

**Bow Valley  
College**

## **2020 Sustainability Report**

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## Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic was the defining issue of 2020 and will have cascading impacts for years to come. Bow Valley College's activities shifted on-line in March 2020. The downtown and regional campuses remained essentially empty for the rest of the year, except for 40 Pharmacy Technician students, and limited campus services staff.

Despite an extremely turbulent year, the sustainability portfolio at Bow Valley College continued to progress. This annual sustainability report is our approach to capturing and communicating the environmental and social impacts of our operations and activities. Through this report, we aim to be transparent about both our setbacks and accomplishments.

In 2020, Bow Valley College:

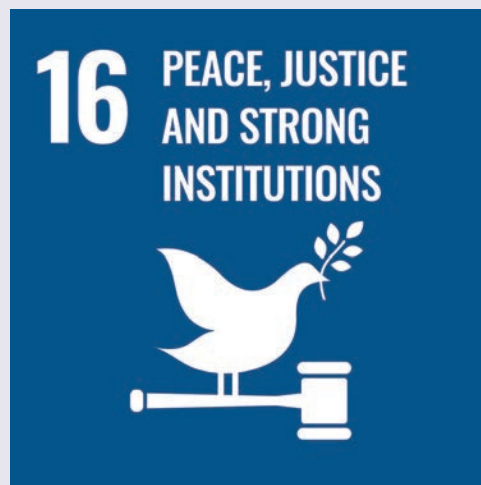
- Received the Fairtrade Canada Community Builder Award;
- Launched a self-guided on-line Sustainability 101 course for employees and learners;
- Participated in Colleges and Institutes Canada's ImpAct program;
- Published our Supplier Code of Conduct;
- Launched a Sustainability & Diversity webinar series;
- Participated in the City of Calgary's Energy Benchmarking program; and
- Made progress on many other initiatives outlined in these pages.

The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the backbone of Bow Valley College's sustainability work. As such, this report aligns with targets from these international goals and the corresponding Canadian ambitions (labeled as CIF for "Canadian Indicator Framework").

Please note, this is primarily a narrative report. For specific sustainability indicators not listed here, please see our public *Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System* (STARS) report published by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





**SDG 16.6:** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

**CIF 16.3:** Canadians are supported by effective, accountable, and transparent institutions.

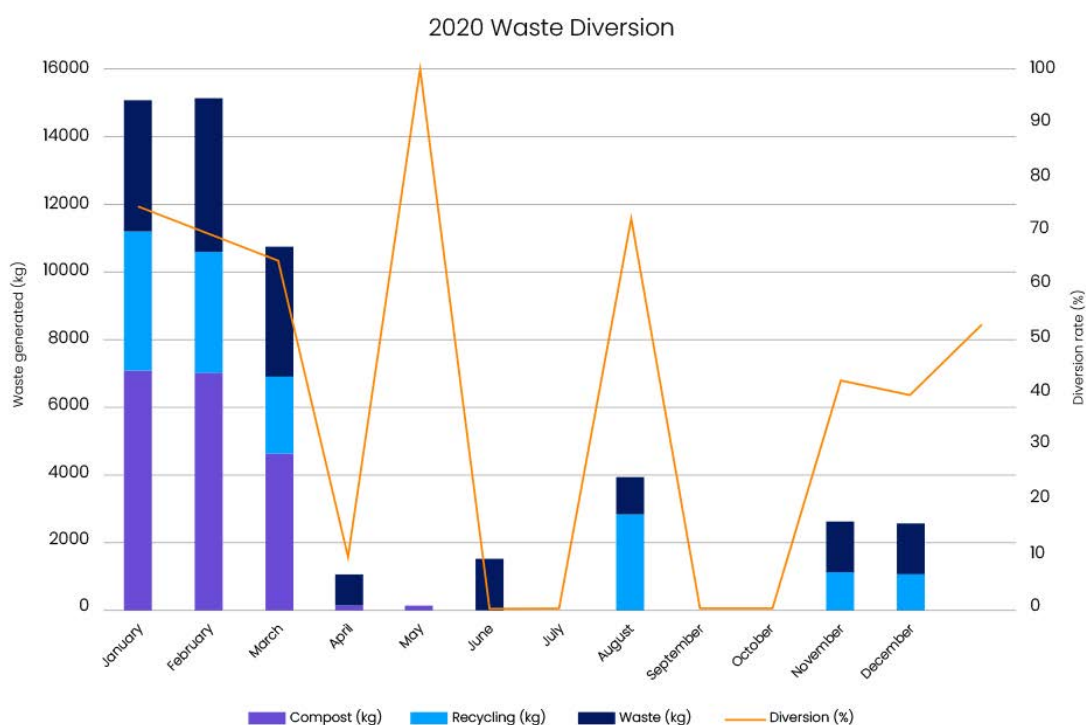


# Operations

## 2.1 Waste and Recycling

Each year, Bow Valley College diverts waste from landfills through composting and recycling programs. In addition to collecting paper, cardboard, refundable bottles and cans, metal, and plastic for recycling through centralized bins, we also have specialized recycling programs for ink and toner cartridges, batteries, electronics, pens, fabric, plastic gloves, shredded paper, and IV bags. In 2020, we also began collecting disposable masks for recycling.

Due to the drastic decrease in people on campus, our waste collection moved to “on call” rather than regular pickups. As a result, our waste tracking and diversion rate were sporadic as some months had no pickups at all (see Figure 1). Regular pickups will resume once we are back on campus.



