INTRODUCTION

The University of Alabama at Birmingham’s vision is to embed sustainability as a fundamental value at the university through the development of sustainability literacy, solutions, and leadership. UAB students, faculty, and staff are committed to taking an influential role as responsible stewards of our resources and communities, and to using educational, operational, and research activities to promote global thinking and local action.

UAB’s Sustainability program was developed in 2013 to serve the university, hospital, and surrounding community, using the widely accepted definition of sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In practice, this is achieved by working to holistically incorporate sustainability principles and standards in operations, teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community outreach and education.

UAB is a thriving academic and medical community, situated in a vibrant city, and is an institution uniquely positioned to engage in robust dialogue centered on the questions posed in the pursuit of sustainability. To advance this dialogue, UAB Sustainability and the UAB Operations and Faculty Sustainability Committees conducted a two-year strategic planning process to determine the most important goals, strategies, and outcomes for a sustainable institution by 2025.

The Center for Educational Accountability assisted in guiding the process that included 13 working groups comprised of 67 members. Two public listening sessions were held, one on campus and one at UAB Hospital, and presentations made to institutional shared governance groups including the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Undergraduate Student Government Association. An online survey was distributed to all hospital and campus email addresses, including students, faculty, and staff, and more than 4,000 individuals responded to the survey.

UAB’s Sustainability Strategic Plan for 2025 is the result of the entirety of these meetings, conversations, listening sessions, presentations, and broader dialogue on campus and in the community. The resulting Sustainability Strategic Plan reflects a vision that aligns with the university’s shared values and concisely outlines the goals and strategies we will pursue over the course of the next six years.
At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, we believe that institutions of higher learning should use their human and technical capacity to improve the quality of life in the communities where they are located and which they serve.

UAB is committed to making a positive impact through exceptional sustainability performance, and the UAB Sustainability Strategic Plan provides the direction for our institution to manage this achievement. The Sustainability Strategic Plan, a document intended to deliver a holistic vision with clear, institution-wide sustainability priorities and goals, was developed in consultation with a wide range of university stakeholders. The goals and strategies are also mindful of current UN international sustainable development goals, including environmental and human health, inclusive economic growth, and gender and racial equity. We will work to address these pressing global challenges through local action.

Our institutional leadership demonstrated through this plan will have a profound, positive influence on individuals, communities, businesses, and other institutions of higher education. The plan will provide a road map for building a healthier, more beautiful, and more resilient campus and community.

I fully support our sustainability vision and call upon all members of the university to play their part in achieving the aims and ambitions set out in this plan.

Sincerely,

Ray L. Watts
OBJECTIVE

AIR, CLIMATE, AND ENERGY

OVERARCHING AIM

To establish a clean energy standard of 20 percent renewable energy sourcing by 2025 and cut greenhouse gas emissions, improve resiliency, and increase overall energy efficiency

GOALS

Build a renewable energy portfolio for the contiguous hospital and campus of at least 20% of overall energy consumption by 2025

Reduce Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 20% by 2025

Create a Green Revolving Fund for investment in projects that improve efficiency and decrease resource use

Establish an annual funding commitment to support the comprehensive energy plan

STRATEGIES

1. Collect baseline data assessing the carbon footprint for energy, transportation, and waste for the campus and hospital
2. Purchase clean energy and promote actions that incentivize the construction of new clean energy projects
3. Develop a roadmap for carbon reduction with key performance indicators and benchmarks
4. Investigate opportunities for increasing the amount of energy generated from onsite renewable energy sources
5. Institute a Green Revolving Fund (GRF) to invest money in projects that improve efficiency and decrease resource use; cost savings that result from efficiency projects will replenish the GRF, allowing it to return to its original size, or to grow
6. Install interactive dashboards in lobbies of all major buildings to educate and engage occupants with energy and water consumption
OBJECTIVE

FOOD AND DINING

OVERARCHING AIM

To support environmentally responsible dining operations, minimize food waste, and support local and sustainable food production

