

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

The Campus Plan

Phase One Summary

March 2023

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This summary serves as a point-in-time glance into the initial analysis and findings of the Campus Plan process which will serve to inform ideas that will shape the future of the College Park (UMD) campus.

THE CAMPUS PLAN

UMD is at a pivotal moment—a new Strategic Plan, sustained upward trajectory of academic and research enterprise, construction of the Purple Line, and a carbon-neutral target. At the same time, the physical campus is challenged by physical space constraints to accommodate academic and research needs today and tomorrow, aging facilities and infrastructure, and increasing occurrences of severe weather events. This plan is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to examine, engage, and envision a campus experience that reflects the institution’s goals, mission, and values for the next 10 years and beyond.

The Campus Plan aims to support and guide a number of campus commitments:

- **Support and advance** Strategic Plan goals and objectives
- **Serve as a physical framework** for the development of the College Park campus environment
- **Identifying opportunities for strengthening connections** to the greater College Park community
- **Provide project phasing strategies**
- **Institute good planning practices**

CAMPUS PLAN PROCESS

The Campus Plan process is split into three phases (illustrated below), and is structured to meet the standards necessary for the review and adoption by the University Board of Regents in September 2023.

- **Phase 1** includes a qualitative and quantitative analysis of campus conditions involving broad engagement with campus stakeholders, analysis of existing campus conditions, identification of current and projected physical campus needs, and development of initial Guiding Principles (criteria used to ensure that the master plan aligns with University goals, mission, and values)
- **Phase 2**, includes the development of planning concepts in response to physical campus needs, input from stakeholder engagement, and informed by the results of the conditions analysis
- **Phase 3** is focused on establishing a preferred physical campus vision and the development of the Executive Summary and Final Report for review and adoption

An inclusive outreach and engagement process is integrated throughout all three phases--a sample of findings to date can be found in the next section.

PREVIOUS CAMPUS PLAN

The last major plan was adopted in 2011 and updated in 2018, which established a foundation for building, landscape, and infrastructure improvements across campus.

The Campus Plan is informed in part by the latest Strategic Plan, Fearlessly Forward: In Pursuit of Excellence and Impact for the Public Good, which serves as a foundation for the UMD mission as a flagship institution for higher education.

Elements of the Strategic Plan that inform the physical development of the campus includes:

- Multidisciplinary collaboration and experiential learning
- Engaged and impactful research and curricular innovations
- Addressing “grand challenges” across local and global scales

- Civic engagement and lasting partnership between students and broadening community
- Strategic research partnerships
- Social justice through relationship-building and community partnerships

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The Campus Plan is intended to reflect the many aspirations and ambitions of UMD's wide-ranging campus communities. To achieve this goal, outreach and engagement-related updates and activities have been planned throughout the duration of this effort. To-date, the project team has engaged in over 75 touchpoints with with a diverse range of students, faculty, and staff, using a variety of approaches, including focused interviews and listening sessions, live polling, open community forums, and an online survey. Input received to date has served to inform a number of items in Phase 1, including understanding existing campus conditions, space needs, and draft Guiding Principles (located on Page 14). Samples of input collected to date are highlighted to the far right.

STRATEGIES UTILIZED

Input Sessions

Polls & Surveys

Questionnaires

Campus Tours

Project Website

Open Forums

DOCUMENTS & DATA COLLECTED

Past Planning Documents

Strategic Plans

Space Reporting

Course / Credit Hour Data

Energy Use Reporting

Traffic and Transportation Data

Facility Assessment Reports

SAMPLE FINDINGS

FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING

Limited land resources challenge opportunities for long-term growth

- Certain classroom sizes and configurations are needed to support the latest approaches to learning (e.g. spaces that can accommodate active learning and studio spaces)
- Students have expressed a continued desire to live on and/or near campus

- There is interest in making research more visible on campus and a larger part of the undergraduate experience
- The Discovery District should serve as a vibrant, mixed-use, and transit-oriented space for research and innovation
- Prioritize the renovation and revitalization of aging campus buildings

PLACEMAKING

- Seek opportunities to strengthen individual school/college identity and, at the same time, increase collaboration across units
- Placemaking elements should reflect and support diverse campus communities
- Explore opportunities to highlight unique campus initiatives such as the AgroEcology Corridor
- Outdoor campus spaces could be created, expanded, and improved to support health and wellness for all

CIRCULATION AND CONNECTIVITY

- Topography challenges both accommodating ADA accessibility, particularly north - south connections
- The campus circulation network feels disconnected and lacks universal access, particularly in the north-south direction
- Congestion and conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and wheeled users occurs across campus The campus is simultaneously described as both “sprawling” and “congested”
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- The Purple Line presents an opportunity for increased connectivity across campus and outwards to the Greater College Park and DC community

SUSTAINABILITY

- Update aging campus infrastructure and legacy buildings to support University sustainability and carbon reduction goals
- Explore opportunities for integrating the NextGen Energy Program into the Plan
- Various campus spaces experience flooding during heavy rainfall, impacting campus operations and adjacent neighborhoods
- Expand upon methods that make sustainable practices an integral part of daily operation

NEXT STEPS

Additional engagement opportunities to lend input into the planning process will be offered throughout Phases 2 and 3, and will be announced through the project webpage and associated campus media outlets.

