

**A Campus of  
Neighborhoods and Paths**

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NC State University  
Physical Master Plan

Prepared by NC State University Community  
Approved by Board of Trustees Trustees Buildings & Property Committee

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## Acknowledgments



A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths presents a campus vision that embodies NC State University's commitment to community, partnerships, and the efficient use of resources. It was crafted by faculty, students, staff members, trustees, neighbors, and the City of Raleigh and is dedicated to nourishing an innovative learning community. Ours is a large urban campus made up of many neighborhoods, each one home to unique activities. By strengthening and beautifying these neighborhoods and weaving them together with a system of pathways, we will continue to create a campus that is memorable and that inspires our endeavors.

– Chancellor Marye Anne Fox

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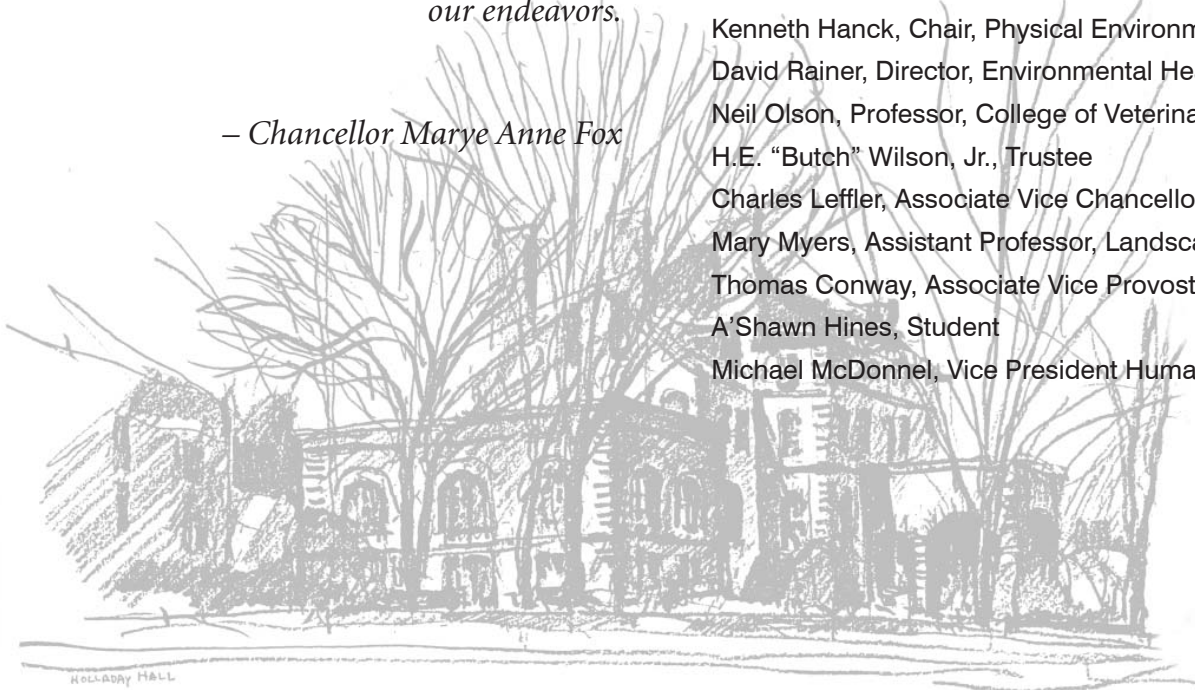
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Harris, Jr., FAIA, University Architect Emeritus: sketches, illustrations, photographs, editorial review • Focus: architectural design standards, drawings, photographs • Forma Design: publication graphic design • NC State Archives: photographs • NC State staff: narrative writing, mapping, photographs • PR&S: Memorial Bell Tower roundabouts rendering • Reynolds & Jewell, PA: Hillsborough St. roundabouts plan rendering • S. D. Williams Editorial Service: narrative writing and editing • **In the preparation of this edition**, task force and committee members found language in Christopher Alexander's *The Oregon Experiment* (1975) and *A Pattern Language* (1977) very helpful in explaining two fundamental concepts about planning on this campus. "Shared open space" describes the very important public places between buildings, places in which occur numerous activities central to the life of the university. "Hearth" describes the natural gathering places that people are drawn to on campus. This plan uses the latter concept at a variety of scales: from a departmental coffee area to a large campus focal point, such as University Plaza (the Brickyard). Many of Alexander's other ideas and skillfully coined phrases are used in this plan, and the university acknowledges the substantial contribution that these make to *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths*.

