University of Regina

Demonstration Plan: Wascana East Lands

October 2002
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1.1 BACKGROUND

The University of Regina is currently in the process of acquiring ownership of a large tract of land east of highway No. 1. Referred to as the northern portion of the Wascana East lands, the site will form the second half of the University of Regina's main campus. The site is intended to accommodate 12,500 students or half of the estimated maximum campus size of 25,000 students.

To allow for future development/construction initiatives the University requires a “Demonstration Plan” reflecting the design principles and objectives identified in the current Campus Plan. To complete the Demonstration Plan design the University retained IBI Group.

1.2 SCOPE

The Demonstration Plan is a detailed conceptual design including roads, open space, building sites and sports fields. The subject property is referred to as the Wascana East lands and represents approximately 180 acres of which approximately 140 are considered developable. The Demonstration Plan reflects a cooperative design process completed in conjunction with University representatives.

1.3 DESIGN BRIEF FORMAT

This Design Brief is organized into four categories as follows:

1.0 Introduction
2.0 Site Description
3.0 Design Parameters
4.0 Demonstration Plan
2.0 Background Conditions

2.1 Site Description

The site is typically referred to as the northern part of the Wascana East lands and is composed of approximately 200 acres. Of the 200 acres approximately 30 acres are occupied by Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST). Located northeast of Highway No. 1 and Wascana Parkway, the lands are relatively flat and primarily grass covered (figure 2). A key physical characteristic is Wascana Creek bordering the lands on the north (figure 3). Wascana Creek, its connection to the larger water areas and its surrounding natural features represent a valuable resource and attribute. Future plans and development should respect its value by ensuring compatible and appropriate land uses.

With its relatively flat topography, the Wascana East lands (north) contain a significant amount of land identified as floodway and flood fringe. Although, site development could be designed to address this limit, the Wascana Centre Authority Master Plan stipulates the importance of preserving the Creek and surrounding wetland habitat. A recognized waterfowl habitat, the Wascana East floodway and flood fringe should be preserved and incorporated into the larger Wascana Centre trail/park system.

The Wascana East Lands north are relatively isolated, being separated from other University's main campus by Highway No. 1. This separation will be key issue in the University's planning, design and development of the Wascana East lands.

2.2 Policy Documents and Plans

There are three key policy documents/plans guiding the Demonstration Plan for the Wascana East lands. The documents including the current Campus Plan, Wascana Centre Master Plan and the Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan currently being finalized. The following subsections provide a brief overview of the relevant information from each document.
FIGURE 1: Air Photo

Subject Site

Trans Canada Highway

Existing Campus

Wascana Creek

Trans Canada Highway

Wascana Parkway

Subject Site

FIGURE 1
2.2.1 University of Regina Campus Plan

The Demonstration Plan for the Wascana East lands is based upon the objectives and strategies identified in the current University of Regina Campus Plan (figure 4). The Campus Plan identifies a total of 26 strategies regarding campus planning, design and development. The following is a summary of the key strategies relative to the development of a demonstration plan for the Wascana East lands:

**Strategy 3: Compact Campus Size**

Future development will support a sense of cohesion as well as easy and quick pedestrian movement between campus facilities.

**Strategy 6: Landscape Structure**

Campus landscapes will reinforce the spatial structure and circulation system of the campus as well as provide pleasant places to relax, view and play. Buildings will be sited and designed to define and animate meaningful outdoor spaces.

**Strategy 7: Road and Path Structure**

The road structure will reinforce primary loops around the campus and research park, with internal secondary roads providing access to individual buildings and service areas. Pedestrian paths will form a finer network linking parking lots, building entries, and recreational trails.

**Strategy 8: Parking**

The University will move from reliance on surface parking to a greater mix of structured parking provided in association with building expansion.

**Strategy 9: Transit Convenience**

The University will seek ways to improve transit service in terms of frequency, convenient stops and efficient routings.
FIGURE 4: Existing University Demonstration Plan
(Source: U of R Campus Plan for Long Range Development 1998)
Strategy 10: The Pedestrian Concourse System

The indoor pedestrian concourse system will be extended to connect all campus buildings. It will be at ground level wherever possible, with access to the outdoors and natural light. The concourses will be designed as a series of connected indoor urban “streets” vital and sociable meeting grounds for the entire university community.