**Figure 1:** Amount of waste (in kilograms) sent for composting (purple), recycling (blue), and to landfill (navy) in 2020. The yellow line indicates the diversion rate each month (percentage of recycling and composting of all waste generated).

**Note:** Figure 1 does not include waste generated from regional campuses, bottles and cans, or specialized recycling programs as these are tracked and collected separately (see chart below). With all recycling considered, Bow Valley College's total diversion rate for 2020 is 86.5%. Through the pandemic, Bow Valley College has maintained a high diversion rate. In fact, the 2020 diversion rate is higher than 2019 (82.6%).

<p><b>Item:</b> Shredded paper</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 79,642</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> Calgary Archives</p>	<p><b>Item:</b> Bottles and cans</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 399</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research</p>	<p><b>Item:</b> Electronics</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 5,419</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> Quantum Lifecycle</p>
<p><b>Item:</b> Coffee packs from Executive office</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 20</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> TerraCycle</p>	<p><b>Item:</b> Plastic gloves, IV bags, disposable bags</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 0</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> TerraCycle</p> <p><i>Although gloves and bags continue to be collected for recycling, none were sent for recycling in 2020. These will be sent in bulk in 2021.</i></p>	<p><b>Item:</b> Batteries and pens</p> <p><b>Amount recycled (kg)</b> 0</p> <p><b>Recycler:</b> <i>Batteries and pens continued to be collected from January-March, but none were sent for recycling in 2020. These will be sent once the campus reopens fully.</i></p>

Bow Valley College received a Community Champions grant from the Alberta Beverage Container Corporation to update our recycling infrastructure. Our recycling and landfill signs have been simplified to make sorting easier for campus users. Installation of this infrastructure will take place in 2021.





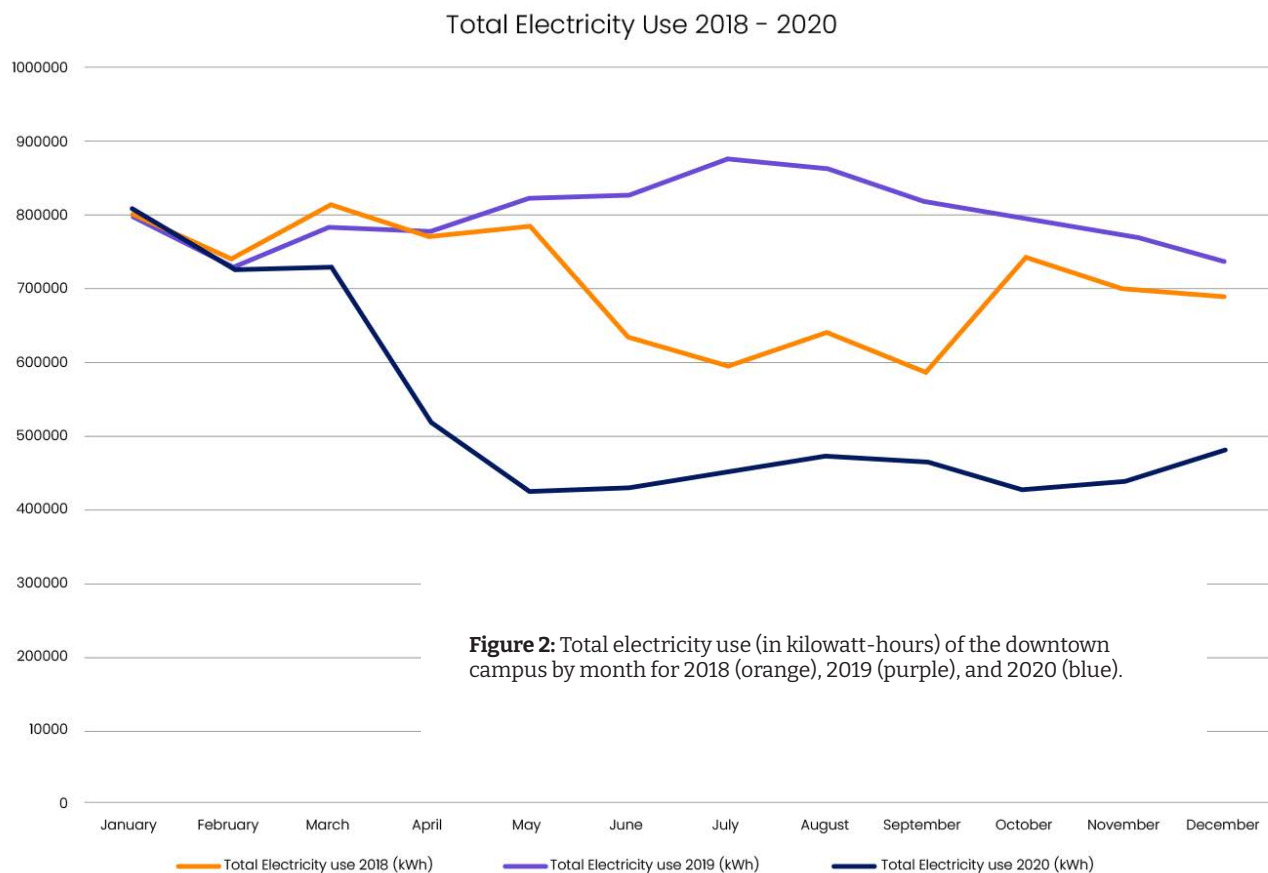
**SDG 12.4:** By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle.



