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**San Francisco State University  
Campus Master Plan**

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**Chapter 7.  
Urban Design Plan**

## 7. Urban Design Plan

### Defining Elements

The urban design plan for the campus, described in the accompanying Master Plan Buildout diagram, expands upon the framework and land use concepts discussed in the previous chapter. The following key elements govern the location and form of future buildings.

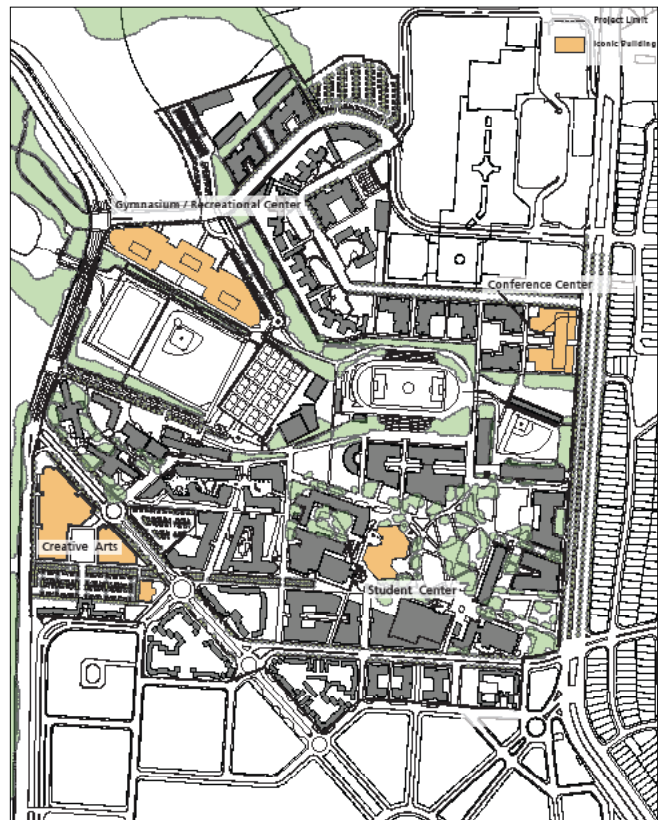
#### *Quad as the heart of campus*

Framed by existing buildings such as the library, Business, and the iconic student center, the Quad is the most memorable part of the SF State campus. The master plan locates and configures new academic buildings to define its edges more strongly and to reinforce the Quad as the symbolic heart of campus.

#### *Iconic buildings at campus corners*

The plan locates iconic buildings at the corners of campus to house facilities that are used by neighbors and visitors as well as by members of the campus community.

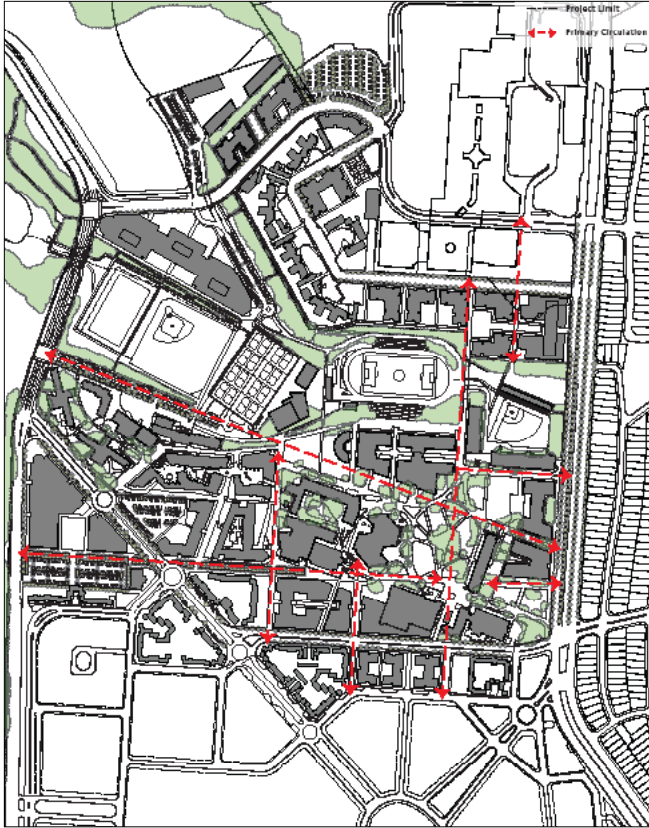
Left: Defining the Quad  
Right: Iconic Campus Buildings





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Top: New Circulation Spines  
Bottom: Build-to lines

