Sustainable Design and Construction

University Policy

Applies to: University units, faculty, staff, students, visitors, and vendors

Responsible Office
Office of Administration and Planning

POLICY

Issued: 12/2008
Revised: 02/01/2021

The university has set ambitious sustainability goals to develop and demonstrate durable solutions to complex and pervasive environmental challenges. These goals include achieving carbon neutrality, reducing building energy use, conserving water, improving ecosystems services, and diverting landfill waste. To align the university’s physical environment with these goals, this policy incorporates sustainability requirements into all qualifying university projects.

Purpose of the Policy

To support the university’s sustainability goals and commitments by integrating sustainability into the university’s physical environment and establishing sustainability requirements for qualifying university projects.

Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying university projects</td>
<td>Planning, design, construction, demolition, renovation, additions, alteration, or repair of university-owned buildings and landscapes, including buildings and landscapes owned by The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td>University-owned buildings, landscapes, natural resources, and other physical structures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable construction</td>
<td>Construction that is timeless, maintainable, and flexible; incorporates responsible use of fiscal, environmental, and human resources; and has beneficial societal and environmental impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center</td>
<td>University Hospital, East Hospital, Brain and Spine Hospital, Richard M. Ross Heart Hospital, Harding Hospital, Dodd Rehabilitation Hospital, Ambulatory Clinics and Services, and Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute and Outreach Sites; College of Medicine and its School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; the Office of Health Sciences, including OSU Faculty Group Practice; various research centers, programs, and institutes; and The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>College or administrative unit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>Permission granted to modify a specific Building Design Standard for a project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waiver</td>
<td>Permission granted to exclude a specific Building Design Standard for a project.</td>
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</table>

Policy Details

I. Overview
   A. The university is committed to addressing the pressing challenges of sustainability through collaborative teaching, pioneering research, comprehensive outreach, innovative operations, and the integration of sustainable construction into qualifying university projects.
   B. University buildings and their functions account for the vast majority of the university’s greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, water consumption, waste creation, and impact on campus ecosystem services. Incorporating sustainability requirements into the university’s building construction projects is critical to achieving the university’s sustainability goals as well as enhancing the user experience for those on campus.
   C. University community members and their behaviors directly influence the university’s sustainability performance. The university has outlined Campus User Responsibilities to instruct the university community on how to positively impact the campus environment. Staff, faculty, students, and other university community members are encouraged to participate in this effort.
II. Applicable Principles and Standards

A. All qualifying university projects must comply with the Ohio State Sustainability Goals and the Presidents’ Climate Leadership Commitments, as well as the following objectives:
   1. Supporting teaching, learning, and research;
   2. Providing accessibility to a broad cross-section of the population;
   3. Conserving resources;
   4. Incorporating green design principles; and
   5. Balancing initial and long-term operating costs.

B. All qualifying university projects, regardless of the individual and/or department managing the project, must adhere to the university’s Building Design Standards (BDS) unless a variance or waiver is granted.

PROCEDURE

I. Building Design Standards

A. Project teams must consult the Sustainability Requirements Applicability Matrix to identify which sustainability requirements in Division 18 of the Building Design Standards apply to their projects. These sustainability requirements are divided into the following seven categories and apply based on project type, scope, and budget:
   1. Commissioning and Sustainability Review
   2. Energy efficiency
   3. Water use efficiency
   4. Ecosystem services
   5. Materials
   6. User experience
   7. Life-cycle cost analysis

C. Projects may need to comply with the sustainability requirements in multiple categories.

II. Variance and Waiver Process

A. All qualifying university projects must adhere to this policy and implement the applicable sustainability requirements. Variances and waivers will only be granted in exceptional circumstances when documentation provided by project teams establishes that a specific section of the policy or sustainability requirements should be granted a variance and/or waived.
   1. All policy and BDS variance and waiver requests must be submitted by project stakeholders using the Building Design Standards Variance or Waiver Request form and will be considered by the Building Design Standards Adjudication Committee, which is comprised of the university engineer, university architect, university landscape architect, and senior director of sustainability and strategic services.
   2. All variance or waiver requests and corresponding documentation must be submitted for consideration as early as possible but in no case later than the closeout of the design development stage. Failure to submit the variance or waiver request in a timely fashion may cause project delays and could become grounds for denial of the request.
   3. The Building Design Standards Adjudication Committee may, within their discretion, escalate requests to the senior vice president of administration and planning or their designee for final resolution.
III. Measurement and Tracking

