

# Memorandum

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**TO:** Board of Governors  
**FROM:** Suzanne Fortier, Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
**SUBJECT:** Overview of Current Sustainability and Climate-Related Activities  
**DATE:** May 16, 2016  
**DOCUMENT #:** GD15-63

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  INFORMATION  APPROVAL/DECISION

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<b>ISSUE &amp; EXPECTED OUTCOME</b>	An overview to inform the Board of the ongoing activities at McGill University related to sustainability and the climate, following the Board's endorsement of the Committee on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) report's recommendations.
<b>BACKGROUND &amp; RATIONALE</b>	In March 2016 the Board endorsed the CAMSR report's recommendation that the University undertake a series of important actions to promote sustainability and to advance the understanding of climate change. The Board asked the administration to provide an overview of sustainability and climate-related activities at McGill University.  The attached presentation provides this overview.
<b>ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>	The activities described in the presentation are in alignment with the University's sustainability policy and with the decision made by the Board of Governors in March to endorse the CAMSR report's recommendation that it undertake action to promote sustainability and advance the understanding of climate change.
<b>COMPLIANCE WITH UNIVERSITY POLICY</b>	Demonstrates support of the Sustainability Policy that states that McGill aspires to achieve the highest possible standards of sustainability on its campuses and in its day-to-day activities through its academic practices, in its facilities and operations, and by its outreach to the broader community.
<b>COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION/EXTERNAL REGULATIONS</b>	N/A
<b>RISK FACTORS</b>	The University is committed to promoting activities and practices that advance solutions to sustainability challenges.
<b>SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Sustainability is a central focus of the overview document distributed for this meeting.

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<b>IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS</b>	The discussion at the meeting will inform the development of sustainability-related actions on schedule for the coming year, including the joint Board-Senate meeting in the fall.
<b>MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL</b>	N/A
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix A: McGill's Sustainability: Overview of current sustainability and climate-related activities PowerPoint presentation

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A line drawing of a building's dome and upper facade, featuring a flagpole with a flag on top. The drawing is light gray and serves as a background element on the left side of the slide.

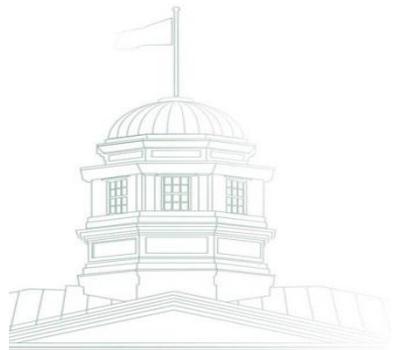
# **McGill's Sustainability: Overview of current sustainability and climate-related activities**

**Presented to the Board of Governors  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor, Suzanne Fortier  
May 16, 2016**

# Introduction and Context

## ■ March 2016

- Board of Governors endorses Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) recommendation that the University undertake a series of important actions to promote sustainability and to advance understanding of climate change
- Board of Governors requests preliminary overview of ongoing sustainability-related activities at May meeting



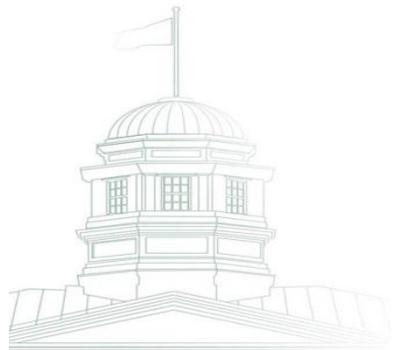
# McGill's Sustainability Strategy – Vision 2020

- 2007: Joint Board-Senate meeting leads to a two-year consultation process on sustainability
- 2009: Creation of the McGill Office of Sustainability
- 2010: Senate and Board approve Sustainability Policy
- 2012: Steering Committee formed to guide the development of a sustainability strategy
- 2012-13: Consultation process involving more than 1,500 community members
- 2014: Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy adopted
  - 1 vision, 23 goals, 14 priority actions across 5 categories
- Dec 2015: Update report indicates on-track: over 50% of actions completed for the 2014-2016 period



# Sustainability at McGill: Governance

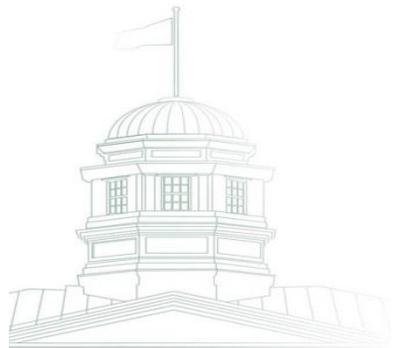
- Sustainability added to the Board stewardship role
- University administration to report to the Board annually on sustainability and climate initiatives



# Sustainability at McGill: Teaching and Learning

- **“ASAP 2012 reaffirms the campus commitment to all that sustainability encompasses— social equity, diversity of origin and ideas, environmental management, and economic sustainability”**

ASAP 2012: Achieving Strategic Academic Priorities



**McGill**

# Sustainability at McGill: Teaching and Learning

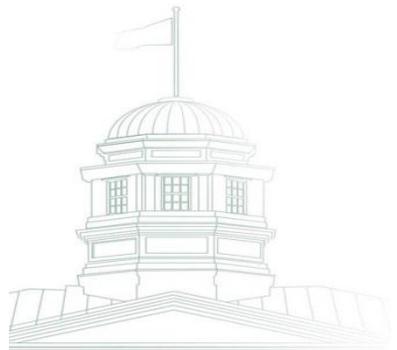
- Increased program offerings reflect the growing importance of sustainability include:
  - McGill School of Environment
  - Joint interfaculty B.A. & Sc. in Sustainability, Science and Society
  - Trottier Institute for Sustainability in Engineering and Design
  - BCom in Managing for Sustainability
- Students at McGill are enrolled in more than 40 courses, including: Green Chemistry, Global Land and Water Resources, Bioresource Engineering for Sustainability, Economics of Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Accounting and Society, Environment and Sustainability



