3.8 Collegetown Precinct

Although not strictly part of the Main Campus, Collegetown does contain a number of properties under University ownership and historically has been closely tied to Core Campus physically and functionally. The precinct contains some of the University’s oldest and most historically significant buildings, including Cascadilla Hall. In addition to academic uses, Collegetown contains private market housing, restaurants, and convenience retail that are amenities for students, staff and faculty. This precinct also contains Sage House and Schuyler House and administrative facilities on East Seneca street and State Street.

Cornell is committed to supporting the vitality, economic viability and neighborhood character of Collegetown and has partnered in the creation of the Collegetown Vision Statement, released in April 2007. The Collegetown Urban Plan and Design Guidelines, to be produced by the City of Ithaca, will provide further direction for the University and City to continue to work together in achieving this vision. Further discussion regarding Collegetown can be found in Section 4.5 and Section 4.19 of Part I of the campus master plan.
• Although no specific development sites have been identified, property acquisition and additional university-led development may be considered on and case-by-case basis. Building massing and design should be in keeping with the neighborhood character of the zone.

• Given that this zone is a transition point between the campus and the city, landscape initiatives, transportation improvements and development should respect the character and quality of the neighborhoods.

• Opportunities to restore existing buildings, landscape and structures should be promoted. Although not a direct responsibility of the university, restoration and improvement to the housing along Linden Avenue will be an important initiative.

• Sheldon Court Apartments and other existing or future buildings in the core of Collegetown should contain active uses on the ground floor that help animate the street.

• The re-landscaping of Eddy Gate Plaza and Walkway has been proposed as a sesquicentennial landscape project. Restoration should include a small pedestrian oriented plaza inside and adjacent to the gateway, more limited parking and vehicle control, upgraded pedestrian circulation and upgraded fencing, removal or replacement of disfigured vehicular guardrails, and the addition of ornamental, spring flowering trees and shrubs.

• The existing gateway to Central Campus on College Avenue should be enhanced, in part by redesigning the Schwartz Center forecourt to make it more attractive and usable for passive programmed activities. An intimate civic plaza can be created by reconfiguring the walls that surround the space.

• Views to Cascadilla Gorge should be protected. These include both views to the gorge from surrounding streets and from the Stone Bridge into the gorge itself.