Strategy 11: Animating the Academic Green

The Academic Green will be smaller, be surrounded by buildings which present a friendly face to it, include more intimate spaces and activity attractions within it. The proposed Central Academic Square on the East Campus will be designed to reflect these objectives.

Strategy 13: Campus Expansion Priority

Each new building will be sited and designed to contribute to the campus-wide pedestrian system and the ordering of the overall spatial structure.

Strategy 16: Environmental Responsibility

The University intends to provide community leadership in responsible and effective environmental action through developments that are land, energy, and waste efficient.

Strategy 17: Respect for Land Value

The increasing value of land, both on and adjacent to the campus, will be reflected in project cost analyses and be accommodated through increased development density.

Strategy 19: Campus Safety

Buildings, landscapes and lighting will be designed and managed to promote personal safety.

Strategy 21: Names Places

Outdoor places and paths, as well as buildings, will have sufficient identity to be named, and they should be named.

Strategy 22: Community Life on Campus

The University will seek to expand catalysts for day-long on the campus-opportunities for socializing, sports, recreation, entertainment, shopping and relaxing.
FIGURE 4: Existing University Demonstration Plan
(Source: U of R Campus Plan for Long Range Development 1998)
2.2.2 Wascana Centre Master Plan

A second key document guiding development on the University Campus and Wascana East lands is the Wascana Centre Authority Master Plan (figure 5). The Master Plan identifies both land uses and design guidelines to be applied to all prospective development within the authority's boundaries. The Wascana Centre Master Plan identifies the Wascana East lands as a “place for future expansion of the University and S.I.A.S.T., a place for other post-secondary education facilities, and long term expansion of the Research Park”. The Plan identifies the need to complete a master plan for the Wascana East lands but does not identify any detailed land uses or establish preliminary designs.
FIGURE 5: Wascana Centre Master Plan

Subject Site

SPMC Properties

Wascana Parkway

University of Regina

Regina Research Park

Wascana East

Flood Fringe Boundary

Saskatchewan Federated Indian College

Wascana Creek

Federal Experimental Farm

SIAST: Wascana Campus
2.2.3 Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan

In the final stages of approval, the Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan (figure 6) represents the effort of seven key stakeholders including University of Regina, S.I.A.S.T., the City of Regina, Saskatchewan Learning, Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, Regina Research Park and Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. The Strategic Plan identifies opportunities for cooperation and coordination between the stakeholders in an effort to improve education and research while acting as a catalyst for economic growth.

Specific to the University's Demonstration Plan, is the conceptual scale demonstration plan identified Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan. The Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan identifies general road configurations and more importantly recommends specific uses for the Wascana East lands. The boundaries of the demonstration plan identified in the Strategic Plan will be adhered to within the University Demonstration plan for the Wascana East lands.
FIGURE 6: Potential Land Use Configuration
(Source: Knowledge Corridor Strategic Plan)
3.1 OVERVIEW

To facilitate the Demonstration Plan Process, design parameters were established for the major components of the plan including gross floor area, parking, student residences, landscaped spaces and playing fields. The following sections review the design parameters established for the Demonstration Plan.

3.2 STUDENTS

The current enrolment at the University of Regina is approximately 9,500 full time students. The existing campus has the ability to accommodate some 12,500 full time students. Ultimate sizing of the University of Regina is estimated to be approximately 25,000 students.

3.3 BUILDINGS (Gross Floor Area)

To accommodate the projected 12,500 students, the University will require a gross floor area of approximately 185,800 to 232,000 square metres (2,000,000 to 2,500,000 square feet). This gross floor area is similar to the amount identified for the University's current campus. The gross floor area includes all building requirements except student residences.

At 185,800 square metres (2,000,000 square feet), the floor area to student ratio is 14.9 square metres (160 sq. ft.) per student. At the upper end of the range, 232,000 square metres of gross floor area translates into 18.6 square metres (200 sq. ft.) per student.
3.4 STUDENT RESIDENCES

The expanded area of the University of Regina Campus is to include a greater percentage of residences with the intent of achieving a 12% bed to student ratio. The total maximum University enrolment of 25,000 students will translate into a requirement for 3,000 beds. Approximately half of the students (12,500) will be located on the Wascana East portion of the campus. Base on these requirement the Demonstration Plan must provide for approximately 1,500 beds.

