

# Part 01





# 1.0 Introduction





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## 1.1 | Purpose and Intent

The Campus Master Plan brings new layers of design thinking that improves both consistency and coherence to the Campus Master Plan where it is lacking, while addressing future growth and contemporary university life. As a flexible master-planning framework, this Campus Master Plan expresses a vision for the University of Lethbridge that balances a consistent architectural character with quality outdoor space, celebrating the University's unique and spectacular natural setting. The Campus Master Plan strives to create a welcoming, intimate and iconic campus that engenders “pride of place”, supporting the University's strategic vision to “continue to build a comprehensive university that advances its sense of community, engagement, diversity and connection (*University of Lethbridge Strategic Plan 2009-12. P.5*).”

This Campus Master Plan Report will show how Aperture Drive regains its original source of emphasis and defines a new heart of campus. This will help identify a visible and natural point of convergence around both the proposed Coulee-quad and the Prairie-quad where students, faculty and staff will meet, socialize and access key services. The location of this core will help re-calibrate the campus and will concentrate services and amenities to create the kind of density that attracts people and makes them want to spend time on campus.

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## 1.2 | The Need for a Campus Master Plan

### 1.2.1 | Campus Vision

The Campus Master Plan establishes a 25 year vision for the campus that is rooted in the strategic vision of the University, identifying clear directions for its physical evolution and establishing a road map to the future. It is hoped the vision, principles and essential features remain consistent even though the University of Lethbridge's academic, financial and social needs evolve. So, although the Campus Master Plan cannot identify every circumstance the University will encounter, it is hoped this Report will provide a clear and integrated framework within which future decisions about the development of the campus can effectively be made. The Campus Master Plan supports the rediscovery and celebration of the University's unique sense of place through the following approaches:

- Improve the design cohesiveness of buildings and landscapes;
- Accentuate the coulee-prairie setting;
- Improve the public realm; and
- Encourage a physical quality befitting a globally significant University

The campus vision was used to develop a planning framework, which in turn was used to regulate campus form, open space, circulation, and infrastructure requirements. A Campus heart was created around Aperture Drive by carefully integrating adjacent University facilities and open space assets. The Campus heart provides facilities, activities, and services to better support the needs of a campus community around natural points of central convergence. This provides the basis for a more holistic and

comprehensive Campus Master Plan that supports the strategic goals and values of the University and contributes to vibrant and diverse learning environments. The objectives that characterize the Campus Master Plan vision are outlined in Section 2.0 of this summary.

### 1.2.2 | Strategic and Capital Plans

The University's key strategic documents provide a policy framework to help guide major capital expansion. The following points, expressed in both Capital and Strategic Plans, were considered in the development of the Campus Master Plan:

- *Confirms the University of Lethbridge as a Comprehensive University:* On June 24th, 2010, the University of Lethbridge received its mandate from the Government of Alberta as a *Comprehensive Academic & Research Institution* as part of *Alberta Advanced Education and Technology Roles and Mandates Policy Framework*. In support of its newly acquired designation, the University will have to develop and expand across faculties to offer a full gamut of post-secondary degree opportunities and research possibilities. These growths in programs will not only require additional and specialized space, but a physical environment that supports, promotes and exemplifies creativity, research and innovation.
- *Enhances the Student Experience & Promote Access to Quality Post-Secondary Education:* As the University of Lethbridge continues to attract a diverse body of local and international students, it will need to strengthen its profile as a global institution providing students technologically enabled facilities

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with the proper academic and social support spaces. As such, the Campus Master Plan facilitates the proper connectivity of the various campus components (research, academic, and residential) with each other.

- *Builds an Internal Community and Enhance Relationships with External Communities:* As the University of Lethbridge enhances its profile as a destination campus the proposed master plan will need to create a welcoming physical environment that promotes dynamic spaces for gathering, learning and creativity. By engaging its natural context, the Campus Master Plan will engender a 'pride of place' for students, staff and faculty, and the greater community.
- *Enhances the Environmental Sustainability of the University:* Endowed with a unique natural environment, the University of Lethbridge should capitalize on and highlight its campus setting. As such, campus design guidelines should demonstrate an environmental conscientiousness – promoting an accessible, pedestrian-oriented campus where vehicular circulation is reduced to a functional minimum.

