

# Creating a Sustainable Western Experience

## 10-Year Goals & 5-Year Outcomes for Sustainability



Western



President's Advisory  
Committee on Environment and  
Sustainability (PACES).

November 2012



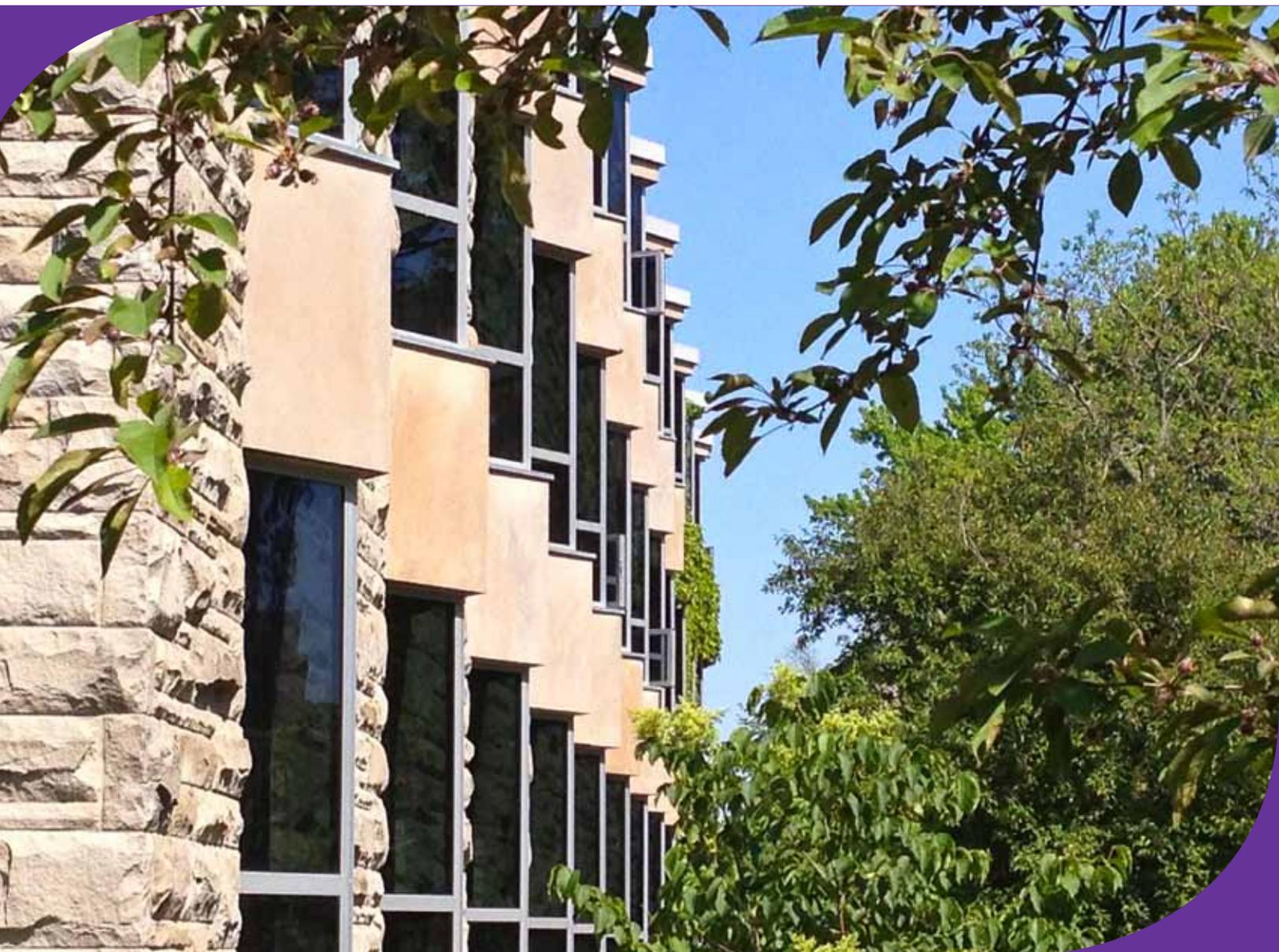
*Photo by Paul Mayne*



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*Photo by Genevieve Moreau*

## 1. A Message from PACES Co-Chairs

As an institution of higher learning, Western has tremendous intellectual capacity and potential to help address the world's environmental challenges in meaningful ways through our teaching, research and sustainable operational practices. Collectively and as individuals, students, faculty and staff members have important roles to play in embracing the values of conservation, participating in sustainability initiatives, and ultimately minimizing our impact on the environment.

Western's commitment to achieving these goals is demonstrated on several fronts.

For example, Western is a signatory to the Council of Ontario Universities' *Formal Declaration of Commitment to Environmental Sustainability*, as well as to the *Talloires Declaration*—a global action plan signed by more than 350 university presidents from 40 countries around the world. To support the spirit and objectives outlined in these documents, Western has established its own formal policy on *Environment and Sustainability* and struck the President's Advisory Committee on Environment & Sustainability. PACES' mandate is to set goals for Western's sustainability efforts, engage the broader campus community in supporting these initiatives, and monitor progress.

Over the last year, we have heard from many of you on your visions for sustainability at Western. We have heard that many of you would like to see a greener Western; a Western where sustainability is embedded in our community and how we do things. We also heard that there is great opportunity to better connect the student body, staff, faculty and alumni in joint efforts at achieving sustainability at Western and in our academic and research activities.

We have been inspired by your visions. Our strategy "Creating a Sustainable Western Experience" is testament to that inspiration, setting us forth on a shared direction for Western's sustainability endeavours. The strategy sets out our 10-year goals and our 5-year desired outcomes. It now needs you —Western students, staff, faculty and alumni— to work with us to implement the "how". There will be steps that we can all take to help us meet our desired outcomes.

