



Earlier plans have guided WMU to its current position as a major regional institution. The primary goal of this Master Plan is to recognize the University's goals as they relate to accommodating new development and enhancing the campus quality, diversity and livability. WMU has identified ways to enhance its image and the quality of student life in a manner that reflects the University's commitment to academic, research and outreach activities.

Introduction



WHY A MASTER PLAN?

As one of the nation's top public research universities, Western Michigan University (WMU) continues to strive for academic excellence. Competition for the best students and faculty is intensifying and rising expectations require universities to adapt more quickly than in past eras. WMU needs a method to respond promptly and appropriately to new educational ideas and opportunities. A Master Plan is a tool that defines development options based on an institution's inherent strengths, resources and vision.

WMU's Master Plan not only allows for the most effective use of its resources, but also celebrates the institution's 100 year heritage. From its start as a single building on top of Prospect Hill, the University now has more than 125 buildings spread over three distinct campuses. Today's Master Plan seeks to unify and strengthen the University's image by allowing the West, Oakland Drive and East Campuses to function cohesively while maintaining their unique character.

MASTER PLAN APPROACH

Because the Master Plan directs the growth of the WMU campus over time, it has to be developed with and supported by the University community. Bringing together a broad range of campus users and neighbors, the planning process seeks individual perceptions, opinions and priorities to forge consensus on important issues and plan recommendations.

The master planning effort was one of the most interactive and participatory planning efforts ever undertaken by the University. Planning groups were established to ensure that diverse interests and perspectives were considered. An Advisory/Policy Committee, comprised of faculty and staff members, students, University administrators, and municipal and community representatives, guided the decision-making process. Subcampus focus groups (representing West Campus, Oakland Drive Campus and East Campus) and a range of student groups offered input and made recommendations.