3.0 Urban Design Element

FAMU was originally a rural college isolated from its context area. Over the past one hundred (100) years, it has grown into a major University surrounded by an urban neighborhood. Prior to the adoption of a comprehensive Master Plan in 1987, the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) had grown through several active periods of construction and land acquisition. The previous campus growth was typified by a fragmented and isolated building in space concept which provided little community spirit on campus. The success of past exterior developments and recent construction projects on campus that include the Recreation Center Phase II expansion, College of Pharmacy, renovation of Jones, Sampson, and Young Halls, the Library restoration, and the University’s involvement with the City of Tallahassee and Leon County with Blueprint 2000 on the development of FAMU Way Extension have demonstrated that the adoption and adherence to a sound plan for urban design enhances the enjoyment and utilization of campus spaces. Renovation projects are preserving the quality and character of architectural icons within the campus core and new projects like Polkinghorne Village bring street presence and architectural style to the campus perimeter.

Similar to the prior Master Plan, this update advocates for a more pedestrian-oriented inner campus by identifying specific elements of the urban design fabric which must be improved in the planning process. Additional streets must be designated for pedestrian use. In the absence of a network of internal roadways, tree-lined pedestrian corridors will direct circulation within the perimeter of the campus. Optimizing resources, planned expansion, densification and reallocation of land uses offers exceptional opportunities to reorganize and develop a system of central exterior spaces with linear linkages. Campus entry points and perimeters should be defined and reinforced to offer a sense of arrival, establish the University image in the community and ensure controlled access and security for the campus. Further it is through the expansion of campus that constructed facilities and structured moments such as open spaces and gateways may reinforce the campus edge and identity within its urban context.

Numerous site amenities may be associated with a pedestrian level campus. Consistency of site furnishings and design forms, continuity of landscape treatments, improved lighting and proper building siting are all elements of urban design which should play a strong role in the development of the Master Plan Update. The creation of urban design standards would reinforce the relationship of buildings to these formal and informal spaces. Supplemental standards for hardscape and landscape elements would strengthen the urban design standards. Each of the above considerations, upon implementation, shall contribute to the creation of a sense of place that is unique to the University. Numerous reference resources are available that can support campus placemaking including LEED for Neighborhood Development, CNU Smart Code, national and international Best Practices and the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department.

To help deter future crime, specific recommendations for the physical environment and policies affecting the use of University property must be established. Employing practices of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) would provide for the enhancement of the campus while deterring undesirable activities that may lead to crime. Sound city planning and urban design strategies must seek to improve the host community and ensure campus security.

The branch campus locations, while consisting of a collection of buildings, are more akin to agricultural research facilities and therefore are not necessarily bound to similar urban design considerations in the same manner of the main campus. Where appropriate urban design considerations identified in Element 3 shall be applied to the branch campus locations.
Urban Design Element

GOAL 1: FAMU shall maintain the design concept initiated in previous Master Plans that reorganizes and densifies the main campus around activity zones; recognizes and is compatible with historical precedents; and expresses a new and determined commitment and dedication to design standards.

Objective 1.1: FAMU shall adhere to urban design principles that encourage protection and enhancement of existing open spaces, establish future design guidelines which respect and perpetuate the best features of historical precedents, and create functional linkages between campus activity centers and the University shall further establish procedures for assuring such adherence by the University and its representatives.

Policy 1.1.1
FAMU shall establish general design principles to be used, as a minimum, to define the campus master plan, including organization and orientation of new buildings and creation of new open spaces.

- New buildings shall establish "front yards," or quads, by adhering to a setback of not less than fifty (50) feet from the edge of pavement from the adjacent major pedestrian/vehicular thoroughfare.
- Additional hubs, or Commons, from which campus activities radiate shall be created for academic, housing, recreational and public interface areas similar to the academic support and student support hubs created by The Set and the New Commons areas which are currently established.
- FAMU shall adhere to a clear, functional hierarchy of spaces through its Master Plan Update by establishing clearly identified land use zones for similar activities.
- While respecting the need for maintaining a unique academic atmosphere for the college campus, FAMU shall densify the hubs of campus activities in keeping with its location at the transitional edge of the urban government-center of Tallahassee and the surrounding suburban area.
- FAMU shall define and reinforce the edges of the campus by creating selected campus entry points which generate a sense of arrival at the University and a controllable perimeter between the campus and surrounding properties of the context area.
- FAMU shall continue to establish pedestrian linkages between the general activity hubs, between hubs and quads, between the quads and the campus perimeter, and between the campus and surrounding neighborhoods.
- FAMU shall designate locations, consistent with the master plan, for the installation of commemorative monuments, memorials, plaques, fraternity and sorority shields and other special features. Such features shall be coordinated and integrated with campus plazas, quadrangles, and other outdoor environs when appropriate prior to installation.
- All open spaces, both new and existing, shall utilize common landscape, hardscape and softscape elements adopted by the University as a unifying theme.
- FAMU shall preserve the views/sight lines in its location and orientation of proposed facilities.
Policy 1.1.2
The FAMU Director of Facilities Planning and Construction shall be designated as the appropriate administrator for compliance review of new campus facilities to ensure consistency with all campus Master Plan Update Goals, Objectives and Policies.

Policy 1.1.3
FAMU shall adhere to the intensities and densities of development for each land use category prescribed in the 4.0 Future Land Use Element of this plan.

