

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

Recommended by CSU's Executive Leadership Team on Aug. 7, 2018 and approved by CSU President Chris Markwood on Aug. 23, 2018.

2018-2025 Environmental Sustainability Plan

Policy Statement

Columbus State University has sustainability as one of its core values and defines it as “Commitment to behaviors that recognize and respect our environmental context.” As provided in the University’s strategic plan for 2018-2023, *Imagine Your Impact*, our goal is to “sustain and support institutional growth and human resource responsibility” (Strategic Initiative #6). In the broader sense, sustainable practices support ecological, human, and economic health and vitality. Sustainability presumes that resources are finite, and should be used conservatively and wisely with a view toward long-term priorities and consequences for resource use. To this end, Columbus State University encourages faculty, staff and students to promote and implement sustainable practices at the University and at home.

The goal of this sustainability plan is to promote activities and initiatives that use campus resources more sustainably and maintain or enhance the natural landscapes on CSU campuses. We will accomplish this goal through a tiered set of strategies and actions that considers environmental sustainability in the context of the University’s growth and mission.

The plan is organized into strategies and within each strategy tiers represent perceived degrees of difficulty or need for financial resources. Specific tasks within each tier are also identified.

Tier 1 – Actions that can be incorporated into current operations with little or no increase in allocation of resources.

Tier 2 – Actions that are achievable with adequate time for planning and a moderate allocation of resources.

Tier 3 – Actions that will require long-range planning and a substantial commitment of additional resources.

Strategy 1. Promote education and research on sustainability by building awareness within the University and the broader community.

Strategy 1 -Tier 1 - Tasks

-Task 1a. Include information on CSU's sustainability plan and practices in the welcome packages for all incoming freshmen, faculty, and staff. Enlist Residence Life and Orientations to help spread the word. Information to be developed by the Sustainability Committee during year 1 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 1b. Implement incentive opportunities to encourage learning about environmental sustainability measures. (e.g., attending sustainability meetings, ONE CSU booth).

-Task 1c. Continue supporting One CSU day on both campuses and diversify student involvement.

-SubTask 1c1. Rotate ONE CSU day between campuses annually.

-SubTask 1c2. Continue to allow ONE CSU day to find sponsorship dollars to provide transportation for K-12 school students and expand public outreach.

-SubTask 1c3. Encourage SGA to add One CSU Day to award point system for student organization of the year.

-SubTask 1c4: Encourage faculty in all disciplines to create a "sustainability project", or learning objective, to be presented on One CSU Day.

-Task 1d. Work with faculty to incorporate sustainability objectives into the "We Solve It" campus initiative.

-Task 1e. Implement an online sustainability education module for faculty, staff, and students (and encourage widespread use. through freshman learning communities and LIVE CSU). Module components to be developed by the Sustainability Committee year 1 of the Strategic Plan. This should include information on appropriate materials suitable for recycling and best practices for ensuring the maximum amount of material is recycled.

-Task 1f. Recommend a budget for the Sustainability Committee within year 2 (we are already more than half way through year 1) of the Strategic Plan that will support and promote One CSU Day and sustainable initiatives/practices on both campuses.

Strategy 1 - Tier 2 - Tasks

-Task 1g. Present the proposed budget for the Sustainability Committee to administration for consideration by year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

Strategy 1 - Tier 3 - Tasks

-Task 1h. Explore sustainability undergraduate degree tracks in College of Letters and Science, College of Business, and College of Education.

-Task 1i. Explore expanding current CSU sustainability staff and efforts and consider creating an Office of Sustainability, modeled after such offices at other USG institutions.

Strategy 2. Incorporate sustainable design features into the construction, operation and retrofitting of the infrastructure of the University.

Strategy 2 - Tier 1 - Tasks

-Task 2a. Seek Georgia Peach Green Building Rating System for new buildings and for major renovations of existing buildings.

-Task 2b. Explore an internal cost-benefit analysis that focuses on the feasibility of generating more energy through solar cells and other technology, and reducing existing energy consumption at the University by the end of year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 2c. Explore an internal cost-benefit assessment on campus lighting both indoors and outdoors by the end of Year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

Strategy 2 - Tier 2 - Tasks

-Task 2d. Implement recommendations of the assessment outlined in 2c by year 4 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 2e. Install additional electric car charging stations, as demand warrants, on main campus and on RiverPark campus by year 4 of the Strategic Plan to facilitate and encourage electric car usage.

Strategy 2 - Tier 3 -Tasks

-Task 2f. Allocate resources and develop a plan based on results of the cost-benefit analysis to implement study findings from task 2b.

Strategy 3. Protect, maintain and restore the natural environments on all campuses.

Strategy 3 - Tier 1 - Tasks

-Task 3a. Incorporate the use of native species in all new planting and replanting on all University properties. All new plant species should be appropriate for the ecological region of the University. A list of appropriate species will be generated by the Sustainability Committee in consultation with College of Letters and Sciences Faculty by the beginning of year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 3b. Continue to reduce the use of herbicides/insecticides on campus. Research and explore more benign alternatives to insecticides.

