



UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Student Life Master Plan 2020

SMA Architects
NAC Architecture
Fall 2020



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

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The University of Montana (UM), nestled in the heart of Western Montana’s stunning natural landscape, is a top tier learning institution with a campus setting that attracts students, educators, and researchers from around the world.

Currently, more than 10,000 students attend the UM, which offers a wide range of majors, and over 150 clubs, division I sports, club sports, sororities, and fraternities. Continually ranked among the best institutions for outdoor activities, there are very few campuses in the country that rival its setting with direct connections to the mountains, a significant river, and a picturesque small city.

Even with all these unique advantages, and relatively low tuition costs, the university has suffered enrollment decline in the last decade. In March of 2020, UM commissioned the design team of SMA Architects and NAC Architecture to develop a Student Life Master Plan. The

purpose of this plan is to guide and prioritize future capital investments in the university’s residential life, dining, recreational facilities, and academic related projects that affect student recruitment and retention. The plan will also address the quality of existing spaces in three ways: proposed major renovation, deferred maintenance, and demolition with an eye to modernization to accommodate contemporary campus and student needs.



The 'Griz' and Main Hall

Master Plan Overview

Over the last several months, the design team has worked closely with the core UM stakeholder group and a wide variety of constituents at the University. Coming in with first-hand knowledge of the city and campus, the design team leaders, SMA/NAC, analyzed the existing campus student life infrastructure before beginning concrete observations and plans. The process has been iterative, open, and conversational. The concepts and plans illustrated in this master plan reflect a sensitive balance of aspiration, realization, realism, and

understanding of the specific needs of the University. Several of the values guiding the master plan include:

- > A vital interest in increasing the recruitment and retention of students. The University of Montana must be regionally competitive.
- > An understanding of the financial challenges in higher education today. The stakeholder and design teams have approached the master plan from a limited budget standpoint looking for opportunities that create an immediate positive impact.
- > The awareness that what happens outside the classroom is as important to today's student as what is learned within. There is a great need and desire to improve the student life experience on campus.
- > The recognition that the campus geography and infrastructure are vital assets to its success: "It has great bones." Most of the propositions in the master plan are about enhancing and modernizing already valuable campus assets.
- > The design team's assertion that wayfinding,

branding, and messaging are as important to the campus as improving the physical spaces people experience.

In addition to these guiding values, the SMA/NAC design team added what it believes is a vital addition to developing a successful student life plan for this institution: Strengthening the brand and perception of the institution both locally and beyond by creating a welcoming and celebratory experience through campus gateways and wayfinding. This information will be highlighted and explained in detail in a Wayfinding deliverable that supplements the Master Plan.

As will be noted further in this document, the campus student life masterplan is understood as an interconnection of four distinct precincts: **Community Connector, River, Mountain, and Campus Core**. As noted early in the design team's analysis, the UM campus takes little advantage of its connections to the unique context in which it is nestled. In a sense, the campus is now simply located adjacent to these amenities rather than embracing and interlocking with them. In looking at each

precinct as a distinct and overlapping neighborhood, the master plan proposes a number of design approaches that give each a welcoming identity and celebrates their uniqueness as a collegiate setting while accentuating their individual personalities and connecting them.

The new ideas and concepts in this student life master plan are designed to complement and further articulate intentions laid out in the existing facilities master plan. For further reference and further details, please see campus master plans at the Facilities Services website: <https://www.umt.edu/facilities/Planning%20and%20Construction/Campus%20Master%20Plans.php>

Ultimately, the success of any master plan is its resolve for action. There should be an aspiring quality that is balanced with realism and action. The SMA/NAC team along with the University of Montana stakeholders have created a student life road map that anticipates a hopeful future and has an attainable sensibility. We look forward to its positive impact on the quality of student life at the University of Montana.

Vision & Goals

During the first two meetings with the core stakeholder group, it was a priority to reinforce and expand upon the original vision and goals of the masterplan.*

- > Improving the student life experience at the University of Montana.
- > Guide and prioritize future capital investments into the University's residential life, dining, recreation facilities, and academic related projects.
- > Student recruitment and retention.
- > Modernize student support and amenities to make students the center and the focus.

Other objectives include:

- > Address quality of existing spaces:
 - › Proposed major renovations.
 - › Deferred maintenance repairs.
 - › Demolition of obsolete, underserving, or antiquated structures.
- > Modernize facilities to accommodate today's learning, teaching, research, and workplace needs.
- > Infuse fresh energy into buildings where major programmatic changes are proposed.

**For details please refer to meeting notes in the appendix.*



Core Stakeholder Group & Design Process

With an aggressive schedule, and a complex agenda, it has been imperative that the SMA/NAC team work efficiently and collaboratively with the University of Montana. The core stakeholder group (CSG) has represented the institution in articulating the goals, vision, and expectations of the campus. During a series of workshops and meetings, the CSG has been instrumental in guiding the direction of the Student Life Master Plan, and preliminary programming for developing the new residential life neighborhood in the community precinct. The CSG has also provided intimate and pertinent insight that has assisted the design team in understanding the nuances of the UM students and culture.

The master planning process was divided into three sections: Collection, Synthesis, and Execution.

- > **Collection:** This phase started with a project kick-off meeting where the vision and goals were confirmed. Afterwards, the design team worked closely with the University to gather information about the different aspects of student life through various representatives from key stakeholder groups: Residence Life, Dining, Recreation, University Center (UC), Student Senate, and Faculty Senate. Though some initial concepts were presented and discussed, the primary task was to collect data that would be helpful in developing the master plan. Because of COVID-19 and the early release of students, a social media survey platform, Social Pinpoint, was utilized to virtually engage the broader UM community on the topics of General Campus, Student Life, and Recreation/Outdoor Recreation.
- > **Synthesis:** During this second phase, the gathered information was reviewed by the design team and collaboratively with the core stakeholder group. Locations for several near-term facilities were studied, including the location for the MMAC Museum and an indoor athletics practice facility to ensure the Master Plan integrated seamlessly with other UM planning. Synthesizing this information initiated the concept of four campus precincts: Community, Campus Core, Mountain, and River. During this phase, there was interest in looking at options for enhancing dining and housing at the UM. This launched the development of alternatives for the Community precinct.
- > **Execution:** During this phase, the master plan, wayfinding and appendix books were created, reviewed and finalized.

University of Montana

- > Paul Lasiter, Vice President for Operations and Finance
- > Sarah Swager, Vice Provost for Student Success
- > Kevin Krebsbach, Director of Facilities Services and Planning and Construction

State of Montana A&E Division

- > Rick Hilmes, Architect, Project Manager

Design Team and Consultants

SMA

- > Tim Meldrum, Principal-In-Charge
- > Klint Fisher, Project Manager
- > Ali Martin, Wayfinding and Branding
- > Carley Smith, Stakeholder Outreach

NAC

- > Dana Harbaugh, Principal-In-Charge
- > Ron van der Veen, Campus Master Planning
- > Jeff Hyslop, Project Architect
- > Andrew Parker, Design
- > Lauren Jane Peterson, Design

BAKER GROUP

- > Mona Milius, Principal

WGM GROUP

- > Jeff Smith, Principal



User Group Meetings

As noted earlier, the SMA/NAC team worked closely with the University of Montana core stakeholder group in articulating the goals, vision, and expectations of the institution. The stakeholders were also instrumental in giving the team timely feedback during the master planning process. The core leadership team also established a series of user groups to interact with the designers. These teams provided a wide range of input about the various aspects of student life on campus.

Because of COVID 19, most of the focus groups meetings were done remotely. While participation was challenging, the contributors were insightful, articulate, and proved to be a vital counterpoint to the core stakeholder group and Social Pinpoint mapping.

Detailed meeting notes from these focus groups can be reviewed in the master plan appendix, as outlined below:

- > Several Core Leadership Work Sessions
- > Student Senate Stakeholder Meeting – 4.29.20
- > Residence Life Stakeholder Meeting – 5.8.20
- > UM Faculty Senate Stakeholder Meeting – 5.19.20
- > Campus Recreation Stakeholder Meeting – 5.21.20
- > Campus Dining Stakeholder Meeting – 5.26.20
- > UM Community – Social Pinpoint Feedback – 6.17.20 to 7.6.20
- > UM Athletics – 6.23.20
- > Res Life + Dining – 7.8.20
- > UM Athletics – 8.6.20

EXISTING CAMPUS

The main campus of the University of Montana (UM) is nestled in the heart of Western Montana's stunning natural landscape.

It is flanked by the picturesque city of Missoula to the north, west, and south, Mount Sentinel to the east, and the Clark Fork River to the north. Continually ranked among the best institutions for outdoor activities, there are very few campuses in the country that rival its setting and connection to a multitude of adventures. There is simply no reason that the campus itself shouldn't attract and retain quality students from around the globe.

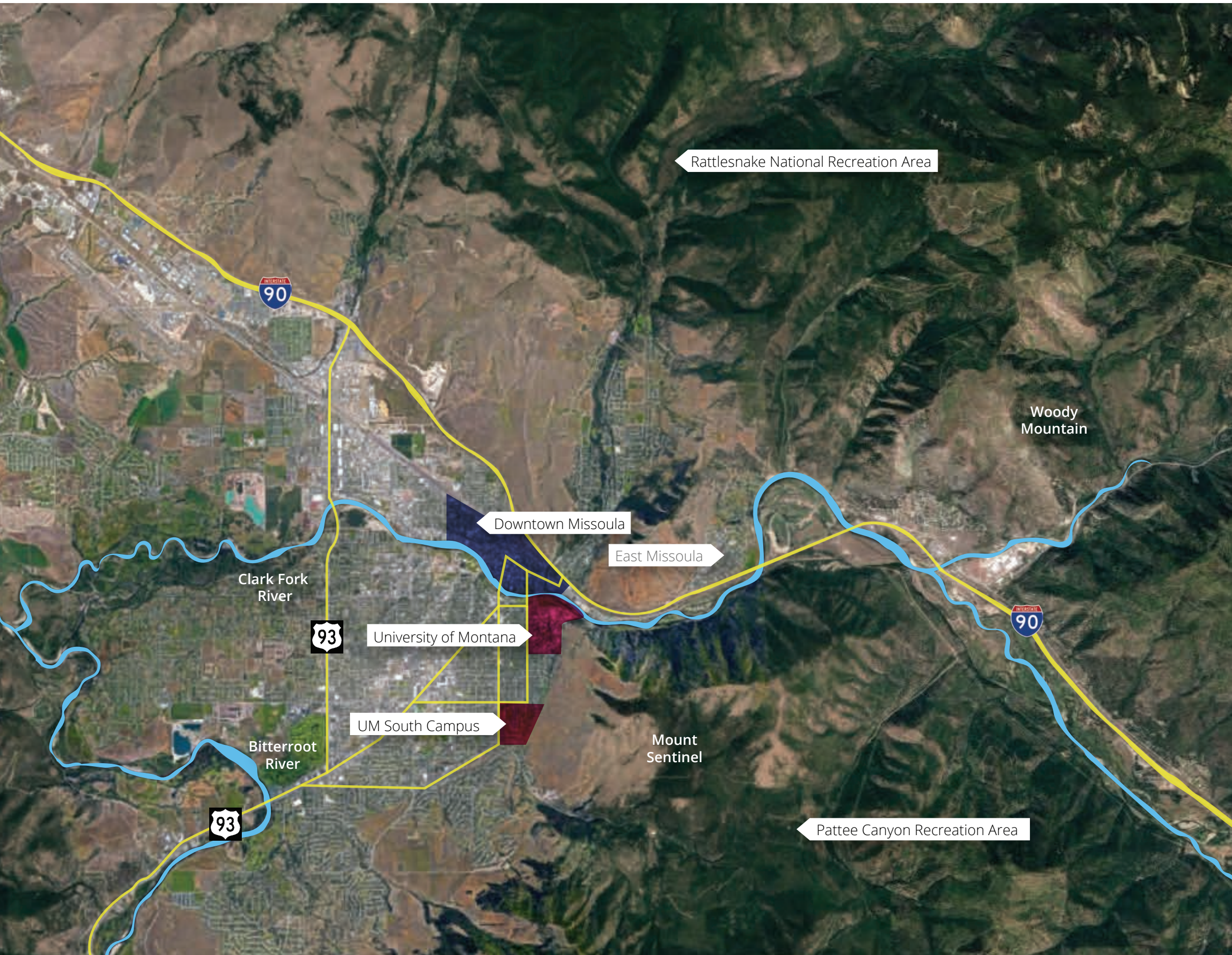
The following section includes a graphic analysis of the existing campus and its place in the greater city of Missoula. The design team has looked at a variety of zones and places to better understand how the University operates on the student life level. These graphics lay the foundation for creating a master plan that not only enhances the different programs but creates a more synergistic institutional brand.

