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The University of Texas at Brownsville draws upon the intersection of cultures and languages at the Southern border and Gulf Coast of the United States to develop knowledgeable citizens and emerging leaders who are engaged in the civic life of their community. It embraces teaching excellence, active inquiry, lifelong learning, rigorous scholarship and research in service to the common good. The University promotes the interdisciplinary search for new knowledge that advances social and physical well being and economic development through commercialization while honoring the creative and environmental heritage of its region.

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# UT<sup>TM</sup>

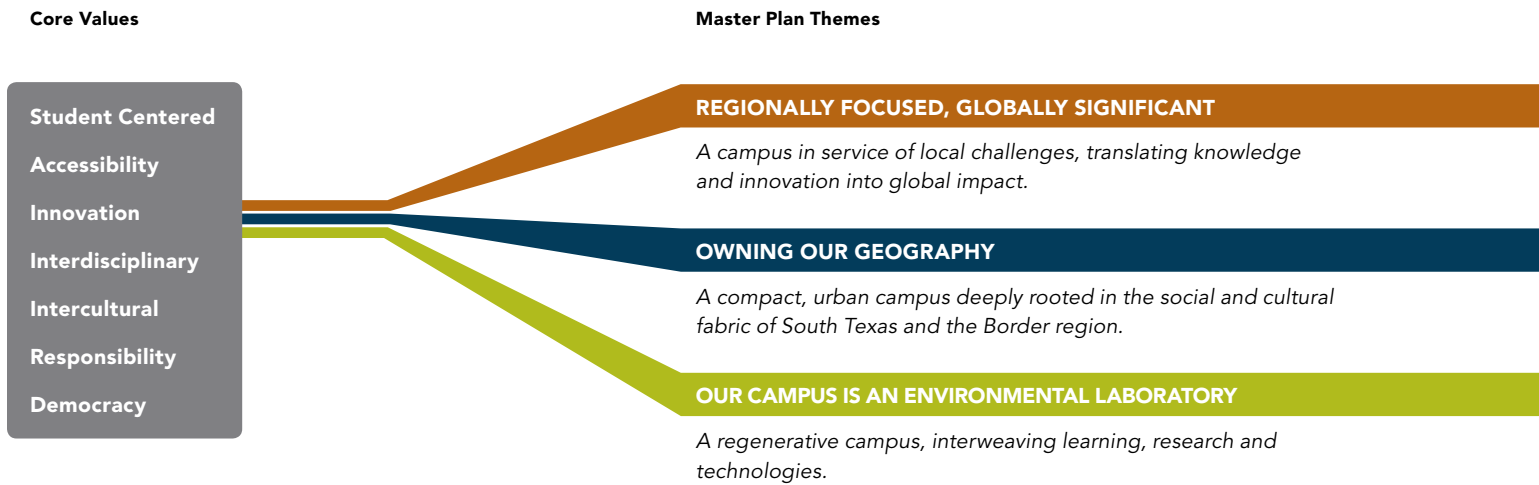
## BROWNSVILLE

### CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

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# FOUNDATIONS OF THE MASTER PLAN



## The Planning Process

The University of Texas at Brownsville is embarking on the most important transformation in its history. Currently in the midst of incredible change, the university has the opportunity to design a highly innovative future. Guided by visionary leadership and inspired by the hopes and spirit of the people it serves, UT Brownsville will become a model institution for the 21st century.

The transition from a long and successful partnership with Texas Southmost College to a standalone University within the University of Texas System has empowered a multifaceted academic and campus planning process. This process has engaged a broad spectrum of University leadership, students

and faculty as well as UT System, city and regional players.

Introduced by Chancellor Francisco Cigarroa in May 2011, the UT Framework for Advancing Excellence guides the definition of a future University that responds to changes in demographics, funding models, global competitiveness and technology. The 21st Century University Commission, a regional engagement initiative in fall 2012, brought together more than 250 key players from across the Rio Grande Valley to imagine the potential of UTB.

