

# SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN



Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University

2024 – Sustainability Office



# Contents

<b>Land Acknowledgement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A Message from President Mohamed Lachemi and Vice-President, Administration and Operations Saeed Zolfaghari</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Definition of sustainability	4
1.2 Purpose of the Sustainability Action Plan	5
1.3 Shaping the plan: How the action plan was developed	6
<b>2. Three Long-Term Goals of the Action Plan</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Goal 1: Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035	10
2.2 Goal 2: Zero-waste by 2035	11
2.3 Goal 3: Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2045	14
<b>3. Five Key Areas of Impact</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Academics	20
3.2 Research and innovation	21
3.3 Operations	22
3.4 Community engagement and partnerships	29
3.5 Administration and planning	31
<b>4. Action Plan Delivery</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1 Implementation	33
4.2 Progress reporting	33
<b>Appendix—Targets at a Glance</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>35</b>



# Land Acknowledgement

The Sustainability Action Plan charts a course for Toronto Metropolitan University to improve its connection with the land and the communities we share it with and serve.

Toronto is located in the Dish With One Spoon Territory. The Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and peoples, Europeans and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect.

The “Dish,” sometimes referred to as the “Bowl,” symbolizes what is now southern Ontario. We all eat out of the Dish, everyone who shares this territory, using only one spoon. This means we share the responsibility of ensuring the Dish is never empty, including taking care of the land and the creatures we share it with.

Incorporating the Dish With One Spoon Treaty into our sustainability initiatives signifies a crucial aspect of our commitment to sustainability.

It emphasizes responsible land stewardship and acknowledges the enduring Indigenous practices of environmental sustainability, such as the responsible use of resources, conservation and the preservation of ecosystems. This acknowledgment serves as a reminder that sustainability is not merely an abstract concept but a practical commitment rooted in respecting and caring for the land upon which we all depend. It is also a commitment to the original inhabitants of the land TMU is based on and their right to self-determination.

This Sustainability Action Plan, envisioning progress through to 2029, underscores the need to consider a longer time horizon—actions that can be taken today, in the near term, and in the future. It adopts the philosophy of acting as responsible custodians of the world for, not only for the wellbeing and flourishing of the current generation but also for those who come after us.



# A Message from President Mohamed Lachemi and Vice-President, Administration and Operations Saeed Zolfaghari

It is with pride and determination that TMU is launching its first-ever Sustainability Action Plan. As a city-builder and a university known for fostering innovation, we recognize the role we play in advancing sustainability, driving restorative climate action and inspiring a cultural movement toward an ecologically responsible, equitable and inclusive future.

Within this action plan, we've outlined a roadmap for transformation and provided our community with clear direction for concerted effort. We've also set ambitious goals to hold ourselves accountable as an institution. The plan's three key goals will help us make incremental changes in behaviours, operations and physical systems throughout key areas where we can generate the greatest positive impact. Our approach is holistic and ambitious, forging stronger partnerships across campus and embedding sustainability into every aspect of our institution from academics and research, to our daily operations and more.

The plan was developed collaboratively with students, faculty, staff and alumni to help us rethink our actions, continually evaluate our choices and follow through with sustainable options.

Meaningful action can result in significant change when amplified through collective effort. The TMU community built the plan as a collaborative effort and together we can achieve its goals. Success is possible if we all contribute to a sustainable future that preserves the vitality of our planet, and the enduring prosperity and well-being of future generations. As you review this plan, we encourage you to consider how you can contribute to sustainability on our campus and beyond. Together, we can transform TMU into a model of sustainability that inspires others and makes a significant impact on the world.

**Mohamed Lachemi**  
President and Vice-Chancellor

**Saeed Zolfaghari**  
Vice-President,  
Administration and Operations



# 1. Introduction

Global climate change has reached a crisis point with environmental degradation, weather extremes and natural disasters, economic disruption and food insecurity. A global cultural shift that embeds sustainable practices in all that we do is imperative to preserve and rehabilitate our fragile ecosystems, maintain our planet's vitality and ensure its global inhabitants' wellbeing.

As a leading higher-education institution, Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) is not only committed to tackling real-world challenges but also aims to be a beacon of innovation and leadership in restorative climate action and environmental recovery, while also championing social equity and economic stability. We understand our pivotal role in catalyzing transformative change and extending our impact from local communities to the global stage.

From scholarly, research and creative activities, to the way we operate our campus and engage with our community, our goal to cement sustainability across all areas of the institution will help empower our community to build a future that is inclusive, equitable, prosperous and ecologically balanced.



## | 1.1 Definition of sustainability

Our vision of campus sustainability builds on the foundational principles defined by leaders and visionaries who recognized the interdependence of the environment and socioeconomic development. The UN's Brundtland Report, Our Common Future, put sustainable development on the global stage in 1987 as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

At TMU we have expanded that core concept to include:

**Living harmoniously within the limits of natural resources, so that all living systems can flourish indefinitely. This requires improving the quality of the environment and human relationships with it in a manner that promotes equity, wellbeing and justice for every community member.**

True sustainability involves a forward-thinking, interdisciplinary approach that advances and safeguards the economy, social progress and the environment holistically. Our definition of sustainability calls for new ways of thinking and organizing ourselves for the enduring prosperity and wellbeing of future generations.

*This definition was developed from input from the CCASC committee, along with feedback from TMU community members.*

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## | 1.2 Purpose of the Sustainability Action Plan

TMU's first university-wide Sustainability Action Plan presents a distinct opportunity for every individual—students, faculty, staff and partners—to contribute meaningfully towards a greener, more inclusive future.

TMU has developed a five-year Sustainability Action Plan that outlines three long-term goals along five key areas of impact that align with our long-term vision and address the university's unique strengths and challenges. The university has done this by aligning the action plan with strategic priorities, research and by engaging the university community.