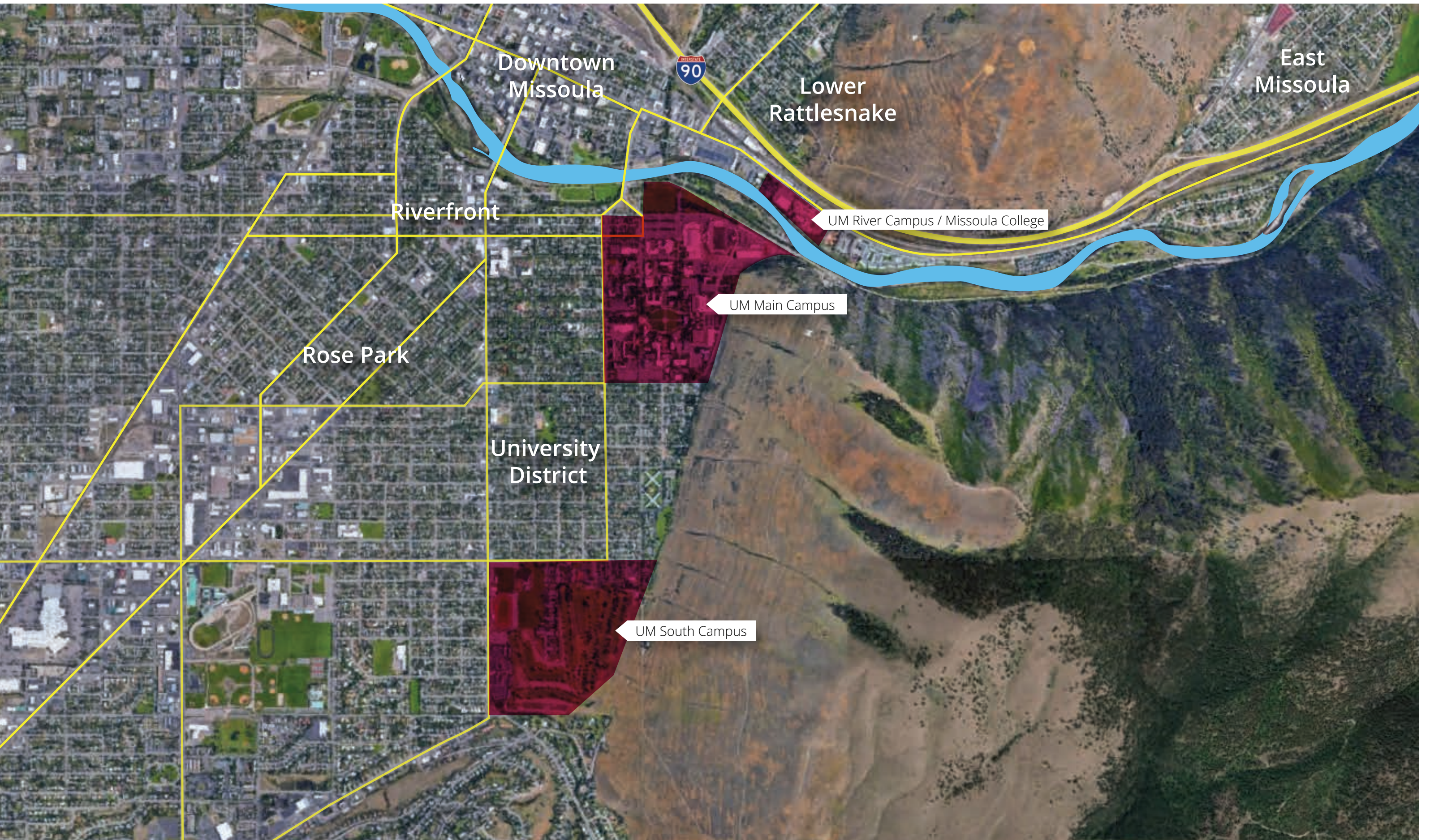
Existing Campus

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VICINITY MAPS	B2
EXISTING CAMPUS	B3
Social Pinpoint	
Campus Map	
Campus Gateway and Green Space	
Campus Circulation	
Student Life Overview	
Student Life Building Conditions	

Vicinity Maps

Very few campuses in America have the connections to the city, mountains, and river that bless the University of Montana. The design team has used this context to organize and highlight the master plan and strengthen the brand and wayfinding to and from the campus.





Campus Map

The following map indicates the zones and facilities currently dedicated to student life programs at the University of Montana.

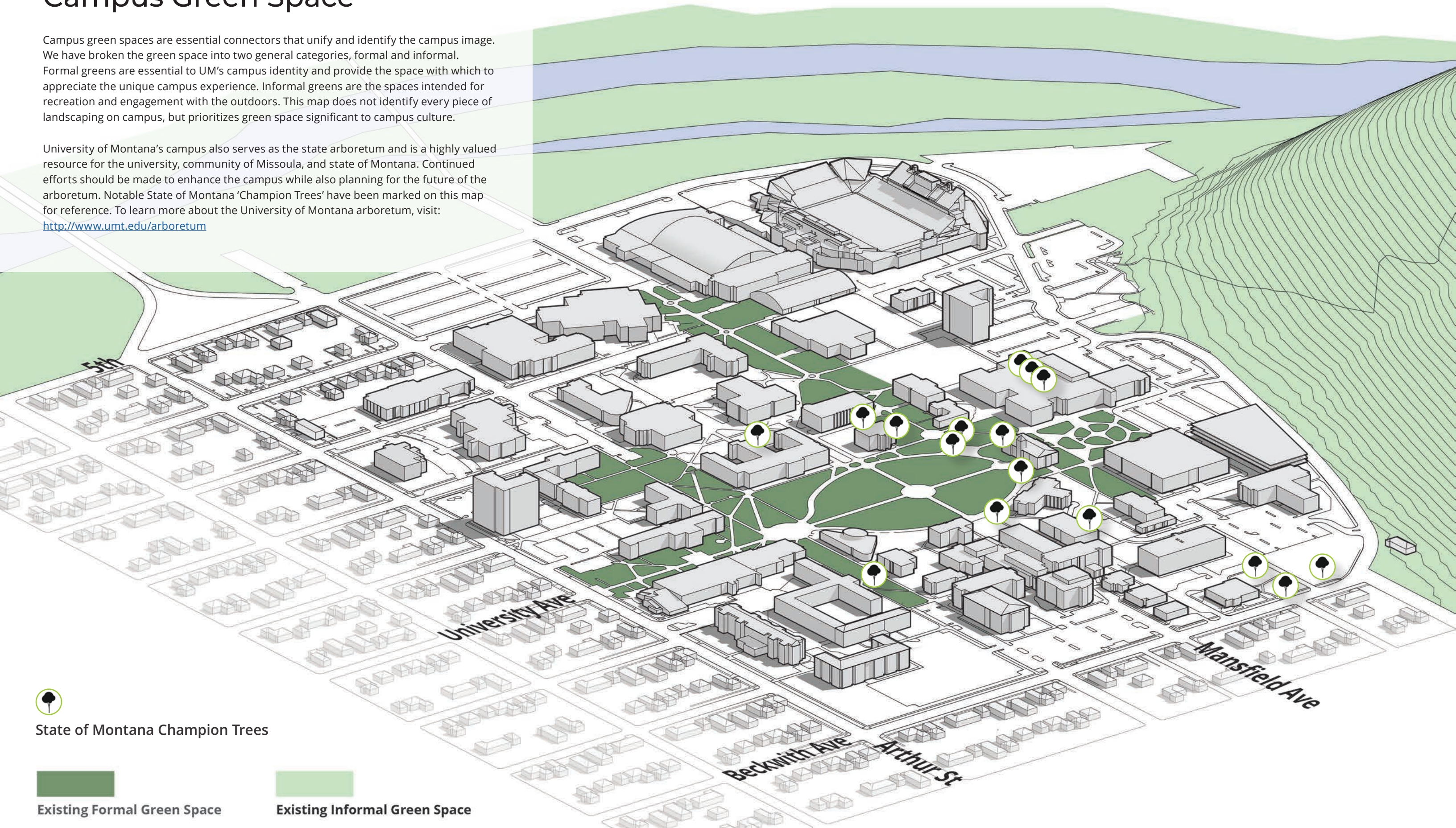
Building numbers correspond to student life building conditions pages at the end of this section.



Campus Green Space

Campus green spaces are essential connectors that unify and identify the campus image. We have broken the green space into two general categories, formal and informal. Formal greens are essential to UM's campus identity and provide the space with which to appreciate the unique campus experience. Informal greens are the spaces intended for recreation and engagement with the outdoors. This map does not identify every piece of landscaping on campus, but prioritizes green space significant to campus culture.

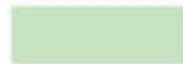
University of Montana's campus also serves as the state arboretum and is a highly valued resource for the university, community of Missoula, and state of Montana. Continued efforts should be made to enhance the campus while also planning for the future of the arboretum. Notable State of Montana 'Champion Trees' have been marked on this map for reference. To learn more about the University of Montana arboretum, visit: <http://www.umt.edu/arboretum>



