

Executive Summary
The First Five Years



UA Huntsville

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

2010 Campus Master Plan

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And a special thank you to the faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the University who participated in the online survey, interviews, and numerous planning sessions and presentations providing valuable input that went into the development of the plan.

Introduction

The Campus Master Plan update is not a mandate, but rather a guide. It depicts the kind of campus to which the University of Alabama in Huntsville aspires. The plan describes in words, maps, and illustrations the essentials of a traditional American living/learning environment.

The plan portrays a vision of how the campus could develop over the coming years. The campus vision includes a more pedestrian-friendly environment, a strong sense of place, and sustainable University growth among other important goals.

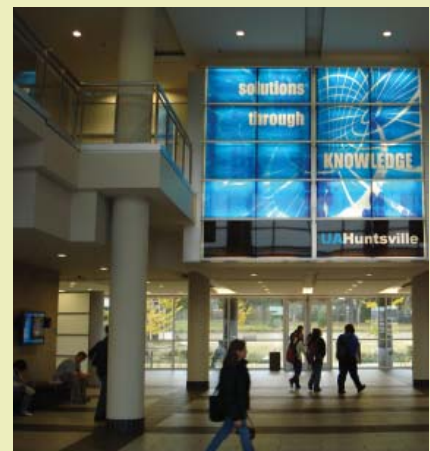
One expectation for the planning process was made clear at the outset: the various functions of the University were not to be separated from one another. Rather, they would be integrated throughout the campus, insofar as possible. Research, teaching, creative activity, housing, and administrative activities would be close to one another, so that they would benefit from proximity. As a result, there is no need to designate specific uses for most campus buildings.

The plan update was prepared with a long-term vision in mind so that each step the University takes in the coming years will lead the campus to that desired future condition. In that spirit the Campus Master Plan provides a methodology for implementing the plan over time in a coordinated and confident manner. An important part of that methodology is the Five Year Plan, which describes how our imminent needs may be fulfilled while laying the foundation for the campus we want further out in the future. Through coordination and forethought, we may avoid missteps and delays and begin to see take shape the campus we envision—sooner rather than later.

The plan also includes a planning and design guide for use in the project review process. This will help assure that, within a few years, all the various elements added to the campus will suit our overall campus vision and provide for the University and our host community a campus that meets the needs of both.

University Mission

The University of Alabama in Huntsville, a research-intensive university, is committed to rigorous scholarship, innovative education, technological research, cultural growth and entrepreneurial creativity in order to enrich our global community.



As a part of its Powers of Ten initiative, the University has determined to increase the size and composition of its student body over the next few years. To prepare for continuing innovation and expansion, the Campus Master Plan proposes several significant changes to the campus that will increase its capacity and improve the quality of the University's physical character and identity.

The Campus Master Plan envisions 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 intended to nurture the soul, as much as inspire the mind, to engage the University community.



“Powers of Ten” Five Year Goals

- \$100 million in annual research expenditures (10^8)
- \$100 million endowment (10^8)
- \$10 million in annual giving (10^7)
- 10,000 student population (10^4)
- 1,000 co-ops and internships (10^3)
- 100 PhDs per year (10^2)
- 10 new degree programs (10^1)
- 1 international campus (10^0)



Transition to a Traditional Campus

Many of those interviewed and completing surveys on-line voiced a longing for a more traditional campus and one that exhibits a more traditional relationship with its host community. In response the plan recommends the core of the University's enhanced learning environment serve its constituents and at the same time engage the Huntsville community. This will be accomplished through organization of future growth around a cohesive open space system and development of what might be called the Heart of the Campus—a place to focus University attention on integrating academic, research and student life functions while inviting public participation in campus life. The intent is a campus core that provides:

- *High degree of pedestrian accessibility*
- *Strong sense of place and legibility*
- *Functional locations and interrelationships*
- *Inviting interrelationships between the University and the community*
- *Sustainable open space/building patterns*
- *Outdoor spaces to support student life*

The big idea is to transform Holmes Avenue into a Main Street environment with places to work, study, eat, and meet one another. This allows the University to take charge and take advantage of the traffic on Holmes Avenue. A safe, signalized pedestrian walkway will be timed with traffic lights at Sparkman Drive and the John Wright/Ben Graves Drive loop to control traffic speed. As the new center of campus activity, the core will be surrounded and permeated by a full range of student life functions and facilities.