### New circulation spines

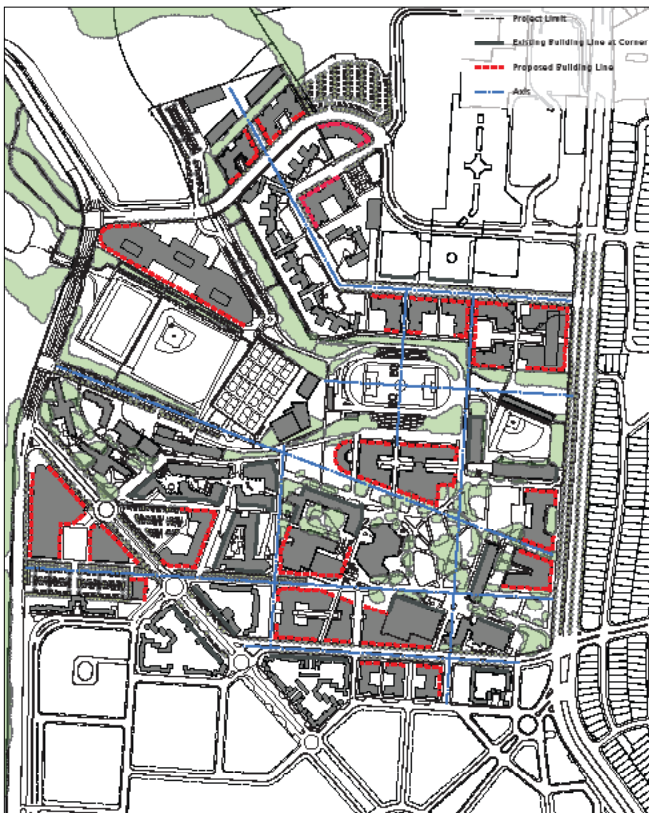
The plan establishes new circulation spines and axes across the campus to connect new facilities to the campus core and improve wayfinding. Two east-west axes span the campus, one linking the Quad to the new Creative Arts complex, and the other connecting the campus entry with the core undergraduate housing complex. A north-south axis connects the University Park North (UPN) housing and University Conference Center to the heart of the campus via a pedestrian bridge that crosses the valley.

### Build-to lines

The plan establishes build-to lines across the campus that reinforce the axes and public spaces. Build-to lines define the limits of new construction, ensuring that the location and massing of new buildings shape the larger campus spaces.

### Courtyards

One of the most attractive features of the existing campus is the scale and character of courtyards, such as those



behind Burk Hall and the newly constructed Village. The plan continues the pattern of intimately scaled courtyards within the new academic and residential buildings as places for quiet activity and respite.

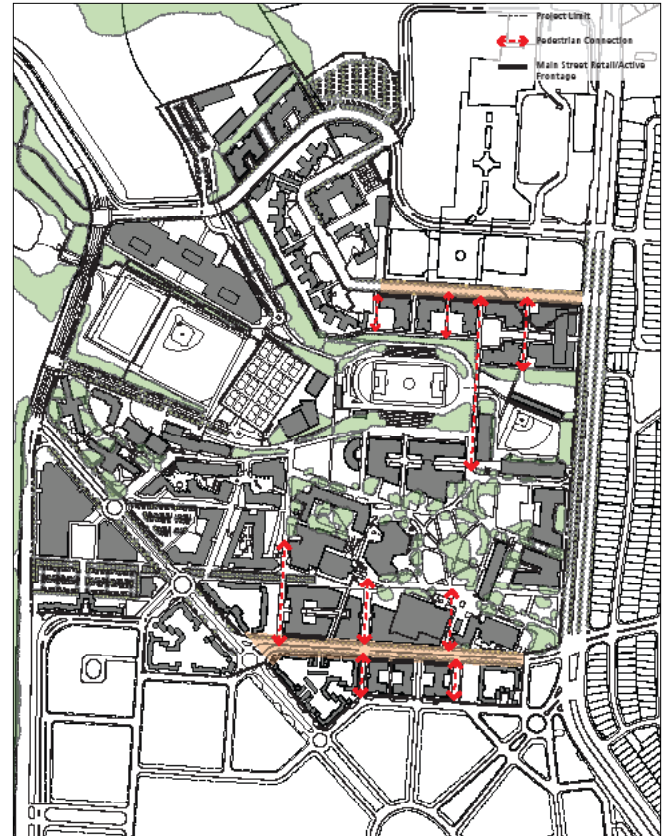
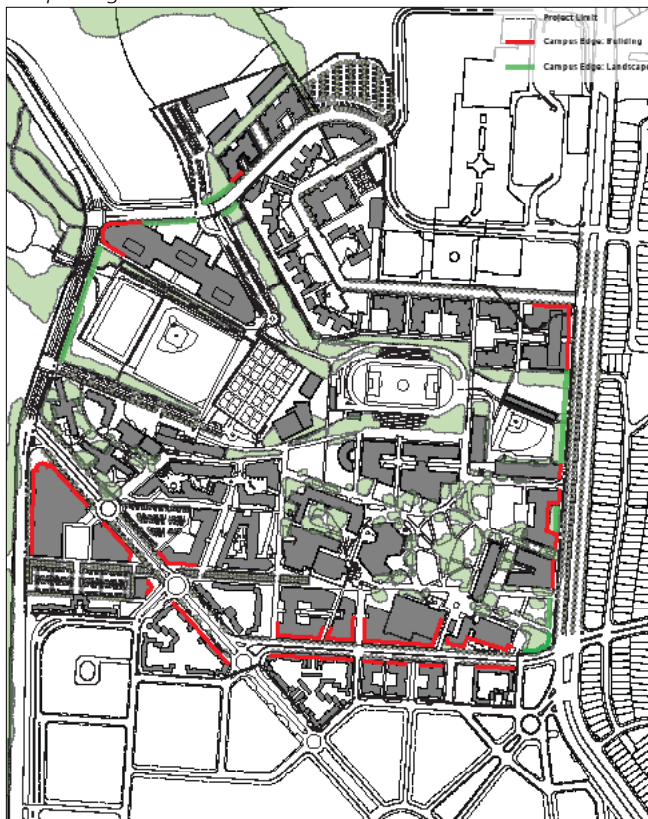
### *Campus main streets*

