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An Introduction to Campus Planning: Insights and Opportunities

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Most cities have institutions: medical, educational, governmental. In most cases, planning for the institution and city is completely separate, and often the interactions of these entities are more negative than positive. However, institutions, especially those of higher education, can be important assets for cities and other kinds of communities because of the benefits and opportunities they can offer, especially over the long term.

Municipal and community planners should know more about campus planners and planning — both to mitigate any town-gown challenges but also to promote benefits for both sides. It is an increasingly accepted fact that collaboration between campuses and their communities is necessary. This can take many forms depending on the type of community, type of institution, and local and regional contexts. There are numerous and growing examples of these collaborations, largely around real estate development, but also with planning and sustainability.

This *PAS Memo* is intended to make municipal planners more aware of their campus counterparts and alert them to possibilities for coordination and collaboration to benefit both institutions and municipalities. It provides a brief overview of campus planning and insights into campus organization, governance, and planning processes to help community planners better understand their campus counterparts, and outlines commonly faced challenges and opportunities, offering pointers on how to approach each of these. The article then introduces recent trends in collaborative planning, and closes with action steps for municipal planners to work together with higher education institutions in their communities over the long haul for mutually beneficial economic and community development.

What Is Campus Planning?

The **map of Columbia University in New York City** (left) and an **1855 plan for Dartmouth College in the then-Village of Hanover** (right) illustrate two campuses in different contexts but with the iconic layout around a central green space. Images courtesy Columbia University maps and

Dartmouth Campus Master Plan.

The term "campus" can mean different things, and "campus planning" can be defined in as many ways as campuses are different. In general, the term "campus" is used for the buildings and land occupied typically by an institution of higher education, usually a self-contained community (Turner 1987, 4). The institution may be a university, a large or small college, a community college, or even a for-profit college or university. Often there is a distinct pattern or organization that characterizes the campus, usually for older institutions and often in their historic cores. For newer institutions, however, especially those in urban contexts, campuses can range from a single building to several that may be located in proximity to each other, though not necessarily with any organized layout.

This **map shows campuses in the Greater Boston area**, illustrating both historical and formal evolution as well as their community contexts. Courtesy Bill Rankin (Yale University, **www.radicalcartography.net**).

"Campus planning" is a broad term that can include academic, strategic, financial, and space planning based on the institution's academic needs. More commonly, campus planning is understood to encompass a wide range of physical planning activities, from specific building placement and design that implements a capital plan to a framework of principles that guides future development. Physical planning may also include landscape and some infrastructure, usually parking and transportation. The time frames for campus planning usually range from five to 10 years, following closely the capital planning cycles. However, some long-range plans include a 20- to 30-year (or longer) outlook. The elements in these plans tend to be different from more short-term planning documents and often include land use, land development, environmental, and infrastructure plans.

Campus planning has been subject to a range of trends — from its origins of buildings placed formally around a major common open space, to ornately landscaped settings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to post–World War II modernist and post-modernist plans that focused largely on architecture and specific programs, usually for the sciences. However, there is a growing trend towards planning that is more inclusive of landscape, transportation, and infrastructure and places a greater emphasis on sustainability. Land-use planning in the traditional sense is still rare on campuses but could be a potential area of dialogue and collaboration with the community.

The large land-use components of a campus tend to be primarily of four types: academic (classrooms, labs, and other teaching facilities); athletics and recreation (indoor and outdoor practice and competition venues); student housing (undergraduate and graduate); and social and cultural facilities (gathering spaces, museums, theaters, concert venues). Many institutions include teaching hospitals and medical centers as part of their main campus or separate campuses, and land-grant campuses may also include large tracts of open space on the main campus or elsewhere used for teaching and research, including conservation.

A Brief History and Planning Models

Planning for campuses has evolved over several centuries; the types of institutions have evolved too, requiring different models of planning. At its inception, the campus was an open green space framed by buildings usually in a quadrangular form, derived from the medieval cloister models of the old European universities. The American model opened up the corners and spaces between buildings, but the concept of a domain removed from the bustle and activity of a settlement remained and is at the heart of the physical and functional introversion reflected on almost all kinds of campuses. This introversion and detachment — "the romantic notion of a college in nature, removed from the corrupting forces of the city" and the persistent sense of "…a world in itself" (Turner 1987, 4) — is also a distinctively American concept.

The iconic and popular image of a higher-education institution — the quadrangle or quad surrounded by neo–Gothic or neoclassical architecture — is the form still largely aspired to, regardless of institutional type, when it was founded, or local context — though there are some exceptions. Many campuses still have entry gates and walls around their historic areas, though later additions tend not to be walled in or gated. Another model placed a few academic buildings directly in urban areas within an existing fabric, with students expected to live mostly off campus and use the city's amenities. The growth and evolution of both campus and city or town in all models has brought them into closer physical proximity as well as added other pressures. The pattern of introversion in their formal organization as well as in campus planning processes still continues in most campus models. Perhaps because of this introversion, campuses and their plans tend not to be integrated into the plans for their communities.

