Plan Background

**Sustainability Definition**
Sustainability is the creation of environmental, social, and economic conditions that foster the health and well-being of people and the natural world in this generation and generations to come. At a minimum, our practices reduce harm on people and the environment; at best, our actions improve the well-being of both.

**Sustainability Plan Vision**
We envision a future where sustainability is woven into the fabric of University of Richmond, where our students, staff, and faculty create a more sustainable world.

**Sustainability Plan Mission**
Working together to cultivate a culture of sustainability.

**Guiding Principles**

*Intentionality* – We pursue sustainability with purpose and forethought, mindful of our interconnectedness and the potential consequences our actions have on the ecological and social systems that support us.

*Sense of Place* – Our unique culture, location, appearance, people, and traditions – collectively our sense of place – generate feelings of attachment to and identity with the University of Richmond. Sustainability efforts inform and enhance this relationship, inspiring both pride and stewardship.

*Collaboration* – Only by coming together can we achieve what is needed to address the local and global challenges we face. Sustainability is inherently interdisciplinary and all of us are needed to create lasting change.

*Gratitude* – We are grateful for the efforts of people, past and present, who have championed sustainability, often behind the scenes and without any expectation of recognition or reward. Advancement of sustainability builds upon the foundation they created. We commit to taking the time to recognize and celebrate those who do work that supports us all.

*Continuous Learning* – We will promote and facilitate collective learning that increases our understanding of sustainability, what it means to the University, and how our actions matter. This plan supports the attainment, transfer, integration, and dissemination of knowledge to support both sustainability and the University’s mission.

*Willingness to Act* – We will take concrete steps to steward our campus, community, and beyond, actively participating in the creation of a better tomorrow for current and future generations.

“Complete and implement a Sustainability Strategic Plan to further weave responsible environmental stewardship into the fabric of the University.”
-University of Richmond Strategic Plan
Planning Process

In *Forging Our Future, Building from Strength*, under the pillar of Stewardship in a Changing World, the University of Richmond established an initiative to “complete and implement a Sustainability Strategic Plan to further weave responsible environmental stewardship into the fabric of the University.” In early 2018, a 10-person Steering Committee, with advisement from the Sustainability and Environmental Awareness Committee, partnered with SmithGroup to lead the creation of a 5-year plan for sustainability.

Development of the Sustainability Plan began with an analysis of historical documents, including the 2010 Climate Action Plan, 2011 Campus Master Plan, 2013 and 2016 AASHE STARS reports, and 2017 Sustainability Report. The planning team also assessed current sustainability efforts across academic, administrative, operational, and outreach functions of the University to establish an up-to-date baseline of sustainability on campus.

Following this environmental scan, SmithGroup led a series of engagement events. Through workshops, intercept interviews, one-on-one conversations, presentations, and a campus-wide survey, the planning team gathered information from students, faculty, staff, and community members on what we are doing well, what we can improve, and how we can move forward. Nearly 1,000 people provided input on the direction sustainability should take at UR.

The Steering Committee then created a plan rough draft containing goals, strategies, and actions that reflected the community’s input and aligned with the University’s Strategic Plan. In a process of continuous improvement, subject matter experts and working groups of the Sustainability and Environmental Awareness Committee made adjustments and improvements to the draft content. The Sustainability and Environmental Awareness Committee reviewed the updated draft plan and made further refinements, resulting in the draft that follows.

The Sustainability Plan Steering Committee remains committed to an iterative process that results in a plan that reflects a diversity of voices. You are invited to read through this draft plan and provide your feedback at richmond.edu/sustainabilityplan.
Draft Goal 1  Integrate sustainability into a University of Richmond education.

1.1 Increase the opportunity for University of Richmond students to engage in coursework focused on sustainability.

1.1.1 Support growth of the number of courses in each of the five schools that focus on a holistic concept of sustainability (including social, economic, and environmental dimensions) or examine an issue or topic using sustainability as a lens.

1.1.2 Examine the feasibility of incorporating sustainability into the general education curriculum, incorporating sustainability into the wellness requirement, and/or establishing a sustainability graduation requirement.

1.1.3 Explore the development of a formal sustainability education program and assess the appropriateness of a certificate or minor in sustainability.

1.1.4 Enhance the rigor and visibility of the sustainability course tracking system, explore an ‘s-designation’ for those identified as sustainability courses, and promote both new and existing sustainability courses.

1.1.5 Develop UR-specific resources that outline and measure the sustainability knowledge, attributes, and skills a student is expected to demonstrate through completion of a sustainability-related course, program, or unit.

