

# Principles of the Master Plan

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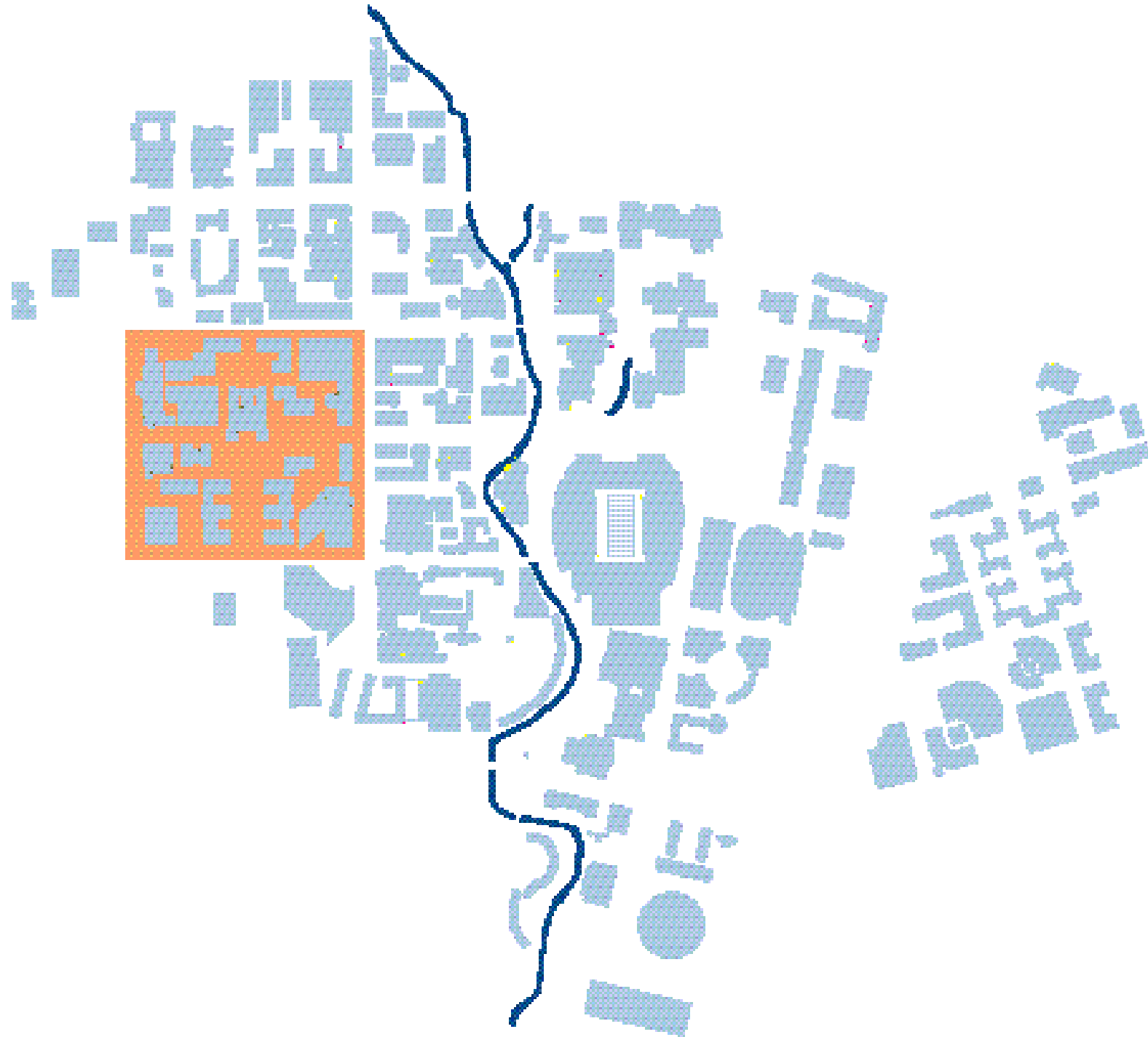
## *Seven Objectives and Organising Principles*

The new master plan for The University of Texas at Austin is significantly different from any previous plan designed for the campus. The University today is a mature and established institution; this master plan is directed toward the reestablishment of its original grand ideal. The campus, as previously master planned, was a majestic but humane academic community, well balanced among intellectual, social and recreational pursuits. This new plan builds on this legacy and retains the ideals established by Cret, but shifts its emphasis to reverse the social fragmentation and loss of community that pressures of recent years have brought to bear.