State of Montana Champion Trees



Existing Formal Green Space



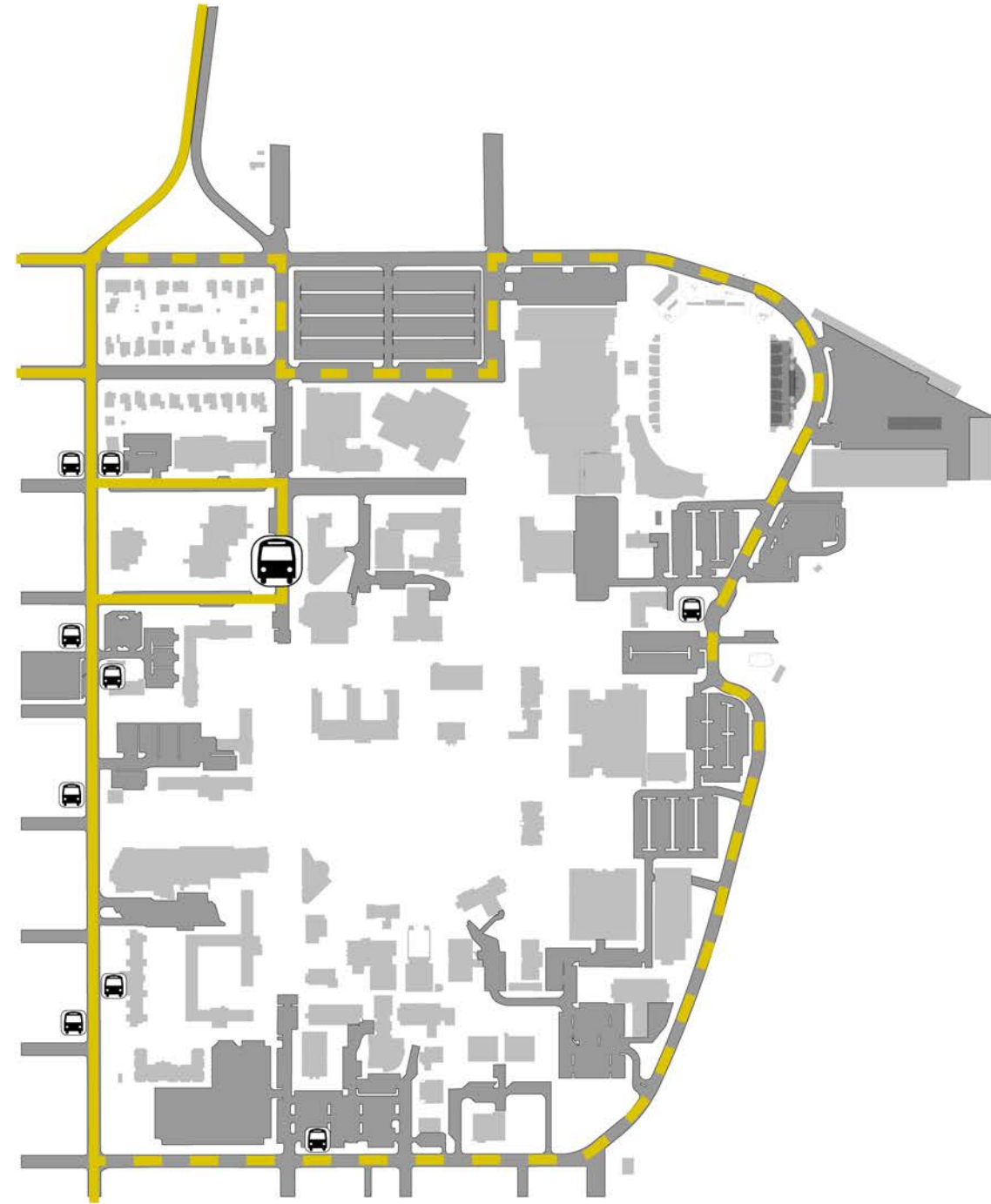
Existing Informal Green Space

Campus Circulation

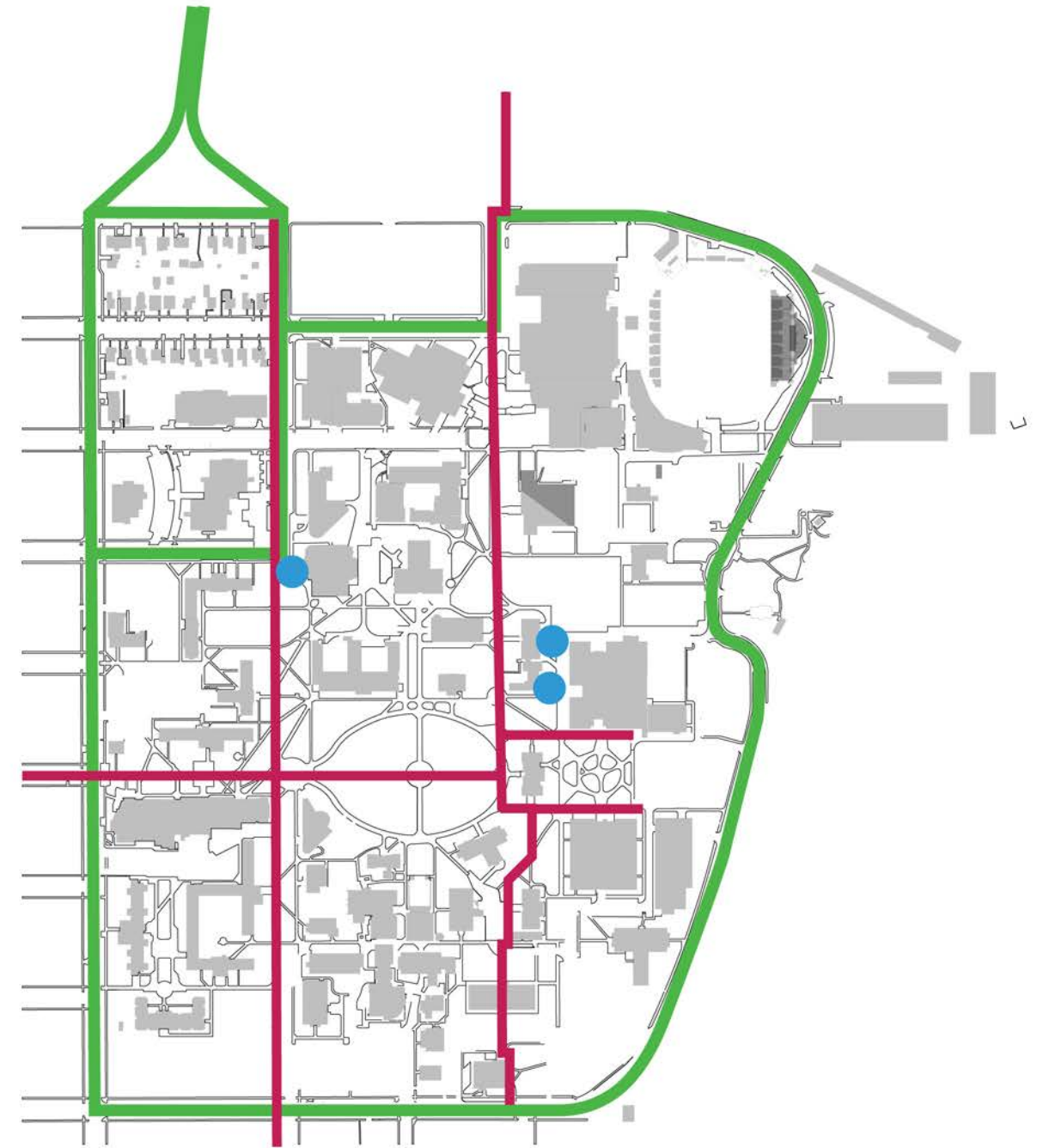
The relative compactness of the University of Montana main campus, along with its ample orthogonal greens and walkways, gives it an ideal setting for bike and pedestrian circulation. There is also a relatively robust bus system that brings people to and from the campus to the city.

The design team has observed that there are prospects to enhance and celebrate connections within the campus, to the city center across the Clark Fork River, the residential neighborhoods towards the west, South Campus to the south, and the mountains to the east.

Early discussions with the University included boosting the outdoors/recreation brand of the campus. As can be seen in the maps, there are only two bike storage places on campus. This was further considered in the master plan.



Parking/Vehicular Circulation



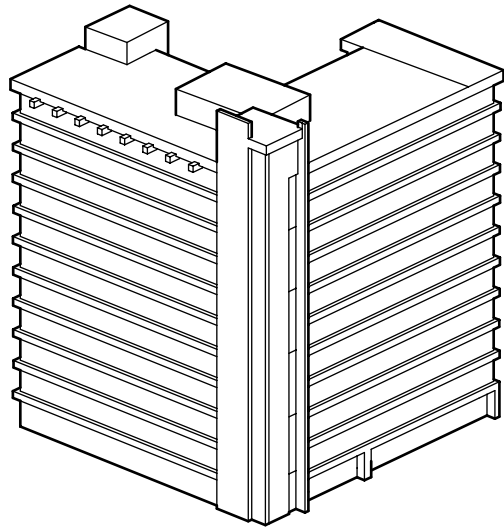
Pedestrian/Bike Circulation



Student Life Building Conditions

It has been noted in the design team's campus analysis, that there is currently adequate amount of square footage of student life space on campus to accommodate the current Full Time Equivalency (FTE). Even so, many of these facilities do not reflect the degree of dining, housing, recreation and student services spaces that students expect in today's competitive higher education market.

As part of the master plan, the design team was asked to evaluate current facilities on campus and assess their viability. Provided here is a high-level look at the campus noting the degree of intervention needed for your student life spaces. We recommend a more complete study of each facility that are noted as 'minor' or 'significant renovation' projects.



1

Jesse Hall

BUILT

1967

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

87,951 SF

OCCUPANCY

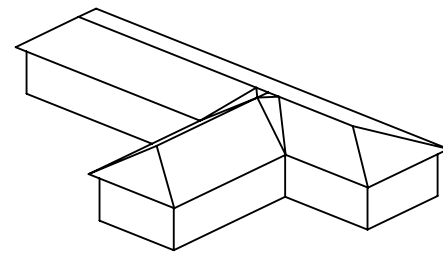
397 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA



2

Turner Hall

BUILT

1938

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

34,796 SF

OCCUPANCY

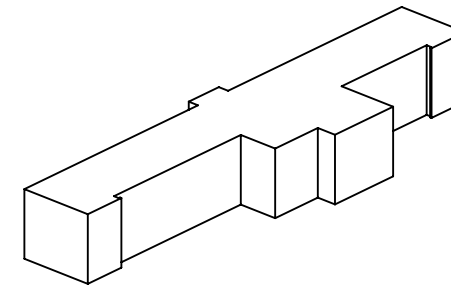
116 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA



3

Knowles Hall

BUILT

1963

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

64,078 SF

OCCUPANCY

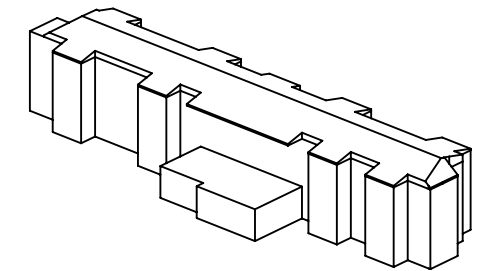
266 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles / Triples

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA



4

Miller Hall

BUILT / REMODELED

1966 / 1996

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

77,553 SF

OCCUPANCY

320 Beds

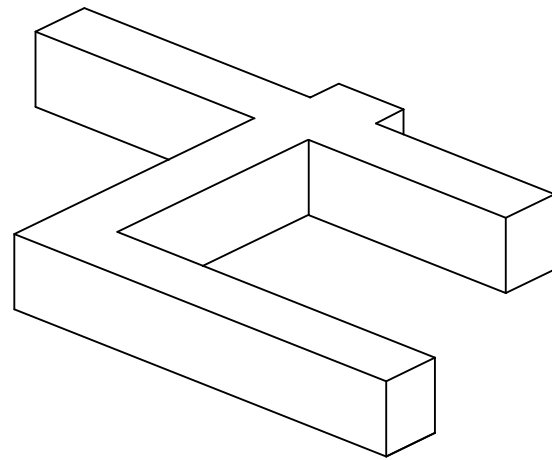
TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles / Pods

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA

Student Life Building Conditions



5

Craig + Duniway Halls

BUILT

1953 / 1956

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

73,619 / 37,224 SF

OCCUPANCY

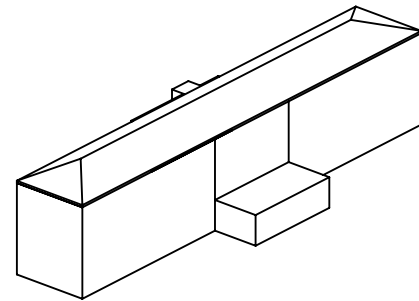
373 / 240 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA



6

Elrod Hall

BUILT

1923

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

34,323 SF

OCCUPANCY

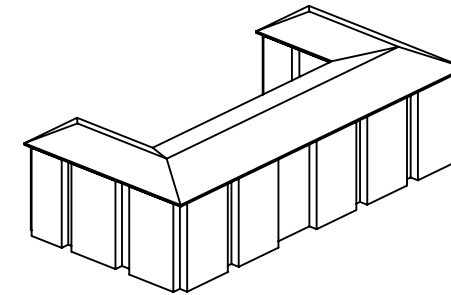
113 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles

STUDENT AMENITIES

Dining / Other



7

Pantzer Hall

BUILT

1995

CURRENT USE

Residence Hall

TOTAL AREA

79,815 SF

OCCUPANCY

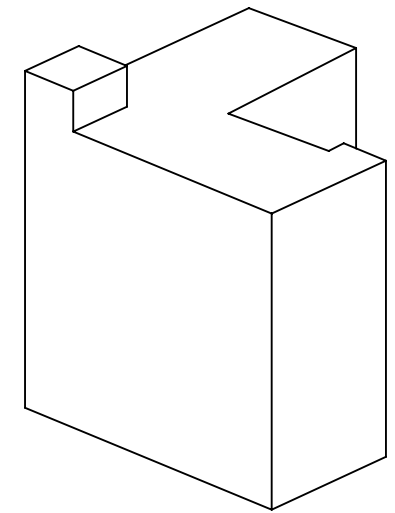
201 Beds

TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Apartments / 4-person Suites

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA



8

Aber Hall

BUILT / REMODELED

1968

CURRENT USE

Designed as residence hall, turned offices and temporary housing

TOTAL AREA

87,951 SF

OCCUPANCY

397 Beds

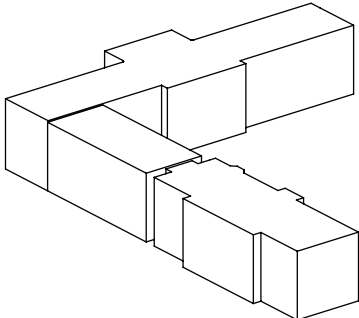
TYPES OF ROOMS

Singles / Doubles / Apartments

STUDENT AMENITIES

NA

Student Life Building Conditions



9

Brantly-Corbin

BUILT

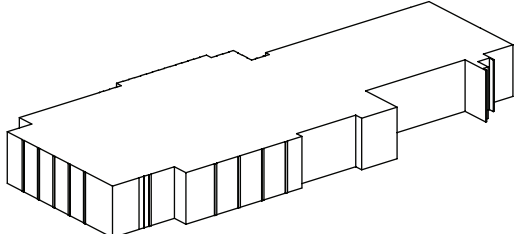
CURRENT USE
Former residence hall turned office space