An image persists of the campus as individual buildings in the landscape, rather than the complex integration of built form, physical, environmental, and social infrastructure, and mix of activities and land uses that characterize both campuses and cities. Indeed, campuses have grown in ways that are similar to cities — through increased density, infill, and outward growth. Some recent campus master plans (**Cornell**, **Princeton**, **the Ohio State University**, and **University of Washington** are some examples) recognize this along with the added complexity of being part of a larger city or community. Going forward, higher-education institutions may need planning models more akin to traditional urban planning but that meet the special nature and needs of academic institutions and actively respond to their home communities and regional contexts.

How Is Planning Carried Out on Campuses?

What should municipal planners know as they try to understand their local institutions and find ways to work together? In this section, the term "planner" refers to the individual or individuals responsible for campus planning at an institution.

Organization and Governance

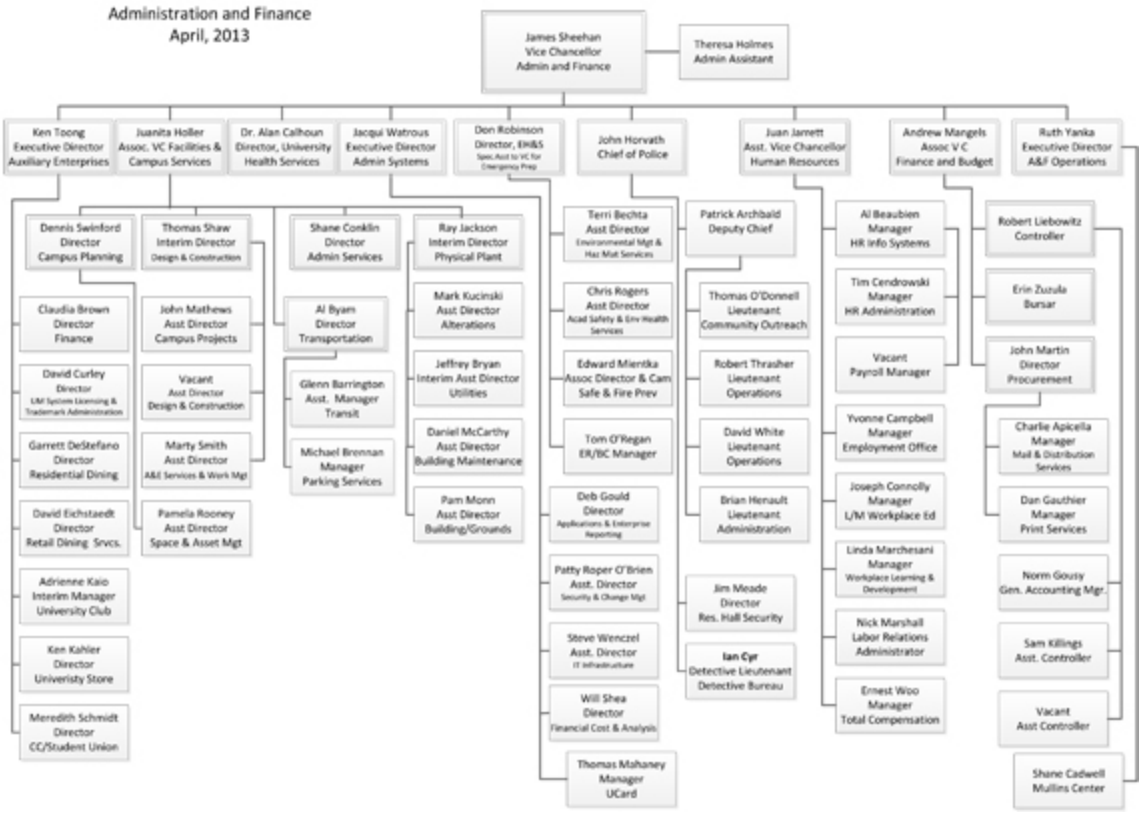
A search for campus planning on the websites of various institutions reveals a wide variation in the place and role of the planner and planning in the institution, and also provides insights into the general and specific organization of institutions. The organization and governance of higher-education institutions, their planning processes, and their decision-making structures are very different from those of municipal governments and play important roles in the creation and implementation of campus plans.

The campus administration is headed by a president (or chancellor in some state universities), and the academic administration is led by a provost. The president reports to a board of trustees or a board of governors, depending on the type of institution. The board has fiduciary responsibility and its composition varies by institution. The responsibilities for various aspects of the administration are assigned to vice presidents or vice chancellors. The provost is supported by vice provosts, who are assigned specific academic areas. Campus land and buildings are usually either privately owned or state-owned (or have elements of both, as in the case of Cornell University), unlike a town or city. Whether the institution is primarily an undergraduate college or includes graduate fields of study has implications for the nature of teaching and research as well on the student residential component on and off campus.

