

U n i v e r s i t y   o f   N o r t h e r n  
C o l o r a d o  
C a m p u s   L a n d s c a p e   D e v e l o p m e n t   P l a n

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# 1 . I n t r o d u c t i o n

## 1.1 Background

As with any physical plant that is the size of the University of Northern Colorado, the evolution of the institutional landscape has occurred in various phases that represent periods of growth and expansion. As incremental and project-specific development has occurred, an articulated vision of the Campus landscape with respect to the structure and aesthetics has become blurred. A

**Encourage High Quality Landscape Design and Development**

- f Accommodate projected expansion and construction of buildings in a manner that strengthens the structure, spatial organization, functionality, and wayfinding of the campus.
- f Encourage complimentary and collaborative design of new facilities and adjacent exterior spaces that adhere to campus landscape concepts and guidelines.
- f Reinforce the concept of the Campus as a primarily pedestrian/bicycle environment, clarify the pathway network, and enhance aesthetic elements of these corridors.
- f Develop functional and artful social gathering spaces at primary building entries, buildings, crossroads and plazas, and passive lawn spaces such as quadrangles.
- f Encourage landscape design forms and concepts that respond to existing and future architecture while respecting campus landscape traditions, appropriate scale and materials.
- f Incorporate principles of sustainable design that conserve resources, endorse energy efficiency, and promote durability and low maintenance of landscape projects.

1.3 Relationship to other Projects

The *Campus Landscape Development Plan* has been developed as a companion document to the following campus planning projects. The relationship of the landscape development concepts and guidelines contained in the *Campus Landscape Development Plan* to these other projects are as follows:

**Architectural Standards**

The UNC *Campus Guidelines*(2002) provide design principles for the purpose of incorporating traditional building and architectural concepts throughout the Campus environment. The recommendations focus on design for UNC building entries, light fixtures, masonry details, roofs, fenestration and decorative attributes. Many of the goals outlined in this document are shared by the Campus Landscape Development Plan that provides similar guidance for site amenities, such as furnishings, paving, lighting, and landscaping.

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**the *Facilities Master Plan***











or are shared with pedestrians. While the corridor traverses the entire length of the Campus, the route is impeded by two street intersections, and access to portions of the Campus are limited. There is no attempt to distinguish this corridor with appropriate landscaping or amenities that would make this a more legible, attractive and comfortable corridor for campus access and activities.

***Transit Stops***

Existing transit stops on the West and Central campus provide places where students, faculty and staff can park once in a convenient peripheral lot, then ride a UNC bus to their classroom or facility destination. Other City managed transit stops are located along 1<sup>st</sup>. These Campus and City sites do not provide comfortable settings for transit access, and could be dramatically improved with new uniform campus shelters, amenities, art, landscape and site improvements to help increase transit ridership and to improve the overall transit experience at UNC.

***Street and Pedestrian Intersections***

Major and minor street intersections occur along the Campus periphery, and provide a logical crossing for pedestrians and bicycles. Not only do these serve as primary points of ingress and egress, but also function as “windows” to the Campus environment.

Opportuni6(n)12.9(t)-2.orpris]TJ 0 Tct.2(s) pei2.9(t)-lity-2.3( ic)9.2(om)176.3(e)-1.3(i-1.7(nva10.9(i)6

unrecognized on the Western campus. A stronger visual unity between campus districts could be established through the quality design of places on both campuses, with common special features and characteristics that include site furnishings, monumentation, lawns, trees, and lighting.

## 2.2 Summary of Key Issues

Existing landscape components and site features that comprise the UNC landscape have generally been designed as a response to individual building architecture or developed in an *ad hoc* manner. Landscape spaces have not historically been identified and recognized as equal importance to buildings and other facilities at the University, and the relationship between the landscape, furnishings theme, signage, circulation system, lawn spaces, and special features is indistinct. Additionally, the general absence of unified design in terms of site furnishings, landscaping, lighting, outdoor spaces, circulation, and signs has resulted in a somewhat illegible campus environment. Primary issues of landscape design identified in the inventory are as follows:

### **Overall Campus**

*f*

**West Campus**

- f* Lack of memorable outdoor spaces that maintain a comfortable pedestrian scale.
- f* Inadequate or unclear arrangement of the pedestrian pathway system.
- f* Weak relationship between campus passive spaces, special use lawns, and athletic fields.
- f* Absence of strong planting design concept and mature vegetation.
- f* Oversized and unattractive parking areas.
- f* Weak relationship of the Campus precinct to neighboring land uses.

