

The background of the entire page is a detailed architectural rendering of a university campus. It shows various buildings, courtyards, and trees in a light brown, semi-transparent style. In the top right corner, there is a photograph of a real building with a prominent clock tower, set against a clear blue sky.

A View to the Future

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
MASTER PLAN SUMMARY REPORT



CONTENTS

1
PRESIDENT'S LETTER

2
INTRODUCTION

4
THE CAMPUS TODAY

6
FUNDAMENTAL PLAN CONCEPTS

8
SUBCAMPUS RECOMMENDATIONS

21
GROUPS AND COMMITTEES



“...On the instant that the valley of the Kalamazoo River came to full view, it was proposed that the county school commissioner join D.B. Waldo in what was to be the most exhilarating adventure in public education yet to be experienced by mere man...”

Historical account of 1903 selection of Ernest Burnham for a faculty position by D.B. Waldo, first principal of the Western State Normal School

President's Letter



DEAR COLLEAGUES

Thanks to the energies and commitment of the State of Michigan, the City of Kalamazoo and the University community, Western Michigan University has grown from a single building in 1903 to a comprehensive campus that covers nearly 600 acres and includes more than 125 buildings. In 1998, three assessment and planning initiatives were undertaken to help chart a course for the University to better integrate future plans with those of our surrounding community. This Campus Master Plan is the outgrowth of that process.

As a leading institution of higher education, we are responding to the evolving expectations of our students and society by defining creative new approaches and solutions. The physical patterns conveyed in the plan help define a foundation for achieving University goals and the academic mission.

The plan responds to specific needs while understanding and respecting long term aspirations by defining a conceptual vision that is both broad and flexible. Projecting a compelling view of our institutional future, the Master Plan defines opportunities for accommodating growth and for achieving a more student friendly, functionally appropriate and attractive campus environment. This plan will help guide the leaders of Western Michigan University today and well into the future.

We are deeply appreciative of the creativity, commitment and collaboration that characterized this planning process. We are indebted to the people, both on our campus and in the greater community, who gave so generously to make this plan a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Elson S. Floyd". The signature is stylized and fluid.

ELSON S. FLOYD



Earlier plans have guided WMU to its current position as a major regional institution. The primary goal of this Master Plan is to recognize the University's goals as they relate to accommodating new development and enhancing the campus quality, diversity and livability. WMU has identified ways to enhance its image and the quality of student life in a manner that reflects the University's commitment to academic, research and outreach activities.

Introduction



WHY A MASTER PLAN?

As one of the nation's top public research universities, Western Michigan University (WMU) continues to strive for academic excellence. Competition for the best students and faculty is intensifying and rising expectations require universities to adapt more quickly than in past eras. WMU needs a method to respond promptly and appropriately to new educational ideas and opportunities. A Master Plan is a tool that defines development options based on an institution's inherent strengths, resources and vision.

WMU's Master Plan not only allows for the most effective use of its resources, but also celebrates the institution's 100 year heritage. From its start as a single building on top of Prospect Hill, the University now has more than 125 buildings spread over three distinct campuses. Today's Master Plan seeks to unify and strengthen the University's image by allowing the West, Oakland Drive and East Campuses to function cohesively while maintaining their unique character.

MASTER PLAN APPROACH

Because the Master Plan directs the growth of the WMU campus over time, it has to be developed with and supported by the University community. Bringing together a broad range of campus users and neighbors, the planning process seeks individual perceptions, opinions and priorities to forge consensus on important issues and plan recommendations.

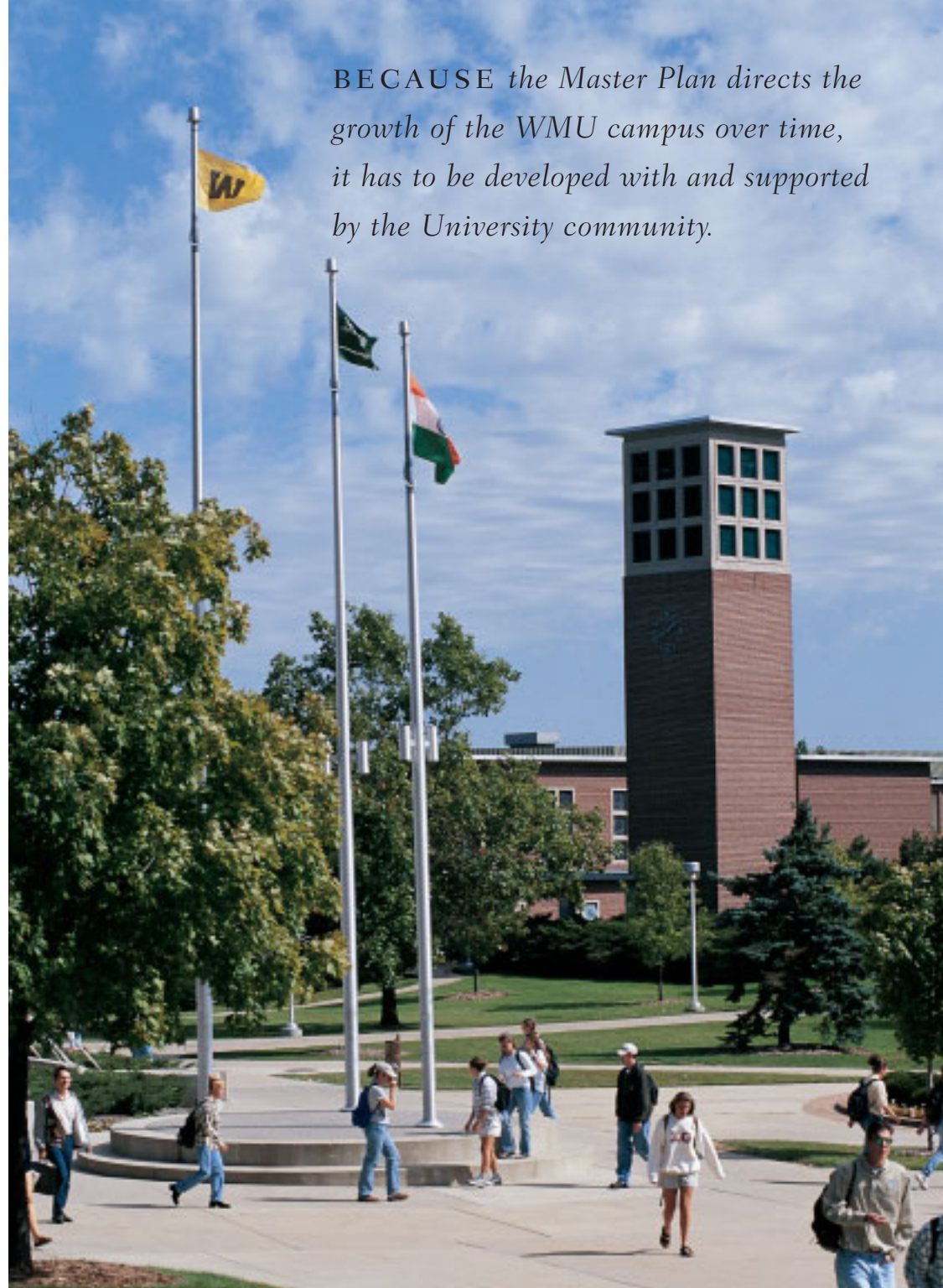
The master planning effort was one of the most interactive and participatory planning efforts ever undertaken by the University. Planning groups were established to ensure that diverse interests and perspectives were considered. An Advisory/Policy Committee, comprised of faculty and staff members, students, University administrators, and municipal and community representatives, guided the decision-making process. Subcampus focus groups (representing West Campus, Oakland Drive Campus and East Campus) and a range of student groups offered input and made recommendations.