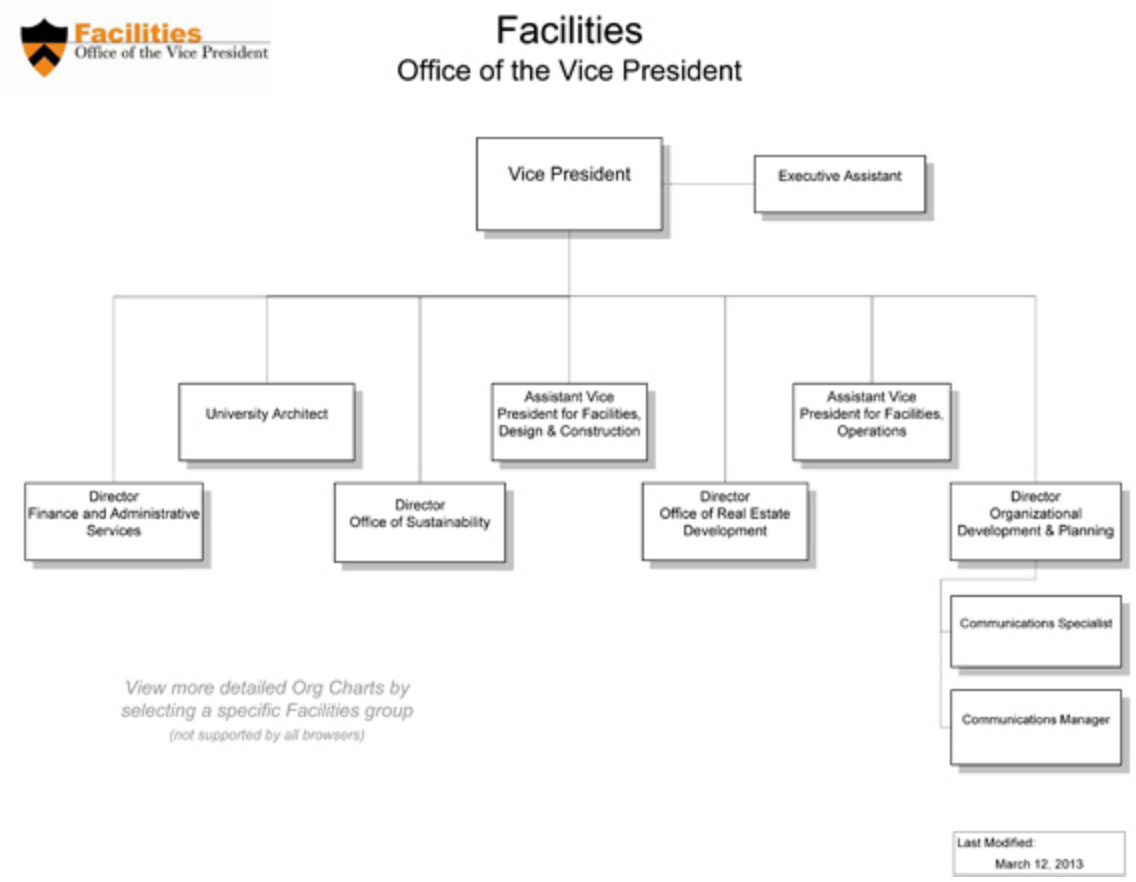
Unlike most municipal governments that have a department of planning and development reporting to the mayor or elected head of government, campus planning typically sits within the facilities department, which oversees the construction and maintenance of the campus physical plant. The facilities department in turn is usually located within a larger administration and finance unit that deals with campus operations: buildings, maintenance, engineering, infrastructure, IT, environmental safety, police, and other functions. Usually called "Facilities Planning," planning on most campuses is typically focused on space planning and architectural project planning, design, and construction.

A glance at different institutions' organizational charts can provide a useful insight into where and how

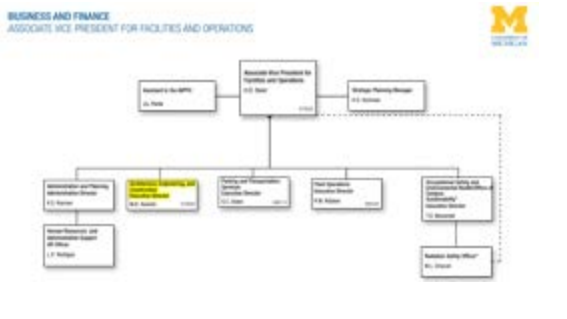
campus or facilities planning is carried out and where the planner can be found. Below are three examples that show the range of planner roles and administrative structures found among institutes of higher education. At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the campus planning office sits within the Division of Administration and Finance. At Princeton University, campus planning is carried out in the Office of the University Architect within the Division of Facilities. And at the University of Michigan, planning is carried out within Architecture, Engineering and Construction, which sits within Facilities and Operations.