The journey has just begun. We invite each and every one of you to continue exploring it with us!

Sincerely, your PACES Co-Chairs,



Janice Deakin,  
Provost and Vice-President (Academi



Gitta Kulczycki  
Vice-President (Resources & Operations)

## 2. About PACES

The President's Advisory Committee on Environment and Sustainability (herein referred to as PACES) is tasked with developing and recommending strategic plans related to campus sustainability and with improving awareness of sustainability initiatives and opportunities campus-wide. PACES is chaired jointly by the Provost and the Vice-President, Resources and Operations and is advisory to the President.

PACES is guided by the following principles:

- Incorporating sustainability into our academic programming, to contribute to an educated citizenry and development of future sustainability leaders;
- Engaging in research across the disciplines into issues of environmental sustainability;
- Reducing our use of inputs;
- Reducing outputs through recycling and reuse;
- Focusing on life cycle management of resources and waste products;
- Utilizing ecological landscaping methods and preserving green space; and
- Building and renovating facilities in accordance with energy efficiency and sustainability principles.

Committee members, in 2011-12, include:

- Janice Deakin, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Co-chair
- Gitta Kulczycki, Vice-President (Resources and Operations), Co-chair
- Tima Bansal, Professor, Richard Ivey School of Business
- Irena Creed, Professor, Biology, Geography and Earth Sciences
- Gordon Southam, Director, Centre for Environment and Sustainability
- Andrew Hrymak, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Professor, Chemical & Biochemical Engineering
- Roy Langille, Associate Vice-President, Facilities Management
- Susan Grindrod, Associate Vice-President, Housing and Ancillary Services
- Helen Connell, Associate Vice-President, Communications & Public Affairs
- Elizabeth Krische, Director of Procurement, Financial Services
- Carolyn Young, Director, Continuing Studies
- Beverley Ayeni, Manager, Energy and Environment, Facilities Management
- Jeff Grieve, Acting Director, Information Technology Services
- Sonja Teichert, Society of Graduate Students
- Dimuth Kurukula, EnviroWestern, University Student's Council



