

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
2021 MOUNT VERNON CAMPUS PLAN
PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK
1 SEPTEMBER 2021

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This *Campus Plan Framework* provides an overview of the key objectives and priorities that will be incorporated in the 2021 Mount Vernon Campus Plan. It reflects input and feedback that has been provided by a wide range of stakeholders, including several members of the community, in connection with GW's Strategic Campus and Facilities Planning process and more specifically over the past several months as part of the Mount Vernon Campus Plan Community Partnership planning effort.

I. OVERVIEW

The George Washington University's Mount Vernon Campus offers a traditional residential campus experience in a setting that is readily accessible to, but clearly distinctive from, GW's main Foggy Bottom campus. The intimate scale of Mount Vernon's built environment corresponds with and complements the surrounding Foxhall and Berkeley neighborhoods, and its rolling green hills and open space elements provide myriad opportunities for outdoor recreation and social interaction, as well as study and peaceful respite, for members of the university community and neighborhood residents alike.

Mount Vernon is an integral part of the GW experience. The campus is home to a growing number of innovative living and learning communities for students who want to combine a small-college experience with the resources of a major research university. These specialized programs—including those focused on global connections, sustainability, politics and values, civic leadership, and the widely-recognized Elizabeth J. Somers Women's Leadership Program—provide guided academic opportunities for students to collaborate with other students, faculty, and post-doctoral fellows on a variety of exciting cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary themes and projects, while also supporting individual research projects and other academic challenges. Honors housing for freshmen enrolled in the highly competitive GW Honors Program is offered at Mount Vernon's West Hall, providing an array of social and unique out-of-classroom opportunities to complement the vibrant, rigorous Honors Program curriculum.

In addition to classroom and laboratory spaces, the Mount Vernon Campus houses its own library, a black box theater, dining facilities, and indoor and outdoor athletic facilities that support a range of GW and community athletic and recreational activities. The tight-knit community atmosphere among the six undergraduate residence halls at Mount Vernon encourages students to forge bonds that last throughout their time at GW and beyond.

Guided by the principles developed through the University's comprehensive Strategic Campus and Facilities Planning effort, the 2021 Campus Plan purposefully seeks to preserve the distinctive character of Mount Vernon Campus, and, to that end, proposes **a development plan substantially reduced in scale from the development program approved by the DC Zoning Commission in the 2010 Campus Plan**. The Plan outlines a comprehensive set of improvements that will enhance the living and learning experience at the Mount Vernon Campus, reinforcing the campus' unique attributes as an urban retreat within the District. As discussed more fully below, the 2021 Campus Plan proposes strategic improvements that will resolve accessibility challenges caused by campus topography, improve campus circulation with new walkways and a centralized transportation hub, provide additional student housing located at the central core of campus, and expand opportunities for the university community and members of the surrounding neighborhood to benefit from Mount Vernon's unique open spaces and recreational facilities—all in a manner that continues to respect and enhance the residential neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

II. STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Over the past ten years, student enrollment at the Mount Vernon Campus has consistently remained below the headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment caps established in the 2010 Campus Plan. GW recognizes the importance that maintaining predictability and certainly with respect to student population carries for residents of the neighborhoods surrounding campus. The university also understands and appreciates that student enrollment has a significant impact on preserving the unique character of the Mount Vernon Campus—an objective that is of great importance to the university community as well as members of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In light of these important considerations, **GW has determined that it will not seek to increase the student enrollment levels approved in the 2010 Campus Plan.**

Accordingly, under the 2021 Campus Plan, the Mount Vernon student headcount shall not exceed 1,725 students on a daily basis, and the Mount Vernon full-time equivalent shall not exceed 1,100 students on a daily basis. Of these, the number of students who have housing assignments on the Mount Vernon Campus shall not exceed 800 students. Evidence of compliance with these student enrollment requirements will continue to be reported at the Mount Vernon Quarterly Community Meetings convened between representatives of the university and members of the community.

III. DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND CAMPUS CHARACTER

As noted above, the Mount Vernon Campus has a distinctive character and scale that integrates with and corresponds to the residential neighborhoods and institutional uses that surround the campus. To effectively maintain this important balance and context, future campus development has been thoughtfully considered and intentionally limited to address only specifically identified university needs and priorities. **As a result, the development program proposed in the 2021 Campus Plan includes only three new development sites, representing a significant reduction of approximately 35% from the new campus development approved by the DC Zoning Commission in the 2010 Campus Plan.** The proposed development sites and their key attributes (including maximum gross floor area, maximum lot coverage, maximum number of stories, and maximum height) are illustrated in EXHIBIT 1.

Proposed Development Sites

The scale and location of proposed development sites are guided by the key objectives of maintaining the residential scale of the campus, working with and responding to existing topography, and ensuring universal accessibility to campus facilities. **Site 1** addresses GW's desire to add 100 beds of student housing to meet the increasing demand of undergraduate students who wish to take advantage of the unique Mount Vernon residential experience, while maintaining a campus student population well within the enrollment caps established in the 2010 Campus Plan. Notably, Site 1 aligns in gross floor area, lot coverage, and height with Site R1 in the approved 2010 Campus Plan. **Site 2** addresses the demonstrated and growing need throughout higher education in general, and at GW in particular, for additional resources to actively promote and support students' physical and mental health and

wellness. The site includes a new Wellness Building adjacent to the existing tennis courts, which have been reconceived as a running track with multi-purpose infield space (discussed more fully in Section IV below). Also incorporated in Site 2 is an open-air loggia connecting West Hall to the proposed Wellness Building and a new central campus transportation hub (described more fully in Section VI below), all of which will help activate the center of campus. Finally, **Site 3** provides a structure to enclose the existing outdoor pool, which will allow year-round use of the pool facility for members of the university community as well as neighborhood residents.

IV. ATHLETIC AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Mount Vernon’s athletic and recreation resources are a significant asset to the university and to the surrounding community as well. However, while the existing athletic fields at Mount Vernon are scheduled to near capacity on a daily basis, significant and growing demand for the facilities—from university users as well as community partners and neighborhood schools—cannot be sufficiently met.

Current Outdoor Athletic Facilities

The soccer/lacrosse field and softball field at Mount Vernon currently support practices and host home games for four GW varsity sports teams (women’s soccer, men’s soccer, women’s lacrosse, and women’s softball). In addition to these varsity programs, GW students participate in 36 different club sports teams, 18 of which are outdoor programs that currently compete for very limited remaining field time at the Mount Vernon Campus. As a result, club teams currently rent and travel to non-GW facilities in excess of 250 field hours each year. GW also supports an active intramural program which does not currently have any access to the Mount Vernon facilities because of the extremely limited availability. All of these athletic and recreational sports programs are institutional priorities, as such programs are widely recognized as playing an integral role in supporting students’ overall physical and mental health and well-being.

Proposed Improvements to Outdoor Athletic Facilities

In order to address this demonstrated demand, the 2021 Campus Plan includes several strategic improvements to the existing outdoor athletic facilities at the Mount Vernon Campus, as illustrated in EXHIBIT 2. Specifically, the Plan proposes to convert the existing tennis courts into a running track with a multi-purpose infield, and replace existing seating with new bleachers at the soccer/lacrosse field and the softball field. Over the term of the Plan, other improvements may be undertaken, including reurfing the playing fields and replacing scoreboard equipment, to ensure that the facilities continue to provide safe and well-maintained conditions for GW varsity sports as well as recreational use, and also meet the demands and requirements associated with NCAA competition. As part of the tennis court conversion project, the eight lighting fixtures that currently illuminate the courts would be reduced to six fixtures. In addition, the Plan proposes the installation of specialized lighting equipment at the soccer/lacrosse field and the softball field. All of the field light fixtures would include glare shields to control light spillage and ensure that impacts on nearby residential properties are effectively minimized. Proposed lighting concepts for the soccer/lacrosse field are illustrated in EXHIBIT 2A.

