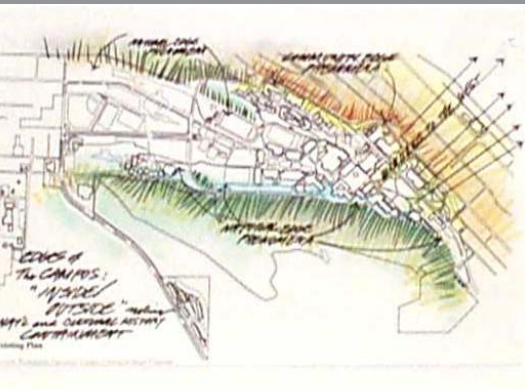


# Western Washington University Character Study Charrette Summary



Planning, Facilities & Operations



*(Draft)*

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
**CHARACTER STUDY CHARRETTE SUMMARY**

January 12, 13 & 14, 2000

## Introduction

We have a wonderful campus. How do we move ahead, meet future needs and maintain that beauty?

The development of the campus is at a crossroads. The density of the campus with regard to buildings and increased numbers of students (FTEs) places increasing demands on space within the buildings, on the open space and with the infrastructure.

The placement of new buildings, the alignment of utilities and the development of the *Institutional Master Plan* are projects and events which are at hand. The manner by which these pressures are addressed will materially affect the current character of the campus.

The purpose of the “Character Study Charrette” was to identify and depict the key ingredients that compose the physical character of the Western Washington University campus, and answer the following questions:

- What are the major character ingredients that compose the campus?
- What specific aspects are strengths and what are weaknesses?
- What actions are recommended to sustain and improve campus character?

## Character Study Charrette Participants

### CHARRETTE TEAM

#### **Michael Durbin, PE**

Mr. Durbin is a registered professional engineer and an associate with David Evans and Associates, Inc. He has been responsible for a variety of infrastructure projects at all levels of design, from preliminary feasibility studies and utility system master planning to preparation of construction documents and management of construction for multi-million dollar infrastructure projects. Recent accomplishments include completion of the Campus Infrastructure Development Predesign for Western Washington University, two regional stormwater management projects in Skagit County and two public school campus developments in Ferndale. Mr. Durbin's special interests involve campus planning and public involvement programs for projects that require resolution of conflicting stakeholder interests. Prior to becoming an engineer, Mr. Durbin had 15 years experience in the construction industry. Mr. Durbin is a graduate of Fairhaven College.

#### **Bill Johnson, FASLA**

Bill Johnson has focused on campus planning and issues of environmental design throughout his 35-year career as planner, designer, teacher, and academic administrator. He has pioneered the development and use of integrative processes whereby human needs are adapted to particular environments, both natural and cultural. In his practice-concerned mainly with projects of urban design, campus and regional planning, natural resource management and historic preservation - a balance of social, cultural, and environmental factors is a perennial concern. The scale of his projects ranges from small communities to extensive regions.

The scope of his personal involvement ranges from designer to catalyst to facilitator in the resolution of conflicts among the different parties concerned.

Bill combines computer-aided design systems with his exceptional skill as an artist to foresee the physical character of new development. Continually refining the design process, he is exploring the potential for adapting traditional patterns of community development to the more complex social, technological, and environmental requirements of modern life.

In his community planning work throughout the country, Bill has been able to bring diverse groups together through the workshop process, thus facilitating the development of implementable master plans.