GOALS

Prevent food waste through increased operational efficiencies and smart procurement systems
Maximize food waste diversion through composting and food donation

Provide more sustainable and ethical food options on campus

STRATEGIES

1. Revise vendor specifications for all university and hospital dining operators to support overall sustainable dining practices, including local and sustainable food sourcing, service material waste reduction, and food waste reduction and diversion
2. Track dining purchases to identify and highlight sustainable certifications, including local, fair trade, sustainable, and animal welfare approved
3. Implement food waste dehydrators or digesters in all on-site kitchens to mitigate food waste sent to the landfill
4. Develop a free food alert app. for leftover food pick-up from events
5. Encourage preference for green catering services that use sustainable servingware and local food sources, and reduce food waste for events
6. Eliminate the use of plastic straws and Styrofoam in campus dining
7. Establish an expanded food truck permit program with guidelines for servingware procurement, waste, and energy use and emissions
OBJECTIVE
WATER

OVERARCHING AIM
To promote water conservation through efficient use and innovative management

GOALS
Reduce overall water consumption and develop opportunities for non-potable water use
Educate the campus community about the benefits of water efficiency and conservation

STRATEGIES
1. Develop design standards for rainwater and utility water capture systems in new buildings, to include a cost-benefit analysis
2. Use new water resource connections, including wells and industrial water (non-potable), to reduce the use of drinking quality water for utilities and industrial purposes
3. Expand the current groundwater and condensate recovery program to meet the level of 25% of utility consumption
4. Install smart water metering systems in larger buildings
5. Increase deployment of smart irrigation systems
6. Draft a sustainable stormwater management plan
OBJECTIVE

BUILDINGS

OVERARCHING AIM

To design, construct, and maintain buildings in ways that provide a safe and healthy indoor environment for users while simultaneously mitigating the building’s impact on the outdoor environment.

GOALS

Review and restructure the overall facilities and building policy with five-year and ten-year benchmarks for space, energy efficiency, new buildings, building updates, resource consolidation, and centralized maintenance.

Build to LEED certified or Energy Star 75-plus scoring standards for campus construction within five years.

STRATEGIES

1. Revise and update current design, construction, and space planning standards.
2. Conduct Life Cycle Assessments (LCA’s) to better understand energy use and environmental impacts of all construction and renovation projects.
3. Adopt centralized service sites in all buildings, including break rooms and appliances, printing, waste removal, and recycling.
OBJECTIVE

TRANSPORTATION

OVERARCHING AIM

To draft policies with five-year and ten-year benchmarks for sustainable transportation solutions that mitigate emissions, traffic congestion, and parking concerns

GOALS

Reduce employee-alone commuting from 88% to 83% and student-alone commuting from 82% to 75%

Decrease vehicular traffic on campus

Reduce emissions from all transportation modes

STRATEGIES

1. Develop an institutional telecommuting and expanded flexible workday policy to reduce commute time, improve recruitment and retention, and support work/life balance
2. Conduct a biennial commuter survey
3. Provide incentives for use of sustainable transportation such as public transportation, carpooling, electric vehicles, walking, and cycling to campus and on campus
4. Align with UAB Campus Master Plan goals for walkability and multi-modal transportation systems
5. Produce a master plan for bike facilities
6. Strengthen partnerships with local transit and area transportation organizations
OBJECTIVE

GROUNDS AND WASTE

OVERARCHING AIM
To produce a comprehensive waste management plan in partnership with external stakeholders to reduce disposal of waste in local landfills and develop the university grounds for ecological stewardship.