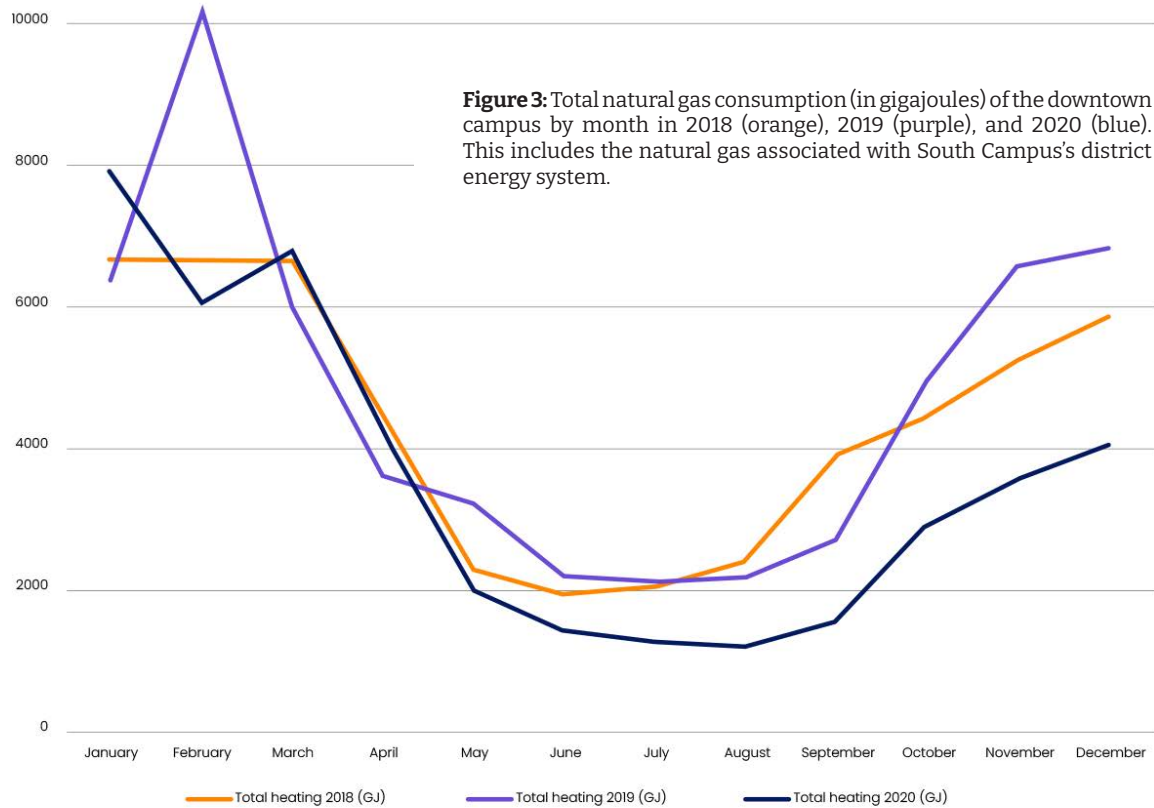
# Operations

## 2.2 Water, Electricity, Heating

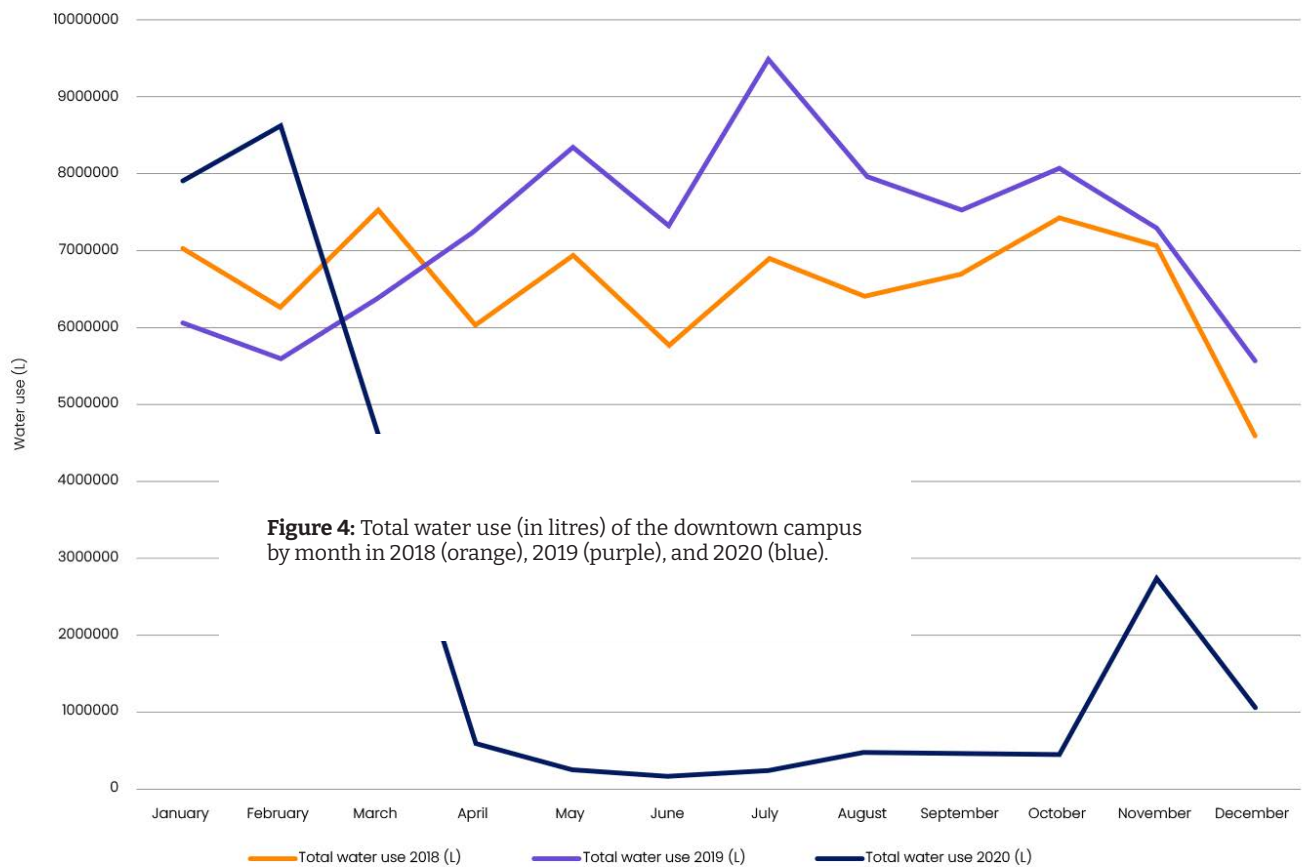
Predictably, Bow Valley College's electricity, water, and natural gas consumption decreased in 2020 compared to previous years (see Figures 2-4). Once the campus was closed to the public in March, electricity and natural gas use dropped by roughly half. The largest change was water use, which dropped to only 32% of 2019's total water consumption. There was a spike in water use in November due to a maintenance issue with the chillers in the cooling tower. This issue is now resolved.



