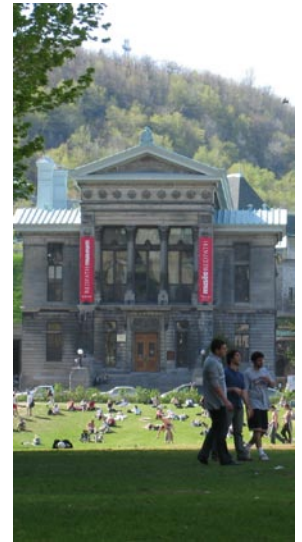# mcgill university master plan

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PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- DRAFT FOR INTERNAL DISCUSSION -

Revised March 17, 2007

INTRODUCTION

McGill University operates in an environment that is increasingly international and competitive for the best people, the best ideas and for adequate funding. To continue to excel and compete on the world stage, the University must marshal its resources to ensure that future development is sustainable, enhances its ability to serve society and allows it to fulfill its teaching and research mission. The University must plan for its future.

Through the course of 2005 and early 2006, McGill University has undertaken an extensive review of its current facilities, space needs and projections for growth and change on its campuses, with the intent to create a new Master Plan for the University. This physical Master Plan is part of a comprehensive planning process that will build on McGill's academic and research strengths, and which has involved all the primary elements of the University, including academic, research, fiscal, service, and philanthropic operations. The results of these reviews are intended to inform and guide discussions relating to the University's physical development to 2010 and beyond.

Academic Mission and Campus Growth

As stated in the initial Master Plan framework, it is fundamental that the physical development of McGill's campuses be based on the academic requirements of the University community. In order to continue to meet its academic mission, to respond to new areas of academic and societal priority, and to enhance McGill's position among the best public universities in the world, the University will accommodate a carefully directed growth in enrollment, with a similarly focused adaptation and expansion of its facilities.

Context for Campus Growth and Change

McGill's compact central campus, complemented by a range of additional sites offering selective programmes and site-specific resources, is a great strength of the University. The downtown campus, strategically located between the City's central business district and Mount Royal Park, is one of the University's greatest assets. Montreal, with its multicultural and multi-university milieu, provides McGill students with extensive opportunities for academic, cultural, and social growth. McGill, along with its sister downtown universities, is a major contributor to the economy, vibrancy and vitality of Montreal, rivaling the largest industrial, financial and commercial enterprises in its economic multiplier effect.

Sustainable Campus Development

McGill University strives to be recognized as an environmentally safe and responsible learning institution, and as a model for environmentally responsible living. To this end, the University has stated its commitment to adopt the principles of sustainable building practices for the design and development of new building and landscape projects, for the redevelopment of existing facilities and for the operation of all of its facilities. McGill's commitment to sustainable campus development underlies all Planning and Design Principles, guiding long-term development and operational plans for the University as well as more immediate strategies for planning, design, construction and care of McGill's campuses.

PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Through the initial framework established by the Master Plan Task Force, the early phases of the Master Plan process and planning work by McGill, a series of principles have emerged around which the master plan will be centered. These Planning and Design Principles will support the University's mission, guide its growth, and ensure that individual projects develop as part of a cohesive whole.

The Planning and Design Principles contained within this document describe the underlying ideas and policies which will guide campus development. Most Principles will apply to both campuses, but others reflect the specific needs and character of each site and its users. As principles, they are not intended to set performance standards and be prescriptive in terms of final built form, but rather they are intended to address strategies and organizational patterns. These Planning and Design Principles address the following topics as they contribute to the public realm of the University: the development and use of a campus structure and the organization of landscape and built form; ways in which individual projects can contribute to the University's overall goals; the sitting of buildings; the best use of existing space; infrastructure needs; circulation routes; and other considerations such as lighting, safety and environmental concerns.

The Planning and Design Principles are organized into sections addressing issues of: 1.0 Dynamic Intellectual Community; 2.0 Strategic Growth; 3.0 Campus Identities; 4.0 Research, Teaching and Learning; 5.0 Non-Faculty Space Priorities; 6.0 Historic Buildings and Landscapes; 7.0 Facilities and Infrastructure; 8.0 Campus Accessibility, and 9.0 Landscape Design.

The full document, entitled Planning and Design Principles, contains justifications for each Design Principle, and is supplemented with Planning Objectives. These Objectives have been included to further clarify the intent of the Principles, and to identify specific design criteria through which the Planning and Design Principles could be implemented.

