University at Buffalo The State University of New York

SORTING IT OUT: THE NEW RULES OF CAMPUS WASTE

UB Business Day

November 12, 2025

WHAT GOES WHERE?

ORGANICS

Food Soiled Paper · Eggs & Dairy Scraps · Coffee Grinds & Teabags · Meat, Bones & Seafood · Fruit & Vegetable · Yard Trimmings

RECYCLABLES

Metal Cans · Aluminum Foil · Paper · Glass Bottles & Jars · Plastics # 1, 2 & 5 · Food Boxes · Paper Packaging · Phone Books

LANDFILL

Garbage · Styrofoam · Ceramic Dishes · Chip Bags · Dirty Takeout Containers · Cigarette Butts · Dirty Diapers · Packing Peanuts


amazon.in


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Tim Horton
Tim Horton
Tim Horton
Tim Horton


Ziploc
Extra-Resistentes
Ziploc

Agenda

Why

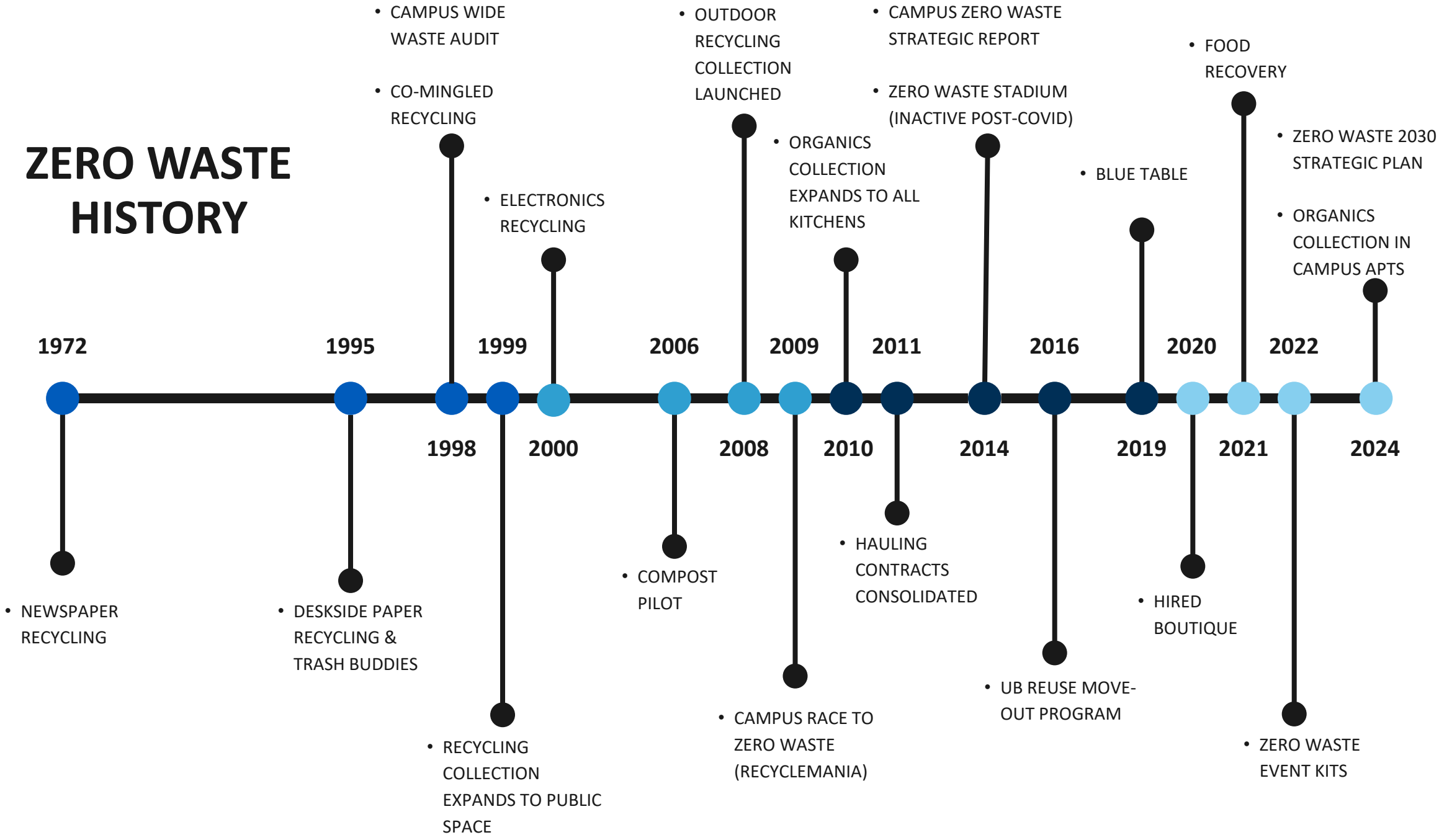
Strategy

Resource Management

Infrastructure (ROT)

