

Campus Master Plan Update 2016

Executive Summary



THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Faculty Senate
Staff Senate
Student Government Association

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2016 Campus Master Plan* Prepared By:

Nola | VanPeursem Architects, PC
The Sizemore Group
Bostick Landscape Architects
Skipper Consulting, Inc.

** Portions of this document were excerpted from the 2010 Campus Master Plan prepared by: KPS Group, Inc.; Skipper Consulting, Inc.; JH Partners; Comprehensive Facilities Planning, Inc.*

INTRODUCTION



Overview

The Campus Master Plan Update 2016 is a guide for growth of The University of Alabama in Huntsville for the next five years and beyond. Built on the foundation of previous master plans, the current plan articulates the University's vision, and its key physical goals of creating a pedestrian friendly environment, a strong sense of place, and sustainable University growth. The Master Plan Update takes into account goals already achieved, while refreshing a vision for the future.

This plan reinforces the integration of research, academics, residential, administrative, and other activities. As a result, the plan is focused more on creating connectivity, and less on designating specific uses for most campus buildings.

The Campus Master Plan provides a guide for implementing the University's vision in a coordinated and logical manner. The plan describes how immediate needs may be fulfilled while setting the course for the long-term future. Each step the University takes in the short-term moves toward achieving the plan's long-term goals.

University Vision

The University of Alabama in Huntsville will be a preeminent, comprehensive, technological research-intensive university known for inspiring and instilling the spirit of discovery, the ability to solve complex problems, and a passion for improving the human condition – a university of choice where technology and human understanding converge.

2016 Focus Areas

The current plan focuses in detail on three components: space utilization, transportation infrastructure, and landscaping. Information contained within the 2010 Master Plan was considered in addition to independent on-site interviews, team assessments, and study of pertinent materials and documents available at the University.

Emphasis was placed on gathering data relating to existing space utilization, and an assessment of space needs. This analysis includes a campus-wide inventory of all instruction, laboratory, and office spaces.

A transportation analysis tested the capacity of the campus roadway network, and its ability to accommodate existing and future traffic demands. This study also includes an inventory and evaluation of existing parking and future parking needs.

The Landscaping section includes an annual landscape and grounds maintenance guide, irrigation standards, tree policy, and an inventory of all existing trees by documenting location, species, size, and condition.

Vision and Goals

The Campus Master Plan 2016 Update continues to envision a campus that provides a complete learning environment — a hospitable, engaging, academic setting where residential villages surround and support an academic core. The Vision is one of outdoor gathering places, walkways, and recreation areas interwoven into a sustainable, gracious, and welcoming setting.

To continue the University's Vision of reaching 10,000 students, this master plan addresses the physical growth and space needs required to accommodate increased enrollment. To prepare for continuing innovation and expansion, the Campus Master Plan proposes several changes that will increase capacity and improve the quality of the University's physical character and identity. The physical improvements proposed in the Master Plan Update are based on the following University-wide planning goals.

- ▶ Target enrollment growth to 10,000, comprised of 7,500 (75%) undergraduate students and 2,500 (25%) graduate students
- ▶ Accommodate up to 33% of undergraduates living on campus, increasing the total campus bed count from 1,652 to 2,500
- ▶ Increase recruitment (applications), acceptance, retention, and progression of students
- ▶ Provide variety in housing styles, including more Fraternity & Sorority Housing

- ▶ Continue to pursue opportunities for strategic land acquisitions
- ▶ Explore collaborative efforts to develop areas such as the Holmes Avenue corridor towards the east, and the research and commercial areas west of Sparkman Drive
- ▶ Create a variety of event venues on campus
- ▶ Update aging facilities to current campus standards
- ▶ Relocate undergraduate programs currently west of Sparkman Drive to the main campus

The intent is to build a campus that enhances the student experience by creating a strong sense of place, and continuing successful efforts to transform the campus into a pedestrian friendly environment. The plan maintains the principle that the core of the University must serve all of its constituents, and at the same time engage the surrounding Huntsville community.

