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Campus Open Space Standards

Northeastern University Guidelines for Capital Project Design & Implementation

11.0 CAMPUS OPEN SPACE STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The Northeastern University Boston Campus is unique. As part of the urban fabric of the City of Boston, the campus is accessible and integrated throughout the surrounding neighborhoods. Open space, once abundant and used for large surface parking areas has become increasingly sparse, reserved for ceremonial spaces and programmed support space. Creating an identity for these open spaces that complement NU structures has been accomplished through various treatments such as landscaping, paving, signage, graphics, and street furnishings, in addition to meticulous maintenance. The university endeavors that such consistent identity shall continue as new facilities develop and existing environments are upgraded.

Open campus areas must continue to be attractive, safe, and multi-functional, all while allowing for utilitarian purposes such as visual openness, free air movement, stormwater drainage or retention, and hidden utility corridors. Landscaping materials must be carefully considered for tolerance within the urban environment with little available sunlight and water, as well as exposure to hazards of urban life such as noxious fumes and residues. Open space and landscape design shall be an inherent part of meeting the university goals for a green and sustainable campus environment. This shall be accomplished through the use of native plant species and materials that are able to withstand the New England environment, harsh weather, varying temperatures, and wear and tear from coastal proximity. Guidelines for selections of landscape and open space materials are as follows:

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11.1 LANDSCAPE - GROUND COVER / TREES / ACCENTS

- 11.1.1 Shall allow for safe public access, and shall visually connect existing architectural and site elements with the future buildings and parking facilities.
- 11.1.2 The design and selection of all landscape treatments should be integrated into the overall design approach for each site.
- 11.1.3 Special landscape treatments are recommended at primary building entrances and at pedestrian and roadway gateways.
- 11.1.4 Landscape treatments at primary building entrances shall be coordinated with architectural styles, materials, and color schemes.
- 11.1.5 All landscape treatments shall adhere to the principles of sustainable design to the fullest extent possible.

11.2 HARDSCAPE - MATERIALS AND METHODS / UTILIZATION

- 11.2.1 Shall allow for safe public access, and shall visually connect existing architectural and site elements with the future buildings and parking facilities.
- 11.2.2 The site shall feature pedestrian and bicycle access along all access points and adjacent roadways.
- 11.2.3 Pedestrian and bicycle mixed use paths shall be no less than 10'-0" wide and shall be separated from the edge of the vehicular roadway by landscape wherever possible.
- 11.2.4 Pedestrian paths not intended to accommodate bicycle traffic shall be no less than 8'-0" in width where possible.

11.3 SITE FURNISHINGS AND FIXTURES - MATERIALS / VENDORS

- 11.3.1 **Bicycle Parking** - Buildings shall offer bicycle parking facilities or spaces designated for secure bicycle parking. These spaces should be provided within the parking structure or adjacent to the building.
- 11.3.2 The location of bicycle facilities shall be convenient to academic and housing facilities, but not immediately in front of building and main entrances. Bicycle facilities shall not intrude upon quadrangle and other open spaces in a visually negative manner. Bicycle facilities shall be conveniently, yet unobtrusively located to main entrances in a safe and protected area.

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11.3.3 Seating shall be an integral part of open space design and may take the form of built-in seats or ledges or site seating and shall become part of the FF&E package for all projects where applicable.

11.3.4 Site furnishings shall include seating, tables, trash and recycling receptacles, bicycle storage / parking, signage posts, and others as dictated by site location and building program. To be determined by university Project Manager.

11.4 WALKWAYS - SIZE / PLACEMENT / MATERIALS / SECURITY / COORDINATE

11.4.1 Shall allow for safe public access, and shall visually connect existing architectural and site elements with the future buildings and parking facilities.

11.5 ROADWAYS - PUBLIC VS. SERVICE / CITY REQUIREMENTS

11.5.1 Vehicular paths connect to City streets as required.

11.5.2 Driveways, setbacks, and view corridors shall conform to City of Boston requirements.

11.6. PARKING - SURFACE LOT / ON-STREET

11.6.1 Surface parking lots for accessibility and building servicing should be located adjacent to new facility if possible.

11.6.2 Surface parking areas shall conform to setback, screening and landscape requirements of the City of Boston.

11.7 WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

11.7.1 All wayfinding and signage shall conform to NU standards for graphics and signage.

11.7.2 Wayfinding messaging shall conform to requirements of the City of Boston.

11.8. RECREATIONAL SPACE

11.8.1 Outdoor recreational space shall be included in appropriate building programs as space allows.

11.8.2 Projects specifically programmed as recreational space shall be planned/ considered on a case by case basis.

11.8.3 Site requirements for active recreational space shall be coordinated with the appropriate campus department for the program.

11.9. LIGHTING

11.9.1 Site lighting shall be restricted to that required for safety and function, and shall be shielded from adjacent properties and from the sky. Site lighting shall incorporate appropriately selected cut-off light fixtures that meet or exceed the sustainability initiatives, policies, and requirements as outlined in these Design Guidelines.

11.10 SECURITY

11.10.1 Refer to [Section 5](#) for security and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

11.11 SNOW REMOVAL / STORAGE

11.11.1 Coordinate with University policy for snow removal and storage to ensure adequate storage of snow pile up.

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