



A new town green for the community of Cardinal Cushing Centers (Phase One)

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# Cardinal Cushing Centers - Village Master Plan Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

In July 2011, Cardinal Cushing Centers (CCC) initiated a master planning process with the mission to provide a plan of action and growth for the CCC community in the future. The goal was to create a blueprint for how the campus could evolve over the next two decades.

The plan strives to embody the mission of CCC and maintain the quality of life of the campus by providing an environment that fosters self-worth and a sense of community for the people who live, work, play, and learn there.

The final master plan is the result of three earlier phases: Existing Conditions & Needs, Concept Alternatives, and Preferred Alternative. Throughout the planning process there was a community-wide effort to develop data; analyze existing buildings, land, developed outdoor spaces, pedestrian and traffic circulation; and carefully examine existing and proposed programmatic needs.

The final plan is a mechanism for continuous sound decision-making. It will provide the framework for addressing the physical needs of the campus as the mission evolves.

## Summary Findings

The master plan explores programmatic needs recognizing that learning occurs in many types of spaces beyond the traditional classroom, including employment training.

Programmatic goals include:

- Creating an inter-generational community setting where people of all abilities experience greater opportunities for independence, meaningful social interaction and lasting friendships;
- Promoting flexible uses and cross-institutional opportunities in all buildings regardless of their predetermined purpose;
- Developing a master plan response that emphasized social interaction at multiple scales for both indoor and outdoor spaces;
- Responding to increasing numbers of adults to be engaged in the core village setting;
- Satisfying student activity and employment training priorities that have grown beyond original spaces;
- Creating state-of-the-art specialized instructional and rehabilitation spaces that support CCC's unique culture.

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To improve upon the less successful aspects of the CCC village including:

- To identify existing spaces and distribution that is not suitable for its use, or poorly located, and to explore potential re-purposing and relocation of such uses;
- To prioritize existing facility improvements that focus on deferred maintenance, improving energy performance, occupant comfort and the quality of living and the instructional environments;
- The open space network and the less than hospitable landscape areas including the area around the residential buildings west of Washington Street (West Village);
- To improve the vehicular network at Cardinal Cushing Centers by creating safer street crossings, redesigning Washington Street with narrower lanes, removing surface parking lots along entry drive and Washington Street, redesigning entry sequence, from the Chapel to the Administration/Education Building and, as a result, making CCC more inviting to adults, students, staff and visitors alike;
- To improve the pedestrian environment quality and safety with an emphasis on shifting parking and roadways away from the core area and improving accessibility to and between buildings;
- To reduce traffic impacts by consolidating core parking and roadways to the periphery;
- To promote landscape strategies to reduce impervious surfaces and incorporate innovative and sustainable storm water management strategies;
- To explore the potential for new development and landscape improvements that reinforce and enhance new pedestrian corridors/quadrangles connecting the village along the east-west axis;
- To explore the strategic siting of new buildings in a way that reinforces all of the goals stated above including reinforcing and improving the principles of the historic structure.

# Cardinal Cushing Centers: Village Master Plan



Future town green, integrated building and village center buildings

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## Priorities for Development

As Cardinal Cushing Centers continues to grow it has clear priorities to accommodate growth, increase enrollment, retain the existing residents, expand its employment programs and create a lively mixed-use village environment. The goals/priorities take shape in a number of ways. New buildings and renovations will accommodate growing programs and provide spaces suitable to contemporary standards. A redesigned landscape will make the village a place that the CCC community and visitors want to spend time on and take pride in. New programs, and their associated facilities, will respond to growing interests, changes and opportunities in the work force.

It is the hope that these priorities will continue the tradition of a school and center that is competitive with their peer institutions and continue to lead the way in employment training opportunities. The main priorities are as follows:

### Create a green and walkable environment

- Give everyone a place to relax, interact, reflect and take pride in.
- A space that promotes the integration of the different populations at CCC.
- A walkable village that takes into account the safety of individuals and acts as a connective device for the village.

### Concentrate Growth

- Focus on areas that allow the village to become more dense thereby creating synergy between programs and act as another way to promote a walkable and sustainable environment.

### Enhance Existing Strengths and Build Upon Successful Projects

- Identify programs, conditions and current activities in which CCC excels and learn from these strengths.
- Continue to follow in the footsteps of successful projects and further advance the mission.

### Identify Areas of Opportunity

- Take advantage of additional land by planning for future development that serves the mission of CCC and is a financially sustainable model for growth.
- Identify select sites that are suitable for development
- Target buildings or already developed sites for demolition and use of those sites for future projects.

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## Development Guidelines

### Areas of Opportunity

The most exciting part of Cardinal Cushing Centers' future is the breadth of opportunity in forming the village. A forward thinking plan with a mission of legacy will shape both the village and the community who are a part of it. A new landscape, integrated classrooms, renovated residences and local village retail can have lasting effects on the individuals who are able to take advantage of its presence at CCC.

A number of opportunities for CCC's growth stand out in particular and are further addressed in detail later in the document.

