Campus character depends on a careful balance between buildings and open spaces. One goal of this master plan is to regain this equilibrium, given the 20th century introduction of cars and their parking lots and the large footprints and massing of science buildings from the 1950s. These phenomena upset the balance between buildings and open spaces, which had previously characterized the University’s campus.

Four of the seven principles of the master plan return the core campus to the pedestrian. These changes are critical to the restoration of a balance between built-to-open space.

The physical and historic characteristics of the campus offer focus for the design of open space. The University of Texas at Austin campus possesses dramatic topography, with two high points of land, one occupied by the Main Building on College Hill and the other rise of land to the east on which the LBJ Library Complex rests. The variety of topography, articulated in the master plans of Paul Cret and Cass Gilbert, needs to be reinforced.

The campus open space structure should be recognizable to easily orient the user, and the open space features should be symbols for both the campus and the city.

The removal of cars from the campus center combined with a proposed bike path are imperative moves toward the recovery of open space. Making the campus more residential will increase the need for open space. The size of the UT campus today necessitates an orchestrated sequence of greens or commons supporting the creation of several villages. There will be a variety of locations for gatherings, festivals or informal interaction, much like the old greens or commons of small towns.

VI. Open Space Character

A Return to the Equilibrium between Building and Open Space

View of the courtyard in Goldsmith Hall (1933). An enclosed patio was a special feature of the Cret buildings. This one at Goldsmith was designed in part by UT architecture students. It was kept by the renovation architects in the 1980s. It serves the dual purpose of providing a beautiful place and of providing natural light in the drawing rooms on either side of the patio. In the past, in a campus tradition that reflects our heritage, the dean would often stand on a bench in the middle of the courtyard and announce, through the open windows (before air conditioning), that an all-school meeting was about to assemble.
Open Space Types | The proposed master plan advocates the creation of a campus-wide system of exterior spaces and the enrichment of existing spaces by clearly defining their form and improving their quality with planting, paving, lighting and fountains or sculptures. To manage this ambitious undertaking, the plan divides the open space of the campus into five distinct types of space, each of which has unique characteristics. The five types are: courtyards, plazas, malls, walking streets, and parks, which range from small, closed, defined courtyards to expansive green parks. The University of Virginia campus has three parallel landscapes—a central public lawn flanked by two gardens that are more natural and private. Every campus needs a careful modulation of its spaces to fulfill different functions. The five types of landscape proposed for UT represent this remodulating of campus open space, which since mid-century has been filled in, used for parking or stripped of any specific character. Revamping UT open space will avoid the recent trend on American campuses of treating open space as empty space and not as an equal partner to built space.
Courtyards | Cret's master plan included courtyards designed to be equal partners with the buildings. Although they are often used for solitary study, courtyards can add to communal life through their use as open-air classrooms. Enclosed by buildings, courtyards may provide a quiet place for formal and informal education.

The design of new courtyards will follow strict geometrics with golden mean proportions. (In mathematics, the ratio known as Divine Proportion is calculated as the division of a line segment into two segments, such that the ratio of the original segment to the larger division is equal to the ratio of the larger division to the smaller one.) Some courtyard design will be derived from the significant landscape history of the campus: informal gardens shaped along winding paths and narrow spaces between buildings, where space is not large enough for a formal courtyard. These small gardens will be enhanced by individual seating for reading and studying.

Courtyards should feature classical layouts and biaxial symmetry. These simple but clearly organized layouts can be achieved with a variety of designs, including a one-dimensional paving pattern, a two-dimensional planting pattern, or a three-dimensional sculpture, fountain or planting pattern.

Patterns produced by sun and shade from buildings and trees add another layer of detail and diversity to courtyard design. These sun/shade patterns are present in all open spaces but are most obvious in courtyards enclosed by buildings.

Many variations to this palette may be introduced through stone pavements and fountains, by defining the edges of the courtyard with hedges or low walls, by setting the courtyard's contours to make a sunken or raised terrain or by selecting a planting of one color foliage of tree, shrub or groundcover.
Plazas | Plazas represent a set of public open spaces for residential and communal life, functioning as outdoor living rooms for a town's population. Plazas have a rich urban history, with a variety of models for access, walls, monumental fountains and porticos. They may be completely paved, following Medieval or Renaissance tradition, or have trees and green spaces after the Mexican tradition, similar to the Plaza de las Islas in San Antonio or the Main Plaza in Santa Fe.

