

Mont Alto



Penn State

Campus Exterior Architectural Plan
April 2009

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Introduction and purpose

Penn State's Mission:

Penn State is a multi-campus public land-grant university that improves the lives of the people of Pennsylvania, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality programs in teaching, research, and service.

To assist in achieving this mission, a Campus Exterior Architecture Plan, known as a CEAP, is developed to suggest ways to improve the exterior aesthetic qualities of campus with low-cost and easy-to-implement concepts that can have meaningful impacts. The CEAP is a planning tool that is an outgrowth of the campus master planning process.

The CEAP includes graphic and narrative descriptions of existing conditions on campus and approximately 15-20 improvement concepts. Positive features may also be identified as elements to emulate.

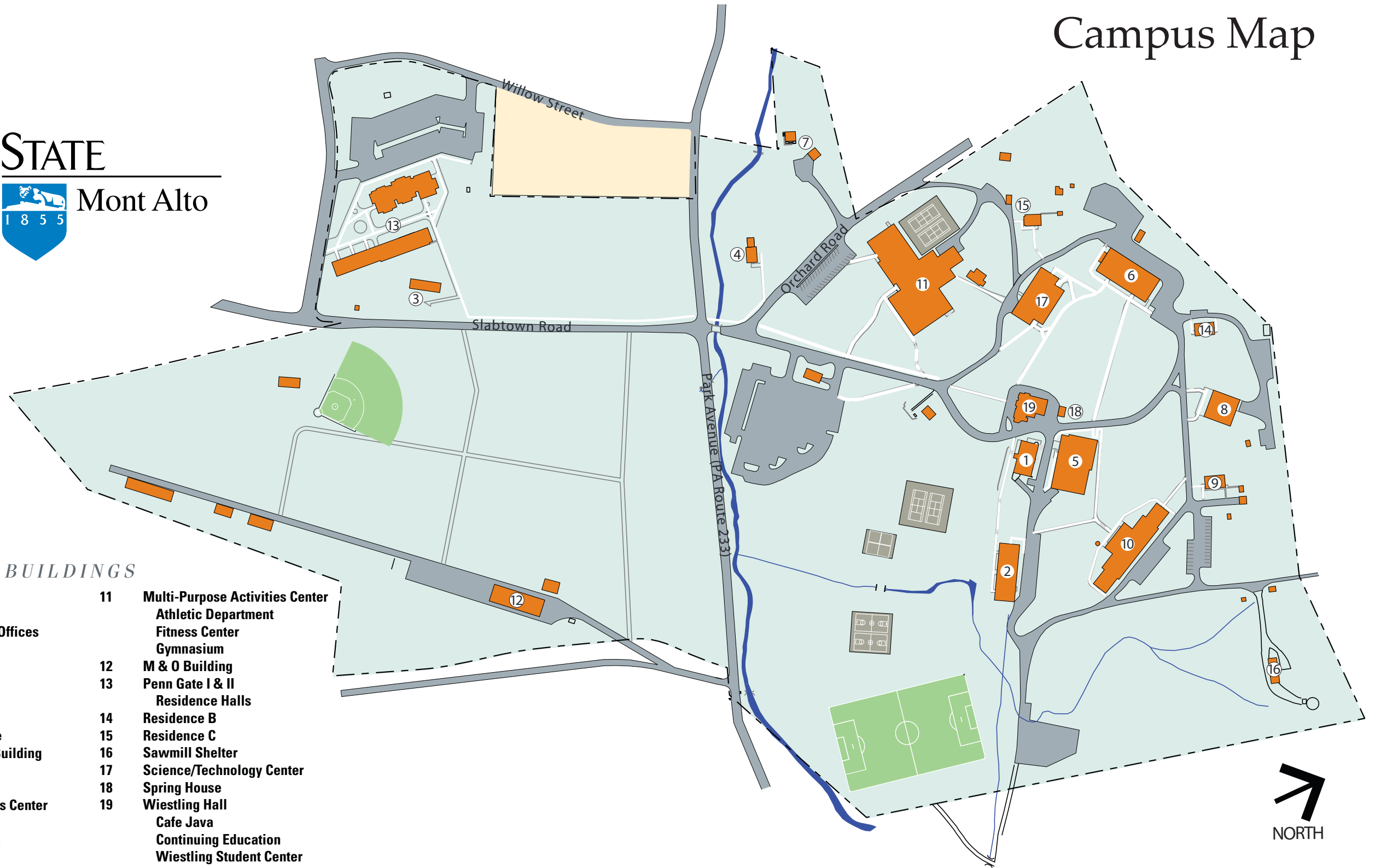
The improvement concepts are ranked or prioritized according to their visual impact and estimated cost. The concepts are not final designs. Further study and design are required prior to implementation.

Campus Map

PENNSSTATE



Mont Alto



CAMPUS BUILDINGS

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Bookstore | 11 | Multi-Purpose Activities Center |
| 2 | Conklin Hall | | Athletic Department |
| | Administrative Offices | | Fitness Center |
| | Admissions | | Gymnasium |
| | Finance Office | 12 | M & O Building |
| 3 | Engineering Lab | 13 | Penn Gate I & II |
| 4 | Emmanuel Chapel | | Residence Halls |
| 5 | Foods Building | 14 | Residence B |
| | Millstream Cafe | 15 | Residence C |
| 6 | General Studies Building | 16 | Sawmill Shelter |
| | Auditorium | 17 | Science/Technology Center |
| | Computer Lab | 18 | Spring House |
| | Student Success Center | 19 | Wiestling Hall |
| 7 | Knouse House | | Cafe Java |
| | Police Services | | Continuing Education |
| 8 | Library | | Wiestling Student Center |
| 9 | Maurice K. Goddard House | | |
| 10 | Mont Alto Hall | | |
| | Residence Halls | | |



NORTH

Existing Conditions Inventory

Background:

A detailed site analysis, campus vision and future development strategy are fully documented in the campus master plan process. In addition to the analysis performed during the master planning process, a focused visual assessment of the campus exterior is conducted which establishes the foundation for the recommendations and concepts contained in this CEAP document.

General Observations:

Second only to University Park in age and once known as the Pennsylvania State Forest Academy, Penn State Mont Alto reveres its history and honors its heritage as a foresters college. The campus occupies 103 acres adjacent to the Michaux State Forest and the West Branch of Antietam Creek in Franklin County.