Workshops with the campus planning staff, interviews with students, open community and campus meetings, a student survey, a web site, and a designated e-mail address supplemented the efforts of the focus groups. The diversity of participants and range of formats allowed the planning process to embrace broad, campus-wide issues, as well as area-specific issues. The final outcome is a plan that is supported and understood across the campus, within the neighborhood and the larger community.

PROCESS

A creative, problem-solving approach strives to look at old problems in new ways. The planning process started with a careful look at natural features, historic development patterns, current uses and future growth projections to identify important issues and opportunities. As creative solutions began to emerge, they were expressed as a range of alternatives. The evaluation and refinement of these alternatives resulted in a Preliminary Master Plan that combined the most valuable elements of each. Further refinements ensured an appropriate balance and relationship between open space and pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, transit and parking, as well as architecture and development capacity.

BECAUSE the Master Plan directs the growth of the WMU campus over time, it has to be developed with and supported by the University community.



The Campus Today





PROFILE

WMU is one of the nation's top 100 public universities. In 2000, nearly 29,000 students were enrolled in 165 undergraduate and 89 graduate programs. Outside research support exceeded \$45 million. Founded in 1903 as Western State Normal School, the institution grew to become one of the nation's leading teacher-training colleges before attaining University status in 1957. An engineering complex south of the central campus and an aviation campus in Battle Creek, Michigan, complete the University's core academic facilities.

To better serve the residents of the State of Michigan, nearly three dozen complete degree programs are offered through regional facilities in eight Michigan cities. These regional centers serve as focal points for WMU's efforts to broaden the University's outreach programs.

Since 1998, with the vision of a new University president and a strong leadership team in place, WMU has continued to move to the forefront of higher education, research and public service. As it approaches its centennial year, the University has ensured that its legacy and place within the community will be strengthened and enhanced with the creation of this new Master Plan.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Major planning concerns and challenges were identified and prioritized through interviews and in workshops with the Advisory/Policy Committee and the focus groups.

1. Regional roadway (Stadium Drive), rail line and two valleys (Goldsworth and Arcadia) bisect and separate the campus.
2. Campus entries are often congested and lack definition.
3. Campus edges are in need of definition and are often unattractive.
4. Vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding is difficult.
5. Vehicular and pedestrian safety is a concern.
6. Parking demand exceeds supply in key areas.
7. Building and open space maintenance is deficient.
8. Architecture lacks a cohesive appearance.
9. Building placement and open spaces do not reinforce each other effectively.

Ten fundamental Master Plan concepts form the foundation of the campus-wide recommendations.

Plan

Fundamental Concepts

- 1. Protect the Valleys** Preserve and enhance the open space character of Goldsworth and Arcadia Valleys. Restrict building development and enhance natural features, landscaping and maintenance levels within these corridors.
- 2. Develop Campus Edges and Entrances**
The University is to be easily identifiable. Establish visually distinctive and significant campus approaches, arrival areas, entries and edges.
- 3. Ensure Wayfinding and Accessibility** Create a friendlier campus with upgraded signage, informational kiosks and improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, particularly at entrances and approaches to the University. Plan compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines and four-season access to all campus areas.
- 4. Plan Alternate Forms of Transportation**
Place greater emphasis on safe and efficient transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation on and off campus.
- 5. Distribute Parking** Position parking around the campus perimeter to be easily accessible from main roads and near principal centers of use. Coordinate transit and pedestrian interface in order to facilitate access to major destinations.
- 6. Connect the Campuses** Maintain and enhance visual and physical connections between the West, Oakland Drive and East Campus areas. Improve inter-campus circulation and accessibility. Protect potential bridging points connecting the campuses.
- 7. Preserve Open Space** Plan future development to preserve and optimize the use of open space to achieve a sense of community and distinctive settings.
- 8. Develop Districts** Identify and develop districts that reflect a distinct identity, share a common function or are relatively self-contained. District buildings should relate to one another, both physically and through similar functions. Consistently maintain building massing, patterns or grids, density and heights appropriate to each district.
- 9. Create Campus Activity Hubs** Create pedestrian-scale activity centers that are centrally located and visually distinct, with facilities clustered around a core open space that attracts students and visitors.
- 10. Distribute Housing** Locate housing throughout the campuses; serve a variety of housing needs and markets.

