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This past spring, we established an ambitious goal to update our Campus Master Plan by the end of 2015. A campus-wide master plan will guide the physical shape of our campus as we continue to look ahead. In so many ways, our physical campus supports our very important and very aggressive vision, which is to be an internationally renowned research university—a first choice for education and healthcare.

Today, UAB land holdings make up approximately a quarter of the downtown central business district in Birmingham. Considering this fact in combination with the thousands of students, employees and visitors that come to our campus each day, UAB has a tremendous responsibility to be a leader in our community, in our state, and in our world. To live up to that responsibility, we as an institution have set strong goals for ourselves in the areas of:

- Education
- Research
- Patient Care
- Community Service, and
- Economic Development.

Our continued efforts to create a campus that is both beautiful and sustainable will help us achieve our multifaceted mission. Our campus should be walkable, safe for cyclists, transit-friendly, and easily accessible for visitors. We should be well-integrated with the business community around us and we should be aggressive drivers of innovation. Just as importantly, we should be great partners with all of our many neighbors within our central urban setting.

We call Birmingham our home, and Birmingham is a community that was built upon the resources of iron and human innovation. This Campus Master Plan is about continuing to grow and change our home for the better. In that great effort, we will continue to build a foundation for changing our world.

Ray Watts
President
PURPOSE

While UAB has commissioned interim studies, plan amendments and topical plans over the years, the University’s last adopted campus master plan was prepared and approved in 2001. Given the time that has passed and changes that have occurred on campus since then, this planning process is intended as a high level refocusing effort capturing an overall vision for campus development and serving as a foundation for more detailed study of key topics.

Thus this plan will guide campus development in two ways:

• **Foundation Shaping Map:** This map and supporting materials illustrate opportunities to accommodate University growth while creating a more vibrant, enriching and interconnected campus.

• **Emphasis Areas:** Several topics emerged from stakeholder meetings and work sessions that warrant further investigation. Core principles are set out in this document so that future topical plans and studies embrace and support the campus vision.

PROCESS

This master plan was developed through a collaborative process that engaged University administration, staff and faculty; community stakeholders; and representatives of the City of Birmingham during the summer of 2015. Planning workshops, interviews and work sessions enabled a broad cross section of the campus community to communicate their desires for the future of the campus and shape the development of the plan. As the Fall semester began, plan concepts were presented and discussed with incoming students, adjacent Birmingham neighborhood associations and the City of Birmingham Planning Commission and staff. The draft plan was made available on the University website for public review and feedback. The plan was then finalized and submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval.

The Campus Master Plan is intended to guide the physical development of the campus in a manner that supports the five pillars of the University’s Strategic Plan:

- Education
- Research
- Patient Care
- Community and Global Service
- Economic Development
The primary elements of the University of Alabama at Birmingham campus vision include:

• An urban campus of quality places and spaces interconnected by walkable streets and paths
• A network of vibrant open spaces for active and passive recreation, gathering, and learning
• A richly supportive setting for student living
• A hub for innovation, creativity, research and artistic expression
• Compelling architecture that frames and engages memorable outdoor places
• Integrated parking and multimodal transportation systems that provide convenient access and movement across the campus
• A cost-effective utility system with low carbon footprint and energy unit index
• A healthy, green and sustainable environment
• A harmonious, purposeful partnership with neighbors

CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Campus Growth
• Accommodate growth compactly and in appropriate locations
• Continue transition from a commuter to a residential campus
• Grow intramural facilities on campus to keep pace with demand
• Relocate and consolidate support functions to enable campus-community growth

Access and Mobility
• Enhance interstate access to and from the campus
• Increase walkability and bicycle accessibility
• Encourage more evenly-distributed, calm traffic
• Place parking at the perimeter and in strategic locations on campus
• Coordinate transit system improvements with parking facility development

Campus Enrichment
• Establish a strong, cohesive sense of place
• Unify the campus with an overall open space system
• Enhance safety and security through technology and campus design
• Improve campus image and visitor experience with gateways and wayfinding

Community Partnership
• Strengthen connections between the campus and surrounding neighborhoods
• Support quality, private development of student, faculty and staff housing
• Encourage development of retail, recreation and cultural activities on and off-campus
SHAPING THE CAMPUS
Over the next five years the University will develop or begin the process of developing new buildings, open spaces, and parking facilities. Buildings will be renovated. Improvements will be made to help motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users get around campus more easily and more safely. Investments in the UAB campus over the next five years will be guided by the illustrative “Foundation Shaping Map” so that, altogether these individual changes will have a positive, transformational impact on the campus.