Successful redirection of the physical plan of the campus will require multiple interventions, large and small. These design proposals will be built over decades and will individually and collectively contribute to the creation of an environment that expresses intellectual, social, and environmental integrity.

This new ambitious and comprehensive master plan for The University of Texas at Austin will affect the physical and spiritual future of the campus. | Its underlying objective is to support and embody a sense of community for students, faculty, and staff and to create a sense of place that will remain strong and clear in the memories of graduates. Another objective is to reverse the current tendency toward decentralization of planning in response to growth. The new Master Plan is unusual in that it addresses the planned growth of an already mature campus; it must therefore be restorative and healing as it guides new development. Seven major principles are interwoven through all master plan proposals:

1. To return the core campus to pedestrians and keep vehicular traffic to the edges of the campus
2. To use the architectural language of Paul Cret's original works as the point of departure for the design of new structures
3. To establish a community of landscaped open spaces, working in concert with buildings to extend and reknit the campus
4. To add substantially to on-campus housing, thus creating a more complete academic community
5. To establish new centers of student activity, reinforcing housing and academic uses to enhance a full on-campus life
6. To concentrate future construction in the core campus rather than on the fringes
7. To enhance public perceptions of and access to the campus through strengthened identity and wayfinding programs



**The 40 Acres: A Pedestrian Core Campus** | Under the new master plan, all daily traffic and parking will be removed from Inner Campus Drive, Speedway and 24th Street between Whitis Avenue and Speedway. These streets will become pedestrian rights-of-way and will, over time, be redesigned with new and more pedestrian-friendly walking surfaces, landscape elements, street furniture and lighting. Parking spaces displaced from these streets will be replaced in new, carefully designed structures that will include parking for the disabled, and be built in or near the central part of the campus. Service traffic will be restricted to specific times of day and destinations. Conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists will be resolved by creating separate bicycle lanes and establishing a dismount zone within the 40 Acres where all bicycles will be walked.

