Campus Master Plan
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
Campus Master Plan
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Introduction
Updating the Master Plan

This 2012 Campus Master Plan Update extends the philosophy and value system of the University’s transformational 2007 plan to capitalize upon the many opportunities presented by purchase of the 168-acre Bryce Hospital property in 2010. The result builds upon and respects the parallel and intertwined histories of both institutions, founded adjacent to one another in the 19th century, joining the essential spaces and places of both into a unified campus environment.

Essential to the planning process has been broad participation by members of the greater University community. Multiple interviews and brainstorming sessions were conducted with University administration, faculty, staff, students and alumni—and with the Bryce Hospital Historical Committee and the historian for the Department of Mental Health. Online survey responses from almost 1,800 members of the greater University community were analyzed by the University’s Manderson Graduate School of Business.

The message was clear from all sources: members of every segment of the University community love the high quality, overall environmental experience of the campus and they expressed a strong desire that it be maintained and continually improved. The 2012 Campus Master Plan Update honors those wishes, unifying the campus as a complete learning environment, interwoven into a gracious and hospitable setting that both nurtures the soul and inspires the mind.
Much has been accomplished since work began on the 2007 Campus Master Plan. Enrollment has increased significantly, new student housing has been added, the new Science and Engineering complex and the College of Nursing are in place, classrooms and research facilities have been renovated. Marrs Spring and Foster Auditorium have been restored and enhanced, and major additions to Bryant-Denny Stadium are complete. A campus transit system is in service to a daily ridership of over 15,000 and over 2,000 new parking spaces have been added.

The strategic concept for this plan update responds to the values and visions expressed by the greater University community. It extends the progress directed by the previous plan, and resolves issues of access, wayfinding and circulation, architecture, landscape, utilities and service, security, and the health of the natural environment, balanced in a way that continues to support realization of the mission of the University.

In accordance with principles adopted by the Board of Trustees as part of the 2007 campus plan, a primary open space system will continue to provide a “field” or “campus” within which buildings and functions are organized, with traditional relationships maintained between and among them. The University’s historic pattern of development is
extended northeasterly into the former campus of Bryce Hospital, whose key resources are retained for current and future use. Original building and open space patterns that were designed in the mid-19th century are strengthened to the benefit of the enlarged and unified campus.

The campus-wide strategy diagram shows existing buildings that will remain and, in deep crimson, building sites that may be utilized over time, consistent with retaining and enhancing a unified, campus-wide open space system, and in support of the values and visions expressed by respondents to the online survey. Key University functions are to be reinforced and extended. Academic activities (teaching, research, creative activity and service) will continue to be located mostly in the extended academic core of campus. University housing will surround much of that core, with most recreation and athletic functions and auxiliary services situated toward the campus perimeter.

The University intends to reinforce its entrances and primary vehicular corridors, which provide a major part of the University’s first impression and support campus-wide accessibility. Vehicular access is extended across the unified campus. Availability of parking at convenient times and places is increased through parking facility additions, which are proposed mostly toward the perimeter, and supported by expansions and extension of the campus transit system, bicycle lanes and paths, and the major walkway system.

Online survey respondents stressed the high quality environmental experience of the campus, the positive role of its significant tree cover and the character it lends to the open space system. Accordingly, the plan calls for significant enhancements and additions to this “urban forest” throughout the unified campus.

THE BIG IDEA

- **Unify** the expanded campus through coordinated, long-term renewal, reinvestment and improvement.
- **Extend** the University’s physical vision, built upon American campus planning traditions, consistent with the University’s historic building initiatives.
- **Continue** investment in accordance with the First Principles of the 2007 Campus Master Plan.
- **Assure** that campus investment is consistent with the vision presented by the Campus Master Plan and Design Guide.
In sum, the 2012 Campus Master Plan Update is built upon a strategic concept that provides for an enlarged, unified campus. Implemented in a systematic way, the plan assures the campus will be maintained, extended and enhanced through investment in a balance of new and renovated facilities that will meet the needs of a planned enrollment of 35,000 students, the many daily and occasional visitors to the campus, plus faculty and staff necessary to meet their needs.

**Historic Context**

Since its inception, The University of Alabama has been both participant in and reflection of the history and progress of the state and the nation. The original campus was designed by State Architect William Nichols, according to concepts of what would become a rich tradition of American campus planning. The University opened in 1831 with 52 students and seven buildings.

In its early years, the University reflected the frontier society of its surroundings. Nevertheless, by the outbreak of the Civil War three decades later, it had come far toward achieving the respect and quality its founders had contemplated. Meanwhile, the Alabama Legislature selected Tuscaloosa for the site of another major state institution, the Alabama Insane Hospital, on property immediately to the east. University president Landon Garland served as master of ceremonies and keynote speaker at the laying of the hospital cornerstone in July 1853.

Previous University president Basil Manly was a member of the Alabama Insane Hospital’s Board of Trustees that hired Dr. Peter Bryce, its first superintendent, a pioneer in the development of the moral treatment model, a philosophy that introduced humanitarian reform into the treatment of mental illness in the United States.

*Steve Davis, Historian*  
*Alabama Department of Mental Health*
The hospital opened and received its first patients in 1861, and soon became the prototypical architectural model used for construction of mental hospitals throughout the country. The university and this new hospital, outposts of higher education and the treatment of mental illness, respectively, located side by side just to the east of Tuscaloosa, were removed by some distance from their intellectual and financial support systems.

Their leaders quickly formed close personal and professional friendships. As Union troops approached in April 1865, President Garland sent his wife to safety with the Bryce family as he took command of the University cadets. From her vantage point inside the dome atop the hospital, Mrs. Garland observed Union troops setting fire to the University President’s Mansion. She quickly returned to the mansion on horseback and managed to persuade the troops to put out the fire.