Projected Growth Targets

Early in the process, a target enrollment of 10,000 students was established. Overall, the impact of that growth is anticipated to be as follows:

Projected Student Enrollment, Faculty, & Staff Growth

Enrollment	Current (Fall 2014)	Goal
Undergrad	5,618	7,646
Graduate	1,730	2,354
Total	7,348	10,000
Student Credit Hours	80,083	108,986
Faculty Head Count	336	457
Staff Head Count	1,611	2,192

Projected Residence Hall Growth

	Current (Fall 2014)	Goal
Undergrad Enrollment	5,618	7,500
Number of Beds	1,652	2,500
% of Enrollment	28%	33%

MASTER PLAN — FIVE YEAR



Elements of the Five Year Plan

The first phase of the Master Plan envisions campus growth for the next five years, assuming continued expansion of academics, research, on-campus housing, and necessary support elements. The plan continues the transformation of the campus to a more traditional, pedestrian-oriented environment.

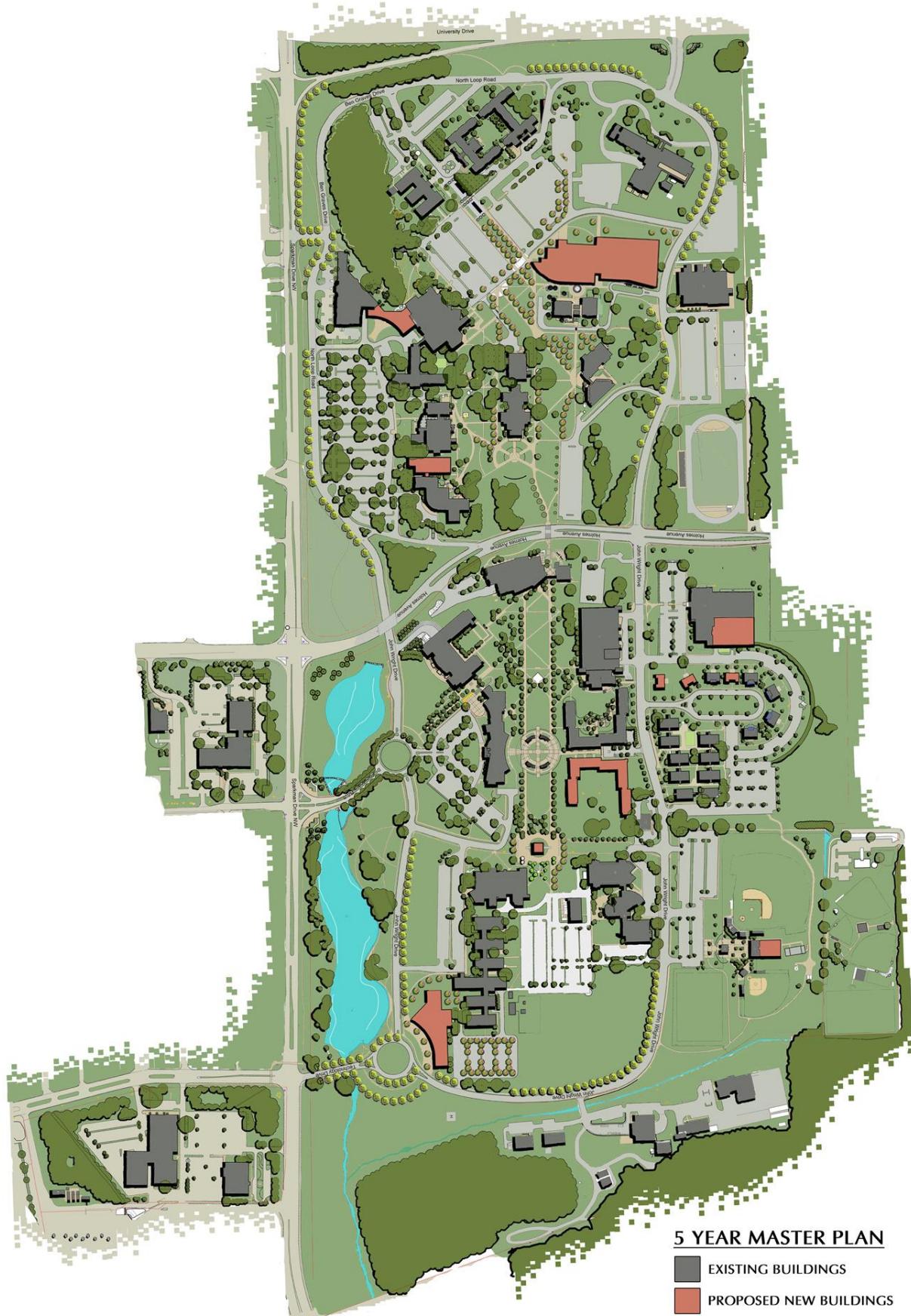
The plan includes new facilities for academics, research, housing, recreation/student life, and the performing arts. These new facilities are positioned in a manner that will create a unifying network of open spaces and a dynamic campus core. The plan is intended to enhance the student experience, and where appropriate, engage the surrounding community.