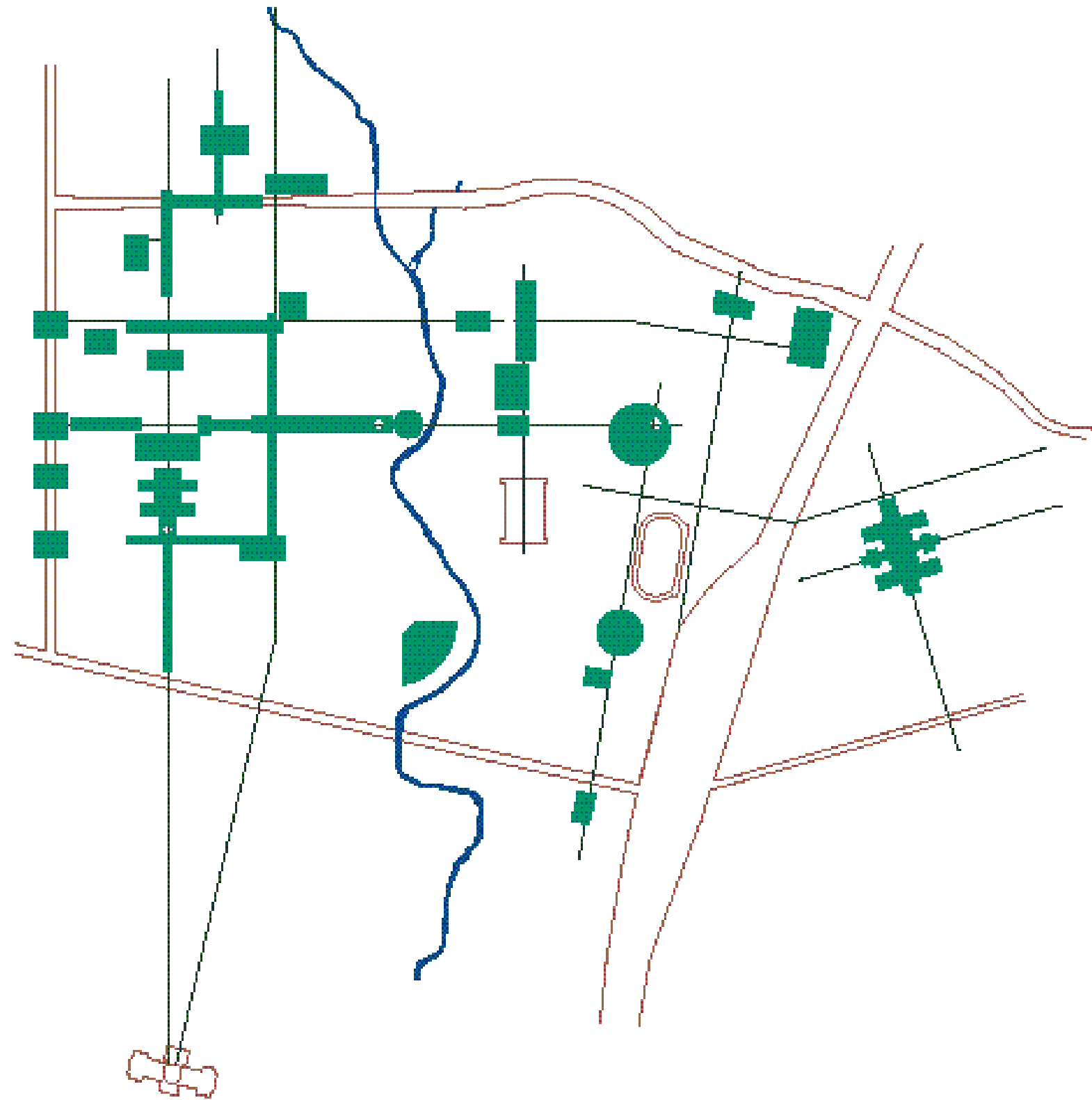
In time, Speedway, to be renamed North Congress Street, will become a central location for informal gathering and food service, featuring a vital, densely populated, accessible and accommodating linear plaza with both hard and soft landscaping. Its redesign will establish it both as a daily source of casual interaction and as the site of street fairs and special events, such as the 40 Acres Festival.



**Re-Adoption of an Established Architectural Language** | New buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must correspond in massing, scale, proportion, materials and building character to its most revered structures.

The University has an extraordinary collection of older Beaux Arts buildings from the 1930s and 1940s, which were designed by gifted architects who were sensitive to program needs, spatial characteristics and the climate of the campus. The sum of their contributions resulted in a unique fabric of architectural style which should serve as the point of departure and aesthetic reference for designers of future additions to The University of Texas at Austin. Architects who design additions to the campus must be

charged with reinterpreting and matching the standards of excellence initiated by Paul Cret. While it is not suggested that future architects reproduce the architecture of Cass Gilbert, Herbert M. Greene or Paul Cret, it is intended that their works establish the basic language of form and character for large and small buildings designed for the University from this point forward.