The Action Plan is not static. It is a dynamic, living document and strategy that will adapt and evolve as our university community continues to acquire knowledge about integrating sustainability practices and climate action into all facets of our institution. This adaptability is particularly crucial in the face of rapid social, economic, ecological, political, and technological change and innovation.

### **Alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a call for action by all countries to promote prosperity and social equity while protecting the planet.

The 17 SDGs were developed by the United Nations to address the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing our world. The goals are interdependent and recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies for social equity, health and wellbeing, and environmental protection.

TMU's Sustainability Action Plan is one way that we are contributing to the SDGs' long-term goals for ending poverty, protecting the planet and tackling inequalities.



### | 1.3 Shaping the plan: How the action plan was developed

The TMU Sustainability Action Plan benefited from a comprehensive, five-step engagement process with the university community from 2021 to 2023, which included students, alumni, faculty, senior administrators, and facilities and operations teams across the five key areas of impact ([page 19](#)).

1. Students, faculty and staff were engaged through outreach and surveys.
2. The Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee was formed (CCSAC).

3. The Sustainability Office drafted the plan based on community and CCSAC feedback.
4. The plan was reviewed and approved by senior administrators and the Executive Group.
5. Ongoing and periodic review of the plan will be managed by CCSAC.

#### **Step 1: Outreach and engagement**

The process began in January 2021 with the launch of the sustainability-action-planning survey. The survey aimed to

understand existing sustainability practices, habits and levels of awareness on campus among a broad range of students, faculty, staff and community members. It received 2,417 responses.

In 2023 the Sustainability Office partnered with [Generation Climate](#), a youth-driven initiative focused on climate-action awareness. Over the course of one week, Generation Climate engaged with approximately 100 TMU students to gauge their perspectives on sustainability and environmental initiatives. The data collected from this event played a pivotal role in shaping the initial draft of our action plan.

# 2,417

responses to initial campus-wide survey

## Top 5 high-priority items for students, faculty and staff

1. Reduce waste



2. Create a greener campus



3. Increase recycling and composting



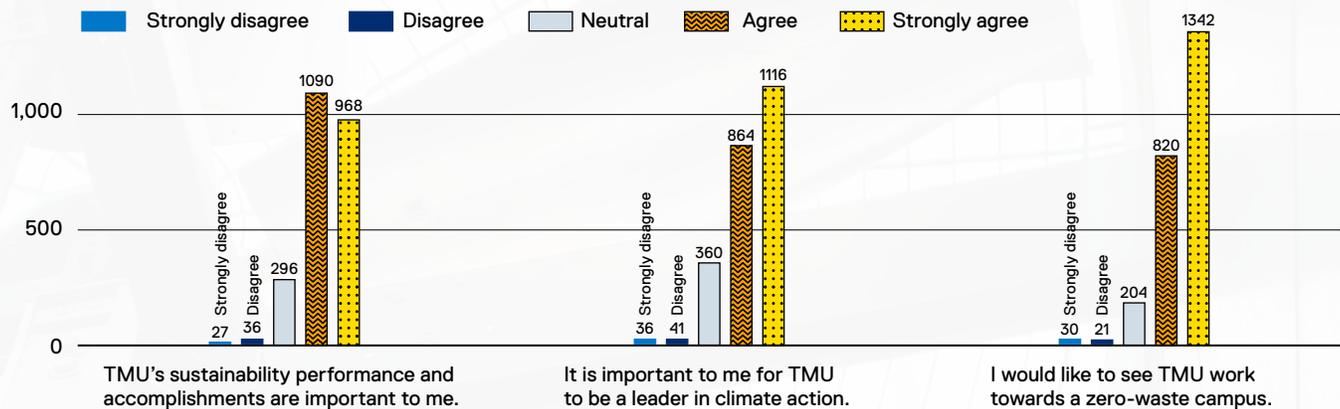
4. Develop a climate action plan to reduce GHG emissions



5. Ensure sustainability criteria are included in university purchasing decisions



### How strongly do you agree with the following statements?



## 1.3 Shaping the plan: How the action plan was developed (cont'd)

Following the survey, preliminary discussions were conducted with key stakeholder groups in specific areas to gain an initial understanding of what could be achieved and what might not be feasible within a five-year timeline. These discussions involved groups overseeing engagement, buildings and grounds, waste management and food services.

The final component of our engagement and outreach strategy comprised a campus-wide survey and an in-person expo. This concluding phase served as a crucial checkpoint to validate alignment with the feedback collected earlier. Overall, both initiatives revealed a strong level of support and agreement with our long-term goals and plan structure.

### Step 2: Climate change and sustainability advisory committee (CCSAC)

In 2023, a significant step in the consultation process was marked by the establishment of the Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee (CCSAC). Composed of 21 members representing students, faculty and staff, CCSAC actively supported the development of the Sustainability Action Plan and regularly discussed and contributed to its strategic planning to ensure its targets are realistic, inclusive and reflect the needs and values of the university community.

### Step 3: Integration with existing and relevant plans and policies

Throughout the consultation process, there was a focus on aligning with existing plans and policies to foster coherence and synergy across TMU's sustainability initiatives.

These plans and policies include:

- [Strategic Vision](#) (2020 – 2030)
- [Academic Plan](#) (2020 – 2025)
- [Campus Master Plan](#) (2020)
- [Strategic Research Plan](#) (2020 – 2025)
- [Toward TMU 2030](#)
- [Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan](#) (2019-2024)
- [Asset Management Plan](#) (2018)
- [Standing Strong Task Force: Report and Recommendations](#)

Overall, this extensive and collaborative consultation process helped shape a university-wide initiative, with all members of the community actively invested in its success.



## 2. Three Long-Term Goals of the Action Plan

1. Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
2. Zero-waste by 2035
3. Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045 (plus, develop Scope 3 emissions tracking methodology by 2026)

The three long-term goals of our action plan were designed to cut across the five key areas of impact ([page 19](#)). In selecting these goals, we placed a strong emphasis on the following elements:



### Alignment with core values:

Our sustainability goals are closely aligned with TMU's foundational values and priorities, ensuring coherence and commitment across our institution.



