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Prepared by Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP
This brochure provides highlights of the Princeton Campus Plan. Prepared by Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP. Designed by Two Twelve Associates.
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Campus Plan addresses issues that are of interest to two interdependent communities. Princeton University’s community consists of over 12,000 students, faculty, and staff. They interact with 30,000 people in the civic community of Princeton Borough and Princeton Township, the two municipalities where Princeton's main campus is located.

Defined by its appealing and historic downtown, Princeton is one of the most compact and walkable towns in New Jersey. The availability of retail, services, and even a railroad link to the Northeast Corridor within walking distance of residential neighborhoods makes Princeton a unique community.

Joined by a common history dating to the pre-revolutionary colonial period, as well as numerous contemporary economic and social interrelationships, Princeton University and the Princeton community are indelibly linked.

The University is one of the region’s top employers, and it was estimated in 2005 to have generated $1.38 billion in economic activity in Mercer County alone. It is the largest taxpayer in both the borough and the township, and it contributes significantly to local organizations as well as to open space and affordable housing. Members of the neighboring communities enjoy the beauty of the campus and take part in the intellectual, artistic, and athletic opportunities that the University offers to them.

With community relations established early as a priority for the planning process, the University and its consultants engaged in numerous public discussions and workshops over the past two years, including a public open house called “Plans in Progress” that was attended by nearly 500 people from on- and off campus who provided significant input at the mid-point of the process.

This input helped to shape the plan’s approach to major issues. Discussions particularly focused on the proposed relocation of the Dinky railroad station as part of the Arts and Transit Neighborhood; pedestrian safety on area roads; the potential impact of campus growth along the northern, eastern, and western campus edges; the need for better overall traffic management and improved parking; and support for environmental sustainability initiatives.

THE EVOLUTION OF A CAMPUS

In 1753, the Borough of Princeton persuaded the College of New Jersey to move from Newark to a four-acre lot donated by the FitzRandolph family. The then-remote site was chosen because it was, as described by Princeton University President Aaron Burr Sr., ‘more sequestered from the various temptations attending a promiscuous converse with the world, that theater of folly and dissipation.’ The move was completed in 1756.

The front green of Nassau Hall was the inspiration for the first use of the word “campus” to refer to the grounds of an American college or university. In the late 1800s, President James McCosh established the overall park-like setting of the campus and commissioned new buildings in a variety of architectural styles.

Between 1906 and 1929, Ralph Adams Cram transformed the campus to reflect President Woodrow Wilson’s admiration for the cloistered spaces of Oxford and Cambridge. In collaboration with Beatrix Farrand, who established a distinctive approach to campus landscape, Cram’s collegiate gothic architecture still defines much of the identity of the campus.

Since then, Princeton has more than tripled in size, adding over 100 buildings, but with varied success in maintaining quality of architecture, landscape, and open spaces as the campus grew, particularly during the postwar period.

This plan aims to preserve and accentuate Princeton’s unique qualities and historic beauty while also selectively adding new qualities that help meet the needs of the next ten years and beyond. These include a reinvigorated commitment to environmental stewardship, the creation of an Arts and Transit Neighborhood that more fully integrates campus and community, and an increased integration of sensitively designed modern architecture into a campus setting defined as much by its landscape and open space as by its buildings and walkways.

THE FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Following the University’s decision to grow within its main campus footprint, President Tighegan articulated five Guiding Principles to steer the planning process:

• Maintain a pedestrian-oriented campus
• Preserve the park-like character of the campus
• Maintain campus neighborhoods while promoting a sense of community
• Build in an environmentally responsible manner
• Sustain strong community relations

While the beauty of our campus inspires and refreshes us, its intimacy advances our goal of integrating academic and extra-curricular life.
Ivy Lane and Western Way Neighborhood

East of Princeton Stadium, the existing athletics fields and parking areas will be reconstructed to create an improved and strengthened athletics neighborhood and a major new parking facility, located in convenient walking distance of most major academic buildings. New parking facility: Flexible athletics practice fields. New Clarke Field baseball stadium. New rugby field. Expanded child care facilities.

