SASAKI

Envisioning a Sustainable Future

A Plan for Action

September 2026

Johnathan and Lizzie Center for Innovation and Active Citizenship
Washington, CT

A Plan for Action

Sustainability as Core Value

Sustainability has been central to our practice since Hideo Sasaki founded the firm over 70 years ago. Our integrated design and planning approach affords us opportunities to infuse every design move and planning strategy with an understanding of environmental context and meaning, while advancing our commitment to stewardship as one of the five core values in the 'Sasaki Strategic Plan, A Plan for Impact'. We strive to enrich our work with creative inspiration, technical rigor, and regenerative systems thinking, to ensure that every project fulfills its potential to improve quality of life for our clients, communities and the planet.

As Sustainability is a core value of our practice, this Sustainability Action Plan addresses five themes: Practice, Mitigation, Adaptation, Health and Operations, to be implemented by project teams and operations with the support of sustainability leader working groups within each discipline. Sustainable design is central to our success, to our hopes for the future, and to our pride in our work as a firm. This Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) lays out a roadmap to achieve these strategic objectives.

Sustainability as Integrator

Sustainability has the potential to be a unifying integrator in our design and planning process, reflecting our belief in the value of holistic design of the built and natural environment. By centering design excellence and stewardship as described in our strategic plan, Sasaki can unlock strategic business opportunities for expanded design services, mitigate risk as the standard of care is evolving rapidly, guide our operations investments, build our practice as design leaders and innovators, and improve our ability to tell the stories that we want to tell.

Development Process

This plan was developed by working groups within each discipline and operations, including Sustainability Leaders in A+I, the Ecology Working Group in LACE, and the PUD Sustainability Leaders cohort. On Green Day 2026, these working groups facilitated firm-wide engagement workshops with their peers in practice. Teams evaluated how proposed workflows and metrics add value to project work, promote internal accountability and fit within project timelines, budgets and labor constraints. Vision statements and actions were then refined and synthesized during meetings with each discipline's Principal's Group, followed by meetings with the Board and all Stockholders to integrate additional feedback to synthesize the vision statements, goals, actions and metrics into integrated themes for all Sasaki practice areas.

Integration with Evolving Standards and Project Processes

Sasaki's existing project management processes and structures are evolving and changing as we integrate sustainability into project delivery. Implementation of SAP goals and metrics will be embedded into workflow and project management structures, including coordination with Project Management Checklists for each discipline, TQC reviews, and TRG and BPM resources. Over time, we will continue to incorporate data collection for these metrics into office-wide systems for data management.

On-going Accountability

Sasaki's Green Team will compile an annual report for each discipline's sustainability leader working group, the Board of Directors and Stockholders. The annual review cycle will encourage ongoing accountability, update our progress, reflect on lessons learned, and refine Actions included in this Plan, in response to our experiences.

Themes

The themes of Practice, Mitigation, Adaptation, Health, and Operations extend across the breadth of Sasaki's disciplines including Architecture and Interiors, Landscape Architecture and Civil Engineering, and Planning and Urban Design. In the following sections, each theme is expanded to include a corresponding Vision Statement, Goals, and Actions.

1 - Practice

Embed Sustainability into our Design Process

1.1 Integrate sustainability into existing project delivery

1.2 Workshop project priorities to embed sustainability and resilience

1.3 Train and onboard for sustainable design skills

2 - Mitigation

Eliminate Carbon Impacts and Envision a Regenerative Future

2.1 Design for carbon neutral architecture by 2030

2.2 Track progress toward carbon neutral site design

2.3 Track progress toward carbon neutral planning and urban design

3 - Adaptation

Design for Resilient and Regenerative Communities

3.1 Conduct a resilience assessment for every project

3.2 Improve stormwater management

4 - Health

Design for Healthy Cities, Sites, Buildings and Interiors

4.1 Plan for smart growth

4.2 Enhance habitat

4.3 Specify healthy materials

5 - Operations

Plan for Carbon Neutral Office Operations by 2030

5.1 Track our impact

5.2 Reduce operational waste and pollution

5.3 Recommend offsets to achieve carbon neutrality

1 - Practice

Embed Sustainability into our Design Process

We will integrate sustainability into all aspects of our professional practice. Our design metrics will address climate change, champion biodiversity and environmental justice, minimize the use of natural resources, and reduce carbon footprints. We will center low carbon design, energy and water efficiency, health, equity, and resilience as key drivers of our design strategy.