Campus architectural style could best be described as eclectic. Several wood frame bungalow style residential structures have been adapted for academic and administrative use. Conklin Hall (built in 1910) is a finely detailed masonry structure with Victorian style cues. Wiestling Hall (the oldest building in the Penn State system) sits at the terminus of a prominent vista from the entrance to campus. Modern campus facilities include the library, Science and Technology Lab, Foods Building and the Bookstore. Many of the core campus academic buildings ring a large green open space. Stands of mature trees are abundant at the edges of campus as well as fruit orchards, farm lands and the small community of Mont Alto. All of these characteristics blend to create the verdant rural quality that is Penn State Mont Alto.

The campus is divided by public roads which diminishes the sense of arrival. Pedestrians and vehicles share circulation throughout the campus core in a less than ideal manner. Parking is suitably relegated to the campus perimeter.

Architecture

Existing Conditions Inventory

The aesthetic character of any campus is defined to a great extent by the structures that comprised it. Victorian, bungalow and modern architectural styles exist on campus. Brick and indigenous stone masonry are the predominant building materials.



Site Furnishings

Existing Conditions Inventory

Benches, trash receptacles tables and bike racks across the campus are varied in design, color and material.

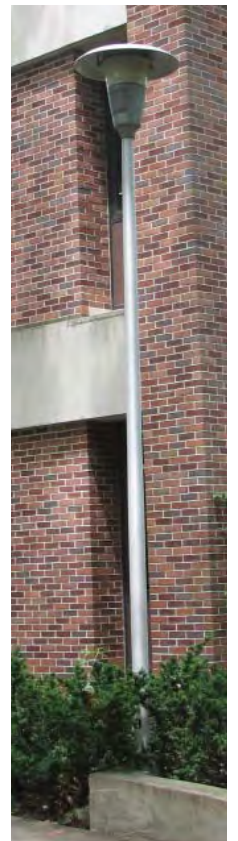
The aesthetically unifying effect of these types of site amenities is not being employed to the greatest possible extent.



Lighting

Existing Conditions Inventory

A variety of exterior light fixture types are present on campus. As with site furnishings, the aesthetically unifying effect of this site amenity is not being employed to the greatest possible extent



Signage

Existing Conditions Inventory



Consistent design and placement of directional and identification signs is key to a unified aesthetic as well as an intuitive and clear means of way finding. Consistent utilization of Penn State graphic standards throughout the system builds the University's identity.



Signage upgrades prompted by CEAP recommendations made at other Commonwealth campuses has resulted in a complete renovation program at Mont Alto as well. The program is currently in the final approval stage with implementation to follow.



Landscape

Existing Conditions Inventory

The landscape aesthetic of the campus can be characterized as park-like with groves of large, quality specimen trees and open grassy lawns. Ornamental plantings are conservative in design and quantity. Mature wooded areas should continue to be protected from development. Any and all invasive plant species should be eradicated. Opportunities exist for the limited use of perennial and annual flower color. Turf areas appear to be weed-free and well maintained. Both formal and informal outdoor gathering spaces exist on campus though there is opportunity for more.



Pedestrian Circulation

Existing Conditions Inventory

The co-mingling of pedestrian and vehicular circulation is problematic. Accessibility challenges exist. No distinct walkway hierarchy exists. Most common surfacing material is asphalt.



Improvement Concepts

The following figures describe and illustrate possible solutions to specific aesthetic and functional shortcomings on campus, most of which are addressable through the CEAP program. In addition to the recommendations that follow, there are routine maintenance tasks that will enhance the aesthetic appeal of campus. Suggestions include:

- ▶ Mulch landscape beds annually
- ▶ Eradicate weeds and other invasive vegetation
- ▶ Fertilize lawn areas
- ▶ Focus the use of annual and perennial plantings
- ▶ Re-seed lawn areas abutting sidewalks killed by deicing chemicals
- ▶ Seal and re-stripe paved areas
- ▶ Tree pruning and maintenance as recommended by University arborist

An implementation priority matrix has been prepared that lists improvement projects and recommends the order in which the concepts/projects could be executed. The implementation ranking is intended as a guideline for realizing the most significant impacts early in the plan implementation.

Location specific concepts/projects are keyed to the map with numbers corresponding to the listing on the matrix at the end of this report.

1A Remove Abandoned Building

Improvement Recommendation



The Penn Gate Gas Building located along Slabtown Road is no longer used.

Recommend the removal of the structure and conversion of the site to lawn.

Conklin Hall 1B

Downspouts

Improvement Recommendation

The white gutters and down spouts on the long facades of the building detract from the beauty of the architecture.

Recommend that the downspouts be reconfigured, reduced in number or eliminated altogether. If they must remain, changing the color to one that's less contrasting to the masonry would diminish the visual impact.



Before



After

1c

The Mill Entry

Improvement Recommendation

The Millstream Cafe entrance walkway is only partially paved. The existing AC unit and mounting bracketing is unsightly.

Recommend that the AC unit be lowered to sidewalk level and the gravel voids in the walkway surface be paved with concrete.



Before



After

Entry Enhancements

Improvement Recommendation

Previous renovation projects have not always respected the architectural integrity of campus buildings.

The two examples at left illustrate alternative door designs that compliment the architectural character of the building. Note also that stylistically appropriate light fixtures and site furnishings improve the aesthetic quality of these important campus locations.



Before



After



Before



After

1D Conklin Hall Entry Enhancements

Improvement Recommendation

Conklin Hall is a beautifully detailed architectural landmark of the campus. Previous renovation projects have not respected the design integrity of the building resulting in inappropriate updates.

Entrances to campus buildings are particularly important in demonstrating the level of quality intrinsic to Penn State.

Recommend the replacement of existing steel doors with stylistically appropriate ones, replacement of "wall pack" light fixtures with period lantern fixtures and landscape planting enhancements to welcome users into the building.



Before



After



Architecturally appropriate period lantern fixture



Metal finish

2

Site Furnishings

Improvement Recommendation



Site furnishings designed in a style “family” are aesthetically unifying. The umbrella table shown here exists on campus in the burgundy color. Generally it’s best to avoid colors because they stand out visually and can appear dated over time. Since existing installations are relatively new and are limited to the patio at Wiestling Hall and the Library they should remain.



For benches and trash receptacles along walkways and other common areas it is important for the style and color to be more conservative. In lieu of free standing ash receptacles in the landscape, purchase receptacle mounted units and strategically locate away from building entrances.



Any freestanding landscape planters should be appropriately designed and sized for the space they occupy and be constructed of durable, quality material.

