



**ATHLETICS AND  
RECREATION**

**CLIMATE AND  
SUSTAINABILITY  
ACTION PLAN**

# 1. About Us

## **Our Mission Statement**

In keeping with McGill University's commitment to education and innovation, Athletics & Recreation vows to provide students and staff opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity within an inclusive environment that values health, well-being and fair play. We strive to instill within our community the values of academic and sporting excellence along with the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle.

## **Demographics**

Every semester, our facilities receive over 300,000 student visits. With 7,323 student fitness center members, 30 varsity teams, 760 intramural teams, and over 20,000 varsity fans attending games every year - the scale of our operations are HUGE. Our facilities are open 16 hours a day, 345 days a year, and include the Memorial pool, McConnell Arena, Molson Stadium, the Fitness Center, Tomlinson Fieldhouse, Forbes Field, tennis courts, and even the Paddle Shack located on Mac Campus, which rents kayaks, paddle boards and canoes to paddlers on Lac St. Louis.

## **Current Sustainability Initiatives**

We're constantly working to improve the efficiency of our operations. Whether that's reducing waste, water, energy, or greenhouse gas emissions, we try to choose the most sustainable options when replacing outdated fixtures. This includes changing the pool water treatment method to decrease toxicity, installing low-flow showers and toilets in bathrooms, converting lightbulbs to LED units, efficiency upgrades to our HVAC system, adding bottle filling stations to water fountains, and recycling materials during construction.

## **Sustainability mission statement**

Above all else, we value health, well-being and fair play – all of which are aligned with practicing sustainability for the planet, and the people on it. We encourage our teams, coaches and fans to become champions of sustainability, working towards become a zero-waste, low carbon footprint athletics facility.

## 2. University Context

McGill adopted a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan that covers the 2017-2020 period. It outlines the University's commitment to reach two ambitious long-term

- Achieve carbon neutrality by 2040
- Attain a Platinum sustainability rating by 2030.

To start closing the gap towards these targets, the Action Plan also includes 22 actions to be implemented by 2020, separated among 5 categories:

Research

Education

Connectivity

Operations

Governance & Administration

Beyond the actions laid out in the Climate and Sustainability Action Plan, a widespread effort from specific units is essential to advance the climate and sustainability agenda at McGill and to reach our long-term targets. Consequently, we are writing our own Climate & Sustainability Action Plan that is relevant to our own needs and challenges as a department.

## 3. 2020 Action Plan

The Action Plan builds on our current sustainability initiatives, with an added focus on game day sustainability, reaching out to our fans, and educating our teams (both athletic and administrative).

This plan was created over the course of almost a year, in collaboration with a group of students providing sustainability consultation for a course (MSUS 401 - Sustainability Consulting). The team surveyed 100 students (50 varsity athletes, 50 general McGill students), completed a benchmarking analysis of other university's sustainable athletics programs, collaborated with the Office of Sustainability, and facilitated sessions with key Athletics & Recreation stakeholders to create this strategy. The plan consists of 9 actions and 23 deliverables.

### Research

1. Analyze greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions stemming from team travel
  - Improve tracking of varsity team travel to be able to properly calculate the carbon footprint of team travel
  - Explore a partnership with Téo Taxi to reduce emissions of taxi trips

### Education

2. Develop materials to educate the entire athletics community on their role in creating a more sustainable athletics facility
  - Collaborate with the Office of Sustainability to post their relevant sustainability material
  - Create new materials specific to the Athletics facility
  - Encourage fan participation through a branded engagement campaign
3. Educate space users on proper waste sorting techniques
  - Hire students to help sort waste at high traffic locations
  - Improve consistency of waste signage – we want everyone to know what goes where, no matter where they are in the facility

## Connectivity

4. Increase awareness of the department's sustainability efforts among the McGill community
  - Create a sustainability section on the Athletics & Recreation website
  - Integrate sustainability efforts into social media and communications
5. Evaluate and begin addressing major accessibility issues for the facility
  - Perform accessibility audit

## Operations

6. Decrease use of single-use plastic water bottles
  - Increase availability of reusable bottles
  - Complete new water fountain upgrades and installations
  - Phase out sales from vending machines and cafeterias
  - Strategize ways to reduce sales of water bottles during games and events
7. Improve waste diversion at facilities
  - Add more recycling bins to facilities and stadiums
  - Streamline waste sorting signage across facilities
  - Add composting where possible
  - Introduce centralized waste bins to offices to increase individual sorting
8. Eliminate single-use noisemakers at games
  - Provide reusable options such as cowbells, painted containers, and drumsticks
  - Encourage attendees to bring their own noisemakers

## Governance and Administration

9. Embed sustainability practices into the department's operations
  - Incorporate sustainability into renovations and upgrades when possible
  - Provide sustainability messaging training to communications team to ensure effective communication of sustainability efforts
  - Provide trainings to staff members and teams on waste sorting and reduction

## 4. Implementation

We were recently approved for funding from the Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) to pay for student interns to oversee our sustainability strategy over the first year. During summer 2019, the interns will work with the main stakeholders to write a progress report with recommendations for the following year.

A sustainable athletics committee will be meeting once a month, to oversee the progress of the strategy, and direct the next steps.

In order to complete the actions in the plan, internal departments that will be consulted include facilities, events, concessions, communications, the sports medicine clinic, varsity teams, and the business office. Outside of Athletics, we will work with the McGill Office of Sustainability, the Office for Students with Disabilities, and Buildings & Grounds to achieve our targets.