

**Planning for Sustainability at Concordia University**  
Draft Recommendations  
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**Contributors**

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**Overview**

Sustainability is an interdisciplinary concept incorporating values, systems and activities that are ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable. It means living within the Earth's capacity to renew and regenerate natural resources, and using these resources in an equitable manner.

The need to create more sustainable ways of living is the critical issue of our era. Climate change, species extinction and social inequities growing within and between nations are just a few of the pressing challenges we face. Integrating ecological, social and economic priorities into decision-making and action provides a way to begin the transformations needed to effectively respond to challenges and prosper in the future. Sustainability thus provides a path for innovation and leadership. Furthermore, building a culture of sustainability is a crucial step toward reducing ecological impact and creating healthy communities, applicable far beyond the walls of the university.

This sustainability strategic planning process aims to further Concordia's leadership role and provide a road map to move forward. The recommendations seek to integrate ecological, social and economic priorities across operations, academic, research and community spheres, as one a piece of the university's larger strategic plan.

**Introduction**

Impressive progress has been made toward creating a more sustainable Concordia. The acclaimed R4 (rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle) program; Concordia's status as a leader in energy efficiency among the 6 largest universities in Quebec for 10 years running; the Hall building's rejuvenated rooftop greenhouse; the housing of the Solar Building Research Network; and dozens of educational conferences and workshops on sustainability are just a few successful sustainability initiatives at different levels in the university. Since the launch of the university's first Sustainability Assessment in 2004, Concordia has been recognized as a leader in campus sustainability. Yet sustainability is a process involving all parts of a system; to fully realize the benefits there needs to be clear directions, goals and action at all levels.

## **Methodology**

The sustainability strategic planning process is being coordinated by a sustainability consultant, supported by the Vice-President, Services. Working closely with the Sustainability Coordinator and the Director, Environmental Health and Safety, the consultant drafted goals and actions for each of the four recommendation areas outlined below. Meetings are being held with dozens of individuals across the university to obtain their input and feedback (please see page 6 for the list of individuals spoken with to date). In this way the plan will be adapted to meet the needs and realities of the university community. Responsible parties, timelines for action and indicators will be assigned where possible and appropriate.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** Institutionalize sustainability at Concordia

**Recommendation 2:** Minimize Concordia's ecological footprint

**Recommendation 3:** Increase sustainability literacy of students through curriculum and research

**Recommendation 4:** Engage community in sustainability activities

### **Recommendation 1: Institutionalize sustainability at Concordia**

**Rationale:** Sustainability is a process involving all parts of a system; to fully realize the benefits for Concordia as a whole, clear directions, goals and action in operations, academics, research and community need to be determined.

#### **Enabling Strategy:**

Integrate sustainability (achievements and indicators) into President's Report

Adopt an Environmental Policy

Create and implement an Environmental/Occupational Health and Safety management system

Conduct a sustainability assessment every three years

## **Recommendation 2: Minimize Concordia's ecological footprint**

**Rationale:** More efficient, effective management of operations, including areas such as energy, waste and purchasing, can reduce both costs and environmental impacts at Concordia.

### **Enabling Strategy:**

Reduce the energy consumption of Concordia's buildings by 15% over a period of 5 years (from 1.21 GJ/m<sup>2</sup> in 2004-2005 to 1.03 GJ/m<sup>2</sup> in 2009-2010) without compromising health and safety, in line and leading the Quebec Government Energy Strategy

Reduce Concordia's greenhouse gas emissions by a specified percentage (to be determined) over the next five years

Obtain LEED certification for all new buildings and major renovations

Increase the availability and use of alternative forms of transportation to x% by 2010

Meet the targets of the Quebec Residual Materials Management Policy by 2008

Supply 30% of overall food served at Concordia from local, fair-trade and/or organic sources

Provide one caterer specialised in local/organic/fair trade and minimum criteria for other catering providers at Concordia

X% of Concordia's purchasing is local, recyclable, reusable, non-toxic, compostable by 2010 (include standards for low emissions furnishings; supplies in different faculties)

X% of events at Concordia are Sustainable Concordia certified (ecologically responsible) to meet Concordia's commitment to Montreal's Strategic Plan on Sustainable Development

Track water consumption and set reduction targets by 2010

Use native and low water consuming plant species for landscaping at Concordia

Track ethical purchasing policy implementation at the Concordia Bookstore

### **Recommendation 3: Increase sustainability literacy of students through curriculum and research**

**Rationale:** Concordia is educating the leaders of tomorrow. It is important to provide skills, knowledge and leadership training to students to prepare them for the environmental and social challenges of the future.