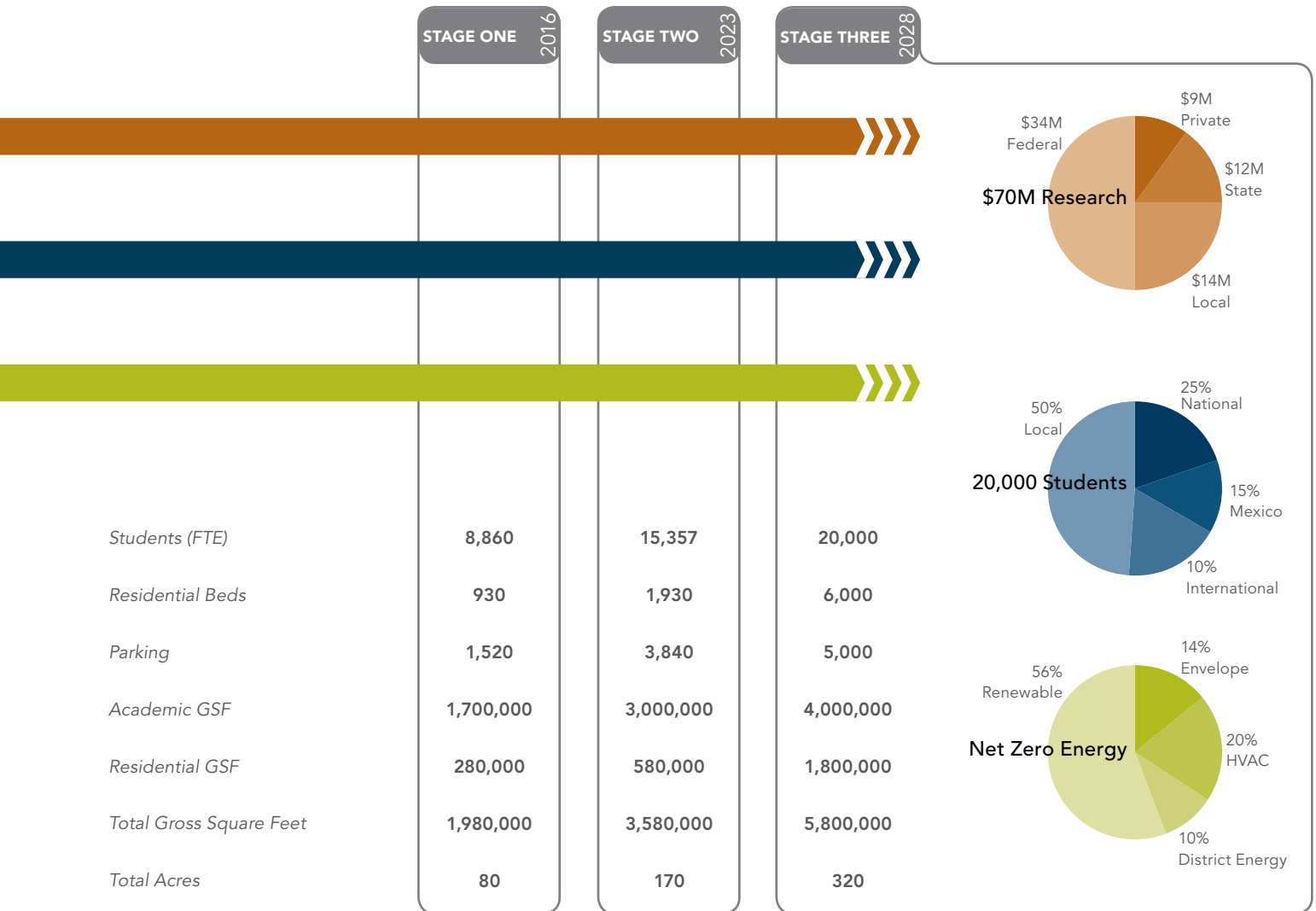
A Sites Evaluation Study was conducted in conjunction with the UT Office of Real Estate to consider the location of a future UTB campus for 20,000 students. In May 2013,

the Board of Regents voted to expand upon the existing location of the University in downtown Brownsville.

As UTB enters into an innovative partnership of universities in southern Texas, this master plan positions the University to thrive within the greater network while also addressing the immediate and critical needs of the existing campus. With only approximately 400,000 square feet of academic space and leases from Texas Southmost College ending in the near future, initiatives are currently underway to proceed with initial building and infrastructure development.

## Envisioning the Future of UTB

Built on unique local cultural heritage and in



service of its community, UTB aspires to be a transformational institution and an innovative environment that acts as a vehicle for enduring student success, the translation of knowledge into global impact and a catalyst for human and economic development. UT Brownsville will be a university known as...