Boston Children's Museum
Resiliency and Implementation Project
Boston, MA

Goal 1.1
Integrate sustainability principles into project delivery

Actions

In 2026, to address sustainability integration in project scoping, we will define standards for work plans and consultant scope so that an appropriate fee, schedule, and workflow integrates sustainability at the project outset.

By 2028, we will track trends, provide insights, and learn from our own work, employing a company-wide data management system to include sustainability project metrics and integrate with Deltek Vantagepoint, with clear responsibility and milestone requirements.

Goal 1.2
Workshop project priorities to embed sustainability and resilience

Actions

In 2026, we will continue to include sustainability as a pillar of our business development strategy to attract like-minded clients, partners, and consultants and expand our scope of services.

In 2026, for each newly awarded project, we will include an internal kick-off goal-setting workshop to support teams in identifying opportunities for integrating sustainability into their project schedule, work plan, and deliverables.

By 2028, each project will include an integrated design workshop as a standard start-up engagement meeting to enable clients an opportunity to articulate their project priorities which can be matched to sustainability goals and strategies, generated by our sustainability and resilience expertise. Ideally, this kick-off workshop would occur in the earliest project stages to identify gaps in scope or services resulting from a mismatch between the client's priorities and the initial work plan and fee.

Goal 1.3
Train and onboard for sustainable design skills

Actions

In 2026, we will coordinate with the TRG from A+I, PUD, and LACE to conduct a gap analysis of how onboarding materials address sustainable design. We will begin the process of crafting an onboarding curriculum to enable all new hires to find shared resources related to discipline standards and sustainable design resources.

In 2027, to be deployed during employee's annual review, a skills profile will be developed to allow designers across the practice to identify skills they have as well as interest in sustainability training and skills to inform staffing and professional development opportunities.

By 2028, building on the 2026 gap analysis and the 2027 skills profile, we will develop a robust sustainable design onboarding and sustainability skills training course modules that will live on a future Sasaki knowledge base as a resource for new employees and all Sasakians.

MassBay Community College Center for Health Sciences, Early Childhood, and Human Services
Framingham, MA

2 - Mitigation

Eliminate Carbon Impacts and Envision a Regenerative Future

We will plan and design to eliminate carbon pollution impacts from development planning and built work and help our clients envision a regenerative future.

Top: Rice University West Campus Energy Plans

Bottom: Rice University Science Quad Stormwater Design

Goal 2.1

Design for Carbon Neutral Architecture by 2030

Actions

In 2026, in addition to what we are already reporting annually to AIA 2030 (pEUI, CUI, GSF, Use Type) we will add questions for assessing and including operational carbon neutral opportunities in A+I and LACE TQCs, and to the PUD project checklist for each phase: all-electric systems, infrastructure for on-site renewable energy, and decarbonization plans for any district energy systems.

By 2026, we will estimate embodied carbon emissions and sequestration on all projects at the concept and schematic design phase, using LCA software (e.g. C.Scale)

By 2030, 100% of our projects will be designed to be carbon neutral for normal operations.

By 2030, We will establish a standardized method of quantifying embodied carbon emissions (A1-A3, minimum) on all projects, both in the US and internationally.

Goal 2.2

Track Progress toward Operational and Embodied Carbon Neutral Site Design

Actions

By 2028, we will track embodied carbon emissions and sequestration on all projects at the concept and schematic design phase, using LCA software for buildings (e.g. C.Scale) and landscape (e.g. Carbon Conscience), for existing conditions and design options.

