The Open Forum sessions introduce participants to the Master Planning process, summarize conclusions drawn from early analysis and listening sessions, and explain the preliminary direction of the plan. The presentation portion of the meeting lasts about 25 minutes to leave significant time for discussion.
This Master Plan will document the university’s vision for the next 20 years of physical development on campus. Typically, UWW would revisit and update this document approximately every 10 years; however, the last Master Plan was completed in 1994.

A master plan needs to consider the campus comprehensively and with a long-range view; we need to think about the full range of students, faculty, and staff in the university community today as well as those who will be on the campus in 20 years.

Ayers Saint Gross is a design firm of architects, landscape architects, interior designers, graphic designers, and planners. We are unique in that 95% of our work is for colleges and universities. We bring knowledge of trends and best practices across higher education. It is critical that this expertise is blended with the expertise that the campus community has about their campus from living, learning, and working there every day. This is why open forums are so important to the process.
The Master Plan process brings together many diverse stakeholder groups and expertise. As a result, it takes time. Our process for this plan is completing a campus-wide Space Needs Assessment concurrently to the Master Plan. The assessment documents every space on campus - classroom, office, lab, storage room, etc – and assesses whether the campus as a whole has an adequate amount of space for its student body. The Master Plan process also includes experts in transportation and parking, landscape architecture, building renovations, and utilities infrastructure. An Advisory Committee made up of faculty, staff, and student representatives is guiding the process.

We have currently moved through the initial phase of Observations and Plan Direction and are in the midst of Plan Development. We have completed a scenario planning exercise with the Advisory Committee that resulted in a preferred direction.
At the beginning of the process, we analyzed the campus and held many listening sessions. This process revealed several consistent themes. This presentation highlights a few that have been most formative to the plan.
Analysis of the natural systems that make up the campus affirm the importance of the glacial landscape topography and natural areas in defining campus character.
Analysis of campus built systems reinforce the compact nature of the campus and the separation of academic, residential, and athletic areas of the campus.

The campus devotes a significant amount of land to parking. While it may not always be located in the exact location that people would like, the total quantity is significant.
Building quality was a recurring theme in listening sessions. A significant portion of the campus’ building stock was originally constructed in the 1960s and has reached a point of needing reinvestment. New and newly renovated buildings on campus were often cited as a strength, but many listening session participants mentioned that the high quality of new space makes the older space feel that much worse by comparison.
A second consistent theme was that the campus could do more to welcome its visitors, whether prospective students or outside guests. The welcome center doesn’t support the functionality that people would like and doesn’t communicate a collegiate environment.
The university community’s inclusion of all students was repeatedly mentioned as a great asset. The efforts to make the campus accessible to those with limited mobility are noticed and appreciated, but also highlight the areas where outdated buildings and steep topography pose accessibility challenges.
The overarching themes drawn from observations of campus and listening sessions were translated into six Guiding Principles that are informing the development of the Master Plan. These include aligning the physical campus with the mission of the institution and providing appropriate quantity of consistently high quality space. The Master Plan will reinforce the university’s distinct identity, support its community, and connect the campus. It will help the campus set a sustainable course and steward their resources.

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The Advisory Committee and consultant team have established a preliminary direction for the Master Plan. The Space Needs Assessment is not yet finalized and as a result, the proposals for new academic facilities do not fully reflect the conclusions of the needs assessment. Initial results suggest that the proposed academic buildings will not need to be as large as they are currently drawn.
Four scenarios for future campus development were studied. Each concentrated development in a different area of campus: on the west side of the campus reinforcing Carter Mall, along Starin Road creating an active street, strengthening east-west connections across the drumlin and between residential communities, and in the core of campus.
As the result of the scenario planning exercise, the team created a hybrid direction. Orange buildings show residence halls, purple buildings show academic footprints. As of yet, which departments go in each new building has not been identified.
Academic facilities still need to be reconciled with the space needs assessment. These facilities reflect the Tennis Building and Student Success Center, which have already been designed. New proposals include an addition to Upham Hall, a new academic building on Carter Mall, and a new addition to Hyer Hall at the site of the historic Old Main. While that idea was received favorably by the Advisory Committee, early results from the Space Needs Analysis do not show any needs that would be a natural fit for that site.
The new academic building on Carter Mall would have a visitors center included on the ground floor. This site is closer to Main Street than the existing visitors center and has proximity to parking. Signage directing guests to the visitors center would need to be coordinated with the City of Whitewater.
Renovations are a significant component of the master plan. The Master Plan will affirm the need to renovate several of the buildings on campus; however, the renovations will not all be able to happen at once. The implementation phase of the Master Plan process will establish sequencing and priorities for capital projects.
Housing and dining are a significant and exciting component of this plan. Due to planned enrollment growth, a new Intensive English Language program with residence hall needs, the desire to vacate off-campus leases, and the need for improved quality and accessibility, the campus needs a substantial quantity of new housing. The 20 year master plan will show four new residence halls housing 400 students each. Three of the halls will provide the capacity to replace Wells Hall, which will then be taken offline as renovations to bring it to the desired quality and accessibility would be cost prohibitive. They are sited to connect the east and west campus residential communities that exist today, making the campus feel more connected.

New housing will require additional dining capacity. Similar to Wells Hall, renovations to Esker would likely be more costly than building new. The Master Plan identifies a new dining hall site south of existing Esker Hall. After completing the new dining hall, the Esker site would accommodate the fourth residence hall.
Each of the buildings proposed is sited to improve campus connectivity and reinforce the structure of its circulation. The proposed academic buildings at Carter Mall and as an addition to Hyer Hall would improve connectivity across the drumlin by providing upper level exits, much like the University Center.
Many of the new buildings are sited on parking lots. Parking lots make good building sites because they are already flat and are not undisturbed natural landscape. By constructing new facilities on already disturbed lands, the campus avoids damaging natural areas on campus.

Over time, new buildings will result in reduced quantity of parking on campus. Some of this lost parking will be made up by finding new locations for parking, while some of it will be handled through parking management.
Many aspects of the Master Plan have impacts on campus sustainability. As the Master Plan progresses, the documentation will explore these impacts more thoroughly. This diagram shows three considerations that have been given to sustainability: building orientation, grey-field redevelopment, and building reuse.
The Master Plan team will hold another workshop in February to present the Draft Plan after reconciliation with the Space Needs Assessment and other more detailed studies.