Part D
College Avenue Campus
11.0 College Avenue Campus

11.1 Existing Conditions
The College Avenue Campus is an approximately 20 acre (8.09 hectare) site situated on a larger parcel of land owned by the University and within the boundaries of the Wascana Centre Authority. The site is located directly south of the Centre Square neighbourhood and adjacent to the Canada-Saskatchewan Production Studios. It is also located within Wascana Centre, one of the most significant natural settings in the city, and is across the Lake from the grounds of the Provincial Legislature. Situated along College Avenue and west of Albert Street, the campus maintains an interface with the surrounding community and is the University's key link to the city.
11.1.1 Open Space

The College Avenue Campus site is characterized both by its pastoral setting as well as its strong connections to the centre of the city. The buildings on the campus sit comfortably back from College Avenue, symbolizing that they are clearly a part of Wascana Centre. The south sides of the buildings open up to the natural beauty of the Wascana Centre with views to the lake and to the Legislature Building. Of notable importance is the amount of surface parking separating the buildings and the lake. Surface parking areas are viewed as opportunities to improve this connection.

Figure D-3. Open Space
11.1.2 Gateways, Views and Landmarks

Strong connections are maintained to the downtown through the creation of strong view termini. Cornwall Street terminates at the main entrance of Darke Hall and Scarth Street terminates at the main entrance of the College Building. Given the strict grid of the city and its flatness, both buildings can be seen while standing on these streets from as far as 1 kilometre away.

Figure D-4. Gateways, views, and landmarks

- **Gateways**
- **View Corridors**
- **Landmark Buildings**
- **Built Form**
11.1.3 Building Frontages

The College Avenue buildings are oriented with frontages toward College Avenue and the Centre Square neighbourhood. Entrances to the buildings (marked with blue arrows) are along the College Avenue face, while service entries are to the back of the building (marked by black arrows). Views to the lake are from the “back” of the campus. The areas identified in yellow represent the landmark frontages of the campus buildings, which constitutes almost all sides. In addition, the majority of the College Building and Conservatory is very permeable, having numerous windows and views to both the City and Wascana Lake. Darke Hall is much less permeable in form.

Figure D-5. Building frontages

- Permeable Frontage
- Non-Permeable Frontage
- Landmark Frontage
11.2 Heritage Significance

In late 2009, the University commissioned Architect-Heritage Consultant Philip Goldsmith to carry out a heritage study of the College Avenue Campus. The completed report, dated 15 July 2010, states, “The Heritage Significance of the Regina College Buildings is very high. This significance is found in three distinct areas: history of the site, quality of design, and their contribution to the nature of the local context”.

The design of the buildings are an excellent example of the “modern” Collegiate Gothic design style used in education facilities in Canada from around 1890 until the 1930s. Their simple grid-based, rectangular, and large windowed form foreshadows the eventual breakthrough of Modernism that occurred after the Second World War. Regarding context, the historic Regina College buildings (College, Conservatory, and Darke Hall) form an anchor for the entire south side of College Avenue in Regina. They are well designed, attractive buildings that define the historic street edge character of College Avenue, and, together with the north facade of the Normal School to the east of the College (now the Sound Stage), create the most complete historic institutional Avenue in Regina. In addition, the buildings form the period boundary of Wascana Park, and, together with the Legislature on the south shore and the magnificent bridge to the west of the lake, frame the park and lend it the picturesque, historic grace for which it is famous.

The heritage significance of the College Building, Conservatory, and Darke Hall dictate protection and restoration to the greatest extent feasible. The viability of the heritage buildings comprising the College Avenue Campus of the University of Regina will be threatened in the long term and a maintenance debt will continue to build if the buildings are not revitalized soon.
11.3 Site Analysis

11.3.1 Existing Buildings

As envisioned in the current Strategic Plan, the historic College Avenue Campus (CAC) will be fully restored and adaptively reused as a fundamental part of the University of Regina. The College Building, Conservatory, and Darke Hall, which comprise the CAC, need to be preserved for the next 50 - 100 years.

