

# Sustainability Council, April 2024

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*Alvin H. Baum Family Fund Chair & Director*



## iSEE

Institute for Sustainability,  
Energy, and Environment



## Agenda for Today

- Updates
  - Green Research Program
  - Solar Farm 3
  - Plastic Waste Reduction in Housing and Athletics
  - Student Group Activities
- Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP)
  - Progress & Challenges



# Green Research Program





# Green Research Committee

Identify the best approach to green research that does not compromise safety.

- Committee charged by leadership in OVCRI, F&S, and ISEE.
- 5-year pilot partnership between DRS and F&S to be staffed by a Green Research Coordinator (GRC) and student workers reporting to F&S Associate Director for Sustainability. (F&S will request new FTE with FY25 hiring request)
- Propose a safe and practical green research program that:
  - is applicable to all research environments.
  - contributes to iCAP goals and commitment to sustainability.
  - establishes a process for “Green” status.
- Primary duties of GRC will include:
  - liaison with stakeholders.
  - develop and deliver training and educational information.
  - track and communicate progress.
- Funding to support the staff & program is being pursued via SSC and the Provost’s Office
  - SSC Funding will be determined in late May; Letter will be sent from iSEE/VCRI/F&S to Provost office



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# Solar Farm 3.0

# Goals and Current Status



- **UIUC Goals:** UIUC's Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP 2020) Objective #2.3.1 is to use 140,000 megawatt-hours per year (MWh/yr) of clean power by FY25.
  - There are existing clean energy contracts and installations for 50,000 MWh/year, so UIUC is seeking 90,000 MWh/year.
  - The 25,000 MWh/year wind agreement expires in October 2026.
- **UIC Goals:** UIC's Climate Action Implementation Plan (CAIP) Procure renewable energy equal to 15% of purchased electricity by 2021; increasing 5%/year through 2028; increasing 2.5%/year from 2029-2050. In 2028 this equates to 75,000 MWh. UIC is seeking 80,000 MWh/year.
- ACES Dean is supportive of making land available for Solar Farm 3. Exact terms will be discussed further; we are also looking at land located anywhere with competitive wholesale market off campus but within Illinois, preferably on university property.
- A task force of university decision makers is being formed to discuss options, finances and any related risk assessment.

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# Single-Use Plastic Reduction Efforts



# Plastic Waste Reduction: Progress in University Housing

- Collaboration on a SSC proposal to increase the number of enhanced hydration stations in residence halls
- Water quality testing in progress to assess lead levels and determine best practices
- Education campaign and re-survey of preferences and concerns planned for Fall 2024
- Collaboration with advertising/CS class to create promotional materials



Enhanced



Basic





# Opportunities in Catering

- Mobile water solutions for large events could provide alternative to single-use plastic bottles
- Can be cost-effective through reduction of single-use bottle purchases and potentially renting out equipment
  - E.g., Convocation lunch for 8,000 new students: \$11,000 for bottled water vs. \$55,000 for mobile water cart
- Potential partnership among Student Affairs, Dining & Catering, Provost, Athletics
- Complements policy change allowing reusable bottles



Quench buggy



Water monster



# Event Recap: Zero Waste Basketball Games

- November 14, 2022 (vs. Monmouth – preseason)
  - 280 lbs. recycled
- March 2, 2023 (vs. Michigan)
  - 1,280 lbs. recycled
  - Diversion rate: 28%
- March 3, 2024 (vs. Nebraska)
  - 460 lbs. recycled
- March 5, 2024 (vs. Purdue)
  - 1,040 lbs. recycled
  - Diversion rate: 10%



Outreach & Education: Bin Guarding



Sorting & Diverting: Clean Up



# Opportunities in Athletics

One-off volunteer events help raise awareness but permanent changes needed for lasting impact:

- DIA agreed to update infographics and increase announcements at events to strengthen messaging
- Request more recycling infrastructure at State Farm Center. Recommend consistently & brightly wrapped bins to differentiate recycling vs. landfill
  - Estimate: \$5100-\$6020
  - Explore potential for coverage through Coke contract
- Request contracted waste staff sort & bag recyclables after games



Memorial Stadium



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# Student Group Updates

# Student Sustainability Committee

The Student Sustainability Committee (SSC) is a student-led organization charged with the distribution of two student fees – the Sustainable Campus Environment Fee (\$15) and the Cleaner Energy Technologies Fee (\$3). With the ultimate goal of making the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign a leader in campus sustainability, the SSC reviews, recommends, and funds projects that increase environmental stewardship, inspire change, and impact students.



