

# *The Future of UT's Brackenridge Campus*

Recommendations from the  
University of Texas at Austin  
*Faculty Council Committee on the Brackenridge Tract*

*David Hillis, Faculty Council Chair; Sam Wilson, Anthropology; Tom Palaima, Classics; Chris Bell, Geological Sciences; Molly Cummings, Integrative Biology*



# Our Design Principles

- Generate new income for UT-Austin from the Brackenridge Tract in a manner consistent with UT-Austin's mission
- Improve academic programs at UT-Austin
- Improve conditions for overused teaching and research facilities currently located on the Brackenridge Tract
- Free up space on the Main Campus (for new undergraduate teaching facilities and planned faculty expansion)
- Provide improved opportunities for graduate student housing
- Increase opportunities for technology transfer from UT research programs
- Strengthen outreach and improve community relations between UT-Austin and the citizens of Austin and Texas
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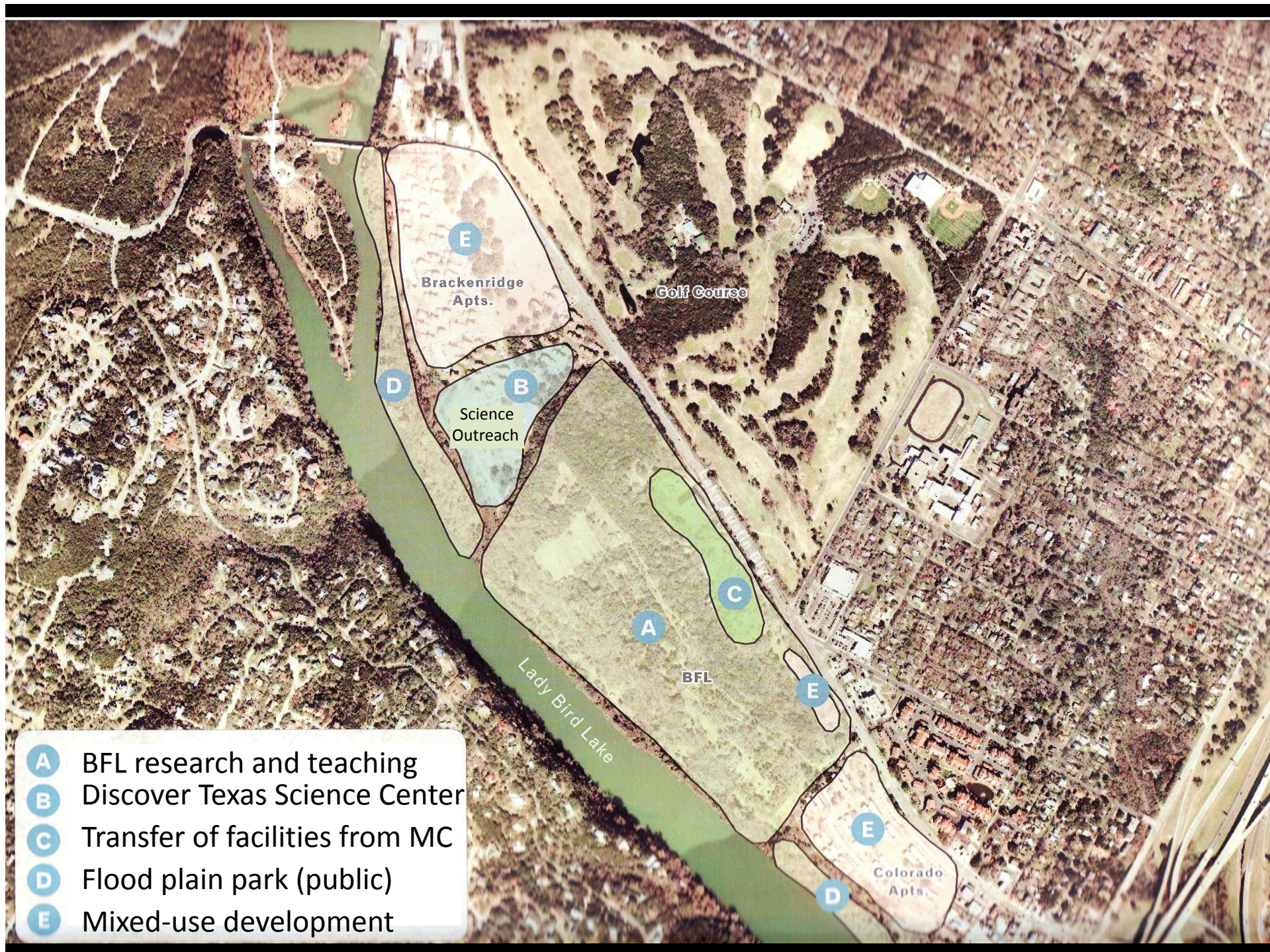
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- A** BFL research and teaching
- B** Discover Texas Science Center
- C** Transfer of facilities from MC
- D** Flood plain park (public)
- E** Mixed-use development