**URBAN CAMPUS**

The campus is an integral and unique part of Downtown Birmingham. The university’s location within the southern half of downtown—which is rapidly changing to a more urban, walkable and mixed-use setting—offers an advantageous, immersive and dynamic physical environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. To capitalize on that advantage, future campus development must likewise be more deliberately urban. Existing connections—vehicular, transit, pedestrian and bicycle—should be enhanced in coordination with the city and supported by thoughtful management and construction of new parking facilities.

Instituting a more urban development pattern offers direct benefits to the university. It enables more efficient investment in and management of campus infrastructure and utilities. By “densifying” areas of the campus through adaptive reuse, addition or redevelopment, the University can reduce the need for outward growth that would entail property acquisition in the midst of rising downtown land values, costly extension of infrastructure, and expansion of operational staff and services to maintain, police and provide transit service for a spread-out campus.

With these benefits in mind, new development on campus should incorporate the following planning and design concepts:

- Buildings frame streetscapes and open spaces, rather than sit within space
- New growth is compact—vertical rather than horizontal—wherever possible
- Buildings and their uses are arranged to generate street level activity
- Legible transitions are provided between public, semi-public, private spaces
- Buildings include entrances and windows on streets and open spaces
- Buildings are sited and designed with outside views in mind
- Service and utility areas are located away from public views

In 2014, UAB saw its sixth straight year of record overall enrollment, with 18,698 students. Graduate enrollment is up 43% over the last ten years and is the largest among Alabama universities.
FOUNDATION SHAPING MAP

The illustration at left depicts the way in which changes to the campus that are initiated in the next five years will set the stage for achieving the University’s longer term goals for the physical development of the campus.

New buildings (red) will be added to the campus to frame streetscapes and open spaces and create a more cohesive, walkable urban campus environment. New buildings will be sized and placed to increase density and limit the need for outward expansion. The building footprints shown in the Shaping Map are intended as “placeholders” giving a general sense of scale, location, orientation and configuration of future buildings.

Additional housing will emerge on the south side of campus to accommodate increasing student enrollment, including housing for a growing international student body. To support on-campus housing, new campus dining, retail and student services will be developed.

A campus-wide open space system will interconnect the academic, recreational, housing and other functions of the campus. The Campus Green is the center of the open space system with a proposed north-south greenway that connects the heart of the campus to the Parkside District and Southside neighborhood.

Campus open spaces include the athletics complex proposed along Interstate 65 as well as plazas, courtyards, lawns, paths and recreational spaces throughout the campus.

Tree-lined multimodal streets supplement campus open spaces and the internal bicycle and pedestrian paths that weave through them. Streetscape enhancements will not only create a more unified campus image but will incorporate enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and stormwater management elements.

New parking facilities are located strategically to allow the campus to grow. A new commuter parking facility on the west side of campus will be connected to the academic and medical campuses by an increasingly efficient transit system.

Physical investments in the campus will include design elements to increase safety and security, from the way buildings and open spaces are oriented to one another to lighting selection and placement.

The design of buildings, parking facilities and open spaces around the perimeter of the campus will create comfortable physical relationships with the Southside and Glen Iris neighborhoods as well as the Parkside and Five Points South districts. New University investments will encourage private development that helps to serve the growing campus and its neighbors.
OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

A campus-wide open space system will provide an attractive, comfortable and engaging campus environment and will establish the framework around which campus functions are organized and interconnected. The campus open space system is made up of:

- Greens, lawns, plazas, courtyards and other cultural open spaces;
- Athletics and recreational open spaces; and
- Tree-lined streetscapes and pedestrian corridors and other linear open space features.

The open space system will become an increasingly valuable asset as the campus grows within its urban framework. Today’s commitment to open space will ensure a healthy urban environment for wellness and social engagement for many years to come. As the density of the campus increases and buildings are arranged carefully and compactly around campus open spaces, the University will evolve into a vibrant and engaging urban environment that is uniquely UAB.