Master Plan



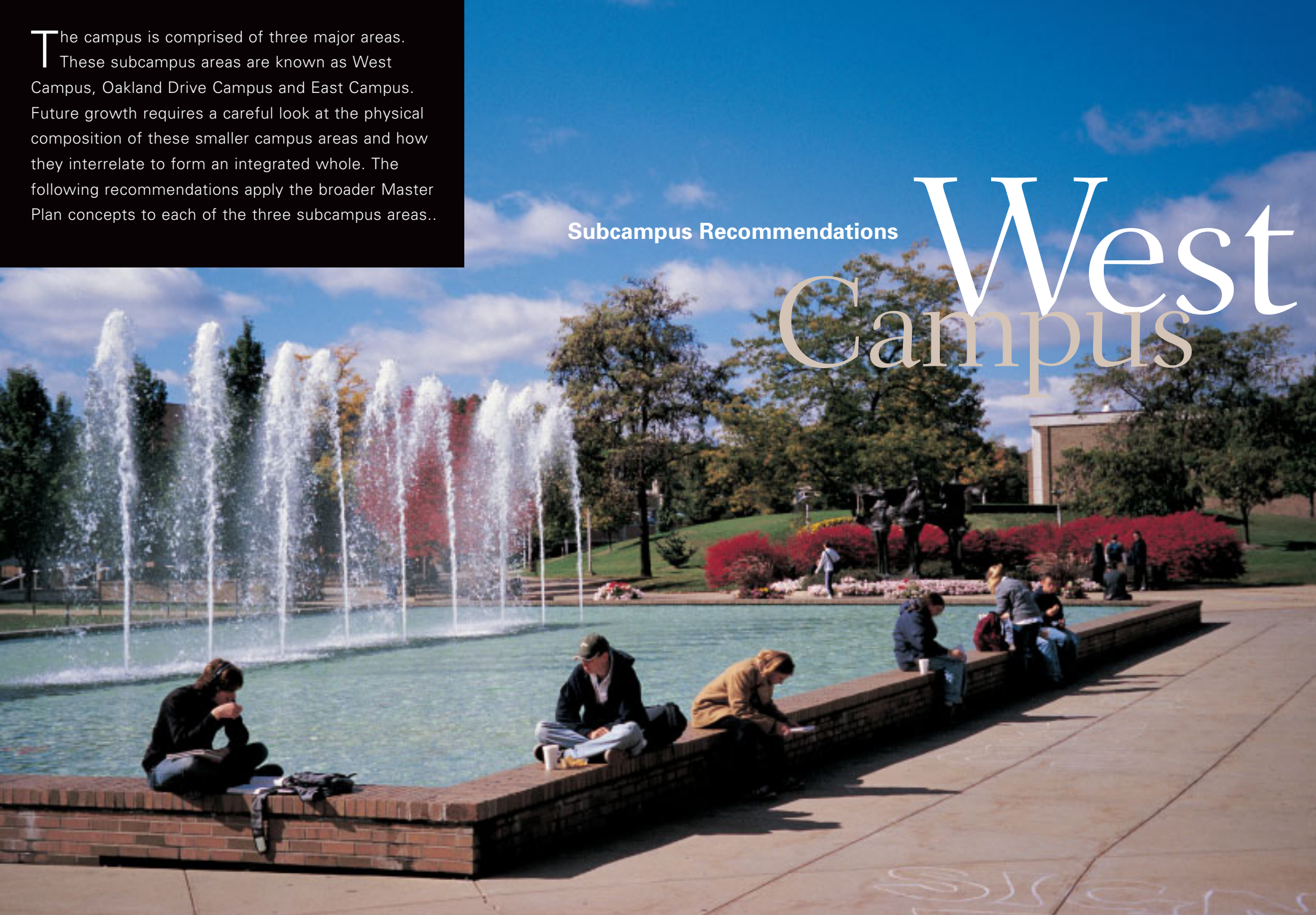
Legend

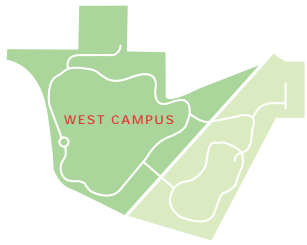
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Existing parking Decks
- Proposed Parking Decks
- Existing Surface Lot
- Proposed Surface Lot
- Athletic Fields
- On Campus Roads
- Off Campus Roads
- Pedestrian Network

The campus is comprised of three major areas. These subcampus areas are known as West Campus, Oakland Drive Campus and East Campus. Future growth requires a careful look at the physical composition of these smaller campus areas and how they interrelate to form an integrated whole. The following recommendations apply the broader Master Plan concepts to each of the three subcampus areas..

Subcampus Recommendations

West Campus





West Campus is the academic core of the University and the vibrant focus of student activity. Because this area has been extensively developed, planning for West Campus development emphasizes the use of infill to clarify existing patterns and to create a hierarchy of open space and pedestrian corridors.