By 2030, we will test pilot projects to track embodied carbon emissions and sequestration on all projects at the Design Development and Construction Documents, using LCA software for buildings (e.g. Tally) and landscape (e.g. Pathfinder) to define specific strategies to reduce emissions.

By 2030, we will test pilot projects to track operational carbon emissions from energy use for all projects. This will include an energy model in the Design Development phase, and exploration of onsite renewable energy generation.

By 2030, we will test pilot projects post completion to verify operational carbon emissions from energy use, to include measured performance verification such as analysis of utility bills.

Goal 2.3

Track Progress toward Carbon Neutral Plans and Urban Designs

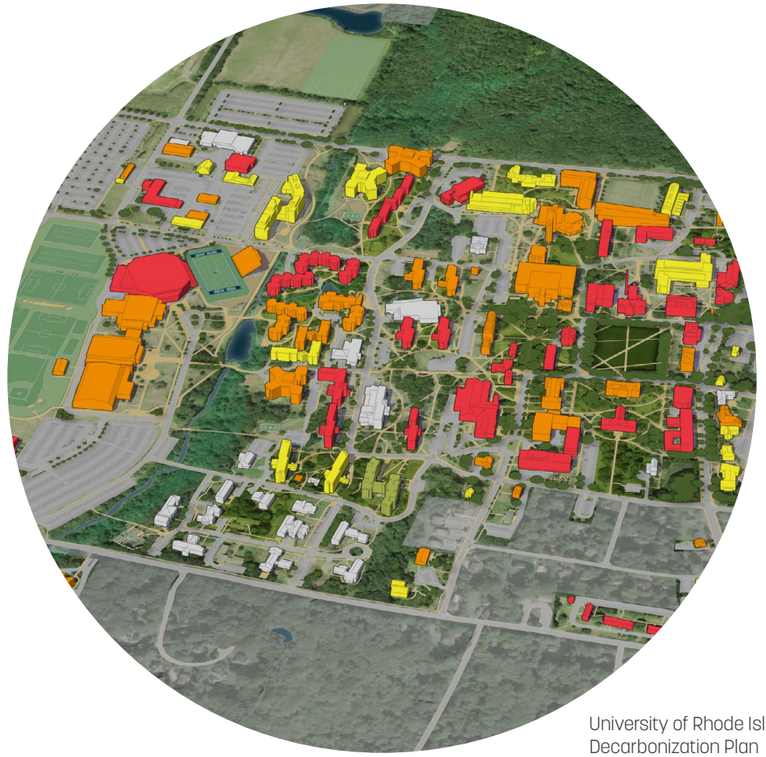
Actions

By 2028, for existing campuses and districts, we will visualize available sustainability metrics and data to guide capital investments to meet client priorities and regulatory requirements.

