Campus Master Plan

A message from the president on 
the Middlebury College Campus Master Plan:

When Knowledge without Boundaries: The Middlebury College Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in the spring of 2006, it became apparent that the College was in need of a new Campus Master Plan to support that vision. The key underpinning of the strategic plan is a new commitment to the human dimension of the Middlebury experience.

In April 2006, I appointed a Master Plan Committee to develop a new master plan. The College invited master planner Michael Dennis & Associates to guide us through this process. In addition to the Committee and the planners, hundreds of campus constituents have contributed to the design of this new plan. I am grateful to all of them for their commitment of time and energy to this important endeavor. Developed by and for the Middlebury College and town community, this Campus Master Plan will guide the development of our campus for at least the next half-century. I am pleased to share it with you now.

A campus is space and buildings, but it is the people—the human dimension—that make the College great. Its built environment—from buildings and structures to the landscape that surrounds and contains them—must support and sustain that excellence. Our culture of excellence requires an infrastructure of excellence.

As the place where students, staff, and faculty come together, the campus is an integral and essential tool for accomplishing our academic mission. It is our shared responsibility to continue to create a campus environment which supports that mission and enhances the quality of life for generations of students, faculty, staff, and visitors. With one eye toward the future, and one eye toward our rich academic and architectural heritage, the Master Plan will help us do just that. It provides a framework to guide the development of the College and ensure that future development decisions reflect academic purposes and priorities for the next 30 to 50 years.

This is the first time Middlebury has had a Campus Master Plan as comprehensive and long-range as this. An overall theme of sustainability is woven throughout the thinking and the planning. The Plan includes a civic structure plan that defines outdoor spaces large and small, as well as long-range building opportunities; architectural principles and guidelines; landscape principles and guidelines; and analyses of, and recommendations for, sustainability, utilities, accessibility, academic space planning, and parking. It is a tightly woven document that addresses all aspects of our physical facilities.
This document also defines a process to ensure that future decisions regarding campus change and growth conform to the concepts of the Campus Master Plan. The urgency of the moment sometimes causes us to deviate from our goals and principles for the sake of expediency. As we move ahead with the implementation of this Master Plan, it will be important to resist the tendency to locate and design facilities to satisfy an immediate short-term requirement at the expense of the long-term quality of the campus. Following the framework of this Plan will allow us to respond thoughtfully, effectively, and creatively to the needs of the future, while also ensuring that the Middlebury campus’s most beloved characteristics and qualities are preserved for generations to come.

The recommendations of the Master Plan form a strong and essential vision that will guide our planning efforts. They serve as guidelines, however, rather than as blueprints. Implementing these principles over time will require the ongoing and informed judgment of faculty, students, and staff who are committed to the common good of the College community. I look forward to working alongside you in the effort to further shape our campus to reflect our vision, mission, and strategic plans.

Ronald D. Liebowitz

President, Middlebury College