A national trendsetter in producing biliterate graduates

A national trendsetter in graduating next generation Latino leaders

An epicenter of cultural and artistic creativity

A national leader in developing models for an affordable, accessible, and technology-enhanced education that accelerates time-to-graduation

A model for sustainability

A relentless pursuit of a 100% graduation rate

Fostering transformational university experiences

A convening voice in resolving issues relevant to the borderlands and with impact on the Global South

**Academic Mission and Core Values**

Beginning with the articulation of the UTB mission statement, seven core values emerged that would guide the vision and planning process. The core values became a vehicle for discovery and exchange, forming the foundation for the vision of a transformed UTB. The academic plan builds upon UTB's

legacy of fostering a community that enriches the regional ecosystem and contributes to global innovation.

**Master Plan Themes**

Evident in all aspects of the visioning and planning process, three themes emerged that guide the definition of a campus in support of the mission statement and core values. The principles, strategies and guidelines put forth within the master plan are directly derived from these three themes. Taken together, the characteristics of the master plan express a multifaceted vision that will not only transform the campus physically but ultimately enrich the student experience.

## PRINCIPLES OF CAMPUS DESIGN

Translating the academic mission, core values and master plan themes into the physical manifestation of the campus, these six principles of campus design define every aspect of the master plan:

### Compact Urban Campus

A Compact Urban Campus creates a high density, pedestrian friendly, walkable community.



### Resource Conservation

UT Brownsville will employ a variety of sustainable strategies to achieve net zero consumption of water, energy and waste.



### Living Laboratory

Learning and research extends beyond the classroom, permeating the entire campus.



**Mobility**

University partnerships with transit agencies will ensure that the campus will be fully connected to the City of Brownsville as well as to the greater Rio Grande Valley.



