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Centennial & the City
This Strategic Master Plan provides an overview of the potential of the diverse land holdings of Centennial College and creates a set of initiatives within which to plan growth of academic offerings and accommodation of an expanding student body.

Rather than providing prescriptive solutions, this document sets up a flexible framework for integrating development opportunities that include academic, residential and commercial development across the major campuses of Centennial College. Rather than seeing each campus in isolation the Master Plan looks across the campuses for opportunities for adjacent commercial co-development that both compliments student activities and provides strategic funding partners in co-development.

Each initiative described in this document requires further detailed analysis and design that is based on the opportunity at hand. The Plan is based on the unique qualities of Centennial and its academic and vocational offerings within a growing Ontario.
The Vision

Transforming Lives & Communities Through Learning

Centennial College is growing quickly. A diverse and inclusive institution, it appeals to numerous communities across Toronto, and has recently seen a dramatic rise in international enrolments, in addition to continuing growth in domestic applications.

Increasing demand for college programs that prepare students for opportunities in the global marketplace has led to efforts to promote connectivity beyond the physical campus, extending to online social networks that provide students with leadership platforms to engage with both local and global communities.

This message of connectivity needs to inform and shape a long-term master plan strategy that will aid Centennial College in developing a sustainable, institutional, and transit-oriented community.
Signature Learning Experience

Create an Inclusive & Collaborative Learning Environment

Centennial’s reach extends far beyond the boundaries of the GTA and the College has been experiencing a dramatic rise in international student enrolment in recent years.

An International Education Office has been set up at Progress Campus to assist students with adapting to life abroad and to offer information and counselling to current students. But to reach out to a broader global community and to foster multicultural diversity on their Canadian campuses, Centennial has also set up new education and resource centres in major cities throughout the world. They facilitate the application process to help potential applicants understand the programs and student life being offered by the College.

Centennial also offers international training and development programs overseas in China, Dubai and India. These programs have been developed to i) provide training in Canada to faculty from international colleges and universities; ii) offer customized study programs for students being sponsored by their business/industry/government overseas; and iii) helping developing countries set up training centres and colleges that address their needs.

Building a strong campus community that encourages inclusiveness and collaborative education within a pluralistic framework is essential to Centennial’s Signature Learning Experience.
More students, especially those coming from overseas, are choosing Centennial because of our unique pledge to teach global citizenship, preparing them for work anywhere and educating them for a changing world.  - Ann Buller
Centennial College Today

Total Campus Area: 370,300 Sqm (91.5 Acres)
Total Academic Space: 76,489.5 Nasm
Total Students Enrolled, Fall 2010: 15,200

Please see Appendix 1 for overviews of individual campus site conditions and programs.
Currently accommodated in four major campuses, Centennial College is spread across the Greater Toronto Area in primarily suburban locations. Actual footprints on Centennial’s campuses occupy a relatively small portion of their sites, creating opportunities for strategic intensification and restructuring. Each campus has a unique identity and urban context, creating opportunities for connectivity and integration with their neighbouring communities. Of Centennial’s 5 locations across Toronto, Progress & Ashtonbee campuses were identified as priorities by the Educational Consulting Services Corporation (ECS), with the support of Centennial College. They each possess great potential for growth & expansion.

Scattered across Toronto East, most of Centennial’s campuses have an enviable connection to the green parks and ravines that surround them, often featuring local trail networks.

Given the distribution of campuses and the distances between them, the College is seeking to consolidate programs within each campus to reduce the need for students to travel between campuses.

Each campus has a unique set of conditions that either limit, or allow for future development. Satellite sites are also currently under consideration for the expansion of current programs, including the Culture and Heritage Institute at the Guild.
Centennial College Growth

Estimated Growth by 2011 was 29.1% Four Years Ago. Actual Centennial Growth Rates Far Exceed Expectations.

Updated student enrolment figures from March 2011 demonstrate that actual full time student enrolment numbers continuously exceed previous growth projections, which means that Centennial is growing far more quickly than they had ever imagined.

Strong International student growth is expected to continue and Centennial's Financial Planning Department foresees continued enrolment growth in all program clusters.

Constraints in space have led to the programming of classes that would normally have been scheduled during the daytime to be shifted either to evening or to weekend time-slots at both Progress Campus and the Science and Technology Centre.

The rapid growth is also redefining how programs are redistributed across Centennial's campuses, and the College is seeking smart relationships that will encourage new synergies and support the clustering of programs to support shared resources.