Open Space and Pedestrian Circulation

West Campus includes a number of significant and sacred open spaces, including Goldsworth Valley, Goldsworth Pond, the Oaklands, the Tent Plaza and the Miller Auditorium reflecting pool and plaza. The Master Plan enhances these spaces by recommending new connecting corridors to create a continuous open space system.

- **Michigan Mall** A new central open space spine, including pedestrian walkways, plazas and a highly maintained landscape, is proposed along the West Michigan Avenue corridor. This new pedestrian mall will replace the existing four-lane road and adjacent parking lots with a core open space that connects visually from the West Michigan Avenue/Howard

Street entry to the intersection of West Michigan Avenue and North Dormitory Road on the east. The Michigan Mall will be defined by strongly articulated buildings and incorporate activity nodes, plazas and congregation areas.

- **Valley Path** The existing north-south pedestrian corridor from Goldsworth Valley to Miller Plaza will be upgraded and extended, via a bridge, to Oakland Drive Campus. The Loop Road will be realigned to the southern edge of Goldsworth Valley, and a vehicular/pedestrian bridge will elevate the Loop Road above the at-grade pedestrian path to establish a safer pedestrian connection. The open space character of Goldsworth Valley will be extended, connecting with the Michigan Mall and providing more direct access for North Valley residents to the academic core.
- **Goldsworth Valley** As noted above, the proposed Loop Road will be relocated to the toe of the slope on the southern valley edge. Pathways for pedestrians and bicycles on the western edge of the valley will link the campus to student housing. The Master Plan also recommends that buildings be removed





from the valley floor and that active and passive recreation opportunities be expanded. Intramural recreation fields in Goldsworth Valley should be relocated to the east end of the valley, at the site of the older family housing units.

Circulation

Major Campus Entries Major vehicular entries are proposed at West Michigan Avenue/Howard Street, West Michigan Avenue/Western Avenue and Oliver Street/Stadium Drive. The primary visitor entry to campus will be located at the intersection of West Michigan Avenue and Howard Street where additional travel lanes and a rotary (at the Loop Road/entrance drive intersection) are needed to accommodate existing and anticipated traffic volumes. To maximize development potential inside the Loop Road, its alignment will be shifted westward and an entry plaza and drop-off will be created.

- **West Michigan Avenue/Stadium Drive** The campus entry at Stadium Drive can be reconfigured to more safely accommodate vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians traveling from the west and downtown by creating a perpendicular intersection. Pedestrians

can benefit from crossing Stadium Drive at the signaled intersection opposite Waldo Stadium.

- **West Michigan Avenue/North Dormitory Road** The entry at North Dormitory Road will include a drop-off in front of the Bernhard Student Center and the Oaklands. This drop-off terminates the proposed Michigan Mall.

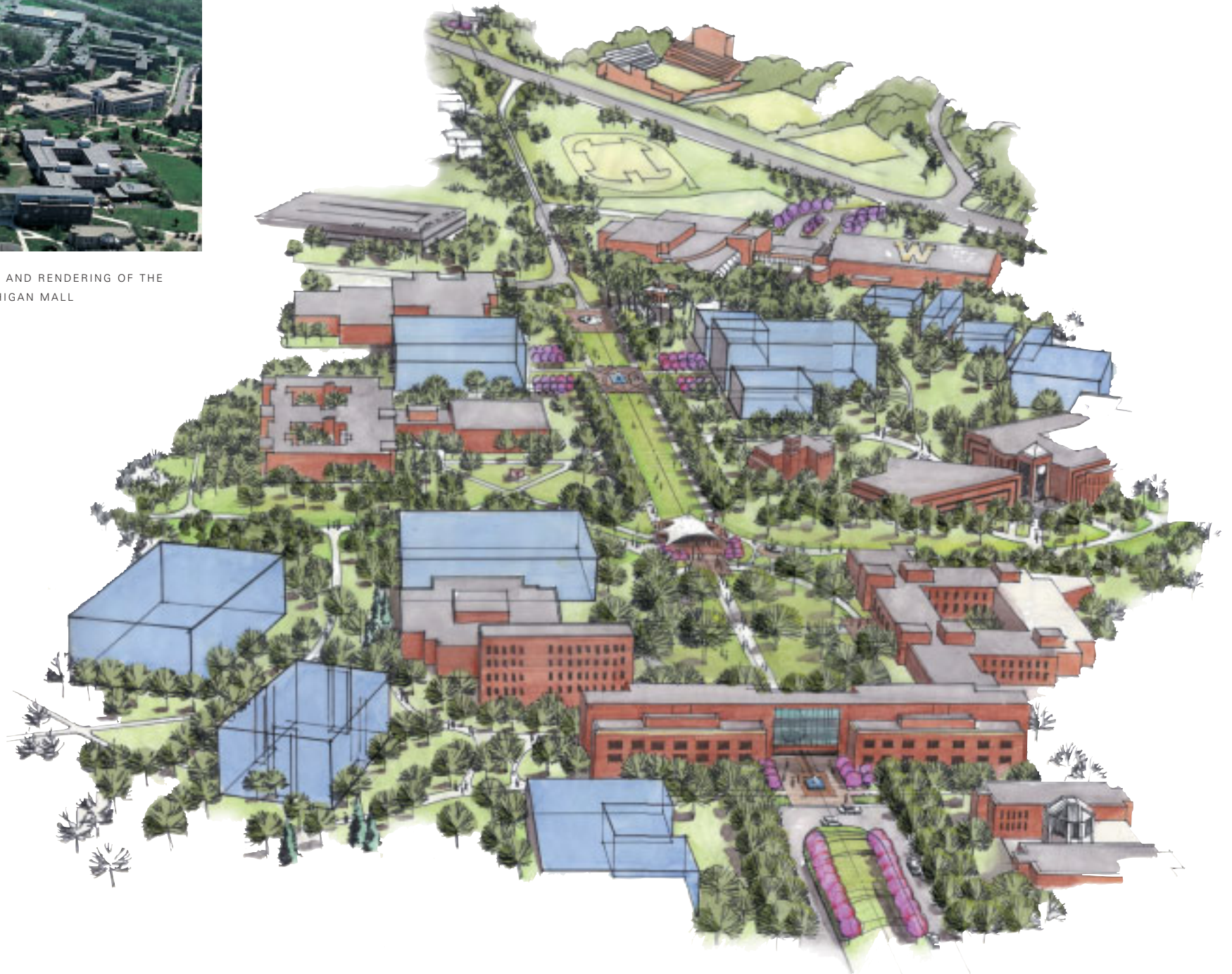
Internal Campus Roads The automobile plays an important role on the WMU campus. A large number of students have automobiles and utilize them in traversing the campus. Faculty and visitor volumes also contribute to high levels of vehicular traffic.