The Conservatory Building and West Tower were constructed together during 1914 to 1916. That the west tower was not constructed at the same time as the College Building, but concurrently with the Conservatory Building, will likely be a surprise to some, as it, and an east tower to the College Building, were part of the original symmetrical College Building design by architects Brown and Valance of Montreal.

Darke Hall was constructed in 1929 as a concert hall and received a major addition to its south end in 1962. In 1986, the structure and foundation were rehabilitated. The former Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, now known as simply, the Gallery Building, opened in 1953. In 1990, the MacKenzie Art Gallery moved into the T.C. Douglas Building, and new building uses were found by the University, including the Senior’s Education Centre and a portion of the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy.

Figure D-7. Existing Buildings
11.3.2 The Tower

The tower portion of the College Building is the most distinctive aspect of the entire campus (Figure D-8). The College Building was designed with symmetrical facades facing north and south and was to be flanked by identical towers to the west and east. However, the towers were not built during the initial construction of 1911 – 1912. The west tower was constructed later during 1914 – 1916 with the Conservatory. The east tower was never constructed but the College Building itself is constructed in such a manner as to allow for the connection to a future tower extension on the east side. The towers were also intended to have a passageway at grade, leading pedestrians to the south side of the building. When the Conservatory, and later Darke Hall were added to the west, the assembly of buildings, with their varying shapes, sizes, different roof forms, varied fenestration, and scale, weakened any sense of symmetry.

From a heritage aspect, serious consideration has been given to the inclusion and construction of the east tower as part of the College Avenue Redevelopment. However, a multi-storey east tower to match the West Tower is difficult to justify programmatically. A matching tower would provide very limited floor area at each level and would require two sets of stairs as well as elevator accessibility. For these reasons, together with the described loss of symmetry in the appearance of the assembled buildings, the asymmetrical approach to any future additions is quite acceptable.
11.3.3 Building Demolitions

The Gallery Building is currently suffering from structural problems and not representing a significant enough heritage value to justify the costs of rehabilitation. This building could therefore be demolished to make way for new construction. The general condition of the Conservatory Building and West Tower, constructed in 1914 - 1916 is variable. The West Tower and the North Block of the former residence wing appear to be stable. The South Block, however, has a history of foundation instability and remedial structural shoring was installed in the southwest stairwell in the 1990s. In 2010, a Conceptual Design and Heritage Assessment was completed that examined the risks associated with various approaches to stabilizing the foundation. The assessment concludes that the South Block of the Conservatory should be demolished, and the Conservatory and West Tower exterior and interior should be restored, and mechanical and electrical systems replaced. In addition to the major concerns over accessibility, there are many critical building code deficiencies. Existing exits are inadequate and nonconforming; to preserve the heritage appearance of the existing north stairwell, a new exit is required. If it is desired to occupy the 4th and 5th levels of the West Tower, two code-conforming exits are required.

Figure D-9. Demolitions

Conservatory South Block
Gallery Building
11.3.4 Open Space

The site, in its formal layout, already implies numerous open spaces that should not be encroached on in any future development plan. These include the following:

1. the formal setback from College Avenue - keeping this space open is crucial in creating the regal quality of the original design, and insuring that the original buildings have an unimpeded frontage on College Avenue;

2. large plots of land west and south that act as a setback from Wascana Drive - these open spaces maintain the feeling of pastoral spaciousness;

3. the double row of trees in the parking lot that leads from the centre of the College Building southward to the lake - this feature is not only of incredible aesthetic value, but also reflects the classicism of the original 1913 Mawson Plan; and

4. the rectangle of land directly south of the College Building - this parcel of open space provides an opportunity to create an intimate courtyard setting for the south side of the College Building.