Field Lighting Considerations

Games played by GW's varsity athletic teams represent the most intensive use of the outdoor fields, owing to the fact that these events utilize amplified sound for pre-game warm ups (e.g., player introductions, the national anthem, etc.) and during the game itself (e.g., to announce substitutions, signal end of periods, etc.). Amplified sound will not be permitted during varsity sports practices or club sport use. **It is important to note that the proposed lighting improvements will not increase GW varsity sports-related activities on the fields**, with the exception of providing the potential to host post-season conference tournaments. The additional field utilization capacity that will be provided as a result of the proposed lighting is intended to address the substantial unmet needs of GW's club and intramural sports programs, and also provide the opportunity to support various neighborhood-serving activities including use of the fields by local schools and community groups. These additional uses would not—except under special and strictly limited circumstances as detailed below—utilize amplified sound, and would not otherwise result in objectionable impacts to the surrounding community.

GW appreciates the concerns that have been raised by members of the community with respect to the proposed lighting of the outdoor athletic facilities, particularly the soccer/lacrosse field. These issues have been discussed at length and the university will continue to explore strategies aimed at effectively minimizing the impact associated with the lighting equipment itself, as well as the expanded hours of use that the proposed lighting would allow, on the residential properties adjacent to campus. As discussed with the Community Partnership and in response to the concerns that have been raised by neighbors who reside in the properties immediately adjacent to campus, GW has proposed to incorporate the following provisions in the conditions of approval of the 2021 Campus Plan:

- A. Defined Scope of User Groups
 - 1. GW varsity women's soccer, men's soccer, women's lacrosse
 - No increase in use of athletic fields for varsity sports from current levels, except potential to host conference tournaments
 - 2. GW club and intramural sports
 - Additional capacity will allow additional club and intramural teams to have access to the Mount Vernon Campus athletic fields
 - 3. Neighborhood/Non-GW uses
 - Additional capacity will allow for expanded community use, including neighborhood schools (e.g., Saint Patrick's Episcopal Day School, Our Lady of Victory School, and The Lab School of Washington)
- B. Controls on Athletic Field Use
 - 1. Hours of athletic field use are limited to the following:
 - No amplified sound shall be permitted on the athletic fields after 9:00PM
 - No use of athletic fields will be permitted after 10:00PM
 - 2. Events with amplified sound are limited to the following:
 - GW varsity games, including pre-game/warm-up period
 - No more than twelve (12) additional special events per calendar year

3. Anticipated spectators
 - GW will develop and implement a comprehensive event management plan for all events that are anticipated to draw more than 750 visitors to campus, specifically addressing transportation, restroom facilities, security and staffing, etc.

C. Light Mitigation Strategies

1. GW shall install specialized field lighting fixtures that meet applicable NCAA regulations and are also specifically equipped with glare shields and/or other effective mitigation components to control light spillage and minimize the impacts of the field lighting on neighboring Berkley Terrace residences.
2. All field lighting fixtures shall be timer-controlled to ensure that established cut-off times are met (unless required to be extended by declared overtime in a GW varsity game).
3. All athletic field lights will be turned off when the fields are not in use.