1.2 Support the integration of sustainability into co-curricular initiatives and high-impact educational practices, including first-year experience, themed semesters, living-learning communities, undergraduate research, study abroad, summer programming, community-based learning, internships, and capstone courses.

1.2.1 Develop a University of Richmond sustainability living lab program that connects coursework, research, and campus operations.

1.2.2 Partner with Living-Learning Programs, the Center for Civic Engagement, Study Abroad, Campus Services, University Facilities, and other campus departments to increase participation in sustainability-related immersive educational programs.

1.2.3 Increase awareness of and access to high-impact sustainability programs.

1.2.4 Partner with the Office of Alumni and Career Services and Academic Advising to increase the number of sustainability-related career opportunities available to students, including job listings, internships, job fairs, and networking opportunities.

1.3 Strengthen connections and establish incentive structures to support scholarship and teaching across different academic programs and disciplines engaged in sustainability.

1.3.1 Support faculty and student research in sustainability and associated inter-, cross-, and transdisciplinary work.

1.3.2 Support and develop faculty with a background in sustainability, climate change, systems thinking, and other inherently interdisciplinary areas essential to sustainability literacy and scholarly research.

1.3.3 Provide professional development opportunities in sustainability education to help faculty in all disciplines create or rework sustainability courses and learning outcomes.

1.3.4 Develop a program that awards funding for sustainability research and academic initiatives.

1.3.5 Work with Library Services to support an open access repository for scholarly research generated by UR faculty, students, and staff.

1.3.6 Appoint a sustainability fellow to support sustainability research and the integration of sustainability into the curriculum.
Draft Goal 2
Increase understanding of sustainability issues and provide resources and opportunities for individuals and groups to enact sustainable behaviors on campus.

2.1 Meaningfully feature sustainability in orientation and onboarding activities for all students, staff, and faculty.

2.1.1 Establish a standard that all new UR students participate in orientation activities that prominently feature sustainability.

2.1.2 Incorporate sustainability into the overall design and implementation of New Student Orientation and UR pre-semester programming.

2.1.3 Add a formal, interactive sustainability component to employee orientation.

2.1.4 Introduce new-employee programming that supports knowledge of and active engagement with UR sustainability goals and initiatives at the University and department/office level.

2.2 Improve the visibility of sustainability on campus.

2.2.1 Develop and promote a campus sustainability tour, both online and on campus, and incorporate sustainability into official UR campus tours.

2.2.2 Post prominent signage that highlights campus environmental stewardship efforts.

2.2.3 Identify sustainability thought leaders and champions on campus, and bring external thought leaders to campus, in partnership with new and existing programs and classes.

2.2.4 Design interactive, educational displays that help visualize data and share current sustainability information.

2.2.5 Develop cohesive sustainability-based marketing and branding efforts across campus in coordination with appropriate personnel.

2.3 Formalize training and education for students, staff, and faculty in environmental sustainability practices.

2.3.1 Raise awareness of and increase participation in programs that address personal sustainability (i.e., Green Office Program, Green Room Program, Be a Green Spider quizzes, etc.).

2.3.2 Create resources to support environmentally responsible living and working.

2.3.3 Establish and train a cohort of employee and student sustainability leaders.

2.3.4 Design online professional development and educational training opportunities on University sustainability initiatives in partnership with appropriate leaders on campus.

2.4 Design and execute a comprehensive menu of sustainability events, programs, and activities for student, staff, and faculty.

2.4.1 Establish a baseline of current existing sustainability programs, events, and initiatives offered across campus.

2.4.2 Generate programming ideas and implementation plans in dialogue with strategic partners and alongside appropriate stakeholders to increase understanding of sustainability and facilitate the opportunity to engage in sustainability-related activities.

2.4.3 Implement activities, receive feedback, and make revisions as necessary to support a culture of sustainability on campus.
Implement sustainable practices in campus services and operations that steward the natural world and support human health and well-being.

Buildings, Climate, & Energy

3.1 Implement resource-efficient and environmentally responsible design, construction, and operation practices in all campus building projects.
3.1.1 Provide energy and water metering on all building systems to track performance and report usage data.
3.1.2 Maintain a third-party green building rating system standard for new buildings (equivalent to LEED Silver equivalent or better) for all new buildings and major renovations.
3.1.3 Adopt a third-party green building rating system for existing building renovations.
3.1.4 Increase awareness of and number of buildings covered by the indoor air quality management program.
3.1.5 Explore the feasibility of constructing facilities in alignment with regenerative design and the Living Building Challenge, including net-zero energy and water systems.