1.0 Dynamic Intellectual Community

Facilitate a dynamic intellectual community through interdisciplinary collaboration across all fields of study and research.

1.1 Constituent and Communal Needs
Design all projects to contribute to the needs of the campus as a whole, in addition to meeting the needs of a particular user group.

1.2 Contiguity of Academic Programmes.
Where possible, maintain and reinforce the continuity of academic programme space by locating teaching and research facilities in physically linked or proximate facilities.

1.3 Grouping Related Activity and Intensity
To further support a vibrant interconnected university community, locate academic and non-academic programmes in areas of related activity and intensity.

1.4 Shared Amenities
Provide new or improved common amenities at key nodes of interaction to facilitate informal contact on campus.

1.5 Interdisciplinary Scholarship and Research
Create appropriate dedicated facilities to support interdisciplinary scholarship and research.

2.0 Strategic Growth

In concert with the Academic Plan, growth will be accommodated in strategic areas.

2.1 Compact Campus: Growth Capacity and Growth Projections
In order to maintain and intensify the rich academic experience provided by its current campuses, increased space needs will be met primarily through infill and redevelopment, reinforcing the existing campus precincts.

2.2 Strategic Property Acquisition
While existing campus precincts will be maintained and reinforced, the University may further strengthen its campus structure through the judicious acquisition of additional properties outside the current precincts.

2.3 Alliances
Support additional opportunities for the growth and enhancement of academic pursuits through links with outside agencies, including peer organizations, allied industry and government, whose interests are aligned with the academic priorities of McGill.

3.0 Campus Identities

Reinforce the special and identifying qualities of each campus.

3.1 Spirit of the Place and Campus Setting
Design new projects to reinforce the fundamental character-defining qualities of the campuses, respecting and celebrating their settings.

3.2 The Symbolic Focal Spaces: Lower Campus Green and McEwen/Watson Fields
Maintain and enhance the Lower Campus Green and McEwen/Watson Fields as the primary outdoor focal spaces of the downtown campus and Macdonald campus.

3.3 Integrated Exterior Network
Develop an armature of green open spaces and pathways which connects the focal space with the other parts of each campus.

3.4 Intensification of Buildings and Interior Circulation
Through infill development, building additions and connecting structures, develop contiguous groupings of buildings which frame and support the streets, pathways and open spaces; and which

The lower campus green framed by buildings from different periods

also provide a network of interior circulation that complements the outdoor routes.

4.0 Research, Teaching and Learning

Invest in facilities which support excellence in research, teaching and learning, and which foster the close relationship between these activities.

4.1 Academic Research Space: Research and Laboratory Facilities
Support research and learning through the improvement of interdisciplinary research and laboratory facilities.

4.2 Academic Teaching Space: Classrooms, Teaching Labs and Study Areas
Support teaching and learning through the improvement of classroom and study facilities.

4.3 Informal Learning: Student Space
Support learning through the construction of spaces that support informal learning for a diverse student body, as well as formal academic facilities.

4.4 Libraries
Enhance the existing libraries and support the diverse traditional and emerging functions served by these facilities.

5.0 Service Areas Priorities

Support a rich academic experience through investment in student, administrative and support services.

5.1 Student Services and Activities
Provide adequate spaces for student services and student activities at convenient, central locations.

5.2 Administrative Units
Administrative units will be positioned on or off campus in response to the needs of each unit and the constituents they serve. Administrative units that do not require contact with students may be relocated to the periphery of the downtown campus or other off-campus locations, and those units which provide common high-use services will be located for convenient access.

5.3 Assembly and Governance
Encourage the creation of meeting spaces that support the University's collegial and collaborative decision-making processes.

5.4 Food Services and Social Spaces
Provide new and improved food services and social spaces.

5.5 Athletic Facilities
Provide improved and expanded athletic facilities and playing fields that are easily accessible from the core of the campus.

5.6 Residential Availability
Provide a greater variety of housing types to accommodate needs of a wider spectrum of students, including senior undergraduates, graduates, and international students, as well as visiting faculty and families.

5.7 Convocation Hall
Consider potential locations for the construction of a convocation assembly hall on campus.

5.8 Communal Support Services
Mitigate the potential negative visual impact of service areas and move workshops, storage facilities and equipment to less prominent locations.

6.0 Historic Buildings and Landscapes

Conserve and build upon the strengths of the University's existing built heritage.