Because of the mild climate of Austin and the high number of sunny days, plazas are appropriate for several locations on campus. They will create enriched formal spaces for outdoor communal living that are larger and more formal than green courtyards and parks, and closer in character to the malls.

Plazas on the campus will be less formal than malls and not necessarily treed, although shade trees, trellises and covered porticos may sometimes be used. Vehicles may occasionally use a portion of a plaza; however, by their design, plazas will convey the impression that they are primarily pedestrian spaces, and vehicular traffic will be slowed by the plaza’s raised plane.

Enriched paving materials, patterned with a minimum of two colors, will help convey the impression of a pedestrian environment. A careful choice of benches and other urban furniture, as well as trash receptacles and lighting, will communicate that plazas are places to meet, linger and rest.

The plaza just south of the Main Building, a historically important and active place, will be the model for similar spaces in other locations.

This Plaza, known as Main or South Mall, holds many memories, including a time when seniors sat on the steps to watch the world run by in front of Old Main, when the senior officer held an impromptu roll of the “blue bonnet” chain, and when the Senior Swingout was held there. Art auctions were once an annual fund-raiser for fine arts scholarships. Rallies, protests, celebrations and student performances have drawn hundreds of people.毕业典礼也常在这里举行，包括烟花，古典音乐和各种表演。
The University's malls have their origins in the linear axes originally proposed by Paul Cret. This new master plan completes the missing major axis to the north and adds secondary malls to strengthen other areas of the campus. Just as the existing East, West and South Malls are different in character from each other, the new malls are not conceived as homogeneous repetitions of a type. Shaded by trees and designed with monumental proportions to aid orientation and provide handsome vistas and walking access to the heart of the campus, they will serve as ceremonial pedestrian promenades. Fountains and sculptures placed in malls will indicate their elevated place in the hierarchy of civic importance.

Diagrams of various conceptual treatments for new malls using planting, paving and sculptural elements.
West Mall. In 1901, Major G. W. Littlefield gave $3,000 to the University to build a “Peripatus,” or walk, around
West Mall. In 1902, Major G. W. Littlefield gave $3,000 to the University to build a “Peripatus,” or walk, around
the original 40 Acres. From the very first days of the walk it was popular with students. “Let’s make the Perip-
this was a statement common for years on the campus. It was an ideal place for dates and served as a meeting place
for friends. In 1913, the businessmen of Austin raised money to pave the walk. One can still walk the Perip, but its
identity was almost lost as numerous other campus walks emerged.

Walking Streets | Walking streets assume many of the characteristics of malls and
plazas, but are less singular. Pedestrians will dominate these streets, with slow-moving
vehicles and bicycles assuming a secondary place. The new walking streets planned will
accommodate light to moderate auto traffic, and they will feature large trees on both
sides. Vehicles will need to negotiate raised crosswalks in their path, reinforcing the
perception of a pedestrian environment. These walking streets will have a recognizable
pavement color to associate with walking areas. The pavement will be enriched by
occasional patterning and linear detailing, but without the overall paving patterns found
in plazas and malls. A few pieces of public furniture will be selectively placed along the
walking street, arranged linearly, to culminate the pro-pedestrian improvements.
Fountain outside LBJ Library. One of the most beautiful park areas on the present campus is the area just south and west of the LBJ Library. Centered by a beautiful fountain that is illuminated at night, the park provides a sanctuary for visitors, faculty, and students. Seasonal flowers that grow well in Texas add to the beauty of this area, which is open to all visitors. When the weather is nice, the lawn is a favorite spot for students studying. Tables and chairs on the knoll behind the fountain provide an excellent place to enjoy a sandwich or a cool drink.

The largest and greenest of the open spaces on campus will be designated as parks. These spaces will include the land on both sides of Waller Creek, the area east of the LBJ complex and the contoured hilly shoulders of I-35. These areas will be planted with additional trees, and pavement will be removed wherever possible to keep the surface as pervious as possible. The planting of trees in boscs will provide shade, visual screening and additional stability for the soil in case of heavy rain or flooding. The intent of these parks is to provide green, restful recreational space, as a park does in a small town.

