

# Introduction / Background

## Letter from the President

For more than 160 years, the University at Buffalo has been at the center of the life of this city and region. Today, more than ever before, UB is at the heart of growth for this community, and it will be even more so in the years to come.

Our goal is simple: to grow in stature as a model public research university for the 21st century. To improve in quality, we have discovered, we must also grow in size, with a larger and more diverse body of scholars and a student body in better proportion to the number and variety of degree programs we already offer.

To accommodate this growth we must also increase the size and capacity of our established campus centers and our emerging campus in Downtown Buffalo. Succeeding at such an undertaking requires an ambitious and far-reaching plan.

The guiding principles for a physical plan to accommodate this growth are clear. UB must:

- Support a rising standard of academic excellence and cultivate vital intellectual communities on our campuses;
- Connect our campuses efficiently and seamlessly with each other and with our neighboring communities;
- Grow our campuses in concert with the communities where we make our homes and from which we draw our strength;
- Become ever more effective stewards of the financial and physical resources which are entrusted to us; and,
- Make our campuses models of sustainable development and design for the coming age of environmental stewardship.

Today, you will have an opportunity to see the first outlines of that plan. It is partly the product of analysis by our internationally noted consulting team, led by Beyer Blinder Belle. But it is also the result of an extensive series of conversations over the past year with stakeholders across the university community and beyond about what a new plan for UB's campus centers must achieve, what problems it must solve, and what opportunities it must grasp.

We are depending upon you to tell us if we have gotten it right. We also hope you will continue to join in the conversation, this coming spring when the planning will focus on developing the basic concepts for a plan, next fall when we will present a draft plan, and spring 2009 when our focus will turn to implementation.

UB exists to pursue its mission of excellence in research, teaching, and service. But we also know that there are no great city-regions without great public research universities. In the age of the knowledge-based economy, such a university is the engine for regional economic growth. For that reason, UB's plan for growth must also be a plan for growth that this community takes to its heart. Help us create that plan. Help us make it happen.

John B. Simpson  
President of the University

“The Vision for the University at Buffalo’s Comprehensive Master Plan effort is for UB to become a model “21st century University” — an open place of learning and a generator of new ideas that sets a standard of academic excellence and serves a diverse population in today’s knowledge based society.”

- Vision Statement

## Guiding Principles

- Promote academic excellence, the interdisciplinary exchange of ideas, and the development of vital intellectual communities.
- Promote a united and accessible university campus with three strong, distinctive, and seamlessly interconnected centers designed to facilitate social interaction.
- Reflect the University’s responsibility to the community that founded it by respecting and being shaped, in part, by public plans and policies.
- Provide the basis for long-range capital programming and the prudent stewardship of university resources.
- Establish UB as a leader in environmental stewardship and sustainable design development.



**Framing UB** - UB has solicited photographs, video and written commentary from the University and neighboring communities, in order to see the campus through your eyes. Here is what you have to say so far...



# Time Line / Schedule

**Pre Planning**  
**October 2006**  
*Identifying key issues and shaping guiding principles for the Master Plan*

**Vision, Strategic Considerations, Guiding Principles**  
**Fall 2007**  
*Gathering data, analyzing existing conditions and interviewing stakeholders to refine guiding principles and identify key issues to be explored in the Campus Plan*

**Campus Concepts**  
**Spring 2008**  
*Developing physical concepts to address growth and translate goals into physical concepts*

**Draft Plan**  
**Fall 2008**  
*Formalizing concepts into physical plans*

**Implementation Launch**  
**Spring 2009**  
*Organize resources and support to enact the plan and monitor progress*

## UB Presence in the Community

### The University as a City

When considering the size, components, and characteristics of the University at Buffalo physical environment, it is like a city—providing major business and services to its students, employees, and affiliates. Therefore, current systems, processes, and policies must be further developed in order to properly manage and unify UB's growing physical infrastructure. In addition, the university as a city must strongly consider its role in the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the region.



### UB in Erie County

While many employees live within close proximity to the core campuses, a large number are willing to commute from distant areas. This map illustrates UB's institutional footprint on Erie County by pinpointing the addresses of faculty and staff within county boundaries. The total 6,495 employees that live in Erie County are predominantly located throughout the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst with the population thinning out further in the Southtowns.

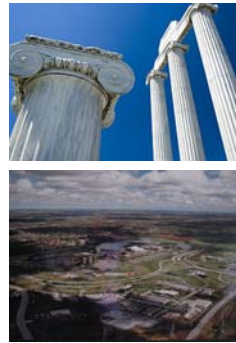
## Why UB Needs a Physical Plan

Building UB: The Comprehensive Physical Plan is needed to facilitate the anticipated institutional growth of the University at Buffalo. The plan will guide the needed development and improvements to the overall campus while preserving its rich history and remaining sensitive to the distinct spirit, culture, and physical setting of UB and its host region.

The plan must translate the academic needs and population projections into requirements for certain types and locations of buildings. Only by looking at all disciplines at once can competing and sometimes overlapping needs be considered in the context of the development of the entire university. And unlike the project-by-project approach, a comprehensive

plan will ensure that important gathering places, landscaped areas, and connecting features that enhance the quality of the student, faculty, and staff experience will be incorporated. The Comprehensive Physical Plan will assist the university in prioritizing, phasing, and anticipating the financial needs of projects for the next two decades.

The comprehensive physical plan will promote UB's growth by creating and sustaining memorable settings that foster learning, academic excellence, interdisciplinary cooperation, and environmental stewardship.