Much of the original campus was in ashes in the summer of 1865. The President’s Mansion, Gorgas House, the Roundhouse, and Observatory (now Maxwell Hall) survived and remain today. Dr. Peter Bryce offered to let the University use the east side of the hospital campus, but there were too few students remaining to accommodate the move.

Civil War destruction of the University’s physical plant, serious financial difficulties and the political challenges of the Reconstruction era deeply affected both institutions. The state’s fledgling mental health hospital, which had drawn national attention for both the design of its facilities and its new approaches to treatment, struggled to survive, let alone grow to meet increasing demand.

In 1871, the University was reorganized and opened once again to students. The campus and the hospital continued to grow side by side, each dependent to a degree on one another. Dr Peter Bryce died in 1892; the legislature renamed the hospital in his honor. In 1893 University Trustee Julia Tutwiler successfully lobbied to open the University to female students.
The classical geometries that informed the original open space and building arrangements of the two campuses were continued through several successive building periods over the next century by the University. However, for the hospital to accommodate what seemed a geometric rate of patient population growth, required those ideals to be seriously compromised.

To support and guide the physical development of the campus, the University relied on a series of fund-raising campaigns and growth plans. These began early. The efforts of Presidents John William Abercrombie and Dr. George Denny furthered the growth of the campus between 1906 and 1936. Abercrombie created the first non-State funding source for campus development in the Greater University campaign. Following Abercrombie's campaign, the Million Dollar Plan was prepared in 1922, which contributed greatly to the beauty and coherency of the architectural environment of the Quad. President Denny and Bryce superintendent Dr. W.D. Partlow forged a strong alliance between the University and the hospital that was beneficial to both institutions, and student enrollment increased almost tenfold to over 5,000 students. Denny Chimes was dedicated in 1929.

The University enrolled its first African American student in 1956; Governor George Wallace made his Stand in the Schoolhouse Door in 1963. Both events were critical elements of the civil rights movement across the South. Just next door and less than a decade later, Bryce Hospital served as launching pad and focus of another civil rights movement: for those involuntarily committed to mental health institutions.

Malone Hood Plaza, dedicated in 2010, was constructed in honor of African American students Vivian Malone and James Hood, who enrolled in 1963 despite Governor Wallace’s efforts to prevent the University’s desegregation. The clock tower pictured above is named for Autherine Lucy, the University’s first African American student, who enrolled as a graduate student in 1956.
Through the decades of the 20th century, the state’s mental health system was systematically underfunded, the hospital population rose to over 5,000, and conditions worsened. In contrast, the 1960s witnessed significant growth and change to the University under President Frank Rose through the Greater University Development Program. It was during this time that campus expansion areas took on an automobile-oriented character, diverging in location, style and arrangement from the formality and character of the traditional core campus.

For the University, each succeeding development initiative reinforced major and minor building and open space axes. This ongoing design pattern produced dramatic and captivating open spaces bounded by multi-storied buildings. New buildings were positioned in response to the geometries created in previous development phases. The form of each building consciously responded to its position within the overall campus. Choosing to place certain buildings on major and minor axes added nuance to the campus design, creating breathtaking vistas terminated by major architectural elements. Each project ensured that building sites and adjacent open spaces were woven together. Within each building period, addition of landscaping, site furnishings, and circulation infrastructure reinforced a cohesive system of beautiful open spaces framed by equally beautiful, dignified buildings.

The hospital grounds, by contrast, rapidly became cluttered through incremental development with new buildings (and those abandoned in place) without benefit of an overall plan. This pattern persisted to such extent that the hospital building was reported in 1970 by Ripley’s Believe It or Not to have the longest roof line in the world. Most of the additions and some of the abandoned structures were removed during the following two decades.

As the University continued to evolve, the campus expanded and new buildings provided greater opportunities for education, including new colleges, museums, graduate and doctoral studies, computer-based education and research.
In the last three decades, the University developed a Campus Master Plan (1985) in concert with a highly successful capital campaign. That plan was later updated (1993 and 1999) and subsequent capital campaigns addressed ongoing needs. Much of the new investment continued to expand the footprint of the campus, but left students, faculty and staff more dependent on personal automobiles for access and circulation across areas of lesser density.

The 2007 Campus Master Plan under President Robert Witt redirected the patterns of investment on the University of Alabama campus, capitalizing upon and returning the campus to its American campus planning and design roots. Plan implementation led to a more walkable campus, defined by usable open space that embraces a traditional density of buildings and activity in an academic core that is gently surrounded by residential life and support services. The locus of parking shifted from the center of campus to the perimeter, and overall accessibility was increased dramatically through investment in bicycle facilities and implementation of a very popular transit system.

On May 27, 2010 the University purchased most of the property of Bryce Hospital, its next-door neighbor for 150 years, from the Alabama Department of Mental Health, increasing the size of the University campus by approximately 168 acres. Later that year, President Robert Witt announced a “Growing with Balanced Excellence” plan through which University enrollment would be increased to 35,000 by the year 2020. The story continues.
For the second time in less than a decade, the University has determined to increase the size of the student body over a several-year period. At the same time, the University continues the commitment to maintain the best of its physical character and identity—indeed, its high quality of campus life—while significantly expanding the campus for innovation and for excellence of its students, faculty and facilities. And it does so while incorporating into the campus the recent 168-acre purchase of the former Bryce Hospital property.