TOTAL AREA

OCCUPANCY

TYPES OF ROOMS
Singles / Doubles

STUDENT AMENITIES
NA



10

CHC

BUILT

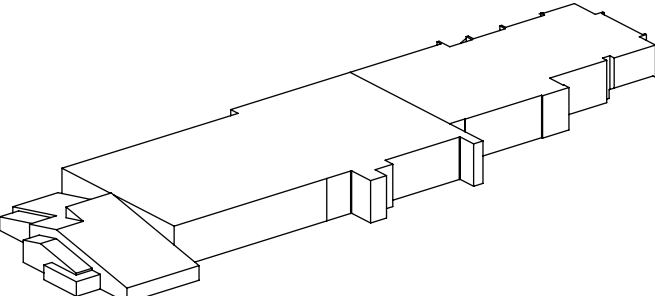
CURRENT USE
Health Center

TOTAL AREA

OCCUPANCY

TYPES OF ROOMS
NA

STUDENT AMENITIES



11

Lommasson Center

BUILT

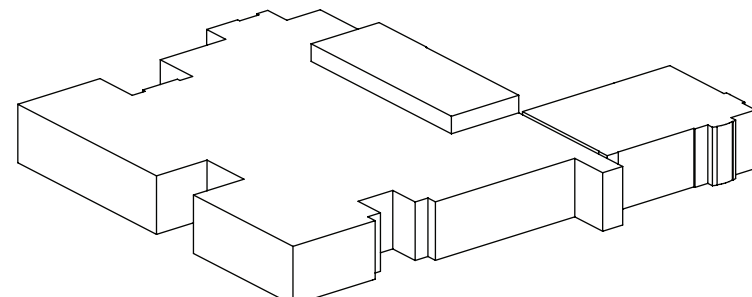
CURRENT USE
Student Services, Dining Center

TOTAL AREA
101,500

OCCUPANCY
NA

TYPES OF ROOMS
NA

STUDENT AMENITIES
Student Services, Dining Center



12

University Center

BUILT
1968

CURRENT USE
Conferencing, Offices, Student Clubs, Food Venues and Dining

TOTAL AREA

OCCUPANCY
NA

TYPES OF ROOMS
NA







STUDENT AMENITIES
Conferencing, Offices, Student Clubs, Food Venues and Dining

Existing Campus







Social Pinpoint

Due to COVID-19, students left the UM Campus in March 2020, making in-person engagement impossible. Finding a way to involve the broader UM community virtually was important to informing the overall Student Life Master Plan. The design team utilized a social media based mapping platform called Social Pinpoint to get feedback on the intricacies of the University of Montana's campus areas: General Campus, Student Life, and Recreation/Outdoor Recreation. Social Pinpoint was deployed via UM's social media platforms, and emailed to key students, faculty, and staff groups. Over a two-week information gathering phase, over 200 pins were dropped on the UM campus map location relative to the comment. Users had the opportunity to drop as many pins as they liked, and to like or dislike pins already dropped. Examples of pin prompts included, "I socialize here because...", "This would be better if...", "Favorite place" and "I do not feel safe here". A break-down of the comments for each of the three information areas is available in Appendix X.




Student Life

-  Favorite place to live on campus
-  I like to study here
-  I would study here if...
-  I socialize here because...
-  I would socialize here if...
-  Place to relax

General Campus

-  Favorite Place
-  I arrive to campus here...
-  I do not feel safe here...
-  Least favorite place
-  This could be better if...
-  Transportation improvement needed

Recreation / Outdoor Rec

-  I don't like to...
-  I like to...
-  This would be better if...

Student Life

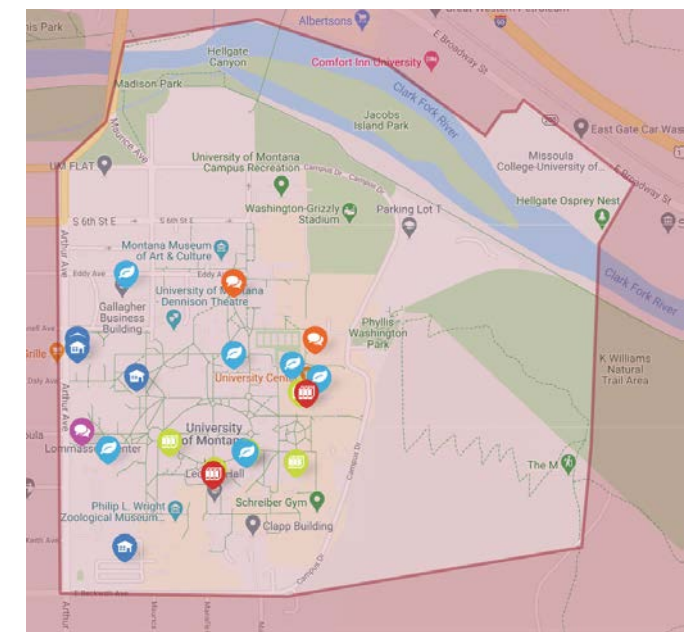
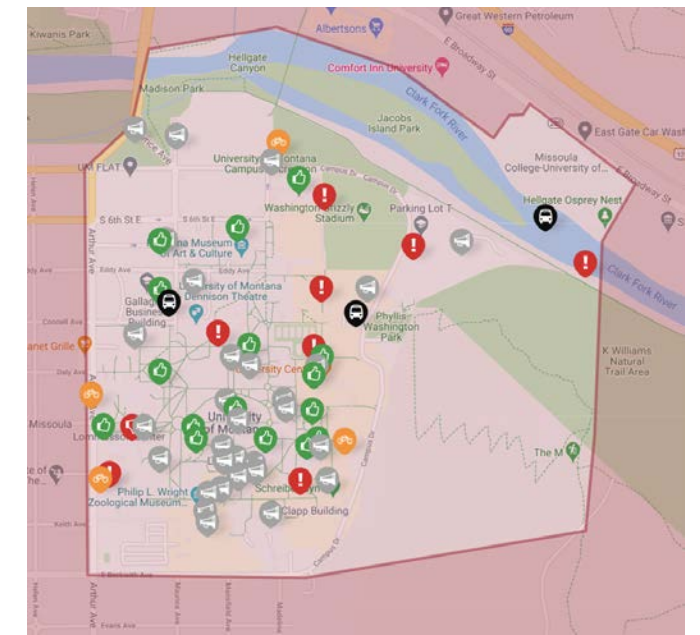
Students really enjoyed their experiences living in Jesse, Turner, and Elrod/Duniway Hall. Having a quiet, convenient area with close access to food, especially healthier options, was a really important factor in finding a place to relax or study.

Recreation/ Outdoor Recreation

Places like the Oval, trails, and M are well liked for recreation. Students would like to see better WiFi, a solution to the mass squirrel population, and more benches along the M trail to enjoy these spaces even more.

General Campus

Students at the University of Montana greatly appreciate aspects of the campus that make it unique, such as intended gathering spaces (UC, Library, and Oval), buildings that contribute to wellness (Curry, the gym, and DHC), and areas that are well landscaped. There are, however, a lot of issues that students feel need to be addressed. Safety concerns, such as inadequate lighting and precautions for emergency situations are things that were brought up, as well as a need for improved layouts for buildings and bus routes.



NEW STUDENT LIFE MASTER PLAN

New Student Life Master Plan

OVERVIEW AND CONCEPT: CITY-CORE-RIVER-MOUNTAIN	C1
CAMPUS STUDENT LIFE MASTER PLAN	C2
Student Housing	
Student Life	
Dining	
Recreation	
Gateways	
ENLARGED PLANS BY PRECINCT	C3
River	C3.1
Mountain	C3.2
Campus Core	C3.3
The Community	C3.4
SMALL PROJECTS	C4

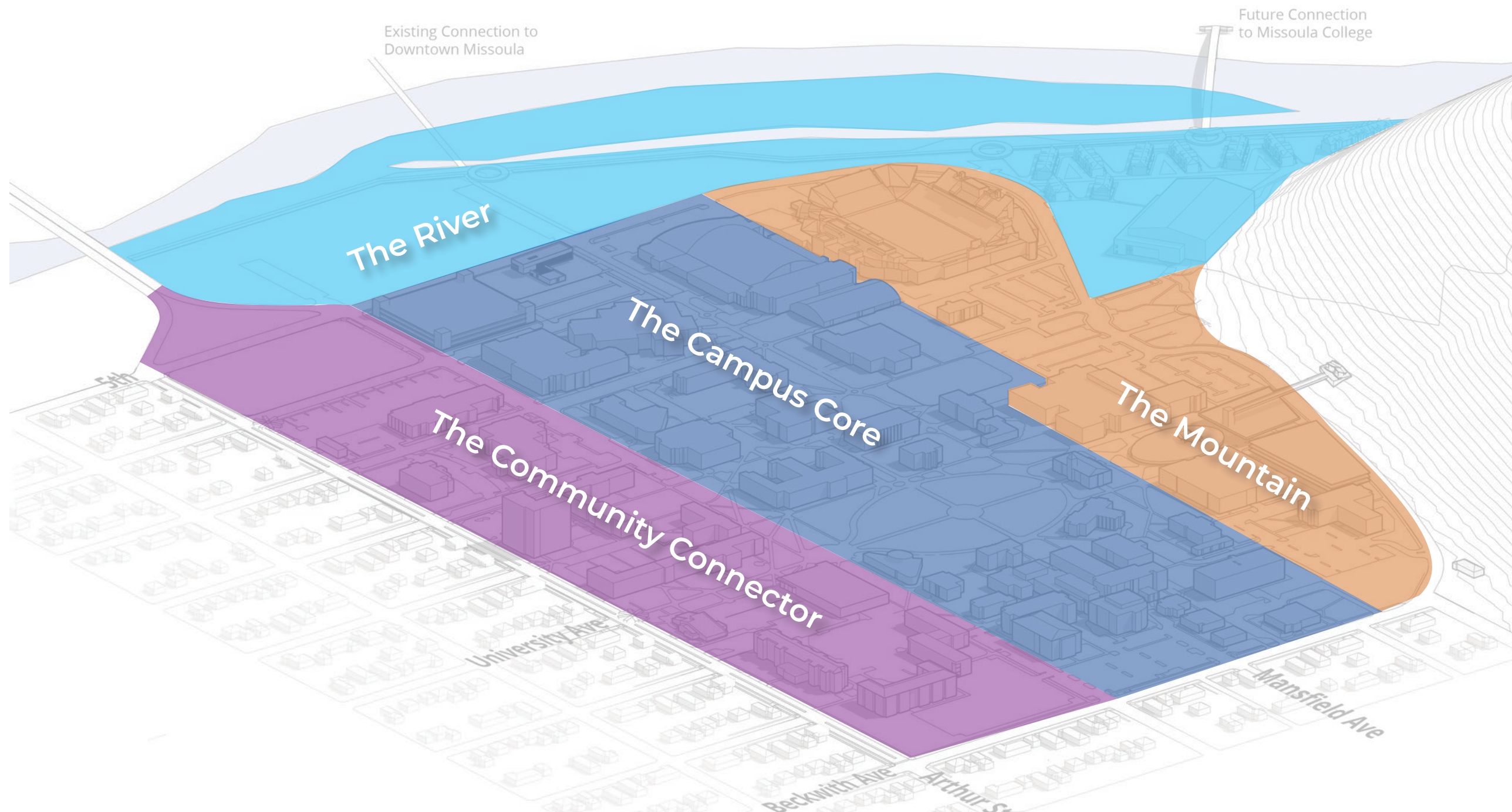
Overview & Concept

The University of Montana's commitment to the vibrancy of its students is evident in the student life master plan. Over the last several months, the design team has worked closely with the core UM stakeholder group, with a wide variety of constituents at the University, and in the city of Missoula on this endeavor. A consistent foundation of core values has guided the work:

- > A vital interest in increasing the recruitment and retention of students. The University of Montana must be regionally competitive.
- > An understanding of the financial challenges in higher education today. The stakeholder and design teams have approached the master plan from a limited budget standpoint looking for opportunities that create an immediate positive impact on campus.
- > The awareness that what happens outside the classroom is as important to today's student as what is learned within. There is a great need to improve the student life experience on campus.
- > The recognition that the campus itself is a vital asset to its success: "It has great bones." Most of the propositions in the master plan are about enhancing and modernizing already valuable campus assets.
- > The design team's assertion that wayfinding, branding, and PR are as important to the campus as improving the physical spaces people experience.