2.3 Existing Landscape Conditions Map and Photo Diary

The map and photos on the following pages describes the existing conditions/issues described in this chapter. These summary maps and photos included on the following pages a

*Figure 2a -*













# 3 . The Development Plan

### 3.1 Introduction

Unification of the UNC campus environment should be achieved through common landscape forms, colors and materials. Simple, timeless and enduring styles of furnishings, paving, and landscape treatments should be used in a highly uniform manner, and the repetition at which they occur would serve to strengthen the sense of campus unity and order. Furnishings and materials could vary slightly between the two major campus districts, and thereby respond more appropriately to their respective environments. However, it is recommended that the degree to which landscape features vary is minimal, and that shared attributes, such as scale, materials, patterns, style, application, spacing and color be shared.

Design of exterior spaces, such as quadrangles, pedestrian crossroads, and building entries would be less bound to design guidance, and the treatment of these larger spaces could potentially vary in form, scale and layout. Although execution of the designs for these areas would provide for variation of form within a larger unified landscape framework, it is important that recommendations in this document that outline materials, furnishings, and location of certain landscape elements be considered prior to design implementation.

### 3.2 Principles

The following principles summarize the intent of the concepts described in this chapter. These principles were developed based upon the analysis of existing conditions, and discussions with UNC staff and administration

#### **Campus Legibility and Structure**

- f* Improve active campus gathering spaces with site design and landscape improvements.
- f* Maintain and enhance larger passive courtyards, campus greens and quads with site and landscape improvement
- f* Establish new larger scale multipurpose pedestrian plazas and gathering places

*f*

- f* Encourage quality civil improvements by the City of Greeley along major City roadways on the perimeter of the campus.

**Beautification and Appearance of the Campus**

- f* Establish a more distinct and sustainable campus character that reflects/interprets attributes of the foothills/plains northern Colorado landscape.
- f* Develop a more diverse palette of site and landscape improvements that are maintainable by UNC staff.
- f* Improve the visual quality of the Central and West campus landscape.
- f* Improve the character and appearance of parking lots with new buffers and islands.
- f* Establish a more visible and compelling public art presence.
- f* Reduce the number of duplicate paths and increase the efficiency of existing pathways.
- f* Develop signature amenities and improvements along major campus pathways.
- f* Develop attractive and interesting site features at existing drainage and detention areas.

**Unification with Common Design Vocabulary/Elements**

- f* Develop uniform landscape and site treatments for common problems and issues.
- f* Establish a more unified palette of materials for lighting, site furnishings, and landscape and hardscape elements.
- f* Reinforce uniform pedestrian/bicycle connections between the west and central campus.

### 3.3 Macro-scale vs. Micro-scale Landscape Elements

The components that make up the design of the ~~UNC~~ campus landscape falls into two basic scale categories. The first can be defined as ~~macro~~ macro elements that contribute to the structural organization as a whole, and provide visual or design coherence to the various parts of the Campus. Examples of these elements include building entries, crossroads, quadrangle spaces, and pathways. The second category is composed of ~~micro~~ micro elements, which include detail features, and materials that collectively form the landscape design “vocabulary” used through the Campus. These include furnishings, plantings, exterior lighting, paving, walls, and shelters. The design quality of these elements is quite independent from the larger structural elements of the Campus. In part, these features serve in the capacity of



## **1. Campus Landscape Zones and Open Spaces**

The development framework map illustrates the Central and West Campus Landscape Zones. These two zones establish the open space design context for a variety of the recommended site/landscape concepts. Concepts and guidelines for these two zones include:

### *Central Campus Zone Guidelines*

- f* Continue to develop and improve the romantic landscape pattern with turf, specimen shade trees, accent trees, and a common landscape furnishings palette (the Design Vocabulary)
- f* Develop a cultural landscape assessment to describe significant landscape features and their preservation objectives.
- f* Establish a major art presence on the Central Campus.
- f*



*West Campus Zone Guidelines*

- f* Develop a distinct and structured landscape pattern that addresses existing and new campus development while also including a common landscape furnishings palette for the whole campus (the Design Vocabulary).
- f* Portions of the West campus landscape should reflect the indigenous character of the plains/foothills landscape, while continuing to address the functional requirements for servicing, special events, recreation use, circulation, and maintenance
- f* Establish a major art presence on the Western Campus
- f* Enhance the campus landscape with the development of special activity nodes at building entries and campus crossroads/plazas.
- f* Formalize the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street streetscapes with new streetscape improvements that incorporate a common landscape furnishings palette (the Design Vocabulary).
- f* Formalize the north south across<sup>th</sup> Avenue with new landscape and site development gateway improvements including art, trees, lighting and furnishings and a common landscape furnishings palette (the Design Vocabulary).
- f* Establish new gateway improvements at 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> that incorporate a common landscape furnishings palette (the Design Vocabulary).
- f* Seek means to reduce turf and maintenance by planting shrubs and perennials along campus edges, at key entry areas, and along campus streetscapes
- f* Develop comprehensive circulation, drainage and landscape improvements in perimeter parking lots that incorporate a common landscape furnishings palette (the Design Vocabulary).