The University has identified key potential projects suited for capital funding. Guided by high-level strategic thinking these potential projects respond to economic forecasts, workforce opportunities, and a projected increase in enrolment numbers. The University's future is envisioned as medium sized institution that will need to accommodate 10,000 full-time students by 2036. As a result of this increase in the student population future campus growth will have to be carefully planned and strategized. The University

of Lethbridge's academic mission is the University's core business. The physical change and design strategies for future growth embodied within the Campus Master Plan must reinforce the University's academic teaching, research and learning objectives by providing an environment for creativity and innovation. In such a manner, the Campus Master Plan will prioritize the efficient utilization of existing space when considering the need for additional quality academic and residential spaces – strengthening the University of Lethbridge's profile as a destination institution.

### 1.2.3 | Review of past plans

A review of the John Andrews International Master Plan (2000) and the Core Campus Expansion Plan (2001) reveal a number of issues that the current Campus Master Plan will critically respond to. Both previous master plans (2000, 2001) show an abundance of outdoor spaces and pedestrian linkages – however the decentralized nature of the plan does not offer a true campus heart. The original Erickson-Massey Development Plan (1969) had taken a very different approach, ensuring a compact campus by placing all future growth around Aperture Drive and within close proximity to University Hall. The Erickson-Massey Development Plan (1969) ensured a:

- Strengthening of the existing site and building features;
- Compact campus;
- Integrated campus with nature;
- Appropriate brand of architecture; and
- Unique Campus identity and experience

In such a manner, the Erickson-Massey Development Plan allowed for an appropriate brand of architecture and unique campus identity and experience.



