

## Sustainability Vision for Emory

*Healthy Emory, Healthy Planet*

*Blue and Gold make Green*

During the strategic planning process of 2004-5, sustainability was identified as a fundamental principle guiding the university. In the spring of 2005, President James Wagner created the Sustainability Committee and charged it with the task of developing a vision for the responsible environmental, economic, and social future of Emory. This document and its specific goals and recommendations are intended to stimulate the imagination and guide decision making, resource use, and future action in all parts of the university. We expect this document to evolve over time and for the recommendations to be pursued through a variety of activities such as the strategic plan, the campus master plan, the work-live community plan, and efforts of university units.

What is sustainability? The Brundtland Commission identified sustainable development in 1987 as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A sustainable Emory will be part of a healthy ecosystem; we seek to reduce the university's harmful impacts on the environment and contribute to regeneration of the ecosystem. A thriving economic sector will provide equitable opportunities for satisfying livelihoods and study through a safe, healthy, high quality of life for current and future generations. A sustainable Emory community implicates social dimensions, including a rich fabric of cultural diversity and the opportunity for all members to play a role in determining their own future. The intersections of social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability are the "triple bottom line" by which we will assess our progress.

\*\*\*\*\*

We envision a future for Emory as an educational model for healthy living, both locally and globally—a responsive and responsible part of a life-sustaining ecosystem. To this end, Emory will collaborate with others beyond the university to provide leadership in sustaining and restoring all aspects of a healthy life: economic, environmental, and social. Commitment to a sustainable future for Emory will require creativity and a new framework for bold decision making. It will also require fresh vision and continuing innovation, so that education and research efforts will foster sustainability in all areas of common life. Systems of measurement will be essential to monitor progress and to encourage adaptive process as we weave sustainability principles throughout academic and operational units. Emory University will become a catalyst for sustainability—for our own community, for the region, and beyond.

**1. Healthy Ecosystem Context:** We seek a restored and restorative human and natural environment—a university community within a forested ecosystem, supportive of native species diversity. The planned campus will provide opportunities for faculty, students, staff, patients, and visitors to move through the natural world. Our university culture will

value connection to place, will encourage time in the out of doors, and will teach about stewardship of our ecosystem, beginning with students' and employees' first moments on campus.

Goals:

- Restore the vision of Emory's original landscape designer, Henry Hornbostel, for a forested campus environment in which people move from home and residence hall to work and study.
- Create a long range land use and landscape design that contributes to a healthy ecosystem and is consistent with inclusive policies for access.
- Restore forested lands and control harmful invasive species on university campuses.
- Restore streams and improve water management practices to achieve healthy watershed function on university campuses.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Partner with the community to transform the landscape of the Clifton Road and North Decatur Road corridors to signal Emory's commitment to a healthy ecosystem, support of diverse forms of transportation, and encouragement of exercise in aesthetically pleasing surroundings.
- ✓ Build a series of demonstration gardens with educational and leisure purposes.
- ✓ Mark natural features such as streams on Emory maps and nearby signs.
- ✓ Develop demonstration plantings of native species in each campus zone.
- ✓ Continue commitment to no net loss of forest cover across the university.
- ✓ Develop a stormwater management plan by 2007 and set targets for implementation.
- ✓ Remove invasive species from all university forests and develop long-term restoration plan by 2015.

**2. Healthy University Function in the Built Environment:** We seek to be a global model through attention to this region and its natural cycles, efficiency in the use of resources and the reduction of waste, and restorative action in the built environment. Our buildings will embody sustainability practices so as to teach, be catalysts for change, and provide incubators for innovation. Our buildings will also be attentive to the abilities of all users, following what is known as universal sustainable design principles for accessibility. Through a commitment to human and ecosystemic health here and elsewhere, Emory will seek to partner with other local institutions to lead the wider economic marketplace towards greening the supply chain—developing systems of production, distribution, and consumption that reduce pollution and conserve resources.

Goals:

- Assess the university by sector to determine how better to create closed loops for energy, water, food, and other basic systems.
- Retrofit existing buildings to embody new technologies and to encourage new behaviors in harmony with sustainability goals.
- Reduce average campus energy use by 25% per square foot by 2015, calibrating from a baseline of December 2005.