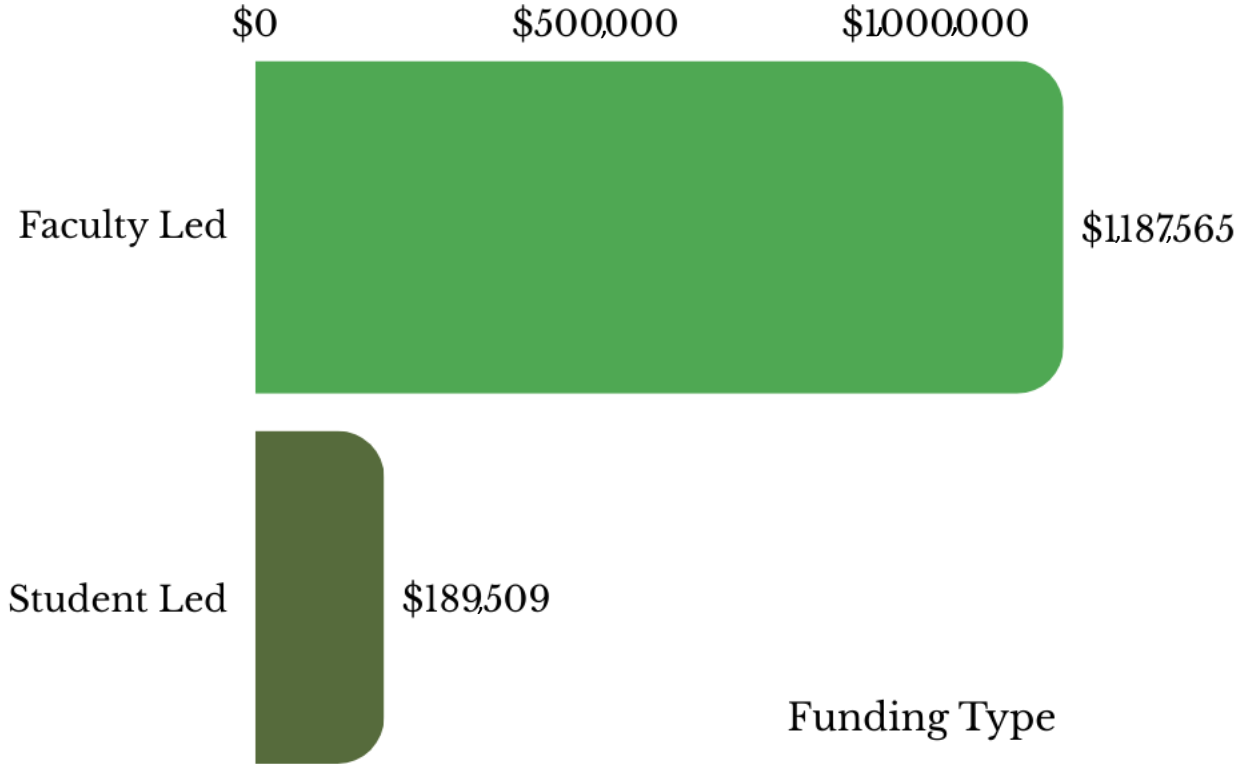
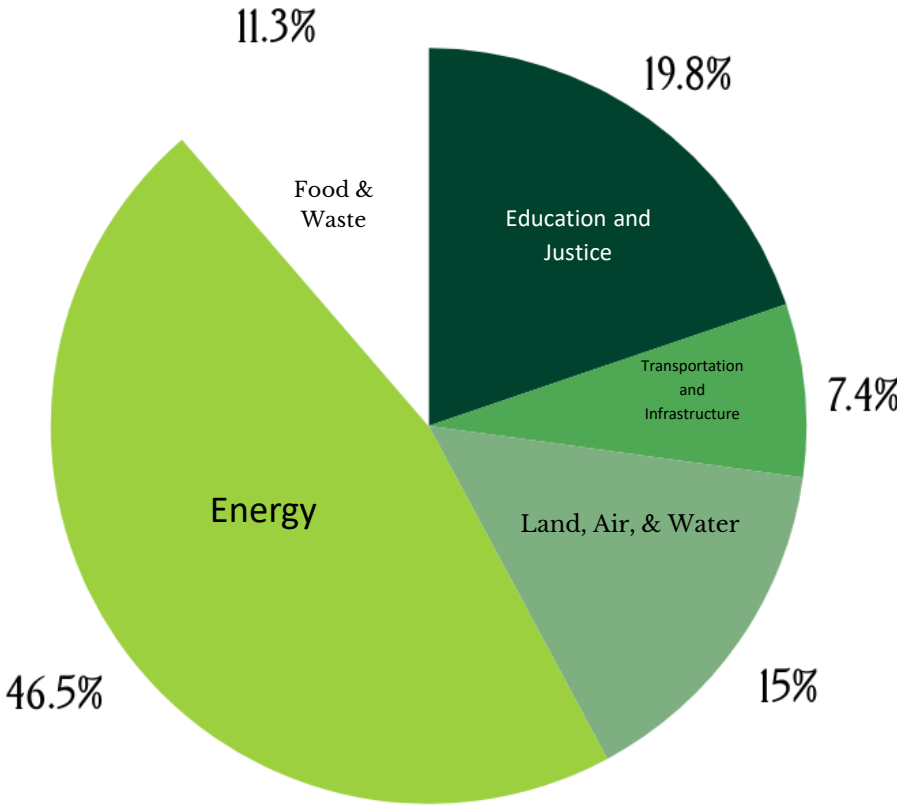
Claire Keating, Chair