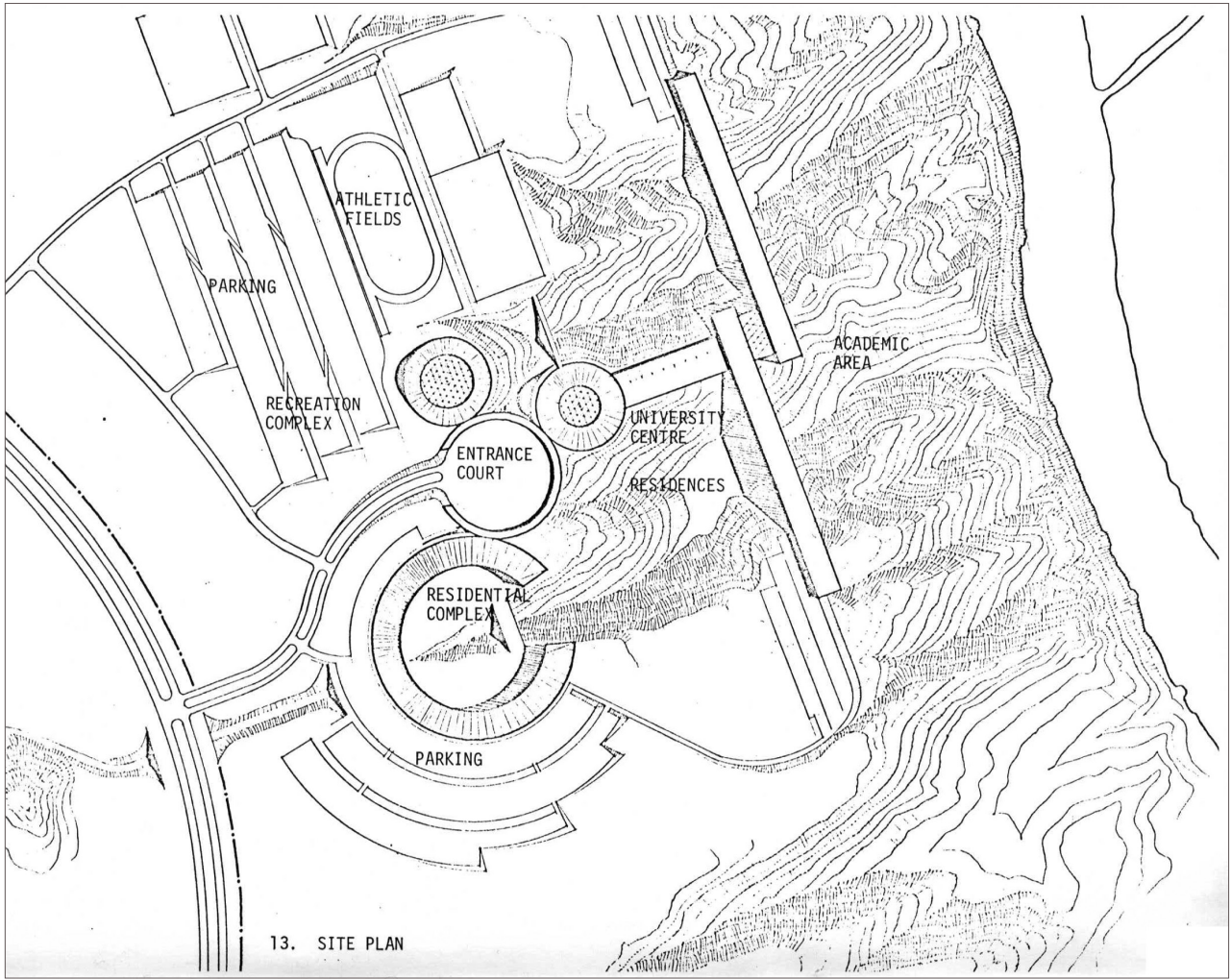


Fig: 1.1 | ERICKSON-MASSEY  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1969)