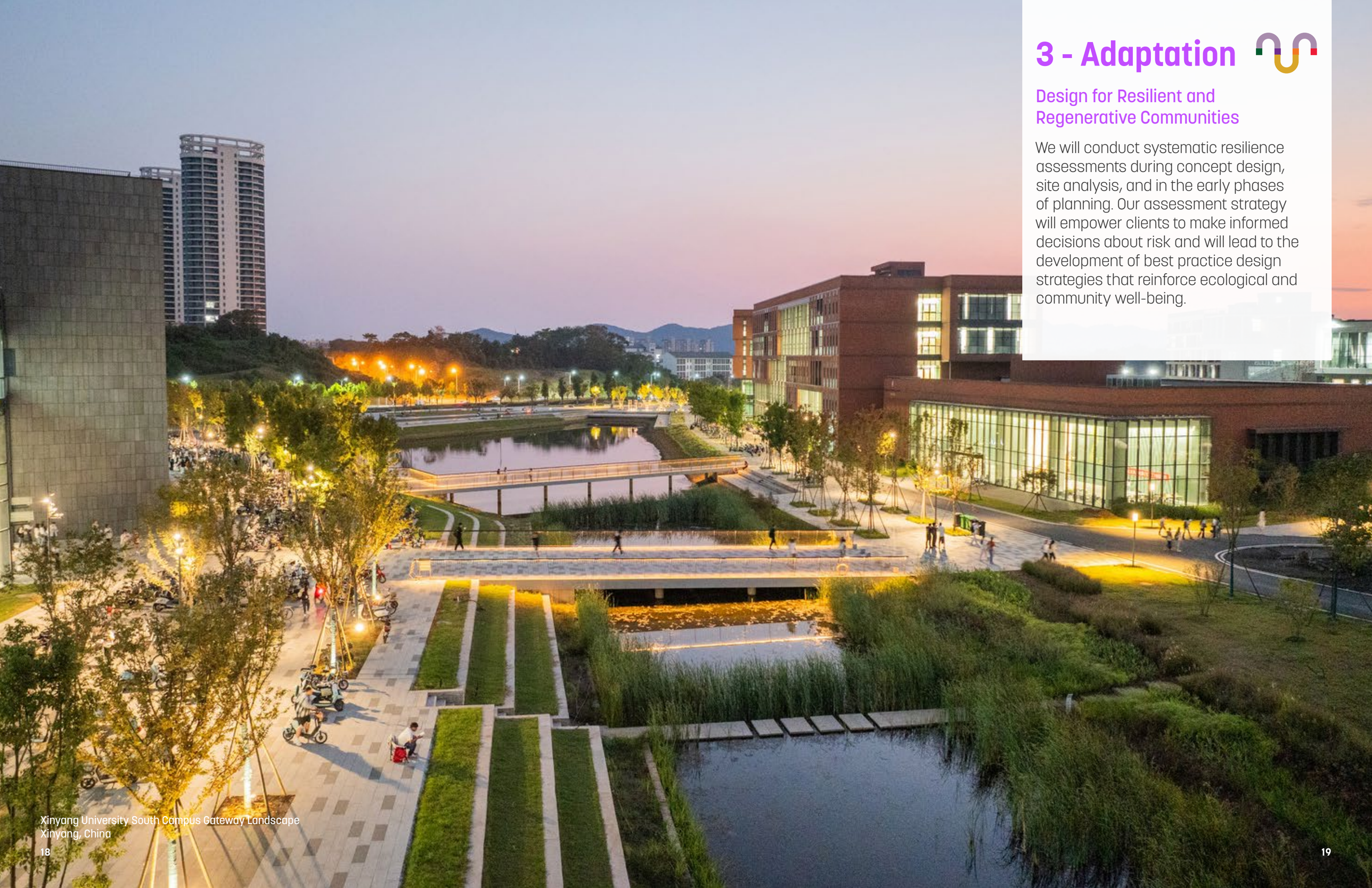
Project teams will request and visualize available existing building energy and water use, operational carbon emissions, and facility condition assessments (FCAs) to facilitate the consideration and comparison of carbon pollution from new construction, renovation, or demolition activities, and to integrate resulting insights and recommendations in each phase's deliverables.

By 2028, for new construction districts and campus expansions, we will use proposed program and building massing to estimate and project annual energy, water, and carbon use and intensity, with LCA tools like C.Scale or using our portfolio of built work with post-occupancy energy, water, and whole building life cycle assessments.

Sacramento State Placer Ranch
Sustainability Strategy



University of Rhode Island
Decarbonization Plan



Xinyang University South Campus Gateway Landscape
Xinyang, China

3 - Adaptation

Design for Resilient and Regenerative Communities

We will conduct systematic resilience assessments during concept design, site analysis, and in the early phases of planning. Our assessment strategy will empower clients to make informed decisions about risk and will lead to the development of best practice design strategies that reinforce ecological and community well-being.