# Overview

- Expanded classroom and research space at BFL, freeing up much needed space on Main Campus
- Research support collections under one roof
- An expanded “Environmental Sciences Campus” and associated Research Park for technology transfer
- A world-class public science center
- Appropriate integrated commercial development and technology transfer to industry
- A modular plan for development that allows development to begin at any time, and allows for future UT needs

# Educational importance of BFL

- Home to field courses taken by over 500 students each year
- Proximity and security are key (a major UT advantage)
  - Students and faculty move back and forth between Main campus and BFL during regular class hours
  - Security for long-term field projects, working at night
- Students gain hands-on research experience
  - Many have capstone experience at BFL
  - Integrate aspects of biology learned in classroom
  - Students become professors, K-12 science and math teachers, environmental scientists and engineers
- Home to many classes across six UT colleges and schools



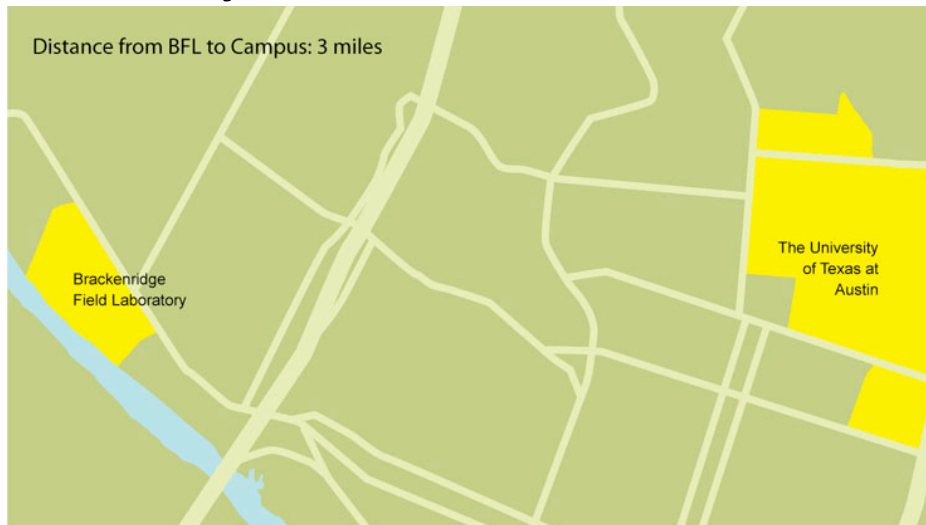
# Research importance

- Magnet for attracting and retaining top faculty, grad students and undergraduates
- One of top-ranked Ecology, Evolution and Behavior graduate programs in the nation (competing with Harvard, Stanford, Chicago, UC-Berkeley, Michigan, and Wisconsin for #1)
- 40 years of long-term data collection
  - Necessary for observing changes in an urban ecosystem
- Studying key issues of our time
  - Invasive species, biodiversity, climate change, genomics, evolution



# Where is BFL?

- 3 miles from campus on Lake
- On a campus bus route
- This proximity is essential for faculty and students



