Sustainability Matters

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

RYERSON SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Ryerson University has definitively committed to a more sustainable future recently supporting both the Ontario Universities Committed to a Greener World pledge and the Talloires Declaration; a ten-point action plan committing institutions to sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching and practice. As a further step toward thoughtfully engraining sustainability into the University as a core value, the Campus Facilities and Sustainability (CF&S) department was created to coordinate campus-wide efforts as a central node connected to all areas of the Ryerson community. As a first step, CF&S is developing a comprehensive, campus wide Sustainability Program made up of three key components.

A Comprehensive Sustainability Strategy: Sets the foundation of the Sustainability Program defining the overarching commitment and purpose, including the key principles and developmental approaches that will be applied.

A System for Effectively Adopting New Projects: On top of the overarching Program strategy defined, this is a recurring annual process that will be methodically applied to identify, assess, prioritize and implement projects that make ideal use of the limited resources available.

A Change Management Program: Will supports the transition of the university to a more sustainable institution through a process designed to encourage individuals genuinely accepting and embracing changes to the campus.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The term sustainability or sustainable development is commonly defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition effectively applied within an organization creates an environment that is ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable.

Mission: As part of our commitment to delivering an exceptional educational experience, Ryerson University will develop sustainable operating practices and capital investment strategies. As part of this transformation we will activate the campus community by engaging academics, researchers, students, administrators and other stakeholders in contributing through collaboration. .

Vision: Ryerson will intelligently and continuously pursue opportunities to improve the sustainability of our campus, leveraging the contributions of our entire community and serving as a catalyst for broader transformation.

Values:

Collaboration: With people at the Program's core, we will engage the various stakeholders within and beyond our community by promoting inclusion, participation and partnership.

Innovation: We will explore and discover new, creative and inspiring ways to overcome challenges that produce exceptional results.

Efficiency: We will capitalize on opportunities that enable us to conserve resources without compromise, while eliminating the duplication of efforts though well-coordinated communication.

Fun: Our Program will promote a culture that encourages people to be part of change in a way that is inspiring and creates a positive experience.

Stewardship: Our community members will, through participation, share experiences that ignite an interest and motivation to support reducing impact on and off campus.

Keys to Success:

Maximizing Triple-Bottom-Line Value: The Sustainability Program will function such that all of potential economic, social and environmental benefits associated with positive action are considered. To help facilitate a holistic approach to recognizing and capturing value across campus, the Program will be focused on establishing greater connectivity and stronger relationships with the diverse mix of students, staff and academics that make up our campus community.

Effectively Measuring Environmental Impact: For the Program to most effectively drive progress, environmental impact must be accurately measured. While this prerequisite may seem obvious, it is not yet common that organizations build the capacity required to perform this function effectively. Measuring impact will demand we examine all facets of the University's operation and its interaction with the broader community. The one metric that has been almost universally employed to measure environmental impact is Carbon Dioxide. Hundreds of methodologies and tools have been developed that use carbon emissions and their equivalents to quantify the environment impact of most anything. The use of carbon as a reliable metric is consistent among governments, organizations and experts the world around. There are a wide variety of additional metrics that can also be used to measure impact but given the nature of Ryerson's operations carbon dioxide alone offers a very solid starting point.

It is critical the Program is supported by a robust and recognized carbon measurement system that is capable of dealing with the unique and diverse attributes of a university. To this end a cutting-edge carbon management system called Encompass was adopted. Encompass enables organizations to develop full scope carbon reduction strategies based on both direct and indirect sources of impact and using carbon emissions factors that are both life-cycle based and specific to Ontario. Utilizing Encompass will give Ryerson an accurate and reliable understanding of our environmental impact such that we can confidently prioritize the spectrum of opportunities available for capturing potential reductions.

An inclusive and collaborative approach: We will no doubt establish new technical systems, measurement techniques and innovative solutions but we are clear our success as an institution rests on the collective and collaborative efforts of the over 30,000 members of our campus community. While CF&S will work on projects of concern to the entire campus, it will be individuals belonging to student groups, administrative departments and faculties who will be encouraged and supported in bringing new ideas and initiatives to their respective communities. With people first, we will establish a new culture, create leadership, breed innovation and extract a tremendous proportion of the potential this we have to affect change.
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PROJECT ADOPTION SYSTEM

The Program's focus will naturally demand consideration of a very broad and diverse range of potential projects. The following describes a clear and thoughtful system that will be applied for annually adopting a group of projects that makes optimal use of the limited resources available.

As described, for our efforts to be successful, it is critical that we focus impact-reducing efforts towards what generates the greatest benefit right across the organization. As such the Program demands a framework that maximizes the triple-bottom-line value produced – people, planet and profit. Further, the project adoption process defined is not intended to be applied every few years when technologies and assets need to be re-evaluated; rather, it involves integrating an annually recurring process that functions naturally alongside the University's operating procedures. The goal is to consistently develop and implement a thoughtful plan for adopting impact-reducing projects each year.