The plan calls for two campus main streets, on Buckingham Way and Holloway Avenue, as a way of integrating the campus with the surrounding neighborhoods. Both streets can become mixed-use environments with ground-floor retail below housing or academic uses, or at the street level of the University Conference Center. Retail may be continuous or intermittent along the street; the specific configuration will depend on detailed retail analysis once projects come forward. The streets should allow enhanced pedestrian activity with sidewalk cafes, slow-moving traffic, and lush landscaping including planters and shade trees.

### *Campus edges*

Adherence to build-to lines creates a consistent but permeable edge that defines the campus and shapes adjacent streets.

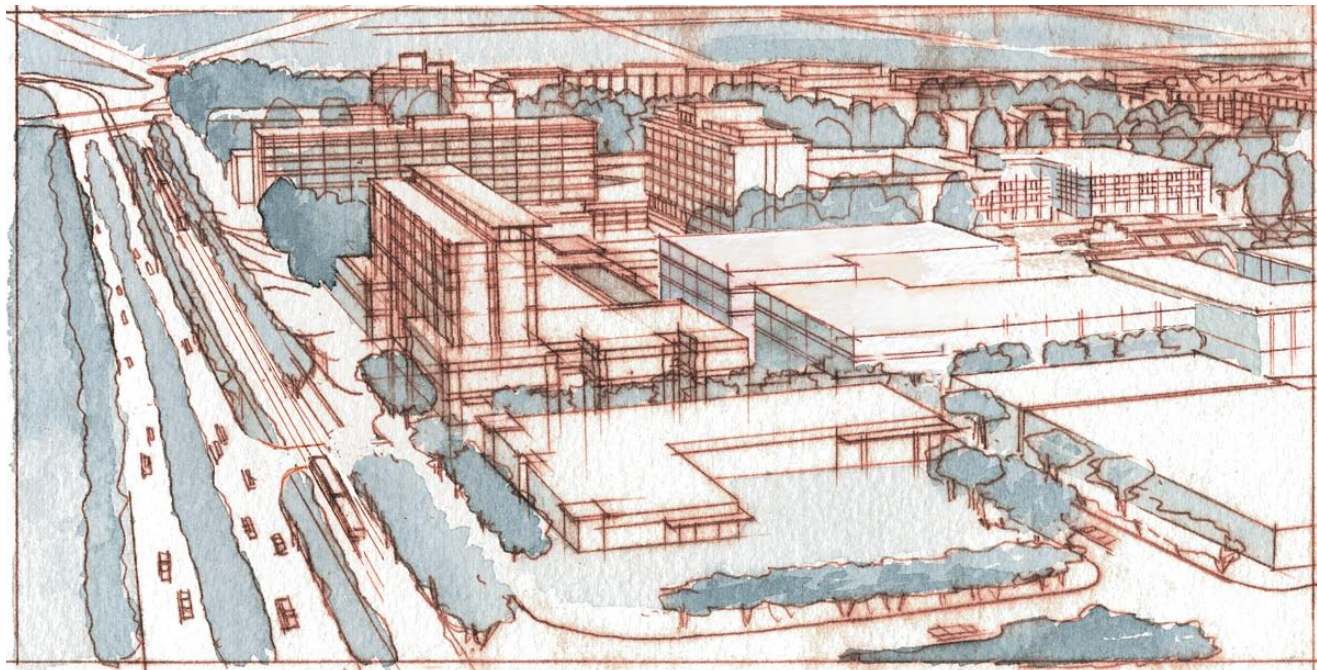
#### *Campus Edges*



Top: Campus Main Streets  
Bottom: Portal Elements







*Birdseye view from 19th Avenue and Buckingham Way, with the University Conference Center to the left, mid-ground.*

### **Portal elements**

Portal elements aligned with major axes reinforce the overall campus structure, clarify wayfinding, and provide inviting points of entry.

