

# Whitman College Campus Sustainability Plan April 2024

## Executive Summary

### Overview

Whitman College has embarked on a transformative journey towards sustainability, guided by collaboration and vision. Partnering with consultants, GreenerU and Cascadia Consulting Group, we embarked on a collective endeavor to craft a sustainability plan that reflects our values and aspirations.

Imagine Whitman College as a beacon of sustainability, where every decision reflects our commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility. Our vision is one of transparency and education, where the principles of sustainability are not just espoused but ingrained in every aspect of campus life. We envision nurturing the next generation of global citizens and climate leaders, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, and passion to effect positive change in their communities and beyond.

### Planning Process

Stakeholders from various backgrounds, faculties, and departments at Whitman College came together to shape our sustainability narrative through purposeful working groups. Facilitated by the expertise of GreenerU and Cascadia Consulting Group, these collaborative sessions were characterized by lively discussions, idea exchanges, and consensus-building efforts. Our collective journey



### Purpose and Intent

At Whitman College, our campus sustainability plan serves as more than just a roadmap; it embodies our commitment to shaping a future where environmental stewardship, social justice, and ethical responsibility intersect harmoniously. By fostering a culture of sustainability, our plan aims to inspire meaningful action, empower diverse voices, and cultivate a community where every individual plays a role in creating positive change.

Through transparent decision-making processes, inclusive engagement, and ambitious goals, we aspire to lead by example, demonstrating that sustainability is not merely an aspiration but a tangible reality that enriches our campus, our community, and the world at large. Ultimately, our sustainability plan embodies our collective vision for a brighter, more equitable future—one where the principles of sustainability guide every facet of campus life and inspire generations to come.

Acknowledging our role as stewards of our environment, we understand the imperative to address our ecological footprint. Hence, we commit to taking decisive steps to slash our greenhouse gas emissions by half by 2035, ultimately striving for carbon neutrality by 2050. This pledge transcends mere ambition; it embodies a solemn promise to future generations, underscoring our unwavering dedication to sustainability and the conscientious stewardship of our planet.

At the core of our strategic framework is the guiding principle of Environmental Justice, Sustainability, and Climate Action. This principle embodies our shared commitment to nurturing a culture of sustainability—one that prioritizes social justice, ethical decision-making, and the empowerment of future generations. For us, sustainability is not merely a goal; it is a fundamental way of life, guiding our every decision and action towards a more equitable and resilient future.

### Implementation Commitments

Central to our sustainability efforts is a firm commitment to transparency and equity. We understand that sustainability goes beyond environmental concerns; it necessitates a deep-rooted commitment to fairness, justice, and inclusivity. In line with this ethos, we pledge to maintain open communication with our community, offering regular updates on our progress, achievements, and obstacles. Furthermore, we prioritize the welfare of all those impacted by our decisions, striving not only to minimize harm but also to actively advance social and environmental justice in all our endeavors.

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## Summary of Proposed Goals

Throughout the comprehensive sustainability planning process at Whitman College, numerous goals emerged, each serving as a beacon guiding the institution towards a more environmentally sustainable and socially just future. From decarbonization initiatives to resilience-building measures, these goals underscore the commitment of the Whitman community to effecting positive change in the face of pressing global challenges.

In the realm of decarbonization, Whitman College has set ambitious targets to optimize energy efficiency, transition to renewable energy sources, and electrify major energy systems on campus. These goals reflect a concerted effort to reduce the institution's carbon footprint and mitigate its contribution to climate change. By prioritizing energy efficiency in both new and existing buildings and leveraging local or regional renewable energy sources, Whitman aims to lead by example in sustainable energy practices.

In tandem with decarbonization efforts, resilience goals have been established to enhance Whitman's capacity to adapt and respond to climate-related events. Through comprehensive risk education, infrastructure improvements, and robust emergency planning, Whitman seeks to ensure the well-being and safety of its community members in the face of increasingly frequent and severe climate events. These resilience-building measures demonstrate a proactive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Operational goals focus on waste reduction, sustainable transportation, and water use efficiency, highlighting Whitman's commitment to holistic sustainability across all facets of campus operations. By increasing waste diversion, promoting sustainable transportation options, and implementing water use reduction plans, Whitman endeavors to minimize its environmental impact and foster a culture of responsible resource management.

Finally, outreach and education goals emphasize the importance of integrating sustainability into the academic curriculum, promoting experiential learning opportunities, and facilitating collaboration and knowledge-sharing among sustainability groups on campus. These goals reflect Whitman's dedication to cultivating a community of environmentally conscious and socially engaged individuals who are equipped to address sustainability challenges both within and beyond the campus borders.

## Proposed Key Strategies

- **LED Conversion:** Switching 60% of campus lighting to energy-efficient LEDs.
- **Energy Efficiency Program:** Identifying and funding measures to reduce energy consumption in buildings.
- **LEED Standard:** Designing new buildings and renovations to meet LEED Gold standards.
- **Heating and Cooling Upgrades:** Upgrading heating and cooling systems to be more efficient and use fewer fossil fuels.
- **Renewable Energy:** Exploring partnerships for renewable energy sources to reduce our carbon footprint.
- **Climate Resilience Education:** Integrating climate preparedness into orientations and increasing awareness of climate risks.
- **Waste Management:** Implementing waste tracking, recycling, and composting programs.
- **Transportation and Water Conservation:** Developing a transportation plan and improving water efficiency campus-wide.

## WHY “PROPOSED”?

The Campus Sustainability Plan is still in a draft form and is waiting for final approval by the College.

The goals and strategies you see here are subject to change based on last round feedback in May.

