



PEOPLE
PLACE
PROGRESS
A MORE
SUSTAINABLE
TOMORROW

AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE **SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

2026 – 2033

BUILDING A HEALTHIER CAMPUS
FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

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INTRODUCTION

American River College stands at a pivotal moment where the challenges of climate change, resource scarcity, and social inequity call for bold leadership and transformative action. This Sustainability Plan is a commitment to reimagine how our campus operates, teaches, and engages with the world. Sustainability is a unifying vision that connects our classrooms, our landscapes, our infrastructure, and our community. It is reflected in how we design our buildings, steward our natural resources, support student success, and prepare the next generation of leaders to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The goal of the project team was to bring the collective insight, expertise, and aspirations of our campus community together, assess the current state of ARC's sustainability efforts, find gaps and needs in relation to current regulations, determine future priorities, and recommend an actionable plan that engages the entire ARC community in responsible sustainability practices.

PROJECT TEAM

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PLANNING PROCESS & INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Planning Approach, Draft Development, & Review Process

The Sustainability Plan was developed through a structured, collaborative, and iterative process aligned with ARC's Integrated Planning Model and informed by higher education sustainability frameworks. Participants included faculty, students, custodians, Classified professionals, Administrators, Campus Operations, Facilities Management, District Representatives, Food Service Representatives.

- Participants reviewed and edited assigned sections. They Defined purpose, scope, and shared understanding of the planning process.
- Cross-functional validation ensured completeness. Needs were aligned with institutional priorities, state regulations, and compliance with CEQA and circular economy practices.
- Revised table of contents and regenerative framing. Sections include KPIs and a funding strategy, with future goals and strategic considerations identified to guide implementation.
- Climate regulations, waste, transportation, and glossary were included.

Guiding Principles

- Student-centered and equity-focused
- Regenerative and resilient systems
- Integrated planning approach
- Data-informed decision-making
- Resource stewardship
- Flexibility and innovation
- Clear governance and accountability

Alignment with Institutional Planning

This plan aligns with the ARC Integrated Planning Model, institutional priorities, capital planning efforts, district initiatives, and accreditation standards. It also supports alignment with California climate policy and global sustainability frameworks.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Focus Area 1: Governance, Leadership & Institutionalization

- Continue the Office of Sustainability within Campus Operations
- Create a Sustainability Committee with campus-wide representation
- Develop a sustainability funding strategy that identifies available internal and external funding sources
- Implement STARS reporting, Key Performance Indicators, and dashboards for accountability
- Integrate sustainability into policy, procurement, and planning processes

Focus Area 2: Communication, Engagement & Public Interface

- Develop a campus-wide sustainability communication strategy
- Launch and maintain a central sustainability website
- Increase student engagement through ambassador programs and events
- Improve visibility through standardized signage, easy to use dashboards, and storytelling
- Address sustainability fatigue through clear priorities and visible progress

Focus Area 3: Built Environment & Facilities

- Improve building performance through energy and water efficiency upgrades
- Standardize LEED Gold (or higher) for new construction
- Standardize WELL for new construction
- Expand metering systems and energy audits
- Implement LEED Operations & Maintenance practices for existing buildings
- Increase renewable energy and electrification efforts

Focus Area 4: Food Systems & Campus Services

- Expand campus-wide composting and food waste diversion systems
- Expand plant-forward and locally sourced food options
- Develop food recovery and donation programs
- Track and report food waste and procurement metrics
- Use dining services as a platform for sustainability education and behavior change

Focus Area 5: Academics & Learning Environments

- Integrate sustainability into curriculum across disciplines
- Expand living labs and experiential learning opportunities
- Identify Sustainability Leads within academic divisions
- Support faculty development and student research initiatives
- Strengthen career pathways in sustainability-related fields

Focus Area 6: Transportation, Energy & Climate

- Conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and tracking system
- Expand EV charging infrastructure in coordination with District Facilities Management and available funding
- Transition ARC fleet vehicles to electric as vehicles are replaced and funding allows
- Promote public transit and alternative transportation options
- Improve energy monitoring and building operations
- Align transportation and energy strategies with climate goals

Focus Area 7: Landscape, Ecology & Outdoor Environment

- Expand smart irrigation systems and water tracking
- Increase native and climate-appropriate landscaping

- Reduce pesticide use through regenerative practices
- Continue Arcade Creek restoration and ecological projects
- Enhance campus biodiversity and habitat health

Focus Area 8: Waste & Materials Management

- Achieve compliance with AB 1383 through organics diversion systems
- Standardize waste bins, signage, and infrastructure
- Conduct regular waste audits and improve data tracking
- Display waste audit findings for public engagement
- Establish Green Team/student ambassador programs
- Strengthen vendor requirements and sustainable procurement practices

Focus Area 9: Water Systems & Access

- Develop comprehensive water metering and tracking systems
- Improve water quality and refill station accessibility
- Expand low-flow fixtures and water-efficient infrastructure
- Explore alternative water sources
- Ensure equitable access to clean and reliable water resources

SUSTAINABILITY AND REGENERATION

BEYOND SUSTAINABILITY

At American River College, sustainability has evolved from simply conserving resources to embracing a regenerative approach that restores, renews, and strengthens the systems that support people and the environment. By integrating sustainable operations, academics, and partnerships, ARC is creating a campus that gives back more than it takes through initiatives such as Arcade Creek restoration, native habitat and pollinator projects, composting, water reuse, and chemical-free landscape management. As a living laboratory, the campus engages students in hands-on learning focused on soil health, water quality, biodiversity, and renewable energy while promoting equity, well-being, and environmental stewardship. Through innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement, ARC is becoming a model for how institutions can move beyond minimizing harm to actively regenerating ecosystems, supporting resilient communities, and preparing students to lead in a climate-responsive future.

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Climate change presents significant environmental, economic, and social challenges, prompting California to adopt ambitious policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving resources, improving waste management, and advancing environmental justice. Regulations such as AB 32, AB 1493, AB 1826, and the Food Recovery Act establish important requirements for institutions, including community colleges, to improve sustainability performance and accountability. At American River College, these mandates serve not only as compliance obligations but also as opportunities to advance innovation, strengthen climate resilience, and support measurable progress in energy, water, and waste management. By integrating regulatory requirements with its commitment to sustainability, equity, education, and community partnerships, ARC is well positioned to exceed state mandates and serve as a model for creating meaningful environmental and social impact.

VISION

American River College envisions a future where sustainability guides all aspects of campus and community life, advancing a regenerative model that restores natural systems, promotes equity, and prepares students for a climate-resilient future. Through innovative programs, hands-on learning, community partnerships, and campus initiatives, ARC is committed to creating measurable environmental and social benefits while empowering students, faculty, and staff to become sustainability leaders. By integrating sustainability into operations, planning, and decision-making, ARC aims to serve as a model of regenerative practice, community well-being, and long-term resilience for future generations.