The Project Adoption Process

Data Collection & Analysis: As a first step toward understanding the University's environmental impact and developing new impact reducing projects, we will identify the data we will require and how this information can be accessed. Some new data gathering systems, mechanisms and processes may need to be established to ensure a comprehensive baseline is established. The following steps will be taken as part of this initial step toward adopting projects:

* Define scope and objectives
* Build data collection plan
* Implement data collection infrastructure collect all data within scope
* Establish data baseline and perform data analysis:

Some of the major areas of environment impact that will be in focus include:

– Electricity – Fossil Fuels – Transportation – Waste – Purchases – Freight – Capital –

Project Identification and Assessment: Based on the data collected and practical knowledge we possess within the campus, a broad roster of potential projects will be developed. An assessment framework will be applied to the highest potential projects identified. The results of this evaluation will be used to prioritize projects and develop a thoughtful implementation plan. The framework defined provides a lens through which the value of these projects can be effectively measured and

compared based on the University's changing resources, priorities and constraints. The Ryerson Sustainability Program will apply a triple-bottom-line valuation method to the assessment and prioritization of potential projects.

The following describes the *triple-bottom-line* as it applies to the Program:

➢ **People**: The first bottom line measurement is people, both internal and external to the organization. The objective is to assess how beneficial and equitable practices are toward members of the organization and surrounding community of stakeholders.

➢ **Planet**: The second bottom line measurement is the planet, that being that resource limited and fragile natural environment within which we live and work. The intention is to evaluate the degree to which impact is expected to be reduced.

➢ **Profit**: The final bottom line measurement is profit which traditionally represents the balance of revenues generated and expenses incurred, providing a measure of financial strength. In this case, we are referring to the complete economic value generated by the organization not limited to internal profits.

The use of the Framework to assess potential sustainability projects will require that three key steps be executed annually:

➢ **Consistently Rating Projects**: This simply involves the application of a formal Project Rating System to the end of measuring the total value each project is expected to contribute. Once complete, it should be clear how the various projects being considered rank against one another.

➢ **Prioritizing Projects Aligned to University Objectives**: Beyond recognizing how projects rank against one another, it is imperative the prioritization of projects be considerate of overarching University goals.

➢ **Selecting a Group of Projects to be Implemented**: At this stage, the total value of each project has been measured and projects have been categorized and ranked according to the Program objective they contribute to most greatly. This information will be used to guide decisions on which projects to adopt.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Change management efforts are designed to support the transition of an organization from a current state to a desired future state through a process designed to encourage individuals genuinely accepting and embracing changes to their environment and/or place of work/study.   Creating support for the Program will demand a highly coordinated, extensive and penetrating change management effort that will focus on three major strategies:

Establishing a Change Management Team: A committed and knowledgeable change management team will be essential to the Ryerson Sustainability Program. A change management team is ideally made up of a broad and diverse group of representatives from across levels and functional areas of an organization. A core group of members will be dedicated to leading this effort while others will take on this role on a less committed or intensive basis. Team members will be engaged in providing perspective and shaping how the program evolves and focuses efforts over time. This will be facilitated through regular meetings and ongoing communication.

Developing a Communications Plan: Building a well-structured communications plan will help ensure the right information is distributed to the right audience at the right time.   The three internal stakeholder groups that will immediately be in focus: Students, Staff and Academics. Plans will be expanded over time to focus on a broader group of internal and external stakeholders including: Alumni, Prospective Students, Donors, Corporate Partners, Community Partners, Suppliers, Contractors and more.

A variety of communication vehicles will be employed including an official Program newsletter and website, email blasts, campus publications, surveys, town halls / community forums, formal and informal training. Greengage, a specialized sustainability tool designed to engage community members, was developed within our very own Ryerson Digital Media Zone and will be used to encourage more dialogue and awareness.

 Two-way communication between the Program and all the stakeholders will be actively promoted. Soliciting feedback from the various stakeholder groups is not only inclusive; it will allow us to understand what people are experiencing and will inform how communications and the Program itself are focused and evolved over time.

Formalizing Change: Formalizing newly established structures, processes, commitments, etc. is essential to long-term Program success.   Once an individual or organization makes a public commitment or takes a visible action, they are much more likely to think it was the right thing to do and to take similar actions in the future.   The following tactics will encourage actual changes

shifting from being experienced as something new and uncomfortable to routine and accepted, more efficiently.

- Defining operating guidelines to capture new processes or approaches that have impacted the way day-to-day tasks are executed, for instance:
    - Formalizing changes to corporate and individual responsibilities.
    - Revising reporting requirements and performance metrics

- Developing new training and development opportunities including:
    - Embedding sustainability content into general staff onboarding material that is presented to new staff and faculty.
    - Educating the heads of both administrative departments and faculties
    - Providing training to leaders coordinating the operation of student groups