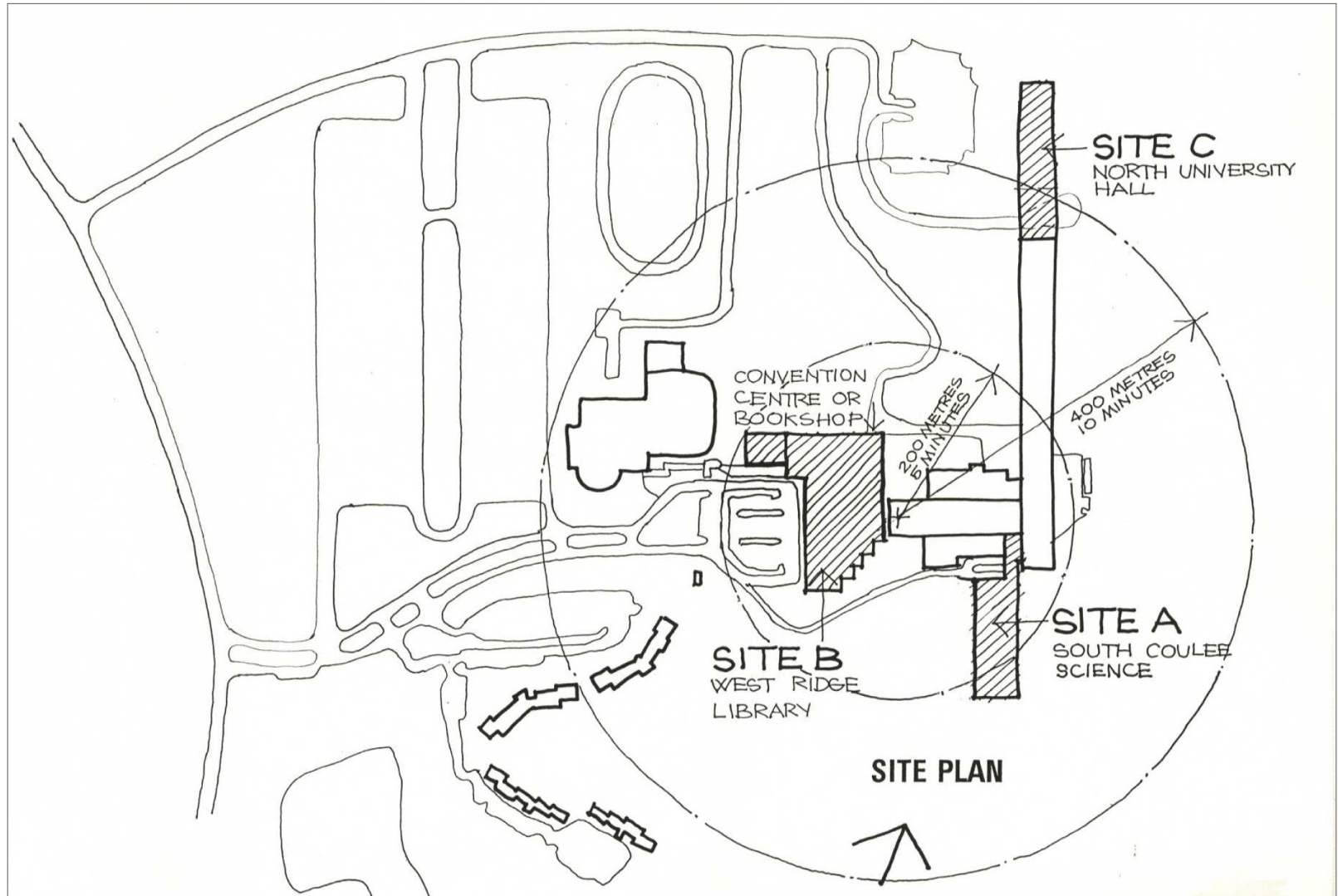


Fig. 1.2 | CAMPUS  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1993)