A key aspect to developing student accommodation is the mix between traditional residences and the current trend toward independent living in low rise townhouse dwellings. The percentage mix between the two is currently identified as 10% assigned to the traditional form and 2% assigned to the independent living form.

3.5 PARKING

The current parking ratio identified by the University is one (1) stall for every thirty-five (35) square metres of gross floor area. This includes staff, students and visitors. Based on the proposed development program identified for the current U of R campus there will be an estimated shortfall of approximately 3,000 stalls. The shortfall must be, at least partially, addressed in the plan for the Wascana East lands.

The parking requirements for the Wascana East portion of the campus are assumed to be approximately the same as the existing campus at 1 stall for every 35 square metres of gross floor area. At an estimated gross floor area ranging from 185,800 to 269,100 square metres the Wascana East portion of the University of Regina campus will require 5,300 to 7,690 parking stalls. Based on an estimated student population of approximately 12,500 the proposed parking will translate to a ratio ranging from 1 stall for every 2.4 students to 1 stall for every 1.6 students.

3.6 SPORTS FIELDS

Currently, the University is experiencing a shortage of sports fields. The Wascana East lands must adjust for the shortage by providing additional sports fields including baseball diamonds and playing fields (i.e. soccer, football and rugby). A specific number of each type of field has not been identified; thus it will be part of the Demonstration Plan process to identify an appropriate balance between sports field requirements, buildings, landscaping and parking.
4.1 OVERVIEW

Figure 8 illustrates the design concept for the Wascana Campus Demonstration plan. The current site boundaries comprise approximately 185 acres or 75 hectares. The plan identifies a strong central core with two primary axes: one extending west to the current U of R campus and the other extending south to the Wascana Parkway. Some of the key aspects of the design include:

- A Central Academic Square which provides a focal point for University activities including social recreational and ceremonial events;
- An open space network made up of pedestrian malls, walkways, courtyards and natural space providing well-defined linkages throughout the campus;
- An open space along Wascana Creek to conserve natural habitat and provide accessibility to this important natural area for the student population;
- Connected building sites to allow for pedestrian linkages between buildings;
- A combination of surface multi-level and below grade basement parking structures to provide an effective combination of parking facilities;
- A circulation plan giving priority to pedestrian movement between campus buildings while allowing for efficient vehicular access and parking;
- The careful integration of open space and building form to create memorable open space 'rooms' and buildings which have good access to natural light. A blend of open space to enhance campus aesthetics and by and the ability for buildings to utilize natural light; and
- A strong streetscape in which a sense of entry to the campus is created and where key buildings and activities are given visual prominence.
FIGURE 8: Demonstration Plan

- Overpass pedestrian connection to existing University of Regina
- Baseball fields
- Wasana Creek
- Central Academic Square
- Surface Parking
- Underpass Vehicular Connection to Existing University of Regina
- Athletic Fields
- Building Sites
- Parking Structures
- Wascana Parkway
- Main Wascana Parkway Entrance
- Student Residences
- Student residences
- Trans Canada Highway
- Main Wascana Parkway Entrance
- Main Wascana Parkway Entrance
- Overpass pedestrian connection to existing University of Regina

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4.2 BUILT FORM

The Demonstration Plan provides for flexibility in building location and configuration while at the same time ensuring that the critical linkages, both pedestrian and vehicular, remain intact. The plan indicates an overall 'envelope', within which the buildings will be located. It is designed to accommodate a phased building program of diverse building types as the campus evolves over time.

The plan envisions a close connection of activities and functions. The buildings themselves act as bridging elements, bringing together the diverse components of the campus. This is guided by the design of earlier academic buildings that create a holistic campus environment through the use of courtyards and quadrangles.

This approach avoids individual buildings which are 'stand alone' or which are connected by bridges, which can result in a fragmented campus environment. The design also addresses Regina's climate, one that demands the close connection of campus facilities.