### 3. Defining Sustainability

Drawing from Western's Policy on Environment and Sustainability, a sustainable campus is defined as one that "promotes the smallest possible ecological footprint by promoting a healthy ecosystem and supporting the values of conservation."<sup>1</sup>

The policy goes on to say:

*Western is a signatory to the COU {Council of Ontario Universities} Statement on Creating a Sustainable Environment and to the Talloires Declaration, an action plan signed by many university presidents from around the world. The COU statement acknowledges that Ontario's universities have special responsibilities on three fronts:*

- *To assist in finding solutions to the challenges of environmental sustainability;*
- *To share knowledge about environment and sustainability; and*
- *To incorporate principles of sustainability into our own operations wherever possible.*

*As a postsecondary institution, Western has the intellectual capacity to solve pressing environmental problems; it has a moral obligation to minimize its impact on the environment; and it has the opportunity to educate students who will become global leaders in the environment and sustainability movement.*

Principles of sustainability are further detailed in the policy and guided the development of the strategy that follows.

1. **Engagement:** Environment and sustainability is the responsibility of everyone at Western. Success requires the collective action of the University community through long-term planning, shared learning, grassroots activities, and institutional leadership.
2. **Institutional Ecology:** The University commits to developing institutional practices that promote sustainability while reducing the use of resources and the production of waste and hazardous materials.
3. **Efficacy:** The University will continue to provide quality education and services while progressively reducing negative environmental, health and economic impacts.
4. **Accountability:** The University will establish measurable sustainability goals and monitor, evaluate and report on performance.
5. **Innovation:** The University will encourage a climate of creativity, inquiry, research and collaboration that fosters new ideas and approaches to sustainability questions and challenges.
6. **Community:** The University recognizes that it is part of a larger community and will engage with that community to promote sustainable practices and to identify and address opportunities and challenges that may have impact beyond our campus boundaries.

<sup>1</sup> Full policy on Environment and Sustainability is found in Appendix #1.

## 4. Western's Commitment to Sustainability

Western has undertaken a number of specific efforts in campus operations, in academics and research and in community engagement. Some of these initiatives include:

### **Leadership in Green Building Design and Retrofits**

Western has established an operational policy that all new building construction and retrofits will achieve a minimum LEED silver certification. Currently, Western has one LEED GOLD certified building, The Claudette MacKay-Lassonde Pavilion, and six additional buildings that are registered for LEED certification. Those buildings awaiting LEED certification include: McIntosh Gallery; Stevenson Hall/Lawson Hall; Richard Ivey School of Business (Phase II under construction); Physics and Astronomy Building (under renovation); Medical Education Centre (under construction); and new Residence (under construction). Campus and community members wishing to learn more about these green buildings can register for a tour at [www.uwo.ca/fm/greentours](http://www.uwo.ca/fm/greentours).

### **Waste Reduction Accomplishments**

Western has excelled in its waste reduction strategies. On average, Western is achieving upwards of 60% waste diversion rates, which is one of the highest in the country when compared to other institutions of higher education. Westminster Hall's achievement of zero waste status is a testament to the commitment to reduce unnecessary waste on campus and acts as a model for the entire campus.<sup>2</sup> Facilities Management estimates that of the existing waste on campus, 15% are coffee cups and a further 20% are items that are recyclable. Opportunities abound for Western to improve on its already impressive performance in Waste Management.

### **Excelling at Sustainability Education - Western's Centre for Environment and Sustainability**

The Centre for Environment and Sustainability (CES) was formed in recognition of Western's dedication to, and support for, environmental studies. Dynamic growth in the areas of environmental and sustainable research across a broad spectrum of disciplines created a need to consolidate research talent into a single collective and foster environmental education. The CES, a collaborative of internationally acclaimed researchers from the Faculties of Science, Engineering, Social Science, Arts and Humanities, Information and Media Studies, the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, the Richard Ivey School of Business and the Faculty of Law, as well as other environmental groups and affiliates across the Western campus, provides a vital stage for the exchange of interdisciplinary research and perspectives.<sup>3</sup>

### **Establishing innovative partnerships - Network for Business Sustainability**

The Network for Business Sustainability is funded in part by, and housed at, Western's Richard Ivey School of Business. The network unites thousands of researchers and professionals to produce "authoritative resources on important sustainability issues—with a goal of changing management practice."<sup>4</sup> The network resources, such as "Embedding sustainability in organizational culture: a how-to guide for executives" provides practical tools for implementing sustainability in top-achieving businesses.