The open space system provides a variety of intentional open spaces, each of a size and design to suit the diverse needs and desires of students, faculty and staff. In addition to the Campus Green, the lawns, courtyards, plazas, and park spaces create a pleasant outdoor environment for the University community to enjoy. Weaving these spaces together with a well-designed system of walkways and bicycle facilities enlivens the campus, increasing safety and enjoyment. The open space system is intentionally designed to allow maximum opportunities for organized and impromptu interaction, a hallmark of traditional campus design that contributes to the physical, academic and social development of students.

The open space system includes tree-lined corridors, streets, and passageways that support connectivity, pedestrian movement and healthy ecosystems. One of the primary open space corridors is a proposed 15th Street greenway which extends northward from the Campus Green to the city’s Railroad Park, and southward to Phelan Park. Interconnecting larger and smaller spaces, the greenway becomes the primary pedestrian link between the academic core, campus recreation areas, and the Southside and Parkside neighborhoods. Another major open space corridor meanders through the former right-of-way of 9th Avenue South, providing an east-west connection that links medical and research areas, the academic core, and recreation areas.

A new green frontage along Interstate 65 becomes UAB’s front door to the region and houses the University’s athletic and recreational facilities. Intramural fields and shared recreational spaces weave together the southern portion of the campus with the adjacent Southside neighborhoods.

Streets traversing the campus are transformed into pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets landscaped to create a comfortable, shaded and attractive environment for those travelling through and into the campus.
FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

The UAB campus houses several major functions. The academic campus lies at the heart of the overall campus—centered around the Campus Green—with remaining University functions surrounding it.

The University Hospital, to the east, overlaps the academic core with several buildings housing both medical and teaching functions. The UAB Highlands campus along the University’s southern perimeter is also an important component of UAB’s medical facilities.

Research facilities, which have historically occurred within the UAB Hospital Campus, will extend westward into the academic campus, creating opportunities for greater synergy between academic, research and health care functions.

Student housing is located south of the academic campus adjacent to proposed recreational spaces and community businesses along 11th Avenue South.

UAB’s athletics and recreational facilities are west of the academic campus. This part of the campus includes space for passive recreational uses, altogether creating an attractive, “green” front door visible from Interstate 65.

Additional campus functions include support facilities and a burgeoning cultural district. The cultural district focuses around the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center and the Abroms-Engel Institute for Visual Arts. Support functions, such as recycling, landscaping and document storage, currently housed in various locations on campus will be consolidated into a larger, central support area west of Interstate 65. This will enable higher uses of valuable land around the core campus and enable greater coordination and efficiency in university operations.

The UA System is undertaking a space planning effort, which is an important part of managing the use of existing campus facilities and projecting and prioritizing future needs for classroom, lab, administrative and auxiliary space. The process begins with a comprehensive space inventory and qualitative and functional analysis of campus facilities. Space utilization assessments highlight opportunities for the University to optimize utilization of existing facilities. Future space needs are forecast based on increasing enrollment, trends and best practices and peer data comparisons.
EMPHASIS AREAS
ACADEMICS

Locations for expanded and new buildings are identified in the Foundation Shaping Map to meet growing space demands over the next five years and beyond. These sites will accommodate projected needs for new and upcoming undergraduate and graduate programs including in the Schools of Nursing and Business, College of Arts and Sciences, Honors College and others. Increased emphasis in research, innovation and entrepreneurial programs will also be a driver for growth within the academic campus.

Additions and new construction are generally envisioned as four- and five-story buildings to provide flexibility for short-term growth and assure room for long-term development of the academic campus.

The addition of new academic buildings will help to strengthen the core of the campus. New buildings will be sited to frame existing and future open spaces and streetscapes creating a more walkable and dynamic academic environment on the blocks surrounding the Campus Green.

UAB HEALTH SYSTEM AND MEDICINE

UAB Health System include facilities at the UAB campus, the adjacent UAB Highlands campus, and the Medical West campus in Bessemer. The Health System and health professional schools provide world-class care to patients while serving essential roles in the academic and research functions of the University.