MISSION

The mission of American River College's sustainability efforts is to advance a regenerative campus by integrating environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic responsibility into operations, academics, and community partnerships.

Through this work, we empower students and the campus community to restore natural systems, reduce environmental impact, and lead in a climate-resilient future.

FOCUS AREAS

Focus Area 1: Governance, Leadership, & Institutionalization

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

American River College currently lacks a centralized framework to coordinate sustainability efforts, resulting in fragmented initiatives despite strong engagement from faculty, staff, and students. Grassroots successes, including campus sustainability events, native habitat restoration projects, composting efforts, Arcade Creek restoration activities, and operational improvements in resource conservation, demonstrate a strong foundation for progress. However, limited funding, lack of structured governance, inconsistent tracking, and limited communication reduce opportunities for broader impact and collaboration. To advance sustainability strategically and effectively, ARC must establish clear leadership, identify appropriate resources, and implement accountability measures that align sustainability with institutional priorities.

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Institutionalize a Sustainability Program	• Continue and strengthen the Sustainability Program within Campus Operations • Create a cross-functional Sustainability Committee with representation from administration, faculty, staff, and students • Develop a clear governance structure with defined roles and responsibilities • Foster a campus-wide network of sustainability leaders and champions • Increase visibility through outreach, events, and campus communication • Integrate sustainability into campus planning, policies, and decision-making	0-5 Years ✓ Office of Sustainability and Sustainability committee created within the first year
Establish Metrics, Tracking, and Reporting Systems	• Implement STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System) baseline reporting • Develop KPIs for energy, water, waste, procurement, and engagement • Create automated or streamlined data collection systems • Develop dashboards for transparency and accountability • Use data to inform decision making and prioritize investments	0-3 years ✓ STARS Reporting & Dashboard delivered by year 2
Develop a Funding Strategy for Sustainability Activities	• Identify and pursue potential funding sources, including state, federal, utility, and foundation grants, as well as bond and capital funding opportunities. • Develop a sustainability funding strategy that leverages available internal and external funding sources. • Support student-led sustainability programs and initiatives • Incorporate lifecycle cost analysis into capital planning • Align funding strategies with institutional sustainability goals	0-6 years ✓ Sustainability funding strategy developed and updated as funding opportunities and institutional priorities evolve.
Integrate	• Embed sustainability criteria into procurement processes • Consider sustainable products and services in purchasing	1-5 years

Sustainability into Policy and Procurement	decisions, taking into account cost, lifecycle value, and applicable procurement requirements. • Align with district and CCC system-wide sustainability standards • Develop guidelines for vendors to meet sustainability expectations • Incorporate sustainability considerations into relevant campus planning and decision-making processes.	✓ Policy & Procurement Integration created by year 3
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Sustainability Objective

Identify and empower campus leaders—including students, administration, faculty, staff, and community partners—to meaningfully engage in managing, implementing, and advancing sustainability efforts that support a regenerative and resilient future for American River College.

Focus Area 2: Communication, Engagement, & Public Interface

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

American River College has demonstrated strong but inconsistent efforts in sustainability communication and engagement. Social media platforms, past events, and student-led initiatives have created moments of visibility; however, these efforts have not been sustained or integrated into a cohesive campus-wide strategy. The absence of a centralized communication platform, such as a dedicated website, has limited awareness and participation.

Sustainability fatigue has also emerged due to fragmented efforts, limited staffing, and lack of visible progress. Despite this, there is a clear opportunity to leverage sustainability as a unifying narrative that connects campus operations, academics, and student experience (see Attachment 1)

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Develop a Campus-Wide Sustainability Communication Strategy	• Launch and maintain a centralized sustainability website • Develop consistent messaging aligned with ARC's vision • Utilize social media, campus communications, and events • Translate technical efforts into relatable impacts	0-2 years
Increase Student and Campus Engagement	• Develop student sustainability ambassador opportunities • Expand sustainability events (Earth Day, workshops, outreach) • Create opportunities for student leadership and involvement • Promote peer-to-peer storytelling	0-3 years ✓ Student Ambassador program created by year 2 ✓ Peer to-peer storytelling developed by year 3
Enhance Visibility of Sustainability Efforts	• Install signage explaining sustainable features • Develop a sustainability webpage or reporting tool to communicate progress on key sustainability metrics. • Create campus sustainability tours and maps	1-3 years ✓ Sustainability reporting tools & signage targeted for implementation by Year 3, subject to available resources

Sustainability Objective

Create a campus culture where sustainability is visible, engaging, and integrated into daily experiences, fostering shared ownership and participation across the ARC community.

Focus Area 3: Built Environment & Facilities

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has made measurable progress in sustainable building practices, including LED lighting upgrades, green cleaning products, and LEED standards for new construction. However, aging infrastructure, inconsistent data tracking, and limited staff capacity present ongoing challenges.

Existing systems provide a strong foundation, but require modernization, standardization, and integration to achieve long-term sustainability goals.

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Improve Building Performance and Efficiency	• Building performance improvement including energy and water audits, HVAC, controls upgrades, and metering infrastructure expansion are coordinated through and executed by District Facilities Management (FM) • ARC campus leadership is encouraged to identify needs and priorities for collaborative action through FM capital planning and project delivery processes	Ongoing ✓ Energy & water audits targeted for completion in Year 1, in coordination with District FM ✓ HVAC/lighting upgrades and metering infrastructure prioritized through District FM capital planning, subject to available funding
Standardize Sustainable Design and Operations	• LEED Operations and Maintenance (O&M) standards for new construction and practices for existing buildings are set and administered at the District level through FM • ARC supports and aligns with the Los Rios Community College District standard of LEED Gold or higher for new construction as administered through FM • The campus advocates and collaborates with FM to advance LEED O&M practices for existing facilities and to integrate sustainability criteria into District facilities standards and guidelines	Ongoing ✓ LEED standards (New + O&M) provided by year 3
Expand Renewable Energy and Electrification	• Solar PV installation and electrical capacity improvements are capital infrastructure decisions managed through FM and District bond/capital programs. They require District coordination and approval. • ARC sustainability group will work collaboratively with FM to identify opportunities for solar PV installation and electrical capacity expansion • Campus electrification goals will be advanced in alignment with District infrastructure programs and available funding mechanisms including bond and grant sources	Ongoing ✓ Electrification planning delivered by year 5

Sustainability Objective

In collaboration with District Office Facilities Management, ARC will plan, develop, and maintain campus facilities that operate efficiently, reduce environmental impacts, and support a regenerative and resilient built environment.

Focus Area 4: Food Systems & Campus Services

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

Campus dining provides a range of food services, but sustainability practices such as composting, local sourcing, and waste tracking are not fully developed or standardized. Dining services present a significant opportunity to influence behavior and reduce environmental impact. Other campus services that provide printing and supplies to departments have the opportunity to increase and promote sustainable choices.

