16.0 Landscape Design Guidelines Element

In campus planning, design professionals whose focus is the outdoors must be sensitive to transitions from building to open space, the need for common areas, and the protection of special features. These design professionals must also be able to use plant and building materials and site furniture to enhance the use of the outdoors for study, relaxation, contemplation, socializing and entertainment.

The development of Landscape Design Guidelines for Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) began with creation of an original Landscape Plan in the 1995 Comprehensive Master Plan and a supplemental Campus Landscape Master Plan, dated 2011, shown in Figures 16.A and 16.B. These Landscape Plans were founded on the following guiding principles:

- Establish a tree planting program to replace the aging campus tree canopy. Initially, plant trees along primary streets, campus perimeters and along defined pedestrian corridors.
- Integrate and articulate architectural and site design in conjunction with landscape architectural design in the planning process to ensure that attractive settings and ample open spaces are provided for new facilities.
- Develop new significant landscape features in association with campus expansion, including campus greens and pedestrian plazas linked by strong corridors which support the proposed pedestrian level campus concept fundamental to the University's total Master Plan.
- Ensure that landscape architectural treatments utilize a consistent set of elements in terms of style, materials and quality.
- Maintain a selective palette of indigenous and site-adaptive plant species that promote Xeriscape principles.
- Create a sense of arrival at campus entrances and improve the campus image by defining and reinforcing campus perimeters.

It is recommended that FAMU establish Landscape Design Guidelines that includes six (6) sections: a summary of the Landscape Plan; a listing of plant materials from which to select in developing a site-specific landscape design; a description of furnishings, lighting and graphics to be used in design; a description of acceptable landscape treatments and “gateways” at the edges of campus property; landscape treatments and screenings for parking, maintenance and service areas; and other miscellaneous items not covered in the preceding topics but critical to complete, cohesive landscape design. Below are some highlights of these various guideline components which are applicable at FAMU.

LANDSCAPE TREATMENTS

A carefully conceived and executed planting concept of indigenous plant material will do much to enhance and maintain the image of the FAMU campus. Indigenous native plants will project a proper scale relationship between the individual, buildings and open spaces and will create an appropriate relationship to the existing environment. The following points should be considered when landscaping the new FAMU facilities:

- Maximum preservation and maintenance of the existing tree canopy, especially the large live oak canopies.
- Improve pedestrian lighting in areas of critical need.
- Major tree re-establishment along primary streets, parking areas and along campus perimeters.
- Development of enhanced “Gateways” into campus to include enhanced landscaping, signage, lighting, and hardscape that recognize the significant edges of campus as well as the primary entrances.
Foundation planting for buildings. There is a particular need to introduce planting in the residential and recreational areas on campus.

Reinforcement of pedestrian access ways within the campus and along its perimeters.

It is important that the trees begin to establish a pattern or theme that will tie the campus together. This will prevent the appearance of a sparse and spotty placement of plant material. Major trees, or generally canopy-type trees, produce shade and add a feeling of permanence to the campus. These trees may be used for mass, to define, accent or soften architectural elements and to further define circulation systems and the spatial quality of open space. Planting size for major trees should be a minimum 2” caliper and larger, where possible. One of the key roles of major trees should be to reinforce pedestrian walkway systems, roadways and open space. Screening of undesirable elements such as parking areas and service areas must also be considered.

**SELECTION OF PLANT MATERIALS**

The selection of plant materials should be predicated on the particular design function in the landscape. Florida Friendly Landscaping principles should be considered in plant selection to create a sustainable landscape that promotes water conservation through resource management and good planning. Also, the philosophy of the “right plant in the right place” should also be a focus for selection of plant material. Scale, form, habit, plant hardiness, seasonal aspects, and maintenance requirements are all important factors when selecting the correct plant species in a particular project.

**SITE GRADING**

The inherently steep topography on the FAMU campus offers wonderful opportunities to accentuate dramatic vistas on and off campus. However, these same conditions present challenges in planning a barrier-free design with satisfactory accessibility on campus for disabled persons. These conditions must be mitigated by alternative ramped sidewalks and ramped entrances for buildings to ensure safe access.

Site grading must be sympathetic to existing land forms and existing drainage patterns while providing appropriate transition of architectural elements to grade. Sensitive use of site grading can provide aesthetic qualities to the development relieving rigid architectural lines, creating private spaces, screening objectionable views and gracefully contouring the land to blend with existing site conditions. Drainage, therefore, becomes an integral part of the overall campus plan accomplishing basic needs while being visually attractive as well.

