



University of Manitoba

# **Climate Action Plan: “What we heard” Report**

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# Intent of This Document

The intent of the “What we heard” Report is to share the thoughts, ideas, concerns and desired outcomes of the University of Manitoba community as they relate to climate action planning and a campus-wide reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

## Background

### Context

In 2020, the University of Manitoba (UM) signed the Global Universities and Colleges Climate Letter which declares the need to take immediate action for climate change. The letter, now replaced by the UNFCCC Race to Zero campaign, commits all signatories to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Based on this, the University of Manitoba is to reach the determined commitment of a 50% emissions reduction by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.

A climate action plan is being developed to outline steps the community will need to take to achieve these goals. Taking those steps will require effort both from the university administration and from the individuals within the university community. As a result, it is critical that the UM engage with that community from the beginning of the development of the Climate Action Plan through to the achievement of emissions neutrality in 2050.

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) project team initiated this engagement process with a series of engagement activities that involved representatives from key areas of the UM community. The discussions that took place highlighted opportunities, strategies, tools, and barriers to climate change mitigation and adaptation at the University of Manitoba. The objectives of the engagement were:

**Objective #1:** To inform and educate the University community of the specific actions and level of ambition required to meet their greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets, engendering a sense of responsibility for continuing this work through to its long-term completion.

**Objective #2:** To involve the University community in selecting low carbon actions based on the modelling and determining the best way in which to implement the Plan.

**Objective #3:** To inform stakeholders of how their involvement will shape the University’s climate action, and to provide feedback on the development of the Plan and its implementation progress over the long term.

# Engagement Overview

## The Engagement Strategy

The engagement process for the CAP began in February 2021 with pre-engagement interviews of 15 people selected by the Office of Sustainability (OOS). Interviewees identified groups and individuals they felt would be valuable for the project to engage with, made recommendations about how to engage successfully at UM, and were asked to share their hopes for and any concerns about the UM Climate Action Plan.

The results of these interviews informed the University of Manitoba [Engagement Strategy](#). That strategy provided the framework for the engagement activities carried out during the Climate Action Plan's development. It also includes guidance for ongoing engagement initiatives to be carried out over the 28-year life of the UM Climate Action Plan.

The remainder of this document provides a summary of the information gained from participants in these engagement activities.

## Engagement During COVID

Due to COVID pandemic restrictions, all engagement was conducted using on-line tools such as Zoom meetings and Microsoft Forms. The Office of Sustainability's [Climate Action Plan web page](#) was used to communicate upcoming and current engagement opportunities to potential participants. In addition, a [UM Today story](#) was shared and targeted emails to key participants and liaisons were sent.

As part of achieving Objective #1, the project team ensured that information about the project, and about climate change and reducing GHG emissions, was shared with the University community. Not all communications channels accommodated feedback, however all were essential to ensuring people were informed and a framework and structure were developed for events in which feedback was gathered. This was particularly beneficial as in-person gatherings were not possible. Methods of sharing information included:

- **Presentations:** Provided by Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) on the Climate Action Plan project and the nature of the changes required for the University to meet its emissions reduction goals. These are delivered to the UM Sustainability Committee, the Climate Action Plan Working Group and to the broader university community on Sustainability Day.
- **Web presence:** As the project proceeded, the Office of Sustainability's [Climate Action Plan web page](#) was launched and updated to provide results from the technical modeling, definitions of terms, information on how to participate in shaping the Plan, and links to broader references.

- **A Discussion Toolkit:** This was developed by SSG to guide smaller groups of students, staff, and other stakeholders through discussions of how the University should meet its emissions reduction goals.

