

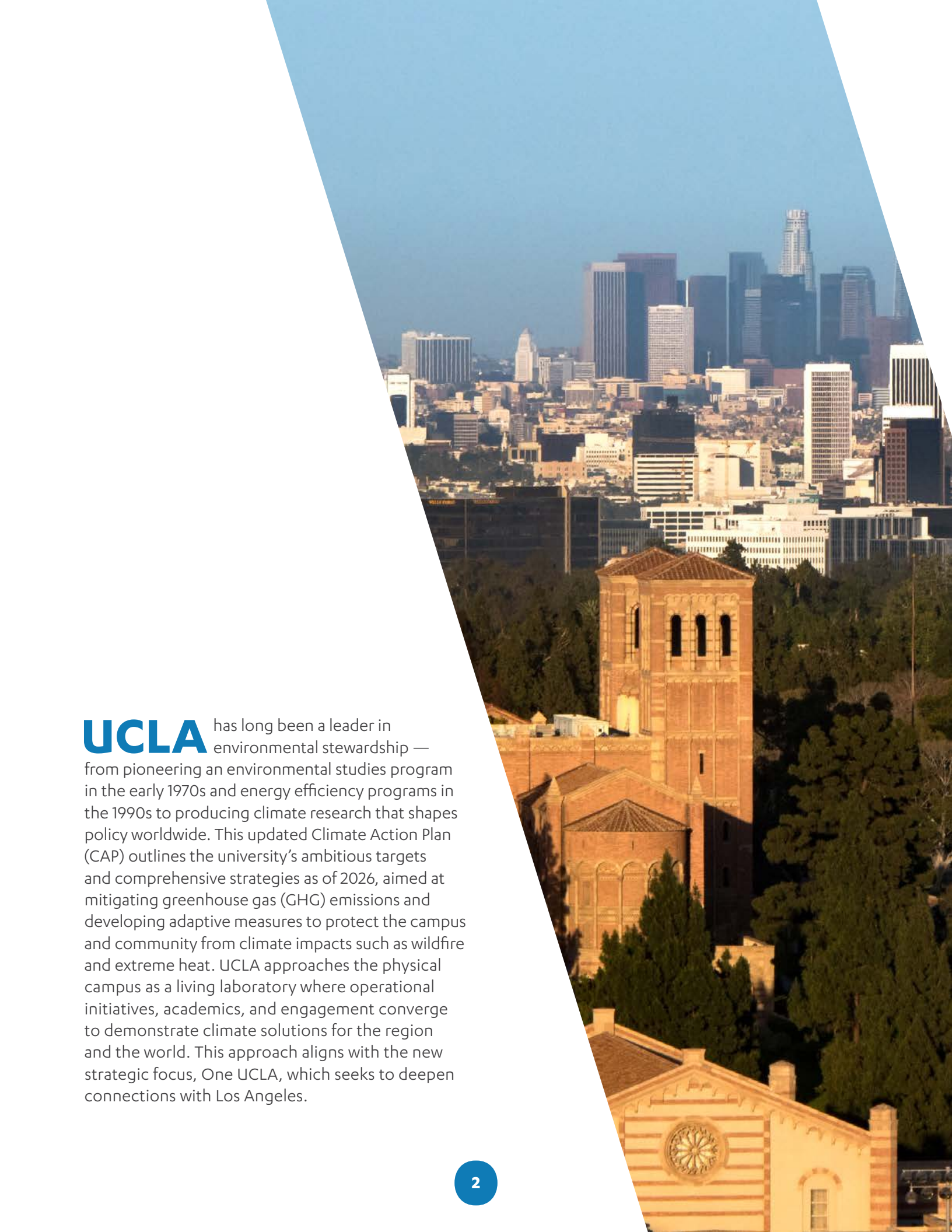
UCLA

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

2026





UCLA has long been a leader in environmental stewardship — from pioneering an environmental studies program in the early 1970s and energy efficiency programs in the 1990s to producing climate research that shapes policy worldwide. This updated Climate Action Plan (CAP) outlines the university’s ambitious targets and comprehensive strategies as of 2026, aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and developing adaptive measures to protect the campus and community from climate impacts such as wildfire and extreme heat. UCLA approaches the physical campus as a living laboratory where operational initiatives, academics, and engagement converge to demonstrate climate solutions for the region and the world. This approach aligns with the new strategic focus, One UCLA, which seeks to deepen connections with Los Angeles.