# Sustainability at McGill: Research

- **“Sustainability is a central component of research at McGill. Researchers and students study all aspects of sustainability, taking a comprehensive approach to how they carry out their work. Sustainability is also an essential element of what the University does to ensure the long-term viability of its research enterprise through maintaining and renewing its infrastructure and core facilities”**

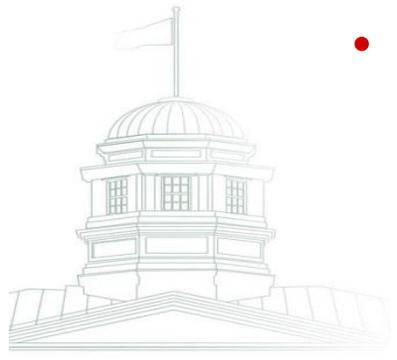
McGill University Strategic Research Plan 2013:2017



**McGill**

# Sustainability at McGill: Research

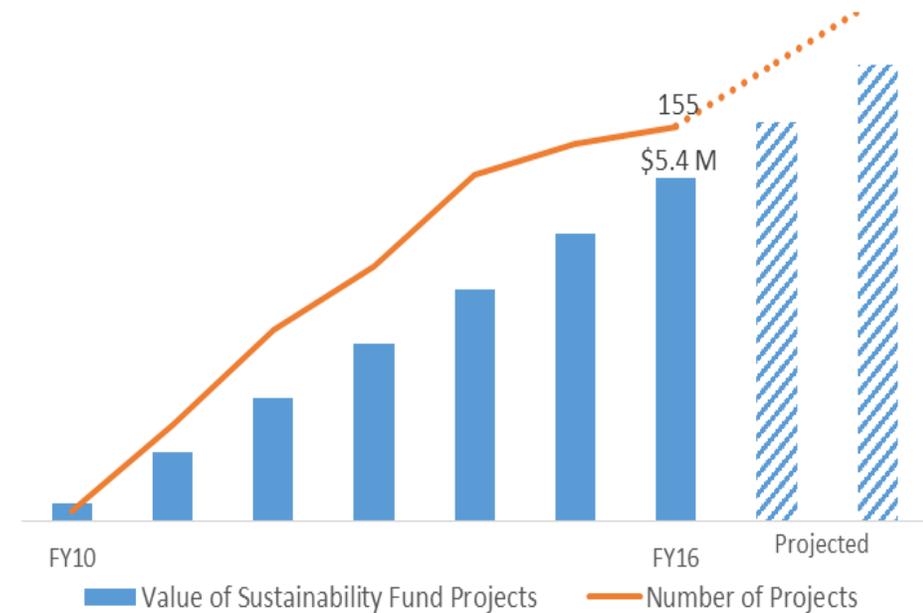
- Over the past 5 years, sustainability-related research has secured more than \$270 million in national competitions and produced more than 4,000 peer-reviewed publications, include:
  - CERC Chair Green Chemistry: developing sustainable biomaterials that are positive for the environment and the economy
  - CIHR Applied Public Health Chair, Geography: adaptation to climate change in indigenous populations
  - Tier 1 Canada Research Chair, Biology: climate change and biodiversity policies
  - NSERC Steacie Fellowship: Department of Natural Resource Sciences and the McGill School of Environment: approaches to measure, map and model interconnected ecosystem services to ensure their long-term sustainability
  - Economics: Green fiscal commission – fiscal policies that promote sustainability targets



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations

- Student led-initiative in partnership with the administration
- The Sustainability Projects Fund funded by a student contribution (\$0.50 per credit) and matched by an administration contribution, for a total of \$850,000 per year
- \$5.4 million fund has provided support for more than 150 projects to date

Value and Number of Sustainability Projects



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations

Sustainability Fund projects include:

- **Edible Campus:** campus-grown vegetables supplied to Montrealers in need
- **McGill Feeding McGill:** locally grown fruits and vegetables in residences
- **Sustainable Procurement Officer:** new administrative position to develop sustainable procurement practices
- **Anti-Oppression Program:** New dialogue and standards for acceptable practices of social and institutional sustainability

Other examples of sustainability in McGill operations include:

- **Conversion of Lower Campus into a pedestrian zone**
- **Investment of more than \$19 million in energy-saving projects**
- **GHG emissions reduced by 33% and energy intensity reduced by 23% since 2002-03**



# Planning Forward (I)

- **Open Forums on Sustainability to take place Sept. 2016**
- **Establishing an Advisory Council on Sustainability by Fall 2016**
- **Investment Committee to report on actions to address principles of socially responsible investment by Dec. 2016**
- **Consultation process on next version of Vision 2020 to be completed by May 2017**
- **Sustainability Performance KPIs to be included in Fall 2017 report**
- **University to invest \$10 million over 5 years in Sustainability Science research**



# Planning Forward (II)

- Close to \$27M in investments identified in the Five-Year Energy Management Plan (2016-2021) to further reduce GHG emissions from stationary combustion and energy intensity by 38% and 27% respectively
- All new construction and most of the major renovation projects at McGill to be certified LEED Silver at minimum
- More than \$130 million of deferred maintenance sustainability projects planned

