

# Campus Sustainability

## STARS

As a separate but related initiative, the University is developing a Sustainability Master Plan for the campus. PSU has selected the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education to guide development of the Sustainability Master Plan.

The STARS system is a comprehensive approach to campus sustainability. It addresses three categories:

Category 1: Education (co-curricular education and curriculum) and Research.

Category 2: Operations.

- building design, construction, operations and maintenance
- climate impact
- food purchasing for dining services
- building energy consumption and renewable energy
- grounds management
- transportation
- waste reduction and management
- water consumption and management

Category 3: Planning, Administration and Engagement.

- coordination of strategic and physical facilities with sustainability
- diversity and affordability
- human resources
- investment
- public engagement

As campus development continues, it should be coordinated with the Sustainability Master Plan. To fulfill the goal of institutionalizing environmental sustainability, new construction and renovation should be designed to achieve at minimum a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver level of certification, as defined by the U. S. Green Building Council.

Though LEED certification is not available for site improvement projects not associated with building projects, site development should be designed in accordance with LEED principles. For example, landscape material selections should be drought tolerant, low maintenance and disease resistant to minimize the need for extensive watering and the use of fertilizers and herbicides. Storm water management should encourage natural filtering and on site absorption. Parking area improvements should include more planting islands and landscaped areas to visually buffer large expanses of parking and mitigate heat island effects. Additionally, parking areas should include electric vehicle charging stations and signage that reserves prime parking spaces for commuters that carpool and drive alternative fuel vehicles. Lastly, paved areas should be converted in to permeable landscaped areas whenever feasible, to improve stormwater runoff and the aesthetic character of the area.