As will be noted further in this document, the campus masterplan is understood as an interconnection of four distinct "neighborhoods": Community, Campus Core, River, and Mountain. As the design team studied the campus and its surroundings, it became apparent that connecting to its surroundings could be a way to truly enhance the Grizzly campus experience. There are very few examples among institutions around the country that deeply embrace natural or small-town environments in a seamless way and truly celebrate their neighboring assets. With this awareness, the design and stakeholder team has seen the opportunity to create a student life experience that blends the campus core with the river, mountains, and city of Missoula.





The Community is the area along the western edge of main campus and has a strong connection to the City of Missoula. Starting at 5th Street East, all the way to East Beckwith Avenue, and from Arthur Avenue into the Oval, this zone is the primary student housing and dining area of campus.

The Campus Core is the academic heart of the university. It extends from 6th Avenue East down to East Beckwith Avenue, and from the Oval to Memorial Walk.

The River is an amazing and underutilized zone of campus fronting the Clark Fork River. This area starts at the river's edge and extends down to South 5th street East, and from the Madison Street Bridge past the pedestrian bridge and Washington-Grizzly Stadium all the way to the Kim Williams Nature Trail.

The Mountain neighborhood starts in the parking lot of the "M" trailhead and connects down to the intersection of East Beckwith Avenue and Campus Drive. It extends from Memorial Walk and embraces the hillside of the "M" and beyond to Mount Sentinel.

In this student life master plan, the UM campus can celebrate and embrace its connection to the unique context in which it is nestled. Furthermore, by considering the neighborhoods as distinct and overlapping communities, the master plan proposes a number of design approaches that give each a welcoming individuality. The University of Montana is a wonderful place to live, learn, and grow. This plan brings a heightened order and sense of celebration to what is already an extraordinary campus and student life experience.

Campus Student Life Master Plan

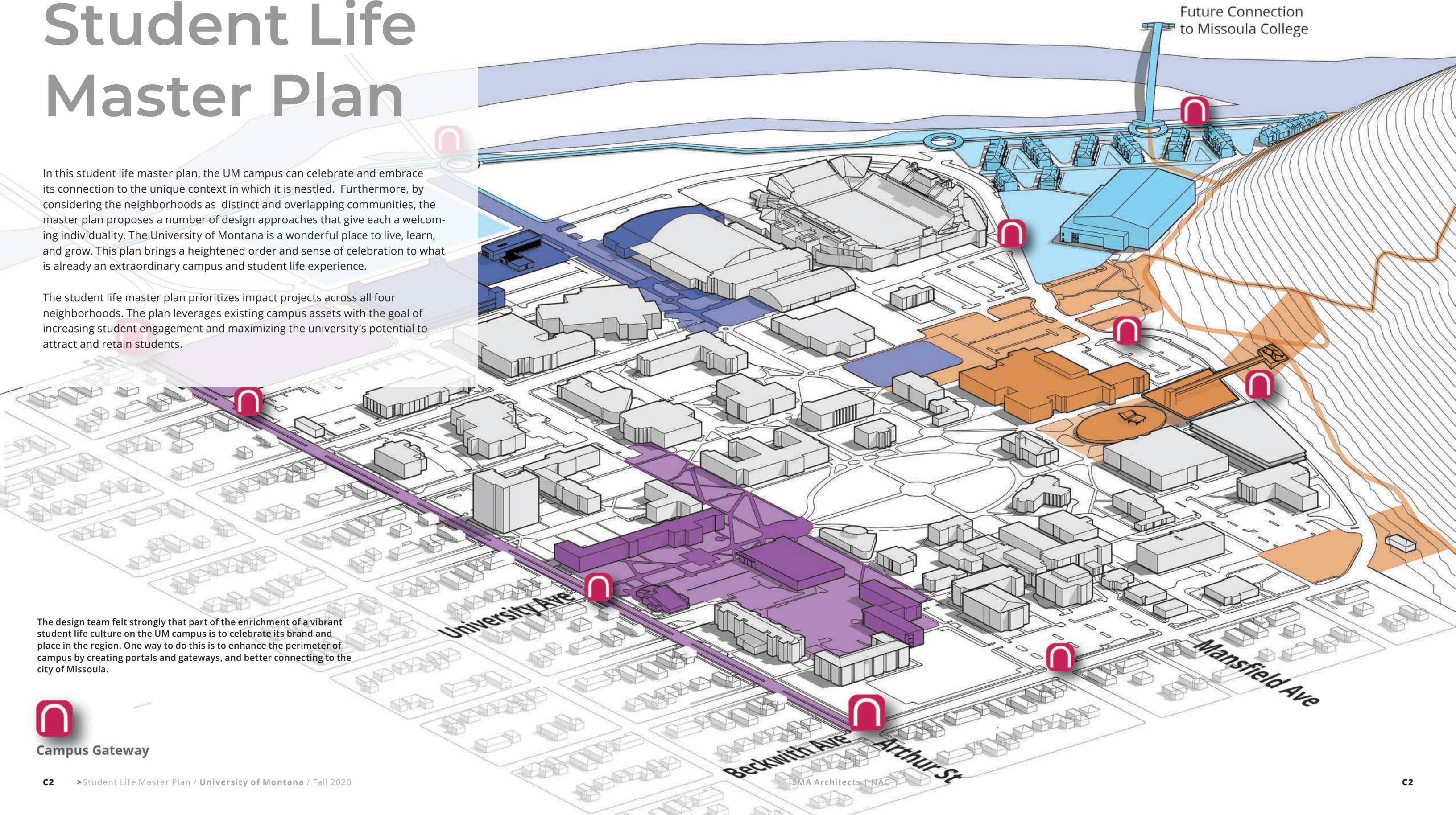
In this student life master plan, the UM campus can celebrate and embrace its connection to the unique context in which it is nestled. Furthermore, by considering the neighborhoods as distinct and overlapping communities, the master plan proposes a number of design approaches that give each a welcoming individuality. The University of Montana is a wonderful place to live, learn, and grow. This plan brings a heightened order and sense of celebration to what is already an extraordinary campus and student life experience.

The student life master plan prioritizes impact projects across all four neighborhoods. The plan leverages existing campus assets with the goal of increasing student engagement and maximizing the university's potential to attract and retain students.

The design team felt strongly that part of the enrichment of a vibrant student life culture on the UM campus is to celebrate its brand and place in the region. One way to do this is to enhance the perimeter of campus by creating portals and gateways, and better connecting to the city of Missoula.



Campus Gateway



Enlarged Plan By Precinct

The River

There are several references in this master plan to the noteworthy natural setting of the University of Montana. Like the mountains to the east, the Clark Fork River is a unique and valuable asset to the university that is currently underutilized.

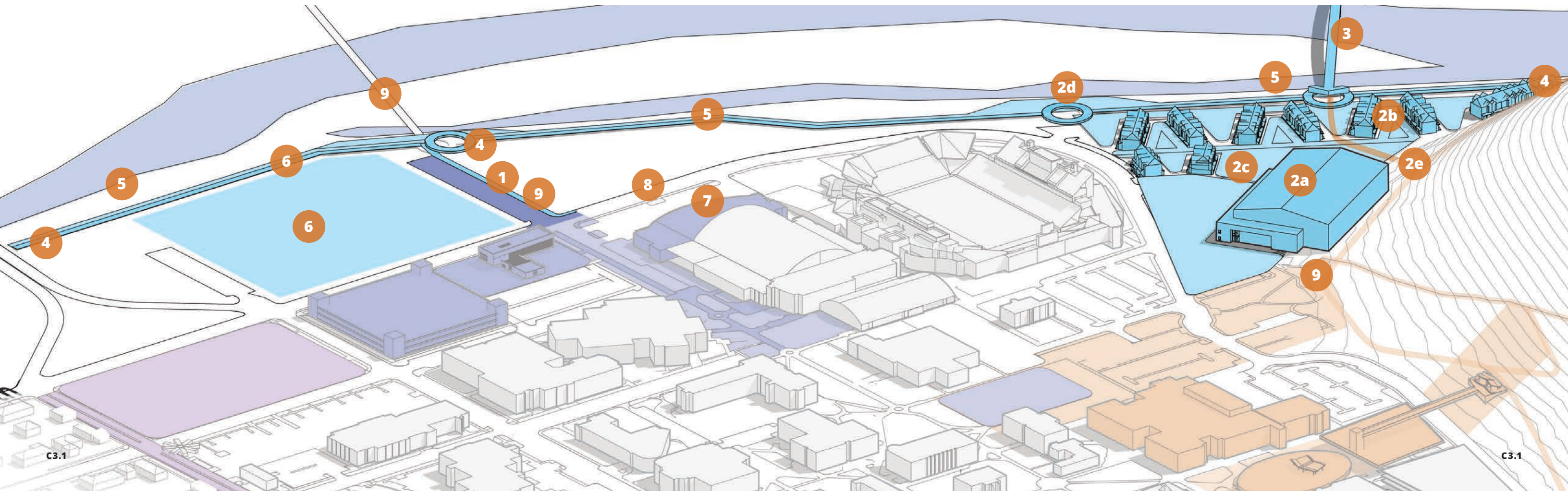
This master plan recognizes the continued partnership between the University of Montana and city of Missoula to maximize and enhance the opportunities along the rivers edge. Established work may be viewed at the following address: <https://www.engagemissoula.com/north-riverside-parks-trails>

The Student Life Master Plan for the river zone strengthens connections from the campus core to the river's edge and Kim Williams trail with a striking re-imagining of the northern edge of campus. Note that then numbers correspond to locations on the precinct map:

1. Extension of Memorial Row to Jacob's Island and the Riverfront Pedestrian Bridge to East Broadway Street.
2. Redevelopment of the current Facilities Services triangle parcel.
 - ▶ a. New indoor football practice / student and community recreation facility.
 - ▶ b. Faculty/graduate housing along Kim Williams Trail.
 - ▶ c. Open space for outdoor activities.
 - ▶ d. Strengthening the pedestrian connection along Campus Drive to the river.
 - ▶ e. Developing the trail between the "M" and Kim Williams Natural Trail Area to become an inviting pedestrian and bike connector.
3. Development of a new pedestrian bridge over the Clark Fork to connect the northeast corner of campus to the Missoula College campus.
4. Introducing UM branding to the Clark Fork River area by developing signage at campus entry points and intersections of campus connections with the Kim Williams Trail.
5. Create moments for engagement with the natural river edge and integration with the Kim Williams Trail

- such as boat and kayak launch areas, pedestrian sitting areas and a surf zone on Jacob's Island.
- 6. Convert and expand current outdoor football practice fields to intramural and recreation spaces.
- 7. Convert current racquetball courts in campus recreation building to multipurpose fitness and wellness studios.
- 8. New covered bike storage
- 9. Wayfinding and interpretive signage opportunities.

Of these interventions, the most dramatic is the redevelopment of the current triangular Facilities Services parcel. The university and design team feel strongly that this valuable and picturesque site is currently underutilized. Because of the unusual size of the indoor practice facility, it has been placed adjacent to Mount Sentinel-close to the football stadium-to reduce its apparent scale. In addition, adding housing along the river, and development of additional student recreation opportunities will reinforce the connection to the river and give greater student life purpose to this precinct.

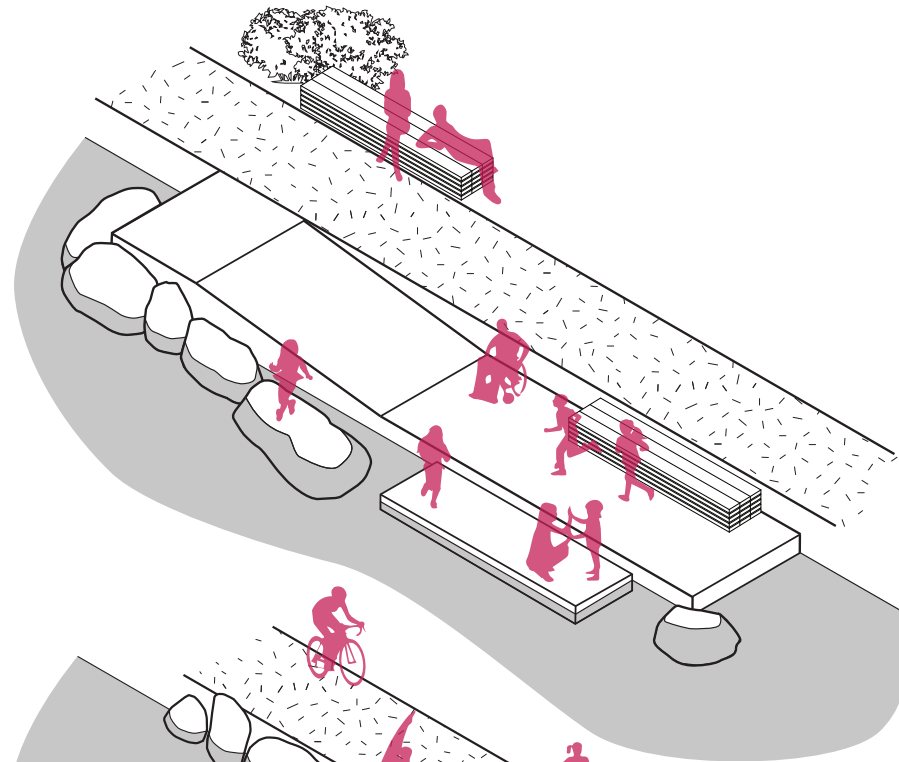




- 2a. New indoor football practice / student and community recreation facility.
- 2b. Faculty/graduate housing along Kim Williams Trail.
- 2c. Open space for outdoor activities.
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- 9. Wayfinding and interpretive signage opportunities.