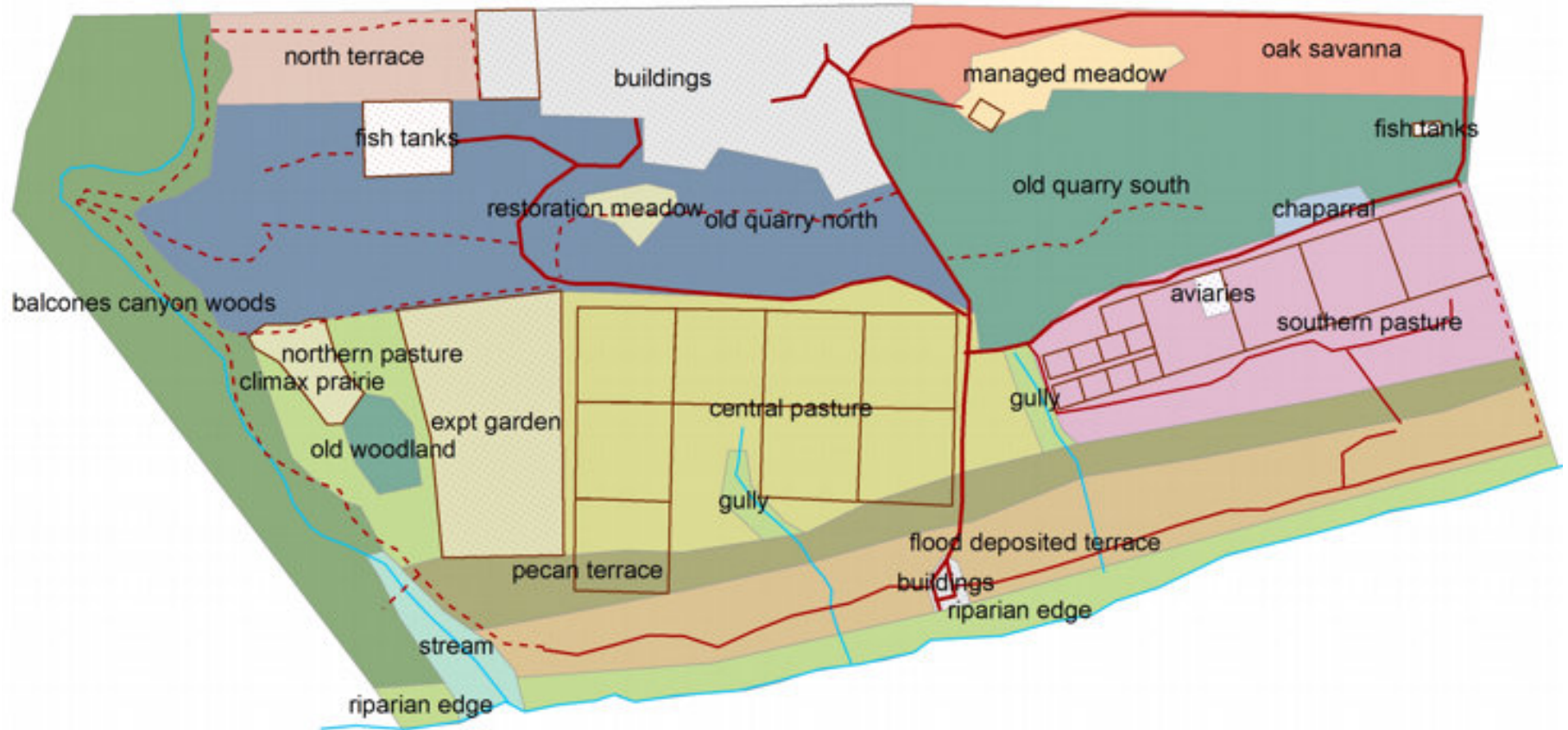


# What are BFL's limitations?



1. Biological and paleontological collections that support BFL are scattered across three campuses
2. Teaching and research buildings are crowded and overused, limiting classes to about 500 students per year


# Current Use of Brackenridge Field Laboratory



# Plans: Stage 1

- Expand the research and teaching facilities of the Brackenridge Field Lab to accommodate increasing teaching and research demands in environmental sciences (e.g., biological sciences, geological sciences, archeology, architecture, civil engineering, etc.)
- Relocate the Texas Memorial Museum, the Plant Resources Center, the Texas Natural History Collection, Invertebrate Fossil Collection, and appropriate faculty and staff from Integrative Biology, Geography, and Geological Sciences to new or renovated space at Brackenridge Tract, where collections can be used more effectively. [Note: the collection facilities needed for research could be moved, even without the construction of a public science center.]
- This will free up about 100,000 square feet of desperately needed space on the Main Campus for development of new undergraduate teaching facilities and for faculty expansion.
- Projected income from new grants: \$20 million per year (projection based on existing average grant/faculty member and projected faculty expansion)





o **Climate Controlled Greenhouse & Office, F22**  
2,156 SF • Expand to 6,000 SF

o **Greenhouse**  
2,500 SF • Expand to 5,000 SF

o **Lake Austin Center 60,000 SF**  
60,000 SF • For classrooms, incubator space, lectures hall, new faculty offices which all help take the burden of Main Campus area shortages

o **Brackenridge Field Laboratory**  
14,958 SF • Renovate for maximum usage in conjunction with the other facilities