### Community engagement:

Insights from the TMU community have been integral in tailoring our goals to reflect collective aspirations and concerns.



### Benchmarking excellence:

We've benchmarked against leading sustainability frameworks like AASHE STARS, QS Ranking, and THE Impact Rankings to shape ambitious yet achievable goals.



### Learning from the best:

By analyzing sustainability strategies from peer institutions and industry leaders, we've crafted a well informed, strategic approach.



### Meeting government standards:

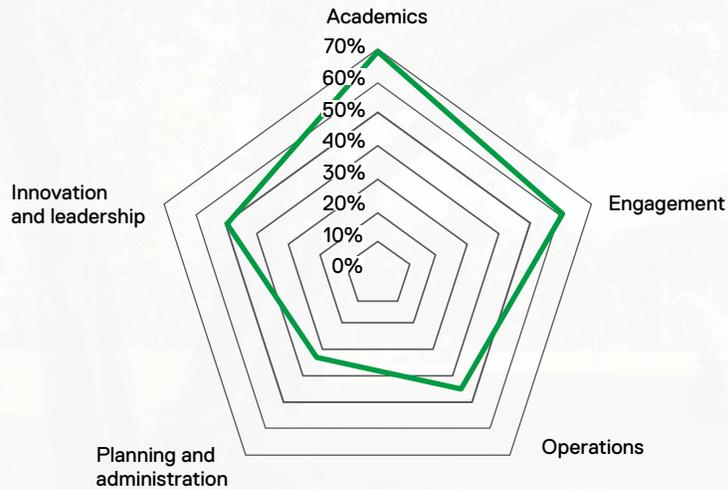
Our objectives are designed to comply with and exceed government targets for emissions and waste management at all levels.



### Embracing a global vision:

Our commitments are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underscoring our dedication to global sustainability efforts.

## TMU's 2020 STARS Submission Results



## | 2.1 Goal 1: Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035

### Why it's important

The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS®) is an industry-specific scorecard that helps us measure our progress. A Platinum STARS rating indicates that an institution not only meets the highest scores in recognized best practices, but has also demonstrated that it has developed actionable strategies for continuous improvement in climate action and social equity.

STARS® is built around four categories: Academics, engagement, operations, planning and administration.

### There are five levels of recognition:

- Reporter
- Bronze (minimum score: 25)
- Silver (minimum score: 45)
- Gold (minimum score: 65)
- Platinum (minimum score: 85)

### Where we are now



TMU received its first STARS® rating in 2021, achieving Silver with a score of 54.26.

TMU's 2021 rating was submitted under version 2.1 of the STARS® system, which has now been upgraded to version 2.2. While a higher score for our 2024 STARS® report is anticipated, it is worth noting that it will become increasingly difficult to obtain and maintain a Platinum rating as the STARS® system is further developed.

### What we need to do to achieve our goal

TMU must commit to embedding sustainability in all areas and at every level to increase our ranking by +30.74.

### Interim target(s)

- By 2024, achieve a Gold Ranking
- By 2028, improve our STARS Gold Ranking

### High-impact actions

#### Planning and administration:

- Develop and publish a Climate Action Plan.
- Develop and implement formal policies and procedures (e.g. publicly available strategy or policy on sustainable procurement)

**Operations:** Improve building energy efficiency, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission-reduction targets

**Academics:** Include sustainability into learning outcomes



## | 2.2 Goal 2: Zero-waste by 2035

### What “waste diversion rate” means

A waste diversion rate measures the percentage of waste not sent to the landfill through reuse, donation, recycling, and composting.

### Why it’s important

Institutionally and as individuals we are accountable for all the materials that we procure and relinquish. Conscientious resource management can mitigate our ecological impact. Minimizing the waste we generate reduces our reliance on virgin materials and the energy required for extraction, fabrication, transportation and recycling. Good resource stewardship also supports social equity and improves health by supporting a circular economy and reducing pollution.

### Where we are now

The diversion rate for 2023 was 31.74%

The university has made significant efforts to increase awareness on waste sorting habits and improve waste infrastructure on campus. Between 2018 and 2021, TMU transitioned from a three-stream system (1. waste to landfill, 2. bottles and cans and 3. paper) to include a fourth stream: Organics. We upgraded infrastructure to ensure consistency of waste bin type and signage across campus and actively engaged and trained students, faculty and staff on how to take part in reducing waste and maximizing recycling.

To achieve our goal of becoming a “zero-waste campus” with a waste diversion rate of 90% or higher, there is still much work ahead. TMU’s waste diversion rate has consistently hovered around 40% over the past seven years, from 2013 to 2019. However, due to the

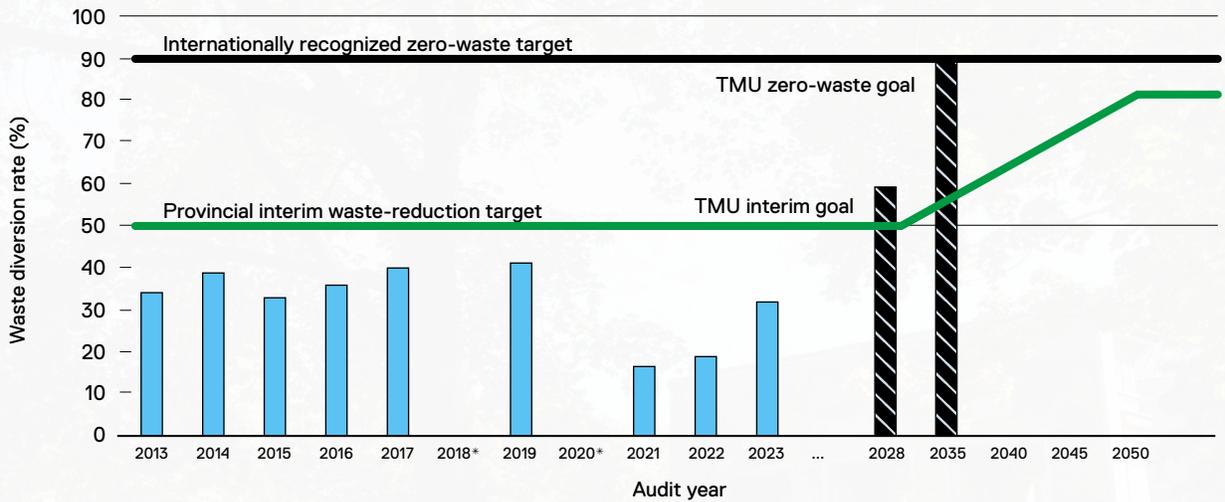
impact of COVID-19, we experienced a significant decrease in our overall diversion rate, which fell to 19% in 2021. Nevertheless, we are now witnessing a positive trajectory back toward our pre-pandemic levels.

