Penn State
Harrisburg
The Capital College

Campus Exterior Architectural Plan

November 2006

Contents

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, know as a CEAP, is developed to suggest ways to improve the 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

Buildings

A	Child Care Center
B	Service Building
C	Wrisberg Hall
D	Dining Hall
E	Church Hall
F	Heating Plant
G	Olmsted Building
H	Student Housing
I	Science & Technology Center
J	Library and Classroom Building
K	Bookstore
L	Educational Activities Building
M	Capitol Union Building
N	Swatara Building
O	Maintenance & Operations
P	Susquehanna Building
Q	Engineering Laboratory Building

Harrisburg

Campus Exterior Architectural Plan

Existing Conditions Inventory

Background:

Penn State Harrisburg • The Capital College presently occupies 215 acres of property within Swatara Township once occupied by a US Air Force base. Surrounding land uses include a warehouse/distribution facility to the north, residential neighborhoods of Middletown to the east, and Harrisburg International Airport to the south. The western edge of campus is bordered by a limited access highway.

A detailed site analysis, campus vision and future development stategy is fully documented in the campus master plan. In addition to the analysis performed during the master planning process, a more focused walking assessment of the campus exterior established the foundation for the recommendations and concepts contained in this CEAP document.

General Observations:

Occupied buildings are spread across campus with the academic core and student housing hub at the northeastern corner of the property. The facilities are well maintained and demonstrate a cared for image to students, faculty and staff as well as the general public.

The aesthetic quality of the campus landscape is characterized by large expanses of turf lawn on gentle to moderately sloped topography. Mature tree specimens are scattered across the campus. The campus landscape is well maintained though sparcely planted in some areas. Due to abundant undeveloped acreage and some remotely located buildings, an impression of campus may be one of incompleteness.

For the most part pedestrian circulation, signage and wayfinding are adequate. Outdoor gathering spaces are present offering opportunities for casual as well as organized interaction. Parking facilities are adequate and suitably located on the campus perimeter minimizing conflicts with pedestrians.

The campus has made great progress in transforming the spartan aesthetic of the former air force base into an academic campus with an attractive, comfortable and inspiring landscape. This document offers conceptual recommendations for advancing this mission.

Architecture

Existing Conditions Inventory

Major architectural modifications, additions, and new construction are beyond the scope of this CEAP. However, the aesthetic character of campus is defined to a great extent by the structures that comprised it. The predominant building material of campus is brick and the architectural style modern.

The stylistic archetype of the Olmsted Building and the Library should be considered when developing exterior improvements such as walls, site furnishings, lighting and planting designs.

Site Furnishings

Existing Conditions Inventory

A variety of types and styles of benches, tables, trash receptacles and planters are spread across the campus. It is recommended that a standard design for furnishings be selected that compliments the campus architecture and landscape.

In addition to aesthetic appropriateness, the longevity and maintenance of site furnishings should be considered when specifying.

Lighting

Existing Conditions Inventory

A wide variety of exterior lighting fixture types are present on campus. As with site furnishings, it is recommended that design standards for parking lot/roadway and pedestrian site lighting be identified and implemented across campus.

Signage

Existing Conditions Inventory

Consistent design and placement of signage is key to a unified aesthetic as well as an intuitive and clear means of way finding. At Penn State Harrisburg campus maps are absent. Building identification signs are inconsistent stylistically and are absent in some cases.

A complete and integrated signage standard has been developed for the University Park campus that properly incorporates the Penn State mark and describes various sign types and appropriate applications. It is recommended that the PSU sign standards be implemented at the campus.

www.opp.psu.edu/stnd/signage/index.html

Landscape

Existing Conditions Inventory

The landscape aesthetic of the campus is characterized by large expanses of turf. Ornamental plantings are conservative and well maintained. Opportunities to screen objectionable views such as parking and mechanical equipment are noted. Gathering spaces are sparsely furnished. It is recommended that the softening benefit of landscape plantings in strategic locations be implemented.

Pedestrian Circulation

Existing Conditions Inventory

The system of pedestrian walkways through and around campus is in good condition. The use of concrete is appropriate and should be continued. Pedestrian pathways through turf areas are noted. There are isolated areas where paved area is excessively generous. Improvements could be realized in the accessibility of some entrances. It is recommended that pedestrian desire lines be carefully analyzed prior to construction of any new sidewalks.

Unique Features

Existing Conditions Inventory

The display of public art is noted on this campus. Great care must be given to establish an effective relationship between the subject and the site. The scale of the artwork must be site appropriate. It is also possible for the piece to contribute to the educational mission of the University.

