



FERRIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
*IMAGINE MORE*

**BIG RAPIDS**  
CAMPUS  
MASTER  
PLAN  
**2015**

May 8, 2015

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# BIG RAPIDS CAMPUS MASTER PLAN 2015



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends of Ferris State University,

It is a pleasure to present the 2015 Ferris State University Big Rapids Campus Master Plan. This a major revision from the 2009 edition and continues the university's efforts to create a campus that advances our core values of Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence, Learning and Opportunity. In this effort we have partnered with Neumann/Smith Architecture to help give shape to the invaluable input received from the university community. Also central to the success of this effort is the hard work and dedication of the Strategic Planning and Resource Council.

The 2009 Plan served the university well during a time of significant new construction and renovation on campus. We added new living options for students with the opening of East Campus Suites, upgraded academic resources with classroom renovations and completion of our new Michigan College of Optometry building, and expanded resources for students with the dedication of the new University Center. With the planned removal of some existing facilities and construction of new residence and classroom facilities, this new Master Plan is an important document for our university's future.

The 2015 Master Plan lays out a vision for our campus designed to meet the needs of our students both present and future through the intentional development of our physical resources. It represents a continued investment in new academic facilities and creates spaces for collaboration where we can help build community. This plan represents a major commitment to develop student living on campus. Eighty percent of our housing facilities are fifty to sixty years old. It is my hope that through the design of a new residential student village we can become a national leader in student housing, much as we have demonstrated in our extraordinary dining facilities.

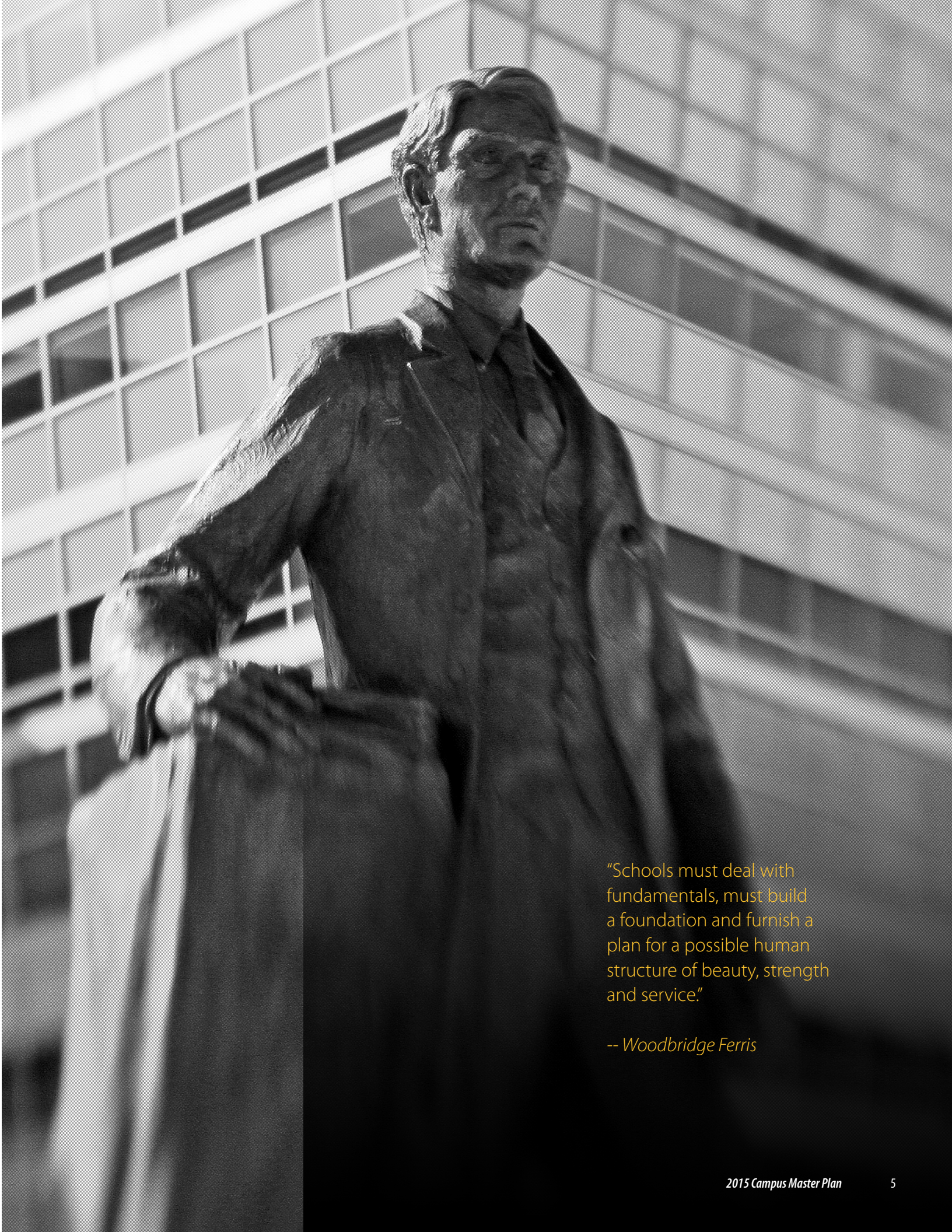
In addition to buildings, this plan includes roads, sidewalks, green spaces and how our campus interacts with the surrounding community. We look to continue advancing trends identified in the previous master plan. Those ideas include a pedestrian-friendly campus, exemplified by our central Quad area, the placement of new academic and residential buildings in ways that promote community and expand the possibilities for learning and collaboration beyond the classroom. These are challenges we embrace as a university committed to students and to a learning approach where theory meets practice.

Our university enjoys a 130-year tradition of providing life-changing education to our students. With this new master plan, we lay the groundwork for how we can best build on that tradition through the development of our Big Rapids campus. I want to thank the many people both at our university and in the communities we serve who have provided input that helped shape and develop this document. Through your efforts we have created a master plan that envisions how our Big Rapids campus will evolve to serve Ferris students for many years and decades to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Eisler". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David L. Eisler  
President



"Schools must deal with fundamentals, must build a foundation and furnish a plan for a possible human structure of beauty, strength and service."

-- *Woodbridge Ferris*

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW	<b>8</b>
<b>2</b>	EXISTING CONDITIONS	<b>16</b>
<b>3</b>	FIVE-YEAR MASTER PLAN GOALS	<b>32</b>
<b>4</b>	LONG-TERM MASTER PLAN GOALS	<b>38</b>
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	<b>44</b>

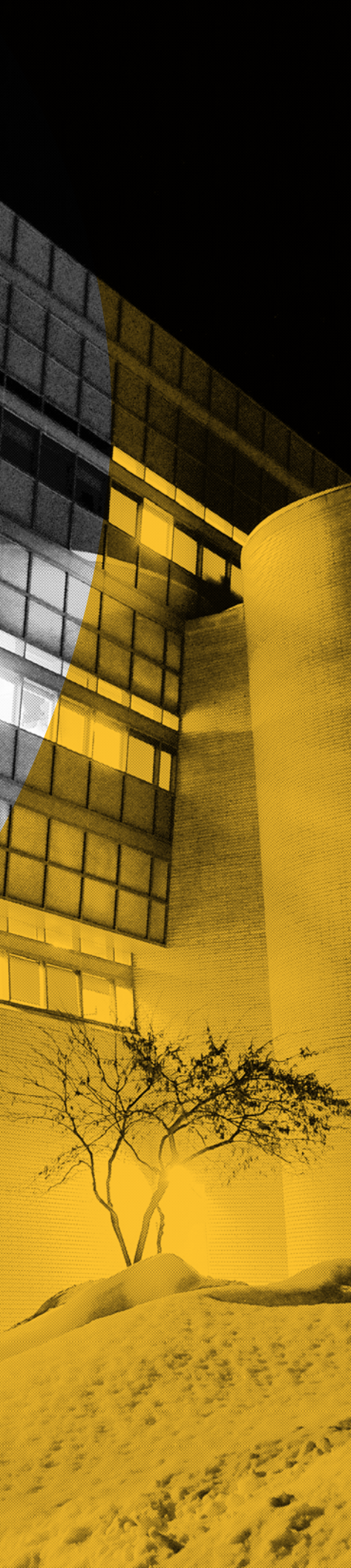


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# MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW







## Executive Summary

In 1884, the Big Rapids Industrial School was founded which eventually transitioned into a public university now known as Ferris State University. Today, the Big Rapids campus exceeds 880 acres of land area and has a student population of approximately 9,800 full and part-time students.

In August of 2014, Ferris State University engaged Neumann/Smith Architecture to partner with the university to develop a Master Plan for the Big Rapids campus. Over 20 focus groups, including over 300 people, dedicated extensive time and effort providing input through information gathering and review sessions.

The guiding principles for the Ferris State University, Big Rapids 2015 Master Plan, remain similar and support previous generations of the Master Plan. The planning process begins with understanding Ferris State University's Strategic Plan and Mission, reviewing the characteristics and conditions of the existing campus, establishing and prioritizing needs, and offering a framework to guide how these changes may be physically incorporated over time.

Future changes may influence the assumptions and conclusions made as part of this plan, and therefore the Master Plan should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

# 1 VISION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES



## Mission

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and its career-oriented, broad-based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.

## Vision Statement

Ferris State University will be: The recognized leader in integrative education, where theory meets practice throughout the curriculum, and where multi-disciplinary skills important in a global economy are developed with the result that Ferris State University will also be:

- The preferred choice for students who seek specialized, innovative, career- and life-enhancing education
- The premier educational partner for government, communities, agencies, businesses, and industries through applied research and joint ventures
- A stimulating, student-centered academic environment that fosters life-long engagement, leadership, citizenship, and continuing intellectual development
- A university that aligns its practices and resources in support of its core values of collaboration, diversity, ethical community, excellence, learning, and opportunity

## Core Values

Our core values of Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence, Learning, and Opportunity are more than just words to us - they represent the driving force by which we operate.

The University Strategic Plan identifies focus areas for each of our Core Values. These areas together are our path for the future. The focus areas call us to build on our strengths, maintain areas of excellence, and aspire toward a creative and sustainable future.

We like to think of our Strategic Plan as living our values. Each strategic initiative has our students as our focus.

