

*Studio 7*

VISIONARY ARRIVAL:  
**Western Edge Master Plan,  
University of Notre Dame**

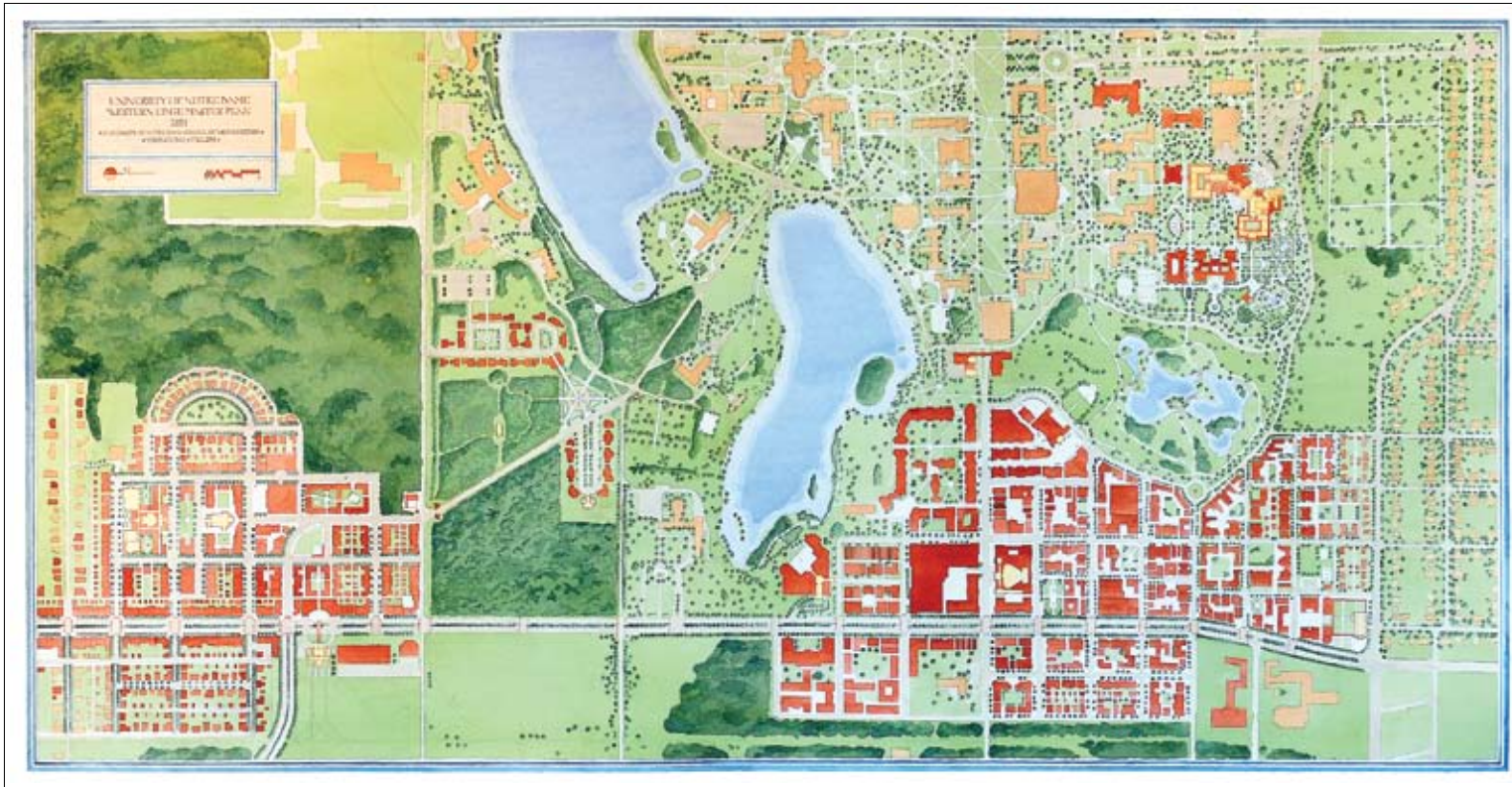
*Fall 2001*

Our first studio, planned while we were still living in Santa Fe, was undertaken in complete innocence of the university's own plans to focus on the east side of campus. The students produced the first PowerPoint and the largest watercolor painting ever seen at the School of Architecture, and came up with approaches to the future that make even more sense now than they did then.