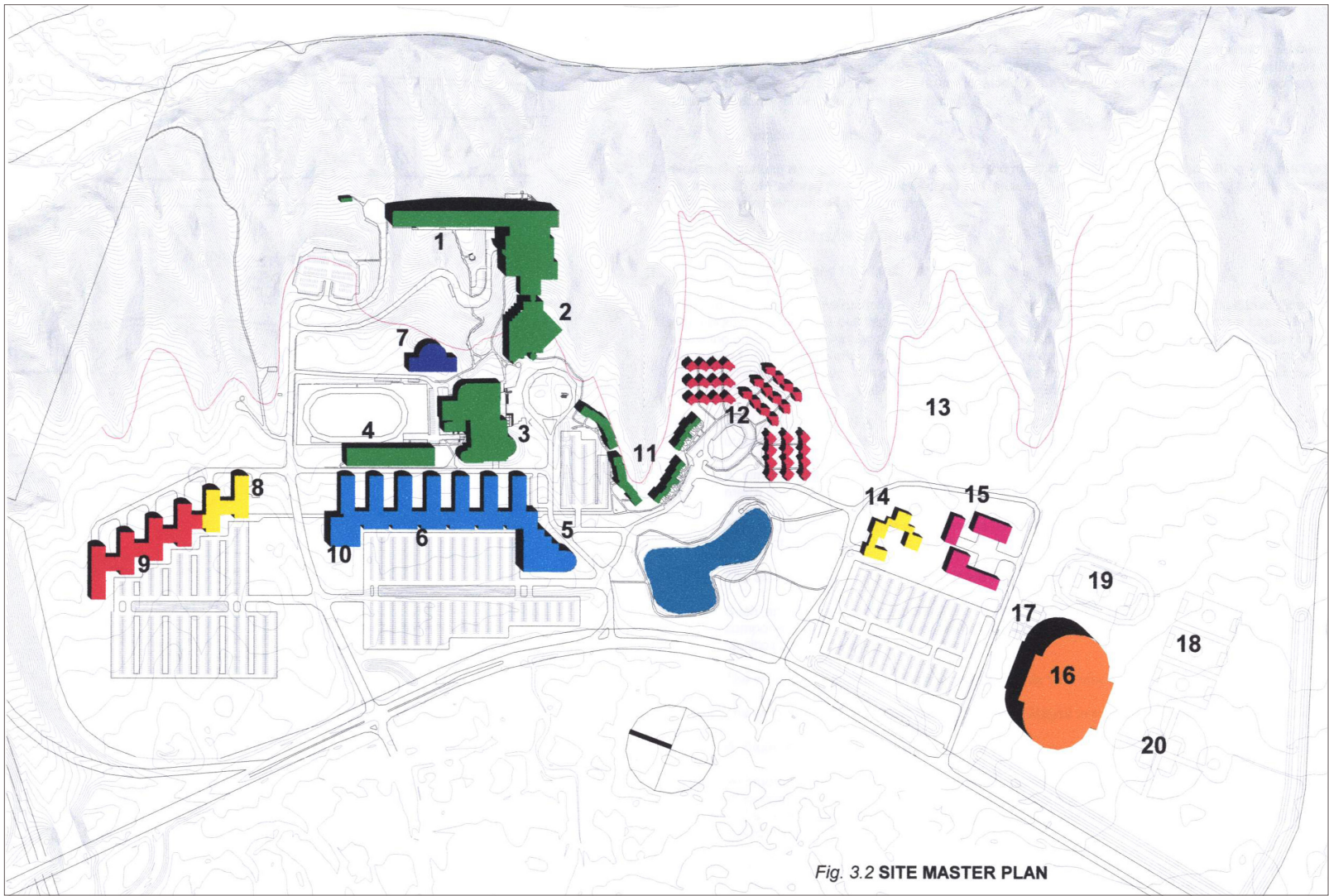


Fig 1.3 | JOHN ANDREWS INTERNATIONAL  
MASTER PLAN (2000)





Fig. 1.4 | CORE CAMPUS  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2001)

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This Campus Master Plan emphasizes the need for a strong campus identity, where the experience and brand of architecture is based on the unique location of the University -- engaging and highlighting the surrounding coulee landscape. Historically, University of Lethbridge campus growth trends have been both westward and northward but have never truly engaged the surrounding coulee landscape. Unchecked, this trend would likely result in a diminished potential for a collaborative, synergistic learning environment and exciting branding opportunities.

The University of Lethbridge has sufficient space within what is considered the campus heart, centered on Aperture Drive to accommodate substantial and yet compact future growth for the next twenty-five years. Compact growth has several benefits: it creates a community that promotes collaboration and synergy. A compact campus is also more sustainable -- diminishing the need for automobiles and limiting infrastructure line lengths; while supporting great place making where buildings (and the programs they contain) are not isolated, but rather frame significant, collaborative public spaces.

### 1.3 | An Inclusive Process

The Campus Master Plan was realized through an inclusive and iterative process -- staged over a one-year period, beginning in May of 2011. The Consultant Team began by examining the physical aspects of the existing campus. The Consultant Team reviewed past procedures for decision making on related physical issues and learned about the “challenges-and-opportunities” and “culture-and-ethos” of the University through interviews and workshops. The Consultant Team applied Planning Principles to areas on the campus identified for future potential growth. The Consultant Team then tested different future uses and option configurations. Finally

the Consultant Team related campus-wide issues (open space, land use, circulation, etc) to the Campus Master Plan structure and developed the most promising approach for future development.

The project stages can be summarized as:

- Consultation and Analysis
- Concept Development
- Master Plan Documentation

#### 1.3.1 | Consultation and Analysis

This Campus Master Plan is the result of a highly collaborative process. The Consultant Team made frequent visits to the University of Lethbridge to consult with Senior Administrators, Campus Planning and Architecture, Facilities, and local stakeholder groups. Constituents provided continual feedback, which greatly influenced the development of the master plan -- ensuring the needs of the University’s internal and external community members were all met.

A variety of consultation processes were used to gather opinions on the future of the University and to develop consensus on the vision for the institution over the next 25 years. These included:

- Interviews with Senior Administrators: 20 senior administrators were individually consulted on a variety of topics;
- World Café Workshops: The broader consultation with University stakeholders was based on the World Café approach. A total of 114 individuals representing academic staff, students, senior administrators, non-academic support staff, and local community members attended the World Café workshops;



Fig.1.5 | WORLD CAFE  
SESSIONS & PUBLIC  
CONSULTATIONS  
(UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE)



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- Whiteboard Forums: Additional input from the student population at large was sought. Six locations were selected around campus and each was outfitted with a whiteboard, a poster posing one of the six questions, and 'sticky' note pads for answers. The questions were added to the University's Facebook page; and
- Open House: Presented planning options as a matter of public transparency and collecting informal feedback. This was an opportunity to communicate the planning process and iterative results back to the public.

