



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL MASTER PLAN

RUTGERS 2030

VOLUME 3: CAMDEN

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PREFACE

Rutgers University embarked on Rutgers 2030 in May 2013, the first comprehensive master plan in over a decade, and the first to incorporate Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), created from the integration of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) with Rutgers University in July 2013. The physical master plan complements the Rutgers University Strategic Plan, prepared in conjunction with the Boston Consulting Group, and approved by the Board of Governors in February 2014, and the strategic plans of each of Rutgers' component institutions.

Rutgers 2030 envisions development at Rutgers over a 15-year time frame, 2015 to 2030, and is comprehensive in its scope; taking into account buildings, the natural and constructed landscape, transportation, and infrastructure. The report consists of three volumes:

- Volume 1: Rutgers University–New Brunswick
- Volume 2: Rutgers University–Newark
- Volume 3: Rutgers University–Camden

RBHS is considered primarily within Volume 1 although constituent elements are found across Rutgers.

The scope of input was broad, involving survey responses from approximately 8,000 members of the community, over 30 presentations and town hall meetings, and meetings with many administrators, faculty, and student groups.

This study would not have been possible without the leadership of Rutgers University President Robert L. Barchi and support of Chancellors Nancy Cantor, Richard Edwards, Phoebe Haddon, and Brian Strom. In addition, the Physical Master Plan Executive Steering Committee, Rutgers University Facilities and Capital Planning members, deans, staff, faculty, and students contributed invaluable insight to the development of the project.

The master plan consulting team included Robert A.M. Stern Architects, Sasaki Associates, VHB, Buro Happold, and Toscano Clements Taylor.

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East/west pedestrian axis adjacent to Admissions Office (left) and Campus Center (center) leading to Penn Street

3 Planning Principles

Closely aligned with the Rutgers University–Camden Strategic Plan, the Rutgers University–Camden Physical Master Plan is guided by the following planning principles. These principles provide a framework for the campus, flexible enough to accommodate changes in priorities for the campus.

- Provide modern classrooms and research and faculty space through new construction or renovation to support evolving styles of teaching and learning
- Promote a focused, enriching and fulfilling experience for undergraduate and graduate students by providing a nurturing campus environment, supportive student-centered services and a comprehensive array of campus amenities
- Improve the first impression of visitors to Rutgers University–Camden by creating campus gateways and defining campus boundaries, including the critically needed creation of an Admissions and Welcome Center
- Extend the Rutgers brand outward into the City of Camden, its surrounding communities, and beyond through corridors occupied by partners

including schools and institutions, and industries and agencies, both public and private.

Rutgers–Camden 2030 examines currently identified areas of important improvements and focus in order to provide a vision for the Camden campus as it evolves in the next 15 years and beyond.

PROVIDE MODERN CLASSROOMS AND RESEARCH AND FACULTY SPACE THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION TO SUPPORT EVOLVING STYLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Student success and engagement rely on having the right kinds and sizes of classrooms, laboratories, and study spaces, incorporating appropriate instructional technology. Rutgers University–Camden is dedicated through its strategic plan and through this master plan to identify areas of opportunity to provide improvements in all of these areas.

Classroom renovation work is critical to ensure student success and although it has been occurring incrementally, its scope should be broadened. Outdated classrooms should be brought up to meet

modern standards and the expectations of students entering in the 21st century. Strategic technology upgrades supported by ELF funding in 2014 have been helpful; classrooms, research spaces, and technologies should continuously be updated for Rutgers–Camden to remain competitive with other institutions, including those within Rutgers. New classrooms and research spaces are also introduced as part of this plan, aligning with the proposed construction of several new buildings.

PROVIDE A FOCUSED, ENRICHING AND FULFILLING EXPERIENCE FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS BY PROVIDING A NURTURING CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT, SUPPORTIVE STUDENT-CENTERED SERVICES AND A COMPREHENSIVE ARRAY OF CAMPUS AMENITIES

College life extends beyond the classroom. Hand-in-hand with development of academic spaces comes the commitment to provide a high level of student support. Starting from their first moments as prospective Rutgers students, care must be taken to ensure and secure the perception and the reality of a safe and welcoming



*Proposed signage at North Second and Cooper Streets
Concept and rendering by ex;it.*



*Proposed signage at The Gateway
Concept and rendering by ex;it.*

place where students can thrive socially and pursue their cocurricular and extracurricular interests. The plan reflects the University's commitment to develop a pathway to graduation and a plan for post-graduation success supported by career counseling and advising. There must be places to meet and engage with other students, faculty, staff, and visitors, places for clubs to meet, and clean, well-lighted spaces for recreation and fitness. Rutgers–Camden 2030 therefore proposes several key projects that would enhance student life in all its aspects.