# CORE VALUES

- 
- COLLABORATION** Ferris contributes to the advancement of society by building partnerships with students, alumni, business and industry, government bodies, accrediting agencies, and the communities the University serves.
- DIVERSITY** By providing a campus which is supportive, safe, and welcoming, Ferris embraces a diversity of ideas, beliefs, and cultures.
- ETHICAL COMMUNITY** Ferris recognizes the inherent dignity of each member of the University community and treats everyone with respect. Our actions are guided by fairness, honesty, and integrity.
- EXCELLENCE** Committed to innovation and creativity, Ferris strives to produce the highest quality outcomes in all its endeavors.
- LEARNING** Ferris State University values education that is career-oriented, balances theory and practice, develops critical thinking, emphasizes active learning, and fosters responsibility and the desire for the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.
- OPPORTUNITY** Ferris, with a focus on developing career skills and knowledge, provides opportunities for civic engagement, leadership development, advancement, and success.

# 1 MASTER PLAN GOALS AND PROCESSES



**1** The study began in September of 2014 with Information Gathering sessions. Over 20 “town hall” type meetings were held with over 300 people representing various stakeholders. Meetings began with a brief overview of project goals and guiding planning principles, and review of the previous Master Plan. The remainder of these sessions allowed for individuals to provide input. Groups interviewed included students, faculty, staff, physical plant, the Alumni Board, The Ferris Foundation Board, representatives of neighboring businesses, residential neighborhoods, the public school district, and local government. The meeting format was informal with extensive dialogue and documentation of the information conveyed. The Stakeholder Input phase was concluded with a number of large group meetings where the culmination of information gathered was presented.

**2** The information gathered from the Stakeholder Input phase was organized to help in the review, analysis, and understanding of scope. The final list contained over 100 items. The information was presented for discussion and prioritized for items to be addressed in the five-year Master Plan or the Long-Term Master Plan based on the University’s Strategic Plan and Mission and capital resources.

**3** With an understanding of the existing conditions, needs, and prioritized projects, planning options were explored to incorporate these elements while reinforcing the guiding principles of campus design. The final plans are based on enhancing a student focused campus, placing building uses in the appropriate locations, enhancing the “walkability” and “sense of place” throughout the campus, while reinforcing the Ferris State University “brand.”

**4** This final document represents the conclusion of the campus Master Plan study providing a tool for “smart” growth as physical change is implemented. The future inherently comes with unanticipated changes that will have an effect on the assumptions made during this study, and this Master Plan will be revisited periodically.

“How do you know what  
lecture or play or experience  
is going to influence the rest  
of your life?”

-- *Woodbridge Ferris*



# 1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The Ferris State University 2015 Campus Master Plan defines a conceptual and physical framework, guided by Master Plan principles and goals, for making physical changes to the campus over time. The plan describes five-year project implementation goals as well as long-term goals beyond the five-year period. These include guidance on land use, buildings and infrastructure, open space, natural features, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation networks for movement to, from and around, and within the campus. The intent of the Guiding Principles is to provide an overarching framework of ideas that inform future decision making. The Principles are commonly agreed upon ideas about how the campus should evolve and implementation should be prioritized. The physical attributes of the Guiding Principles are as follows:

## **Building Use**

A university campus typically consists of building use types including classrooms, housing, offices, sports, recreation, and maintenance facilities. Academic uses should define the core of the campus with student support services and administrative functions in close proximity.

## **Vehicular Circulation, Parking**

Access to and within a university campus needs to accommodate automobiles as well as service and public safety vehicles. The user of the system varies and each have their unique needs.

## **Visitors**

For the first-time visitor, it is important to establish the campus brand as they approach the campus. This is accomplished through the use of appropriate signage and “gateway elements” that develop a sense of arrival, have a clear campus entrance point, define visitor parking, and a “welcome” center for greeting and servicing their needs.

## **Commuters Students, Faculty and Staff**

Commuter students, faculty, and staff already have knowledge of the campus. Their needs are to have easy access to parking lots, ideally located on the campus perimeter to minimize conflict with major pedestrian paths in reasonable proximity to their destinations.

## **Students Living on Campus**

Students living on campus typically would not need access to their vehicles every day. Parking lots should be generally close to where students are living but not interfere with land for development or preserving natural features.

## **Service and Public Safety**

Service vehicles, including delivery and maintenance, and public safety vehicles need direct access to campus buildings, but should minimize conflicts with the pedestrian path system. Service entry points to buildings should be placed to buffer views from pedestrians.

## **General**

The street system should be well defined and understood. It is secondary to the pedestrian system and their intersections should be clearly marked. Streets should also be designed with various degrees of hierarchy. Interior campus roads should have slower speed limits and should incorporate elements to calm traffic.

### **Pedestrian Circulation**

The pedestrian system is one of the most important components of a successfully functioning campus. Paths need to be located to minimize connections and distances, ample in size to accommodate maximum loads, safe from conflicts with vehicle and bicycle circulation systems, well lighted, and should incorporate way-finding/signage for clear understanding of the campus. Furthermore, the design should make for a pleasant user experience, encouraging interaction, linking to defined outdoor spaces, and engaging the architecture and natural features of the campus.

### **Public Transportation**

Public transportation provides an alternative to walking, biking, or using vehicles to travel within the campus. Public transportation systems reduce the dependency on the automobile, campus traffic, and the desire to have parking close to buildings.

### **Architecture**

Building architecture should manifest the building use and should be considerate of neighboring buildings and the campus as a whole. Primary buildings such as the library, university center, and recreation center should have unique features to define them as landmark buildings. All buildings should consist of quality materials for durability and maintainability. Building placement should consider natural features of the site, define outdoor pedestrian spaces, and create vistas.

### **Sustainable Design**

Sustainable design principles should be incorporated in the design of buildings and site development to minimize use of natural resources and promote energy conversation.

### **Natural Features**

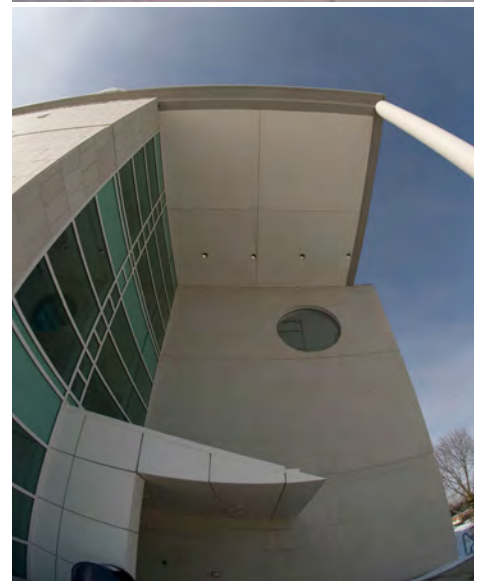
The campus is unique with an abundance of natural open space, groupings of mature trees, topographical changes, and a significant river abutting the campus. Highlighting and bringing awareness to these qualities should be considered as part of the master planning process.

### **Relationship To Neighboring Community**

Planning should encourage linkages to the downtown and other neighboring businesses.

### **Campus Branding**

Street systems should be well defined with clear marking of areas when passing through pedestrian zones. Vehicular systems should be secondary to the pedestrian network. Streets are also an opportunity to “brand” the campus and incorporate way-finding/signage systems for a clear understanding of the campus elements. There are also a potential “branding” opportunities for the university both for the shuttle bus vehicles and bus stops.



# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS







## Existing Campus

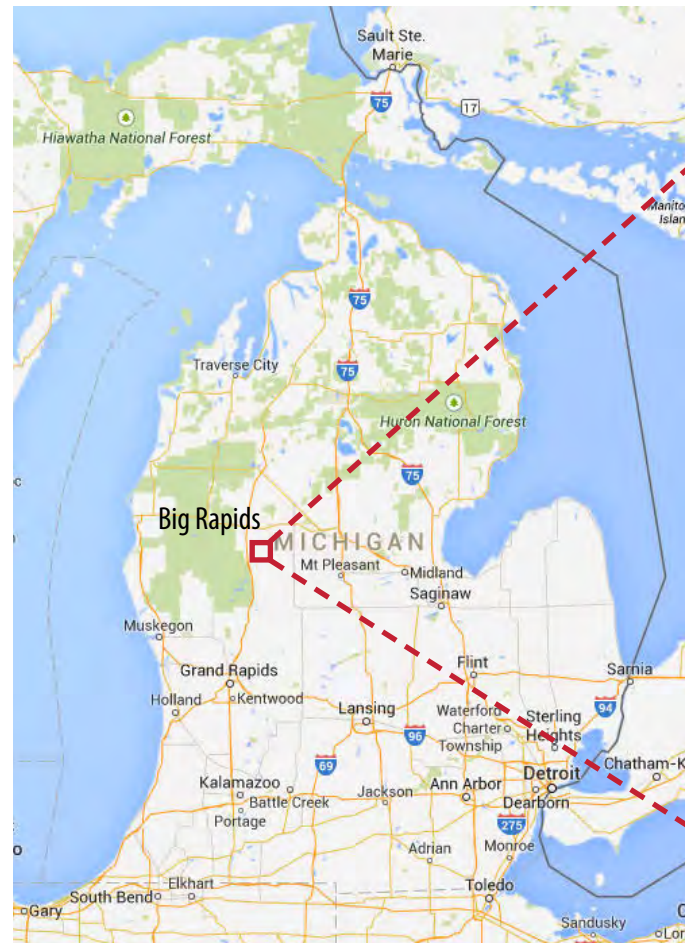
Through the master planning process, several observations were made about the Ferris State University Big Rapids campus. The observations are neither positive nor negative. They simply point out various facts about the existing campus and campus systems.