CAMPUS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the campus needs assessment is to identify current allowances and projections for the next 10 years and long-term aspirational growth. “Needs” vary in scale/type, and can be summarized into the following categories:

- **Physical space allowances:** Academic and research, administrative and support, Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA), and Division of Student Affairs (DSA)
- **Additional campus needs:** mobility, land assets, and infrastructure

Physical space needs are examined in two ways:

- **Current allowance:** focused on addressing current deficiencies, and
- **10-year growth scenarios:** focused on proactive planning to accommodate potential increases in full-time day equivalent (FTDE) enrollment

METHODOLOGY

The campus needs assessment is shaped using a qualitative and quantitative process, where standards established by the University System of Maryland are applied and then adjusted using comparative benchmarking with peer institutions and focused interviews with campus stakeholders.

The Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA) “Building Champions” facilities campaign serves as additional guidance for understanding projected needs. DSA-specific space needs are defined through a separate DSA Strategic Facilities Plan process, which establishes strategic facility needs to be incorporated into the Campus Plan. Once existing needs and allowances are identified, several 10-year growth scenarios (informed by parameters including changes in enrollment and employment) are then applied to understand additional projected needs. The diagram below further illustrates this process:

Collect Data

- 2021 Enrollment / Employment Data
- Campus room utilization
- 2021 Space Inventory and Guidelines Application (SGAP) Report
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Physical Campus Analysis

Develop Preliminary Space Allowances

State of Maryland University System Space Standards

Comparative Benchmarking + Qualitative Refinements

Review / Refine Inputs and Space Allowances

Final Existing / Projected (2031) Space Projections

PRELIMINARY CAMPUS NEEDS

A sample of findings (subject to ongoing review and refinement as this effort moves into Phase 2) associated with campus needs are highlighted below:

Physical Space Allowances

Demand for research and study spaces

- Desire for consolidated and expanded student service functions, including expanded healthcare space
- Demand for additional office and lounge spaces

- Desire for additional athletics facilities to meet Big10 Conference peer institutions
- Desire for additional on-campus residence hall beds
- Desire to right-size smaller classrooms and learning spaces to support current teaching paradigms
- Opportunity to renovate and reimagine campus library spaces to better support student needs

Additional Campus Needs

- Demand for universally-accessible pathways across campus
- Need for additional multi-functional outdoor spaces
- Desire for additional stormwater mitigation strategies to reduce impacts of campus flooding
- Outdated steam infrastructure impacts current operations and sustainability goals
- Desire for additional wayfinding elements to guide all campus users
- Need to conserve environmentally sensitive areas such as conservation easements and natural wetlands

NEXT STEPS

Space needs will continue to be reviewed, refined, and finalized to inform conceptual studies in Phase 2.

CAMPUS CONDITIONS ANALYSIS PURPOSE

The purpose of the campus conditions analysis is to understand the quality of buildings and exterior spaces across campus, including academic buildings, residence halls, and/or landscaped areas. Findings are merged with results of the campus needs assessment and engagement input to:

- Identify areas that may need improvement or redevelopment
- Inform the Draft Guiding Principles and initial FMP concepts in Phase 2

Physical and functional conditions analysis of campus spaces includes (but is not limited to):

- Campus environmental constraints
- Physical and functional building conditions
- Purple Line construction
- Accessibility shortfalls

COMMON THEMES

LAND ASSETS (CAMPUS GROUNDS)

Assessing campus land assets includes examining the quality and function of outdoor spaces to identify opportunities for enhancements, preservation, and/ or redevelopment. The results of analysis conducted to-date includes the following:

- McKeldin Mall, Chapel Lawn, and Hornbake Plaza represent spaces that support UMD's identity and may be candidates for preservation and/or enhancements
- Other land assets may be considered underutilized, such as the area directly west of McKeldin Library, and may be potentially suited for infill development or open space enhancements
- Several districts have deficient amounts of accessible open spaces, including rec fields, malls, quads, and courtyards
- Limited land resources for infill and development

CAMPUS BUILDINGS

The campus core has grown rapidly over the last fifty years to accommodate UMD's wide-ranging academic and research achievements. Assessments of existing buildings included examining physical building conditions, density, age and size, and adaptability to support future functions. Findings includes the following:

- A number of buildings may not support today's research and learning standards
- Select buildings may not best-serve the University's academic mission may be designated as candidates for potential renovation or redevelopment
- Potential new construction could focus on infill within the campus core with close proximity to Purple Line stops