3 Lighting

Improvement Recommendation

Replacement of any antiquated, inefficient pedestrian walkway and parking lot lighting is recommended. Metal halide lamps in cut-off luminaires mounted to poles are recommended for pedestrian walkways. High pressure sodium lamping is acceptable for parking lot lights. Color/finish for all fixtures should be consistent campus wide. Avoid the use of bollards due to vulnerability to snow removal operations and vandalism. It is also recommended that wall mounted "utility style" fixtures be avoided.



Typical Parking Lot/Roadway Light



Site Light



"Utility style" fixture to be avoided

4A University Mark

Improvement Recommendation

The Campus signature mark displayed on banners throughout campus is graphically incorrect. The silhouette of the lion on the shield should not appear as a negative image.

Guidelines for use and graphics are published on the following web site:

http://publications.psu.edu/graph_ident_system/graphunivmk.html



Existing banner with incorrect reverse image of the Penn State Mark



Correct format of signature mark for Mont Alto

4B Parking Signs

Improvement Recommendation

The positive aesthetic effect of relocating pole mounted parking signs to the face of the existing masonry wall is evident in the photo simulation at left.

Note also that colored parking stall designations should be limited to perimeter markings instead of in-filling the entire space.



Before



After

4C HC Stall Marking

Improvement Recommendation

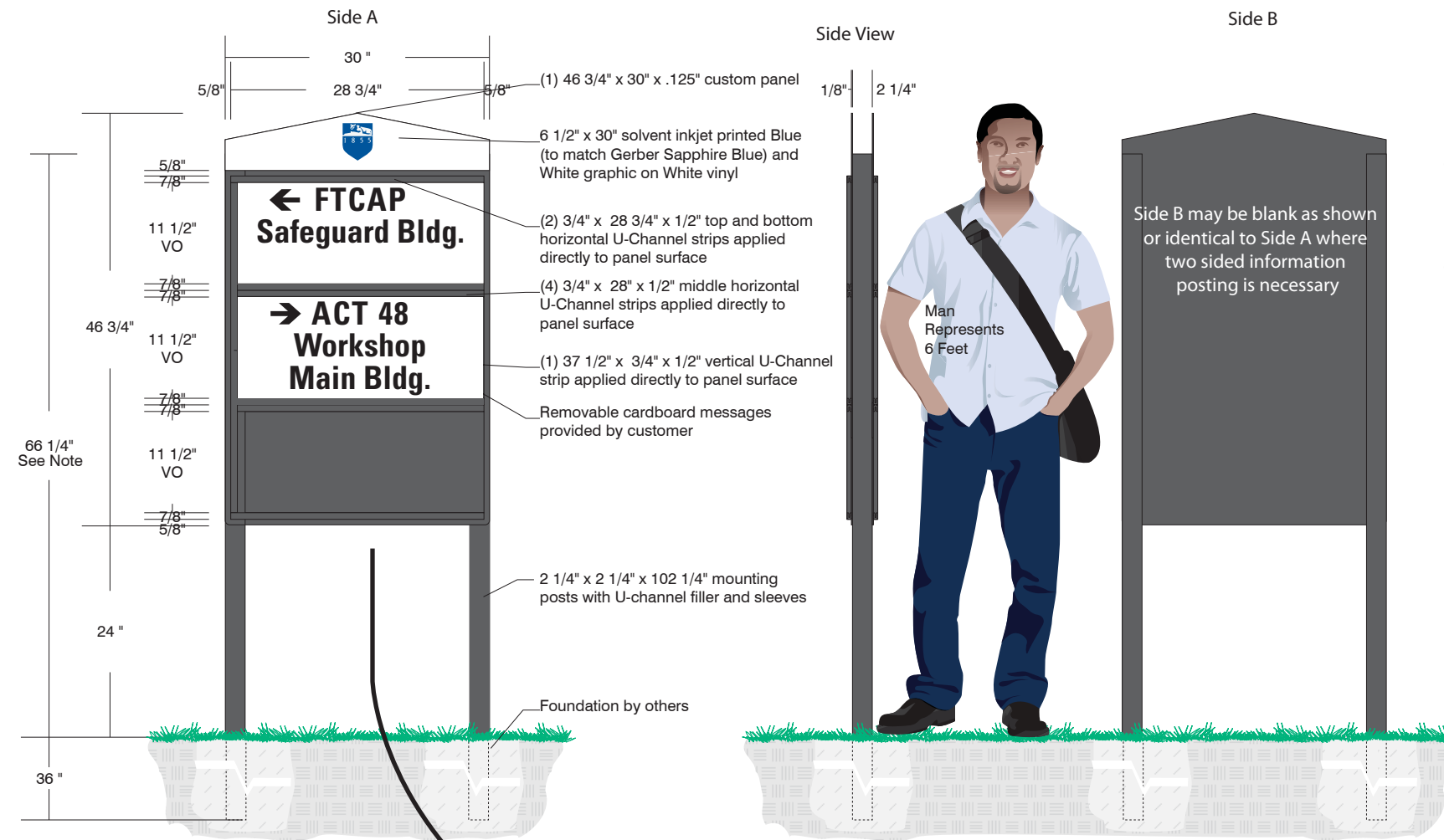
Painting the entire surface of specially designated parking stalls attracts undue visual attention. Accessibility guidelines require only the placement of the standard signs shown at left.



Examples of Existing Condition

Changeable 4D Event Sign

Improvement Recommendation



Note:
This diagram illustrates the largest changeable day event panel sign permitted.

The sign can be reduced to accommodate one or two changeable panel heights.

When less than three panel heights are desired the over-all height of the entire sign should be reduced proportionally.

When the campus is host to temporary events that require special directional instruction to visitors, it is recommended that a permanent sign structure be erected that incorporates consistent form, color and typography.



5A Bridge Handrail

Improvement Recommendation

The footbridge across Antietam Creek is a unique feature of the campus.

There is an opportunity to strengthen the visual appeal as well as safety of this crossing by rebuilding the existing rail. The design of the rail system should compliment other entrance treatments at this important campus vantage point.