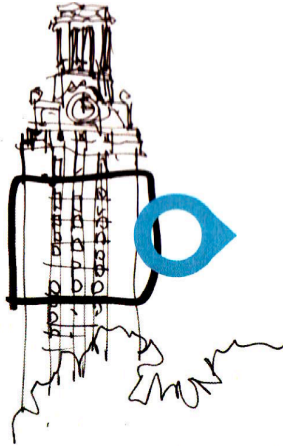
o **Facility Managers Residence**  
2,000 SF • Housing to support BFL's 24/7 on-call needed care

o **Butterfly Greenhouse**  
5,000 SF • Expand to 15,000 SF

Expansion

Expansion

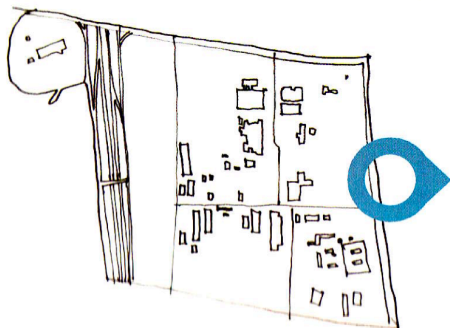




Would free up 6 floors of Main (28,000 sq. ft.) occupied by the Plant Resources Center, as well as at least 20,000 sq. ft. in Biology buildings (BioLabs, PAT), allowing for much needed on-campus program expansion. Other programs (such as many of the teaching programs for the new Environmental Sciences Degree program) could also be moved to BFL, or developed there.



Would free up the entire Texas Memorial Museum for development of an on-campus teaching center, thus generating at least 27,000 square feet of new teaching space at a central Campus location (this space would not be fully available until Stage 3)



Would free up 8,000 sq. ft. of space at the Pickle Research Campus (currently used by Texas Natural Science Center Collection) for expanded facilities for University Libraries (or other current needs), as well as space used for Invertebrate Fossil Collection

# Stage 2

- Move some graduate student housing (Colorado Apartments) from Brackenridge Tract to the site of the existing Gateway apartments, as recommended in the Cooper-Robertson proposal
- This will increase available graduate student housing, and free up land for the development of a UT Research Park along the shores of Lady Bird Lake to promote technology transfer from UT environmental sciences to industry
- Projected income, rent from industrial partners: \$9 million per year (based on industrial rent of \$30/square foot/year, and 300,000 square feet); could be expanded as demand dictates
- Income on royalties from new patents from technology transfer

