



CONNECTIONS

Building a Connected Community



September 10, 2018



PATH TO PROMINENCE

As an institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and service, Lehigh University educates future generations of leaders, creates new knowledge, and serves as an agent of powerful, positive change.

Building on its proud legacy of success, Lehigh, under the leadership of its board of trustees, has now embarked on an ambitious plan that will allow it to grow and evolve into an even more impactful and innovative university—one whose work will change lives, and the world, for the better.

The Lehigh University Path to Prominence plan serves as the roadmap for this transformation and focuses on the primary strategic priorities of: Evolution (infrastructure projects), Expansion (population growth), and Exploration (enhancing academic programs).

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The Evolution of the campus, in terms of buildings, roadway improvements, sidewalks, green spaces, and lighting upgrades is guided by the following planning principles.

Agility

- Plan for flexible academic and residential buildings that allow for short and long-term change and support for ongoing innovation.
- Build and renovate structures with a flexible approach that will allow for change in the future, as well as bold thinking in how interdisciplinary research could be conducted today.
- Accentuate interdisciplinary capacity of buildings to allow for new types of campus learning and living.

Connectivity

- Strengthen campus residential and intellectual neighborhoods.
- Enhance the pedestrian-centered campus experience on Lehigh's campuses
- Improve our landscape strategies by establishing a more welcoming and engaging relationship between structures, creating physical transparency to increase visibility on campus.
- Integrate Lehigh's three campuses through improved infrastructure and amenities.
- Establish Lehigh as a cornerstone of community and regional revitalization.

Growth and Stewardship

- Provide facilities for the responsible growth of our study body, academic life and the establishment of the College of Health.
- Develop an approach to sustainability and resiliency that is distinctly Lehigh - reflecting our values, history, and aspirations. Assess and propose projects that take initiative in leading edge approaches to energy, materials, and operations.
- Reinvigorate our most historic buildings so they may better fulfill their contemporary function.



A NEW MOBILITY ECOSYSTEM

Lehigh's campuses and its connection to the SouthSide will be strengthened and transformed over the next ten years by catalytic projects and academic strategies that are the foundation of the Path to Prominence.

While each campus has its own strengths, challenges, and characteristics, each are part of a greater whole that is the University. The Campus Master Plan specifically recommends a series of initiatives, under the umbrella of "Connections," that will improve how those within the campus community and its visitors travel within and between the three campuses.

The framework outlined below seeks to improve access, significantly reduce congestion, improve the usage of Goodman Campus, achieve a more integrated Mountaintop Campus and create a more connected, pedestrian-friendly, and sustainable campus environment by minimizing the unsustainable reliance on single-occupant vehicles.

These initiatives will also promote Lehigh's Campus Sustainability Plan 2020, while pursuing the health and wellness aspirations that are critical to creating a strong, supportive, and healthy campus community.

VISION

Campus planning, enrollment growth targets, and sustainability goals require that Lehigh reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs) on the Asa Packer Campus. FY19 is the start of a phased approach to achieve this goal via a comprehensive program. Lehigh University's Connections Plan will reduce the reliance on the automobile for on campus travel, promote ridership and expansion of the Lehigh University transit system and encourage health and wellness through walking and cycling, resulting in a more collaborative, less congested, and more sustainable environment for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors alike. The Connections Plan will seek to accomplish the following thematic goals:

- Foster a multimodal culture
- Achieve environmental sustainability
- Enhance health & wellness
- Minimize investment in new parking structures

Each of the initiatives outlined below requires a new approach and major changes to how we connect with, within, and between our campuses. While it will be challenging to implement, and represents a significant cultural change, a coherent and connected University campus will inspire community interaction beyond the buildings, and advance Lehigh's Path to Prominence while ensuring that Lehigh's financial resources are devoted to our academic strategies.

- Gateways
- The Pedestrian Experience
- Transit System
- Parking System
- Mobility Solutions
- How Lehigh Works



Gateways

Creating new and enlivening existing key campus gateways and borders to promote community, enhance connectivity, and create a sense of arrival to campus for both visitors and the community.

“Let’s face it,” Simon said, “parking lots make lousy borders. Neighbors shouldn’t be separated by large stretches of asphalt, and universities should not be separated from the community in which they reside by a large stretch of asphalt. SouthSide Commons will help change all that.”

[Link](#) to the full SSC Groundbreaking

Goals

- Create seamless connections between campuses and the SouthSide through roadway network improvements and an enhanced transit system.
- Soften and connect gateways between campus and the surrounding community to blur the lines between the Asa Packer Campus and the SouthSide.
- Redesign and enliven entry to the campus through streetscape improvements and SouthSide business revitalization.
- Prioritize the pedestrian experience through roadway improvements, lighting, landscaping enhancements, and reduction of single-occupancy vehicles.
- Develop a faculty and staff housing program through both rentals and incentives to purchasing homes on the SouthSide.



