

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Annual Sustainability Report

2024-25



SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE

LAURIER 
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Land Acknowledgement



Laurier's Waterloo and Brantford campuses are located on the shared traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabe (Anish-nah-bay) and Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-no-show-nee) peoples.

This land is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe peoples and symbolizes the agreement to share, protect our resources and not to engage in conflict.

From the Haldimand Proclamation of Oct. 25, 1784, this territory is described as: “six miles deep from each side of the river (Grand River) beginning at Lake Erie and extending in the proportion to the Head of

said river, which them and their posterity are to enjoy forever.” The proclamation was signed by the British with their allies, the Six Nations, after the American Revolution. Despite being the largest reserve demographically in Canada, those nations now reside on less than five per cent of this original territory.

Laurier's Milton campus is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, and part of the Nanfan Treaty of 1701 between the British Crown and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We continue to work with our Indigenous partners and colleagues to ensure that we are appropriately acknowledging those lands and their stewardship.



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FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION



As we reflect on the past academic year, I am pleased to present Wilfrid Laurier University's 2024-25 Annual Sustainability Report, which highlights our continued efforts to foster a more sustainable future through education, research, operations, and community engagement.

At Laurier, we are committed to raising awareness, inspiring action, and implementing initiatives that address economic, environmental, and social challenges. From operational improvements that reduce our greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) to enhancing student engagement, sustainability reaches all areas of the university. This year's report focuses on progress under three main pillars: [operations](#), [academics](#), and [engagement](#). Our goal is to inspire, educate, and equip our students, faculty, staff, and partners to engage in actions that contribute to a more sustainable future – both on and off-campus.

Over the past 15 years, we've seen sustainability embedded across departments, student groups, and decision-making. Throughout our journey to achieve a net zero campus, students, staff, and faculty are all contributing to a vibrant, sustainable future in all the communities we operate in. We see this through operational projects to sustainability-focused programs such as the Carbon Reduction Roadmap update, Freestore, Move Out Program, First-Year Leadership Program's Sustainability Councils, and so much more. Notably, the university has seen a [25% decrease in emissions from the 2009 baseline year](#), emphasizing the commitment to a net-zero future.

Laurier also plays a critical role in preparing the next generation of leaders. As we continue to work towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, we are taking steps to

advance awareness and action both on campus and within the broader community. This includes featuring progress on the SDGs in the university's SDGs hub webpage, from education and innovation to community engagement. In 2024, Laurier ranked in the top 15 per cent of global universities in the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings. Through the dedication of students, staff, and faculty we will continue to ensure the university is well-positioned to lead in addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing the world today.

In line with this vision, the Sustainability Action Plan (2023-28) serves as our strategic roadmap outlining how we will strengthen sustainability across our educational, research, operational, and community programs. This plan is central to our ongoing efforts to improve the well-being of the university community while reducing our environmental impact. This Annual Report highlights progress made on the goals and actions identified in the Action Plan.

We look forward to taking even greater strides in the upcoming academic year, further embedding sustainability in all that we do. We will continue to build upon the sustainability success of the Laurier community in the upcoming academic year and for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lloyd Noronha', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lloyd Noronha

Vice President, Finance and Administration

Introduction



Wilfrid Laurier University is committed to advancing sustainability through operations, academics, and engagement. Sustainability is woven into the fabric of our university, shaping how we teach, research, and operate. This annual report reflects the collective efforts of departments, researchers, and students who are driving meaningful change across our campuses. The Annual Sustainability Report illustrates the progress made on the 12 goals of the Sustainability Action Plan (“Action Plan”).

In compiling this report, departments, researchers, and students were consulted to gain a holistic picture of how sustainability reaches every part of the university. For 2024-25, the reporting boundary includes the Brantford, Kitchener, and Waterloo campuses. With the launch of our new Milton campus in Fall 2024, this report does not yet include baseline data or sustainability progress from Milton. However, we look forward to sharing its sustainability journey in next year’s report.

While this report cannot capture every effort, it spotlights the most significant advancements in operations, academics, and engagement. Each section begins with a performance summary, followed by updates, case studies, and stories from across Laurier. Additional progress and data can be found in the final section of the report.

At its core, this report serves three key purposes:

- **Tracking progress** on the university’s Sustainability Action Plan
- **Showcasing impactful** sustainability stories from our community
- **Highlighting contributions** to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As we continue our commitment to sustainability, we celebrate the achievements of the past year and look ahead to the opportunities that lie ahead. Thank you for being part of Laurier’s sustainability journey through highlighting sustainability-focused stories from across the University and the University’s contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sustainability Progress in 2024

Key Performance Indicators

24.8%

decrease in scope 1 and scope 2 emissions from the 2009 baseline levels.

721

tonnes CO₂e

of scope 3 emissions (water, air travel, and waste) were emitted in 2024.

57%

decrease in water use intensity from 2009 baseline level.

8,175

tonnes CO₂e

emitted from scope 1 and scope 2 emissions in 2024, amounting to a difference of 500 tonnes CO₂e from 2023.

7%

of students graduate from programs that have adopted at least one sustainability learning outcome.

29.6 kg

of landfill waste was produced per person (staff, faculty, and students), a decrease of 27% since 2009 (Waterloo).

Designations



Since 2019 (Waterloo)



Since 2017 (Brantford and Waterloo)

CITY OF
BRANTFORD

Green Business
Recognition Award



To be renewed in
Summer 2025



Six consecutive years

Rankings and Awards



The Times Higher Education (THE) ranked Wilfrid Laurier University among the top 15 per cent of global universities in the 2024 University Impact Rankings.



REIMAGINE
EDUCATION

Wilfrid Laurier University won gold at the 2024 QS Reimagine Education Awards, chosen as the top submission from Canada and the U.S. across all 18 categories.

Progress on Goals

Building Momentum: Tracking Progress on the Sustainability Action Plan

The Sustainability Action Plan 2023-28 ("Action Plan") defines goals, actions, and opportunities that will advance sustainability at Laurier. Every year, the launch of the Annual Sustainability Report highlights the progress made on Action Plan goals, actions, and opportunities. This year, the way we're reporting progress has changed. To build a higher degree of transparency, this report will update progress to the following degree:

Progress Highlights

The main sections – [Operations](#), [Academics](#), and [Engagement](#) – highlight progress on each cover page through data collection and analysis. Following the progress highlights pages, there are updates, spotlights, and case studies to feature progress across the Laurier community. For more details on data presented in the progress cover pages, use [Appendix B](#) as a reference.

Progress on Goals

In the subsequent section, the 12 Action Plan goals are listed alongside a status update and a note on progress. The status update icon is in the form of a "speedometer." The speedometer indicates the level of progress made on that goal – far left indicating the goal has not made any progress and the far right indicating the goal has been attained. This status is derived from the number of actions that are in progress or have been completed, listed in [Appendix A](#). The "notes on progress" are described on a semesterly basis. There are reference links available to specific content highlights and case studies throughout this report.



Index of Completion Levels

Not Started: 0%	Mostly Complete: 66% - 99%
Started: 1% - 40%	Complete: 100%
Underway: 41% - 65%	






Summary of Progress

(2023-28 Action Plan)

GOAL	STATUS	NOTES ON PROGRESS
GOAL 1 Climate Continue to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across Laurier campuses in Brantford and Waterloo, building a low carbon campus in Milton, and undertaking other projects as funding opportunities arise. (SDG 13)		<p>Winter 2025: Carbon Reduction Roadmap finalization. See the Roadmap's highlights under Operations Climate Action.</p> <p>Spring 2025: Anticipated update to the Energy Conservation Demand Management Plan, providing a breakdown of strategic energy projects.</p>
GOAL 2 Energy + Water Improve energy and water conservation across campus and contribute to deferred maintenance. (SDG 7 & 13)		<p>Fall 2023 to Fall 2025: Enrolment into the Independent Electricity System Operators' (IESO) Strategic Energy Management (SEM) program. To date, the program has completed an audit of the Athletics Complex and the year one footprint reduction milestones.</p> <p>Fall 2024: Completed a pilot energy analysis to measure the utility footprint of the Archives facilities at both Waterloo campus and off-site storage locations.</p>
GOAL 3 Transportation Increase sustainable transportation uptake by students, faculty, and staff to reduce single occupancy vehicle use by 5 percent. (SDG 9 & 13)		<p>2023-2026: Neuron Mobility e-bikes and e-scooters are available at five locations around Laurier's Waterloo campus.</p> <p>Winter 2024: Survey was conducted with student users of Neuron mobility devices to understand program utilization.</p>
GOAL 4 Transportation Improve the sustainability of the University's fleet of vehicles to improve efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. (SDG 9 & 13)		<p>Spring/Summer 2024: EV charger installed at 81 Lodge and two new fleet EV vehicles were acquired and the adoption of new regulations for use of 14 electric vehicle charging stations across each campus.</p> <p>Spring 2025: Launch of the EV case study of FAM Operations and Transportation and Parking Services to understand the qualitative and quantitative departmental insights of acquiring fleet vehicles.</p>
GOAL 5 Waste Reduce overall amount of waste produced on the University by five percent and increase the waste diversion rate by 10 percent. (SDG 12)		<p>Winter 2024: Completed a collaborative waste audit with the Circular Innovation Council and Environment and Climate Change Canada. Additionally, the Move Out Program diverted 5,108 lb of materials from the Waterloo campus and approximately 1,000 lb from the Brantford Campus.</p>
GOAL 6 Food + Dining Improve sustainable food systems in formal and informal campus services. (SDG 2)		<p>Ongoing: Campus partners facilitate ongoing food insecurity programs at each campus. More details are available on the Wellness Education Food Security webpage.</p>
GOAL 7 Grounds Achieve a system of sustainable open and natural spaces throughout campus, prioritizing pedestrians and a positive, thriving relationship between the built and natural environment. (SDG 15)		<p>Fall 2024: Service Now's ChangeX program sponsored a tree planting event to install a microforest behind the Dining Hall. The Tree Trust program sponsored the plantings of two trees by the Black Walnut tree on the corner of Albert St and Seagram Dr. See more details on these plantings under Operations Grounds.</p>

Summary of Progress

(2023-28 Action Plan)