**Ron Kasprisin, AIA, APA**

Ron Kasprisin conducts design and planning studios and teaches courses in design communication and urban design process at the University of Washington. As a Partner of Kasprisin Pettinari Design since 1975, Professor Kasprisin has had extensive experience in physical planning and urban design with special emphasis in downtown redevelopment, waterfront revitalization, and historic adaptive reuse. Some current projects include the Eighth Street Landing waterfront project in Hoquiam, Washington; the Yakima Downtown Urban Design and Land Use Plan; and award winning projects in Missoula MT (First Place, National Design Competition for the downtown riverfront corridor); Milwaukee WI (Honorable Mention in the International Design Competition for the downtown lakefront); American Planning Association Merit Award for the Haines AK Comprehensive Plan and Waterfront Revitalization; APA Mention Award for the Ketchikan AK Creek Street Public Facilities Design; and, Planning Association of Washington Outstanding Achievement Award for the Port Townsend Urban Waterfront Master Plan. Professor Kasprisin has recently completed *Watercolor in Architectural Design*, Van Nostrand Reinhold New York, July 1989, a

reference book for designers on the process, methods and techniques of using watercolor in design. He is an Adjunct Professor at Eastern Washington University in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. He received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Notre Dame and a Master of Urban Planning degree from the University of Washington. Professor Kasprisin is vitally interested in the ecological responsibility of design and planning.

**Rolfe Kellor, AICP, APA, SCUP**

Rolfe Kellor is the Principal of Kellor Associates, a Seattle-based consulting firm that specializes in campus and facilities planning. Mr. Kellor has over 30 years experience as a campus planner, including approximately 20 years as the University of Washington's Campus Planning Officer. Recently, as a consultant, he has completed campus master plans for Seattle University and Seattle Pacific University. He is currently providing technical assistance to Western Washington University on the *Institutional Master Plan* and is a member of the design team for the campus infrastructure development project. Mr. Kellor has a BS in Landscape Architecture and a MS in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Wisconsin. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, American Planning Association, and the Society for College and University Planning.

**Kenichi Nakano, FASLA**

Kenichi Nakano has been involved in landscape architecture in the Seattle area for over 30 years as both a professional landscape architect and as a lecturer at the University of Washington School of Landscape Architecture. His work has received both local and national recognition for excellence in landscape architecture. Kenichi served as a trustee for the American Society of Landscape Architects for several years and is active in local civic groups including the Seattle Planning Commission. Through his involvement with public agencies and community groups, Kenichi has developed critical experience and keen insights into the public process. He has successfully balanced programmatic concerns and public desires with site opportunities to produce aesthetically pleasing and ecologically sound landscapes while meeting budget constraints.

Under Kenichi's direction, Nakano Associates has worked on a number of projects at Western Washington University in recent years. We are currently working on the Campus Service Center and the Campus Infrastructure project; past projects include the Communications Facility Predesign, Haggard Hall Renovation, Shannon Point Marine Center Master Plan, South Campus Infrastructure Predesign, Wetland Design Alternatives, Washington State Regional Archives, and Rainforest Sculpture Plaza Design. The firm has also worked on and successfully completed projects at the University of Washington, Washington State University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, the University of Puget Sound, Pacific Lutheran University, Seattle Pacific University, Bellingham Technical College, and Renton Technical College.

**Vince Vergel de Dios, AICP**

Vince Vergel de Dios has been a principal at NBBJ for 15 years. He is an expert in architecture, urban design, and planning, particularly environmental design, site analysis and feasibility, and implementation studies. His recent work has concentrated on pre-design planning that assists in major development decisions, including numerous development potentials analyses. His project responsibilities reflect his skills in conceptual design as well as his understanding of cultural, social, and political forces.

Vince has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 1982.



**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION**

**Karen Morse, President**

**George Pierce, Vice-President, Business & Financial Affairs**

**Philip Sun, Director, Planning, Facilities & Operations**

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY STAFF**

**Rick Benner, Planning**

**Mitch Blanton, Operations**

**Gail Kuromiya, Planning**

**Bill Managan, Operations**

**Robert Schmidt, Construction Administration**

**David Sherwood, Operations**

**Ed Simpson, Planning**

**Tom Thorp, Operations**

**Sherrie White, Planning**

**David Willett, Facilities**

**Jeff Winslow, Planning**

**Jerome Wolfe, Operations**

**Gene Wright, Operations**

## Impressions of Character

Western staff provided a strong beginning for the work with the character analysis from the “Existing Land Use Section” of the *Institutional Master Plan* document currently being developed. They participated enthusiastically in the charrette and provided words and phrases to describe the essential character of the campus along with the charrette consultants:

### Consultant Input

- Northwest, natural, and green
- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- Sculpture garden
- Land form/valley squeeze
- Brick, concrete, grass, trees, and rain
- Stepped valley with hierarchy of flowing spaces
- Large “pools”, narrow cascades, eddies and coves
- Cascade steppes

### Western Staff Input

- Penny arcade – beginning and end
- Flow – sequence of outdoor spaces
- Flow – pulse of students and energy
- Linear form – mall
- Diversity of spaces and functions
- Regional
- Residential
- Preservation
- Classic sanctuary of learning
- Edges – big and small
- Relationships –rocks, sky, and trees
- Secure community
- Protection
- Connected individualism
- Natural setting
- Sequence of open spaces
- Intimacy of detail
- Village
- Comfortable scale

## Character Analysis

The consulting team spent most of the first day exploring the campus, sketching, taking photos, and preparing an analysis of the campus character. Drawings were prepared to illustrate major elements comprising or influencing campus character, including the natural environment, places and activities, development patterns, circulations and access, organizing lines and spaces, gateways, edges, open spaces, and views. The analysis also included illustrations of campus edges and existing and planned centralized facilities.



## Environmental Influences

### Strengths

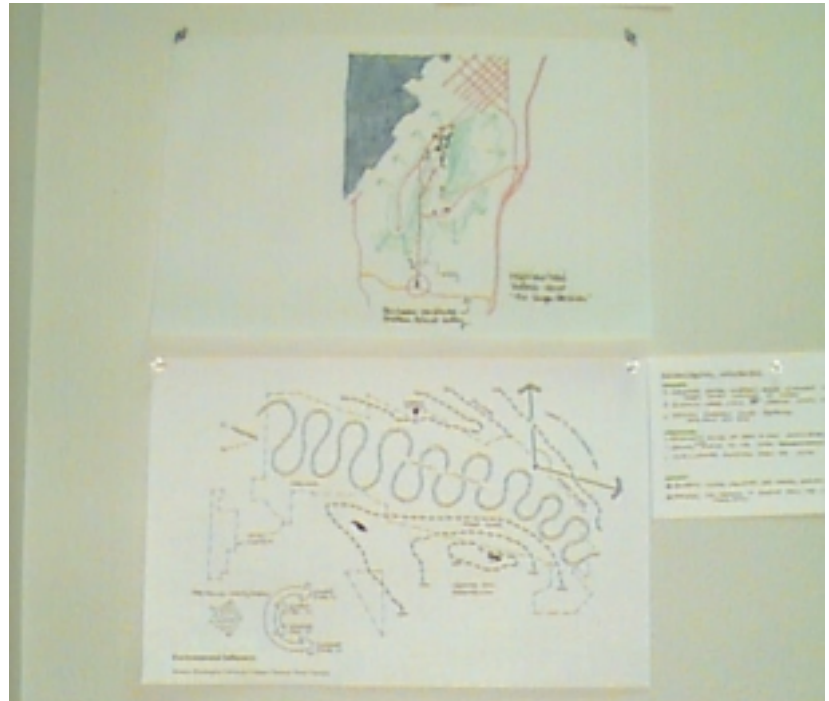
- Distinctive natural landform setting
- Abundant northwest vegetation
- Valley campus squeezed by slopes
- Expansive water views
- Precious southern solar exposure

### Weaknesses

- Restricted access at east & west campus edges
- Natural valley drains to the south – complicates development
- Southerly wind and weather exposures

### Actions

- Reinforce linear character & natural features
- Maximize sun exposure & protect from weather