BUILDING COMMUNITY STARTS AT HOME, and Notre Dame is well positioned to do so, according to its mission statement: "The University encourages a way of living consonant with a Christian community... Residential life endeavors to develop that sense of community and of responsibility that prepares students for subsequent leadership in building a society that is at once more human and more divine." As a well-established institution of higher learning, Notre Dame has the ability to think and plan over a longer term than institutions that have to respond to short-term fluctuations in politics and culture and finance. Twelve Notre Dame fifth-year architecture students participated in this studio, directed by Sallie Hood and Ron Sakal.

Currently, most visitors' first impression of Notre Dame is the ill-defined and confusing western edge, as seen from the end of the Indiana Toll Road's exit ramp at mile 77. There's no distinctive border to suggest that you're approaching something important. The streets are more like highways than community-based thoroughfares, and they separate the university from related institutions and nearby communities. Landscaping, street furniture, and attractive signage are lacking. This careless and primarily auto-oriented approach offers a poor model of sustainability. By comparison, the campus's southern entryway is well-defined, announces the institution, and is easily entered on foot, by bicycle, or by car.

These considerations are especially important as the university plans for future growth, which might involve accommodating 50 percent more buildings and people in 2101 than in 2001.



University of Notre Dame  
Western Edge 100-year Plan  
Studio

Wherever it occurs, that expansion should reflect the best of the existing campus, and reclaim areas like the western edge.

Student proposals sought to emphasize the quality of life and traditions of the University of Notre Dame, St. Mary's College, and Holy Cross College; to physically integrate institutions and communities now separated; to promote diverse social experiences; and to model sustainable growth. They envisioned a series of gradual improvements that would accommodate growth over the short

term (2-5 years), medium term (50 years), and long term (100 years). Using ideas and tools drawn from architecture, landscape architecture, transportation planning, and urban redevelopment, students proposed ways of creating a more sustainable and walkable community. Their proposals would present a welcoming face to the larger South Bend community, and would offer many different types of residential accommodations, as well as such diverse land uses as a commuter train station, parish church, theater, museum, grocery, hotel, and banquet hall.

### Highway 933

Students proposed adding lighting, plantings, and street furniture to make US 933 more pleasant to walk along. Equally important, they proposed to make it less intimidating to cross on foot, by reconfiguring it as a boulevard with a central median—all without reducing its traffic-carrying capacity (see p. 132).

### Western Procession

Students proposed a line of approach proceeding eastward toward campus through a series of planned vistas that purposefully unfold Notre Dame history and signify its higher goals and purposes. Parts of this passageway would also serve as a wildlife corridor. Beginning at a new South Shore commuter railroad station at the southwest corner of 933 and the Toll Road off-ramp, it would proceed across 933 to a monumental gateway leading into a new neighborhood with diverse faculty and student housing. Passing through one corner of the neighborhood, the roadway would gradually turn south and cross Douglas Road, where another gate would formally announce the campus itself. Continuing diagonally southeast, the visitor would encounter an ecumenical retreat chapel and a community hall before passing between the lakes (see p. 132).

### Dorr Road

North of the road, students proposed a theater and communications center that would create



Community Hall Proposal  
J. Griffin, B. Zant



Retreat Chapel  
J. Griffin, B. Zant



Banquet Hall Interior  
A. Risto



Grocery Store/Residential Building  
M. Kroener

places for interaction with the community and serve as a gateway to the new avenue eastward. They would add a security building at the campus entrance, a hotel for visitors, and new dormitories to take advantage of the lakeside vistas toward the heart of campus (see p. 132).

