

Campus Sustainability Plan 2024 (CSP '24)

With the help of [GreenerU](#) and [Cascadia Consulting Group](#), Whitman College has begun an endeavor to address climate change and promote sustainability through a comprehensive approach guided by a Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP). This plan serves as the roadmap for aligning with established standards and local initiatives, including the guidelines set forth by Second Nature for signatories of the Climate Commitment. It ensures that the institution follows global best practices while also aligning with local climate action goals, such as those set by the City of Walla Walla and Walla Walla County, and other relevant initiatives. Within the CSP, estimated costs, savings, and proposed implementation timelines are detailed to provide transparency and guidance in reaching sustainability goals.

Furthermore, the CSP recognizes the imperative of managing the climate impacts of future expansions, particularly with regard to equity considerations. It integrates diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles and a climate justice lens throughout the planning process and in the final document. Addressing local inequities exacerbated by climate change is central to the CSP's objectives, with efforts made to amplify the voices of affected communities. Engagement of diverse stakeholders, including students from varied backgrounds, is fundamental to ensuring that the planning process is inclusive and representative of all perspectives.

Equity remains a core focus within the CSP, guiding the selection of mitigation and adaptation strategies to promote fairness and justice in all sustainability initiatives. Additionally, the CSP emphasizes academic curricular innovation to support equitable student success and foster climate action leadership among students. Outreach and education efforts are centered on empowering students as future sustainability leaders, with a specific emphasis on incorporating equity principles into educational delivery on sustainability and climate change topics. Through the implementation of the CSP, the College aims to create a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable campus community while preparing students to effectively address global challenges.

Who is involved in this process?

Staff, faculty, and students made up 4 different working groups. The working groups were created to focus on specific topics for the CSP. These groups are: Outreach and Education, Operations, and Decarbonization and Resilience. Each group consisted of about 15 members each.

The CSP planning Process follows the below timeline:



**MEETING 1
LAUNCH**

October



**MEETING 2
GOALS**

November



**MEETING 3
STRATEGIES**

January



**MEETING 4
SUMMIT**

February



**MEETING 5
ACTION**

March

Meeting 1 – Launch

We initiated its sustainability planning process with a three-hour in-person event facilitated by GreenerU. The main goal was to establish a shared understanding of the baseline and planning process while discussing criteria and vision statements. Participants engaged in activities to create criteria for evaluating goals, define the college's sustainability vision, and identify areas for improvement. The outcomes included generating goal criteria lists, initiating sustainability discussions, and pinpointing gaps in the baseline report. This event marked the start of a collaborative effort to shape Whitman College's sustainable future.

Meeting 2 – Goals

The meeting convened with the aim of producing a list of goal topics through brainstorming and prioritization activities, all rooted in a shared understanding of the focus area's baseline. Attendees reviewed updates to the baseline report and engaged in an ideation activity to generate a broad spectrum of sustainability ideas for Whitman College. Through subsequent sorting activities, ideas were categorized into visions, goals, strategies, and actions. The meeting concluded with the decision on categories for goal topics, marking a significant step towards shaping Whitman's sustainable future.

Meeting 3 - Strategies

This meeting was to deliberate and refine the draft goals while establishing strategy topic categories. Attendees reviewed progress thus far, evaluated the draft goals, and collectively workshopped them until consensus was reached. They also brainstormed and prioritized strategies. The outcomes of the meeting included an initial round of voting on draft goals followed by an hour-long discussion and revision process, resulting in significant changes to most goals. A second round of voting in the final 15 minutes led to general agreement among participants on all goals, marking a successful refinement process.

Meeting 4 – Summit

The Summit was another in-person event, facilitated by GreenerU, to gather feedback on the draft goals crafted by each focus area. Attendees were invited from all stages of the planning process to participate in a gallery tour showcasing the draft goals and engage in focus area group meetings to formulate strategies. Goals for the event included reviewing all draft goals and providing feedback, revising goals as needed based on feedback received during the

gallery tour, and establishing three to five strategies for each goal. The outcomes of the event included final revisions to goals and further brainstorming on strategies, fostering a collaborative and iterative approach to goal-setting and strategy development in Whitman College's sustainability planning process.