The campus is encouraged to continue diligent maintenance of existing works and the sites they occupy as well as adding to the collection as appropriate.

It is recommended that the campus refer to the guidelines for public art as delineated in the public art master plan for the University Park campus.

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 without added capital cost. Suggestions include:

- ► Mulch landscape beds annually
- ► Eradicate weeds
- ► Fertilize lawn areas
- ► Limit use of annual and perennial flowers to areas that can be maintained

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 Olmsted Areaway

Improvement Recommendation

The areaway to the basement on the south side of Olmsted Building should be covered for safety and aesthetic reasons. It is recommended that aluminum bar grate that permits the circulation of air yet obscures views be installed.

1B Door Painting

Improvement Recommendation

Color of painted exterior doors should be consistent with other trim elements on the building.

Before

After

After

1c Paint Penthouse

Improvement Recommendation

It is recommended that the campus be vigilant about maintaining painted surfaces.

After

Before

1D Church/Wrisberg/Dining Halls

Improvement Recommendation

The landscape and buildings in this area impart a feeling of abandonment and neglect. While in transition to other uses, the landscape surrounding these buildings requires routine maintenance such as weed control, pruning and mulching. Glass in the door to the dining hall is broken. Stored materials inside are visible from the exterior. Dining Hall signage on the building should be removed. Railings and fire escape stair towers require painting.

2A Site Furnishings

Improvement Recommendation

Site furnishings designed in a style “family” are aesthetically unifying. The examples shown here will compliment the contemporary architectural style present on the campus. Powder coated metal is attractive, comfortable and durable.

Planters should be appropriately sized for the space they occupy and be constructed of durable, quality material. The examples shown here are cast stone and bronze in simple yet appealing styles.

2B Bike Racks

Improvement Recommendation

An assessment by the campus should be undertaken to determine the need for bike racks. Rack locations should be convenient to users while minimizing pedestrian and vehicular conflicts. Consolidation of racks into a courtyard(s) with perimeter screening and paved surface is recommended.

Replace rusted and deteriorated units with a new campus standard such as the example shown below.

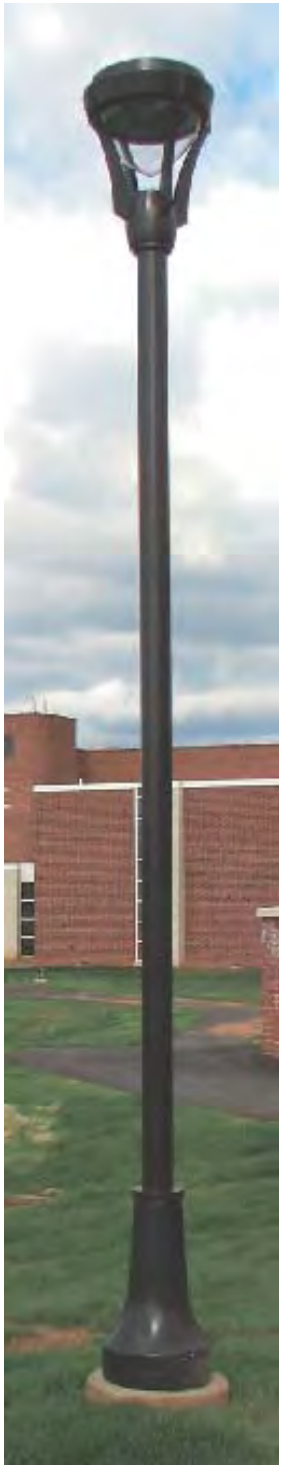
2C Emergency Phones

Improvement Recommendation

A few isolated instances of the old emergency call boxes are noted on campus. It is recommended that the transition of emergency phones to Code Blue® model be completed.

3 Lighting

Improvement Recommendation



Replacement of any antiquated, inefficient pedestrian walkway lighting is recommended. Metal halide lamps in cut-off luminaires mounted to poles are recommended. Color/finish should be consistent campus wide. Avoid the use of bollards due to vulnerability to snow removal operations and vandalism. The two types illustrated here exist on campus and are recommended for campus wide installation as new projects or replacement opportunities arise.

Site Light

Parking Lot/Roadway Light

Improvement Recommendation

A comprehensive, campus wide signage and wayfinding plan is recommended. Uniform graphics and sign content not only assist people in finding their destination but also conveys a unified image. These examples illustrate the standard adopted at University Park.