- **Loop Road** A continuous Loop Road can be created by upgrading and extending the existing perimeter road to encircle the campus. To minimize impacts on the Goldsworth and Arcadia Valleys, and to facilitate traffic flow, irregular and tight curves will be smoothed and access to each district will be clearly identified. A dedicated bike lane is also envisioned.
- **Stadium Drive Bridge** West Campus can be linked to Oakland Drive Campus via a proposed bridge across Stadium Drive that accommodates automobiles, transit vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.





CURRENT AERIAL VIEW (ABOVE) AND RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED WEST CAMPUS MICHIGAN MALL



WEST CAMPUS development emphasizes the use of infill to clarify existing patterns and to create a hierarchy of open space and pedestrian corridors.

- **Stadium Drive Boulevard** Stadium Drive will be designed as a boulevard as it moves through campus between Howard Street and Oakland Drive to communicate a clear University identity.
- **Alternative Travel Modes** Improvements to pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes are proposed to minimize on-campus use of the automobile, thereby reducing traffic volumes and creating a safer, more pedestrian-oriented setting.

Parking A comprehensive parking system will need to provide convenient, accessible parking for visitors, faculty, staff and students.

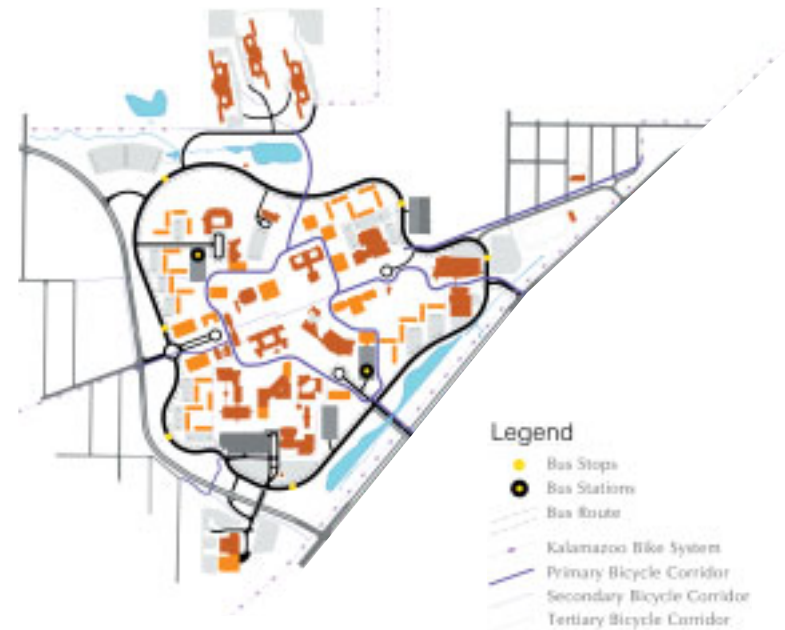
- **Parking Decks** To provide more parking spaces closer to the heart of campus and make sites available for new infill buildings, surface parking areas will need to be replaced by decks.
- **Surface Parking** Remote surface parking is recommended near the Howard Street/Valley Road

entrance and in the underutilized lots adjacent to the Lawson Ice Arena. Surface parking at the corner of Stadium Drive and Howard Street will also support West Campus use.

Architecture

- **Development Patterns** Existing buildings on West Campus are positioned in three different patterns: a north-south grid (most of the academic core); a radial pattern (Bernhard Student Center, Waldo Library and the Oaklands) and an axial pattern (along the West Michigan Avenue corridor). These distinctive configurations should be preserved and strengthened as new facilities are added.
- **Development Capacity** The Master Plan anticipates that approximately 500,000 net new gross square feet of building space can be added on West Campus.
- **Housing** A mix of academic facilities, open space, parking and student housing is recommended within each West Campus district to achieve a more consistent level of student activity in the day and evening hours.