3.2 Update the 2010 Climate Action Plan with greenhouse gas reduction targets that will result in carbon neutrality by 2035.
3.2.1 Match 100% of UR’s electricity usage with procurement from renewable sources by 2020.
3.2.2 Generate 5% of electricity by on-site renewable resources by 2025.
3.2.3 Implement and publicize energy policies that improve outdoor air quality and minimize pollutants from stationary and mobile sources.
3.2.4 Investigate best practices in carbon offsets and carbon sequestration, including utilization of University-owned lands.
3.2.5 Explore an internal carbon accounting model that would establish baseline measures and encourage building and department-specific reduction targets.

3.3 Reduce energy use intensity (energy per square foot per year) 40% below 2009 levels by 2025.
3.3.1 Implement an energy conservation management plan to identify, prioritize, implement, and track energy reduction and efficiency opportunities.
3.3.2 Establish an energy management system to guide and monitor energy usage and energy use intensity on campus.

Dining

3.4 Identify opportunities to increase procurement of sustainable food at the capacity needed for consistent, high quality meals.
3.4.1 In partnership with Dining Services, establish a food system working group comprising students, staff, and faculty to benchmark best practices in sustainable food procurement, increase collaboration across stakeholder groups, and publicize green dining efforts.
3.4.2 Track and assess sustainable food purchases annually based on the STARS and Real Food criteria (including local, community-based, organic, ecologically sound, humane, and fair).
3.4.3 Using STARS and Real Food criteria as a guide, establish UR-specific sustainable food procurement targets by 2020.
3.4.4 Implement a sustainable food plan aimed at achieving UR-specific sustainable food procurement targets by 2021.
3.4.5 Explore sustainable procurement guidelines for catering and off campus food vendors.

3.5 Reduce food waste to the landfill by 50% by 2025.
3.5.1 Research best practices in food recovery, establish internal processes for both recovery and reuse, and develop partnerships to streamline and increase capacity for food donations.
3.5.2 Pilot pre-consumer food composting collection in Retail Dining by 2020.
3.5.3 Compost pre- and post-consumer food waste by 2025.
**Investment & Procurement**

3.6 Develop innovative funding mechanisms to support sustainable practices on campus.

3.6.1 Implement a green revolving fund to accelerate projects that reduce the University’s environmental impact, provide a long-term economic return, and promote education and engagement of campus stakeholders.

3.6.2 Explore development of a green fund that provides small, competitive grants for the campus community to develop sustainability solutions.

3.6.3 Investigate the feasibility of adopting a revenue neutral carbon charge on campus.

3.7 Enhance the University’s ability to engage with the campus community on issues of responsible investing.

3.7.1 In partnership with Spider Management, explore the development of a committee on responsible investing aimed at increasing understanding of institutional investments and providing input on matters of importance to students, faculty, and staff.

3.7.2 Collaborate with other universities who have established responsible investment committees to benchmark best practices.

3.8 Increase the amount of environmentally and socially preferable purchases as a percentage of total goods purchased.

3.8.1 Explore the feasibility of setting internal sustainable purchasing standards and identifying how to implement data tracking measures.

3.8.2 Formalize and publicize sustainable procurement policies on purchased goods, including electronics (e.g., EPEAT), appliances (e.g., Energy Star), paper goods (e.g., Forest Stewardship Council), and cleaning supplies (e.g., Green Seal).

3.8.3 Identify professional development opportunities in sustainable purchasing for Procurement personnel.

3.8.4 Research sustainable purchasing standards and available training for personnel who purchase goods on campus.

3.8.5 Examine best practices of total cost of ownership and total life-cycle cost implementation in purchasing and decision making.

3.9 Research and implement sustainability procurement standards for outside vendors.

3.9.1 Reinforce prioritization for working with women- and minority-owned enterprises.

3.9.2 Identify a process to certify that all Richmond trademarked apparel is produced under fair labor conditions.

3.9.3 Develop environmental standards and practice guidelines for major business partners.

**Land & Water**

3.10 Design and maintain campus landscapes in a manner that supports ecological health, advances student learning, and promotes recreation.

3.10.1 Develop and implement a Sustainable Landscape Management Plan following guidelines from the Sustainable SITES initiative.

3.10.2 Alongside partners in Biology and Environmental Studies, generate a UR biodiversity management plan and draft an invasive species management plan for the Eco-Corridor, Westhampton Green, and other open spaces on campus.

