

**YORK UNIVERSITY  
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2030**

**Positive Change:  
Connecting  
People,  
Planet and  
Purpose**

November 2024

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

York University recognizes that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.



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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Science paints a bleak picture of our future. Failure to respond to the damaging effects of climate change will result in biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, water and food security risk, intensifying suffering and loss of life of humans and animals, not to mention magnifying political conflicts and social inequality around the world. We are at an inflection point: Will we take individual and collective action and work together to identify and develop solutions that will ensure our planetary well-being? Or will we be complacent or even deny the evidence affecting us all?

At York University, we recognize the importance of convening people and ideas for meaningful action. Since its inception, York has been a progressive research-intensive University committed to enhancing the well-being of the communities we serve by supporting research excellence, interdisciplinary knowledge translation and collaborative partnerships that drive positive change, both locally and globally.

The Sustainability Strategy 2030 will maintain York as a leader in sustainability action, research and learning, while we position students to be positive agents of change to right the future in our communities and around the world. The strategy was developed through consultation with all our community members – our knowledgeable faculty, our enthusiastic students, our experienced staff and our leading alumni.

Advancing sustainability is a goal that underscores everything we do, which is why our University Academic Plan includes an institutional challenge to strengthen our contributions to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the institutional level, we have announced ambitious goals to achieve net zero by 2040 or sooner. We are well positioned to meet these aspirations through our various decarbonization and other initiatives on campus. These initiatives will allow us to meet and exceed our targets, while we act as a lighthouse for innovation and change.

We continue to move the dial on education, research and partnerships across our campuses – from Toronto to Costa Rica to India – to support the SDGs, but each and every one of us must do more to support global cooperation that translates ideas, research and partnerships into positive change. There is, perhaps, nothing more important than this endeavour.

Our impact is well noted – we have been recognized as a global leader for six consecutive years in The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, where we currently rank in the world's top 35 for our impact on the SDGs.

As our talented faculty, staff, contract instructors, alumni, students, and honorary doctorates have proven time and time again, individual actions matter, and by fostering dialogue and collective action, we can build a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Rhonda Lenton  
*President and Vice-Chancellor*



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# LETTER FROM THE CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

Ours is a society at an inflection point. Overlapping environmental, economic, and social crises are manifesting in natural and societal instability and destruction on a global scale. The resulting disruptions are taking a toll on areas of rich biodiversity, stable ecological systems, strong economies, and stable democracies all around the world.

The need for urgent action on these intersecting challenges has never been greater. The path to sustainability, equity and peace will not be an easy one, but there are signs of hope all around us. There are advancements in our understanding of the interactions between natural systems, there is innovation in technology, approach, and policy to better address issues on an intersectional basis, and there are individuals mobilizing for change despite the challenges.

York University has a history of leading on sustainability in our teaching, research, and operations. York University is well positioned at the intersection of our physical environment and our human condition. York has a global reputation as a leader in sustainability and as a University that does more than educate and research – York trains a community of changemakers.

The Sustainability Strategy 2030 represents an ambitious commitment on the part of all communities at York – students, faculty, instructors and staff. While this strategy represents outcomes and a roadmap of actions to achieve these outcomes, the commitment to action is reflected in the comprehensive nature of the steps that have been identified and the accountability mechanisms. Implementing this strategy will require careful planning and continued engagement of the York community. Its actions and commitments build on the University Academic Plan, the success of previous sustainability initiatives, existing University-wide strategies, and best practices in the sector, and are a reflection of the feedback we received from thousands of community members.

Let's build on the success of York students, faculty, instructors and staff to take action on the York campuses and beyond to realize the objectives laid out in the Sustainability Strategy 2030.

With hope,  
Mike Layton  
*Chief Sustainability Officer*



# ANSWERING THE CALL – OUR CALL TO ACTION



Our planet is in a critical moment in history. We are in an era where human beings have drastically and significantly impacted life on our planet as we know it. In 2021, more than 11,000 scientists from 153 countries released the World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency, and to date, over 40 countries have acknowledged and declared a global climate crisis. The consequences of the climate emergency are clear: political destabilization and growing inequality, biodiversity loss, devastating impacts of war and more.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states, “we are now in a ‘code red’ for humanity”, and the United Nations urges that “for a safe climate future, we must take action now to stop emissions and to cool the Earth.” It is evident that human beings are fundamentally altering the ecological, economic and social systems that support humanity and the entire web of life.

Consequentially, it is essential that higher education institutions embody peace, prosperity and cultivate purpose in the precarious times we are living in. Collectively and collaboratively as students, faculty, instructors, staff and broader community, we have important roles to play in creating the vision of a sustainable future for societies, and in leveling the path towards just and equitable futures for all. Together, we can cultivate the empowerment, practical skills and leadership needed to solve today’s global challenges to ensure the sustainability of future generations for many years to come.