### Total Heating 2018 - 2020



### Total Water Use 2018 - 2020



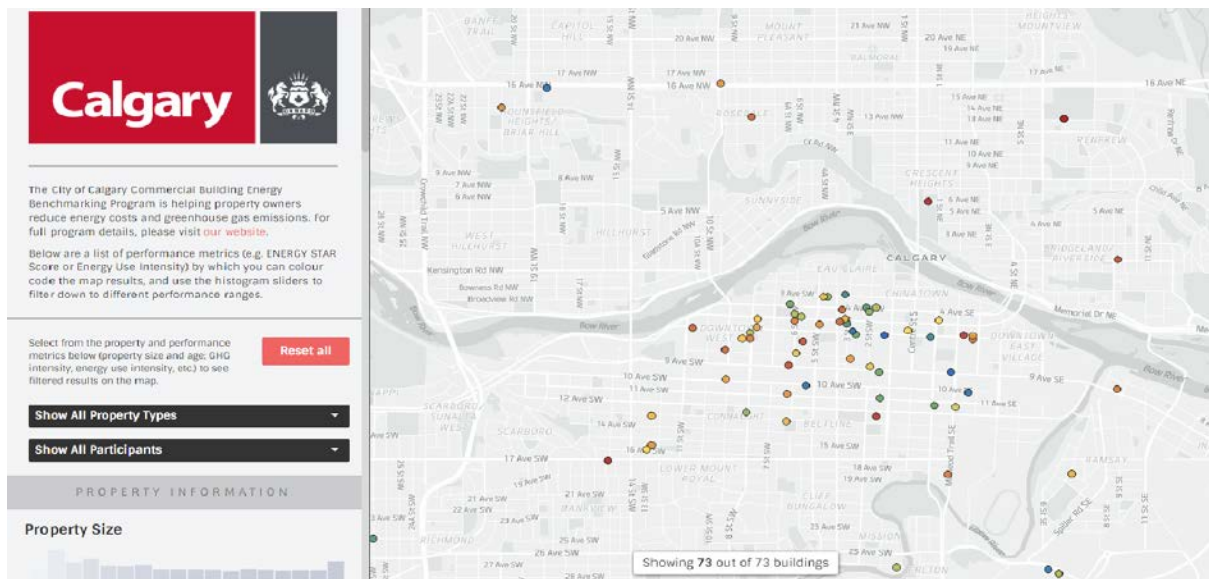
These reductions are due to the hard work of our maintenance staff. The Campus Services team keep the buildings operationally functional while drastically decreasing consumption by:

- Turning off mechanical cooling systems, except for critical electronics support chillers;
- Closing blinds in office areas and classrooms;
- Running fan systems in the South Campus for only two hours per day to circulate air;
- Running only two out of the six fan systems in North Campus (at 25% capacity); and
- Turning off all lighting and non-essential appliances (coffee machines, water coolers, computers, TVs, printers, etc.)

We participated in the City of Calgary's new Commercial Building Energy Benchmark Program to track and compare our energy performance to other commercial buildings in Calgary. Bow Valley College was the only post-secondary institution to participate, which makes it difficult to understand how our data compares with organizations of comparable size and use. Other schools are expected to participate in future years, which will only provide more useful comparisons.