Responding to the University Community

How did the vision for the campus come about? Continuing personal interviews, group discussions, and the University's on-line survey suggested that the University community strongly desires a more traditional university campus environment:

- *Unified campus (without the traffic of Holmes Avenue in the way)*
- *Improved pedestrian accessibility*
- *More campus life opportunities*
- *More usable indoor and outdoor spaces*
- *Central focus space associated with a traditional "quad" system*
- *Physical town / govt connections*
- *Improved and expanded food service*
- *On-campus access to commerce and services*



*Five-Year Illustrative
Master Plan*

- Future Buildings
- Existing Buildings



Implementing the Plan

The University will carry out this plan over a period of years through construction, adaptive reuse and redevelopment of buildings, creation of new open spaces, improvements to pedestrian facilities and streets, establishment of a campus transit system, and updating campus wayfinding and signage. The University will employ a design review process for planning, design, and construction of new buildings and open spaces to ensure development of an attractive, comfortable educational environment as envisioned in this plan. There are several key initiatives that will set strong precedents for the continued growth of the campus.

Focus Initiatives

Accomplishment of the development program considered in this Master Plan will likely take 15-20 years. Much of that depends on the University's ability to fund continuing development, attract students, and enlarge its research programs. Several plan objectives, however, may begin to take shape relatively soon through a few key investments. Specifically, development of the Central Quad and the Heart of Campus, expanding and building residential villages, upgrading and expanding facilities at and adjacent to von Braun Research Hall and enhancing the pedestrian environment will all be instrumental in laying the foundation for the longer term aspirations of this plan.

Development of the Central Quad, together with the construction of a few currently proposed buildings alongside it, represents a major transformation for the campus and will provide an attractive, walkable, and engaging environment at the center of the campus. The redesign of Holmes Avenue and initial building construction there will further integrate the campus' southern and northern ends with a mix of vital functions in easy walking distance of student housing and teaching and research. The addition of new student housing adjacent to the Central Quad and in North Campus will enhance the student living environment while accommodating the additional students who will activate the campus environment envisioned in this plan.



The First Five Years

The first major efforts to implement the Campus Master Plan include several capital investments, as shown in the Illustrative Five-Year Master Plan (on the facing page) and as described in the following pages.

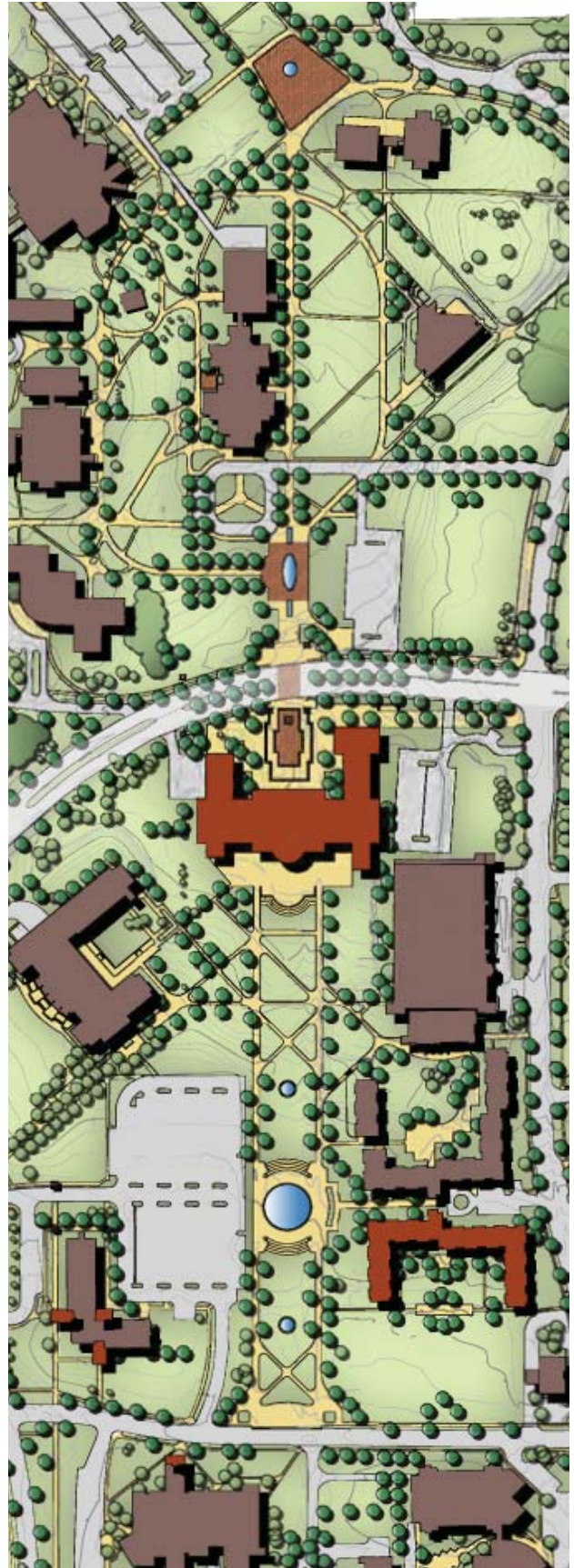
Central Quad

Construction of the Central Quad sets off the overall metamorphosis of the campus from its past vehicular-dominant form to that of a mature, walking campus.