The manual specifying the standards can be found at www.opp.psu.edu/stnd/signage/index.html

Building Identification

Campus Map/Wayfinding - Vehicular

Campus Map/Wayfinding - Pedestrian

4B Sign Removal

Improvement Recommendation

Remove existing obsolete sign identifying Mead Heights. Relocate barrier gates to intersection with Rosedale Avenue.

5A Parking Lot Islands

Improvement Recommendation

Before

Replace gravel groundcover in parking lot islands with turf. Unless mandated by a regulatory code, the painting of curbs is discouraged. Not only is such a practice added maintenance but it draws undue attention to a utilitarian feature.

After

5B Landscape Timbers

Improvement Recommendation

Before

Planting beds edged with wood timbers impart a residential aesthetic and should be avoided in major pedestrian areas. Recommend the removal of this type of bed edging on the Vartan plaza in the heart of campus.

After

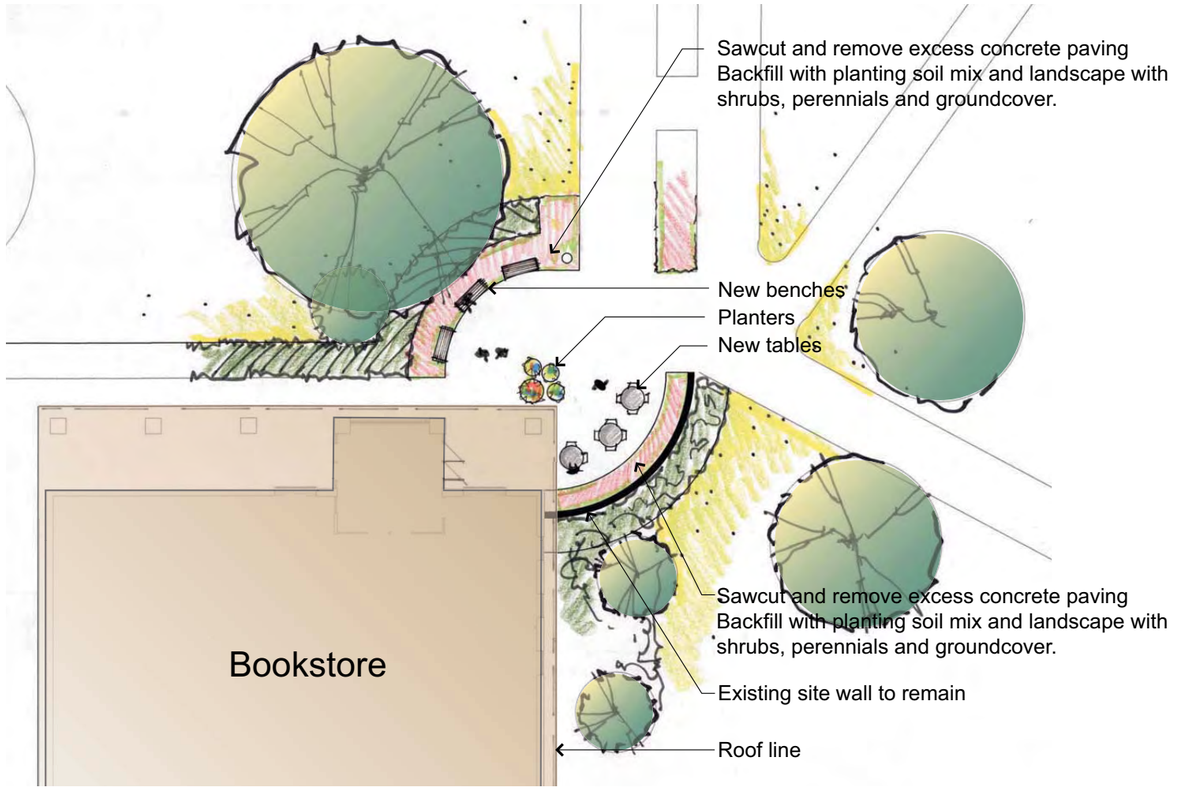
5C

Bookstore Patio Enhancement

Improvement Recommendation

The paved patio in front of the bookstore is excessively large and sparsely furnished.

Propose the removal of excess paving and replacement with ornamental landscape plantings. Replace existing benches, trash receptacles, tables and planters with new campus standard.



Courtyard Enhancements 5D

Improvement Recommendation

Replace all site furnishings including patio tables, trash receptacles and site lighting. Pressure wash patio surface to remove dirt and stains. Supplement landscape plantings.