GOALS

Implement a net-zero waste plan that encompasses purchasing, operations, recycling, and waste

Foster a culture of zero waste

Formalize commitments to ecologically preferable grounds design and management

STRATEGIES

1. Assess total solid-waste and specialized waste amounts produced by the campus and hospital
2. Benchmark and set goals for waste reduction
3. Compost major organic waste streams
4. Develop a student-run recycling center with job-specific learning outcomes
5. Increase recycling revenue through in-house baling for direct sale of recyclable commodities to the market
6. Evaluate a business model for internal secure paper shredding for the campus and hospital
7. Explore innovative technology solutions for grounds management equipment
8. Design and manage landscapes to support native plant populations and integrated pest management
OBJECTIVE

CURRICULUM

OVERARCHING AIM
To integrate sustainability as a key concept where applicable so that UAB students have the opportunity to gain experience through coursework

GOALS

Expand projects using the campus as a “Living Lab” for sustainability so that students are able to test and research real-world problems in their immediate environment

Promote sustainability-related learning outcomes in all applicable courses and majors

STRATEGIES

1. Advance the annual Red Mountain Project course development program
2. Pursue academic department-level collaboration for incorporating learning outcomes related to sustainability
3. Explore opportunities to incorporate sustainability into the new Signature Core Curriculum
4. Develop a proposal for a sustainability certificate program to be offered at the undergraduate level
OBJECTIVE

RESEARCH

OVERARCHING AIM
To support interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and creative activities related to sustainability and encourage sustainable research practices.

GOALS
Foster academic interdisciplinary collaboration on issues of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.
Support sustainable research practices through expansion of the Green Labs Program.

STRATEGIES
1. Develop a departmental pilot program for recognition of interdisciplinary efforts in promotion and tenure.
2. Cultivate a Green Labs culture across the institution through partnerships with Occupational Health & Safety and individual departments.
4. Recognize sustainability research and scholarship within the UAB academe, and use internal and external communications platforms to highlight research for sustainability.
OBJECTIVE

Purchasing

Develop sustainable purchasing practices and protocols to exercise UAB’s purchasing power toward maximizing environmental stewardship, protecting human health, and supporting local and global sustainability.

OVERARCHING AIM

Create a university and hospital guide for sustainable procurement

Draft a sustainability component for the campus Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) protocol

Review and update applicable purchasing policies to include sustainability criteria and goals

GOALS

STRATEGIES

1. Connect campus and hospital purchasing programs to develop uniformity in purchasing policy and practice
2. Create an institutional information campaign that promotes a culture change to a circular economy model in new transactions
3. Publicize successful efforts to procure goods and services that minimize energy use, waste, and social impacts
OBJECTIVE

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

OVERARCHING AIM

To effectively engage students, faculty, and staff in collaborative pursuit of UAB’s social, environmental, and economic sustainability goals by sharing information and inspiring active participation.

GOALS

Provide compelling stories and examples of sustainable problem-solving and successes to the campus and hospital community.

Facilitate active networks of students, faculty, and staff working together to advance goals of the Sustainability Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIES

1. Promote sustainability goals at student and faculty recruitment and orientation programs
2. Create a student sustainability leadership program
3. Implement the Sustainability Ambassadors program for faculty and staff
4. Provide funding for campus engagement in sustainability initiatives through the Sustainability Investment Fund and other similar programs
5. Develop an annual seminar for interdisciplinary sustainability topics
OBJECTIVE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

OVERARCHING AIM

To provide sustainability education and programs for a broad regional, national, and international community

GOALS

Complete the proposed Urban Remote Microgrid and Sustainable Neighborhood demonstration site, featuring UAB’s Solar Decathlon competition house

Establish UAB as a trusted hub of sustainability information

Develop and share educational publications that address everyday sustainability measures for a broad audience, including individual, residential, corporate, and municipal

STRATEGIES

1. Develop formal and informal partnerships with area municipalities and other stakeholders to support sustainability and resilience initiatives
2. Establish online community-based sustainability courses
3. Build a more effective and user-friendly website for the UAB Sustainability program and raise the program’s social media presence to national prominence
4. Initiate tracking mechanisms for all new project partnerships to assess overall impact of the program