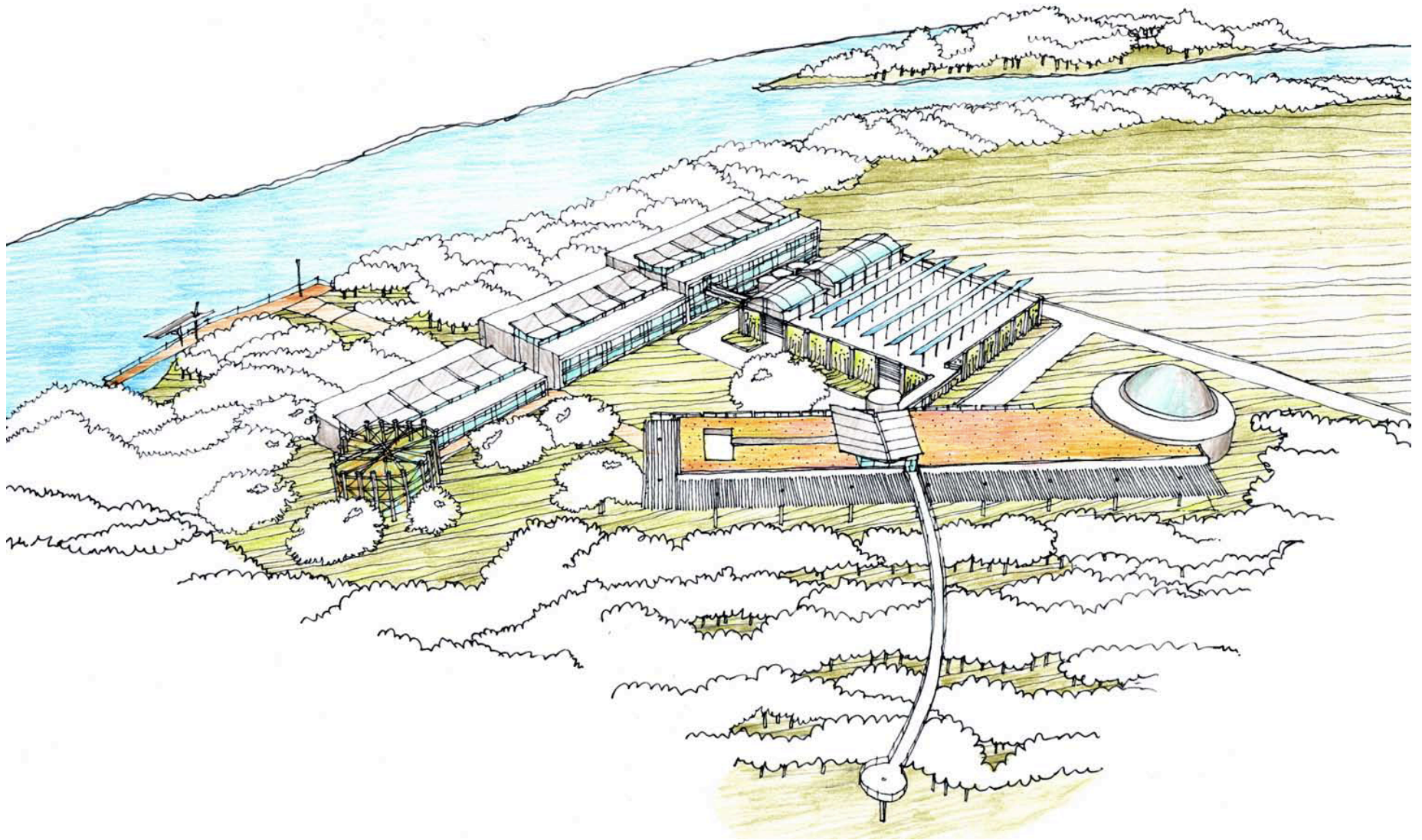
# *Examples of Industrial Partners*

- Biofuel research and development (UT researchers are already among the world leaders in the development of biofuels from algae and other biological sources; research already in progress at BFL)
- Biotech (former UT biology faculty already have developed Texas' most successful biotech companies, and continue to work closely with UT biologists; research already in progress at UT)
- Environmental engineering and policy (UT's Environmental Science Institute and BEG have leading programs; research already in progress at BFL)
- Clean energy technology (solar, wind, and battery technology; UT Engineering has breakthrough programs)
- Environmental-friendly design and architecture (UT's School of Architecture and Environmental Science Institute are developing programs)
- Control of invasive species (e.g., fire ants cause more than \$1 billion in damage per year in Texas, as estimated by Texas A&M agricultural economists; BFL is world's leading research site)

*The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the "Century of the Environment," and science will lead the development of a new green economy, according to Jane Lubchenco, US Undersecretary of Commerce*

# Stage 3

- Build a public outreach center (the Discover Texas Science Center) at the Brackenridge Tract to educate the public about environmental sciences, and to facilitate the development of a research park of allied commercial partners.
- Extend the public hike-and-bike trail through the Brackenridge Tract along Lake Austin Blvd., and add appropriate commercial cafes and services to support the public and to generate additional rental income for UT-Austin.
- Projected income: \$5 million in rent and user fees (projection based on average net income from other similar science centers and expected rental income from associated development and public support facilities)



Sketch of the proposed Discover Texas Science Center





View of the proposed Discover Texas Science Center from Lady Bird Lake



This 12-acre parcel  
next to the field lab  
is currently unused

12 Acres of land with  
additional area for  
future expansion.

○ **Parking Garage with Roof Top  
Research Green Houses**  
200,000 SF/10,000 SF

○ **New Texas Natural Science Center**  
Planetarium, Museum, Classrooms, Conference  
Room, Rooftop Garden Cafe & Auditorium  
52,500 SF