THE CAMPUS PLAN

Core Campus

No major new development is planned. Extensive restoration of the campus landscape will restore this historic space while meeting modern functional needs. Projects include green up of campus greens and pathways, and a slow-draining program across the entire area. Holder Court restoration (completed in Fall 2007); McCash Walk restoration. (ongoing in 2008).

Arts and Transit Neighborhood

Redevelopment of a large area at the campus edge will create a dramatic new gateway, with public places, cultural and retail spaces, and reconfigured roads and transportation systems to improve traffic flow and transit connectivity. The Arts Plaza, framed by the Peter B. Lewis Center for the Arts, a landscaped and cellular, and located across from the McCarter and Berlind theaters; The Transit Plaza, connection point for the NJ Transit Dinky service; commuter and campus parking, regional and local locations, a community store, campus shuttles, a bike station, the Wawa convenience store and a new Dinky station building.

Natural Sciences Neighborhood

Supporting interdisciplinary collaboration and research in existing and new natural science programs, this neighborhood will be joined by a pedestrian footbridge over Washington Road. New construction will enable the natural features of the area, its woodlands and streams, to be restored and enhanced, and will create a major new campus green space: Neuroscience and Psychology buildings. Chemistry building: Storchen Bridge. Restoration of Washington Roadavine, woodlands and stream. Lewis Library (opening in 2008). Sciences Green.

Campus Housing

The plan accommodates the planned increase in the undergraduate population from 4,700 to 5,200 by 2012, and reconfigures and improves housing for faculty, staff and graduate students. Whitman College (completed in Fall 2007); New Butler College (opening in 2009); Renovation of Hibben and Magie for graduate students (interior only); Reconstruction of the Butler Tract for faculty and staff; New apartments at Dean Mathey Court for faculty and staff.

Prospect Avenue and William Street Neighborhood

This area will be more integrated with the core campus as existing science buildings are vacated and reused, the E-Quad is expanded, and landscape improvements extend the sense of campus to the area. Renovation of Frick, Frick, and Hoyt Halls for humanities and social sciences expansion; Renovation of 185 Nassau Street for new-added programs in the visual arts and creative writing. Operations Research and Financial Engineering building. School of Engineering and Applied Science expansion. Landscape improvements. Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding relocation and expansion. Renovation of the former Campus Club as a student life facility.

A Campus of Neighborhoods

The campus is made up of many “neighborhoods” that have loosely defined boundaries and are characterized by a concentration of use, activity, or discipline. The neighborhood concept supports interdisciplinary collaboration, guides growth near the edges, and fosters an integrated, rather than piecemeal, approach to campus development. The Campus Plan focuses on four emerging neighborhoods.
Arts and Transit Neighborhood

Creating a cultural and transportation hub that is both a campus and community destination.

Unlike the historic cloistered enclosures which separate the University from its neighbors, the new Arts and Transit Neighborhood will create a public space that is a nexus of both campus and community life, complementing Princeton’s existing fabric of public spaces—Palmer Square, Scudder Plaza, and Hinds Plaza at the public library—with a new cultural focal point. New activities will build upon and strengthen two longtime community anchors: the McCarter Theatre Center and the New Jersey Transit Dinky railroad station.

The neighborhood will be the home to the new Peter B. Lewis Center for the Arts and the University Art Museum’s satellite and will create a focal point for the arts and fulfill an edge-to-edge deployment of the arts at Princeton. Existing destinations such as Richardson Auditorium, the Princeton University Art Museum, the McCarter and Berlind theaters, and Hinds Plaza at the public library—with a new cultural focus—will support visitors arriving at the University from its neighbors, the new Arts and Transit Neighborhood is the creation of a transit hub to support multiple modes of public transportation, reducing the use of private vehicles. At the heart of this transportation hub is a Transit Plaza which features an NJ Transit Dinky station, stops for the community jitney and university shuttle, bike parking, and dedicated space for a possible future bus rapid transit to Princeton Junction. In addition, direct access to Lot 7 garage will reduce vehicular mileage travelled by University staff and visitors arriving from the north by at least three-quarters of a mile in each direction, thereby reducing associated carbon emissions.

Enjoying the new Arts Plaza, patrons stroll to a café in the former Dinky creates building. Students and local residents walk along a passageway, shaded walkway connecting the historic campus and downtown with the new NJ Transit stations just beyond.