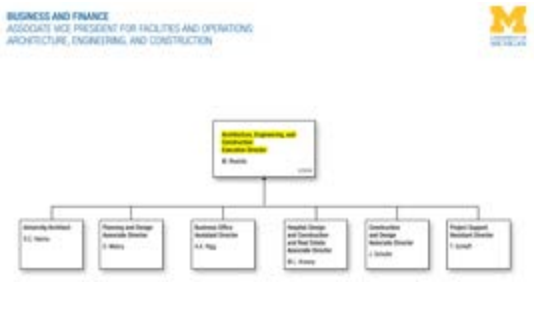


University of Massachusetts–Amherst organizational chart. Courtesy University of Massachusetts–Amherst.



Princeton University organizational chart. Courtesy Princeton University.





University of Michigan organizational charts. Courtesy University of Michigan.

In most institutions, facilities or campus planning is carried out in the office of the campus architect or is part of the design and construction office. Many institutions do not have an urban planner on their staff and much of the planning is related to the implementation of capital projects. In some, the planner may be a staff member in the design office who supports municipal approvals for capital projects or may be part of a separate office that deals with land use and environmental regulations. A few institutions have separate offices for campus planning and design and construction, both reporting to an associate vice president / associate vice chancellor or vice president / vice chancellor for facilities or administration. There are also institutions that have only a planning office with architectural design oversight but do not implement capital projects.

Adding to these existing differences, organizational charts and planning processes can change with turnovers in the leadership of the administration or the institution. Decisions about campus planning as well as approaches and the plans themselves thus reflect the individual institution and its organizational structures as well the periodic changes in its leadership. To assume that all institutions are similar and plan in a similar way is a common misconception and can be a stumbling block to finding ways to work together.

Drivers and Rationale for Planning

The primary drivers for a campus plan are the institutions' academic mission and needs, usually tied to its strategic and capital plans, which influence both the nature and timeline of the physical plan.

Strategic plans are founded on the academic mission and needs of the institution, evolving pedagogy and research, and the resources required to meet those needs, some of which are reflected in the capital plan. Because of its close association with capital plan implementation, physical planning tends to be in 5- or 10-year timelines; it is difficult to plan beyond 10 years for specific program needs. Physical planning is expected to implement those needs through institutional growth or major academic initiatives.

Another driver for campus planning may be requirements adopted by some states for their educational institutions to have long-range master plans that address enrollment, growth, and capital planning (more on this below). Plans may include the entire campus or just areas of campus that are required to realize an important strategic initiative.

Most facilities or campus plans are based upon space needs of academic programs as accommodated in buildings. The buildings are usually sited during the master planning process, academic adjacencies being a major factor in decision making for size and location of programs and facilities. Open spaces, other elements of the public realm, and infrastructure, including transportation and parking, tend to be secondary and derived from individual building programs. Plans for landscape and infrastructure may be part of an overall master plan. Implementation as a distinct process is rarely addressed.

Processes, Players, and Types of Plans

The great diversity of institutional structures and processes and the strong linkage with academic and capital planning typically results in short-term plans that implement a list of capital projects. Decisions about campus development are usually made at the highest level to ensure the realization of a strategic plan or major academic initiative. Funding mechanisms and fundraising abilities can play very important roles. The availability of resources determines to a great extent what gets included and implemented in a plan and even the type of plan. Campus plans may be carried out in house or by consulting firms hired for this purpose.

Types of plans vary widely with the type of campus, the need at hand, the leadership or vision, and the precedent for planning at the institution. For example,the University of California system requires **long-range development plans** (LRDPs) that are comprehensive in nature; include land use, infrastructure, and environmental plans; and require an Environmental Impact Review (EIR). The guidelines for the organization of the plan have several elements, including the relationship with the community and the surrounding land uses. Though the University of California suggests **a detailed format for its long-range development plans** (see excerpt in sidebar) — one of the best planning models to integrate the needs of an academic institution with a comprehensive plan format — it does not impose requirements for the content, organization, or longevity of a LRDP.

University of California Long Range Development Plans

The following excerpts from the **University of California guidelines for Long Range Development Plans** (LRDPs) indicate the need for a comprehensive approach and can be a good starting point for joint planning between campus and community.

3.1.1 LRDP ORGANIZATION

The organization of an LRDP may vary, but it usually includes the following information:

- Historical perspective including historical plans for the campus and the evolution of those plans over time.
- Relationship with the community.
- Location and setting.
- Surrounding land uses.
- Physical setting including:
  - Existing environmental resources.
  - Existing land uses.
  - Existing landscape and open space.
  - Existing circulation and transportation systems.
- Facility characteristics including:
  - Facility population.
  - Academic organization.
- Planning process for the LRDP.
- Projected needs including:
  - Facility population.
  - Space needs for academic and support systems.
- Guidelines for implementation.