A. Facilities Operations and Development (FOD) in the Office of Administration and Planning will annually report on the impact of Division 18 of the BDS, including tracking and reporting on the university’s carbon footprint, energy conservation measures, water conservation efforts, ecosystem services impact, and landfill diversion as they apply to qualified university projects.

B. FOD will maintain and make tracked data on the performance of the university’s physical environment available for use by the university for the purposes of research and academic scholarship.

Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position or Office</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Design Standards Adjudication Committee</td>
<td>1. Consider and rule on policy variance and waiver requests.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Escalate, when appropriate, variance and waiver requests to senior vice president of administration and planning or designee for final resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Maintain and make available tracked data regarding the university’s physical environment for research and academic scholarship purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project stakeholders</td>
<td>Submit any variance and waiver requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project teams</td>
<td>1. Consult Sustainability Requirements Applicability Matrix to identify which sustainability requirements apply to their projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provide required documentation for variance or waiver requests as set forth in the policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior vice president of Administration and Planning</td>
<td>Provide final resolution for escalated variance and waiver requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University community</td>
<td>Assist Ohio State in achieving its sustainability objectives by following Campus User Responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
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Resources

Governance Documents

- Board of Trustees Review and Approval of Facilities Improvement Projects and Real Estate Transactions policy, [ap.osu.edu/sites/default/files/330_bot-review-approval.pdf](ap.osu.edu/sites/default/files/330_bot-review-approval.pdf)
- Building Design Standards, [fod.osu.edu/bds](fod.osu.edu/bds)

Design Framework

- Building Design Standards Variance or Waiver Request form, [fod.osu.edu/bds_waiver](fod.osu.edu/bds_waiver)
- Design Guidelines for Buildings and Landscape, [fod.osu.edu/sites/default/files/buildings-landscape.pdf](fod.osu.edu/sites/default/files/buildings-landscape.pdf)
- Framework 2.0 Plan, [pare.osu.edu/framework](pare.osu.edu/framework)

Additional Resources

- Campus User Responsibilities, [go.osu.edu/sustainableactions](go.osu.edu/sustainableactions)
- Ohio State Climate Action Plan, [si.osu.edu/sites/default/files/CAP_Final_04082020.pdf](si.osu.edu/sites/default/files/CAP_Final_04082020.pdf)
- President and Provost’s Council on Sustainability, [president.osu.edu/leadership-and-committees/ppc-sustainability](president.osu.edu/leadership-and-committees/ppc-sustainability)
- The Presidents’ Climate Leadership Commitments, [secondnature.org/signatory-handbook/the-commitments/](secondnature.org/signatory-handbook/the-commitments/)
- Sustainability Efforts, [osu.edu/initiatives/sustainability/](osu.edu/initiatives/sustainability/)

Contacts

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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>E-mail/URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility design</td>
<td>Facilities Design &amp; Construction</td>
<td>614-292-4458</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Service2facilities@osu.edu">Service2facilities@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General policy questions</td>
<td>Administration and Planning</td>
<td>614-292-3080</td>
<td>ap.osu.edu</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainability requirements</td>
<td>Facilities Operation and Development</td>
<td>614-292-0257</td>
<td>fod.osu.edu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**History**

- **Issued:** 12/2008  
  Issued as Green Build and Energy
- **Revised:** 08/22/2012
- **Revised:** 01/15/2019  
  Minor revision
- **Revised:** 02/01/2021  
  Renamed Sustainable Design and Construction
- **Edited:** 05/03/2021  
  Noted policy names in History section