Landscape Improvement

Improvement Recommendation

The photographic examples at left illustrate landscape planting beds that lack completion. Expansive mulched beds should be supplemented with shrub and groundcover landscape plantings. Site furnishings such as those shown should be appropriately sited on hard surfaces outside of landscape beds.

5F Landscape Improvement

Improvement Recommendation

The degree of slope on existing bank makes maintenance of these areas difficult and hazardous. Recommend the replacement of grass with mulched planting beds.

In lieu of planting beds, the gradient in these sloped areas could be lessened and lawn areas restored by placement of waste clean fill material from other earthwork projects on campus.

5G Landscape Improvement

Improvement Recommendation

Material stockpiles and maintenance equipment should be relocated from this area. Remove paved surface and replace with lawn.

Landscape Improvement 5H

Improvement Recommendation

The landscape of the main entrance to campus is characterized by moderately sloping grassy terrain dotted with mature trees flanking the gently curving roadway. The park-like nature of the entry experience can be enhanced by supplemental tree plantings (evergreen and deciduous). The hillside west of the entrance facing Rt. 230 is presently devoid of trees. Significant tree plantings on this slope will add interest and screen the Engineering Laboratory Building.

1 - Looking south along College Avenue

2 - Panorama at Olmsted Drive/College Avenue intersection

3 - Panorama at Rt. 230/College Avenue intersection

4 - Looking east along Rt 230 from property corner

Landscape Improvement

Improvement Recommendation

The view of the Science and Technology Center from College Avenue can be enhanced by screening and/or removing stored materials from the loading area.

Install new landscape plantings to soften and accent the southeast corner of the building.

1 - Loading area

2 - Loading area

3 - Southeast building corner

Landscape Improvement

5J

Improvement Recommendation

Provide supplemental screening of service area on the north side of the Library. Screening can be comprised of landscape plantings and/or fence and gate structure.

1 - Service area

Landscape Improvement 5K

Improvement Recommendation

The first view of a building upon entering campus from Rt 230 is focused on the southwest corner of the CUB. Additional landscape plantings strategically located at this corner would enhance the architecture and screen the parking.

Handicapped Accessible Parking lot

Southwest corner of CUB facing College Avenue

Landscape Improvement 5L

Improvement Recommendation

A landscape buffer including trees, shrubs and groundcover should be planted around the perimeter of the existing parking lot. Islands within the lot should be landscaped as well.

The walkway between the Library and the CUB is heavily traveled. Landscaping and site furnishings along this important pedestrian circulation route is recommended.

1 - Parking lot perimeter screening

2 - Walkway from Library to CUB

3 - Walkway from Library to CUB

4 - Walkway from Library to CUB

5 - Parking Lot Islands

Landscape Improvement 5M

Improvement Recommendation

Housing Quad

Landscape plantings in and around the student housing village is sparse. Various mechanical equipment is not appropriately screened from view. Turf areas within quads are worn.

A landscaping plan addressing aesthetic and maintenance concerns should be developed and implemented. Annual lawn aeration, fertilizing and weed control programs should be initiated.

Existing “grass pave” surfacing is not functioning properly. Installation procedures must be ridgidly adhered to for such a system to be successful. Recommend removal and replacemend to achieve desired turf cover and strength to carry vehicular traffic.