IMPROVE THE FIRST IMPRESSION OF VISITORS TO RUTGERS–CAMDEN BY CREATING CAMPUS GATEWAYS AND DEFINING CAMPUS BOUNDARIES, INCLUDING THE CRITICALLY NEEDED CREATION OF AN ADMISSIONS AND WELCOME CENTER

Transform the vehicular approaches towards Rutgers–Camden

For most visitors, Cooper Street is the first impression Camden offers whether approaching from Philadelphia

or New Jersey. It represents and reflects on Rutgers' presence in and commitment to South Jersey. The perception of pleasant passageways along Cooper Street therefore must be a planning focus and priority. Although there has been an effort to renovate, recreate and upgrade Cooper Street, more work needs to be done. Not only does Cooper Street anchor the campus, it connects Rutgers–Camden to further revitalization in the city's Waterfront District.

Improve access to campus

As critical as it is to enhance Cooper Street as a visual corridor for vehicles, it is just as critical to enhance it for pedestrians. With existing surface parking lots stretched to the west toward the waterfront, secure and pleasant passage along Cooper Street needs to be assured. In addition, with the imminent construction of the new Nursing and Science Building extending the campus boundary south, North Fifth Street should be improved to allow students to travel from the inner campus to the new building and to other buildings that are, or will be, located on this emerging education and health care corridor through efficient pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows.

Address campus edge conditions

There has been a significant effort to enhance Pearl Street with streetscape improvements and the addition of bike pathway. Beyond the campus edge, there is much work to be done to improve appearances. If the area beneath the Benjamin Franklin Bridge were better maintained and lit, it would connect Rutgers University–Camden with the neighborhoods to the north. These communities already have become the focus of attention for improvement by the Cooper's Ferry Partnership, a redevelopment agency focused on revitalization projects in the city. There is a distinct and immediate need for signage and visual identifiers to help visitors to the city and the campus recognize that they have arrived at Rutgers University–Camden. Such signage must guide vehicular and pedestrian traffic toward the campus and must define a vibrant institution for all to see. Identifying signage could include wayfinding signs, street banners and prominent building signs and banners.

The creation of an Admissions and Welcome Center will provide prospective students and their families with a landmark facility to introduce them



to Rutgers–Camden. Combined with renovations to the admissions building, these actions will attract greater numbers of visitors to the campus and the neighborhood, with the goal of increasing enrollments.

Enhance on-campus streets and pedestrian connections

While the buildings and landscaping around the Quad are aesthetically pleasing and intact, the rest of the campus needs attention. Lawrence Street functions as an access road for deliveries and presently serves to bisect the campus. North Third Street is perceived as a campus edge despite the fact that there are residence halls, parking lots and the Business and Science building which lie to its west. This study recommends that street and walkway improvements be among the top priorities of steps to enhance the campus experience for pedestrians and to create a more vibrant and engaging campus environment.

Reposition entry to the residence halls to create a new gateway

The residential student complex on North Third Street currently faces toward the center of the campus,

losing an important opportunity to signal activity and vibrancy for visitors to Rutgers and to the city. This study recommends that changes to this complex be implemented to allow the entrance to the complex to serve as an additional gateway and face Cooper Street.

EXTEND THE RUTGERS BRAND OUTWARD INTO THE CITY OF CAMDEN, ITS SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES AND BEYOND THROUGH CORRIDORS OCCUPIED BY PARTNERS, INCLUDING SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS AND INDUSTRIES AND AGENCIES, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Rutgers University–Camden has a large stake in the improvement of the City of Camden that surrounds it. Perceptions of a vibrant and safe community can enhance the full experience of college and city life. Rutgers–Camden should foster for students the full measure of college life, offering 24/7 engagement. Great strides are being taken in this direction; for example, a wide array of diverse activities – ranging from NCAA Division III sports to an increasingly lively Greek life to a student-initiated commitment to civic

engagement and other forms of experiential learning – are already in place, and will continue to grow with increases in enrollment. Other examples include Rutgers–Camden’s use of Campbell’s Field for its baseball team, and the commitment by its Honors College (among other units) to nurture a service orientation to its students in on-campus activities (such as serving as admissions ambassadors) and for efforts undertaken in concert with community partners. The initiatives outlined in the master plan have the potential to promote engagement and foster collaboration with partners outside of Rutgers–Camden, solidifying its mission-driven work and building its standing as a key community partner and anchor institution in the City of Camden.

At left: Nursing and Science Building at Federal Street and North Fifth Street, currently under construction

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