Future sites are reserved for development of new medical and research facilities on the UAB Medical campus, which has grown to be one of the largest public hospitals in the country. Growth of UAB Medicine will be led by the AMC21 strategic planning initiative, which emphasizes biomedical research, innovation and collaboration. In the next several years new facilities are envisioned for genomic medicine and data sciences as well as clinical buildings adjacent to the hospital and Kirklin Clinic.

Ongoing planning and development on the medical campus will address issues of renovation and/or replacement of aging facilities, growth in ER services, and incorporation of public spaces as part of the hospital’s wellness infrastructure.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The UAB Information Technology divisions’ strategic plan includes the following goals:

- secure computing environment
- shared governance
- world class IT organization
- business value and reduced costs
- innovation through business partnerships
- institution-wide data driven decision making
- surrounding community of IT excellence

To support these developmental goals, IT facilities and programs should be consolidated into a single facility. Consolidated operations and IT infrastructure upgrades will enable the desired expansion of University research functions.

A proposed IT facility will accommodate 300 staff and a 12,000 square foot Tier-3 Data Center that will house all campus administrative IT and research computing systems. Construction of a new facility will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of IT functions, which are currently housed in three separate, aging facilities. This facility will provide a shared, secured computing space for all campus departments. Locating the facility near the Rust Research Center, would reduce infrastructure and construction costs.
CAMPUS IMAGE

The campus image and wayfinding system is made up of:

- Green frontage along Interstate 65 serving as the University’s front door to the region;
- Gateways at strategic locations to create good first impressions of the campus;
- Primary streets that serve as “image corridors”; and
- Banners, wayfinding and building identification signage located throughout the campus.

A new campus lawn greets visitors arriving by way of Interstate 65. The vast lawn stretching along the east frontage of the interstate accommodates a wide range of passive and active recreational uses.

Improvements in signage and landscaping and careful attention to building form create strong first impressions and clearly announce entry into the campus. While all entries to campus should portray a unified and positive image, designated gateways are located at key points along more prominent streets. Signage, markers and similar items have accumulated on campus over the years, all of which should be inventoried and either updated or replaced to create a more cohesive and orderly environment throughout UAB.

While gateways introduce the campus to the visitor, its streets and the development alongside them define the character and image of the University to all those travelling on them—by car, on foot, or otherwise. Quality and consistency of signage, landscaping, lighting, pedestrian facilities, and building configuration and design make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore the character of these “image corridors” must be carefully safeguarded.
CREATING COMPLETE STREETS

There are a number of public streets traversing the UAB campus that may be “retrofitted” to create a more effective and safer environment for walking and bicycling. The illustrations on this page represent ways some existing streets may be redesigned (within the existing curbline to minimize costs) and achieve several important goals:

- redefine streets to calm through traffic;
- create a strong buffer between existing sidewalks and moving vehicles;
- enhance intersections to shorten crossing distances and provide more standing space;
- include curb extensions at intersections and midblock for trees and stormwater management; and
- incorporate dedicated bicycle lanes.

Redesigning campus streets will require collaboration with the City of Birmingham. In some case, traffic studies may be required.

Creating a safe campus environment for bicycling requires dedicated infrastructure and a cultural shift supported by education, encouragement and enforcement. Attributes of well-designed campus bike programs include:

- Safety: The design and maintenance of bikeways should minimize the potential for bodily harm. This includes maintaining a smooth and stable surface, providing adequate operating space, ensuring visibility at intersections and roadway crossings, and creating a predictable environment for all path and/or road users.

- Comfort: Bikeway design should not induce stress for any mode of transportation—not for people bicycling, walking or driving. On-street bike lanes should enhance comfort either through the provision of dedicated space for bicyclists, or by creating a traffic-calmed bicycle-priority environment. Off-street bike paths should be buffered from fast-moving vehicles and include enhanced crossing treatments at road—way intersections.

- Connectivity: Bikeways should form a cohesive network that allows people to access everyday destinations. Even short gaps can have a large impact on the perceived usefulness of facilities.

- Intuitive Design: It should be obvious to all road or path users how to navigate through and around the bikeway. People bicycling should be able to move through the bikeway without thinking, and it should be obvious to people driving or walking how they fit in to the bikeway context.