4.2.1 Building Details

The Demonstration Plan illustrates building sites of which an actual building is estimated to occupy approximately 50%. The total amount of building site area is approximately 45 acres (180,000 sq.m.) or 24% of the total site area. At 50% coverage, the actual amount of building footprint is approximately 22 acres or 90,000 square metres. At an assumed average height of 3.5 metres the estimated gross floor area is approximately 315,000 square metres or 3,400,000 square feet. Figure 9 illustrates the location of the building sites.

The plan anticipates buildings whose maximum depth is some 40 meters, although actual building depths will range from some 17.5 meters for academic facilities to 20–25 meters for research buildings. Heights will also vary considerably, although it anticipated that high rise structures will not be required. Structures are anticipated in the order of 3–4 storeys in height and which occupy some 50% of the building envelope.
FIGURE 9: Development Frame Work

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4.2.2 Residence Buildings

Figure 9 illustrates the location of the two types of student residences proposed for the demonstrations. The larger area is identified for traditional residences in the form of dormitories (figure 10). The second form of residence is identified as townhouses and garden apartments (figure 11). Figure 9 illustrates the location and types of residences being proposed. The amount of residences identified will provide approximately 2,000 traditional student accommodations and 200 units of townhouse/garden apartments.

Area for traditional students residences area is identified at approximately 27,000 square metres. Based on a standard of 28 square metres per student, the identified area translates into housing for approximately 1,000 students per level. At an average height of 2 storeys, there is an estimated 2,000 beds.

The townhouses and garden apartments are identified on a 4 hectare site. With an estimated density of 50 units per hectare there is the potential for 200 units. Depending on the type of unit and its use for either regular, mature or married students, the level of accommodation will vary. However, at an estimated average of 2 students per unit, the townhouse/garden apartments have the ability to house approximately 400 students.
4.3 OPEN SPACE

Open spaces are a critical element to the Demonstration Plan and to the overall success of the campus as a successful academic institution. Well-designed open spaces help to define a sense of place and form a backdrop to the daily movement of students as they commute to the campus or go from class to class. They become the place where major academic ceremonies such as convocation take place. They form the setting for social interaction, whether it is in the form of informal discussions, solitary study or spontaneous sporting activities; that mosaic of informal activities that both facilitates interaction or encourages private pursuits, both of which are critical to the formation of the student.

The demonstration plan envisions three types of environments that will occupy approximately 70 acres of the campus, the amount of open space reflects the objective of both the University and the Wascana Centre Autlenty. These spaces, illustrated in figure 14, are defined as; formal spaces defined by the university buildings, natural spaces defined by the environmental features of the site, and recreational spaces used for organized sports on the campus.
4.3.1 Formal Spaces

A series of formal spaces planned for the campus spaces, which are defined by buildings and create a hierarchy of places that serve a range of campus activities.

**Central Academic Square**

Located at the geographic center of the Wascana Campus, this space will become the functional and symbolic nucleus of campus life. It will provide a focus to the major activities of the campus including:

- A location for the most active places on campus including the library and resource centre and the student union.
- Restaurants and outdoor cafes.
- Place for informal as well as formal recreation activities such as intramural soccer and football, volleyball, ultimate frisbee and activities such as skating in the winter (figure 15).
- A stage for major campus events such as convocation where tents might be set-up for associated receptions (figure 16).
- Campus celebrations such as winter carnival (ice castle) and summer festivities such as outdoor concerts and theatre.

The Central Academic Square has been carefully sized to facilitate large gatherings but at the same time provide the compactness required for a humanly scaled vibrant open space.
A series of comparisons to the same scale are included to illustrate the scale of this space relative to the existing quadrangle on the west campus as well as to other universities with important symbolic cores including:

- McGill
- Harvard
- MIT

These spaces have evolved under distinct circumstances. Some characteristics are briefly noted as follows:

**McGill** - The central court at McGill is bounded by the Library, the Arts Building and the historic Science buildings. It provides space for small gatherings shaded by larger trees as well providing for sports in the open area. Dominated by Moyse Hall the court is the symbolic focal point of the campus.