<sup>2</sup> Zero-waste certification is a program of Zero-Waste International Alliance and recognizes efforts of communities, institutions and buildings in diverting over 90% of their waste from landfills and incinerators. For more information: <http://www.zwia.org>.

<sup>3</sup> Centre for Environment and Sustainability. <http://www.uwo.ca/enviro/Research/researchindex.html>

<sup>4</sup> Bertels, Dr. Stephanie (2010). "Embedding sustainability in organizational culture: a how-to guide for executives." The Network for Business Sustainability. [www.nbs.net](http://www.nbs.net).

## 5. Developing a Campus-Wide Strategy

The **IMAGINE 2022** project began in the summer of 2011 when PACES commissioned the development of a 10-year sustainability vision and action plan for Western's University Campus.

In the same time period, Facilities Management completed Western's first STARS assessment.<sup>5</sup> The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.<sup>6</sup> Western's Silver ranking within the STARS assessment tool is consistent with the majority of campuses that have completed it.

In the fall of 2011, an analysis was undertaken to better situate Western's sustainability activities in comparison to its peers. This report found that Western had met some important sustainability achievements in comparison to its peers. There was also opportunity highlighted for increased leadership as Western continues to strive in its efforts at integrating sustainability.

Following this analysis, the IMAGINE 2022 project began engaging the Western community in discussions on the directions and priorities for sustainability initiatives at Western. Students, staff, faculty, and London residents were invited to contribute ideas and solutions in two community forums, a virtual brainstorm, online polls, e-submissions, and other on-campus engagement opportunities. The ideas were all presented to PACES to assist in the development of a sustainability vision for Western, as well as the prioritization of 10-year goals and 5-year desired outcomes needed to create momentum towards achieving this vision.

A priority has been placed on the need to embed sustainability in the campus culture through the creation of a vital and engaged community at Western. To this end, **"Creating a Sustainable Western Experience"** emphasizes the importance of strategies that embed sustainability into the culture of living, working and learning at Western.

The strategy itself is designed to enable ongoing input by the Western community. It is designed to drive us towards desired outcomes without being prescriptive in the "how-to's". Key to the strategy's overall success, therefore, is the active participation and ongoing input of the Western community.

<sup>5</sup> Western's full STARS submission can be found online at: <https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-western-ontario-on/report/2011-08-22>

<sup>6</sup> Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. <https://stars.aashe.org>



## 6. Western's Sustainability Pledge



*Our guiding vision for a Sustainable “Western Experience” - in community, teaching, research and operations.*

Western is committed to embedding sustainability into every facet of daily life.

- As a member of the London community, we will incorporate responsible practices into all aspects of operations in order to minimize our impact on the environment.
- As a teacher of the next generation of global leaders, we will equip students with the knowledge and the tools essential to living a sustainable future.
- As a research facility with strong intellectual capacity, we will investigate pressing issues and propose effective solutions to environmental problems.

Through active citizenship, teaching and research, we will ensure the health of our planet and its people for the long term.

## 7. Goals for Creating a Sustainable “Western Experience”



### **Sustainability in the Western Community**

- Every member of the Western community - including students, faculty and staff - will have the opportunity for a sustainable and healthy working, living and learning environment.
- The profile of sustainability will be elevated on campus, inviting campus-wide collaboration and engagement.

### **Excellence in Sustainability Teaching and Learning**

- Every student entering Western will have the opportunity to be exposed to the theory and practice of sustainability.
- Students seeking expertise and knowledge in sustainability will have access to curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Opportunities will be available to the entire Western community, and beyond, to acquire education in sustainability topics of interest and relevance.

