



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Facilities & Services



2030 Strategic Plan

Message from the COO

The historic St. George campus is a city within a city, forming the foundation of the University of Toronto’s academic mission.

Our facilities enable the pioneering research, provide the vibrant community spaces and attract—and retain—the world-class talent that make us a global academic leader.

The Facilities & Services team upholds the time-honoured tradition of maintaining our buildings and grounds.

As stewards of our beloved campus, we have a responsibility to more than 100,000 people who learn, teach and work here every day. We also have taken up the call of leading sustainability efforts on campus, developing ambitious decarbonization projects and delivering on our climate positive vision.

This strategic plan represents the guiding principles that will act as our north star into 2030. It was thoughtfully developed through extensive staff and client consultation and reflects on the forces that will shape the future of the higher education world—as well as our legacy of serving our community.



Ron Saporta, Chief Operating Officer
Property Services & Sustainability



Contents

- 02 The 2030 strategic plan
- 03 Strategic priorities
- 04 Our planning journey
- 06 What we learned
- 08 **Delivering exceptional service for our community**
- 10 **Caring for and responsibly maintaining world-class spaces**
- 12 Deeper dive: reliability-centred maintenance
- 16 **Realizing our team’s potential**
- 20 **Leading the sustainability journey**
- 22 Deeper dive: climate resilience
- 24 **Driving operational excellence**
- 26 Deeper dive: continuous improvement
- 28 Putting our plan into action

Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

The 2030 strategic plan

Vision

To provide a world-renowned campus where students, faculty and staff thrive in safe, vibrant and sustainable environments.

Mission

We create environments that foster learning and discovery by empowering partnerships, people, technology, innovation and passion. We support the university’s growth through stewardship of the campus, while respecting our heritage and embracing sustainability.

Values

- Respect

We put people first. We communicate openly, politely and honestly with each other and with clients. We seek to build and improve trust and create positive experiences and relationships.
- Dedication

We are committed to excellence in everything we do. We act with curiosity, take initiative and focus on generating and implementing productive solutions. We continuously look for and implement ideas to improve our services and operations.
- Collaboration

We are a unified team. We act as one unit across roles and areas of responsibility with shared ownership of our services. We eagerly share information, help each other, problem solve together and have fun.
- Responsibility

We are proud to be entrusted with the care of our campus and the opportunity to contribute to our community. We respond quickly and earnestly to needs, apply our knowledge and skills to improve campus spaces and strive for consistency every time.