Before



After

Campus Entrance Enhancement

Improvement Recommendation

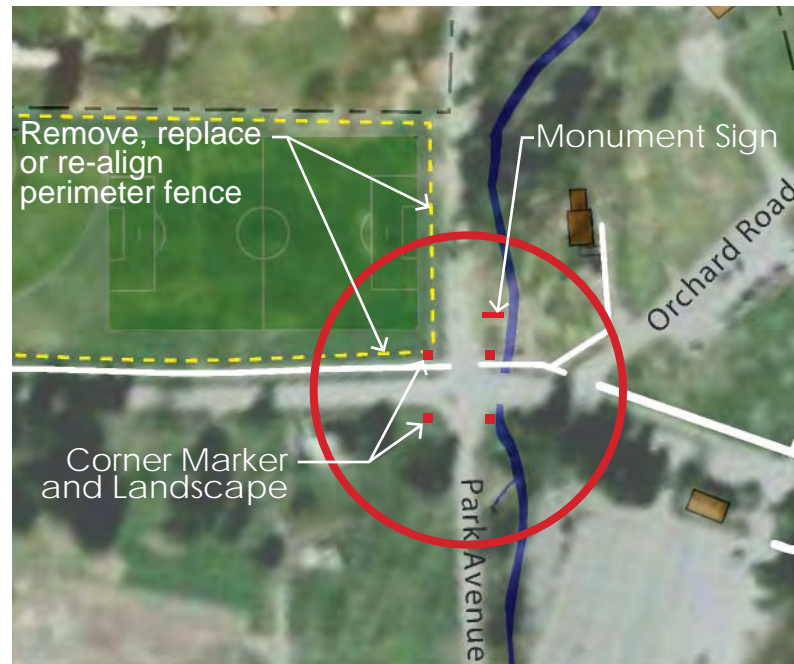
The campus is bisected by public thoroughfares that cross at the campus entrance. The opportunity exists at this location to enhance campus identity.

Recommend the placement of masonry markers at the corners using the same stone material found on the entrance monument sign. Ornamental lighting could be incorporated to add character. The new masonry markers should be appropriately landscaped.

Existing chain link fencing around the athletic fields should be removed or relocated.

Existing steel guide rails at bridge abutments could be replaced with a design that compliments the over-all aesthetic character of the entrance.

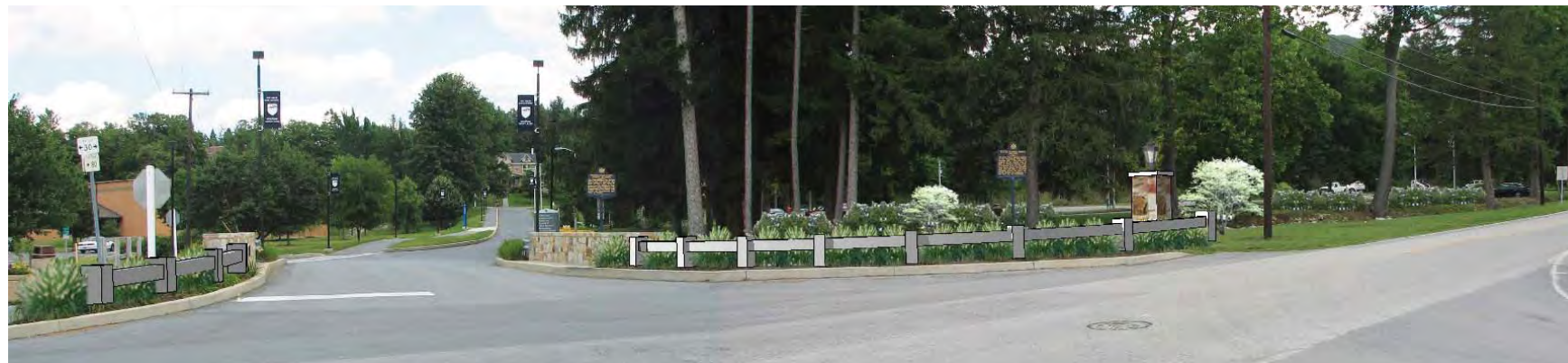
Proposed guide rail



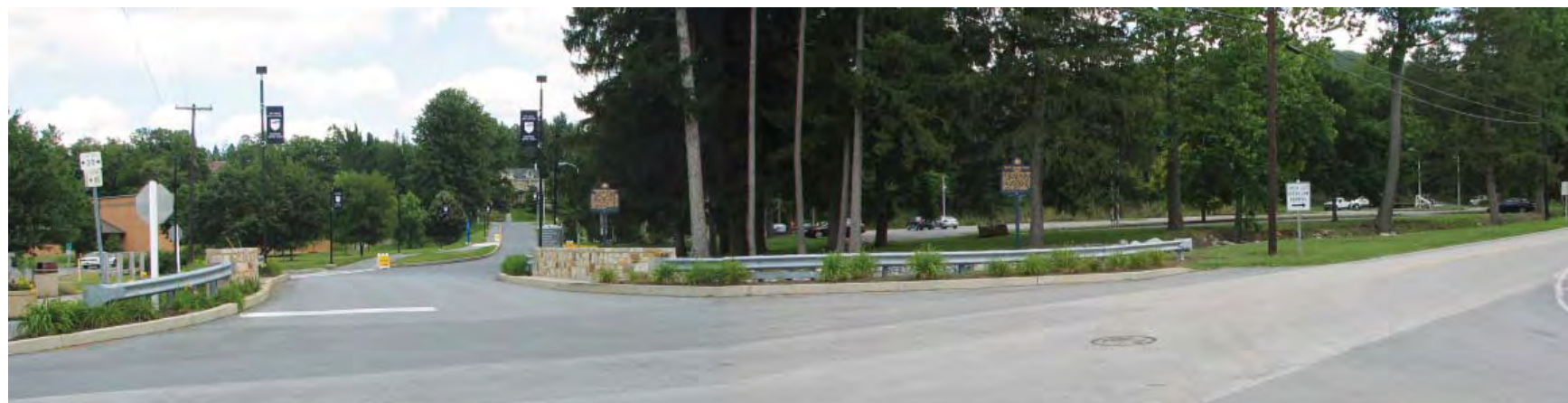
Concept Diagram



Corner Marker



View of enhanced entrance



View of existing entrance



Campus Entrance Enhancement

5B

Improvement Recommendation

The existing entrance monument sign along Park Avenue (Rt. 233) and the surrounding landscape could be enhanced to create a more pronounced and significant campus identity.

The stone base of the existing sign is attractive and well built. Replacement of the panel sign with a masonry and pin letter signature mark will upgrade the sign and give it a more permanent and solid appearance.

Supplement and expand foundation plantings using shrubs and groundcover. To further enhance the visual presence of the entrance, a fence rail using the same design, material and scale as is proposed for the bridge abutments and footbridge rail could be installed.

The combined effect of all the components of this treatment would be an entrance theme that extends beyond the sign itself to include the bridge and possible masonry entrance markers.