BHM
OBJECTIVE

DIVERSITY

OVERARCHING AIM

To promote a more inclusive and equitable environment where faculty, staff, and students can thrive, and reinforce our commitment to working with local and diverse suppliers

GOALS

Provide diversity education that ensures cultural awareness for all staff and faculty to support recruitment and retention of a diverse and highly qualified workforce and student population

Support the enhancement of economic growth, employment, and investment in Birmingham through our purchasing activities

STRATEGIES

1. Implement educational courses for social sustainability using the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) modules: Cultural Awareness Building Blocks, SafeZone Training, Unconscious Bias, and Bystander Intervention
2. Include social sustainability messaging during recruitment and onboarding
3. Work to increase the number of individuals completing ODEI education modules
4. Establish effective data collection mechanisms for enterprise-wide diverse suppliers and second-tier spending
OBJECTIVE

WELLBEING AND WORK

OVERARCHING AIM

To support the links between healthy and sustainable lifestyles and their impacts on work life

GOALS

Develop and launch a wellness champion network to promote and engage employees in wellness programs

Improve employee engagement and satisfaction

Address significant healthcare concerns for the UAB employee population, including diabetes, cholesterol, and hypertension, with a strong focus on weight management

STRATEGIES

1. Redefine the current wellness and incentive strategy, and identify member populations with higher disease prevalence and opportunities for improved medication adherence
2. Develop targeted interventions for select member populations and document a multi-year strategy to include measurement of outcomes
3. Promote campus walking trails, measure their use, and evaluate areas for improvement
4. Create a wellness champion strategy and communication network, and engage champions for specific wellness programming
5. Conduct biennial employee engagement surveys and develop response-driven initiatives
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UAB CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASON FULMORE, PhD</td>
<td>Research Methodologist &amp; Evaluator, Center for Educational Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWRENCE MOOSE</td>
<td>Program Director, Center for Educational Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACHEL COCHRAN, PhD</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Center for Educational Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOB SHEPARD</td>
<td>Health &amp; Medicine, UAB University Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRIAN ATKINSON</strong></td>
<td>Transportation Demand Manager, UAB Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRIAN BOWSER</strong></td>
<td>Resident District Manager, Dining Services, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRIAN JOHNSON</strong></td>
<td>Director, Residence Life, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRIAN TEMPLETON</strong></td>
<td>Project Manager, Planning, Design, &amp; Construction, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHARLES MONROE, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Materials Science &amp; Engineering, UAB School of Engineering;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHARLOTTE BEEKER</strong></td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Food, Nutrition, &amp; Guest Services, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHRIS JONES</strong></td>
<td>Director, Student Multicultural &amp; Diversity Programs, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DALE PAYTON</strong></td>
<td>Manager, Facilities &amp; Standards Animal Resources Program, UAB Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAVID HAGAN</strong></td>
<td>Director, Environmental Management Programs, UAB Occupational Health &amp; Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAVID POWELL</strong></td>
<td>Manager, Warehouse Services, UAB Financial Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEBORAH GRIMES</strong></td>
<td>Chief Diversity Officer, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEEDEE BARNES BRUNS, MLA</strong></td>
<td>Executive Director, New Student Programs, UAB Office of the Vice Provost, For Enrollment Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMETRIA SCOTT</strong></td>
<td>Manager, Small Business Inclusion, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIANE CRAWLEY, JD</strong></td>
<td>Instructor, Department of Marketing, Industrial Distribution, &amp; Economics, UAB Collat School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIANE TUCKER, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Professor and Director, Science &amp; Technology Honors Program, UAB Honors College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ED CRUMP</strong></td>
<td>Senior Director, Environmental Services, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FERNANDO COLUNGA-MEDINA</strong></td>
<td>Student C’18, UAB School of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HESSAM TAHERIAN, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, UAB School of Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JAMES MCCLINTOCK, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Endowed Professor, Department of Biology, UAB College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JAMES WILLIAMS</strong></td>
<td>Director, Building Services, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JENNA LACHENAYE</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Human Studies, UAB School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADOBE' DAVIS</strong></td>
