

Memorandum

Office of the VP (Administration and Finance)
James Administration Building, Room 531
845 Sherbrooke St. West, Montreal, QC, H3A 0G4
Tel: 514-398-6037 | Fax: 514-398-5902

TO: Board of Governors
FROM: Yves Beauchamp, Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance)
SUBJECT: Annual Report on McGill Sustainability and Climate Initiatives
DATE: October 3, 2019
DOCUMENT #: GD19-15

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

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.
BACKGROUND & RATIONAL	<p>In 2016, the Board of Governors' stewardship role was expanded to include sustainability, and the University administration reaffirmed its commitment to address climate change in a manner consistent with the University's mission.</p> <p>This commitment is entrenched in the new <i>McGill University Sustainability Policy</i> (2018) which also provides that the University must report annually to its community on its progress toward achieving its sustainability goals. In accordance with this provision, McGill's Office of Sustainability prepares a yearly summary of the community's sustainability and climate activities related to operations, governance, administration, and research and education.</p> <p>The annual report also highlights, among other things, student and staff involvement in the University's sustainability and climate-related initiatives.</p>
ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	The mission of McGill University is advanced responsibly by carrying out sustainability and climate activities in a manner that achieves a balance between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability.
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 <i>Sustainability Policy</i> which states that the University will report annually on its progress toward achieving its sustainability goals.
COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION/ EXTERNAL REGULATIONS	There are no known legislation or external regulation requirements applicable to this matter.
RISK FACTORS	The University is committed to promoting activities and practices that advance solutions to sustainability and climate-related challenges.
SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS	Sustainability is a central focus of the present report.

IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS	The discussion arising from this report will determine the development of sustainability- and climate-related actions on schedule for the coming year.
MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL	N/A
APPENDICES	Appendix A: Overview of current sustainability and climate-related activities

Overview of sustainability and climate-related activities at McGill

Presented to the Board of Governors

Yves Beauchamp, Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance)

October 3, 2019



McGill

Context

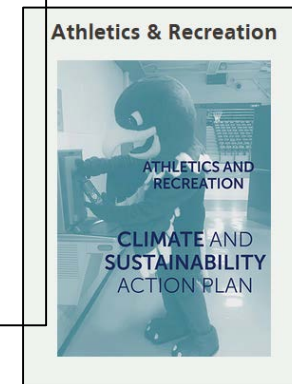
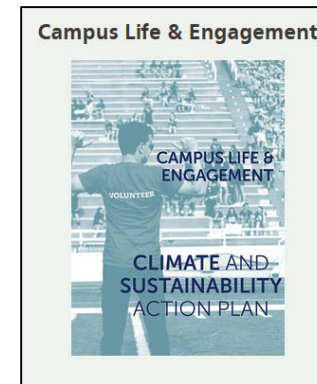
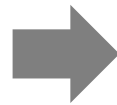
“Addressing climate change in a manner consistent with the University’s mission is a McGill priority. This is an issue to which all members of the administration are committed, and one that the Board of Governors will now include in its stewardship role.”

- Principal Fortier (2016)



McGill's Sustainability Strategy – Vision 2020

- Climate & Sustainability Action Plan (2017-2020):
 - A Progress Report was finalized early 2019. It shows that 71% of the plan deliverables are implemented.
 - 4 units adopted a Unit-Level Climate & Sustainability Action Plan.



Sustainability at McGill: Plans and Policies

In 2018-2019:

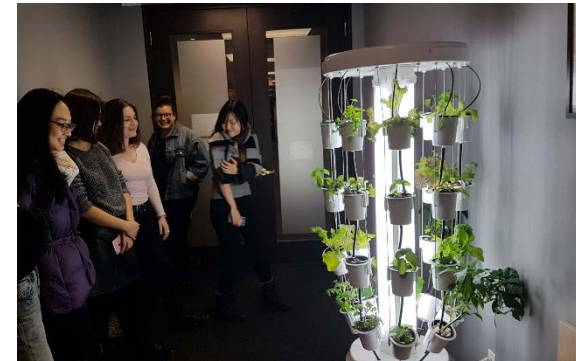
- McGill's *Sustainability Policy* was updated and consolidated with the former Environmental Policy.
- One of the seven Research Excellence Themes identified in McGill's Strategic Research Plan is "Design and create **sustainable** materials, technologies, landscapes, and communities".
- One of the nine guiding principles of McGill's recently-approved Master Plan is "Support **Sustainability** Through Governance"



Sustainability at McGill: Students and Staff Involvement

In 2018-2019:

- A total of 195 staff and faculty members participated in the Staff Gardens program.
- Three hydroponic growth towers were installed in administrative offices to provide fresh produce year-round.
- 150 events (since May 2017) and 36 workplaces (since Jan. 2018) went through the certification programs ran by the McGill Office of Sustainability.



Sustainability at McGill: Students and Staff Involvement



In 2018-2019:

- MealCare's student volunteers diverted close to 2,650 pounds of food waste from cafeterias and other vendors at McGill, representing 2,900 meals, which was donated to local shelters and soup kitchens.
- The student-led Desautels Sustainability Network (DSN) brought back the Desautels Business Conference on Sustainability, making it Montreal's largest student-led conference on sustainable business.
- Campus Life and Engagement trained 600 student leaders to increase the sustainability of orientation events.



Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education



In 2018-2019:

- The Green Labs Initiative at the Neuro was launched and put in place lab material recycling programs, online resources, and organized culture change-focused events.
- The McGill Sustainability Systems Initiative (MSSI) initiated its fourth research theme: Sustainability Transitions. MSSI also provided \$478,000 to 8 faculty and 7 student-led research projects.



Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education



In 2018-2019:

- The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) provided \$5.5M to support a network for monitoring, modeling, and managing Canada's ecosystem services for sustainability and resilience.
- The Office of Sustainability and McGill's Sustainability Systems Initiative (MSSI) jointly organized a sustainability soirée, showcasing inspiring sustainability research and projects happening on campus.
- Students in multiple courses conducted research projects related to sustainability and carbon neutrality at McGill.



Sustainability at McGill: Operations



In 2018-2019:

- The University secured a \$1.8M contribution from the Low Carbon Economy Fund to implement three projects that will have combined reductions of 9,900 tCO₂e / year once they are online.
- McGill phased out the sale of single-use water bottles from retail locations. The following measures were also implemented:
 - 2 additional hydration stations were built (for a total of 5)
 - 23 water fountains were installed or upgraded to include a bottle filler
 - Discover McGill decreased the distribution of bottled water by 70% (7,000 less)
- McGill chose a new food service provider with a focus on nutrition, sustainable sourcing, and student engagement.



Sustainability at McGill: Operations

In 2018-2019:

- The Sustainability Projects Fund provided \$250,000 to accelerate the greening of McGill's fleet of vehicles.
- Buildings, Grounds, and Events Support made visible improvements to the waste management system.
- McGill's Athletics & Recreation purchased two electric Gators to help reduce GHG emissions.
- McGill joined the City of Montreal and other partners in a commitment to reduce environmental impacts of air travel.
- A new trail was implemented to increase access and preserve ecosystems at the Gault Nature Reserve.

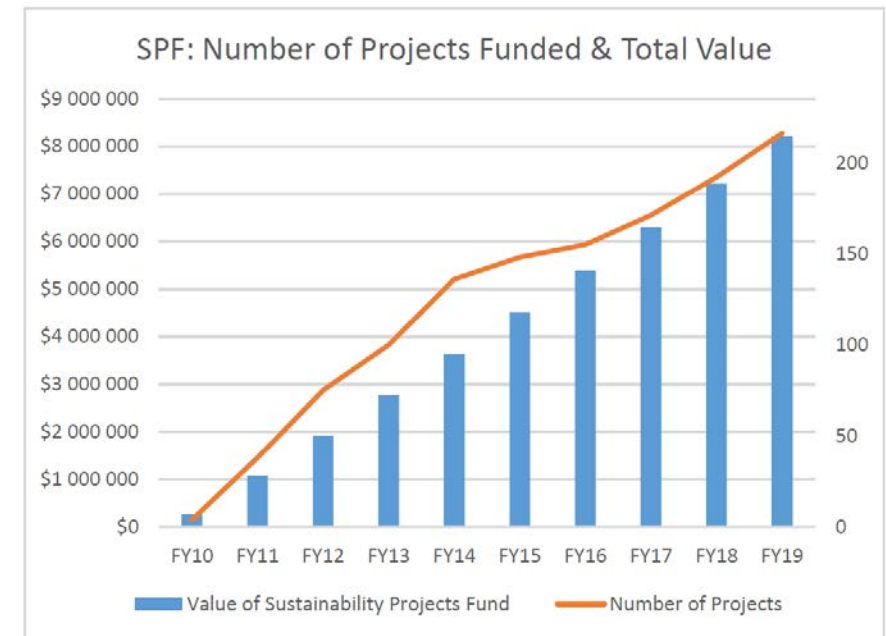


Sustainability at McGill: Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) - A tool for implementation



In 2018-2019:

- The SPF application experience was redesigned to improve efficiency, clarity and impact.
- Over 200 projects funded in the last 10 years, including 24 in FY 2019. For example:
 - Ecological improvement of the dairy cow pasture on the Macdonald Campus
 - Interactive Accessibility Network Map



External Recognition

In 2018-2019, McGill received recognition from five external organizations for its overall sustainability performance:

Awarded by:

Sustainability Institution of the Year for its ambitious yet realistic Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy

International Green Gown Awards, endorsed by UN Environment

Campus Sustainability Achievement Award for its engagement programs to increase collective sustainability actions for staff, students, and faculty

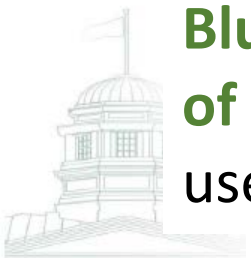
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education

One of Canada's **Top 100 Greenest Employers**

Mediacorp Canada

Blue Community Designation, and **Ecological Transition of the Campus Award** for phasing out the sale of single-use plastic water bottles

« Eau Secours » Coalition & Trophées des campus responsables



Planning Forward

- Initiate a consultation process to develop McGill's next climate and sustainability strategy (2020-2025).
- The SPF will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in November 2019. A special event will be organized to mark the occasion.
- The process to improve waste management on campus will continue.