## Activities Completed

To date, the project team has completed the following engagement sessions:

- **Pre-Engagement Interviews:** Individuals spoken to in “pre-engagement” interviews provided input to the Engagement Plan, were asked for their views on what they hoped would come out of the Climate Action Plan, and for concerns they may have about the Plan.
- **Climate Action Working Group:** Between January and July, five Zoom workshops were hosted with the seven members of the UM Climate Action Working Group, as well as additional participants when appropriate. One additional session will be completed when the Climate Action Plan has been drafted. These workshops allowed UM subject matter experts to inform the technical work being done on the Climate Action Plan, and to ensure that the modeling reflected the operational realities of the University of Manitoba.
- **Public Lunch and Learn Sessions:** In May 2021, two Lunch and Learn sessions were provided via Zoom to the University community at large. Both sessions had 14 attendees including both students and staff from a variety of faculties and departments of the University.
- **Survey:** In May 2021, an online survey was provided to the University community via the Office of Sustainability’s Climate Action Plan web page. 82 sets of responses were received on topics ranging from classroom lighting in specific buildings, to the fuel used by the University’s district energy system, to the adequacy of transit service, to where compost facilities should be provided on campus.
- **Discussion Toolkit Feedback:** A Discussion Toolkit was developed by the project team to allow members of the University community to facilitate small group discussions about what should be included in UM’s Climate Action Plan. Feedback was gathered from 8 groups ranging in size from 5 participants up to 61 participants that all used the Toolkit to facilitate conversations on specific topics. Students, faculty and staff presented at these sessions, and also provided and documented feedback. Participants included local and international students, a panel of Métis students, University administrative staff and faculty from Fort Garry, Bannatyne and William Norrie Centre campuses, and students in an “Introduction to Sustainability” course.

The remainder of this report presents the engagement that was carried out and identifies key themes that were detected in the feedback and ideas received at each session or through each medium.

# Pre-Engagement Interviews

Between February and March of 2021, pre-engagement interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

- Carla Loewen, Director, Indigenous Student Centre
- Diane Hiebert-Murphy, Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs)
- Gary Glavin, Associate Vice-President, Research
- Jay Doering, Associate Vice-President, Partnerships
- John Sinclair, Professor, Natural Resources Institute
- Mark Hudson, Professor, Sociology and Criminology
- Mark Torchia, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Executive Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
- Martin Scanlon, Dean of Agriculture and Food Science
- Michael Benarroch, President of the University of Manitoba
- Raman Dhaliwal, Director of Administration and Operations at Bannatyne
- Stephanie Levene, Associate Vice-President, Alumni and Donor Relations
- Suzanne Harden, Associate Vice-President, Marketing and Communications
- Tino Dogo, UM Students' Union Vice-President, Community Engagement
- Valerie Williams, Diversity Consultant, Human Resources
- William Dowie, Graduate Students' Association and Senator

These individuals were asked primarily for assistance in developing the Engagement Plan. They were also asked what their hopes and concerns were with regards to the Climate Action Plan.

## Hopes for the Climate Action Plan

The hopes expressed for the Climate Action Plan by interviewees ranged from the philosophical to the sociological, to the practical. Here are a few paraphrased examples. (Additional examples are found in Appendix A.)

- The University of Manitoba envisions itself as **a community of trailblazers**. We need to be trailblazers on this, leaders in the province and in Western Canada. We need to be aggressive, and that includes things like ensuring our investment portfolio is aligned with our emissions reduction commitments.
- Everyone who is part of the University, from the internal community, students and alumni to the levels of government who support us financially or with infrastructure like transit all need to **feel empowered and responsible** for being

part of implementing the solution to this problem.

- A university is driven by policy, so if we want this plan to be effective, part of our execution of it should **include a policy that outlines the commitments** that have been made, what is required of each of us, and the initiatives that will coordinate our responses to ensure we meet our commitments.
- I hope the University maintains its commitment to the Plan. What we're trying to achieve will be expensive. To ensure that we don't end up having to abandon the Plan, I'd like to see a **revolving environmental sustainability fund** that would allow future projects to be funded by the savings generated by the first projects.