### **Southern Neighborhood**

On the east side of 933 south from Dorr Road to Angela, students proposed replacing the parking lot and golf course with a new neighborhood, including a parish church

tied to St. Joseph High School, a grocery, a banquet hall to accommodate wedding receptions and similar events, gardens for a new landscape architecture program, and a new Snite Museum. Open spaces would be preserved. The neighborhood would be designed to be welcoming and permeable to walkers, with multiple entry points, carrying through the street grid and scale of the existing South Bend neighborhood south of Angela Boulevard (see p. 133).

Notre Dame's western edge represents a rare opportunity to reshape the university's character and community relations for a long time to come. The planned vistas of the Western Procession would signify the university's higher goals and purposes. Dorr Road would offer a town-gown social space. The southern neighborhood would connect open spaces and the heart of campus. Pedestrian-friendly development can accommodate all kinds of transportation and encourage interaction among students, faculty, alumni, and visitors; it has the potential to respect the existing campus and to open it to the wider world.

## Western Edge, Notre Dame Studio Participants

### Clients

**Studio participants representing the Notre Dame extended family**

**5th-year Architecture Students, School of Architecture:**

**Colette Arrendondo**

**Nicholas Doro**

**Anna Grasso**

**John Griffin**

**Neil Hoyt**

**Meaghan Kroener**

**Katherine Miller**

**Ariane Risto**

**Samantha Salden**

**Kelly Scibona**

**Marina Christina Trejo**

**Brian Zant**

### Notre Dame Faculty:

**Sallie Hood**

Visiting Associate Professor,  
School of Architecture

### Professional Consultants and Studio Reviewers:

**Noel William Barker**

Urban Sociologist, DePaul University

**Michael Bordenaro**

Independent Writer

**Alan De Frees**

Professional Specialist,  
School of Architecture,  
University of Notre Dame

**Brian Kelly, AIA**

Associate Professor and Director  
of the Program in Architecture,  
University of Maryland; Senior Associate  
and Leader of the Notre Dame Master  
Plan Design Team, Ayers Saint Gross

**Lora A. Lucero, Esq., AICP**

Editor, *Planning and Environmental  
Law*, The American Planning  
Association; Planner, New Mexico

**Douglas Marsh, AIA**

University Architect, University  
of Notre Dame

**Jo Patton**

Policy Analyst, Business and  
Professional People for the Public  
Interest (BPI), Chicago, Illinois

**Ron Sakal**

Principal, Sakal & Hood Architecture  
and Urban Design, Chicago, Illinois

**Members of the School of Architecture  
Faculty, University of Notre Dame**

## Student Reflections

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*From day one of Sallie's (or was it Sallie & Ron's) studio (or was it an "office"), that semester was different. The twelve of us were told we would be working on one project together. We would function as an "office." On previous assignments, our class had pulled numerous all-nighters, lived on top of each other studying for a year in Rome, and had assignments in pairs or trios; but none had asked us to take twelve different people-views, personalities, talent, and produce one seamless urban design proposal. This project would require new skills. How long would we brainstorm? When would decisions be made? Who would force compromise or push a schedule? We were students, classmates, friends. There was no boss, no management. But we dove in and dreamed big in ideas and presentation. Timing, phasing, scheduling would have to be precise. We took on an ambitious effort to produce a larger-than-life eight-foot-long watercolor. And we'd need a PowerPoint to present both our technical concepts and academic ambitions, as well as speak to the public.*

*The studio began with something familiar—precedent study—that instantly became more than simple library research. We visited the campuses of DePaul University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois at Chicago, each set differently into the city. We analyzed successful aspects and shortcomings of each.*