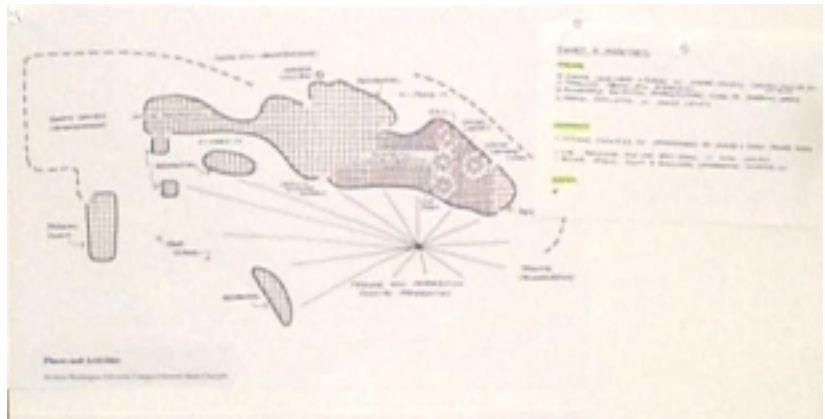
## Places & Activities

### Strengths

- Mature landmarks & places in north campus
- Protected Sehome Arboretum
- Established residential pockets/clusters close to academic area
- People dominance in north campus

### Weaknesses

- Unclear transitions to neighborhood at north & south campus ends
- Car dominance & vast open spaces in south campus
- Remove Physical Plant & questionable neighborhood compatibility



## Development Patterns

### Strengths

- Regionally organized pattern in north campus
- Hillside residential clusters
- Continuity in building materials, colors & textures on north campus
- Hillside/campus juxtaposition

### Weaknesses

- Grid shift & juxtaposed pattern south of Carver Gym with unrefined open spaces
- Contrast of institutional building scale with neighborhood at north and south campus ends



## Major Organizing Lines & Spaces

### Strengths

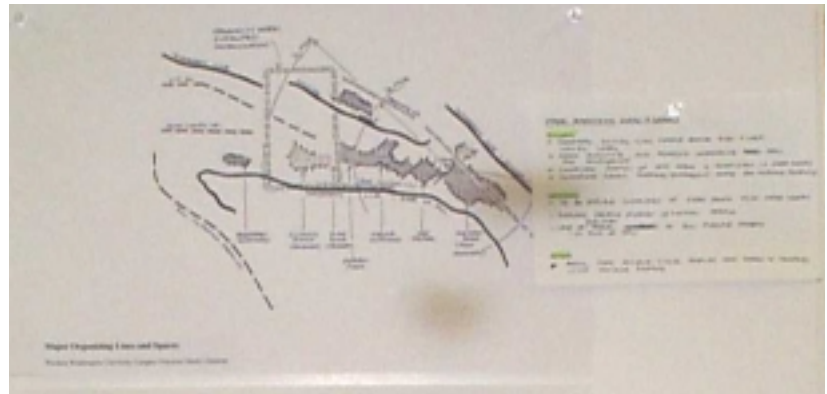
- Topographic hillside lines clearly define east & west campus edges
- Street alignments also establish organizing basis for development
- Connected pattern of open spaces is established in north campus
- Controlled campus approach/progression along Bill McDonald Parkway

### Weaknesses

- To be defined connection of south campus with north campus
- Expanded walking distances with lineal campus
- Lack of clear campus arrival at Bill McDonald Parkway

### Actions

- Assure that building setting defines open spaces & connects with existing patterns



## Gateway & Edges

### Strengths

- Distinctive separation & edges along east & west campus areas
- Logical north & south campus gateway locations
- Remote gateway at I-5 freeway to intercept & direct

### Weaknesses

- Restricted east/west access & connections with neighborhoods
- Lack of definition of north & south campus gateways
- High Street connection with Bellingham/downtown/north
- Expansion of proposed south campus loop establishes car dominance in contrast with north campus pedestrian dominance and may create barrier for flexible future development