The continual quest for a quality physical environment parallels that of academic excellence. The online survey of the University community conducted early in the planning process revealed a depth of love and devotion members of the University community feel for the campus, one that fully supports its role as a place of academic and social growth and development. The respondents wrote fondly of places and spaces that have touched them then and now—of buildings and the memorable spaces in-between. With few exceptions, they supported planned enrollment growth, but voiced concern over the potential impact it might have on the quality of the physical environment about which they care so deeply.
The University will embrace its new property and fully unify the campus. In doing so, the University will maintain and enhance key structures, extend and replace infrastructure, provide opportunities for infill of new buildings in a manner compatible with a unified open space system, and remove facilities determined to be incompatible with the vision expressed in this document.

This campus plan update sets clear direction for accommodating planned growth while respecting the culture and image of both the University campus and the major resources of the Bryce property. It does so through extension of the University’s campus planning philosophy, goals, approach, and implementation system to incorporate the former Bryce property and provide a long-term strategy for a unified campus.

Through realization of the vision expressed in this plan, the University will continue to enhance quality, build on a rich past and enhance the total environmental character of the unified campus in support of teaching, research, creative activity, and service to the greater community. It will link these essential functions closely together in a manner that will encourage students, faculty, staff, and guests to meet and to learn from one another in a diverse range of settings, both in- and out-of-doors, and to pass safely and conveniently from one place to another by walking, cycling or use of the campus transit system.

The philosophy of the planning process is centered on an appropriate response to the context of traditional forms throughout the expanded campus at every scale:

*Unique*: The campus reflects the nature and character of the University—the institution and its role in the nation, region, state and community.

*Logical*: The campus is a logical, unified physical expression of the University’s mission and purpose.

*Respectful*: The campus accounts for, respects and capitalizes on the best of its physical organization, facilities, histories and traditions.

*Constituent-oriented*: The campus serves the greater University community.
GOALS

Unify and conserve the traditional campus and Bryce property, together with engaging open spaces, landmark structures and overall sense of place.

Enliven the campus with a diversity of opportunity for academic and social engagement, indoors and in outdoor spaces suitable for quiet conversations as well as passive and active recreation.

Adapt buildings and facilities as appropriate to accommodate innovation and expansion, mindful of the impacts of density, accessibility, and indoor-outdoor relationships.

Organize buildings in traditional patterns around shared usable open spaces and featuring endearing architecture.

Integrate new construction with incremental infill that embraces the campus-wide open space system.

Invest in the quality of the campus experience through an overall development strategy and implementation system.

To assure this outcome, planning, design and development of the campus will continue to embrace the fundamental principles upon which the University of Alabama was initially planned and designed, even as the University continues to grow and respond to contemporary demands:

An organized open space system will extend the learning experience beyond the classroom and continue to engage students in their surroundings.

The campus will be complete in and of itself, organized to provide a diversity of facilities, services, and experiences appropriate and essential to the mission of the institution and development of the student, both as individual and member of a community.

Strong, coherent organizing systems of streets, paths, buildings, and open spaces that are simple, direct, and compelling will provide future building projects with logical locations and appropriate sites, framed by streets and open spaces as primary elements of a legible campus.
A walkable campus will support bicycle use and transit accessibility, while reducing the burden of dedicating significant areas of land throughout the campus for access and short-term parking of personal automobiles and will support healthy, active lifestyles, which are essential to full intellectual and social growth of the University community.

Traditional building location and relationships will provide a place that is greater than the sum of its individual parts. Each building and open space will be designed in context—respecting the overall organization and image of the campus and visual and physical concern for its neighbors.

Prominent outdoor spaces to support student life will provide opportunities to interact with one another in support of intellectual development for members of the University community. They will also provide the opportunity to directly engage the environment or conversely, to contemplate it from a distance.
In sum, this vision for an expanded, unified and legible campus is consistent with the First Principles for campus organization, planning and design adopted by the Board of Trustees as part of the 2007 campus master plan, revised and enhanced as appropriate to the many opportunities and challenges inherent in a major land acquisition.

By achieving this vision, the campus will continue to offer a complete learning environment—a hospitable, yet engaging academic setting, steeped in the beauty, climate and culture of the South, where residential life, academics, outdoor gathering places, walkways, and recreation areas are interwoven.

This effort will require constant vigilance, especially during a complex process of integrating new property, engaging in thoughtful, adaptive use of selected facilities while surgically removing others, and reinforcing what is arguably the premier example of the American campus planning tradition in the Deep South, beautifully executed, maintained and enhanced for over 180 years.
FIRST PRINCIPLES

• The primary purpose of the campus is to provide appropriate settings for teaching, research, creative activity and service.

• The core of campus is for learning and for selected supporting spaces and services essential to learning.

• The surroundings of the core are for student residences and student life – an environment supportive of learning.

• Other supportive spaces and functions, including access to the core and its immediate surroundings, are directed primarily to the campus perimeter.

• A usable open space system, consisting of a diversity of spaces and outdoor spaces, defines the overall campus.

• Historic resources are respected and supported.

• Campus buildings are placed in a manner that helps to create and form a diverse system of usable, legible open spaces.

• Primary campus streets provide an appropriate setting for major campus precincts, with key buildings organized in a traditional manner.

• Persons on foot take precedence over bicycles and automobiles in the campus core.

• A primary walkway system links usable open spaces and places, and interconnects campus residential areas with the academic core.

• All campus streets are designed to provide equal status to the movement of bicycles, automobiles and transit vehicles.

• A campus transit system provides a dependable, reliable and efficient alternative to the automobile.

• Walkways, bicycle paths and lanes, and vehicle access and parking systems are organized to direct internal vehicular trips to the campus transit system.

• Vehicular access to the campus core is restricted during selected times and days.

• Parking is managed as a limited resource, especially toward the campus core.