*Secondary Streetscape Guidelines*

These are the corridors that define the edge of the campus and establish a buffer to the surrounding established and developing neighborhoods. Guidelines for these areas include:

- f* Implement a formal tree planting (and revegetation) program with more varied species of trees will help define the secondary corridors from the core campus streetscape.
- f* Establish a maintainable curbside buffer zone between the curb and the sidewalk. This buffer should include a clearly distinguished pattern of deciduous street trees. The ground plane should include native plant materials and low maintenance mulch.
- f* Establish a maintainable campus buffer zone between sidewalk and the campus. This buffer could include deciduous street trees, shrubs, grasses and or perennials. If there is enough room, this zone should also include modest berms to increase the effectiveness of the buffer next to parking areas, and to increase the visibility of attractive corridor landscaping.
- f* Increase the scale of detail and complexity of planting at intersections, pedestrian entry areas, and points of interest
- f* Plant native materials as part of the streetscape design to help reduce maintenance and need for supplemental irrigation.
- f* Consider designing for walks that are six feet in width and represent a curvilinear or non geometric configuration when space allows.
- f* Develop standard streetscape lighting fixtures which are uniform throughout streetscapes













## **5. Pedestrian Crossroads & Plazas**

Campus crossroads and plazas are defined as places where pedestrian walkways intersect. These “hubs” are important for the functional, social and visual role that they represent on campus, and it is therefore desirable that the form of treatment encourages social interaction and contributes to the visual character of the campus.

*Intent*

*f*



## **6. Quadrangles**

Quadrangle spaces function as outdoor rooms and open spaces for campus rituals, social encounters, informal, unstructured recreation and relaxation. These geometrically arranged yards and fields provide access to the buildings that bound their perimeter, and serve as important campus spaces. As a complimentary space to neighboring architecture, quadrangles represent one the most basic spatial components of the campus landscape and are often recognized as a hallmark or signature of campus design.

### *Intent*

- f* To provide human-scaled “greens” that encourage passive and active recreational use, allow for efficient pedestrian movement, and visually organize and enhance neighboring buildings.

### *Guidelines*





## **8. Pathways**

The campus-wide system of pathways is a comprehensive and effective system of linkages to buildings, parking and activity sites, and help organize the form and pattern of other campus development. Without proper planning, an unorganized and haphazard system of paths will be constructed that results in a pedestrian movement network that functions in a confusing manner. The presence of a distinctive pathway hierarchy that is characterized by a range of path widths, paving materials, and landscape treatments assists with wayfinding and user orientation, and allows the user to clearly perceive the spatial organization of the campus environment.

### *Intent*

To create a hierarchy of paths, including a “pedestrian /bicycle spine” corridor which links the Central Campus to the West Campus and parking areas, while providing a clear system of circulation for the pedestrian and the bicyclist.

### *Pedestrian/Bicycle Spine Guidelines*

- f* Vary paving materials at edges, nodes or intersections to create interest in the ground plane









### 3.5 Micro-Scale Elements: the Campus Landscape Design Vocabulary

#### **Introduction**

The following section describes the recommended site and landscape materials selection and design detail opportunities that will comprise the campus landscape design vocabulary. It is intended that repetitive use of this design vocabulary in the various campus development projects will result in a more organized, memorable and beautiful campus. These elements have been chosen to encourage creative design solutions for campus development, while also being able to adapt to the diverse architectural and site development conditions of the central and west campus.

The detail landscape/site design treatment of the campus with these micro-scale elements should:

- f* Help to unify the image of UNC, and bring about a sense of coherence among numerous landscape and site improvements dispersed throughout the Central and West Campuses
- f* Maintain aesthetic and functional consistency from one project to the next within the UNC Campus, by using a common palette of materials, and design themes.
- f* Achieve a timeless design quality throughout the campus.

The recommendations for the design vocabulary provide a means through which a set of appropriate improvements are identified and organized. This provides for a uniform treatment of campus spaces described in the Landscape Development Framework Plan. The Design Vocabulary Guidelines supplement the information set forth in the Building Standards by further identifying a specified palette of materials that when implemented, will project the desired image of the University of Northern Colorado.

This palette is broken down into five general categories of improvements. They are listed as follows:

- f* Site Lighting
- f* Gateway Monumentation
- f* Site Walls
- f* Site Furnishings
- f* Paving
- f* Landscaping

This chapter will identify these materials and discuss their general application on the UNC Campus. At the end of the chapter, product cut sheets and specific improvement items will be grouped to describe the proposed design vocabulary for campus improvements.