D. Sound Mitigation Strategies

1. GW acknowledges that mitigating sound impacts associated with the use of the athletic fields on neighboring properties is a key priority and that sound mitigation strategies need to be comprehensive and effective.
2. GW will maintain and enhance existing vegetative and landscape elements between the athletic fields and neighboring properties to help buffer and mitigate sound.
3. GW will retain a third-party acoustical engineer to work directly with university staff and neighboring property owners to observe and evaluate amplified sound generated from the soccer/lacrosse field (as compared to ambient sound levels) and non-amplified sound generated from the soccer/lacrosse field (as compared to ambient sound levels) at the campus property line, and will work collaboratively to establish appropriate sound levels at the campus property line that do not result in objectionable levels of disruptive sound.
4. Amplified sound system controls
 - GW will clearly identify and establish fixed placement of sound system speakers to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent residential properties.
 - Volume control levels on the amplified sound system will be set and fixed to ensure that established maximum dB levels at the campus property line (as determined through the third-party acoustical engineer review process described above) are not exceeded. The sound system will be assessed and re-calibrated as necessary before each season (e.g., Spring and Fall).
 - A sound meter will be installed in the GW broadcast booth to allow for real-time monitoring of dB levels.

E. Communication and Engagement with Neighbors

1. GW will provide neighbors with weekly notification of upcoming events scheduled on the athletic fields, and will also provide updates if modifications to the schedule occur as a result of weather impacts or other unexpected changes.
2. GW will provide neighbors with the phone number and e-mail address for an identified university staff member who be onsite and available for neighbors to contact directly during all events on the athletic fields that use amplified sound.

3. GW shall conduct a re-assessment of the sound levels upon a neighbor's request if the agreed-upon sound levels established in the seasonal assessment/calibration are not found to be effective in mitigating disruptive sound at the neighbor's property through the duration of the season.

Additional Athletic Facilities

As noted in Section III above, the 2021 Campus Plan proposes two new buildings to support the demonstrated and growing need throughout higher education in general, and at GW in particular, for facilities that support students' physical and mental health and wellness. These proposed buildings are identified in EXHIBIT 2 as athletic facilities E and F. Facility E is a new structure of up to 30,000 square feet of gross floor area that would enclose the existing outdoor pool and provide additional support space, allowing year-round use of the pool facility for members of the university community as well as neighborhood residents. Facility F is a new Wellness Building located adjacent to the proposed running track (in place of the existing tennis courts), which includes up to 24,000 square feet of gross floor area to provide additional recreational and wellness program space.

V. UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY WITH AN ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

A key goal of the 2021 Campus Plan is to improve campus accessibility and elevate the pedestrian experience. Existing campus topography, characterized by steep slopes that divide existing open spaces, has historically presented challenges in providing comprehensive connectivity and accessibility throughout the Mount Vernon Campus. In addition, roadway configurations and traffic patterns have created a vehicular-focused circulation network that does not optimize the pedestrian experience.

The Plan seeks to significantly improve these conditions and promote a welcoming and inclusive campus environment, prioritizing universal accessibility in the design of pathways and connections to provide safe and barrier-free routes to existing open spaces, wooded areas, landscaped features, athletic facilities, and campus buildings. As part of this campus-wide effort, vehicles will be removed from the center of campus allowing existing vehicular roads to be pedestrianized, and proposed new pathways through the woodland areas of campus will expand the breadth of the campus experience for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. These new pathways would complement, not compete with, the challenging slopes on campus, forming pleasant, landscaped walkways that provide new and more direct cross-campus connections. The positive impacts of these proposed campus circulation improvements are illustrated in EXHIBITS 3A and 3B.

The pedestrian experience will be further improved by enhancing open space and landscaped areas of the campus, including preserving the original character of the East Quad and Hillside and activating more wooded areas of the campus with outdoor learning spaces and garden amenities, while maintaining and enhancing the perimeter edges that serve as important buffers between the campus and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

VI. TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Comprehensive TDM planning will remain a priority for the university over the term of the 2021 Campus Plan. Specifically, the university will maintain its robust Mount Vernon Campus Shuttle service that provides frequent and convenient access between GW's Mount Vernon and Foggy Bottom Campuses and greatly reduces the campus' impact on neighborhood traffic. The university will continue to work closely with DDOT and members of the community to ensure that GW's TDM policies and programs effectively support and incentivize a variety of sustainable travel modes—including walking, biking and transit in addition to utilizing the Mount Vernon Campus shuttle—for students, faculty, staff and campus visitors.