UCLA Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets and Baseline

Despite a remarkable 80% increase in gross square footage and a surge in energy-intensive medical and lab facilities, UCLA has maintained near-1990 emissions levels due to continuous efforts in energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable transportation. This updated Climate Action Plan addresses three main categories of emissions: Scope 1, which is direct combustion of fuels such as natural gas in the campus cogeneration plant and fuel used by the campus fleet; Scope 2, which is purchased electricity; and Scope 3, which are indirect emissions from sources including employee and student commutes, air travel and landfill waste.

This Climate Action Plan addresses the requirements of the UC Policy on Sustainable Practices Climate Protection section, and establishes 2019 as the base year for setting reduction targets. The 2019

baseline was adjusted according to The Climate Registry (TCR) protocols to account for acquisitions, and the adjusted GHG emissions for the 2019 baseline (Scopes 1, 2 and 3) are 384,500 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO₂e).

UCLA has adopted ambitious targets for reducing its direct emissions (Scope 1) from the 2019 baseline of 267,659 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO₂e) as shown in Figure 0.2.

In addition to Scope 1 goals, UCLA is committed to achieving at least a 90% reduction in total emissions (Scope 1, 2 and 3) relative to the 2019 baseline by 2040, targeting 38,450 MT CO₂e.

Furthermore, UCLA, along with the UC system, began 100% clean electricity procurement in 2025.

