SEEDING ROOTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

From the realms of the human world, to the water beings, forest creatures and all other forms of life, land gives birth to, nurtures, and sustains all life. As human beings, each of us, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, exist within interconnected and interdependent relationships with land. Land, or Mother Earth, provides the basics of connection, teaching not only who we are as human beings but also how to conduct ourselves in a good way.

In this way we are as much a part of the Earth as it is a part of us – every experience and expression of relationship developed in place is replete with stories that provide context and understanding of who we are as people, families, communities and nations. These stories, and their connected relationships, are the seeds of tomorrow, carrying ways of being that engender an ethic of stewardship and sustainability going forward into the future. At the same time, learning to live sustainably – in a deeply sacred and intimate relationship with place - requires respectful acknowledgement of the traditional lands on which one stands, including the impacts of that presence both historically and today.

Indeed, for the Michi Saagiig people, on whose traditional and treaty lands Humber College sits, the land has provided not only the sustenance necessary for life, but also a spiritual, cultural, and ancestral home since time immemorial. Known as Aa-oo-biigok, the Place of the Black Alders in Michi Saagiig language, the region is uniquely situated along Gabekanang Ziibi (the Humber River watershed), providing a home and habitat to 600 bodies of water, 755 species of plants, 42 species of fish, and over 185 animal species. This territory is also subject to the Dish With One Spoon Treaty, a covenant agreement between Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and allied nations to peacefully share the land and all its resources, ensuring the continued abundance and viability of the “dish” (ie. the land) into the future. Of particular importance is the fact that the Dish With One Spoon Treaty is also a covenant with nature, solidifying the need for reciprocal relationships with land, water, animals, plantlife, and other beings that human beings depend on for survival. In this framework people do not own the land but belong to the land as a relative and protector of land for future generations.

Today, we find ourselves in a pivotal moment. The recognition of responsibility to all walks and forms of life embedded in Indigenous philosophies like the Dish With One Spoon has never been more significant than this time of ecological crisis. We are all interconnected members of a universal family. Each and every person across the world eats from the same dish. Indeed, we are but one thread in the web of life; what we do next, with respect to our relationship with the land and each other, will set the course for the future. As people who have received the gift of land and all its resources, we hold not only the capacity but also the responsibility to lead by example in all that we do.

Regina Hartwick
Acting Director, Indigenous Education
Humber College’s institutional value of Sustainability states

We preserve our collective future.

We recognize the Brundtland’s definition of Sustainable Development, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.1

Humber’s first Sustainability Plan 2013-2018 provided direction to advance sustainability efforts across the organization. This 2019-2024 Sustainability Plan outlines a bold approach to reimagine our future to shape healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities. We all have a shared responsibility to own and reflect our values in our actions. It is through culture change, leadership and collaboration that we will create positive change for our communities and environment.

Humber plans to be the healthiest campus in the country. In September 2018 we became the first public college or polytechnic in Canada to adopt the Okanagan Charter, thereby committing to incorporating health into everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates to support students, staff and faculty.

Chris Whitaker, President and CEO, voting on Sustainability priorities

The students, staff, faculty and partners that we engaged with were clear in the vision and actions they expect Humber to achieve in order to become a national leader in campus sustainability. As we reflected on what we heard, it was apparent that we need to support communities to change behaviour in order to build a more sustainable future. Whether it’s embedding sustainability across curriculum, enhancing how we help connect people to nature or building net zero buildings, every act supports sustainable behaviour that changes culture.

We are living in a time where one hears about the climate emergency on a daily basis. In October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), assessed the science related to the climate crisis and warned there was only 12 years left to keep global heating at a maximum of 1.5°C. If we do not act on the opportunities presented in the Sustainable Development Goals, the climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, and economic growth will increase.

As human beings, we exist within a universal family and share one planet. Every part of creation has an important purpose and is connected through reciprocal relationships that are shared with all beings, both human and non-human.