These spaces will not be housed in a single, large structure, but in a “village” of smaller buildings compatible in scale with their surroundings and designed by a variety of architects. Buildings will be interspersed with plazas and landscaped open spaces, following in the tradition of Princeton’s historic campus and town planning.

To realize this vision, many layers of transportation infrastructure must be reconfigured into a single, coherent system. The project will not generate new traffic—in fact, it will reduce peak-hour traffic by replacing administrative offices with cultural uses. One of its greatest impacts will be to improve the congested conditions that exist today in the Alexander Street/University Place corridor, which was not designed to handle the volume of modern, regional through traffic and transit commuters that it now supports.

The redevelopment will include reconfigured roadways and a new roundabout to relieve traffic congestion; and a multi-modal transportation hub or “Transit Plaza,” to provide convenient access to the Dinky and adequate space for connecting cars, taxis, buses, campus shuttles, bicyclists, and a new community jitney service. A new Dinky station including retail space and other passenger amenities will face the Transit Plaza along with the relocated 24-hour Wawa store.

The design also provides access from Alexander Street to the University’s existing 750-car Lot 7 garage for University staff and visitors to the campus and the new arts facilities.
Natural Sciences Neighborhood
Fostering scientific collaboration in a natural setting

The natural sciences represent one of the most dynamic areas of growth and change at Princeton, requiring buildings of ever-increasing technological sophistication. New interdisciplinary programs have been created, including the Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics and the Princeton Neuroscience Institute, and longstanding scientific disciplines such as chemistry can no longer accommodate modern laboratory-based research in the aging buildings that house them.

A significant expansion and consolidation of departments into a cohesive Natural Sciences Neighborhood at the south end of Washington Road will include new buildings for chemistry, neuroscience, and psychology. The neighborhood already includes facilities for math, physics, biology, and the geosciences, and will soon include the Lewis Library. New pathways will connect to adjacent neighborhoods, especially engineering, humanities, and social sciences.

The planning strategy locates these buildings at the southern edge of campus, where the natural landscape of robust woodlands and ravines will provide an appropriate buffer to their mass. A modern architectural vocabulary emphasizing lightness and transparency will relate the buildings to their scenic surroundings.

The bridge also serves athletes and others going from the multiple buildings previously separated by this major roadway. The bridge also serves athletes and others going from the dorms to athletic facilities. A particular challenge is the need to integrate the increasing bulk of modern research buildings into the human scale of the campus. The size of these structures is due not only to their high-technology systems and equipment, but also to the fact that teaching continues to be emphasized at Princeton as much as research. As a result, the new Chemistry building will include more fume hoods and lab benches than would normally be required for a pure research space.

Streicker Bridge, a footbridge across Washington Road designed by the distinguished Swiss engineer Christian Menn, will reinforce these connections and collaborations by linking multiple buildings previously separated by this major roadway. The bridge also serves athletes and others going from the dorms to athletic facilities.

In addition to landscape and stormwater strategies that will restore, enhance, and expand the natural areas, the new Chemistry building will incorporate sustainable building technologies. A series of proposed features will reduce energy demand and conserve water:

- Extensive high-performance glazing will provide ambient daylighting of interior spaces, linked with sensors for control of dimmable electric lighting. Architectural shading elements will decrease ambient daylighting of interior spaces, linked with sensors for control of dimmable electric lighting.
- Integrated mechanical systems will enable optimal transfer of cooled and heated air from offices through the atrium and incorporate displacement heating and cooling in the auditorium. High-efficiency laboratory fume hoods with automatic sash closers will reduce both air supply and exhaust requirements, and heat recovery systems will capture energy from lab exhaust. A gray water system will collect and recycle stormwater for non-potable uses. Landscaped rain gardens and biofiltration areas will retain and filter additional building and site stormwater.

The Chemistry nature path frames a pastoral setting around the Chemistry building and along Washington Road, where the Armory building and parking lot were previously located.
Ivy Lane and Western Way Neighborhood

Integrating a once-remote area into the life of the campus and strengthening the athletics neighborhood

Ivy Lane and Western Way are two names for one continuous road that crosses the borough and township border as it extends east of campus. Encompassing lands on both sides of the road, the neighborhood forms the southeast edge of campus, and is home to Princeton Stadium, Clarke baseball field and other athletics facilities.