**OPEN SPACES**

There are three (3) basic open space/recreation systems that should be incorporated into the FAMU campus:

- Passive Open Space--Natural areas, fields and lakes.
- Pedestrian Open Space--Pedestrian plazas, quads, campus greens and linear linkages.
- Active Recreation Open Space--Track, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, swimming pool, tennis, racquetball and multipurpose fields.

Passive open space is classified as any area not utilized for pedestrian circulation purposes or active recreation purposes. These spaces include wooded natural areas, agrarian fields and pastures and water bodies, such as ponds. Existing natural wooded areas should be preserved and new wooded areas planned as natural buffers for internal landscaping and the campus edge. Lakes that are planned within the campus master plan can serve such activities as fishing, boating or general relaxation. Lakes and ponds provide a major aesthetic site feature as well as stormwater retention. They must appear as natural as possible, retaining existing vegetation along the shoreline when feasible and supplementing landscape materials when necessary.
Pedestrian open space, existing and planned, for the FAMU campus consists of pedestrian plazas, quads, commons and linear open spaces. Pedestrian plazas, which are primarily identified by surrounding structures, may offer comfortable seating areas, provide general orientation, impel movement toward entrances and serve as a foreground or setting for buildings. Food service should be available on a main plaza with outdoor seating (where climate permits) within view of the plaza.

Almost every American university campus includes a central plaza or primary gathering place. Just as the traditional village or small town had its common green or town square, so each campus community needs a common, semiformal place for relaxation and social interaction. Common areas may function as nodes of the pedestrian-oriented campus to interconnect facilities in a secure, pleasant manner, which encourages positive social interaction. Campus greens afford the academic community place and opportunity for much needed, larger scale, social interaction and extra curricular activities that help balance the rigorous intellectual activities of the University.

The Quadrangle is a successful recently developed example of a university campus. Projects of a similar nature should be planned in the residential and recreational areas on campus. Recent improvements at the women's Quadrangle have helped to create an inviting outdoor space. Other exterior spaces that need improvement include the open spaces around the men's dormitories at Sampson, Young and Gibson Halls. Enhanced landscape features will strengthen the appearance of the buildings as well as add exterior spaces for social activities.

Linear open spaces on the FAMU campus consist of pedestrian ways along streets and pedestrian paths within the campus. The Set is an excellent example of a linear open space designed to meet the functions defined by the intended user group. Another linear area that could be improved is along Wahnish Way. Several of the open spaces there are devoid of landscaping, shade trees and site amenities. The development of a cohesive landscape plan linking together all of the walks, open spaces and buildings would help to unify this important area of campus.

The long-range intention of the Master Plan Update is to reroute the campus perimeter roadway to the west of Bragg Stadium which provides an opportunity to articulate a new primary campus entrance at the intersection of Wahnish Way and Canal Street. The partial closure of Wahnish Way would accommodate the development of an axial open space promenade through the center of campus.

Major roads with associated paving, drainage, swales, pathways and landscape buffer zones can also be considered open space. A new focus on the spaces that mark the arrival into campus along these roadways should be one of the priorities for the future. New trees, colonnades, walls, signage, planters and other improvements will help to strengthen the edges of campus and define the University to the public.

The long-range aspects of the Master Plan Update will accommodate the establishment of a greenway associated with the perimeter campus roadway. Ultimately, this greenway would be connected to the planned expanded greenway and trail system along Cascade Park, which will provide a direct corridor to Tallahassee's new urban park as well as adjacent neighborhoods and mixed use areas. The design function of these open space elements is to provide linkages within the development as well as visual enjoyment when traveling to and from activity areas.

Any space utilized for structured or unstructured recreation activity will be classified as active recreation open space. Included within this category are baseball/softball, basketball, volleyball, racquetball, track fields, tennis courts, swimming pool and multipurpose fields.
The campus environment still remains one of the few urban spaces where pedestrians predominate. The majority of people favor additional safe spaces and greenery rather than the unplanned encroachment of more buildings, roads and parking areas. As in the city, pedestrian/vehicular conflict can be a major concern. Unlike the city, most campuses were originally planned as pedestrian environments, which are then gradually and typically encroached upon by roads and parking areas. Future planned campus expansion and densification should be balanced with quality open spaces. The following are important characteristics to consider in the design of new "favorite spaces" on campus (see Figure 16.2: Campus Plaza Location Map):

- Retention of unique or particularly attractive natural features
- Planning for a variety of natural spaces, from large, open lawns or meadows to secluded, creekside spaces or very natural areas
- S sensitively located seating and bench/table arrangements to enhance areas for study, eating and conversation
- A concise, integrated system of well lit and patrolled "night safety paths" linking main campus entries and nighttime activity centers to ensure personal safety for all users
- Consideration for noise in the outdoors.