# SSC Initiatives Inspire Change



# Faculty-Led & Energy Projects make up most of our budget.



Total Funds Allocated in 2023: \$1,377,073.73



# Looking forward: prioritizing direct student impact

Each semester, \$18 is given to the University from each student, and our committee is charged with stewarding these funds.

The value of their sustainability experience on campus should exceed the value of our fee.







# Student Sustainability Leadership Council

Co-Presidents: Danika Ford, Whitney Fowler, and Claire Sullivan

# PRN x SSLC Luncheon

Wednesday, September 20th  
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.  
University YMCA (Latzer Hall)

Please join us and Prairie Rivers Network for lunch with local environmental organizations (Grand Prairie Friends, Sierra Club, Eco-Justice Collaborative) to connect, network, and discuss how we can support each other in our shared environmental efforts!



Registration Form



**THE RED HERRING**  
vegan restaurant

FREE vegan food for the first 50 people!

Monday, 10/2  
6 pm (doors open at 5:45) @

## SUSTAINABLE FOOD EVENT

Speakers will be discussing their backgrounds in sustainable food and how you can get involved!

# SSLC Events

## WEDNESDAY TALKS

Attend this speaker presentation

**Oct 4, 18, 25**  
12:00-1:00 PM

BEVIER CAFE

First 5 people receive a FREE lunch!



Nicole Cantello

Environmental Protection Agency

# GREEN QUAD DAY

WED, OCT 11  
11AM-3PM

Stop by Anniversary Plaza to see sustainability orgs on campus and enjoy the green festivities!

RSVP to table in the link tree in our bio!

# Sustainapalooza Earth Day Festival on the Quad

APRIL 22  
4-8PM

- Food
- Live Music
- Art
- Clothing Swap
- Vendors
- Tabling



## Green Globes

& ICAP 2025 KICKOFF EVENT

APRIL 25, 2024

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Electrical and Computer Engineering Building  
(ECEB) Auditorium

RSO/SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONS AND CHAPTERS CAN SUBMIT THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SUSTAINABILITY FOR RECOGNITION AT THE GREEN GLOBES AWARDS CEREMONY AND THE CHANCE TO WIN A MONETARY REWARD!