## Overview

**A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths** lays out the future of physical development at NC State University. It presents a way to integrate the many parts of a large, urban campus into a coherent whole. This plan includes guidelines and standards for individual projects and directions for fitting those projects into the overall campus fabric.

The **Introduction** includes the university's acknowledgment of and thanks to all who participated in the crafting of this plan, the chancellor's introductory message, the Table of Contents accompanied by this Overview, and a description of the processes that led to the creation of *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths*. The latter section includes a brief history of the development of the campus to provide a context for the plan.



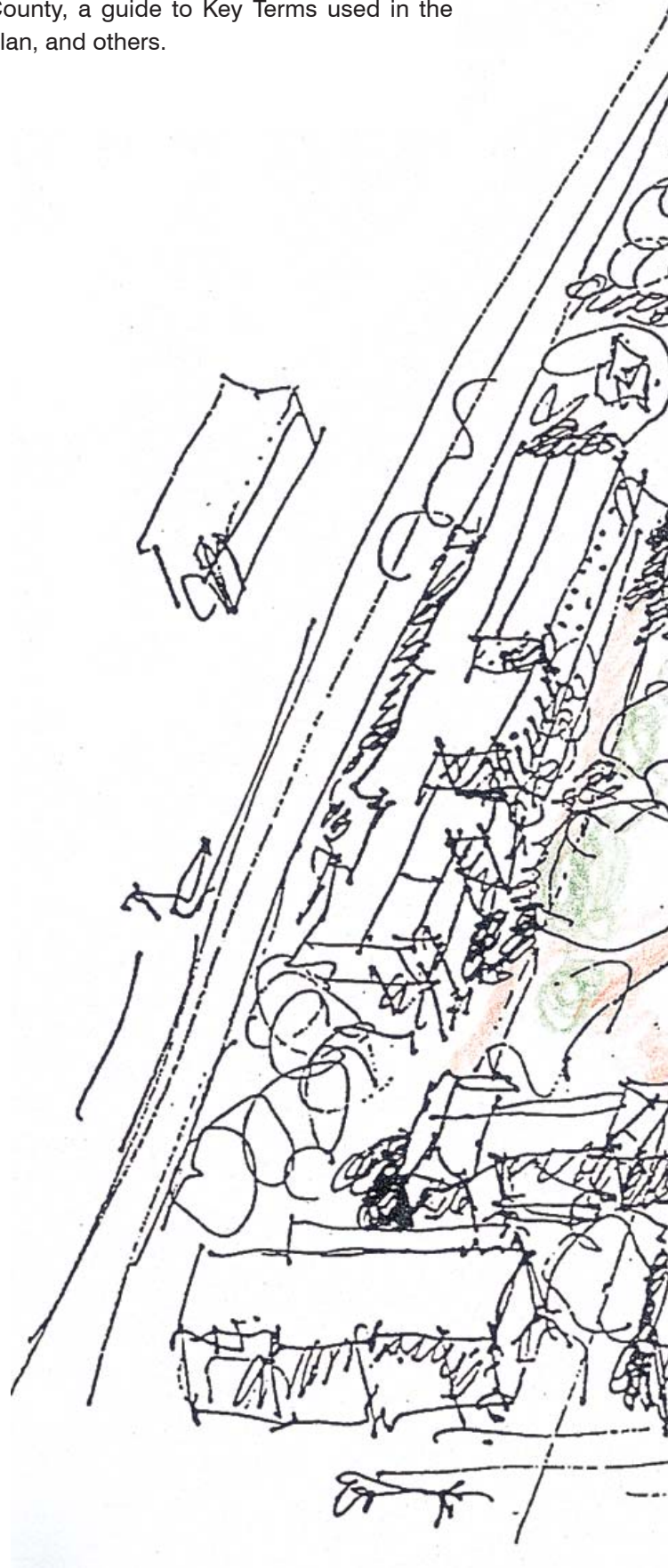
Proposed neighborhood on North Campus

The **Foundations** section begins with the Campus Vision—the NC State campus as it will become, drawing on the campus's successful existing parts. All development will advance this Vision. The subsequent Guiding Principles, on which the Vision is built, are the university's underlying values regarding campus development. Following these are the **Design Guidelines and Standards**,<sup>1</sup> which begin by presenting the concepts of **Campus Neighborhoods**<sup>2</sup> and **Campus Paths**,<sup>3</sup> the fundamental concepts of this plan. The guidelines are conceptual development criteria that every development proposal must address. The architectural, landscape, and natural systems standards, which are coupled with their appropriate guidelines, present specific criteria for the design of buildings, the development of the exterior environment, and the sensitive management of storm water and vegetative buffers and the ways to integrate these networks into the campus fabric. These guidelines and standards tie the many parts of a large campus into a coherent whole that honors the Vision and the Guiding Principles.

The **Capital Improvement Plan** describes the university's working projections about its growth and presents proposals for accommodating that growth. It includes space assignments by college and activity type and describes the two phases of the university's ten-year Capital Improvements Plan. Maps are presented to illustrate the projected development of the campus based on the 10-Year Capital Plan.