## UB: One University - Three Campuses

The University at Buffalo is the state's largest and most comprehensive public university and is spread across three campuses

### North Campus: A world of education

UB's bustling North Campus, where most of the university's core academic programs are offered, is located in suburban Amherst. Opened in the early 1970s, the North Campus currently has more than 100 buildings and more on the way, including ongoing construction of new apartment-style student housing, as well as state-of-the-art academic buildings.



1,100 acres  
 148 buildings (6,715,482 sq. ft.)  
 10 residence halls  
 5 apartment complexes

### South Campus: Classic Lines, Cutting Edge

The picturesque South Campus, located three miles away from the North Campus in a residential section of Buffalo, was the university's home for much of the twentieth century. Here, ivy-covered buildings and a traditional bell tower complement new research and teaching facilities. The schools of Architecture and Planning, Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Dental Medicine, Public Health and Health Professions, and Nursing are on the South Campus. The School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences will locate to the South Campus in 2011.



350 acres  
 53 buildings (1,025,198 sq. ft.)  
 6 residence halls

### Downtown Campus: Science in the City

A major research center of the University at Buffalo, the New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences creates a hub of life sciences expertise and innovation in Western New York. The CoE has a strong foundation in life sciences research and discovery to bring to its collaborative efforts with industry, government, and researchers around the world to improve the health and well-being of the population.



43 buildings, including shared and leased space  
 (588,568 sq. ft.)



# Public Participation

The leadership of this institution has reached out to the breadth and depth of the university and the community at large for advice on how to create the kind of places that will help us achieve our goal of excellence.

## Community Conversations

In September 2006, UB President John B. Simpson announced the University's determination to rise among the ranks of great public research universities and to do so by growing our faculty and enrollment by forty percent.

Since that time, the leadership of the institution has reached out to breadth and depth of the university community and to the community at-large to explain this initiative and ask for advice on how to create the places – the campuses – where this change can happen.

This outreach began with UB's own internal leadership, extended to the highest ranks of the State University of New York, and then to the incoming administration of Governor Spitzer, and on to our representatives in the State Legislature. We have consulted with our partners in local and regional government and with leaders in business and in the community and with our campus neighbors.

Working through the complex institutional structure of the University itself, we have also had extensive discussions with administrators, Deans, faculty, librarians, staff, students, alumni; and supporters in dozens of different organizational venues.

All told, over the past 14 months we have held some **115 formal meetings** involving well over **two thousand individuals** to talk about what the places that constitute the University at Buffalo need to become for us to follow our path to prominence among the great public research universities of this nation.

These conversations have been supplemented by additional commentary invited through the **Building UB web site** – where you can continue to offer us your thoughts on the plan. It has also been complemented by the submission of photographs by nearly 150 students, staff, and others to our **Framing UB photo dialogue** – a chance to let the planners look at the University campuses through the eyes of the people who are here every day. Some of those photographs are on display here.

We have analyzed this body of commentary very carefully and derived from it the following summary of "strategic considerations" – key issues which the plan must address if it is to help UB achieve our goal of excellence. This is a broad distillation of thousands of voices, but people who know UB will likely recognize these statements. All participants are invited to help us confirm or adjust these expressions of "strategic considerations."

The University administration, in consultation with its many partners, developed a beginning set of "guiding principles" for the planning nearly a year ago. Conversations since then have elaborated, deepened, adjusted, and reinforced these guiding principles which, in turn, help organize the strategic considerations offered here.



## Preliminary Strategic Considerations

### Promote academic excellence and the development of vital intellectual communities:

UB campuses need more and better **large scale program space**.

The campuses need a variety of **formal gathering spaces** or places for socializing.

**The central role of the Libraries** in the life of the University must be reinforced.

**Classroom space** is in short supply.

**Technological capacity** must continue to grow.

Facilities need to reflect **the changing ways that students learn**.

UB's commitment to **interdisciplinary research** demands that we think about what kinds of different facilities this new way of working requires.

### Promote a united and accessible university campus with three strong, distinctive centers:

The designs of our campuses need to acknowledge that **we live in a winter city**.

**Key connections** must be made easier on all three campuses.

People on both main campuses are frustrated with **parking**.

Improvements in **public transit** connections are needed between UB campuses and the region.

**Convenient retail and other services** are lacking on both North and South Campuses.

Many places on the two campuses are **confusing to visitors**.

**Visitors arriving by car to North Campus are confused**.

The "**public realm**" of all three campuses needs to be made warmer and more inviting.

### Reflect the University's responsibility to the community by which it was founded:

**South Campus** shares an interest with residents and property owners in improving adjoining neighborhoods.

**North Campus** is poorly connected to its surrounding neighborhoods.

**UB Downtown** offers an opportunity to lead the resurgence of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The University needs **healthy working relationships** with our host municipalities and related agencies.

### Provide the basis for long-range capital planning and the prudent stewardship of resources:

There is concern about underinvestment in basic and critical **maintenance** of facilities and infrastructure.

UB must **increase its capacity** to plan, program, design, construct, and evaluate more capital projects.

A **wider variety of financial tools** is needed for UB to move forward.

**New university facilities must be ready** when new faculty, students, and staff arrive.

Something we might call **campus pride** is missing.

### Establish UB as a leader in environmental stewardship and sustainable development and design:

A concerted effort must be made to **limit the growth of energy use** and our "carbon footprint."

**Campus landscape design and maintenance** should be geared to limit the use of energy, pesticides and herbicides and to promote water management practices.

**We need to protect and restore trees** on both North and South Campuses.

**Alternative forms of transportation**, including transit, cycling, and walking should be promoted.

**State of the art building design** should be in accordance with LEED standards.