Apply for a Nomination by April 18



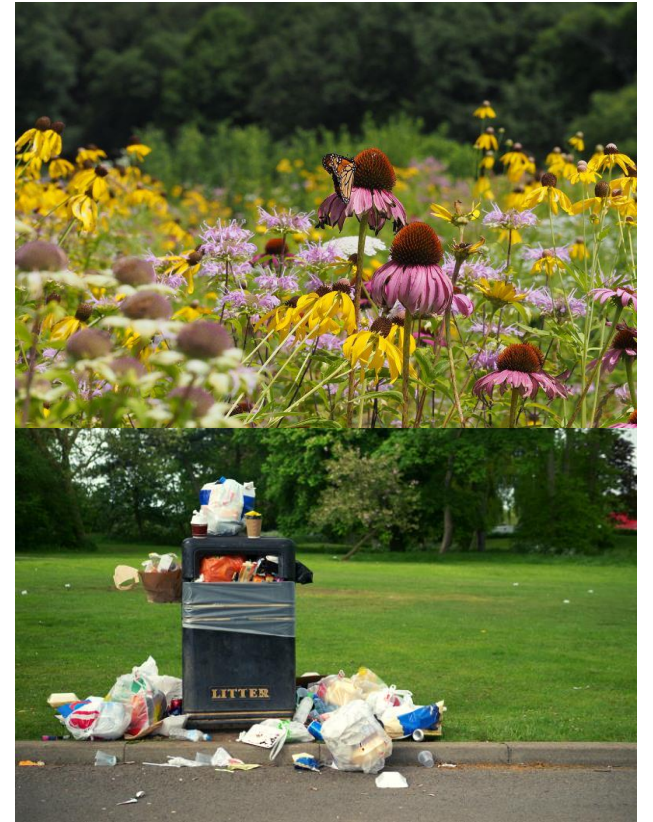
<https://tinyurl.com/GGNoms2024>

GREEN GLOBES

ICAP 2025 KICKOFF

# Sustainability Concerns from Students

- Fossil fuel divestment
  - iCAP Objective 9.1: Divest from fossil fuels by 2025
- Increasing trees & green space on campus
  - iCAP Objective 4.2.1: Increase Number of Trees
- Increasing native plants on campus
  - iCAP Objective 4.2.2: Increase Pollinator Friendly Areas
- Reducing plastic consumption on campus (e.g., plastic soda/water bottles in vending machines, plastic bags at Illini Union Bookstore).
  - iCAP Objective 5.2: Reduce Landfilled Waste
- Reducing litter on campus, especially after big events such as Quad Day
  - iCAP Objective 5.2: Install appropriate waste collection infrastructure



# Student Asks for Administration

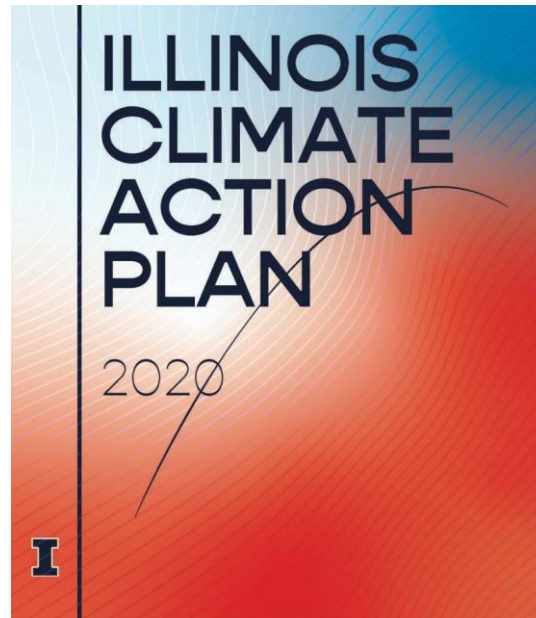
- Monthly updates with what iSEE is doing to fulfill the iCAP objectives listed on the previous slide
- Find more ways to collect & implement student input
  - Host monthly “office hours” to talk with students & hear their concerns
  - Open up meetings such as Sustainability Council to more students (i.e. public comment opportunity)
  - Host semesterly or bi-semesterly luncheons with student leaders
    - Highly advertise public comments/student input opportunities
- Take student input seriously
  - Students don't feel heard

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# iCAP Progress and Challenges