**Harvard Yard** - This historic centre of Harvard, it is a space that is flanked by student residences, academic spaces as well as by the library. The space is heavily treed and is used by smaller groups as well as for convocation. Organized sports, which require a large field are difficult. It is the place or space, rather than an individual building that is memorable.

**MIT** - The Barker Engineering Library, the icon of MIT, a classical building with a doomed roof and expansive colonnade. The building reaches out towards the Charles River and to Boston, creating a major open space, which in addition to hosting major campus ceremonies is used for a variety of campus activities. The expansive lawn and magnificent treed areas is ideally suited for both active and quiet activities.
Lessons Learned

Whether the Central Academic Square will eventually attain the iconic quality of the spaces described above will depend on:

1. Location: The proposed square located at the geographic centre of the East Campus will become its logical focus.

2. Context: It must become the focus of collegial campus life as housed in facilities such as the student centre and the library.

3. Expression: The adjacent building must be carefully sized and scaled, both to the individual as well as to the university collective.

Connecting Malls

From the Central Academic Square, two open space Malls extend westward and southward connecting the East Campus to the existing campus, the Research Park and the Saskatchewan Indian College to the west as well as to SIAST, future research facilities and complementary institutions to the south.

These spaces are more linear in nature and will be flanked by major interior ‘streets’, which in turn link the academic facilities. Both the interior and adjacent open spaces are at the same level, providing complementary interior cold weather routes as well as exterior routes and places, both shaded and open.

The malls will provide clarity to the overall circulation pattern; they will be animated spaces as students move from class to class and by the specific academic characteristics of the disciplines in the flanking facilities.

The Malls will frame the view to the major common facilities surrounding the Central Academic Square, providing a visual focus to the spaces. The opposite ends will be defined by softer elements such as landscape, facilitating a sense of the campus reaching out, connecting to its surrounding context.
Informal Quadrangles

As the Campus is built, a series of clearly defined quadrangles will be formed, each with its own unique character. These will be defined by buildings that in turn link together or by individual facilities, which are then linked.

The building and space will be considered as an integral element in which both are a product of an integrated process. It should be noted, that ground level pedestrian flow can occur in a more random manner, penetrating the buildings through either open portals or transparent lobby areas.

4.3.2 Recreational Spaces

The demonstration plan also includes space for both passive and active recreational opportunities. Providing for fields where students can be involved as either participants or spectators in a range of sports.

The recreational and sports fields are conveniently located for easy access from both campus buildings and parking facilities. Their physical locations also help to animate the university grounds with activities outside of the formal campus environment.

4.3.3 Perimeter 'Edge' Conditions

Wascana Creek - The Wascana Creek forms the easterly boundary to the site and will connect the east campus to this important citywide feature. In addition to providing a water element, natural shoreline and important waterfowl habitat and a series of trails will extend to the campus, providing an important amenity. Consideration should be given to providing a water element, adjacent to the student residences and the sports fields, which would bring an extension of the Creek directly to the campus, providing both an important summer amenity as well as access to cross country skiing and possibly skating in the winter.
TransCanada Highway - The edge along TransCanada Highway (figure 21), a high speed limited access road, has been buffered through the use of landscaped open space, playfields and by parking areas that are carefully screened though the use of berus and landscaping.

The highway is crossed at two points. To the south an underpass provides access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. To the north an overpass which is more central to the campus itself and which would provide more convenient access for both pedestrians and cyclists.

The bridge will have a significant visual impact from the TransCanada Highway and therefore careful consideration should be given to both its visual characteristics as well as its functional requirements.

Wascana Parkway - The Wascana Parkway is characterized along its length by generously landscaped buildings set well back from the roadway. The Parkway will become the civic entry for both the East Campus as well as to the adjacent S.I.A.S.T. Campus and other related institutions. This entry point will be generously landscaped and defined by two buildings that become the backdrop to this gateway

4.4 CIRCULATION

4.4.1 Pedestrian Circulation

Within the core campus area, the primary means of movement will be walking. This will be facilitated by means of an interior network as well as an open space system which would parallel the interior system (figure 22). This will facilitate ease of movement between classes even in the most inclement weather. At the same time, as the academic calendar extends out into the summer period, it will ensure that students will be able to take full advantage of the summer season
FIGURE 22 Pedestrian Circulation
The interior and exterior networks are at the same level, allowing for ease of movement from one to the other. The interior system will be at the building edge where possible, providing for views and ease of visual orientation on campus. In this way, the activities in each system will complement one another, creating a vibrancy that is not likely to take place if each system functions in isolation.