(2020 data not included due to operational impact of COVID-19).

### What we need to do to achieve our goal

To meet the target’s, TMU is prioritizing emission reductions from waste and supporting a circular economy that promotes reuse and redistribution to give usable materials a second life. TMU has established a sustainable procurement process and needs to expand reuse programs, education and engagement initiatives—60% of the waste we send to landfill could be recycled through streams already offered.

## TMU Annual Waste Diversion Rates



\*No audits conducted for 2018 or 2020

## | 2.2 Goal 2: Zero-waste by 2035 (cont'd)

**Gap to be filled: +50%**

### Interim target(s)

- By 2028, surpass current provincial waste diversion target of 50%
- By 2028, reduce waste generated on campus by 15% compared to baseline year of 2019

### High-impact actions

**Sustainable procurement:** Implement and publish comprehensive policies for sustainable purchasing

**Construction and demolition waste reduction:** Strategies to minimize waste in construction projects

### Expand reuse and circularity

**programs:** Enhance and broaden campus-wide reuse initiatives

### Education and awareness:

Raise awareness through targeted education initiatives and behaviour change strategies



TMU has developed a five-year Sustainability Action Plan that outlines three long-term goals along five key areas of impact that align with our long-term vision and address the university's unique strengths and challenges. The university has done this by aligning the action plan with strategic priorities, research and by engaging the university community.



## | 2.3 Goal 3: Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2045

### What “net zero” means: Understanding emissions and their scopes

Greenhouse Gases (GHGs), which include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>, “carbon”), trap heat in the atmosphere and warm the planet. GHG Protocol is an organization that provides greenhouse gas (GHG) definitions and accounting standards that are used globally to measure and manage GHG emissions, value chains and mitigation strategies. The standards allow organizations to identify, monitor and address their emissions inventories.

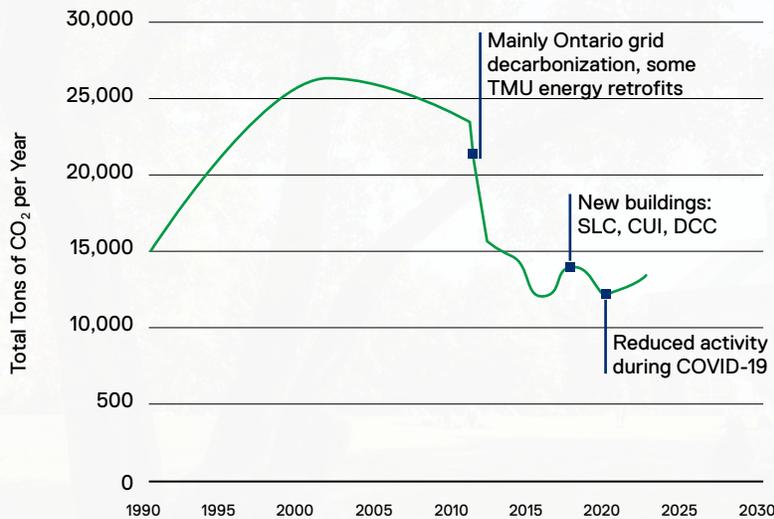
**Scope 1 emissions** include direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by an organization, e.g., the combustion of natural gas in boilers and furnaces to heat campus buildings and the use of internal combustion engine vehicles owned or operated by TMU.

**Scope 2 emissions** include indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy, such as the emissions related to the purchase and consumption of electricity from a utilities provider.

**Scope 3 emissions** include additional indirect emissions that occur in the organization’s value chain, such as those associated with purchased goods and services and travel.

According to the Government of Canada: “Achieving net-zero emissions means our economy either emits no greenhouse gas emissions or offsets its emissions, for example, through actions such as tree planting or employing technologies that can capture carbon before it is released into the air.”

## Historic Trends



## Why it's important

Net-zero emissions are crucial in combating climate change to secure a viable planet for future generations. To effectively limit warming—and the economic volatility and climate instability it causes—immediate and aggressive emission reductions are needed worldwide.

Achieving net zero at TMU means improving the energy efficiency of the campus and operations, as well as significant investment into existing facilities. The university has the most direct control over Scope 1 & 2 emissions. Indirect emissions from Scope 3 are the most challenging to address within the purview of a five-year plan and will continue to be tracked, mitigated and linked to future targets.

## Where we are now

Annual Scope 1 & 2 emissions: 13,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

## What we need to do to achieve our goal(s)

There is no single initiative that will enable the university to meet these objectives. A suite of infrastructure, policy and behavioral changes will need to work together to reduce emissions.

While TMU aims for net-zero Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2045, it is important to acknowledge that achieving this goal solely through electrification may be insufficient using existing technologies. Ontario's electricity grid, while having a relatively low emissions intensity, nevertheless has emissions associated with it.