## Concerns about the Climate Action Plan

The following are paraphrased examples of concerns expressed by pre-engagement interviewees:

- Few of us are experts in what needs to be done on a university campus to become emissions neutral. For all of us to understand enough to do our part, we will **need support and training**. We will also need to set up structures that help us do the right things, act quickly, and monitor to make sure what we did is working.
- If people are caught blindsided by this plan, or don't know how to apply it in their day-to-day activities, it won't succeed. It will need to be **framed through teaching, research and service**, and related to the daily activities of every faculty member and student. It will need to be practical, and we will need to find ways of making our progress visible.
- We will need to find ways to ensure all the people who make up our broad community **understand the Climate Action Plan and the science in it**. This will mean everyone from the Indigenous Elders on campus, to international students, to cafeteria cooks, to faculty staff to custodians understand the terminology in the Plan, the changes that are required, and what they need to do.

## Climate Action Working Group

Early in the project, the Office of Sustainability project team invited a group of key administrative staff to join the Climate Action Working Group. Members attended an initial project kick-off meeting for the Climate Action Plan, as well as discussions and workshops about:

1. The University's current energy and emissions profile, and its trajectory out to 2050;

2. Plans for the University's building portfolio and related maintenance systems;
3. Actions that offer opportunities for the University to reduce its emissions, which are the most / least palatable, and when and how they could be achieved;
4. The results of modelling the selected actions in terms of how much each action reduced their emissions over time;
5. The opportunity for an anaerobic digester to produce renewable natural gas for use in the Fort Garry district energy system; and
6. The opportunity for solar photovoltaic (PV) installations in the context of Manitoba's relatively clean grid electricity.

The mandate for this team in these workshops was to ensure the Climate Action Plan's development reflected an understanding of the University of Manitoba's existing initiatives and constraints, relevant operational circumstances, contractual commitments, policies, and plans.

## Summary of What We Heard

Discussions at these workshops covered much ground, but the following themes appeared consistently:

- **Electricity:** Manitoba's electricity grid already has very low emissions. Some technologies such as solar PV, help reduce emissions more in other provinces than they would in Manitoba. Considering their long payback period, investments in such technologies may not be the best way to spend UM's limited funding.
- **Energy:** The University has a strong track record of reducing energy use, optimizing the performance of its energy systems in buildings, and improving sustainability in its infrastructure, particularly at the Fort Garry campus. Its existing "Efficient Campus Model" provides a well-planned and useful path to achieving a further reduction of 20% in energy use.
- **The Fort Garry District Energy System:**
  - Provides heat and cooling to many buildings, and while optimizing its performance has helped reduce energy use, it needs to change to a renewable fuel if the University's emissions reduction targets are to be met.
  - Switching the Fort Garry DE system to landfill gas (LFG) from the Brady Landfill is an appealing option. The UM is able to burn the unrefined gas, meaning that the low-grade gas can be sent directly to the campus through a dedicated pipeline. This would reduce the dependency that UM has on natural gas by approximately 40%.
  - Switching the Fort Garry DE system to renewable natural gas (RNG) produced in an anaerobic digester on campus could potentially make the UM not only carbon neutral by 2050, but carbon negative. It could also earn a significant amount of money for the University. However, initial



capital costs are high and there may be logistical challenges including location, transportation and quantity.

- **COVID:** COVID has given the University an opportunity to reconsider the use of buildings and the time spent on campus. Options like more flexible class schedules, working and studying from home, sharing parking passes and incentivizing staff to use transit would all be ways that some of the emissions reductions that occurred during COVID could be kept long-term.
- **Commuting:** Transitioning the UM community, especially staff, to stop using their vehicles to commute to the University is going to be a significant challenge. Currently, taking your personal vehicle to work is more convenient, faster, and often less expensive than public transit.
- **Parking:** The difficulties of getting people to switch to transit or active transportation are exacerbated by the low-priced parking included in staff contracts or employment agreements. It would be helpful if the Climate Action Plan stated that to accomplish our emissions reduction goals, parking benefits must be removed from all employment agreements, and all people who park at the University must pay a rate that is aligned with the true value of the land, and the true cost of driving a vehicle.

## Lunch and Learn Sessions

Two hour-long Lunch and Learn sessions were advertised and held in May for the whole University community. Topics for the first session included “Renewable Energy” and “Zero Waste”. The second session was used to gather input on “Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation”, “Energy-Efficient Buildings” and Green Spaces and Roofs”.