*We took the lessons and came back to Notre Dame, our home for four years. Here we'd grown from freshmen living dorm life and playing on the quads to "fifth years" living in the community of South Bend. Now we were asked to analyze such personal surroundings through critical, urban-design eyes—to use our skills to plan an optimistic future for Notre Dame. For a place so personal to each of us, it was a giant task, and one that we took on with a great sense of responsibility. We had the skills to give back, assist with these issues, and present a brighter future. The excitement we felt in creating a realistic vision outweighed any difficulties that could arise because of twelve different designers and personalities in a studio atmosphere.*

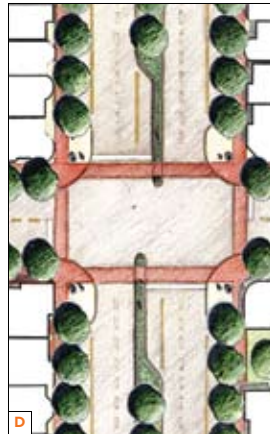
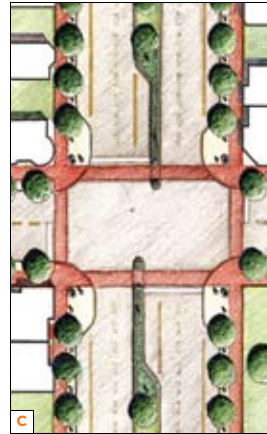
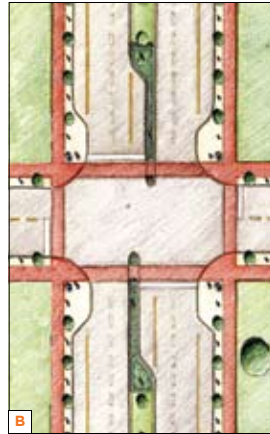
*Today in our professional lives, we face the same challenges that we faced in that studio. Personalities will differ. Goals will misalign. Views diverge. There is not always the same togetherness and shared vision we felt in Sallie's studio. But the skills we developed in that semester still serve us today. While most projects we work on are not as close to our hearts as the campus of Notre Dame, we learn and analyze better because we know each place is as important to its residents as Notre Dame is to us. Enriching communities is a part of our profession that is an honor of which we continuously strive to be worthy.*

## Notre Dame Location



**A** Notre Dame's Western Edge 2-10- year Plan, Studio;  
**B** Notre Dame's Western Edge 50- year Plan, Studio;  
**C** Notre Dame's Western Edge 100- year Plan, Studio

## State Route 933



**A** SR 933 Existing Conditions, Unknown;  
**B** SR 933 Plan in 2-10 years, Studio;  
**C** SR 933 Plan in 50 years, Studio;  
**D** SR 933 Plan in 100 years, Studio

## Dorr Road



**A** Dorr Road Area Map, Studio;  
**B** Dorr Road Campus Entry, K. Miller;  
**C** Dorr Road Dormitories, K. Scibona;  
**D** Dorr Road Theatre, N. Hoyt;  
**E** Grocery Store / Residential Building, M. Kroener;  
**F** Existing Western Campus Entry Gate, Unknown;  
**G** Dorr Road Hotel, M. C. Trejo

## Southern Edge



- A** Banquet Hall Exterior, A. Risto;
- B** Banquet Hall Interior, A. Risto;
- C** South Neighborhood Area Plan, Studio;
- D** Snite Museum of Art, S. Salden;
- E** New Catholic Church, A. Grasso
- F** Western Edge, A. Grasso



## Campus



- A** Notre Dame Campus in 1901, Studio;
- B** Notre Dame Campus in 2001, Studio;
- C** Notre Dame Campus in 2101, Studio

## North Western Edge



- A** Western Edge Commuter Train Station, C. Arredondo;
- B** North Security Building, N. Doro;
- C** North Neighborhood Plan, Studio;
- D** Community Hall Proposal, J. Griffin, B. Zant;
- E** North Entry Gate, N. Doro;
- F** Retreat Chapel, J. Griffin, B. Zant

## Western Edge Master Plan



- A** Notre Dame Western Edge 100-year Plan, Studio