The **Campus Design Plans** are maps depicting the many concepts presented in the Design Guidelines and Standards as well as other features of campus development, such as utilities infrastructure.

The **Appendices** include additional information related to the master plan, such as the university's land holdings in Wake County, a guide to Key Terms used in the plan, and others.



<sup>1</sup> **Design Guidelines and Standards:** Conceptual definitions and development instructions in this plan to be followed in all projects.

<sup>2</sup> **Campus Neighborhood:** The key planning and fundamental physical building block of the campus. Neighborhoods may have diverse characters, but all contain a mix of uses, have a sense of self-contained place, and are focused around a Shared Open Space.

<sup>3</sup> **Campus Paths:** Any transportation route, from a footpath to a major transit route. The word path is used when describing streets and transit routes to emphasize the point that the campus is, for the most part, pedestrian oriented.



E F HARRIS JR.  
11.18.97

Proposed Riddick Stadium redevelopment



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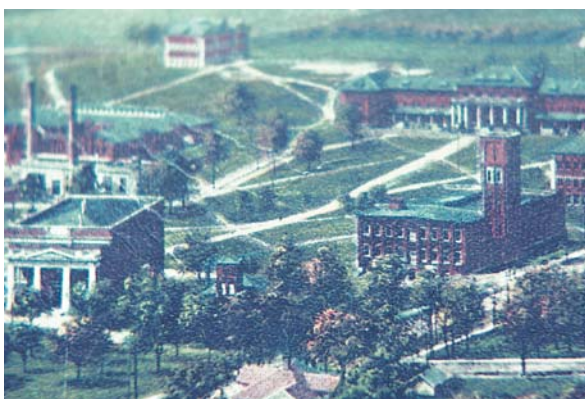
To find *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths* on-line,  
please go to [www.ncsu.edu/univ-arch/masterplan](http://www.ncsu.edu/univ-arch/masterplan)

## The Path to This Physical Master Plan

### History: The Physical Development of NC State University

Few if any of NC State's founders foresaw the growth that the university has experienced. Early design efforts focused on a much smaller campus than today's two thousand acres and over 9.5 million square feet of built space accommodating a community of more than thirty-five thousand people. History also intervened in ways that often focused planning on near-term rather than long-term needs. Many of the courtyards, open spaces, and walkways in the older sections of the campus appear to have been part of an original intention but in fact were nurtured and developed piece by piece over the years.