• New parking facilities are situated outside the core and are accessible to the surrounding road network.

• The ratio of residence hall beds to nearby resident parking spaces is 1:1; parking for residents is permitted nowhere else on campus.

• Commuter parking is situated primarily toward the perimeter and served by the campus transit system.
3

Plan Elements
Master Plan Elements

The illustrative plan represents a future build-out of the unified, extended campus. This image proposes conceptual building and open space arrangements where future expansion and infill are to occur. The campus open space system is the dominant feature of the campus and ties together its historic core, modern expansions, and future development and infill. New structures are shown in red and existing structures in gray.

The illustrative plan depicts a modified transportation infrastructure that includes primary streets linking Hackberry Lane, Jack Warner Parkway and Fifth Avenue to open up the northeast portion of the campus. Overall the accessibility system accommodates and stimulates walking and bicycle travel and the use of a campus transit system. In the figure, the circulation elements highlighted in gold are intended for walking and for bicycle, transit and service vehicle access. The remaining thoroughfares are intended for general vehicular access in combination with the other modes of circulation.

Figure 1: Illustrative Plan
Legibility: Open Space System

As appropriate to reinforcement and extension of the American campus planning tradition, the unified campus is defined and organized by an overall open space system. It consists of a diverse range of formal and informal, landscaped open spaces (quads, lawns, plazas, courtyards, recreational fields, passive parks greenways and trails, and athletic fields), streetscapes and paths, and natural areas. Each space is set aside and is or will be designed to respect natural systems and man-made geometry, as appropriate to location and intended use.

The open space network provides a setting for existing and proposed buildings, and ties campus areas together physically, offering opportunities for students, staff, and visitors to interact comfortably and safely outdoors. Natural areas and wildlife habitats afford educational opportunities that cannot be substituted indoors. Finally, the overall open space system is critical to achieving an appropriate balance between built and unbuilt space—between ongoing physical development of the campus and the effects of density on those who live, work, and play on the campus and on the surrounding natural systems.
Campus Core. In the academic core of the campus, open spaces are arranged in response to the prevailing, mostly formal, geometric relationships established and maintained throughout the development of the campus over the last two centuries. Buildings embrace and support the design, use, and safety of these open spaces through their arrangement and massing. Open space types include quads, plazas, and lawns.

Residential Areas. For student living, open spaces provide opportunities for passive recreation and interaction and also a buffer and transition between public and private space. Each residential area incorporates a central green large enough to accommodate a variety of uses. Residential open spaces include lawns, courtyards, and quads.

Support areas. In the eastern portions of the campus, a more picturesque or informal arrangement of open spaces and buildings prevails. In these areas, where recreational and athletic uses are provided, there is a greater ratio of open space to building footprint. Project designers will effectively arrange and design open spaces and buildings to prevent “remnant” open spaces that detract from the purposefulness and cohesiveness of the overall network of open spaces.

Figure 3: Defining Elements of the Open Space System
Environmental Context

The University of Alabama campus is spread gently upon a rolling knoll, atop lush green bluffs on the south bank of the Black Warrior River. For many years, the University has enjoyed scenic views of barges, ferries, and boats floating along the glistening river below. But until recently these views have been little more than a passing thought, a back door to the University. All the while, the natural patterns of streams and drainage swales continued to flow from the University toward the river, supporting green fingers of vegetation, weaving the two environments together. Picturesque rock outcroppings remained hidden within the dense vegetation of the bluffs, and the waters from Marr’s Spring carved undulant patterns into the rocky stream bed that few have seen.

Meanwhile, the knoll above, where the University rests, is decorated with stately buildings, organized in geometric patterns and softened by the shaded canopies of immense oaks over azaleas and manicured lawns. The Quad has served as the symbolic core of the University since its inception, and remains one of the most iconic of American campus open spaces.

This pattern of the landscape has been the framework for the Capstone since its inception—carefully planned on the one hand and inadvertently preserved on the other, altogether it illustrates the essence of a wild and genteel Southern landscape.

Next door, the Bryce Hospital campus, with a similar relation to the Black Warrior River and its advantages of location, began with its major building oriented to capture views of majestic lawns and vistas of garden plots. Much of the original lawn remains, and significant open space will be recaptured through implementation of this plan.

With acquisition of the Bryce property, the University has doubled its frontage along the Black Warrior River, offering additional access and opportunity for riverfront use. Consequently, an important consideration is appropriate use and conservation of the riverbanks in a manner reflecting the values of the University toward its environmental context.
The Natural Southern Landscape

The bluffs along the Black Warrior River will continue to serve as a natural buffer between the University and the river, whose usually calm waters can change quickly in times of flood, when runoff from much of the state flows through the area and spills over its banks. The native vegetation has withstood the test of time, through countless storms and flood events: the ecosystem is tough yet fragile, and will be conserved insofar as possible.

One of the few access points along the river is the historic Lock Two, adjacent to the University’s Park at Manderson Landing. The industrial structure has been inundated by high water many times, yet it continues to offer a solid edge to the river, and opportunities for access and viewing. Most of the rest of the riverbank remains in a stable, yet also fragile condition. Paths, trails, and scenic overlooks will be carefully blended into the existing framework, thereby minimizing erosion and disturbance.

The existing rock outcrops and natural streams along the bluffs will be conserved in their natural state, with limited access and intervention. Existing native vegetation and ecological habitat will be conserved, managed and supplemented as appropriate.
The Genteel Southern Landscape

The University of Alabama is steeped in tradition and culture, and this is reflected in the landscape environs. Stately oaks shade the beautiful lawns, walks, and drives that welcome guests and visitors. Flowering trees and shrubs rustle in the gentle breeze, as hosts await their visitors on shady porches, offering sweet tea and lots of southern hospitality. Greek life is abundant, and cultural events abound. The campus environs are a welcome host to the life and culture of the University.