Source: Strategic Space Plan: Centennial College Draft Report, Educational Consulting Services Corp, September 2010

Student Enrolment from 1966 - Present

Source: CAAT II Enrolment Report, Centennial College Financial Planning Department
Note: Recent enrolment growth is attributed to the continuing rise in international visa student numbers, as well as "Second Career" participants.

Figures do not include part-time enrolments.
The City's Shifting Modal Split

Future LRT Transit Connections

The campuses are all served by major roads and infrastructure. Under the current Metrolinx and City of Toronto transit plans, all four campuses and Centennial’s satellite site at the Guild Inn stand to benefit from new and improved transit stops at each location.

The future development of transit-oriented ‘hubs’ surrounding these transit stops will catalyze movement across the city enhancing accessibility to the college and increasing the visibility of the campuses. Therefore, the city’s transit plans should be strategically factored into future plans for the college, allowing the college to reach out to a wider student pool while reducing reliance on automotive forms of transportation.

These connections to the city would benefit the College by helping to integrate a diverse student body – many of whom having only recently immigrated to Canada – with surrounding communities, but also by allowing the communities to take part in Centennial’s many cultural and educational initiatives.

Currently, the College’s on-campus residence can only support 330 of its 15,200 students. The remaining students commute from across the GTA and 23.2% arrive from surrounding regions.

42% of students spend more than 6 hours commuting each week, and while the automobile is the predominant form of transportation in the Scarborough area, more than 82% of students currently use alternative modes of transportation. These would include taking transit, cycling and car pooling.

There are plans underway to expand the transit network across the city and Centennial must tap into new transit developments by taking a proactive role in ensuring that new transit lines reach each of their campuses to provide frequent and efficient connections for students, faculty and staff and that the design of the stops and stations is conducive to a transit-oriented College and mixed-use development.*

*Please see Appendix 2 for an overview of potential changes to the transit system.
Major Multi-Use Trail Developments

New multi-use trails have recently been developed along the Hydro Corridor, providing a strong link across eastern Toronto that connects to the city’s existing trail network. Centennial’s Scarborough campuses all find themselves conveniently located within close proximity to this major multi-use trail.

Multi-use trails along the Hydro Corridor provide a safe cycling and pedestrian route in a park-like setting, and Centennial should take full advantage of the opportunity to promote connections to their campuses through the improvement of signalized intersections, public space and landscaping along this green path.

Since more than 35% of the student population lives in Scarborough3, promoting the use of this trail network as an alternative mode of local transportation, which is cheaper, healthier and more environmentally friendly, is a realistic option.

1-3 Source: Centennial College Student Demographics (Based on 2009-2010 Data)
Neighbouring Zones to Connect With

Centennial is not growing in isolation. It is part of an established suburban pattern that holds numerous potential relationships to be pursued.

Transit investment is a trigger of development by making surrounding properties more attractive for mixed-use and allowing residents and businesses to better connect with the rest of the city.

While Scarborough's residential neighbourhoods are well established, there are 5 major concurrent areas of active re-developments that are emerging within some of the mixed-use & industrial zones close to the Centennial campuses - all of which fall within close proximity of the proposed future Transit investment.
New Developments in the East

Major Developments that Centennial College Should Seek to Leverage Include:

1. UTSC Expansion & Pan Am 2015
2. Scarborough Centre Development
3. Markham-Ellesmere Revitalization
4. Guild Inn Cultural Precinct
5. Eglinton's Rezoned Golden Mile

*Please see Appendix 3 for overviews of the new developments in the east.
Growth & Campus Capacities

Full-time international student enrolments are expected to double by 2015, rising to 3290.

Domestic student enrolments were expected to exceed capacity at fewer than 14,000 students in 2013.

There are currently 15,200 full-time students; therefore the college is currently operating over-capacity.

Current facilities provide 70 GSF per full-time student, which is 45% below the Ontario College System average.

EXISTING = 1,060,000 GSF
ADDITIONAL = 870,000 GSF

To meet the Ontario college system average area per student figure, based on current student numbers, Centennial College would require an additional Progress Campus.

Source:

Note: Overviews of changing student demographics can be found in Appendix 4
A Collaborative Effort

Planning for Centennial College’s future development should not occur in isolation. To tap into the numerous co-development opportunities in surrounding neighbourhoods, the next step for the College, would be to establish a strong dialogue with key stakeholders in both public and private sectors.

A 21st century institution does not exist in a vacuum. Essential to the prosperity of a progressive institution is mutually beneficial engagement with the city and community that it is a part of. Collaboration with stakeholders early in the development process would ensure that synergistic opportunities are recognized and challenging issues are addressed in a timely fashion and incorporated, and most importantly, that a coherent plan is developed and carried forward, that receives support from all parties that are represented in the Core Team.