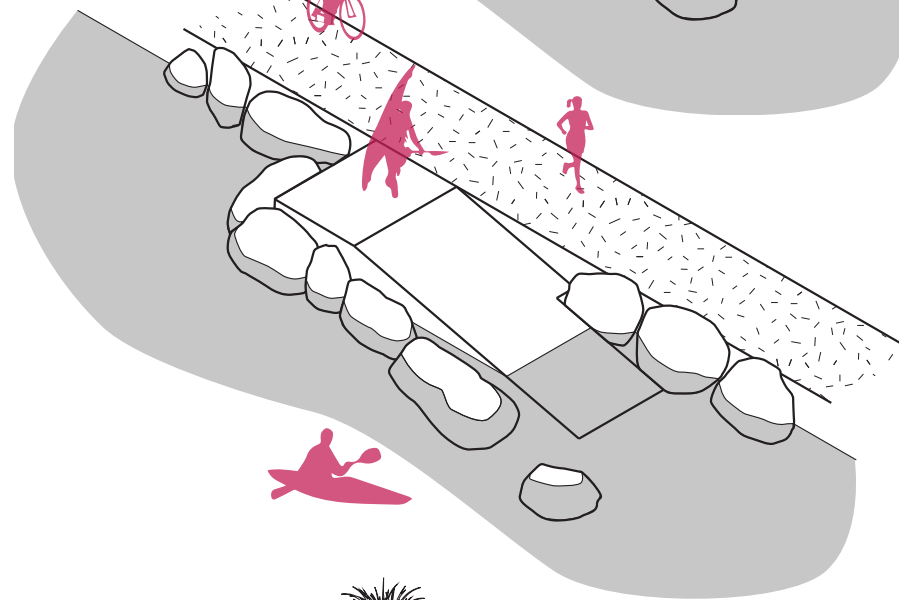
River Access (5a)

The Clark Fork River offers an attractive and valuable natural amenity to students and the Missoula community, but there is currently no accessibility adjacent to campus. Implementing varied locations and types of access will help to activate the northern edge of campus, serve as an attractive amenity, and help to provide a safer environment through increased visibility and activity.



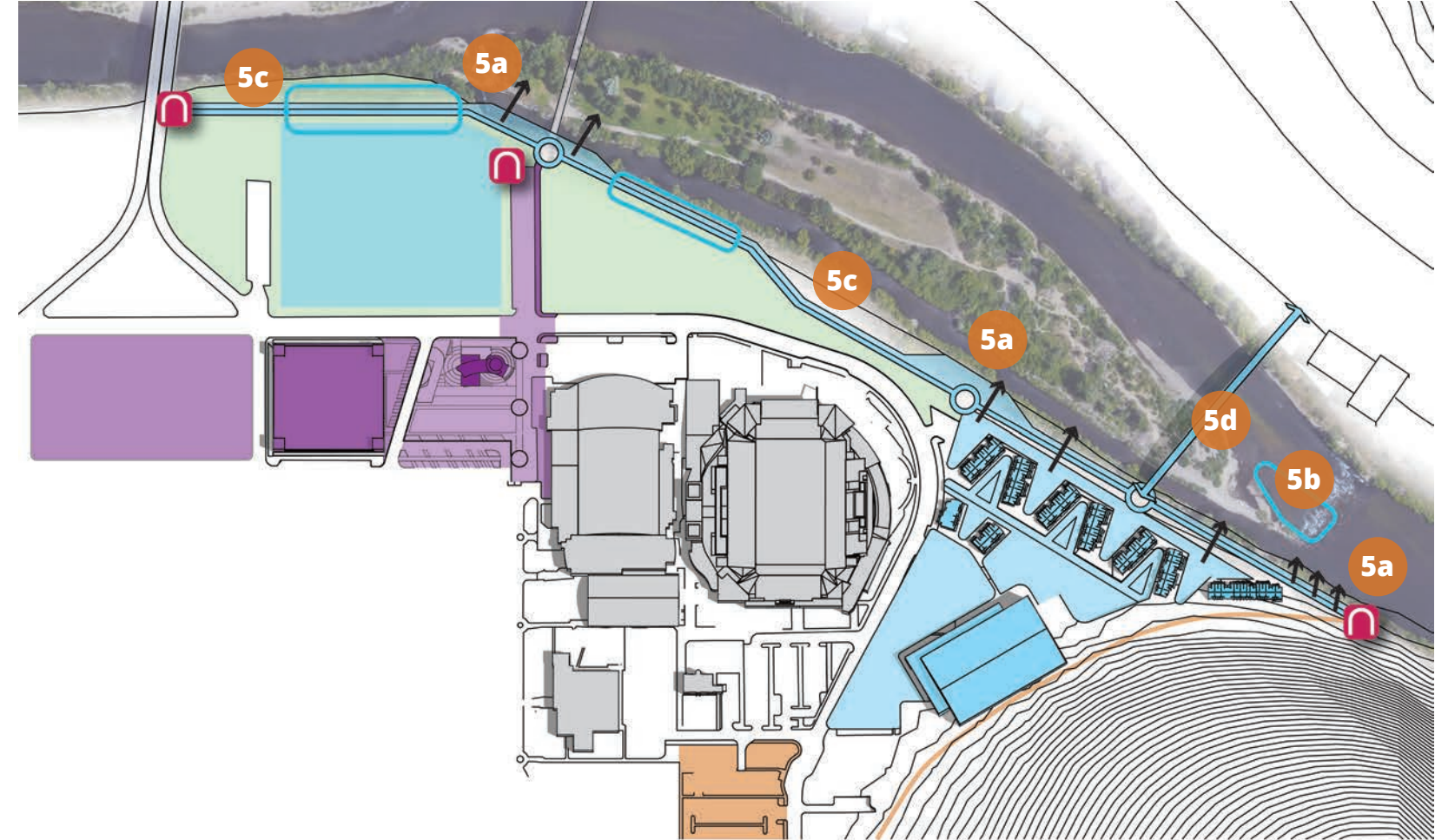
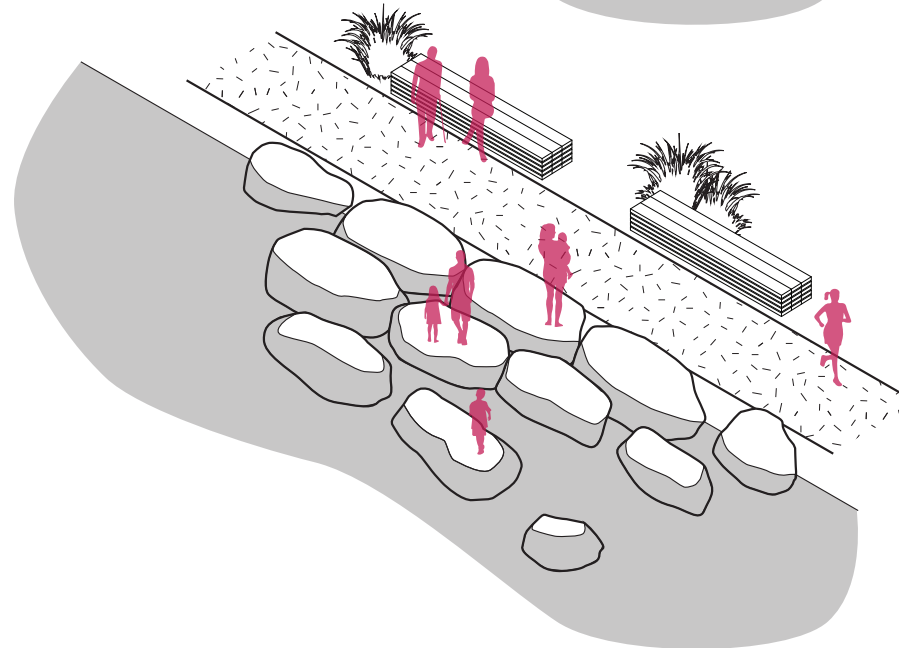
Surf Park (5b)

The rapids and viewing platform at Caras Park, northwest of campus are popular features in the Missoula and have drawn crowds for both viewing and water activity. The river along campus is a great location to expand on this already popular theme.



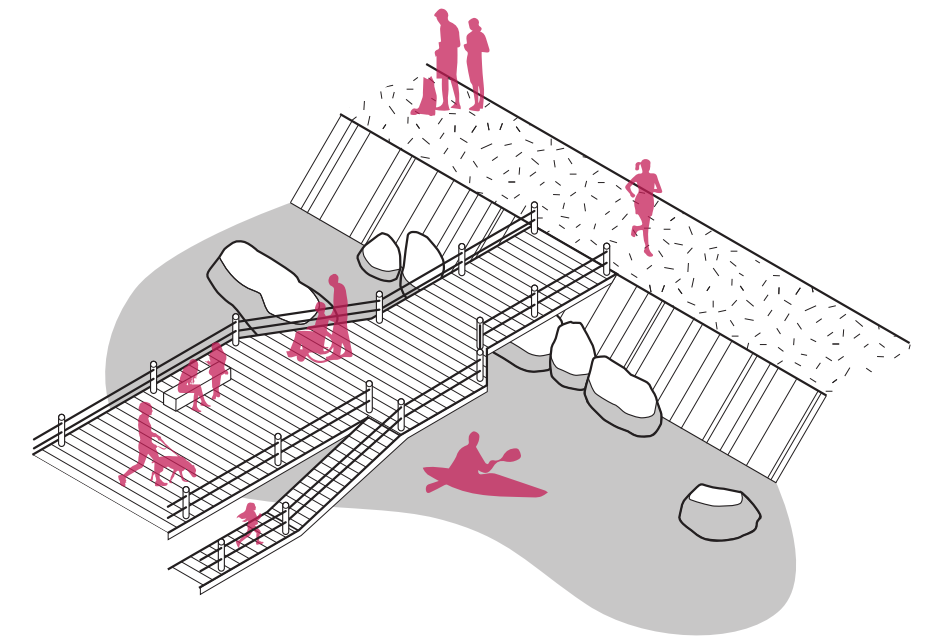
River's Edge (5c)

There is currently a high undeveloped bank between the Clark Fork River and the northern edge of campus along Kim Williams Trail. Providing places for people to connect directly with the water will greatly enhance the draw to the Clark Fork River.



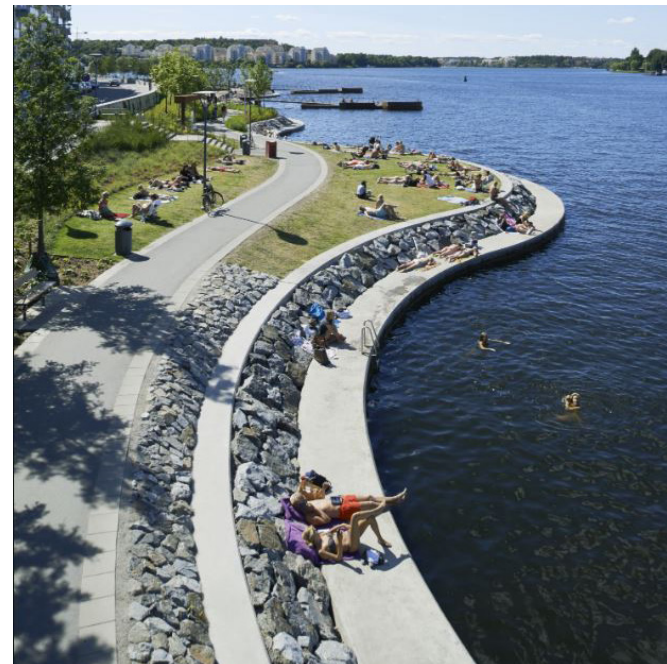
Missoula College Bridge (5d)

A new pedestrian bridge connection between Missoula College and the main campus would provide more accessibility to the trails and amenities on both sides of the river and better join the two institutions. This bridge could also be a new signature gateway to the University of Montana and create additional access to river activities.