Despite our LEED designated buildings, we ranked relatively poorly. Out of 141 buildings assessed, North Campus ranked 92nd, South Campus ranked 120th, and West Campus ranked 121st for greenhouse gas emissions intensity. This likely has to do with the number of hours our buildings are used compared to regular office buildings (for example, the College is open six days a week and for evening classes, which is an extended schedule compared to most commercial buildings). Future assessments may include GHG intensity per hour of use or per user, which will help contextualize these results.

Note, the data compared is from 2019 and therefore reflects our pre-pandemic energy performance.





**CIF 7.1:** Canadians reduce their energy consumption.

**SDG 7.3:** By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.



**SDG 6.4:** By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors.



# Operations

## 2.3 Food Services

Food services were closed between mid-March and December. However, in partnership with Sodexo Canada, several sustainability initiatives were implemented in the last two months of the year:

- Reusable plates were introduced at The Market as a sustainable alternative to single-user compostable containers;
- Sodexo began contracting with a vendor to filter used cooking oil once a week. This means the cooking oil was used twice as long before being recycled.
- Individual milk creamers in the staff kitchens were replaced with bulk milk cartons.



**SDG 12.5:** By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.

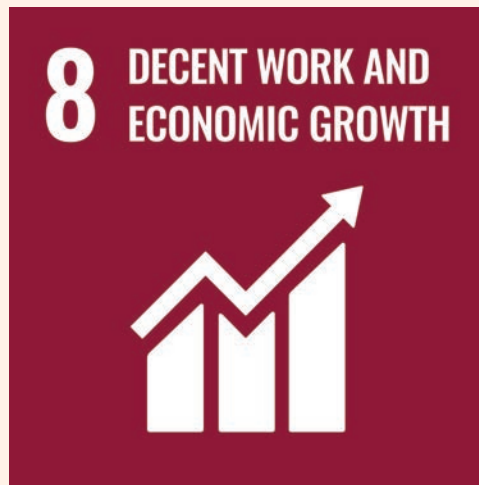
# Operations

## 2.4 Purchasing

Bow Valley College updated its Purchasing Policy 2019 to incorporate sustainability. In 2020, we published our Supplier Code of Conduct to communicate these sustainable purchasing values publicly.

Since 2019, all competitive bids posted by Bow Valley College are scored for sustainability. In 2020, 12 competitive bids were published by the College, with an average sustainability weighting of 8%. This means, on average, an organization's sustainable portfolio made up 8% of their total assessed score.

Bow Valley College employees participated in the Sustainability Purchasing Leadership Council's (SPLC) strategic program planning process (SP3) throughout 2020. As a result, ten short-term purchasing goals were developed. In 2021, a cross-departmental sustainable purchasing working group will be formed to work on these goals. We also joined the SPLC Higher Education Peer Learning Circle in November to learn from and share resources with peer institutions also working on sustainable purchasing initiatives.



**SDG8.7:** Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery, and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all forms.

# Operations

## 2.5 Climate

We announced in our 2019 Sustainability Report that climate action become a larger focus for Bow Valley College in 2020. We have kept this commitment by:

- Surveying Bow Valley College learners about their perspectives on climate change in our annual Learner Survey. We found that 85% of learners are concerned about climate change and want to see the College act on environmental issues such as climate change. This is higher than the national average, as 74% of Canadians are concerned about climate change according to a 2019 Abacus Data poll.
- Signing a three-year contract with a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consultant to conduct GHG inventories for 2019, 2020, and 2022. The first two assessments will begin in 2021. These assessments will capture our GHG emissions pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic.
- Joining the Colleges and Institutes Canada ImpAct project working group on Campus Sustainability, which has specific focus on climate change (see section 7.1).
- Running two events related to climate change (see section 4.1) and promoting the City of Calgary's fall climate change webinar series to employees, learners, and the external community.
- Compiling a report with recommendations for carbon offsetting.



**CIF 13.1:** Canadians reduce their GHG emissions.

**SDG 13.3:** Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

# BVC Green Committee

The BVC Green committee is a volunteer group of employees and students with the mission to advance environmental stewardship and champion a College-wide sustainability culture. In 2020, the BVC Green Team volunteered 75 hours planning for and participating in events on campus and online.



Four members of BVC Green, from right to left: Mimi Tang, Megan Hardman, Dionne-Smith Castellano, and Christine Abit.



# Student Sustainability Ambassadors program

The second cohort of Student Sustainability Ambassadors ran from January–April 2020. These five student Ambassadors attended meetings, volunteered, and worked on various sustainability action projects such as minimizing the use of coffee cups on campus and introducing vermicomposting to the early childhood education classrooms.

In exchange for their effort, Ambassadors were rewarded with a completion certificate, credit on their co-curricular record, and a stipend. For more information about the program and individual student projects, see the BVC Green website.



Winter 2020 term Student Sustainability Ambassadors. From left to right: Manan Kapoor, Lourdes Rodriguez, Mouna Marouki, Mimi Tang, and Stefi Dhillon.



**SDG 12.4:** By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

# Fair Trade Community Builder award

Fair Trade supports fairer conditions and better prices for people in the Global South who grow and make products such as coffee, cocoa, and cotton. Under fair trade, producers are paid a living wage, assured safe working conditions, and trained in environmentally responsible farming methods.

Bow Valley College is the recipient of the Fairtrade Canada Community Builder award. This award is given to the group who exemplified the spirit of partnership and community support by connecting to and mentoring the broader fair trade community. We did this through multiple fair trade events (see section 4.1). To learn more about how Bow Valley College supports fair trade, see visit the BVC Green website.