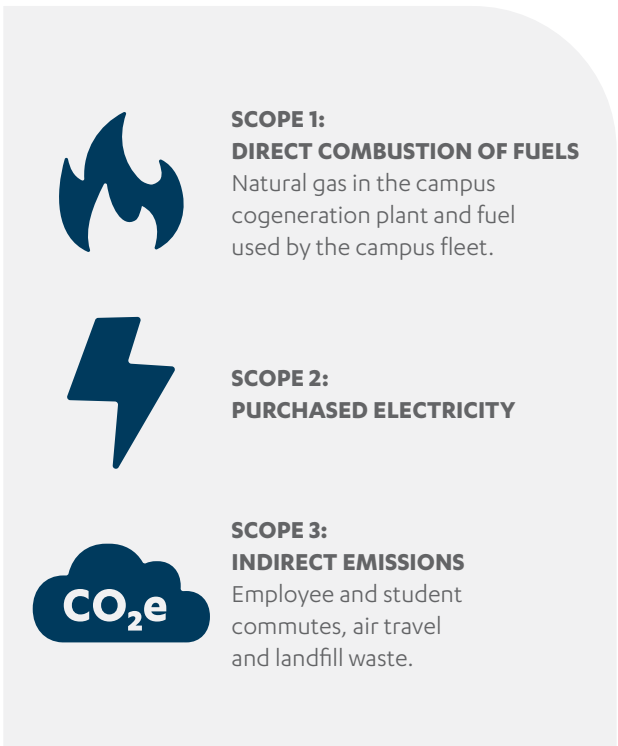


FIGURE 01
SCOPE 1, 2 & 3 EXPLAINED

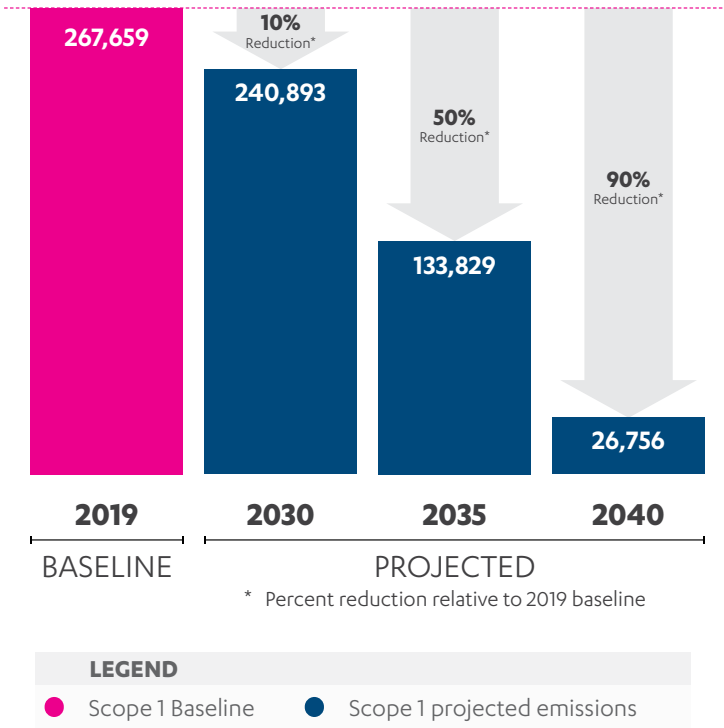
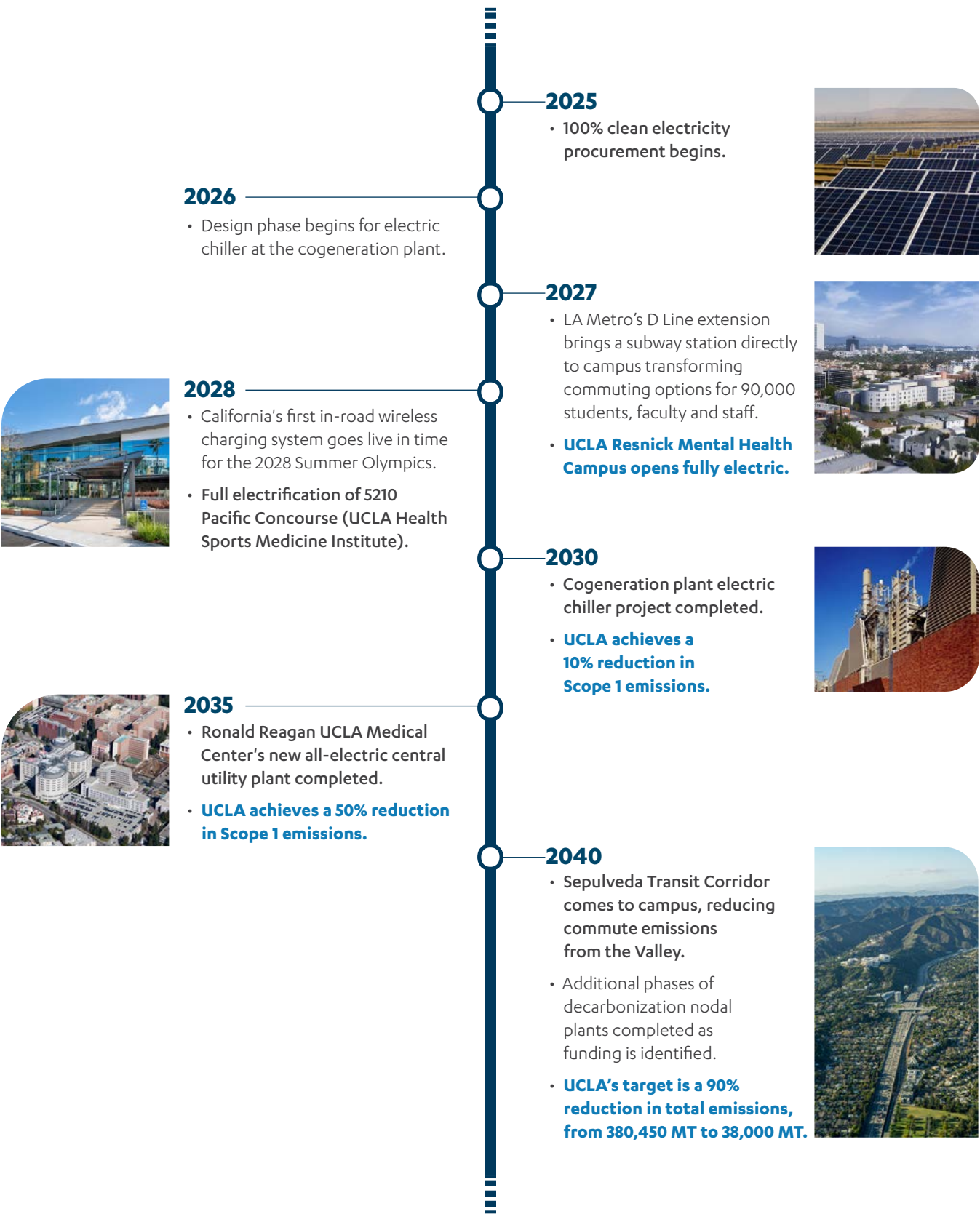


