Non-sign Elements

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Information Booth

The Information Booth is one of the front-line contact points for visitors coming to campus and thus is important for first impressions among prospective students, their parents, event attendees, potential donors and others.

1. The information booth for visitors has been reported by multiple sources to be sporadically staffed and lacking in resources for students in the booth to be of much assistance. There is reportedly no computer terminal and there may be no phone for staff to call for information. It was also reported that there is neither heat nor air conditioning, which does not entice students to work in the booth. As this is the front door to the college, for many visitors it does not provide a good first impression. Sporadic staffing also makes it difficult for visitors to know where to go for parking permits or information.

2. The location of the information booth is not clear for visitors coming onto the campus. A more prominent location adjacent to the main vehicular circulation on Metzger Loop can be more effective.

The booth needs to be located along the major circulation routes into the college. Staff should be present during days and times of typical visitor use including evenings, weekends and special events. There should be sufficient information and materials for common visitor needs including take-away information, visitor and disabled parking permits. Telephone and computer communications should be available to booth staff. Personnel should represent the image of the college in appearance, attitude and helpfulness.

Pre-visit Information

Information provided on campus is absolutely necessary and is always viewed under pressure as visitors seek to reach their destination. This pressure reduces how effectively people can understand information from signs and maps. Reviewing wayfinding information before the visit is more relaxing; information viewed this way is more likely to be retained for some time. Making information available to individuals in their home is ideal. Printed brochures with maps and directions are one means to accomplish this but the Internet is an easy and more flexible method for those with access to it. Maps and directions obtained off-site must correspond closely to what the visitor experiences when they arrive on campus and must be consistent among different media. This includes not only the graphic appearance but also content (names of roads, buildings, departments, etc.).

On websites, images of building entrances taken from the point of view of the visitor can make a real difference in a visitor being able to recognize a building and their destination. Additional accessibility information can be provided for those with special needs.

Maps

1. Maps, whether mounted on fixed displays around campus or distributed to visitor as take-aways, provide an important tool for orienting oneself and wayfinding. Whereas directional signs have limited space and only list key destinations; a map can include all buildings, essential services, other locations as well as additional wayfinding information. The existing base map for the college is a good start but it is too detailed in some regards and missing some information that visitors need. Realistic detail is not necessarily an advantage in making maps understandable.

2. The map should show important pedestrian paths but not all the existing paths. This would entail making the grid of pedestrian paths visually important and omitting most of the diagonal paths. The campus would appear more organized.

3. One or two landmarks on the campus, such as Green Hall, should be shown with some dimensional detail to provide orienting points relating the map to the actual campus for the visitor.

4. Make major features (such as the lakes) visually distinctive.

5. Overlay an alphanumeric grid on the map in all media so that facilities can have a coordinate location on legends and in directions.

6. Visually distinguish pedestrian paths from roads to add organization.

7. Make primary roads and paths larger than the corresponding secondary roads and paths.

8. Provide a legend with an alphabetic list of facility names and phone numbers for common destinations and information sources.

9. Drop all the letter and number street names unless they are important enough to be placed on a directional or street sign.

10. Remove extraneous detail such as off-campus buildings not related to the college. Do retain detail that provides clues to locations such as the main entrance to the campus.

11. Only retain detail that adds to the uniqueness and identifiability of facilities. The concentric ovals define the track; all other details can be removed.

12. Visually strengthen garage entrance locations. Use arrows to distinguish entrances from exits.

13. Limit colors used and ensure that the map will be readable if reproduced from a color version on a copy machine.

Pedestrian Paths

Existing pedestrian pathways lack a hierarchy of visual importance and with it a sense of organization for circulation on the campus. There are primary paths that appear like minor tracks and secondary paths that are wide and finished like major walks. The lack of hierarchy makes it more difficult for visitors or members of the college community to create a coherent picture of the campus.

1. Create a hierarchy of paths through consistent variation of width, materials, and adjacent landscaping. There is at least one major east-west path from Loser Hall to Ely-Allen-Brewster and several north-south spines within the academic core of the campus.

2. One or two additional east-west major paths could be created across the northern portion of the academic core if all portions of the path had a consistent appearance commensurate with acting as a major path.

3. The "Ecological Forest" is neither a forest in appearance nor in scale. Its location between buildings creates the appearance of a vacant lot. Consider moving it to another location more appropriate to its intent. At present it serves as a point of disorientation for visitors.