- Convenience: Good bikeway design will minimize delay for all users, minimize out-of-direction travel, allow bicyclists to pass one another, and provide wayfinding to other bikeway connections and popular destinations.
PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

The recommended campus pedestrian system is made up of a combination of sidewalks along public streets (solid lines) and off-street paths (dashed lines). While the existing network provides wide coverage over the campus, it has potential to be dramatically improved so that it safely and conveniently connects campus functions with parking and transit facilities. Campus walkability can be enhanced by focusing on the following:

- Design of intersection crossings
- Expansion of pedestrian and multi-use paths within the campus open space system
- Architectural features of buildings that address and activate streetscapes and open spaces
- Street design characteristics that calm through traffic
- Arrangement and density of campus functions that encourage walking rather than driving
- Parking and transit infrastructure and policies that support walking

Many of these improvements can be achieved through street improvements (see “Creating Complete Streets,” p. 13). The University should continue to partner with the City to improve the design and function of campus streets.
BICYCLE SYSTEM

Bicycle accessibility is becoming increasingly important as the campus evolves and interests in wellness and sustainability grow. The diagram below shows a potential network of bike lanes (solid lines) and paths (dashed lines) that could be constructed to provide safe bicycle access around campus. On-street bicycle facilities, including either dedicated bicycle lanes or shared lanes, could be introduced through retrofitting existing public streets. These opportunities will require additional study in conjunction with the City of Birmingham.

Off-street shared paths, accommodating pedestrians and bicycles, will increase mobility within the campus and provide access to and from perimeter parking and to adjacent neighborhoods and to destinations in Parkside and Five Points South.

In addition to bicycle infrastructure, universities across the country have developed procedures and programs to promote bicycling to and around campus while reducing vehicular congestion and parking demand. These activities are typically undertaken with the following principles in mind:

- Promote sustainability by reducing carbon footprint of commuting to campus
- Save money by shifting commuters to non-vehicular modes and reducing the need for parking
- Incentivize alternative modes of transportation
- Provide affordable transportation options
- Raise quality of life for the campus community

Strategies for accomplishing these principles involve university-supported educational programs and materials and enforcement programs to assure safe bicycling practices. Support facilities will help encourage more students, faculty and staff to embrace bicycling on campus. These include: short- and long-term bicycling areas, bike centers and self-repair stations, changing areas, wayfinding and bike share programs.
VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Embedded within an urban street network on the south side of Birmingham’s city center, the campus lies between Interstate 65 and Elton B. Stephens Expressway (US Highway 31/280). Both roadways include interchanges that serve as key access points for the southern portion of the city center. The resulting high traffic volumes and auto-centric street characteristics are a challenge for creating a more multi-modal campus. Going forward it will be important for the University and the City of Birmingham to enhance the character of the local street network to more safely and efficiently accommodate pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists.

The urban street grid provides flexibility to provide balanced vehicular access while the downtown area continues to evolve through redevelopment. The City and the University must be judicious when considering street closures to avoid unintended traffic impacts on area streets and to preserve direct access to emergency room facilities (as shown in following diagram with red dotted lines).

Meanwhile, campus streets can be redesigned to calm vehicular traffic and to better suit pedestrian and bicycle mobility. For example there are opportunities to reduce large cross sections of some streets that accommodate traffic flows that are both undesirable within the campus and in excess of actual demand. On four-lane streets, interior lanes are used frequently for left-turning vehicles, reducing their effectiveness as through lanes. Several of these streets can be redesigned with two outside through lanes and a center turn lane. These changes would calm through traffic, allow for bicycle lanes to be added, and accommodate landscaping and other improvements that create a safer walking environment alongside the street.

One significant change to vehicular circulation could be a reconfiguration of the Interstate 65 access system. Currently, access from I-65 is provided by off-ramps at 4th and 6th Avenues South and University Boulevard. Campus users currently access I-65 at University Boulevard and 3rd Avenue South. This current access system results in congestion on University Boulevard for long periods during the day and limited use of the other access points, due in part to their indirectness. The concept for improving interstate access would create a pair of frontage roads between University Boulevard and 4th Avenue South, similar to the I-65 access system between 3rd and 6th Avenues North.
PARKING

The way that people use parking is influenced by the proximity of different destinations to one another, street design, pedestrian infrastructure, transit access, and parking policies and rates. The provision and management of parking will be an important factor as the University transitions from a commuter campus to one that is accessible by alternative modes.

