

Sustainability Council Report  
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The Sustainability Council held its November meeting on December 3, 2025, due to the holidays. I have included a summary of the meeting, along with a summary of October's meeting. In November, Eli Mudd presented the Bottled Water Phase Out plan to the Staff Senate.

### Sustainability Council Meeting

December 03, 2025

The meeting covered updates from several committees focused on sustainability initiatives at the University of Louisville. The **Operations Committee** reported on winter preparations and highlighted the new Engineering Student Success & Research Building, which is expected to achieve LEED Gold certification and includes innovative features such as geothermal wells, chilled beam systems, and dedicated wellness spaces. This building also houses the Conn Center for Renewable Energy Research, reinforcing UofL's commitment to reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

The **Education & Research Committee** discussed strategies for advancing interdisciplinary sustainability research and grant writing. Challenges include reduced federal funding and the need for clearer resource commitments in the upcoming Strategic Plan. Suggestions included creating programs like Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and leveraging private philanthropy. Other schools' models, such as internal sustainability research grants at FSU and UT-Dallas, were noted as examples. The committee emphasized collaboration across units and the importance of articulating funding needs to secure support.

The **Engagement Committee** focused on upcoming initiatives such as the Green Office Certification program, Ecolympics, and the Community Engagement Symposium scheduled for March. Plans include expanding outreach through EcoReps workshops, promoting e-waste collection, and launching sustainability ambassador training. Additional updates included progress on phasing out bottled water with new filling stations, athletics recycling efforts, and media coverage highlighting UofL's sustainability achievements. The meeting concluded with discussions on living wage advocacy, health and safety governance, and integrating sustainability into the university's vision and principles.

## Sustainability Council Meeting

October 29, 2025

The meeting provided updates from multiple sustainability committees at the University of Louisville. **Operations** reported on ongoing infrastructure projects, including HVAC upgrades, roof replacements, and chilled water plant improvements. The committee also addressed flooding concerns in Houchens and traffic signage near the new Engineering Building. **Education & Research** shared plans for a Green Careers Summit for high school students and discussed efforts to advance sustainability-focused academic programs, such as a master's degree in sustainability. **Planning & Administration** highlighted revisions to the draft Strategic Plan, which now incorporates sustainability into its vision and values, and discussed challenges posed by anti-DEI legislation on meeting STARS goals.

The **Engagement Committee** focused on outreach initiatives, including EcoReps workshops, the Adulting 101 Skill Fair, and community events like Sustainability Week and the annual Pumpkin Smash composting activity. They also explored new engagement ideas such as a DIY climbing wall and papermaking workshops. Updates were shared on Bombas sock donations for houseless individuals and plans for future tabling events. The committee emphasized collaboration and creative approaches to promote sustainability awareness across campus.

Additional updates included progress on phasing out bottled water through new filling stations, development of a Green Office Certification program, and recycling efforts in athletics. Media coverage highlighted UofL's sustainability achievements, such as an improved Princeton Review rating and the Free Store expansion. The meeting concluded with a report from the AASHE Conference, where UofL representatives presented on sustainability strategies and learned best practices from other institutions, including procurement reforms and waste diversion programs. Plans for Arbor Day celebrations and future meetings were also discussed.