3.10.3 Conduct an assessment to identify endangered or vulnerable species, and environmentally sensitive areas on University land.

3.10.4 Explore the development and use of outdoor spaces to support education, wellness, recreation, and research, including open-air classrooms, gathering spaces, field sites.

3.10.5 Research the appropriateness and availability of using battery-powered landscape equipment on campus.

3.11 Manage campus lands to steward the James River watershed, increase water capture, and reduce stormwater impacts.

3.11.1 Create a watershed management plan centered on restoring the ecological function, aesthetic beauty, educational capacity, and recreational function of Westhampton Lake.

3.11.2 Explore use of Westhampton Lake as a source of on-campus irrigation.

3.11.3 Restore Little Westham Creek and implement best management practices to improve stormwater management, increase groundwater recharge, and reduce nutrient and sediment flow to the James River.

3.11.4 Increase use of low-water landscape features and install rain catchment systems and cisterns in areas where irrigation is desired.

3.11.5 Assess the ratio of hardscape (paved, wood, or stone surfaces) to softscape (living objects in the landscape) to inform need for permeable paving surfaces.
3.12 Reduce potable water usage 50% below 2010 levels by 2025.

3.12.1 Investigate and utilize on-site technologies for water reclamation and reuse for utility and landscape purposes.

3.12.2 Sub-meter water usage in each building, set reduction targets based on established baseline, and implement efficiency and reduction strategies.

Transportation

3.13 Reduce carbon emissions related to transportation and mobility.

3.13.1 Increase the use of carpooling, public transit, walking, and/or biking as primary means of student, staff, and faculty transportation.

3.13.2 Study the feasibility of offsetting emissions associated with University-supported travel.

3.13.3 Increase the number of electric and gas-electric hybrid vehicles, solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations, and infrastructure to support them.

3.13.4 Transition 30% of the University fleet toward electric vehicles by 2025.

3.14 Improve campus connectivity with the greater Richmond region.

3.14.1 Build community and agency partnerships to make the roadways surrounding campus safer for biking and walking in alignment with the City of Richmond’s Complete Streets Policy.

3.14.2 Explore opportunity to expand the Green Bike program and connect with City of Richmond on potential partnership regarding bicycles, scooters, and other personal transportation options.

3.14.3 Increase the number of sidewalks, bike lanes, and car-free areas to promote a more pedestrian friendly campus as described in the 2011 Campus Master Plan.

3.14.4 Pursue certification in the League of American Cyclists Bicycle Friendly University program.

Waste

3.15 Divert 75% of materials from the landfill by 2025.

3.15.1 Achieve Rethink Waste rollout (co-location of bins; standardized signage, bins, and bag colors) across campus by 2020.

3.15.2 Implement a pre- and post-consumer composting program on campus.

3.15.3 Explore the feasibility of a materials sort center on or near campus.

3.15.4 Provide in-person and online Rethink Waste training for all students, staff, and faculty.

3.16 Reduce gross waste totals 15% by 2025.

3.16.1 Research and adopt processes that consider the end of product life in purchasing decisions, including questions of avoidance, reduction, reuse, and recycling.

3.16.2 Implement and promote reuse strategies across campus and develop measures to minimize prevalence of single-use disposable items.

3.16.3 Develop internal systems and external partnerships to improve capacity for donations of usable goods.
Identify and activate organizational systems, resources, partnerships, and processes that weave sustainability into the fabric of the University.

4.1 Build UR’s capacity to achieve Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Assessment, Tracking & Rating System (STARS) Gold by 2022 and STARS Platinum by 2025.

4.1.1 Expand resources available to the Office for Sustainability to bolster its ability to assess and report on UR’s sustainability performance, develop and run programs, manage institutional sustainability goals, and collaborate with administrative, operational, and academic partners.

4.1.2 Identify tasks, roles and responsibilities, resources, and timelines associated with achieving AASHE STARS Gold by 2019 and STARS Platinum by 2023.

4.2 With the support of University leadership, develop methods and identify necessary resources for departmental and unit-level ownership of sustainability so that programs, operations, and events across campus can more readily incorporate sustainability into their work.

4.2.1 Create an online resource that provides the opportunity for each department, office, or unit to understand and articulate their resource use and impact on the campus, as well as their unique contribution to sustainability.

4.2.2 Offer the opportunity for individual departments or units to work with a sustainability strategy team to identify opportunities to create unit-level action plans relevant to their own needs and challenges that support the University’s sustainability goals and initiatives.

