The Drexel University urban campus district
Generating innovation, investment, and community for university and city
AGENDA

• **Context:**  *Transit without TOD*

• **Strategy:**  *Convergence of university mission with market-oriented TOD*

• **Actions:**  *Independent and collaborative*
Neighborhoods and neighbors

- MANTUA
- POWELTON VILLAGE
- PENN PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL
- U. CITY H.S.
- SCIENCE CENTER
- 30TH ST STATION
- Drexel
- UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
- MIXED-USE
- CENTER CITY
- LOWER NORTH PHILADELPHIA
- SCHUYKILL RIVER
- UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Transit without TOD
Transit without TOD
Yet thousands of people bike, walk and take transit daily...
And there is plenty of transit
Travel to Campus Daily
(At least 16 days/month)
Kittelson Associates

- Comp Pass not widely used
- Transit Check would be more popular if available
- Bike parking and showers were desired
- 85% of drivers drive alone

*Green My Ride: Drexel Faculty and Staff Transportation Survey Results and Recommendations
March 2010 Transportation Survey
Drexel’s mission

• Experientially based
• Technologically driven
• Engaging the urban environment
Drexel’s new leadership: John Fry

Responsible for Penn’s recent integration into West Philadelphia
Pursuing academic quality through growth: Recent past

West Philly campus doubled enrollment over past 15 years
Pursuing academic quality through growth: Next 10+ years

- 4,400 more student beds
- Double academic/research space to roughly 6 million GSF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Categories, Excluding Housing</th>
<th>Housing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,250,000 (+86%)</td>
<td>630,000 ASF (+71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1,450,000 ASF (+101%)</td>
<td>710,000 ASF (+80%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2,300,000 ASF (+161%)</td>
<td>930,000 ASF (+105%)</td>
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1891: Interdisciplinary Institute

Drexel: Art, science, and industry gathered under one roof

Center City: Region’s commercial core

Penn: Distinct campus emerging since 1872 relocation to West Philadelphia
1991: Mature University

**Science Center:** Established commercialization catalyst

**Drexel:** Variety of strong colleges, signature co-op program, but campus lacks identity, urbanity

**Center City:** Peak as business center

**Penn:** Extensive but introverted campus
2011: A residential campus and full spectrum of professional schools

Science Center: Gradual research expansion

Drexel: Growing on-campus student community; expanded range of academic disciplines

Drexel Health Sciences cluster

Center City: Renaissance as a choice place to live

Penn: Significant investments make West Philadelphia a place of safety, amenity, choice
2021: Drexel’s District: Portal to Innovation

**Powelton Village/Mantua:** Diverse neighborhood with expanded array of housing and retail choices

**Research City:** Science Center, Drexel and private sector collaborate in research

**Drexel Portal:** Urban campus brings minds together around walkable streets and interdisciplinary facilities

**Center City:** Integrally linked to Innovation City economy and community

**30th Street District:** Mixed-use connection to Philadelphia and the world

**Penn:** Connecting University City to the Schuykill
2041: Regional Economic Engine

**Powelton Village/Mantua:** Diverse neighborhood with expanded array of housing and retail choices

**30th Street District:** Growth over rail yards further leverages strategic regional/global access

**Research City:** Expanded private sector research presence

**Drexel Portal:** Growing research capabilities draw more academic and business investment

**Center City:** Integrally linked to Innovation City economy and community

**Penn:** Connecting University City to the Schuykill
2011-2041 MASTER PLAN STRATEGY: Making Drexel a portal to innovation

Build on Drexel’s distinctive engagement with its city:

• Establish the Drexel Portal
• Bring the campus to the street
• Draw the Drexel community together around shared places
• Create an innovation community
Establish the Drexel Portal

- Place the full range of campus activities within a 5-minute walk.
- Connect the District to the world via Drexel’s extensive local/regional transit assets.
- Concentrate the core undergraduate campus
  - Professional schools take prominent perimeter sites
  - Reposition administrative and support services
- Preserve, intensify and overlap college precincts.
- Convey strong campus identity.
Bring the campus to the street

• Improve convenience, safety of walking:
  – Active ground-floor uses visible to/from sidewalk
  – Improved crosswalks, lighting

• Implement infill development strategy: Terraces

• Make streets into great public spaces:
  – Green and beautiful
  – Inviting gathering
  – Drexel/city interchange

• Improve transportation choices—walk, bike, transit
Draw the Drexel community together around shared places

• Provide gathering spaces for different people...
  – Interdisciplinary
  – Student-student
  – Student-faculty
  – Faculty-faculty

• ...in multiple forms and places
  – Formal and informal
  – In/around campus buildings
  – In campus green spaces
  – Along streets

• Expand dining, retail and entertainment amenities that bring people together.
Create an innovation community

- Demonstrate sustainability innovations.
- Intensify the overlap and magnitude of campus, workplace, residential and amenity activities to foster creative innovation.
- Connect students with employers and the world beyond campus.
- Build a larger, more active University City neighborhood.
- Produce a revenue stream for Drexel.
Focusing intensity around transit
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Focusing intensity around transit: Development density
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Focusing intensity around transit: Overlapping activities
Bringing walkable streets to life
Ultimately growing TOD over rail yards
JFK Boulevard: Vision
30th Street: Today
30th Street: Vision
Students support amenities that then attract target faculty, staff

• Recent housing development in University City has demonstrated market appeal for students and the general market.

• Drexel’s growing student body and staff represent untapped potential to attract more retail, entertainment.

• Added retail choices and more walkable streets can attract people both to...
  – Work and study at Drexel
  – Live in an emerging 30th Street neighborhood
Precedent: Central Square, Cambridge
Precedent: West Fenway, Boston
Office uses already present, planned

- Slower growth rate than housing or hotel
- High-speed rail to NYC would transform opportunity
ACTIONS

Drexel Master Plan Action Sequence

- **Ongoing**
- **2012 - 2016**
- **2017 - 2026**
- **Major building project**
- **Landscape or smaller building / terrace project**

Corridor Focus Area

**Nearer Term** ↔ **Longer Term**

COMAD

ACC student housing + retail

LeBow

Tutoring Terrace
Mixed-use developer partnership

Project under way with American Campus Communities will continue Chestnut Street’s mixed-use revival:

• 833 student beds
• 18,000SF pedestrian-oriented retail
• 17,000SF academic and/or additional retail
Infill “terraces” provide immediate walkability and retail choice
2011 acquisition of JFK’s north side and University Crossings
Collaboration with city: JFK to become green street at heart of 30th St. TOD
Pilot project for progressive Green City, Clean Waters program
Defining academic/housing program growth and sequence

Academic space needs—Summary
Discussion
The Drexel University urban campus district
Generating innovation, investment, and community for university and city

Presentation for Multimodal Hubs: Realizing Placemaking Potential to Entice Economic Development
Ben Carlson LEED AP | Goody Clancy | Rail-Volution 2011
Extra slides