

UF to Begin Two Major Projects to Enhance Campus Gateways and Pedestrian Safety

In August 2021, UF will begin two picturesque gateway projects from the Landscape Master Plan that will enhance outdoor spaces and create a pedestrian-focused campus. The entrances will enhance outdoor spaces that will offer students, faculty, and staff opportunities to gather and collaborate as well as to sit, relax, and enjoy the scenic nature campus has to offer.

The Landscape Master Plan (LMP) was produced in 2019 as a means to outline key projects to enhance campus in a beautiful and sustainable way. Using plants indigenous to North Florida has increased the natural beauty of campus, while creating sustainable and functional outdoor space for all to enjoy. The Northeast and Newell Gateway projects will begin this summer. Both were included in the LMP and address five key components of campus—its edges, its campus core, its roadways, its natural

systems and landscape elements. Designing hospitable campus edges that are beautiful, welcoming, and easily navigated by visitors will be positively viewed and traveled by all. Restricting the use of motorized vehicles within the campus core will be a significant step for UF, transforming the heart of the campus into a pedestrian and bicycle friendly realm. This will also present a safer and more sustainable campus for pedestrians. The limitation on vehicular traffic will decrease the greenhouse gas emissions produced on campus and create safer walking conditions. This is important to welcome and invite the greater Gainesville community to campus.

In an interview with the Director of Planning, Linda B. Dixon, mentioned that “UF has always sought to be a pedestrian-friendly campus. Years ago, the campus speed limit was lowered to 20 MPH, vehicle usage was restricted



NORTHEAST GATEWAY - AUTOCOURT



2021 Gateway Projects



in the campus core, pedestrians were prioritized at roadway crossings, and transit and bicycling were supported as a means to reduce traffic volumes as a means to reduce traffic volumes. Today we seek to move beyond those foundations and commit to a truly walkable and beautiful campus.”

These two gateway- projects will commence in late Summer with the vision to connect pedestrians safely to on and off-campus housing and commercial areas. “Good pedestrian design is a universal design that makes campus walkable and accessible to people of all physical abilities,” said Dixon. She also said “The focus on pedestrian access is important because it is the most equitable form of transportation. All people become pedestrians as soon as they step from their car, bus, or bicycle.” Building an attractive, sustainable, and safe link between campus and the City of Gainesville is essential to UF’s goal to rise in rankings and preeminence.

Northeast Gateway: The Strategic Development Plan identified the campus gateway at 2nd Avenue as the major connection to the Innovation District of downtown Gainesville. The creation of Northeast Court just inside the gateway serves to expand the impact of the gateway, announcing the campus, welcoming the casual visitor, and orienting guests to the parking facilities beyond. The result is a positive

first impression of the campus generated by quality materials, organized facilities for parking and drop-off, a well-maintained and clarified landscape, and the introduction to the pedestrian-centric campus.

Newell Gateway: The Landscape Master Plan proposes a unified family of gateways to present a welcoming face to campus visitors. The proposed primary pedestrian gateway is incorporated here at the intersection of Newell Drive and West University Avenue to convey Newell Drive’s conversion to a pedestrian way and to welcome pedestrians into the campus. The gateway also frames one of the most appealing long views of the campus. Coordination with the City and Florida Department of Transportation to rethink the pedestrian crossings along West University Ave, including a new traffic signal at NW 16th Street, has informed the design of the gateway to promote pedestrian safety and the use of the improved future pedestrian crossing.



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