### **Excellence in Sustainability Research**

- Western will encourage and pursue research that promotes sustainability accomplishments and knowledge at the local, regional and international levels.
- Western will invite innovative partnerships - on and off-campus - to research and propose solutions to society's most pressing sustainability challenges.
- Collaboration will be encouraged internally to increase opportunities for trans-disciplinary sustainability research and raise awareness on the scope of Western's research activities in fields of sustainability.

### **Sustainability in Western Operations**

- Western will begin the transition towards a low-carbon campus, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- Western will engage in a campus-wide effort to become a Zero Waste campus.
- Western will enhance ecosystem services on campus while supporting alternative lifestyles.
- Western will endeavour to purchase products and services that meet a comprehensive range of sustainability criteria.
- Western will solicit and support the development of green infrastructure on campus.

## 8. Sustainability in the Western Community

**GOAL 1: Every member of the Western community - including students, faculty and staff - will have the opportunity for a sustainable working, living and learning environment.**

### Desired 5-Year Outcomes:

- Awareness and engagement in sustainability is embraced by the Western community.
- Sustainability is a major student learning initiative within Western's residences and in orientation week activities.
- A sustainability fund designed to encourage sustainability initiatives on campus is explored as a mechanism to drive increased engagement and advancement of sustainability efforts at Western.

**GOAL 2: The profile of sustainability will be elevated on campus, inviting campus-wide collaboration and engagement.**

### Desired 5-Year Outcomes:

- An increase in sustainability best practices and greater collaboration and involvement in sustainability initiatives throughout campus is facilitated by Western's Campus Sustainability Coordinator and a new Sustainability Coordination Committee.
- Sustainability on campus, through teaching, research, and operations builds reputation, fosters innovation, and generates contributions, in addition to cost savings.
- Sustainability is embedded in campus planning documents.



## 9. Excellence in Sustainability Teaching & Learning

### **GOAL 3: Every student entering Western will have the opportunity to be exposed to the theory and practice of sustainability.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Steps initiated to establish an interdisciplinary introductory course in sustainability which would be made available to all students entering Western.
- Greater integration of sustainability in course offerings across faculties is achieved.
- Sustainability values are promoted across departments, faculties, in residence and in presidential communications.
- The campus community comes together to learn about existing sustainability research, opportunities and initiatives taking place throughout Western.

### **GOAL 4: Students seeking expertise and knowledge in sustainability will have access to curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- A sustainability minor is developed as a path toward creating both a major and a second-entry undergraduate degree in sustainability.
- A discussion is initiated on the opportunity to evolve the Centre for Environment and Sustainability into a School of Sustainability.

### **GOAL 5: Opportunities will be made available to the entire Western community, and beyond, to acquire education and experience in sustainability topics of interest and relevance.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- The University has developed forms of recognition for students, staff, faculty or alumni participating in curricular or extra-curricular programs in sustainability – such as a formal or informal certificate offering for sustainability.
- Increased opportunities are available, to the Western community and beyond, for non-credit sustainability courses and programs.

## 10. Excellence in Sustainability Research

### **GOAL 6: Western will encourage and pursue research that promotes sustainability efforts and knowledge at the local, regional and international levels.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Internal grant competitions include sustainability aspects of research in their evaluation criteria.
- Sustainability research initiatives utilize Interdisciplinary Development Initiatives Program (IDIs) funding.
- High-achieving student research initiatives for solving sustainability challenges are incented and profiled.
- Trans-disciplinary research projects by graduate students and fourth-year undergraduate projects are initiated and encouraged.

### **GOAL 7: Innovative partnerships will be developed across Western academic disciplines to research and propose solutions to societies most pressing sustainability challenges.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Sustainability research, funding opportunities and priorities on campus are promoted via multiple mechanisms.
- Trans-disciplinary research clusters exist based on internal areas of strength responding quickly to opportunities and needs for sustainability research.