The middle section of the Quad has a traditional rectilinear form, bounded by the proposed Heart of Campus building at its northern terminus and buildings on its eastern edge. New residence halls south of the multi-modal facility help physically define the space and ensure activity along it. At its northwest corner, the Quad opens into a forecourt at the Shelby Center. Existing parking along the Quad's western edge remains in the interim, but will be replaced by new teaching and research facilities in the long term, further framing the open space.

A fountain creates a focal point to the open space at its cross axis with Madison Hall. This forms a threshold to the campus for visitors arriving by way of Madison and setting off to explore the University on foot.

Broad, multi-use paths bound the east and west side of the space, accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists, and service and emergency vehicles. Trees line these pathways providing shade and softness and forming smaller, more intimate spaces within the Central Quad.



Five-Year Illustrative Plan, Central Quad

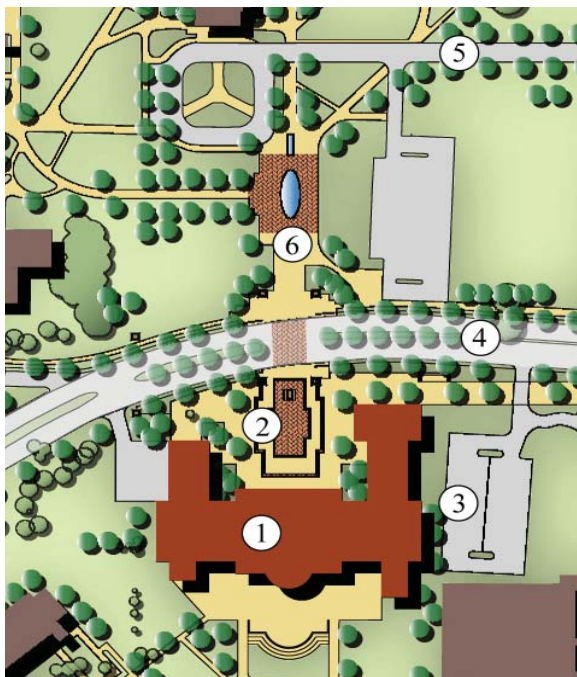


Cross section looking north through the Central Quad

Heart of Campus

Development of the Heart of Campus is an important early initiative to begin the transformation of Holmes Avenue into a safer, pedestrian friendly campus core and unite the northern and southern portions of the campus. This includes construction of a new mixed-use building and plaza on Holmes Avenue, expansion of the multi-modal facility and streetscape improvements to Holmes. This mix of academics and research, office and meeting spaces, retail, and student services will draw regular foot traffic to this new campus focal point.

The mixed-use building (1) and plaza (2) are aligned on the primary axis of the Central Quad. The building includes wide, ground level pedestrian passages that funnel foot traffic between the Quad and the Holmes Avenue crossing. Retail and service uses occupy storefronts along the plaza and street. Upper floor spaces will have grand views of the Central Quad and the Heart of Campus plaza and should be reserved for special University gatherings, conference use, and other important functions. The design of the building will reflect its symbolic importance and its prominent location.

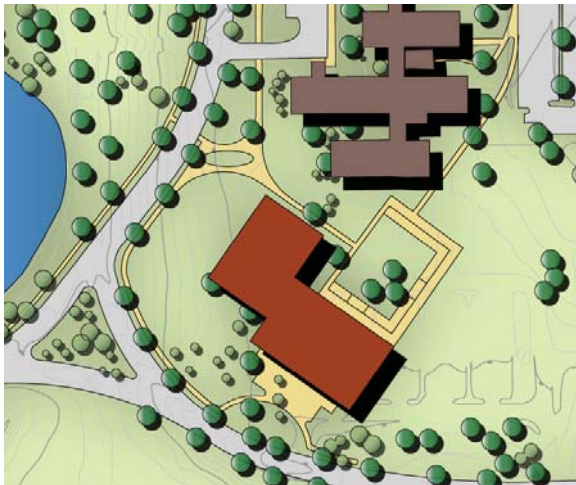


Expanding structured parking at the multi-modal facility will eventually become necessary to support continued growth in this area. However, in the interim additional parking will be provided in a surface lot (3) adjacent to the new building.