It is likely that supplementary strategies such as renewable energy generation and carbon offset purchases will be necessary. However, as a decarbonization strategy, carbon offset purchases will be only considered as a last

resort due to several inherent issues, primarily around the quality and verifiability of offset purchase options currently available.

## Interim target(s)

By 2035, reduce Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 40% compared to the 2019 baseline year

## High-impact actions

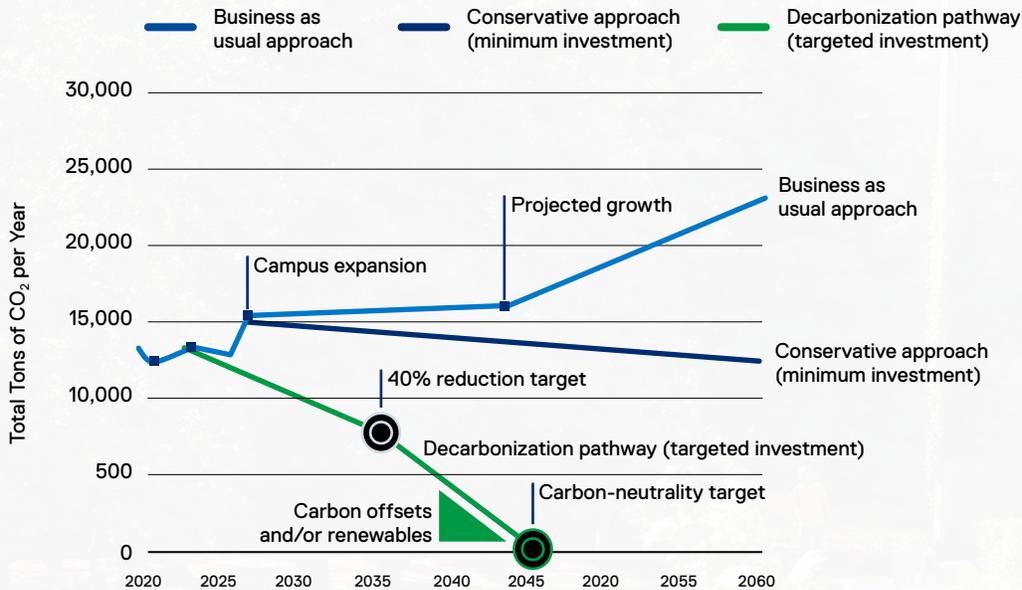
### Building energy efficiency:

Implement program to increase energy efficiency of existing campus buildings

**District heating system:** Switch existing steam district energy system to low-carbon alternative such as low-temperature hot water system with electric heat pumps

**Low carbon energy use:** Utilize low-carbon source of energy such as geothermal and wastewater heat recovery.

## Future Scenarios



### 2.3.1 Scope 3 value-chain, emissions-management planning

Scope 3 emissions are not the direct result of our own operations or assets. They are related to the emissions caused along the value chain that supports our activities.

For example, the emissions generated by the upstream production and downstream disposal of materials we procure, e.g. consumables like paper and soap, personal protective equipment (PPE), tools, equipment and technology, or the travel that university faculty and staff undertake for university business.

#### Interim target(s)

Develop a comprehensive Scope 3 emissions-tracking methodology by 2026. The methodology will be used to track performance of all areas of impact: Academics, research and innovation, operations, community engagement and partnerships, planning and administration.

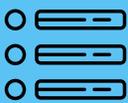
#### Proposed actions and considerations

Life-cycle emissions across the value chain are broad, complex and involve many actors and sources that are not always within TMU's direct control. For most organizations, including TMU, Scope 3 emissions

are far larger than Scope 1 & 2 emissions combined, which makes it essential to prioritize action to maximize impact.

As a critical step towards reducing Scope 3 emissions, we have developed a [Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines](#) and are more rigorously integrating sustainability considerations into our procurement processes. This initiative will play a pivotal role in mitigating emissions associated with purchased goods and services along our supply chain.

## As part of our commitment to addressing Scope 3 emissions, we will:

**1** 

### **Prioritize impactful Scope 3 emission categories:**

Identify where efforts can significantly reduce emissions within TMU and the broader community.

**2** 

### **Assess data quality and availability:**

Evaluate the data related to priority emissions for accuracy and comprehensiveness to establish reliable baselines and track progress.

**3** 

### **Leverage best practices and collaborate with peers:**

Engage with other institutions to adopt proven Scope 3 emissions management strategies and collaborate for greater impact.

**4** 

### **Target quick wins:**

Focus on readily achievable emission reduction measures in priority areas for cost-effective improvements.

**5** 

### **Set category-specific key performance indicators (KPIs):**

Develop specific indicators to monitor sustainability efforts and progress towards emission-reduction targets.

**6** 

### **Educate our community about travel emissions:**

Provide resources to the university community about the emissions impact of travel choices and encourage lower-emission options.



### 3. Five Key Areas of Impact

Five priority areas were identified where sustainability initiatives could be achieved through changes in operations and physical systems, cultural and behavioural changes, or combinations thereof. These five areas were identified in consideration of TMU's [Strategic Vision](#), the [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System \(STARS®\)](#) and the UN's [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).



### **Academics:**

We must graduate more changemakers by leading in sustainability education and research.



### **Research and innovation:**

We must pioneer research and innovation for scalable sustainability solutions while leveraging our campus as a testbed and incubator.



### **Operations:**

We must demonstrate our commitment to sustainability through all aspects of the development, operations and maintenance of our campus.

- a. Buildings and utilities
- b. Grounds and ecosystems
- c. Waste and circular materials management
- d. Transportation
- e. Food systems and dining
- f. Procurement



### **Community engagement and partnerships:**

We must empower our community members to advance sustainability both on campus and off campus, driving a culture shift through strategic partnerships.



### **Planning and administration:**

We must ensure that sustainability considerations are fully integrated in our institutional and administrative functions.