### **GOAL 8: External collaboration will be encouraged to increase opportunities for trans-disciplinary sustainability research and raise awareness on the scope of Western's research activities in fields of sustainability.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Creators and users of sustainability knowledge are assembled through mechanisms such as a sustainability innovation network.
- Western's research pursuits in sustainability are marketed, communicated and recognized beyond Western borders.
- Innovative partnerships involving key stakeholders within and beyond the Western borders exist.
- End-users engage in the funding, design and execution of sustainability research.



## 11. Sustainability in Western Operations

### **GOAL 9: Western will begin the transition towards a low-carbon campus, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Main campus' scope 1 GHG emissions will be reduced by 15% below 2009 levels
- A 30-year Low carbon Utilities & Infrastructure Strategy outlines steps we will take to contribute towards [reduction targets of 37% by 2030 and 80% by 2050](#).
- All new construction and major renovation projects include energy and carbon management as a priority starting with the design stage.
- In order to advance our GHG reduction efforts, Western requires the financial commitment of the federal and provincial governments to support project implementation

### **GOAL 10: Western will engage in a campus-wide effort to become a Zero Waste campus.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- A 10 year Waste Management strategy guides projects and initiatives that will lead us to a Zero Waste campus
- Waste management policies, procedures, systems and infrastructure are in place to support our move towards a Zero Waste campus
- Food waste on campus is reduced through a formal food composting strategy and in collaboration with internal and external partners

### **GOAL 11: Western will enhance ecosystem services on campus while supporting alternative lifestyles.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Natural habitat on campus is protected and enhanced, where appropriate.
- The campus connection to the Thames River is celebrated and drives involvement in restoration efforts.
- There is a reduced need for vehicle-based transportation through and on campus.
- Access to healthy, local, organic and fair trade food with vegan and vegetarian options are widely available throughout campus.
- Opportunities for on-campus food production are harnessed.
- Opportunities are explored to increase the number of projects that provide cost-savings by reducing Western's overall environmental impact.

### **GOAL 12: Western will endeavour to purchase products and services that meet a comprehensive range of sustainability criteria.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

- Sustainability in procurement will be heightened as campus requisitioners build sustainability into their purchasing decisions and policies.
- Opportunities for incorporating life-cycle accounting into purchasing decisions on-campus are identified and integrated.