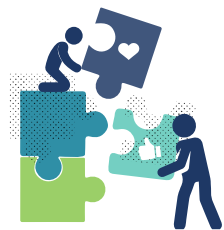
Strategic priorities



Delivering exceptional service for our community



Caring for and responsibly maintaining world-class spaces



Realizing our team’s potential



Leading the sustainability journey



Driving operational excellence

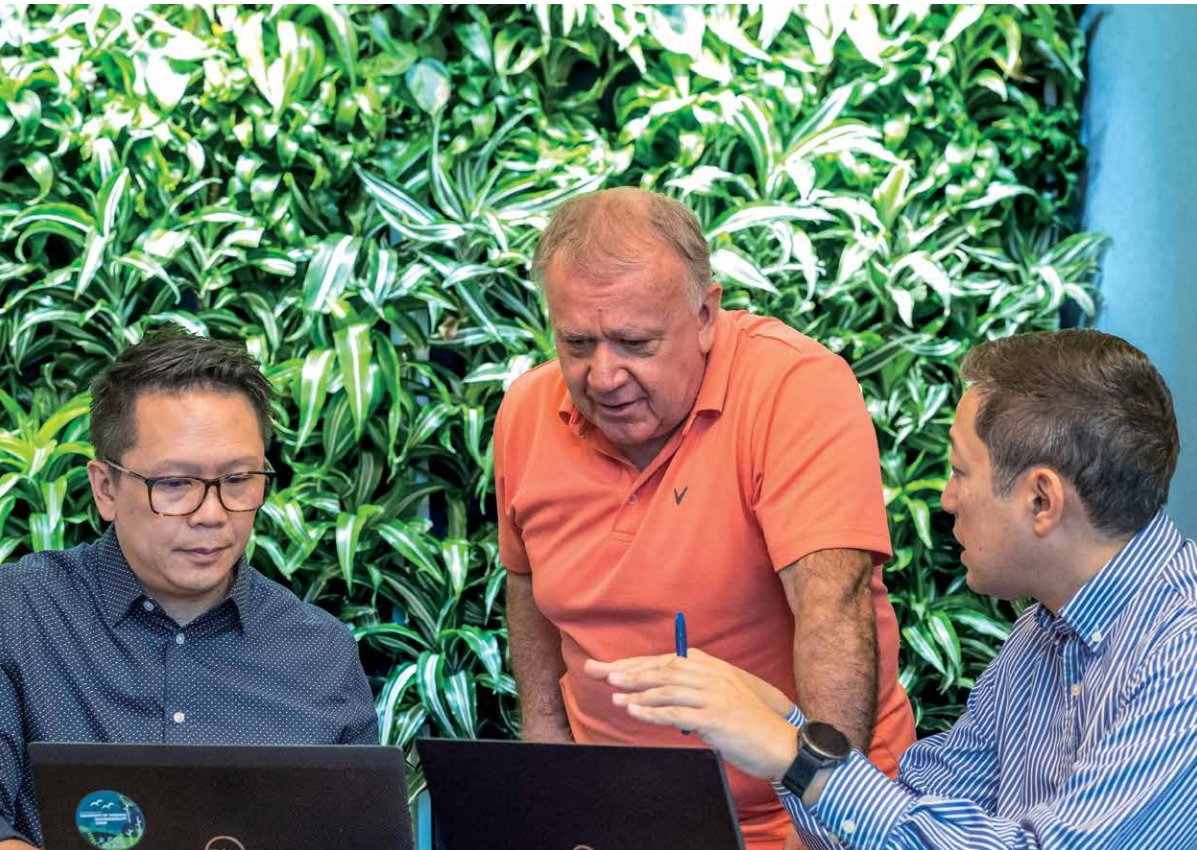
Our planning journey

We began our strategic planning with self-reflection.

This meant engaging and listening to our most important stakeholders: our clients, our partners and our staff. We consulted over 500 people in a variety of roles from different F&S teams, faculties and departments.

We carefully considered external trends and our peers.

We also conducted an environmental scan to review strategic plans from North American universities of comparable academic rankings—as well as municipalities with similar populations to the St. George campus. We discussed global and local trends that may impact the higher education sector and facilities management functions.



clients, partners and staff members consulted through surveys, focus groups and interviews



peer and municipal strategic plans reviewed to compare how we match up to others



major global trends considered, including economic, technological and environmental factors

“Facilities & Services is setting standards for sustainability in our institution, but also our sector and country. The fact that we understand our role as not just to be the most sustainable university, but to get others to do the same is huge. We want to do more at the end of the day.”

— F&S staff member

What we learned

Client experience

While our team members are dedicated to clients, our clients and partners provide a mixed review. They appreciate the team's subject matter expertise, problem solving, sustainability efforts and emergency response. However, their overall experience with F&S is negatively impacted by inconsistent communication and a dissatisfaction with our day-to-day responsiveness and project delays.

Systems and processes

There is widespread agreement among our teams, clients and partners that our systems and processes need to be streamlined and documented. Simplified processes and more effective use of technology would bolster our ability to deliver with excellence, improve the staff experience and align with our peers—who focus on this explicitly.

Team

Our staff are proud of their colleagues' expertise and proud to work at the University of Toronto. Greater effort on collaboration and communication across teams—as well as more recognition, better opportunities for professional development and improved onboarding processes—would lead to a more cohesive and effective team.

Global trends shaping higher education

- Financial constraints require an increased focus on cost-efficiency and process improvement
- The climate emergency necessitates acting on sustainability and resilience
- Rapid technological advancements open doors to implement and innovate new processes
- A shortage of skilled trades and specialized professionals calls for more succession planning and better onboarding
- The need for equity, diversity and inclusion requires a greater focus on carefully planning physical spaces and building supportive teams



Our 2030 priorities

Delivering exceptional service for our community

We provide the best possible client experience. Through innovation and trusted client relationships, we deliver responsive, proactive and financially sustainable services. We are partners of choice to our clients, engaging in transparent communication and ongoing consultation.