Adoption, adherence and continued updates to the Landscape Design Guidelines and the following goals, objectives and policies will promote the addition of more excellent outdoor areas at FAMU.
16.0 Landscape Design Guidelines Element

GOAL 1: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) shall develop a Landscape Plan and establish a set of Landscape Design Guidelines, which sets standards for the quality and enhancement of planning, design and construction/implementation of landscape treatments on the University campus.

Objective 1.1: FAMU shall update the Landscape Plan to correlate with Master Development Plan revisions. FAMU shall endeavor to implement the Landscape Design Guidelines which sets standards for the planning, design and construction/implementation of plant materials, hardscape, furnishings, lighting and graphics, campus edge landscape treatments, landscaping treatment of stormwater retention areas and other design elements important to creating a unified landscape treatment for FAMU properties.

Policy 1.1.1
FAMU shall endeavor to establish, adopt, and update Landscape Design Guidelines. The guidelines shall provide a detailed description of the components of the Landscape Plan to include treatment of vehicular circulation, pedestrian circulation, bicycle facilities, public transportation facilities, emergency access facilities, open spaces, planted areas, site furnishings, lighting location and type, trash collection and recycling facilities, maintenance and utility facilities, and campus edges.

Policy 1.1.2
Until such time as the volume of bicycles on campus equals or exceeds five (5) percent of the total vehicle traffic volume, bicycle traffic shall not be separately accommodated within planned or existing routes. Until the bicycle volume reaches this level, bicycle traffic shall be expected to utilize bicycle-friendly roadway facilities and pedestrian corridors. When the volume of bicycle traffic reaches the five (5) percent level bicycle-only corridors may be considered. The design of these facilities should be in accordance with the Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.1.3
FAMU shall establish as policy a set of standards for the selection of plant materials which emphasize natural vegetation and Florida Friendly principles in their design and use. These standards should be included in the Landscape Design Guidelines. Also, with respect to conservation of Florida’s valuable water resource, standards for landscape irrigation shall be established and also included in the Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.1.4
FAMU shall establish as policy a set of standards for the selection of furnishings, lighting, signage, and graphics. These standards should be included in the Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.1.5
FAMU shall encourage the use of furnishings and hardscape products that meet campus sustainable guidelines such as use of recycled materials and selection of regionally sourced materials.
Policy 1.1.6
FAMU shall establish as policy a set of standards for the treatment of campus edges and gateways into campus to mark important entrance points. These standards should be included in the Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.1.7
FAMU shall establish as policy a set of standards for miscellaneous design elements such as open spaces and planted areas along stormwater treatment facilities and ponds. These standards should be included in the Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.1.8
To enhance the quality of the experience in the outdoors, gasoline-powered or other noise producing landscaping maintenance devices such as leaf blowers, lawn mowers, trimmers, and garbage/refuse collection trucks shall be limited to off-peak hours and other times were the general outdoor atmosphere is not compromised. When maintenance of facilities is necessary during peak use hours or in areas where people have gathered to read, study or socialize, maintenance personnel shall strive to minimize disturbance through the use of noise dampening devices.

Policy 1.1.9
FAMU should require that an active tree preservation/restoration/replacement program be incorporated as a major component of its Landscape Design Guidelines. A campus wide significant tree analysis and arboricultural plan shall be provided to help maintain the large canopy oaks on campus.

Policy 1.1.10
FAMU shall require that consideration of topography and preservation of views, as defined in the 3.0 Urban Design Element, be incorporated as a major component of its Landscape Design Guidelines, adopted as part of this plan.

Objective 1.2: FAMU shall continue to maintain review procedures for landscaping plans and designs proposed for installation on University property.

Policy 1.2.1
Landscape plans shall be included in the design packages submitted for review and approval by the Design Review Committee (reference 15.0 Architectural Design Guidelines Element). The committee membership shall include at least one (1) registered landscape architect or professional arborist, who will be responsible for reviewing and, where appropriate, summarizing committee comments.