Policy 1.1.4
FAMU shall form an Urban Design Committee consisting of, at a minimum, the Director of Facilities Planning and Construction, two (2) faculty members, one (1) student representative, one (1) staff member from the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department and one (1) member of the Tallahassee community, FAMU alumnus or other non-University-related board member or other citizen. The Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department representative shall be a non-voting member of the Committee. FAMU shall charge this committee with two primary responsibilities:

1. Assure that the Landscape Design Guidelines and Architectural Design Guidelines adopted by the University, and any future amendments thereto, are in accordance with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Comprehensive Master Plan, particularly those stated as generalized urban design guiding principles.
2. Generate long-range design funding and construction of critical non-University fundable urban design elements such as botanical collections, fountains or other ornamental features, outdoor art and sculpture and arrival plaza development.

Policy 1.1.5
FAMU shall require compliance with its adopted Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Design Guidelines prior to acceptance of design or construction for new or renovated facilities.

Objective 1.2: FAMU shall encourage protection and enhancement of existing open spaces while creating new ones and shall organize service and loading functions and facilities to avoid intrusion into open space areas.

Policy 1.2.1
FAMU shall strive to retain and protect all existing and future successful open spaces. If campus expansion should occur, FAMU shall provide additional open space to meet level of service standards identified in the Master Plan.

Policy 1.2.2
FAMU shall establish an implementation schedule for the improvements to open spaces and linkages on campus.

Policy 1.2.3
FAMU shall provide additional open space consistent with its Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) permitting process, where appropriate.

Policy 1.2.4
FAMU shall require that service and loading functions of new facilities be located away from major pedestrian and vehicle thoroughfares and shall not intrude into
areas designated as open space. All service and loading facilities shall be sited, designed and screened in accordance with provisions contained in the University's adopted Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.2.5
FAMU shall request funding for campus spaces and linkages in conjunction with future building construction as a standard item for each proposed building shown in the Master Plan Update Map (Figure 2). FAMU shall strive to establish approximately five (5) percent set aside of the total construction budget for the enhancement of campus open spaces and linkages.

Objective 1.3: FAMU shall develop its campus Master Plan in a manner that is compatible with the Tallahassee – Leon County Comprehensive Plan guidelines. Consideration shall be given, at a minimum, to building location and orientation, building mass and scale, landscape character, ground level functional character and public safety.

Policy 1.3.1
The Landscape Design Guidelines adopted by FAMU shall meet, at a minimum, the Tallahassee – Leon County landscape and tree preservation ordinance provisions for all future buildings and facilities.

Policy 1.3.2
FAMU shall utilize native North Florida plant materials consistent with the upland plant ecology and shall avoid the introduction of domesticated and other plants foreign to the campus environment.

Policy 1.3.3
FAMU shall adhere to those building locations and orientations outlined in the Master Plan Update Map (Figure 2) and shall not substantially deviate from such maps without amending this plan. Substantial deviations shall be defined as those building and facility locations which are moved to areas more than three hundred (300) feet from their location prescribed in the Master Plan Update Map.

Policy 1.3.4
FAMU shall ensure that the adopted Architectural Design Guidelines support the perpetuation of successful historical facilities characterized by brick construction, pitched roofs, and other such elements which contribute to creating a symmetrical, stately, collegiate appearance.

Policy 1.3.5
FAMU shall require that new buildings, open spaces and linkages to other facilities support the current design concept, requiring that building mass and scale be defined relative to pedestrians on adjacent thoroughfares.

Policy 1.3.6
FAMU shall require that the University's urban design guiding principles, Future Land Plan, Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Design Guidelines be compatible with the Tallahassee – Leon County Comprehensive Plan and other applicable studies and plans approved and adopted by the local government.
Objective 1.4: FAMU shall observe and incorporate mechanisms to conserve energy and natural resources in its planning, design, construction and use of all new and renovated facilities.

Policy 1.4.1
FAMU shall require that all design professionals adhere to the energy efficiency/energy conservation initiatives described in 13.0 Conservation Element and its adopted Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Design Guidelines.

Policy 1.4.2
FAMU shall require that passive energy conservation techniques be among the primary criteria to be evaluated in the siting, orientation and landscape and architectural design of all new and renovated facilities. These passive energy conservation techniques shall include, but are not limited to, planting of shade trees, implementation of a street tree program and solar orientation of buildings/window placement.

Policy 1.4.3
FAMU shall require adherence to the goal(s), objectives and policies of the 13.0 Conservation Element, 15.0 Architectural Design Guidelines Element, and 16.0 Landscape Design Guidelines Element by University students, faculty, staff, consultants and all other parties doing work either directly or indirectly for the University or on University property.

Policy 1.4.4
FAMU shall continue its shade tree and street tree program and will utilize resources from the Landscape Architecture program and shall further encourage and support participation in these tree programs by students, nonprofit organizations, faculty and staff.

Policy 1.4.5
In an effort to reduce energy consumption on Campus, FAMU shall:
- participate in the LEED rating system for new construction and renovation projects,
- install low flow fixtures and LED lights,
- invest in solar technology,
- increase pedestrian and bicycle friendly routes to and from campus,
- expand the Campus recycling program, and
- encourage the installation of Florida friendly/native landscape for new construction and renovation projects as well as campus beautification efforts.