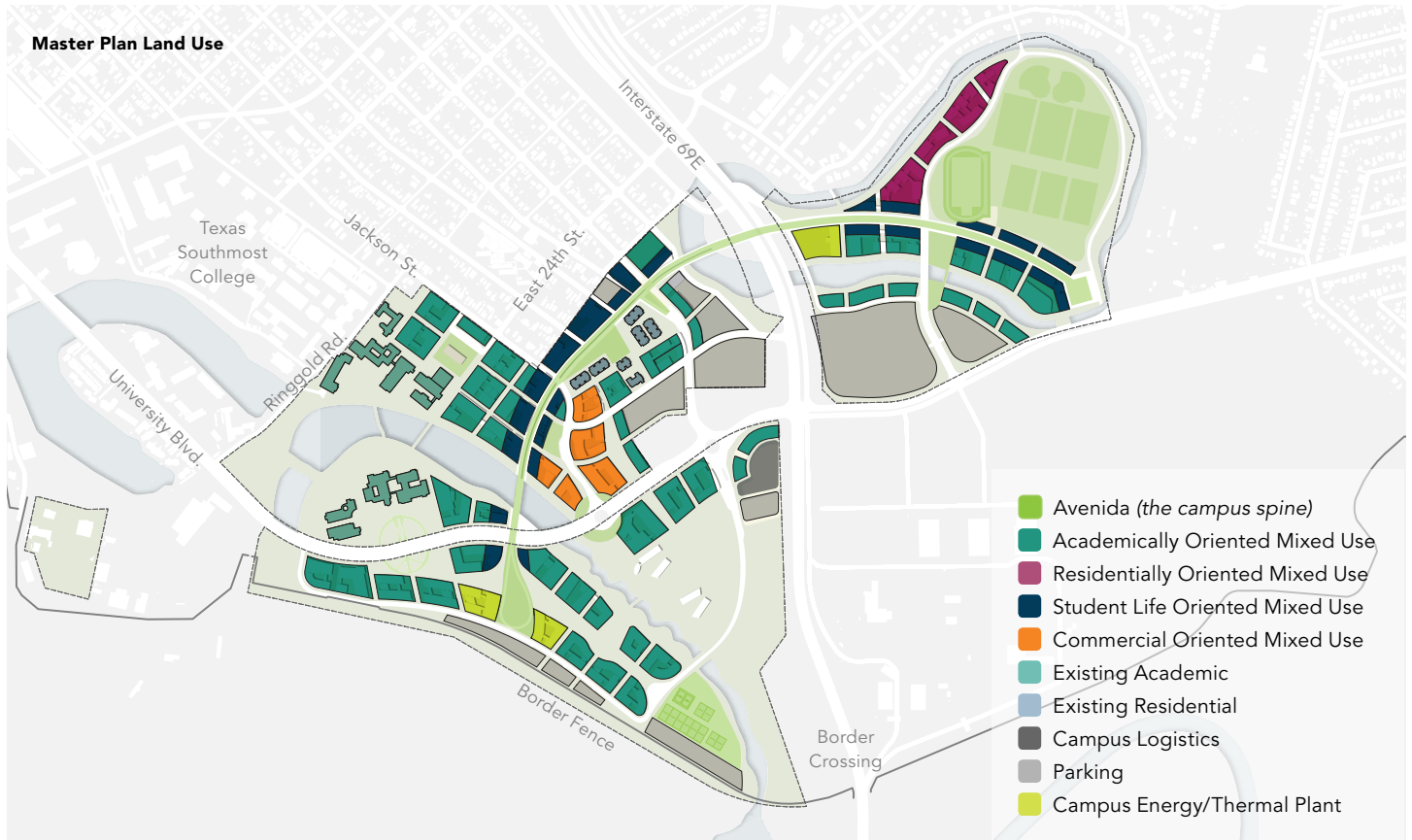
**Campus as a Destination**

Accessible to the greater community of the Rio Grande Valley, the campus of UT Brownsville will serve as both park and cultural center for the region.



**Campus Life**

The campus will encompass all aspects of student life integrating living, working, playing and learning.



## A COMPACT, URBAN CAMPUS

A compact, urban campus creates a high density, pedestrian friendly, walkable community.

### Design for Climate

Rooted in the strong urban tradition of Latin American cities and building upon the context of downtown Brownsville, a dense grid of streets defines a comfortable and walkable campus environment. A compact, urban environment responds to a hot and humid climate and is a necessity within a city where land is at a premium.

Narrow and shaded streets interweave the indoors and outdoors and typically converge onto a central plaza or square. Within every urban block, courtyards oriented to the prevailing winds and shaded by natural and built elements provide a diversity of spaces for individual or collaborative activity.

### Campus Location

By expanding upon the current campus

location, the University will maintain its unique relationship with the international border and downtown Brownsville. A total area of approximately 320 acres will enable the necessary expansion of the University, in both the built and natural environments. Bisected by the overpass of Interstate 69E, the area is organized into an east and west campus that can be entirely traversed by foot within 25 minutes.

### Mixed Use Neighborhoods

The overall structure of the campus is conceived as an assembly of distinct yet mission oriented neighborhoods. Enabling a diversity of campus experiences, each neighborhood is uniquely defined by its relationship to edges or landmarks, both natural and urban. In support of a thematically organized academic structure, every neighborhood embraces a mixed use typology that fosters an integrated and energetic environment.



### The Avenida

In support of a walkable environment, pedestrian streets are the major organizing element of the campus. The Avenida is the campus spine that serves as a walkable Main Street connecting all campus neighborhoods. It accommodates bicycle and campus shuttle movement alongside the pedestrian ways as well as a flowing acequia channel and ample natural shading. Student life functions such as residential and student service spaces are placed in close proximity to the Avenida.

The Avenida





## A SUSTAINABLE AND ACCESSIBLE UNIVERSITY

### Resource Conservation

As a steward of the environment, UTB will become a leader in innovative sustainability initiatives and partnerships within the Rio Grande Valley.

#### Net Zero Approach

Committing to the goal of a Net Zero campus- one that produces as much clean energy as it consumes- will ensure UTB is a global model of sustainable practices. Implementation of a regenerative environment is a long term commitment that requires sustainable design and technologies within every campus development as well as reducing consumption and changing patterns of behavior. The implementation of systems that contribute to a Net Zero future will be a catalyst for innovative learning and research as well as a generator of meaningful student employment.

#### Demonstration Systems

At the southern terminus of the Avenida, a new campus Energy Center will employ and display sustainable energy generation systems. The visibility of the systems at the facility will offer opportunities for integrated and engaging learning and research. Visible systems throughout campus, such as sculptural wind turbines defining pathways or photovoltaics shading parking areas, will accommodate the campus energy demand while providing a constant expression of the University's commitment to sustainability.

A complete green infrastructure system throughout campus will mitigate the ecological impact of the built environment

on the surrounding ecology. Systems such as bioswales, rain gardens and wetlands facilitate a more natural movement of stormwater and act as a filtration system. In addition to rainwater reclamation techniques, a unique partnership with the Brownsville Wastewater Treatment Center adjacent to campus will recycle wastewater and return it to the University for non-potable uses.