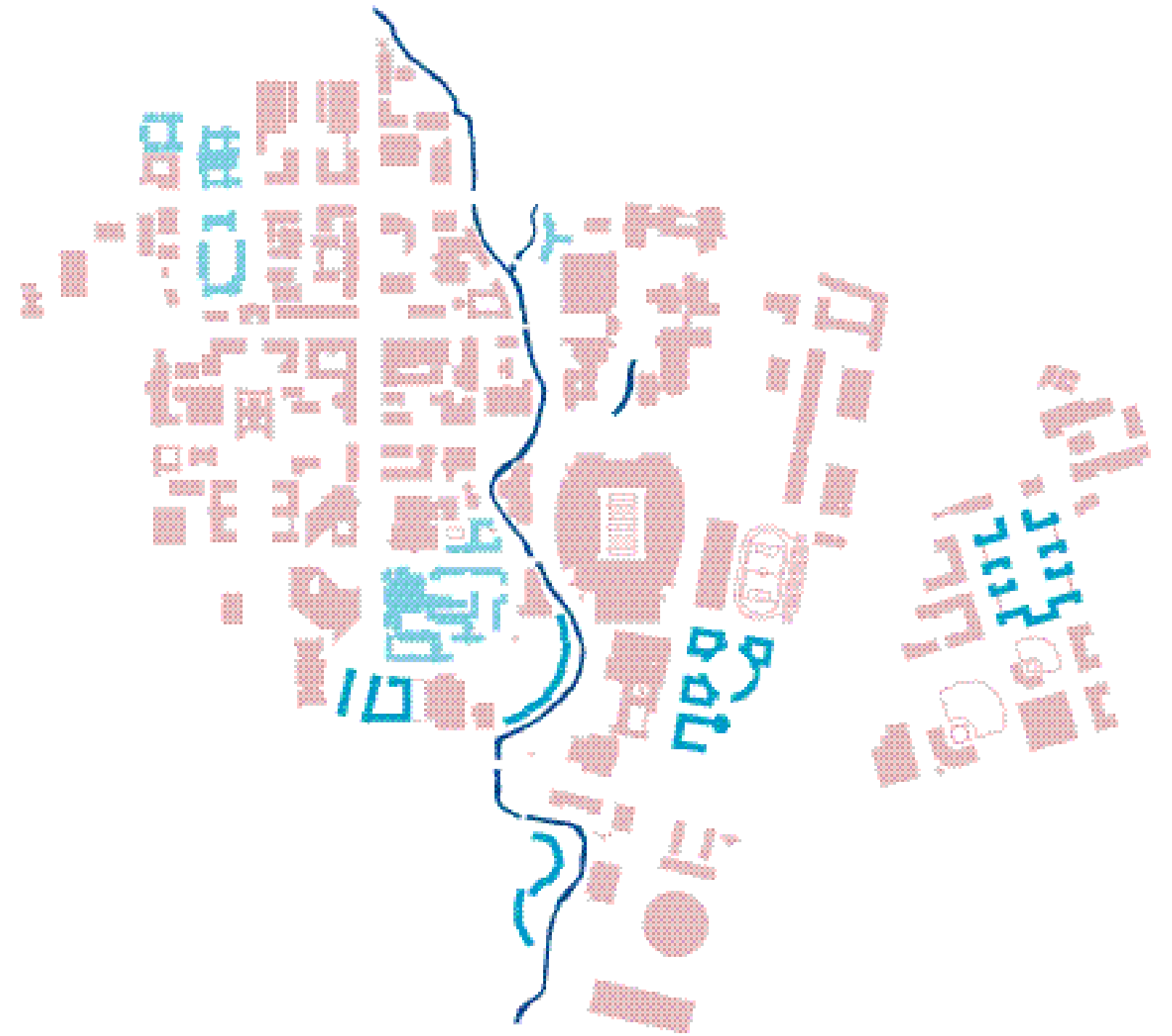


**Establish a Community of Open Spaces** | In the 1930s Paul Cret brought careful definition of open space among buildings to the campus. These open spaces—large and small, formal and informal—combined to create a beautiful and coherent academic environment. This new master plan draws upon Cret’s earlier sensitivity to the spaces between buildings and uses it as a point of departure for new design.