Campus Vehicular Circulation and Parking

The 2021 Campus Plan's focus on redesigning roadways in the center of campus as pedestrian-only pathways creates an opportunity to streamline and simplify the routing of the Mount Vernon Campus Shuttle. Specifically, as illustrated in EXHIBIT 3B, the Plan proposes a new, centralized pick-up/drop-off turnaround location between the Clock Tower and Ames Hall that would eliminate the circuitous loop that exists today while still providing convenient access to the center of campus and the newly aligned accessible pedestrian pathways. The geometry of the turnaround will accommodate multiple shuttle vehicles arriving or departing at once, to ensure effective operation in peak-demand conditions. It is intended to be designed as a shared space with differing pavement delineating vehicular paths and ample space on all sides for pedestrians to navigate safely and comfortably. With respect to parking, no significant changes in the current on-campus inventory of approximately 200 spaces (nearly 150 of which are located in the existing parking garage structure) are anticipated over the term of the Plan.

Off-Campus Parking Policy

GW will continue to maintain and actively enforce the off-campus parking policy established in Condition 4 of the 2010 Mount Vernon Campus Plan Order of Approval that affirmatively requires all students, faculty, staff, and vendors to park on the Mount Vernon Campus. GW will continue to prohibit, to the extent permitted by law, students, faculty, staff, and vendors from parking on the streets adjacent to and surrounding the campus. To accomplish these purposes, GW shall continue to employ a system of administrative actions, penalties, and fines for violations, but the university has no authority to tow or remove cars parked on public streets. GW shall also continue to prohibit construction employees, contractors, and subcontractors from parking on the streets adjacent to and surrounding the campus through a contract provision or similar mechanism. GW shall continue to use reasonable efforts to provide advance notification of parking availability on campus and encourage other university-related visitors to park on the Mount Vernon Campus.

GW takes the obligation to comply with these parking commitments seriously, and will continue to work collaboratively with members of the community to ensure that off-campus parking policies are effectively monitored and consistently enforced, and their efficacy evaluated, over the term of the 2021 Campus Plan.

VII. SUSTAINABILITY INTEGRATION

As an anchor institution in DC, GW has a steadfast commitment to sustainability. A key objective of GW's Strategic Campus and Facilities Plan and the 2021 Mount Vernon Campus Plan is to build upon and strengthen the foundation and vision for sustainability that GW has developed over the last decade through further refinement of performance targets and strategies. In order to support GW's sustainability objectives and in particular its stated goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, the university will pursue a wide range of strategies in connection with the implementation of the 2021 Mount Vernon Campus Plan, including the following:

Campus Buildings

- Evaluate opportunities to achieve net-zero energy or carbon for new construction
- Optimize building design to incorporate solar or other on-site renewable energy sources
- Evaluate opportunities to utilize fully electric building design
- Perform embodied carbon/ life-cycle analysis for new buildings to better understand carbon impacts of building materials
- Target green building standard of LEED Silver or higher (a commitment GW has already demonstrated at the Mount Vernon Campus, as both Ames Hall and West Hall are certified LEED Gold)

Transportation

- Consider electrification of fleet vehicles and campus shuttles
- Provide EV charging infrastructure on campus
- Provide space for a Capital BikeShare station on campus
- Provide short-term and long-term bicycle parking on campus

Stormwater Management

- Continue to proactively manage natural watershed and site-generated runoff as outlined in the 2010 Campus Plan
- Evaluate opportunities to exceed DC stormwater regulations to capture and reuse stormwater for irrigation, toilet flushing, cooling tower make-up/process water
- Consider creating educational precedent for exemplary stormwater infrastructure

Green Space

- Integrate sustainability and sustainable education into "urban retreat" aspects of campus
- Consider Sustainable SITES certification for portions of campus
- Utilize native plantings
- Integrate stormwater infrastructure into green space
- Explore campus community garden to encourage healthy nutrition