Bonnet Springs Park
Lakeland, FL

Universidad de Lima Master Plan
Phase One Implementation
Lima, Peru

Goal 3.1
Conduct a Resilience Assessment for Every Project

Actions

In 2026, pilot projects will test hazard and climate assessment tools for North American and international projects, including: Climate.Park.Change[1], CBE Clima Tool[2], RAPT[3] and those identified in the LEED v5 prerequisite Climate Resilience Assessment4. These pilot projects will provide valuable information on best practices and will build a foundation for a standardized assessment process and client engagement strategy.

By 2028, we will standardize a climate resilience analysis workflow. To provide guidance for teams, this process resource will compile best practice precedents for our typical project types and sectors, will include hazard data by location, and will incorporate design strategies to address hazards and client risk tolerance.

By 2030, we will conduct a systematic resilience assessment for every project to inform our design approach.

By 2030, we will develop go/no criteria for potential projects informed by resilience and adaptive opportunities.

Goal 3.2
Improve Stormwater Management

Actions

In 2026, in addition to meeting required local stormwater regulations, all new domestic and international projects will:

- Measure the area of pervious and impervious surfaces and the percentage of pervious site area, before development and of the proposed design.
- Determine and document a project-specific percentile of storm events and corresponding rainfall depth and volume.
- Include Low Impact Development (LID) design Best Management Practices (BMPs) to detain, retain, and treat stormwater to meet the project-specific percentile of storm events.

By 2028, in accordance with our standard climate resilience analysis workflow for all domestic and international projects, we will use available climate projections and recent local precipitation records to identify an appropriate project-specific percentile of storm events and will include strategies to slow, retain and treat runoff with Low Impact Development design strategies.

By 2028, we will identify at least two pilot projects to test enhanced standards such as those referenced in Living Building Core v4.1, SITES and LEED v5 prerequisites.

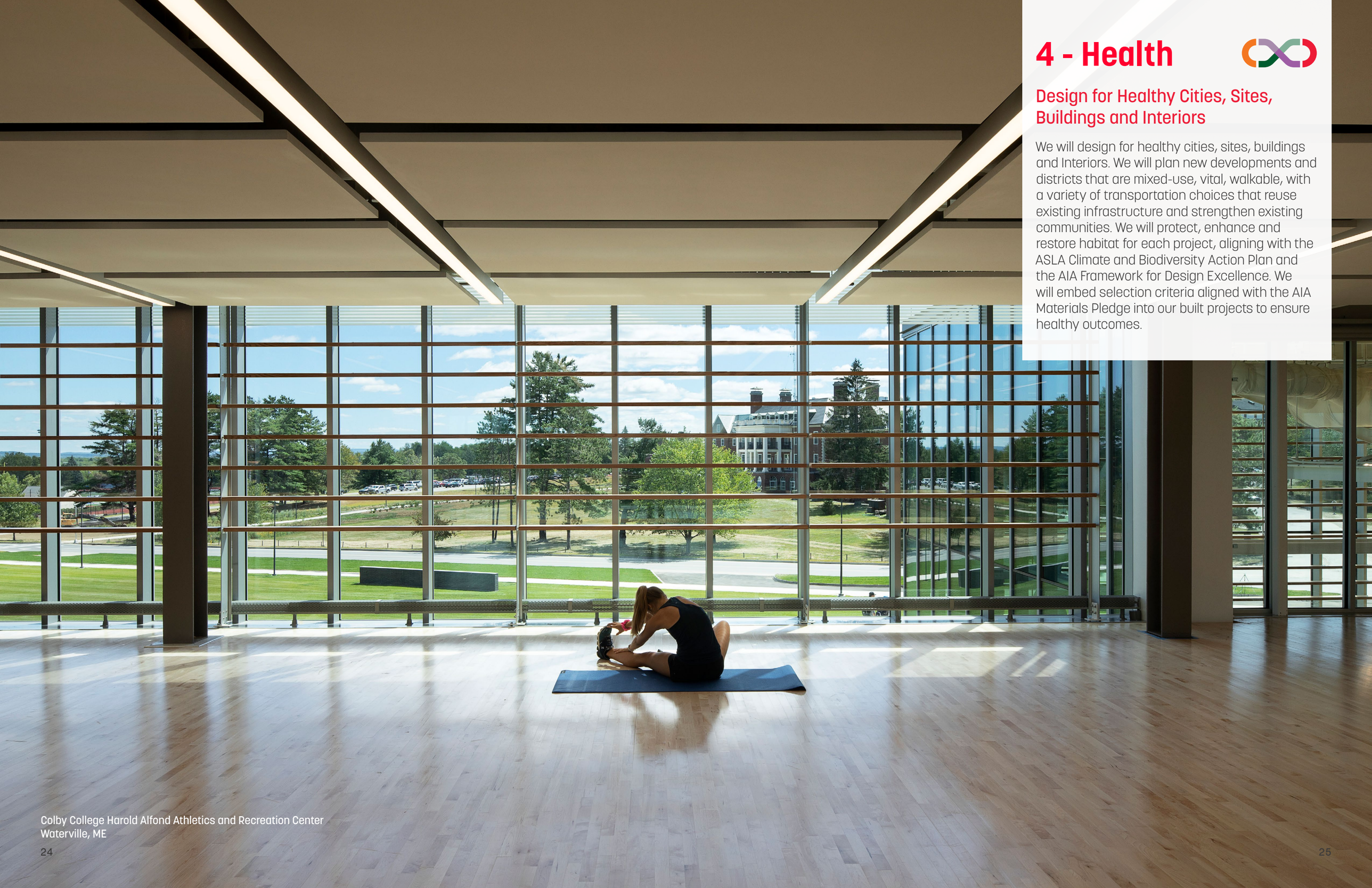
By 2030, we will identify at least two pilot projects to conduct post-occupancy verification to measure and assess if our strategies improved water quality and verify stormwater volume and rates.

