

THE PROJECT

This study developed a series of design analyses for this state university campus located in an historic mill town in central Massachusetts. Studies focused on collaborative university-city development opportunities along the North Street corridor connecting the University to downtown, and space utilization and reallocation studies.

CHALLENGE

Fitchburg State University, one of six such institutions in the Commonwealth's higher education system, has experienced flat enrollment over the last several years and operates a physical plant better suited (in size and technological capabilities) to its period of largest enrollment, the 1970's. The campus is located a quarter-mile distant from Main Street, the city's principal, but under-occupied, commercial street. The connecting section of North Street is characterized by under-utilized commercial uses to the south and low-cost rental housing adjacent the University to the north. The area lies within the city's redevelopment district, and, in fact, the city owns many parcels along the street.

SOLUTION

The planning team worked with University and city redevelopment officials to generate a series of alternative schemes that incorporate a mixture of initiatives: university, municipal and commercial. The favored concept envisioned a phased process that would accommodate space needs for the University (student and employee housing, academic, and public service) as an anchor and foot-traffic generator for a set of commercial uses fronting on a new, compact urban open space at the junction of North and Main Streets.

Subsequently, DOBER LIDSKY MATHEY (DLM) worked with the University to develop space reallocation scenarios and strategies to adjust space available to University needs while simultaneously demonstrating to state officials the University's commitment to effective space management and re-configuration of the space inventory for efficient space utilization.

RESULTS

The University and City are now well-positioned to identify, attract, shape, direct, and support promising development opportunities as they arise, and to coordinate development activities in the North Street corridor for the mutual benefit of the University, the City, and its taxpayers.



EDGERLY HALL



LIBRARY CAMPUS CENTER



NORTH STREET REDEVELOPMENT ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

Additionally, the University has an up-to date sense of its space management objectives and the concrete steps needed to accommodate space needs in the space available. This proactive space management posture puts the campus on a solid footing as it works with the State to create new facilities to meet future needs.

*Project completed under previous name: Dober, Lidsky, Craig and Associates, Inc.

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CREATING CAMPUS SOLUTIONS