### **Future Building Sites**

Key decisions about building location shaped the urban design plan and have major implications for the layout and configuration of the campus. These include:

- The location of the new **Creative Arts complex** on the western side of campus along Lake Merced Boulevard shifts the center of gravity of the campus to the west, requiring improved access and pedestrian linkages from the rest of the campus. The location of the building's entrance is of critical importance if this new facility is to be an active part of the campus as a whole.
- Siting the new **gymnasium/recreation-wellness center** on the current site of Lakeview Center and corporation yard enhances the recreational uses of the valley. This location is one of the few sites large enough to accommodate this facility without compromising its efficiency and avoiding the need to stack one element above another. The new gymnasium/recreation-wellness center looks out over the athletic fields to the southwest and has public access from Lake Merced Boulevard and Winston Drive.
- The **University Conference Center** is sited at the corner of 19th Avenue and a realigned Buckingham Way. This location takes advantage of proximity to Stonestown Galleria, the Muni M line stop, and the heart of the campus.



## Academic Buildings

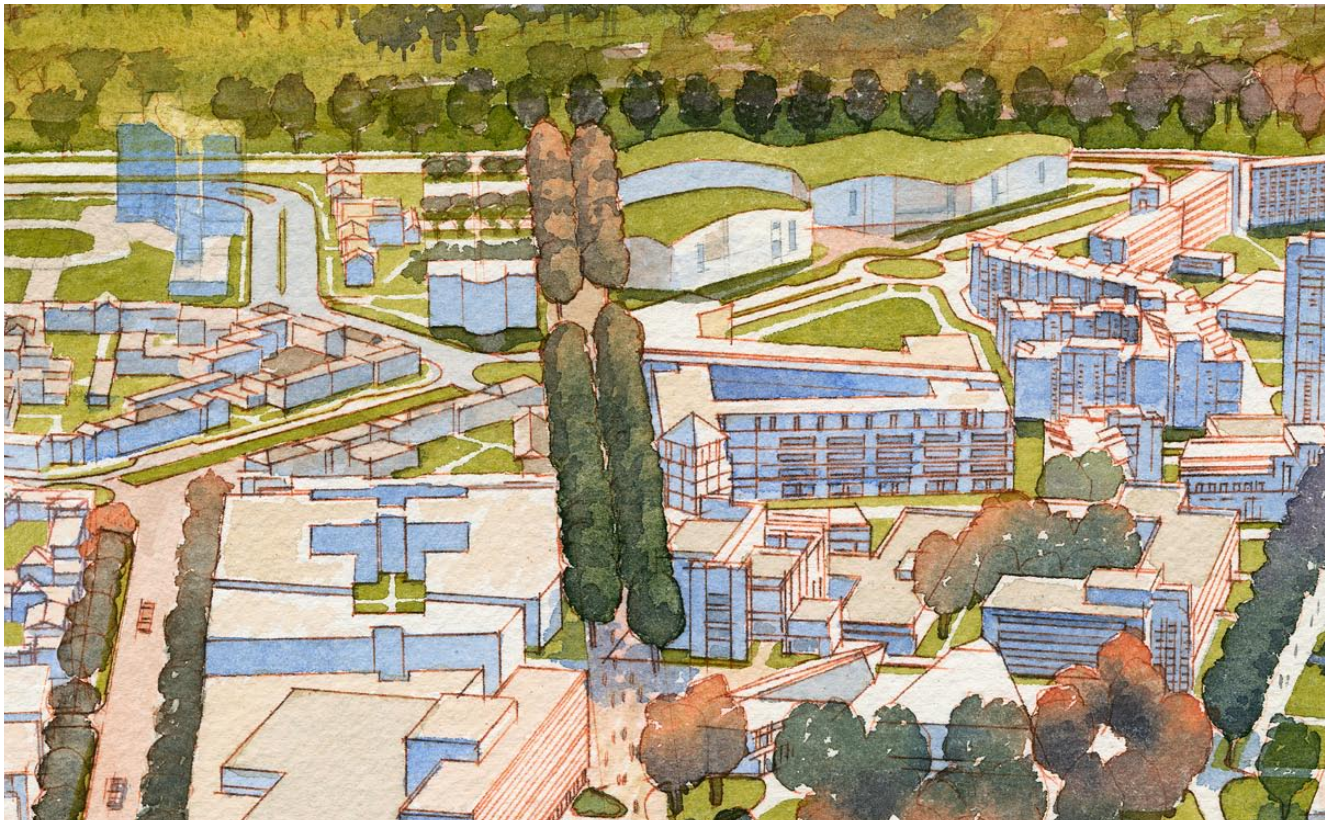
The urban design plan locates new academic buildings close to the Quad on redevelopment sites vacated by buildings slated for demolition. Early projects include a Clinical Sciences Building on the SOTA site at Tapia Drive and Font Boulevard, which offers good access for drop-off to the child care and nursing facilities housed in the building; BSS and HHS Buildings relocated to the former Creative Arts site; and a new Science Building on the site of the existing gym, close to the existing science facilities in Hensill and Thornton Halls.