### Living Laboratory

Preserving the natural ecology and restoring campus resacas will establish a powerful campus identity while facilitating learning and research opportunities that permeate the entire environment.

#### Respecting the Natural Ecology

The Tamaulipan brushland on campus is an ecosystem found only in southern Texas and northeastern Mexico. The design of the master plan respectfully integrates both the built and natural environments, allowing naturalists, biologists, environmental scientists and others to undertake unique learning and research directly on campus.

#### Resaca Restoration

A restored and resilient resaca system will be a defining feature of the campus environment that establishes a powerful University identity. Restoration and bank stabilization of the resaca edges, added wetland areas and an increased flow of water will ensure the natural habitat can thrive and host a diversity of research endeavors.

#### Integrated Learning Environments

Outdoor learning environments are woven

into the fabric of the campus, both within the urban grid and alongside restored resacas or transects of native ecologies. These spaces vary greatly in scale, formality and potential use.

Integrated technology in 21st century learning environments will support a diversity of digital learning methods and innovative models for multidisciplinary studies. Expanding even beyond the traditional learning environment, the realm of learning and research extends virtually throughout the campus, the City and the rich ecology of the Rio Grande Valley.

### Mobility

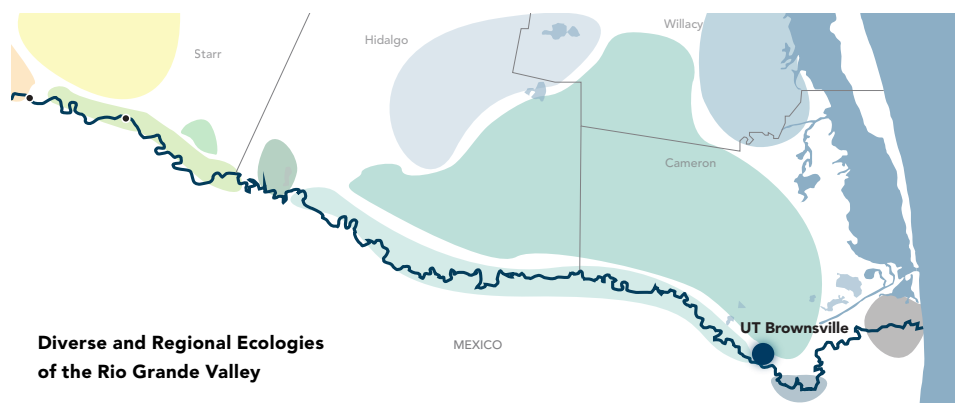
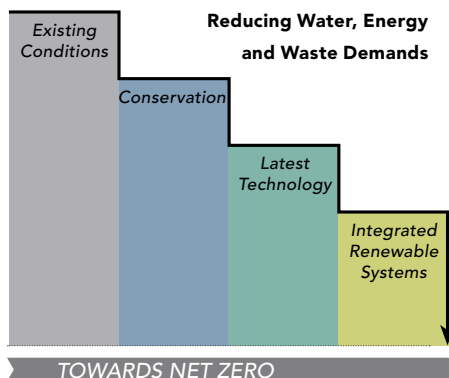
The compact urban campus encourages pedestrian movement as the primary mode of transportation while extensive bicycle and transit networks provide sustainable and affordable options for the campus community.

#### Regional and City Connection

University partnerships with Brownsville Metro and Valley Metro will connect the campus to the City of Brownsville as well as the greater Rio Grande Valley. An accessible and sustainable alternative to vehicular transportation, these local and regional buses also have the potential to become productive places of learning. Wifi enabled buses extend the classroom not only beyond the building but beyond the campus, generating the possibility for mobile study and collaboration.

#### Multi Modal Campus

Pedestrian streets and complete streets





that integrate all forms of public and private transit work together to support a walkable urban environment. Foot traffic is augmented by a bike sharing program and campus shuttles that circulate along multiple routes. These integrated systems facilitate seamless transition between modes of transit, offering any individual the ability to easily traverse the campus.

*Park Once*

The master plan proposes a ‘park once’ strategy for vehicular traffic. Parking facilities are located in close proximity to major access routes. Once an individual has parked their vehicle, they may chose to walk, cycle or take a campus shuttle to their intended destination. The diversity of alternative transit options available reduces the amount of valuable land that must be dedicated to parking. The parking areas that are necessary utilize permeable paving to minimize ecological disruption and become optimal areas for solar energy collection.

