The Wayne State University master plan provides a framework to guide decision making around the university’s physical environment. It includes:

- Important data sets and resulting analytics, and web-based mapping tools that promote data visualization and communication. The analysis shows significant softness in the university’s use of existing space, and concludes the university’s growing deferred maintenance liability represents a clear and present danger to its ability to deliver on its mission.
- Physical strategies and principles that better organize the campus, prioritize and direct capital investment; suggest near-term demolitions, renovations, and site improvements; make the campus more welcoming and inclusive for students, faculty, staff, and the community; and maximize future flexibility by providing options for long-term on-campus development.
- Organizational structures that promote integrated decision making within the university and better connect the university with its external community so as to allow for meaningful and sustained engagement.

1. ORGANIZE THE CORE CAMPUS AND MAKE IT MORE WELCOMING

The key idea for better organizing the campus is to highlight the “H” consisting of Gullen Mall, Cass Avenue, and the east-west cultural axis. Gullen Mall should be the internal pedestrian and student-oriented campus “main street”; Cass Avenue must become a true civic corridor where the university and city blend and merge; and the east-west cultural axis should engage the neighborhoods and cultural institutions, and invite the community into the university. In addition, Warren Avenue and Anthony Wayne Drive should be narrowed, and made pedestrian friendly. The university should also explore the long-term potential for decking I-94 to better connect the core campus with iBio and TechTown. Finally, the university should establish mixed-use residential districts both north (at Woodward and I-94) and south (at Cass and Canfield); and should reserve the important gateway at Warren and Woodward for an appropriate community-oriented program.

2. NEAR-TERM, CONCENTRATE ACADEMIC ACTIVITY IN AN ENHANCED CORE

The university should optimize program locations and consolidate dispersed colleges. This includes focusing instructional activity in a reimagined State Hall; rethinking the Purdy-Kresge and Reuther complex so as to better support student study and collaboration; concentrating College of Fine and Performing Arts uses in Old Main; repurposing the majority of the Undergraduate Library for academic uses, primarily centered on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (particularly language and humanities programs) and the Honors College; and using the Faculty Administration Building for academic departmental uses, relocating administrative functions, including the president’s and provost’s offices, to Maccabees. These changes should allow the university to empty Manoogian Hall, General Lectures, the atrium portion of the Undergraduate Library, and Shapero Hall. With the possible exception of Shapero, these buildings should be demolished. In addition, Life Sciences should either be gut-renovated or demolished. Finally, the Prentis Building should be repositioned with community-oriented uses as an important campus gateway.

3. DEFINE KEY SITES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTE OPTIONALITY FOR THE HEALTH SCIENCES, AND FOCUS THE UNIVERSITY’S REAL ESTATE STRATEGY

The master plan supports the health sciences by detailing multiple options which describe how they could remain in place or relocate wholesale. Regardless of which option is chosen, the plan recommends replacing Scott Hall. While the near-term strategy for the master plan focuses on consolidation, the long-term idea is to secure the university’s future by providing for growth when it becomes needed. The plan therefore identifies a minimum of 2.3 million square feet of development capacity within the core, and recommends the university focus its real estate strategy between the Lodge and Woodward Avenue after maximizing these development opportunities.