A wide-angle photograph of a vast, flat, green field, likely a golf course or a large agricultural field. The grass is a vibrant green, and the field extends to the horizon. A red banner is overlaid at the top of the image, containing the text "IV. Open Space Character" in white, italicized font.

IV. Open Space Character

4.0 Open Space Character

The campus is currently characterized by formal and informal spaces that hold historic, symbolic and functional significance. For example, the area in front of the Old Arts building is symbolic, while the wooded area directly south of the Student Union Building is informal. Significant open spaces define the campus edges to the north, south, and east. This variety is treasured as the aesthetic quality of the campus is shaped by a diversity of outdoor experiences. These spaces have been created incrementally as the campus has evolved, often due to the siting of buildings. In some instances, however, open spaces are merely “leftover” spaces or areas awaiting development. Where university functions meet the College Hill residential neighbourhood, they do not interlink.

The Open Space component of the Concept Plan begins with consideration of several key ideas:

- A campus landscape should be planned and maintained as a vital element of the campus environment. The landscape sustains and supports campus life;
- The treatment of the landscape allows for the introduction of a new aesthetic quality to the campus;
- A strong open space network defines movement and offers beauty and pleasure to all users. It enhances the pedestrian experience and promotes walking;
- The relationship between the City and the campus can be strengthened by integrating the campus into the City of Fredericton’s Open Space network.



4.1 Open Space Framework

The approach to the Fredericton Campus Plan Open Space Framework builds upon the existing system of formal and informal open spaces currently found on campus. Opportunities to enhance or create additional open spaces have been embraced, and as a result, the Open Space Framework is directly tied to the approach to Built Form articulated in Section 6 of this plan. Open spaces are recognized as encompassing a variety of functions, and are thus distinguished based on a series of defining characteristics.

Greenbelt

An important characteristic for a compact and cohesive campus is a clearly defined edge that also acts as a shared and appealing interface with the surrounding context. UNB Fredericton is afforded the opportunity to establish a “greenbelt” that would define the north, south and east edges of the campus. This greenbelt strings together a variety of “green” elements, including the space in front of the Old Arts Building, Buchanan and Chapman Fields, as well as the wooded areas to the east and south of the existing campus. These greenbelt edges should be protected from development in perpetuity, and recognized as key amenity areas that contribute to the overall campus aesthetic.

Green Streetscape

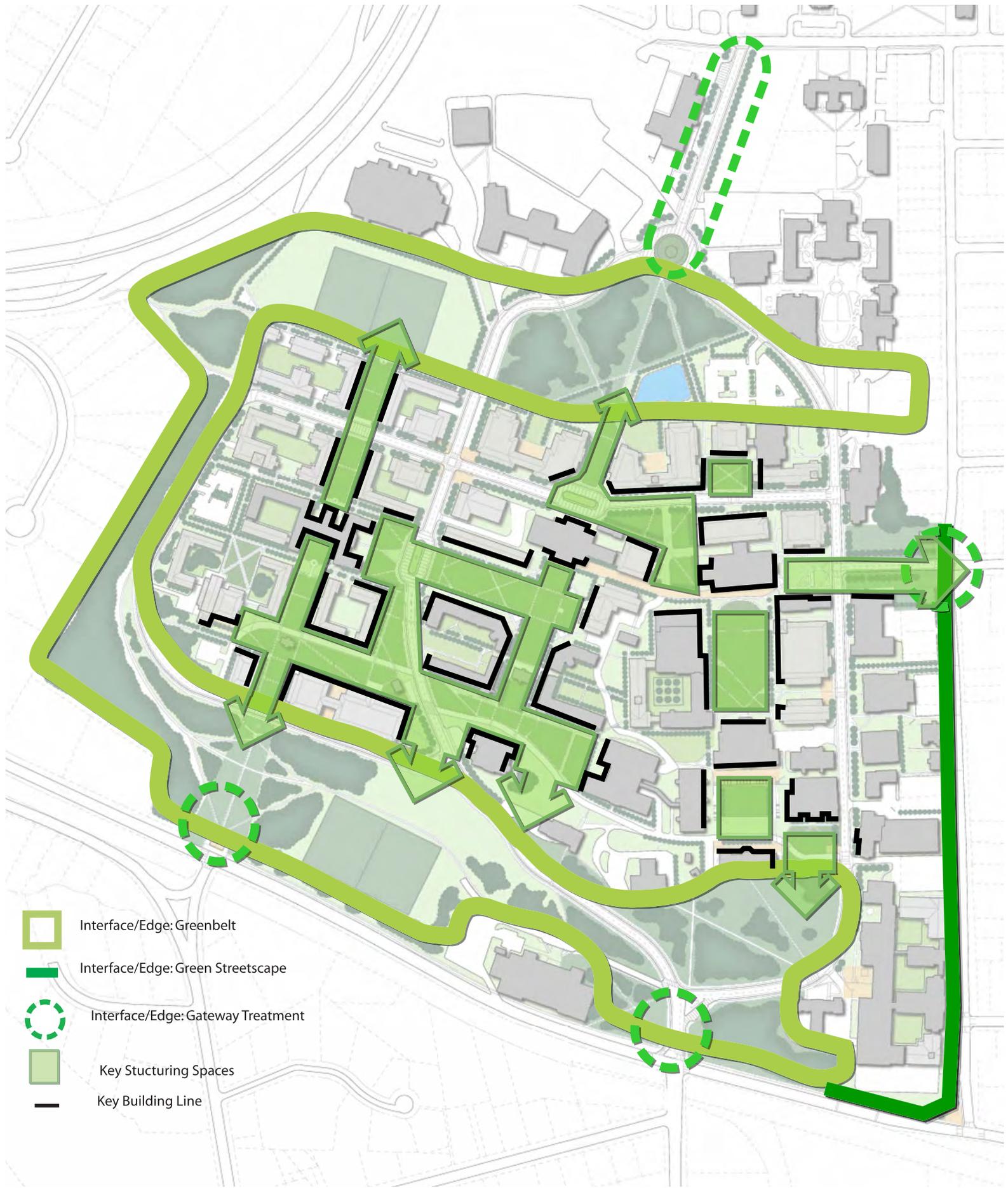
Windsor Street is the western edge and interface between the campus and the College Hill community. It is here that the University most directly meets the City, but the campus fails to respond to this community. Over time, through infill and landscaping, this corridor should be transformed from its current unappealing reverse frontage condition into a beautiful green urban streetscape that provides the University with an enhanced frontage to the City.