Streetscape improvements are designed to make Holmes Avenue (4) safer for pedestrians, more attractive as a campus “image corridor,” and more accommodating for development of the campus core. Trees, hedges, and decorative fencing channel pedestrians to the raised, signalized crossing at the Heart of Campus plaza while also providing environmental cues to slow traffic. Additional enhancements include pedestrian-scale lighting, banner signs, and a landscaped median to support traffic calming and complement landscaping at the street edge.

Five-Year Illustrative Plan, Heart of Campus

North of Holmes Avenue, the access drive for the library moves to Ben Graves Drive (5) to accommodate a formal space that serves as an extension of the Central Quad. Upon construction of the multi-purpose arena in later phases, this plaza (6) will provide a gathering space before and after events at the new multi-purpose facility.



Five-Year Illustrative Plan, Academic and Research Expansion

Academic and Research Expansion

The majority of new teaching and research facilities constructed during the first five years arises immediately south of Wernher von Braun Research Hall. Two southerly wings of von Braun will be removed to give ample room for the erection of a new building to the south. The new building will be expanded in later stages of the University's growth. Surface parking is maintained adjacent to von Braun Hall in the interim. All existing parking in this area will relocate in the future to serve the building complex to develop south of the Engineering Building.

Facing Sparkman Drive the new building is adjacent to the lakeside yet sits back just far enough to avoid encroachment into the flood-

plain. The setback provides a very prominent location and affords the new building a generous lawn along John Wright Drive, continuing the pattern of green frontages along this segment of the loop road. A spacious courtyard connects von Braun Hall and the new building.

Residential Expansion

Residential development in the first five years commences with construction of student housing on the eastern frontage of the Central Quad. The new residence hall (1) will expand the residential village recently built on the Quad. The new facility will form a south-facing courtyard, linked to the larger Quad space, to be completed through subsequent development of additional housing and academic buildings to the south.

Other on-campus housing during this phase takes shape across John Wright Drive. A new building (2) is added to the fraternity and sorority housing complex. Together, these additions complete an intermediate phase for this residential village, which will lend greater presence along the loop road while providing a sense of privacy and enclosure to the commons along which the fraternity and sorority houses are arranged.



Five-Year Illustrative Plan, Residential Expansion

Summary of Five-Year Initiatives

Building construction and programming

1. Multi-use Heart of Campus building
2. Research building
3. Second phase of student housing along Central Quad
4. Relocation of some academic and administrative functions from Olin B. and Shelbie King Halls
5. Expansion of National Space Science and Technology Center
6. Expansion of Johnson Research Center
7. Additional building for Facilities and Operations

Open space enhancements

8. Initial phase of Central Quad
9. North Residential Quad and formal space intersecting the Central Quad axis
10. Picturesque open space surrounding library
11. Extension of Central Quad on North Campus

Athletics and Recreation improvements

12. Expansion of University Fitness Center
13. Track and intramural sports field

Vehicular circulation and parking improvements

14. Realignment of Ben Graves Drive to make room for residential growth and to remove through traffic from the residential area
15. Roundabout at intersection of loop road and University Drive
16. Relocation of library parking lot
17. Parking structure to serve North Campus residential village
18. Realignment of western segment of John Wright Drive



*Twenty-Year Illustrative
Master Plan*

- Future Buildings
- Existing Buildings



The Twenty Year Plan

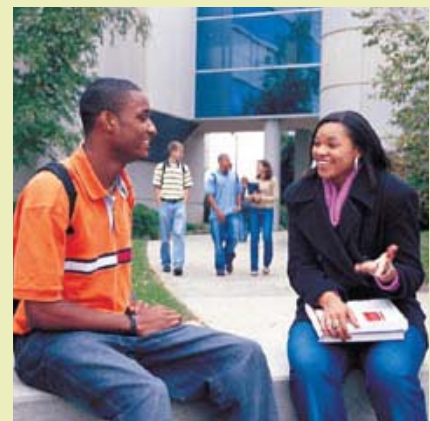
The Master Plan, illustrated at left, envisions the organization, function, and look of the campus in perhaps twenty years, assuming continued growth of academics, research, on-campus housing, and necessary support elements. The plan reflects a transformation of the campus to a more traditional university environment with a much larger percentage of students in residence.