From the university's pastoral beginning along Pullen Road, enrollment and facilities grew steadily and moderately until the end of the First World War, after which they accelerated. Plans of the 1920s called for grouping buildings that housed linked activities, such as the agriculture and engineering groupings on the North Campus, classrooms around the Court of North Carolina, the "executive group" near Holladay Hall, athletics around Riddick Stadium, and student residence halls south of the railroad.



The Court of North Carolina

During the Great Depression, the university lost several graduate programs, and its progress was in jeopardy. Planning for expansive growth was not a priority. After the Second World War, however, enrollment surged, many graduate and research programs were restored or started, and the university embarked on an optimistic course of growth that continues to the present.

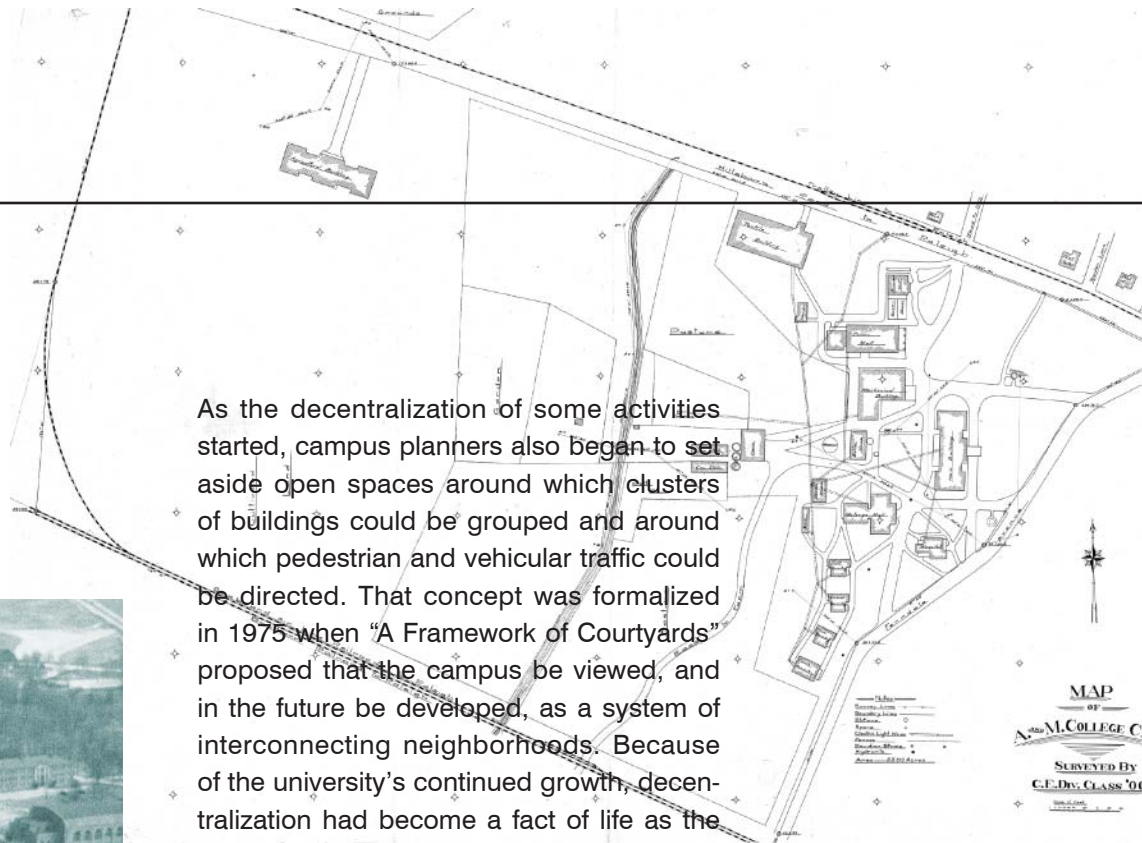
NC State's first postwar physical master plan was created in 1958, the same year the university's first modern long-range strategic plan was written. The physical master plan brought some coherence to a burgeoning campus, but while it was meant to help the university achieve other strategic long-range goals, it did not become a formal part of the strategic planning process. Adherence to the master plan was desirable but not mandatory.