Attendees of the Lunch and Learn sessions included staff from Architectural Engineering Services, Indigenous Engagement, the Bookstore, the IT department, the Office of Sustainability, and the Departments of Animal Science and Computer Science. It also included students from the Departments of Animal Science, Environmental Science, and Landscape Architecture.

At both Lunch and Learn sessions, the hour began with a short presentation on the types of opportunities that exist to reduce emissions in each topic area. Participants were then led through a group activity in which they were given three examples of how each topic could be deployed at the University. Participants used virtual sticky notes on a Miro board to identify opportunities, challenges and ideas related to each of the examples. The Miro boards remained available for several days after the session to allow participants to continue to enter ideas before the ideas were gathered and reviewed for themes.

## Summary of What We Heard

The following are some of the key themes that appeared in the Miro board feedback at the Lunch and Learn sessions:

### Renewable Energy

- Participants supported the idea of using heat pumps in both new and retrofitted buildings on campus.
- The idea of installing solar panels over the SmartPark parking lot received a variety of responses. Some supported it and pointed out co-benefits. Others suggested that the value of investing in solar requires further research, including determining whether solar PV is greener than Manitoba's provincial electricity grid when the embodied carbon in the solar panels is taken into consideration.
- Participants raised the fact that wind power technologies continue to evolve and should continue to be monitored as potential low cost, low maintenance energy sources for UM.

### Zero Waste

- The University should find ways to eliminate single-use packaging and food/ beverage containers on its campuses – possibly through policies, purchasing practices, and incentives.
- Work needs to be done to address dealing with different types of waste such as biomedical, laboratory, and e-waste. In addition, the broader issues of planned obsolescence in electronic products and extended producer responsibility should be reviewed.
- The University's Custody and Control Policy informing the process for computer decommissioning should be updated to reduce the amount of e-waste generated by UM.
- Campus life is an excellent environment in which to encourage waste reduction practices such as re-use of student furniture, equipment and clothing.

### Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation

- The most significant challenge to achieving the reductions required in transportation will be changing the culture of the car. Especially in a Winnipeg winter, a car is convenient and the alternative is perceived to be uncomfortable.
- A car-free Fort Garry campus would be excellent if people with disabilities are still allowed direct vehicle access to a building and deliveries can be accommodated.
- Reducing commuting in personal vehicles and achieving a car-free campus would be supported by making transit and active transportation easier for more people to use. Suggested improvements included:
  - Adding a pedestrian bridge to St. Vital to make a bike or walking commute

- from that area to the Fort Garry campus;
- Providing improved bike infrastructure, including adding a roof to the bike rack outside the ALC to eliminate slipping hazard from snow melt/ freeze in winter; secure bike storage (emphasized by many), moped and motorcycle parking, rental bikes, or free bikes for use on the campus that are unlocked by a UM card;
- Removing the N Lot parking lot and turning it into pedestrian pathways with increased greenery and indigenous art;
- Providing “better” bus service, and adopting the Eco Pass program for faculty and staff, like Red River College;
- Considering allowing non-emitting vehicles to still access campus; and
- Closing major arteries on the Fort Garry campus (i.e. University Crescent and Chancellor Matheson) on weekends.
- COVID restrictions required a shift to online classes, and a temporary elimination of commuting to school. Participants were asked what they thought of making all first-year lecture classes virtual on a permanent basis, to retain some of the reduction in commuting. The response was mixed. It was recognized that this could support an increase in enrolment of rural and international students. Others expressed concerns about social isolation and reduced access to resources like wifi.

### **Energy Efficient Buildings**

- The idea of requiring all new buildings to be net zero energy was broadly supported. Additional suggestions included:
  - Also using recycled and alternative building materials and techniques;
  - Ensuring that cost benefit analyses are completed to justify higher investment costs, and to ensure that the benefits considered include ongoing energy savings, as well as health and productivity improvements; and
  - The University go further and include embodied carbon in their assessment of whether buildings are ‘net zero’.