The Master Plan Update reinforces and refreshes the guiding principles that governed the growth of the University over the past ten years. Current points of emphasis include:

- ▶ Replacing and expanding academic buildings.
- ▶ Consolidating all instructional space to the main campus.
- ▶ Continuing the expansion of the Campus Greenway.
- ▶ Expanding residential opportunities.
- ▶ Adding assembly, performance, and recreational facilities.
- ▶ Enhancing the pedestrian environment.
- ▶ Improving vehicular circulation.

A broad mix of uses, including a multi-purpose facility and parking functions, activate the north part of the Campus Greenway. Expansion of Charger Village Residence Hall completes the architectural definition of the central Campus Greenway. Three proposed fraternity / sorority houses complete the original master plan for Fraternity / Sorority Row. Additions to the College of Business Administration, the Conference Training Center and the University Fitness Center reinforce the central core of the campus. A new building for the College of Engineering anchors the south end of the Campus Greenway, and marks the south entrance to the campus. The plan includes seven key traffic improvements to promote greater safety for both pedestrians and vehicles, and completes the perimeter road around the entire campus.

The implementation of the Five Year Master Plan includes individual projects that are enumerated on the following pages.

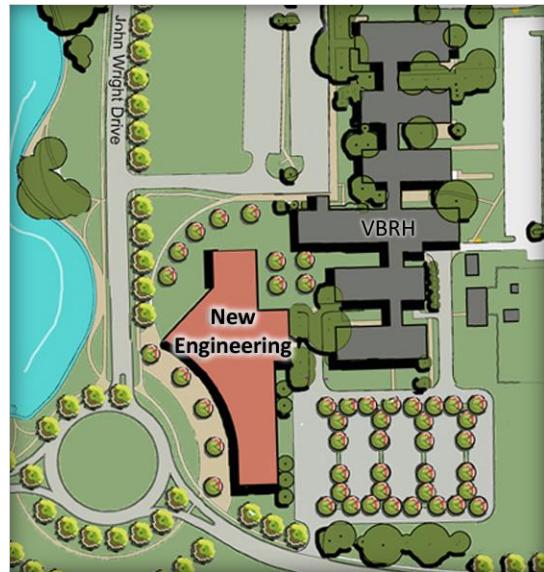


The First Five Years

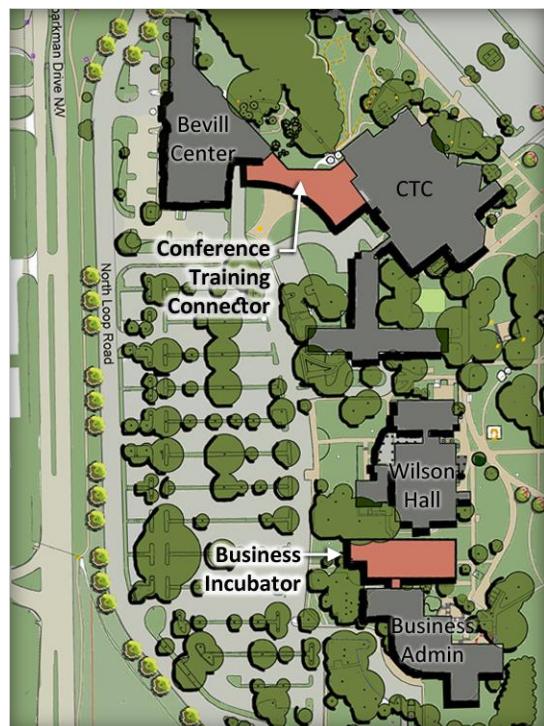
The first phase of the Master Plan will focus on various projects that are intended to advance student retention and progression as well as research and development. They cover a range of academic, support, and student life components. Specific capital investments are shown in the Five Year Master Plan on the previous page and are described below:

Building Construction and Programming

- ▶ ***Engineering Building*** — Engineering programs are a priority at UAH and a new facility is needed to bring together programs in the current Engineering Building and in Tech Hall. The physical condition of the existing Engineering Building necessitates significant capital investment, and its layout is not optimal for 21st Century pedagogical methods. The proposed facility will provide high quality space for engineering programs. It will be located in the vicinity of the current Engineering Building and will allow for future expansion. This should be the first in a sequence of projects that would eventually culminate in the definition of an engineering quad.
- ▶ ***Conference Training Connector*** — This project creates a physical connection between The Bevill Center and the Conference Training Center (CTC). The connection will enhance the CTC's ability to accommodate outreach training programs on campus and create a more welcoming presence to the University's industry partners.
- ▶ ***Business Incubator / The Innovation Center*** — This multi-tenant business incubation facility will house a program that will provide start-up and / or young businesses with affordable primary space plus shared resources such as support services and business assistance in an effort to foster success. It is intended to be a tool for recruitment and public relations, and will promote strategic alliances and partnerships.



Proposed Engineering Building



Proposed Business Incubator & Conference Training Connector

- ▶ ***Performing Arts*** — The University's successful programs in music and theater are a key driver for creating a performing arts center as a part of the new Multi-Purpose Facility. The University-wide space assessment indicated a need for additional assembly areas on campus. The proposed facility is in close proximity to Roberts Hall, where related programs are located.



Proposed Multi-Purpose Facility

- ▶ ***Multi-Purpose Facility*** — The multi-purpose facility would be designed to accommodate UAH events including convocation, commencement exercises, academic conferences and symposia, job fairs for alumni and students, career fairs, regional and state science fairs, and some UAH athletic events. In addition, the facility would be available to house small-scale concerts, UAH and community theatrical performances, and some high school and youth athletic events.



Proposed Charger Village Phase II & New Sorority & Fraternity Houses

- ▶ ***New Sorority & Fraternity Houses*** — Three new proposed facilities will be located within the existing Fraternity / Sorority Row. Development of these three houses is consistent with the original Fraternity / Sorority Housing master plan, and will support future growth and quality of student life.

Student Life and Recreation Improvements

- ▶ ***Charger Park Support Building*** — This project adds locker rooms at Charger Park to support recreational and student life.
- ▶ ***University Fitness Center Addition*** — This project completes a long-term plan to expand the University Fitness Center and keep up with the demand for student recreational space.

Traffic Circulation and Parking Improvements

To support the University Campus Master Plan, numerous improvements are recommended for the University transportation network. These proposed improvements were identified and developed as a result of interactive work sessions amongst the University Campus Master Planning team, and analyses of existing traffic counts, traffic forecasts, and roadway capacity analyses. The recommended improvement projects involve a combination of roadway realignments, road closures and a proposed parking structure.

- ▶ ***University Fitness Center Area*** — To improve pedestrian safety, vehicular access to the University Fitness Center should be relocated from the center to the southern end of the parking lot. A crosswalk should be constructed from the front door of the fitness center, through the parking lot, and across John Wright Drive. A pedestrian table should be constructed across John Wright Drive and align with the proposed crosswalk from the front door. A concrete landing area should be constructed on the west side of John Wright Drive at the pedestrian table.
- ▶ ***Ben Graves Drive / John Wright Drive*** — In an effort to slow traffic and improve safety, Ben Graves Drive and John Wright Drive should be restriped, changing these drives from four lanes (two lanes in each direction) to three lanes (one lane in each direction plus a turn lane).
- ▶ ***Ben Graves Drive*** — A portion of Ben Graves Drive should be reconstructed so the alignment will pass east of University Place School and form a new alignment for the campus perimeter road. In the future, a traffic circle should be constructed at the intersection of Ben Graves Drive and the campus entrance road connecting to University Drive.
- ▶ ***Traffic Circle at John Wright & Technology Drive*** — This corrects a confusing traffic condition where three roads merge in a triangular configuration.



Relocated University Fitness Center Driveway



Ben Graves Drive reconstruction to complete campus loop road

- ▶ ***Bevill Center Area*** — Ben Graves Drive in the vicinity of the Bevill Center should be realigned to the east to create more distance between Sparkman Drive and Ben Graves Drive. The existing access from Sparkman Drive to Ben Graves Drive should be relocated to the north. The existing traffic signal should be relocated to the proposed access.
- ▶ ***Ben Graves Drive*** — A segment of Ben Graves Drive that runs in front of Morton Hall and the North Campus Residents Hall should be closed. Ben Graves Drive should be realigned to create an intersection with the campus entrance drive at University Drive. As a part of the Ben Graves realignment project, the one-way access drive that extends from Ben Graves Drive along the eastern side of the North Residence Hall should be closed. The segment of Ben Graves Drive that is currently one-way should be converted to a two-way roadway.
- ▶ ***Charger Way*** — Remove a portion of Charger Way where it crosses the Campus Greenway, allowing for uninterrupted pedestrian traffic on the Greenway.