York U’s Sustainability Strategy 2030 will be an important pillar for the University in supporting education to transform societies in line with the UN’s Common Agenda, the Transforming Education movement and following UNESCO’s broader vision of Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education and subsequent commitments in Canada. The York U Sustainability Strategy 2030 is set to advance the University Academic Plan and other frameworks aiming to enhance sustainable development at the provincial, national and global level.

As a world leader in sustainability, York University seeks to embed sustainability as a core value into teaching, research, and campus operations, and to serve as a transformative catalyst for climate



action and solutions. York is a **living lab**, an incubator for sustainability leaders, a disrupter of old ways of thinking, and a lighthouse for transformative approaches. Through mobilizing students, faculty, instructors and staff, York University pledges to significantly reduce its carbon emissions and ecological footprint in our community and beyond. Furthermore, we will be accessible by sustainable modes of transportation, will regenerate our campuses, reignite and steward our relations with nature, create access to green spaces, set credible carbon targets, and ultimately, support a healthy culture of community where all are welcome to live, work, and study.

As an **anchor institution**, York's campuses will continue to grow and support local economies, ecosystems, communities, services and facilities. With the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as our guide, York aspires to have a positive impact in our local and global communities through research, partnerships, and advocacy. We pledge that our Sustainability Strategy will contribute to a bright future for the York Community and beyond – one where we work collectively as a community and grow to be locally responsible global citizens who are equipped with the resiliency, compassion, and leadership we need to face any challenges that lie ahead.

#### Living Labs

Living Labs explore solutions to sustainability challenges in our campus by connecting staff, faculty, students and external partners to explore and experiment solutions using the campus as a test bed for sustainability and solving complex interdisciplinary challenges.

#### Anchor York U

As an anchor institution, York will focus on addressing economic disadvantage, discrimination, and/or barriers to equal opportunity experienced by people across the GTA, but with initial and ongoing focus to the neighbouring communities of our campus. This includes those distant or isolated from the labour market (such as youth experiencing vulnerabilities) and those from equity-seeking communities and neighbourhoods who have historically faced discrimination that prevents equitable access to economic opportunities.

### York University strives to create positive change by connecting people and planet through:

- Leveraging York's strength as the most socially and culturally diverse institution deeply rooted in social and environmental justice partnerships, by championing actions that connect people and planet.
- Defining York as a global thought leader in sustainability by focusing on preparing students to have impact, research excellence in areas of strength and creating a living lab for innovation and knowledge mobilization.
- Taking action to make York one of the most sustainable universities in the world that has a positive impact on the local environment while advancing solutions for global challenges and the SDGs.

# PURPOSE

Our Sustainability Strategy 2030 will guide the University in advancing sustainability into the near and long-term future. The purpose of the strategy is to communicate and implement a collective vision, inspire positive change, build capacity, empower people, harness innovation and creativity, and foster a culture of sustainability within and beyond enabling the University campus to be a microcosm of the urban conditions of the entire surrounding region. While York University defines sustainability in the broadest holistic sense, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions, this strategy will focus on environmental factors and their intersections with social and economic factors. It is intended to complement other institutional documents and commitments that touch on our vision, guiding principles, strategic objectives, and actions.





Care was taken to ensure the Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns closely with the University Academic Plan and all university-wide strategies and frameworks including the Strategic Research Plan, campus Master Plans, the Indigenous Framework, the Decolonization, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Wellbeing Strategy, the Action Plan on Black Inclusion, and the Internationalization and Global Engagement Strategy.



## People

Building upon the 2017 Sustainability Strategy, the renewed strategy expresses broad areas of focus in three pillars – people, knowledge and place – with strategic objectives and actions that represent York’s long-term aspirational goals and intended implementation.



## Knowledge

Given the nature of the rapidly evolving climate emergency, this strategy will be a living document with actions that will develop and adapt over time. As the implementation of the sustainability strategy evolves, there will be ongoing attention to setting measurable and interim targets.



## Place

Moreover, within our ongoing developments and processes, we are identifying efficient and collaborative mechanisms for climate solutions. Through an interdisciplinary,

participatory and whole institution approach, we are engaging and mobilizing all community members towards tangible climate action.

It is anticipated that the work to advance the objectives and actions will require accountability, careful planning, community consultation, new and interim targets and detailed financial and implementation plans to achieve them. This strategy is a living process and action plans will need to be reviewed regularly to track progress and meet changing circumstances.



# BACKGROUND

The development of the original 2017 Sustainability Strategy for York University stemmed from a recommendation included in the 2015-16 report of the President’s Sustainability Council under the leadership of the Council Chair and President. The 2017 strategy provided as a roadmap across all functions of the University, including strategic actions across the pillars of people, knowledge, and place.