GOAL	STATUS	NOTES ON PROGRESS
GOAL 8 Planning Create and update standards and tool-kits to embed sustainability in Planning, Design, and Construction (PDC), Facilities Operations and Human Resources onboarding activities. (SDG 9)		Winter 2025: Completed update for the Sustainability Policy 4.13. It will act as a foundational policy for the internal development of green building and procurement standards. Additionally, Phase 2 of the Carbon Reduction Roadmap will be available in 2025 to address these standards.
GOAL 9 Curriculum Improve sustainability knowledge and skills in Laurier students by providing sustainability resources and opportunities to Laurier's teaching community and to students directly. (SDG 4)		Fall 2024: Faculty of Education student engagement with Conservation Halton's Water Festival to enhance student station designs to incorporate climate change insights and curriculum. Fall 2024/Winter 2025: The Sustainability Office partnered with faculty members and offered guest lectures and capstone project experiences. See Teaching and Research for more details. Winter 2025: Climate pedagogy survey conducted with first year Laurier students to understand foundational climate change knowledge entering post-secondary education.
GOAL 10 Research Improve collaboration between the Sustainability Office and Laurier research programs that focus on the environment and sustainability. (SDG 4)		Summer 2024: The Sustainability Office participated in the " Climate Pedagogy Forum " and the Faculty of Education's " Fostering Sustainability Workshop " to support ongoing efforts led by Laurier faculty members.
GOAL 11 Engagement Further the goals of the Strategic Academic Plan as they relate to sustainability. (SDG 4 & 10)		Fall 2024: The Sustainability in Business (SIB) Greenovation event challenged participants to come up with campus sustainability solutions. Winter 2025: RBC sponsored the Changemakers in Action hackathon. Participants identified ventures that could be developed and applied at Laurier to address localized climate change.
GOAL 12 Investment Support meaningful action on climate change while meeting fiduciary duties to the Board of Governors.		Winter 2024: The Climate Risk Management Working Group was established. The group provides strategic recommendations on climate risk management. Their efforts continued throughout the 2024-25 academic term.

Commitment to the SDGs

(UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS)

A New Hub for Highlighting Progress on the SDGs

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a comprehensive framework for Wilfrid Laurier University to meaningfully contribute to a sustainable and equitable future for all. In 2024, the University launched its [Strategic Initiatives webpage](#) on the SDGs. This hub illustrates Laurier's dedication to the SDGs reflected in several key areas including education, research, partnerships, equity, student-led initiatives, and accountability. The webpage highlights the Laurier community's contributions on all 17 SDGs through progress highlights, research centres, and initiatives.

20

Laurier research centres focus on **at least one SDG out of a total of 23 research centres.**

15%

Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings ranked Laurier in the top 15% of **global universities (2024).**

165

The number of initiatives at Laurier currently working on advancing **at least one SDG.**



"Laurier's commitment to research is a driving force in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, fostering innovation, collaboration, and impact that creates a more just, sustainable, and resilient world for future generations."

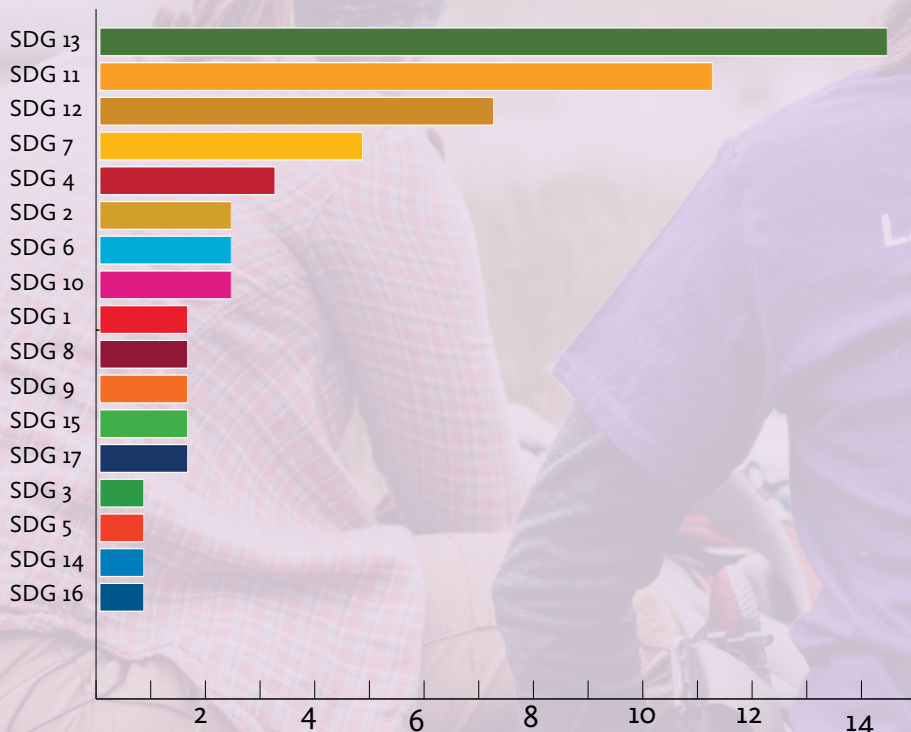
- Charity Parr-Vasquez, Assistant Vice-President: Research



Connecting the Annual Report to the SDGs

Figure 1.0

The breakdown of spotlights, case studies, and features in the Annual Report that focus on each SDG.



The # of spotlights, case studies, and features that focus on each SDG

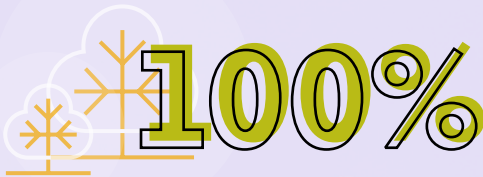
The Annual Report is an opportunity to highlight sustainability progress on operations, academics, and engagement. All of the progress highlights (spotlights, case studies, and features) in this report connect back thematically to the SDGs (refer to Figure 1.0). Progress highlights were reviewed and cross-listed with the list of SDGs. Notably, the majority of highlights (15 out of 28) have a connection to SDG 13, Climate Action. To read more about initiatives and progress on the SDGs, please visit the [Laurier SDGs webpage](#).



Operations



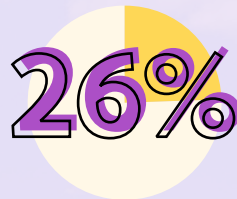
PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS



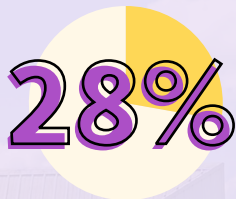
of the Laurier campus' naturalized areas are managed organically



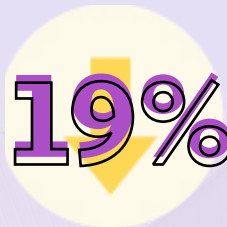
electric-powered vehicles are now a part of Laurier's total fleet (42 total vehicles)



of total Food Services spend are plant-based food purchases



is the percentage of waste that was diverted from the landfill (Waterloo waste diversion rate)



decrease in **all emissions** since the 2009 baseline year

LAURIER
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY



Climate

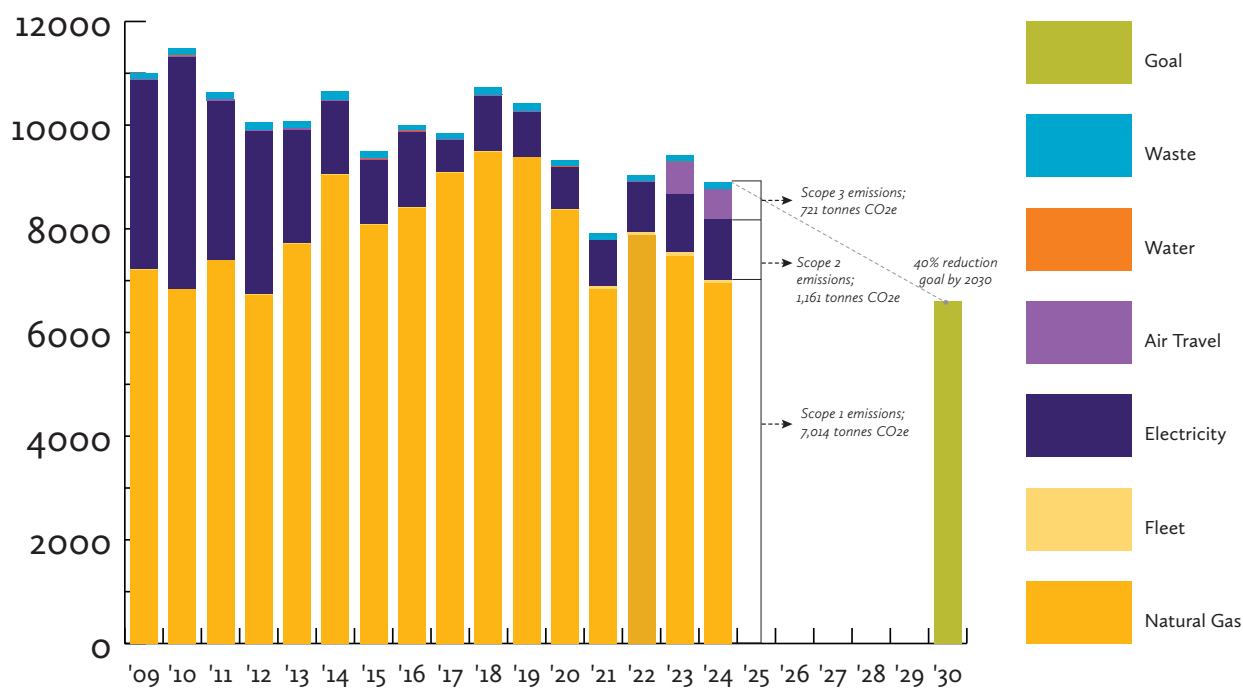


Progress Towards Net-Zero at Laurier

Over the past five years, Laurier has strategically invested in energy efficiency projects and plans to reduce consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Reporting Scope 1 (direct emissions, owned or controlled by the university), Scope 2 (indirect emissions from electricity) and Scope 3 emissions (indirect emissions from Laurier's activities), provides insight into the university's emissions reduction progress. Notably, there has been a **24.8% decrease in Scope 1 and 2 emissions collectively** since the 2009 baseline (see Figure 2.0). Additionally, in 2024, all scopes of emissions amounted to a **6% decrease in emissions** from 2023 levels. Overall, the university has seen considerable emissions reductions, particularly in scope 1 and 2 emissions, ensuring we remain on the pathway to net-zero by 2050.

Figure 2.0

The total emissions for all Laurier campuses since 2009 broken down by the main sources of emissions (Scope 1,2,3).

