



4 The Campus Master Plan

The campus master plan begins with five fundamental principles and an overview of the essential features of the plan. The plan then looks at the campus from different perspectives, recognizing that each physical or functional “layer” is connected to every other layer. It first considers, at a regional scale, the land and communities that define Cornell’s setting. It then zooms into the Main Campus and uses the form of the land to help define a physical structure of open spaces and streets. Patterns of land uses and landscapes are layered over this structure. And networks and strategies for improving the campus’s transportation and utilities systems are described. The frameworks established by the plan will help ensure the principles and essential features are supported as the campus grows and evolves.

Principles

The campus master plan and subsequent planning processes at Cornell should be guided by five interrelated and mutually-supportive principles. These principles respond to the issues and opportunities that emerged early in the process and encapsulate the main objectives of the plan. They describe an integrated approach to sustainability, recognizing that the stewardship and development of Cornell's campus must balance academic, social, environmental and economic priorities, over time improving its setting for the benefit of all people and ecosystems.

Support the academic mission

The Cornell campus shall support and cultivate academic success and growth, providing open, collaborative and adaptable environments for teaching, research, service and outreach, the exchange of ideas, and the nurturing of innovation.

Promote stewardship

Cornell shall respect and manage the physical environment of the campus and its broader land base for the health of the university, its constituencies, its neighbors and the larger regional ecosystem.

Enhance the campus experience

Cornell's campus shall contain a diversity of inviting, accessible and safe places, for social and culture interaction, recreation, athletics, and passive enjoyment by faculty, staff, students and visitors. It will maintain and enrich its legacy of memorable landscapes and become a more pedestrian-oriented campus.

Reinforce community

Cornell shall enhance the community-building aspects of campus. It will broaden housing options, expand the campus's social and cultural infrastructure and promote a healthy, vital greater Ithaca.

Ensure integrative planning and design

In the planning and design of the campus, Cornell shall integrate disciplines, engage communities, and coordinate academic, development, landscape and infrastructure initiatives.

Essential features of the plan

1. A **clear distinction between town and country** is reinforced to support the academic land grant mission and promote the dual urban and rural character of Cornell.
2. A **compact campus** is defined to promote academic and social integration, help unify the academic core, provide a range of opportunities to live on campus, encourage walking, and protect natural features and rural land.
3. **Academic growth is focused in East Campus**, recognizing that the campus west of Garden Avenue can only accommodate a limited amount of additional development without significantly diminishing its highly-valued open spaces and character.
4. **Landscaped open spaces and the natural setting organize the campus.** The character of the campus as a whole and the places within it should be distinguished first and foremost by the landscape, both natural and designed.
5. **A range of uses are integrated in strategic locations** to facilitate a sense of community, enhance student and employee amenities, and extend vitality on campus.
6. **Spaces for casual recreation, spectator sports and cultural performances play a vital role in the academic heart of campus, but some athletic fields are relocated** to facilitate a compact, integrated core.
7. A **convenient campus circulator** is introduced to keep all active parts of the campus well connected, reduce driving and simplify the regional bus routes on the campus.
8. The **quality of open spaces and streetscapes is elevated** to enhance the experience of the campus and physically unify it.
9. **Surface parking is gradually replaced by more structured parking, with no net increase in commuter parking**, to achieve a compact, pedestrian-oriented campus.
10. **Collegetown and Downtown become even more vital to the university** as targets for residential initiatives and potentially the locations for additional administrative uses, and possibly academic uses
11. The **East Hill Plaza area is encouraged to evolve holistically with a mix of uses** to become a distinct place that supports Cornell's academic, worklife and housing objectives, and complement Downtown and Collegetown.
12. The need for **new approaches to planning and development and new funding models** is highlighted as critical to successful implementation of the campus master plan and Cornell's other sustainability initiatives.