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Reduce Food Waste and Increase Diversion	- Expand composting programs in partnership with the District-contracted food service vendor. - Track food waste and diversion rates in partnership with the District-contracted food service vendor. - Develop food recovery and donation programs in partnership with the District-contracted food service vendor.	0-3 years ✓ Composting milestone targeted by year 1 ✓ Food recovery program delivered by year 2 ✓ Food waste tracking established by year 2
Promote Sustainable and Healthy Food Options	- Expand plant-forward and locally sourced menu options in partnership with the District-contracted food service vendor. - Support sustainable sourcing through the District-contracted food service vendor. - Increase transparency in food procurement practices.	0-5 years ✓ Sustainable dining practices expanded by Year 5, in coordination with food service providers and available resources.
Use Dining as an Educational Platform	- Integrate sustainability messaging in dining areas - Encourage behavior change through signage and outreach - Engage students in sustainability initiatives	Ongoing

Sustainability Objective

In partnership with the District-contracted food service vendor, advance sustainable campus dining practices that reduce waste, support local economies, and promote healthy and environmentally responsible choices.

Focus Area 5: Academics & Learning Environments

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has a strong foundation of sustainability-related coursework and research opportunities. However, these efforts are not fully coordinated, and there is no comprehensive framework to guide integration across disciplines.

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Integrate Sustainability Across Curriculum	• Develop a campus-wide sustainability curriculum framework • Identify sustainability contacts or leads within departments using existing structures, where feasible. • Expand sustainability-related courses	0-3 years ✓ Sustainability curriculum framework delivered by year 2 ✓ Sustainability leads by year 2
Expand Experiential Learning Opportunities	• Partner with FM and develop living labs across campus to reduce and/or eliminate herbicides and pesticides (Attachment xx) • Support student research and fieldwork • Partner with operations for hands-on learning • Partner with FM for more sustainable landscaping ideas	Ongoing ✓ Living lab opportunities developed by Year 3 in partnership with FM and Campus Operations, subject to available resources.
Promote Sustainable Practices with Consumable Supplies	• Replace disposable plastic whiteboard markers with refillable aluminum markers • Work with printing services to implement a delivery system for copies that do not require plastic wrapping • Promote purchase of recycled paper products • Promote reuse of paper materials before recycling	Ongoing
Support Faculty and Student Engagement	• Provide professional development for faculty • Reactivate sustainability-related student clubs • Identify funding opportunities to support sustainability-related research and participation	1-3 years ✓ Faculty development milestones by year 3 ✓ Student research expansion delivered by year 6

Sustainability Objective

Prepare students to lead in a sustainable and regenerative future by integrating sustainability into education, research, and hands-on learning experiences.

Focus Area 6: Transportation, Energy, & Climate

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has made progress in energy efficiency and transportation infrastructure, including EV charging stations and public transit programs. However, fleet electrification, data tracking, and infrastructure expansion remain key challenges (see Attachment 2).

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions	• Conduct a GHG inventory in coordination with District Facilities Management. • Improve energy tracking systems in coordination with District FM. • Optimize building operations in coordination with District FM.	0-2 years ✓ GHG inventory targeted for completion ✓ Energy monitoring improvements coordinated with District FM and implemented as resources are available
Expand Sustainable Transportation Options	• Expand EV charging infrastructure in coordination with District FM and available funding. • Promote public transit and micro-mobility. • Improve access to sustainable transportation options. • Align transportation planning with campus climate goals.	1-5 years ✓ Alternative transportation opportunities expanded by Year 2 ✓ EV infrastructure expansion pursued through District capital planning and available funding
Electrify Campus Fleet	• Transition ARC fleet vehicles to electric as vehicles are replaced and funding allows, consistent with District FM standards and direction. • Provide staff training on the use of electric vehicles. • Coordinate necessary charging and electrical infrastructure upgrades with District FM.	Ongoing

Sustainability Objective

Reduce emissions and improve mobility systems to support a low-carbon, accessible, and climate-resilient campus.

Focus Area 7: Landscape, Ecology, & Outdoor Environment

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has implemented irrigation controls and supports ecological projects such as Arcade Creek restoration. However, water use, pesticide reduction, and biodiversity enhancement require further development (see Attachment 3).

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Improve Water Efficiency and Irrigation Systems	• Irrigation systems and associated infrastructure are FM managed assets. Smart irrigation upgrades and water tracking systems require FM coordination for procurement, installation, and integration with District metering. This helps reduce overlapping metering networks and improved flow of data when assessing available • Smart irrigation system upgrades and water efficiency improvements to campus landscaping will be coordinated with FM to improve campus landscape programs and ecological restoration initiatives	Ongoing ✓ Smart irrigation improvements prioritized in coordination with District FM and implemented as funding allows ✓ Water-use tracking developed in coordination with District FM, using available data and systems
Enhance Ecological Health and Biodiversity Suggested	• Expand native landscaping and increase the diversity of native plants in partnership with District FM. • Support pollinator habitats in partnership with District FM. • Continue ecological restoration projects in partnership with District FM.	Ongoing ✓ Native landscaping expansion completed by year 5 ✓ Habitat & biodiversity programs delivered by year 5
Reduce Chemical Use	• Implement biosolarization and alternative weed-abatement practices in partnership with District FM. • Reduce pesticide and herbicide use across the campus in partnership with District FM. • Conduct regular soil testing in partnership with District FM to support improved soil health.	1-3 years ✓ Biosolarization/regenerative practices milestones by year 3

Sustainability Objective

Restore and enhance campus landscapes to support biodiversity, reduce resource use, and contribute to a regenerative ecosystem.

Focus Area 8: Waste & Materials Management

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has improved waste infrastructure, but challenges remain in contamination, composting effectiveness, and regulatory compliance. Data tracking and staffing limitations hinder progress (see Attachment 4).

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Achieve Organics Diversion Compliance (AB 1383)	• Expand campus-wide composting • Reduce contamination through education • Ensure proper waste processing • Phase in color-coded bins and standardized labeling as resources allow	Immediate-2 years ✓ Organics diversion practices implemented and expanded over the first two years ✓ Color-coded bins and standardized labeling phased in as resources allow
Improve Waste System Effectiveness	• Standardize bins and signage • Conduct regular waste audits • Improve infrastructure placement • Advocate for edible food recovery	0-2 years ✓ Waste audits initiated by Year 1 ✓ Standardized bins and signage phased in based on identified needs and available resources
Strengthen Engagement and Accountability	• Waste diversion data that draws from District hauler contracts or utility accounts must be reported to District Office of Sustainability annually to support compliance reporting DO staff will request support in coordinating access to this data • Establish Green Team/Student Ambassadors • Train staff on waste management • Improve tracking and reporting and coordinate data with FM for annual compliance reporting	Ongoing - Staff training programs delivered by year 3 ✓ Green Team/Ambassadors created by year 2

Sustainability Objective

Develop a comprehensive waste system that minimizes landfill use, ensures regulatory compliance, and supports a zero-waste campus.