This Sustainability Plan is organized into three pillars. The Culture and Community Pillar is advanced and supported by the actions of the other two pillars, Sustainable Operations and Teaching, Learning & Applied Research. Actions associated with any of the pillars will directly affect the ways in which we will strengthen a sustainable campus culture and community. This is why the Sustainable Operations and Teaching, Learning & Applied Research pillars are embedded within the Culture and Community pillar. Each action and achievement made will move us towards a thriving culture and community.

This document outlines the description of success and strategic priorities for each of the three pillars, as well as highlights a selection of the supporting actions that we commit to.

A second Supporting Actions document details all of the supporting actions that we commit to and will be tracked over the course of this five-year plan.
According to Humber’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Taskforce, Campus Culture is the personality of an organization, shaped by the institutional history, mission, physical settings, norms, values, practices, and assumptions that guide behaviour of individuals and groups in the institution.

Our culture and community promotes sustainable, equitable, diverse, and inclusive actions of students, faculty, staff, and partners. We will continuously place empathy, compassion, and humility at the centre of everything we do.

Shaping a thriving culture involves seeing ourselves as both part of the problem and the solution. Culture does not change because we desire to change it; as we engage in thoughtful planning, decision-making, and action we will be part of creating a culture that encourages leadership in addressing the world’s most pressing challenges.

Our community will have a profound effect on our success. Demonstrating allyship with our local and global community partners and collaborating on each of our strategic priorities, we will lead the way to a more sustainable world together.

Sustainability is directly linked to other institutional strategic priorities, which are not reported through this plan, but will directly contribute to creating a culture of sustainability, equity, diversity and inclusivity.

Stakeholders said one of the three top priorities for campus sustainability was widespread engagement and awareness of sustainable practices.
Sustainability, one of the key mindsets within Humber’s Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), will be embedded into all academic program curricula to help prepare every Humber graduate to be career-ready citizens. Graduating students will be able to demonstrate Humber’s Sustainability mindset and its interconnectedness with Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), Systems Thinking, and Indigenous Knowledge, which will support their future career journeys and their ability to be agents of social good in an increasingly complex world.

In order to integrate sustainability in all Humber programs, we will equip our faculty and staff with the tools they need, including professional development, resources, and peer to peer learning in sustainability. We will work closely with Humber’s ILO framework team to develop integration assessment metrics to ensure sustainability lives meaningfully within each program curriculum. These actions will support a culture of teaching, learning, and applied research at Humber that produces citizens ready for the world of tomorrow.

The Office of Applied Research & Innovation (ARI) strives to be a leader among Canadian Polytechnics in sustainability-related applied research. We will look at this in three ways: how we seek out projects, which projects we choose and how the projects are executed.

**Strategic Priorities**

1. Equip students with core skills and attributes that contribute to all the mindsets of the ILOs.
2. Advance knowledge and skills of faculty and staff with a set of core competencies that include all the mindsets of the ILOs.
3. Become a national leader in sustainability research, specifically sustainable architecture and energy-efficient construction.
4. Advance knowledge and share evidence-informed teaching practices related to sustainability through the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).
5. Share experiences for reflection and improvement of teaching and learning processes related to sustainability subject matter.

**SELECT SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>METRIC</th>
<th>LED BY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrate the Sustainability mindset into the curriculum of all academic programs</td>
<td>Institutional Learning Outcome team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue growing the Faculty-led Sustainability Champions Group (e.g. professional development and peer to peer learning, creation of resources)</td>
<td>Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC), Teaching and Learning support team, Office of Sustainability, ILO team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a framework which considers a project’s level of sustainability as an evaluation criterion. Applied research projects with a high sustainability score will be prioritized</td>
<td>Applied Research and Innovation, Office of Sustainability</td>
</tr>
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**METHODOLOGY**

To see more supporting institutional initiatives review the Supporting Actions document.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Priorities

1. Stewardship of the natural environment and the regional biodiversity in which our campuses are located. We collaborate to protect and improve the health and resilience of these areas, which in turn will improve the quality of campus and community life now and for future generations.

