This is a brief history of Tennessee State University as gathered by the planning team. The objective of this work element is for the planning team and campus community to gain an understanding of TSU’s history, documenting key events that have shaped the educational and physical form of the campus as well as identifying those forces which are likely to influence its future.

1. HISTORY OF TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Tennessee State University, founded in 1912, is a comprehensive, urban, coeducational, land-grant university located in Nashville, Tennessee. Through successive stages of growth and change during its nearly 100-year history, TSU has developed from a small normal school for Negroes to a 4 year university graduating degrees at all levels. The process of educating teachers was based on developing “norms” or standards, hence the name Normal School. With such humble beginnings and a small student body, TSU has grown to become one of the nation’s most highly respected Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) as well as a national university attracting students from 42 states and 45 countries. To its credit, TSU has accomplished this transition without losing focus on its primary mission; that being an “access” school for Tennessee’s financially challenged students; many of whom have few alternatives when seeking to gain a collegiate education. Although TSU was, until recently, considered by many students the campus of “last resort”, its recognition as a nationally ranked university and reputation for quality curriculum delivery has allowed TSU to claim it is now a campus of “first choice”.

Today, TSU is comprised of multiple facilities on the nearly 760 acres located in Nashville and surrounding communities. The 290-acre main campus has more than 65 buildings and is located in a residential setting just west of Nashville’s center. The Avon Williams Campus is located downtown near the center of the Nashville business and government district. The master planning process is focused on the two-campus structure (Main and Avon Williams) which resulted from the merger of Tennessee State University and the former University of Tennessee at Nashville on July 1, 1979.

TSU, in its earliest form, was created by an Act of the General Assembly in 1909 which created the Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School. This new institution first began serving students on June 19, 1912. William Jasper Hale was appointed as head of the school. The original 247 students, along with the faculty and staff, operated much like an educationally-focused family; everyone working together to maintain the institution’s
academic and physical functions. Faculty, staff and students shared tasks including clearing rocks, harvesting crops, carrying chairs from class to class and generally maintaining the facility while also conducting classroom activities.

In 1922, the institution was elevated to the status of a four-year teachers' college and was empowered to grant bachelor's degrees. The first degrees were granted in June 1924. During the same year, the institution became known as the Agricultural and Industrial State Normal College. In 1927, "Normal" was dropped from the name of the college.

As the college grew in scope and stature throughout the 1920s and 1930s, so did its impressive roster of alumni who embodied the school's charge: "Enter to learn; go forth to serve." In 1943, when William Hale retired after more than 30 years at the school's helm, an alumnus was chosen to succeed him; Walter S. Davis. From 1943 until his retirement in 1968, President Davis led the institution through a period of tremendous growth and change. As a result of his efforts, the university increased its academic offerings, built new facilities and gained worldwide recognition.

In 1941 the General Assembly authorized the State Board of Education to substantially upgrade the educational program of the college, which included establishment of graduate studies leading to the awarding of master's degrees. Graduate curricula were first offered in several branches of teacher education. The first master's degree was awarded by the college in June 1944.

In 1946, the institution was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In August 1951, the institution was granted university status by approval of the State Board of Education. The reorganization of the institution's educational program included the establishment of the Graduate School, the School of Arts & Sciences, the School of Education and the School of Engineering. Provisions were also made for the later addition of the Schools of Agriculture, Business, and Home Economics. At this time, the university was known as the Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial State University.

In August of 1958, the university, by approval of the State Board of Education, was elevated to the status of a full-fledged land-grant university. The Land-Grant University Program included the School of Agriculture & Home Economics, the Graduate School, the Division of Extension and Continuing Education and the Department of Aerospace Studies. In 1974, the university added The School of Allied Health Professions and the School of Business. In addition, the School of Nursing was established in 1979.

Today, TSU consists of five colleges, three schools, and the Institute of Government: These are the:

- College of Arts & Sciences
- College of Business
- College of Education
- College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science
- College of Health Sciences
- School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences
- School of Nursing
- School of Graduate Studies and Research
In 1968, Andrew Torrence, also an alumnus, was named the university's third president. It was during his relatively brief tenure that the state legislature formally dropped "Agricultural & Industrial" from the university's name, which became Tennessee State University. Also, it was during the Torrence presidency that one of the most significant events in the campus’s history occurred; a lawsuit which would not be fully resolved or have its impact felt for decades to come.