3.1.2 LRDP ELEMENTS

Land Use — This element shows the location of proposed land uses. The goal is to provide guidance

for locating future structures and uses while maintaining adequate flexibility for future decision making. The level of detail in this element varies. Academic uses may all be under a single "Instruction and Research" land use designation, or there may be separate designations for academic uses, administration, recreation, student housing, family student housing, support services, and open space.

Landscape and Open Space — Each campus has different types of open space: formal paved plazas and courtyards, less formal landscaped areas, and undeveloped natural areas. The LRDP indicates the role of open space, for example, whether buildings are integrated into the predominant land forms and vegetation (e.g. the Santa Cruz campus), or buildings are predominate and open spaces are connections among building clusters. Open areas may gain significance due to ongoing unauthorized or informal use, which then forms the basis of opposition if the site is proposed for use.

Circulation and Transportation — The LRDP shows how people move to and through the site in the future. All forms of travel are considered: pedestrian, bicycle, mopeds, motorcycles, cars, service and delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles, and hazardous material transportation. The LRDP indicates which paths and roads are shared by one or more forms of travel and which are segregated. Parking for all vehicle types is addressed.

Utilities — This element focuses on the campus systems for domestic and irrigation water, waste water, storm drainage, sanitary sewers, chilled water and steam, electrical distribution, natural gas, and communications. Each type of utility's expansion strategy is planned to accommodate the growing campus population and technology changes.

3.1.3 LRDP ORGANIZING CONCEPTS

An LRDP may be organized according to several possible concepts such as:

Physical Form. The physical form may be a grid system, satellite development, development along a spine, or spoke development around a circular core.

Neighborhood. Colleges, quads, precincts, and academic neighborhoods form sub-areas of a campus that accommodate academic clusters or combinations of academic and living functions.

Systems. The framework of support systems includes circulation, utilities, and information. One of these frameworks may be the organizing concept for future campus development.

Other state systems (such as Arizona State University, University of Colorado, State University of New York, University of Texas, and the University of Washington) do not seem to have a standardized format for their long-range master plans, but all of these plans inform the system-wide capital plan. The State University Construction Fund (SUCF) in New York State recently completed a system-wide series of master plans organized in a standard format to assist with consistent review for the **capital planning process**. These did not require any environmental impact assessment but aimed to be more comprehensive than the usual facilities master plan and provide a consistent basis for evaluating projects. Private institutions and community colleges differ widely in their approach to planning and this is seen in both their master plans and their implementation.

The implementation of campus or facility plans is often challenging and rarely addressed in the design of the master plan. This creates uncertainty both on the campus and in the community, reinforcing the image of unpredictability that dogs most higher-education institutions. While it is important to recognize that the plans need to be flexible to accommodate the institution's needs, planning approaches need to evolve to address issues that have long-term impacts on the campus and community. The following section highlights common areas of misunderstanding and where these can be reassessed to build bridges.

Pitfalls and Possibilities

The idea of town-gown relations usually brings up negative rather than positive aspects. Most times what comes first to mind are stories about students, derelict neighborhoods, strains on municipal services, traffic concerns for neighbors — the list can go on and sounds similar in almost every community with an institution. Added to this may be set attitudes on both sides about the intentions of the other. On campuses there is often the sense that the community is "anti-development," and the community is often concerned about the campus "taking over" and impacting the quality of life for residents — especially neighbors — and being a drain on community resources.

Tensions between institutions and their communities usually center on traffic, physical growth, taxes, students, and issues at their shared edges.

A 2013 pilot survey by the **International Town-Gown Association** (ITGA) summarized institutional/municipal challenges, listing the most common points of friction. Unsurprisingly, campus expansion, parking shortages, and land use and zoning are listed as most challenging. Of a total of nine common points of friction in the summary, three deal with parking and traffic. Off-campus, almost all points of friction have something to do with student-related activity; a common concern for

both the campus and community is the quality of student rental housing, often at the edges and privately owned. Past histories of campus-community interactions (or lack thereof) add to the concerns and mistrust on both sides. For a campus and a community thinking about the first step, it is hard enough knowing who to talk to, let alone how to begin the conversation.

Ironically many of these points of friction are planning issues that affect the greater community as well as the campus, and so working together to plan and solve issues is important. Often, the best starting point, whether initiated by the campus or the community, is identifying areas of shared concern and outcomes that are beneficial to both institution and community. The ITGA survey identified potential solutions to the points of friction mentioned above with input from municipal and campus planners. Collaboration in planning came up in two of the three most common solutions — collaboration between campus and community on planning for university growth and expansion as well as in municipal comprehensive planning and land use and zoning. The third most commonly identified area of collaboration was transportation and parking.