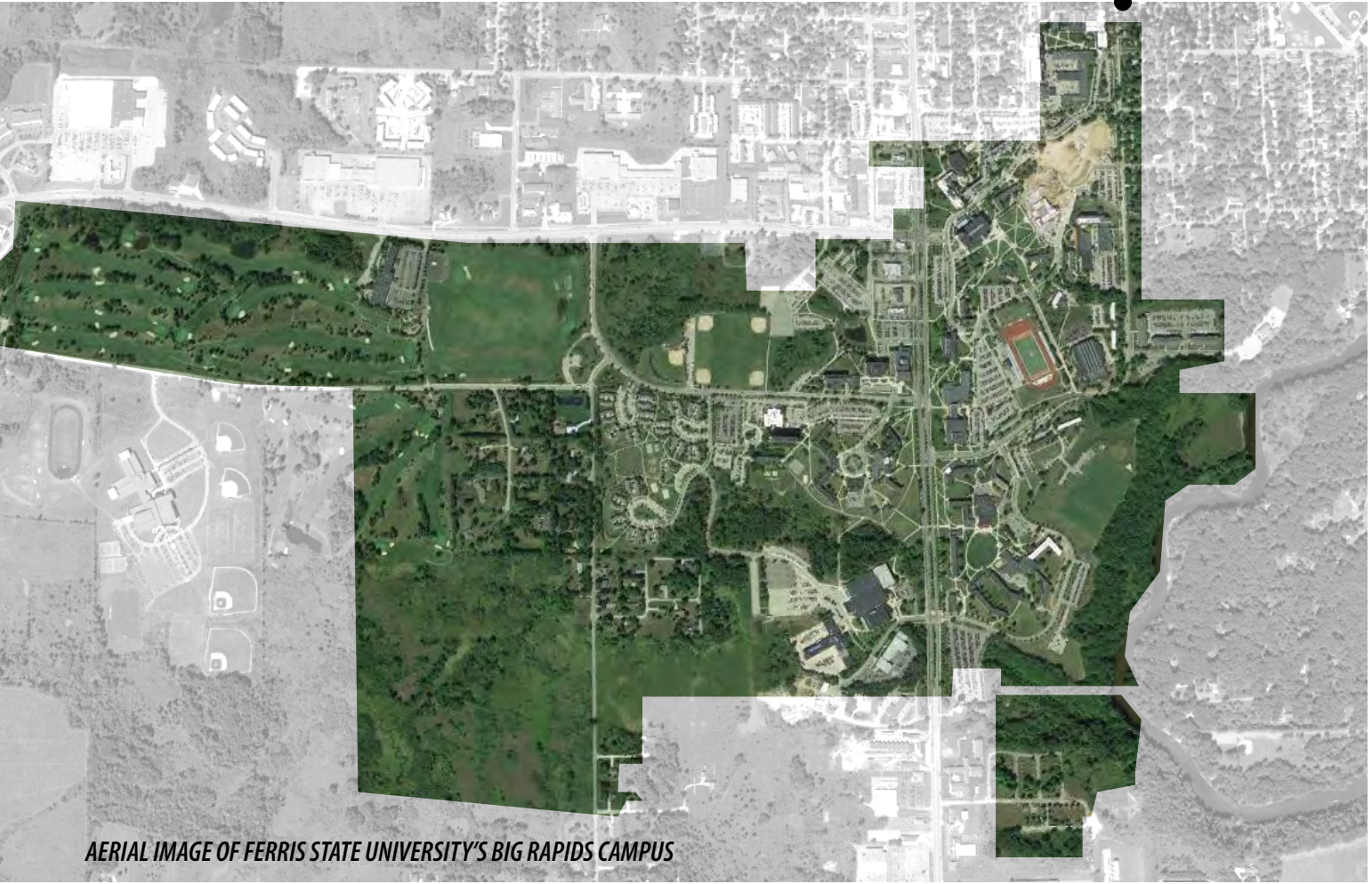
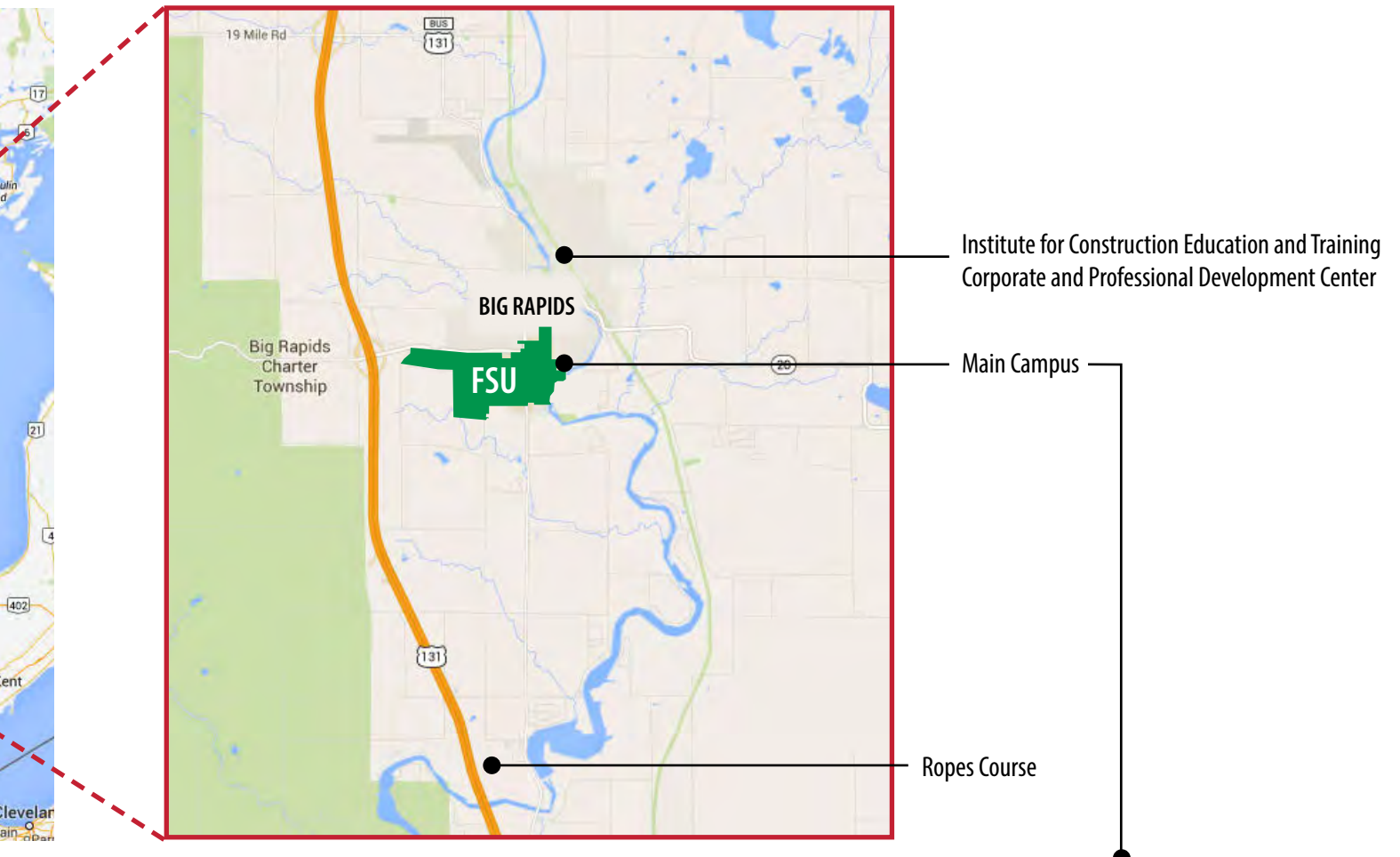
- Ferris State University has a large land area (over 880 acres) for its current Big Rapids campus student population (approximately 9,800 full and part-time students).
- State Street, the major north/south road in Big Rapids, divides the University into two major areas, subsequently forming a west campus and an east campus.
- There is currently an extensive vehicular system throughout the campus. The roads are used by both university students and employees, as well as residents of the Big Rapids community. The parking zones are used primarily by University students, employees and visitors.
- Due to the extensive vehicular system, the already divided campus is sub-divided into many small districts. This also causes pedestrian/vehicular conflicts to occur throughout the campus.
- There are many small parking areas located by the edge of campus as well as throughout the interior of the campus.
- Academic, administrative, residential, athletic, recreational and student services buildings are intermingled throughout the campus.
- There is a consistent use of building material throughout the campus.
- The consistent use of building materials has led to most buildings lacking identity.
- There is no geometric format to building placement on campus, which results in the buildings not having a close relationship with one another.
- Due to the fact that there is not a geometric format to building placement on campus, there are very few defined greenspaces between existing buildings.
- Contrarily, there is an abundance of undefined greenspace which is extremely well planted, that include the university golf course, a nature preserve, and a majestic river front flat and overview of the Muskegon River.
- A campus epicenter exists with the new University Center and with the FLITE (FSU Library for Information, Technology and Education) building.
- Much of the existing student housing was built in the 1960s, is traditional dormitory type in their style, and typically has a single occupant bathroom between two sleeping rooms. Substantial renovation or replacement is needed to meet current student needs.

# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## BIG RAPIDS CAMPUS

The main campus of Ferris State University is located in Big Rapids, Michigan and is the focus of this campus Master Plan. The primary part of the campus consists of 880 acres located south of the City of Big Rapids downtown area. Also considered part of the university, but not geographically connected is the Institute for Construction Education and Training – Corporate and Professional Development Center site and the Ropes Course. Although those components were discussed and reviewed as part of this study, no significant planning effort was anticipated in those areas and for graphic purposes are not depicted in the campus study plans.