○ **Living Research Catwalk**  
1,800 SF

○ **UT Sciences Research Facilities**  
Multi-use Molecular Lab, Incubator Space,  
GISF Facilities, Teacher Training and Staff  
Dining Area, Staff and Public Dining Area (con-  
vertible to a 40x80 meeting area), Carpentry  
Shop, Administrative Offices and Collection  
Staff Offices  
1200,000 SF

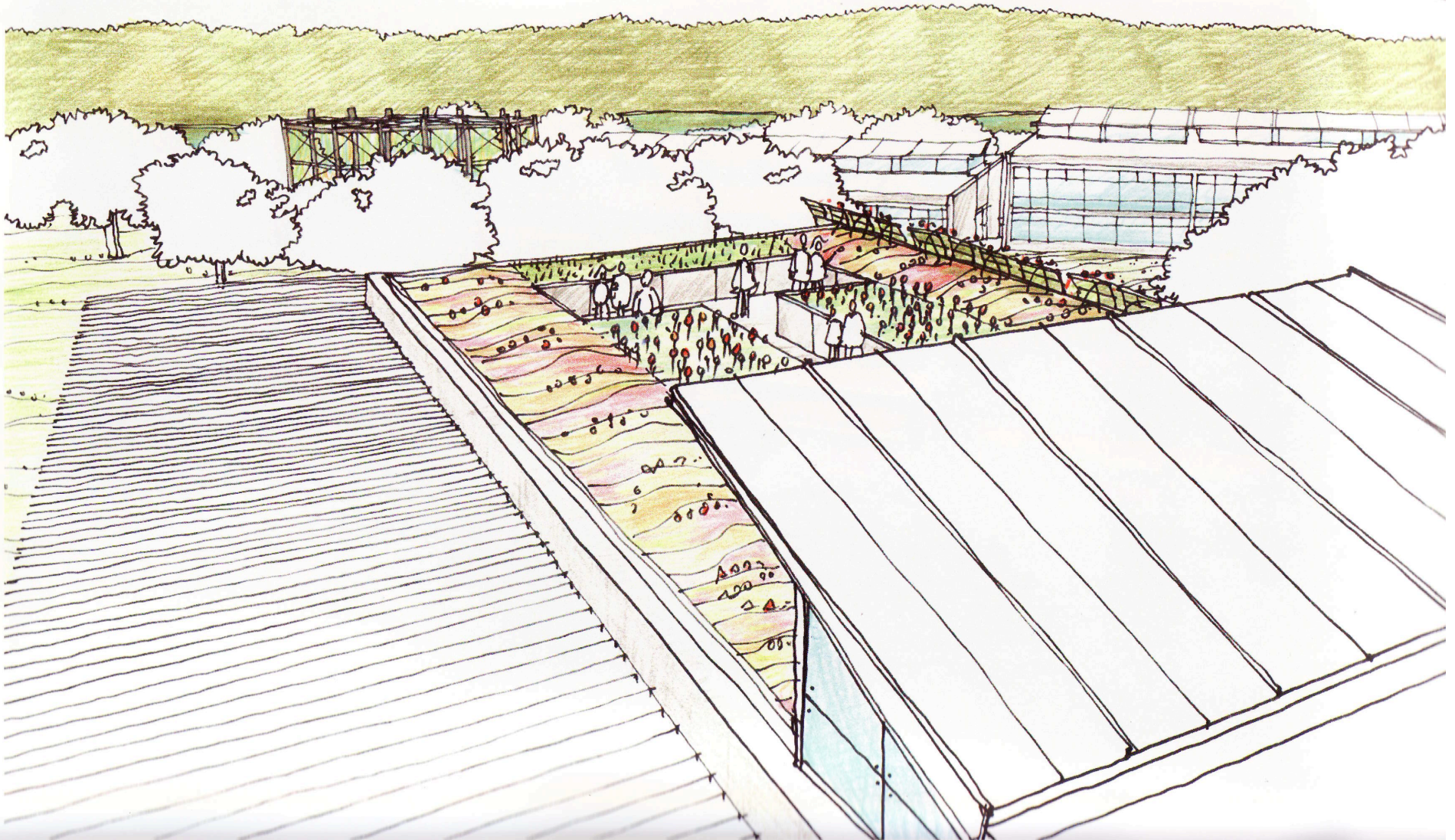
○ **Butterfly Center**  
4,000 SF

○ **Living River Aquarium**  
Pier Lab & River Views  
3,000 SF

Lady Bird Lake



Artist's conception of the view from the Rooftop Cafe of the Discover Texas Science Center, showing rooftop gardens and research facilities in background.