Infrastructure, natural resource conservation, and economic development are other areas that generate concerns among community members but are also possibilities where both the institution and community can share interests and collaborate towards outcomes that benefit both and improve the stability and livability of the community. These are increasingly important as communities and campuses develop climate action or adaptation plans and integrate greater sustainability into their development and operations. Often these planning collaborations are helpful in leveraging external funding, sorely needed by both for capital improvements to energy, infrastructure, and natural systems — or even for joint planning initiatives.

Making Connections and Building Relationships

The most common types of collaboration between institutions and their home communities tend to involve development projects with a specific program and outcome: economic gain and resource efficiencies for both the institution and community. These can be great ways to address difficult areas of contention and problems that may threaten the stability of both sides. They may be one-time collaborations, or they may develop into de facto redevelopment partnerships over times. They originate and are structured in almost as many ways as there are specific problems to resolve. See the sidebar below for several examples of such projects.

Examples of Town-Gown Collaborations

University of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia
The **West Philadelphia Initiatives** program, a multifaceted urban planning and community development program, has reduced crime and blight, increased job opportunities, and improved the quality of life in West Philadelphia neighborhoods. Those developments in turn have reinforced the university's ability to attract the best students, faculty, staff, and research opportunities. See the **detailed report** by Lucy Kernan and John Kromer.

The Ohio State University (OSU) and the City of Columbus, Ohio
In 1995, OSU and the City of Columbus founded **Campus Partners for Community Urban Development** to revitalize the University District. Campus Partners was incorporated as a non-profit organization to work with the city, community agencies, neighborhood civic associations and the university itself. An "organization of organizations," the **University District Organization (UDO)** is a nonprofit planning and community improvement organization incorporated in 1971 to work toward the stabilization and revitalization of the University District. Campus Partners and OSU are represented on its board of trustees, along with community groups, social service agencies, businesses, churches, and local government.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts
The transformation of **Kendall Square** in Cambridge, Massachusetts, supports MIT's mission to advance life-changing science and research by creating an area that will attract innovation companies and encourage future collaborations. MIT's redevelopment of its properties in **Kendall Square** has transformed the area over the last decade into a lively and distinctive mixed use neighborhood.

Portland State University (PSU) and the City of Portland, Oregon
Portland State University's **strategic plan** addresses linkages with the community, community engagement, and service. PSU's identity is very much connected to that of its home city. **Initiatives for community development** include transit, housing, and neighborhood revitalization around the campus.

The City of Montreal and its Strategic Plan
In contrast to the examples above, where institutions of higher education initiate collaboration with their home community, the City of Montreal in its Strategic Plan reaches out and actively includes its institutions of higher education in the vision of the city's future as an international "City of Knowledge." For details, refer to the website for the **Stratégie de Développement Économique 2011-2017 / Montréal**. Specific initiatives and projects include neighborhood redevelopment, infrastructure, and public urban spaces that serve both the institution and the city as a whole, such as the **Quartier Concordia**. The major University Health Centers of McGill University and the University of Montreal are part of **focused economic development zones** in the city.

Such projects often occur along a campus edge bordering the community and allow for an improved interface between campus and community activities, expansion of the revenue base for the municipality, and an enhancement to the quality of life in these neighborhoods. This approach allows a direct illustration of benefits to both campus and community for generating funding and investment. The success of several of these examples has depended on setting up a long-term relationship between institution and community and processes and structures to sustain it. To quote Perry and Wiewel (2005, 310), "While good relations never guarantee support, they provide multiple avenues for communication about university needs and priorities. This also suggests that while at any time the relationship may be a given, based on political vagaries and its previous history, it is subject to modification through concerted and consistent attention." I would offer that this can be true in reverse as well.

The roles of university presidents and mayors as well as their administrations in taking the first step cannot be underestimated. These are often bold moves and require a commitment at the top. The commitment has to be on both sides for a collaboration of any kind to happen, whether it is for a project or for ongoing planning and community development. However, depending on leadership alone will not carry long-term projects or planning initiatives to fruition, particularly the latter. Mayoral and presidential terms are limited and flux often follows elections.

There needs to be a wider acceptance of the need to collaborate and an understanding that the institution and community are interdependent and not independent. Institutions play an important role in a community's economic development and stability. It is critical to engage as many levels of the administration in this approach and effort as well as the faculty and students. While governance and org charts can change with leadership, the network of connections on both sides can often keep the conversations going during times of flux.

Encouraging both employee and student volunteer efforts in the community can be another great way to extend the leadership and distribute it to supplement the governance structure. Setting up affinity or neighborhood groups that go beyond campus projects to address larger issues of the community's well-being can reinforce the idea of mutual interdependence — that the community is the institution's address or identifier, and vice versa. Boston's image is inextricably linked with its institutions, for example, but so are smaller communities that may just have one or a few institutions. The health and vitality of the city, community, or region is therefore essential to the vitality of the institution.