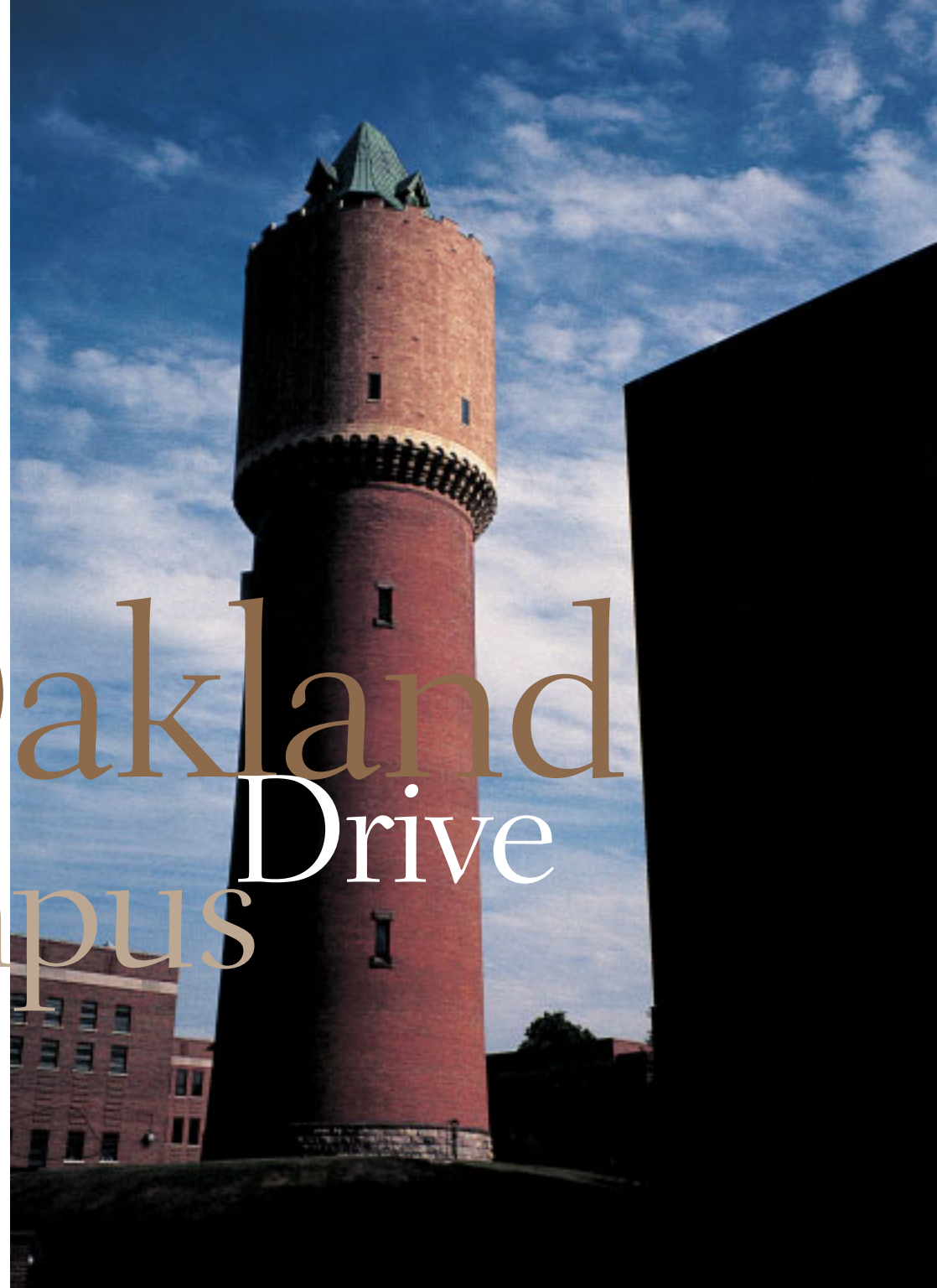






Subcampus Recommendations

Oakland Drive Campus





Oakland Drive Campus, containing the Kalamazoo Regional Psychiatric Hospital, is poised to become an important part of WMU. While the Psychiatric Hospital property remains leased to the State of Michigan, this subcampus offers significant opportunities for accommodating future University growth. New development should take into account historic development patterns, unique natural features and the presence of a generous open space edge.

Open Space and Pedestrian Circulation

- **Arcadia Valley** The valley, with its steeply wooded banks, creek and proposed retention ponds, presents a positive image of the University from Stadium Drive. In order to protect this campus edge, the Master Plan recommends that development occur on the level area at the top of the ridge. To highlight the area's natural character, the relocation of the car impoundment lot and coal pile remnants, and the addition of natural planting are recommended.
- **Oakland Drive** Tall trees and open grassy areas convey a beautiful parklike setting along Oakland Drive that is highly valued by the community and

surrounding neighborhoods. A generous 300' no-building zone is proposed to protect the existing stands of stately oak and ash trees.

- **Athletic Fields** Intramural fields that allow students informal recreational opportunities are proposed just south of the Psychiatric Hospital. Intercollegiate fields are located to the north near the proposed indoor practice facility.
- **Pedestrian Corridor** A major interior pedestrian corridor is proposed to facilitate north-south connections within Oakland Drive Campus.

Architecture

- **Uses** Oakland Drive Campus uses should be expanded to include housing, academic and clinic/research, as well as recreation and athletic facilities. Family housing is proposed to be sited on the Howard Street hillside, where it will serve as a transition to privately owned homes across the street.
- **Historic Context** New construction should reflect historic development patterns and define academic quadrangles. Siting of proposed buildings takes advantage of the level terrain found beyond the valley and minimizes impacts on existing trees..