Policy 1.2.2
For landscape plans prepared independent of architectural/facility plans, the designer shall be required to submit plans to the University for review by the Design Review Committee. The Design Review Committee shall review and comment on submittals made at the Advanced Schematic Design, Design Development and 50% Construction Documents project phases.

Policy 1.2.3
The requirement for submittal of plans for review to the University shall not relieve the designer of securing the necessary design approvals from appropriate city, state and federal agencies.
Policy 1.2.4
Design of irrigation systems shall be submitted for review to the Design Review Committee as part of a proposed facilities standard design review process [reference 15.0 Architectural Design Guidelines Element]. Irrigation system designs prepared independent of architectural/facility plans shall be submitted for review on the same schedule as required for landscape plans. Irrigation plans shall also be submitted to appropriate jurisdictional authorities, as required.

Policy 1.2.5
FAMU shall require the Design Review Committee to review all plans, designs, and construction documents for compliance with the University’s Landscape Design Guidelines with particular attention to tree preservation, view preservation and topographical consideration elements.

Policy 1.2.6
FAMU shall require preparation of a site-specific Tree Mitigation Plan on projects which may potentially impact hardwood trees of six (6)-inch diameter caliper or greater when measured four (4) feet, six (6) inches above grade. The plan shall be prepared by a professional arborist or Landscape Architect and shall address, at a minimum, the following items:

- Root zone protection.
- Nutrient treatment.
- Trimming.

Objective 1.3: FAMU shall establish priorities for the funding of landscape improvements, including improvements to remediate existing deficiencies and funding of facilities to improve accessibility for disabled persons.

Policy 1.3.1
The timing and priority of landscape improvements on the FAMU campus shall be as programmed in the 14.0 Capital Improvements Element, Table 14.1. Funding, timing and priorities for landscape improvements shall be understood to include accessibility improvements for disabled persons.

Policy 1.3.2
FAMU shall fund the remediation of existing landscaping deficiencies in accordance with the following priorities:

1. Redesign/reconstruction of accessways most commonly used by disabled/handicapped persons to meet all the applicable code requirements.
2. Relocation/repositioning and introductions/addition of screening in maintenance areas, service facilities, and trash and recyclable materials facilities.
3. Retrofitting of existing open space to achieve common, unifying landscape, hardscape and softscape elements.
4. Establishment of an enhanced pedestrian corridor between the housing land use zones on the southern end of the campus and the academic, academic support and student support land use zones on the northern half of the campus.
5. Establishment of a tree-lined corridor for the perimeter roadway system along the edges of campus.
6. Replacement of motorized vehicle throughways with pedestrian/nonmotorized vehicle corridors as parking garages are
constructed and personal vehicle circulation on internal campus roadways is eliminated, with a focus on Wahnish Way.

**Policy 1.3.3**
FAMU shall fund the planning, design and construction of landscaping in compliance with its Landscape Design Guidelines, adopted as part of this plan, as part of the total estimate of costs for implementation of any new, renovated, rehabilitated or expanded facility on University property.

**Policy 1.3.4**
FAMU shall require that the site and landscaping design for any new, renovated, rehabilitated or expanded facility include accommodation of disabled/handicapped persons. This requirement shall extend to the open areas, green spaces, and accessing walkways impacted by the new/redesigned facility.

**Objective 1.4:** FAMU shall provide cost-effective maintenance of its landscape hardscape and softscape features.

**Policy 1.4.1**
FAMU shall require that field personnel responsible for landscape maintenance have a minimum of one (1) week [forty (40) hours] of professional training, every two years, in the areas of which they will be responsible. Such training shall include, at a minimum, familiarization with maintenance tools, storage care, repair and use; personal safety practices and equipment; basic plant agronomy and soil characteristics; clipping and pruning techniques; Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as well as the handling of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.

**Policy 1.4.2**
FAMU shall continue to maintain the Landscape Maintenance Committee comprised, at a minimum, of the University's Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, the Director of Horticulture and the Coordinator of Landscape Management. The committee shall be charged with an annual review of the Landscape Design Guidelines Selection of Plant Materials. Recommendations for additions, deletions or modifications to the plant list shall be submitted to the Urban Design Committee (3.0 Urban Design Element) for approval.

**Policy 1.4.3**
The Landscape Maintenance Committee shall continue to assess the feasibility of the University's Plant Operations and Maintenance Department starting a mulching program to make its own mulch.