FIGURE 02
SCOPE 1 PROJECTED GOALS 2030–2040 (shown in MT CO₂e)

UCLA Climate Action Plan Key Milestones



Decarbonizing our Energy Systems (Scope 1 & 2 Mitigation)

Energy efficiency is a cornerstone of any decarbonization pathway, and UCLA has a long history of efficiency initiatives. This updated CAP details energy-efficiency initiatives on the main campus, as well as specialized initiatives in UCLA Housing and the UCLA Health System. Strategies include a smart buildings and labs (SBL) program that targets high-intensity lab and research buildings, which consume up to three times more energy per square foot than classrooms; an LED lighting program; and metering and space optimization programs to leverage real-time occupancy data to enable demand-controlled ventilation and reduce energy use in underutilized spaces.

To determine a pathway for direct decarbonization of its Westwood campus, UCLA completed a major decarbonization study in 2024 (funded by The State of California and conducted by WSP) to analyze strategies for deep reductions in Scope 1 emissions. The study identified the optimal pathway as developing nodal all-electric heating and cooling plants with accelerated decarbonization. This approach replaces the centralized cogeneration plant with a network of smaller, all-electric facilities distributed across campus — reducing emissions while strengthening resilience for the campus and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. The decarbonization study noted that deploying interim solutions, such as an industrial heat pump, early will significantly reduce cumulative emissions. Although capital-intensive, the phased approach spreads costs and disruptions over time. UCLA is currently implementing top-priority projects, including installing an all-electric chiller at the cogeneration plant, and an all-electric central utility plant for the hospital. The first project, an all-electric chiller at the cogeneration plant, has entered the design phase, and UCLA has applied to UCOP for decarbonization funds to support it. UCLA is also exploring the feasibility of innovative energy solutions at the Sepulveda Transit Corridor station on the Westwood campus, in partnership with LA Metro. This plan integrates the recommendations from the WSP study into the university's climate action planning and includes details on the recommended pathway and progress.

UCLA Health has unique targets within the broader UCLA strategy, including a 50% reduction in organizational emissions (Scope 1 and 2) by 2030. Scope 1 and 2 emissions for UCLA Health include medical gases such as volatile anesthetics and nitrous oxide, for which UCLA Health has identified actions to reduce. The updated UCLA CAP includes UCLA Health emissions and initiatives, such as plans for an all-electric plant at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, electrification of new facilities like the Mid-Wilshire Behavioral Health Hospital and 5210 Pacific Concourse (future UCLA Health Sports Medicine Institute), and decarbonization feasibility studies for UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center and the Mid-Wilshire Medical Office Building.