-Task 3c. Grass clippings should continue to be mulched and discarded away from drainage areas to prevent low oxygen concentrations in waterways.

-Task 3d. Continue to hold contractors operating on all properties associated with CSU accountable for compliance with this Sustainability Plan.

Strategy 3 - Tier 2 - Tasks

-Task 3e. Encourage increasing the tree canopy coverage across both campuses. Help each college/unit plant a native tree in honor of Arbor Day each year *in coordination with Campus Facilities and the Sustainability Committee.*

-Task 3f. Continue use of smart sensors to reduce irrigation. Fifty percent of the irrigation should be regulated through smart sensors by year 4 of the Strategic Plan. Timing of the irrigations should be adjusted to maximize the efficiency of water use.

-Task 3g. Reduce the square footage of manicured lawn space by planting native shrubs and grasses, native understory trees (e.g., dogwoods), and native hardwoods. At least 20% of the manicured lawns should be repurposed in this manner by year 4 of the Strategic Plan.

Strategy 3 - Tier 3 - Tasks

-Task 3h. As budget and needs allow, revisit the Sasaki Master Plan's idea of restoring Library Lane and creating a "Green Valley" along Lindsay Creek. (<https://campusplanning.columbusstate.edu/docs/master-plan-report-final-09-11-2012.pdf>). This entails transforming Library Lane from a drive-through parking lot into a two-lane road, and restoring areas along the creek as a naturalized green space, including a reconstructed creek/swale connection to Lindsay Creek and converting the parking lot along the Lindsay Creek into athletic fields. This would improve stormwater management on main campus by enhancing buffer zones along Lindsey Creek that will clean, through microbial activity, stormwater running off of impervious surfaces before it reaches the creek.

-Task 3k. Complete a study on the feasibility of creating a food oasis on campus.

Strategy 4. Use environmentally friendly products and practices throughout the University.

Strategy 4 - Tier 1 - Tasks

-Task 4a. Research again the feasibility of contracting with a company (e.g., Spin) to supply a campus-wide bike share program for faculty, staff, and students within year 1 of the Strategic Plan. Contractor must assume all liability and cost with implementation.

-Task 4b. All recycling policies should be coordinated through the Sustainability Committee.

-Task 4c. Reduce printing/copying throughout University by 5% annually for the length of the strategic plan to be evaluated on an operational unit basis using UITS data.

-Task 4d. Work with Custodial Services to ensure that office and building recycling bins are emptied and their contents transferred to University-approved holding locations and not into refuse dumpsters in year 1 of the Strategic Plan. It is incumbent on faculty and staff to ensure that recycling bins in offices and buildings are not contaminated with food products/waste; with the exception being beverage containers.

-Task 4e. Install recycling stations in student housing on both campuses working with student life by the start of year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4f. The Sustainability Committee should develop and implement a plan to recycle printer and toner cartridges by year 1 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4g. Continue to allow Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center to work with Aramark to transport usable materials to Oxbow for their composting program.

-Task 4h. Recognize sustainable measures and actions on campus through an annual review and award process to be implemented beginning in year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4i. Evaluate specific university wide measures to conserve electricity, including but not limited to reducing temperature settings on hot water heaters, and additional measures to effectively monitor and control temperatures in buildings.

Strategy 4 - Tier 2 - Tasks

-Task 4j. Discuss increasing the number of single stream recycling containers on both campuses.

-Task 4k. Encourage the city to place an additional city recycling trailer on the RiverPark campus by year 2 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4l. Work with Aramark to receive annual reporting on the percentage of locally grown, sustainable food sources used for all University-related activities.

-Task 4m. Phase out single-use plastics and styrofoam at the University by year 2 of the Strategic Plan, to include all vending machines and vendors.

-Task 4n. Reduce electric consumption by 15% by year 4 of the Strategic Plan through a combination of improved technology and best practices.

-Task 4o. Reduce the solid waste stream by 20% by year 4 of the Strategic Plan through increased recycling and informed purchasing decisions.

-Task 4p. Reduce gasoline consumption by 15% by year 4 of the Strategic Plan through a combination of altered practices, improved fuel economy vehicles, and electric vehicles, where possible.

Strategy 4 - Tier 3 - Tasks

-Task 4p. Develop transportation strategies, particularly across all facilities used by CSU, that reduce fuel consumption above the 15% required in Task 4 by year 4 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4q. Capture all recyclable materials at the University by year 4 of the Strategic Plan.

-Task 4r. Develop a plan by year 4 of the Strategic Plan to outline measures to move towards a carbon-neutral university.

-Task 4s. Reduce potable water consumption by 15% by year 4 of the Strategic Plan through conservation and rainwater recapture measures, where possible.

Concluding Statement

This Sustainability Plan is intended as a living document and will be revisited by the Sustainability Committee annually as needed.