The University of Arizona is updating its Master Plan and is looking for input from members of the campus and greater communities.

The UA 2020 Master Plan is intended to guide the physical development of campus in alignment with the University’s strategic plan [1].

"It's like a road map for campus and how we want to develop in the future," said Peter Dourlein, campus architect and assistant vice president for Planning, Design and Construction [2].

Like a road map, the plan must be flexible and provide alternative routes for differing conditions, Dourlein said. It doesn't prescribe specific timelines for what and when building projects should happen, but rather offers guidelines to ensure that when developments do take place, it's in a way that fits with the University's broader vision. The plan is meant to offer guidance for the next five to 10 years.

"The Master Plan is the physical manifestation of the strategic plan," Dourlein said. "There are lots of plans that go into supporting the strategic plan. There's a financial plan and an academic plan and programming and other things that support the goals of who the University wants to be. The Master Plan is the physical part of that."

The updated version of the Master Plan, which was last updated in 2009, is set to be finalized by May. Between now and then, workshops and public forums will be held to gather feedback from various stakeholders, Dourlein said.

The first series of those workshops, held in July, asked participating campus and community members to help identify areas of strength, weakness and opportunity across campus. More than 100 participants attended those sessions.

In a second series of workshops, held on Aug. 12, participants were divided into groups and asked to think about campus planning through the lens of one of the strategic plan's five pillars: Wildcat Journey, Grand Challenges, Arizona Advantage, Arizona Global or Institutional Excellence.

More than 200 people attended those workshops, where the conversation spanned a variety of topics, including building accessibility and sustainability, the future of performing arts spaces on campus, the new global student center under construction at the Park Student Union, the potential for integrating new technologies and desert-adapted landscapes into the built environment, and whether it makes sense for certain UA facilities to relocate off campus.

Feedback from the sessions will help inform the efforts of Planning, Design and Construction, which is working to update the plan in partnership with Ayers Saint Gross, a design firm that
has an office in Tempe and has worked on campus planning with all three state universities and other campuses nationwide.

The UA’s 2020 Master Plan will focus on the main campus, which spans nearly 400 acres. Planning for a space as large and complex as the UA is no easy feat, Dourlein said.

"It's a very complicated place," he said. "It's essentially a city of so many different functions and operations, so it's not just planning a single use. We have performance venues in the arts, we have athletics venues, we have research at the highest levels, we have education at the highest levels, and we have all kinds of operations and support functions. Our campus must accommodate the goals and visions for the future established in our strategic plan and our mission, so we have to understand enough about all of them to plan the future of our built environment."

Several focus areas have been identified for consideration in the campus planning process, based on priorities outlined in the UA’s strategic plan. Those areas, and their objectives, are:

- **Density**: Develop an urban environment that accommodates higher densities of academic, research and community outreach facilities.
- **Campus gateways**: Reinvent campus gateways to maximize UA branding, wayfinding, community engagement and density benefits.
- **Campus edges**: Develop collaborative growth and development processes with the city and surrounding neighborhoods to facilitate appropriate growth at the edges of campus.
- **Interdisciplinary zones**: Develop academic, research and partnership collaboration clusters, on and off campus.
- **Partnerships**: Maximize the positive impacts of strategic, corporate and public-private partnerships, on and off campus.
- **Sustainability**: Develop a comprehensive campus sustainability plan.
- **Infrastructure**: Develop a comprehensive utility/transportation infrastructure plan.
- **Academic and research planning**: Facilitate innovative, high-quality classrooms, labs and work spaces.

**Amanda Kraus**, assistant vice president for campus life and executive director of the UA Disability Resource Center, was among those who attended the most recent Master Plan workshops.

"I appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the campus Master Plan process," she said. "In particular, we have had good discussion on access and universal design. Being thoughtful and getting feedback from colleagues is critical to assessing how we can contribute to a campus that is inclusive of its diverse constituents."

Kraus said being involved in the process also is a good way to hear from other members of the campus community.

"Not only do we have the opportunity to contribute our perspective but to learn about other priorities," she said. "Being a part of this conversation helps to make us all better-informed colleagues."
Dourlein encourages anyone on campus to attend forthcoming workshops and forums on the Master Plan. The next round will take place in September, and dates and times will be posted on the Master Plan website [3].

"We want input, we want feedback, and we want at the end of this process for people to say they had ample opportunities for input and involvement," Dourlein said. "There are so many different perspectives that are important in creating a plan like this. Certainly, it's led by the vision of the president, but it needs to be informed by every corner of campus. Everyone has something they can contribute, and it will make a better plan."

Source URL: https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/input-wanted-campus-road-map

Links
[1] https://strategicplan.arizona.edu/
[2] https://pdc.arizona.edu/
[3] https://masterplan.arizona.edu/