The interior circulation system should take on the characteristics of a vibrant street that would open out to the study areas, lounges, eating and other common services. It will provide opportunities for chance meetings and socialization.

There are three circulation rings envisioned including an inner route around the three edges of the Central Academic Square, an outer route paralleling the ring road and intermediate route.

There will be instances where the students will opt to take short cuts across the exterior open space. However, this was not considered onerous. It is what people who are used to cold weather do and was felt to be preferable to excessive compartmentalization of the exterior open space system and preferable to the creation of a secondary podium level.

Extensions of the pedestrian system beyond the core area will be integrated into the roadways themselves. Sidewalks are generous in width and separated from the roadway by a boulevard. Tree planting along these walkways is proposed, providing for shade.

Access to the perimeter surface parking lots will be at clearly defined intermediate points for convenience and safety. Pedestrian routes are defined by clear walkways across the perimeter roadways, and entries into the buildings is direct. Landscaped berms, which provide visual screening as well as wind protection will assist in channeling this movement.

A large percentage of full time students will continue to live off campus. In addition, there will be an increasing number of students who will attend the university on a part time basis, either in the evening or during the day. It is important, therefore, that these entries be as convenient as possible.
4.4.2 Vehicular Circulation

Figure 25 illustrates how traffic will access the East Campus, either directly from Wascana Drive from the south or indirectly through the West Campus via the TransCanada Highway underpass. These will connect to the perimeter ring road which in turn will provide access to the outer and inner core of the campus.

Primary System

This primary roadway system will include two lanes in either direction separated by a heavily landscaped central median. Circular roundabouts are provided at the intersections of the access roadways and the ring road, providing green landscaped terminations to these entries and calming traffic. All roadways will be pedestrian oriented and will incorporate clearly defined cross walks and where appropriate, side curb extensions into the roadway to reduce the length of the pedestrian crossing (figure 26).

Figure 26: Cross section of proposed access needs
FIGURE 25: Vehicle Circulation
Secondary System
A series of secondary roadways will connect to this primary system, providing access to those facilities located outside the core campus area. These would provide for generous pedestrian circulation, separated from the roadway itself by a landscaped median.

Service Traffic
A service vehicle system is provided off the ring road into the inner core campus. This will provide for maintenance access, deliveries and waste removal.

Depending on ongoing water table investigations, it may be possible to have these service courts at the basement levels of the building. This would allow for distribution at this level, separate from the primary student circulation levels. It would also allow for continuity of the outer pedestrian movement ring as services delivery could ramp down below this level.

4.4.3 Bicycle Access
Bicycle use on campus at this point is relatively light. However, in the future this could increase due to the extension of the academic season into the summer months. The linkage between the West and East Campus and the construction of housing in close proximity of the campus, but beyond convenient walking distance may also result in an increased use of bicycles.

Accommodation of bicycle transportation will include dedicated lanes on the roadway system and proper parking facilities. Such infrastructure should be considered when the final details of the campus are completed.

4.5 PARKING
Parking has been organized to provide convenience, while maintaining the integrity of the pedestrian movement of the inner campus. In addition, it recognized the significant cost differential between surface lots, above grade parking structures and below grade parking. The plan uses a combination of these three approaches as follows:

Surface Parking Lots
These are located outside the perimeter ring road and are accessible directly from that road. Pedestrian movement from these lots channeled to the intermediate cross walks and from these points directly into the inner core circulation system.
Parking Structures
Parking structures are consolidated at three points within the inner core of the campus. These will provide direct access into the academic buildings.

Below Grade Parking
It is anticipated that as the buildings are built, parking can be incorporated into the lower levels. This will be done on a selective basis, dependent on the building configuration. Access from these areas into the academic areas is direct and convenient.