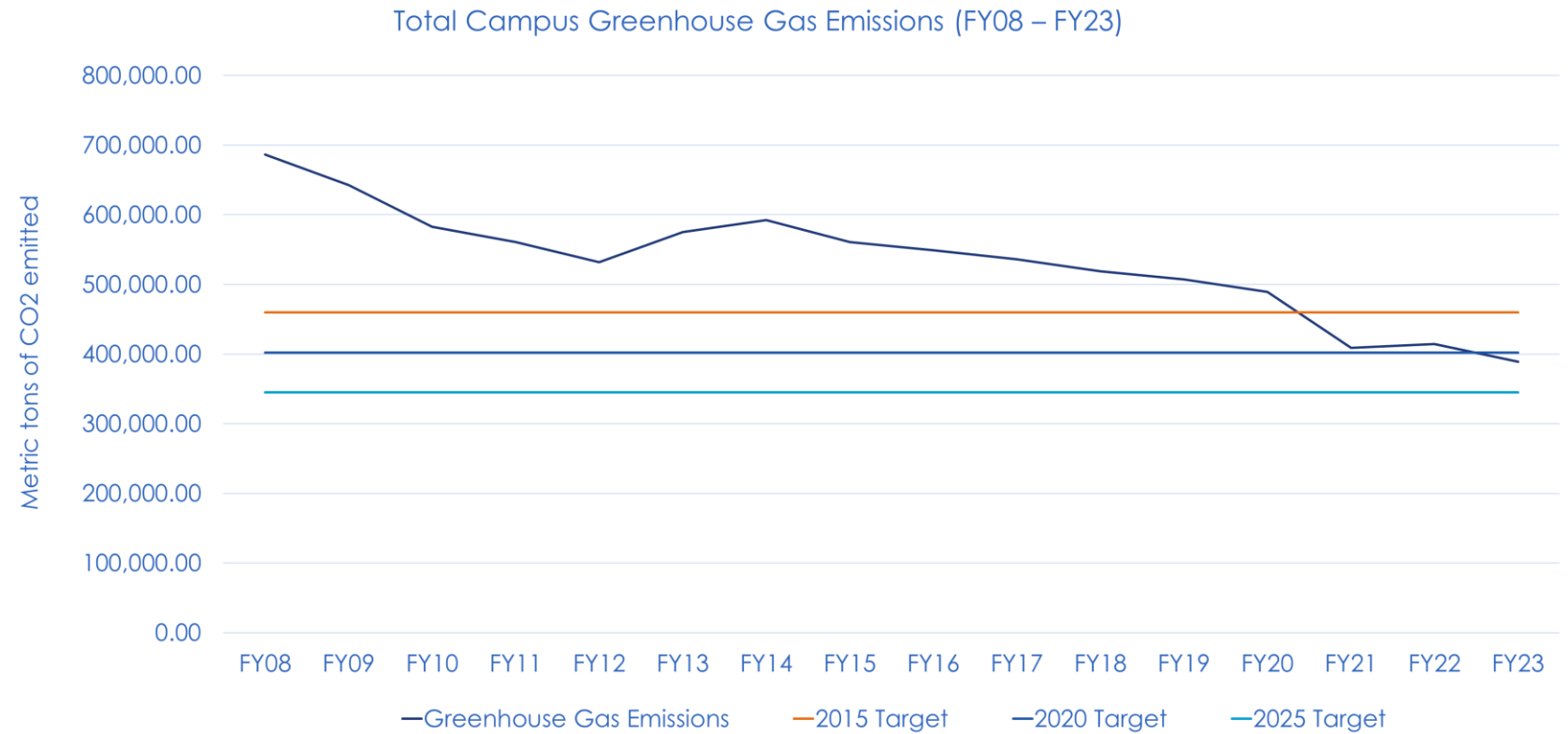


# Illinois Climate Action Plan Progress Report











# Greenhouse Gas Emissions |

- Emissions have decreased by more than 40% since 2008.