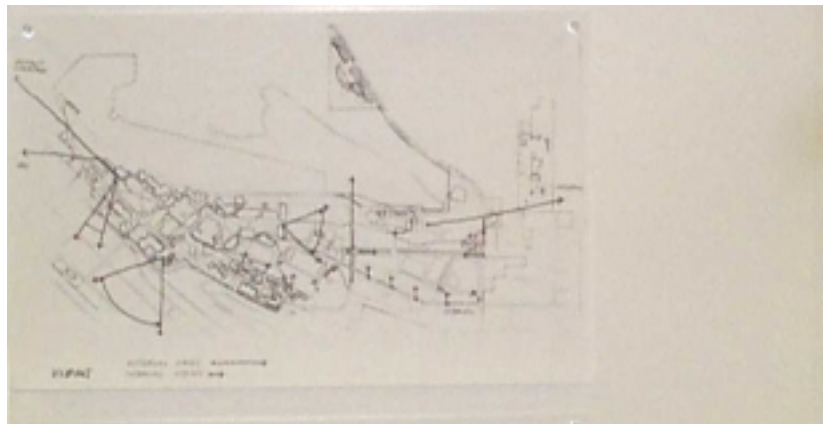
## Circulation & Access

### Strengths

- Pedestrian/bicycle priority in north campus with few vehicular conflicts - 'few cars in the valley'
- Proposed West College Way bypass connection improves safety & traffic flow

### Weaknesses

- High Street appears as vast city street & closure creates traffic confusion
- Backside service functions along East College Way with little connection to Sehome Hill vegetation/space
- Proposed loop road brings cars closer to campus activities but may create vehicular/pedestrian conflicts
- Little relationship between campus roadway network with neighborhood grid

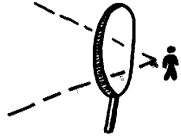


## Primary Character Principles

Primary character principles were developed and refined during the charrette. Photos and sketches were added to illustrate the principles. It was agreed that the following primary character principles represent the essence of what makes the campus a beautiful and special place.



### PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED



- PEOPLE & BICYCLE DOMINANCE
- CONTROLLED VEHICULAR ACCESS
- BICYCLE FRIENDLY

#### Pedestrian Focused

- People dominance
- Controlled vehicular traffic
- Bicycle friendly

### CONTINUITY OF PEOPLE FLOW

- LINEAR
- VALLEY - SPATIAL FLOW



- LIKE A STREAM
- VARIES
- HAS DIVERSITY
- STEPPED PROGRESSION

#### Continuity of People Flow

- Linear
- Valley - spatial flow
- Like a stream
- Has diversity
- Stepped progression

### CLOSE NATURAL/ PEOPLE & BUILT RELATIONSHIP



- STRONG CONNECTIONS & JUXTAPOSITIONS
- OMNIPRESENT
- DRAMATIC DYNAMIC BALANCE
- NATURAL 'WALLS' CONTAIN THE PLACE

#### Close Natural/People & Built Relationship

- Strong connections and juxtapositions
- Omnipresent natural features
- Dramatic and dynamic balance
- Natural "walls" contain the place

### INTIMACY & BREAKDOWN OF SCALE



- PRIMARY & SECONDARY OPEN SPACES
- 'EDDIES'
- VILLAGE FEEL
- SETTING FOR ART

### “Village” - Intimacy/Breakdown of Scale

- Primary and secondary open spaces
- “Eddies”
- Village feel
- Setting for art

### PROTECTED SANCTUARY

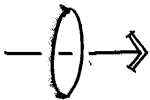


- EASE OF WAYFINDING
- SENSE OF EDGES
- COMFORTABLE
- FRIENDLY
- CARING

### Protected Sanctuary

- Ease of way finding
- Sense of edges
- Comfortable
- Friendly
- Caring

### VISUAL PORTALS

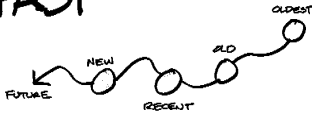


- WINDOWS OUT
- TRANSPARENCY
- LINKAGES w/ MOUNTAINS, WATER, VEGETATION, NEIGHBORHOOD

### Visual Portals

- Windows out
- Transparency
- Linkages with mountains, water, vegetation
- Linkages with neighborhoods