Objectives

- 1 Innovate to deliver excellent, responsive and efficient service to our clients
- 2 Strengthen collaboration, relationships and two-way communication with clients and partners to develop solutions that exceed expectations
- 3 Equip our team to deliver excellent service



Our 2030 priorities

Caring for and responsibly maintaining world-class spaces

We are proud stewards of our campus and continually strive to create the best environments for the University of Toronto community. Through our subject matter expertise, we make spaces:

- Welcoming and safe
- Accessible and inclusive
- Beautiful and clean
- Reliable and sustainable



Objectives

- 1 Transition to a reliability-centred maintenance model, with a greater focus on preventative and proactive approaches
- 2 Modernize and deliver upon a robust deferred maintenance program to meet the university's changing academic priorities
- 3 Continuously evolve our building design standards for world-class spaces



Reliability-centred maintenance

We are working toward a reliability-centred maintenance (RCM) model that most effectively prioritizes our community's ability to deliver on our ambitious academic mission and research mandate while safeguarding the campus experience.

The primary goal of RCM is ensuring that our critical systems—those most vital to sustaining learning and teaching activities, research and overall campus life—are functioning reliably and in the most cost-effective manner possible.

This model consists of identifying the role of an asset, understanding its potential failure modes (and the impact of those failures), and applying the best and most efficient mix of maintenance strategies to keep it running optimally.

Establishing a robust and effective RCM process involves a rigorous cataloguing of building assets and systems and their associated impact on operations and risks of failure. By identifying markers that can signal potential failures—and conducting careful cost benefit analyses—we can decide on a unique maintenance approach for each asset that employs a mix of predictive and preventative strategies.

By planning thoughtfully, we will optimize our use of talent and time, ensuring that staff and funds are properly allocated around our clients' needs and that we are spending every dollar of the maintenance budget thoughtfully and responsibly.

Ultimately, we strive to embrace and adopt this maintenance model because it optimizes performance, minimizes downtime and reduces operational risks—all the while ensuring that our staff and maintenance resources are efficiently and strategically deployed.





"F&S staff are the in-house experts and quick responders to the needs of the campus community."

— F&S client

Our 2030 priorities

Realizing our team’s potential

We are a united, high-performing and collaborative team. We recognize each other’s strengths, celebrate successes and inspire the best in one another. We empower each other through an inclusive and supportive culture, open and honest communication and professional development opportunities.



Objectives

- 1 Foster an inclusive culture where all team members can contribute and feel valued
- 2 Enable a unified, collaborative and solutions-focused team environment
- 3 Increase learning and development opportunities so that team members have the skills they need to succeed and grow





“There are wonderfully supportive and knowledgeable individuals across F&S. I have witnessed our team taking great care to resolve client issues.”

— F&S staff member

Our 2030 priorities

Leading the sustainability journey

We are the recognized leaders of environmental sustainability in the University of Toronto community and beyond. We integrate a sustainability mindset and culture into everything we do, serving as an example to the world and making a lasting and widespread positive impact.



Objectives

- 1 Accelerate our plan to become a climate positive campus
- 2 Develop and implement a climate resilience strategy to ensure our campus is prepared for the future
- 3 Develop and implement an indirect emissions strategy to reduce our footprint and waste
- 4 Engage the U of T community as active partners to further our sustainability impact
- 5 Continuously exchange knowledge and best practices with other global sustainability leaders



Climate resilience

We believe that mitigating our climate impact is not enough; we must embrace a mindset of climate *resilience*.

Climate resilience refers to the ability of ecosystems, communities and economies to adapt, recover and thrive in the face of climate-related challenges such as extreme weather events and rising temperatures. It involves developing strategies to reduce vulnerability, minimize damage and foster sustainable growth despite the impact of climate change.

This includes actions like strengthening infrastructure, improving water management and implementing early warning systems. Climate resilience emphasizes not only the capacity to withstand immediate shocks but also long-term adaptability, ensuring that we can continue to function and prosper under changing environmental conditions.

As stewards of our beloved, historic campus and guardians of the university's educational mandate, F&S has a responsibility to ensure that climate-related challenges do not prevent us from pursuing our academic mission. We must consider

all possible outcomes of climate change and be ready for anything; this means building with anticipation for changing futures and adjusting our infrastructure planning to account for potential, as-yet unrealized problems.