#### 1. Landscape

The main area of opportunity for landscape improvements is redesigning the area around the new residential buildings and introducing a more formal open space that can serve as both a quad and a town green, appealing equally to students, adults, residents and visitors alike. The current landscape is a patchwork of areas that are disconnected, at times well maintained, such as the sloping lawn next to Fatima House, and other times with little to no landscaping at all, such as the area around the new residential buildings. A redesigned landscape would look to connect all elements of CCC from the residences on the Hill to Kennedy Hall to a renewed retail zone.

Aside from a new design for the central quad, there are other significant landscape improvements to be made and opportunities for new open space. An obvious need in the village is for a more formal and continuous pedestrian circulation system. The property is currently disjointed, dispersed and lacks a clear path network. The concept of a pedestrian spine linking the disparate parts of the main village could restore a sense of interconnection in the village and perhaps even make the long walks between buildings seem more pleasant and more inviting.

In addition to open space, the landscape plan should address the streetscape condition on the property, such as street crossing on Washington Street and the lack of sidewalks.



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## 2. Building Sites

The next 10 to 20 years offer an opportunity for Cardinal Cushing Centers' growth, much of which has the potential to happen to the core village. As the programs grow, existing buildings outlive their useful life span and renovation becomes cost-prohibitive, new buildings will be built and existing buildings taken down. This will allow for well-considered and context sensitive infill development. A number of sites are potential candidates for new buildings.

### **Administration/Education Building**

The current Administration/Education Building, which houses both administrative functions, including the CEO's office, classrooms and the auditorium is beginning to outlive its useful life. There are substantial repairs needed to the windows, accessibility issues, heating and ventilation and general technological and furnishing upgrades. The repairs necessary for the building may make it cost prohibitive or it may not address the changing needs of the programs at CCC.

In that case, there is the possibility that it could be transformed into affordable housing.

### **Central Parking Lots**

The two main surface parking lots at the CCC serve as staff and visitor parking. The parking lots are ample and rarely filled to capacity. In the future, as the adult population increases and, as a result, the staff level decreases, the amount of parking provided will be even less necessary. As is, there is an oversupply of parking already. The lot across from the Portiuncula Chapel has 80 spaces and the lot on Washington Street has 92 spaces.

The parking lots - in their current locations - are unattractive and not conducive to providing the kind of seamless village experience that CCC seeks. The lot at the main entrance does not provide a welcoming environment as one enters CCC, but instead feeds into a sea of asphalt. The parking lot on Washington Street breaks up the continuity in the village fabric that is appropriate for Cardinal Cushing Centers.

These sites could be used to locate the new village retail, a new open space and a new classroom/employment training center.

### **Existing Cushing Retail**

The Cardinal Cushing Centers retail cluster (the Bass Cafe, Cushing Trader, Timeless Treasures Shop and Greenhouse) are successful examples of how CCC integrates employment opportunities with retail operations. CCC would like to expand upon and improve these programs. The buildings that the retail operations are currently housed in are approaching the end of their serviceable use. They are also poorly interfaced with the street and difficult to access with the exception of the parking lot off of Route 53. The proposition of new village retail buildings would make these structures obsolete and therefore prime candidates for demolition, and would open up the space for future building construction and expansion of the open space.

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## 3. Expansion / Additional Property

While Cardinal Cushing Centers has space on its core property to accommodate future spaces needs, it may ultimately need to expand. In this event, the organization is fortunate due to the large tract of land adjacent to the main property (210 acres). The difficulty lies in providing access to that land due to the presence of wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes.

However, there is some area behind McCann Hall that could be used for immediate expansion of the village for future housing needs. The larger question of growth is an examination of what the potential development scenarios might be for the rear property beyond the expansion of the school and employment programs.

Cardinal Cushing Centers: Village Master Plan  
Preferred Alternative



# Cardinal Cushing Centers – Village Master Plan Executive Summary

## Major Capital Projects

To continue Cardinal Cushing Centers' mission plan for a changing population, a series Capital Projects should be implemented that improves the environment (interior, social and natural) for resident, students, staff and visitors at CCC. They range from landscape improvements and increased open space to new facilities for employment education and opportunities. The following list of projects looks at these improvements in detail.

### 1. Landscape

Project Area	3.4 Acres
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Despite some of CCC's landscape being well maintained there are still areas which are substantially lacking in usable space and appropriate landscape treatments. Most notably the outdoor space around the newer residential buildings west of Washington Street.

A predominant theme is the lack of cohesiveness of the village as a whole. It is fragmented, disturbed by surface parking, street crossings and poorly maintained outdoor space in parts. An overall landscape strategy could improve these deficiencies.

The following are some of the targeted improvements:

- Redesigned entry sequence at the Administration/Education Building to reduce impervious surface, increase safety and add open space.
- Central Quad to provide a communal open space to be used by the entire CCC population, as well as the adjacent community, a true town green.
- Streetscape improvements to narrow lanes, add street trees and sidewalks.
- New garden plot and greenhouse
- Redesigned outdoor space around residences west of Washington Street (West Village) to include plaza, fountain and passive green space.