5. the areas east and west of the College Building are opportunities to expand the pastoral landscape along the east edge of the campus lands, to create a green courtyard or landscape connection between buildings. The potential landscape connections are also opportunities to extend green linkages from College Avenue to the lake.
11.3.5 Views

The upper floors of the College Building and the Conservatory Building give a commanding view over Wascana Centre and also views of the Legislature Building. These views should be considered and protected where possible in the development of the site.
11.3.6 View Corridors
There are a number of special view corridors which should be considered when drafting a new plan (Figure D-12). The most important of these are the view corridors which terminate at the northern façade of historic campus buildings, Darke Hall, the Conservatory Building, and the College Building. There are also a few possible view corridors south of the buildings terminating at the southern façade and leading down to the lake. East-west corridors are less prominent, the most important being the view along the northern facades of the campus buildings.
11.3.7 Connections

If the site is going to be intensified through development, then movement will have to be rationalized through the improvement of certain connecting roads. Reducing the impact on Wascana Drive is also an important consideration (Figure D-13). Enhancing the north-south road that extends south of College Avenue from Hamilton Street and connecting it to Wascana Drive will be a necessary step to move people deeper into the site. Two east-west connectors will also be necessary.
11.3.8 Growth Potential

Given the constraints outlined in the preceding analysis, there is still a large amount of development potential for the site. If done correctly, new development will respect and profit from the bucolic setting, without negatively impacting it. Growth also has the potential of lending the existing buildings a better frame in which to be enjoyed, through the creation of enhanced public spaces and focused view termini.

The removal of the Gallery Building creates the opportunity to construct a new ‘Atrium’ building between the Conservatory and Darke Hall. The Atrium Building solves accessibility and other building code problems, provides functional space that cannot be accommodated in the existing buildings, and provides the opportunity to properly accommodate new centralized mechanical and electrical systems. The Atrium Building also provides an accessible grade-level main entrance, serving all three buildings. Interior accessibility to all floor levels is provided through strategically placed elevators.
11.4 Vision for Redevelopment

The historic College Avenue Campus will continue to support the academic mission of the University and the University’s Strategic Plan.

Restoration and Adaptive Re-use
The College Building, and the portion of the Conservatory facing College Avenue, will be fully restored and adaptively reused as a fundamental part of the University of Regina.

Additional Programming Opportunities
The restoration and adaptive re-use strategy for the College will create opportunities for increased space within the buildings, which can accommodate additional programming such as leadership and outreach programs. The campus would serve as a Provincial and National destination integrating academic programming with outreach and training for both public and private sector professionals. The restoration will also allow for the buildings to be equipped with state of the art meeting rooms for groups ranging from 20 to 300. Large scale premier events and receptions can be held in a new modern atrium space. These are attractive resources for institutions such as the Centre for Continuing Education, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, and for the broader community.

Figure D-15. College Avenue Campus: Heritage image of Darke Hall
Figure D-16. A modern, striking atrium that respects and enhances the heritage of the site

Figure D-17. An internal view of the atrium looking south
11.5 Principles for Redevelopment

1. Maintain the “community focus” of the campus
College Avenue Campus will maintain the community focus of the campus, such that better links with the City of Regina are forged through the restoration and development of the site, while ensuring a strong University of Regina role in its future use.

2. Elevate the profile
College Avenue Campus will elevate the profile and presence of the campus within the University of Regina, Wascana Centre, and the Region.

3. Deliver community outreach programming
College Avenue Campus will amplify the University’s capacity to deliver community outreach programming and services, while trying to maintain the uses that exist on site.

4. Reinforce the campus’ natural and built heritage
College Avenue Campus will reinforce the significance of the campus’ natural and built heritage by operating within the intent of the Wascana Centre Authority Act.

5. Maintain the integrity of the “core” campus
College Avenue Campus will maintain the integrity of the “core” campus by facilitating uses on the College Avenue Campus that are complementary to it.

6. Leverage partnerships
College Avenue Campus will leverage partnerships to further develop the site and restore its heritage buildings.

7. Include environmental sustainability
College Avenue Campus will include environmental sustainability and the concept of Education for Sustainable Development as a visible component of the redevelopment of the campus.