THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
FOGGY BOTTOM CAMPUS PLAN: 2006 - 2025

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED CAMPUS PLAN

The George Washington University, founded in 1821 and rooted in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood since 1912, combines the resources of a major international research university with the unique dynamics of a vibrant, urban setting in the heart of the nation’s capital. Development of the University’s Foggy Bottom campus is currently governed by the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2000 to 2009. The DC Board of Zoning Adjustment – prompted in part by concerns about University expansion outside the Campus Plan boundaries – imposed several conditions in connection with its approval of the existing Campus Plan. These conditions include maintenance of faculty, staff and student population caps at levels established in 1985 and a stringent undergraduate student housing requirement. Since the adoption of the existing Campus Plan, the University has consistently maintained compliance with the Campus Plan and has followed a development program that has added over 2,000 on-campus undergraduate beds (plus an additional 379 additional beds scheduled for delivery in fall 2006 on Square 103) to meet the student housing requirement, and has also constructed outstanding new academic and student activity facilities to further the University’s core mission.

Looking toward the future, several factors – including the need to meet the evolving facilities requirements of the University, a desire to proactively address concerns with respect to University growth and development, as well as the unique redevelopment potential of Square 54, the former GW hospital site – led the University to closely evaluate future development of the Foggy Bottom campus. To this end, the University launched a comprehensive community-based planning effort which resulted in a plan for the future of the campus that offers shared and lasting benefits for the University, the Community, and the District. This vision is articulated in the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2006 – 2025.

In order to achieve the goals of the new Campus Plan, GW has adopted a “Grow Up, Not Out” development strategy that not only meets the University’s institutional needs but also responds to concerns raised by the members of the community, the Office of Planning, and the Zoning Commission. This new Campus Plan allows GW to develop the modern facilities necessary to maintain its status as a world-class university; preserves and enhances the District’s tax base by making more efficient use of properties already owned by the University and allowing Square 54 to be used for commercial purposes; and addresses concerns regarding GW expansion into surrounding residential neighborhoods outside the Campus Plan boundaries.

The Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2006 – 2025 sets forth a predictable framework for campus development over the next two decades. Specifically, the Plan:
- identifies 18 development sites within the existing Campus Plan boundaries to accommodate the University’s forecasted academic and student housing requirements;
- concentrates new development in the core of campus (along 22nd Street) and away from residential areas;
- maintains Foggy Bottom student enrollment and faculty and staff caps at existing approved levels;
proposes student housing development that will result in a bed inventory in excess of the Campus Plan requirement, to ensure continued and consistent compliance with the Plan and to maintain a housing inventory that meets student demand in terms of amenities and unit configuration;

- establishes appropriate height and lot coverage guidelines, informed by location and use, allowing for more efficient use of individual development sites and providing the opportunity to maintain important open spaces and preserve lower-scale architecturally and historically relevant buildings on the balance of campus;

- proposes several sites which could accommodate underground parking facilities in order to maintain the appropriate campus parking capacity and continue to meet the 2,800 off-street parking space requirement set forth in the existing Campus Plan; and

- allows Square 54 to be developed as a mixed-use “town center” to provide the campus and the community with a unique neighborhood gathering place and generate revenue necessary to support the University’s academic mission.

GW has worked closely with the Office of Planning to identify the appropriate zoning mechanism to achieve the development plan set forth in this new Campus Plan. The two-stage PUD process (including the commercial rezoning of certain sites concentrated in the campus core), coupled with a text amendment to the Campus Plan Regulations to permit an increase in aggregate FAR in R-5-D and R-5-E zones, provides an effective means to accommodate GW’s forecasted academic and student housing needs while ensuring a measure of predictability and control with respect to future University development.

The shared benefits that would accrue from the implementation of the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2006 – 2025 include:

- Accommodation of the University’s forecasted academic and student housing space requirements within the existing Campus Plan boundaries, concentrated within the campus core and away from existing residential neighborhoods;

- Increased retail services through the creation of an I Street retail corridor to serve the Foggy Bottom and West End neighborhoods and the District at large as well as the University community;

- Increased tax revenues for the District of Columbia through conversion of Square 54 from non-profit to commercial use;

- Preservation and maintenance of numerous buildings of architectural and historic significance on the Foggy Bottom campus;

- GW commitment to use Hall on Virginia Avenue (HOVA) and Aston for other than undergraduate student housing, by fall 2006 and fall 2007, respectively;

- GW commitment not to purchase off-campus residentially-zoned properties in the Foggy Bottom & West End neighborhoods for other than investment purposes; and

- Improved mechanisms for monitoring Campus Plan compliance.

In summary, the implementation of the University’s “Grow Up, Not Out” development strategy, informed by the open and inclusive community-based planning process and as articulated in the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan: 2006 – 2025, will result in shared and lasting benefits for the Community, the District, and the University.