## WINDOWS TO THE PAST



- EVOLUTION OF CAMPUS
- SEQUENCE OF TIME

### Windows to the Past

- Evolution of campus expressed
- Sequence of time

## SENSE OF A VILLAGE



- RECREATION ATHLETICS W/ ACADEMICS
- COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS
- COMMON GROUND OF LEARNING
- IN-TOUCH WITH ALL PARTS OF THE UNIVERSITY
- INTERCONNECTED
- EDGE TRANSITIONS
- INTELLECTUALLY CHARGED

### Sense of a Community

- Community of scholars
- Recreation/athletics
- Common ground of learning
- Interconnected
- Intellectually charged

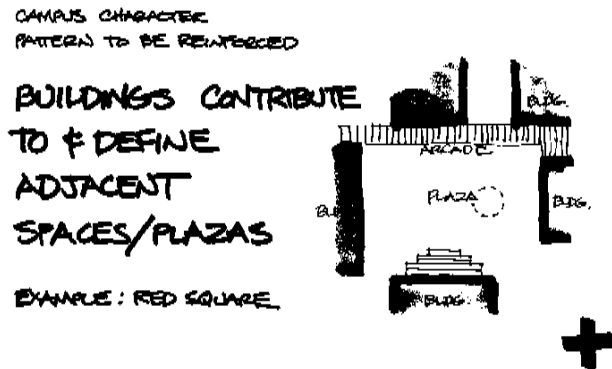
## Character Patterns

Based on the analysis of campus character and the identification of the primary character principles, “character patterns to be reinforced” and “character patterns to be avoided” were defined.

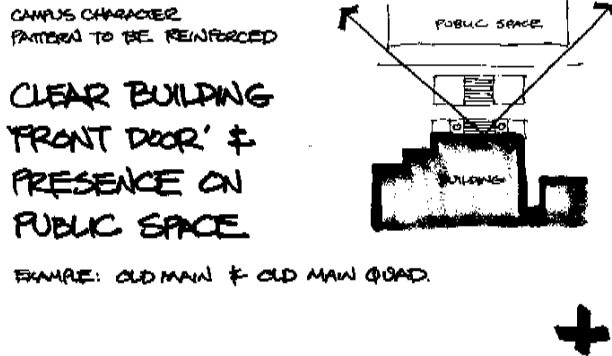


### Patterns to be Reinforced

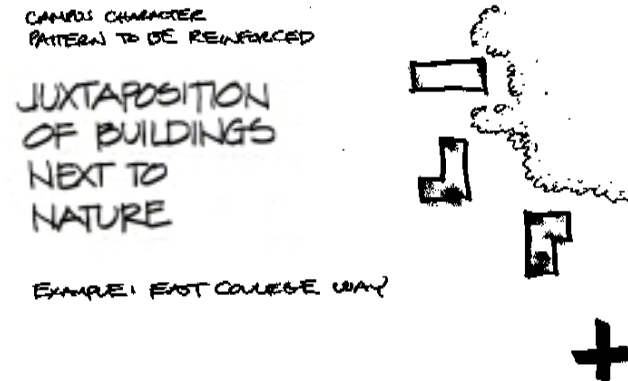
- Buildings contribute to and define adjacent spaces/plazas