The addition of the Bryce campus allows the University to expand without compromising the rich Southern landscape. As the University continues to grow over the years, it will maintain the ratio of building to open space, and overall density of the campus. The Bryce property features its own formal spaces and lawns that complement the campus environs. These spaces, especially Bryce Lawn and the entrance drive with its allee of oaks will be conserved and enhanced. The focus will remain on conservation of the unified campus setting and the knitting together of its formal spaces.
Functional Organization

The University intends that the unified campus of the future continue to build upon the best of its past while capitalizing on opportunities that may present themselves over time. With that in mind, the functional organization of land use or activity areas proposed by this plan—academic and administrative support, housing, athletics and active recreation, passive and meeting and interactive spaces, and support facilities—follows and reinforces the prevailing patterns of campus development presented in the 2007 Campus Master Plan, extended in a similar way across the unified campus.

Functions

Academic and administrative support. The academic campus (shown in red) is intended primarily for learning, including teaching, research, creative activity and service—and for selected supporting services and outdoor spaces of various sizes that are essential to learning. The important historic resources—especially the essential buildings and spaces of the two parent institutions—will be respected and supported within this area.

Campus housing. The surroundings—to the north and south of the academic campus—(shown in yellow) are reserved primarily for student residences, student life, and immediate support functions—in an environment conducive to learning.
Athletics and recreation. In support of physical health and welfare, much of the campus is dedicated to athletic and recreational facilities and spaces (shown in green), which augment passive, meeting and interactive outdoor spaces that are included in all functional areas of the campus.

Support functions. Other support functions (shown in blue), such as medical, cultural and general use facilities, and most parking resources, are directed toward the campus perimeter—recognizing, of course, the need for selected exceptions in cases where such uses provide a routine service to students, faculty, and staff and therefore need to be located near or within the academic or residential portions of the unified campus.

Community interface. To the south and west of the campus are located zones of interaction between campus and surrounding community that are of tremendous mutual importance. These include business areas and neighborhoods that share more than just physical boundaries with the campus—both City and University have critical interests in the quality of life of these areas.

Expansion and Infill

The expanded campus has multiple opportunities for infill to accommodate the functions that will be required to serve the growing student population. The following describes the locations in which different facilities needs may be accommodated in accordance with the overall vision for the campus.

Academic Buildings. New academic growth will be accommodated primarily through adaptive use of existing classroom buildings and former Bryce Hospital campus buildings to remain. As need arises, additional opportunities for infill with academic buildings are located strategically throughout the campus, to be massed and articulated to support and activate the campus-wide open space system.
Housing. Several opportunities exist for continued development of on-campus housing to ensure adequate supply as the student population increases. New development will occur through expansion into previously undeveloped portions of the campus and through infill and replacement in existing residential areas. The intent is to assure proximity to the academic core and to on-campus services integral to student life. New housing will be designed into a pattern consisting of modestly-sized blocks, or building groups, with immediate access to usable open space opportunities and to sidewalks and paths connecting to the campus core.

Reorganization and rebuilding of some affinity housing will accommodate more students and lower densities, including along a realigned Second Avenue, University Boulevard, and south of the campus academic core. The arrangement of new residential buildings includes a significant open space within the block, responds to the central north-south axis extending from the Quad, while also addressing the influences of adjacent block and building geometries. Additional affinity group housing is provided on both sides of the Second Avenue extension.

The surroundings of the core are for student residences and student life—an environment supportive of learning.
**Athletics.** Athletics facilities are typically dedicated to the University’s athletic programs in contrast to those facilities open for general student recreational use.

With the exception of Bryant Denny Stadium, all athletic facilities are located either south of Paul W. Bryant Drive or in the easternmost portions of the campus near 5th Avenue East and the eastern end of Campus Drive. The location of the aquatic center is shifted to a site adjacent to the University Recreation Center, supporting its joint use by Athletics and University Recreation.
Recreation. Existing recreation structures and facilities include the University Recreation Center, recreational fields, and tennis courts, which are available to the general student population. Opportunities to expand recreational facilities include a recreation center within the northerly student housing district, and new softball fields and general use fields in easterly and northerly areas, respectively, of the expanded campus.
Support facilities include campus administration, student services, on-campus dining and retail, hotel and conference facilities, storage, maintenance, and other ancillary functions. Most of these functions occur along the perimeter of the core academic area with those buildings most directly interrelated with campus daily activity located closer to the core and to student living areas. The demand for additional support space is not expected to increase in direct proportion to the increase in student population. With an efficient development pattern, additional space can be afforded, as needed for these functions, over time.
Surface and structured parking is located throughout the campus, but arrayed mostly toward the perimeter. Surface parking is a very low-value use of University property, displacing more valuable uses and separating people and facilities from one another. This reinforces University resolve to shift surface parking from the interior of the campus to perimeter locations, to encourage and support walking, bicycle and transit access, and to utilize valuable core locations for academic and residential facilities. Commuter parking lots will continue to be located along the campus perimeter near major roads to ensure convenient access. Structured parking will continue to be placed strategically to reduce the need for surface parking. As always, the University intends to provide safe, convenient non-vehicular circulation infrastructure in combination with transit operations and effective wayfinding strategies to provide effective access alternatives to students, faculty, and staff.
Wayfinding and Circulation

The process of wayfinding is one of gathering visual cues from the environment to help make decisions about how to get from one place to another. The unified campus has new destinations and multiple modes of travel. Thus, it is essential that the environment provide an organized and effective destination guidance system. This will continue to be accomplished through the design of buildings and open spaces as well as through appropriate, coordinated signage.