#### **Enabling Strategy:**

Have 50 sustainability-related feasibility studies, internship reports, class projects per year by 2009

Implement sustainability related course in the John Molson School of Business by 2009

Develop & offer Sustainability Graduate Diploma by 2009

Integrate sustainability into courses in all faculties

Assess the current sustainability literacy of students by integrating sustainability questions into existing surveys

Increase the number of sustainability-related journals, books and other resources in Concordia libraries

Assess the feasibility of creating a Centre for Applied Sustainable Development by 2010

Obtain Canada Research Chair(s) in Sustainable Development

#### **Recommendation 4: Engage community in sustainability activities**

**Rationale:** Sustainability provides an avenue to enhance community relations through outreach and the demonstration of socially responsible leadership in planning, education and operations.

#### **Enabling Strategy:**

Create a comprehensive sustainability communications strategy

Encourage "sustainability actions" in 20-30% of departments in faculties and service sectors by 2010. These include behavioural change related to waste production, consumption, purchasing, energy and water use, transportation habits, participation, volunteerism and community building.

Promote and fulfill Concordia's commitments to the city of Montreal's Strategic Plan on Sustainable Development

Orient all new staff, faculty and students and teaching assistants to sustainability at Concordia University

Incorporate sustainability into campus tours

Ensure Sustainable Concordia presence at yearly Concordia open house

Involve Concordia in local sustainability endeavors (e.g. sustainability case competitions, sustainable ambassador programs, sustainable business conferences, yearly alumni events/dinners focusing on sustainability, annual Car Free Day etc.)

## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY AT CONCORDIA

Consultations as of 31 October, 2007

Person	Position	Date
Patrick Kelley, Lissa Matyas, Divya Siquera	Director, Strategic Planning, Office of the President; Strategic Planning Project Managers	21 August, 2007
EMS team: Dr. Bob Roy, Sue Magor, Marc Gauthier, Jenn Davis, Stehpanie Corcoran, Julie Laurin, Yves Gilbert	Office of Provost, EHS, Office of VP Services, Facilities Management	22 August, 2007
Sustainable Concordia student group, Environmental Coordinator and Sustainability Coordinator	Fee-levied student group & EHS staff	30 August, 2007
Dr. David Graham	Dean, Arts and Science	6 September, 2007
Yves Gilbert	Director, Customer Service and Operations Development	14 September, 2007
Chantal Beaudoin	Environmental / R4 Coordinator, EHS	18 September, 2007
Marilyn Lessard	Director, Hospitality Services	18 September, 2007
Lissa Matyas	Project Manager, Strategic Plan, Office of Pres	18 September, 2007
Catherine Wild	Dean, Fine Arts	21 September, 2007
EMS team		24 September, 2007
Dr. Nabil Esmail	Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science	25 September, 2007
Dr. Sanjay Sharma	Dean, John Molson School of Business	3 October, 2007
Dr. Carole Brabant (Dr. Louise Dandurand)	Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies	4 October, 2007
Dr. Eric Shragge	Principal, School of Community and Public Affairs	4 October, 2007
Olivia Rovinescu	Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning Services	9 October, 2007
Lance Evoy	Coordinator, Institute for Management and Community Development	9 October, 2007
Alea Morren	Sustainable Ambassador program coordinator	15 October, 2007
Blake Saucier-Curtis	allego Concordia program coordinator	15 October, 2007
Nabil Bissada, Stephanie Corcoran, Sue Magor	EMS area development	18 October, 2007
Yves Gilbert, Nabil Bissada, Sue Magor	EMS area development	18 October, 2007
Michael Di Grappa	Vice President, Services and Acting President	25 October, 2007
Howard Bokster	Editor, Concordia University magazine	25 October, 2007
EMS team		31 October, 2007
Noel Burke	Dean, School of Extended Learning	TBD
Marc Champagne	Manager, Custodial Services	TBD
Martine Lehoux	Director, Facilities Planning & Development	TBD
Jacques Webster	Senior Food Service Director, Chartwells	TBD
Bradley Tucker	Director, Institutional Planning Office	TBD
Peter Bolla	Executive Director, Facilities Management	TBD
Jenn Davis	Sustainability Coordinator	Continuous since July 2007
Sue Magor	Director, Environmental Health and Safety	Twice per month since July 2007