- a. Equity and justice
- b. Governance



## 3.1 Academics

### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

### Interim target(s)

By 2030, Sustainability is embedded into all relevant programs with opportunities for foundational sustainability education to all undergraduate and graduate students.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Integrate program-level sustainability learning outcomes into the curriculum, aiming for a minimum of 25% of students graduating from these programs.	Started to track	• Provost and Vice-President, Academic
2	Administer the sustainability literacy assessment to all (100%) students.	Underway	• Facilities Management & Development – Sustainability Office
3	Establish a formal program that supports academic staff to develop new sustainability courses and/or incorporate sustainability into existing courses.	Underway	• Facilities Management & Development – Sustainability Office • Provost and Vice-President, Academic
4	Explore methods to make sustainability education easier to identify and access for all students (undergraduate and graduate).	Underway	• Facilities Management & Development – Sustainability Office • Provost and Vice-President, Academic
5	Explore transdisciplinary sustainability courses and modules to support future needs of industry, business and government.	Underway	• Provost and Vice-President, Academic
6	Develop a climate literacy module tailored for TMU community members upon their arrival at TMU.	Not started	• Facilities Management & Development – Sustainability Office



## 3.2 Research and innovation

### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

### Interim target(s)

By 2030, TMU aims to strengthen its position as a dedicated institution for interdisciplinary sustainability research, further establishing sustainability as a core thematic focus of our reputation and identity.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Create a working group for campus as a living lab project and transdisciplinary sustainability.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI)</li> </ul>
2	Set up an intake process for campus as a living lab research requests.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
3	Use the intake process to create and track KPIs related to campus research collaboration.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>• Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI)</li> </ul>
4	Provide on-going support for the Urban Farm Living Lab.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>• Urban Farm</li> </ul>
5	Develop tracking mechanism for research related to Sustainable Development Goals.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI)</li> <li>• University Planning Office</li> </ul>
6	Increase institutional research capacity on green transitions.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI)</li> </ul>



## 3.3 Operations

### 3.3.1 Buildings and utilities

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### Interim target(s)

By 2035, 40% reduction of Scope 1 & 2 emissions from 2019 baseline year.

#### Long-term goal

Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2045.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Develop Sustainable Building Guidelines with energy and emissions performance requirements including embodied carbon considerations.	First iteration complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
2	Improve energy and emissions performance of campus operations by developing efficiency standards for operations and maintenance, conducting building retro-commissioning/renewals, and implementing infrastructure upgrades.	In progress (lagging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office, Project Management Office (PMO), Maintenance &amp; Operations (M&amp;O)</li> </ul>
3	Have a list of shovel-ready decarbonization projects scoped out to utilize funding opportunities.	In progress (target mid-2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office, Maintenance &amp; Operations (M&amp;O)</li> </ul>
4	Assess options to reduce or eliminate dependence on the district steam system.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office, Maintenance &amp; Operations (M&amp;O)</li> <li>• Legal Services</li> </ul>
5	Complete third-party verification of GHG emissions inventory.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
6	Increase the percentage of low-carbon energy sources on campus.	Underway (lagging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability, Maintenance &amp; Operations M&amp;O</li> </ul>
7	Enable funding mechanism and resource allocation to achieve decarbonization targets (i.e. Green Revolving Fund).	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> </ul>



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
8	Create a publicly accessible campus energy and emissions dashboard using a submetering system.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration &amp; Operations, Communications</li> <li>• Computing and Communications Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
9	Integrate health, well-being and accessibility considerations into the existing building guidelines to align with the WELL Building Standard or equivalent certifications.	Completed (updates underway)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
10	Employ full life-cycle costing in capital planning, including the consideration of carbon emissions, demolition waste and materials reuse in evaluating redevelopment or renovation options.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> </ul>
11	Raise the visibility of sustainable building features through communications such as interpretive signage and experiential learning activities in courses.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration &amp; Operations, Communications</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>



### 3.3.2 Grounds and ecosystems

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### General short- to long-term goal

By 2028, develop landscaping projects that reduce the heat-island effect, increase biodiversity and foster wellbeing.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Leverage TMU's Campus Master Plan into a roadmap for landscape and storm water management.	In progress	• Facilities Management & Development
2	Invite engagement with nature and the outdoors through building and landscape design strategies and coordinate with various campus health and wellness programs.	Somewhat started	• Facilities Management & Development • Student Wellbeing • Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI) • University Business Services – Urban Farm
3	Promote unoccupied green roofs on buildings where rooftop alternative-energy generation is not feasible or viable to mitigate the heat-island effect.	Somewhat started	• Facilities Management & Development

### 3.3.3 Waste and circular materials management

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### Interim target(s)

- Achieve provincial diversion target of 60% by 2028
- By 2028, reduce waste generated on campus compared to baseline year of 2019

#### Long-term goal

- Zero-waste campus by 2035.



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
<b>Campus infrastructure</b>			
1	Improve campus-wide waste tracking and monitoring for major waste streams.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>Housing &amp; Residence Life</li> <li>Food Services</li> </ul>
2	Continue to improve waste infrastructure to support recycling and composting rates.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
3	Complete campus-wide rollout of centralized waste system.	Almost Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
<b>Campus waste reduction</b>			
4	Elevate awareness of the university's waste diversion goal and engage the campus community in ambition to become a "zero-waste" campus.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
5	Identify and implement source-reduction strategies to reduce campus waste.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
6	Create a dedicated working group for Housing & Residence in recognition of its high-impact potential.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
7	Expand campus reuse programs (FreeStore, TMU Furniture Rehome Program, Eco-Move Out).	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
8	Improve incentives for reducing waste and encouraging reuse to minimize single-use disposable items.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Services</li> </ul>
9	Engage event-planning staff to develop guidelines for waste management at major events and ceremonies.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orientation Staff</li> <li>University Events and Ceremonies</li> <li>Event and Space Reservations</li> <li>Food Services</li> </ul>
10	Develop and implement a Sustainable Swag Policy.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Services</li> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Campus Store</li> <li>University Relations</li> </ul>
11	Decrease the overall generation of electronic waste on campus through initiatives such as promoting electronic device repair and refurbishment.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Computing and Communications Services</li> <li>Financial Services</li> </ul>