- Energy conservation programs and policies have contributed to 35% reduction, but Energy Use Intensity has plateaued over past 3 years
- Currently at 12% renewable power use - Solar Farm 3 would allow us to meet this target
- Net Zero Space Growth Policy is in place, but variances are approved regularly – no significant progress in limiting growth








 <b>ENERGY</b>   iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 2.1</b> Develop a planning document with a detailed strategy for net zero emissions by 2050.	 <b>In Progress</b>
<b>Objective 2.2</b> Reduce the annual energy consumption of each college-level unit by at least 20% from a 2015 baseline	 <b>In Progress</b>
<b>Objective 2.2</b> Reduce Energy Use Intensity from a 2008 baseline by: 45% by 2030, 50% by 2040, and 60% by 2050.	 <b>On Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 2.3</b> Use clean energy sources for 15% of total campus energy demand by 2030	 <b>In Progress</b>
<b>Objective 2.2.1</b> Improve space use efficiency by minimizing square footage per person and updating the Space Policy in the Campus Administrative Manual.	 <b>In Progress</b> Sub-committee of Illinois Space Advisory Committee is working on an update
<b>Objective 2.3.1</b> Use at least 140,000 MWh/year of clean power by 2025	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 2.3.2</b> Use at least 150,000 MMBTU/year of clean thermal energy by 2030	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>











- Urban Biodiversity Master Plan completed - catalogues assets and vulnerabilities, with recommendations to strengthen biodiversity in Champaign, Urbana, Savoy, and campus
- Vision Zero traffic redesign strategy adopted by Regional Planning Commission in 2022
- Will continue to collaborate on local sustainability issues through a climate resilience task force including local stakeholders

 <b>RESILIENCE</b>   iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 8.1</b> Develop an Urban Biodiversity Master Plan  <b>On Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 8.5</b> Inventory potential for area green jobs <i>*Champaign is searching for sustainability coordinator; room for green jobs expansion with new state legislation</i>  <b>On Schedule*</b>
<b>Objective 8.2</b> Coordinate Rainwater Management Plans  <b>In Progress</b>	<b>Objective 8.6</b> Support the Vision Zero traffic redesign strategy for safe, sustainable transportation <i>*Champaign Urbana Urbanized Transportation Study (CUUATS) passed resolution in favor of Vision Zero for Champaign County in September 2022</i>  <b>Complete*</b>
<b>Objective 8.3</b> Develop an Environmental Justice Plan <i>* Inventoried current environmental justice Resources on campus; plan under discussion</i>  <b>On Hold*</b>	<b>Objective 8.7</b> Establish a local offset program by 2024 <i>* Under discussion</i>  <b>On Hold*</b>









- Development of a sustainability General Education Requirement is under way
- Sustainability Course Repository allows students to search for sustainability courses
- Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) now in third year
- Sustainability training videos provide informal education

 <b>EDUCATION</b>   iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 6.1</b> Broadening the availability of sustainability education  On Schedule	<b>Objective 6.4</b> Developing a local sustainability internship program  On Hold
<b>Objective 6.2</b> Establishing a sustainability course repository  In Progress	<b>Objective 6.5</b> Helping students explore sustainability careers (with The Career Center)  On Hold
<b>Objective 6.3</b> Launching the Environmental Leadership Program  Completed	<b>Objective 6.6</b> Offer a graduate certificate in sustainability by 2024  Behind Schedule

- Water use declined by 41% from 2008-2023; usage ticked up in the past two years
- Campus Landscape Plan was completed in 2022; Rainwater Management Plan in progress
- Campus is planting 300 trees/year, has 45 pollinator plantings, and will reach goal of 49 green infrastructure projects this year
- Limited funding to implement Campus Landscape Master Plan

 <b>LAND &amp; WATER</b>   iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 4.1</b> Reduce potable water consumption to 721,500 kgal/year by 2024	 <b>On Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 4.2</b> Implement the Resilient Landscape Strategy recommendations by 2024	 <b>On Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 4.2.1</b> Increase the number of trees on campus by 1,500 by 2024	 <b>On Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 4.2.2</b> Increase number of pollinator-friendly landscapes by 50% by April 2024	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 4.2.3</b> Double number of green infrastructure installations to 48 by 2024	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 4.3</b> Use cover crops on 20% of the South Farms by 2024	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 4.4</b> Monitor soil health for all South Farms land parcels by 2024 <i>*A research project on campus is currently assessing South Farms soil health</i>	 <b>In Progress</b>

