

SASAKI

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET

Master Plan Report ■ March 2008



An aerial site plan of the Purdue University Calumet campus. The plan shows various buildings, parking lots, and green spaces. A central vertical corridor is highlighted in red, and several other areas, including a large green field on the left and a basketball court on the right, are highlighted in green. The surrounding area is a grid of streets.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purdue University Calumet is at an important point in its history. It has begun an ambitious transformation which includes the addition of residential life and the strengthening of academic programs. Given improvements to the Indiana Community College system, the University is clarifying its role as a principal provider of bachelors and masters level education. At the same time, the University remains committed to expanding access to student learning, and partnering to support economic development in northwest Indiana and serving the changing needs of the region.

This master plan provides the University with the direction needed to develop its physical resources in support of these goals. The plan represents the collaborative efforts of the entire University community and the extended Purdue System, and is based on a rigorous analysis of all available data. It is an organic, integrated solution to the challenges facing Purdue Calumet, and capitalizes on existing strengths and opportunities while respecting the neighborhood fabric of which the University is a part.

The main challenges the plan seeks to address are:

- A disconnected campus with academic activity concentrated in the north and residential life in the south
- Significant existing space deficits, primarily in student life, laboratory, and library space
- The impression of a “drive-through” campus whose physical experience is dominated by largely uninterrupted parking lots
- Supporting the additional needs of a growing residential and full-time student population

The key elements of the plan are:

- The creation of a linear green linking the campus north to south and providing a transitional zone between parking lots and active uses
- The development of east-west groves of native trees which break the parking lots into more manageable parking rooms and perform important ecological functions
- The definition of a sacred green quadrangle in the geographic center of the campus framed by a tall new iconic transparent addition to the library, which will provide an instantly recognizable image for the campus
- An emphasis on first constructing new buildings in the central area of the campus to help shift the gravity of activity southward in support of important north-south connections
- The formation of a vibrant residential district in the south with playing fields and additional recreation facilities including a glass-fronted fitness and exercise facility with a strong street presence
- An alliance with the City of Hammond and private developers to create a mixed-use campus town along the 173rd street corridor which will provide both additional residential beds and needed retail services like restaurants, coffee shops, and potentially the university bookstore

The final plan respects the long, narrow nature of the University’s land holdings, and is inspired in many ways by the existing Peregrine Path. This “corridor of buildings” is continued through the central region of the campus, and a complimentary new corridor is created to frame the east side of the green spine. Detailed phasing is specified for this development. Arrival sequences are simplified, with a major new entry point through the proposed campus town. The pedestrian experience crossing 173rd street is improved.

The critical mid-to long-term decision facing the University will be how to address parking requirements as enrollment grows and as existing surface lots are used for building sites. The plan identifies locations for potential future garages, but the cost of these garages is likely to be significantly greater than the cost of acquiring additional property for surface parking. These greater costs will have to be balanced against the impact of incursion into neighborhoods.

The master plan represents a transformative vision for Purdue Calumet, and aims to guide its physical growth over the next twenty years. It builds on the campus’ many strengths, and through place-making, hopes to create connections and community, and provide the resources the University needs to fulfill its mission.



EXISTING CAMPUS