2. Involve community in developing a campus land use plan which incorporates explicit sustainability goals.

3. Teach, learn and conduct Applied Research about nature’s systems and its interconnectedness to the health and wellness of all living and non-living things. We advance experiential learning opportunities related to stewardship of the natural environment.

4. Connect people with the natural world by engaging our communities with the surrounding natural environments and the benefits to health and well-being.

SELECT SUPPORTING ACTIONS | METRIC | LED BY
--- | --- | ---
Develop a sustainable landscaping management program (IPM) for campus spaces | Program created and tracked | Capital Development and Facilities Management (CDFM), Office of Sustainability
Create a Master Plan for the Humber Arboretum that connects with Humber College’s campus land-use planning process for academic and non-academic purposes | Develop Master Plan | Humber Arboretum and Centre for Urban Ecology
Enhance the natural functions of the Humber Pond that includes living labs, an outdoor classroom, social gathering spaces and wildlife habitats | Examples of activity annually | Humber Arboretum and Centre for Urban Ecology

HIGHLIGHTS

70% of students surveyed said they would commit to spending more time outdoors.

The Humber Arboretum and Centre for Urban Ecology’s Strategic Plan can be found on their website.

To see more supporting institutional initiatives review the Supporting Actions document.
66% of the Humber community will choose and promote local, organic, Fair Trade and healthy options when buying food.

**FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Strategic Priorities**

1. Ensure broad access to **Good Food** (“food that fundamentally respects human dignity and health, animal welfare, social justice and environmental sustainability”) on our campuses that celebrates our cultural diversity, health and well-being.
2. Strengthen education and literacy about Good Food and increase the percentage of Good Food at Humber from a baseline set in 2019.
3. Engage our community in food, health and wellness by establishing a Good Food Committee.

**SELECT SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

- Conduct the Good Food Challenge every two years
- Expand the reach of the Humber Arboretum Food Learning Garden. Continue food growing and integration with Arboretum community programming and Faculty of Health Sciences programs
- Explore where and how Good Food including culturally diverse food can be expanded and available across campus

**METRIC**

- Purchase data

**LED BY**

- Office of Sustainability, Meal Exchange
- Humber Arboretum and Centre for Urban Ecology, Faculty of Business - Canadian Centre of Culinary Arts and Science, Office of Sustainability, IGNITE
- Food Services, Office of Sustainability, Faculty of Business - Canadian Centre of Culinary Arts and Science, IGNITE

**SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING**

**Strategic Priorities**

1. Educate and support the campus community to be able to apply social and sustainable purchasing practices.
2. Introduce Campus Print Strategy to reduce paper consumption by 30% by 2024.
3. Advance principles of Fair Trade on campus.

**SELECT SUPPORTING ACTIONS**

- Create a guiding document for social and sustainable purchasing practices
- Track printing data and share with community
- Reduce procurement of swag and physical materials campus-wide

**METRIC**

- Purchase data

**LED BY**

- Purchasing Services, Office of Sustainability
- Office of Sustainability, ITS
- Purchasing Services, Office of Sustainability

**85% of the Humber community are willing to stop purchasing or accepting single-use bottled water, and use their reusable bottle instead.**

Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have honoured the sacredness of water. Described as the “blood of Mother Earth,” water is life for all beings, flowing within and between us. A focus on honouring water has been embedded throughout the Sustainable Operations pillar.

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**Students using reusable water bottles**

**Soupbar is a pay-what-you-can initiative started by IGNITE that serves nutritious soups from donated leftovers while addressing food insecurity and reducing wasted food.**

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**Vegetarian Awareness Day Event**

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**Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have honoured the sacredness of water. Described as the “blood of Mother Earth,” water is life for all beings, flowing within and between us. A focus on honouring water has been embedded throughout the Sustainable Operations pillar.**
CLIMATE ACTION AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Priorities

1. Significantly reduce campus greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while preparing for and addressing the impacts of climate change.