Megan Hardman, our sustainability engagement assistant, gave a presentation at the National Fairtrade conference in March as part of a panel entitled, "How to Teach, Engage and Work with Youth."



Sustainability coordinator (Amy Spark, centre) and sustainability engagement assistant (Megan Hardman, right) accepting the Fairtrade Community Building Award on behalf of Bow Valley College from Helen Reimer, director of business development at Fairtrade Canada (left).



**SDG 10.4:** Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.



# 2020 Initiatives

## Events

A major part of the sustainability portfolio at Bow Valley College includes offering engagement and educational opportunities through events and workshops. BVC Green members supported the following events in 2020:

- New Student Orientation, Coee Kick-o, Volunteer 101, Indigenous Student Welcome, and Student Services Expos run by Learner Success Services;
- Welcome Back Bash organized by the School of Foundational Learning;
- English Language Learner Orientation hosted by the International Education Department; and
- Program Preview Night and Open House run by the Welcome Centre.

The sustainability team also worked with the organizers of the United Way book sale in January to make the event entirely plastic-bag free and contributed content toward the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, hosted by Learner Success Services in November.

The following section highlights the events hosted by the BVC Green committee in 2020 in collaboration with various internal and external partners. Two events were cancelled due to Covid-19, but the remainder were switched to an online format. In total, approximately 1,900 people participated in these events, which is about half compared to 2019. However, engagement was generally more in-depth in 2020. For example, participants attended an hour-long webinar rather than briefly stopping by a booth.



Employees and faculty participating in Winter Bike to Work Day.

## Fair Trade Coffee and Mental Health Break

Designed to provide employees and students with a mental health break while learning about and enjoying fair trade products (coffee and tea). Counsellor from Learner Success Services hosted wellness activities.

**Dates:** January 20 **Number of participants:** 80 (estimate)  
**SDG Alignment:** CIF 3.2: Canadians have healthy and satisfying lives.

## Student Sustainability Summit

Co-hosted by the Sustainability Council and Sustain SU (an initiative of the Students' Union) at the University of Alberta, this was a one-day gathering for university and college students from across Alberta.

**Date:** February 1 **Number of participants:** 7 BVC students  
**SDG Alignment:** SDG 12.8: By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

## International Development Week

Hosted a series of activities about sustainability initiatives on campus and how to incorporate sustainability into various careers.

**Dates:** February 6 **Number of participants:** 300 (estimate)  
**SDG Alignment:** SDG 12.8: By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

## Winter Bike to Work Day

Speaker from the City of Calgary hosted a breakfast 'n' learn on February 7 on cycling infrastructure in the City (7 participants). The following week, an employee organized a lunchtime bike ride to Inglewood (5 participants).

**Date:** February 7 and 14 **Number of participants:** 12  
**SDG Alignment:** CIF 11.2: Canadians live in healthy, accessible, and sustainable cities and communities

## Fair Trade Valentine's Day

Employees and students were invited to create Valentine's Day cards using recycled materials.

**Date:** February 13 **Number of participants:** 30 (estimate)  
**SDG Alignment:** SDG 12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.

## Earth Hour

The Arusha Centre and City of Calgary usually host a large outdoor event at St. Patrick's Island to celebrate Earth Hour. This event was cancelled due to Covid-19, so employees and students were invited to share photos of how they celebrated Earth Hour at home. These stories were compiled into a blog post for the Intercultural Development blog.

**Date:** March 28 **Number of participants:** 7  
**SDG Alignment:** CIF 7.1: Canadians reduce their energy consumption.

## Sustainability Report Virtual Scavenger Hunt

Employees and learners were invited to answer trivia questions related to the 2019 Sustainability Report. Two bundles of fair trade chocolate and tea were given as prize draws.

**Date:** April 22–May 4 **Number of participants:** 24

## Webinar: Native Bees

The Alberta Native Bee Council presented on Alberta's more than 300 native bee species and encouraged attendees to protect bees in their backyards.

**Date:** April 24 **Number of participants:** 35

**SDG Alignment:** SDG 15.5: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity, and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

## Bike to Work Day

BVC Green created and shared a resource guide entitled *Who Bikes at BVC* with photos, advice, quotes, and tips and tricks from cyclists across the College.

**Date:** May 1 **Number of participants:** N/A

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 3.1: Canadians adopt healthy behaviours.

## Webinar: Ethical Coffee & Tea

Presented by Fair Trade Calgary, this session gave an overview of how fair trade products support farmers and producers.

**Date:** May 22 **Number of participants:** 25

**SDG Alignment:** SDG 10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

## Food Friday (x3)

These events were coordinated by the Intercultural Centre. Presenters hosted a cooking show that demonstrated how to cook sustainably using fair trade products, plant-based diets, and harvesting local berries.

**Dates:** May 22, June 1, August 14 **Number of participants:** 59

## Webinar: Discover Parks

An overview of Alberta's natural areas in celebration of World Environment Day. Presented by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS).

**Date:** June 5 **Number of participants:** 52

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 15.2: Canada conserves and restores ecosystems and habitats.greater equality.

## Canadian Multiculturalism Day Film Screening

BVC Green and the Intercultural Centre screened *Hutterite Harvest* and *Of the Village*, followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker, Reuben Tschetter. (Reuben is a BVC alumnus.)