In 2023, under the guidance of the President, Vice-President Finance and Administration, Vice-President Research and Innovation, and the President’s designated Academic Sustainability Advisor, the Office of Sustainability began work to renew the strategy to meet the growing sense of urgency and our evolving understanding of the complexity of sustainability locally and globally. Building on the York University’s Sustainability Framework, the Office of Sustainability relied on the leadership and expertise of several thematic sustainability working groups comprised of faculty, staff, and students to provide direction, significant consultation with the York University community and a review of best practices in the sector, on the call to action, guiding principles, outcomes and actions contained within the plan.



Building on the 2017 strategy, the Office of Sustainability conducted a review of best practices from other North American universities and began extensive engagement with the York community and beyond through workshops, presentations, open forums, peer-to-peer engagement, and two online surveys. The outreach for engagement included three Indigenous engagement circles with Indigenous students, faculty and staff, supported by the Indigenous Students Association. Additionally, two expert review panels were engaged to review the draft proposals.

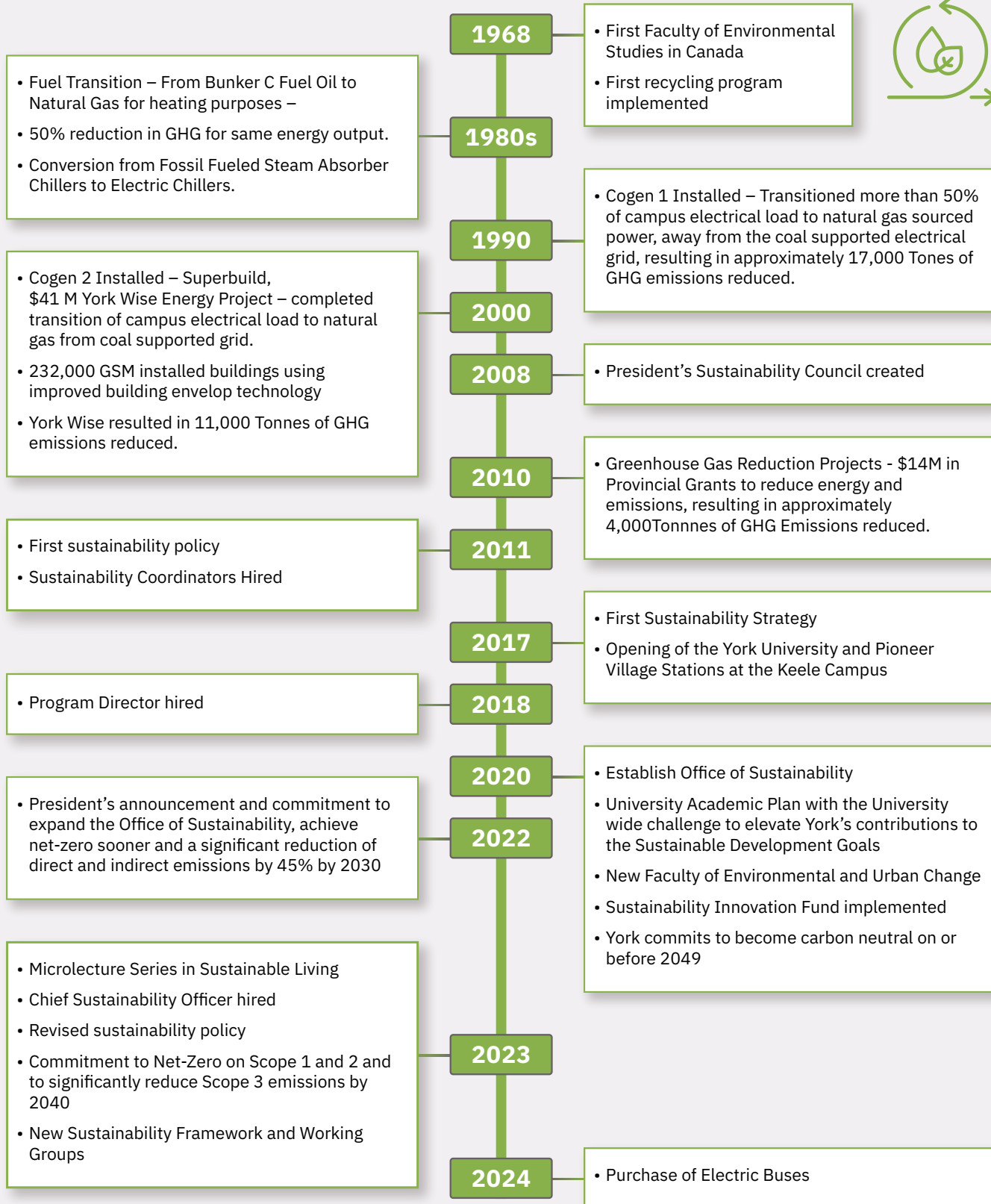
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*Over 5,000 interactions with students, faculty, instructors, staff, alumni, and neighbouring community members guided development of the revised sustainability strategy.*