Focus Area 9: Water Systems & Access

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC relies heavily on well water and lacks comprehensive metering systems. Water quality concerns and infrastructure limitations impact both sustainability and user experience.

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

Recommendation	Suggested Activities & Comments	Target Timeline
Improve Water Tracking and Infrastructure	- Water metering and infrastructure are FM managed assets. Baseline development is coordinated with FM and reported upward annually. - ARC will work collaboratively with Fm to establish campus water use baselines and develop tracking systems compatible with District reporting requirements - Campus water consumption data shall be reported by the District Office of Sustainability on an annual basis	0-3 years ✓ Water baseline and metering plan targeted for completion in Year 1, in coordination with District FM.
Enhance Water Quality and Access	- Identify and prioritize refill-station improvements in partnership with District FM, based on water quality, accessibility, infrastructure needs, and available resources. - Address user concerns related to water quality and access in partnership with District FM. - Expand access to water-refill stations in partnership with District FM and as resources are available.	0-2 years ✓ Priority refill station improvements targeted for implementation as resources allow.
Explore Long-Term Water Solutions	- Long term water supply and infrastructure decisions, including potential transition to city water service and greywater or water reuse system installation, are subject to FM feasibility analysis, District capital planning, and applicable permitting processes - ARC to identify campus needs and priorities to inform FM - Improve tracking and reporting and coordinate data with FM for annual compliance reporting	2-5 years

Sustainability Objective

Ensure reliable, equitable access to clean water while reducing consumption and advancing sustainable water management practices.

CROSS-CUTTING MILESTONES (EXECUTIVE VIEW)

Milestone	Target
★ Sustainability Office + Governance Active	Year 1
★ STARS baseline and sustainability reporting established	Year 2
★ AB 1383 Compliance	Year 2
★ Energy, water, and waste system improvements underway	Year 3
★ Major Infrastructure Transformation Underway	Year 5
★ Regenerative Systems (Closed Loop) Emerging	Year 7

SUCCESS METRICS & KPI SUMMARY

This dashboard provides a structured framework to measure progress toward ARC’s sustainability and regenerative goals. Metrics align with California regulations, industry standards (AASHE, STARS), and institutional priorities.

I. Governance & Leadership

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
% Focus Areas with Assigned Leads	TBD	100% by Year 1	Best Practice / STARS	Annual
Sustainability Funding Strategy	TBD	Funding strategy developed and periodically updated	Institutional	Annual
STARS Rating	TBD	Silver by Year 5	AASHE STARS	Annual

2. Communication & Engagement

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
# Student Participants	TBD	+50% by Year 3	Institutional	Annual
Website Engagement	TBD	Annual increase	Institutional	Quarterly
#Sustainability Events	TBD	Annual	Best Practice	Annual

3. Built Environment & Facilities

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
Energy Use Intensity (EUI)	TBD	-20% by Year 5	Title 24 / SB 32	Annual
%Buildings Metered	TBD	100% by Year 3	Best Practice	Annual
% LEED Gold Projects	TBD	100% New Construction	LEED/State Guidance	Per Project
WELL	TBD	100% New Construction	USGBC Guidance	Per Project

4. Food Systems

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
% Food Waste Diverted	TBD	75% by Year 3	AB 1383	Quarterly
% Plant-Forward Options	TBD	50% Menu by Year 5	Best Practice	Annual
Food Recovery (lbs)	TBD	Increase Annually	Food Recovery Act	Annual

5. Academics

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
#Sustainability Courses	TBD	+30% by Year 3	STARS	Annual
#Living Labs	TBD	At least 5 by Year 3	Best Practice	Annual
Student Participation	TBD	+50% by Year 3	Institutional	Annual

6. Transportation, Energy & Climate

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
GHG Emissions	TBD	-40% by 2030	SB 32	Annual
# EV Charging Stations	TBD	+50% by Year 5	Clean Cars II	Annual
% Fleet Electrified	TBD	50% by Year 5	State Targets	Annual

7. Landscape & Ecology

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
% Native Landscaping	TBD	50% by Year 5	Best Practice	Annual
Irrigation Water Use	TBD	-25% by Year 5	Water Efficiency Standards	Annual
Pesticide Reduction	TBD	-50% by Year 5	Best Practice	Annual

8. Waste & Materials

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
Waste Diversion Rate	TBD	75% by Year 3	AB 1383	Quarterly
Contamination Rate	TBD	<10%	Best Practice	Quarterly
# Waste Audits	TBD	2 per year	Best Practice	Annual

9. Water Systems & Access

KPI	Baseline	Target	Regulatory /Alignment	Reporting
Water Use Intensity (WUI)	TBD	-20% by Year 5	CA Water Standards	Annual
% Campus Metered	TBD	100% by Year 3	Best Practice	Annual
Portable Water Reduction	TBD	-25% by Year 5	State Guidance	Annual

EXECUTIVE KPI SUMMARY

Key Institutional Targets:

- Achieve STARS Gold Rating by Year 5
- Reduce GHG Emissions by 40% by 2030
- Achieve 75% Waste Diversion by Year 3 (AB 1383 Compliance)
- Reduce Water Use by 20–25% by Year 5
- Ensure 100% of new construction meets LEED Gold or higher
- Establish fully metered campus systems by Year 3

FUNDING STRATEGY

Funding Strategy Overview

Successful implementation requires a diversified funding approach leveraging capital, operational, external, and reinvestment strategies.

Primary Funding Sources

Bond & Capital Projects

- Infrastructure, HVAC, Electrification

Operating Budget

- Existing operational resources for sustainability-related activities, as available and appropriate Utility Incentives
- Energy rebates (SMUD/PG&E)

Grants

- California Energy Commission (CEC)
- California Air Resources Board (CARB)
- CalRecycle

Foundation

- Student Programs

Partnerships

- Solar
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Cost Savings & Reinvestment

Track energy, water, and waste savings to demonstrate the financial benefits of sustainability investments and inform future funding decisions.

Phased Funding Strategy

Phase 1: Low-cost pilots

Phase 2: System investments

Phase 3: Capital upgrades

Phase 4: Regenerative systems

Governance

Use existing college governance and budget processes to review and prioritize sustainability funding needs.