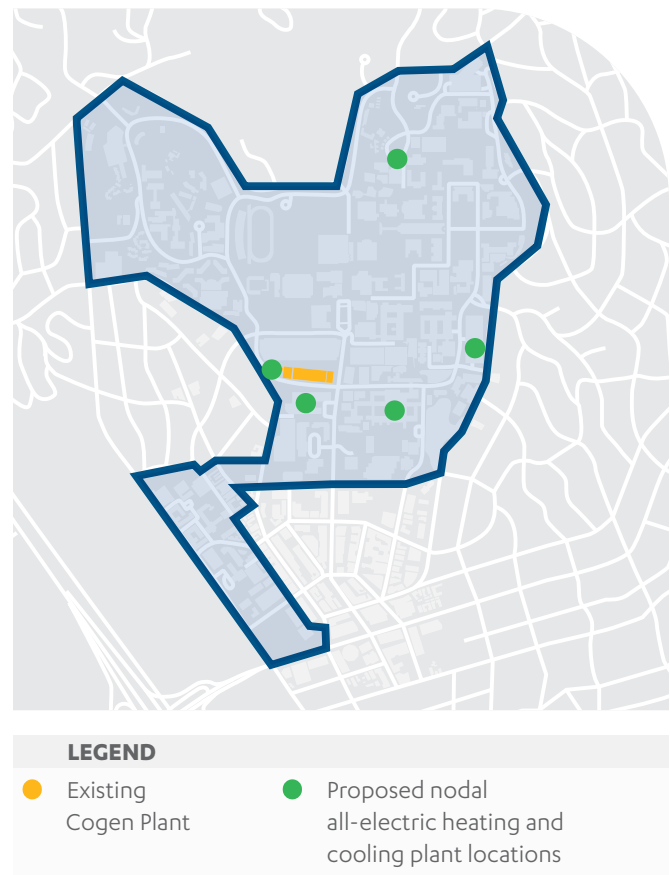


FIGURE 0.3
PROPOSED NODAL ALL-ELECTRIC HEATING AND COOLING PLANT LOCATIONS AT UCLA CAMPUS
(Nodal plants are distributed on campus rather than at one central location.)

Mobile Sources and Other Scope 3 Emissions Mitigation

Getting to and around campus is one of UCLA's most significant sources of emissions — and one of its most exciting areas of progress. Emissions from UCLA's fleet of over 1,000 vehicles fall under Scope 1. A significant \$19.85 million grant will enable the entire BruinBus fleet to transition to 100% electric and fund California's first in-road electric charging system, timed for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. UCLA Health offers fully electric shuttling between its Santa Monica Medical Center facilities and Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. In addition, UCLA Health's supply chain fleet vehicles provide central supply distribution to over 150 ambulatory clinics within the health system's clinic network. To support this transition, UCLA has installed nearly 500 EV charging stations across the main campus, including 474 Level 1 chargers, 16 Level 2 chargers and six DC fast chargers.

Commutes and air travel are considered Scope 3, or indirect sources of emissions. Commuting remains UCLA's largest mobile source of CO₂ emissions, accounting for over 79% of mobile source emissions in 2024. Emissions mitigation depends on encouraging commuters to use alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs).

This can be done by offering incentives such as transit passes and parking strategies, as well as by promoting telecommuting. Future transportation infrastructure, the LA Metro D line extension, set to open in 2027, will bring a subway station directly to UCLA's doorstep, drastically enhancing regional access and reducing car dependency.

Air travel is another key source of Scope 3 emissions, and mitigation strategies include prioritizing virtual participation, shifting short-haul trips to rail, and purchasing high-quality carbon offsets. This plan also includes new Scope 3 sources, such as municipal solid waste, which UC began tracking in 2025, and other sources for future consideration, such as supply chain emissions. UCLA is developing an updated zero waste plan focused on reducing landfill waste, which is the source of GHG emissions in this category. UCLA Health, as part of UC Health, reports annually on all solid waste as well as medical and hazardous waste streams as part of its waste reduction and Scope 3 emissions reduction efforts. Other potential sources of Scope 3 emissions reporting are under consideration by a UC working group.



BruinBus will be 100% electric and will install California's first in-road electric charging system.



The extension of the LA Metro D line will significantly help offset Scope 3 emissions.



UCLA Health is developing a zero waste plan to reduce landfill waste to bring down GHG emissions.