The 1958 plan divided academic activity from student activity into North and South Campuses, respectively. It established a central pedestrian area (University Plaza), suggested moving vehicular traffic to the campus's periphery, and dispersed some new construction into all areas of a six hundred-acre campus.

In 1960 the university established the Campus Planning Office, which updated the 1958 plan. It defined a compact, high rise, pedestrian-scaled campus based on a ten-minute walking radius—all essential



*Many of the courtyards, open spaces, and walkways in the older sections of the campus appear to have been part of an original intention but in fact were nurtured and developed piece by piece over the years.*



1906 campus map

As the decentralization of some activities started, campus planners also began to set aside open spaces around which clusters of buildings could be grouped and around which pedestrian and vehicular traffic could be directed. That concept was formalized in 1975 when “A Framework of Courtyards” proposed that the campus be viewed, and in the future be developed, as a system of interconnecting neighborhoods. Because of the university’s continued growth, decentralization had become a fact of life as the campus expanded beyond the compact core. The open space network emerged as a means of giving coherence and unity to the campus.

*The 1978 Physical Master Plan* reemphasized the importance of courtyards and connectors to campus design and, for planning purposes, divided the growing campus into a series of precincts, based on the integration of geography and land use.

In 1982, the system of interconnected courtyards, with accompanying strategies for traffic flow, was used in the siting of new buildings. Decentralization continued, with substantial infill. The concept of decentralization with interconnection was reemphasized in the 1983 “Space Inventory and Potential” report, which also focused heavily on the development of the university’s satellite areas as well as the main campus.

When in 1984 the university announced its intention to build Centennial Campus on the state’s initial allocation of land from the Dorothea Dix property, which is immediately south of the original campus, it created a unique planning opportunity. Centennial Campus, unlike the original campus, would have the benefit of a far-reaching master plan from the start.

*The Centennial Campus Master Plan*, approved by the Board of Trustees in 1987, and its accompanying Design Guidelines formalized principles that had emerged on the original campus. The new campus

would be composed of “related villages, neighborhoods and courtyards—each a distinctive place whose character is defined by a diverse architecture that provides life and animation and is connected to the site’s natural landscape. The campus composition intends to be a fabric with emphasis on the spaces between the buildings rather than on individual buildings.”

By formalizing the concepts that had emerged organically from the development of the original campus, the Centennial Campus plan guidelines laid the foundation for the *1994 Physical Master Plan*. Both call for the integration of institutional activities into mixed-use communities. The high quality of the development on Centennial Campus from its inception to the present represents the efficacy of the concepts and guidelines that were formally applied to the entire campus with the 1994 plan. These have shaped substantial new building not only by the university but also by public and private partners who have benefited by utilizing the planning standards. Centennial Campus is emerging as an exemplary model of mixed-use academic and research campus.



Early courtyard and paths

services were to be within a ten-minute walking distance. The plan for the university’s urban center was thus established.

In 1963, several points of the 1958 plan were reemphasized, including zoning of the academic campus around D. H. Hill Library and focusing student activities on a new South Campus student center and gymnasium.

“Campus Environment and Planning System,” a 1968 in-house report, endorsed the compact campus center but also suggested some decentralization through dispersal of activities. This marked the emergence of the idea that the campus could be a group of neighborhoods. The university was growing into an academic town parallel to Raleigh’s growth into a mid-size city.



Centennial Campus

## The Path to This Physical Master Plan *(Continued)*



Precinct workshop

### Process: The Crafting of This Plan

It was with the 1994 plan that the term Campus Neighborhood entered the vocabulary of the wider campus community. *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths* has grown directly from and was built on the 1994 plan via a campuswide planning process. In 1997, then Chancellor Larry Monteith initiated a process for North Campus that focused particularly on two large spaces with development potential: the Riddick parking area and the land occupied by the North Campus greenhouses. The North Campus Workshop produced specific plans for the new Undergraduate Sciences Teaching Laboratory and, perhaps even more important, established a collaborative model for campus planning. This model was used in five additional workshops covering the remaining campus precincts. All workshops were chaired by Smedes York, then chair of the Trustees' Buildings and