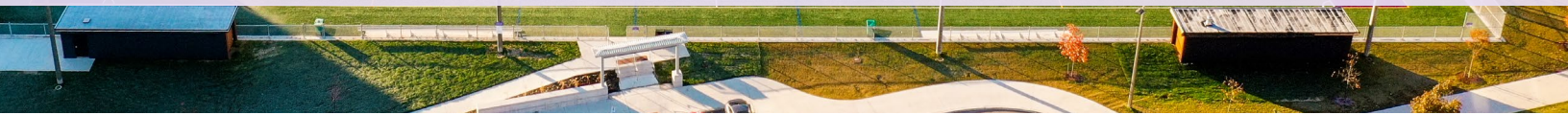




Key Developments from Laurier's Climate Risk Management Working Group

The Climate Risk Management Working Group (CRMWG) aligns with the university's sustainability and planetary health priorities and provides key recommendations on climate risk management strategies. The group consists of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external board members, with representation from essential board committees.

In April 2024, the CRMWG updated its workplan, discussed updates to the fossil fuel endowment fund, and reviewed the revisions of the [University's 4.13 Sustainability Policy](#). As the year progressed, the group focused on pursuing sustainability rankings, ESG (environment, social, and governance) reporting requirements, and learning about developments on the Milton Campus Master Plan. The CRMWG continues to partner with the Climate Change Charter group of universities, staying attuned to evolving trends in sustainable and climate action investing. By leveraging these partnerships and on-campus sustainability initiatives, the group helps guide Laurier's strategic climate action development.



SPOTLIGHT

Accelerating Decarbonization with a Refined Carbon Reduction Roadmap

In 2020, Laurier embarked on its decarbonization journey with the development of its first Carbon Reduction Roadmap (CRR). The CRR was an embodiment of the **University's commitment to reducing its emissions by 40% by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050**. In 2024, the Facilities and Asset Management team committed to a refinement of the existing CRR to reflect the changing decarbonization landscape. Blackstone Energy Services (Blackstone) was selected to update the CRR through building walkthroughs, stakeholder sessions, and consultation meetings. Following the stakeholder and feedback sessions, the CRR will be delivered in two phases. The first phase of the roadmap includes an actionable decarbonization and facility renewal program. The second phase will recommend a suite of decarbonization governance enablers to support Laurier's path to net-zero. Overall, the renewed CRR identifies an actionable decarbonization and clean infrastructure renewal program to take the University on its path to net-zero emissions by 2050.





SPOTLIGHT



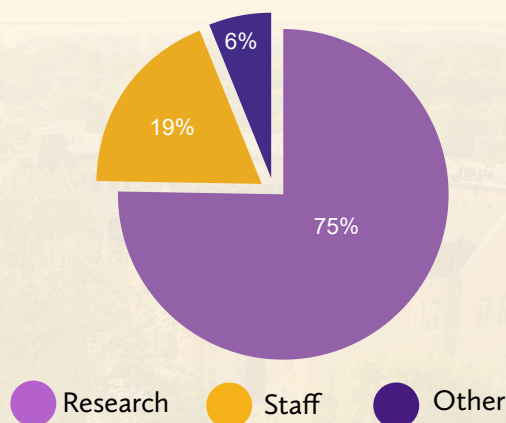
Impact of Business-related Travel on Laurier's Carbon Footprint Profile

In 2023, the air travel emissions inventory was refined to better reflect our carbon footprint. Air travel, related to business, falls under Scope 3 emissions, which are indirect emissions that are outcomes from Laurier's activities. Utilizing the [ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator](#), air emissions from 1,654 flight routes were calculated by manually inputting departure and destination details. As a result, Laurier's air travel emissions for 2024 totaled 582 tonnes, constituting 6.5% of the university's total emissions (Scope 1, 2, and 3). **This is a decline of 11% from the previous year 2023**, which saw air travel emissions totaling 648 tonnes. The total emissions from Laurier-related business travel equate to travelling the globe 194 times.

For 2024, the data set was analyzed to understand the breakdown of departmental greenhouse gas emissions related to air travel (Figure 3.0). The index codes were cross-listed with departments, research grants, and faculty names. In 2024, 75% of business-related air travel was attributed to research, while 19% was associated with staff travel and 6% considered "other," (all other travel not related to staff and research that could not be categorized). The next steps for understanding the true impact of Laurier's air travel emissions footprint will require increased staff capacity to analyze opportunities to reduce the need for air travel.

Figure 3.0

Air travel emissions source breakdown (2024).



SPOTLIGHT

Faces of Climate Action: Committing to a Net-Zero Future

Throughout September 2024, the Sustainability Office conducted 15+ interviews with researchers, managers, leadership, staff, and students who are committed to climate action in their work or research. These interviews were conducted on the Brantford and Waterloo campuses to highlight the spectrum of climate mitigation and adaptation work happening at Laurier. All the footage was condensed and compiled into a four-minute video, the [Faces of Climate Action](#), that highlighted research, operations, and engagement initiatives that are contributing to a net-zero future at Laurier.





Energy and Water

Sustainable Operations: Laurier's 2024-25 Projects for Energy and Water Impact

The 2024-25 academic year proved to be busy for Laurier's Facilities and Asset Management (FAM) team! Behind the scenes, the FAM team is improving aging infrastructure, while planning for the future to reach net-zero by 2050. While the financial and logistical challenges are present along the pathway to net-zero, staff are still committed to making improvements to enhance efficiency and reduce emissions. Below is a list of notable projects that were completed in the 2024-25 academic year.



Science Research Mechanical Heat Loads for Laboratory Fume Hoods

Focused on optimizing heat loads to improve energy efficiency in research labs.

Science Research Air Handling Unit Replacement

Replaced outdated air handling units to enhance energy use and efficiency in the Science Research building.

Other Efforts

Facilities staff prioritize efficiency through strategic efforts. This includes addressing building automation control setbacks, peak demand setbacks, removal of emergency pole stations, and roof repairs on the Brantford and Waterloo campuses.

Replacement of the Commercial Dishwasher for the Dining Hall

Replaced the old commercial dishwasher with an energy-efficient model, resulting in lower energy and water usage.

Carbon Reduction Roadmap Update

Updated the university's roadmap for carbon reduction, providing strategies to further reduce energy consumption and carbon footprint across campus operations.

Installation of Air Conditioning Unit for Animal Care Laboratory

Installed an air conditioning unit in the animal care lab to improve energy efficiency while maintaining optimal conditions.

Cold Regions Research Centre Operational Footprint Changes

Implemented operational changes in line with sustainability goals, aiming for reduced energy and water consumption and resource use as part of the Green Lab certification process.

Archives Footprint Demonstration Analysis

Conducted an analysis to assess and improve the environmental footprint of Archives, focusing on energy and resource use.

Installation of Three Heat Pumps in Post House

A multi-year strategy to install heat pumps that reduce energy consumption and improve heating and cooling efficiency.



CASE STUDY

ASSESSING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT IN ARCHIVES TO SUPPORT LAURIER'S SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Archives face growing threats from climate change due to increasing extreme weather events. At Laurier, Archives and Special Collections conducted a feasibility report to assess disaster planning, sustainability, and climate adaptation practices. The report highlighted the need for resilient spaces, optimized record storage, disaster planning training, and regional strategies. This led to the selection of the renovated archives space at 232 King Street as a pilot project to evaluate its carbon emissions footprint. Laurier's Energy Manager, Suma Abid, led the pilot project through its phases from establishing a baseline to determining future potential partners.

Methodology

The pilot project aimed to establish a baseline of carbon emissions for Archives and Special Collections from 2019 to 2023 by analyzing natural gas and electricity data. The team identified key factors influencing emissions, including the size of archived collections, building automation systems, energy sources, and space usage.

Key Findings

Archives and Special Collections account for approximately 0.17% of Laurier's Scope 1 emissions and 0.08% of Scope 2 emissions, equivalent to **the emissions generated by driving an average gas vehicle for 14,000 km annually**. The study demonstrated that integrating energy-efficient technologies and best practices can reduce environmental impact while preserving valuable archival materials. Specialized solutions for archive spaces can address climate change concerns, inform sustainability goals, and improve disaster planning and climate adaptation across Laurier campuses.

"This Carbon Footprint project has been a significant step in aligning Laurier's Archives and Special Collections with our broader sustainability goals. By studying carbon emissions, we can set a baseline for future improvements and collaborate with partners to enhance campus sustainability."

- Suma Abid, Energy Manager, Facilities and Asset Management



Challenges and Conclusion

The preservation of archival materials faces rising costs due to climate change. There are challenges in securing consistent funding for energy-efficient infrastructure and engaging the campus community in sustainable practices. This case study underscores the importance of sustainability in preserving archives and special collections amid climate change. The pilot project at Laurier has provided a baseline for carbon emissions, guiding future decisions around energy use, building retrofits, and climate adaptation strategies. Moving forward, Laurier is exploring partnerships to enhance sustainability in archives and campus-wide initiatives.



Enhancing Efficiency with Demand Control Ventilation in Science Research

Completed in September 2023, the Demand Control Ventilation (DCV) project at the Laurier Science Research Building has marked a step toward enhancing energy efficiency and reducing environmental impact. The building's original ventilation system had become outdated, with units that were beyond their expected lifespan and inefficient in terms of energy use. The refrigerants in these units were also not environmentally sustainable, and the system was not keeping up with the increasing demands of the building's scientific operations.