University Partnership

ZERO WASTE HISTORY



WHY

It is a priority for UB to advance the zero waste initiative

UB 10 in 10


Not all Electricity is Created Equal
Increasing Efficiency
Keeping it Cozy & Green
Climate Justice
Every Action Counts
Investing Locally to Provide Flexibility
Zero Carbon Mobility
Resilience
Making it Happen
Put a Price on Pollution
Waste Not
Responsible Investing
Taking Stock of Our Food System

University at Buffalo

#36

Public University *in U.S*

U.S. News & World Report

#1

Advancing Clean & Affordable Energy *in U.S*

Times Higher Ed Impact Rankings

35%

Decrease in Emissions

UB Carbon Footprint Disclosure

#2

Climate Action *in U.S*

Times Higher Ed Impact Rankings

#1

Good Health & Well-being *in U.S*

Times Higher Ed Impact Rankings

New York State's Flagship University


SINGLE-USE PLASTIC?
THERE'S GOT TO BE AN OTTER WAY!

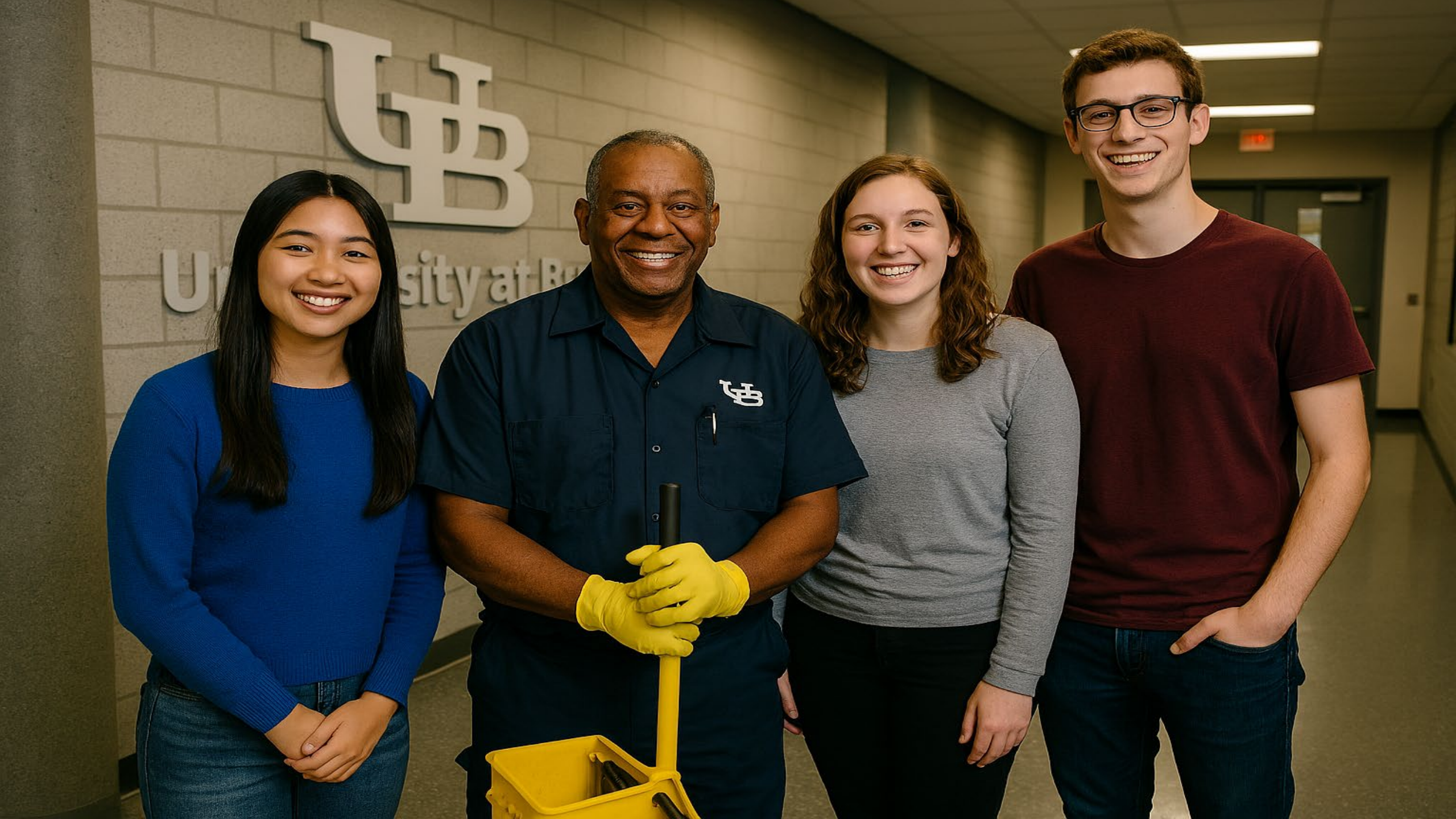


Figure 33: Example of inconsistent container type, size, color, and signage.

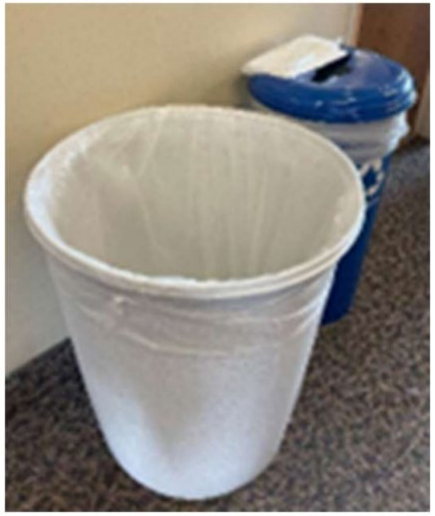


Figure 48: Trash and recycling containers outside dorm rooms in Ellicott.

Figure 43: Example of hallway trash and recycling container with liner colors not consistent with universally recognized colors and conflict with the liner colors used in other containers across campus.

Figure 54: Recycling in the trash compactor at the CBLS.

Figure 44: Yard waste in the trash at Helm.

Figure 42: Typical desk trash and recycling configuration. Some recycling bins were lined, and others were not. There was little consistency with the colors of the liners.

