

16.0 LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES ELEMENT

16.1 Introduction

The 2000 update of the campus master plan served to extend the landscape development strategies established in the original 1995 master plan and focus on the creation of signature open spaces. In 2005, those strategies remain highly relevant to the development of the academic core of campus. The following goals, objectives and policies seek continuity with the previous guidelines, while also advancing concepts for the development of the southeastern housing/student life district of campus, reflecting the goals that have been accomplished in the previous five years, and incorporating lessons learned from recent seasons of extreme weather events.

16.2 Goals, Objectives and Policies

GOAL 1601

Create a distinctive landscape environment that juxtaposes “institutional” landscapes with environmentally sensitive, native plant landscapes. The resulting visually rich environment is meant to exemplify the diversity of Southwest Florida's native and designed landscape environments.

Objective 1601.1 – Landscape Concepts

Implement landscape concepts for the Florida Gulf Coast University campus in accordance with the principles outlined in Figure 16-1.

Policy 1601.1.1

Develop the campus landscape beyond the perimeter of the loop road and on the peripheral development parcels with plant materials that reflect, in massings and patterns, the existing native upland plant communities. Develop a transition planting zone between these “natural” environments and the institutional-landscape portions of the campus core.

Policy 1601.1.2

Develop the central, pedestrian-oriented areas of the campus with a distinctive institutional, ornamental landscape, which incorporates contrasting plant materials, including indigenous species, arranged in institutional design patterns.

Policy 1601.1.3

Develop signature landscape treatments at the eastern entrance to the campus. ~~following campus entrances:~~
~~A. Eastern entrance to the campus, when developed.~~

Policy 1601.1.4

Develop a signature landscape treatment for the western entrance to the Academic Core (at the intersection of the main entrance road and the loop road). Consideration should be given to incorporating a water features as part of the pedestrian/vehicular entrance sequence.

Policy 1601.1.5

Develop secondary landscape gateways at the following two-three locations along the loop road:

- A. At the intersection of the loop road with the access road to the southeastern parcel, when developed (Visual and Performing Arts Complex entrance).
- B. At the intersection of the loop road with the east access road, when developed. Entrance features shall be designed to enhance the arrival sequence with axial views where practicable; entrance areas should not be encroached upon by surface parking.

Policy 1601.1.6

Develop surface parking lots with landscaped medians (every second bay) and landscaped parking islands a minimum of 400 sf in area every 12 spaces. Additionally, the following standards shall apply:

- A. Indigenous canopy tree species shall be used in medians and parking islands, at a rate of one tree per 12 parking spaces.

- B. Parking lot perimeters shall be screened with a loose hedge of low indigenous shrub material that provides a safe visibility window into the parking area from outside.

Policy 1601.1.7

Maintain the central campus "great space" as a predominantly open, turf lawn with formal plantings of signature palm trees to reinforce and emphasize the ceremonial character of this symbolic space. **Native** Palm trees chosen for this area shall be a single-trunk, pinnately-compound leaf species that is majestic in character and scale, such as Medjool Date or **Native Florida Royal Palm**. Periphery areas beyond the formal lawn but part of the "great space" shall be developed with canopy and flowering trees to provide visual diversity and shaded outdoor retreat areas. Where practicable and appropriate, pedestrian walkways should be developed which both reinforce the formal lawn and accurately reflect intuitive pedestrian routes. Develop the "great space" with a landscape to hardscape ratio of 85% to 15%.

Policy 1601.1.8

Develop the central east-west open space axis as a viewshed and pedestrian corridor, emphasizing the use of turf, and low-maintenance groundcover at the periphery of buildings. As the campus expands and matures, this open space will be the Academic Core's primary pedestrian corridor. Therefore, it should remain visually uncluttered and open for access, pedestrian traffic flow, and safety purposes. Emphasize the singularity and linearity of this space through consistent landscape and hardscape treatment rather than creating unrelated clusters of plantings that appear to clutter the space. Long range, consider the creation of a mature tree canopy that would make the spine a more inviting place to linger during the warm weather months.