- F&S introduced EVs & hybrids into carpool and has sustainable fleet plan, but no policy exists for other units
- Campus has established telecommuting policies
- Campus continues to implement Campus Bike Plan to improve safety and mobility for cyclists – updated Campus Bike Plan 2024 underway






TRANSPORTATION		iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 3.1</b> Establish written replacement plans for at least 80% of campus fleets by 2024	 <b>On Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 3.4.1</b> Develop a Commuter Program and register 100 people by 2024	 <b>In Progress</b>
<b>Objective 3.2</b> Increase the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for university-owned roads so the average PCI score is at least 65 by 2025 <small>* A new PCI Index will be available later this year</small>	 <b>Complete</b>	<b>Objective 3.4.2</b> Continue to implement the 2014 Campus Bike Plan	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 3.3</b> Establish an Electric Vehicle Task Force by FY22	 <b>Complete</b>	<b>Objective 3.4.2</b> Establish telecommuting policies for the campus by 2024	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 3.4</b> Reduce driving on campus and the percentage of staff trips with single-occupancy vehicles from 60% to 50% by FY25	 <b>On Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 3.5</b> Reduce net air travel emissions from FY14 baseline: 50% by FY24 and 100% by FY30	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>

- Volunteers recycled more than 4,060 pounds of bottles and cans at 6 zero-waste sporting events from 2022 to 2024
- Be Orange, Go Green campaign increases awareness of ~700 water bottle filling stations
- Sustainable Student Farm sends majority of its produce to campus dining halls
- Grind2Energy system converts food scraps into fertilizer and energy – but only for dining halls, and creates cost burden

 <b>ZERO WASTE</b>		iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 5.1</b> Create sustainable procurement reporting guidelines, 100% compliance by 2024 <i>*New procurement plan in development</i>	 <b>In Progress*</b>	<b>Objective 5.4</b> Reduce food waste through a behavior change campaign and tracking/ recovering surplus food, with five new areas reporting food waste by 2022	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>
<b>Objective 5.2</b> Reduce campus waste by at least 10% to 4,544 tons by 2024	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 5.5</b> Develop a plan to sustainably dispose of organic waste by 2024	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 5.2.1</b> Place new indoor bins in at least 150 buildings by 2024. <i>*64 campus buildings have at least one</i>	 <b>In Progress*</b>	<b>Objectives 5.6, 5.6.1</b> Increase use of local food to 35% by FY30 <i>*Establishing standard definition of "local"; Sustainable Student Farm provides "a majority" of its produce to university dining halls</i>	 <b>In Progress*</b>
<b>Objective 5.3</b> Establish a culture of reuse, with four zero-waste events in 2023	 <b>Complete</b>	Implement Food Literacy Project by tracking environmental footprints of each dining hall by 2024. <i>*University Housing considering third-party company to track data</i>	 <b>Complete</b>
<b>Objective 5.3.1</b> Develop Zero Waste messaging campaign, collect 10,000 Use the Bin pledges by 2024	 <b>Behind Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 5.7</b> Establish a green cleaning program that meets LEED standards by 2024	 <b>On Schedule</b>