The new DCV system has revolutionized the way the building's ventilation operates. Instead of running at full capacity all the time, the DCV system uses a network of sensors and tubes to continuously monitor air quality and adjust airflow based on actual needs. When the desired temperature is achieved, the system reduces airflow to a minimum set point; thus, conserv-

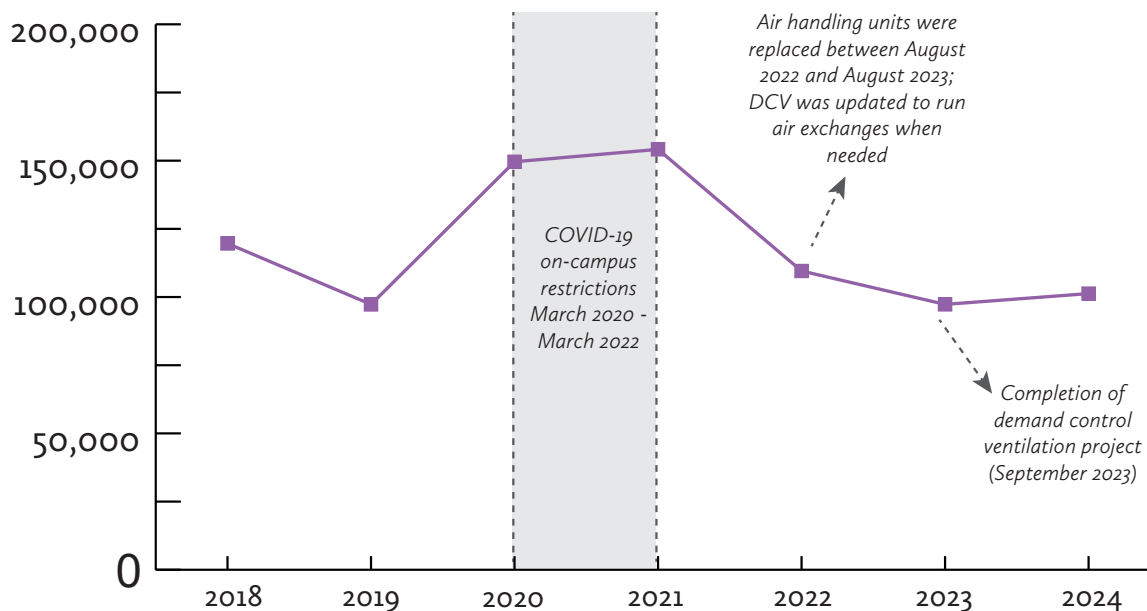
ing energy and reducing the amount of air that needs to be reintroduced into the building. This is especially beneficial in both winter and summer, as it cuts down on the energy needed to heat or cool the air.

Thanks to this system, Laurier has seen a reduction in natural gas consumption and emissions. Specifically, in 2024, natural gas consumption levels dipped just below 2018 levels from 119,634 m³ to 101,256 m³ (Figure 4.0). With the assumption that loading levels have remained consistent in Science and Bricker Academic, this decrease in consumption has resulted in, **a 15% reduction in emissions from 2018 levels**, from 231 tonnes of CO₂e to 195.63 tonnes of CO₂e.

This project exemplifies how innovative systems can improve efficiency, reduce costs, and support Laurier's ongoing sustainability goals.

Figure 4.0

The annual consumption of natural gas (m³) in the Science Research building.





Transportation

Electrifying Laurier's Fleet to Drive Sustainability

Laurier is making strides in transitioning its fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) as part of its sustainability efforts. In 2024-25, the University replaced aging gas and diesel fleet vans with four Ford E-Transit EVs, purchased in two phases: March and December 2024. These EVs, each with a 150 km range per charge and 1-tonne towing capacity, align with Laurier's goal to reduce emissions and costs. The vehicles also benefit from Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP) rebate program, receiving \$10,000 per vehicle, totaling \$40,000 across the two years.

The switch has been smooth, with staff enjoying the vehicles' connectivity and custom settings, while the regenerative braking reduces wear on brake pads and tires. Regular charging every few days has proven efficient, even in cold weather. Positive feedback from the Laurier community highlights the seamless transition, with no issues related to range or performance. This move supports Goal 4 in the 2023-28 Action Plan, improving the sustainability of our campus fleet to improve efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.



SPOTLIGHT

Neuron Survey Reveals Key Insights on Campus Mobility and Transportation

The recent Neuron survey in Waterloo Region provided insights into the usage of the shared mobility program, particularly among Laurier students, staff, and faculty. It found that 16% of trips in the region started or ended at Laurier stations, showing a strong link between campus and the community. The survey had an 89% response rate from 91 participants, with an average travel distance of 1.87 km to or from campus. Demographically, 53% of respondents were students, 40% were staff, and 7% were faculty.

Almost half (49%) had used a Neuron vehicle, with students leading at 65%. Respondents (67%) suggested discounts for the Laurier community to increase usage. Barriers included affordability, lack of awareness, and vehicle proximity. Active or alternative transportation like walking was used by 88% of current users. For non-users, driving alone (58%) was the primary mode. Participants recommended clearer signage, such as Neuron Parking Zones and No Sidewalk Riding, to enhance safety and improve the program's accessibility.



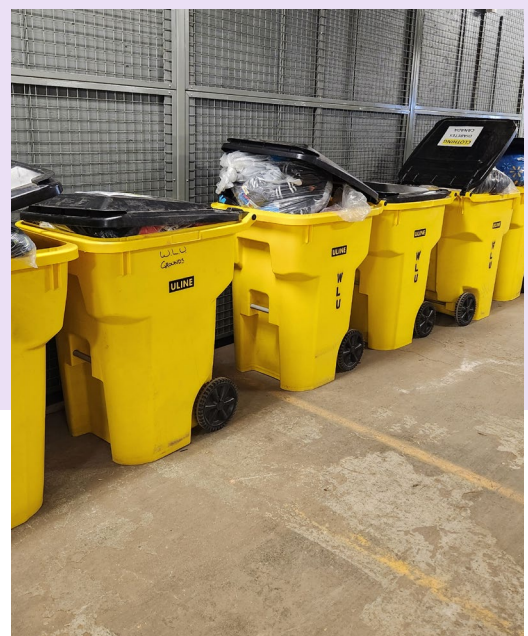
Waste



Building a Circular Campus with the Move Out Program

Seven years ago, the Sustainability Office launched the Freestore as a pop-up during orientation week. Since then, it has grown into a permanent location at 232 King St., officially reopening in January 2023 after a pandemic delay. The Freestore exemplifies Laurier's commitment to a circular economy—extending the lifecycle of products through reuse to reduce, while promoting sustainability. Items are primarily sourced from the Move Out Program, which collects reusable goods from students during April's residence move-out period. Since its inception in 2015, the program has diverted 26,917 pounds of items from potential waste, recirculating them through the Freestore or donating them to the community.

Since reopening, the Waterloo Freestore has distributed **4,282 pounds of goods to students, including international, returning, and first-years**. This initiative supports students while reducing environmental impact, showcasing Laurier's leadership in sustainability. Together, the Freestore and Move Out Program contribute to a circular economy at Laurier, which is a stepping stone to promoting a zero waste campus through operations and engagement.



The Opportunity to Enhance Waste Programming Efforts

While the reach of waste programming has expanded to the Waterloo and Brantford campuses, there are still opportunities to enhance operational efforts to divert waste from the landfill. Programs such as the Freestore and Move Out Program have grown from small efforts to programs requiring months of planning and execution year-round. These efforts are instrumental to bringing affordable, equitable programs to students, but they will not be the only solution to enhancing the university's diversion and waste prevention.

Every year, the university receives a waste diversion report from Waste Management (WM) - the waste hauler on the Waterloo and Brantford campuses. While this report covers both campuses, Brantford has been omitted from the following comparison. This is as a result of the City of Brantford picking up recycling for Laurier buildings, which means that the data would only reflect landfill waste weight - not recycled materials. The methods used by WM to calculate the diversion rate¹ is based on a variety of factors that give us an approximation of the university's diversion rate in Waterloo². The 2024 waste data was compared to 2022 data from WM to understand the volume and diversion rate of landfill waste. This is primarily due to the fact that the 2023 dataset included recycling weights that far exceeded Laurier's average recycling volume, which will be reviewed in the 2025-26 academic year.

In 2024, the Waterloo campus' diversion rate was 27%, up from 23% from 2022. This means that there was a higher proportion of landfill waste that was diverted to the recycling stream. While total landfill waste weight increased by 16% in 2024, recycling increased as well by 54%. A factor that contributed to an increase in landfill waste was primarily due to the frequency of pick-ups increasing from three times a week to five times per week. Overall, there is a consistent trend in the diversion rate remaining around 20-30%, aside from 2023 where the data needs to be verified.

Figure 5.0
The breakdown of Laurier's 2022 composition of waste materials produced, recycled (paper, containers, cardboard, scrap metal), reused, and recirculated.

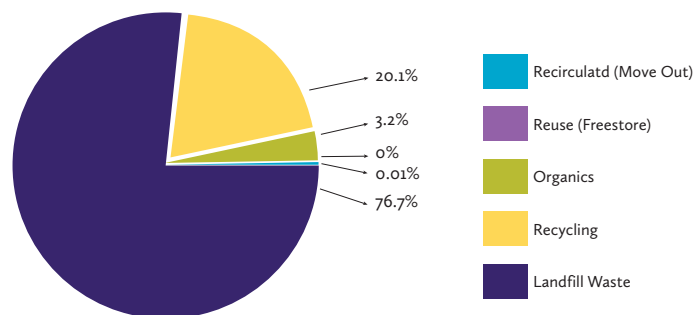
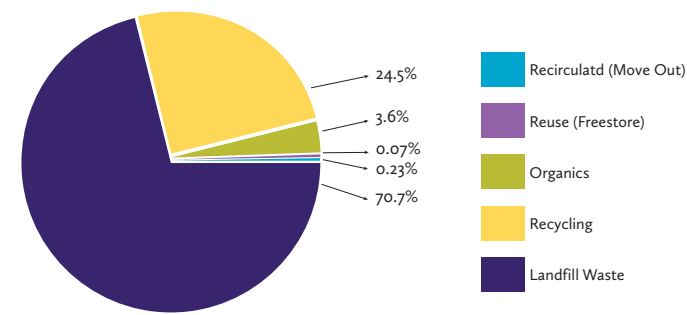


Figure 6.0
The breakdown of Laurier's 2024 composition of waste materials produced, recycled (paper, containers, cardboard, scrap metal), reused, and recirculated.



1 The diversion rate measures the weight of the portion of waste that was not sent to landfill - i.e. recycling, organics, and cardboard.
2 Every March, the university receives a waste diversion report from Waste Management. Waste Management calculates the breakdown of weight of landfill waste, organics, cardboard, and single stream recycling. This is completed by looking at each pick-up location and multiplying the number of pick-ups x the container's yardage x district average (kg/yard).



CASE STUDY

SUSTAINABLE MOVES: HOW THE 2024 WATERLOO MOVE OUT PROGRAM DIVERTED 5,108 POUNDS FROM LANDFILLS

The Move Out Program reduces waste by collecting donated items from first-year residence students who live on-campus. The 2024 program took place during the final weeks of the academic year, coinciding with the exam period, and focused on four primary categories: e-waste, textiles, household items, and non-perishable food. In 2024, the Move Out team took a different approach in Waterloo to enhance collection rates. The goals were:

1. To redirect students from discarding unwanted items in the garbage.
2. To provide quality items for students in the following school year.
3. To maintain clean and clear common areas in residence buildings during the move-out period.

