

3. URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

The basic urban design framework set forth in the 1995 plan remains as the guiding principle for campus development in the plan update. The plan is structured around unified and interconnected system of public spaces, quads, courtyards and pedestrian concourses that are defined by coherent building edges. The framework for the organization of building sites, open spaces and circulation is the St. Petersburg street grid. In some cases, the streets remain open for vehicle use. In the heart of the campus, bounded by First and Third Streets, Sixth Avenue and Bayboro Harbor, the street corridors are converted to pedestrian concourses. The Central Lawn on the site of Second Street South and the pedestrian concourse on Seventh Avenue South, remain as key elements of the urban design plan. In fact, the implementation of those spaces is a capital priority project in the update. Progressive increases in campus density are encouraged in the urban design element so as to enhance campus vitality, conserve limited land resources for facilities growth, and animate the functional connections between areas of the campus.

The relocation of the Physical Plant area to the First Street South side of the campus will remove the cooling plant from a location near the middle of the new Central Lawn. Recently implemented Waterfront Park improvements were also highlighted in the 1995 plan. Arcades and breezeways at the ground level of the buildings provide protection from summer sun and downpours. Building heights will be mainly in the range of three to five stories, partly in deference to the airport runway approach pattern over the south side of the campus, and partly to reflect the most efficient and humanly-scaled profile for academic buildings.

Context

The USFSP campus occupies nine city blocks in St. Petersburg including the peninsula at the edge of downtown adjacent to Bayboro Harbor. The city street and block structure extends into the campus boundaries and provides a strong framework for future campus development. The Whitted Municipal Airport forms a significant edge at the eastern part of the campus while the blocks forming the western and northern edges are typically made up of apartment residences, houses and commercial uses. Two blocks west of the campus is the Bayfront Medical Center and All Children's Hospital, which are part of a growing medical district. The Poynter Institute and the Dali Museum relate directly to the Bayboro Harbor and as institutions are highly compatible with the adjacent USF campus.

The most impressive campus open space amenity is the bayfront lawn, which together with Poynter Park forms the northwestern edge of Bayboro Harbor and unifies the adjacent institutions with the existing campus buildings.

Plan Framework for Urban Design

The overall design for the St. Petersburg campus is based on a compact urban form, which retains the city grid system as a visual and spatial framework, transformed into a series of quadrangles and pedestrian open space corridors framed by new campus buildings. The campus is organized around a central lawn on the north-south axis and an east-west pedestrian promenade along the Seventh Avenue alignment extending toward the Bayfront and Medical Center. The two axial spaces join that part of the campus fronting on Bayboro Harbor and the interior part of the campus, with visual extensions to the city beyond. The two spaces are proposed to be framed with buildings of relatively uniform height and the edges of the spaces lined with arcades for sun and rain protection.

The plan reinforces First Street, Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street as the principal public street edges of the campus. Within the boundary area, Sixth Avenue is reduced in width to two lanes and is intended to serve as a campus access drive. . .

While the campus, as an urban place, has several points of entry, the principal symbolic entry is envisioned to be accommodated at the junction of the Sixth Avenue and Second Street access drives. .

(See Figures 3-a through 3-c.)

Goal

The Urban Design goal of USFSP campus master plan is to integrate with and enhance the urban fabric of downtown St. Petersburg where the city meets Bayboro Harbor.

Summary of Objectives and Policies

Objective 3.1. USFSP shall ensure compatibility among land uses on the campus and in the context area as described in the intergovernmental Coordination Element.

Policy 3.1.1. The USFSP shall coordinate with the host community regarding issues related to the urban design character of the University/host community context area as described in the Intergovernmental Coordination Element.