ADVANCING A REGENERATIVE FUTURE

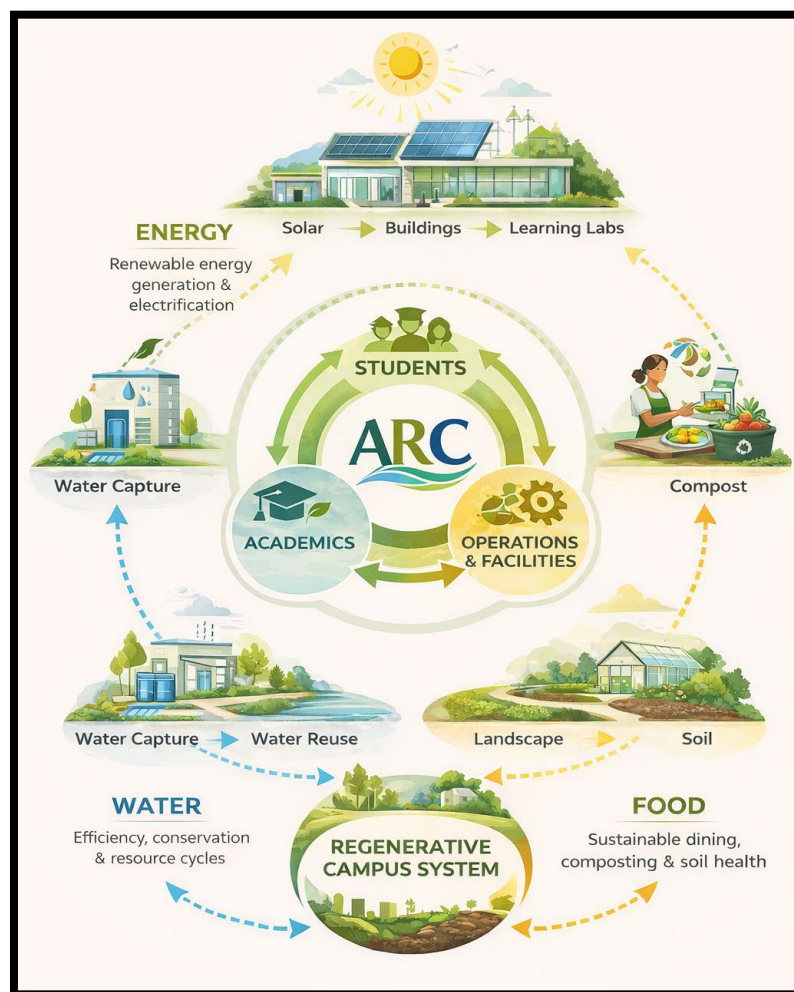
From Vision to Action

Sustainability at American River College is a connected, campus-wide effort where decisions in one area influence outcomes across the whole institution. By aligning operations, academics, and community engagement, ARC is advancing a vision of becoming a regenerative, resilient, and equitable campus.

As the impacts of climate change become increasingly evident, ARC has both an opportunity and a responsibility to lead by reducing its environmental footprint, advancing innovative solutions, and preparing students to address future challenges. Sustainability is no longer just about minimizing harm; it is about restoring systems, strengthening communities, and creating lasting positive impact.

Achieving this vision requires shared responsibility. Faculty, staff, students, and partners all play a role, and everyday choices collectively shape institutional outcomes. Through practices that emphasize reuse, restoration, and long-term stewardship, ARC is transitioning from a linear model of consumption to a more circular and regenerative approach.

This Sustainability Plan is a living framework that will evolve as new opportunities, technologies, and partnerships emerge. Its success depends on collaboration, accountability, and innovation. Together, these efforts position ARC to become a model for regenerative practice and community leadership, creating a thriving future for generations to come.



APPENDICES

Summary of California Climate Regulations

California continues to lead the nation in climate policy through a comprehensive set of regulations aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improving resource efficiency, and advancing environmental justice. These regulations and statewide policies influence higher education institutions, including American River College, by establishing requirements, standards, and statewide goals related to energy use, transportation, waste management, water conservation, and reporting.

Statewide Climate Policy & Targets

Executive Order S-03-05

- Established long-term GHG reduction targets
- Created the Climate Action Team
- Requires ongoing reporting on climate impacts and progress

Executive Order B-55-18 (NEW)

- Establishes California's goal of carbon neutrality by 2045
- Requires the state to achieve net-negative emissions thereafter

Assembly Bill 32 (Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006)

- Requires GHG emissions to return to 1990 levels
- Establishes CARB authority for monitoring and enforcement

Senate Bill 32 (2016) (NEW)

- Expands AB 32 targets to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030

Energy & Utilities

Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)

- Requires increasing renewable energy procurement
- Current target: 60% renewable electricity by 2030
- Moving toward 100% clean energy (SB 100)

Senate Bill 100 (2018) (NEW)

- Requires 100% zero-carbon electricity by 2045

Title 24 Building Energy Standards

- Establishes energy efficiency requirements for buildings
- Includes solar and electrification requirements for new construction

Transportation & Air Quality

Assembly Bill 1493 (Pavley Bill)

- Regulates GHG emissions from passenger vehicles

Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS)

- Requires reduction in carbon intensity of transportation fuels

Advanced Clean Cars II (NEW)

- Requires 100% of new vehicle sales to be zero-emission by 2035

Senate Bill 375

- Reduces emissions through coordinated land use and transportation planning

Waste & Materials Management

Assembly Bill 341

- Requires commercial recycling programs
- Sets statewide goal of 75% waste diversion

Assembly Bill 1826

- Mandates organic waste recycling for large generators

Senate Bill 1383 (CRITICAL UPDATE)

- Requires:
 - 75% reduction in organic waste disposal
 - 20% edible food recovery by 2025
- Applies directly to institutions like ARC
- Includes enforcement and reporting requirements

Assembly Bill 1219

- Expands Good Samaritan protections for food donation

Water & Resource Management

Executive Order B-29-15

- Establish statewide reduction of potable water use

Making Conservation a California Way of Life (NEW)

- Establishes long-term water efficiency standards
- Requires water use reporting and reduction targets

Land Use, Planning & CEQA

Senate Bill 97

- Requires CEQA to include GHG analysis

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Updates

- Requires evaluation and mitigation of environmental impacts, including climate impacts

Air Quality Regulation

Air Pollution Control Districts (APCDs) / Air Quality Management Districts (AQMDs)

- Enforce regional air quality standards
- Provide grants, compliance support, and oversight
- Work with CARB and EPA

Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

Senate Bill 1383

- Targets reductions in:
 - a. Methane
 - b. Hydrofluorocarbons
 - c. Black carbon

Food Recovery & Circular Economy

Food Recovery Act (HR 4184)

- Encourages donation of edible food
- Supports composting and food waste reduction

Circular Economy and Recycling Policy (NEW)

- California is transitioning toward a circular economy model
- Focus on:
 - Waste reduction
 - Material reuse
 - Sustainable product design

Key Regulatory Implications for American River College

These regulations and statewide policies establish requirements and goals that inform ARC's sustainability planning, including efforts to:

- Reduce GHG emissions across operations and transportation
- Implement comprehensive waste diversion systems (especially organics)
- Improve energy efficiency and transition to renewable energy
- Enhance water conservation and tracking
- Support sustainable procurement and food recovery programs
- Strengthen data tracking, reporting, and accountability systems

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. **AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education)** – An organization that supports higher education institutions in advancing sustainability through resources, tools, and benchmarking systems such as STARS.
2. **Anthropogenic** – Originating from human activity.
3. **ARC** – American River College.
4. **Biodegradable** – Capable of being broken down by microorganisms into natural elements.
5. **Biodiversity** – The variety of plant and animal life within an ecosystem.
6. **Biomimicry** – Design inspired by natural systems and processes.
7. **Biosolarization** – A soil treatment method using solar heat and organic matter to eliminate pests without chemical inputs.
8. **Carbon Neutrality** – Achieving net-zero carbon emissions by balancing emissions with removal or offsets.
9. **Carbon Sequestration** – The process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide.
10. **Circular Economy** – An economic system aimed at eliminating waste and continually reusing resources.
11. **Climate Adaptation** – Adjustments to systems in response to actual or expected climate impacts.
12. **Climate Mitigation** – Actions taken to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions.
13. **Climate Resilience** – The ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related impacts.
14. **Closed Loop System** – A system where outputs (waste) are reused as inputs, minimizing waste.
15. **Composting** – The process of converting organic waste into nutrient-rich soil amendment.
16. **Cradle to Cradle** – A design framework where materials are continuously reused in cycles.
17. **Decarbonization** – The process of reducing carbon emissions, particularly from energy and transportation systems.
18. **Demand Response** – Adjusting energy use during peak demand periods to reduce strain on the grid.
19. **Disproportionately Impacted Communities** – Communities that experience greater environmental and health burdens.
20. **Digital Twin** – A digital model used to simulate and optimize building or system performance.
21. **Electrification** – Replacing fossil fuel-based systems with electric alternatives powered by clean energy.
22. **Embodied Carbon** – Emissions associated with the production, transportation, and installation of materials.
23. **Energy Use Intensity (EUI)** – Energy consumption per square foot of building space.
24. **Environmental Justice** – Fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in environmental decision-making.
25. **Environmental Stewardship** – Responsible use and protection of the natural environment.
26. **Fleet Electrification** – Transitioning vehicles from fossil fuels to electric power.
27. **Food Recovery** – Redirecting surplus food to people in need rather than disposal.
28. **Green Infrastructure** – Natural or engineered systems that provide environmental benefits, such as stormwater management.
29. **Green Procurement** – Purchasing products and services with reduced environmental impact.
30. **Greenhouse Gas (GHG)** – Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide and methane.
31. **LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)** – A certification system for sustainable building design and operation.
32. **Living Lab** – A real-world campus system used for teaching, research, and applied learning.
33. **Maladaptation** – Actions or designs that increase long-term environmental impact or vulnerability.
34. **Microgrid** – A localized energy system that can operate independently from the main grid.
35. **Native Species** – Plants or animals that occur naturally in a region and support local ecosystems.
36. **Nature-Based Solutions** – Strategies that use natural systems to address environmental challenges.
37. **Net Positive Design** – Design that produces more energy or resources than it consumes.

38. **Net Zero Waste** – Diverting waste so that little to none is sent to landfills.
39. **Non-Renewable Energy** – Energy from finite resources such as fossil fuels.
40. **Operational Carbon** – Emissions from energy used during the operation of buildings.
41. **Pollinator Habitat** – Landscapes designed to support bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.
42. **Regenerative Sustainability** – An approach that restores and enhances natural and social systems.
43. **Renewable Energy** – Energy from sources that are naturally replenished, such as solar or wind.
44. **Reuse Water** – Reclaimed or recycled water used again for beneficial purposes.
45. **Scope 1, 2, and 3 Emissions** – Categories of emissions:
 - Scope 1: Direct emissions from owned sources
 - Scope 2: Indirect emissions from purchased energy
 - Scope 3: Indirect emissions from external activities (e.g., commuting, procurement)
46. **Soil Health** – The condition of soil as a living ecosystem supporting plants and microorganisms.
47. **STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System)** – A framework developed by AASHE to measure and report sustainability performance in higher education institutions.
48. **Sustainability** – Meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own, while increasingly focusing on regenerative outcomes.
49. **Sustainability KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)** – Measurable metrics used to track sustainability performance and progress.
50. **Swales** – Landscape features designed to manage stormwater runoff and increase water infiltration.
51. **Urban Heat Island Effect** – Increased temperatures in urban areas due to built environments and lack of vegetation.
52. **VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds)** – Chemicals that contribute to air pollution and can impact human health.
53. **Water Use Intensity (WUI)** – Water consumption relative to building or campus size.
54. **WELL Building Standard** - Building certification system focused on how buildings and operations affect human health and well-being.
55. **Zero Waste** – A philosophy and strategy focused on waste prevention, reuse, and resource recovery.

ATTACHMENT 1

Sustainability at ARC
Aug 18, 2022 · 🌍
memories....

Sustainability at ARC is 🍎 thinking about recycling with **Cecilia Baldwin** and **2 others** at **American River Col....**
Aug 18, 2016 · 🌍

Another big congratulations to the Information Center up in Admin for getting your level 2 ARC Green Office... See more



< Sustainability at ARC

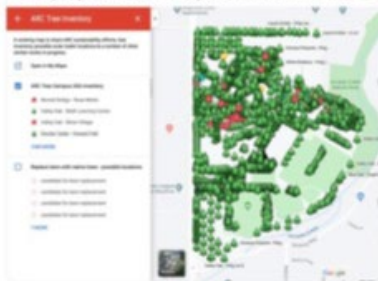
All Photos Reels More ▾

Sustainability at ARC is at **American River College.**
Jan 3, 2020 · 🌍

check it out — our Tree Inventory is complete!!

Don Reid is with **Brenda Baker** and **2 others.**
Jan 3, 2020 · 🌍

Over the summer, we had an amazing bit of help from an intern at ARC that knocked this project out of the park! We... See more



👍 11 🗨 2 ➦ 2

ARC Natural Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Immersive, Field-Based Learning:
Get outside and learn by doing. In Natural Resources (NATR) courses, you'll explore diverse California ecosystems while building direct skills in natural history interpretation, field techniques and much more.

For questions contact:
Department Chair: Jennifer Neale
NealeJ@arc.losrios.edu
Instructional Assistant: Alex Enderle
EnderleA@arc.losrios.edu

ATTACHMENT 2



ATTACHMENT 3



NutSed1 NW of
Sci Bldg
2:30pm

Outer area of 'L' shape:
Biosolarization plots

Inner 'L' shape:
Solarization plots

Caution Tape & Signage
will be placed
around the site



NutSed1 NW
of Sci Office

Area just behind
(east of) the
olive trees.