In 1968, a TSU faculty member, Rita Sanders Geier, filed a lawsuit against TSU and the State of Tennessee alleging a dual system of higher education in Tennessee based on race. In addition, two TSU professors, Ray Richardson and H. Coleman McGinnis, joined Rita Geier as co-plaintiffs in the lawsuit, as did the U.S. Department of Justice. An agreement between the two parties in this case, which over the years evolved into Geier v. Tennessee, would not be reached for over 32 years. During this period, numerous court-ordered plans failed to produce progress on the matter. On Jan. 4, 2001, a mediated Consent Decree agreed upon by all parties was ordered by the court.

In 1975 Frederick Humphries became TSU’s fourth president. At that time, Nashville was still home to two public four-year universities; TSU and UT Nashville. On July 1, 1979, as a result of one of the court orders in the 1968 Geier v. Tennessee case, the former University of Tennessee at Nashville was merged with TSU. President Humphries was the first TSU president to face the challenge of maintaining balance between TSU's role as one of America's preeminent historically black universities and as an emerging comprehensive, national university.

In 1947, prior to merging with TSU, The University of Tennessee at Nashville began as an extension center of the University of Tennessee. UT Nashville offered only one year of extension credit until 1960, when it was empowered by the Board of Trustees of the University of Tennessee to offer two years of resident credit. In 1963 authorization was granted to extend this to three years of resident credit, even though degrees were awarded by the Knoxville unit. In 1971, upon successfully meeting the requirements for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and to more fully realize its commitment as a full-function evening university, the UT-Nashville campus became a full-fledged, four-year, degree-granting institution.

During the same year, the General Assembly sanctioned the institution as a bona fide campus of the University of Tennessee, and the new university occupied its quarters in the building at the corner of Tenth and Charlotte avenues in downtown Nashville. In part, it was the erection of this building which gave rise to the decades-long litigation to "dismantle the dual system" of higher education in Tennessee. The litigation resulted in the merger of both institutions (ordered by Judge Frank Gray in February 1977), resulting in an expansion of the present-day Tennessee State University as a Tennessee Board of Regents institution.

In 1987 TSU's fifth president, Otis Floyd, assumed his post following a year as interim president. He left the university when he was appointed chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents in 1990. Floyd, as both President and Chancellor, kept TSU moving forward, initiating efforts that resulted in the university's receiving in 1988 an unprecedented $112 million from the state general assembly for capital improvements. Under this plan, nearly all buildings on campus were renovated, and eight new buildings were constructed, including
the Floyd-Payne Campus Center, the Ned McWherter Administration Building, the Wilma Rudolph Residence Center, and the Performing Arts Center.

In 1991, James Hefner became the sixth president of Tennessee State University. He oversaw implementation of the capital improvements project and managed TSU during a period of enrollment growth to 9,100 students; a population which exists today on the TSU campuses.

In October, 2006, Melvin N. Johnson became the seventh TSU president. During his term as president, Dr. Johnson commissioned the Academic Master Plan in 2007 as well as this Campus Master Plan, also in 2007, and development of a strategic approach to transforming TSU into a 21st Century institution of higher education.

Today, TSU offers 45 bachelor's degrees, 24 master's degrees and awards doctoral degrees in seven areas: biological sciences, computer information systems engineering, psychology, public administration, curriculum and instruction, administration and supervision, and physical therapy.

In summary, during its 99 year history, seven presidents and four acting presidents have served the institution. They are:

- William J. Hale, 1912-1943
- Walter S. Davis, 1943-1968
- Andrew P. Torrence, 1968-1974
- Charles Fancher, (Interim) 1974-1975
- Frederick S. Humphries, 1975-1985
- Roy Peterson, (Interim) 1985-1986
- George W. Cox, (Interim) 1990-1991
- James A. Hefner, 1991-2005
- Melvin N. Johnson, 2005-present

2. ACCREDITATION AND AFFILIATIONS

Tennessee State University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist in Education, and Doctoral degrees. In addition, the following programs and associations support the high quality education available on the TSU campuses.