Methodology

The program began in early 2024 with planning sessions held from February to April to ensure smooth operations. For the collection process, the Sustainability Office set up sorting stations in residence buildings, encouraging students to drop off donations directly. Following collection, the Grounds team delivered items to the 230 Regina Street warehouse. Staff members and volunteers assisted with sorting at the source, which was intended to streamline the process and reduce sorting time later.

Results

5,108 LB

was donated by first-year students living in residence buildings



100+ HRS

dedicated to collecting, sorting, and weighing donations



66%

of all items collected went back into the Laurier community

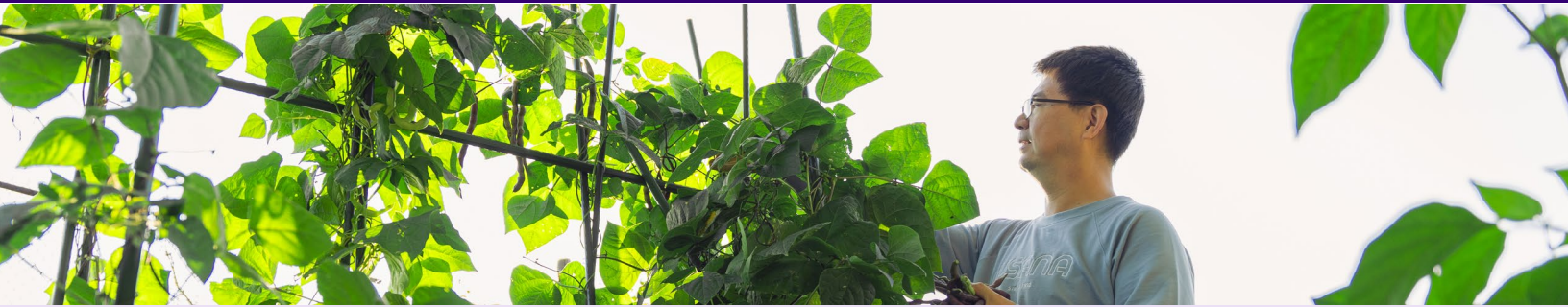
Conclusion

The 2024 Move Out Program was a resounding success! The program's effectiveness was largely due to the strategic planning and cross-departmental collaboration that began months before the end of term. Despite a few challenges, the program met its key objectives and provided valuable lessons for future iterations.





Food and Dining



Northdale Community Garden Expands to Support Food Security

The Northdale Community Garden has expanded its offerings to support food security and sustainability. In 2024, 18 new 50-square-foot plots were added, providing students, staff, and faculty with opportunities to cultivate a variety of vegetables, berries, and herbs. This initiative was a collaborative effort involving Facilities and Asset Management, the President's Office, and Enrolment Services.

Additionally, a 300-square-foot plot was dedicated to the Graduate Students' Association to enhance food security programming on campus. The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden, spanning 400 square feet, continues to diversify its plantings, contributing to the university's commitment to sustainable food practices. These developments reflect Laurier's dedication to fostering a sustainable and inclusive community through hands-on engagement with food production and environmental stewardship.



SPOTLIGHT



Empowering students as Fair Trade Campus Ambassadors

In September 2024, the Fair Trade Campus program welcomed nine Laurier students into the Fair Trade Campus Outreach Team. These students were responsible for increasing education and visibility of Fairtrade products and practices on the Waterloo campus. Students also had the option to become a certified Fair Trade Ambassador, requiring students to complete training before receiving a certificate. Three Laurier students committed to becoming ambassadors through the program offered by Fair Trade Programs (Canada). The Outreach Team convened monthly to plan and discuss upcoming programming and events aimed at promoting Fairtrade products. A key highlight of the team's efforts occurred during Fairtrade Month in October 2024, when they organized information booths across the Waterloo campus. In total, four booths were held across campus with 243 students stopping by to learn about Fairtrade. Additionally, 400 cups of Fairtrade coffee were provided to students at no cost!



Grounds



Enhancing Campus Naturalization Through Tree Planting

Urban areas benefit from naturalization and the introduction of native vegetation. At Laurier, the Grounds team commits to uplifting areas on campus to enhance naturalization. In October 2024, the Sustainability Office brought together students, staff, and faculty to plant trees on the Waterloo campus. In partnership with the Grounds Team, and sponsored by ServiceNow ChangeX, a total of nine trees were planted alongside the hill beside the Dining Hall. Following the planting, staff members walked over to the black walnut tree located on the corner of Albert Street and Seagram Drive. This tree was selected for the Tree Trust by the Region of Waterloo and Reep Green Solutions. The Tree Trust aims to provide care for mature legacy trees in the community with pruning, fertilizing, and pest control. Staff wrapped up the day by planting two new native trees to take the place of the legacy tree once it has reached end-of-life.





Planning

A Greener Game: Sustainable Innovations at Seagram Field

When aging infrastructure needs to be replaced, there are many factors taken into consideration. Factors such as cost, convenience, and sustainability inform project planning of viable, cost-effective options. A recent example is the Seagram field replacement project. The existing artificial turf was at the end of its useful life and unable to accommodate the university's recreational and varsity sporting needs.

The project involved installing a new multi-sport artificial turf field, along with upgraded field lighting, a modern scoreboard, and new underground infrastructure to align with contemporary standards.

The new turf installed is a FieldTurf system that incorporates shock pad and rubber infill components, which embeds sustainability features. For example, the Pro-Play-EcoSport shock pad installed has a cross-linked polyolefin product that does not leach chemicals into the environment. Additionally, the rubber turf infill material was ambient crumb rubber that is derived from recycled old car and truck tires. Overall, projects like the Seagram field replacement illustrate the benefits of embedding sustainability into project planning at Laurier.



Academics

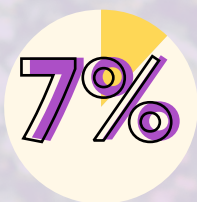


PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS



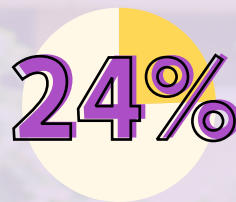
100%

of academic departments have **at least** one faculty member that conducts sustainability research



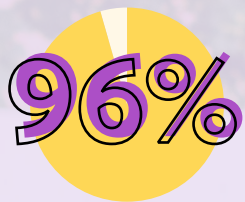
7%

of students graduate from programs that have adopted at least one sustainability learning outcome



24%

of all course offerings (undergrad and graduate) are sustainability course offerings



96%

of academic departments have sustainability course offerings



20%

of faculty members conduct sustainability-related research





Curriculum



Transforming Campus Challenges into Learning Opportunities

Campus as a Living Lab is an initiative that brings sustainability concepts to life through student-driven projects that engage with real-world challenges on or off-campus. Throughout each academic year, the Sustainability Office partners with faculty members to deliver campus as a living lab projects to life. Courses like PS 383: Environment, Psychology and Action, ES 297: Climate Change and Collective Action, and EU 433: Environmental Education for a Sustainable Future offer students hands-on learning experiences that contribute to the campus' sustainability goals while promoting deeper understanding of environmental issues.

- **In PS 383**, students collaborated with the Sustainability Office to design accessible green spaces and develop an interactive event for first-year students to learn about sustainable programs on campus. Their work prioritized inclusivity and engagement, ensuring that green spaces are accessible for all students.

- **ES 297** provided a platform for students to explore Laurier's climate action strategies and learn how they can actively contribute to sustainable practices, both within the university and in the broader community.
- **In EU 433**, students gained practical experience in sustainability planning by creating action plans for schools, drawing from sustainability initiatives on both the Waterloo and Brantford campuses. These projects focus on equity, accessibility, and collaboration, offering students the tools needed to implement sustainable solutions.

Other courses include: GEOG362 Food Security and Organics, GG261 Powering Earth, GS/SE364 Social Innovation in the City, and SE400 Capstone in Social Entrepreneurship. Looking ahead to the next academic year, the Sustainability Office looks forward to continuing building partnerships to bring Campus as a Living Lab to life.



CASE STUDY

UNDERSTANDING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS' CLIMATE KNOWLEDGE AND ENGAGEMENT AT LAURIER

With universities playing a vital role in climate change education, understanding students' prior knowledge and engagement in climate issues is crucial. Led by researchers from the Teaching Excellence and Innovation's (TEI) Climate Pedagogy Community of Practice at Laurier - Debora VanNijnatten and Dana Sawchuk - the survey was designed and fielded for the 2024-25 first-year cohort of students. The survey assessed climate knowledge of first-year students, their sources of information, and their willingness to engage in climate action.

Background and Methodology

The survey is part of TEI's ongoing work to help faculty better understand our students. The initiative responds to the uncertainty faculty members have expressed about where to start with integrating more climate change education into their courses. Research of this nature has not been done on Canadian university campuses before. The survey was distributed to first-year students at Laurier, gathering responses from 1,197 participants (21.6% response rate). The survey included a 10-question quiz on climate knowledge and asked students about their confidence in their prior climate education, their sources of climate information, and their interest in climate activism.

Results

- **66% of students** felt somewhat confident about their high school climate education
- Respondents showed high levels of confidence (**70% fairly, very, or extremely confident**) that Laurier could contribute to their climate education
- **40% of students** expressed a likelihood of engaging in climate-related activities

"The survey results point to some holes in our students' climate change education as well as some uncertainty about their role in pushing for climate action, but they trust Laurier faculty to guide them!"



- Dana Sawchuk, Professor



- Debora VanNijnatten, Professor

Challenges and Next Steps

Composing the survey questions took much longer than anticipated and required several rounds, over several months, of soliciting feedback and making changes. Securing a sufficient number of respondents also proved challenging, with multiple methods - class announcements, social media posts from campus partners, posterage, and direct email to students being employed (direct email was the most successful technique). To address these gaps, Laurier should enhance its climate curriculum across disciplines, integrating both scientific knowledge and opportunities for practical engagement. This would help equip students with the necessary skills and confidence to contribute effectively to climate solutions.



Research



SPOTLIGHT

Laurier's Commitment to Sustainability Recognized in the 2024 THE Impact Rankings

Across Laurier, faculty members are contributing their research and findings to advance sustainability, climate mitigation and adaptation, and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Laurier was ranked among the top 15% of global universities in the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings, which assess institutions working toward the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The rankings evaluated 2,152 universities across 125 countries addressing challenges such as poverty and climate change.