Updated Entrance Sign with landscape enhancement - Option 1



Existing Entrance Sign



Updated Entrance Sign with landscape enhancement - Option 2



Updated Entrance Sign on existing stone base



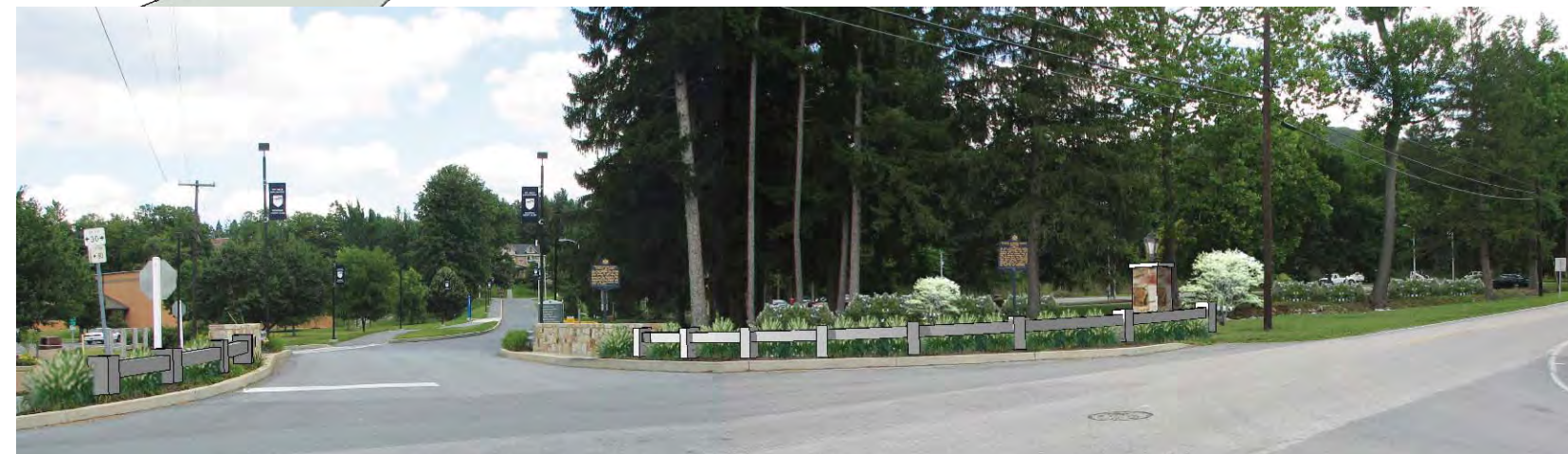
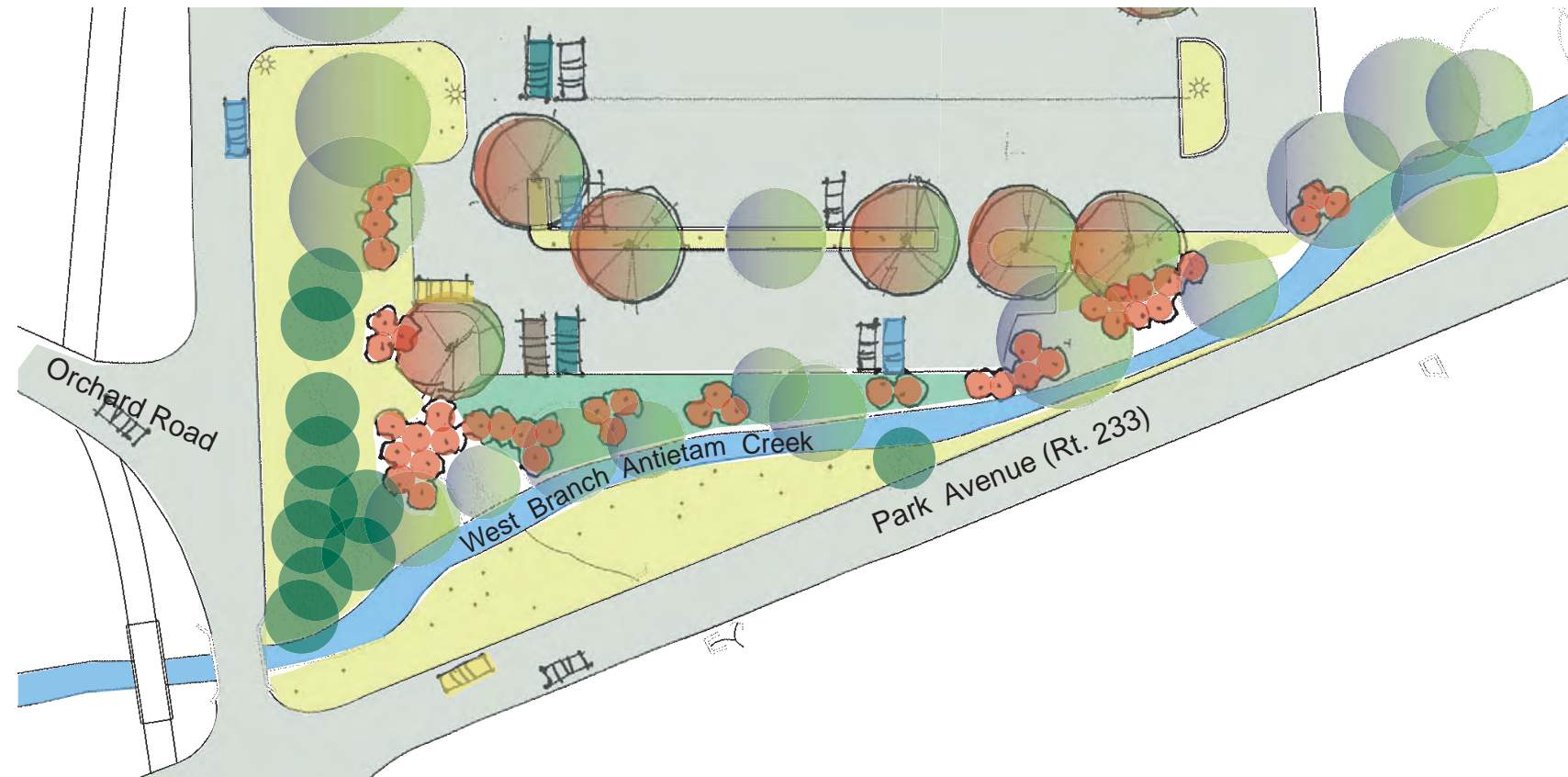
Cornus sericea - Redosier Dogwood
Winter stem color