A campus is a careful intertwining of built and open space, which allows for the communal space to weave buildings into an academic community. The creation of a variety of new spaces that vary in treatment and importance from ceremonial malls to mainly pedestrian streets is sought for the campus. Plantings, pavements and urban furniture will provide new communal spaces across the campus. These open spaces will

become the connective tissue of the campus (particularly important in Austin, where climate allows for nearly year-round use of outdoor space); and collectively they will serve to bind all buildings into a unit of academic life.

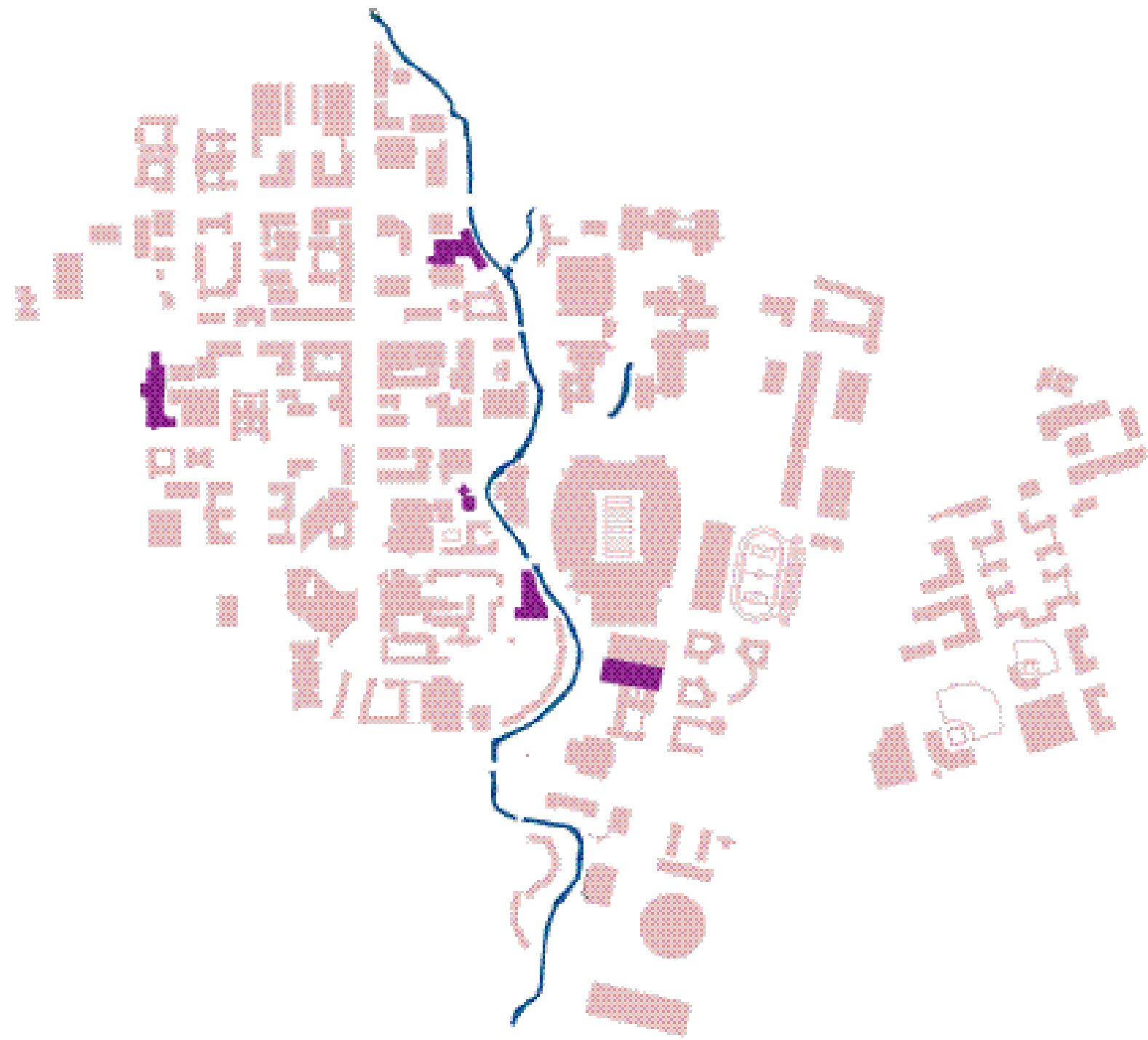
This new master plan draws upon Cret’s careful attention to exterior space as integral and existing in equal partnership with buildings. The plan also draws on his 1933 master plan as a point of departure for the design of new spaces. A hierarchy of space has been established, privileging Cret’s formal malls of the South, East and West, and creating categories of malls, plazas, walking streets, courtyards and parks to establish a community of open spaces of different character and use.