Laurier achieved high marks for its efforts in tackling climate change, fostering gender equity, and promoting peaceful and just societies. **Individually, the University ranked in the top 15% for SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).** Key

initiatives include programs like the Women in Leadership mentorship, the UNESCO Chair on Food and Sustainability, and climate-related research partnerships.

The THE Impact Rankings recognize not only the work that universities do, but also the way we educate and inform our communities about our impact. Laurier community members are encouraged to share their work that supports the SDGs with Laurier's THE Impact Rankings Working Group using the THE Impact Rankings form.

Laurier's recognition underscores its commitment to creating a sustainable and equitable future through research, teaching, and community partnerships.



Engagement



PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

\$176,228

has been awarded to Sustainable Hawk Fund Projects since 2016.



6

sustainability memberships and designations are held by Laurier



18

internal partnerships exist with the Sustainability Office



10

offices are participants of the Green Office Program

10

events have been co-sponsored or co-led by the Sustainability Office



42

Sustainable Hawk Fund projects have been completed to date



SPOTLIGHT

Summit for Creative Solutions 2024 Ignites Collaboration in Brantford

On May 16, 2024, the Laurier Hub for Community Solutions held the Summit for Creative Community Solutions in Brantford. The goals of the Summit were to celebrate creative solutions, inspire change, honour community leaders, and highlight Brantford as a creative city. The event's theme was “Innovation, Sustainability, Inclusion,” to foster collaboration among the Laurier community.

“The 2024 Summit for Creative Community Solutions brought together students, faculty, and community leaders to foster meaningful collaborations and innovative approaches to sustainability and social impact. The overwhelming engagement and thoughtful discussions demonstrated the power of partnerships in driving real change, reinforcing our commitment to bridging gaps between academia and community needs.”

- Christina Han, Director of Laurier Hub for Community Solutions

The Summit brings together individuals and organizations of varying backgrounds with the intent to drive meaningful change and creativity for participants. The City of Brantford, Laurier’s Sustainability Office, Enterprise Brant, Alumni Office, Belonging Brant, Chamber of Commerce Brantford-Brant, and the Office of Research Services came together in partnership to make this event a reality.



SPOTLIGHT

Sustainability in Action: Brantford Campus earns Green Business Award

The Laurier Brantford campus received the City of Brantford’s Green Business Award in recognition of innovative sustainability initiatives. This award highlights Laurier’s commitment to fostering environmentally sustainable operations and programming in Brantford. There are several notable efforts that contributed to attaining this recognition including: the Laurier Honeybee Project (Christine McKinley, staff), the Laurier Freestore (Dean of Students), the Sustainable Hawk Fund, Indigenous Student Centre’s Garden space, and capital projects’ efforts. This recognition reflects Laurier’s dedication to sustainability and the collective efforts of its students, staff, and faculty.



Student Engagement



Laurier 2040 Challenge Sparks Collaboration for Climate Action

Climate action is integral for [Laurier's sustainability journey](#) towards net-zero emissions. This past year, the Sustainability Office hosted [Climate Action Week](#) from October 7th to 11th to engage the Laurier community on climate-related initiatives and research happening across our campuses.

The theme for the week was Collaboration for Climate Action. The signature event, Laurier 2040 Challenge: Mapping Climate Action, invited 20 students to come together to build a net-zero, sustainable campus by 2040.

Students worked in groups of less than five to identify mitigation, adaptation, and community actions that will bring Laurier to net-zero emissions ahead of the University's 2050 goal. Groups were provided with a map

of the Waterloo campus and had less than one hour to work through 40+ predesigned actions that could contribute to a sustainable campus. Additionally, students had to balance emissions reductions with cost.

Teams were judged by a panel of three judges - Dr Ehaab D. Abdou (Assistant Professor, Global Studies), Suma Abid (Energy Manager), and Eric Meliton (Sustainability Manager). Judges evaluated all six teams based on their innovative ideas, actions, and the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction potential. In the end, team "Tree Amigos" won \$500 with their innovative campus design and actions. The winning team decided to donate their winnings to a local environmental charity in Waterloo Region. The Sustainability Office looks forward to hosting this challenge on other campuses and with other departments!





SPOTLIGHT

Sustainability Meets Innovation: Highlights from the Greenovation Case Competition

In November 2024, Sustainability in Business (SIB) hosted their annual flagship event, the Greenovation Case Competition. In total, nine teams participated in the competition where they were challenged to come up with innovative ideas to enhance on-campus sustainability. Following the presentation of solutions, the panel of judges evaluated all projects. The first-place team's idea was a "Sustain-a-thon," which would gamify the way that students engage with sustainable practices on campus. All participants were encouraged to apply for the Sustainable Hawk Fund to bring their idea to fruition.



SPOTLIGHT

From Hive to Table: Exploring the Sweet Success of Laurier's Rooftop Bees

The Sustainable Hawk Fund's legacy continues to engage the Laurier community in sustainability-related endeavors. In particular, the Laurier Apiary project from 2022, led by Christine McKinley, has continued to provide a source of education and engagement in Brantford. In September 2024, Christine brought together 20 students to learn more about the honeybees on the roof of One Market. During the event, students went on a tour of the apiary to see the bees at work. Following the tour, students had a guided taste testing of local honeys hosted by Jan from Tasty Road Trips and chef Tracy Winkworth. Participants walked away with an understanding of different flavour profiles of honey and the impact that local plants can have on the taste of honey.





Staff Engagement

Laurier's Green Office Program Recognizes Sustainability Leaders

On November 21st, the first three Green Office Program participants were awarded certificates for achieving bronze and silver designation levels. The Green Office (GO) Program is a program designed to encourage staff and faculty to get involved in sustainability initiatives on campus. Offices work through a scorecard, including nine categories of sustainability, and track actions they are taking. The Green Office Recognition and Launch Event was hosted by the Sustainability Office to recognize current participants and to recruit new offices to participate. The total attendance was 20 staff members, which included current and prospective program participants.

The following Waterloo offices were recognized for their efforts:

- Enrolment Services (Bronze)
- Facilities and Asset Management (202 Regina St) (Silver)
- Career Centre (Silver)

As of February 2025, the program has ten active offices across the Waterloo campus. Throughout 2025, the Sustainability Office will be looking at recruiting Brantford and Milton offices!



SPOTLIGHT

Advancing Sustainability: Oliver Manidoka's Role at Northdale

Oliver Manidoka, a Laurier Psychology program graduate, played an instrumental part in advancing sustainable food systems at the Northdale Garden. During his undergraduate studies, Oliver collaborated with Stephanie Absalom, the Indigenous student support coordinator, to establish Laurier's Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden—a project rooted in cultural tradition.

Following his appointment as the Indigenous Student Recruitment and Access Coordinator, he continued to support the work at Northdale. In Spring 2024, Oliver helped organize an Office of Indigenous Initiatives lunch-and-learn event for Waterloo campus staff, featuring produce grown by the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden team. In Summer 2024, Oliver continued his commitment to the garden. He grew traditional medicines as part of the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden, in addition to tending to his own plot. His work embodies Laurier's dedication to sustainability and demonstrates how community members can lead impactful initiatives.





CASE STUDY

MY GREEN LAB COLLABORATION: TRANSFORMING SUSTAINABILITY IN LAURIER'S SCIENCE LABS

What started as a project funded by the Sustainable Hawk Fund, has now led to significant water and energy reductions among lab practices and processes across the university. Partnering with My Green Lab, which is a not-for-profit focused on providing recommendations for sustainable lab practices, led to a pilot project in the Centre for Cold Regions and Water Science (CCRWS).

Methodology

The initiative began with Gena Braun, research instrumentation technician at Laurier, identifying opportunities for sustainability within the university's labs. After partnering with My Green Lab, the team focused on reducing freezer energy consumption and eliminating plastic waste.

Results

- **Energy Reduction:** By increasing the temperature of ultra-low freezers by 10 degrees and implementing improved maintenance, the university reduced the energy consumption of these units by up to 30% from pre-pilot project levels (2023).
- **Water Conservation:** Water usage in the undergraduate chemistry lab decreased by 98%, from 157,000 liters per year to just 2,000 liters for experiments that rely on water aspiration or cooling. This was achieved by replacing water aspirators with vacuum pumps and introducing a circulating water pump for distillation processes.
- **Waste Reduction:** The CCRWS successfully sent over 50 kg of plastic waste to a nearby recycler between September 2023 and June 2024.



Challenges and Conclusion

Academic research labs train a high number of undergraduate and graduate students, but also experience a high turnover of students in the lab as a result. This can lead to poor lab supply management, a resistance to make changes to long-held lab procedures, and challenging management of longer term projects that are outside the immediate scope of the research goal.

The partnership with My Green Lab has proven to be a successful model for sustainable research practices at Laurier. The significant reductions in water and energy use, alongside minimized waste generation, demonstrate the potential for environmentally conscious changes in academic and research settings. By embedding sustainability into the lab environment, Laurier is not only conserving resources but also educating future scientists about the importance of sustainability in their work.



Faculty Engagement



SPOTLIGHT

Laurier Professors Champion Sustainability in Teaching and Research

Climate Pedagogy Symposium

Faculty members at Laurier are committed to bringing climate teachings to curriculum. Together, in collaboration with Waterloo Climate Institute at the University of Waterloo, Conestoga College, and Wilfrid Laurier University, instructors and staff came together to share innovative approaches to climate change education (CCE). The [Climate Pedagogy Symposium](#) was held on May 15th, 2024 at the Balsillie School of International Affairs to serve as a platform for educators to exchange innovative teaching practices for CCE. In total, 15 participants from Laurier attended the symposium and engaged in over six interactive sessions.

QS Award for Academic Leadership in the Northwest Territories

The 2024 QS Reimagine Education Awards ranked [Laurier as the top submission in Canada and the U.S.](#) across 18 categories. This recognition earned the university gold for the longstanding research partnership with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). This collaboration addresses the impacts of climate change in northern Canada, as one of the fastest-warming regions on Earth. Since 2010, over 600 Laurier students have participated in research projects through the GNWT-Laurier Partnership, conducting fieldwork in forests, lakes, and tundra.

