

# Comprehensive Sustainability Plan Progress Report 2026



# Decarbonization



## ENERGY

**PROGRESS:** Completed energy studies on five of our highest energy intensity buildings, identifying 14 efficiency measures for further investigation that could reduce campus-wide Scope 1 emissions by 17%.

## BUILDINGS

### PROGRESS:

- The Fleming Museum chiller replacement was completed, enhancing system reliability and saving an estimated 26,000 kWh annually.
- The Howe Library air handler project is projected to save more than 569,000 kWh annually, avoiding approximately 132,333 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions each year through improved energy performance.
- A new high-efficiency chiller at the Health Sciences Research Facility (HSRF) is expected to reduce campus emissions by 1,621,511 pounds annually.
- A geothermal test well was drilled at Colchester Research Facility in March 2026.

## TRANSPORTATION

### PROGRESS:

- Launched an employee vanpool program, providing a new lower-emissions commuting option.
- Installed 8 new e-micromobility charging units at Jeanne Mance, bringing the campus total to 32 dedicated e-bike and e-scooter charging outlets.
- Opened first EV commuter lot, providing employees with all day access to 12 charging ports, located at the Wheeler House.

Partnered with Green Mountain Transit to expand bus service to UVM's Market Street residence, reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips.



# Research & Learning

## RESEARCH

**PROGRESS:** Sustainability remains central to UVM's R1 research enterprise, with 93% of academic departments engaged in sustainability-related research.

## LEARNING

**PROGRESS:** 86% of academic departments have sustainability course offerings. Undergraduates who have completed their sustainability requirement report being better able to assess how sustainability impacts their lives and how their actions impact sustainability.

UVM achieved prestigious R1 Research Activity Designation, joining the ranks of the nation's top tier research institutions in 2025.

# Operations



Students installed a “soft landing garden” at the base of a prominent oak tree, creating native insect habitat, supporting bird populations, and modeling sustainable landscape practices in a high-traffic campus setting.

## LANDSCAPE

### PROGRESS:

- Approximately 5,000 square feet of new pollinator gardens were planted in 2025.
- 99% of UVM grounds are maintained without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides or herbicides.

## FOOD & DINING

**PROGRESS:** In FY25, UVM Dining invested \$2.5 million in local food, representing 21.4% of total food expenditures and partnerships with more than 105 Vermont farmers and producers. This reflects a 5.9% increase over the previous fiscal year.



UVM launched the “better burger,” as the default option at dining halls, a 70% Vermont-raised beef and 30% roasted mycelium blend. In partnership with 50CUT and Black River Produce, it supports local farmers and cuts greenhouse gas emissions by 30%.

## WASTE

### PROGRESS:

- FY25 campus landfill diversion rate exceeded 50%, for the first time since COVID.
- Compost collection was expanded to every floor of each residence hall.
- Surplus program relaunched in a new location at Fort Ethan Allen.

# Governance and People

## INVESTMENTS

**PROGRESS:** The University has invested \$43.6 million of its operating reserves in an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) laddered bond fund, aligning financial management with its sustainability values.

## PURCHASING




**PROGRESS:** 100% of UVM-issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in FY25 incorporated sustainability specifications. A new Supplier & Vendor Code of Conduct further embeds Our Common Ground values into the University’s procurement process.



# COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN GOALS

DECARBONIZATION	ENERGY AND CLIMATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Carbon neutral by 2030.</li> <li>★ Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) 60% below 2007 levels by 2024.</li> </ul>
	BUILDINGS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Reduce GHG emissions in major University buildings.</li> <li>→ Increase energy efficiency in laboratory buildings.</li> </ul>
	TRANSPORTATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Reduce GHG emissions associated with the UVM fleet.</li> <li>→ Reduce conventional single-occupancy vehicle commutes from 2019 baseline.</li> <li>→ Implement the EV Charging Campus Plan.</li> </ul>
	RESEARCH & LEARNING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Strengthen and support transdisciplinary sustainability research across the University.</li> <li>↻ Launch Sustainable Solutions Lab and cultivate research that uses campus as a “living lab”.</li> </ul>
	LEARNING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Educate students to have a positive impact and contribute to sustainable communities.</li> </ul>	
OPERATIONS	FOOD AND DINING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Increase spending on Vermont-grown food to 25% by 2030.</li> </ul>
	WASTE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Reduce total pounds of waste generated per campus user 10% by 2035.</li> <li>→ Increase composting and recycling by a combined 10% or more by 2035.</li> </ul>
	LANDSCAPE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Prioritize the purchase of electric grounds management equipment.</li> <li>→ Increase the acreage of sustainable and native plantings on campus.</li> </ul>
GOVERNANCE & PEOPLE	GOVERNANCE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↻ Implement the CSP and revise the Plan on a five-year basis.</li> </ul>
	INTERCULTURAL EXCELLENCE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↻ Support the implementation of Inclusive Excellence Action Plans within departments across the University.</li> </ul>
	INVESTMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↻ Increase percentage of positive sustainability investments and shareholder advocacy.</li> </ul>
	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Create partnerships with other training and educational institutions to support the development and training of the green workforce in Vermont.</li> </ul>	
PURCHASING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Improve purchasing practices to increase sustainable purchases across the University.</li> </ul>	

## PROGRESS TRACKING

 = ACHIEVED  
  = ON TRACK  
  = ONGOING