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
<b>Construction and demolition waste</b>			
12	Embed construction and demolition waste diversion and reuse targets in Sustainable Buildings Guidelines.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability, Maintenance &amp; Operations (M&amp;O), Project Management Office (PMO)</li> <li>Financial Services</li> </ul>
13	Track materials generated by projects from start of construction through completion to determine total waste generation.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability, Maintenance &amp; Operations (M&amp;O), Project Management Office (PMO)</li> </ul>
14	Develop zero-waste procurement policy, guidelines and processes for campus construction projects. Integrate into purchasing RFP language as part of campus procurement.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>Financial Services</li> </ul>

### 3.3.4 Food and dining

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

Continue to increase sustainable food offerings on campus and embed sustainable practices into food service operations.

#### Interim target(s)

- By 2024, develop a formal strategy to reduce food waste on campus
- By 2025, establish a roadmap to requiring 100% of food and beverages purchased to be local, community-based, or third-party verified.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
<b>Reduce food waste</b>			
1	Implement a <a href="#">Leanpath</a> (or equivalent) program to minimize food waste.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Services</li> </ul>
2	Enhance training opportunities for employees on proper sorting techniques for all kitchen waste.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Food Services</li> </ul>



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
3	Launch a zero-waste catering strategy.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
<b>Increase sustainable food options and access</b>			
4	Increase the percentage of plant-based food and beverages by 15 percent.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Services</li> </ul>
5	Develop an awareness campaign on healthy and sustainable food choices.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Food Services</li> </ul>
6	Support and promote food insecurity-related initiatives across campus.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Student Wellbeing</li> </ul>

### 3.3.5 Procurement

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### General short- to long-term goal

- By 2028, increase sustainable procurement and contribute to the development of a circular economy.
- Develop a phased strategy to integrate climate-related factors—such as value-chain emissions—equity, health and waste minimization into purchasing decisions, vendor selection and vendor management.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Update Procurement Policy with sustainable purchasing language and requirements.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
2	Create a guideline for sustainable purchasing practices promoting social and environmental benefits.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
3	Conduct workshops to support adoption of the campus <a href="#">Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines</a> . Supplement this with web content.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
4	Develop a tracking mechanism for RFPs and tenders integrating sustainability into evaluation criteria.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Services</li> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
5	Establish baseline data and targets to improve the percent of campus-wide purchases that meet third-party standards for paper, electronics equipment and cleaning supplies.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Services</li> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>Computing and Communications Services</li> </ul>
6	Work with existing procurement partners to reduce packaging.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Services</li> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>

### 3.3.6 Transportation

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### Interim target(s)

By 2028, develop initiatives and programs to reduce the carbon footprint of travel-related activities, including commuting activities to and from campus.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Develop and refine methods for tracking student and staff commuting footprint.	Somewhat started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
2	Determine methodology for accurately tracking staff business-travel carbon footprint. Establish reduction targets.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Financial Services</li> </ul>
3	By 2025, TMU will create a mitigation program to reduce emissions from business-related air travel. This will include a pilot for a subset of departments.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Financial Services</li> </ul>
4	Expand the number of campus charging stations for electric vehicles.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
5	Increase the quantity of secure campus bike-parking infrastructure.	Somewhat started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>Parking Services</li> </ul>

## 3.4 Community engagement and partnerships

### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- ✓ Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- ✓ Zero-waste by 2035
- ✓ Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

### General short- to long-term goal

By 2028, improve sustainability awareness and action within the campus community.

We will leverage our position as an anchor institution and community partner to collaborate with a wide range of partners at local, regional, national, and international levels. This includes the City of Toronto, private companies non-profit organizations, and other higher-education institutions to amplify and scale solutions, learn from others and collectively share knowledge.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Establish a Sustainability Action Fund to fund campus projects related to environmental or social sustainability in collaboration with internal and external community partners.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• University Advancement</li> </ul>
2	Enhance employee sustainability literacy and integration into daily work and life	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
3	Develop interactive D2L training modules for incoming students and employees.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
4	Continue to expand Sustainability Ambassador Program.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Student Wellbeing</li> </ul>
5	Continue to offer sustainability-focused orientation themes and events.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Student Wellbeing</li> <li>• Housing &amp; Residence Life</li> <li>• University Business Services</li> </ul>
6	Expand existing Housing & Residence Sustainability Leaders Program.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Housing &amp; Residence Life</li> </ul>
7	Develop and apply behavioral-science approaches and strategies to promote sustainable behaviors.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>



No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
8	Develop and promote a Sustainable Events Guideline.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
9	Establish a Green Office Program for faculty and staff.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
10	Embed sustainability into new employee orientation, workshops and materials.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>Human Resources</li> </ul>
11	Develop eco-allied solutions e.g. community garden access for TMU community members.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>University Business Services – Urban Farm</li> <li>Community Wellbeing</li> </ul>



## 3.5 Administration and planning

### 3.5.1 Equity and justice

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### General short- to long-term goal

Support the equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) goals of the university.

No.	Proposed Actions	Status	Responsible Parties
1	Include equity, diversity and inclusion goals as themes in existing and new sustainability programming and service offerings.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
2	Advance equity, diversity and inclusion in the value chain by tracking progress toward internal targets to increase proportion of contracts with historically underrepresented business enterprises.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> </ul>
3	Promote dialogue about sustainability, inclusion and justice on campus and in the surrounding community. This includes building dialogue with Indigenous communities within and outside the university.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>
4	Develop and implement education, support and resilience-building initiatives to empower our students in mental health and wellbeing.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development – Sustainability Office</li> </ul>



### 3.5.2 Governance

#### Applicable action-plan goal(s)

- Platinum STARS sustainability rating by 2035
- Zero-waste by 2035
- Net-zero Scope 1 & 2 Emissions by 2045

#### General short- to long-term goal

By 2028, provide knowledge, resources and examples of mechanisms for integrating sustainability into university operations and organizational structures.