## Semi-Public Buildings

Each of the proposed semi-public buildings has an impact on the external identity of the campus, public accessibility, and the relationship with surrounding buildings and spaces:

- **Creative Arts complex.** The new Creative Arts complex is located on the existing softball field, between Font Boulevard and Lake Merced Boulevard. This facility is slated to be built in phases and is intended to house both academic facilities as well as auditoriums for public performances. In keeping with the character of other academic buildings on the campus, the new buildings are located around an internal courtyard that serves as an outdoor gathering space and breakout area during public events.
- **Gymnasium/Recreation-Wellness Center.** This new facility houses an NCAA

*Birdseye view looking west along the Arts Allée, with Creative Arts in the background.*



regulation-size basketball/volleyball court, an Olympic-size swimming pool, and a multi-court gym and fitness center, in addition to locker rooms and other support spaces. It also houses academic and office space for Kinesiology. It is one of a new breed of recreation centers that take a holistic approach to wellness and play a much-expanded role as a social center on campus.

The gym/recreation-wellness center is located on the site of the existing Lakeview Center and corporation yard, overlooking the existing and expanded athletic fields in the valley. Pedestrian access to the center from the rest of the campus is via a new network of paths described in the Campus Circulation chapter. Public vehicular access is from Lake Merced Boulevard and Winston Drive.

- **University Conference Center.** Located in the northeast corner of the campus at the intersection of the realigned Buckingham Way and 19th Avenue, the University Conference Center takes advantage of proximity to transit and the Stonestown Galleria.

The center is envisioned as a small conference facility—which can accommodate both University-related as well as outside events—combined with a mix of guest rooms and housing for University affiliates. Although the exact mix of guest rooms and University housing would be determined as a part of a detailed programming and design process, the center is envisioned as a flexible facility that could accommodate guests at conferences and other University-related activities such as prospective student/parent orientations, as well as providing some overflow housing for graduate students, permanent and visiting faculty, and staff.

The new facility will contain a conference center of approximately 35,000 square feet with limited ground-floor retail and restaurant, along with a combination of guest rooms (approximately 80 rooms), and University suites and apartments (approximately 50 units with a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units), and a visitor center, overlooking the valley, for prospective students and families and other University guests.

The new University Conference Center is intended to serve SF State as well as the larger community. The center provides much-needed space for University-sponsored conferences and events, and a venue—unique in this area of the city—for programs, meetings, retreats, seminars, public receptions, press conferences, weddings, etc.

## Housing

Expanding the supply of campus housing has multiple benefits: it allows the University to recruit and retain qualified faculty, staff, and students; enables more SF State affiliates to commute to campus by walking rather than driving; significantly shifts students from off-campus rentals to supervised on-campus housing, and builds a strong and cohesive campus community.

Housing is located north (UPN), south (UPS), and west of the academic core. The student housing complex west of the core is designated primarily for freshmen, with easy access to the dining center and student support services. UPN and UPS offer a combination of housing options to faculty, staff, graduate students, students with families, and upper division students.



As of fall 2005, SF State faculty, staff, and students occupied approximately 30 percent of the units in UPN and UPS. That number will increase over time as units become available through natural attrition. In addition, as illustrated in the accompanying Master Plan 2020 Buildout diagram, the master plan calls for a number of UPN and UPS sites to be redeveloped with housing in more compact and denser configurations pulled close to the street in order to increase the supply of housing and to create an active and pedestrian-friendly interface between the buildings and the campus streets that they front.

New housing is planned on the existing Sutro Library site along Winston Drive; in UPN, on existing low-rise building sites north of Cox Stadium and east of the existing towers; in UPS, on the block west of Cardenas Avenue; and as part of the proposed University Conference Center. The Sutro Library site offers an ideal location for early construction of for-sale faculty and staff housing. The two redeveloped housing sites in the central area of UPN, east of the towers and near the Buckingham/Winston intersection, begin to organize the neighborhood, defining view corridors and street edges.

The interior site offers the opportunity for denser housing in a structure of up to 70 feet. Redeveloped housing further south in UPN along the realigned section of Buckingham Way takes advantage of views across the valley and Cox Stadium, helps to redefine Buckingham as a campus “main street,” and anchors the northern end of the new Millennium Bridge that links UPN with the campus. Similarly, the redeveloped housing on the UPS site begins to define Holloway as a campus main street. A limited amount of ground-floor retail can be provided to animate both these streets and offer needed services for the campus community and neighbors.