STRATEGY

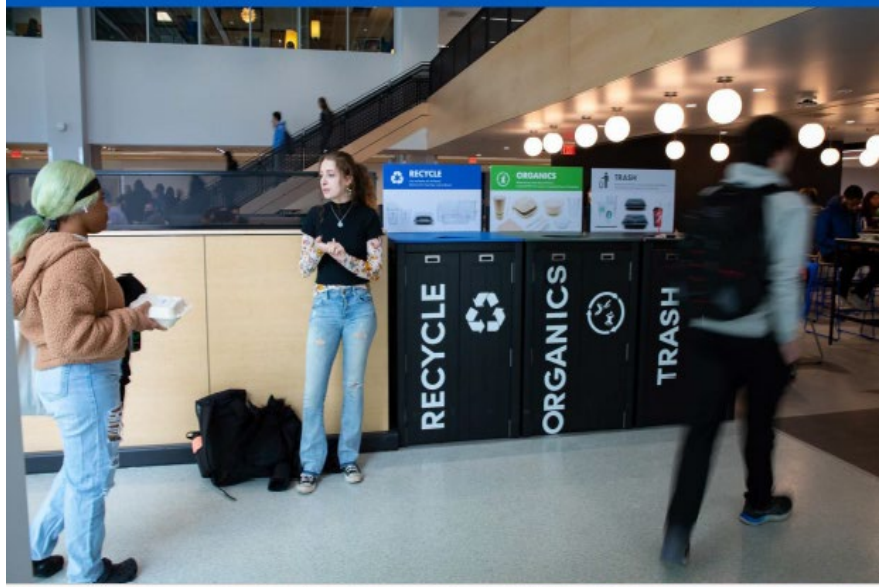
The path for moving forward

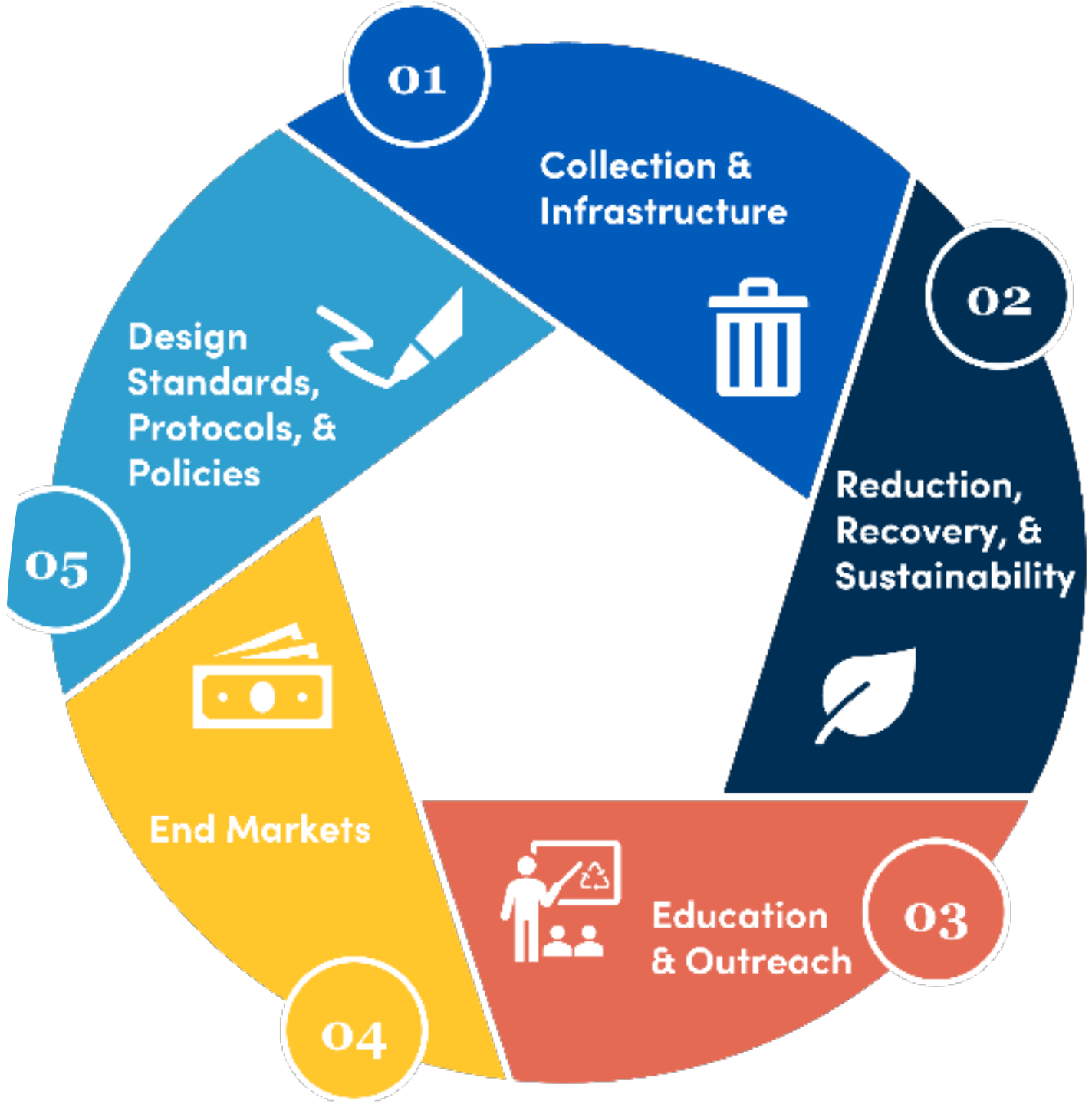

OUTFINE
HONEY STINGER
POP CORN

RRS | University at Buffalo

ZERO WASTE:

A CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY





ZERO WASTE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Management & Metrics

Zero Waste Design Standards

Forward Facing Collection Infrastructure

Recycle Organics

Zero Waste Toolbox

Policy Recommendations

Campus Participation

Custodial Practices

Back of House Speciality Waste

Compostable To-Go Dining

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resourcing, coordinating and administering the new system