6.1 Preservation Designations
Develop a comprehensive assessment of and database for the University's holdings.

6.2 Rehabilitation, Adaptation and Replacement
Identify and maintain the best of the University's historical features, and repair or remove those features of lesser historic significance. Assign appropriate uses to historical buildings in order to ensure their heritage values are conserved.

6.3 Funding
Actively work to increase funding from a range of sources for historic buildings and landscapes.

7.0 Facilities and Infrastructure

Support the achievement of excellence through the provision of appropriate facilities and infrastructure.

7.1 Renewal of Existing Facilities
Renew or replace out-dated existing buildings and infrastructure.

7.2 Reallocation of Space
In conjunction with the renewal or replacement of existing facilities, give consideration to the reallocation of space in order to make best use of University facilities and infrastructure.

7.3 Construction of New Facilities
When it has been determined that existing facilities cannot meet the standards and capacity required of current or anticipated programmes, construct new facilities.
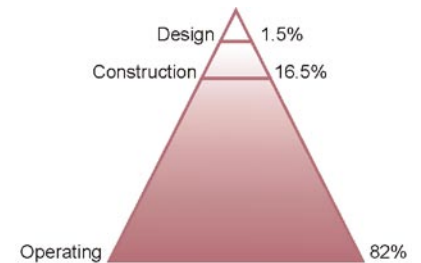
7.4 Space Utilization
Improve space utilization at all campus locations.

7.5 Building Standards: Quality, Permanence, and Economy
Commit to high quality, permanence and life-cycle economy in building and site development design, construction, maintenance and renewal.

7.6 Energy Conservation and Waste Efficiency
Implement environmentally responsible practices and build and renew buildings, infrastructure and landscape in a manner that is land, energy, resource and waste efficient.

The smaller earlier costs greatly influence larger, later costs.
Source: Consulting Engineers of British Columbia

8.0 Campus Accessibility

Improve the access both to and within the campuses.

8.1 Transportation Emphasis
Use transportation demand management strategies to reduce demand for parking and the need for single occupancy vehicles by promoting a range of viable commuting alternatives, including public transit, bicycling, walking, and carpooling.

8.2 Pedestrian Network
Give priority to pedestrians by improving and expanding the pedestrian network and limiting vehicular access to the campus.

8.3 Vehicular Circulation
Reconfigure the campus vehicular circulation system to give priority to pedestrians and reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts.

8.4 Service and Emergency Vehicles
Service and emergency vehicles should use streets and drives where possible. Develop shared pedestrian/service routes where street access is unavailable and mitigate the negative visual impact of service areas.

8.5 Cycling
Encourage commuting to campus by bicycle without compromising pedestrian safety.

8.6 Transit
Encourage commuting to the campus by public transit.

8.7 Parking
Provide the minimum amount of parking required and reduce the visual and the negative environmental impact of parking areas.

8.8 Orientation and Wayfinding
Enhance orientation and wayfinding and provide a clear destination for visitors.

8.9 Barrier Free Campuses
Give high priority to developing barrier free access to all parts of the University. Provide special services to people with disabilities in locations where universal access has not yet been achieved.

8.10 Campus Safety
Design and manage buildings, landscapes, and lighting to promote personal safety.

9.0 Landscape Design

Develop and maintain the landscape open spaces of the campus: to reveal and strengthen the special and identifying qualities of the University's places; to tie together the various parts of the campus, both physically and thematically; to provide safer, more useable and more beautiful campus spaces; and to follow exemplary standards of environmental sustainability at the stage of implementation and in the continued operations and management.

9.1 Planting
Major planting will be deployed to reinforce a legible spatial structure of the campuses, to moderate the micro-climate, to increase the bio-mass, and to support other environmental objectives.

9.2 A Landscape Design Palette
Design and select a palette of high quality, landscape construction materials, design details and furnishings for both campuses that references the local traditions and settings of each campus and has a common association with McGill University.

9.3 Outdoor Lighting
Design exterior lighting to promote night-time safety and comfort; to demarcate principal pathway routes; and to subtly illuminate spaces of social or architectural significance.

9.4 Storm Water Management
Design in-ground and rooftop landscapes to optimize the management of storm water.

9.5 Commemoration and Public Art
Reveal the activities, values and history of McGill through the naming of places and artifacts, and through commemorations and works of art that are integrated with their associated settings.