Precedent Imagery

The following images have served as conceptual inspiration during development of the student life master plan.



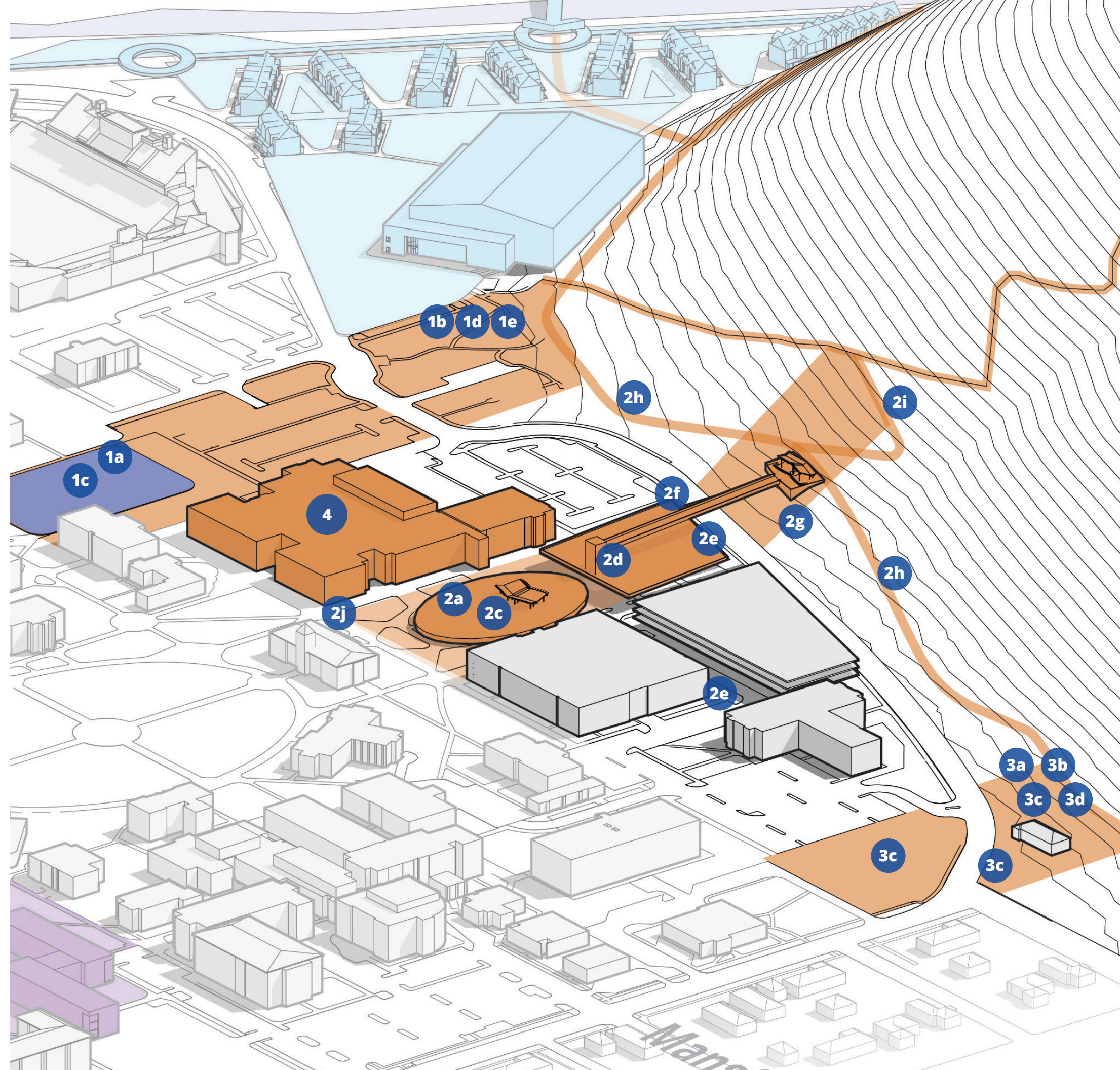
The Mountain

Very few institutions in the world are set in the shadows of a peak such as Mt. Sentinel. Currently, Campus Drive, a series of parking lots along the east edge of campus, and the facilities service yard separate the campus community from its mountain context. There is a small area at the “M” trailhead and Phyllis Washington Park that give direct access to the mountains, but the new master plan seeks a more interconnected highland relationship.

The plan for the mountain neighborhood anticipates three “connectors” from campus that interlock with the hillside to the east. Note that the numbers below correspond to locations on the precinct plan:

1. **The North Connector** is an enhancement of the current “M” trailhead area, that extends the green to Memorial Row. The plan here advocates demolition of Aber Hall and the tennis courts to allow for unobstructed access between the two.
 - › a. Removal of Aber Hall and tennis courts
 - › b. New Trailhead Information Center
 - › c. Location of future building
 - › d. New covered bike shelter
 - › e. Wayfinding and interpretive signage opportunities

2. **The central connector** imagines a completely new and vibrant outdoor community space between the University Center and the Mansfield Library. This will be an area for significant outdoor concerts, festivals, theater and campus celebrations. Taking advantage of the existing topography an amphitheater is created to the east of the plaza. Approximately 80 stalls of parking can be developed along Campus Drive and between the library and eastern garage. At the amphitheater an ADA accessible pedestrian bridge connects this area to a lower campus overlook. Two new paths are anticipated here: One is a switchback that leads to the “M” trail. The other is a lower ADA accessible trail that stretches from the original “M” trailhead all the way down to the Veterans Center at the intersections of Campus Drive and East Beckwith. This allows all visitors to experience a part of Mount Sentinel with wonderful views of campus and the city.
 - › a. New Campus Plaza
 - › b. University Center improvements (See below)
 - › c. Center stage
 - › d. Amphitheater
 - › e. New parking
 - › f. Pedestrian bridge over Campus Drive
 - › g. Lower campus lookout
 - › h. New lower ADA “M” Trail
 - › i. Connector to upper “M” Trail
 - › j. Covered bike shelter at U Center Plaza
 - › k. Wayfinding and gateway opportunities.



3. The southern connector with the U.S. Forest Service Building, Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, and Veterans Center will become a unique area of healing and learning that anchors the southeast corner of the main campus and connects to the lower “M” trails.

- › a. Gateway and connection to lower ADA “M” Trail
- › b. Covered bike shelter at trail gateway
- › c. Enhancement of open area around Forest Service building and Veterans Center
- › d. Wayfinding and interpretive signage opportunities

The overall purpose of this neighborhood design is to transform the eastern edge of campus from an area adjacent to the mountain, to a zone that embraces this amazing stretch of landscape. This is a place that has been reserved in the past for the robust but can become a destination for all who want to connect to Mount Sentinel and enjoy the unique views of the campus and city.

4. University Center

Considered the “downtown” of the university, upwards of 7000 people use the U Center in a single day. It houses key student functions and organizations, a wide variety of study and common areas, a game room, dining and conferencing for the community. A recent study was completed which focused solely on ways to redevelop and enhance the UC. The Master Plan recognizes this study and encourages its continued implementation. For further reference and details, please see: <https://www.umt.edu/uc/about/master-space-plan/default.php>

The work required to modernize the U Center is extensive. The central atrium is a defining feature of the building but has mixed reviews from students and staff. The space is dated and the roof is a continuing maintenance issue. The food court needs a complete renovation with new venues and more variety. New seating areas have increased usage, but these lack visibility and connectivity to the atrium and outdoor plaza. In addition, here are upgrades to the University Center that have been recommended in focus groups conducted by the design team for the student life master plan:

- › Continue to provide space that is visible to students and focused on their needs and interest, including Identity groups, leadership offices as well as space for a variety of meeting types.
- › Continue to invest in new furniture that is “sticky” and encourages students to linger, study, and hangout.
- › Remodel dining space to meet current students demands. Provide more visibility between the dining space and the rest of the UC so that the spaces feel connected and separated into individual separate. Consider adding TV’s and additional furniture to provide flexibility and variety to spaces within the UC
- › Analyze meeting spaces on campus to ensure that the right types and sizes are available to entire campus and student population. Recent renovation to some meeting rooms have dramatically increase their usage. Look for opportunity space to create similar investment and different sized rooms
- › Conferencing and event space is a huge draw to campus from the entire state and city of Missoula. ADA access and clear wayfinding to these spaces is needed to ensure visitor get to their destination.
- › The UC lacks an appropriate outdoor space which can be programed. Dedicated power and shelter is needed. If located adjacent to the building existing restrooms in UC could be used.
- › Theater needs to be reconfigured with new furniture
- › Consider third floor access to roof space.
- › Atrium space is generally popular with students particularly in winter. Roof can be problematic creating cold drafty temps in the winter and significantly increasing the heat load in the summer. It is also prone to leaking and visually needs to be updated. While the Space is large, it is echoey and difficult to program. A/V is needed within the space to provide better programing without draping cords and equipment across space.
- › ADA access to the building is challenging and the building. Entrances and circulation can be confusing for visitors. New elevators and convenient wayfinding is needed.

Precedent Imagery

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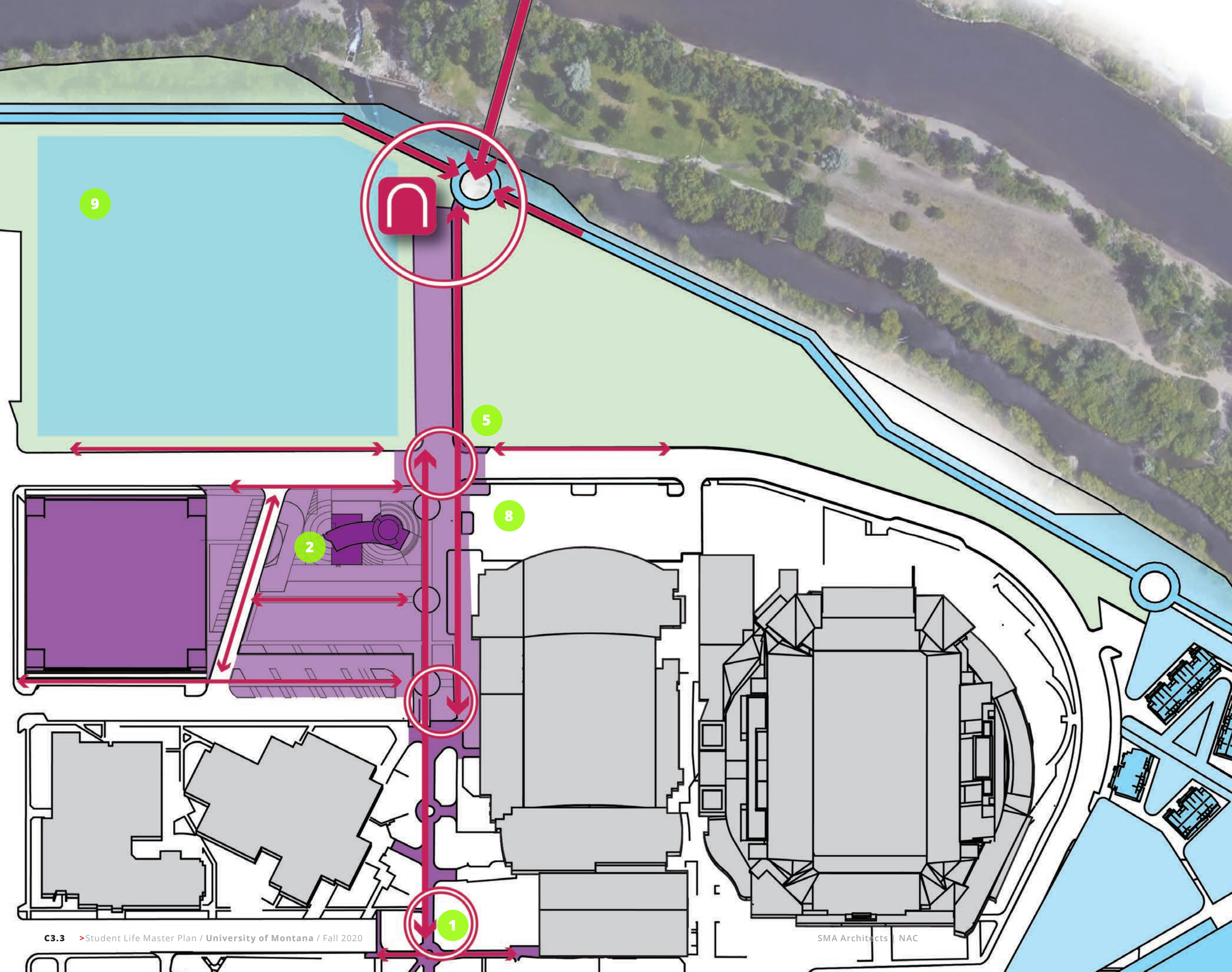
The Campus-Core

The heart of the University of Montana campus is truly a memorable place. Centered on the Oval and flanked by Memorial Row and the green that bisects at the Grizzly sculpture, this is the academic focus of campus. It extends from South 5th Street East at the north end of the university down to East Beckwith Avenue. Though the design team's work did not address significant changes to this area there are several recommendations proposed in this precinct. Two that anchor this student life master plan are extending Memorial Row all the way to the Clark Fork River and placing the new MMAC Museum at the northern end of this neighborhood. Memorial Row currently ends at Adams Center. Linking it to Riverfront Trail Pedestrian Bridge will give the community a contiguous branded experience all the way to the center of campus. Placing the museum along this walk amplifies what is already a visitor and event focused part of the campus. Easy public access to parking makes this a strong entrance point to the rest of campus along an enhanced green.