4.3 Incorporate sustainability into development, planning & policy, and strategic communications.

4.3.1 Partner with the Advancement Office to clarify the case for sustainability as a leading priority for the University and an important development strategy.

4.3.2 Alongside the Office of Planning & Policy, develop a guide for existing sustainability policies, implement and publicize new policies that support University sustainability goals, and establish a mechanism to communicate, track, and implement said policies.

4.3.3 Partner with University Communications to develop a common understanding of sustainability and explore the feasibility of a communications plan that increases the ability of the University to tell its sustainability story.

4.4 Build upon existing partnerships and create new relationships to strengthen efforts that improve the health of people and the well-being of the natural world.

4.4.1 Collaborate with Wellness and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Thriving initiatives, as well as other strategic partners, in order to expand the understanding of sustainability to include a more inclusive, just, healthy, balanced, diverse, and safe campus and community.

4.4.2 Increase the number of students and staff participating in sustainability-related community service and community engagement projects in partnership with the Center for Civic Engagement.

4.4.3 Work with the Center for Civic Engagement to strengthen community partnerships in sustainability to advance initiatives that build resilience in the greater Richmond area.

4.4.4 Increase both intra- and inter-campus collaboration to grow the statewide, nationwide, and global sustainability community.
Feedback & Next Steps

Let Us Know Your Thoughts
Once you have read through this draft plan, we want to hear your thoughts, your questions, and your feedback. You can access the feedback form using the QR code to the right or at richmond.edu/sustainabilityplan.

Next Steps
The Steering Committee will gather feedback from students, staff, and faculty across campus. We will use the feedback on this draft to create a finalized sustainability plan. The target date for adoption of the plan is spring 2019.

Sustainability Plan Steering Committee
The Steering Committee has guided the sustainability planning process and will continue to lead plan engagement, review, and implementation.

Committee Members:
- Rob Andrejewski: Director of Sustainability
- Harleen Bal: Student ’18, Environmental Studies and Healthcare Studies
- Wendy Burchard: Strategic Sourcing Manager
- Cassandra Collins: Sustainability, Communications & Engagement Specialist
- Amy Howard: AVP of Community Initiatives and the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement
- Melanie Jenkins: Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Paul Lozo: Director of Maintenance
- Miriam McCormick: Associate Professor of Philosophy and Philosophy, Politics, Economics and Law
- Shahan Mufti: Associate Professor of Journalism
- Andrew Schoeneman: Assistant Professor and Chair of Nonprofit Studies, School of Professional & Continuing Studies

Committee Members:
- Sam Abrash: Associate Professor of Chemistry and Environmental Studies
- Rob Andrejewski: Director of Sustainability
- Cassandra Collins: Sustainability, Communications & Engagement Specialist
- David Donaldson: Operations & Summer Programs Coordinator, Events, Conferences, & Support Services
- Joel Eisen: Professor of Law
- Mary Finley-Brook: Associate Professor of Geography and the Environment
- Jessica Flanigan: Associate Professor of Leadership Studies and Philosophy, Politics, Economics and Law
- Tim Hamilton: Assistant Professor of Economics
- Dee Hardy: AVP for Campus Services
- Amy Howard: AVP of Community Initiatives and the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement
- Andrew McBride: AVP for Facilities, University Architect
- Miriam McCormick: Associate Professor of Philosophy and Philosophy, Politics, Economics and Law
- Justin Mure: Student ’19, Biology and Healthcare Studies
- Tom Roberts: AVP of Recreation and Wellness
- Andrew Schoeneman: Assistant Professor and Chair of Nonprofit Studies, School of Professional & Continuing Studies
- Carl Sorensen: AVP for Human Resources
- George Souleret: University Engineer
- Allison Steele: Manager of Custodial and Environmental Services

Sustainability & Environmental Awareness Committee
The Sustainability and Environmental Awareness Committee is an Administrative Committee approved by the Faculty Senate in June 2016. The committee is advisory in nature and addresses issues that pertain to sustainability at University of Richmond. They have provided invaluable subject matter expertise in the sustainability plan review process.

Committee Members:
- Sam Abrash: Associate Professor of Chemistry and Environmental Studies
- Rob Andrejewski: Director of Sustainability
- Cassandra Collins: Sustainability, Communications & Engagement Specialist
- David Donaldson: Operations & Summer Programs Coordinator, Events, Conferences, & Support Services
- Joel Eisen: Professor of Law
- Mary Finley-Brook: Associate Professor of Geography and the Environment
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