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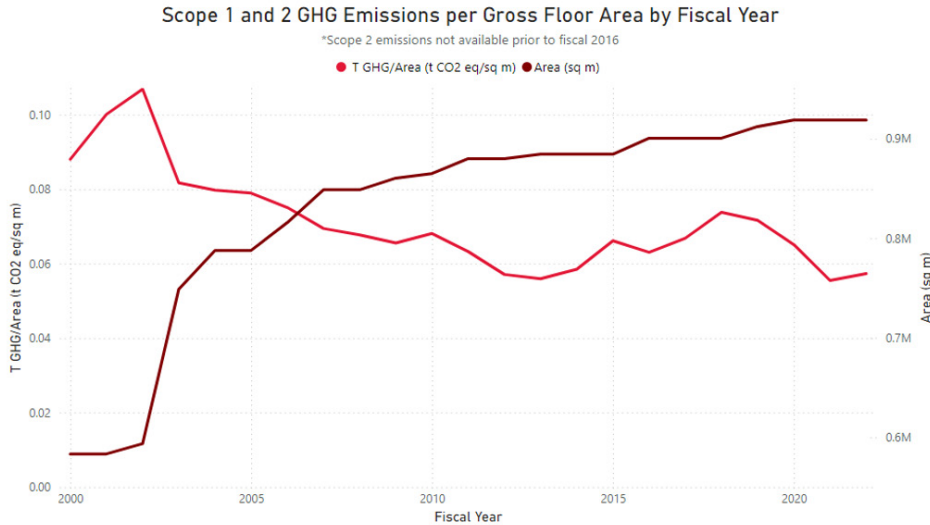
# SUSTAINABILITY TIMELINE



# SUSTAINABILITY AT YORK

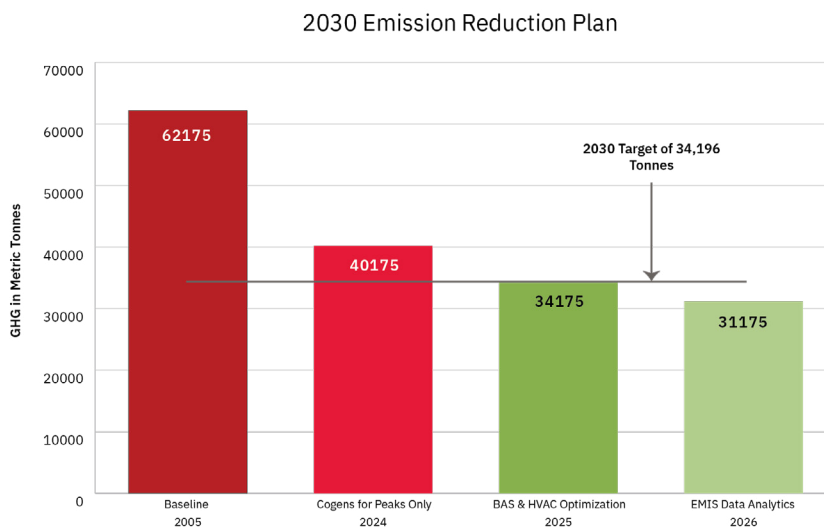
## CAMPUS SCOPE 1 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (TONNES GHG PER M<sup>2</sup>)

Over the past 20 years, York University has grown considerably in size but investments in energy efficiency and more sustainable buildings have contributed to a decrease in the GHG emissions. This has enabled the University to avoid over 700,000 tonnes of GHG emissions over 20 years.