**AERIAL IMAGE OF FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY'S BIG RAPIDS CAMPUS**

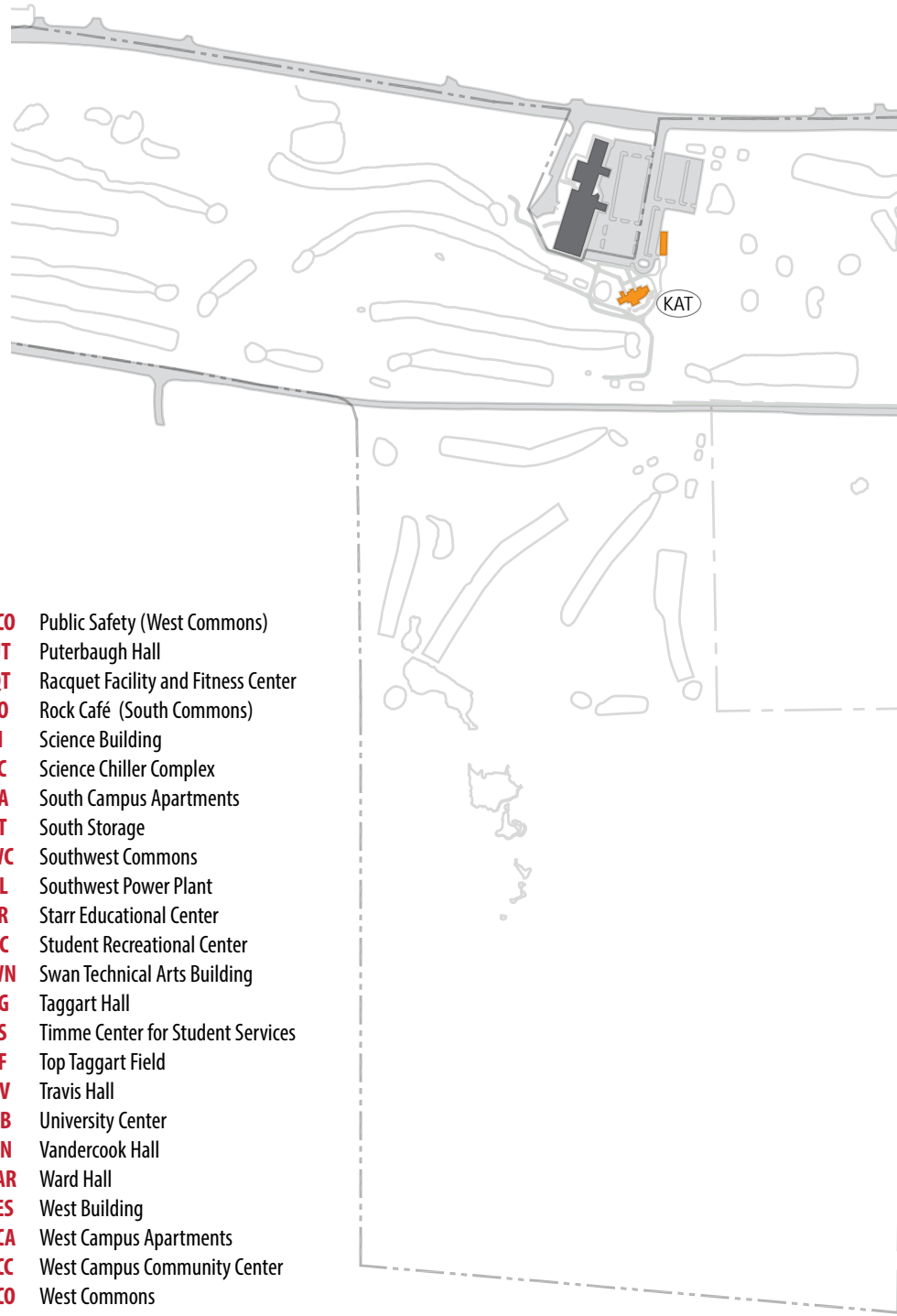
# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## BUILDING NAMES

The site diagram shows each primary campus building and related name. The campus contains over 110 buildings equating to approximately 3,350,000 square feet.

- VFS** Allied Health (Victor F. Spathelf Center)
- ALU** Alumni Building
- ASC** Arts and Sciences Commons
- AUT** Automotive Center
- BHC** Birkam Health Center
- BIS** Bishop Hall
- BIT** Bituminous Lab
- BON** Bond Hall (North and South)
- BRO** Brophy Hall
- BUS** Business Building
- CLK** Clark Hall
- CCE** Copy Center
- CRA** Cramer Hall
- CAC** Creative Arts Center
- ECA** East Campus Apartments
- ECS** East Campus Suites
- SPO** Ewigleben Sports Complex
- FLT** FLITE Library (Jim Crow Museum)
- GSA** General Services Annex
- GEN** General Services Building
- GRN** Granger Center for Construction & HVAC
- HAL** Hallisy Hall
- HEC** Heavy Equipment Center
- HFE** Helen Ferris Hall
- HEN** Henderson Hall
- IRC** Interdisciplinary Resource Center
- JOH** Johnson Hall
- KAT** Katke Golf Course
- KNO** Knollcrest Commons
- MCK** McKessy House
- MCN** McNerney Hall
- MER** Merrill Hall
- MCO** Michigan College of Optometry
- MIL** Miller Hall
- MUS** Music Activities Center
- NEC** National Elastomer Center
- NST** North Storage
- PHR** Pharmacy Building
- PIC** Pickell Hall
- POW** Power Plant
- PRK** Prakken Building

- WCO** Public Safety (West Commons)
- PUT** Puterbaugh Hall
- RQT** Racquet Facility and Fitness Center
- SCO** Rock Café (South Commons)
- SCI** Science Building
- SCC** Science Chiller Complex
- SCA** South Campus Apartments
- SST** South Storage
- SWC** Southwest Commons
- SPL** Southwest Power Plant
- STR** Starr Educational Center
- SRC** Student Recreational Center
- SWN** Swan Technical Arts Building
- TAG** Taggart Hall
- CSS** Timme Center for Student Services
- TTF** Top Taggart Field
- TRV** Travis Hall
- UCB** University Center
- VAN** Vandercook Hall
- WAR** Ward Hall
- WES** West Building
- WCA** West Campus Apartments
- WCC** West Campus Community Center
- WCO** West Commons
- WIL** Williams Auditorium





# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

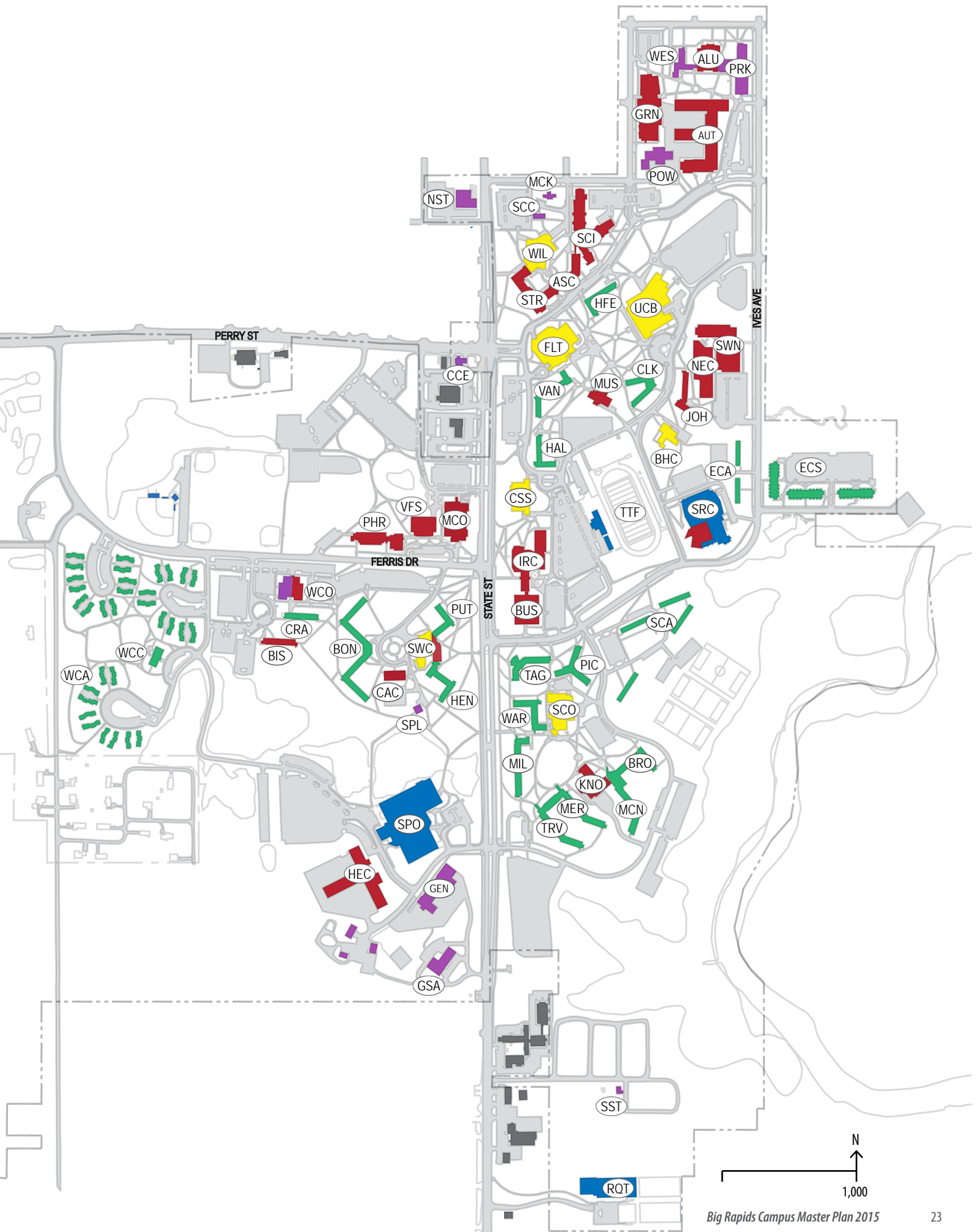
## BUILDING USE TYPE

*The site diagram shows each campus building and its primary use. For purposes of understanding the building “zones” within the campus, the uses have been categorized into five use types: Academic, Residential, Athletics & Recreation, Student Services & Support, and Administration & Physical Plant.*

### LEGEND

- Academic
- Residential
- Athletics & Recreation
- Student Services & Support
- Administration & Physical Plant





# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

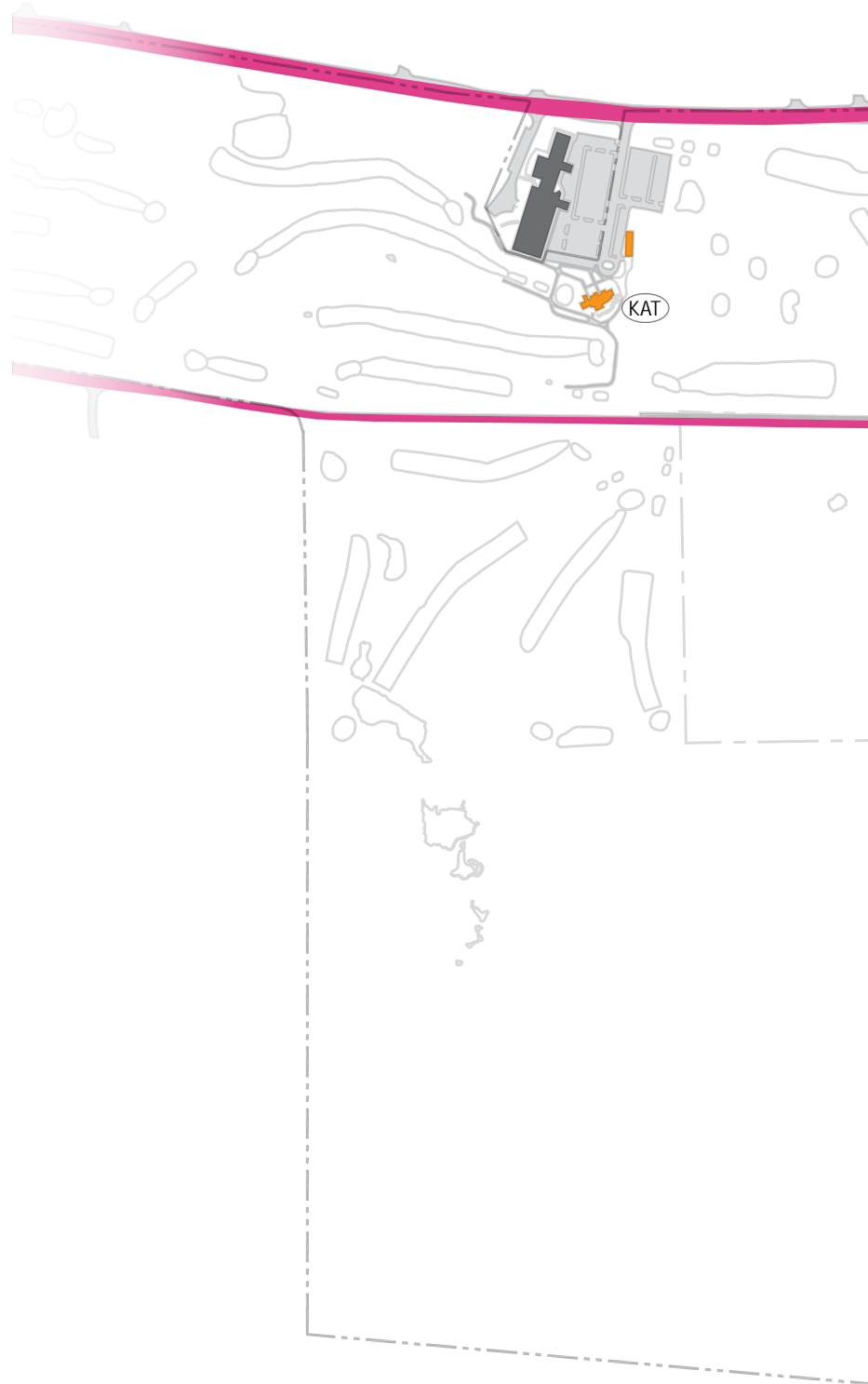
## MAJOR VEHICULAR CIRCULATION SYSTEM

*The site diagram shows the primary existing vehicular circulation and parking areas within the campus.*

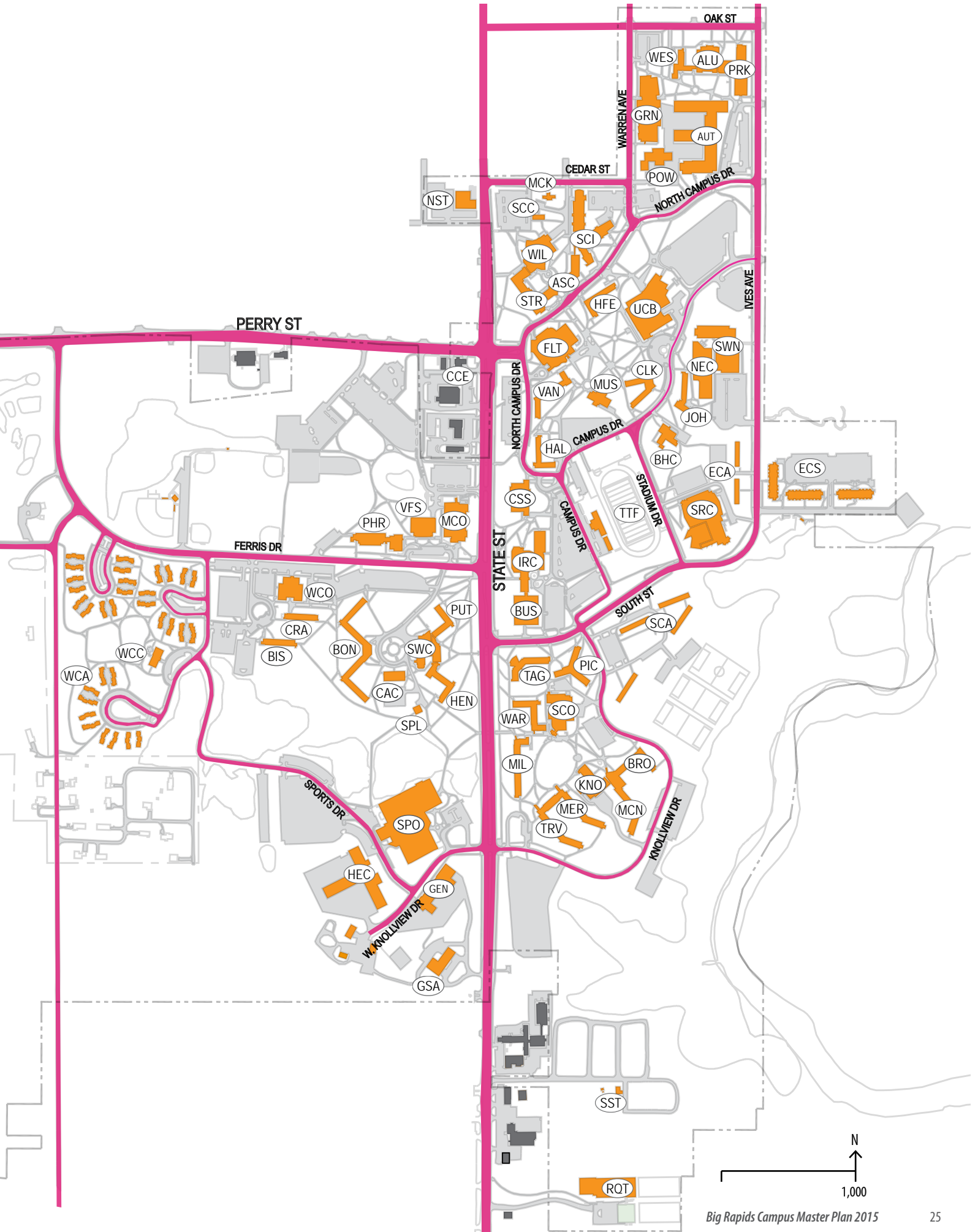
*The road system that abuts and extends through the campus exceeds 2.5 miles in length. Parking spaces within the FSU campus total approximately 7,500.*

### LEGEND

- Existing Roads
- Existing Buildings









# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

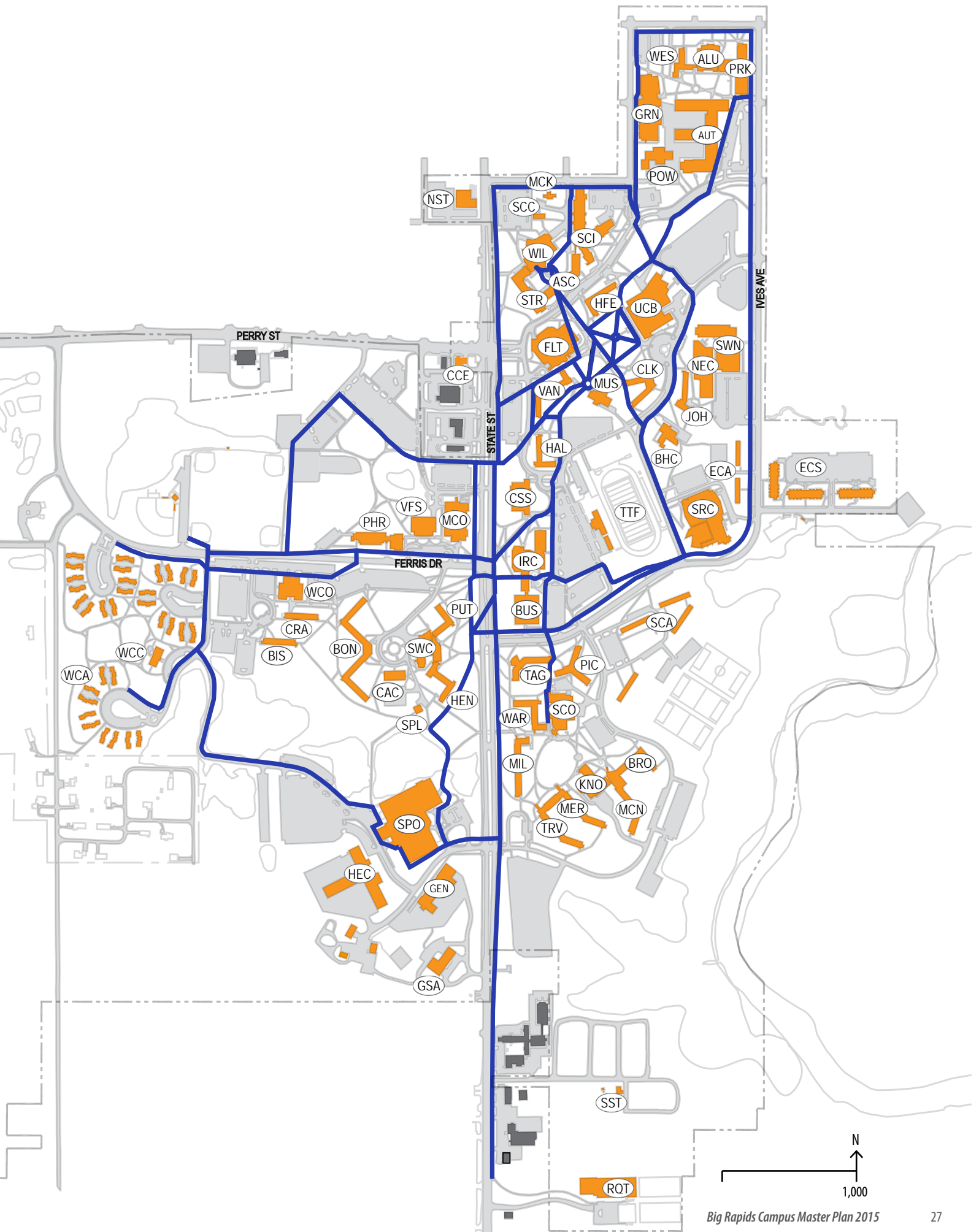
## MAJOR PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION SYSTEMS

*The site diagram shows the primary existing pedestrian circulation system throughout the campus. The major sidewalk paths are nearly 6 miles in length with the secondary systems more than doubling that number.*