Several parking strategies should be further studied and pursued:

- Locate surface lots away from the center of the campus
- Use structured parking in the center of campus
- Enhance pedestrian connections between parking and other campus functions
- Provide convenient visitor parking
- Encourage denser, more compact development within and around campus
- Provide clear wayfinding signage for parking and transit
- Establish a parking rate structure that reflects the level of convenience provided

As part of the ongoing evolution of parking on campus, a large, remote parking complex is planned immediately west of Interstate 65. The site is easily accessible from local streets and from the interstate but less desirable for other university functions due to its remote location. A transit shuttle will pick up and drop off passengers in the remote parking complex throughout the day.

Parking structures are located throughout the campus and in the surrounding area. New structured parking will be located strategically to support development and redevelopment on campus and in relation to campus transit. Wherever possible, parking structures should include other uses at ground level to enhance the pedestrian environment and generate activity. Otherwise, the facades of parking structures should be designed to properly “meet the street,” harmonize with architectural context, and visually de-emphasize their parking function.
Blazer Express, the campus transit system opened in 2013, includes three primary daytime routes (blue, green and gold), two nighttime routes (orange and purple) and an additional daytime route that operates during afternoon rush hour (silver). The number of and design of routes represents the varied needs of system users—University students, faculty and staff; medical and research staff; and hospital visitors. To encourage commuters to use the system, routes provide access to remote parking.

Campus transit usage is influenced by many different factors:

- Routes
- Headways (time between buses)
- Parking
- Walkability
- Campus density
- Intensity of development around the campus
- Interface with public transit systems

The University’s bus-based transit system is adaptive, which allows the system to be evaluated and adjusted as parking, walkability and other related campus systems are upgraded. Convenience of the system will help attract greater ridership, which will ultimately allow the system to grow.
In concert with the development of the campus master plan, the University commissioned the development of an athletics master plan to enhance athletics and recreational facilities on campus. Currently, baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, sand volleyball courts, and two football practice fields are located between the academic campus and Interstate 65. Indoor sports, training, and sports medicine facilities are located in the Wallace Building and Bartow Arena nearby. Tennis courts are located on the east side of campus. Altogether, on- and off-campus facilities accommodate seventeen varsity teams and intramural uses.

The athletics master plan recommends expanding, reorganizing and consolidating athletic facilities on the west side of campus. In particular the plan calls for a new facility for track, band and intramural use; new soccer and football practice fields; two new recreational softball fields, passive recreational spaces, and additional parking. The plan also recommends relocating tennis to the athletics and recreational complex.

Also, as noted previously in this document, additional intramural fields are proposed on the south side of campus.
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The urban context of UAB is central to its identity. With the benefits of being in a highly-accessible and dynamic city environment comes the responsibility of being a good neighbor. Through cooperative planning, the campus can grow effectively while catalyzing city and private investments that benefit campus users and off-campus businesses and residents. The City of Birmingham and the University have worked together in the past to achieve common goals and spur economic development in downtown, an objective that resonates in the University’s Strategic Plan. Such partnering efforts should continue and be emboldened by past successes.

With respect to its interface with surrounding neighborhoods and districts, the guiding principle should be to create seams rather than hard edges. This is done physically through contextually-sensitive building and site design and programatically by creating “common ground”—spaces where the community and campus users come together or share facilities.

A two-block area of the campus between 11th and 12th Avenues South is proposed for a variety of campus recreational uses. This presents an opportunity to develop open space and recreational facilities that can be shared with the community, particularly Ramsay High School and Southside residents. Designed in a park-like setting, open space amenities made available by the University can also generate private reinvestment in housing and other uses along adjacent blocks.

