Climate Action at Vassar

The Next Five Years
Past Sustainability Progress

- Vassar has generally seen a downward trend in its carbon footprint since its reporting baseline year of 2005
  - Most greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions have come from increased building efficiency, changes in the New York power grid, and a shift from fuel oil to natural gas for central heating
  - Emissions from commuting, sponsored travel, and Study Away have also declined, but at a much slower rate
- Most ‘easy win’ options for carbon reduction have already been achieved
- To achieve our commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030, more in-depth solutions will be needed
30,550 metric tons

-13,500 metric tons

-10,200 metric tons

-6,850 metric tons = 0
Near-Term Decarbonization Plans

- For the last year, Vassar has worked with Ecosystem, an outside consultant, to develop plans to work toward full decarbonization.

- This was an iterative planning process led by the Climate Action and Sustainability Committee (CASC), a shared governance committee of students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

- The culmination of this effort is a near-term plan to sharply reduce carbon emissions to less than 25% of our 2005 baseline by 2022. The Vassar Board of Trustees agreed in principle to move forward with this plan pending financing.

- Our next step is updating our Climate Action Plan to outline further sustainability goals and objectives through 2025. CASC is leading the drafting process.
## 2020 - 2030 Decarbonization Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Completion</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>GHG Reduction</th>
<th>Remaining GHG Footprint*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Migration to Biofuel for Campus Heating</td>
<td>4,350 mTons</td>
<td>12,700 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Campus-wide LED Lighting Retrofits</td>
<td>650 mTons</td>
<td>12,050 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Heating and Cooling Infrastructure Upgrades</td>
<td>2,650 mtons</td>
<td>9,400 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conversion to 100% Renewable Purchased Electricity</td>
<td>2,550 mTons</td>
<td>6,850 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025</td>
<td>Revision of Climate Action Plan for 2025-2030</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2028</td>
<td>Completion of Additional Facility Electrification Upgrades</td>
<td>800 mTons</td>
<td>6,050 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030 or sooner</td>
<td>Behavior Change Programs and Limited Carbon Offsets for Travel, Commuting, and Facility Emissions</td>
<td>6,050 mTons</td>
<td>0 mTons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As soon as feasible</td>
<td>Total Decommissioning of Combustion-Based Heating for Fully Electrified Campus</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0 mTons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*relative to 2018 baseline
We need more bike parking
More $$$ for green projects
We should have LEDs in all buildings
More $$$ for green projects
We need more sustainability courses
Less Air Travel!
Can we get more native pollinators?
Vassar should partner more with the community
We need to reduce our carbon footprint faster
More people should use public transit
All dorms should have composting facilities
No more plastic bottles on campus!
I wish I knew what I could and couldn’t recycle

Collecting General Feedback

Developing High-Level Goals

Increase Campus Waste-Diversion Rate by XX%
Decrease Emissions from Commuting and Travel by XX%
Reduce Energy Use Intensity of Campus Buildings by XX%

Creating Action Steps

Launch Comprehensive Zero Waste Educational Campaign
Decrease Plastic Vending Offerings by XX%
Create a Carpooling Incentive Program
Launch a Carbon Offset Storeroom for International Travel
Require All New Construction to Adhere to Green Building Guidelines
Evaluate Feasibility of Green Revolving Fund for Campus Improvements

2020 Climate Action Plan Development Process
(all items listed below are examples from peer institutions and not necessarily recommendations for Vassar)

Collecting General Feedback:
- I wish I knew what I could and couldn’t recycle
- We need more sustainability courses
- Campus should stop burning fossil fuels
- We need to reduce our carbon footprint faster
- More people should use public transit
- All dorms should have composting facilities
- No more plastic bottles on campus!
- We need more bike parking

Developing High-Level Goals:
- Increase Campus Waste-Diversion Rate by XX%
- Decrease Emissions from Commuting and Travel by XX%
- Reduce Energy Use Intensity of Campus Buildings by XX%

Creating Action Steps:
- Launch Comprehensive Zero Waste Educational Campaign
- Decrease Plastic Vending Offerings by XX%
- Create a Carpooling Incentive Program
- Launch a Carbon Offset Storeroom for International Travel
- Require All New Construction to Adhere to Green Building Guidelines
- Evaluate Feasibility of Green Revolving Fund for Campus Improvements
Upcoming Climate Action Forums

The Office of Sustainability can host a smaller forum for your area upon request (pending availability). Please email mkenfield@vassar.edu to set up a time.

Villard Room
Monday 11/18
11am - 12pm

Villard Room
Tuesday 11/19
12pm - 1pm

Villard Room
Wednesday 12/4
3pm - 4:30pm

vassar.edu/sustainability