**Dates:** June 25 **Number of participants:** 133

**SDG Alignment:** SDG 4.7:By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including...promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and of appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

## Webinar: Cut Your Plastic Waste

Facilitated by Plastic Free YYC, this webinar gave participants practical tools for reducing plastic in their life.

**Date:** July 10 **Number of participants:** 26

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 12.1: Canadians consume in a sustainable manner.

## Webinar: Calgary's Water System

Hosted by the City of Calgary Water Services, this presentation gave an overview of Calgary's three water systems: stormwater, wastewater, and water sanitation.

**Date:** August 14   **Number of participants:** 17

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 6.1: Canadians have access to drinking water and use it in a sustainable manner.

## Webinar: Permaculture & Growing Food

Facilitated by Urban Farm School, this session gave an overview of permaculture growing principles and maximizing growing spaces for food security.

**Dates:** September 16   **Number of participants:** 64

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 2.1: Canadians have access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food.

## Webinar: Climate Game Changers

Presented by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), this session provided an overview of how climate change impacts natural areas in Alberta, and, in turn, how these natural areas can mitigate climate change.

**Date:** October 26   **Number of participants:** 70

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 13.1: Canadians reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

## Webinar: Indigenous Connections to Land

Screened the film *Stories of Decolonization* followed by a discussion by Bow Valley College's Indigenization & Decolonization Curriculum Consultant, Crystal Manyfingers.

**Dates:** October 28   **Number of participants:** 97

**SDG Alignment:** UNDRIP Article 25: Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters, and coastal seas and other resources, and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

## Coping with the Emotional Impacts of Climate Change

Bow Valley College partnered with the University of Calgary for a workshop on the psychological impacts of an unstable climate, as part of the University's Flourish series.

**Date:** November 2   **Number of participants:** 24

**SDG Alignment:** CIF 13.2: Canadians are well-equipped and resilient to face the effects of climate change

## Webinar: Talking Trash

Presented by the City of Calgary Waste & Recycling, this session gave an overview of the City's recycling and composting initiatives.

**Dates:** November 20   **Number of participants:** 33

**SDG Alignment:** SDG 12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.



## 4.2 Sustainable Development Goals

As is clear from this report, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are integral to the sustainability portfolio at Bow Valley College. Additionally, we completed several initiatives intended to educate about the global goals, including:

- Posting two videos about the SDGs, featuring chief of staff Brett Bergie and sustainability coordinator Amy Spark, in celebration of Global Goals week in September;
- Contributing to the SDG Toolkit for Canadian Colleges and Institutes as part of the CICan SDG working group;
- Two Bow Valley College students attended the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) youth workshop in May; and The co-curricular Sustainability 101 course was developed around the SDGs (see section 5.1).



Employees and faculty participating in Winter Bike to Work Day.



**SDG 12.4:** By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

# Academics and Research

## Sustainability 101 Course

In the months following the campus closure, the sustainability team decided to create an online self-guided course for employees and students entitled "Sustainability 101." Members of the Bow Valley College community can register for this course through the D2L platform. Those that complete all nine modules receive a certificate of completion, and students also receive recognition on their co-curricular record. In total, 51 people registered for Sustainability 101 in 2020.

The course is composed of nine modules:

- Orientation and introduction to sustainability
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Waste and recycling
- Growing food and protecting wildlife
- Climate action
- Energy and water
- Air quality and active mobility
- Civic engagement and green jobs
- Conclusions and future directions

Sustainability was also embedded into the mySuccessHub course for new students, hosted by Learner Success Services.

The screenshot shows the D2L course interface for "Sustainability 101 2020" at Bow Valley College. The top navigation bar includes the college logo, course title, and user profile (Amy Spark). Below the navigation bar is a menu with options like "Edit Course", "Course Home", "Content", "Communication", "Assessments", "Brightspace Help", "Calendar", "Glossary", "FAQ", and "More". The main content area features a large banner image of a green plant in a pot with the text "Sustainability 101 2020". On the left, there is a "News" section with a "Welcome!" announcement dated May 25, 2020, at 9:32 AM. The announcement text reads: "Welcome to the course! We are excited to introduce Sustainability 101 for the first time at Bow Valley College. This course is designed for learners and staff who want to explore sustainability. We'll cover many different topics in this course, and by the end, you will have lots of practical knowledge. This course is self-paced, so feel free to take the time you need to complete it. You can also jump around between modules. However, we recommend following the given sequence, because some information is introduced in a specific order." On the right, there is a "Calendar" section showing the date "Thursday, February 11, 2021" and a link to "Upcoming events".

Screenshot of Sustainability 101 in D2L.

## Sustainability in the Classroom and Professional Development

As an educational institution, our mandate supports almost all targets under SDG #4: Quality Education. We are an access college that creates educational opportunities for immigrants, Indigenous Peoples, international students, persons with disabilities, older workers, and the underemployed.

Members of the sustainability team were invited to present to 18 classes (396 students) from the Chiu School of Business, School of Community Studies, School of Global Access, and School of Technology. We also answered inquiries about sustainability, such as how to properly dispose of atypical waste products. In 2020, we answered only 71 inquiries, down from 152 in 2019.

