Office of Sustainability
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Operations Focus Areas for Review

At its next four meetings, the Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC) will prioritize focus areas for sustainability at UW-Madison. Here is the schedule:

December 2020	Academic & Research focus areas
January 2021	Engagement focus areas
February 2021	Operations focus areas
March 2021	Planning and Administration focus areas

The focus areas identified (so far) for our February meeting are in Table 3. These were identified through a review of peer best practices, results of UW-Madison's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) report, Office of Sustainability staff experience, and feedback from the campus community during public listening sessions.

Additional focus areas may be defined by the SAC members. Before initial prioritization, the SAC will review, discuss, and identify resources that support the implementation of initiatives or challenges that could stall initiative progress.

Source(s) of focus areas are identified by the following:

⭐ = STARS & Peer Best Practices

🌐 = Office of Sustainability Experience

🦡 = Listening Sessions

👤 = SAC Members

Focus Area	Issue(s) to Address	Example Initiative(s)	Example Action items
Sustainable Planning & Design ⭐⚙️🎖️	UW-Madison does not have a consistent methodology for incorporating sustainability into campus planning and building design	DFDM sustainability guidelines and processes that **prioritize learning and knowledge** while pursuing **industry leading sustainable design** Processes for incorporating **applied research and technology transfer** into new planning and new building design	• Design spaces for learning beyond the classroom (interior & exterior) • Establish metrics for the social and educational sustainability objectives on new building design • Expand green roofs & green infrastructure • Expand adaptable spaces that accommodate evolving pedagogies and research • Design for future climate (building & grounds) • Develop more rooftop solar • Incorporate assessment and research to continuously evaluate and inform the process • Expand water efficient fixtures • Pursue net zero energy & net zero carbon buildings • Develop program for building sustainability tracking that could incorporate third party building certifications (LEED, WELL, etc.)
Sustainable Buildings ⭐⚙️🎖️	UW-Madison lacks comprehensive requirements for incorporating sustainability practices and principles into building operations and maintenance	Consistent, **multi-attribute building operations policy** that at a minimum addresses water use, energy use, product sourcing, and indoor air quality **Trained staff** to support implementation of, and reporting on, operations policy Expanded **artistic and cultural attributes** of buildings to engender creativity and create areas of respite	• Add assessment of classroom spaces into end of semester evaluations • Develop green cleaning plan • Develop an Inclusivity Committee to evaluate and review existing spaces and practices • Develop building energy and water use benchmarking and reduction plan • Develop color, lighting and air quality standards that prioritize learning, wellbeing, and equity, and are easily maintained. • Develop indoor air quality management plan that includes proactive monitoring • Develop program for building operations sustainability tracking that could incorporate third party certifications (LEED O+M, EnergyStar, etc.) • Require energy metering for all buildings • Create a public sustainability dashboard that includes social and environmental facility attributes

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Sustainable Landscape Management	UW-Madison does not have a consistent methodology for incorporating sustainability practices into landscape management	Campus-wide **integrated pest management (IPM)** program that at a minimum addresses native plantings, minimal pesticide use, and less groundskeeping Landscapes designed for **carbon sequestration**	• Implement IPM program for main campus and athletics • Develop more tree canopy and accessible green space • Complete Bee campus certification • Complete Tree Campus certification • Develop exterior lighting standards for wildlife corridors, proximity to the lakeshore, and trespass into residence halls • Re-establish the natural pharmaceutical garden at Pharmacy in collaboration with CALS
Sustainable Transportation	UW-Madison has untapped opportunities to be a national leader in sustainable transportation services and further reduce GHG emissions	Plans for **long-term teleworking** and how **wellbeing** and **inclusivity** will drive resources for the movement of people and services **Green fleet** plan to reduce fuel use and emissions **Green travel guidance** and **carbon offset** purchasing systems	• Expand inclusivity through addition of tricycles in the bike share program • Add racks/lockers for longboards • Install additional electric vehicle charging stations • Limit new parking facilities • Develop interactive maps of fitness routes, historical tours, art and the modes available to access them • Offer an interactive map of commuter resources • Implement an anti-idling policy • Develop processes for investing in local projects for carbon offsets
Green Energy and Electricity	Sustainable energy use at UW-Madison is limited by: • Natural gas powered district heating and cooling • Low per unit costs for electricity from MGE	Incorporate **human rights** considerations in all energy sourcing Procure **100% renewable electricity** and source **net zero carbon energy**	• Expand participation in MGE's Renewable Energy Rider program • Participate in the MGE Green Power Tomorrow program • Evaluate opportunities to convert heating and cooling plants to renewable fuels • Purchase carbon offsets • Commit to energy procurement guidelines that incorporate human rights benchmarks

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Resource Management ⭐⚙️🛡️	Sustainable resource management at UW-Madison is limited by: • Landfill and resource collection and materials are being managed by several units on campus • Inconsistent signage and disposal requirements • Lack of procurement requirements on resource recovery and packaging	**Zero waste** plan for the main campus Use of **life cycle cost analysis** in procurement standards	• Centralize waste reporting • Require waste reporting for all capital projects • Enforce zero waste planning and execution guidelines for events • Write procurement policies that limit package waste and prioritize recyclable products • True cost allocation of waste and resource services across campus
Sustainable Food ⭐⚙️🛡️	Sustainable food systems at UW-Madison are limited by: • Food sourcing being managed by two separate units • Limited options for food disposal or recovery	Established institutional definition of **local food** and plan for increasing procurement Robust, standardized **food recovery system** for campus events	• Provide more local food options • Increase sustainably certified food options • Increase non-meat-based food options • Develop institutional standards for food recovery • Coordinate food sourcing from on-campus farms / gardens • Develop a sustainability-themed food outlet on campus • Increase food purchases from minority- and women-owned businesses • Participate in Real Food Challenge • Participate in the Cool Food Pledge • Implement processes that follow the EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy
Sustainable Procurement ⭐⚙️🛡️	Sustainable procurement at UW-Madison is limited by: • Insufficient required sustainability considerations in vendor evaluation and contract development • Inconsistent reporting of third party certified sustainable products • Limited auditing of vendor certified green attributes	UW-Madison specific **sustainable purchasing standards** including life cycle cost analyses during procurement and supply chain carbon footprint reporting requirements Support **equity and diversity** through minority and women owned business opportunities	• Implement cradle to cradle purchasing requirements • Require vendors to provide "Green" / EPEAT / ethical sourcing certification reports • Define and audit "green" product label in Shop@UW • Complete Fair Trade Campus certification • Require inclusion of minority- and women-owned businesses in all advertisements for bids

Focus Area	Issue(s) to Address	Example Initiative(s)	Example Action items
Other Focus Areas with Operations Impact			
Campus as a Living Lab: Living lab activities could often result in improve the sustainability of university operations **Honors & Recognition**: Recognition can also include achievements in advancing sustainable operations **Sustainable Events**: Sustainable events are enabled by sustainable facilities, procurement policies, waste management, and transportation alternatives **Sustainable Athletics**: Sustainable athletics includes sustainable operations of athletics facilities **Alumni Engagement**: Development opportunities could fund advanced, sustainable facilities **Sustainability Co-curricular Learning**: Student organizations can be driving forces for more sustainable operations **Sustainability Onboarding and Training**: Behavior that supports sustainable operations can be normalized through introduction during onboarding and training			

Table 3. Operations focus areas