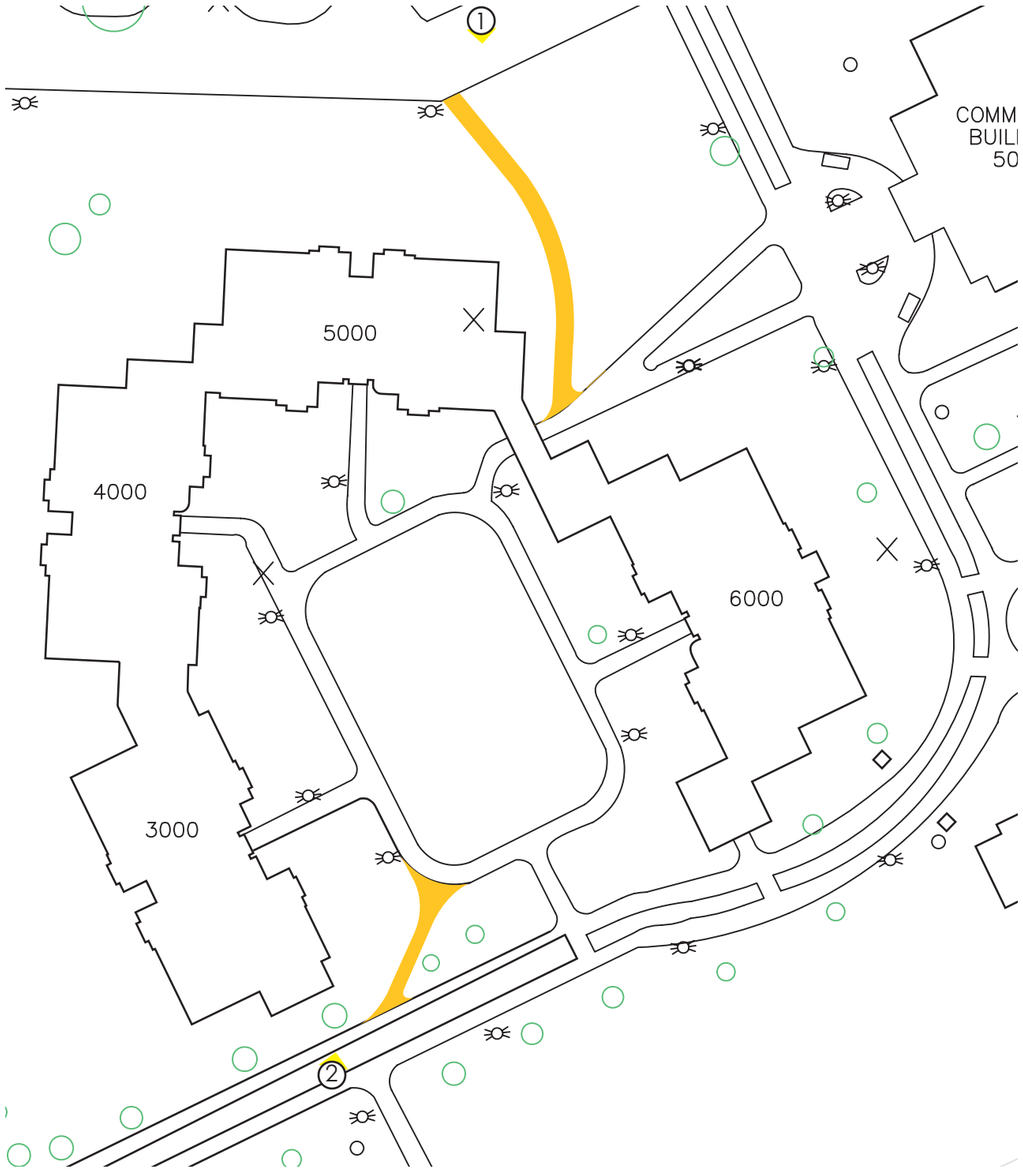
“Grass Pave”

Typical View of Mechanical and Electrical Equipment

6 Walkway Installations

Improvement Recommendation

Off-walkway pedestrian circulation within the housing village has developed. These paths reflect the desired route of pedestrian flow. The pathways should be surfaced and maintained.



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2

Project Key Map

Penn State Harrisburg
Campus Exterior Architectural Plan
Project Prioritization Matrix
November 2006

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	Areaway Grate (Olmsted)			X		X			4
1B	Door Paint (Science & Tech Bldg)			X				X	6
1C	Paint Penthouse (Olmsted)		X					X	5
1D	Church/Wrisberg/Dining			X		X			4
2A	Site Furnishings (campus wide)				X	X			5
2B	Bike Racks		X					X	6
2C	Emergency (Codeblue) Phones	X						X	4
3	Site Lighting (campus wide)				X	X			5
4A	Signage (campus wide)				X	X			5
4B	Sign Removal (Meade Heights)			X				X	6
5A	Parking Lot Island groundcover	X						X	5
5B	Landscape Timber Removal (Vartan Plaza)			X				X	6
5C	Patio Enhancement (Bookstore)				X	X			5
5D	Courtyard Enhancements (Olmsted)			X			X		5
5E	Infill Existing Planting Beds (various locations)				X	X			5
5F	Slope Planting (Olmsted)			X		X			4
5G	Maintenance Compound Removal				X	X			5
5H	College Avenue				X	X			5
5I	Science & Tech Bldg				X	X			5
5J	Library			X		X			4
5K	CUB				X	X			5
5L	Parking Lot				X	X			5
5M	Housing Village			X		X			4
6	Walk Installation (Housing Village)				X		X		6

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.

Harrisburg
Campus Exterior Architectural Plan