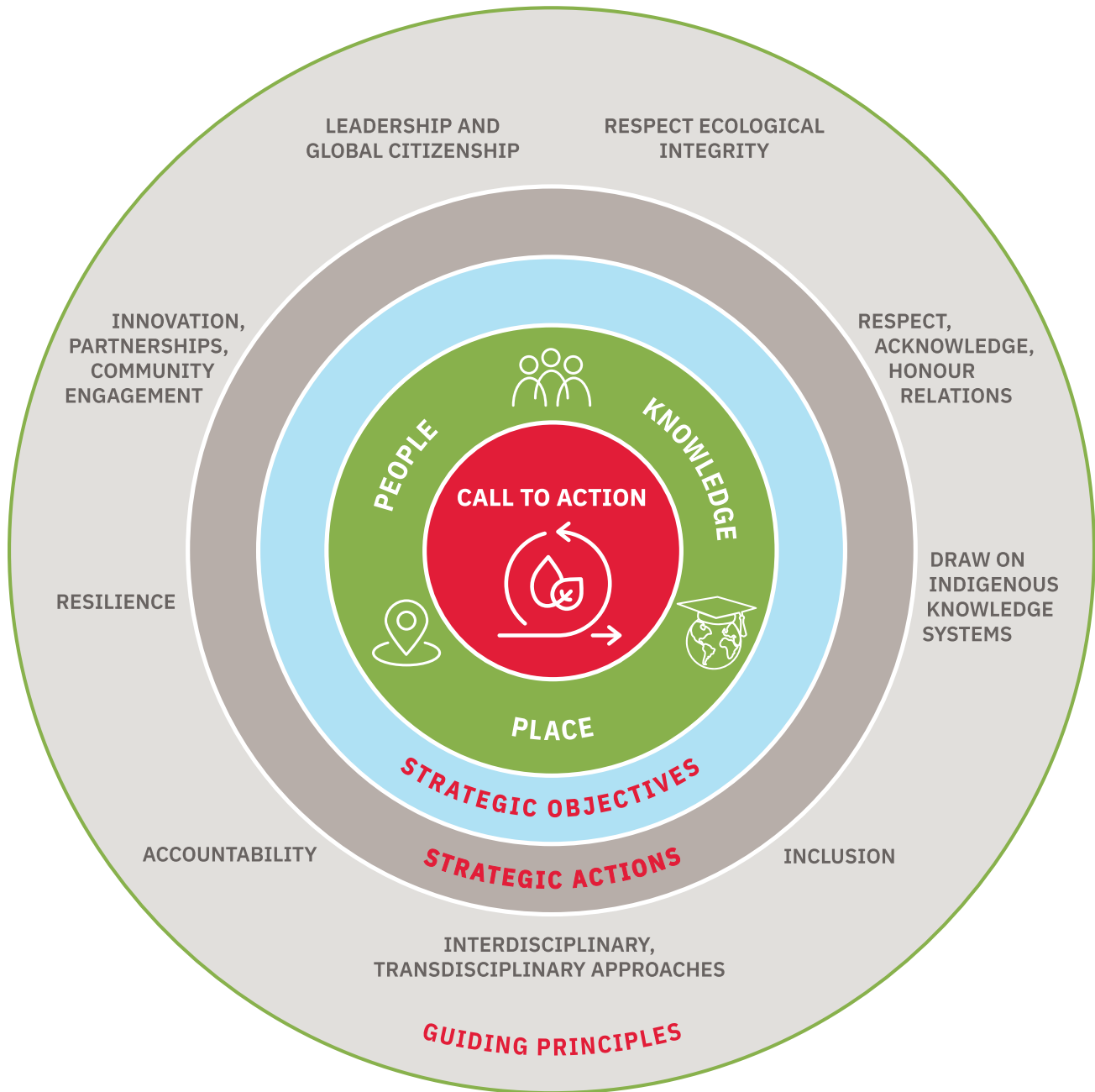
## 2030 EMISSIONS REDUCTION PLAN

York University is taking steps today to meet our 2030 emissions reduction target five years early by 2025, including reducing use of the co-generation plant, optimizing building systems for heating and cooling and better use of occupancy data to manage energy use.



# SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY WHEEL

## YORK UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2030



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

York University's values inspire and inform our decisions, attitudes and actions towards a culture of community, social and ecological justice and integrity, and climate action. Our guiding principles will be fundamental in providing a greater awareness surrounding sustainability behaviors and choices which influence us on the individual, collective and global level. They will be foundational in ensuring the York community can effectively and mindfully navigate the challenging, complex, and rapidly shifting ecological, economic, and social environments. The guiding principles will inform fair, equitable and compassionate decisions, processes and outcomes that advance the strategic actions within the University and beyond.

- Demonstrate local leadership and global citizenship with a sense of urgency by being a lighthouse which inspires transformative action, while advancing practical and tangible solutions.
- In respectful ways, draw on traditional and contemporary Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews to inform planning and actions that recognize these distinct understandings of land and environment.
- Respect and acknowledge the interdependence of all life, and act in support of intergenerational social and ecological justice, rights of the planet and honour all our relations.
- Demonstrate meaningful inclusion and amplification of diverse, under-represented, and cross-cultural perspectives, acknowledging barriers and actively working to reduce them.
- Advance innovation, forge strong partnerships and deepen community engagement to amplify our collective positive impact.
- Through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach, respond to the interconnectedness of global challenges by integrating principles of research and operational design: the **avoid-shift-improve** hierarchy, and **circularity**.
- Ensure accountability is a core component of planning and decision-making by maintaining transparent and regular reporting and seeking measurable outcomes to demonstrate action.