- Clear building front door and presence on public space



- Juxtaposition of buildings and nature



- Housing and academic proximity with integration of nature

CAMPUS CHARACTER PATTERNS TO BE REINFORCED

HOUSING & ACADEMIC PROXIMITY WITH INTEGRATION OF NATURE



EXAMPLE: RIDGEWAY

FUTURE: HOUSING VILLAGE SOUTH OF BILL McDONALD PARKWAY



- Buildings aligned along key organizing lines

CAMPUS CHARACTER PATTERNS TO BE REINFORCED

BUILDINGS ALIGNED ALONG KEY ORGANIZING LINES



EXAMPLE: HIGH STREET

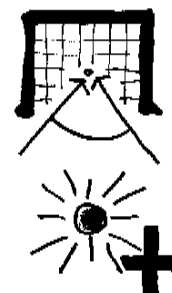


- Orient plazas and open space to capture the sun

CAMPUS CHARACTER PATTERNS TO BE REINFORCED

ORIENT PLAZAS & OPEN SPACE TO CAPTURE THE SUN (SOUTH)

EXAMPLE:



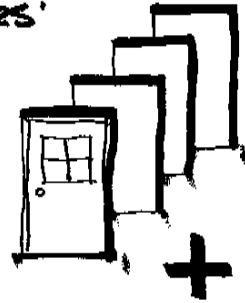


- Multiple “front doors” to the campus

CHARACTER PATTERN  
TO BE REINFORCED

MULTIPLE 'FRONT DOORS'  
TO THE CAMPUS

EXAMPLE :



- Sustainable development/environmental enhancement

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT/  
ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT

EXAMPLE : BIRD SANCTUARY

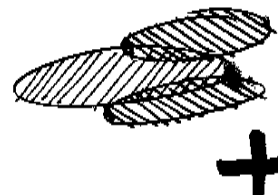


- Contiguous academic core

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO REINFORCE

CONTIGUOUS ACADEMIC  
CORE

(COMPACT ORGANIZATION)

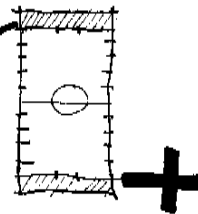


- Athletics integrated with academic and residential

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

ATHLETICS/RECREATION  
INTEGRATED WITH  
ACADEMICS/RESIDENTIAL

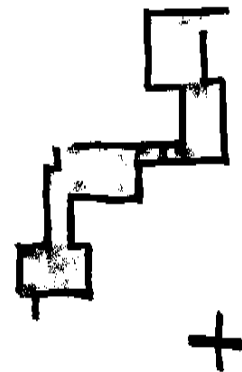
EXAMPLE : SOCCER FIELD +  
RECREATION FIELDS



- Asymmetrical linked plazas

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

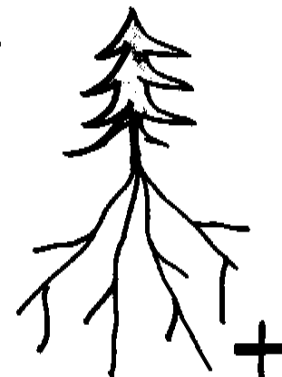
ASYMETRICAL  
LINKED PLAZAS



- Informal organic structure

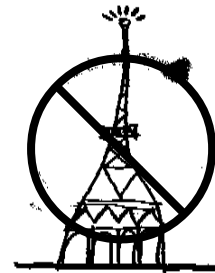
CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

INFORMAL  
ORGANIC  
STRUCTURE



- Appropriate restraint in architectural design

PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED  
APPROPRIATE RESTRAINT IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN



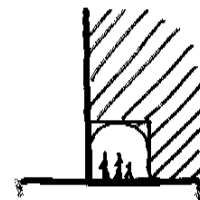
- Setting for campus art

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO REINFORCE  
SETTING FOR CAMPUS ART



- People friendly spaces at building ground level

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO REINFORCE  
PEOPLE FRIENDLY SPACES AT BUILDING GROUND LEVEL



- Compatible transitions with community edges (fit)

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

COMPATIBLE TRANSITIONS  
WITH COMMUNITY AT  
EDGES (FIT)