### LEGEND

-  Major Pedestrian Paths and Plazas
-  Existing Buildings






# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

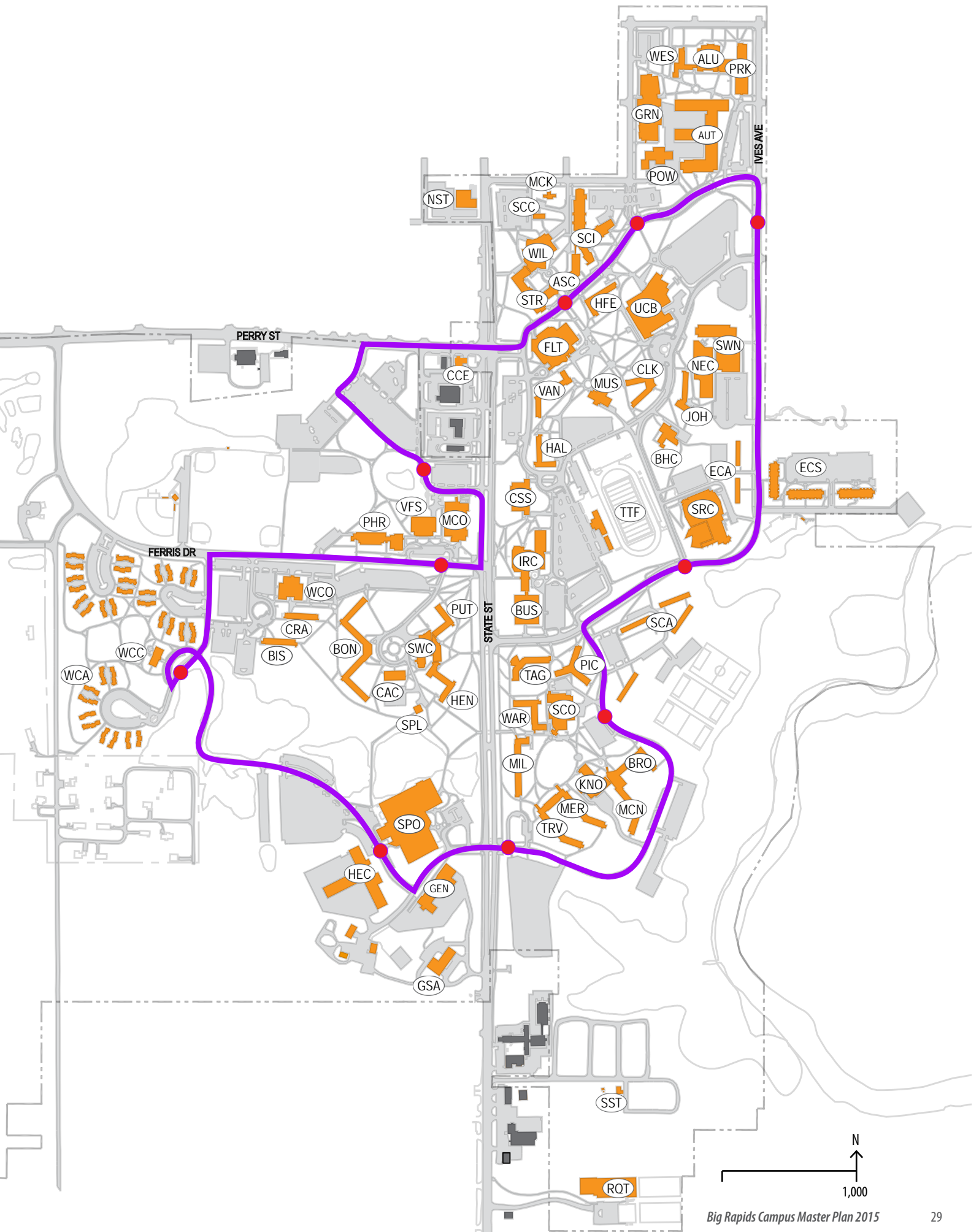
## SHUTTLE SYSTEM CIRCULATION

*The site diagram shows the recently incorporated shuttle transportation route and bus stops.*

### LEGEND

-  Shuttle Route
-  Shuttle Bus Stops
-  Existing Buildings





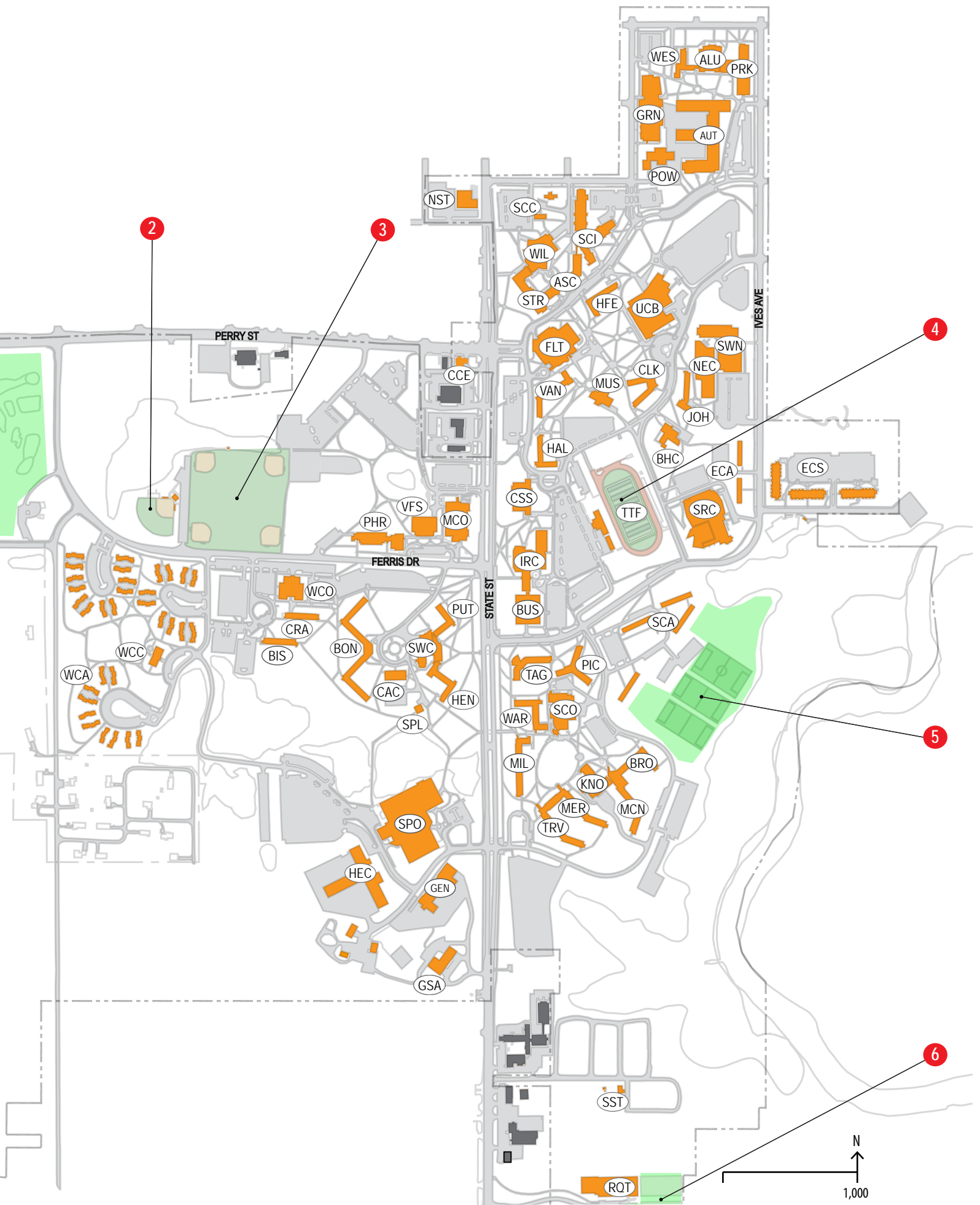
# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## OUTDOOR ATHLETICS & RECREATION

*The site diagram shows the primary outdoor athletics and recreation areas.*



1. Golf Course
2. Softball Stadium
3. Intramural Fields
4. Football Stadium
5. Soccer and Practice Fields
6. Tennis Courts



3

FIVE-YEAR  
MASTER PLAN GOALS







## Overview

The following campus plan drawings show how the current major five-year priority projects may be incorporated within the existing campus. The proposed placement or improvements were evaluated with the consideration of Ferris State University's Strategic Plan and Mission, the Guiding Principles, and the existing conditions of campus addressed in Sections 1 and 2 of this document.

# 3 FIVE-YEAR MASTER PLAN GOALS

## PROJECTS - BUILDINGS

### Academic

1. **Swan Annex**  
Priority 1
2. **Virtual Learning Center**  
Priority 2
3. **Katke PGM Learning Center**  
Priority 3
4. **Pharmacy Building Improvements**  
Priority 4

### Residential

5. **West Campus Apartments Expansion**  
Priority 1
6. **Southeast Campus Student Housing Redevelopment**  
Priority 2



### Athletic or Recreation

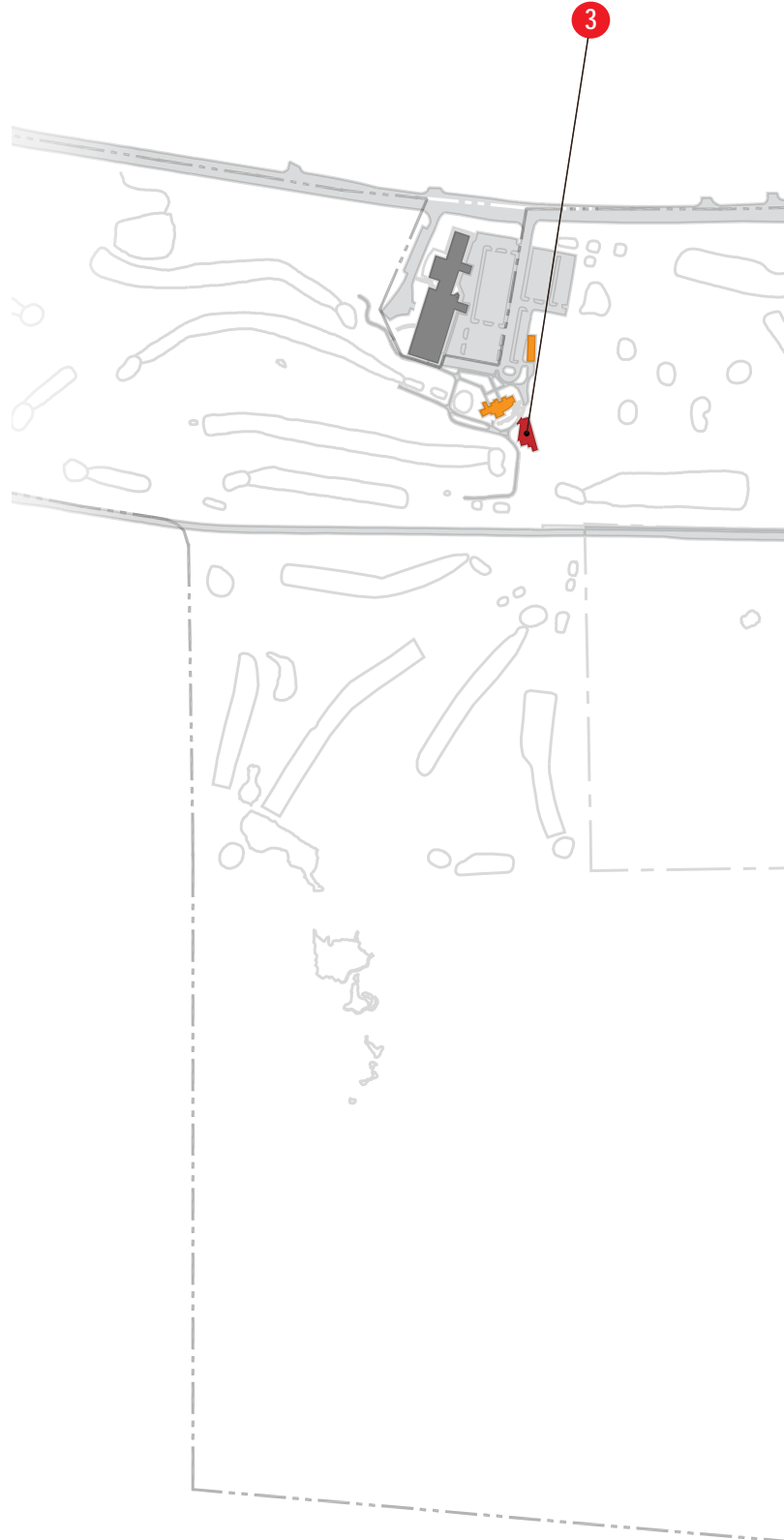
7. **Ewigleben Sports Complex Partial Renovation and Addition**  
Priority 1
8. **Top Taggart Field General Improvements, New Locker Room Building**  
Priority 2