The Exploratorium,  
San Francisco

Lawrence Hall of  
Science, Berkeley

Maryland Science  
Center, Baltimore





← Arizona Science Center, Phoenix



New York Hall of Science, Flushing, NY

Liberty Science  
Center, New  
Jersey →







California Academy of Science,  
San Francisco





● Kiosk on Hike and Bike trail displaying on-going BFL research

This plan for extending the City's hike-and-bike trail through a small corner of the field lab may not be necessary, as the trail could connect to the planned bike trail along Lake Austin Blvd. Plans and funding for the extension are already in place by the City of Austin.

• Development on Lake Austin Blvd with BFL entrance beyond



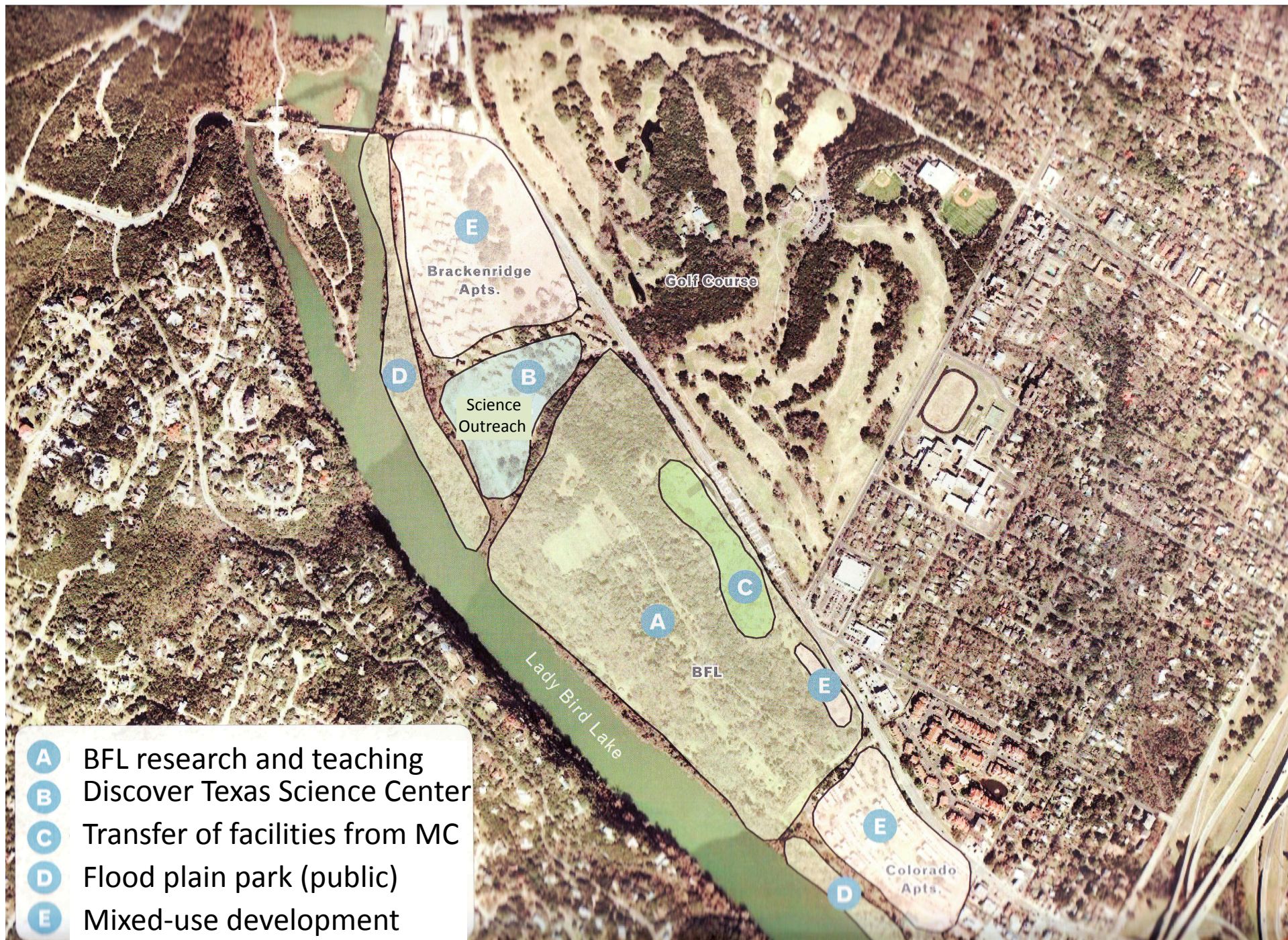
• Cross Section of Retail/Housing/Offices with direct access to Lake Austin Blvd and views overlooking BFL