## **Avoid-Shift-Improve Hierarchy**

Avoid – refraining from harmful activities or products

Shift – to less harmful activities or products and switching to efficient and cleaner activity options

Improve – the product or activity in terms of environmental performance.

## **Circularity**

In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting. The circular economy tackles climate change and other global challenges, like biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, by decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources.

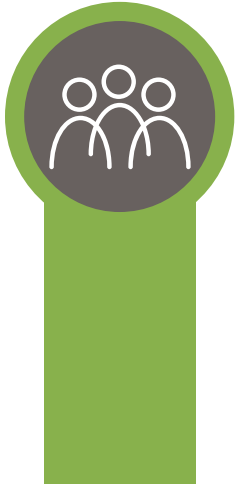
- Embed resilience into campus operations, research, and teaching to ensure actions can adapt to changes in local and global conditions.
- Strengthen our relations with nature and respect ecological integrity and natural heritage by integrating regenerative and **biocentric** approaches in our stewardship.

**Biocentric**  
 Biocentrism, ethical perspective holding that all life deserves equal moral consideration or has equal moral standing.





# PEOPLE



York University is fostering a culture of sustainability and collaborative behaviour to pursue local and global sustainability objectives and actions in our community and beyond. The York community includes its students, faculty, instructors and staff and other organizations, alumni and neighbours. York’s holistic understanding of sustainability includes the intersection of human well-being and the environment and recognizes the social, economic, and environmental roles of York University in, and with, our local neighbourhoods and world.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate sustainability as a core value and foster a culture of sustainability and stewardship across our community members and beyond to become influencers of societal transformation towards sustainability.
- Support initiatives that address food insecurity and food justice on campus and in our community.
- Maintain a holistic approach that includes social sustainability – embedding York as an anchor institution in our local community – and contribute to global action through the SDGs.
- Strengthen reciprocal relations with Indigenous communities including students, faculty, instructors, and staff in sustainability leadership, planning and action.
- Enhance the physical environment to be more inclusive, accessible, and equitable, where everyone has the potential to feel a sense of belonging and respect.
- Embed arts and culture as a tool for social and environmental transformation.
- Support efforts to become signatories to the **Okanagan Charter**, acknowledging the interconnectedness of health and the physical environment, consistent with the Well-being Strategy.



### Okanagan Charter

The Okanagan Charter is an International Charter, which calls upon post-secondary institutions across the world to embed health into all aspects of campus culture and to lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally.

## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Implement the Sustainability Framework and report annually on progress in advancing the sustainability strategy and working group initiatives.
2. Embed sustainability in the **Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs)**, annual **Performance Dialogue Process (PDP)**, leadership competencies and new job descriptions.
3. Support efforts to advance a housing strategy that reflects the outcomes of the sustainability strategy and the unique needs of the institution.
4. Implement strategies to ensure low carbon, sustainable, local, diverse and nutritious food is accessible and develop metrics to track progress.
5. Actively engage in regional and international partnerships and collaborations, including levels of government in Canada, other nations, intergovernmental agencies, industry and global civil society that support sustainability.
6. Increase student, faculty, instructor, staff and alumni engagement to promote awareness and action on sustainability issues, including tools to support direct action and participation in community and global events.
7. Enhance sustainability storytelling, including operations and teaching and research, to further community engagement and foster action.
8. Demonstrate conscious efforts to advance the arts as a tool for social and environmental transformation in operations, learning and research.
9. Create opportunities for youth leadership and empowerment in sustainability initiatives.
10. Ensure the arts and cultural facilities at York support planning, operations and programming through a social and environmental sustainability lens.
11. Build on York's success with the Anchor York U Framework to position York as a collaborative community leader with impact in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond.
12. Establish additional spaces for Indigenous culture and community within the University.

### **Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)**

The Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) Framework brings structure, measurement and accountability measures required to implement strategies and support the achievement of the University's goals. It helps align strategic priorities with organizational resources and communicates priorities in a clear and transparent manner.

### **Performance Dialogue Process**

York's CPM performance and development goal setting is called the Performance Dialogue Process or PDP. The process guides the development of individual CPM employee goals that are aligned with job responsibilities, departmental objectives, and University priorities.

# KNOWLEDGE



York University's mission is the pursuit, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge through excellence in research and a commitment to enhancing the well-being of the communities we serve. York's commitment to sustainability is evident in the University Academic Plan's focus on advancing the global SDGs. York University is already recognized as an international leader in SDG-relevant research, teaching, partnerships, and campus practices. Answering the Call is the UAP challenge to deepen this work over the coming years and reaffirm our longstanding institutional values of social justice, equity, sustainability, and excellence in all that we do.