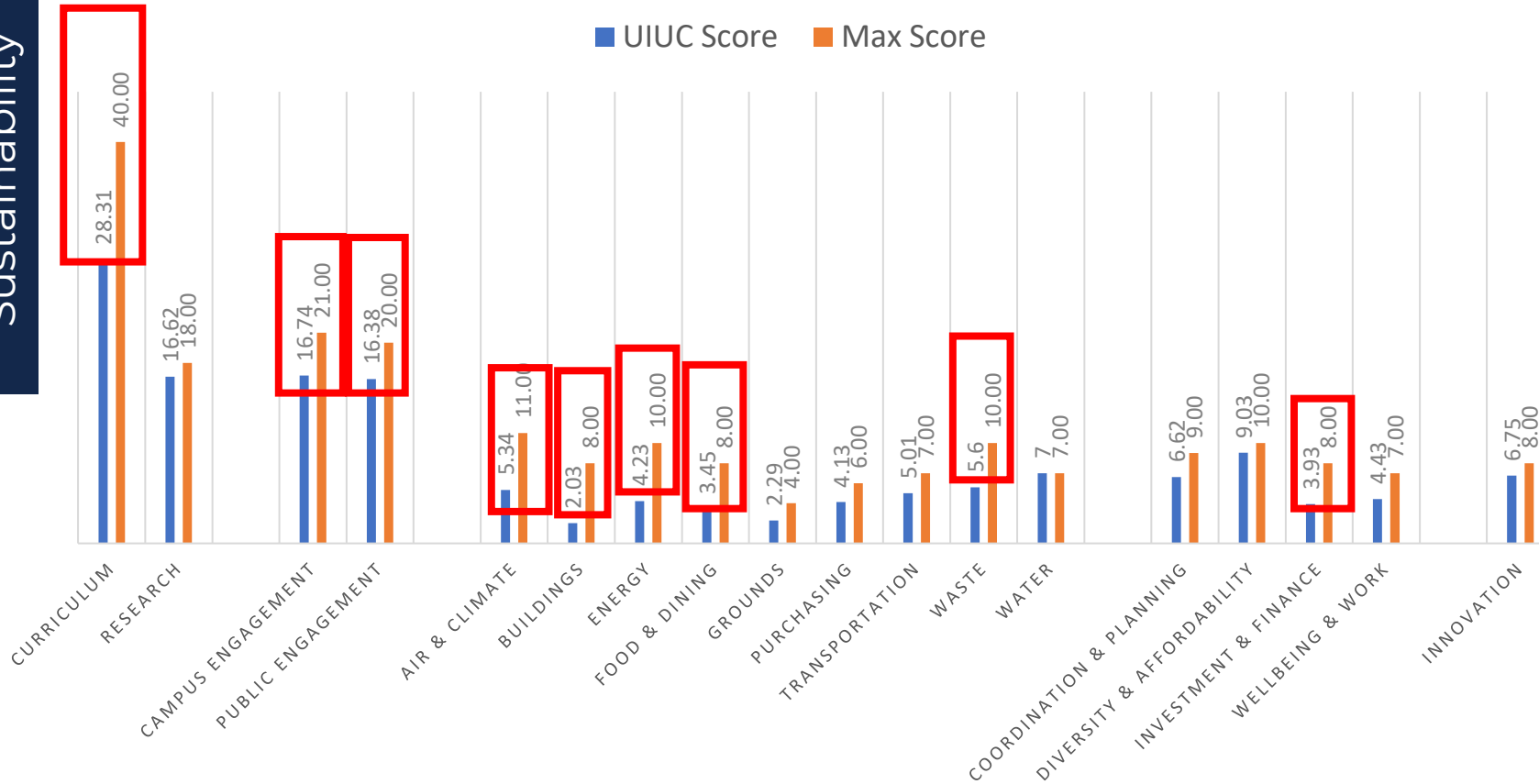
# Engagement |

- Number of green-certified events/chapters/offices grew from 7 in 2020 to 57 in 2023
- The Division of Intercollegiate Athletics is now part of the Green Sports Alliance
- The iCAP portal is regularly updated to report progress

 <b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		iCAP UPDATE	
<b>Objective 7.1</b> Increase the number of Green Campus Program Certifications by 20% every year from 2020-24	 <b>On Schedule</b>	<b>Objective 7.4</b> Use GivePulse tracking system to increase local sustainability collaborations	 <b>On Hold</b>
<b>Objective 7.2</b> 80% of Illini Union Events qualifying as sustainable by 2024	 <b>Completed</b>	<b>Objective 7.5</b> Hold an annual Youth Sustainability Summit	 <b>On Hold</b>
<b>Objective 7.3</b> DIA joining the Green Sports Alliance by 2021	 <b>Completed</b>	<b>Objective 7.6</b> Use the iCAP Portal regularly to report progress	 <b>Completed</b>



# AASHE STARS – Working Toward Platinum



## Opportunities to improve our score

- Increase # of sustainability courses
- Peer-to-peer engagement
- Decrease overall GHG emissions
- LEED for Operations & Maintenance
- Improve building energy efficiency and % energy consumption from clean sources
- Sustainable procurement policies
- Decrease landfill waste %, increase recycling %
- Increase % of sustainability investments

- Current score = 72
- Score needed to reach platinum = 85



THANK YOU!