Gateway Treatment

Currently all three access points into the Campus are characterized by an open space condition as a terminus to the approaching street. These areas are the University’s Gateways and their enhancement through landscaping, gateway markers, signage and public art can reinforce a desired image for UNB while establishing far reaching visual linkages with the surrounding city.

Key Structuring Spaces

The primary organizing feature of the UNB Fredericton campus, as in many other campuses, is the sequence of quadrangle spaces shaped by the deliberate placement of buildings. This pattern should be enhanced and extended into the expansion areas as a defining characteristic for the University. In concert with the surrounding green perimeter and the steep slopes, a well-connected network of attractive spaces with exceptionally dramatic views can be achieved that are unique to UNB Fredericton.



-  Interface/Edge: Greenbelt
-  Interface/Edge: Green Streetscape
-  Interface/Edge: Gateway Treatment
-  Key Structuring Spaces
-  Key Building Line



4.2 The Open Space Plan

The Open Space Plan for the campus builds upon, enhances and extends the current system of spaces, while exploring opportunities to introduce new types of spaces within a coherent network. While each space may be tailored to a specific function or purpose, the entire network operates as a framework that structures the growth of the campus, provides for porous pedestrian movement, reinforces key physical and visual connections between buildings and to the city below, and provides for a beautiful setting. The Open Space Plan is comprised of six primary structuring components, which will be defined shortly.

Components of the Open Space Plan

Commons

Located at entries into the Campus, commons are informal, yet symbolic spaces that may be heavily travelled by pedestrians. The four commons also connect to and anchor the internal open space network. Commons should function primarily as passive spaces and provide for an enhanced aesthetic setting through a variety of landscaping treatments that may include grassed areas, woods and formal or informal plantings.