NutSed1 NE
Sci Office

Site South of Greenhouse 112'x40'

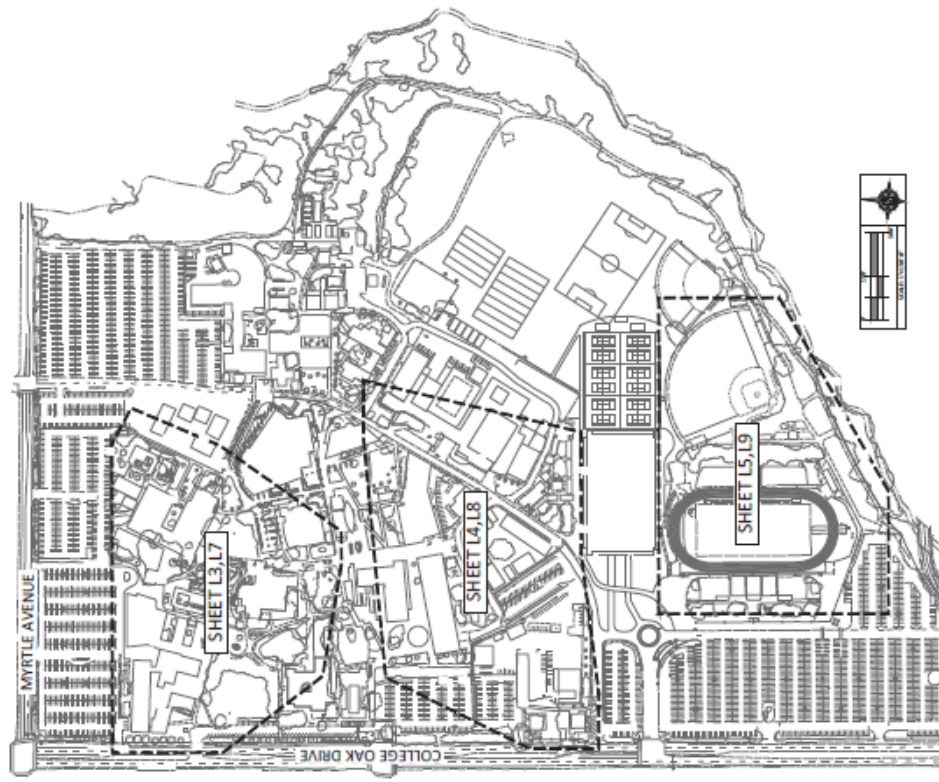
All Bermuda

East Corner looking West

Solarization & Biosolarization will kill the Bermuda as well.



- Ammendments from Dr. Chris Simmons:
Rice Bran (outer layers of the Rice Grain)
&/or Tomato Pumace (Skins/Seeds left after
juice extraction)
- Solarization: Clear plastic tarps. Eight weeks for
100% die off
- Biosolarization: Clear plastic tarps +
ammendments. Two weeks for 100% die off.



- [illegible]



2021 Beverage Container Recycling in California

Beverage Container Recycling Rates

$$\left(\text{Beverage Container Recycling Rate} \right) = \left(\text{Number of Beverage Containers returned} \right) \div \left(\text{Number of Beverage Containers Sold in CA} \right)$$

The BCRP Recycling rate goal is 80%

68%
Recycling Rate

=



18.6 Billion
Bottles and Cans Returned

÷



27.4 Billion
Beverages Sold

Recycling Rates by Container Material Type



73%
Aluminum



64%
Glass



66%
#1 PET



53%
#2 HDPE



1%
#3 PVC

Sales:
10.2 Billion
Returns:
7,421.18 Million

Sales:
3 Billion
Returns:
1,923.23 Million

Sales:
13.7 Billion
Returns:
9.09845 Billion

Sales:
186.89 Million
Returns:
99.85 Million

Sales:
0.27 Million
Returns:
0.00 Million



4%
#4 LDPE



25%
#5 PP



20%
#6 PS



6%
#7 Other



9%
Bimetal

Sales:
6.02 Million
Returns:
0.21 Million

Sales:
5.33 Million
Returns:
1.35 Million

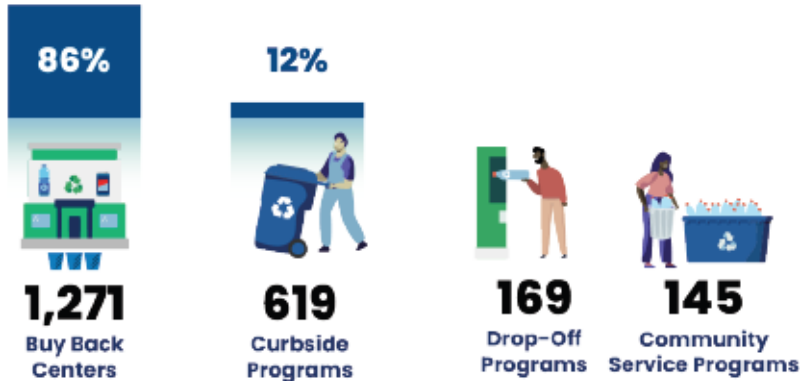
Sales:
202.78 Million
Returns:
39.88 Million

Sales:
42.9 Million
Returns:
2.71 Million

Sales:
54.76 Million
Returns:
4.96 Million

Program Participants

CRV Recycling Collection Distribution



Other Program Participants



Rates paid for Containers Per Pound at Recycling Centers

Recycling centers may issue the CRV refund by weight when consumers redeem more than 50 containers of a material type.

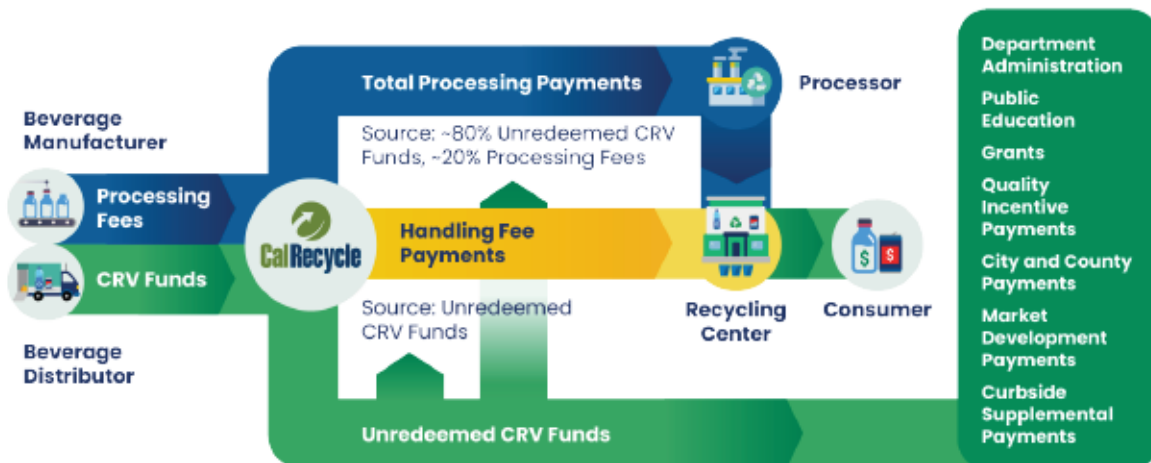
CalRecycle calculates the number of containers per pound to ensure refund value by weight equals the value by container (5 or 10 cents).