**Addition of On-Campus Housing** | The student population of the University totals 48,000, but only 5,200 students—substantially less than the size of any incoming freshman class—can be housed on campus. To support the academic, social and recreational needs of an academic community, it is essential that substantial numbers of students live on campus. It is in the undergraduate experience of working and living together that the spirit and collegiality of the institution are maintained.

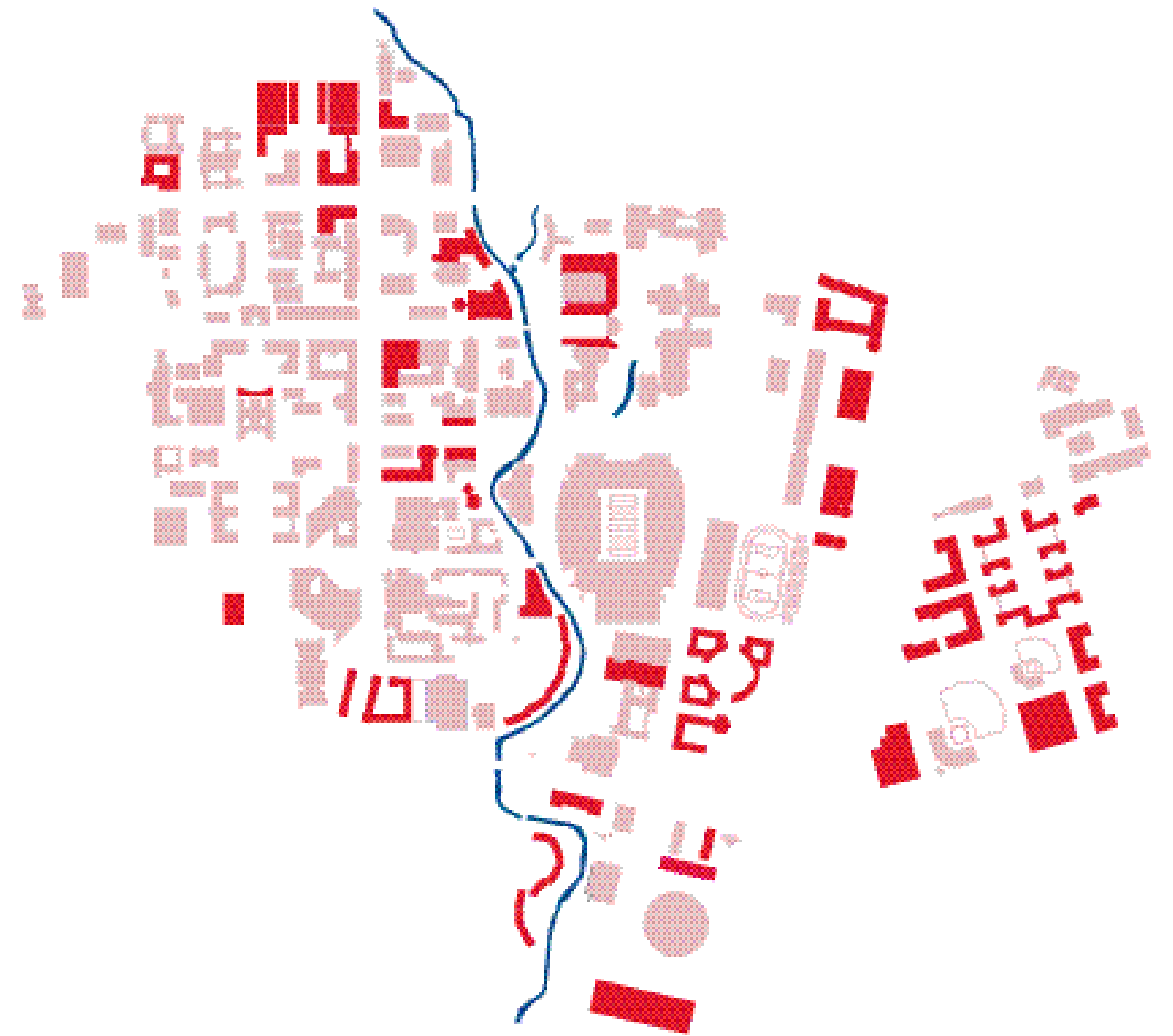
New housing should complement concentrations of student activity and the natural environment, creating a learning and living community within the boundaries of the University. It is proposed that substantial new housing be sited to take advantage of the natural beauty of Waller Creek and should more than double the number of housing