With the exception of the taller UPN structure—6 stories over structured parking—new housing is conceived as 4-story stacked flats over structured parking. All residential buildings contain a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units that the University can rent either by bed (to upper division students) or by unit. The University Conference Center provides approximately 50 units in a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom configurations for use by SF State affiliates. Collectively, the new housing in UPN (including the Sutro Library site), UPS, and the University Conference Center provides a net gain of 657 units to the University’s housing supply. With the existing UPS and UPN units that are expected to become available gradually to SF State affiliates through attrition, the University will gain approximately 1,200 housing units overall by 2020.

## Student Services

Building C of the Village, which currently contains 37 units (148 beds) of student housing, will be converted to much-needed space for Student Services facilities. The building is immediately adjacent to the existing Student Services Building on Centennial Way, centrally located to housing and the academic core.

## Support

The corporation yard and Facilities offices are relocated to Lot 25 on Winston Drive, vacating an ideal site for the gym/recreation-wellness center. A new vehicular underpass beneath Winston Drive permits maintenance and delivery vehicles to have unimpeded access to the rest of the campus.



Height Limits

Parking

The parking strategy is discussed in detail in Chapter 9: Campus Circulation.

Architectural and Urban Design Standards

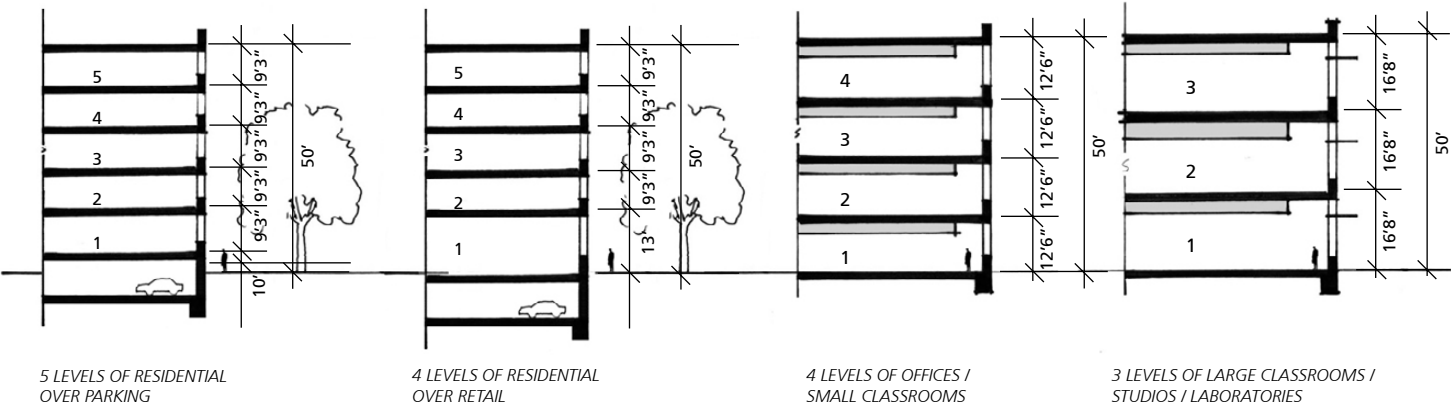
At present, SF State does not have an immediately identifiable, distinctive, unifying architecture. However it does have a number of buildings that display a response to function, climate, and setting that can be used as a precedent or source of inspiration for future design.

In order to achieve a unified and coherent architectural identity in keeping with the master plan principles of sustainability and environmentalism, the following standards will govern the design of all new buildings:

Adherence to build-to lines

The build-to lines define campus spaces, pedestrian and landscape spines, and axes. The build-to lines should determine each new building's configuration and major frontages on the main campus spaces in a manner similar to the street and block-pattern of a town.

Building Sections – For a 50-foot height limit, the number of stories varies depending on building type.





