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American University of Beirut Campus Design Guidelines
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Campus Master Plan for the American University of Beirut defines a vision for the physical development of its site in Ras Beirut. The implementation of this vision was planned to include three phases potentially spanning twenty years. The master plan was created over a period of seventeen months using a process consisting of the following phases:

- Inventory, Assessment and Program
- Alternative Master Plan Concepts
- The Preliminary Master Plan
- The Final Master Plan

The master plan addresses matching the existing condition of the campus with the needs of the AUB community in an inspiring plan that will guide this world-class institution into the future. It is designed to forward AUB's academic mission.

Existing Conditions

The following conclusions were reached regarding the existing condition of the campus:

- Location on the Mediterranean and within Beirut is spectacular.
- Topographic conditions create Upper, Middle and Lower Campuses.
- “Connections” between the four distinct areas of AUB are weak.

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The Master Plan

The following are the key recommendations contained in the master plan:

- Provide appropriately sized, state-of-the-art facilities by renovating approximately 140,000 square meters of existing academic, residential, support and sports facilities, and administrative buildings over the next twenty years.
- Preserve the function of the Upper Campus as the historic center of the campus by developing a new University Overlook and creating an upper-level pedestrian promenade.
- Embrace the Medical Center as part of Upper Campus through site improvements and building renovations. Continue to renovate and develop the Medical Center to ensure that AUBMC remains a leader in the delivery of medical care in the region.
- Ensure the quality of the Middle Campus through active landscape management, amplifying its importance on the campus with an active improvement program.
- Transform the Lower Campus with the construction of the Hostler Center and the School of Business along with the Seafront Facade of the Lower Campus, totaling 30,005 gross square meters, and include site improvements of plazas and pedestrian promenades, creating multiple well-connected, distinct centers.
- Create pedestrian links among the academic, administrative, student quality-of-life and support facilities by locating parking on the perimeter of campus and developing well designed pedestrian links.

Master Plan Alternatives

After studying several alternative plans, the following conclusions were reached for the organization of the new buildings, renovations, site improvements and infrastructure improvements:

- New buildings should selectively enhance the campus, building upon the existing pattern of uses.
- Site improvements provide the best opportunity to "connect" the diverse areas of the campus and provide the largest immediate positive impact on campus life.
- Infrastructure improvements should be technologically advanced and provide for sustainability.

The Upper Campus has a “world class” collegial character; with near-term capital projects, the Lower Campus can begin a transformation.

Existing academic space can be optimized to support a substantial amount of future growth.

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2. INTRODUCTION TO THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The American University of Beirut has developed over time into an institution with a unique campus character and identity. At the core of the liberal arts educational philosophy is the tolerance of difference in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of ideas. This tolerance has helped to create the character and identity of AUB and has indirectly manifested itself in the physical assets of the campus. The Campus Design Guidelines are intended to help AUB implement the vision set forth in the master plan, provide for the appropriate control of creative expression when implementing improvements to the campus, and establish standards for building systems. The guidelines are intended to ensure that the overall integrity of the master plan vision is achieved during its incremental implementation, and to assist the individual design teams as they work through the process of detailed design of each improvement recommended in the master plan.

To facilitate use of the guidelines, this document has been separated into three sections: Landscape, Architecture, and Engineering. This separation should not impact the multidisciplinary effort that is required for creating a campus.

The master plan principles for AUB provide the foundation upon which the design guidelines have been built. These master plan principles are:

• To provide an appropriately-sized, state-of-the-art teaching environment by renovating existing buildings and landscape.
• To preserve the function of the Upper Campus as the historic center of the campus.
• To embrace the Medical Center as part of the Upper Campus.
• To provide active landscape management of the Middle Campus, which comprises AUB’s naturalistic landscape.
• To transform the Lower Campus by creating multiple well-connected, distinct centers.
• To create strong pedestrian links between the academic, administrative, student quality-of-life and support facilities.
• To strengthen AUB’s connection, both physically and programmatically, with its neighbors.

The design guidelines are derived from the master plan principles, and are intended to improve the structure, function and visual character of the campus. The design guidelines are aimed at ensuring that as the campus evolves, it continues to be a unique aesthetic asset.