

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL FY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Sustainability Master Plan

The Sustainability Master Plan's (SMP) creation was guided by the Office of Sustainability with input from the Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC), along with contributions from four working groups that drew participants from a wide array of campus stakeholders, open houses to capture broader campus engagement, and numerous meetings with student, faculty, and staff organizations. The four working groups were Physical Environment, Waste Management, Institutional Effort, and Social Sustainability.

Sustainability Master Plan Working Groups



The SAC prioritized the top two targets from each of the four working group areas. The top eight targets where the SAC will emphasize action are:

Physical Environment

- Target 2-1: Decrease campus energy use intensity
- Target 2-3: Increase the use of renewable energy

Waste Management

- Target 6-6: Increase the number of opportunities provided for on-campus residents to recycle electronic waste (number of collection points for batteries and e-waste).
- Target 6-1: Increase post-consumer composting in dining locations (number of on-campus dining venues engaged in post-consumer composting).

Institutional Effort

- Target 10-3: Increase the percentage of students who take a course with a sustainable learning outcome.
- Target 9-1: Leverage institutional purchasing dollars to advance a sustainable supply chain.

Social Sustainability

- Target 7-2: Continue to close the gaps in student success rates.
- Target 8-3: Report hours of community service per full time equivalent enrollment commensurate with Texas A&M University Core Value of Selfless Service.

TOPICS

- Sustainability Master Plan
- Social Sustainability Highlights
- Institutional Effort Highlights
- Physical Environment Highlights
- AASHE STARS Rating

The President's Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC) is charged with formulating strategy to foster and promote sustainability throughout the university community. This includes:

1. Guiding sustainability goals and strategies to integrate sustainable practices in all areas of the campus in coordination with the Office of Sustainability.
2. Monitoring Texas A&M performance using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) tool.
3. Facilitating campus implementation of the Sustainability Master Plan.



SUSTAINABILITY
RESPECT. PROTECT. PRESERVE.

IMPLEMENTATION

Since FY20, the four working groups that developed the SMP began actively reporting target achievements to the SAC. During the past year, the SAC heard reports from Social Sustainability, Institutional Effort, and Physical Environment. Following are brief working group highlights.



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1. Student Success initiative goals are to increase first year retention, increase four- and six-year graduation rates, and reduce achievement disparities, particularly for first generation and underrepresented students.
2. Year one of the program focused on improvements in academic advising, establishment of a first-generation student center, and increased focus on the first-year experience. Year two of the program increased focus on student belonging, climate, and culture.



EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

3. TAMU has over 1,200 student organizations on campus but there is no single mechanism for reporting community service, making this a difficult number to accurately capture.
4. Student Activities established two goals for improvement.
 - I. Create a training module for student leaders to educate them on how to report their service hours.
 - II. Set a minimum expectation regarding service hours, and we have a current proposal to launch a service student council in the spring to focus on this effort.



INSTITUTIONAL EFFORT HIGHLIGHTS



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

1. Procurement noted that TAMU maintains two primary office supply contracts, Staples and Office Depot. In FY 2019, about 38% and 26% of our paper purchased, through Staples and Office Depot respectively, met the eco-friendly standards.
2. While final numbers are still to be determined, it appears that TAMU will report an increase in our Historically Under utilized Business (HUB) purchases.
3. SSC Custodial noted that the total spent on sustainable cleaning products is \$1.2M, which is 80% of the total amount purchased.
4. IT Liaisons group is working on various sustainability initiatives related to technology. One effort is to work with AggieBuy vendors to apply Energy Star labels to technology products, in hopes of encouraging their purchase.
5. Other efforts include the investigation of desktop computer leasing agreements rather than purchasing, reviews of computer life cycle and how to extend it, purchasing recycled paper and toner for open access lab printers, and turning off computers when not in use to save energy.



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT HIGHLIGHTS

ENERGY USE & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION

1. The target through FY20 is to achieve a \$285 million cost avoidance in energy consumption.
2. The Energy Performance Improvement (EPI) program engages occupants of targeted buildings in a partnership with UES energy stewards to reduce energy consumption. The net cost avoidance through December 2020 is \$2.6 million.
3. In an effort to increase the university's use of renewable energy, we executed a 15-year purchase agreement with a solar array source called Samson and Delilah. This will result in a \$2.4 million cost avoidance.



CAMPUS MOBILITY

4. Transportation Services (TS) is in the process of developing a mobility master plan to minimize single occupant vehicle travel across the campus.
5. TS recently received a grant to add 35 diesel and 3 electric buses.
6. 250 throttle assist bikes have been added to the Veo bike share fleet.



BUILT ENVIRONMENT & SITE DESIGN

7. Office of the University Architect is working to revise the Facility Design Guidelines (FDG) to reflect sustainable procurement practices. Expected completion date is end of 2022.
8. To meet this goal, FDGs will be revised so that exterior building envelope guidelines maximize long-term energy savings and interior finishes maximize sustainability. Currently, all new buildings must be designed to LEED Silver standards.
9. Development of a LEED scorecard is in progress, should be completed in FY22. This will guide new projects to ensure they are meeting the standards.
10. Regarding rainwater collection cisterns, we plan to revise the cistern maintenance and installation guidelines; however, the 2020 target was too aggressive. Requested extension to December 2022 for maintenance recommendations on existing cisterns, and December 2023 for system O&M guidelines.
11. Working to revise the FDG's to reflect sustainable procurement practices. Requested extension until December 2022.



The FY21 President's Sustainability Advisory Council

Chair:

- Dr. Jerry Strawser, Executive Vice President and CFO, Division of Finance and Operations

Members:

- Dr. Lou Tassinary, College of Architecture, Representative Faculty Senate
- Dr. Debbie Thomas, Dean, College of Geosciences, Representing the Council of Deans
- Dr. Jorge Vanegas, Dean of School of Public Health, Representing the Council of Deans
- Dr. Carol Binzer, Director, Residence Life and Housing
- Mr. Matt Fry, Vice President, Research
- Ms. Nikki Cavender, Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness, Representing University Staff Council
- Ms. Mary Schubert, Director of Strategic Programs, Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness
- Mr. Jeff Truss, Environmental Health & Safety
- Ms. Rebekah Parkhill, Director of Administration, Athletics
- Mr. Scot Obergefell, Manager, Athletics
- Mr. Phillip Zellner, SSC Services for Higher Education
- Mr. Dirk Anderson, Director of Operations for Retail Dining, Representing Chartwells
- Mr. Eric Mendoza, Student Body President
- Mr. Zach McCue, Speaker of the Student Senate
- Mr. Rohan Singh Wilkho, President, Graduate and Professional Student Council

Ex-Officio:

- Ms. Jane Schneider, Associate Vice President, Facilities and Operations
- Ms. Ashley Skow, Administrative Coordinator II, Facilities and Operations
- Ms. Kelly Wellman, Director, Office of Sustainability

AASHE STARS

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) is a tool for evaluating sustainability efforts at colleges and universities.

The system recognizes achievements in five categories:

- Academics
- Engagement
- Operations
- Planning and Administration
- Innovation and Leadership



Depending on how fully an institution responds to various AASHE-defined credits within those categories, a rating of Reporter, Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum is awarded.

Texas A&M submitted its first report in 2012 followed by annual submissions beginning in 2015. The December 2020 report earned a STARS Gold rating with a score of 68.85.

TEXAS A&M STARS PERFORMANCE 2012-2021