As we consider collaboration and relationships, it will be ever more critical to move beyond one-off projects to partnerships that are based on planning, whether physical or strategic. An individual project may be successful; however, projects tend to develop in an ad hoc or opportunistic manner and may not always contribute to a coherent or comprehensive view of physical or economic development. Quoting Perry and Wiewel (2005, 311), "given the permanence of universities, it appears that a more consistent and comprehensive approach to joint planning might better serve both the universities and their cities." For nonurban institutions, joint planning may be more regional and deal with different sets of issues.

Planning together offers the advantage of envisioning a shared future and not just enumerating the benefits from individual projects. It can also allow for a more complex and realistic exploration of the impacts and benefits of the institutional presence in the community rather than just periodic transactional impact-based contributions.

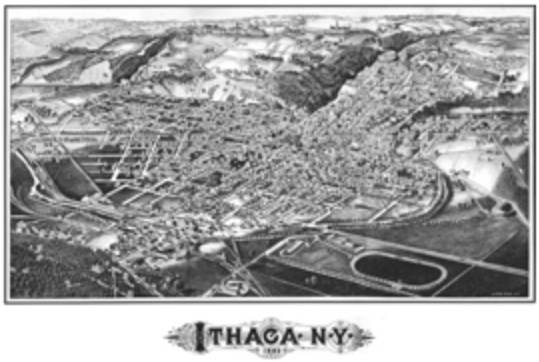
Recent and Emerging Trends for Positive Change

Collaborations between communities and institutions include a diverse range of initiatives depending on the institution and the community/communities. Several trends — the concept of home community and long-term broad-based sustainability —have been growing stronger over the last few decades and consistently illustrate positive outcomes.

"Home" Communities vs. "Host" Communities

Framing the role and place of institutions in their communities can change the tone of the conversation. When I first drafted an RFP for the Cornell master plan, I had used the term "host community," the norm in describing campus-community issues. A comment from a colleague — "We are not going anyplace else; this is home for us" — was an eye-opener. His suggestion to use the term "home community" instead was invaluable and made a crucial difference both during the master planning process and in subsequent campus-community interactions. Along similar lines, Portland State University uses the term "institutional citizenship."

This can change the perception on both sides. The community needs to see the institution as a partner in its development and stability and not as an unwelcome intrusion. The institution in return needs to see the health and quality of the community as integral to its own long-term survival and success rather than as a stumbling block. There are numerous examples of institutions across the country that have partnered with their home communities to effect some often drastic changes to their mutual and lasting benefit (see sidebar above). While many of these have been focused on economic development, housing, and security, increasingly sustainability and dealing with climate change are opening up other areas for longer-term collaboration in areas such as alternative and renewable energy, infrastructure, land use, and natural resource conservation.



Two images of Cornell University on the hills overlooking Ithaca, New York — one from 1890 and the other from 2009 — show the still-evolving relationship between the campus and its "home" community. Courtesy Cornell University Archives (left) and Jon Reis Photography (right).

Sustainability and Mutual Interdependence

Long-term scenarios and outcomes for land development, transportation, natural resource use, and environmental conservation are relevant to both the campus and its home community in attaining sustainability goals.Neither can truly declare carbon neutrality without the inclusion of the other.

Sustainability is now the norm with American and international college and university participation, many of which have set ambitious targets for climate neutrality in the coming decades. The **Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)**, an organization that provides resources to colleges and universities pursuing sustainability, supports the **American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC)**, launched in 2007, through which campuses commit to neutralize greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible. Since its founding, more than 672 institutions of higher education have signed on and the number is steadily increasing.

Sustainability is also increasingly the norm with municipal governments and communities. **ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability**, founded in 1990, is an international organization with centers in several regions of the world and has grown to include over 1,000 local governments in 84 countries. The emphasis is on quantitative and qualitative measures of **sustainable cities** that are "marked by a green economy, a healthy and happy community, smart infrastructure and are biodiverse, low-carbon, resilient and resource-efficient." These measures correspond well with the metrics for sustainable campuses or **STARS**, AASHE's sustainability tracking system.

Energy efficiency and emissions reductions are the major areas of emphasis for both campus and community. They connect to a wide range of actions from green buildings to smart growth and the use of alternative transportation. Local and regional transportation networks, energy and other infrastructure, and land-use policies are areas of potential long-term collaboration and joint planning depending on the institution and the community. Cornell University, the City of Ithaca, and Tompkins County have long partnered on a regional transit system (TCAT), and with other communities in the county are working together on programs and infrastructural improvements to advance alternative modes and reduce emissions from single-occupancy vehicles. These initiatives came out of a joint planning effort by the university, which has helped to leverage state and federal funds for many of these transportation-related community improvement projects. The context for sustainable transportation is a county-wide vision for smart growth that the university's planning aligns with.