Represented in the Illustrative Master Plan are new facilities for teaching and research, housing, athletics and recreation, and administrative and support services. These new facilities are positioned around the campus to purposefully create a unifying network of open spaces, a dynamic campus core, and appropriate relationships with the community. At the center is a new campus core at the intersection of the Central Quad and Holmes Avenue. A broad mix of uses—including an arena and new spaces for retail, conference, research, and academics—will activate this place, the Heart of Campus.

Academics and research flank the Quad. Residential villages are located in the North Campus around Morton Hall, along the Central Quad, and within the fraternity and sorority housing area. To the east administrative and support uses are concentrated in two locations—in the center of campus and south of John Wright Drive. Athletics and other active recreational uses are housed on the eastern side of campus. Passive recreational uses take advantage of the lakeside along Sparkman Drive, the front door to the campus.

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements support the functional organization of the campus so that students, staff, and visitors will find it increasingly convenient to move about on foot or bicycle. Vehicular access, parking facilities, and an improved wayfinding system provide easy arrival and departure while supporting and encouraging safe, non-vehicular travel within the campus. The strategic arrangement of buildings and improved bicycle and pedestrian systems also lay the foundation for an effective future transit system.

All of these elements, together with the design of new buildings and open spaces, create an attractive and engaging learning environment that reflects a quality image within and without. New buildings and open spaces establish a stronger sense of human scale, harmony, and hierarchy throughout the campus. Sustainable planning and design techniques lessen the impacts of campus growth on the environment and surrounding neighborhoods, provide cost-savings through increased efficiency, and assure comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces for learning, living, working, and playing.



First Principles

The Campus Master Plan is based on what might be termed “first principles” that emerged from interviews and surveys of the University community. Consistency with these principles will assure that new buildings, open spaces, and other facilities adhere to the spirit of the Campus Master Plan.

- *Primary Purpose.* The primary purpose of the campus is to provide appropriate and sustainable settings for teaching, research, creative activity, and service of the University community.
- *Heart of Campus.* The heart of the campus is located near its geographic center and is planned and designed to bring together the University and its host community.
- *Open Space System.* A usable open space system defines the overall campus framework of building locations.
- *Integrated Design.* Campus buildings help to create and form usable, legible open spaces of various types and functions.
- *Circulation.* A primary pedestrian circulation system interconnects the Heart of Campus with all other precincts. A primary bicycle access system interconnects all parts of the campus. All campus streets provide equal status to the movement of automobiles and bicycles.
- *Pedestrian Convenience and Safety.* Future campus buildings and uses are arranged to make walking and bicycling safer and more convenient. Pedestrian movement takes precedence over the movement of motor vehicles throughout the campus.
- *Residential Campus.* Residential facilities are located and designed to enhance student life, safety, and accessibility.
- *Support Functions.* Support facilities are located and designed to enhance student life and/or invite active community participation and interaction.



- *Image Corridors.* Major campus streets reveal the essential elements of the campus, its major precincts, and setting in the community.
- *Vehicular Access.* Vehicular access to the campus is open, and pedestrian/vehicle conflicts are minimized by design.
- *Transit Orientation.* Campus growth and development are organized in anticipation of a campus transit system that one day will provide a dependable and efficient alternative to the automobile.
- *Access and Parking.* All access and parking systems are planned and designed to organize and direct a significant percentage of internal trips to walking, bicycling, and transit.



Design Guide

Implementation of the Campus Master Plan's design policies is achieved largely through the Campus Design Guide, which provides measurable standards for the continued physical development of the campus. Consultant selection and thorough evaluation of the scope, feasibility, and impact of proposed projects are also critical to accomplishing plan goals at the project level.

The Campus Master Plan provides general direction to the University regarding overall campus development. The Campus Design Guide provides detailed expectations for individual projects to ensure that each positively contributes to the development of the campus in accord with the Campus Master Plan.

There are Design Guidelines for the campus as a whole and specific standards for precincts with more unique design needs. Major projects may also require project-specific guidelines to ensure that unique characteristics of site and context are thoughtfully addressed and the project scope includes site and landscape improvements that support Campus Master Plan implementation.



Intent

The design of an individual building, open space, or other facility must do more than satisfy the requirements of its own program. Each project must also, in its own way, further the development of the campus as described in the Campus Master Plan. Thus, each physical change to the campus will help accomplish the larger vision for the future of the University. These guidelines serve as parameters against which design solutions may be measured with respect to their achievement of the policies of the Campus Master Plan.



The University of Alabama in Huntsville

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