During the ongoing consultation process, a comprehensive review of material including strategic policy documents and previous master plans was carried out. This review of documents was carried out in tandem with an analysis of existing campus conditions. This set the stage for the development of concept options.

### 1.3.2 | Concept Development

During the concept development phase, the Consultant Team explored numerous master plan options. Each option proposed different organizational strategies for: distributing growth and program; locating open space; determining vehicular and pedestrian circulation networks; and establishing connections with the surrounding urban and natural frameworks. From the pool of master plan options that were developed a preferred option was selected. This preferred option was further developed and refined in the final stage of this process.

### 1.3.3 | Master Plan Documentation

In this concluding stage, the preferred option of the Campus Master Plan was refined and finalized. This Campus Master Plan illustrates a vision that will guide the University to properly locate future campus growth and improvements using an agreed upon planning framework. The Campus Master Plan is supported by a set of design guidelines that ensure future projects adhere to a vision of the University and create a cohesive campus environment. The result is a master plan that builds on the University's many existing strengths, and provides a clear roadmap for the campus' physical development over the next several decades.

## 1.4 | Principles and Foundations

The development of Campus Master Plan is guided by three overarching directions, which respond to current Campus needs. These needs align with the goals and directives of the University's current 2012-2016 Capital Plan (updated in May 2012) and 2009-2013 Strategic Plan.

### 1.4.1 | Three Overarching Directions

The planning team has proposed three overarching directions, developed through an extensive consultation process. These directions are important planning and design principles that have influenced the development of The Campus Master Plan concepts and policies.

Summarized, these include:

- Opportunities provided for students, faculty, researchers, and staff to meet and interact on campus while new buildings or the reconfiguration-of-existing buildings will feature multi-functionality to attract broad cross-sections of the campus community;



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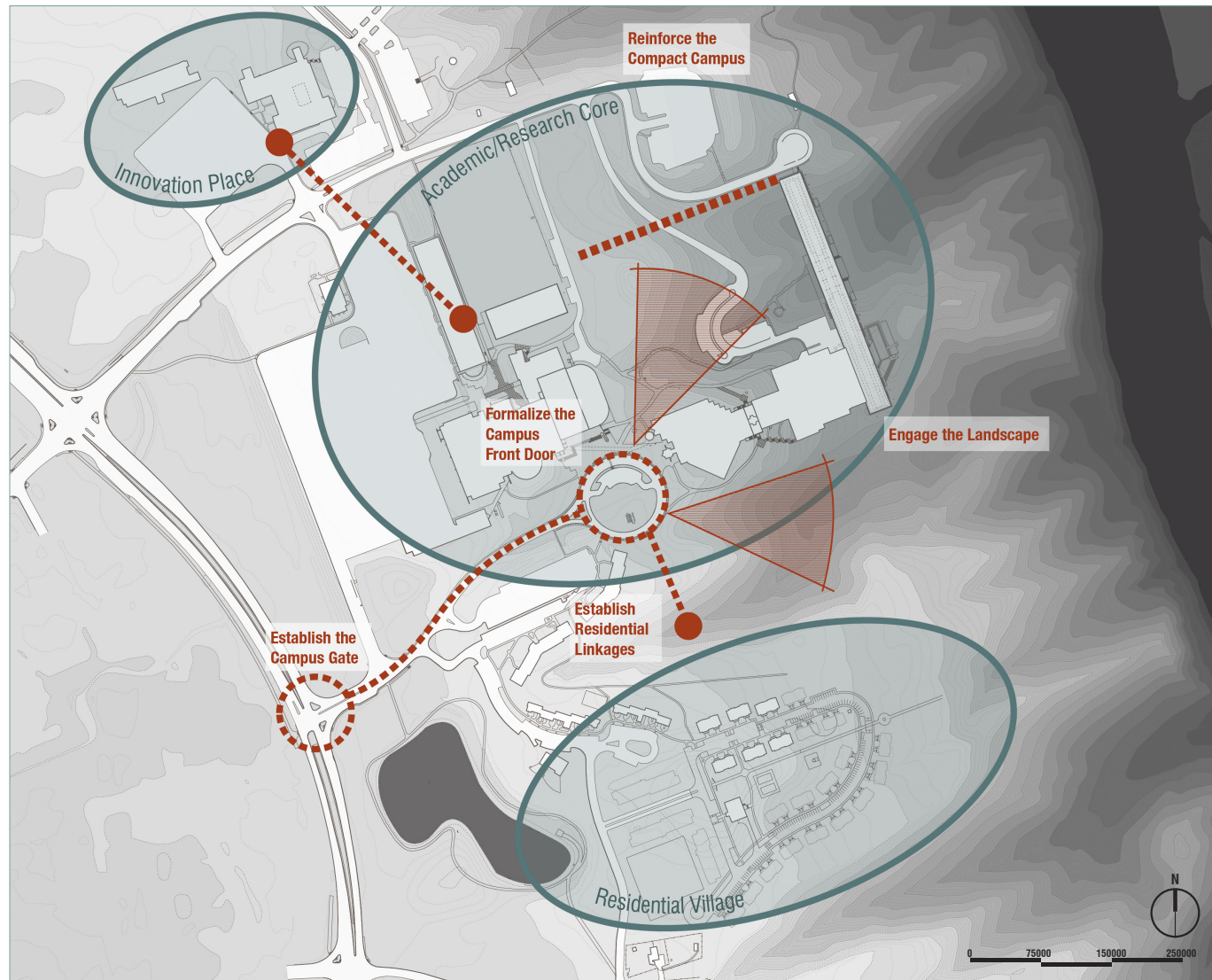