Parks consisting of large grassy and treed areas should surround Waller Creek. A minimum of their surface will be devoted to paths, which should not be paved but made with crushed stone. Groundcover and grass should predominate the park, with the exception of the area immediately around Waller Creek.

Waller Creek | Water-tolerant vegetation, layered according to the depth of the water, will line Waller Creek, creating a richly vegetated glen around the stream. The vegetation will slow the water, help clean it and prevent the erosion of the stream's banks. The heavy planting of large and small trees, groundcover and water-tolerant vegetation along the creek will provide some protection for the region in the event of flooding. The surface will be contoured into swales, creating retention ponds for controlling the discharge of water.

Boscs of water-tolerant trees will be planted far enough apart to produce dappled shade where grass can grow, with various types of groundcover planted inside the boscs. Landscaping will transform the terrain into a restful and serene place where a blanket could be laid on the grass for reading, studying or picnicking.
In the spring, flowering trees add special beauty to the campus. Redbud and flowering peach, plum and crabapple are stunning gathering today what at the Union of Remembrance, 2nd Street. When Memorial Museum was first built, students and faculty were barren streets and the flaming flowers, when Memorial Museum was first built, bluebonnets flourished. When Memorial Museum was first built, bluebonnets filled the area between its steps and the Mustang statues, which were given to the University by Ralph Ogden.

When the West Mall was paved during the Paul Cret period, a large round bed was located mid-way between the Main Building and Guadalupe Street. Pansies were regularly planted each fall and bloomed there until May, when a hardier shrub was planted for the summer. Students, faculty, and visitors enjoyed the pansy blooms all winter and spring and often chose the pansy bed as a meeting place.

Plants | A more systematic use of trees lining malls and avenues will benefit the campus. Live oaks are the major species of tree on campus, but the presence of oak wilt disease in Austin makes it necessary to limit the future use of oak species. Large trees will be planted in continuous beds, rather than in individual holes, giving them a better chance to grow slowly and making them less susceptible to urban conditions and disease. Paving blocks will be set at wide intervals into these planting beds to allow for student crossings.

Pecan trees serve as a viable alternative to live oaks, and they will be planted in three different designs. In one, live design, pecans and live oaks will be alternated. In a second option, where there is a sufficiently wide corridor to plant a double line of trees, a live oak line and a pecan line. If one tree is affected by disease, the spatial definition provided by the avenue of trees will not be lost. The third option features allees of only pecans. Mixes with other large trees are encouraged; nothing, however, compares with the majesty and wide frond of live oaks, which complement the scale of streets and avenues. Small trees that serve as decoration, rather than shaded space for the pedestrian, should be avoided.

Courtyard of Texas Memorial Museum looking west.
Lawn | A significant portion of open spaces on early campuses was in the form of lawns. This concept has been modified by two modern events. First is the enormous loss of green space that came with the increase of pavement for vehicles and buildings. Second is the high cost of lawn maintenance. These events work at cross purposes; while the increase of paved surfaces calls for a greater need of lawns to balance the imperious and pervious ground cover, lawns are consistently questioned for their high water dependency and the maintenance associated with general upkeep. These conditions call for the planting of less water-dependent ground cover and the adoption of new maintenance practices. Lawns of a variety of grasses are still recommended for the original 40 Acres.

Walkoffs and bushwhacking (cutting across lawns and establishing new paths) in the area of existing malls will be discouraged by the addition of corner rails or hedges. Aerating and replanting of walked-on areas will be done to repair current damage.

In other areas of campus, medium length grass will be considered as well as wildflowers and groundcovers, with the latter predominating. This does not mean the elimination of all lawns outside the 40 Acres, but their placement will be reduced to courtyards and parks.

Lighting | Pedestrian site lighting will be provided throughout the campus. Standardized pole fixtures in the 40 Acres will provide adequate amounts of light along walks if the lights are spaced at no more than four times their mounting height.