Land-use planning can address a range of issues including growth and zoning, land and natural resource conservation and management, mixed use development, workforce housing, tourism, and others. Addressing land use is also critical to climate adaptation planning, biodiversity, and healthier communities. Other initiatives target local purchasing, including locally sourcing food and supporting local agriculture, local or regional manufacturing, and entrepreneurship.

Action Steps for Planners

Here are some initial ideas for municipal planners to help them begin learning about, reaching out to, and ultimately collaborating with campus planners to better benefit both campus and community. These action steps are based on successful approaches tried in different institution-community contexts to initiate and continue the outreach and relationship-building process. You may come up with others geared to your own community that spring from your experience.

- A good first step is to **contact the institution's office of government and community relations** to indicate a willingness on the municipality's part to work with the higher-education institution. This could take the form of an invitation to meet regularly on issues of common interest, including planning. Having the political leadership and planning leadership committed to this regular interchange is essential, as is communication at senior levels of the municipal and institutional administrations.

- **Contact the campus planner** or person in charge of campus planning to initiate regular meetings. These could be monthly, quarterly, or twice a year. They do not have to be project-specific but can include information sharing and time to clarify issues and discuss planning and project issues.
- **Include both the positive connections and the negative impacts** in the conversations. All too often, the focus is on the challenges on both sides; what is working and the areas of collaboration can easily get overlooked or forgotten. Planners on both sides need to actively think about areas of common interest where they can work together and shared outcomes, whether these are individual projects or ongoing initiatives.
- While community-institution collaborations usually emphasize development projects, **joint planning initiatives** can be a great way to collaborate, whether they address regional planning, infrastructure, transportation systems and corridors, parks and open spaces, housing initiatives, real estate development, or other areas. Planning provides a process to discuss issues and concerns as well as think about outcomes that are mutually beneficial. It is also a good foundation for individual development projects.
- Invite planners from the higher-education institution into municipal comprehensive planning processes, encouraging their participation as a stakeholder in community development — both physical and economic. Together, municipal and campus planners can explore ways to **coordinate campus development with municipal development** for mutually beneficial outcomes and impact mitigation instead of using zoning or other measures to control institutional growth.
- **Establish relationships at multiple levels** in the administration and in the academic community. This is helpful as there are several types of issues — zoning, site plan review, environmental permitting and regulations, transportation planning, infrastructure, housing, events, etc. — to deal with on a regular basis. It is critical to have one primary point of contact, however, so that critical communications are not missed or misplaced. Having a list of key contacts at the higher-education institution is a good idea. Multiple points of contact and relationships are vital to weathering changes in administration that planners often have to ride out on both sides.
- **Leverage or tap institutional expertise** (academic or professional) to help with community needs. This can often be a good way to establish connections and goodwill and may be a constructive way of sharing resources on an ongoing basis. Many institutions can provide research, student and employee volunteer time for community projects, or other kinds of "in-kind" services that contribute both to learning and community benefits.
- **Be open to different kinds of partnerships** to deal with community impacts and community development. While PILOTs (Payments In Lieu of Taxes) are effective in many circumstances, their transactional nature may detract from broader and deeper institutional engagement that contributes to the community in many other ways. There are both quantitative and qualitative measures of contribution that need to be weighed in these relationships.

PILOTS largely measure the quantitative negative impacts related to provision of infrastructure, services and lost tax revenues. However, as mentioned earlier, one cannot generalize these negative impacts or their mitigations as institutions and communities are different. Depending on the type of community, institutions can participate in various types of community building — examples include student and employee community engagement and voluntary public service, development partnerships, support of community social services and other institutions, and infrastructure development. Often the multiplier effects of the institution's presence are considerable in addition to the overall quality of life and cultural amenities that institutions often contribute. A shared vision of the community is often a good basis for evaluating both impacts and contributions.

Conclusion

The emphasis in this *PAS Memo*, including the action steps above, is on developing ongoing and long-term relationships and building trust. One-off project collaborations could be one place to begin, but this requires the establishment of a follow-up process for collaboration to make the impact a lasting one and to build and maintain trust.

Planners should remember that the institution is not a business that can or will pick up and move elsewhere. It is invested in the success and health of its home community for the long haul. Higher-education institutions provide a measure of stability to local or regional economies, and value the quality of life that the home communities offer to their students and employees who, for the short or long term, are the community. The quality of the environment, schools, infrastructure, and neighborhoods, the availability of a diversity of goods and services, security, cultural amenities, and strong social networks are among the highly desirable elements that institutions depend upon for recruitment, retention, institutional excellence, and stability. These are also the characteristics of sustainable and successful communities.

It is not easy, but it is critical to set aside histories and old fears on both sides — both of institutional growth and of community hostility. Regardless of who takes the first step, everyone benefits.

About the Author

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