No.	Proposed actions	Status	Responsible parties
1	Create a university Sustainability Policy approved by the Board of Governors to set strategic directions, guide outcomes and aid decision makers.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
2	Include sustainability-related content in the Board of Governors and Senate orientation material.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> <li>• Senate Office</li> <li>• General Counsel &amp; Board Secretariat</li> </ul>
3	Add sustainability key performance indicators (KPIs) to the Board of Governors' reporting framework.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>
4	Advance evidence-based greenhouse gas emissions-reduction solutions by continuing to actively engage students and faculty to serve on advisory committees.	Not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management &amp; Development</li> </ul>



## 4. Action Plan Delivery

### | 4.1 Implementation

Achieving success in implementing the plan requires substantial collaboration among multiple units and partners both on and off campus.

Progress toward the goals outlined in the Sustainability Action Plan will be monitored through periodic reviews by TMU's Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee (CCSAC). The committee convenes regularly to ensure that all sustainability initiatives remain current with the latest research, adhere to best practices and continue to align with the university's overarching mission.

To facilitate wide-spread involvement and ownership, it is also crucial to engage students, departments and faculties at multiple levels. While the Sustainability Action Plan provides centralized guidance, sub-working groups will further promote local participation, interdisciplinary collaboration and improve reporting to the CCSAC to ensure all endeavors are captured.

### | 4.2 Progress reporting

To track our progress, updates on the Sustainability Action Plan to the community will be provided annually through a Sustainability Progress report. This report will detail advancements made towards the three long-term goals and across the five key impact areas outlined in the plan.

#### 4.2.1 Key performance indicators

We have established a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to guide our implementation strategy and ensure steady progress towards our interim targets and overarching sustainability objectives. Our KPI framework consists of:

#### Long-term goals:

- Reporting TMU's STARS Sustainability Rating every four years, aligning with the submission deadlines.
- Annual reporting of TMU's waste diversion rate.
- Annual reporting of TMU's greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Impact areas:

Additionally, we will report on tailored KPIs for each of the five impact areas, including their respective sub-areas.

### A dynamic approach to sustainability actions

We have developed specific actions under each area of impact to provide a clear and actionable roadmap for our sustainability initiatives. The specificity of these actions allows us to set clear targets, measure progress effectively, and align with benchmarking measures such as STARS. However, we acknowledge that the dynamic nature of sustainability challenges may require adjustments to our approach. We have chosen to be specific in our actions to provide a strong foundation for our efforts, but we also recognize the importance of adaptability.

Throughout the course of this plan, if we find that circumstances necessitate changes to actions, we are committed to being flexible and responsive. This flexibility allows us to pivot and incorporate advancements in sustainability practices, ensuring that our plan remains aligned with the most effective and efficient methods. Transparency and accountability in such situations will be maintained through regular progress reporting, which will include updates on any modifications or enhancements to our sustainability initiatives.

# Appendix—Targets at a Glance

Key impact area	Sub impact area	Interim targets	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Develop Scope 3 emissions tracking methodology by 2026
Long-term goals		Achieve a STARS gold ranking by 2024	✓			
		Develop a scope 3 emissions tracking methodology by 2026	✓	✓		✓
		By 2028, surpass current provincial waste diversion target of 50%		✓		✓
		By 2035, reduce waste generated on campus by 15% compared to 2019 baseline year		✓		✓
Academics		Embed sustainability into all relevant programs with opportunities for foundational sustainability education for all undergraduate and graduate degree students by 2030	✓			
Research & innovation		Strengthen TMU's position as a dedicated institution for interdisciplinary research, further establishing sustainability as a core thematic focus of our reputation and identity by 2030	✓			
Operations	Buildings & utilities	By 2035, reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions by 40% compared to 2019 baseline year	✓		✓	
	Grounds and ecosystems	Develop landscaping projects that reduce the heat-island effect, increase biodiversity and foster wellbeing by 2028	✓		✓	
	Waste and circular materials management	Achieve provincial diversion target of 60% by 2028	✓	✓		✓
		By 2028, reduce waste generated on campus compared to baseline year of 2019	✓	✓		✓
	Transportation	By 2028, develop initiatives and programs to reduce the carbon footprint of travel related activities, including commuting activities to and from campus	✓		✓	✓
	Food systems and dining	Develop a formal strategy to reduce food waste on campus by 2024	✓	✓		✓
		Establish a road map to requiring 100% of food and beverages purchased to be local, community-based, or third-party verified by 2025	✓	✓		✓
	Procurement	By 2028, develop a phased strategy to integrate climate-related factor- such as value-chain emissions, equity, health, and waste minimization into purchasing decisions, vendor selection, and vendor management	✓	✓		✓
		Increase sustainable procurement and contribute to the development of a circular economy by 2028	✓	✓		✓
	Planning and administration	Equity and justice	Support the equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) goals of the university	✓		
Governance		By 2028, provide knowledge, resources, and examples of mechanisms for integrating sustainability into university operations and organizational structures	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community engagement and partnerships		Improve sustainability awareness and action within the campus community by 2028	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Acknowledgements

TMU's Sustainability Action Plan reflects the result of a multi-year collaboration with countless students, faculty and staff who generously contributed their time, expertise, and innovative ideas to shaping a sustainable future for TMU.

Thank you for your ongoing support and involvement.

– *Climate Change and Sustainability Advisory Committee*

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Cheryl Teelucksingh	Chair of Sociology, Professor	Department of Sociology
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Cory Searcy	Assistant Vice-President	International
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Johannes Dyring	Assistant Vice-President	Business Development & Strategic Initiatives
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