- Policy 3.1.2. USFSP shall work with the City of St. Petersburg to effect the street closures and street narrowing as outlined in this plan element and the Transportation Element within the 10 year planning time frame.
- Policy 3.1.3. USFSP Design Review Council, as described in the Architectural Design Guidelines Element Policy shall review and ensure compliance with master plan goals, objectives, and policies.
- Objective 3.2. Protect and enhance the Snell and Williams Houses and grounds and the Studebaker Building (U.S. Geological Services).
 - Policy 3.2.1. USFSP shall coordinate with the State Division of Historical Resources with regard to the nomination of the Snell and Williams Houses to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Objective 3.3. Reinforce the open space framework of the campus as a continuation of the existing street and block grid of St. Petersburg so that the campus remains an integral part of the urban fabric.
 - Policy 3.3.1. The timing and phasing requirements and priorities for the development of buildings, facilities, and open spaces consistent with the principles established in this element are established in the Capital Improvements Element.
- Objective 3.4. Establish an open space hierarchy founded on the development of the Central Lawn as illustrated in the 2008-2009 plan, with other pedestrian open space corridors following the former street grid extending from the Central Lawn.
 - Policy 3.4.1. USFSP shall give priority to siting the proposed new facilities in positions indicated to provide near-term spatial definition to the Central Lawn and the East-West Promenade in order to effect the completion of the core area urban design within the planning timeframe.
 - Policy 3.4.2. USFSP shall position future buildings as shown on Figure 3-a so that their significant edges contribute to the framing and definition of public spaces. Major facades and entries shall face the public space and the more private aspects of the building such as mechanical or service areas shall be separated from the public

entries and placed away from the public spaces at the interior of the development block.

Policy 3.4.3. The USFSP shall replace existing parking areas located within proposed open space with increased parking facilities as shown on Figures 3-a and 3-b.

Policy 3.4.4. USFSP shall explore procedures for funding campus landscape framework improvements independent of individual buildings construction projects, while at the same time monitoring site design funded through new building project budgets for consistency with the overall campus landscape design intent. Funds to be distributed in a targeted manner, prioritized for funding development deemed to have the greatest potential for impact and improvement of the campus. The intent shall be to implement a campus landscape framework that is visibly composed as a whole rather than a collection of individual, unrelated small landscape pieces.

Objective 3.5. Establish building zones and edges to follow the line of existing street wall except where designated and retain the city street and block grid as the urban design framework of the campus.

Policy 3.5.1. USFSP shall ensure compatibility among land uses on campus and in the context area as described in the Intergovernmental Coordination Element.

Policy 3.5.2. USFSP shall ensure compatibility among land uses on the campus and in the context area by constructing campus buildings two to three stories in height to provide a unified spatial edge and to proportionally contain campus open spaces in a way that is appropriate to the urban setting. Heights should be diminished as necessary on the east edge of the campus to comply with airport restrictions.

Policy 3.5.3. USFSP shall restrict building zones and enforce building setbacks as designated in this plan element and the Architectural Design Guidelines Element in order to retain the existing city street and block grid.

Objective 3.6. Preserve and enhance the open space adjacent to the bayfront and its connections with areas to the south and to the north.

- Policy 3.6.1. The USFSP shall enhance the open space adjacent to the bayfront and its connections with areas to the south and north through the development of an esplanade walk along the seawall edge from Poynter Park to the campus boathouse.
- Objective 3.7. Locate service and loading functions in relation to the existing alley alignments in the core of each of the development blocks.
- Policy 3.7.1. USFSP shall maintain service access to the center of development blocks via existing alleys accessed by limited access campus drives.
- Objective 3.8. Enhance functional linkages between areas north and south of the campus, and between the campus and medical facilities to the west.
- Policy 3.8.1. USFSP shall implement site improvements to establish the Central Lawn and East-West Promenade during the planning timeframe as shown in Figures 3-a through 3-c.
- Objective 3.9. Decrease energy consumption on campus as measured per capita and per building.
- Policy 3.9.1. USFSP shall require new building design to respond to the particular climatic conditions of South Florida and shall require issues of energy conservation including building orientation and siting, massing, and shape to be addressed during the design. USFSP shall encourage climatic responses such as; walkways, breezeways, shaded courts, screens and operable windows. Glass atriums and building forms more appropriate to northern climate shall be discouraged.
- Policy 3.9.2. USFSP shall require materials openings, lighting systems, and HVAC to be designed to meet contemporary standards. System energy conservation standards are mandated to be in compliance with Florida Energy Conservation in Building Act of 1974. The State University System Professional Services Guide specifies that an energy analysis design submission in compliance with the above legislation be submitted for all subject projects at the advanced schematic design stage of development.

- Policy 3.9.3. USFSP shall review and evaluate all existing buildings relative to their energy consumption and role in campus wide energy costs and demand patterns and shall establish an energy management system, which allows campus-wide.