Ellinikon Metropolitan Park and Public Realm
Ellinikon, Greece

4 - Health

Design for Healthy Cities, Sites, Buildings and Interiors

We will design for healthy cities, sites, buildings and Interiors. We will plan new developments and districts that are mixed-use, vital, walkable, with a variety of transportation choices that reuse existing infrastructure and strengthen existing communities. We will protect, enhance and restore habitat for each project, aligning with the ASLA Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan and the AIA Framework for Design Excellence. We will embed selection criteria aligned with the AIA Materials Pledge into our built projects to ensure healthy outcomes.



Colby College Harold Alfond Athletics and Recreation Center
Waterville, ME

Fenway Corners Urban Design Vision
Boston, MA

Seaport Square Master Plan
Boston, MA

Goal 4.1
Plan for Smart Growth

Actions

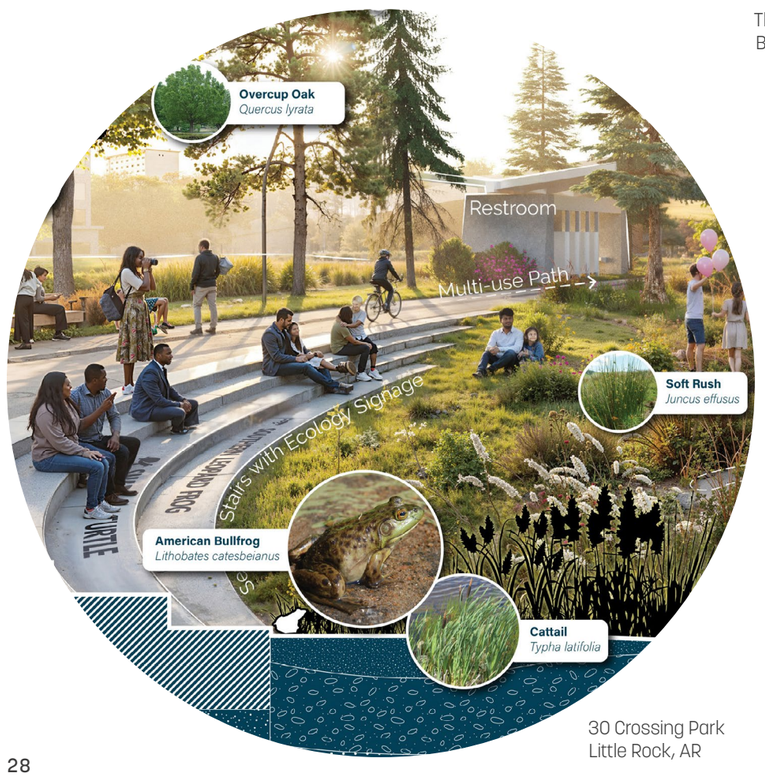
In 2026, we will incorporate smart growth metrics on select pilot planning and urban design projects to include:

- **Density:** Housing Units/Acre, Jobs/Acre, and Floor/Area Ratio (FAR)
- **Mix of Uses:** Track distinct land uses. Target at least three uses within project and at least four uses within 1/4 mile (400 meters), per LEED ND v4 Neighborhood Pattern and Design: Mixed Use Neighborhoods[5]
- **Site Reuse:** Track if project site is brownfield or infill and ability to retain viable existing assets. Target previously developed land or remediated brownfield sites, and retain or reuse 80% of existing assets including buildings, infrastructure, landscape, per LEED ND v4 Smart Location and Linkage, Smart Location Prerequisite[6], SITES v2 Site Context Credits 1.5.[7]
- **Multi-Modal Access:** Track transportation options provided. Target at least two of the following three: ¼ mi to bus or ½ mi to rail or bus rapid transit (BRT); 90% of circulation networks to include sidewalks; or separated bicycle lanes, per LEED v4 Smart Location and Linkage: Access to Quality Transit[8], Bicycle Facilities[9], and Neighborhood Planning and Design Walkable Streets Prerequisite[10].
- **Intersection Density:** Track number of intersections per square mile/ meter as a proxy for connectivity and walkability. Target more than 90 intersections/mile sq (35 intersections/ square km) within ¼ mile (400 meters) for projects with no circulation network within the project boundary, and more than 140 for projects with internal circulation networks, per LEED v4 Neighborhood Pattern and Design, Connected and Open Community Prerequisite[11].

By 2028, we will review these pilot projects' lessons learned and their discoveries with the goal to refine and determine eligibility criteria for tracking and measuring smart growth metrics across our broad range of project types and sectors.

By 2030, we will build an integrated database to facilitate tracking project metrics that meet our tracking criteria to enable benchmarking, and sharing of project trends and insights.

The University Lakes
Baton Rouge, LA



30 Crossing Park
Little Rock, AR

Goal 4.2
Enhance Habitat

Actions

In 2026, all new projects that include landscape design services will conduct a basic ecological inventory, to include:

- Regulatory boundaries such as wetland boundaries or conservation areas
- Landscape softscape and habitat area, and corresponding % of total site area
- Tree quantity, diameter at breast height (DBH), and % of canopy cover over total site area, if applicable
- Preserved habitat area and corresponding % of total site area
- Narrative and diagram of recommended buffers
- Researched recommendations for climate-adaptive species Community Prerequisite[12]

By 2028, we will identify at least two pilot projects to test enhanced design standards to:

- Identify indicator species and associative habitat resources and connectivity
- Discern critical habitat and opportunities for restoration
- Preservation of at least 40% of existing greenfield (areas not previously developed) from disturbance to align with the LEED v5 Biodiverse Habitat Credit[13]
- Aim to meet open space and vegetated area requirements aligned with the LEED v4 Open Space Credit[14]

By 2030, we will test post-occupancy processes on at least two pilot projects, to:

- Verify adaptive operations and management plans
- Measure and observe invasive species mitigation from a developed restoration action plan
- Conduct post occupancy research two years after construction completion

Goal 4.3
Specify Healthy Materials

Actions

By 2028, we will integrate Material Pledge criteria into our physical and digital libraries and standards, and re-tool our material research process to encourage innovative material selections, save our internal knowledge, and integrate our clients' material health and toxin avoidance standards.