### **GOAL 13: Western will solicit and support the development of green infrastructure on campus.**

#### **Desired 5-Year Outcomes:**

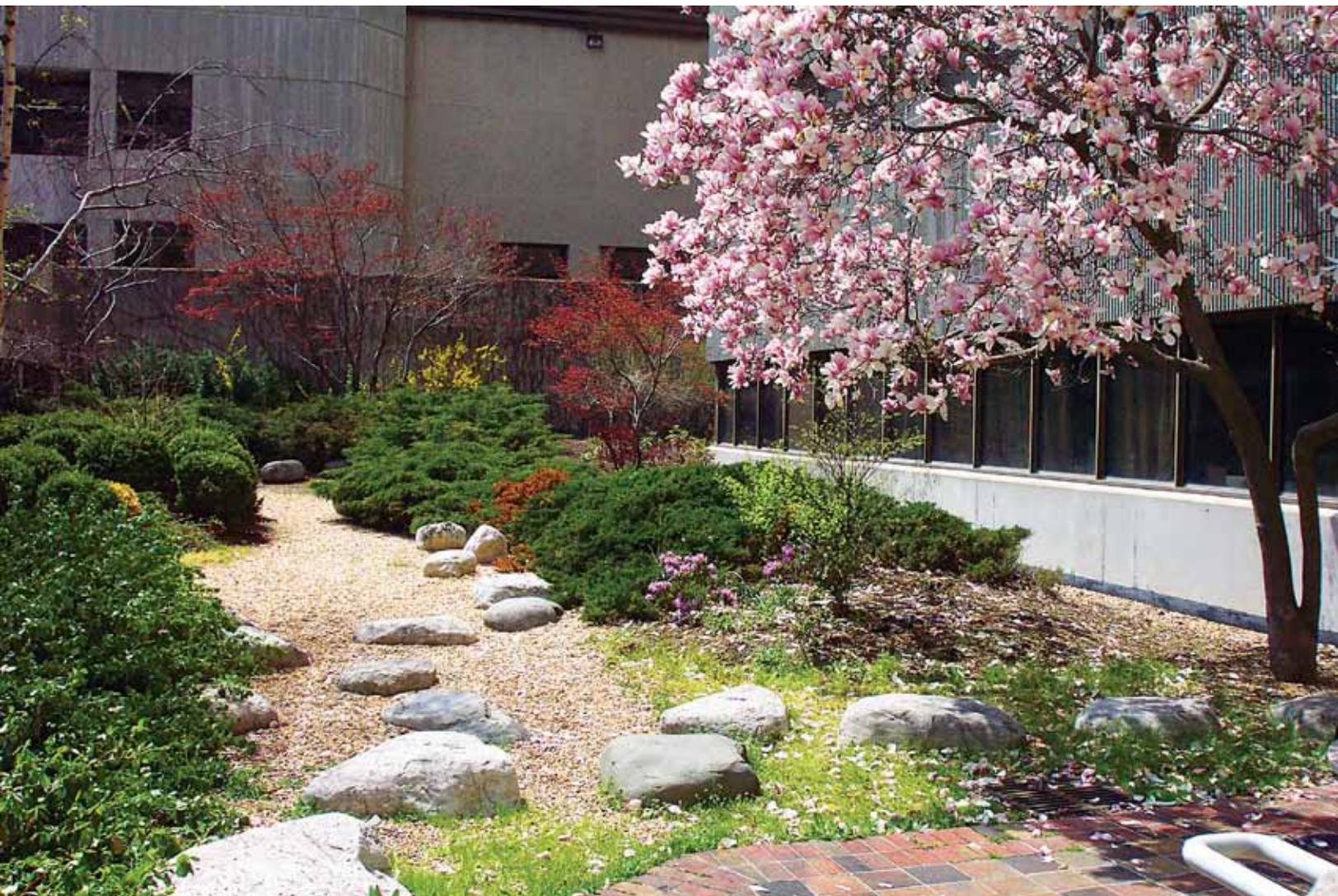
- Partnerships with the City of London will facilitate increased access for bike and pedestrian travel to and from campus.
- Model green infrastructure projects will be identified and piloted, in areas such as Information Technology services, stormwater management, permeable surfacing and green-roofs.

## 12. Moving to Implementation - Closing Thoughts

Western has enormous potential to become a leading institution of higher education in sustainability; this strategy is the first step in Western's overall sustainability planning efforts. An implementation framework has also been developed to guide the next steps and to monitor our success moving forward.

Sustainability planning is new for campuses. With this plan, Western is joining a small group of institutions across Canada that have created sustainability strategies for campuses. The first step to implementing Western's Sustainability Strategy requires the development of a 5-year action plan. There is inspiration in the visions of Western community members and there is great opportunity to bring together Western's student body, staff, faculty and greater community in a joint effort in developing Western's 5-year action plan. Western's path to sustainability is evolving. The involvement and input of the entire Western Community will move the campus into the next phase of its planning and sustainability pursuits.

Our sustainability planning process has just begun. Let's continue to work together to make Western a leading institution in sustainability in culture, teaching, learning, research and operations.



## Appendix #1:

### The UNIVERSITY of WESTERN ONTARIO POLICIES and PROCEDURES.

#### 1.48 ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Classification: General

Effective Date: 24JUNE10

Supersedes: New

#### PREAMBLE

A sustainable campus is one that promotes the smallest possible ecological footprint by promoting a healthy ecosystem and supporting the values of conservation.

