

# Memorandum

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**TO:** Board of Governors  
**FROM:** Yves Beauchamp, Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance)  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Report on McGill Sustainability and Climate Initiatives  
**DATE:** December 13, 2018  
**DOCUMENT #:** GD18-24

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  INFORMATION  APPROVAL/DECISION

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**ISSUE & EXPECTED OUTCOME** An annual overview of the University's current sustainability and climate-related activities, is presented to the Board of Governors for information.

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**BACKGROUND & RATIONAL** In 2016, the Board of Governors' stewardship role was expanded to include sustainability, and the University administration reaffirmed its commitment, already entrenched in the *McGill University Sustainability Policy* (2010), to address climate change in a manner consistent with McGill's mission.

Accordingly, and in an effort to assist the Board of Governors in fulfilling its stewardship role, the administration presents an annual overview of the University's sustainability and climate initiatives. Since 2016, the administration presented such a report on May 16, 2016, and October 5, 2017. The 2017-2018 report summarizes all initiatives and accomplishments since October 2017 in three areas:

- Governance
- Research and education
- Operations

The report also includes highlights of the Sustainability Project Fund.

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**ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES** The mission of McGill University is advanced responsibly by carrying out activities in a manner that achieves a balance between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

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**COMPLIANCE WITH UNIVERSITY POLICY** As well as assisting the Board of Governors in fulfilling its stewardship role with regard to sustainability, this report adheres to McGill's *Sustainability Policy*, which states that the University will report annually on progress toward achieving its sustainability goals.

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**COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION/EXTERNAL REGULATIONS** There are no known legislation or external regulation requirements applicable to this matter.

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**RISK FACTORS** The University is committed to promoting activities and practices that advance solutions to sustainability and climate-related challenges.

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<b>SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Sustainability is a central focus of the present report.
<b>IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS</b>	The discussion arising from this report will inform the development of sustainability- and climate-related actions on schedule for the coming year.
<b>MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL</b>	N/A
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix A: Overview of current sustainability and climate-related activities

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# Overview of sustainability and climate-related activities at McGill

Presented to the Board of Governors by  
Yves Beauchamp, Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance)

December 13, 2018



**McGill**

# Context

*“Addressing climate change in a manner consistent with the University’s mission is a McGill priority. This is an issue to which all members of the administration are committed, and one that the Board of Governors will now include in its stewardship role.”*

- Principal Fortier (2016)



# McGill's Sustainability Strategy – Vision 2020

- Climate & Sustainability Action Plan (2017-2020):
  - Presented to the Board December 12, 2017.
  - Progress report to be finalized early 2019.



# Sustainability at McGill: Governance



In 2017-2018:

- McGill was designated one of Canada's Top 100 Greenest Employers by Mediacorp Canada.
- McGill was ranked second greenest campus in Canada by Corporate Knights.
- Sustainability was reconfirmed as a fundamental principle of the new Procurement Policy.
- Sustainability material was included in the onboarding material of Senate and Board members, and new investigators.



# Sustainability at McGill: Governance



In 2017-2018:

- The Sustainable Travel & Mobility Guide was released. It focuses on reducing the carbon footprint of commuting and travel.
- New document encourages McGill staff to integrate sustainability-related objectives in the performance dialogue.
- Three Sustainability KPIs were included in the set of metrics developed by the University to chart its progress on strategic priorities.
- One of the *My Healthy Workplace* learning communities is centered around embedding sustainability in the workplace.



# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education



In 2017-2018:

- The RVH Sustainability Sciences cohort ( $\approx 140$  members) published approximately 1000 publications.
  - 6.6% were in top 1% journal percentiles
  - 62.2% were in top 10% journal percentiles
- This cohort received \$33M in grants and contracts (excluding Canada Research Chair (CRC) and Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) awards).





# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education

In 2017-2018:

- McGill-Concordia collaboration, Team MTL, won 4 awards for their “Deep Performance Dwelling”, net-zero energy home at the Solar Decathlon competition in China.
- The McGill Sustainability Systems Initiative (MSSI) launched the first Ideas and Innovation Fund competitions and supported 14 bold and novel projects (>\$900,000 in total).
- MSSI also launched two new research themes:
  - Transitioning to sustainability
  - Cleantech: technologies for sustainability



# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education



In 2017-2018:

- The Government of Quebec agreed to invest \$37M to allow McGill to plan the transformation of the RVH into one of the world's leading hubs in sustainability and public policy.
- The annual Trottier Symposium on Sustainable Engineering, Energy and Design focused on planning for resiliency in the face of climate change.
- A Sustainable Labs Award was launched to recognize efforts made by members of McGill laboratories.
- Students in multiple courses conducted research projects related to carbon neutrality at McGill.



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations



In 2017-2018:

- McGill announced it will phase out single-use water bottles from retail locations by May 2019.
- The McGill Waste Reduction and Diversion Strategy was created.
- Trash2Treasure, a collaborative initiative led by SSMU, redirected reusable items towards charitable organizations during move-out in the Milton Park area.
- Student volunteers certified 53 sustainable events. 20,000+ participants attended these certified events.



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations



In 2017-2018:

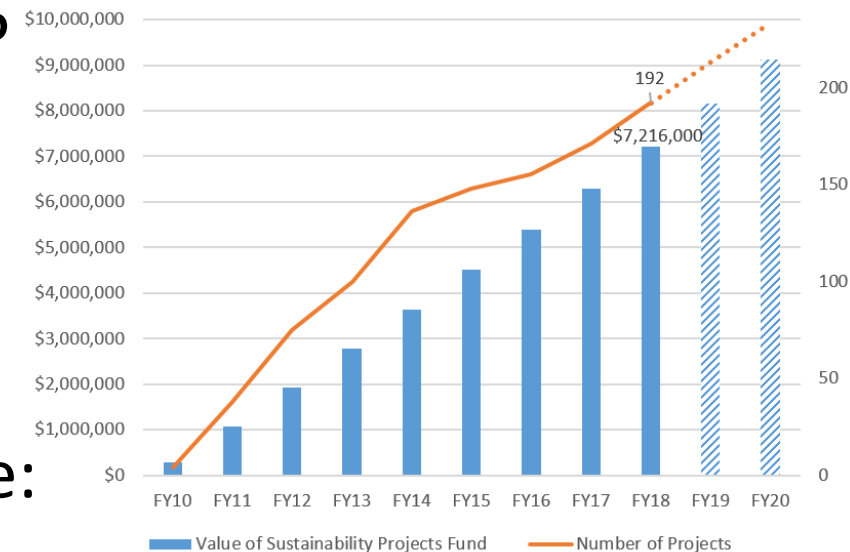
- Security Services purchased McGill's first all electric vehicle.
- 21 electric charging stations for vehicles have been or are in the process of being installed throughout the Gault, MacDonald and downtown campuses.
- The Sustainable Vehicles Management Program is under finalization. It integrates key sustainability and climate considerations.
- Smart energy grids are being implemented. They recover excess heat to heat or cool other rooms or buildings.



# Sustainability at McGill: Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) - A tool for implementation

In 2017-2018:

- The students and the administration renewed their commitment to the SPF for an additional 5 years (2018-2023).
- A “Tiny Stream” (less than ~\$250) was introduced to have a simpler, faster application process for small projects and events.
- Close to 200 projects funded so far. For example:
  - Gault Nature Reserve Community Access Trail
  - Macdonald Campus Orchards



# Planning Forward

- The Board's key performance indicators on greenhouse gas emissions (#23) and on the degree of implementation of the Vision 2020 Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (2017-2020) (#25) will be updated early 2019.
- A climate vulnerability & risk assessment for McGill will be completed.
- The Climate & Sustainability Action Plan mid-way progress report will be finalized.
- The Campus Master Plan will be submitted, with climate and sustainability considerations being integrated.