By 2030, we will coordinate Materials Pledge criteria for emerging site and infrastructure material categories to establish selection priorities for LACE built work, harmonized and integrated with LACE specification writing services and standards.

10 World Trade Center
Boston, MA

Microsoft New England Research & Development Center (NERD)
Cambridge, MA

5 - Operations

Plan for Carbon Neutral Office Operations by 2030

Sasaki will develop a plan for carbon-neutral office operations by tracking and reducing operational carbon emissions from energy consumption, commuter and work-related travel.

Sasaki Office
Boston, MA

Boston City Hall Plaza Renovations
Boston, MA

Goal 5.1
Track our impact

Actions

By 2027, Sasaki will quantify annual operational carbon emissions resulting from utility sourced and on-site energy use in leased spaces in Boston, Denver, New York, and Los Angeles.

By 2027, we will establish an bi-annual commuter habit survey for all offices to inform transportation benefits and in-office policies, and to enable estimation of annual commuter related carbon emissions.

By 2028, when considering new travel booking services and processes, we will include a requirement to easily quantify or estimate carbon pollution for reimbursed work-related travel such as flights, car rentals, trains, and taxis. Work-related travel includes project trips, site visits, interviews, and conferences.

By 2028, Sasaki will be able to easily quantify project-related travel carbon pollution from flights, trains, and car rentals. By 2029 or sooner, we will be able to offer this information to clients who request this information.

Goal 5.2
Reduce operational waste and pollution

Actions

By 2028, Sasaki will procure 100% renewably sourced electricity in Denver, New York and Los Angeles, as we do in Boston.

By 2028, we will revise our catering policy for all events with the aim to reduce food waste, and will include restrictions on single-use plastics. Sasaki will seek to add compost collection for all offices.

By 2030, we will develop recommendations and policies to reduce our pollution and waste from work-related and commuter travel, informed by several years of trend data from annual commuter surveys and work-related travel.

Goal 5.3
Recommend Offsets to Achieve Carbon Neutrality

Actions

By 2030, Sasaki will develop a Plan to achieve carbon neutral operations.

In this Plan, Sasaki will identify specific strategies to offset any remaining operational emissions which may include market-based offsets, or Sasaki-led ecology, restoration, or renewable energy initiatives.

Sasaki will leverage this Plan for business development opportunities to attract clients and partners that align with our values and strategic goals.

Innovation Hub at Tec de Monterrey
Monterrey, Mexico

Copley Square Park
Boston, MA

Contributors

A Sasaki-Wide Effort

This Sustainability Action Plan was a collaborative effort of contributors and reviewers across the Sasaki practice in 2025-2026, including the LACE Ecology Working Group, PUD Sustainability Leaders and A+I Sustainability Leaders who worked on the draft goals and actions, the A+I Architecture 2030 Ambassadors, the Sasaki Principals Groups in each discipline for offering invaluable questions and comments, and the broad community of Sasakians who participated in Green Day 2026 workshops to crowdsource our best practices and test draft goals and metrics. This Plan belongs to all of you.

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And all Sasaki Principals...

for contributing to this firm-wide effort, and for their leadership.

References

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13 https://www.usgbc.org/credits/new-construction-core-and-shell/v5/ssc1?return=/credits/New%20Construction/v5/Sustainable%20sites Accessed 8/6/2026. Path 1 for Greenfield sites requires at least 40% of total site area to remain undisturbed from development.

14 https://www.usgbc.org/credits/SS107?return=/credits/New%20Construction/v4. Accessed 8/6/2026. Provide outdoor space greater than or equal to 30% of the total site area (including building footprint). A minimum of 25% of that outdoor space must be vegetated (turf grass does not count as vegetation) or have overhead vegetated canopy.

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Ellinikon, Greece

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