The neighborhood seems farther away from the center of campus than it really is due to limited pathways and relatively low activity levels. However, following the completion of the new Lewis Library and with the growth in the adjacent Natural Sciences and Prospect/Willian Neighborhoods, it will be more proximate to centers of campus activity.

While there are no current plans for new academic buildings in this area, it is a crucial location for future academic development. The plan establishes principles to support this long-term growth so that, over time, the neighborhood will become a fully integrated part of the future campus.

A new parking facility south of Western Way will meet critical demand for new spaces, based on the anticipated growth of faculty and staff and loss of other parking spots on campus to development. A low-profile garage and landscaped surface parking lot will be set back into the hillside. This site was selected over other options since it is within a close walking distance of the majority of academic and administrative buildings where commuters work. Emphasizing walkability will reduce dependence on shuttle buses and avoid informal parking on nearby streets. New pathways will connect north and west to the E-Quad, Natural Sciences Neighborhood and Core Campus, while traffic access will be provided from Faculty Road.

The athletics fields will be rebuilt farther south, defining a strengthened athletics neighborhood around the Caldwell Fieldhouse. Improvements will include new practice and club sports fields, better lighting, and artificial turf to increase field utilization. New stormwater detention basins will be located beneath the athletic fields to treat and store runoff from the site as well as from adjacent waterhedges to reduce the impacts on the Washington Road stream and east basin.

The Data Center currently located at 87 Prospect Avenue will be relocated near the University’s cogeneration plant or off campus since its planned expansion, including a backup power and cooling plant, was deemed incompatible with this neighborhood and a poor use of space in this increasing campus-like area.

Campus daycare facilities, located at 171 Broadmead, will be expanded to a site known as the “Broadmead Fields,” convenient for employees using the new parking facility as well as for faculty and staff who live nearby. Eventually, daycare facilities may be expanded in this location creating a daycare “village” designed as a set of small-scale buildings compatible with the residential surroundings.

To provide for campus growth while respecting the adjacent residential neighborhoods, the Campus Plan designates FitzRandolph Road as the eastern limit of academic uses. Only non-academic uses compatible with the residential neighborhoods, such as daycare and housing, will be located east of FitzRandolph Road.

This area east of Washington Road and south of Nassau Street was one of the first expansions of the campus beyond the original Historic core. Development there began with the University’s first two science buildings, Frick and Green halls. Later, growth continued without a unified plan, resulting in a haphazard neighborhood interspersed with streets, parking lots, and utilities.

Recent planning has strengthened this neighborhood’s identity. Shapiro Walk now directs most pedestrian movement, and new buildings are beginning to define quadrangles. In 1990, the area was designated as what is known as an E3 zone to place limits on new development and to create expanded spaces, especially behind private residences to the east. 2005 amendments to the ordinance allow for more development in the Engineering Quadrangle, but also mandate an effective shuttle system, more effective buffering, better overall site design, and the implementation of a comprehensive landscape plan.

The planning strategy is completely consistent with the ordinance. Robust plantings will enhance Shapiro Walk, evoking favorite campus walkways designed by Beatrice Ferrand. New trees and ground treatments will improve the neighborhood’s major green spaces, and the new Operations Research and Financial Engineering (ORFE) building will create activity and strengthen the adjacent quadrangle.

Prospect Avenue and William Street Neighborhood

Extending the sense of campus to a mixed area

This area east of Washington Road and south of Nassau Street will soon be home to the School of Engineering and Applied Science. A planned addition between the original buildings and the more recently constructed Brown Hall will allow the engineering school to meet urgent needs for expansion and modernization. In addition, a few dilapidated buildings on Olden Street will be replaced with facilities for housing or mixed-use.

Prospect Avenue, known as “the Street,” is a vital, mixed-use corridor that features the independently owned and operated eating clubs. Two previous club buildings will be reused. The former Campus Club will become a gathering and social space for undergraduate and graduate students. The Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding will move from its current location on Olden Street into the former Elm Club building, which will be renovated and expanded.