Realizing the Vision of WCU's Landscape Master Plan: A Panel Discussion

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Realizing the Vision of WCU’s Landscape Master Plan, a Panel Discussion

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WCU SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH & PRACTICE
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“The primary goal of the landscape master plan is the creation of a long-term, incremental enhancement of the student experience and the emergence of a cohesive identity for the Campus over time.”
Campus growth over time has been primarily a “product and focus of academic expansion and land and building acquisition. Consequently, the physical nature of the resulting open space network lacks a unifying focus and clarity... the potential of many student spaces remain unrealized with the overall feel of the Campus being one of fragmentation and disconnection.” (p. 2)

**SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

- A. Limited ecological expression and green infrastructure
- B. Streets dividing the Campus
- C. Missing and redundant connections
- D. Underdeveloped student zones
- E. Maintenance heavy landscaping
- F. Lack of clear gateway
- G. Unsafe street crossings
- H. Undersized walkways
- I. Views to undesirable areas

**MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

1. Improve definition and aesthetic quality of the Campus perimeter while creating strategic, focal gateways and a new entry signage system.

2. Create enhanced first visit impression and move-in day experience, as part of a comprehensive circulation system that includes walkway hierarchy, more available routes, and enriched student experience.

3. Increase safety through the organization and improvement of street crossings as well as the enhancement and hierarchy of pathway and parking lot lighting systems.

4. Provide diverse landscape interaction for socializing, fitness, outdoor study, and seating while considering the relocation of the food trucks and the opportunity for making S. Church Street a pedestrian only corridor.

5. Develop a strong planting strategy representing the native ecology, integrating regenerative green infrastructure practices, including reducing the maintenance associated with the existing landscape.

**MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK**

The Master Plan Framework consists of both physical design and ecological principles intended to simplify and enrich the overall Campus experience. Student social activity will be facilitated by providing opportunities for programmed and non-programmed activities. An improved circulation network will identify primary and sector north-south corridors with secondary walkways running between and to the Campus perimeter. The perimeter will be strengthened to provide a sense of the University, and the entire Campus will be organized as a series of ecological corridors that further enhance the on-ground experience.
EXISTING W. ROSEDALE CORRIDOR

The corridor was designed as a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly way along the southern edge of the South Campus.

1. Mixed Elements
2. Rosedales Church
3. Rosedales Building East
4. Rosedales Building West
5. Rosedales in S. High

PROPOSED W. ROSEDALE CORRIDOR

The design addresses the lack of coherence in the pedestrian and bicycle corridors. It enhances the overall connectivity in the area.

6. Mixed Elements
7. Rosedales Church
8. Rosedales Building East
9. Rosedales Building West
10. Rosedales in S. High

A wider sidewalk allows for more continuous and friendly street use. Planting and landscaping are integrated into the design. The Rosedales site will be developed as a "staple" for various events such as movie screenings.

- A 15-foot wide street with "parklets" and "sidewalks"
- "Sidewalks" are ideal for "parklets"
- "Sidewalks" can be extended to "parklets"
- "Parklets" can be extended to "sidewalks"

A more robust transit waiting area and "sidewalks" will improve the overall connectivity in the area.
PROPOSED PRESIDENTS WALK

Presidents Walk is destined to be the central and transformative corridor on Campus. The Presence Walk will provide a visual opportunity for student activity. The Presence Walk will be the major link from Hilltop to the north edge of Campus. Flanked on both sides by student-oriented retail, bars, and cafés, the Presence Walk will create a space that fosters student interaction and engagement. The Presence Walk’s linear nature will transform the experience of walking and sitting along this path.
PROPOSED CHURCH STREET AND UNIVERSITY AVENUE CROSSROADS

Architects and planners are presented by the visual scaffold of existing Church Street and University Avenue as the amount of contiguous open space is reimagined on North Campus. The addition of a pedestrian building noise experience the idea of new, active public open spaces. Similar to University of Pennsylvania and Penn State, the proposed make the vertical spine open space is further enhanced by the building setbacks, allowing not only for walking/running access but for reserved, active programmed space as well.

1. Enhanced Crossroads
2. Visible Gateways
3. Permeable Pavement
4. Scanning Edge

PROPOSED PLUM RUN CORRIDOR

The Plum Run Corridor has enormous potential to be a dynamic gateway for the University, envisioned as an ecologically inspired and connected corridor that is both an outdoor pedestrian and cycling zone. Proposed is a new pedestrian-only path along an extended comma, and existing corridor. Pedestrian circulation will be expanded to accommodate a variety of programs and will add pedestrian-friendly streets and landscape areas to accommodate outdoor classrooms. The area is designed to maximize the interconnectivity of the corridor. Scanning the ground exists in different spatial conditions along the corridor and also enhance the Plum Run. Different ground conditions enhance the ecologically diverse corridor by allowing a diversity of ground covers, shrubs, understory trees, and canopy trees.

1. Scanning Along South New Street
2. Scanning Along South New Street
3. Boardwalk Path
4. Outdoor Classroom Deck
5. Wooded Stream Valley
6. Canopy
PROPOSED ARRIVAL PLAZA

The Plaza will serve as the center of activity and a more significant threshold to Campus. Fifty new parking spaces will be removed from the M Lot with the newly acquired spaces being converted into green space for the new Arrival Plaza. A second parking garage will be added to the north. Parking Structures to accommodate any displaced parking. The space directly in front of M Lot will be focused on with water features, seating, and groups of trees for small and large group gatherings and photo opportunities. Further, landscaping is improved with the augmented presence of President’s Walk, creating a more important connection from the parking garages to North Campus.

1. Plaza
2. Path Frames
3. Wooded Grove

MASTER PLAN VISION WITH TREES

- NE Quad
- Food Truck Plaza
- Church St & University Ave
- President’s Walk
- Arrived Plaza
- Race Walk
- Roseville Corridor
- Main Run Corridor
"The Landscape Master Plan strives to create a landscape that reflects the regional, native ecology by enhancing and expanding native plantings across Campus. This entails not only the species that are planted but also the planting patterns that replicate natural systems where possible." (p. 168)

Green Infrastructure Recommendations

- Woodland Groves
- Ecological Essence Garden Zones and Corridors
- Enhanced Surface Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Turf Conversion and Interstitial Spaces
- Formal Greens, Quads, Oval
- Edges / Streetscapes
- Green Roofs, Athletics / Rec Fields, and Surface Parking
GENERAL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS
• Treat water close to the source
• Replace impervious surfaces with permeable pavement
• Limit new disturbance
• Balance initial costs with long-term benefits
• Create opportunities for multi-functional landscapes
• Use a diverse native plant palette