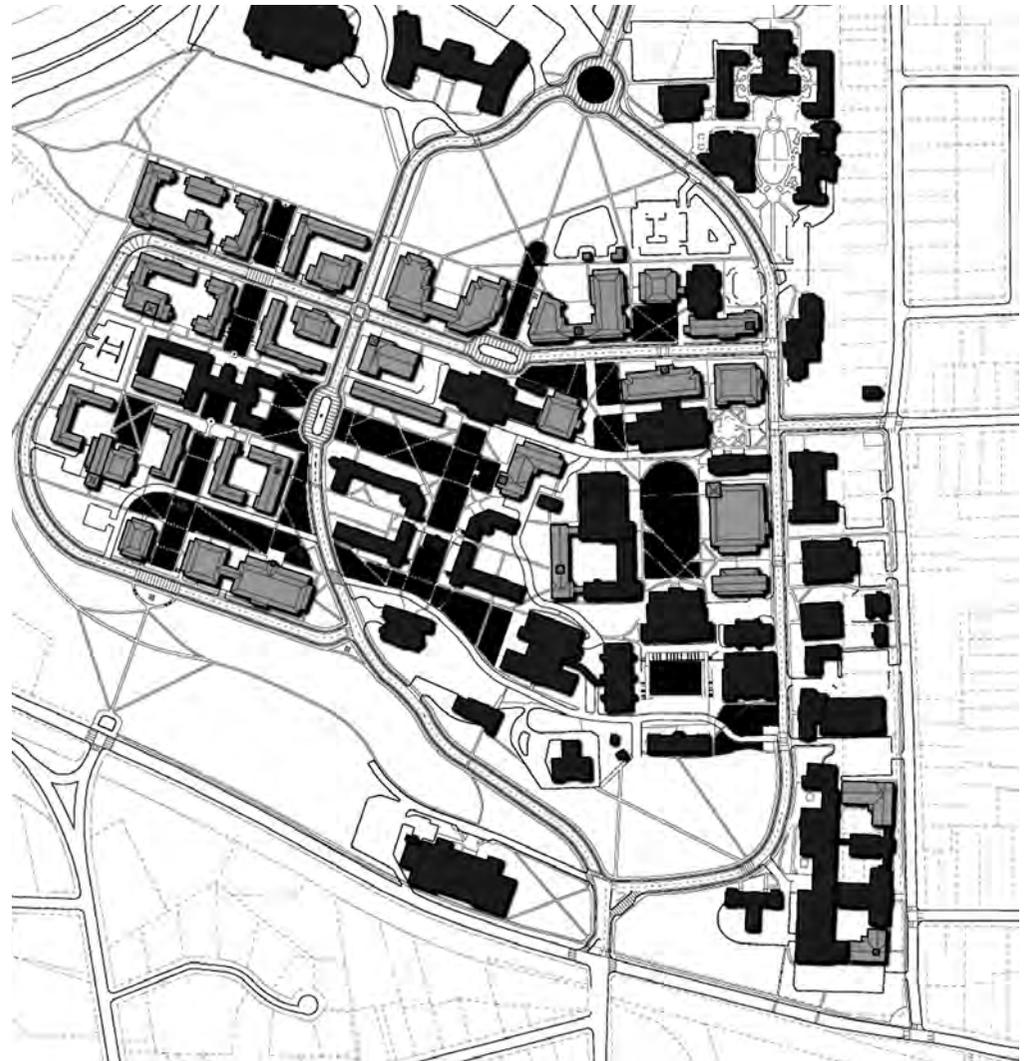
- The **North Common** is the most significant common, located at the University Avenue and Beaverbrook Street gateway and leading to the Old Arts Building;
- The **South Common**, another important gateway space, is directly across from Marshall d'Avray Hall, and provides a significant green area at the southern edge of campus;
- The **East Common** will be created as a result of the expansion of the easterly side of campus, and is south of the Forest Hill and Waterloo Row intersection. This large informal area should be characterized by a pedestrian gateway to the Core Campus;
- The **West Common** is directly east of the Kings College Road and Windsor Street intersection, and frames the main entrance to the west of the campus.



Yards

Located within the heart of the campus, yards are highly formalized and linear spaces that structure the campus built form. Primarily consisting of quadrangles, yards serve as an internal focus and pedestrian “street” network that directly connect different buildings and functions in an attractive and compelling setting. Yards should be characterized by minimal landscaping to reinforce visual connections between buildings. While passive in nature, the free flowing space of most yards should accommodate unorganized active uses such as casual play or public gatherings.

Two key existing yards are Jacob’s Yard, north of the Harriet Irving Library, and the area north of the Student Union Building. A proposed primary yard runs the length of the campus in the centre of the eastern expansion area; two east/west yards provide linkages between the existing campus and the eastern expansion area; two yards in the south of the campus run from south of Singer Hall to Pacey Drive, and south of the Student Union Building to the heart of the South Common. Smaller yards are dispersed throughout the campus, including the Old Arts Yard, to the south of the Old Arts Building, and a newly created yard that would frame the front entrance of the Forestry and Geology building.