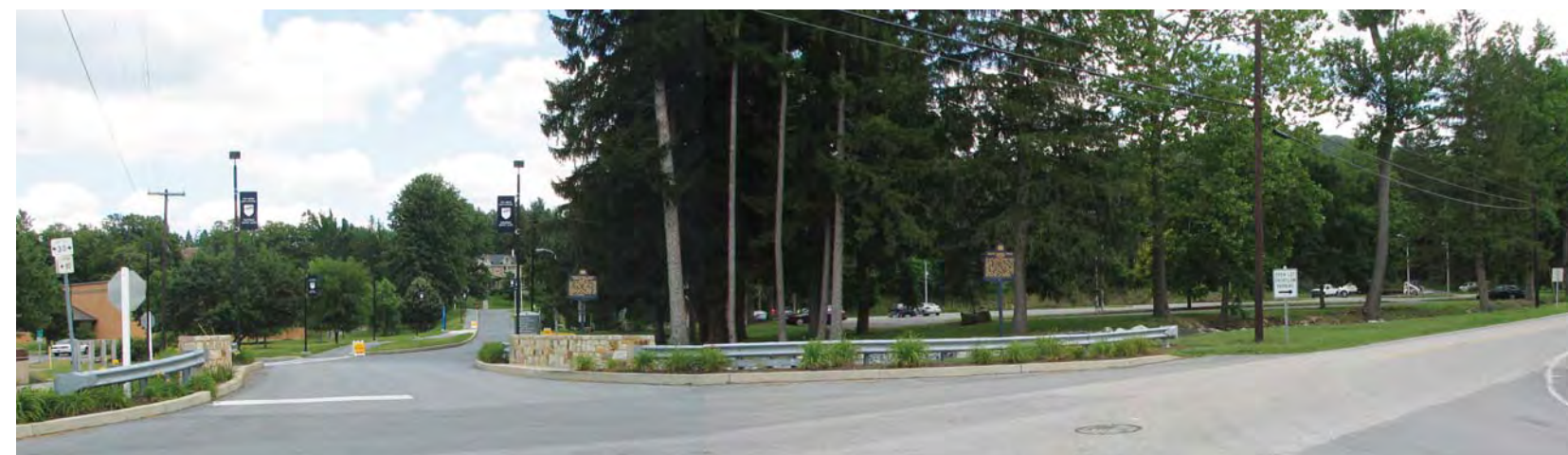
Cornus sericea - Redosier Dogwood
Stream edge screen plant



Acer freemanii "Autumn Blaze"
Parking lot tree



After



Before

Parking Lot 5C Landscape Enhancement

Improvement Recommendation

The large commuter parking lot at the entrance to campus is fully exposed to the adjacent public roadway. A more favorable impression to passersby could be created by selectively screening the view into campus using riparian plant species that are compatible with the adjacent creek habitat.

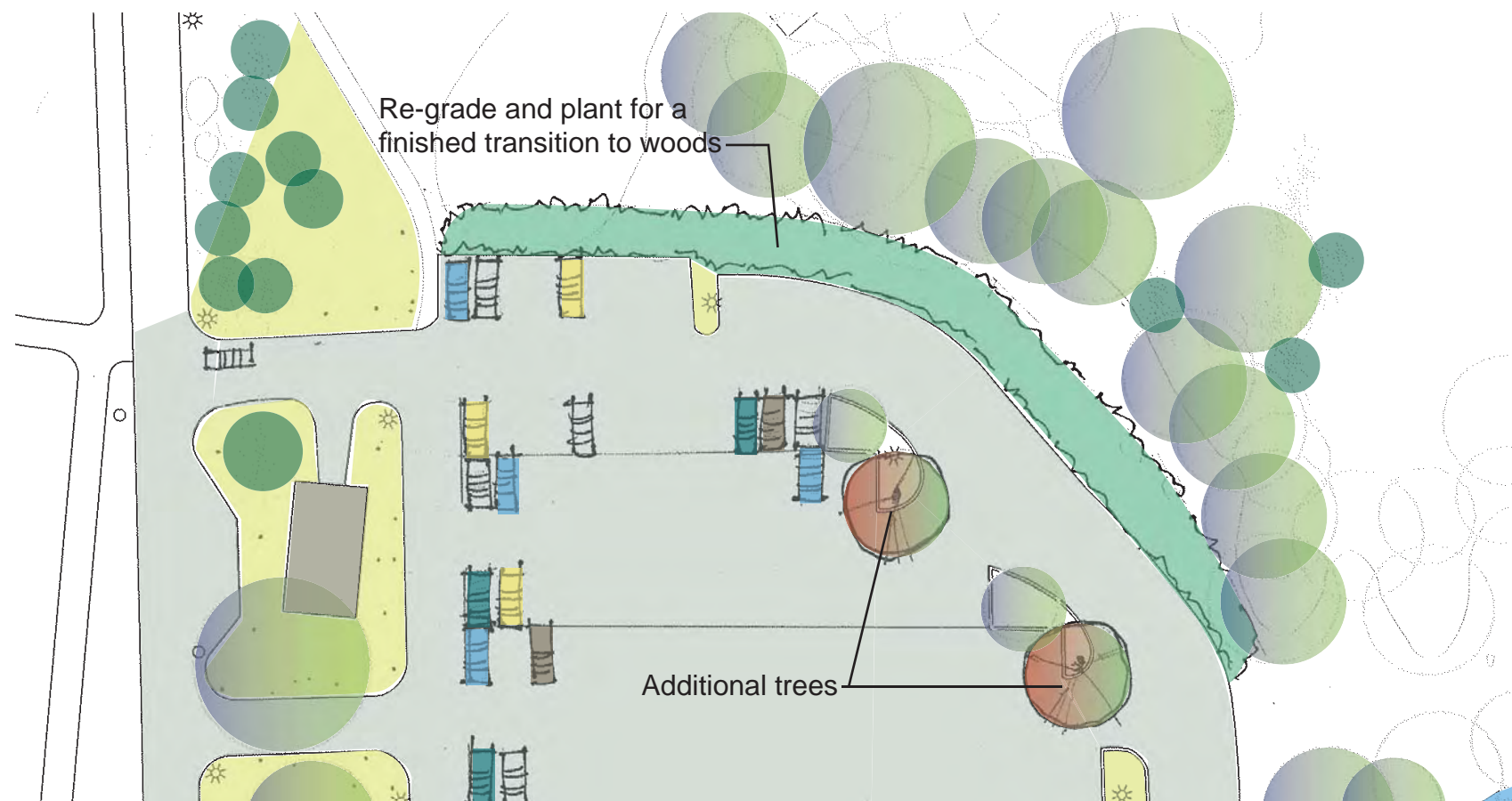
5D

Parking Lot Improvements

Improvement Recommendation

The edge of the existing parking lot going into the woods looks unfinished and rough.