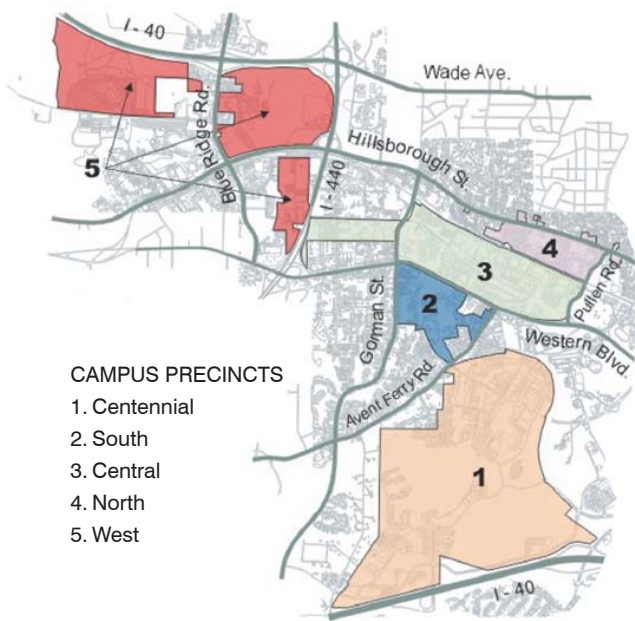
*The fundamental ideas underpinning this plan are the Campus Neighborhood as the organizing campus structure and the Campus Paths as a system connecting those neighborhoods, bringing a sense of coherence and beauty to NC State.*

Property Committee, and attended by a broad cross section of stakeholders representing the precinct and community.

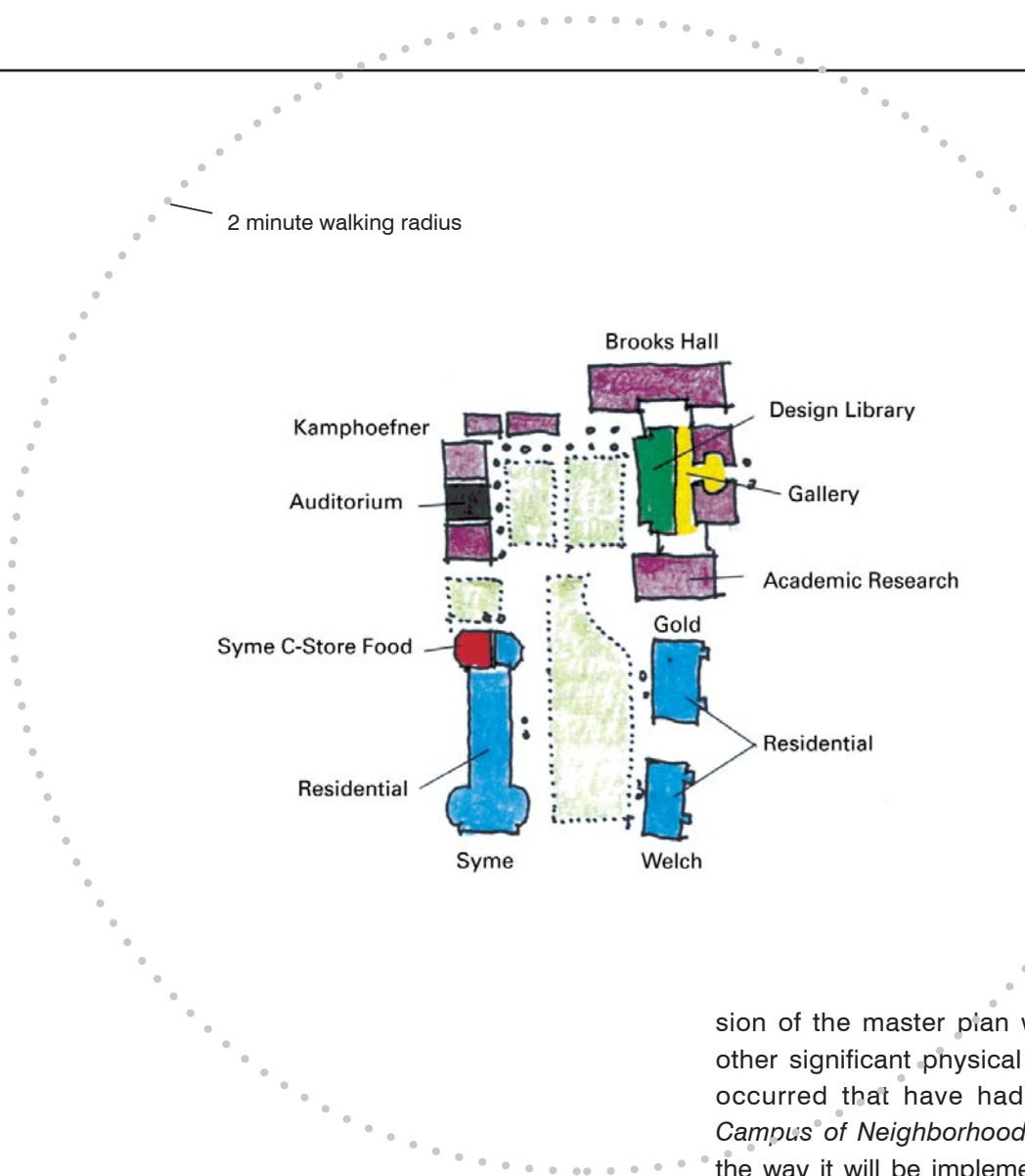
The precincts, which had become the focus of campus development in the 1978 master plan, remain a useful division of the campus, and much infrastructure development is still based on existing precinct plans. Designers and planners continue to use many maps that divide the campus into precincts, and reference can be found to them in numerous planning documents. But it is the Campus Neighborhoods and Campus Paths that will determine the character of the NC State Campus.