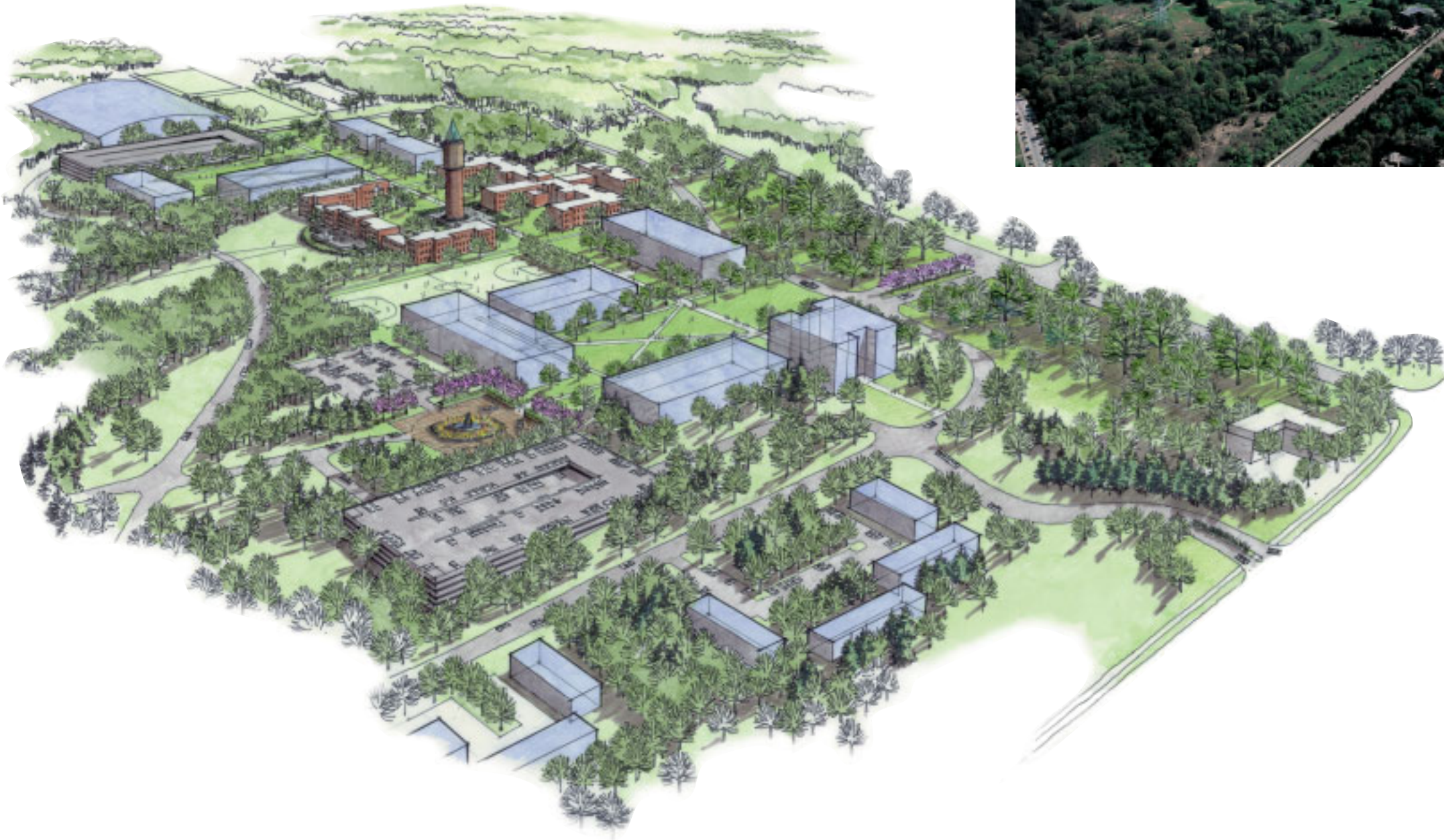


Legend

- Level 1 Open Space
- Level 2 Open Space
- Level 3 Open Space
- Level 4 Open Space
- Athletic Fields
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Tertiary Pedestrian Corridor



CURRENT AERIAL VIEW (RIGHT) AND RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED OAKLAND DRIVE CAMPUS



NEW DEVELOPMENT should take into account historic development patterns, unique physical features and the presence of a campus/neighborhood edge.



In many cases, these future building sites have been selected to reflect the location and configuration of original buildings.

- **Water Tower** The water tower is historically and culturally significant. It will remain the visual focus of the area complementing Sprau Tower and the Kanley Memorial Chapel campanile on West Campus and the East Hall cupola on East Campus. It is proposed that new buildings will typically be three stories.
- **Adaptive Reuse** The Master Plan recommends that the historic Psychiatric Hospital quadrangle be preserved and adapted to respond to future needs.
- **Development Capacity** The Master Plan estimates that approximately 700,000 net new gross square feet of building space can be accommodated.

Circulation

- **Campus Entries** Major vehicular entries to Oakland Drive Campus are proposed at Oliver Street and Stadium Drive and at two locations along Oakland Drive between Howard and Austin Streets. Minor campus entries should be located along Howard Street and on Oakland Drive.
- **Loop Road** A perimeter Loop Road is proposed for Oakland Drive Campus. In addition, a bridge, accommodating cars, transit vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles, is proposed to span Stadium Drive and the existing rail line. This bridge can provide an effective physical connection between the West and Oakland Drive Campus areas.
- **Bicycles** Dedicated bike lanes are proposed along Oakland Drive Campus roads and the proposed Stadium and Oakland Drive bridges. The City of Kalamazoo bicycle corridor on Oakland Drive can be easily accessed at three points along the Loop Road.

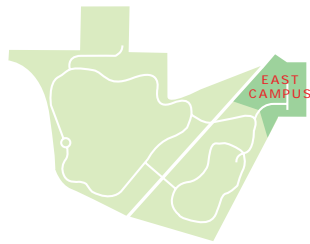
Legend

- Bus Stops
- Bus Stations
- Bus Route
- Kalamazoo Bike System
- Primary Bicycle Corridor
- Secondary Bicycle Corridor
- Tertiary Bicycle Corridor