Mark Terry receives the J.Robert Cox Award

Mark Terry received the J. Robert Cox Award for Environmental Communication and Civic Engagement from the National Communication Association, recognizing his impactful research on global environmental justice. Terry, an adjunct professor in Digital Media and Journalism, was honored for his Youth Climate Report project. The first Canadian recipient in the award's 110-year history, Terry's work bridges communication gaps between young climate activists, stakeholders, and policymakers through innovative tools like the [Geo-Doc platform](#), which maps climate research videos worldwide.

Faculty of Education Fostering Sustainability Workshop

In August 2024, Professor Manuel Reimer and Professor Judy Halpern led a workshop on Fostering Cultures of Sustainability in K-12 Schools: A community psychology perspective. The workshop brought together 20 participants to discuss the psychology of climate change, eco-anxiety, cultures of sustainability, and impacts of climate change. The facilitators focused on kindergarten to grade 12 as the public education system can equip students at a young age to be knowledgeable in sustainability and climate change. To learn more, please visit their [current projects webpage](#).



Connect with us

LAURIER SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE

Websites

wlu.ca/sustainability

students.wlu.ca/sustainability

Social Media

X & IG: @LaurierGreen

Facebook: /LaurierSustainability

In-person

202 Regina St N, Room 101

Appendix A

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN | Progress Updates

Climate | Goal 1

Action #1: Establish mechanism for regular communication of carbon emissions to business units to facilitate reduction efforts and behavioural changes.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP1: Reporting dashboard design (2023-24)	New completion date: Winter 2026	Winter 2025: FAM Operations and the Sustainability Office are working with IESO's Strategic Energy Management program to develop a semester-based reporting dashboard that utilizes existing or newly acquired tools.
OPP2: Chrome River Scope 3 Emissions Pilot (2024-25)	New completion date: Winter 2026	Winter 2024: Inclusion of Chrome River air travel expense items in scope 3 inventory. Winter 2025: Exploration with ICT and Finance of an automated scope 3 emission calculation process that could be applied for all business travel (via Chrome River).
OPP3: Green Procurement/ Green Building Standards (2025-26)	New completion date: Summer 2026	Winter 2025: FAM is working with Blackstone Energy to develop policy framework for Green Procurement (Procurement Services) and Green Building Standards.

Action #2: Establish a post COVID-19 pandemic baseline (2022-23) to update GHG emissions reduction strategy.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP4: Brantford and Waterloo campuses baseline updates (2023-24)	Complete	Fall 2024: FAM Operations updated utility baselines for Brantford and Waterloo campuses for provincial reporting purposes, Energy Management Demand Plan, and the Carbon Reduction Roadmap.

Action #3: Develop a utility metering strategy that will include retrofit and replacement of outdated infrastructure and capacity to maximize savings.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP5: Metering inventory management upgrades (2024-25)	New completion date: Summer 2027	Fall 2024: FAM Operations completed an inventory of potential utility meters that require upgrades. Phased implementation of these upgrades have been a consideration within Laurier's participation in the IESO's Strategic Energy Management program.

Energy & Water | Goal 2

Action #1: Regularly measure and verify energy and water usage based on established protocols.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP6: Annual campus audits for Brantford and Waterloo campuses (2023-24)	New completion date: Fall 2026	Spring/Summer 2024: Completed an energy scan of the Athletics Complex within the IESO's Strategic Energy Management program to develop a building audit strategy. Fall 2024: Archives and Special Collections Pilot Project.
OPP7: Reach Platinum STARS (2026-27)	New completion date: Summer 2028	Winter 2025: Submission of STARS reporting for 2025 (projected Gold rating renewal), which will align with a submission to reach platinum by 2027-2028.

Action #2: Develop building energy benchmarking capabilities and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP8: Case studies and best practices publication (2024-25)	Complete	Winter 2025: The 2024-25 Sustainability Report features case studies. The next step is adding more case studies through sustainability networks and on Laurier's website.

Action #3: Establish and implement capital planning design standards for new and existing energy and water consuming equipment/systems.

Relevant Opportunities
Opportunity 3 (OPP3) is duplicated under Action #3.

Action #4: Realize energy savings through continued expansion of Building Automation System (BAS) technologies and retro-commissioning of building systems.

Relevant Opportunities
Opportunity 1 (OPP1) is duplicated under Action #4.

Transportation | Goal 3

Action #1: Incentivize sustainable transportation options to encourage uptake

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP9: Increased engagement with staff and faculty to encourage utilization of corporate bus pass (2024-25)	Complete	Spring/Summer 2023: The Region of Waterloo introduced a 15% discount on corporate bus pass fares for TravelWise members resulting in a threefold increase in participation of the program by Laurier employees. Winter 2024: Sustainability Office co-hosted a WinterWise TravelWise webinar.

Action #2: Partner with government and non-profit organizations to improve scope of programs.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP10: Integrated funding with community partners (2027-28)	In Progress	Fall 2024: Established connectivity with each of the municipal climate change action plan teams at City of Waterloo, Region of Waterloo, City of Brantford, and Town of Milton. Winter 2025: Participation on City of Brantford's Active Transportation Working Group.

Action #3: Identification of sustainable transportation opportunities to reduce Scope 3 emissions from campus-to-campus commuting.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
Opportunity 2 (OPP2) is duplicated under Action #3.		
OPP11: Milton and Brantford transportation pilots (2027-28)	In Progress	Winter 2022: Supported the Link the Watershed initiative by the Transit Action Alliance proposed to create additional bus routes between Guelph, Waterloo Region, and Brantford. Letter of support from Laurier was provided to advocate to multiple municipal councils.

Transportation | Goal 4

Action #1: Expanding on pilot learnings from 2018-2022 Action Plan to use electric and hybrid vehicles in the Facilities and Asset Management department fleet to replicate campus fleet conversion.

Relevant Opportunities	
Opportunity 2 (OPP2) is duplicated under Action #1	Opportunity 11 (OPP11) is duplicated under Action #1.

Action #2: Utilize campus fleet management systems data and protocols to improve transportation demand management and decision-making for items such as anti-idling and route optimization.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP12: Installation of telematics technology to measure fleet vehicle use data (2026-27)	In Progress	Fall 2024: FAM Operations is committed to transitioning fleet vehicles with suitable EV replacements as vehicles are decommissioned. With a shift to EVs the need for telematics is addressed through EV mobile application and dashboard use.

Waste | Goal 5

Action #1: Improve awareness of waste reduction/diversion programs through incentives, events, and better advertising.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP8: Case studies and best practices of existing portfolio including examples of effective capital management and project implementation (2024-25)	New completion date: Summer 2026	Fall 2024: Friendlier transitioned to Laurier Food Services. The program provides diversion and recycling results every year. Winter 2025: My Green Lab case study .
OPP13: Process improvement challenges and contests to enhance engagement of Laurier community (2024-25)	New completion date: Fall 2026	Fall 2024: 2nd annual partnership challenge with Sustainability in Business student club.

Action #2: Expand reuse programs to reduce waste generated by Laurier's community.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP14: Replication of waste related programming available at all campuses (2025-26)	In Progress	Winter 2024: Established the Move Out program in Brantford campus led by the Dean of Students.
OPP15: Process identification to deal with surplus equipment, furniture, etc. stored in campus building portfolio (2025-26)	Complete	Fall 2024: Partnership between Distribution Services and FAM to establish an annual surplus materials online warehouse sale.

Action #3: Utilize data generated from self-auditing certification capacity established at both Brantford and Waterloo campus to assist with identifying process, service, and capital improvements.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OP16: Data utilization from internal waste audits (2023-24)	Complete	Winter 2025: Third academic year conducting internal waste management program audits in partnership with FAM Custodial Services at each campus. Winter 2025: Fourth academic year utilizing internal audit data provided by Printing Services and the Hawk Shop to submit regulatory reporting into the Resource Productivity Recovery Authority program.
Opportunity 3 (OPP3) is duplicated under Action #3.		

Food & Dining | Goal 6

Action #1: Work with on-campus food service providers on common initiatives such as increasing local food purchasing/percentage, focusing on plant-based meals, and reducing food waste and packaging.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP17: Installation of innovative solutions: Adoption of best practices and improved institutional industry processes (2025-26)	In Progress	Fall 2024: Friendlier transitioned to Laurier Food Services. The program provides diversion and recycling results every year. Fall 2024: Installation of a high-efficiency dishwasher for the Food Services dining hall, which will enhance long-term operational capacity and reduce water use footprint.
Opportunity 3 (OPP3) is duplicated under Action #1.		

Action #2: Increase the number of ways students and staff can access and purchase local foods.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP18: Installation of innovative solutions: Adoption of best practices and improved institutional industry processes (2025-26)	In Progress	Fall 2023: Laurier Food Services launched a collaboration with Coolfood Meals offering Low Carbon Certified (CF) meals. Fall 2023: Hosted a Sustainability Retreat at Brantford campus in partnership with Faculty of Liberal Arts identifying ways in which Laurier and the City of Brantford could mitigate food justice issues. Winter 2024: Sustainability Office collaborated with Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer to support food systems research. Students focused on: Fair Trade awareness and program expansion (GG260), food security programming, food waste, reusable containers, and organics (GES362).
OPP19: Expansion of Laurier community garden plot opportunities (2024-25)	New completion date: Summer 2027	Spring/Summer 2024: Laurier expanded community gardening plots Winter 2025: Guidance document to be developed for use in 2025 growing season to identify implementation milestones to enhance gardener experience. Seasonal milestone plan will be identified with a projected timeline of completion of 2027-28.

Action #3: Establish a formal program around edible tree and shrub plantings.

Relevant Opportunities

Opportunity 18 (OPP18) is duplicated under Action #3.

Action #4: Develop zero waste dining options.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP20: Process enhancements to dining service and vendor portfolio options including providing guidance on process improvements to how dining can provide zero waste (2027-28)	In progress	Fall 2023: Laurier Food Services launched a collaboration with Coolfood Meals offering Low Carbon Certified (CF) meals.

Grounds | Goal 7

Action #1: Prioritize planting and maintenance of pollinator friendly plants and habitat.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP21: Strengthen Laurier community involvement with Bee Campus designation: Provide Laurier community stakeholders with Bee Campus programming (2023-24)	New completion date: Summer 2026	Winter 2025: Established a student life levy grant to pursue Bee Campus designation at Brantford campus along with LSPIRG, ISC, and Laurier Apiaries.