### 2. Becker House Renovation—Completed 2012

Project Square Footage	3,275 GSF
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The transition of the residences west of Washington Street to host an adult population will inevitably include some renovations. A more immediate project is for an interior renovation of Becker House and landscaping around the house to include gardens, sitting areas and peripheral landscape treatments, such as fencing.

### 3. Fatima House Renovation—Completed 2012

Project Square Footage	4,560 GSF
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As one of the oldest buildings at Cardinal Cushing Centers, Fatima Hall has gone through a number of renovations and, as a result, it is disjointed with poor accessibility. There is both interior and exterior maintenance that needs to be addressed, such as the exterior siding on the building, the bathrooms and the ceiling in the common room.

## 4. Kennedy Hall Renovation

Project Square Footage	68,000 GSF
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Kennedy Hall, which now holds administrative offices, day habilitation and employment training, will ultimately be renovated for 48 units of affordable housing. There will also be common spaces and program administration offices. It will be an affordable housing project that is seeking tax credit financing at present.

This is part of the reasoning behind the proposed integrated building, as the existing uses in Kennedy Hall will have to find a new location.

## 5. Integrated Building

Project Square Footage	52,563 GSF
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- A new building which is able to host multiple uses by incorporating flexible space will include the following uses.
- New classrooms to replace existing classroom space in Kennedy Hall.
- New employment training space to replace current space in Kennedy Hall to accommodate between 45-55 students. This will be integrated with the retail space.
- Space allocated for specialized services. Should be flexible and may be increased depending on the changing nature of people at CCC.
- Space for adult day community services

## 6. Future Village Center Buildings

Project Square Footage	14,400 GSF
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The full realization of the Cardinal Cushing Centers Master Plan recommends two additional buildings on the new central open space to accommodate future office, therapeutic and classroom uses.

These buildings will provide the missing pieces for framing the open space and creating the sense of a true town green. These buildings will add an estimated 14,400 GSF to the campus.

# Cardinal Cushing Centers: Village Master Plan

## Phase One: Construction/Renovation/Demolition



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## Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative takes an incremental approach to the planning process, showing a phased development plan where the integrated building is constructed first and subsequent buildings are added, as needed. The new building is necessary to accommodate uses that will be displaced from Kennedy Hall once that building undergoes renovation for affordable housing. The new building will house uses varying from classroom space to offices to retail to residential units. This sort of integration and flexibility will create a true sense of community on campus by mixing uses and people.

The phased approach will include a new campus landscape in concert with the new building. The initial steps will be to improve the existing parking on the entry drive with new landscaping and a slightly reduced footprint. Once that is completed the parking lot on Washington Street will be removed and overflow parking will be accommodated in a new lot on Route 53. The removal of the parking lot on Washington St clears space for the redesign of the village landscape between Washington Street and Route 53.

It is advised that construction on the Integrated Building begin prior to the construction on the landscape, as it will disrupt the existing grounds around the development site.

Additional buildings along the entry drive will “close the loop”, so to speak on creating an enclosed open space that is accessible for students, residents, staff and visitors alike.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

### Advantages:

- Creates presence for CCC along Route 53 with ground floor retail that establishes the desired village environment.
- New Integrated Building has both a presence on Route 53 and continues its position as an anchor on the campus quad.
- Provides appropriate amount of parking.
- Surface parking on Washington Street is eliminated and additional parking on Route 53 is provided.
- Surface parking on entry drive is eliminated to make room for additional future buildings.

### Disadvantages:

- Introduces surface parking along Route 53.
- Requires additional parking along Route 53 near the recycling center
- A phased approach runs the risk of the surface parking on the main entry drive remaining for an unknown duration.
- Surface parking on Washington Street reduces the pedestrian focuses quality of Washington Street by establishing a void in the streetscape.
- Surface parking along entry eliminates the village like, street front presence that is desired.

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## Phasing\*

1. Redesign of surface parking lot on entry drive.
2. Redesign village streetscape and Administration/Education entry sequence.
3. Construction of additional parking along Route 53
4. Removal of surface parking lot along Washington St.
5. Build new Integrated Building (~50,000 GSF)
6. Demolition of existing retail
7. Move classroom, office, specialized services uses from Kennedy Hall to new building.
8. Renovate Kennedy Hall for affordable housing (68,000 GSF)
9. Construct new landscape between Washington St. and Route 53. Includes a "village green" and landscape improvements around the residential buildings.
10. Selective renovation of Administration/Education Building
11. Build new retail and office village buildings (7,200 GSF each) on former entry drive lot.

# Cardinal Cushing Centers: Village Master Plan

## Phase Two: Construction/Renovation/Demolition





Cardinal Cushing Centers

*All ages. All abilities. All together.*

[www.CushingCenters.org](http://www.CushingCenters.org)

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