- f* Lighting shall be placed in landscape areas adjacent to ~~paths~~ when possible. Fixtures placed in landscape areas shall have a common concrete wrap connect detail flush with grade to reduce maintenance around pole base. When necessary to install lighting in paved parking areas, a 36" above grade foundation ~~is to~~ be utilized for placement of the pole and luminaire.
- f* Single and double luminaire assemblies are encouraged for parking lot areas. Lighting

*Central Campus Pedestrian Lighting Guidelines*

- f* Maintain design consistency throughout Central Campus.
- f* Use historic acorn light fixture described in these guidelines.
- f* Develop 12'–











## **2. Campus Gateway Monumentation**

*Intent*





#### **4. Site Furnishings**

*Intent*

*f*

- f Provide removable insert to dump trash.
- f Ensure trash receptacles are simple and unobtrusive design and easy to service.

*Bicycle Rack Guidelines*

- f Select a bicycle rack style that complements other furnishings and is attractive within the campus environment.
- f Use a simple, space efficient and serviceable design.
- f Locate invisible secure locations where demand for bike parking is expected.
- f Use large galvanized rack for larger bicycle parking areas.
- f Use U locks for 5 or less parking stalls.

*Planting Pot Guidelines*

- f Use planting pots to provide color and scale at key campus plazas, patios and gathering areas.
- f Ensure that pot locations are compatible with access and service functions.
- f Select warm earth or theme dark blue tones to be compatible with brick architectural features and concrete paving.
- f Use precast concrete pots that compatible with other furnishings.
- f Use larger containers to 29(t)-2.6(oc/LBo17.1(pTj (l)-2.6(o)2(caiv)12.9(an)2(i)b10.9-2e)-2.6(o)2(<ar)-yg

*f* E













## **5. Paving**

*Intent*

*f*

*Secondary Path Guidelines*

- f* Use poured in place concrete flatwork
- f* The scale, pattern and layout shall complement adjacent campus buildings and development patterns.

*Accent Paving Guidelines*

- f* Intersperse concrete sidewalks and plazas with accent paving panels and patterns to provide texture and interest at special locations such as building entries, crossroads, furnishing locations, entries, etc. Accent paving panels should be Sheffield brick or other warm tones to





## **6. Planting**

### *Intent*

- f* Develop a hierarchy of landscape materials to distinguish key areas of the campus and to reflect site





*Plant Species Chart and Landscape Concepts*

- f The following table depicts plant species for the different functional landscape concepts as shown on the Landscape Development Concept Map. The chart also describes specific applications on the Central Campus (and West Campus).
- f The numbers on the top of the chart reflect the numbered categories of functional landscape concepts described below and conceptually defined in the previous chapter, section 3.4, macroscale elements.

***Streetscapes***

1. **Gateway Tree** *Large groves of trees planted in a geometric pattern at campus gateways and entry areas.*
  - Large deciduous tree with fall accent color
  - Small ornamental tree with spring bloom accent
2. **Core Streetscape Tree** *Formal rows of trees planted along the 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> internal core campus streetscape.*
  - Large deciduous canopy tree
3. **Secondary Streetscape Tree** *Formal rows of trees planted along perimeter campus streetscapes.*
  - Large deciduous canopy tree
  - Large deciduous tree with distinctive form
4. **Mid-Block Streetscape Accent Tree** *Formal groves of trees planted in the midblocks of internal core and perimeter campus streetscape.*

-

- Large deciduous canopy tree that contrasts with circulation trees in form or fall color

**Pathways**

7. Internal Corridor Tree: *Formal rows of trees planted along campus pedestrian paths.*

- Large deciduous tree with varying form, canopy, and fall color
- Small ornamental tree with spring bloom accent or varying shades of foliage

8. Internal Crossroads Tree: *Small groves of trees planted in the crossroads of internal campus pedestrian paths.*

- Small ornamental tree with spring bloom accent

**Other**

9. Campus Landscape Tree: *Specimen trees planted at special areas to reflect unique themes, uses, and architectural purposes.*

- Large deciduous tree with varying form, canopy, and fall color, emphasis on native species and non-native specimen trees
- Small ornamental tree with varying shades of foliage and spring bloom interest

*Accent Shrubs, Grasses, Perennials, and Annuals Guidelines*

- f Accent shrubs and grasses should be focused at campus gateway entries, building entries, and campus crossroads. More traditional plant materia.2(r)-a71edahdu(a.2(r)d2.6(r)-4(g)10.9(ur)8.5(pos)-4.











# 4 . Appendix