## *Extending the Hike and Bike Trail Along Lake Austin Boulevard*

- City of Austin already has funding (\$1 million) and plans to extend bike lanes along Lake Austin Boulevard.
- Connecting City's hike-and-bike trail to new Lake Austin Boulevard project through the Brackenridge Tract (along the edge of the current location of the Colorado Apartments) would improve public access and transportation
- UT could rent space for shops and cafes to service hike-and-bike trail





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# Stage 4

- Much of the development in stages 1-3 can begin immediately, as it is compatible with the agreement between UT and the City of Austin.
- No re-development of the Lions Golf Course can occur for another decade (before 2019). The needs of UT may well change between now and 2019. We propose that any plans to redevelop Lions Golf course be postponed as the University develops its Research Park, Brackenridge Field Lab, and the Discover Texas Science Center. Those developments may well change the needs and priorities of the University and the community, and the decision on possible re-development would best be made closer to the actual development date.
- If future development occurs on Lions Golf course, we recommend against residential housing, as it would restrict UT's ability to expand and use the space in the future. Any use of remaining open space should be on a short-term basis, so as not to restrict UT's ability to expand in the future.



# Summary

- New teaching and research capacity for UT
- Improved research and teaching space for existing programs
- Increased space (net 100,000 square feet) on central main campus for new teaching facilities and faculty expansion
- Improved graduate student housing
- Improved public outreach and community relations
- Projected \$44 million in new income/year for UT (does not include any new income from graduate student housing, or any income from development of Lions Golf course)
- No new roads necessary; reduced impact on local neighborhoods; improved facilities for public use; compatible with City of Austin plans

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# The Brackenridge Gift: respecting the donor's wishes

“...for the purpose of the advancing and promoting University education”

“... that it be never disposed of, but be held permanently for such educational purpose”

Our plan is focused on advancing and promoting University education,  
and ensuring that the Brackenridge Gift is held permanently  
*for such educational purposes*

## Comparison of UT versus Cooper-Robertson proposals for development of the Brackenridge Tract

	<i>UT Proposal</i>	<i>Cooper-Robertson</i>
Effect on UT Academic Programs	Enhances✓	Detracts
Provides new space on UT Campus for teaching and new faculty	Yes✓	No
Maximizes UT research resources	Yes✓	No
Provides opportunities for long-term academic development	Yes✓	No
Enhances technology transfer from UT research	Yes✓	No
Maximizes economic benefits to UT consistent with UT's mission	Yes✓	No
Improves UT outreach and community relations; consistent with City plans	Yes✓	No
Honors donor's wishes	Yes✓	No

*We thank the following individuals and groups for providing input to the Faculty Committee on the Brackenridge Tract:*

- Edward Theriot, Director, Texas Memorial Museum (plan to move TMM and integrate associated research collections)
- Robert Jansen, Chair, Integrative Biology, and Henry Bose, Director, School of Biological Sciences (plan to move associated biology research and teaching facilities to BFL)
- Beryl Simpson, Director, Plant Resources Center (plan to move Plant Resources Center to BFL)
- David McGregor, Cooper Robertson and Partners (plan for UT Graduate housing)
- Dean Mary Ann Rankin and College of Natural Sciences Advisory Council (plan for development of research and teaching facilities for College of Natural Sciences)
- Dean Sharon Mosher, Jackson School of Geological Sciences (plan for Geology programs)
- Jay Banner, Director, Environmental Sciences Institute (plan for ESI programs)
- Andy Ellington, Chemistry and Biochemistry (industrial biofuel development plans)
- Larry Gilbert, Director of Brackenridge Field Lab (overall plan for development of the field lab)
- West Austin Neighborhood Group (input on community needs and neighborhood planning)
- Mary Arnold (input on public needs and facilities, open space concerns)
- City of Austin Bicycle Program (input on plans for bike lanes along Lake Austin Blvd)
- UT Faculty Council Executive Committee (oversight and overall advice on plan)