Lawns

Secondary to Yards, lawns are less formal or public in nature and are often associated with specific buildings through courtyards and forecourts. A variety of landscaping treatments should characterize lawns, which will determine use. For example, in relation to residences, lawns provide for a passive common area for students. Key existing lawns are north of Carleton Hall, in the courtyard framed by Harrison, Neville and Aitken Houses, as well as MacKenzie, Bridges, Jones and Neill Houses. Proposed lawns are primarily located in the eastern expansion area.



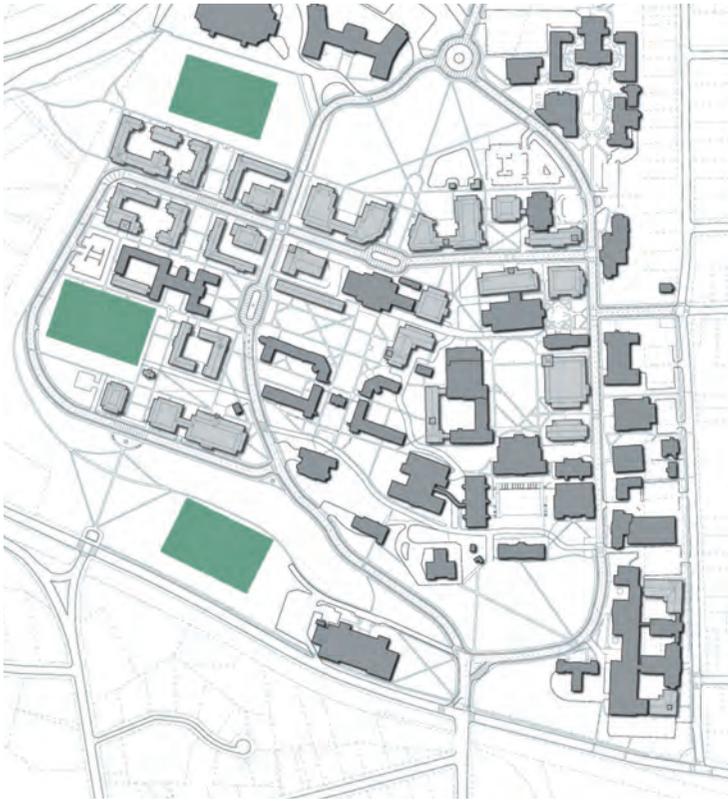
Squares

Squares are formal paved areas strategically located in or near high pedestrian traffic areas, highly active functions, gateways, or symbolic gathering places. These spaces can be formal or informal in their design, dependent upon the intended function or location. For example, squares should provide for a landmark installation at a key visual terminus or accommodate an outdoor café in the warmer months.

Several existing areas, some of which are currently parking lots, should be reconfigured to function as viable squares, including the area directly in front of the Old Arts Building, at the King's College Road/Windsor Street gateway, at several points along Dineen Drive, in the area south of McConnell Hall to the Residence Administrative Offices, and in front of the Harriet Irving Library leading east to the Student Union Building, where a Pedestrian Mall will be created. The East Common will culminate, to the south, in a new square, and several squares are included in the development sites along Pacey Drive.

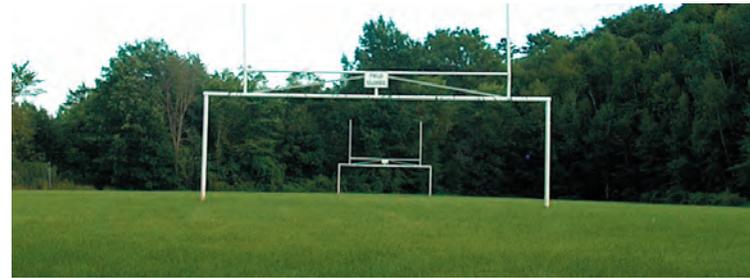


A square at Pasadena City College, California



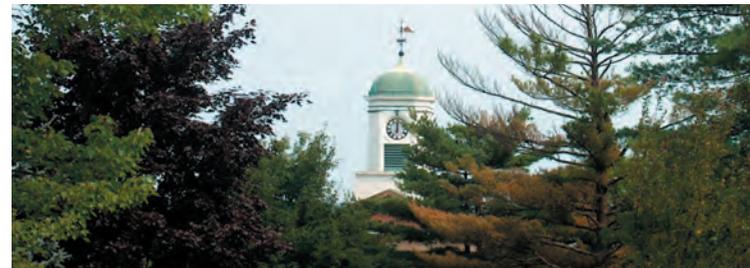
Fields

Organized outdoor sports should take place in formal settings called fields. The Open Space Plan maintains and enhances the existing Buchanan, Chapman and College Fields and integrates them into the larger network. In addition, ancillary lands to the south of the campus, including lands to the south of Montgomery Street, should be considered for the development of future fields. If a need is identified, a new field can also be created in the East Expansion area as illustrated.