Image Corridors

Image corridors are the major routes through the campus along which gateways and major wayfinding decision points occur. These are primarily vehicular routes and are corridors to which the University will continue to pay special attention in order to maintain the level of quality it wishes to portray to the University community and to visitors.
Gateways

Gateways are the first experience of the campus for visitors. They also act as thresholds, through which one passes and senses a transition into a new place. Effective gateways and major decision points aid in the campus wayfinding system. Gateway features include special buildings, landscaping, signage, and streetscape elements to emphasize this sense of transition and provide visual information to aid in navigating the campus.

Figure 12: Gateways

Figure 13: Decision Points

Signage

Signage is a critical element in the wayfinding system but should not be overdone. The current major wayfinding signage system directs visitors to appropriate parking opportunities and to the transit system, and limits the number of signs so they do not become confusing or detract from the beauty and elegance of the campus. Essential signage elements for the campus will generally continue to include landscaped monument signs at gateways, primary vehicular direction signs, street name signs, pole-mounted banners in specific locations, information kiosks, parking opportunity signage, and building signs.
Circulation

The University will continue to support and encourage walking and bicycle use and limit private motor vehicle access to and within the campus core, while expanding access options for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Investment in multi-modal facilities and services will continue. Sidewalks and paths will be widened, improved, expanded, and extended. On-street and off-street bicycle facilities will be improved and added. The campus transit system will continue to interconnect dispersed points throughout the unified campus, including perimeter parking areas.

All campus streets are designed to provide equal status to the movement of automobiles and bicycles.

A primary walkway system interconnects campus residential areas with the academic core.
University Initiatives
Open Space System

The Quad

This traditional collegiate open space has long served as the symbolic core of the campus. It was center of the 1829 plan for an academical village created by State Architect William Nichols. Over the years, subsequent plans and building programs have reinforced the geometries of the Quadrangle. This important open space features places for gathering in the sun or shade, amidst large stands of trees, cozy nooks, and formal terraces. The University continues its commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of this iconic space, its lawn and vegetation, for the use and enjoyment of the greater University community.

Black Warrior River Bluffs and Riverbank

The Black Warrior River offers a natural environmental buffer along the northern edge of the University. Native stands of trees and vegetation cover rock outcrops and shade natural streambeds. The Park at Manderson Landing provides direct access to the river and walking connections to the Tuscaloosa Riverwalk. The riverside bluffs offer a connection between the University and the environmental and cultural features of one of Alabama’s primary waterways, the Black Warrior River.

Remnants of the historic lock at Manderson Landing provide one of the few remaining examples of the craftsmanship of the original stone locks along the Black Warrior River.
These were constructed of huge blocks of stone, hand shaped with hammer and chisel. The original stonework has withstood the tests of time and flooding, and served as a beautiful viewing platform for the University.

With the addition of the Bryce property, the University has added considerable frontage along the river. An important initiative is appropriate use and conservation of the riverbanks of the Black Warrior River that reflect the values and mission of the University, further linking the campus to its environmental context. In addition to trails and overlooks, facilities will be added to accommodate the University’s Rowing Team. As a component of a plan for conservation and maintenance of the riparian habitat, natural vegetation, rock outcrops and tributary streams will be conserved.

The Black Warrior River is named after Choctaw Chief Tushkalusa, also the namesake of Tuscaloosa. In Choctaw, tushka means “warrior” and lusa means “black.” During the early days of industrialization in the state, the federal government built a system of locks and dams along the Black Warrior River that resulted in one of the longest channelized waterways in the United States.

**Marr’s Spring Preserve**

The preserve at Marr’s Spring Road and Campus Drive is a shady woodland spring, featuring walks, bridges, and peaceful places of respite. The University recently completed improvements to the area of the spring. The new park offers a shady gathering place, and an escape from the urban environment. It is also a place for groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, and outdoor classrooms. Its success will be extended downstream toward the Black Warrior River along with extension of the campus walkway system.
**The Crescent**

This picturesque rolling landscape serves as an important component of the campus watershed. Here, expansive lawns and green areas offer places for groundwater recharge. The Crescent serves as the dividing line between the watershed systems of the northern and southern portions of the campus, offering an elegant, rolling meadow, where wide pathways and elegant bridges are set amongst intramural recreation fields, picnic lawns, and ponds.

**Bryce Lawn**

This tree-covered lawn, south of the central Bryce Administration Building, lies on an axis defined by the Bryce campus entry drive lined with stately oaks. The Lawn is an important part of the composition of the Bryce property. The lush, shady grounds were planned as an important element in the well-being and mental health of the hospital residents. The buildings were designed such that every room offered expansive views of the lush green environment. This lawn will be preserved and maintained as an important component of the urban forest and open space system. The lawn offers an array of sunny and shady spaces for informal gatherings and scenic respite.

**Capstone Promenade**

This classical campus mall is located along the axis terminated by Smith Hall to the east and Morgan Hall to the west. The Promenade features elegant walks, seating areas, and the central Gorgas Plaza and fountain. The Promenade has always served as an important crossroads at the approximate geographic center of the campus. It links the Quad, the Crimson Promenade, the future Seventh Avenue Pedestrian Mall, and a series of key walkways that radiate outward and interconnect all of the campus open space system. The Promenade features gathering areas and comfortable nodes for small groups. It will include an Academic Honors Plaza to be located between Gorgas Library and Clark Hall.
Crimson Promenade

An important link between the campus core and the northern residential villages, the Crimson Promenade will be extended southerly as reclamation of the core of campus from private automobile access continues. Extension of the promenade’s richly decorated walkway, with its commemorative bricks, ornamental iron work, and vine covered trellis and columns, will complete the link between Ferguson Plaza and the Quad.

