

# Guiding Principles for Campus Planning Penn State University

## Introduction

An on-going comprehensive and inclusive planning process for the Penn State University campuses provides a flexible framework to guide decisions that will enhance the physical campus environment. These decisions will strive to balance and unite aesthetic character, programmatic needs, long-range flexibility, sustainability, and life cycle costs.

In order to provide an overview and explanation of the values that will serve as a foundation for future planning efforts, the following planning principles have been compiled. These principles have been grouped into the following categories, with an understanding that their interrelation and balance is critical to successful planning:

- Campus Planning (Land Use and Spatial Organization)
- Campus Character
- Vibrant and Student Centered Campus
- Sustainable Campus
- Multi-Modal Transportation, Circulation, and Parking
- Community Integration

These planning principles contribute to the vision and goals of the University through the stewardship of the University's existing and future physical assets and by supporting operations critical to the University's Land-Grant mission: teaching, research, and public service.

The intent is that these principles will be considered in long-range land use and development decisions, provide guidance in day-to-day operational and design decisions, and assist in accommodating changes in programs and space requirements that inevitably arise.

## Campus Planning (Land Use and Spatial Organization)

Use the Campus Master Plan (Land Use and Open Space Framework), Energy Master Plan (utility systems), and supporting documents to guide the future assignment of university land, to establish appropriate adjacencies among uses, and to develop an overall structure of campus open space that ties the campus together, defines its visual character, and protects its environmental qualities.

- The campus master plan will establish precincts that are informed by college and departmental plans.
- Maintain preferred land use districts and locations for land-intensive functions such as the arboretum, agricultural research, recreation, athletics, parking, and football parking in concert with building-based functions such as academic, research, and residential.

- Prioritize in-fill development, and establishing appropriate densities for campus districts.
- Maintain future building sites for most appropriate programs.
- Make wise use of the limited available land resources in and surrounding the campus core.
- Consider the highest and best use of building sites to ensure that long-range opportunities are not constrained by decisions made to address immediate needs.
- Maintain a long-range understanding of the types of facilities and amounts of building space and land resources the University will require in the future.
- Maintain flexibility in the master plan to allow for unforeseen opportunities to be accommodated.
- Expand the original open space framework of the core to unify the entire campus.
- Integrate accommodations for transportation and utility infrastructure with land use and open space networks to achieve an efficient campus environment with long-term value.
- Maintain long-term growth opportunities for Innovation Park, the University Airport, and the Mount Nittany Medical Center.
- Preserve and develop long-term opportunities for agricultural land use and research needs.

## **Campus Character**

The physical environment of the campus is an expression of the University's overall quality, brand, and the educational experience it provides.

- Preserve iconic views within (Old Main) and beyond campus (Mount Nittany).
- Preserve historically significant buildings, landscapes, and districts. The historic core and sacred spaces are important symbols of Penn State's tradition, dignity, and pride.
  - Iconic buildings (i.e. Old Main, University House, Borland, Schwab, etc.)
  - Iconic landscapes (i.e. Old Main Lawn, HUB Lawn, Pattee Mall, Henderson Mall, etc.)
  - Heritage Trees and Groves
- Preserve and build-upon the best architectural, landscape, and planning qualities of campus.
- While being directly informed by programmatic requirements and state-of-the-art technologies, materials, and design, the design of each new building, addition, and renovation will be context driven to ensure an appropriate relationship with the site, adjacent buildings, and overall campus context.
- Advance the ideal of a pedestrian centered campus by maintaining and improving the major pedestrian and open space corridors and in the campus core.

- Maintain defined and coherent campus edges that are open and integrated with the community.
- Highlight campus entrances and gateways to foster a welcoming and user-friendly arrival experience.
- Strategically integrate all buildings into the campus landscape to create comfortable and memorable outdoor spaces.
- Maintain and promote the aesthetic appeal of campus with every investment in facilities and grounds.
- Develop and maintain campus standards for site amenities and materials to create a consistent, high-quality public realm and uniform campus fabric.
- Screen back-of-house operations to minimize the visual impact of service areas from adjacent civic spaces.

## **Vibrant and Student Centered Campus**

A vibrant campus benefits students, faculty, staff, visitors, alumni, and the community as a whole. It provides a pattern of memorable and functional outdoor spaces to enhance the student experience.

- Use the campus as a “learning laboratory” to advance the academic mission of the University.
- Maintain and enhance indoor and outdoor spaces that encourage and accommodate activity and interaction throughout campus.
- Maintain and expand coherent, efficient, and safe network of walkways. Connect all destinations on campus.
- Maintain and enhance pedestrian-friendly campus streets (comfortable, attractive, and safe)
- Provide accessible routes throughout campus and into all buildings.
- Keep public spaces professionally maintained.

## **Sustainable Campus**

The planning and development of Penn State’s campuses strives to exemplify the University’s commitment to environmental stewardship and balances the needs of present and future generations.

- Promote energy conservation through responsible planning, design, construction, and renovation of campus facilities.

- Encourage the efficient use of resources (energy, water, materials, etc.) to provide economic solutions, minimize demand, reduce waste, and preserve and protect natural resources.
- Protect the quality of water resources and the natural environment by establishing protected environmental resource areas.
- Develop a comprehensive campus stormwater management approach to mitigate impacts of campus development and improve water quality.
- Prevent environmental degradation through land use and land development decisions and processes.
- Advance the health, wellbeing, and comfort of the campus community by promoting access to daylight and views.
- Invest wisely with an understanding of initial costs and life-cycle costs.
- Incorporate resource efficient and low polluting technologies into new and renovated facilities to reduce operating and societal costs, and to provide opportunities for research in this field.
- Preserve environmentally valuable open spaces and promote green infrastructure resources, such as wetlands, mature trees and groves, groundwater infiltration areas, and drainageways.

## **Multi-Modal Transportation, Circulation, and Parking**

Use the Intermodal Transportation Plan and supporting documents to guide the safe, efficient, and effective movement of people and vehicles within the overall campus master plan.

- Provide accommodations for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit to enhance the pedestrian centered campus experience of the academic core.
- Develop facilities that support an effective and efficient intermodal transportation system and reduce dependence on cars.
- Meet the evolving demands of a diverse population by encouraging an optimal mix of travel choices to get to, from, and through campus - minimizing capital expenditures for new parking facilities.
- Reduce environmental impact of transportation by reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Accommodate transportation and parking for all events on campus.
- Coordinate transportation with land use patterns on campus and in the community.

- Provide appropriate accommodations for emergency vehicles, service access, and those with enhanced mobility needs.
- Locate the majority of parking resources at the campus perimeter with dependable and comfortable transit service and bicycle accommodations to promote a pedestrian-oriented campus.
- Provide separation of vehicle and pedestrian traffic where major conflicts exist to enhance personal safety.
- Minimize the amount of vehicular traffic that passes through the campus core.

## **Community Integration**

The University Park campus is a defining feature of the community and the region. Therefore, the campus is developed and functions with consideration for regional impact.

- Coordinate on-campus land uses with adjacent off-campus land uses.
- Enhance the physical relationship between campus and the surrounding community by strengthening connections and views between the two.
- University development should be informed by local and regional planning goals for growth, development, infrastructure, and transportation systems.
- Consider the role of the campus as community resource.