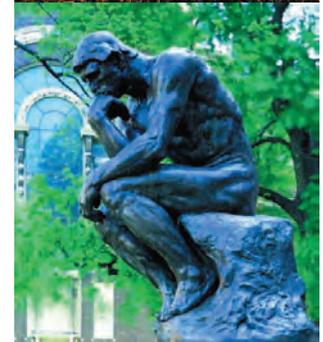
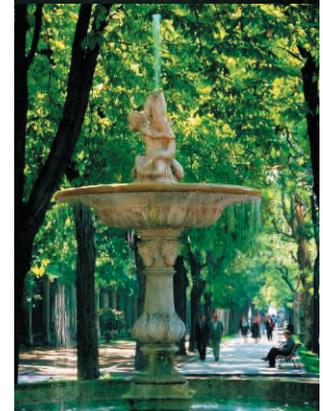
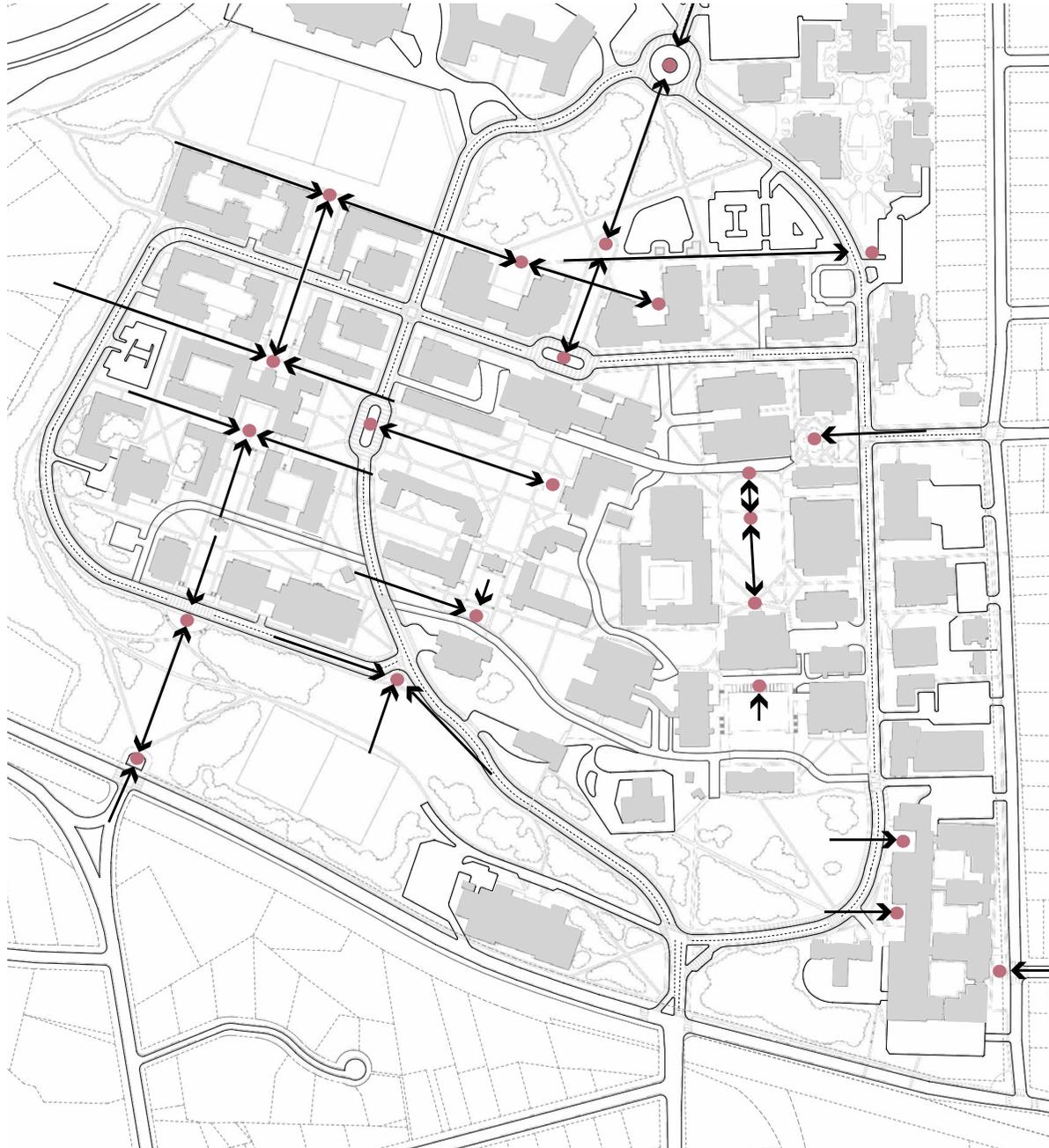
Green Canopies