Realigned Ben Graves Drive



Closed portion of Ben Graves Drive

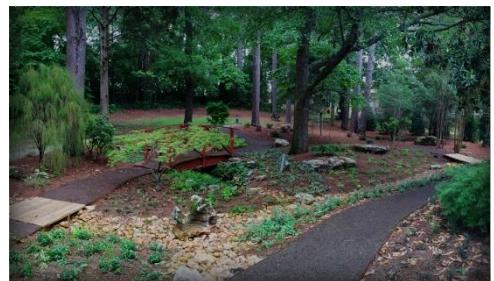
Landscape Master Plan

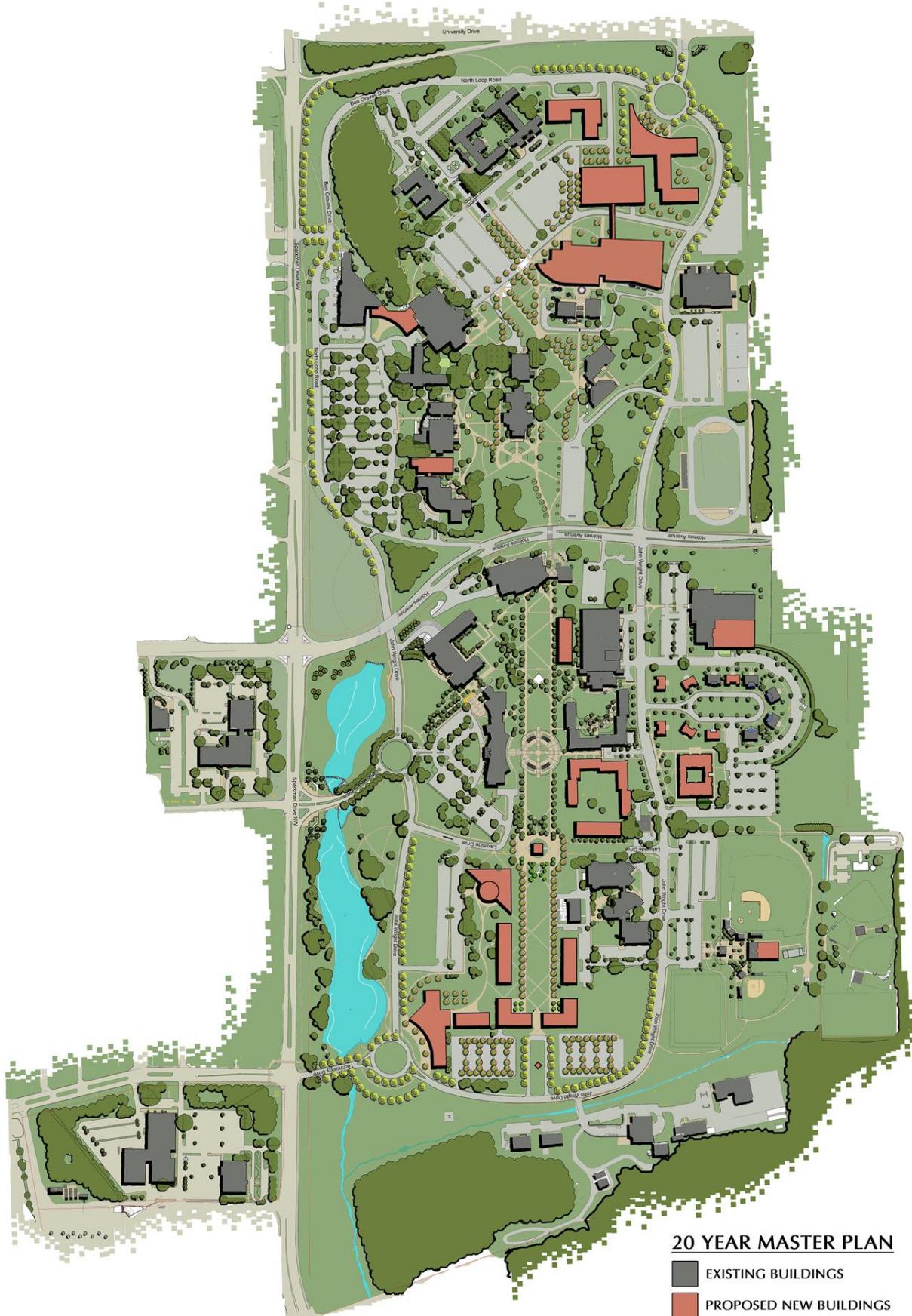
The landscape master plan contains recommendations for improving and maintaining campus outdoor space. This section defines new outdoor space and strengthens existing space to better accommodate campus social gathering, recreation, and passive enjoyment of the outdoors. Guiding principles for future designs are as follows:

- ▶ *Image and Identity* — Strengthen the campus' identity through a consistent visual vocabulary of lighting, furniture (benches, trash receptacles, tree grates and guards), bicycle racks, fencing, and planting.
- ▶ *Front Yard Spaces* — Maintain the residential character of "front yard" spaces along street frontages to serve as visual space and outdoor foyers to buildings.
- ▶ *Internal Public Space* — Enhance internal green spaces, courtyards, and promenades for social gathering, recreation, ceremony, picnicking, and quiet enjoyment of the outdoors.

5 Year Master Plan Landscape Initiatives

- ▶ *Continued expansion of the Greenway through the north side of campus* — Expanding the Greenway to a large green area in front of Morton Hall would tie the campus together and provide a safer pedestrian path from residential to academic areas. Large shade trees, seat walls, varied pavements, tables, and benches will create areas for passive recreation.
- ▶ *New multi-purpose facility* — There is the opportunity for a unique courtyard between Roberts Hall and the new multi-purpose facility. This space could be used for informal gatherings, people watching, and break-out activities.
- ▶ *New Residential Building at Charger Village* — The pedestrian axis defined by the construction of Charger Village Phase II would complete the pedestrian thoroughfare to the Campus Greenway. The courtyard on the south side of the building creates an outdoor room for social gathering and student events.
- ▶ *Union Grove Gallery* — This unique building and setting is ideal as a flexible, natural, outdoor space, and could support a variety of activities from receptions, quiet study, and alumni events.





MASTER PLAN — TWENTY YEAR



Elements of the Twenty Year Plan

The twenty year plan envisions the organization, density, and appearance of the campus in approximately ten to twenty years. This extended view makes the same assumption of continued growth of academics, research, residences and administration that guides planning for the next five years.

New buildings and additions to existing facilities are located with the intent of creating a network of open spaces, a dynamic campus core, and extended relationships to the community.

Campus functions are organized along north and south extensions of the Campus Greenway. A broad mix of uses, including a multi-purpose facility and parking functions, activate the north part of the Campus Greenway. The south part of the Greenway is defined by an academic quadrangle anchored by engineering and other technical programs.

Residential components are located in the North Campus around Morton Hall, across from Charger Village I, and around the fraternity and sorority housing area. Administrative and support uses are concentrated in two locations — south of John Wright Drive and west of Sparkman Drive. Athletics and other active recreational uses are located on the eastern side of campus while passive recreational uses take advantage of the lakes and open space located on the west side of campus.

20 Year Master Plan Landscape Initiatives

The landscape portion of the 20 Year Master Plan furthers the establishment of the Campus Greenway as the backbone of the campus, and continues the creation of unique outdoor spaces around existing and newly constructed campus facilities. It additionally reinforces the 5 Year Plan by establishing the following site planning and design guidelines:

- ▶ Reinforce the Campus Greenway through proper placement of new buildings and relocation of parking to the perimeter of campus.
- ▶ Restoration, enhancement, and celebration of creeks, wetlands, and drainage ways so they better serve as campus amenities.
- ▶ Re-landscaping with indigenous plant materials to help minimize water use.
- ▶ Decoupling impervious surfaces and replacing or installing drainage swales (rather than storm sewers) to remove and percolate runoff.

- ▶ Reduction of heat island effects through tree planting and building orientation.
- ▶ Interconnection of key areas via an integrated pedestrian/bike/open space system.
- ▶ Buildings sited so outdoor spaces are shaded in summer, receive sunlight in winter, and encourage inside/outside use in moderate and fair weather.

Conclusion

The design of future buildings and open spaces at the University must do more than satisfy the requirements of its own program. It must embody the essence of the University Vision and advance the development of the Campus as a whole. The guidelines set forth in this Master Plan Update are the parameters by which future projects can be measured towards accomplishing that goal.