Policy 1601.1.9

Landscape material choices for the FGCU campus should emphasize hardy native species that are tolerant of seasonal drought, hurricanes or other severe weather conditions.

Policy 1601.1.10

The University shall adopt a "campus standard" vocabulary for site furnishings, lighting poles, and fixtures and graphics, which shall be used consistently throughout the campus to maintain a coordinated appearance.

Policy 1601.1.11

All primary campus open spaces and entrance features shall be irrigated.

Policy 1601.1.12

Retention/detention areas shall be landscaped in accordance with requirements that may be specified by the SFWMD in conceptual permit for the University and the following principles:

- a. Where possible, provide low maintenance plantings of native grasses, shrubs or other plant materials which do not require mowing and which will tolerate periodic inundation.
- b. Where grass must be used for budget reasons, ensure that retention areas are designed to provide adequate access for mowing and other maintenance equipment.
- c. Where possible, grade retention areas with side slopes that are less steep than is permitted in order to maintain a more naturalistic appearance to these areas.

Policy 1601.1.13

Develop a major landscape/urban design feature in the new southeast housing/student life district of campus, as a distinctive organizing element for this precinct of the campus, incorporating landscape, hardscape, and water elements to create a memorable outdoor "room" that acts as an informal gathering place and promotes a vibrant student life at FGCU.

Policy 1601.1.14

As parking structures are planned and developed on the FGCU campus, create landscape strategies that assist in mitigating the visual impact of these structures on the campus. **This might include planting on the sides and tops of the structures.**

Policy 1601.1.15

Promote public safety and security on campus through the appropriate placement of landscape elements such as shrubs, trees, fences, pathway lighting, and emergency telephones. Maintain line-of-sight visual connections along primary and secondary pedestrian paths and in parking areas.

Objective 1601.2 – Preservation of Native Plants

Preserve, to the extent practical and appropriate, existing high quality native plant materials on the University campus.

Policy 1601.2.1

The location and layout of on-campus roadways, parking areas, and building footprints should be finalized prior to construction, based on post-melaleuca-removal tree surveys, which identify high quality native vegetation. Where possible and practical, layouts should be modified to allow high quality native upland and wetland vegetation to remain, augmented with appropriate plant community species to reestablish viable environments.

Policy 1601.2.2

Provide wetland plantings and native littoral vegetation as required by the environmental permits received for the site development.

Policy 1601.2.3

Enhance existing design and plant palettes to provide a more “mannered” interpretation or vision of native habitats, and to provide an appropriate transition between natural and manmade areas.

Policy 1601.2.4

Continue to use boardwalks to reach portions of the campus remote from the academic core and to focus and promote pedestrian flow from the western to eastern ends of the academic core.

Objective 1601.3 – Budgeting for Landscape Improvements.

Implement the landscape concept plan by allocating proportional campus landscape costs to programmed building and parking structure costs and by seeking supplemental funding for landscape improvements.

Policy 1601.3.1

Implement the Landscape Concept Plan by allocating in each future building or parking structure project a proportional share of overall planned landscape improvement cost, including wetland restoration, preservation and creation, road and parking area landscaping, and pedestrian circulation landscaping. Cost allocations should include required plant materials, landscape development and lighting.

Policy 1601.3.2

Apply the following descending priorities for implementing components of the Landscape Concept Plan.

Priority 1: South Lake Village

Priority 2: West Lake Village

Priority ~~3~~ 4: Campus “Great Space”/Formal Lawn

Priority ~~4~~ 2: Internal Pedestrian Corridor/Quadrangle

Priority ~~5~~ 3: Major Landscape / Urban Design feature in new southeast housing/student life district, such as a plaza with a water element

Priority ~~6~~ 4: Campus Loop Road and Southeast District Access Road

Priority ~~7~~ 5: Pedestrian Paths and boardwalks.

Policy 1601.3.3

Seek separate funding mechanisms and revenue sources specifically targeted for landscape improvements, such as corporate and private donations, grants, horticultural societies, alumni gifts, etc.