Campus Community Behavior

- Consider installing real-time energy metering devices to promote awareness and encourage more conscious choices
- Eliminate single-use plastics and commit to net-zero waste on campus
- Consider TRUE certification
- Consider expanding composting on campus

Regulations and Other Considerations

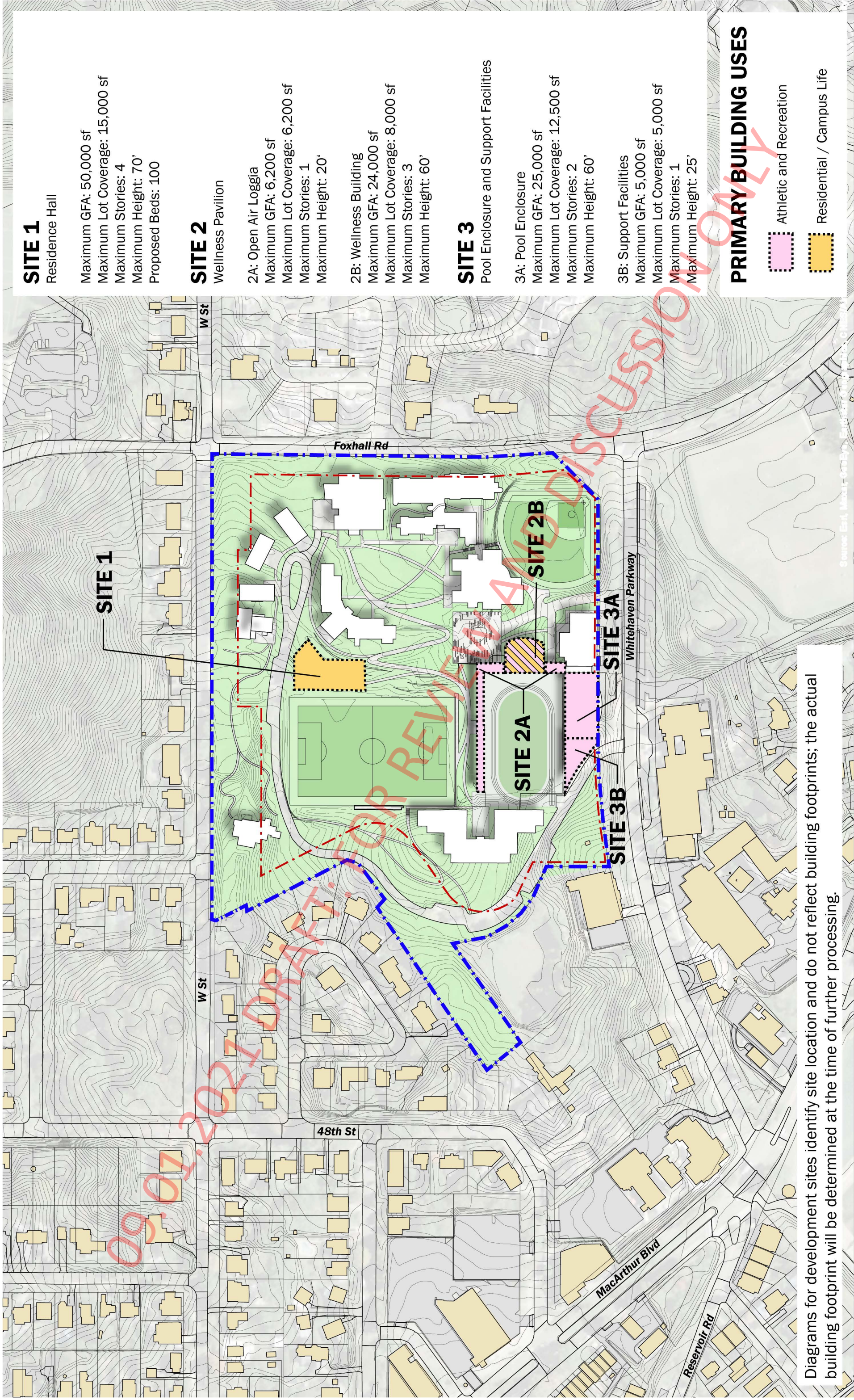
- All relevant decisions will be evaluated in consideration of DC Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS)
- All relevant decisions will be evaluated in consideration of GW's goal of achieving STARS Platinum