Trees throughout the Campus form a green canopy. While heavily wooded areas have important environmental functions, they also create buffering and passive spaces. Formal tree planting provides for shade and wind protection for pedestrian comfort while enhancing the aesthetic quality of the campus in general. Key pedestrian corridors should be planted with significant trees to improve the micro-climate and to enhance the overall tree canopy on campus. Trees should also be used to reinforce and strengthen framed views to buildings or scenic vistas. In addition, a tree replacement strategy should be implemented to ensure that as significant stands age, such as those located in the North Common, they are replenished.



Open Space Landmarks

Landmarks are vertical structures, such as public art installations or monuments strategically located within the open space network. Landmarks in open spaces not only become important orienting devices for pedestrians, but also offer an opportunity to identify sites of symbolic or historical importance, or to memorialize important figures in the University's history. Sites well suited for landmarks have been identified where they can be most visible such as at the end of a view axis, on a prominent high point or at intersecting corridors of pedestrian movement.





4.3 Landscape Character

The landscape character of the campus can contribute to the campus aesthetic by providing a comfortable, safe and beautiful campus environment that responds in a variety of ways to the range of natural and constructed features that exist today.

A Landscape Plan

As a crucial and potentially prominent element of the campus setting, the landscape should be given more detailed consideration in the context of a comprehensive Landscape Plan. With the help of a Landscape Plan, the University should endeavour to protect existing topographical, geological, hydrological and natural features.

A Tree Replacement Strategy

In addition, existing trees are in need of protection, and a Tree Replacement Strategy is necessary to plan for the eventual decline of some of the most prominent trees on campus. In many instances, priority should be given to the use of native species in landscaping, so that interventions such as pesticides, fertilizers and mowing can be minimized.

Water Use and Run Off

Water use and runoff should also be considered in the context of a Landscape Plan. Landscaping should prioritize the planting of species less dependent on water (xeriscaping), consider the creation of constructed wetlands to bio-remediate runoff water and grey water from buildings, and use porous surface materials to minimize runoff.

Landscape Approach

The various types of open spaces on campus should be characterized by landscape design and materials that are appropriate to the character of each area. While it would be simplistic to characterize all open space components in the same way, consideration should be given to ensuring that these areas have consistent elements. For example, informal spaces such as Commons should have defining elements that establish continuity both in relation to the campus as a whole, and in relation to the other Commons. This will in part be achieved by selecting a palette of colours, textures and materials that have a degree of continuity from one type of space to the next.

Earthworks

An opportunity exists to consider the landscape as a layer that could redefine the campus environment by adding an innovative aesthetic element. Earthworks are large-scale landscape gestures involving the movement of soil to define an area in an artistic or practical way. The topography of the campus is such that in certain areas, there already appears to be a deliberate shaping of earth in a gestural manner. For example, Jacob's Yard exhibits a number of these formations. An application of this approach across the campus should be considered by the Landscape Plan to reinforce the unique identity of UNB Fredericton.



The shaping of earth to create a compelling and beautiful landscape exists throughout the campus. “Earthworks” can be a very cost effective way of greatly enhancing the campus and becoming a distinguishing feature of the University and its setting.

4.4 Open Space Planning Considerations

The Open Space Plan provides a template for campus development and is a central element of the Campus Plan. In the absence of a building program, or in response to a building program that will evolve over an extended period, the Open Space Plan should be implemented with an emphasis on the various components that comprise the overall campus structure — the commons, lawns, yards, squares, fields and green canopies (see sections 4.1 and 4.2). Interim uses such as parking can occupy future development sites, making it possible to implement the Open Space Plan immediately, even in the absence of a building program. Areas that ought not to be developed, such as those identified in the Open Space Framework, should be protected and clearly delineated.