Action #2: Prioritize creation and maintenance of green spaces, pedestrian spaces, and linages, including walkways and gathering areas.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP22: Expand on existing Smart About Salt Certification to build proactive salt management awareness opportunities (2025-26)	In Progress	Winter 2024: Purchased salt monitoring kits from Water Rangers to develop a monitoring strategy within proximity to Waterloo campus. Fall 2024: Participated in the development of a promotional video for on-site salt management best practices with the Region of Waterloo. Winter 2025: Exploration of strategic regional monitoring sites for potential downstream citizen science capacity with regional partners.

Action #3: Develop and partner with programs that support healthy ecosystems and human wellness.

Relevant Opportunities
Opportunity 19 (OPP19) is duplicated under Action #3.

Coordination & Planning | Goal 8

Action #1: Prioritize planting and maintenance of pollinator friendly plants and habitat.

Relevant Opportunities
Opportunity 3 (OPP3) is duplicated under Action #1. Opportunity 4 (OPP4) is duplicated under Action #1.

Action #2: Prioritize creation and maintenance of green spaces, pedestrian spaces, and linages, including walkways and gathering areas.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP23: Provide sustainability-themed training opportunities to Laurier staff and faculty (2023-24)	New completion date: Fall 2026	Fall 2023: Exploration of a module with Human Resources to be incorporated into corporate Hire to Hawk training. In Spring 2025, it was determined that a new sustainability training program will be embedded into the Staff Sustainability Certificate series.
Opportunity 8 (OPP8) is duplicated under Action #2		

Action #3: Advise on existing and emerging external sustainability-related legislation, funding opportunities, and other mandates.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP24: Leadership capacity within institutional network: Leverage Ontario Colleges and Universities Professional (OCUSP) network to advocate for strategic province-wide initiatives (2027-28)	Complete	Spring/Summer 2023: Co-hosted the OCUSP Annual General Meeting with University of Waterloo and Conestoga College. Fall 2023: Laurier holds the university co-chair position for two-year academic term (2023-2025) to lead membership. Spring/Summer 2024: Part-time student hire to develop a new OCUSP membership website. Spring/Summer 2024: Laurier oversees a STARS subject-section working group.

Curriculum | Goal 9

Action #1: Work with faculty to provide resources to support embedding sustainability content into courses.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP25: Development of Open Learning Micro-credential (2026-27)	In Progress	Winter 2023: Sustainability Office co-op student research project to select various courses that provide a broader level of sustainability and climate change insights that could be explored for development into a microcredential course.

Action #2: Expand environment and sustainability-related academic programs offered at Laurier through focused programming.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP26: Sponsorship of academic contests and challenges: Supportive capacity for existing or newly developed experiential learning opportunities for the Laurier community (2026-27)	In Progress	Fall 2024: Hosted student teams to participate in Laurier 2040 challenge to reduce Waterloo campus' overall carbon footprint. Fall 2024: Sponsorship of Greenovation Challenge. Winter 2025: Keynote and judging capacity for the Enactus Laurier's Changemakers in Action student contest to identify developmental venture opportunities.

Action #3: Expand environment and sustainability-related academic programs offered at Laurier through focused programming.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP27: Establish strategic non-profit, NGO, and corporate partnerships to enhance engagement with students, staff, and faculty (2026-27)	In Progress	Winter 2024: Established 28 corporate, non-profit, governmental and non-governmental partnerships to enhance engagement with students, staff, and faculty. Winter 2025: Increased the number of corporate, non-profit, governmental and non-governmental partnerships to 39 total.
OPP28: Establish a sustainability-themed alumni network (2027-28)	In Progress	Winter 2025: Development of a collaborative partnership with Alumni Relations office to establish an alumni network of new and recent graduates from sustainability themed academic programs.

Action #4: Connect students to internal and external learning opportunities through academics, partnerships, Sustainability Office events, and communications.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP29: Supportive resources for Indigenous Student Centres: Providing capacity for ongoing engagement opportunities and enhancement to Indigenous initiatives offerings (2025-26)	In Progress	Spring/Summer 2023: Sustainability Office supported the co-hiring of a full-time student staff for the Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre. Fall 2024: Development of a Brantford Indigenous Student Centre landscape master plan as part of a student life levy grant matched by the Sustainability Office to retrofit the garden and install a ceremony space.

Research | 10

Action #1: Showcase and profile research initiatives and individuals achieving excellence in research at Laurier within the field of sustainability through established communication channels.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP30: Academic network development opportunities by utilizing existing and new academic partnerships (2027-28)	In Progress	Winter 2023: Update to the wlu.ca main research page itemizing eight of the 23 Laurier sustainability-themed academic research centres. Fall 2024: 2nd year cross institutional collaboration committee to develop the Times Higher Ed Impact Rankings and QS Rankings submission.
Opportunity 28 (OPP28) is duplicated under Action #1.		

Action #2: In collaboration with faculty, innovate academic initiatives and programs to use campus as 'Living Lab' opportunities.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP26: Sponsorship of academic contests and challenges: Supportive capacity for existing or new experiential learning opportunities for the Laurier community (2026-27)	In Progress	Fall 2023: Co-hosted the Hacking Freshwater Futures hackathon . Fall 2024: Sponsorship of the Climate Knowledge and Action Survey of first-year students.
OPP31: Establish sustainability leadership in U-Sports: (2027-28)	In Progress	Winter 2024: In partnership with IESO's Strategic Energy Management program, Enbridge, and Enova, a full energy-scan of the Athletics Complex was completed Fall 2024: Athletics department utilized sustainable FieldTurf for the renewal and replacement of Seagram Field.

Engagement | Goal 11

Action #1: Support and drive partnerships to provide experiential learning opportunities.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP32: Increase Sustainable Hawk Fund program support: Expand the funding capacity, potential number of projects funded, and access by Laurier community stakeholders (2026-27)	In Progress	Fall 2024: Exploration with Advancement and External Relations team to establish a funding portal for strategic sustainability-themed initiatives, including the growth of funding capacity for the Sustainable Hawk Fund.
Opportunity 27 (OPP27) is duplicated under Action #1.		
Opportunity 28 (OPP28) is duplicated under Action #1.		

Action #2 Align Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity Action Plan opportunities in existing and new sustainability programming and services offerings.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP33: Supportive resources for Centre for Student Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (2025-26)	In Progress	Fall 2023: Established operational oversight of the menstrual equity program (21 dispensing units), including the facilitation of the Menstrual Equity Committee. Winter 2024: Publication of the <i>Mapping Menstrual Equity at Laurier</i> summary report.
Opportunity 28 (OPP28) is duplicated under Action #2.		

Action #3 Integrate Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report into programming.

Relevant Opportunities

Opportunity 29 (OPP29) is duplicated under Action #3.

Action #4: Support integration of Indigenous principles and customs into managing Laurier's ecological and social systems, particularly in terms of connection to the land and ecosystem health.

Relevant Opportunities

Opportunity 29 (OPP29) is duplicated under Action #4.

Investment | Goal 12

Action #1: Work with responsible parties to enhance Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) risk management strategies, such as revising relevant investment policies, procedures, and terms of reference to include ESG factors into decision-making.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP34: Engage with existing and new Investing to Address Climate Change (2025-26)	In Progress	Winter 2024: Establishment of the Climate Risk Management Working Group comprising of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external board members, with representation from key Board Committees. See Investment update.
OPP35: Facilitate continued engagement and strategic consultation with students, staff, and faculty on responsible investing practices (2026-27)	Not Started	<i>No update as the action hasn't started</i>

Action #2 Work with Finance and Administration and Advancement and External Relations to develop a fossil fuel-free and impact investing endowment fund available to donors.

Opportunity	Status	Notes on Progress
OPP36: Expand donor interest and involvement in support of the fossil fuel free endowment fund (2027-2028)	In Progress	Spring/Summer 2023: Established the Fossil Fuel Free Endowment Fund to align with the institution's commitment to responsible investing and sustainability. The fund emphasizes environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, targeting Canadian and global equities, as well as fixed income securities, to support long-term growth while minimizing climate-related financial risks.

Appendix B

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | Progress Updates

Category ¹	Indicator	Unit	2022	2023	2024
Climate	Total Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions*	metric tonnes (CO ₂ e)	8,909	8,675	8,174
	Year-over-year change in Scope 1 and 2 emissions	% change	-15%	-3%	-6%
	Change in Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions since the baseline year (2009)*	% change	-18%	-20%	-25%
	Total Scope 3 emissions*	metric tonnes (CO ₂ e)	134	778 ²	721
Energy	Total natural gas consumption	m ³	4,173,815	3,953,428	3,678,736
	Total electricity consumption	kWh	29,051,976	29,938,006	30,553,877

¹ The key performance indicators are reflective of all campuses with a full year worth of data (Brantford, Kitchener, and Waterloo). The Milton Campus opened officially in Fall 2024 with an on-campus presence. As a result, Milton data is omitted from the dataset.

² The increase is attributed to the implementation of an enhanced methodology to calculate air travel emissions at Laurier.

* These indicators are considered the "key performance indicators (KPIs)." The KPIs measure against how well Laurier is achieving its sustainability goals in the Sustainability Action Plan.

Appendix B

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | Progress Updates

Category	Indicator	Unit	2022	2023	2024
Water	Total water consumption on all campuses*	(m3)	128,671	146,270	136,480
	Water use intensity (water intensity = water (m3) per square foot)	water (m3) per total building sq footage	0.033	0.038	0.035
	Change in water use intensity from 2009 baseline	% change	-59%	-54%	-57%
Waste	Total landfill waste produced*	metric tonnes	644	680	761
	Total landfill waste produced per person (students, staff, and faculty)* (Waterloo and Kitchener)	kilograms produced per person	27.8	28.9	29.6
	Total landfill waste produced per person (students, staff, and faculty)* (Brantford)	kilograms produced per person	7.6	5.5	16.7
	Waste diversion rate (Waterloo) ¹	% (diverted waste / all waste)	26%	43% ²	29%
Transportation	Proportion of total fleet that are electric vehicles	% total fleet	0%	4.7%	10.6%
Academics	Proportion of all course offerings (undergrad and grad) that are sustainability course offerings ³	% of all course offerings	no data available	no data available	6.7%

¹ The waste diversion rate is only applicable to Waterloo because in Brantford the recycling is collected curbside by the City of Brantford and not reported.

² Refer to the [waste feature page](#) for a more detailed explanation in to the spike in waste diversion.

³ Sustainability course offerings are collected every three years as part of the STARS (Sustainability Tracking and Assessment Rating System) for universities and colleges.

* These indicators are considered the "key performance indicators (KPIs)." The KPIs measure against how well Laurier is achieving its sustainability goals in the Sustainability Action Plan.