units available on campus to students. Additional on-campus housing will also help to reduce the demand for parking spaces and thus strengthen the pedestrian environment. The addition of new housing on campus will make a positive contribution to increasing academic and social interaction and extend a sense of security throughout the day.



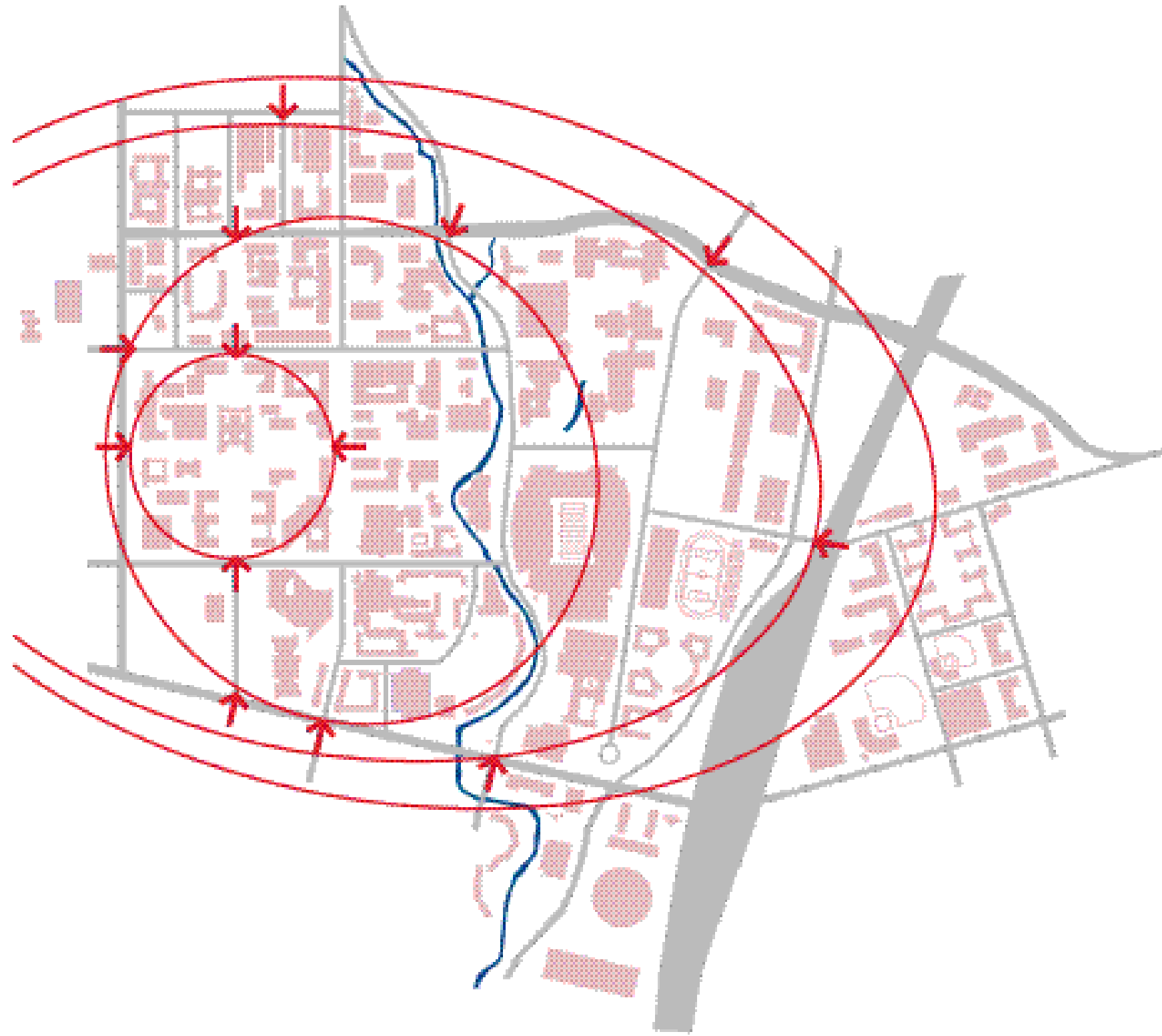
**Centers for Student Activity** | New social and recreational activity centers are needed to accommodate established concentrations of students in the eastern part of the University campus. The addition of two new student unions of substantial size will create a three-union system anchored by the historic Texas Student Union building on the West Mall. The new Union North will serve the needs of students in the vicinity of the engineering college. Union South is designed as an adjunct to the expanded recreational facilities in the Gregory Gymnasium Complex and the Recreational Sports Center, and it is located close to new housing in the south, further supporting students' daily activities on campus. A new Recreation Center at Gregory Gymnasium will provide the existing gym with additional recreational facilities.