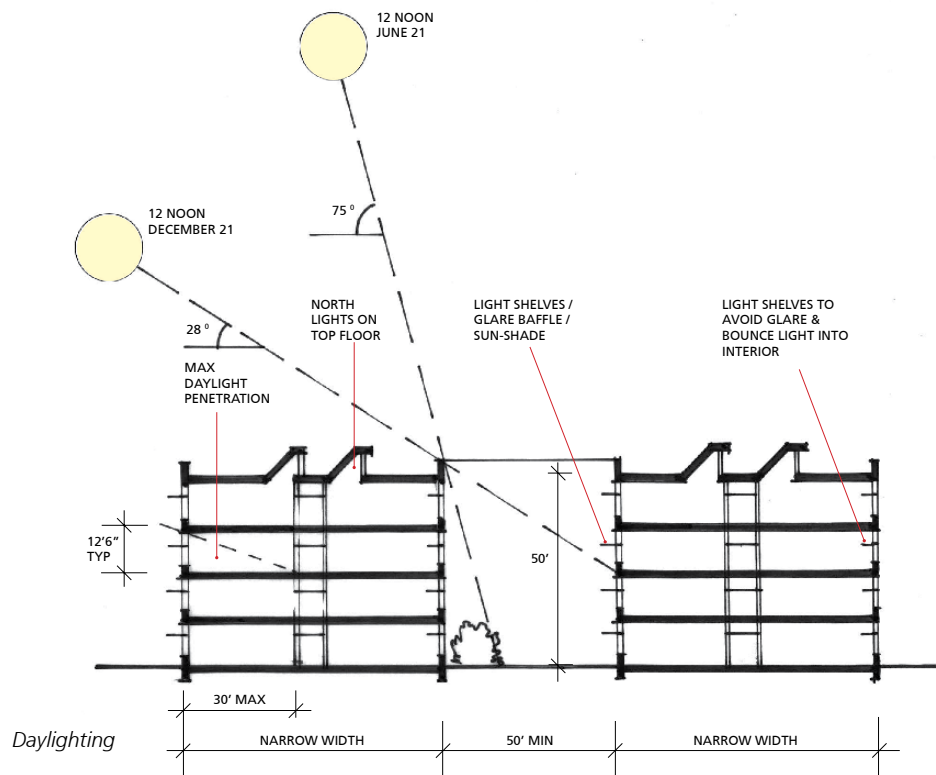
## Height limits

Height limits maintain a consistent scale to the campus, relating to existing buildings where appropriate, and allow iconic buildings such as the student center to retain their unique identity. As illustrated in the Building Heights diagram, academic buildings around the Quad and most residential buildings maintain a 50-foot height limit, which accommodates a number of floor-to-floor arrangements, depending on the building type, as shown in the accompanying sections.

The height limit is raised to 70 feet along 19th Avenue to reinforce the campus's urban frontage, along Centennial Walk consistent with the existing Humanities and Village buildings, and in UPN on the interior site close to the Buckingham/Winston intersection. A 100-foot limit applies only to high-volume spaces in the gym/recreation-wellness center and Creative Arts complex.

## Daylighting

Daylight should be used as the primary means of lighting campus buildings. As part of the campus goal of creating a sustainable environment, new buildings are required to rely on daylight for all spaces unless program requirements dictate otherwise. Narrow-width buildings are preferred instead of deep-plan configurations to avoid the need for extensive artificial lighting. Because of the ambient light and frequent occasions when the campus is shrouded in fog, the majority of building elevations can be transparent. Sun shading is appropriate on southern exposures and the use of light-shelves is advantageous in avoiding the problems of glare and the need to bounce light deep into interior spaces. In large spaces such as studios, skylights and north-lights are encouraged. Where site restrictions require a building configuration that



*An atrium with clerestory windows and heavily glazed interior walls*



*Interior circulation corridor receives direct daylight from window at end of hallway and borrowed light from transom window above internal partition wall of classroom.*



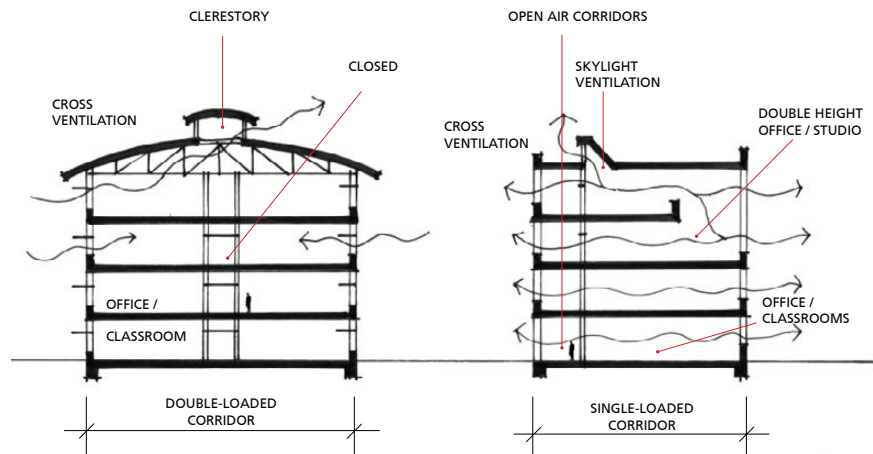
*Interior light shelves facilitate deep daylight penetration without glare.*

employs an atrium, there is an opportunity to provide borrowed light into otherwise buried interior spaces.