4. Use landscaping and hardscaping at intersections of major pedestrian circulation routes to emphasize the grid of paths organizing the academic core of the campus.
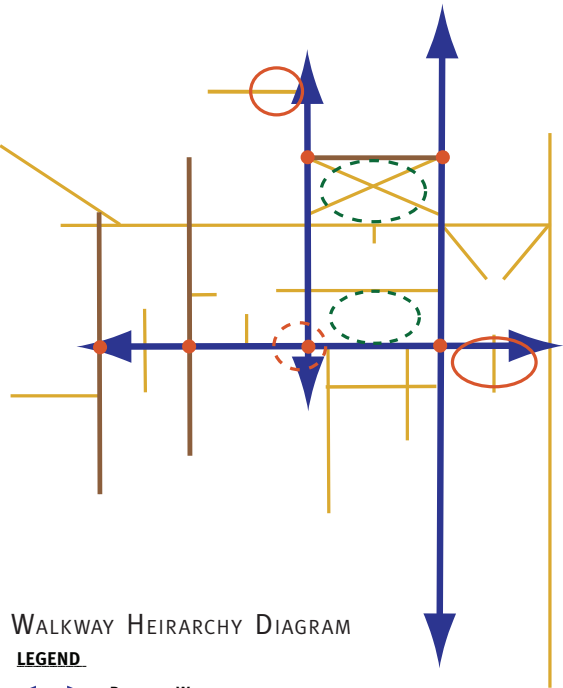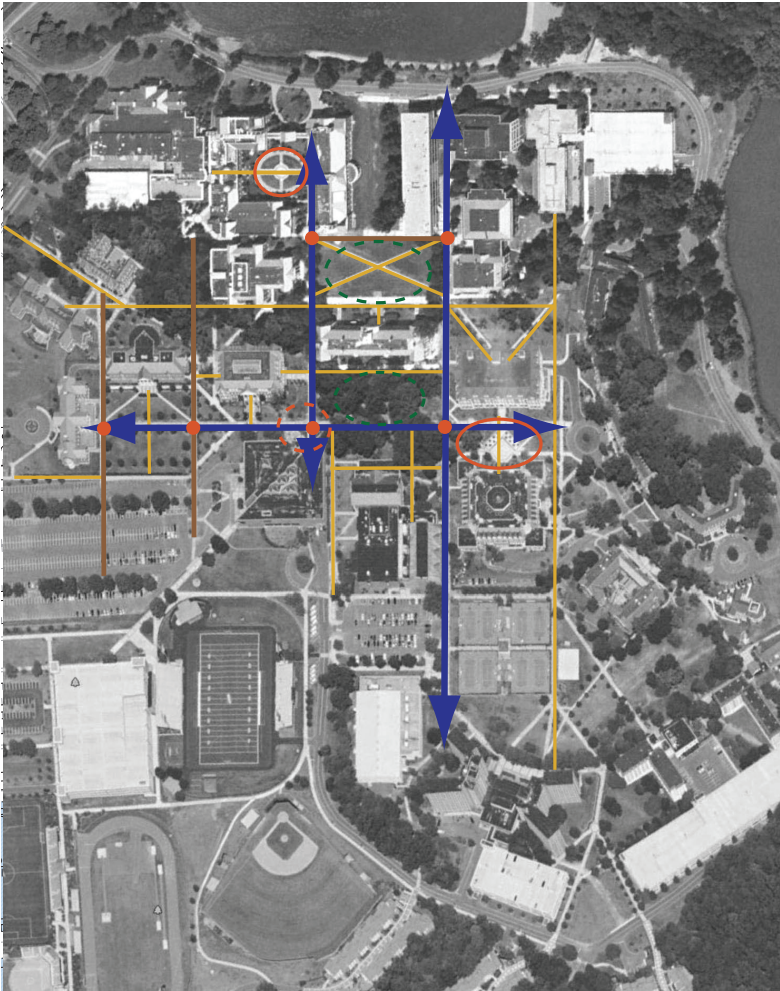
WALKWAY HEIRARCHY DIAGRAM

LEGEND

- ←→ PRIMARY WALKWAY
- — SECONDARY WALKWAY
- — TERCIARY WALKWAY
- ● KEY INTERSECTION
- ⬭ EXISTING SOCIAL GATHERING SPACE
- ⬭ POTENTIAL SOCIAL GATHERING SPACE
- ⬭ POTENTIAL USABLE GREEN SPACE

Paving Examples

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