We also offered multiple professional development opportunities for our employees and faculty in 2020:

- The Teaching and Learning Enhancement team and sustainability coordinator led a session on “Cultivating Sustainability Literacy in the Classroom” for instructors;
- Human Resources and the sustainability coordinator led a lunch and learn about the relationship between Lean management principles and sustainability;
- The sustainability coordinator presented the SDGs to the Academic Operations Committee and gave an overview of the Supplier Code of Conduct and purchasing initiative to multiple departments; and
- The sustainability coordinator supported the Recruitment team as they developed a sustainable recruitment plan, which will roll out in 2021.



**SDG 4.3:** By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including university.

**CIF 4.1:** Canadians have access to inclusive and quality education throughout their lives.

## Applied Research

In alignment with Bow Valley College's new Academic and Research Priorities, the College participated in Map the System for the first time in 2020. Map the System Canada is an annual competition that tasks students with applying a systems lens to research a specific social or environmental issue. The program is managed by The Institute for Community Prosperity at Mount Royal University. A student from Bow Valley College, Francis An Barbra, researched the rise of HIV in the Philippines and presented virtually at the Canadian final.





## Entrepreneurship and Training

Bow Valley College has vibrant programs to expand Alberta's social entrepreneurship capacity, such as Innovation Rodeo, 150 Startups, and VentureQuest. Three students won the top prize at the 2020 VentureQuest competition for their business, Fuzzy Alpaca. This sustainable startup will sell alpaca wool garments such as sweaters, scarves, and ponchos made from wool from farmers in Peru and fabric from Indigenous communities in Canada.

Meeting the commitments of the Sustainable Development Goals will require economic diversification and technological upgrading. Bow Valley College's Tech Skills Initiative was announced in 2019 and took flight in 2020. This initiative provides communication technology training and work placements for those looking to change careers or upskill. It is funded by Alberta Labour to help unemployed Albertans transition back into the workforce.



**SDG 8.2:** Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.

# Communications

Communication is key to Bow Valley College's sustainability initiatives. The following section highlights the results of our ongoing communication activities.

## Social Media

- Sustainability-themed content regularly appears on four different social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn) for five different accounts (main Bow Valley College account, International, SABVC, Learner Success Services, and Alumni Engagement);
- We had 165 posts in 2020 and an average of 24 likes per post;
- The September 25 video celebrating the SDGs featuring chief of staff Brett Bergie had over 1,000 views;
- We had the most engagement for posts about Winter Bike to Work Day, the Student Sustainability Ambassadors program, Canadian geese on campus, and the fair trade award; and
- On average, 7.3% of posts on Bow Valley College social media accounts are related to sustainability initiatives.

## Website

- Bow Valley College is featured in the College and Institutes Canada (CICan) SDG Toolkit;
- The BVC Green website had a total of 1,979 hits in 2020 and an average view time of 2:19 minutes per page;
- The most popular webpage on our site was waste diversion (359 unique page views), closely followed by the Student Sustainability Ambassadors page (356);
- Bow Valley College was featured in the 2020 Guide to Green Colleges by *The Princeton Review*; and
- Bow Valley College is featured on the CICan ImpAct program.

## Internal Communications

- Employees received sustainability updates through the intranet more than once every two weeks (29 total);
- Students received sustainability updates through the weekly electronic newsletter. Students received 72 updates related to sustainability in 2020;
- Alumni received information about sustainability events in the tri-annual alumni newsletter, which has 20,000 subscribers;
- Before the College closed due to Covid-19, five full-colour ads were projected on 31 TV screens across main campus; and
- Bow Valley College was featured in the January edition of the Alberta SDG Network newsletter.



# Institutional Learning, Engagement and Partnerships

Bow Valley College is proud to build partnerships and learning communities regionally, nationally, and internationally. We are the convener of the Calgary Postsecondary Sustainability Community of Practice which meets biannually. In 2020, we joined the Alberta Postsecondary Energy Efficiency Community of Practice and the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council Higher Education Peer Learning Circle (see section 2.4). The sustainability coordinator was on the judging panel for the Student Sustainability Leadership Award through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

## Colleges and Institutes Canada

Our most extensive partnership in 2020 was with Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan). Bow Valley College is a member of CICan's Campus Sustainability project working group under the ImpAct initiative. This initiative launched in February 2020, right before the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Recognizing a strategic moment, the working group wrote an open letter to the three federal Ministers responsible for drafting the green economic recovery plan. The letter was entitled "Building Back Better to Ensure Well-being for All" and emphasized the need for economic recovery to incorporate goals from the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the targets under the Sustainable Development Goals. The letter was signed by 15 institutions and five regional associations.

Bow Valley College also participated in CICan's SDG working group which published the SDG Toolkit (see section 4.2) and was on the judging panel for the new SDG Excellence Award category (winner announced in 2021).



**SDG 17.1:** Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience, and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

**SDG 17.1:** Canada fosters collaboration and partnerships to advance the SDGs.

# Looking Ahead to 2021

Despite an extremely challenging year, we are proud of the advancements we made for sustainability in 2020. As we continue to grapple with the pandemic, economic downturn, and ongoing environmental and social challenges, we would like to share our priorities for 2021:

- Completing our second Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS) report;
- Enhancing the fourth-floor terrace on South Campus to support biodiversity and mental health;
- Launching a sustainability-themed podcast for the College community;
- Completing our first comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions inventory;
- Launching a cross-departmental sustainable purchasing working group;
- Adapting our operations in alignment with the upcoming federal single-use plastics ban;
- And more!



Bow Valley College student participating in Earth Hour 2020 by encouraging her followers to say no to single-use plastics.