Recommend that the transition slope be graded and planted with a shrub groundcover. Additional tree plantings in existing parking lot islands are also suggested.



Rhus aromatica "Gro-Low"
Stabilizing ground cover plant to transition into woods



Acer freemanii "Autumn Blaze"
Parking lot tree



5E Auten Gazebo

Improvement Recommendation

The quality of the space around the existing gazebo could be improved through the installation of suitable trees, shrubs and groundcovers. The interior of the structure could be made ADA compliant by eliminating the step at the entrance.



Before



After



Landscape ^{5F} at Gazebo

Improvement Recommendation

The quality of the space around the existing gazebo could be improved through the installation of suitable trees, shrubs and groundcovers. The interior of the structure could be made ADA compliant by eliminating the step at the entrance.

A paved access walk and new site furnishings will give the use a finished character.



Before



After

Conklin Hall 5G Landscape Enhancement

Improvement Recommendation

Conklin Hall is the administrative center of the campus. It sits prominently above a grassy slope leading to the woods that offers pleasant views of the woods to the south. The north side of the building is dominated by the access road and parking lot. The pedestrian walkway along the south side of Conklin Hall is narrow and overgrown. It does not tie into other pedestrian routes to the east.

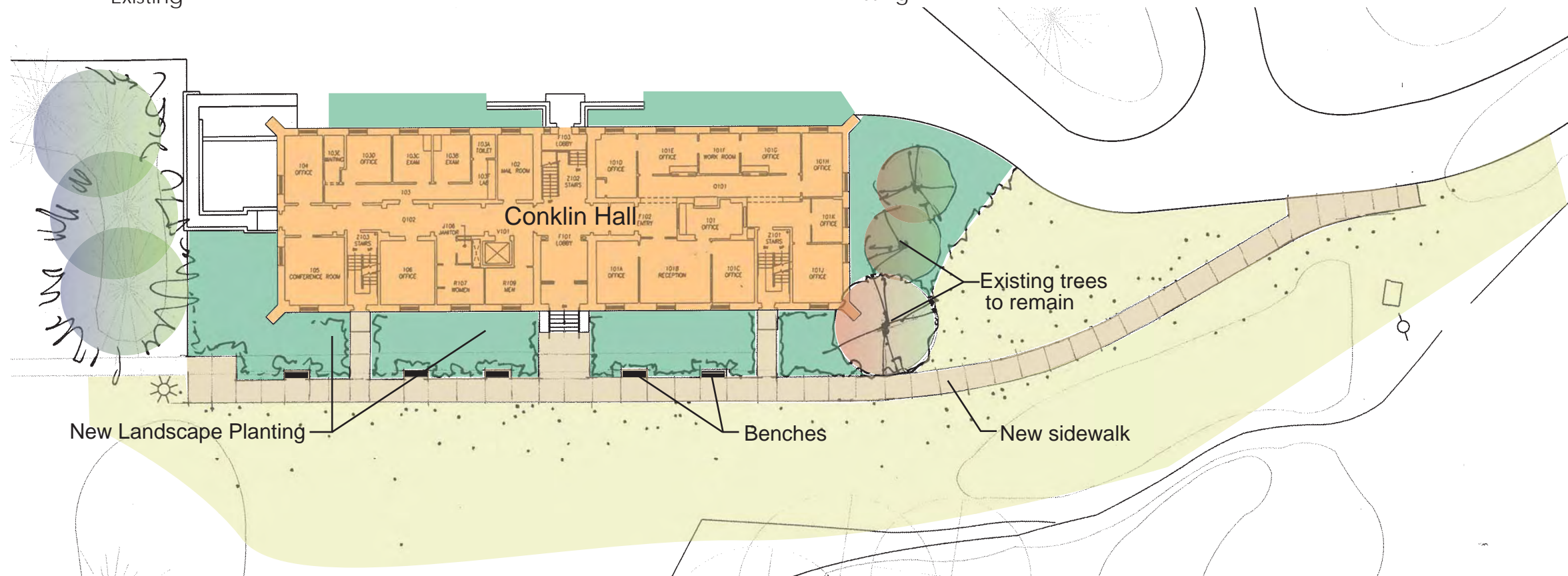
Recommend the placement of new sidewalk, supplemented landscape plantings and seating opportunities as shown.



Existing



Existing



Bookstore Landscape Enhancement

5H

Improvement Recommendation



Before

The service function and mechanical equipment for the bookstore are exposed to view. Non-standard site furnishings on a gravel surface characterize the outdoor gathering space at this important campus hub.

Recommend that the corner be landscaped to screen the service and mechanical equipment. Pave the seating area and furnish with campus standard table and trash receptacle. Cover bright blue paint on pavement surface and provide handicapped stall signage.



After

6A

Pave Pathway

Improvement Recommendation

The pedestrian route from the student parking lot to Mont Alto Hall is well established as is evidenced by the trail at left.

To facilitate this pedestrian flow it is recommended that the pathway be paved and the edges stabilized.



Before



After

6B Post Boards

Improvement Recommendation



The rustic character of lumber and shingle style exterior post boards is not compatible with the image of quality and permanence of a Penn State campus. Management of content on post boards is often inconsistent.

Space for managed posting of relevant notices should be limited to interior locations in common areas of buildings.

It is recommended that the existing exterior wooden post boards be removed from campus.



6c Gazebo

Improvement Recommendation



This existing wooden gazebo in the landscape is in disrepair. If it has no significant value to the campus then it should be removed. If it holds value then restoration is required.

6D Dumpster Enclosure

Improvement Recommendation



Creating organized and efficient waste and recycling dumpster screening is necessary in order to present the best face of a campus. Success has been realized at University Park Campus through the use of wood or synthetic lumber enclosures.

In addition, visual impact can be minimized by simply painting the dumpsters a neutral color that matches the enclosure.