### **Green Spaces and Roofs**

- The breakout groups that focused on adding green roofs and increasing green space generated the following suggestions:
  - Intensive green roofs with a variety of local, hardy vegetation including grasses important to Indigenous peoples should be incorporated into new building designs from the start, include patio, seating and study areas, and be part of teaching and learning.
  - Ground-level parking should be eliminated (or made multi-levels) and replaced with green space.

In all discussions, participants highlighted opportunities for research and education that are unique to a university setting, and in some cases unique to the University of Manitoba's faculty expertise. Comments indicated there was consensus that topics such as waste reduction and addressing global issues like the planned obsolescence of technology need to be actively integrated into university programs and research. This would align with UM's commitment in its *Sustainability Strategy 2019 – 2023* to increase the number of sustainability courses offered and research done that addresses sustainability issues.

## Discussion Toolkit Feedback

In June, the Climate Action Plan team offered a Discussion Toolkit to the University community via the Office of Sustainability's [Climate Action Plan web page](#) and by contacting key individuals directly. Topics in the Toolkit included "Renewable Energy", "Zero Waste", "Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation" and "Energy-Efficient Buildings".

### Summary of What We Heard

#### **Renewable Energy**

- Use renewable natural gas to replace natural gas. Generate the RNG on-site using special composting facilities and waste from on campus; and
- Install kinetic pads in parts of the tracks in gyms to collect energy from workouts and then use that energy in the buildings.

#### **Zero Waste**

- For many students or staff who come from outside Manitoba, recycling, contamination, separating organics and waste, and other related concepts may be completely new. We need to continue to ensure that new students understand and appreciate the importance of dealing with our waste properly;
- Address waste from chemistry and biology labs by ordering experiments so that pipet tips don't need to be swapped out immediately and encourage the use of "green chemicals"; and
- Never leave the computers in Computer Science turned on when they're idle. When they're not being used, turn them off.

#### **Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation**

- U-Passes should include summer travel and also be made available to part-time students;

- Transit travel times should be comparable to travel times by personal vehicle to be considered acceptable – certainly not 2-3 times longer. General support for action;
- Biking for some is preferable to transit. However, increasing end-of-ride facilities and increasing secure bike storage would make it more attractive for many; and
- Now that we know how to do remote lecture classes, students should be able to attend any lecture class either remotely or in person, as they prefer. A number of students indicated it was difficult at first, but became easier, and in the future, they would prefer a blended model.

### **Energy Efficient Buildings**

- All lights inside buildings should automatically turn off when rooms are not in use. (Participants mentioned that there are unoccupied buildings in which the lights have been on throughout COVID.); and
- Create energy reports for each faculty and make them take on an energy offsetting project to contribute to a culture of accountability.

## **Survey**

Between May 10 and May 28, 2021, an online survey was presented on the Office of Sustainability’s Climate Action Plan page. It contained 10 questions in total, some of which were multiple choice and others allowed free text responses. The survey had four sections: Renewable Energy, Zero Waste, Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation, and Energy Efficient Buildings. Respondents were told how much of UM’s total emissions come from each category and given some contextual information before answering the questions.

### **Summary of What We Heard**

The following were some of the themes observed in the survey results:

#### **Renewable Energy**

When asked which option(s) show(s) the most promise for reducing emissions from the Fort Garry district energy system:

- Approximately 1/3 of respondents chose switching to electric boilers, and another 1/3 chose switching to RNG. A further 20% said either or both electricity and RNG should be used.
- 82% of respondents indicated that the buildings connected to the DE system should be retrofitted to significantly reduce their energy use. 69% selected both a

fuel switch and retrofits, and the other 13% chose only building retrofits.

## **Zero Waste**

Respondents were asked where they would like to be able to deposit their organic waste on campus. The most frequent responses were at the University Centre, and at all locations where food is sold or eaten. However, there were also many respondents who thought people should be able to deposit their organic waste “at many more locations”, “throughout the campus” or “in every building”.