The University of Western Ontario is a signatory to the COU Statement on Creating a Sustainable Environment and to the Talloire Declaration, an action plan signed by many university presidents from around the world. The COU statement acknowledges that Ontario's universities have special responsibilities on three fronts:

- To assist in finding solutions to the challenges of environmental sustainability
- To share knowledge about environment and sustainability
- To incorporate principles of sustainability into our own operations wherever possible

As a postsecondary institution, Western has the intellectual capacity to solve pressing environmental problems; it has a moral obligation to minimize its impact on the environment; and it has the opportunity to educate students who will become global leaders in the environment and sustainability movement.

#### A. SCOPE

This policy applies to all areas of the University that support the delivery of teaching, research and services at Western. It provides an overarching framework for creating an institutional culture of sustainability that draws upon the abilities and expertise of the University community.

#### B. PRINCIPLES

The University of Western Ontario subscribes to the following principles of sustainability:

1. **Engagement:** Environment and sustainability is the responsibility of everyone at Western. Success requires the collective action of the University community through long-term planning, shared learning, grassroots activities, and institutional leadership.
2. **Institutional Ecology:** The University commits to developing institutional practices that promote sustainability while reducing the use of resources and the production of waste and hazardous materials.
3. **Efficacy:** The University will continue to provide quality education and services while progressively reducing negative environmental, health and economic impacts.
4. **Accountability:** The University will establish measurable sustainability goals and monitor, evaluate and report on performance.
5. **Innovation:** The University will encourage a climate of creativity, inquiry, research and collaboration that fosters new ideas and approaches to sustainability questions and challenges.
6. **Community:** The University recognizes that it is part of a larger community and will engage with that community to promote sustainable practices and to identify and address opportunities and challenges that may have impact beyond our campus boundaries.

#### C. GOALS&OBJECTIVES

The principles identified in this policy will encourage:

- Incorporating sustainability into our academic programming, to contribute to an educated citizenry and develop future leaders
- Engaging in research across the disciplines into issues of environmental sustainability
- Reducing our use of inputs
- Reducing outputs through recycling and reuse
- Focusing on life cycle management of resources and waste products
- Utilizing ecological landscaping methods and preserving green space
- Building and renovating facilities in accordance with energy efficiency and sustainability principles

## D. STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. Vice-Presidents

Each vice-president has responsibility to ensure that the University complies with all applicable legislation and regulations related to sustainability within his or her operational mandate.

### 2. President's Advisory Committee on Environment and Sustainability (PACES)

#### *(a) Mandate*

The President's Advisory Committee on Environment and Sustainability has primary responsibility for developing and recommending strategic plans to put into practice the principles enunciated in this policy. The expectation is that, for each part of its mandate, it will build on the work that is already being done by staff and organizations involved in sustainability initiatives within academic and administrative units across the University. It will:

- (i) Establish specific goals for sustainability.
- (ii) Develop performance indicators for and regularly measure progress toward established goals.
- (iii) Develop communication tools to:
  - Inform the University community in general of programs and activities relating to sustainability
  - Assist with information dissemination in order to reduce duplication of effort and enhance efficiencies
  - Educate individual members of the community with respect to how they can contribute to a sustainable campus
- (iv) Advise the President and senior administration on policy and procedural changes that need to be made.
- (v) Report annually to the University community at large, the Senate and the Board of Governors.

#### *(b) Membership*

The President's Advisory Committee on Environment and Sustainability is composed as follows:

- The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) (Co-Chair)
- The Vice-President (Resources & Operations) (Co-Chair)
- The Associate Vice-President (Housing & Ancillary Services)
- The Associate Vice-President (Facilities Management)
- The Associate Vice-President (Communications & Public Affairs)
- The Director of the Centre for Environment and Sustainability
- Three faculty members appointed by the President
- Three staff members appointed by the President
- One dean appointed by the President
- One undergraduate student appointed by the USC
- One graduate student appointed by the SOGS

Appointed members will serve for two-year terms, renewable.

**IMAGINE 2022** | **Our path to sustainability**

**Creating a Sustainable Western Experience**  
10-Year Goals & 5-Year Outcomes for Sustainability



**Western**