DISCOVERY DISTRICT AND BEYOND

Historically, the campus has expanded to the North, moving the heart of campus with it. Factors informing growth beyond the campus core includes:

- The construction of the Purple Line supports opportunities for transit-oriented growth around the five campus stops to the east and west of the campus core
- The current strategic plan intends to expand University research initiatives campus-wide, with the Discovery District as a focus for this outward growth.
- Connecting the Discovery District physically and academically to the rest of campus furthers the University's rapid growth as a center for multidisciplinary and innovative research

MOBILITY

Assessing mobility-focused conditions covers multiple items, including understanding pedestrian and wheeled user access, vehicle access and parking, and transit access (including factoring in the construction of the Purple Line). A brief sample of findings includes the following:

- The Purple Line should be leveraged as an opportunity to link the campus better, not further divide it, particularly in the campus core
- Deemphasize vehicles on campus and emphasize human-scale mobility
- Need to expand connectivity of biking networks throughout campus and to greater trail networks

GATHERING IDEAS

The project team was invited to present at the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation-sponsored faculty and staff retreat to share progress and findings on the plan update. The retreat provided the opportunity for School faculty and staff to weigh in on existing campus conditions and considerations. Consistent themes presented and discussed included:

- Managing the growth of campus through a collection of connected and sustainability-designed districts
- A desire to strengthen University connections to surrounding communities through improved connections, shared uses, and green spaces
- An emphasis on preserving and enhancing campus environmental networks to meet sustainability goals, support academic programming, and better the campus experience

NEXT STEPS

Results of the analysis will be used to inform conceptual studies in Phase 2.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles are intended to serve two purposes:

- Evaluation criteria to ensure that the development of the campus plan responds to the aspirations expressed by campus stakeholders and conditions analysis
- Metrics to track the success of the plan upon its adoption

The Guiding Principles are informed by the campus needs assessment and build upon the commitments and principles highlighted in the Strategic Plan. Draft Guiding Principles are highlighted below and are subject to change throughout the duration of the project:

HIGH IMPACT CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTS

- **Reimagine learning** through new high-impact, multi-disciplinary, and experiential environments
- **Right-size and upgrade buildings** to meet today's space and accessibility needs
- **Advance excellence in sponsored research** by identifying opportunities for collaborative, readily-adaptable, and secure facilities
- **Optimize programmatic adjacencies**
- **Cultivate an environment that values experiential learning** through continued growth, visibility, and accessibility of the research enterprise
- **Create a seamless Discovery District connection** from College Park Metro to the Main Campus
- **Integrate academic, research, student affairs, ICA, and other spaces** to best-serve the campus community
- **Support updates and expansion of student services**, including updated residence halls, health and wellness facilities, dining services, and recreation facilities
- **Support the expansion of Intercollegiate Athletics** facilities to meet Big10 Conference standards
- **Guide edge and Discovery District development** towards shared University and community goals

HOLISTIC PLACEMAKING

- Strengthen and update individual campus **district identities**
- Extend the framework of **legacy landscapes**
- Create **multi-functional open spaces**
- Enhance access, stewardship, and usage of **environmentally sensitive areas**
- Seek opportunities to promote and highlight initiatives focusing on ADA **accessibility, diversity, and inclusion**
- Create high-quality **visitor experiences**
- Prominently showcase **University values** through campus art, wayfinding, and exterior design elements

PEOPLE-FIRST MOBILITY

- Seamlessly connect the campus to **regional transportation nodes and corridors**
- Create new and iconic **campus-wide circulation corridors**
- **Ensure campus-wide accessibility and safety** for pedestrians and wheeled users
- Limit **vehicular access** to campus core
- **Decant parking from the campus core and consolidate parking** around the campus perimeter
- Create a hierarchy of **campus gateways** through landscape and wayfinding improvements
- **Envision a comprehensive and cohesive wayfinding system** that reflects University values and identity

SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP AND INVESTMENT

- **Promote strategies at multiple scales to help the campus achieve carbon-neutral operations**
- **Support University-wide sustainability goals** by leveraging infrastructure, environment, mobility, and building improvements
- **Connect campus environmental systems** with the greater Anacostia Watershed
- **Highlight opportunities to mitigate impacts of extreme weather events**
- **Make sustainability an engaging part of the University experience**
- **Plan for future growth** at appropriate and contextual levels of density
- Seek district-specific opportunities to **increase permeable surfaces, tree canopies, and native landscapes**

NEXT STEPS

Upon completion of Phase 1 tasks, the project team will transition into Phase 2, which will focus on:

- Developing physical plan concepts and focused studies
- Refining the Guiding Principles and using those to evaluate the strength of planning concepts
- Additional opportunities for stakeholder engagement