York's Strategic Research Plan echoes this commitment. It highlights York's expertise in justice, equity, and sustainability with a focus in strategic research, action and innovation which foster and develop healthy communities, equity and global well-being. York aspires to develop pathways for all students, faculty, instructors and staff to access sustainability curriculum, especially experiential education opportunities in sustainability to gain knowledge and influence change.

## STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Promote program and course level learning objectives and outcomes that identify and articulate global sustainability challenges and solutions.
- Support faculty, staff and students to actively engage in public discourse and experiential learning opportunities on global and local environmental issues, consistent with the UAP.
- Increase faculty awareness of and access to curricular resources and experiential learning opportunities that heighten student engagement with sustainability in the curriculum.
- Draw on the expertise of York researchers and instructors to build on York's international reputation for sustainability that attracts students and collaboration with public and private partners.
- Support and accelerate inclusive opportunities to connect York University (student, faculty, instructors, staff and alumni)



entrepreneurs, innovators, and startups into the sustainability objectives of the University and design clear procurement pathways to leverage their technologies/services in achieving our goals.

- Establish campuses as living labs for sustainability-related projects by encouraging the use of campus operations, grounds and buildings for research and experiential opportunities for community members and increase participation in sustainability classroom-based exercises by internal and external partners.
- Make new knowledge accessible to the broader community, including schools and educators.

## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Work with academic leadership to assess the presence of sustainability objectives and outcomes in program review processes.
2. Support programs in reflecting on the ways their respective objectives align with sustainability during the **Cyclical Review Process**, including opportunities for experiential learning.
3. Create a resource bank that demonstrates the ways global sustainability challenges and solutions can be incorporated into curricular innovation.
4. Regularly assess student literacy of sustainability and the SDGs.
5. Develop and maintain support mechanisms for innovative campus-based sustainability projects from faculty, staff, and students.
6. Develop a framework for removing barriers to implementing living lab projects on campus and in the local community to support classroom-based living lab learning experiences.
7. Advance research in sustainability, pursue funding opportunities and encourage collaborations between Faculties, researchers, other institutions, and outside partners.
8. Develop tools for embedding the principles of sustainable design into the grant development process.
9. Amplify sustainability research and knowledge mobilization in local, national and global communities.

### Cyclical Review Process (Cyclical Program Review)

York University Quality Assurance Procedures (YUQAP) Section 6 is the Protocol for Cyclical Program Reviews assesses the academic standards of existing undergraduate and graduate programs, including credit graduate diploma programs, and ensures that all programs maintain the highest academic quality.

# PLACE



York's campuses and facilities are concentrated in the Greater Toronto Area, with additional sites in Costa Rica and India. In addition to the pursuit of knowledge, our carbon footprint requires that we pay close attention to sustainability in our development, operations and maintenance on all of our campuses. Emissions and pollution reduction, and the regeneration of our local ecosystem will enable us to collectively reimagine the land and environment that sustains us in an effort to build a better community and world.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Phase out carbon emissions and achieve net zero emissions by 2040 for scope 1 & 2 emissions and develop targets for scope 3 emissions, wherever feasible.
- Transform York University into a model of sustainable design with all new buildings and major renovations built to net zero and where possible, net positive.
- Aspire to be a zero-waste institution, upholding the principles of circularity and the waste hierarchy (Reduce-Reuse-Recycle+).
- Reduce water use on campus, with a focus on reducing per person and campus wide consumption.
- Protect watersheds and optimize stormwater repurposing or reuse on-site and minimize stormwater runoff.
- Increase the proportion of commuters traveling through low emission options.



- Following the principles of York’s Master Plan with a pedestrian first and “vision-zero” road safety approach, ensure campuses have a safe and efficient transportation network.
- Embed sustainability into corporate travel that minimizes emissions, maintains global connectivity, and maximizes institutional outcomes.
- Mitigate the ecological impact of food consumed on campus.
- Regenerate local ecosystems and biodiversity on University lands to foster ecological, healthy, and inviting campuses.
- Prioritize community and ecological health, by reducing the use of, and exposure to, toxic chemicals in all operations, construction and materials.
- Integrate sustainability into day-to-day operations and long-term planning, including financial, investment and IRPs.
- Maximize impact of physical assets to accelerate campus sustainability and resiliency.
- Increase proportion of goods and services that advance sustainable procurement goals, both environmental and social considerations within our campuses and along the value chains.
- Achieve Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS) Platinum through the Association for the Advancement in Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).



## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Develop a space utilization plan that maximizes efficiency in the use, heating and cooling of buildings on campus, including the impact of the hybrid work policy and creation of a community atmosphere of social inclusion and community building.
2. Develop a strategy to decarbonize central utilities on all campuses.
3. Develop a standard that new building construction and major renovations are required to be **net zero**, and where feasible **net positive**, that considers embedded carbon.
4. Develop an institution wide plan to right-size and decarbonize fleet vehicles.
5. Develop a corporate travel policy and plan that minimizes emissions and maintains global connectivity while maximizing institutional priorities.
6. Develop **micro-mobility**, active transportation and road safety plans for York's campuses.
7. Develop plans to reduce emissions from commuting, including improving and encouraging options for the use of public transit and other low carbon forms of commuting options.
8. Enhance purchasing policies and procedures to include environmental sustainability, alongside existing social considerations, and implement for all purchasing categories.
9. Develop a water and stormwater management plan that optimizes efficiency, repurposing or reusing onsite, minimizes stormwater runoff and includes water conscious behaviour and building standards.
10. Develop a waste reduction plan that focuses on waste hierarchy and circularity, with a particular attention to single use plastics and organics.

### Net Zero

"Net-Zero" means a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removal out of the atmosphere. To go net zero is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or to ensure that any ongoing emissions are balanced by removals. In the context of institutions of higher learning, this means all Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and determining where emissions can be eliminated and where offsets will be required. (Source: CAUBO)

### Net Positive

Net positive is an approach that means doing more good than bad. It goes beyond 'doing less harm' and by making a positive impact.

### Micromobility

Micromobility can generally be defined as vehicles that are small, compact, low-speed and often electric. Examples include: cargo e-bikes, electric kick-style scooters, low-speed vehicles, golf carts, and large quadricycles.

11. Develop, update and implement campus-wide **re-naturalization** and ecological **regeneration** plans prioritizing Indigenous plants, aligning with the York University Secondary Plan policies for natural heritage and the Keele Campus Master Plan Greening York recommendations.
12. Ensure York facilities and campuses operate as part of the community wide network of habitat for animal and plant species and as an inviting and positive space for teaching and learning.
13. Maintain an investment policy that addresses inherent risk of climate change, actively promotes transition to low carbon economy, and follows the best practices for **Environmental, Social Governance (ESG)** approaches.
14. Demonstrate accountability by maintaining an annual inventory for **scope 1,2 & 3 emissions** and report regularly on interim targets and progress to achieve sustainability objectives.
15. Develop an institutional climate vulnerability assessment which identifies specific risks and potential mitigation measures.

#### **Re-naturalization**

A process of returning natural ecosystems or habitats to their original structure and species composition. Restoration requires a detailed knowledge of the original species, ecosystem functions and interacting processes involved.

#### **Regeneration**

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) define “ecosystem restoration” as the process of reversing the degradation of ecosystems to regain their ecological functionality, and to improve their productivity and capacity to meet the needs of society and allow nature to have the time to flourish again.

#### **Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)**

ESG is a framework that helps stakeholders understand how an organization is managing risks and opportunities related to environmental, social, and governance criteria (sometimes called ESG factors). ESG takes the holistic view that sustainability extends beyond just environmental issues. While the term ESG is often used in the context of investing, but can also include customers, suppliers, and employees.

#### **Scope emissions (1, 2, 3)**

Scope 1: Direct Emissions: Emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the institution (such as Central Utilities, Fleet, Science labs)

Scope 2: Indirect Emissions: Emissions generated in the production of purchased electricity, heat, or steam consumed by the institution.

Scope 3: Indirect Emissions from Upstream and Downstream Activities: Emissions from sources not owned or directly controlled by the institution that are a consequence of the activities of the institution. This includes the procurement of goods and services, transportation (commuting & business travel) and investments.



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Mike Layton, Chief Sustainability Officer

Nicole Arsenault, Program Director

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## **Working Group Co-leads**

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## **Internal Experts Consulted**

Spana Sharma, Rebecca Beaulne-Stuebing, Susan Dion, Philip Kelly, Ian Garrett, Meagan Heath, Eric Kennedy, and John Simoulidis

## **External Expert Reviewers (York U Alumni & Sustainability Professionals)**

Nicole Doray, Ian McVey, Andrew Plunkett, Adriana Gomez, Jennifer Wong, and David MacMillan

## **Steering Committee:**

Rhonda Lenton, President & Vice Chancellor; Mike Layton, Chief Sustainability Officer; Carol McAulay, Vice President of Finance and Administration; Amir Asif, Vice President of Research and Administration; Lisa Philipps, Provost & Vice-President Academic; Susana Gaijic-Bruyey, Vice-President Advancement; Laina Bay-Cheng, Vice President of Equity, People and Culture; Alice Hovorka, Dean, Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change; Ravi De Costa, Associate Dean, Research & Graduate Studies, LA&PS; Marcia Annisette, Vice Provost Academic; Barb Joy, Executive Director and Chief Spokesperson Communications and Public Affairs; and Nicole Arsenault, Program Director, Sustainability