**Campus as a Destination**

Accessible to the greater community of the Rio Grande Valley, the campus of UT Brownsville will serve as both park and cultural center for the region.

*Accessibility*

The University will be an epicenter of cultural and artistic creativity in the Rio Grande Valley. Activities can be hosted across the campus, both indoors and outdoors, that fuel the cultural and educational ecology of the region. The hierarchy of spaces provided on campus will facilitate individual, regional and

educational events at a variety of scales.

In welcoming the greater community to the University, the campus street network is an extension of the urban fabric of Brownsville. The campus will be highly accessible with clear signage, lighting and wayfinding. These elements will contribute towards a safe experience for every visitor to the campus.

*Park Like Setting*

The identity of UT Brownsville is fueled by its rich, park-like setting. The experience of moving through campus will be strengthened by a unified landscape that builds on the native resaca ecology and is interwoven with a variety of civic, formal and informal space. Site amenities such as canopies for shading, seating, paving and signage further unify the campus, while their design promotes the cultural and artistic expression of the region.

**Campus Life**

The campus will encompass all aspects of student life integrating spaces for living, working, playing and learning.

*Multi Functional Development*

Integrating campus living with interdisciplinary learning and research will lead to a vibrant campus culture that complements the City of Brownsville and the greater region. The University will become a more residential environment provide housing for 30% of students. A mix of residential, learning, amenity and retail facilities on the 24/7 campus will enrich student life and promote a strong sense of community.

*Active Design*

Creating comfortable spaces and a diversity of opportunities for physical activity within the campus will foster a healthier university community. Active uses of the campus environment such as major sports fields in Los Tomates Banco, running trails throughout campus and recreational use of the northern resaca are augmented by more passive strategies. Shading pedestrian routes, designing streets that are safe for cyclists or pedestrians and maintaining building heights that are easily accessible by stair encourage daily physical activity across campus.

*The Student Experience*

Ultimately, the master plan is about enriching the individual experience. The plan embodies qualities of the future campus that have been expressed by the University community throughout the entire planning process:

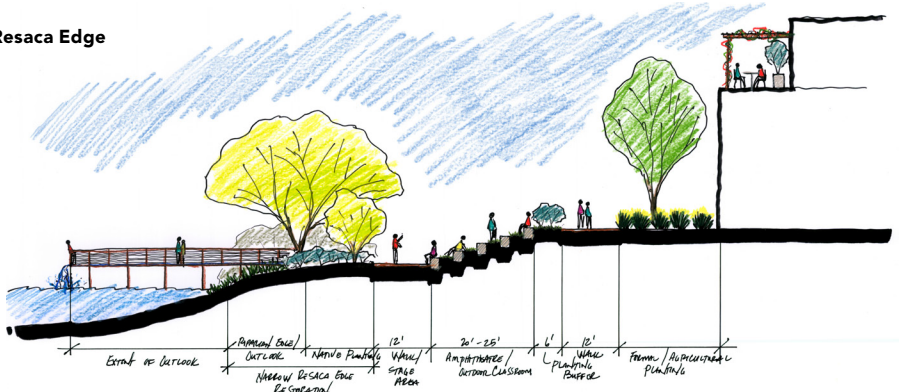
The campus will be a welcoming, easily accessible space that serves the entire campus, local and regional community.

It will be a vibrant place of activity that develops the whole student through opportunities to learn, work, live and play on campus.

Every student will have the opportunity for meaningful campus employment.

The campus will be a complete academic environment where moments of discovery and discourse are possible in all settings and contexts.

**Resaca Edge**



# THE MASTER PLAN CAMPUS

The full build out of the campus in 2028.





Interstate 69E

North

## WEST CAMPUS

The University is organized into an east and west campus that are connected via the Avenida. The west campus hosts the core of academic activity anchored by the mixed use, commercial hub of the Centro de las Culturas neighborhood.





**Centro de las Culturas**

**Casa Bella Center**

**Tamaulipan**



Tyler St.

Interstate 69E

North

## EAST CAMPUS

The east campus- the neighborhood of Los Tomates Banco- enables a diversity of activities that augment the academic core of the west campus. This includes major campus sports fields, mixed use residential space reflecting the residential neighborhood across the northern resaca and a performing arts center that will be easily accessible for a large influx of visitors.