Note that numbers below correspond to locations on the precinct plan:

- 1. Extension of Memorial Row.
- 2. Location of new Art & Culture Museum
- 3. New parking structure
- 4. Removal of Aber Hall and the current tennis courts to create a link to the current "M" trailhead. (See the Mountain Neighborhood)
- 5. Wayfinding and interpretive signage emphasizing the history of the university.
- 6. Enhanced connection around University Hall to a new campus central plaza and amphitheater at U Center.
- 7. Selective pruning and removal of trees to improve visibility and vistas.
- 8. Covered bike shelter





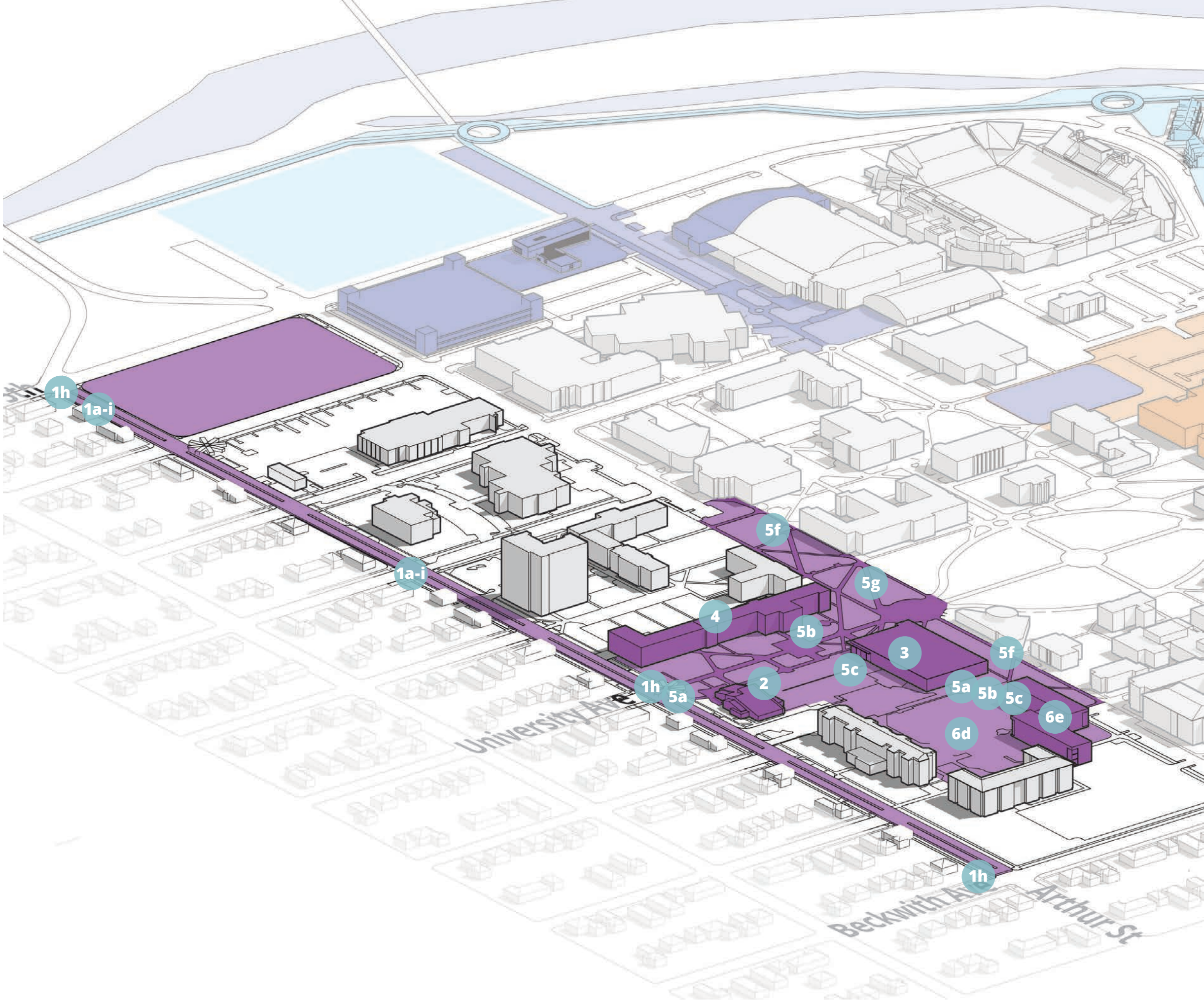
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7. Selective pruning and removal of trees to improve visibility and vistas.
8. Covered bike shelter
9. Previously practice fields. Would be converted to general usage if training facility is built. Currently not usable.

The Community Connector

As the masterplan process has unfolded, the Community Connector Neighborhood has become a focal point of the student life master plan. This zone houses most of the residence halls and dining; and is the official front door to the university. Beginning at the triangular southern end of the Madison Street Bridge called Rankin Park, this precinct extends along Arthur Avenue at the western edge of main campus all the way to East Beckwith Ave. And from Arthur Ave, it reaches east to the North/South campus green intersecting the Grizzly Statue. The university and design team have shared the assessment that improving this area will yield the highest student life dividends on campus for a several reasons:

- > The Community Connector precinct is the most visible to the city.
- > As the primary residential and dining area of main campus it is the most active area of the university.
- > It is the official front door the University of Montana.
- > The residence halls are currently under capacity with a number of problematic facilities that require significant renovation to meet the expectations of contemporary students.
- > Arthur Street has been a neglected important connector for the campus and community.
- > There are opportunities to design Ryman Walk as a gateway to a system of interconnected pedestrian greens and walkways throughout the campus and to Mt. Sentinel.
- > This area is a focal point for prospective and freshman students.
- > The precinct is rich with campus underutilized campus greens and mature vegetation.

As detailed in the appendix, the design process for this area consisted of numerous studies that looked at different approaches to both dining, housing, student services, and open space. This neighborhood plan represents the culmination of that process. *Note, numbers below correspond to locations on the precinct map:*



Improvements to Ryman Walk and the outdoor greens will enrich the residential life in this neighborhood while strengthening its identity as a major factor in student recruitment.



1. Arthur Street Improvements: The goal along Arthur St. has been to develop stronger connections to the community, enhancing its presence in the city and strengthening the brand identity of the university as the gateway to campus. This master plan includes:

- ▶ a. New signage and lighting.
- ▶ b. Enhanced landscaping
- ▶ c. Improved bus shelters
- ▶ d. New center median
- ▶ e. Dedicated bike lane
- ▶ f. Traffic calming at crossings ensure student and public safety enhancing connection to the neighborhood
- ▶ g. New wayfinding
- ▶ h. New Branded gateways at key locations/intersections

- ▶ i. Selective pruning of trees to increase visibility and open vistas.

2. Lommasson Center: This facility is a critical building on campus, housing both dining and student services. The design team's study confirmed the confusing layout, ADA issues, outdated dining and kitchen, and unwelcoming presence. This plan advocates demolishing the eastern portion of the building with The Corner Store to remain on the western edge of Lommasson to provide an anchor

at the entrance of campus along Arthur Ave. this facility provides alternative food options. More importantly The Corner Store give the university additional space for residential life programming. This portion of the building is also currently being renovated.

3. New Dining: This facility is the foundation for a new campus branded experience that reaches the entire university and community beyond. It will be located at the intersection of the Grizzly statue and Ryman



Walk. This location is central to the on campus housing district and is connected to the heart of campus. A new state-of-the-art kitchen and dining area will provide much needed space for the culinary team to showcase their already sophisticated menu. The dining facility will also provide a wide range of modern spaces and amenities including a new campus garden space, private dining rooms, new dining venues, study spaces, staff support spaces and a safer delivery area.

4. Knowles Hall: Feedback from students and the stakeholder group has been that this residence hall is well liked and in a prime location on campus. Not only is it adjacent to dining, but it is within a short

walking distance of most academic buildings. This master plan advocates renovating Knowles Hall to modernize, upgrade energy and water performance, enhance it's technology infrastructure and build an addition to increase bed count and community spaces.

5. Ryman Walk: To complete the experience of linking Knowles hall to the new dining facility the design team feels it imperative to refresh the entire Ryman walk experience. This master plan proposes new landscaping, replacing the deteriorating paving, creating a new branded front door gateway at Arthur Street, and creating a new plaza space between the existing corner store and new dining.

- › a. New Gateway to campus
- › b. Ryman walk improvements
- › c. New student plaza.
- › d. New Parking and delivery
- › e. Covered bike shelters
- › f. Selective pruning and removal of trees to improve visibility and vistas.
- › g. Wayfinding and interpretive signage

6. The potential removal of Craig, Duniway and Elrod Halls: These are residence halls with high deferred maintenance costs that would require a significant influx of money to modernize. At

the same time they have very low density, while requiring significant water and energy to maintain. Removing these facilities creates desirable open space and opportunities for future residence halls.

- › a. Craig Hall Removal
- › b. Duniway Hall Removal
- › c. Elrod Hall Removal
- › d. New Community greens
- › e. New Residence Hall
- › f. Selective pruning and removal of trees to increase visibility and open vistas

Arthur Street Improvements

Arthur street is the front door to campus and provides a clear opportunity for community and campus pride. The Arthur edge is the first impression most will have with the University of Montana and is an important branding opportunity and a place to highlight the University of Montana and the city of Missoula.

Redevelopment of Arthur experience includes:

- > New campus signage at key intersections to brand and welcome visitors to campus.
- > Clearly identify new crosswalks from the neighboring community with lighting, striping and curb cuts to provide additional safety for pedestrian and promote a walkable campus culture.
- > Remove existing gravel paths, cigarette receptacles, benches and visual clutter in favor of a consistent branded landscape buffer.
- > Removal of overhead power and data in favor of buried utilities. This will help dramatically to enhance the views into campus and enhance the other proposed improvements.
- > Arthur is a prominent street for bus traffic. Provide new bus shelters that are clean, easily maintainable and encourage the used of public transportations.
- > Provide a dedicated bike lane which separates vehicular and bike traffic to promote safety and encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation.
- > Adjust the road centerline and provide a new center median along Arthur. This will help to narrow the road lanes which will reduce road width to promote traffic calming reducing vehicular speeds. The new center median can provided consistent lighting, branding, and landscaping opportunities to pronounce the campus edge. The median can also be a place for signage directing visitors to key turns onto campus.

These proposed changes will help to provide a safe and welcoming campus edge which will announce the campus and celebrates the connection to Missoula



Arthur Street Inspiration from Stadium Way, WSU



Existing unwelcoming street edge at Arthur Ave

Connecting the Precincts

Weaving the campus together. A central goal of the student life master plan is enriching the day-to-day experience for students, staff, and visitors. This includes not only improving and establishing branding identities for each neighborhood, but also creating an interconnected web of pedestrian and bike links merging these precincts together. This results in a contiguous campus experience, that extends to the city and landscapes surrounding the campus. Some of these are existing and new campus greens, while others are improved or new roadways and paths. Throughout this network will be layering of new gateways, wayfinding and interpretive signage that reinforces the history, brand and beauty of the University of Montana.