Objective 1601.4 – Design Review

Establish, when appropriate for the pace of development, a planning and design review process to monitor compliance with the landscape architectural guidelines defined by this Element.

Policy 1601.4.1

Establish a planning and design review committee to provide internal review of campus landscape projects to ensure compliance with the adopted Campus Master Plan and design guidelines.

Policy 1601.4.2

The planning and design review committee should establish protocols for review of proposed landscape designs that maintain adherence to the guidelines, yet allow for innovative design solutions that may not be addressed by the guidelines.

Policy 1601.4.3

The planning and design review committee should, on a regular basis, review the design guidelines relative to previous and on-going construction projects in order to identify potential modifications to the guidelines consistent with the intent of this Element.

Objective 1601.5

To establish standards for the selection of exterior furnishings, lighting, and graphics for use on campus.

Policy 1601.5.1

The selection of site furniture shall remain consistent for the entire campus, regardless of adjacent architectural style. Street and site furniture style shall relate to campus image and identity as a whole, and not to an individual building or campus development project.

Policy 1601.5.2

Selection of site furnishings shall consider durability, ease of maintenance, and harmony with existing materials, styles, and colors chosen as an overall campus concept. Colors, materials, and finishes shall be able to be easily refinished or resurfaced to match existing site furniture. Existing outdated furnishings shall be replaced as needed with the new style of furnishing.

Policy 1601.5.3

Benches shall be chosen that are of proper scale, size, and durable material to withstand the heavy use on campus. Older and less durable or deteriorated benches shall be removed and replaced with the selected new style as necessary.

Policy 1601.5.4

Trash receptacles shall be of sufficient size, type, and durability, and shall accommodate recycling programs in place or under consideration for the campus. Aesthetic considerations shall be addressed when specifying color, number, and placement of trash and recycling bins on campus.

Policy 1601.5.5

Bollards used on campus for restricting vehicles from walkways shall be made of a durable material, either concrete or steel, and be of sufficient size and scale to be easily seen and to deter intrusion. They shall also be of a single style throughout the campus for uniformity and visual cohesion.

Policy 1601.5.6

Accommodations shall be made to disabled persons on campus through the use of ramping and less severe changes in grade, which shall reduce the necessity of stairs within walkways. Stair handrails shall be of a consistent and durable material, preferably painted metal, in order to reduce deterioration and maintenance.

Policy 1601.5.7

Walls used in the landscape, for retaining earth, or for visual screening shall be constructed of a durable material, such as concrete, and be uniform in appearance and characteristics throughout the campus. Walls should not be constructed of railroad ties or other materials that deteriorate or need continual maintenance.

Policy 1601.5.8

Decorative fencing or fencing used as a perimeter to stormwater / retention areas or screening shall be of a durable style and material to reduce maintenance needs and deterioration. Style color and material shall be consistent through campus. Security fencing shall be of chain link type, preferably vinyl coated in a dark color, preferably black, to lessen the visual impact.

Policy 1601.5.9

Service areas and trash dumpsters shall be well screened from pedestrian and vehicular corridors with planting, solid fencing, or masonry walls.

Policy 1601.5.10

Graphics and signage shall be utilized to assist in the overall comprehension of the campus and layout and to facilitate easier direction finding. Graphics font, logo types, colors, etc. shall be coordinated with overall University graphics (i.e. letterhead, vehicle door signage, etc.). Signage shall be uniform in appearance throughout campus, of adequate size and contrast, and be well illuminated at night. Individual building identification shall be consistent in type of signage and placement. Campus maps shall be installed at key visitor parking and entry points, and within campus at key pedestrian nodes and pedestrian traffic corridor intersections.

Policy 1601.5.11

Light fixtures for exterior use on campus shall be selected so as to be compatible with other site furnishings. Colors, materials, and finishes shall coincide to allow a uniform appearance throughout the campus. Lighting element choice shall be used consistently throughout the campus, and consideration shall be given to the best properties of site lighting and minimal glare. Light fixtures shall be durable, low maintenance, and painted or anodized metal for longevity and easy repair. Older, high maintenance light fixtures shall be replaced as needed with the new type.