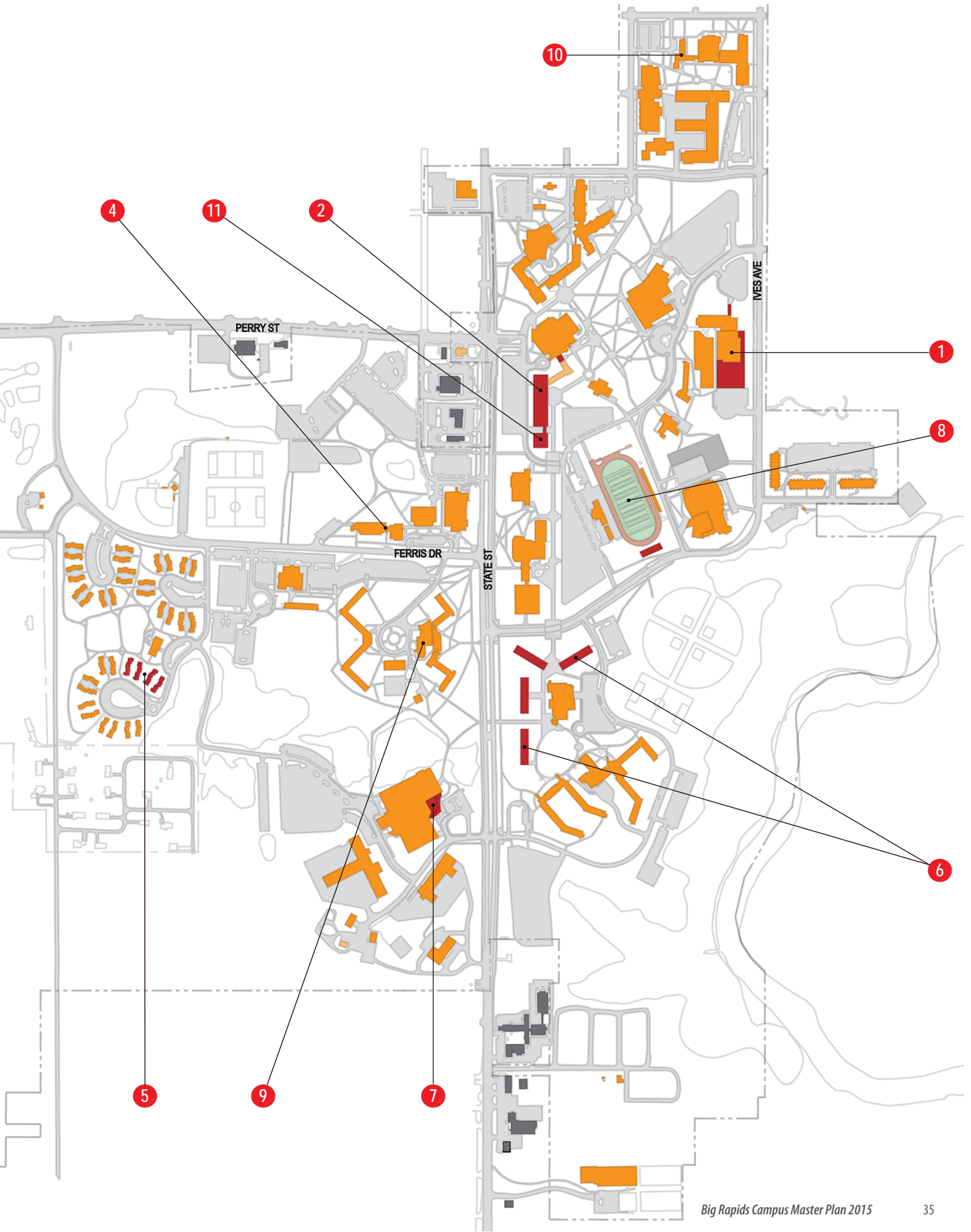
### Other Projects

9. **Southwest Commons (West Side Cafe) Repurposing**  
Priority 1
10. **West Building Renovation or Demolition**  
Priority 2
11. **Welcome Center**  
Priority 3

### LEGEND

-  Existing Buildings
-  New Buildings or Additions





# 3 FIVE-YEAR MASTER PLAN GOALS

## PROJECTS - SITE

### Streets or Crosswalks

1. **Cedar Street Extension**  
Priority 1
2. **Pedestrian Sidewalk** (North Campus Drive partial closure)  
Priority 2
3. **State Street Crossing Improvements**  
Priority 3

### Parking

4. **Student Recreation Center Parking Expansion**  
Priority 1
5. **Parking Lot 28 Driveway**  
Priority 2

### Pedestrian

6. **Pedestrian Sidewalk**  
Priority 1
7. **Pedestrian Link Improvements** (primary plaza, bridge or tunnel northeast of Timme Center for Student Services)  
Priority 2





### Althetic or Recreation

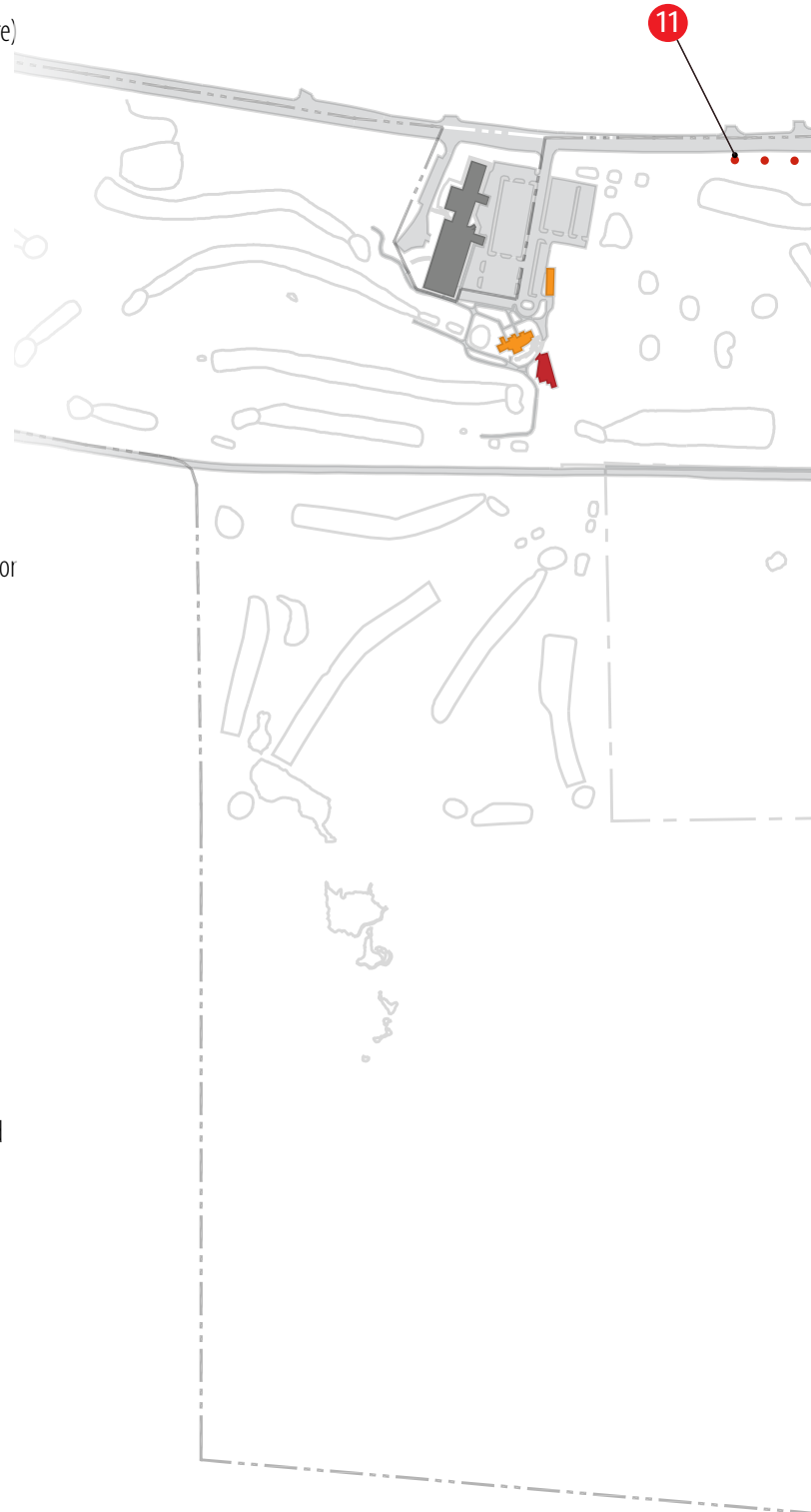
8. **Intramural Softball and Sports Fields Relocation**  
Priority 1
9. **Soccer Field Relocation** (possibly synthetic surface)  
Priority 2

### Signage or Branding

10. **Gateway Signs**  
Priority 1
11. **Campus Branding Site Elements**  
Priority 2
12. **Major Electronic Sign** (northwest corner Perry Street and State Street)  
Priority 3

### LEGEND

-  Existing Buildings
-  New Buildings or Additions
-  New Major Pedestrian Paths and Plazas
-  New Campus Site Branding Elements





# 4 LONG-TERM MASTER PLAN GOALS





## Overview

The following campus plan drawings show how the current major long-term projects may be incorporated within the existing campus. The proposed placement or improvements were evaluated with the consideration of Ferris State University's Strategic Plan and Mission, the Guiding Principles, the existing conditions of the campus addressed in Sections 1 and 2, and the goals within Section 3, the Five-Year Plan.