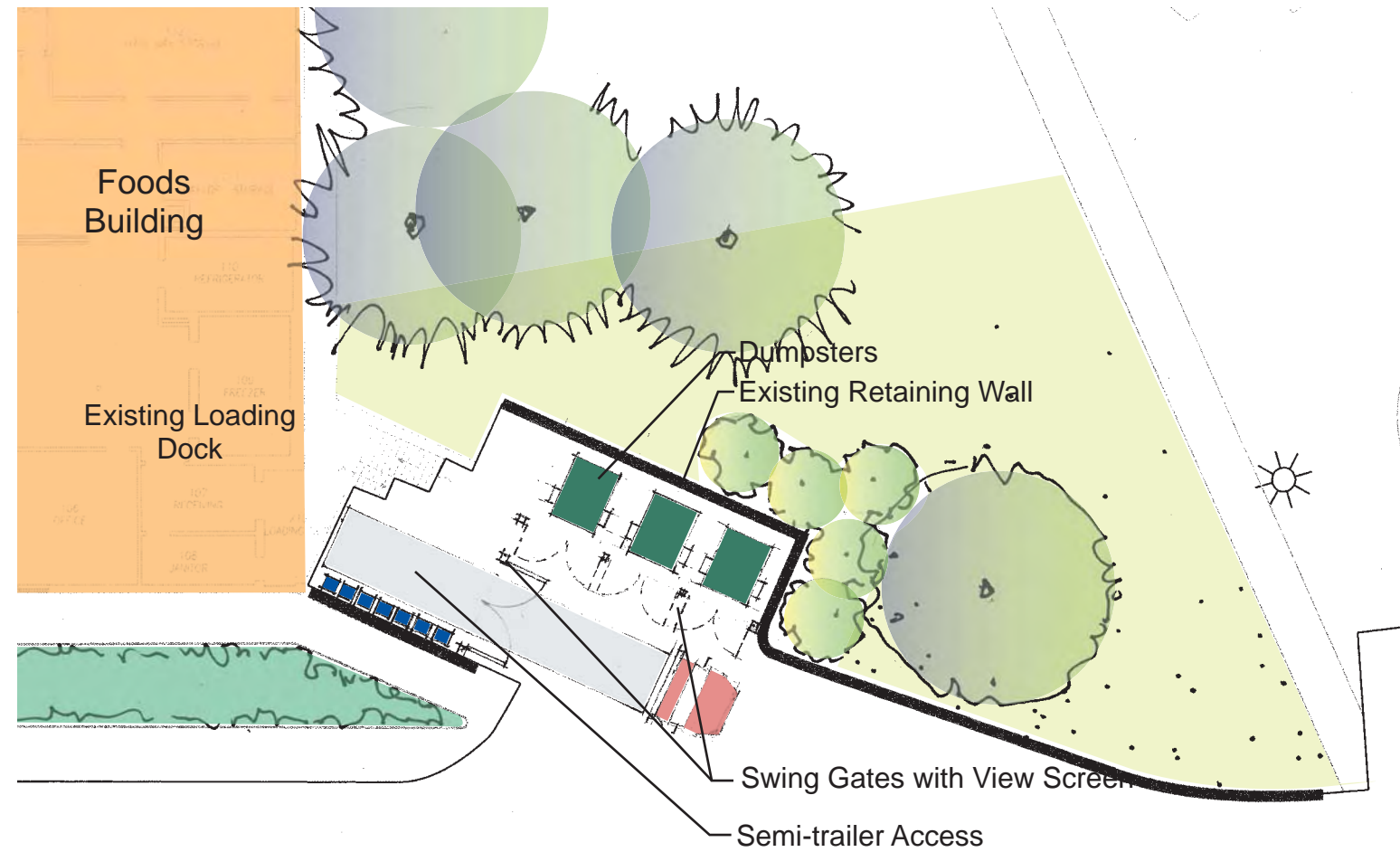
Existing Condition

Foods Building Dock 6E

Improvement Recommendation

Service access to the Foods Building at its current location is necessary despite its unsightly appearance.

One way to mitigate this aesthetic challenge while maintaining the functionality of this area is to screen with swinging gates.



Existing Condition



Example of dumpster enclosure with view screening swing gates.

6F Wiestling Hall Patio and Landscape

Improvement Recommendation

Wiestling Hall is a primary student centered facility in the very heart of campus. Vehicular encroachment into the open space surrounding the building has been dramatically curtailed to the credit of the campus.

This concept drawing illustrates a truly pedestrian space with enhanced paved surface, dedicated table seating areas, reduced pavement and landscape enhancement.



Existing



Existing



Existing

Project Key Map

Penn State Mont Alto
 Campus Exterior Architectural Plan
 Project Prioritization Matrix
 Spring 2009

Proposed exterior improvement projects have been assessed with respect to the following criteria and assigned an implementation priority value.

Criteria include:

Visual Impact - degree to which the project improves the visual quality of the campus

Cost - level of capital investment required to implement the project (assumes no volunteer or donor contribution)

The projects with the highest numeric score should be given the highest priority for implementation

VISUAL IMPACT
 1 - Little or no impact
 2 - Minor Impact
 3 - Moderate Impact
 4 - Major Impact

COST
 1 - Greater than \$25,000
 2 - \$15,001 to \$25,000
 3 - \$5,001 to \$15,000

#	PROJECT	IMPACT				COST			SCORE
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	
1A	Remove Abandoned Building		X					X	6
1B	Conklin Hall Downspouts		X			X		X	3
1C	The Mill Entry			X			X		5
1D	Entry Enhancements								
	Conklin Hall (4 entrances)				X		X		5
	General Studies Building (2 entrances)				X		X		5
2	Site Furnishings			X			X		6
3	Lighting			X		X			5
4A	University Mark								
4B	Parking Signs			X				X	6
4C	HC Stall Marking			X				X	6
4D	Changeable Event Sign			X				X	6
5A	Bridge Handrail				X			X	7
5B	Campus Entrance Enhancement								
	1 - Monument Sign				X		X		5
	2 - Guiderail/Fence				X		X		5
	3 - Masonry Markers				X		X		5
	4 - Landscaping				X		X		6
5C	Parking Lot Landscape Enhancements			X		X			5
5D	Parking Lot Improvements			X		X			5
5E	Auten Gazebo			X			X		7
5F	Landscape at Gazebo			X			X		7
5G	Conklin Hall Landscape Enhancements			X		X			5
5H	Bookstore Landscape Enhancement			X		X			5
6A	Pave Pathway		X				X		5
6B	Post Boards		X				X		6
6C	Gazebo		X				X		6
6D	Dumpster Enclosure (Erie Hall)			X		X			5
6E	Foods Building Dock			X		X			5
6F	Wiestling Hall Patio and Landscape			X		X			5

Note:
 Cost ranges identified in this matrix are for planning purposes only. Actual costs will be dependent upon fully developed plans for the respective project. Some of the projects listed above can be broken down into smaller pieces and implemented in phases.