The precinct workshops became the basis for updating the 1994 master plan, and a significant theme arose from them—a clear demand for a more beautiful campus, one enlivened with more green space and oriented toward pedestrians. Participants also voiced overwhelming support for transportation alternatives, including the Triangle Transit Authority's proposed regional rail system and the envisioned campus fixed-guideway system. When work on *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths* started in 1998, these ideas became important principles.

As the precinct workshops and the revi-



- CAMPUS PRECINCTS
- 1. Centennial
  - 2. South
  - 3. Central
  - 4. North
  - 5. West



Brooks Hall Neighborhood

sion of the master plan were under way, other significant physical planning events occurred that have had an effect on *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths* and the way it will be implemented. The Board of Trustees established the Campus Design Review Panel to monitor design decisions. Dean Marvin Malecha initiated a School of Design studio dedicated to campus planning. And the community collaboration generated in the workshops produced new partnerships, including the Hillsborough Street Partnership, which created a vision for that critical city-university interface.

The planning process also embraced long-running and growing trends at the university. It incorporated the life work of architect Ron Mace, a graduate of the School of Design, who defined the concept of universal design,<sup>4</sup> which has been instrumental in the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act throughout the country. The environmental work of many faculty, staff, and students has also found a focus in the plan, as there has been a heightened consciousness of environmental stewardship for natural resources at NC State. The restoration of Rocky Branch and storm-water planning at Centennial Campus are examples of new environmental planning at

the university.

During the past several years, the planning process has also been influenced by an increased role played by University of North Carolina–General Administration (UNC–GA) as space standards, and repair and renovation formulas have been established. A 1999 systemwide report identified substantial facility needs, which were included in a ten-year capital improvements plan. The inclusion in this master plan of the Capital Improvement Plan ties the vision of a memorable campus to the concrete programmatic demands of a growing institution.

The fundamental ideas underpinning *A Campus of Neighborhoods and Paths* are the Campus Neighborhood as the organizing campus structure and the Campus Paths as a system connecting those neighborhoods. These ideas will guide the future physical development of the university. By adhering to this plan, the university can bring beauty and a sense of connection to a campus that has become a city of neighborhoods.

<sup>4</sup> **Universal design:** *The design of products and environments so that they are usable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or special features. The concept of universal design originated at NC State.*



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