

Notes: Workshop 06 Parking and Transportation Meeting

Project	UNT Campus Master Plan Update	Project No.	2025-3605 (UNTS) 52AC24018 (Page)
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Client	UNT System	Location	Rawlins Hall MPR
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Date	18 February, 2026	Time	1:30 – 2:30pm
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Attendees

- ☑ Brandon Lacy, UNT, Campus Landscape Design Manager
 - ☑ Casandra Nash, UNT, Director of Planning, Design, and Construction
 - ☑ Meredith Butler- UNTS, Director of Planning
 - ☑ Brian Cay – UNTS, Associate Director of Master Planning
 - ☑ Adriana Hernandez, Coleman and Associates, Landscape Planner
 - ☑ Corey Rothermel, Page, Project Manager
 - ☑ Elizabeth Foster, Page, Visioning Principal
 - ☑ Melissa Guitierrez-Soto, Page, Lead, Urban Designer
 - ☑ Sukriti Gandhi, Page, Campus Planner
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1. Overview

The Landscape Focus Group reviewed open space concepts, landscape typologies, focus areas, and draft guidelines for materials and site furnishings.

Overall, the group responded positively to the Green Ripple framework and Discovery Park concepts, with detailed feedback focused on:

- Pedestrian safety
 - Shade and comfort
 - Operational functionality
 - Material durability and maintenance
 - Strengthening public-facing arts identity
 - Parking lot and streetscape design guidance
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2. The Green Ripple

Framework & Graphics

- Request to extend the Ripple graphic to the northeast corner in the Landscape Typologies diagram to better reflect intended connectivity.
- General agreement that materials and furniture along the Ripple should repeat and become the campus standard.

Design Considerations

- Ensure 26' width for emergency vehicle access where required.

- Incorporate softer landscape elements and organic forms where appropriate.
- Consider screening opportunities and edge treatments.
- Streetscape interventions should achieve both aesthetic and functional outcomes (e.g., drainage improvements).

Pedestrian Safety

Strong emphasis on improving cross-traffic safety.

Questions raised:

- Can vehicular routes be designed to encourage drivers to bypass campus rather than cut through?
- How can pedestrian priority be strengthened at key crossings?

3. Landscape Typologies & Identity

The typology framework (open space, quad, mall, plaza, courtyard) was well received.

Discussion emphasized:

- Clear differentiation between typologies.
- Aligning activity types (gather, leisure, move, collaborate, chill) with physical space.
- Avoiding over-design — prioritize quality over plant quantity.

Soft vs. hard edges were discussed:

- Soft edges: Landscape-based transitions rather than walls.
- Hard edges: Branding, sound mitigation, construction impact buffering.
- Avoid unnecessary wall conditions unless programmatically justified.

4. Focus Areas

Landing Plaza (Athletics Area)

- Required setback from the football stadium to accommodate the existing secured/ticketed footprint of the stadium.
- Entrance to the proposed new arena can be direct onto the plaza.
- Acknowledgement of neighborhood sensitivity.
- Positive reaction to the proposed bridge over I-35.

UNT City Center

Signature Open Space

The City Center open space is expected to serve as a signature campus destination.

Key themes:

- Relationship to North Texas Boulevard vs. Hotel/Conference frontage must be carefully resolved.
- Space should function as a true community attractor.

Children & Family Programming is a positive and will attract the community

Clarification:

- “Playground” does not need to be literal.
- Emphasis on playful landscape elements:
 - Rocks

- Mounds
- Logs/trunks
- Flexible space for running and informal activity

Swings and hammocks were identified as extremely popular and broadly usable across age groups.

Activation Strategies

- Food is a major attractor.
- Consider food truck areas and grocery adjacency.
- Include student services and recreation components to keep students on campus.
- Design elements should give students reasons to stay rather than leave campus.

The City Center should feel uniquely Denton.

Music Plaza

Strong focus on student-centered design.

Shade & Comfort

- “Nobody is hanging out in the sun.”
- Shaded seating is critical.
- Swings and shaded gathering areas recommended.

Topography & Accessibility

- Significant grade change between Highland Mall and the Music Building.
- Must accommodate instrument movement and ADA access.
- Need to study circulation carefully.

Highland Pedestrianization

- Strong enthusiasm for pedestrianizing Highland.
- Improve safety at crossings.
- Consider a focal point or turnaround condition at Maple Street rather than extending the mall all the way to Eagle Drive.

Library expansion was mentioned as a related planning consideration.

Sycamore Street Mall

- Rain garden concept with bridges liked, but it is critical that drainage challenges be addressed.
 - “Bridges” across stormwater areas may complicate maintenance, but the concept looks like a step in the right direction.
 - Graphic correction needed: paths should align with building entries, not gallery space.
 - Infrastructure upgrades required to support landscape enhancements.
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Discovery Park

Overall very positive reaction.

- Strong support for expanding and enhancing the trail system.
- Current campus is inward-facing; desire to open the front toward Elm Street.

- Add more intentional, programmed outdoor space.
 - Continue improving connection to nature and research identity.
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5. Streetscapes

Welch Street

- Encourage more welcoming streetscape treatment.
- Consider enhanced pedestrian comfort and identity.

Maple / Highland Area

- Improve safety at street crossings.
 - Design streets so that pedestrian traffic is prioritized.
 - Consider visual or physical cues to discourage through-traffic.
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6. Landscape Materials & Guidelines

Hardscape

- UNT working to eliminate exposed aggregate pathways.
- Past maintenance issues with pavers led to shift toward stamped concrete.
- Decomposed granite should be specified where appropriate.

Trees

General tree list well received with suggested additions:

- Mexican White Oak
- Monterey Oak
- Texas Persimmon

Avoid:

- Bradford Pear
- Pistachio

No need for highly prescriptive tree grate standards.

7. Parking Lot Design Guidelines

Strong interest in establishing clearer parking lot standards:

- Landscape islands
- Shade trees
- Screening strategies
- Integration with pedestrian circulation
- Drainage performance

Participants expressed desire for parking lots to align with overall landscape character.

8. Site Furnishings

Furniture

- Current standard bench has been discontinued — opportunity to revisit.
- Consider zone-specific furniture palettes (e.g., Arts District vs. Music District).
- Loose/movable furniture has not been successful — tends to disappear.
- Cost effectiveness remains important.

Seating Strategies

- Incorporate seat walls and integrated seating rather than floating elements.
- Seat walls can also screen bike parking.

Swings

- Very popular and well used.
- Worth retaining as a signature element.

9. Maintenance & Operations

Key recurring themes:

- Drainage must be addressed early.
- Irrigation strategy critical.
- Avoid overplanting if maintenance capacity is limited.
- Material durability and lifecycle cost matter.
- Flexibility in gathering spaces is essential.