East Campus

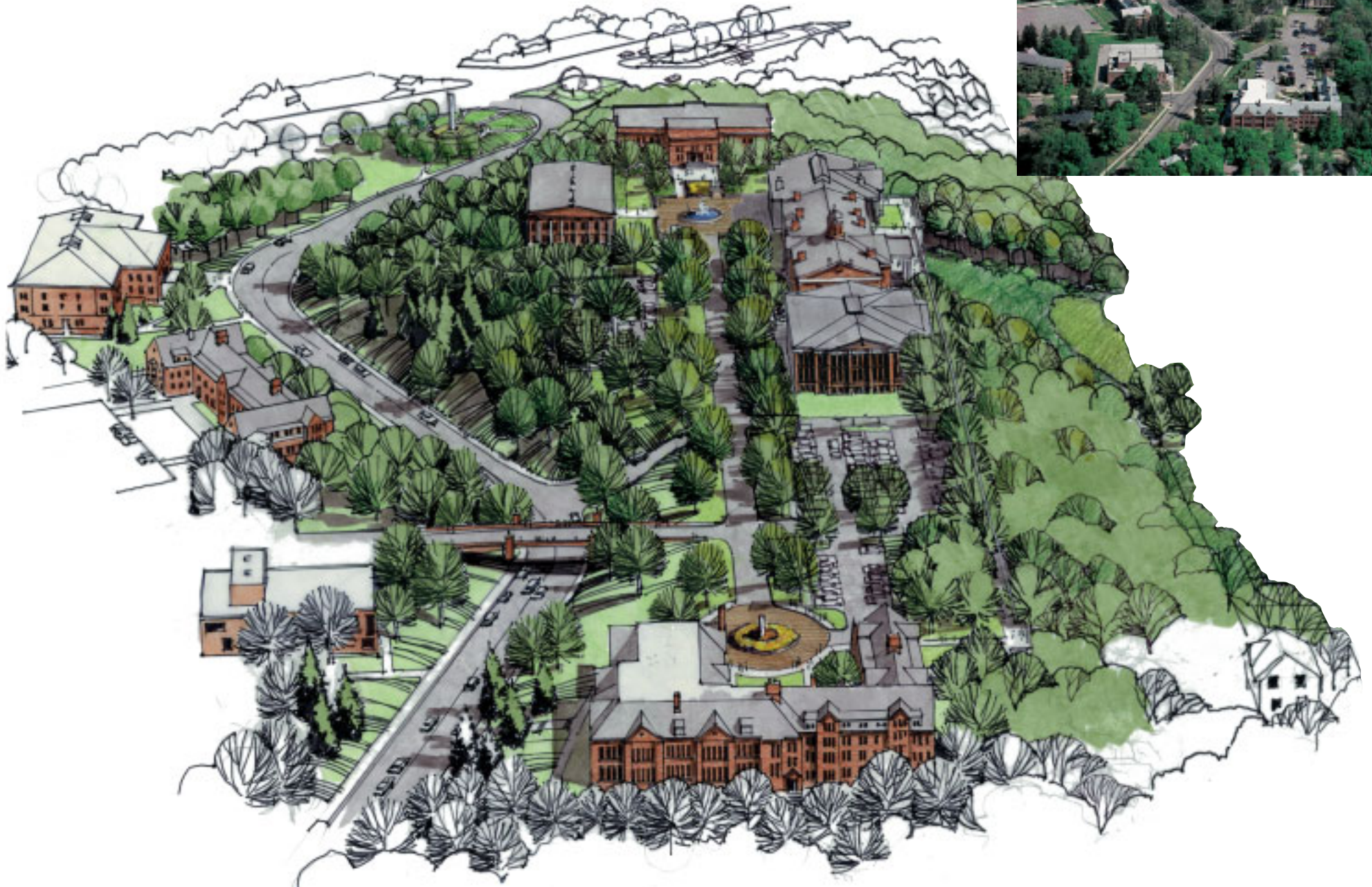


This 60-acre hilltop campus is the original site of the University. Today, it includes historic buildings that accommodate a variety of uses, as well as athletic fields and facilities. Adaptive reuse of the historic buildings, the site's topography, its separation by a busy Oakland Drive and close interface with the Vine Street neighborhood are important planning considerations. While many East Campus buildings are currently not used to capacity and require critical and costly renovation, the recent and highly successful renovation of Walwood Hall demonstrates how an older building can assume new functions. Limited access and parking are also constraints.

Open Space and Pedestrian Circulation

- **East Hillside** The Master Plan recommends that the Vine Street hillside be preserved and planted with low maintenance, native trees and shrubs.
- **New Quadrangle** Realignment of the Oliver Street/Oakland Drive intersection to the south is recommended to increase safety and provide an open space quadrangle defined by Oakland Recital Hall, Spindler Hall and Montague House.
- **Athletic Fields** Existing athletic facilities and a new indoor practice facility just south of Oliver Street suggest the creation of an East Campus athletic district within the original historic campus. The relocation of two intercollegiate playing fields to this district is suggested.
- **Walkways** A major pedestrian walk is proposed to be included as a part of the bridge that crosses over Oakland Drive. A north-south walk following the ridgeline east of East Hall offers a wonderful opportunity to experience distant views to downtown, thus emphasizing the original intent of this hilltop campus.

CURRENT AERIAL VIEW (RIGHT) AND RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED EAST CAMPUS





THE RECENT and highly successful renovation of Walwood Hall demonstrates how an older building can assume new functions.

Architecture

- **Uses** The Master Plan recommends that administrative support functions be relocated to the original and historic Western State Normal School buildings. Other suggested uses, such as University archives, museums and art galleries serving the Kalamazoo community, warrant consideration.
- **Demolition** The removal of the Speech and Hearing Center, when appropriate, is also recommended to allow for the expansion of parking and open space.

Circulation

- **Arrival Zone** A major arrival zone is recommended at the convergence of Stadium and Oakland Drives. This site should include expanded open space and a significant campus arrival sign and plaza. The plaza might include a fountain.
- **Oliver Street** The realignment of Oliver Street and a bridge over Oakland Drive (vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle) can improve vehicular circulation and provide a safe and convenient linkage.



Western Michigan University

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