These actions all underscore GW's commitment to a holistic approach of effectively integrating sustainability into its operations, management decisions, and community impact.

VIII. CONCLUSION

As noted at the outset, this *Campus Plan Framework* provides an overview of the key objectives and priorities that will be incorporated in the 2021 Mount Vernon Campus Plan. It reflects input and feedback that has been provided by a wide range of stakeholders, including several members of the community, in connection with GW's comprehensive Strategic Campus and Facilities Planning process and more specifically over the past several months as part of the Mount Vernon Campus Plan Community Partnership planning effort.

As the next step in this collaborative planning process, members of the community and other interested stakeholders are invited and encouraged to provide additional feedback on all of the planning components and commitments outlined in this *Campus Plan Framework*. The Framework will be discussed at the September 8, 2021 Community Partnership meeting and an updated version of the Framework, including proposed Campus Plan conditions, will be circulated prior to September 22, 2021 Community Partnership meeting. The University intends to share a full draft of the 2021 Campus Plan with the Community Partnership in October 2021, and aims to file the final version of the 2021 Campus Plan with the District of Columbia Zoning Commission in November 2021.



SITE 1

Residence Hall

- Maximum GFA: 50,000 sf
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 15,000 sf
- Maximum Stories: 4
- Maximum Height: 70'
- Proposed Beds: 100

SITE 2

Wellness Pavilion

2A: Open Air Loggia

- Maximum GFA: 6,200 sf
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 6,200 sf
- Maximum Stories: 1
- Maximum Height: 20'

2B: Wellness Building

- Maximum GFA: 24,000 sf
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 8,000 sf
- Maximum Stories: 3
- Maximum Height: 60'

SITE 3

Pool Enclosure and Support Facilities

3A: Pool Enclosure

- Maximum GFA: 25,000 sf
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 12,500 sf
- Maximum Stories: 2
- Maximum Height: 60'

3B: Support Facilities

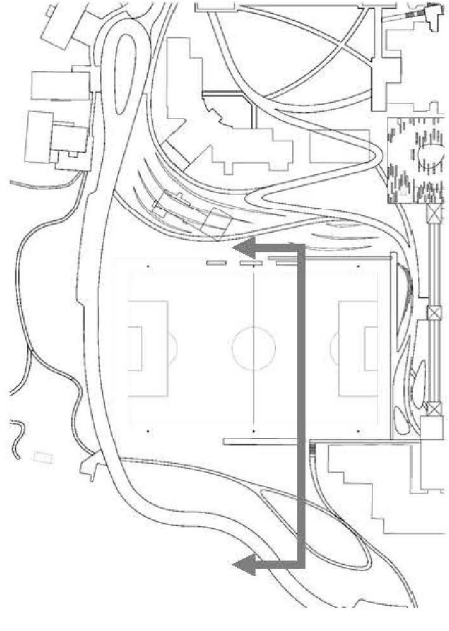
- Maximum GFA: 5,000 sf
- Maximum Lot Coverage: 5,000 sf
- Maximum Stories: 1
- Maximum Height: 25'

PRIMARY BUILDING USES

-  Athletic and Recreation
-  Residential / Campus Life

Diagrams for development sites identify site location and do not reflect building footprints; the actual building footprint will be determined at the time of further processing.

Soccer Field Lighting Concepts



09.01.2021 DRAFT: FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION ONLY

PROPERTY LINE
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