The Pedestrian Experience

A walkable and bikeable campus is imperative to creating a safer, healthier, and more vibrant community. The Connections Plan focuses on prioritizing the pedestrian and biking experience by expanding the zones in which walking and riding is paramount; and driving and parking are secondary, and in certain cases, not allowed. Areas which transform roadways, prioritize pedestrians fall within the car-free zone on the Asa Packer Campus, and build upon past successful public realm improvements.

Goals

- Update existing roadways around campus for safety and accessibility to be compatible for cars, bicycles, pedestrians and transit alike.
- Activate the campus by enhancing community, promoting walkability, and establishing vibrant public spaces.
- Further develop the pedestrian path system, expanding the safe and walkable routes throughout campus to effectively connect all residential areas and the academic core campus.
- Incorporate pavers and curb-less paths, narrow the road widths, and remove street parking to accommodate pedestrian travel.
- Ensure that the expanded pedestrian pathways are eco-friendly and support bicycle transportation.
- Create a car-free zone of nearly 39 acres in the academic core of campus bounded by Packer Avenue, Taylor Street, University Drive, and Brodhead Avenue.
- Convert Upper and Lower Sayre Park Roads into a one-way multi-modal loop to create a recreational loop for walking, running, and biking.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive landscape strategy that advances Lehigh's sustainability goals, and creates comfortable and interesting open spaces, including:
 - Reinforcing existing woodlands
 - Strengthening the academic core and a hierarchy of open spaces



Transit System

An efficient and seamless transit system is essential to supporting a car-free campus and reducing reliance on the personal vehicle, integrating the three campuses, and fully utilizing all existing parking facilities.

Goals

- Provide convenient, timely, and comfortable transportation options to eliminate vehicle dependence in the core of campus and provide access to all existing parking facilities.
- Optimize bus routes and utilize fuel efficient fleet vehicles to create a healthier, cleaner, and more sustainable campus environment.
- Implement significant improvements and promote transit system usage by expanding the Lehigh transit and shuttle service, including the implementation of new routes, buses, shelters, wayfinding signage.
- Provide consistent, attractive, weather-protected bus shelters with clear signs, bus route information, consistent branding, and protection from the elements.



Parking System

The Path to Prominence relies heavily on development proposed on existing surface parking lot facilities throughout the Asa Packer Campus. Current development plans, population growth, coupled with the implementation of the car free zone, is expected to impact approximately 600 parking spaces. Effective and properly-utilized parking will support the needs of the campus in a more sustainable manner. Lehigh will implement a parking strategy to accommodate demand in a sustainable way.

Goals

- Increase parking efficiency by taking advantage of currently under-utilized parking areas.
- Upgrade our parking facilities to comply with ADA guidelines supported by a transit service.
- Limit vehicular access and parking throughout the core campus and establish the car-free zone.
- Remove parking while limiting access of cars and service trucks throughout the primary pedestrian campus routes.
- Maximize the efficiency of existing parking supply and reducing the reliance on the personal vehicle by assigning every parking permit issued to only one (1) specific location (location-based parking).
- Continually assess parking demand on the Asa Packer Campus and encourage use of commuter parking areas to reduce demand.
- Partner with the City of Bethlehem and lease parking from the City as required by demand to provide parking inventory within walkable distance to Asa Packer Campus.
- Offer designated parking zones to faculty and staff
- Reduce the number of students with vehicles through effective transportation alternatives.



Mobility Solutions

Foster a multi-modal culture and prepare for future changes to the mobility ecosystem by providing an array of mobility services and solutions that reduce single occupancy automobile dependence, promote health and wellness, and support the long-term University vision and master plan.

Goals

- Develop and promote incentives for student and faculty use of alternative transportation options (walking, biking, public transportation, car sharing, carpooling, commuter parking).
- Foster shared demand-responsive services to provide flexible mobility options that match customers' needs.
- Partner with the public and private sector to deliver various transportation, carpool and ridesharing options (LANTA/LYFT/Enterprise).
- Creating a new accessible shuttle service to assist in providing access to buildings with significantly improved headway times.



#HowLehighWorks

Optimizing the use of campus resources, including the efficient use of time and technology, is essential as we aim to meet the long-term vision of the University. By leveraging technology and prioritizing efficient use of campus spaces and travel time, Lehigh can ensure increased academic programming opportunities and productivity of its employees.

Goals

- Promote the use of new technology to facilitate internal and external collaboration across the University without requiring travel to in-person meetings. These technology solutions provide audio and video conferencing services across all operating systems and mobile platforms.
- Collaborate with Human Resources to develop management guidelines for telecommuting and flexible work locations.
- Collaborate with the Registrar's Office to adjust class schedules as needed to provide students with efficient transit to and from class and other academic programs.
- Develop new cultural norms for meetings to give people ample and reasonable travel time.