The per pound rate fluctuates with changes in the amount of material manufacturers use in each container.

Material Type	# of Containers per Pound	Refund Value per Pound
Aluminum	30.2	\$1.65
Glass	2.01	\$0.105
#1 PET	24.4	\$1.33
#2 HDPE	7.3	\$0.58
#3 PVC	9.7	\$0.48
#4 LDPE	41.1	\$2.05
#5 PP	10.8	\$0.54
#6 PS	110.1	\$5.51
#7 Other	3.1	\$0.31
Bimetal	7.6	\$0.38

Flow of Funds to Support Program Operation

Beverage Container Recycling Program funds pay to run the program, subsidize recycling businesses, and expand redemption and demand for recycled materials.



Processing Payments and Fees

Beverage manufacturers' processing fees help pay processors for the cost to recycle materials whose scrap value doesn't cover costs.

The processing payments CalRecycle makes to processors fluctuate with the market value of materials.

2021 Processing Payments to Businesses

\$179.6 M

How Processing Fees and Payments Are Calculated

(Jan. 1, 2022)

Processing payments and fees are paid for materials that cost more to recycle than scrap value is worth.

Processing payments equal the difference between scrap value per ton and cost per ton.

A formula in the law dictates processing fees.

Material Type	Scrap Value per Ton	Cost per Ton **	PP per Ton	PF per Container
Aluminum	\$1,458.51*	\$598.82	N/A	N/A
Glass	\$-7.25	\$158.07	\$165.32	\$0.00426
#1 PET	\$250.43	\$516.01	\$265.58	\$0.00045
#2 HDPE	\$408.13	\$1,023.40	\$615.27	\$0.00574
#3 PVC	\$0.01	\$1,609.74	\$1,609.73	\$0.05393
#4 LDPE	\$0.27	\$2,296.44	\$2,296.17	\$0.01794
#5 PP	\$11.40	\$2,060.21	\$2,048.81	\$0.06109
#6 PS	\$9.60	\$1,276.12	\$1,266.52	\$0.00385
#7 Other	\$2.92	\$1,398.20	\$1,395.28	\$0.14628
Bimetal	\$0.91	\$1,290.00	\$1,289.09	\$0.05371

SB 54 Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act

Enforcement Actions and Inspections During 2021



Beverage Container Manufacturers and Distributors

Compliance Audits Completed: 61
Audit Findings: \$1.563 Million Owed



Processors

Load Inspections: 3,089
Claims Denied or Reduced: 51



Dealers (Retailers)

Inspections: 2,431
Notice of Noncompliance Issued: 808
Notice of Violation Issued: 742



Recycling Centers

Notice of Noncompliance Issued: 281
Notice of Violation Issued: 186
Investigations: 166
Businesses Placed on Prepayment Controls: 23
Probationary Reviews Completed: 575
Handling Fee Reviewed: 17
Handling Fee Denied: 6

Legislative Bills Enacted in 2021



AB 148

Adds 5 Pilot Projects and
Extends Pilot Program Sunset to
6/30/26 (Committee on Budget,
Chapter 115, Statutes of 2021)



AB 962

Expands Program to
Include Reusable Containers
(Kamlager, Chapter 502,
Statutes of 2021)



AB 1311

Expands Program to Include Bag
Drop Centers and Alternative
Schedules (Wood, Chapter 506,
Statutes of 2021)

SB 54 Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act

Overview of Beverage Container Recycling Program



Flow of Consumer Funds through CRV Program



SB 54 Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act

ARC Waste Audit Calculator

Taken from the 3-bin waste container in the Student Center - 3/25/2026

	Weight of bags BEFORE SORTING	percent of BEFORE SORTING TOTAL	Materials found in each bag AFTER SORTING					Weight of bags AFTER SORTING and AFTER DUMPING liquid	AFTER SORTING DIVERSION RATE	AFTER SORTING DIVERSION RATE if we were composting
			RECYCLING	COMPOST		LAND FILL				
			Mixed Recyclable	Compost / Food Waste	Liquids					
RECYCLING	0.1	1.3%	1.7					1.7	26.6%	26.6%
COMPOST	2.2	28.6%		3.2	1.4			3.2	50.0%	50.0%
LANDFILL	5.4	70.1%				1.5		1.5	23.4%	23.4%
OTHER		0.0%					0.0	0.0	0.0%	0.0%
Totals	7.7		1.7		4.6	1.5	0.0	6.4		
Before sorting DIVERSION RATE from landfill. Compost currently goes to landfill because of contamination										
1%										
27%										
77%										

Additional Comments:

California's SB 1383 law, in effect since January 1, 2022, requires all residents and businesses to separate organic waste—including food scraps, green waste, and food-soiled paper—from trash into green bins. Community Colleges are not exempt from this law. --
<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcpcollection/>

Some items were questionable as to whether or not they were recyclable. clear plastic lids from food servery, white plastic plates from servery, clear plastic coffee cups from starbucks.

Weight of empty containers	
Garbage can round with empty bag	7.8
White bucket	2.2

Recommendations, Suggested Activities, and Timeline

- Increase Landfill Diversion Rate

Waste Management Reports	
Calendar Year	Diversion Rate
2026	41.27%
2025	46.62%
2024	48.40%
2023	48.21%
2022	48.38%

Ambitious but realistic goals:

Short-term (3 years): 60–65%

Mid-term (5–7 years): 70–75%

Long-term: 75–80%

Background: Assessment and Accomplishments

ARC has made meaningful progress in expanding waste diversion infrastructure and improving campus waste systems. However, persistent challenges remain, including high contamination rates in recycling and organics streams, inconsistent composting effectiveness, and evolving regulatory requirements. Limitations in data tracking, staffing capacity, and system standardization continue to hinder performance optimization. Dining services present a significant opportunity to influence behavior and reduce environmental impact. Addressing these gaps will be critical to achieving long-term sustainability goals and regulatory compliance.

Sustainability Objective

Collaborate with campus dining to develop and implement a comprehensive food, waste, and materials management system that prioritizes waste reduction, maximizes diversion from landfill, ensures full regulatory compliance, and advances ARC toward a zero-waste campus (defined as ≥90% diversion) – promoting healthy, environmentally responsible choices.