

**MCGILL UNIVERSITY**

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# **CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2020-2025**

*Empowering our community. Advancing our efforts.  
Transforming our campuses.*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

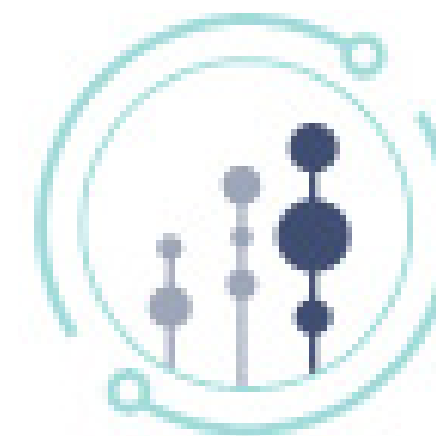
The McGill University Climate & Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025 sets the framework to achieve meaningful changes on our campuses in the next five years. Building off the success of previous action plans and other strategic documents, the Strategy was informed by consultations with students, staff, and faculty.

The content of the Strategy is structured around eight categories: Research & Education, Buildings & Utilities, Waste Management, Travel & Commuting, Food Systems, Procurement, Landscapes & Ecosystems, and Community Building. Each category includes one objective, one flagship action, and a series of complementary actions. Additionally, each category highlights ways students, staff, and faculty can get involved and contribute to a sustainable McGill.

Woven throughout the Strategy are two transversal themes: Climate Mitigation & Adaptation, and Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion. These are the two foundational pillars in which we choose to anchor our practice of sustainability.

In addition to the two long-term targets established in Vision 2020 – achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 and attain a Platinum sustainability rating by 2030 a third long-term target has been added: to become zero-waste by 2035. The category objectives as well as the action items in the Strategy, are structured to support the achievement of our three long-term targets.

# LONG-TERM TARGETS



## PLATINUM RATING BY 2030

McGill aims to reach the highest sustainability rating using a system developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The vast scope of data needed to obtain a Platinum sustainability rating means that McGill must commit to embedding sustainability in all areas and at every level. The actions items in the McGill University Climate & Sustainability Strategy are structured to bring McGill closer to this goal.



## ZERO-WASTE BY 2035

The creation of this additional long-term target has been informed by the feedback collected during public consultations. Becoming zero-waste implies reaching a diversion rate of at least 90%. The scope of this target will cover day-to-day waste and will be reassessed in 2025 to evaluate the inclusion of other waste sources. In order to achieve this target, major changes will need to take place in the campus infrastructure, supply chain, programs, and education initiatives.



## CARBON NEUTRALITY BY 2040

Carbon neutrality is a process that is intended to achieve net-zero greenhouse gases by implementing a combination of actions aimed at eliminating greenhouse gas emissions, sequestering carbon using carbon sinks, and purchasing carbon offsets. Key measures implemented at McGill such as large-scale energy transformations, electrification of the University vehicle fleet, and offsetting unavoidable travel emissions, will pave the way to carbon neutrality.

## CATEGORY OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2025



### RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Identify strategies to increase learning and research opportunities in sustainability.



### BUILDINGS & UTILITIES

Increase the environmental performance of buildings while reducing their carbon footprint.



### WASTE MANAGEMENT

Expand reuse, recycling, and composting efforts to increase the University's diversion rate.



### TRAVEL & COMMUTING

Develop initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of commuting activities, directly-funded air travel, and McGill's fleet of vehicles.



### FOOD SYSTEMS

Enrich sustainable food offering by promoting local, third-party certified, and plant-based options.



### PROCUREMENT

Raise awareness on sustainable procurement and contribute to the development of a circular economy.



### LANDSCAPES & ECOSYSTEM

Develop landscaping projects that reduce the heat island effect, increase biodiversity, and foster well-being.



### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Enhance opportunities for sustainability and well-being initiatives while increasing the representation of past and present communities on the campuses' physical spaces.

## MONITORING & REPORTING

The continued input and collaboration of the McGill community is key to ensuring a successful implementation of the Strategy. Distribution of ownership, strong communications, and clear accountability are central to the progression of the Strategy over the course of the next five years. Several tools will allow to track both the output and the outcome of the McGill University Climate & Sustainability Strategy, namely key performance indicators, which will be submitted to the

Board of Governors, and progress reports. These reports are set to be published twice - once at the halfway mark in 2023, and at the end of the implementation in 2025. Ultimately, the McGill University Climate & Sustainability Strategy is a living document and will continue to be shaped by the voices and views of students, staff, and faculty.