The Centennial College Strategic Master Plan is an overview of the guiding principles that will allow the College to proceed with its high demand for new and improved facilities in a coherent, well conceived, and flexible manner.

Finding intelligent, creative, and context-specific opportunities for fusing Centennial’s development strategy with neighbouring expansion and revitalization plans leads to the following guiding principles that can lead to the creation of a sustainable, institutional and transit-oriented communities for each of Centennial Colleges campuses.

The key concepts of

1. **Leverage** new transit initiatives
2. **Seek** co-development opportunities
3. **Intensify** the academic village

express this dynamic interaction between the campuses and their surrounding contexts.
Principles & Strategies

The Master Planning Strategy

1. LEVERAGE New Transit Investments
2. SEEK Co-Development Opportunities
3. INTENSIFY The Academic Village
Centennial College must actively engage with transit planners and become a player in the city’s “world in motion”. Orientation towards Centennial’s campuses from transit lines should be shaped by the College to ensure that new transit hubs will support co-development initiatives in adjacent areas while raising the profile of the College.

Studies of the stimulative effect of improved transit and changes in modal split, such as those observed on the Yonge Street Corridor, have demonstrated that enhancing connectivity by improving pedestrian access to transit at stops and stations can create the conditions for increased economic activity.

In Richmond Hill Centre and Langstaff/Longbridge, the number of people and jobs per hectare, within a 500m diameter of proposed transit hubs, is expected to increase by more than 1100%.

1. Yonge Subway Extension: concept plan & profile, Toronto - TTC; 2. Yonge Subway Extension comparison of the development potential within a 500 metre study area surrounding future transit hubs, Toronto - TTC.
York University provides a prime example of intelligent long-term transit-oriented planning for a post-secondary institution.

Planning for more than 2 decades, York strategically oriented its mixed-use and academic developments around future transit hubs.

Mixed-use areas are focused around transit stations and in areas with land use transitions, such as along Pond Road and in the northwest area of the campus.

Two new subway stations will provide the University, not only with increased access to transit, but also a sense of arrival and identity. The new line will be in operation by 2015.

1. York University’s Secondary Plan Update Background Document and Transportation Master Plan, Toronto, Brook McIlroy Inc; 2-3 York University Station Transit Hub, Toronto - Fosters + Partners
Strategy 1.3: Decant parking into concentrated parking structures to plan for changes in the modal split and allow for site densification over time.

Despite rising student numbers, York's parking figures continue to decline due to enhanced transit services.

With Centennial's expanding reach to both local and global communities, the College can continue to expect steady growth in student numbers.

Better transit connections suggests that the modal split will alter to favour increased transit usage. Even as student numbers increase, parking requirements would likely decline, which would allow the College to decant surface parking from their site and invest intensifying their existing campuses.
SEEK Co-Development Opportunities

Strategy 2.1: Create gateways through co-development & increase Centennial’s visibility on a city-scale by initiating community partnerships.

Centennial College has an opportunity to leverage transit development investments and while drawing support from all levels of government and forging partnerships with the private sector.

Strategy 2.2: Develop residential communities with a variety of housing types, including townhouses, mid/high-rise towers & mixed-use blocks

When developing student accommodation, Centennial should seek to provide a diverse mix of housing options and living arrangements to serve a demographically diverse staff and student body by working with private sector partners. The provision of basic services associated with this housing within walking distance of the of the campuses will contribute to sustainable growth that both serves the College's needs and benefits from its presence.

Simon Fraser University's (SFU) UniverCity Master Plan is a model sustainable community that incorporates a commercial core, community facilities, and an extensive network of pedestrian paths and bike trails with the demands of SFU's expanding student body. Mixed-use and transit-oriented, UniverCity upholds SFU's 4 Principles of Sustainability: Environment, Equity, Economy and Education.

The 1996 Official Community Plan (OCP) had envisioned a dense, mixed-use community on approximately 65 hectares of land surrounding the SFU campus. It allows for up to 4536 residential units in 2 distinct neighbourhoods, each with its own elementary school and neighbourhood park.

UniverCity is currently home to approximately 3,000 residents and is planned to accommodate more than 10,000 when fully built out.