In addition to street, sidewalk and building lighting, provisions for special lighting at ceremonies, pageants and festivals will be designed into malls, plazas and the promenade of North Congress. These provisions will include the availability of numerous outlets, allowing for the installation of festive lighted frameworks for special occasions.

View of the courtyard and creek in front of the Fine Arts Building. Building broad areas of grass among buildings on campus after summer, the hot Texas sun, but sprinkler systems usually keep it green most of the year. In the early days, the campus was covered with needle grass and wildflowers in the spring and was then mowed after they died from the heat. For a few years, a fence was placed around the campus to keep neighbors’ cows from coming in the yard. In the 40 Acres, a variety of grasses are still recommended.

Existing light fixture on campus. The campus had no outside lighting during its early years, but in 1895, Austin became the “City of Eternal Moonlight” when it acquired 31 cast and wrought iron tower lights that were thirty feet tall and mounted on 15 foot deep poles. But with the growth of the city, the need for lighting increased and this became a burden. New brilliant tungsten lamps illuminated the campus when classes began in September 1912. The student life editor of the Alcalde, alumni magazine, reported: “And lights! Fifty-five tungsten lamps, high-powered, supported by artistic iron posts, covered with frosted globes, peep into every crook and cranny of the campus, including the Perip. We say no more.” A student reporter complained in the Texan, student newspaper, “Dan Cupid is henceforth banished from campus.” Alternative light fixtures. Streets are to be lit with lighting poles and wall fixtures on buildings.
Paving will tie the campus together visually, pulling the buildings of the 1960s and 1970s and surfaces around them into the historic fabric. Careful, well designed paving can serve as a signature for the entire campus, unifying it, improving its design quality and delineating the various spaces of the campus with richly patterned fields of brick, tile, and stone.

A paving palette ensures consistency in all new open spaces as well as in all repaved existing spaces. This palette complements materials used in buildings on the core campus, ensuring that colors remain in harmony with overall campus design.

The creation of a hierarchy of patterns and of materials is the most crucial unifying element in the development of open spaces. It should serve to unify the design while allowing for the use of different materials of surface ornamentation. For example, plazas and malls might be paved with high-quality, warm-colored local stones such as Uxmal from Mexico; the edges of biking paths could be paved with a golden color brick; crushed stone could be used in flood plains such as Wacker Creek. The use of tiles can add permanent, brilliant color accents at specific points to emphasize a building, an entrance or a space.

The great variety of pavements at UT represents the range of pattern density and the variety of color desirable for different types of open, paved spaces.
Benches | Benches follow paving in hierarchy, adding to the quality and beauty of a public space. They become symbols identifiable of a particular campus and its public spaces. On the campus the benches will belong to one of three categories. Those associated with transportation systems will be standard black, slotted, metal benches. Similarly designed wooden benches will be the choice for all areas in courtyards, gardens, parks and along malls. Architecturally defined paved spaces, such as plazas, lend themselves to seating comprising architectural built-in elements. In these spaces and along the North Congress promenade, limestone benches are proposed. The University could commission a design firm to develop a distinctive, well designed UT Bench.

Trash and Recycling Containers | Trash and recycling containers are probably the most difficult pieces of urban furniture to specify because existing designs are not visually pleasing. It is recommended that the University commission a design firm to custom make containers for use on campus.

Kiosks and Food Carts | Informational kiosks and food carts should be located away from the main view corridors running through the campus. For example, along the North Congress promenade the food carts are to be located along the east side of the mall and kept away from the East Mall. Food carts should be located in proximity to seating areas. Kiosks should be located in areas where they will provide convenient display of information without blocking traffic along the main pathways. Two suggested locations are bus stops and gateways. The materials, location and design of these elements should relate to architectural and landscape guidelines of the Master Plan and be considered valuable design elements.

In November 1915, Major E.G. Littlefield, who lived across the street north of the campus, gave the University 100 new outdoor benches. Student reaction was extremely favorable. Benches along the West Mall were generally occupied by young men who were “buzzarding” or watching the girls go by.

Food carts, referred to as “the movable feast,” first appeared on campus during the 1960s. By September 1992, twenty-five kiosks were in place. Students assumed leadership in collecting funds to build more attractive display areas and implemented their placement.