- Reduce Emory's total waste stream by 65% by 2015, including recycling 100% of electronics waste and road construction materials and composting, recycling, or reusing at least 95% of food waste, animal bedding, and building construction materials.
- Partner with suppliers to obtain food, paper, construction materials, energy, and other needed materials through methods of manufacturing, transport, packaging, and labor relations that embody the triple bottom line of sustainability and support a daily awareness of purchasing implications for global health.
- Build all new and renovated structures to contribute to Emory's leadership in green building standards, and engage in sustainability education by broadening participation in building design and decision-making and by engaging in post-construction learning opportunities.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Develop a phased plan for energy and greenhouse gas reduction, setting goals across the university both for energy efficiency and for overall energy reduction.
- ✓ Create innovation incubators and support initiatives at all Emory sites, including Oxford College, Yerkes, and other locales.
- ✓ Develop a pilot program to inform future policy and provide feasibility data for solar panels and green roofs, consistent with campus aesthetics.
- ✓ Develop a sustainability leadership program for representatives of each university building, who in turn will inform and foster creativity in their respective buildings.
- ✓ Expand awareness of and participation in recycling and waste reduction to achieve university goals.
- ✓ Support university renewable energy use.
- ✓ Review and align architectural and engineering design standards for consistency with sustainability goals..
- ✓ Develop policies to encourage purchases of fairly traded products in as many ways as possible throughout the university.
- ✓ Develop an annual Greening the Supply Chain conference with Georgia Tech and other local institutions and suppliers.
- ✓ Reduce use of toxic materials in landscaping, maintenance, and other activities.

**3. Healthy University Structures, Leadership and Participation:** Emory seeks to support equitable social structures within an ethos of sustainability, while developing strong leadership and participation among all students, faculty, and staff. Leaders at all levels who are inspired, informed, responsive, and engaged will include sustainability criteria in ethical and managerial decisions. Leaders among students, faculty, and staff will collaborate across units of the university to develop sustainable systems of daily life and help Emory thrive, economically, socially, and environmentally. We envision a future Emory with a strong, diverse student body, well supported with financial aid, and academically thriving. We envision also a diverse, vigorous, and productive faculty and staff. To this end, we seek to be a responsible employer, providing fair and just remuneration, including wages, benefits, and working conditions for all employees and

contractees, with opportunities for advancement and reward. The Emory experience will engender a sense of place and a pervasive awareness of sustainability commitments which will invigorate cooperation among sectors of the university and will encourage aesthetic and celebratory expressions.

Goals:

- Review university policies to recognize and address cultural, economic, and ethnic disparities in health.
- Support programs for leaders at all levels to inform the community about sustainability and justice issues and to recognize achievement.
- Develop visible symbols of our campus sustainability commitment to guide new awareness and habits.
- Provide organizational structures to encourage cooperation and support educational opportunities for all faculty, staff, and students to engage actively in change toward sustainability.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Appoint a Director for Sustainability to catalyze and coordinate university efforts.
- ✓ Create a Sustainability Committee or Council to support innovation and develop cross-university cooperation.
- ✓ Form an external Advisory Council with other Atlanta area leaders.
- ✓ Develop an alumni network to support sustainability outreach beyond the university.
- ✓ Create incentive programs to support leadership innovation toward sustainability.
- ✓ Choose a sustainability symbol and target four key behaviors:
  - a) adjust building temperature and appropriate dress code for summer and winter,
  - b) decrease elevator use and increase use of stairs,
  - c) increase awareness of Emory as a walking campus and adjust use of shuttles, trails, and private cars,
  - d) integrate connection to place in all university rituals

**4. Healthy Living-Learning-Working Community:** Emory seeks to create an ethos that encourages a healthy lifestyle with choices in transportation, food, and housing for all community members and visitors. Through collaboration with business and government, we will encourage nodes of housing density around the campus, to reduce commuting stress and support transportation options that reduce use of fossil fuels. We will build university buildings and roads to encourage walking, with appropriate attention to the diverse physical abilities of community members as we provide connections among educational buildings, natural areas, businesses, and living spaces. Emory's commitment to sustainability seeks visible means and cultural, ethical, and economic motivations to promote healthy lifestyle choices in exercise and food, to reverse the decline in health indicators of the present era.