<td>Director, UAB Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANITA CLEMON</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Vice President, Institutional Equity, UAB Office of the Vice President, For Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMY BADHAM</strong></td>
<td>Director, Office of Service Learning &amp; Undergraduate Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIANE TUCKER, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Professor and Director, Science &amp; Technology Honors Program, UAB Honors College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ED CRUMP</strong></td>
<td>Senior Director, Environmental Services, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FERNANDO COLUNGA-MEDINA</strong></td>
<td>Student C’18, UAB School of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HESSAM TAHERIAN, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, UAB School of Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JAMES MCCLINTOCK, PhD</strong></td>
<td>Endowed Professor, Department of Biology, UAB College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JAMES WILLIAMS</strong></td>
<td>Director, Building Services, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JENNA LACHENAYE</strong></td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Human Studies, UAB School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Title and Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JENNIFER GRIFFIN</td>
<td>Director, Student Involvement, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN SHACKA, PhD</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacology &amp; Toxicology, UAB School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KATHRYN KAISER, PhD</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Health Behavior, UAB School of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KENDRA CARTER</td>
<td>Marketing Specialist, UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEVIN BELL</td>
<td>Program Director III, Office of the Dean, UAB School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYLE HANNAH</td>
<td>Manager, Facilities Finance, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAURA KOWALCZYK</td>
<td>Vice President, Supply Chain &amp; Support Services, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARC BOOKER</td>
<td>Executive Director, Student Housing &amp; Dining, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARIE SUTTON</td>
<td>Director, Marketing &amp; Communications, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATT WINSLETT</td>
<td>Director, Utilities Management, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELISSA LOATS</td>
<td>Assistant Manager, University Purchasing, UAB Financial Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL SHINE</td>
<td>Manager, IT Business Services, UAB Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIKE BOYD</td>
<td>Executive Director, Benefits &amp; Wellness, UAB Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIKE GEBEKE</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Facilities Management, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIKE MANER</td>
<td>Manager, Development &amp; Training, UAB Organizational Learning &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLLY LEREW</td>
<td>Manager, Research Administration Systems, UAB Office of the Vice President for Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICO GEURS</td>
<td>Endowed Professor &amp; Chair, Department of Periodontology, UAB School of Dentistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETTA EVANS, PhD</td>
<td>Professor, Department of Human Studies, UAB School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT ESTES, PhD</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical &amp; Diagnostic Sciences, UAB School of Health Professions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT HEATH</td>
<td>Director, Radiation Safety, UAB Occupational Medicine &amp; Research Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT SHARPE</td>
<td>Senior Director, Construction Facilities Planning, UAB Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT MORAN</td>
<td>Director, Support Services, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAN RIES</td>
<td>Director, Campus Recreation, UAB Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEFFANIE SABBAJ, PhD</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, UAB School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEPHEN WATTS, PhD</td>
<td>Professor, Department of Biology, UAB College of Arts and Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS ANDERSON II</td>
<td>Project Manager, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIM SULLIVAN</td>
<td>Manager, Support Services, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONY MILLETTE</td>
<td>Manager, Steam Plant Operation, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACY LYONS, PhD</td>
<td>Executive Director, Undergraduate Success &amp; Retention, UAB Office of the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIRGINIA SISIOPIKU, PhD</td>
<td>Associate Professor, Department of Civil, Construction &amp; Environmental Engineering, UAB School of Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM GRIFFIN</td>
<td>Manager, Chilled Water Plant Operations, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT STAFF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAMBI INGRAM</td>
<td>Coordinator, UAB Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOFF BOYD</td>
<td>Project Manager, Landscape Architect, Planning, Design &amp; Construction, UAB Facilities Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JULIE PRICE, PhD</td>
<td>Manager, UAB Sustainability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19