Meeting 5 – Action

Meeting 5 solidifies the language of the strategies and allows attendees to collaborate on goals-to-action ideas, which will contribute to the creation of an implementation plan. The process resulted in a multitude of action items laying out the steps necessary to fully realize our vision and reach our CSP goals.

CSP '24 GOALS

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- **Curriculum:** By 2030, all students understand and have experience creatively addressing sustainability-related problems.
- **Experiential Learning:** By 2030, Whitman's sustainability education will extend beyond the conventional boundaries of a physical classroom, enabling students to experience the practical implementation of their studies through real-world opportunities that are accessible to all students.
- **Internal Organization:** By 2030, the sustainability department facilitates synergies and knowledge sharing between sustainability groups and efforts on campus, using consistent, accessible, and intentional communication strategies.
- **Environmental Justice:** By 2030, the sustainability department has established a plan in partnership with various divisions across campus that will develop opportunities for co-curricular, real-world environmental justice work that are responsive to the priorities of our partners.
- **Community Involvement:** Being Workshopped!

OPERATIONS

- **Waste Diversion:** By 2030, Whitman has increased waste diversion to 60%.
- **Waste Reduction:** By 2030, Whitman has reduced discarded material generation by 15% from a baseline year of FY 2024.
- **Grounds:** By 2030, Whitman has created and implemented a landscape master plan that preserves and enhances the sustainability, resiliency, and accessibility of Whitman's landscape.
- **Transportation:** By 2030, Whitman supports accessible transportation options that reduce emissions from commuters, the campus fleet, and college-related travel.
- **Water Use:** By 2030, Whitman has a comprehensive understanding of their water use and has established and implemented a campus water use reduction plan.

DECARBONIZATION AND RESILIENCE

- **Risk Education:** By 2030, Whitman provides comprehensive, accessible, and well-thought-out information and resources about the importance of climate resilience and responding to extreme climate-related events through a variety of channels with the intention of reaching the entire campus community and the greater Walla Walla community.
- **Infrastructure:** By 2030, Whitman has the necessary resources to support its faculty, staff, and students in an equitable manner through climate-related events such as heat waves, wildfire smoke events, and high wind events.
- **Emergency Planning:** Whitman annually updates an inclusive, and sufficiently funded emergency management plan that integrates with the city and regional emergency response plans and collaborate with the greater Walla Walla community.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Immediately energy efficiency is optimized for all new buildings and by 2030 a schedule and funding plan for prioritizing energy efficiency is created for all existing buildings while accounting for climate adaptation measures and cost effectiveness.
- **Electrification:** Convert all major fossil-fuel based energy systems on campus to electricity
- **Renewable Energy:** Power campus using primarily renewable energy from local or regional sources.

FAQs:

What's the Vision?

Whitman College demonstrates its commitments to environmental justice, climate action, and sustainability by increasingly implementing best practices chosen through transparent decision-making processes while educating the next generation of global citizens and climate action leaders.

What is the Goal Criteria?

All goals should...

- Be SMARTIE (strategic, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely, inclusive, and equitable)
- Be transparent, understandable, and accessible
- Prioritize Whitman's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050
- Align with Whitman's strategic plan and local and regional work

How are we defining “sustainability”?

Whitman College understands the concept of sustainability as a holistic commitment to environmental stewardship, social and environmental justice, and ethical decision-making. Sustainability involves making thoughtful and careful choices that resonate with the values of our community, ensure fairness and inclusivity, and promote responsibility for the well-being of the planet that all humans share. Our community's understanding of sustainability extends beyond the present, aiming to empower future generations to navigate and contribute to a harmonious and equitable world in which the basic needs of humans are met while their communities and the ecosystems around them also thrive.

What are the current recommendations for decarbonization?

Energy efficiency

- Solution 1: reduce energy use intensity in buildings that will exceed the state standard.
- Solution 2: convert all campus lighting to LEDs

Electrification

- Solution 3: decarbonize the central heating plant using ground source heat pumps.
- Solution 4: decarbonize the distributed buildings

Renewable energy

- Use renewable energy from local or regional sources