Goals:

*Lifestyle Programs:*

- Develop programs that actively promote healthy lifestyles.

*Living Arrangements:*

- Develop a program of nearby faculty and staff housing and a revitalized Emory Village to encourage deeper community engagement and reduced auto use.
- Build new commercial zones on or near campus to offer ready access to food and other necessities.
- Establish vibrant undergraduate housing communities to embody sustainability principles.

*Transportation Arrangements:*

- Mark our campuses with inviting spaces and programs that encourage walking, biking, and other transportation alternatives to automobiles.
- Make both Emory and Oxford campuses fully accessible to wheelchairs.
- Connect the university with nearby institutions, Atlanta, and other cities with trolleys, trains, and other public transportation; include Yerkes, Grady, and Oxford in transportation planning.

*Food Arrangements:*

- Establish a university farmers market, featuring locally grown and sustainably produced foods, to highlight a commitment to sustainable agricultural production.
- Adapt campus dining facilities to provide and encourage healthy food choices at all times of day. Procure 75% of ingredients from local or sustainably grown sources by 2015.
- Include community gardens in the university landscape plan for aesthetic and educational purposes.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Establish sustainable living/learning communities in residence halls by 2010.
- ✓ Develop affordable housing for faculty and staff within a one-mile radius of university workplaces to promote a more vibrant and sustainable community.
- ✓ Provide shuttles for transportation to campus within three mile radius.
- ✓ Review parking policy to support sustainability goals.
- ✓ Establish a process to move toward sustainable and local food purchases and to create partnerships with regional farmers.
- ✓ Reestablish the Turner Village organic garden for residents and develop a visible college-led community garden for undergraduates and staff.
- ✓ Review food choices in all dining facilities to ensure health-promoting choices.

**5. Education and Research:** The university seeks to support continued learning about sustainability through formal coursework, research, and the whole of life on campus. The university will be a laboratory for innovation, sharing its research discoveries and sustainability stories in formal venues and through our students and graduates. Participants in the Emory community will be ambassadors for the principles of sustainable living and a healthful future, both here and elsewhere.

**Goals:**

- Include inquiry, practical application, and institutional learning about sustainability issues in the curriculum of each school and across schools.
- Support faculty research that investigates and encourages attention to sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) and offer appropriate research and practicum experiences for students.
- Offer opportunities for continued learning for faculty and staff about sustainability issues.
- Support action projects that encourage reflective participation in sustainability efforts for students, staff, and faculty leaders.
- Develop travel seminars in which faculty participants study human communities in relation to their natural environments in nearby and international contexts.

**Recommendations:**

- ✓ Support faculty development to infuse curriculum with sustainability issues across all schools, and at all levels of students.
- ✓ Expand teaching and research programs focused on sustainability, including basic and advanced courses, research projects, and interdisciplinary collaborations in curriculum and research development.
- ✓ Develop hands-on sustainability-related research opportunities for undergraduates.
- ✓ Develop travel seminars focusing on sustainability by 2010.
- ✓ Create an incentives fund to support sustainability initiatives by both faculty and students in education and research.

**Members of the Sustainability Committee:**

Wayne Alexander, Chair, Department of Medicine, Medical School

Eloise Carter, Professor of Biology, Oxford College

Arri Eisen, Biology Department, Director, Science and Society Program, Emory College

Bill Eley, Executive Associate Dean/Medical Education and Student Affairs

Bob Hascall, Vice President for Campus Services

Jim Hughes, Associate Dean and Professor, Law

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Professor, Director, Women in Theology and Ministry, Candler

Bridget Guernsey Riordan, Assistant Vice President, Campus Life

John Wegner, Campus Environmental Officer, Environmental Studies, Emory College

**Co-chairs:**

Michael Mandl, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration

Peggy Barlett, Professor of Anthropology, Emory College

Consultations to refine this report were carried out with the: President's Cabinet; Senate; Senate Committees on the Environment and Campus Development; Faculty Council; Woodruff Health Sciences Leadership Council; Employee Council; Ecoseac (Student Environmental Action Coalition); Fraternity/Sorority Council; Residence Hall Association; Student Government Association; Oxford Strategic Planning Committee; Purchasing; Food Service; President Jimmy Carter; sustainability leaders of peer institutions; and open meetings of Emory and Oxford faculty, staff, and students.