Keep Fire Door
Closed
219

Re-Aligning the Incentive Structure to Achieve Zero Waste

Hauling & Resource Management RFP

Waste Hauling

- Objectives
- Waste Streams
- Equipment
- Technology and Sensors
- Signage and Standards
- Service, Response and Communication
- Reporting
- Additional Services

Resource Management

- Year One Objectives
- Year 2-5 Objectives
- Training and Educational Instructions

Program Implementation

- New Programs
- Transition Planning

The Value Proposition for Resource Management

- **Data Gap**: Less than half of the waste and recycling hauled away from campus is currently measured—that will change to 100%
- **Savings**: Case studies with leading vendor and other peer higher education intuitions **show 30% reduction in cost when leveraging a resource management model v. just hauling**
  - Studies show that for every dollar an organization pays for hauling and logistics, they spend up to $10 handling the material to be disposed thus potential for ripple effect savings
- **Efficiency**: Sensors, scales and other technology will reduce waste collecting and hauling pickups when not needed
- **Compliance:** this will bring UB into full compliance with the NYS food recycling law
- **Capacity:** Will provide a designated FTE to coordinate all waste streams, something we currently do not have
- **Risk:** our current process relies on single vendor verification of weights
- **Increased Diversion Rate**: The resource Management model has extensive data showing **20%-50% increase** in diversion rate possible within a few years

INFRASTRUCTURE

Implementing the new ROT system and rightsizing our zero waste system for the campus


RECYCLE
Cans and Bottles, #1, #2 Plastics,
Aluminum Foil, Clean Paper and Cardboard
ORGANICS
All Food Scraps, Meat, Dairy and Cheese,
Compostable #7 PLA Containers, Compostable Cups and Dining Ware.
TRASH
ORGANIC
TRASH
EXIT

Narrow corridors, in office suites and areas which historically have not generated large amounts of waste

Dining rooms and large gatherings areas

Organics for kitchenette/break area

Open/public space such as corridors, and near elevators and lobbies.

Outdoor use


LANDFILL
RECYCLING


Mixed Recycling
Landfill
Compost

Design Standards

- **ADA compliant**
- **Constructed as a single unit, which collects three streams of waste (recycling, organics and trash)**
- **Fabricated using recycled materials as required by NYS Executive Order 22**
- **Display two types of signage including a listing the acceptable materials on the front of the bin and accompanying lid**
  - **Signage will feature a QR code leading to comprehensive information**
- **Display signage at eye-level and apply universal design**
- **Display signage in the form of a "backboard" attached to the bin**
- **Color coded for quick visual recognition**
  - **Royal Blue: mixed recycling (paper, plastics, glass, metal, cardboard)**
  - **Kelly/Hunter Green: organics, compostable food waste and ASTM 6400 compostable service ware**
  - **Black: garbage/trash**
- **Specific apertures assigned to each waste stream to help with differentiation**
  - **Mixed recycling: Saturn-style or triangular opening**
  - **Organics: Round opening with hinged lid**
  - **Trash: Swing flap or square opening**
- **Assembled left to right in the order of recycling, organics, trash**