University Boulevard

The Lawn at University Boulevard is one of the most beloved features of the University, with its extensive urban forest of oak trees. Tuscaloosa was nicknamed the Druid City during the Civil War era because of its abundance of old oaks and hardwoods, many of which were found on the campus of the University. Today, Druid City Hospital and the School of Nursing serve as the easterly gateway to both the community and University, but the tree canopy to the east is not nearly as majestic as at the core of campus. The University will invest in tree planting along this important image corridor.

Urban Forest

The University’s urban forest cover has consistently been rated one of the most popular and beloved aspects of the University in campus surveys and interviews. Indeed, the online survey conducted for this master plan update indicated clearly the University community would like to extend the urban forest of the campus core to other parts of the campus, and especially along its major image corridors. In response, the University will prepare and implement a Master Tree Plan that will guide the planting of formal tree lawns throughout the campus, with special emphasis on the image corridors.

Figure 16: Existing campus tree cover
Figure 17: Planned campus tree cover
Academic and Support Facilities

Academic and support facilities are critical to serving the envisioned student population. The most significant expansion of these facilities will result from renovation of existing academic buildings and adaptive use and expansion of other existing facilities.

As new facilities have been constructed over the past several years, the University has systematically taken older classroom buildings “off-line” and repurposed them through significant reinvestment. The first of these was Lloyd Hall, which once housed a typical assortment of classrooms and laboratories, plus faculty and administrative offices. Following redesign and renewal, it is now one of the most popular and heavily used buildings on the Quad, with a larger number and variety of teaching spaces for general use, food services, and indoor spaces in which students and faculty may meet, study and engage in social interaction between classes.

Russell Hall was next, and, as the new Science and Engineering facilities become fully occupied, more are to follow along this path to “new” and repurposed teaching space at a fraction of the cost to tear down and rebuild.

As the expanded campus continues to become available for University occupancy, many of the former Bryce facilities will lend themselves to renewal and reinvestment for a variety of adaptive uses. The former Bryce facilities, some of historic value, others in good or very poor condition, and most in between, present a variety of opportunities.

In accordance with the contract of purchase between the University of Alabama and the Alabama Department of Mental Health, and in consultation with the Bryce Hospital Historical Committee, the University has examined and evaluated all hospital property facilities. Each has been reviewed for potential adaptive use against known and anticipated University space needs. The costs to bring each facility up to current building codes and to refit for appropriate adaptive use have been weighed. Those listed at left are under consideration for restoration, adaptive use and expansion, as appropriate.
Housing

Construction of additional on-campus housing will continue as needed to accommodate the planned student population. Although expansion and/or infill is proposed in several locations, the highest concentration of new housing will be in the north part of campus. Over time older residential facilities will be renovated or replaced, based on project feasibility analyses. Expansion of parking facilities will continue in order to maintain desired ratios of on-campus beds to parking spaces.

In all cases of residential growth, this plan establishes two important design expectations: that housing is organized into clusters scaled to create a comfortable, walkable environment, and that it be oriented to create and embrace usable open spaces. Neither megablocks nor megastructures are desirable.

The University will replace and/or renovate existing housing as the useful economic or physical life of each facility nears. This will first require development of additional residential units (“swing space”). Additional and replacement on-campus housing will be provided in the form of residential building groups that offer a hospitable setting for living on campus, where students can live and learn comfortably and congregate together.

Potential sites for new housing development are situated in selected locations, mostly toward the perimeter of the campus. These locations will offer endearing architecture, modestly scaled to residential use, each with abundant usable outdoor space to foster memorable experiences and relationships. Residential building groups will be designed with walking in mind, and each will be accessible to the core campus.

Figure 18: Future housing and recreational open spaces north of Bryce Hospital
Walkable Campus

The campus contains a comprehensive network of streets, walkways and bicycle lanes. All will be fully interconnected and supported by an on-campus transit system. The campus access and circulation system is planned and designed to enhance the walkability of the campus, and to assist people—walkers, cyclists and motorists—to find their way and thus to explore the campus. The system will help make the university experience memorable even for those who may visit only once; it will help all residents, commuters and visitors develop a sense of spatial knowledge of the campus and thereby discover the unique physical environment of The University of Alabama.

Accessibility. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a consideration in all elements of circulation. Convenient, barrier-free entrances, legible signage and pavement textures, and clear, well-lit paths are the norm throughout the campus.
Walkers

To support a walkable campus, all circulation systems and other modes of travel will continue be planned and designed to serve and enhance the walking experience. To minimize conflict, the academic core of the campus will be kept as vehicle-free as possible. New sidewalks and other walkways will be constructed, planned and designed to provide clearly defined routes having adequate shade and consistent paving textures that signify changes in use from exclusive walking environments to a mix of walkers, bicycles and transit vehicles.

Bicycles

To support bicycle travel as an environmentally friendly, inexpensive and efficient form of transportation, an expanded mix of on-street bike lanes (shown in red) and off-street bicycle and multi-purpose paths and trails (shown in blue) will be provided throughout campus and may be connected with other such facilities in the surrounding community. Where shared paths are necessary, distinct paving or markings will identify the portion of the path set aside for each mode. Bicycle racks and shelters will be added as necessary to further facilitate the use of bicycles across campus.
Expansion of the campus to include the Bryce property entails expansion of the University’s coordinated approach to accessibility and circulation. The buildings of the academic core are generally within walking distance of one another, but not all classes are located in the core. Class scheduling often prevents walking between some academic buildings. Access to the core from the perimeter of campus and its major parking areas also requires transit. By its very nature, transit system operation is an evolving process that requires periodic adjustments of routes and stops to assure efficiency. Full- and part-time transit-only lanes increase efficiency and reduce headways—especially in the core of campus.