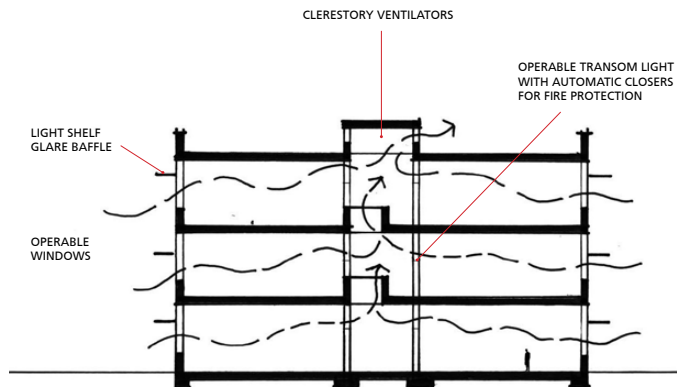
### Natural ventilation

Natural ventilation should be used for all offices, classrooms, labs, and teaching spaces, except for those that code requires to be mechanically ventilated. Because of SF State's benign oceanside climate and wind patterns, natural ventilation is easily achieved through operable windows, louvers, and the use of skylights and north-lights to achieve a thermal chimney stack-effect.

Cross ventilation through operable windows and skylights



Vertical exhaust ventilation through corridor atrium



Tracking windvanes atop stair cores ensure that natural suction creates a thermal chimney effect, exhausting warmed air on this classroom building at the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus.



Operable windows and external shading devices on the Student Services building



Continuous ridge vents along the shallow-pitched roof of this office building at the Inland Revenue Centre in Nottingham. The glass cylinder stair tower has a fabric roof that lifts to allow the escape of exhaust air.



Thermal chimney atop a new research facility at the Centre for Mathematical Sciences, Cambridge University



## Architectural character

In keeping with the design of several of the original campus buildings and the recent renovation of others, an architectural language that responds to climate and setting can be developed. Architectural elements such as horizontally proportioned windows, overhanging sun-shading elements on southern exposures, light-colored stucco cladding, or poured-in-place concrete are common features of both the oldest and most recent campus buildings that should be applied.



*Continuous horizontal sunshading above horizontal ribbon windows, on facades facing south and west*



*Eye-brow sunshade, extending horizontally beyond window*

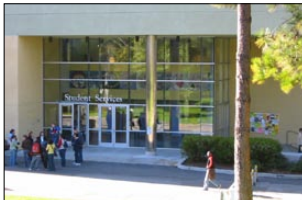


*Raised frame window surrounds, suited for north and east building facades*

*These images show three of the University's original buildings—(L to R) HSS, the Gymnasium, and the Administration Building—that exhibit features of the architectural language described previously.*

## Transparency at ground level

Transparency at ground level is particularly important along the two proposed campus main streets—Holloway Avenue and Buckingham Way. This is especially necessary where the buildings are situated at the back edge of the sidewalk.



*The Student Services building is appropriately transparent and inviting at the ground level.*



*Active, common uses bracket both sides of the Centennial Village courtyard.*



*Commercial uses on the ground floor, below upper residential floors, in a new mixed-use development in Denver.*

## Arcades, porches, balconies, and portals

These elements, responsive to the campus's benign climate, should be used to encourage pedestrian activity and to provide shade, natural ventilation, and daylighting to interior spaces. The space of an arcade should be square or vertical in proportion.



*Arcades line the buildings facing Stanford's Serra Mall, providing shade for windows and pedestrian circulation routes.*



*Continuous external walkways wrap the upper floors of the James Clark Research Center at Stanford University.*



*A portal along Stanford's east-west axis, connecting the Lomita Mall with the Main Quad*

### ***Roof gardens: roof terraces and planted roofs***

Roof spaces should be either useable roof terraces, providing additional open space on the campus, or planted as green roofs, allowing the roof to reduce heating and cooling loads and reduce stormwater runoff. These strategies can also be used in combination.



*The iconic roof terrace atop the Student Union*



*An urban green roof with low-maintenance plantings*



*Sculptural green roofs on recent buildings in San Bruno, California*

### ***Entrances***

Special attention should be paid to the design and location of front entrances to buildings. They should be bright, glazed, and easy to find. The architecture should incorporate the building's name and/or address. Provision should be made in the campus public art program for treating the design of the doorway as an integrated art component.



*The glazed entryway to the Science building includes the building's name, date, and decorative copper panels above.*



*The monumental, pivoting doors to the Cesar Chavez Student Center incorporate polychrome graphic panels on both sides.*



*The wood entry door to Clapp Hall, a dormitory at Princeton University, is framed by a cast stone archway and columns.*

### ***Local materials sourcing***

Any construction project should explore the possibility of using locally sourced materials, whether raw materials or manufactured items, and maximize their use as a means of limiting the environmental impacts of transporting goods.

### ***Reuse of construction and demolition materials***

Any construction project should explore the possibility of reused construction and demolition materials and maximize their use as a means of limiting the environmental impacts of extracting and manufacturing new materials.