It is essential that nothing on campus—from the world-class research taking place to the teaching and learning that defines our culture—be interrupted by factors that are within our control.

As one of the most sustainable universities in the world, we have a responsibility to act as a demonstrator and thought leader, educating our sector peers and inspiring them to make necessary changes. Based on the size and scale of our operation, we are obliged to take concrete steps to support our community and the core mandate of the university. By taking proactive steps and preparing for future scenarios, F&S can reduce the extent to which our clients, students, faculty and staff are negatively impacted by our changing environment.



Our 2030 priorities

Driving operational excellence

We are committed to providing an efficient and consistent experience for clients, partners and team members through effective and streamlined processes and integrated technologies.



Objectives

- 1 Cultivate a culture of continuous improvement
- 2 Transform our systems and processes to be simple, efficient and integrated
- 3 Leverage communication and technology to ensure the team has consistent access to information, tools and resources



Continuous improvement

Our vision is to relentlessly and enthusiastically pursue the continuous improvement of all services, processes and systems at every level of the department.

Continuous improvement is at once a philosophy, a culture and a practical methodology that enables organizations to achieve their strategic and operational goals through both ongoing incremental and breakthrough improvements of all aspects of their operations. The Plan, Do, Study and Act (PDSA) method forms the backbone of most continuous improvement efforts.

We are laying the foundation for a continuous improvement program at F&S built around the Lean Six Sigma model—a fusion of two methodologies that aims to systematically eliminate waste in processes while reducing process variation towards an ever-higher quality standard. This model, adopted from the manufacturing sector, is a tried-and-tested approach that has been successfully applied within higher education institutions around the globe.

Respect for all people is a gravitational core value, which drives all other guiding principles, including incorporating the voice of the client in process design, collaborative problem-solving, maximizing value for clients while minimizing waste and making data-driven decisions.

“Our people are the key to our success. They are subject matter experts in maintenance, they are client-centered and, most of all, proud to call the University of Toronto their employer and St. George their second home. Together, we will move forward with steadfast collaboration and make change.”

— F&S staff member



Our continuous improvement program will consist of the following integrated elements:

- Program governance driven by clear guiding principles, steered and enabled by senior management and resourced for success
- Adoption and use of tested frameworks, tools and templates to support a variety of initiatives
- Training, professional development and recognition to grow and develop the right knowledge and skillsets and cultivate a culture of collaboration and improvement
- Dashboards and data that leverage benchmarking, operational and client data to inform and support the analysis, implementation and sustainment of improvements
- Automation and innovation that streamline processes and create capacity within our teams

Putting our plan into action

Developing a plan is always just the first step. The most important element of strategic planning is putting that plan into action.

Strategy execution is the implementation of the plan we developed to achieve our goals, support the needs of our staff and advance U of T’s academic mission. This means establishing daily structures and systems and empowering the teams and individuals entrusted to deliver on strategic projects and objectives.

We believe that the first step to great execution is committing to the plan across the broader team, while leaving room to continuously reflect, refresh and pivot to meet evolving needs. Over the last five years, we have proven that one of our greatest strengths is our ability to adapt and adjust as the environment demands.

We commit to communicating more frequently and transparently with our team members so that everyone understands our plan and sees themselves reflected in it. Ultimately, this means encouraging everyone to meaningfully contribute and empowering them to deliver successfully.

This means establishing and strengthening:

- Channels of internal and client communication—up, down and across
- Accountability and performance management of our progress, supported by governance and decision-making
- The monitoring of our bandwidth and adjusting our priorities and resource allocation
- Our drive to continuous improvement, creating capacity for leaders and teams to execute

All photos provided by the University of Toronto unless otherwise stated, with acknowledgement to:

Donglin Que (various throughout)
Jenna Marie Wakani (inside cover)
Neil Ta (page 21)

Featuring F&S teammates:

Page 4: Kevin Leong, Tony Marziliano, Timur Bulat
Page 7: Nathan Brand, Irshad Patel
Page 9: James Donaldson, U of T community member
Page 11: Lambert Adlam
Page 13: Rajesh Patel, Valentin Prendi, Hitendra Ahir, Dhansukh Patel
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