Given a finite amount of land on campus, managing vehicular traffic is always an issue. The University of Alabama has overall auto/student ratios that, unchecked, would be clearly contrary to a walkable campus. To complement planned expansion and improvement of walking and bicycle circulation systems, access of private motor vehicles to certain places will continue to be limited at various times during the day and week. In general, private motor vehicles are excluded from most of the academic core during business hours. Such limited-access streets are paved and signed to distinguish them from general access roads.
Service and Delivery Vehicles

To foster a pedestrian-oriented campus, service vehicle access to some core streets is limited during certain times to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and bicycles. Pedestrian facilities may be used for service access only when and where absolutely necessary—particularly in instances where buildings lack a street-accessible service entrance or where site infrastructure requires repair. In all cases, the allowable speed of service vehicles in shared environments is slower than that of a pedestrian.

Parking

Until 2007, personal automobiles were the predominant means of campus access and internal circulation. This had forced surface parking into most every corner of the campus, consuming an enormous amount of land and separating people and places. The desire for a pedestrian-oriented campus led to removal of surface parking from the campus core. In general, major surface parking will continue to be relocated to the perimeter of campus. New structured parking will be limited to a mix of larger facilities on the campus perimeter, while smaller ones may be located just outside the academic core, closely surrounded by academic and administration buildings. Additional parking will be located in close proximity to new campus housing.
Wayfinding requires presenting many types of environmental information in locations and in ways that help people understand where they are in relation to the campus as a whole. At the largest scale, the wayfinding system is organized using several primary image corridors. Supported by legible open spaces, these streets and their intersections are the backbone of the system, for they lead to key destinations and other important elements of the campus.

Wayfinding signage is organized into a hierarchy. It begins at key entry points, from which vehicular pathways through the campus and to parking areas are marked. As the campus is unified and the system expanded, additional signs will reinforce pathways for bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and emphasize various aspects of the university that make it unique and interesting. Overall, the signage system is intended to enhance the perception of the campus as a safe, clean and attractive environment by providing a consistent visual hierarchy of information and identification.
Design Guidelines

Implementation of the Campus Master Plan’s design policies is achieved largely through use and application of the Campus Design Guide, which establishes measurable strategies for development and redevelopment on campus. Consultant selection and project definition and feasibility are also critical to accomplishing the plan goals for design.

Campus Design Guide

Where the Campus Master Plan provides direction to the University regarding overall campus development, the Campus Design Guide provides more detailed expectations for individual projects. The Design Guide is organized into the following categories:

Urban Design. There are three campus design “realms” in which varying expectations are established. The primary purpose is to ensure that new development: 1) is harmoniously integrated into the historic campus fabric, 2) provides pleasant, attractive relationships between buildings, open spaces, and natural areas, 3) ensures a desirable relationship between the campus and the community, 4) supports pedestrian activity and transit use, and 5) enhances campus safety. A project’s urban design decisions may also be affected by supplemental conditions.

Architectural Design. The primary purpose is to ensure that all new buildings are in harmony with the campus, the design realm, and the building’s immediate context. The classical architectural styles of historic campus buildings are the basis upon which new projects should be designed, though variation is allowed for details and materials outside of the core campus.
Site and Landscape Design. While the Urban Design guidelines address the design of campus open spaces at a larger scale, these guidelines address detail requirements for the design of all open spaces, e.g., gathering spaces, building perimeters, streets and paths, and surface parking areas. The intent is to ensure high-quality open spaces that provide a level of consistency throughout the campus. They also lend flexibility to the designer to respond to a site’s context, such as the materials and styles of buildings and site furnishings present in adjoining open spaces.

Sustainable Design. These guidelines provide goals parallel to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system and are calibrated to the unique needs of the campus. The intent is to encourage greater energy efficiency and environmental quality while reducing negative impacts of development on the natural environment. Individual projects are not required to achieve a specific threshold within each sustainability goal. Instead, these goals are a challenge to the designer to incorporate sustainable development techniques within budget constraints and in synergy with other guidelines.

Design Review

The Design Review process is administered by the UA Facilities Department but also incorporates reviews by the University administration, as well as the University Board of Trustees, whose concern is the promotion, development, and maintenance of the campus.

To assure successful and efficient design and review processes, the sponsor, consultant, and Facilities Planning Staff must work together from the outset of a project. It is the responsibility of the UA Facilities Department to engage consultants early in the process, ensuring a strong understanding of the Design Guide.

Upon initiation of a project request, there are six major phases of project development, design, and review:

- Review and Feasibility Analysis
- Program Development
- Conceptual Design
- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documentation
The initial “conceptual design” review addresses the larger-scale concerns of the project’s urban design as well as preliminary architectural and sustainability concepts.

The subsequent “schematic design” review addresses the evolving details of the project in the context of the guidelines. Schematic design review confirms the urban design, where revisions have occurred, and considers the evolving details of the project, e.g. architectural style and materials, programming of spaces, landscape design, and building systems design.

Design development review confirms the remaining elements of the architectural, landscape, and systems design and is the final review by the Design Review Committee. Upon Design Development approval, the project team is released to finalize construction documents and any construction phase sustainability efforts. During this phase, project submittals are reviewed and approved by the UA Facilities Department. Final approval of the landscape component will be conducted by the UA Landscape and Grounds Advisory Group.

Final review is primarily handled administratively by the Facilities Planning Staff to assure that construction documents are in keeping with the approved design.