In the development of new university facilities along the campus perimeter, the following design principles must be considered:

- The uses of properties along the community interface should be compatible with adjacent uses, particularly residential areas to the south. To the degree possible, campus functions that generate noise, extensive traffic and other objectionable characteristics should be placed away from residential neighbors.
- New university buildings should be scaled, massed and articulated to provide a comfortable transition in scale between denser, taller portions of the campus and single-family neighborhoods south of campus.
- Parking lots should be separated from residential lots by buildings or landscape screens
- Exterior lights should be positioned to cast light away from neighboring properties and shielded to prevent glare
UTILITIES

The University has taken great strides in recent years to increase the efficiency of its utilities infrastructure. Past conservation efforts have saved the University over $10 million annually. A comprehensive energy study is now underway that will guide UAB to a more sustainable, energy future. Utilities planning has established the following benchmarks to measure progress in enhancing the system:

- Be within the top 10% of peer universities in energy efficiency
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25%
- Reduce annual energy costs by $15 million
- Improve thermal comfort and indoor air quality
- Expand access to central utilities to existing and future buildings
- Develop single platform instrumentation, control and electronic systems
- Upgrade building automation systems

To achieve these benchmarks, several strategies are emerging from the energy study. Future buildings will be designed to optimize efficiency in mechanical systems and to reduce energy consumption through careful design of building envelopes. Existing buildings also will be upgraded to increase energy performance. University facilities will be connected to central utilities over time.

The University also intends to take advantage of alternative sources to meet its energy needs including cogeneration and solar power.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Through a joint effort of the UAB Utilities and Sustainability programs, the University intends to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25%. To do this, the University will

- Implement a Climate Action Plan
- Implement sustainability standards for new construction and renovations
- Reduce energy consumption of buildings
- Install a combined heating and power system
- Increase and sustain energy-efficient building performance

SUSTAINABILITY

UAB characterizes sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Consisting of three pillars, sustainable activity seeks to achieve, in a balanced manner, economic development, social stability and environmental protection. Sustainability is woven throughout UAB campus planning, integrating core sustainability principles in all facets of planning and operations to support the mission of the institution.

Sustainability is embedded as a fundamental value of UAB promoted throughout the University through sustainability literacy, solutions, and leadership. This emphasis galvanizes UAB and surrounding neighborhoods around an enduring transformation into a more resilient campus and community. It is the University’s aim, whenever possible, to serve as a “living laboratory” in which the built environment is not only a backdrop of university life, but an integral component of multidisciplinary study and outreach addressing issues relevant to human health, ecosystems, and resource use.

- Green building practices
- Optimize energy use
- Improve waste management
- Responsible water use, management
- Alternative transportation and fuels
- Balanced ecological, human landscape

The University will maintain effective conservation and renewal programs to control operating costs and promote environmental sustainability, preserving our physical assets in a sound fiscal manner. Our built environment will support productivity and innovation, healthy behaviors, and environmental protection. Targeted policies and practices—as well as individual, everyday actions—are essential to realizing our vision of incorporating sustainability into every aspect of university life.
This Master Plan identifies ways in which the University of Alabama at Birmingham campus may grow in support of its strategic mission—advancing its role as an institution of higher learning, research and healthcare and as a leading economic engine in the state.

New development and improvement of infrastructure and services will create a more attractive, convenient and sustainable residential campus.

The campus envisioned in this plan will have a strong, unified sense of place and will offer an enriching environment for living, working, playing and studying at UAB.

Students, faculty, staff and visitors will be able to get around the campus easily and safely as a result of the University’s ongoing improvements to parking, transit, pedestrian and bicycle systems.

Through the planning and design of future investments in its campus, UAB will encourage investment by others that support the well-being of the University, its neighbors, Downtown Birmingham, and the city overall.

### WHAT’S NEXT

This plan represents an overall vision for the development of the campus and a foundation for an ongoing planning effort. To realize the vision and goals set out in this plan more detailed investigations, analyses and plans must be conducted. The campus planning process identified several priority areas for further focused study that are necessary to realizing the vision and goals set out in the plan. The University will pursue these additional studies and plans in coordination with targeted stakeholders over the next five years. Each of these will refine, add detail to and become part of the campus master plan.

- Utilities and energy master plan (underway)
- Athletics master plan (underway)
- Housing plan update
- Academics space utilization study and plan
- Medical facilities master plan
- Interstate 65 access study and plan
- Streetscape master plan and traffic studies
- Bicycle and pedestrian master plan
- Transit system plan update
- Parking master plan
- Sustainability master plan
- Wayfinding master plan and signage standards
- Landscape and streetscape standards update
- Campus-community partnership plans
- Continued strategic planning within each department and school