Climate Resilience Planning

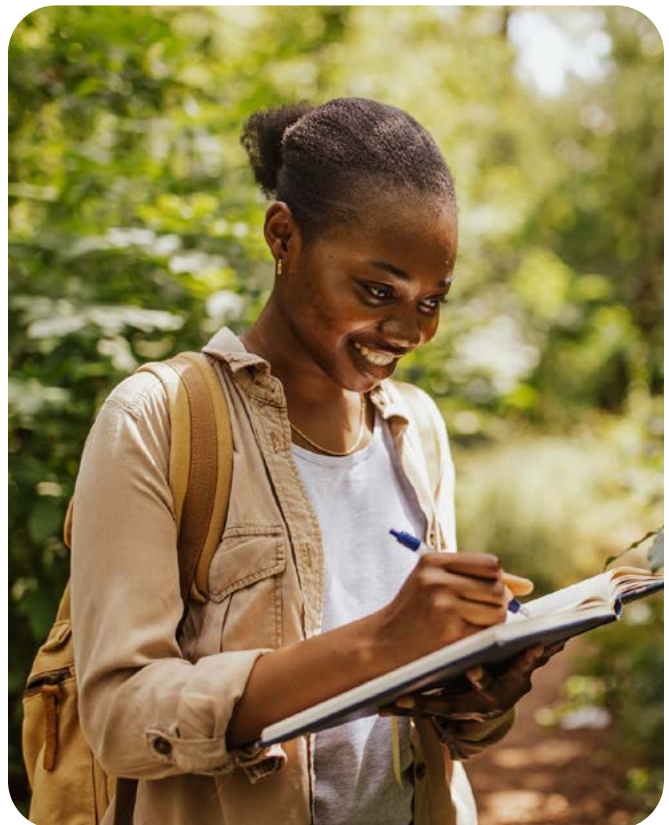
UCLA has broadened its commitment to include climate resilience planning—preparation for external shocks and stressors, particularly climate impacts in a region facing increasing wildfire, extreme heat and drought risks. [UCLA's Landscape Plan](#) was honored with a [national award](#) from the American Society of Landscape Architects for its climate resilient approach and initiatives.

The University of California system is guiding this effort through a framework that incorporates Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (J.E.D.I.) to address existing inequities that make some communities more vulnerable to climate change. Climate impacts fall hardest on those least responsible for causing them. UCLA's resilience planning centers J.E.D.I. — ensuring that our preparations address the communities most at risk. UCLA Health is integrating this equity-centered approach into its resilience planning. UCLA also collaborates regionally, having contributed advisory expertise to the development of Resilient Los Angeles and the Climate Vulnerability Assessment for LA County.



Research, Education, and the Living Laboratory

The massive energy system transition outlined in the CAP creates opportunities for applied teaching and research involving the physical campus. The decarbonization study identified opportunities for applied research, particularly in engineering, where researchers can analyze data generated by the new energy system in real time, as well as in fields such as urban planning, economics, and sociology, which can study the wider societal impacts of a decarbonized system. Students are actively engaged through programs like the Sustainability Action Research Program and the UC President's Bonnie Reiss Leading on Climate Fellowship Program. Furthermore, UCLA students have conducted applied research to examine best practices for education and outreach strategies, as well as to develop phased, practical approaches for tracking Scope 3 emissions related to supply chain and procurement.





Implementation and Next Steps

A phased financing strategy is central to implementation — UCLA is actively pursuing state funding, UC system resources, and other partnerships to support priority projects. Implementation of the core decarbonization strategy for the Westwood campus has already begun. In 2025, UCLA selected WSP to lead the detailed design and costing for the first priority decarbonization project, installing a fully electric chiller at the cogeneration plant.

The planning and execution of these initiatives are advised and reviewed by the climate action task force — a cross-campus body of faculty experts, students, staff and senior university leadership. As these initiatives continue to develop, updates to the plan will be published on the [university's decarbonization and climate action planning webpage](#).