Where once the Texas Union, designed by Paul Cret, was close to the geographic center of the campus, the current size of the University and its facilities requires a reexamination of what is known as the center of the campus and its central axis. The master plan proposes that Waller Creek become the new central axis of the campus. New Centers for Student Activity will complement new student housing and further support the life of the University.



**Increased Density in the Core Campus** | It is proposed that future development be concentrated within the core campus west of Interstate Highway 35. Establishing new structures in this way reinforces the pedestrian quality of the campus by creating convenient walking distances of less than ten minutes between destinations. The new master plan allows for the development of 3,250,000 square feet, which will be a complete, beautiful set of buildings and open spaces in this historic part of campus.

In addition to expanding overall available square footage, new buildings should be designed to defer to and define open space. By redesigning existing open space, several quadrangles can be created. As perimeter buildings are added, these quadrangles could be completed, thereby supplying the density that will intensify the public focus of open space.



**Strengthened Identity of the Campus** | The entrance to a campus represents a point of transition, the symbolic gateway to a collegiate community. The master plan proposes three scales of gateways. The largest scale is found upon approaching the campus after exiting Interstate Highway 35; the intermediate is located at points where one walks or drives from adjacent city streets; and the smallest is primarily for pedestrians, marking thresholds into key areas of the campus, especially the original 40 Acres. These gateways serve both as placemarkers and as locations for obtaining information about the University, its history and its activities. Wayfinding and signage, consistent and easily visible, will contribute to a sense of place and define these points of transition.

A new major entry to the campus is planned to the East, at the end of Manor Road. By connecting Manor Road under I-35, the campus will be connected to facilities and activities located to the East. This new entrance will provide vehicular access much needed in this area of campus. Visitor centers are proposed within the Tower, Littlefield House and the new South University Avenue parking garage.