# 4

## LONG-TERM MASTER PLAN GOALS

### PROJECTS - BUILDINGS

#### Academic

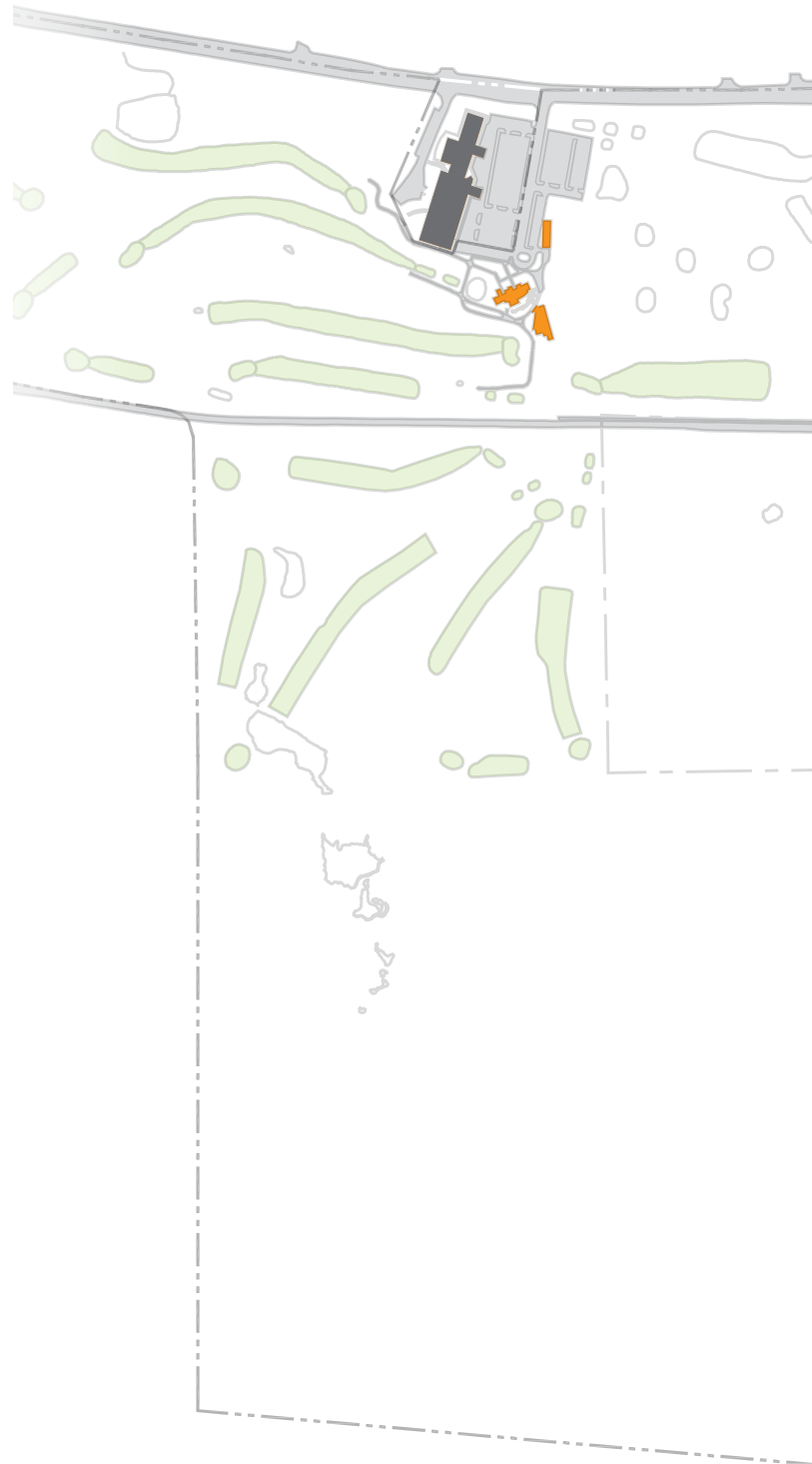
1. **Automotive Center Improvements**  
Priority 1
2. **Swan Building (5 Story) Renovations**  
Priority 2
3. **Johnson Hall Replacement**  
Priority 3
4. **Future Building Sites**  
Priority 4

#### Residential




5. **Southeast Campus Student Housing Redevelopment**  
Priority 1

#### Athletic or Recreation

6. **Student Recreation Center Improvements**  
Priority 1



#### LEGEND

-  Existing Buildings
-  New Buildings or Additions
-  Possible Building Sites





# 4

## LONG-TERM MASTER PLAN GOALS

### PROJECTS - SITE

#### Streets or Crosswalks

1. **Ives Avenue / Knollview Drive Connection**  
Priority 1
2. **State Street Roundabout** (involves Michigan Department of Transportation)  
Priority 2

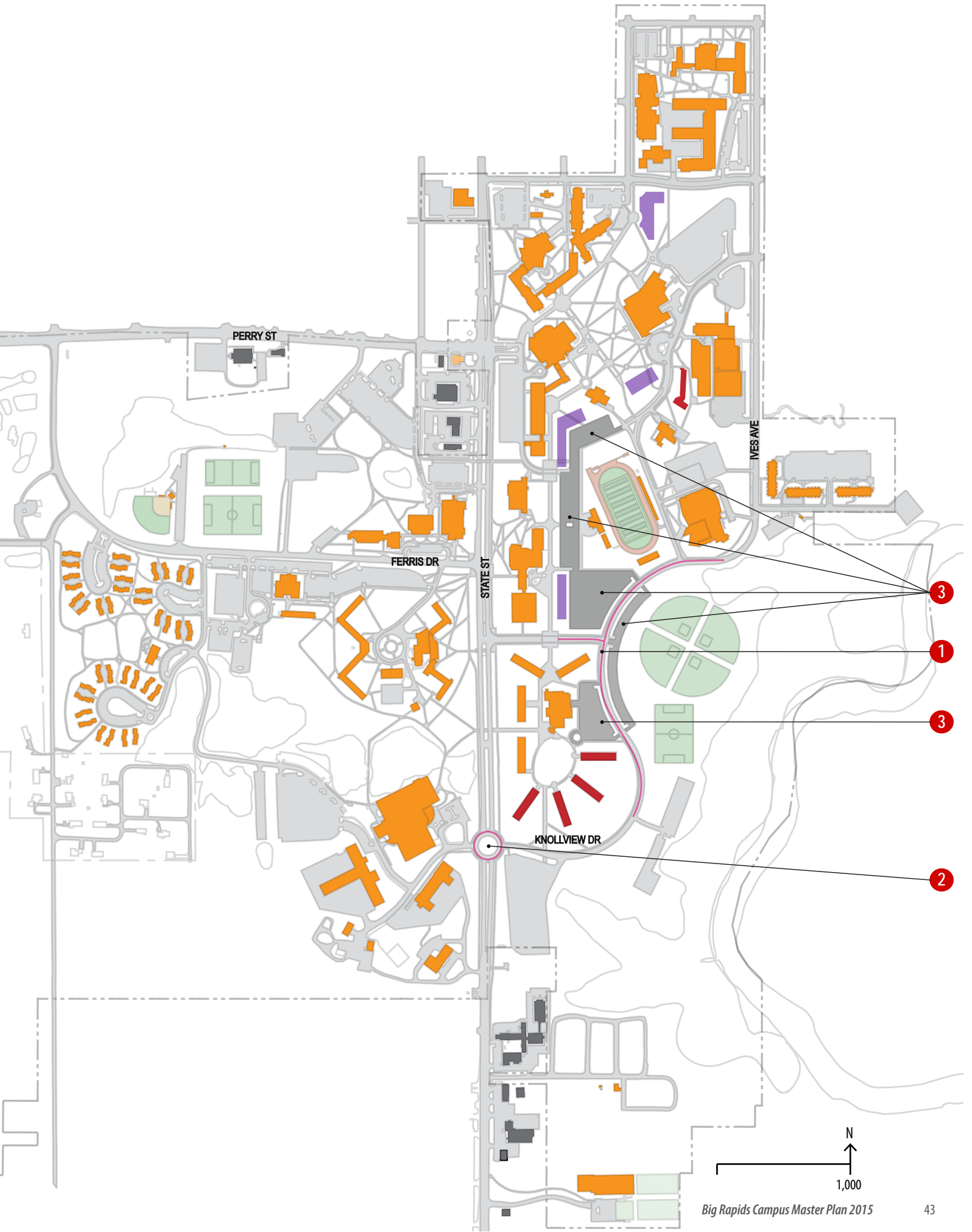
#### Parking

3. **Parking Lots** (modify and expand parking lots)  
Priority 1



#### LEGEND

- Existing Buildings / Buildings Accomplished in 5 year Plan
- New Buildings or Additions



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## **Ferris State University Stakeholder Input Groups**

Academic Senate  
Alumni Board  
Assistant/Clerical Support Employees  
Associate Vice Presidents and Directors  
Athletic and Recreation Staff  
Board of Trustees  
City/County Leaders  
College of Engineering Technology Faculty  
Community Representatives  
Deans and Academic Leadership Council  
Ferris Grand Rapids Employees  
Foundation Board  
Housing and Residence Life Staff  
Open Campus Forums  
Physical Plant Employees  
President's Council  
Resident Advisors  
Shuttle, Transportation, and Parking Representatives  
Strategic Planning and Resource Council (SPARC)  
Student Government  
Student Government Campus Affairs Committee

## **Neumann/Smith Architecture**



"I hope this school may  
continue to awake and  
inspire young men and  
women."

-- Woodbridge Ferris