1. UniverCity, Simon Fraser University; 2. Woodsworth College Student Residence, University of Toronto, Toronto - architects Alliance; 3. Pond Road Student Residence, York University, Toronto - architects Alliance; 4. Simmons Hall Student Residence, MIT, Boston - Steven Holl
In approaching new development opportunities, Centennial should seek to densify and urbanize its campuses by layering a mix of programs that make efficient use of its land holdings while creating a more vibrant and continuously active campus environment. By moving beyond the single use paradigm and overreliance on single occupant vehicle access that defines many suburban campuses, and developing more compact and diverse campus settings that overlap and integrate with private development, Centennial can leverage relationships with the private sector that simultaneously help to subsidize expansion costs and nurture attractive and active campus communities that host academic, commercial, residential and recreational programs.

Ryerson University has made a virtue of a necessity. Its campus exploited the advantage of developing within a rapidly growing high density urban neighbourhood that was within walking distance of many of Toronto’s most important retail, business and cultural districts. This has enabled Ryerson to develop a strategy for working with the private sector to meet the University’s needs while occupying buildings that have active street lever commercial uses, and allow for overbuilding with high rise components of private market housing or office uses sitting atop the academic podium. This form of co-development will help to pay for the University’s expansion.

Centennial can adopt a similar approach for its campuses. Since it is itself a major land holder and its surrounding neighbourhoods are on the verge of major transformation related to transportation initiatives and increased real estate activity it has an opportunity to take a much stronger leading role in shaping future development to take full advantage of these synergistic opportunities.

1. Ryerson University Co-development Implementation Strategy, Toronto - KPMB Architects
**Strategy 2.4:** Use development initiatives for financial leverage through urban design strategies that enhance real estate value.

Centennial has the opportunity to use its master plan to foster excellent urban design within its campuses and their surrounding neighbourhoods, generating attractive and active mixed-use communities that in turn increase the value of surrounding real estate.

In Montreal, the Quartier International de Montréal (QIM) was a public project that was based on a partnership with private investors. While government seed funding was provided by a combination of federal, provincial and municipal levels, another $16 million was needed from private investors.

12 of 25 local businesses agreed to provide funds to revitalize the neighbourhood, and the QIM was able to generate a nine-fold return on investment that helped to transform a derelict neighbourhood into one of the city’s most prestigious neighbourhoods in less than 5 years.
Given the widespread distribution of Centennial’s campuses across Scarborough, future plans should consider how the campuses can better connect to each other and with the city around them and how the strengthening of links between the campuses can ultimately benefit both the College and the city.

One example is the vision set out by the Penn Connects master plan, which links the University of Pennsylvania to the City of Philadelphia and the City to the University.

Penn Connects seeks to bridge UPenn’s campuses on opposite sides of the Schuylkill River.

The eastern expansion of UPenn continues the strong network of pedestrian pathways building on urban design principles which have shaped the existing main campus. The new series of bridges/connections and gateways will establish a expanded network, linking the campus, City Center and neighbouring communities.

Strategy 2.5: Use connections between campuses to reinforce the existing networks that link neighbouring communities, green spaces and mixed-use developments.

1–3 University of Pennsylvania: PENN Connects, Philadelphia - Sasaki Associates. (1. Walnut Street acting as the main artery of the campus; 2. Campus vision: strong pedestrian networks between the 2 sides of the river; 3. Programmatic bridges strengthening connections between the East and West Campuses and the city)
The suburban layout of the existing campuses with large areas devoted to surface parking has endowed Centennial with a significant asset, a land bank in which to grow. A reassessment of these holdings reveals the opportunity to colonize and reconfigure these parking lots into patterns that anticipate phased future intensification and development.

With future transit networks extending across Scarborough, transit use will increase and parking requirements can be expected to diminish over time, allowing each campus to densify within property areas recovered from surface parking.

**INTENSIFY The Academic Village**

**Strategy 3.1:** Intensify and pedestrianize the Academic Village by expanding the network of academic and student spaces.
Strategy 3.2: Improve and activate student spaces to enhance the learning environment and help to build a strong sense of collegiality, identity and a home away from home.

Building a network of open and accessible spaces throughout the campus will enhance the vibrancy and attractiveness of the Academic Village.

Developing a rich program of activity across the campus will ensure that spaces remain continuously active 24/7.

Centennial is already moving in the right direction by investing in new student spaces across the Progress Campus. The College should build on recent initiatives by extending amenity spaces for students throughout the campuses. In many cases these can be further enhanced through private sector partnerships.

1. Concordia University, Montréal - KPMB Architects; 2. Centennial College’s Science & Technology Centre, Toronto - KPMB Architects; 3. Centennial College’s New Library & Academic Facility, Toronto - Diamond & Schmitt Architects Inc
Progress Campus & Ashtonbee Campus
Progress Campus

LEVERAGE · SEEK · INTENSIFY