*Note: This was supported by feedback from the Discussion Toolkit sessions.*

## **Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation – Active Transportation**

When asked what the University could do to help people change (or continue) to commute using transit or active transportation rather than a personal vehicle:

- 89% of respondents indicated improved biking and walking conditions would encourage them to use active transportation to get to the University. Specific suggestions included adding more paths, signage, lighting, end-of-ride facilities (such as secure parking and showers or access to the athletic facilities), and grading changes to prevent flooding of paths.
- 73% of respondents offered suggestions to improve transit, including expanded routes, and more frequent service.
- Although the question did not specifically mention these options, 20% of respondents made suggestions to improve their ability to carpool, and 18% requested the ongoing ability to work from home.

## **Decarbonizing and Reducing Transportation – Electric Vehicles**

Respondents were also asked about whether they had any intentions of purchasing an electric vehicle in the coming years. The responses were as follows:

- 30% plan to purchase an electric vehicle in the next 1-5 years;
- 30% plan to purchase one in the next 6-10 years;
- 20% are unlikely to purchase one in the next 10 years; and
- 20% did not respond to the question.

## **Energy Efficient Buildings**

Respondents were asked to identify specific buildings or infrastructure they felt could be made more energy efficient and comfortable.

85% of respondents answered this question with at least one and often several locations in which they indicated the heating and cooling, or other elements of the air conditions in the building were problematic. The following five buildings were the most frequently identified in order as having issues with being too hot or cold, or having other

air quality and flow problems:

1. Tier Building
2. Wallace Building
3. The Elizabeth Dafoe Library
4. Arnes Lecture Building
5. Sinnott Building

In addition, a number of people indicated that doors that open automatically cause a lot of heat to be lost in the winter when people simply walk past the door. Everyone agreed that this should be fixed in some way – possibly by replacing these doors with more energy-efficient alternatives.

*Note: This feedback was also received from the Discussion Toolkit engagement activity.*

## Conclusions / Final Note

The project team received an incredible amount of information from each workshop, presentation, and through online engagement platforms. Both the ongoing engagement efforts and campus mobilization and the final Climate Action Plan will be stronger because of all the different ideas shared by many stakeholders and participants. The project team extends a sincere “Thank you” to all who took part in this engagement effort.

# Appendix A:

## *“Hopes” and “Concerns” from the Pre-Engagement Interviews*

The following are a selection of the “hopes” and “concerns” expressed during the pre-engagement interviews for the UM Climate Action Plan. To preserve privacy, the name of the person who made the comment is not given, and the comments are provided in a random order.

### Hopes

#### **Communication, Engagement and Ownership**

- I think what works in a university and what I hope happens with this plan is that there is active engagement across the campus and people really feel empowered to be a part of solutions - not just to be a part of developing a plan, but a part of how that plan is implemented.
- We need to get past arm twisting and get people bought into it.
- I think unit representation and representation from faculty and staff will be really important. We need champions at each level so that people don't feel like they're just being told they're not allowed to do something that has been a normal business practice for them in the past.
- I hope there is an element of positivity, celebrating, and making things feel fun.
- I hope that there are clear Indigenous voices included in the project, and not just as an afterthought.
- It's important that we have clear goals, clear actions, a clear plan, and a good path forward so we can achieve the goals that have been set.

#### **Broader Relationships and Dependencies**

- We rely a lot on all levels of government, federal, and provincial financially. For many other things. I hope those entities feel involved as much as our internal community and our alumni and those people who are connected to the U of M, our students, but also those levels of government that that really can support us to get things done institutionally. This may be using different forms of energy, changing transit, road structures, all of that. I think well, to me would be a really big part of what would make this successful.
- It's important that UM's plan aligns with Canada's plan for reducing emissions and that everyone understand how our work on this fits into the large picture. That would be a good way to frame it? What kinds of impacts will there be in day-to-day operations?