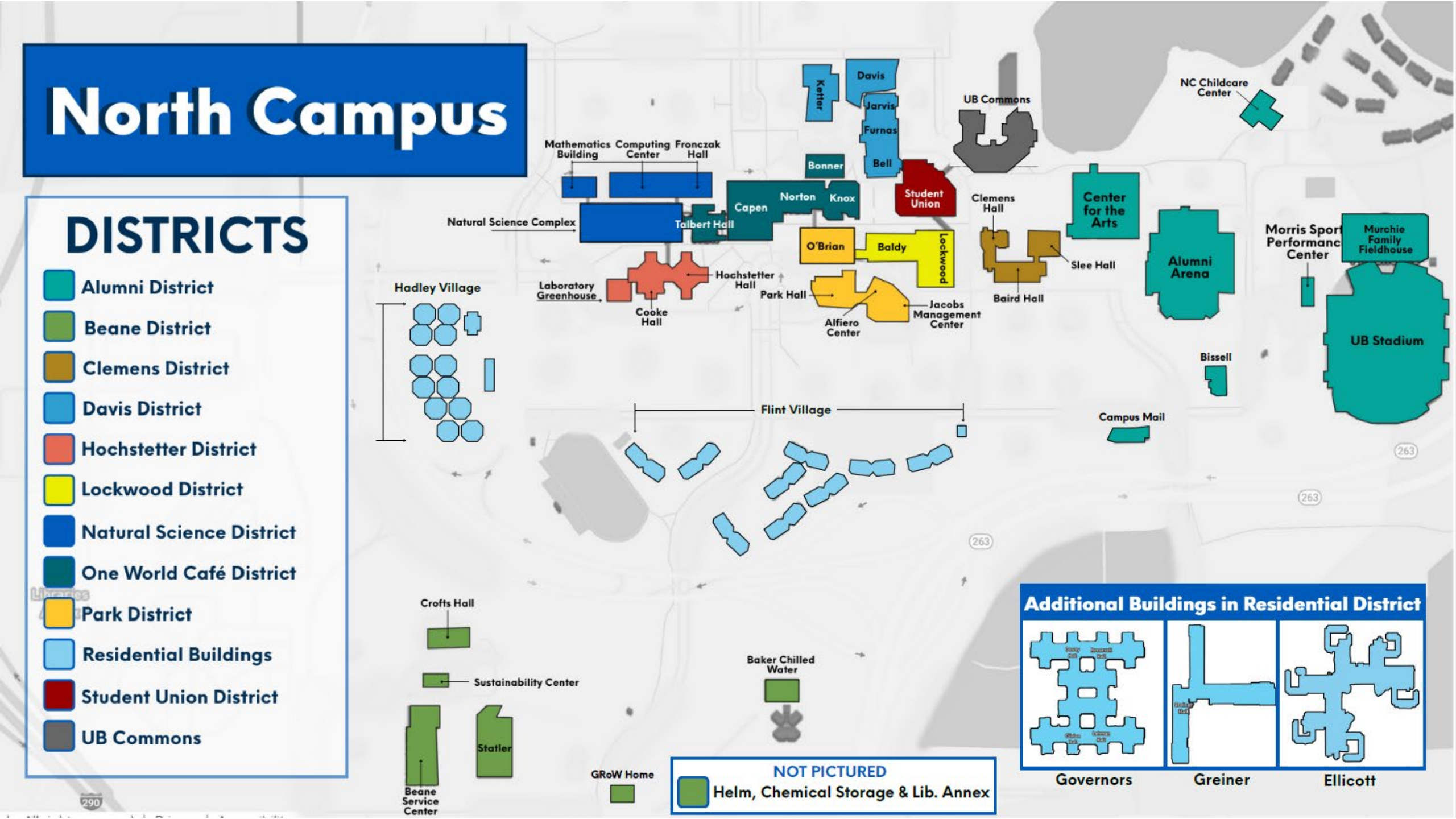
All equipment being purchased through a centralized process to ensure only approved equipment is used


RECYCLE
ORGANICS

North Campus

DISTRICTS

- Alumni District
- Beane District
- Clemens District
- Davis District
- Hochstetter District
- Lockwood District
- Natural Science District
- One World Café District
- Park District
- Residential Buildings
- Student Union District
- UB Commons



Additional Buildings in Residential District

Governors | Greiner | Ellicott

NOT PICTURED

Helm, Chemical Storage & Lib. Annex

South Campus

DISTRICTS

- BEB District
- Goodyear District
- Parker District
- Pharmacy District
- South Childcare District
- Squire District

Key Factors Being Leveraged in Sequencing the District Order

- Capital and renovation plan for built infrastructure
- Connection to other buildings and occupant behavior
- Primary function of building (i.e. office, classroom, gathering space, event space, etc.)
- Volume of people in buildings (i.e. used by specific groups or all members of campus)
- Projected amount of organic waste generated
- Overall amount of ROT infrastructure needed and cost implications
- Receptivity and enthusiasm of building inhabitants to adopting new organizational behavior change in regard to zero waste goals and management
- Alignment with overall zero waste strategic plan

University Partnership

What role do you play? What role does UB play? How do we get there together

So What is Actually Changing?

- **Mindset**: waste is not something that simply gets trucked off campus—our actions have global consequences
- **Action**: moving to a Recycle, Organics & Trash (ROT) system (new infrastructure)
- **Responsibility:** your waste, your responsibility! Staff/faculty/students will dispose of the waste they generate in ROT's, custodians to remove from those areas

How did we/I do?

Complete the session survey using your smart device:

Scan the QR code provided on your schedule.

OR

Scan the QR code shown here.