2. Pursue global best practice in sustainable design, construction and the operation of new and renovated buildings.

3. Ensure our spaces prioritize health, accessibility, functionality and social inclusion.

4. Our campuses will be places where students and the community come to learn from the latest in healthy and efficient building design and operations.

5. Create spaces that situate the campus in the context of diverse histories, lands and waterscapes.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Strategic Priorities

1. Improve sustainable transportation options so that they are accessible to connect students, staff and faculty to and from our surrounding communities.

2. Reduce the amount of fossil fuel emissions produced from transportation to and from campus.

3. Promote active transportation.

4. Support flexible working options to reduce travel.

Expected completion of the Finch West light rail transit (LRT) line at Humber College North Campus is 2023. This will greatly improve access to sustainable transportation to North Campus for many users and provide greater direct connections to other regional transit systems.
THE SUSTAINABILITY STEERING COMMITTEE

The Sustainability Steering Committee (SSC) is a cross-institutional advisory body reporting to the President and Executive Team that provides integrated, collaborative, evidence-based advice to ensure Humber’s commitment to sustainability is reflected in planning and decision-making across the college. It is responsible for providing advice and direction related to the execution of Humber’s Campus Sustainability Plan.

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

The Office of Sustainability is responsible for reporting on campus sustainability efforts, providing expertise and building engagement across all institutional functions to achieve Humber’s goal to provide national leadership in developing sustainable campuses.

REPORTING AND CONTINUOUS ENGAGEMENT

All actions in this plan will be tracked and reported annually. This plan will evolve and there will be continuous open dialogue with the Humber community internally and externally through direct contact, events, workshops, website communications, presentations, social media. We will host at minimum one engagement session at each campus per year inviting all stakeholders to provide feedback. In every annual report lessons learned and challenges will be acknowledged.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over 1,300 students, faculty, staff and partners contributed their ideas and aspirations for this Sustainability Plan.

WASTE SYSTEMS

Strategic Priorities

1. Embed waste reduction into all campus operations and functions in order to reduce campus waste generation, bin contamination and achieve 80% diversion.
2. Significantly reduce single-use and unsustainable items.
3. Embed accessibility within the waste management system through community-based participatory research and solution development.

To see more supporting institutional initiatives review the Supporting Actions document.

SELECT SUPPORTING ACTIONS | METRIC | LED BY
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Reduce the volume of waste generated by 15% per campus user | Metric Tons | Office of Sustainability, Custodial Services
Reduce contamination in all waste streams | Metric Tons | Office of Sustainability, Food Services, Faculty of Business - Canadian Centre of Culinary Arts and Science, Custodial Services
Tax use of paper cups | Program created, communicated and cup purchases tracked | Food Services, Faculty of Business - Canadian Centre of Culinary Arts and Science, Office of Sustainability

LED BY

4,684 textbooks were donated, repurposed or recycled in 2018 through Textbooks for Change
We achieved 66% waste diversion from landfill in 2018
Created a “cup mountain” display to encourage reusables. Approximately 7,000 cups are sent from Humber to the landfill every day
17MT (metric tons) of building material were donated to local charities, 52MT were diverted from landfill, 34MT were recycled in 2018

66% of the Humber community is willing to use a reusable mug instead of single-use coffee cups.
All stakeholders put waste and recycling management in their top three priorities.

A full review of the stakeholder engagement conducted to develop this plan can be found here.

A COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY
BETWEEN OCTOBER 2018 AND APRIL 2018 OUR COMMUNITY PROVIDED FEEDBACK THROUGH:

3 SSC workshops
18 pop-up events at Lakeshore and North Campuses (over 500 people engaged)
9 town halls at Lakeshore and North Campuses (105 participants)
21 one-on-one stakeholder interviews
1 online survey (370 students and 353 staff & faculty responses representing all Humber students, staff and faculty)

Many individual meetings and reviews with campus partners
Thank you to the Humber community that contributed to the collective vision of Humber Sustainability.

All Our Relations helped shape this plan.