#### **Recognizing Opportunities**

- There's a really big opportunity with waste and especially compost. The whole methane landfill gas thing can be solved, at least, I think, pretty effectively with implementing a



composting system that's campus-wide. I hope we can do something with the city or maybe fully funded by the university, to do that. And an educational program should go with that. That would be a really big contribution to the community.

- I really hope we do the obvious, low tech solutions right away - things like adding proper insulation in old buildings to make sure we're not wasting heat.
- I would hope that since we're a university, we support lots of pilot and demonstration projects on on-site production of renewable energy, that could be the more traditional renewable stuff, but should also be as esoteric as micro-turbines in the rivers.

## **Organization**

- I hope we use our existing ability to lead big scale initiatives like this to make sure it's successful. We need to do lots of consultation, a lot of information sessions, data collection, focus groups and surveys up-front. Then establish a steering committee pulling together members of all the key areas throughout the university to get perspective from all the different departments. From there, roll it out through subcommittees that ensure everyone can get involved. And then ensure there is regular status reporting required.
- I hope a central unit leads this initiative and helps role it out. This will mean taking it from the broad understanding of the climate crisis and translating it to individual responsibilities to change lightbulbs or not go to so many conferences... whatever it is.

## **Recognize and be honest about the realities**

- I hope we develop an aggressive plan to really reduce the amount of travelling we do. We can't allow ourselves to fall into the trap of thinking we can buy offsets for our travel rather than reduce it. Offsets don't get us to decarbonization. It will be tempting to buy offsets because we're so used to travelling. It's a perk of University life, and there will be institutional inertia and tremendous push-back to removing perks like this. It will be very challenging but I really hope we push through that and do what has to be done, because in the broader picture, that's an easy, obvious and responsible decision that we as an educated community should step up and take.
- In the context of decarbonizing the energy plant, we have a goal, which is to make it emissions neutral by 2050. So how do we get there? And if we have to spend money to do that, then we have to do that. I hope we recognize this openly and just do what has to be done.
- I would hope that we are working to actually reduce our carbon footprint.

## **Concerns**

### **Affordability and Timeline**

- My biggest concern is whether we will actually meet our targets. Our buildings and energy structures are old, and need significant upgrades. We've taken so long to get to this that I'm concerned it won't be affordable or that it can't be done in time.

- We'll need significant funding to do this, and that will require partnerships and support from governments. But governments are political, and if the party in power doesn't support this work, that could prevent us from getting the funding required to do this.

### **Maintaining the Priority of the Work**

- There are a lot of competing priorities at the university that are all important. For this initiative to succeed, we'll need to keep this front and center with constant messaging. I suggest the Office of Sustainability, create a community of practice to invite people to meet to discuss the challenges and the initiatives and how we can keep moving this forward as a top priority. It could easily become buried with all the other priorities.
- Universities are famous for putting big plans together. But then when it comes to implementation or follow through, there's usually trouble, sometimes valid trouble, sometimes not so valid. I'm concerned that the University not only lay out the plan and commit to it, but commit to the financial implications over the long term, and demonstrate that they're following through all the way along.
- It will be complicated to integrate this project in with everything else we're trying to do at the University. We will need to understand how this work fits into the new strategic plan, how it must affect our decision-making on other key initiatives, and how we are going to resource it given our current budget pressures.

### **Bureaucracy and Caution**

- I think there's a disconnect between the appropriate enthusiasm of people working on this and the way the university actually runs. You can get verbal commitment to broad goals and then still run into bureaucratic caution that stops the institution from acting. Resolving this will require strategic engagement.
- I don't want this plan to just sit and then all of a sudden when it starts becoming important to re-engage, that there's no momentum anymore, or it essentially gets locked up in a bureaucratic inertia bubble.

### **Coordination and Understanding**

- There aren't many opportunities for faculty and university administration to come together, and it will be important that they do to support this. The Senate can help with that. If ongoing engagement with this can be assigned maybe even to a Senate committee, that would ensure this is something that's reported on regularly and people are hearing about it.
- If meaningful consultation isn't built into all aspects of the plan, actions that are proposed may catch people blindsided.