- Protection from the weather

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO BE REINFORCED

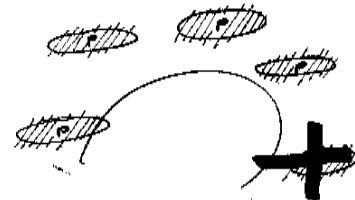
PROTECT FROM THE  
WEATHER



- Parking located at west campus periphery

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO BE REINFORCED

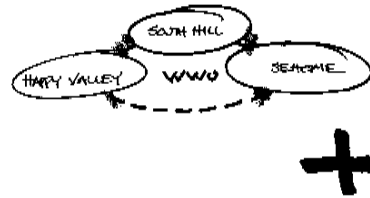
PARKING LOCATED AT WEST  
CAMPUS PERIPHERY



- Neighborhood connections

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO BE REINFORCED

**NEIGHBORHOOD  
CONNECTIONS**  
(COMPATIBLE FIT)



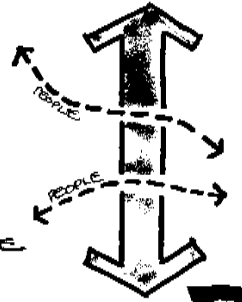
### Patterns to be Avoided

- Pedestrian pathways that cross major vehicle routes

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO BE AVOIDED

PEDESTRIAN  
PATHWAYS CROSS  
MAJOR VEHICLE  
ROUTES

EXAMPLE: SOUTH COURSE DRIVE

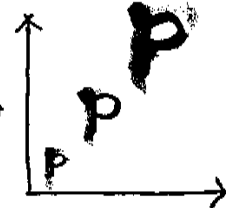


- Expansive surface parking lots

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO AVOID

EXPANSIVE  
SURFACE PARKING  
LOTS

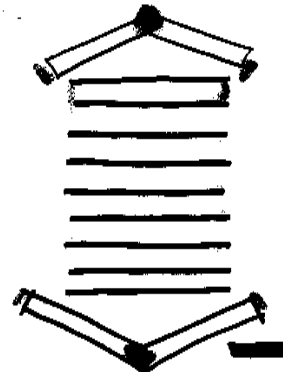
EXAMPLE: NEAR 21<sup>ST</sup> ST + NEAR FAIRHAVEN



- Excessive and dominating roadways

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERNS TO AVOID

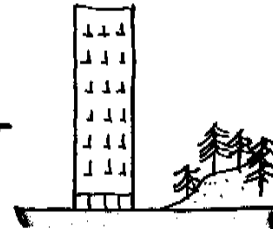
EXCESSIVE &  
DOMINATING  
ROADWAYS



- Buildings over-powering the natural environment

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO AVOID

BUILDINGS  
OVER-POWERING  
THE NATURAL  
ENVIRONMENT

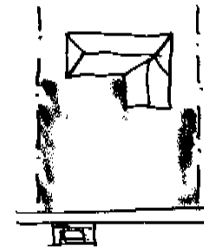


- "Paving your front yard"

CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO AVOID

'PAVING YOUR  
FRONT YARD'

(LOSS OF GREEN &  
DOMINANCE OF CONCRETE)



- Overly grand vehicular entries

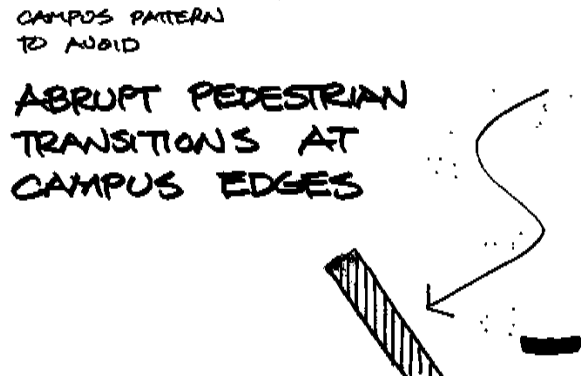
CAMPUS CHARACTER  
PATTERN TO AVOID

OVERLY GRAND  
CAR ENTRIES

EXAMPLE: SOUTH CAMPUS DRIVE



- Abrupt pedestrian transitions at campus edges



- Unattractive building backsides