Fig.1.6 | KEY PLANNING PRINCIPLES:  
**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Strengthen/Highlight Views   
Strengthen/Highlight Connections 

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- Strengthen the quality of the built and natural environments to help brand the University as a destination institution, with particular emphasis on improving campus life and student experiences; and
- Demonstrate leadership in the management and planning of building assets and the careful stewardship of land holdings.

## 1.4.2 | Planning Principles

Key planning principles were developed to rediscover and accentuate the University's unique natural setting. The planning intent is to improve the cohesiveness of buildings within the surrounding landscape -- ensuring the campus reflects the quality and stature of a globally significant University. Three overarching directions that will structure subsequent design work include:

- Campus Gateway on and giving primacy to Aperture Drive;
- Framing a "Coulee-Quad" and campus heart;
- Interconnected buildings (academic, residential) that engage the coulee;
- Unique brand of architecture fully integrated with landscape; and
- Creating a unique Campus identity and experience

The Consultant Team developed several unique, macro-level planning recommendations -- intended to guide long-term campus development. The following recommendations outline principles that are intended to guide the larger scale planning decisions for the University. These principles repair and accentuate the existing campus design -- organizing systems to allow the unique beauty, original order, coherence, and distinctive setting of the campus to stand out.

This will be done using:

- **Gateways:** Create gateways to the campus, which clearly identify the University of Lethbridge within its surrounding context, while communicating and displaying to the neighbouring community the University's brand;
- **Experience of Arrival:** Reinforce existing and new visual and pedestrian axes on campus. Create a series of 'desire lines' that make walking across the University campus easy and pleasurable;
- **Vibrant Public Spaces:** Create a tight pedestrian-oriented campus core with an environment conducive to academic excellence and vibrant student life as well as maintaining a comfortable pedestrian microclimate;
- **Outdoors Space:** Define the public realm core of the campus through signature elements of landscape, urban furniture, and lighting. This will create a cohesive collegial sense of community where coulees are protected and utilized as celebrated open space, surrounded by University uses;
- **Safety and Security:** Provide transparency and accessibility at grade, as well as programs, which are conducive to social interaction and enhance a strong sense of collegiality;
- **Sustainability:** Enhance 'green' accessibility to the University campus including transit, cycling, and facilitating pedestrian movement.