**College of Arts & Sciences**


**College of Business**
• **Business** (B.B.A., M.B.A.: AACSB is: the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International)

**College of Education**

• **Education** (B.S., M.S., M.A.Ed., Ed.S. Ed.D: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE))

• **Psychology** (B.S., Ph.D with concentration in Counseling: American Psychological Association (APA))

**College of Engineering, Technology and Computer Science**

• **Aeronautical & Industrial Technology, Architectural & Mechanical Engineering, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Electrical & Computer Engineering** (B.S.: Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology)

**College of Health Sciences**

• **Cardio-Respiratory Care Sciences** (B.S.: Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs)

• **Dental Hygiene** (A.A.S., B.S.: Commission on Dental Accreditation)

• **Health Care Administration and Planning** (B.S.: Association of University Programs in Health Administration)

• **Health Information Management** (B.S.: Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs in collaboration with the Council on Education of the American Health Information Management Association)

• **Medical Technology** (B.S.: National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences)

• **Occupational or Physical Therapy** (B.S.: Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Association; Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association)

• **Physical Therapy** (M.P.T.: The Master of Physical Therapy program was granted candidacy status from the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)).

• **Speech Pathology and Audiology** (B.S., M.S.: Council of Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association)

**School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences**

• **Family and Consumer Sciences** (B.S. American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, American Dietetics Association)

**School of Nursing**

• **Nursing** (A.A.S., B.S.N., M.S.N.: National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission)

**Institute of Government**

• **Public Administration** (M.P.A.: The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration)
3. HISTORY OF MASTER PLANNING

TSU has had a number of master plans created through its history.

In 1951 a comprehensive master plan was completed by Douglas Williston, a fairly well-known HBCU planner of that time. The 1951 plan features a campus-wide map, information of planned facilities, and a robust landscape plan. This plan did not focus upon quantitative analysis or sub-plans for specific areas of focus.

The 1971 master plan was done by a local Nashville firm, Hamilton-Butt & Associates. This plan focused comprehensively upon the campus, including current and projected buildings. This plan also did not focus upon quantitative analysis or sub-plans for specific areas of focus.

In 1988 a master plan was prepared for Tennessee State University by Gruzen Samton Steinglass/The Ehrenkrantz Group - Hickerson - Fowlkes. Its purpose was to establish a long-range design framework for future campus development. The plan also involved a comprehensive campus needs assessment. The assessment included both spatial needs for the different departments and studied the physical conditions of the buildings. This plan was well utilized for multiple projects on the campus.

In 1997, Lose & Associates conducted a North Campus Land-Use Plan. The primary focus of this study was to assess the current needs of the athletic programs and their facilities. The plan also included a land-use design to meet these needs. Only portions of the design plan were ever realized, mainly the tennis facilities and the large crescent-shaped parking lot.

In 2007, TSU commissioned the BKV Group to complete a campus-wide master facility plan, the findings of which are presented in this document.

4. BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

No individual TSU facilities are of significant architectural or historical character to be on the National Historic Register. The following facilities are located within a less rigid designation as a “historic district” on the register:
Table 1: Buildings located within the National Register Historic District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Built</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Davis Humanities</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliot Hall</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harned Hall</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Industrial Tech</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love LRC</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCord Hall</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, several facilities have significance to TSU history but are not important as pieces of architecture, nor are they located within the historic district. Goodwill Manor, although it is a complete replacement/replication of the original facility, is the only surviving building from the original campus construction of 1912-1914. The old Football Fieldhouse/AFROTC Building, and the Ag Barn (Farrell-Westbrook), are known as Depression era WPA buildings, though very little of their structures is original.

5. NAMED FACILITY HONOREES

There are several buildings on campus which have been named for important members of the Nashville or Tennessee area which include:

- **Averitte** Amphitheater – Laura M. Averitte, author of the university’s Alma Mater, founder of the TSU Theater Program.

- **Avon Williams** Campus – Avon N. Williams Jr., Tennessee State Senator, TN and US Supreme Courts Member. NAACP Administrator.

- **Boston** Room AD Suite – Ralph Boston, Olympic Gold, Silver, and Bronze medalist, one-time long jump world record holder.

- **Boswell** Complex – Alger V. Boswell, Department Head, VP Emeritus, Registrar, Dean of Men


- **Clay Hall** – Robert E. Clay, State Education Administrator and A&I supporter.

- **Clement** Hall – Frank G. Clement, Tennessee Governor and TSU supporter.
• Cox – Fancher Computer Science Complex – George W. Cox, Interim President and VP for Academic Affairs. Charles B. Fancher, Interim President and VP for Administration.

• Cox - Lewis Theater – W. Dury Cox Jr., actor and TSU theater supporter. Edward C. Lewis Jr., father of TSU’s music department.

• Crouch Hall – Hubert B. Crouch, Graduate School Dean, Science Division Director.

• Crutchfield Athletics Weight Room – Claude S. Crutchfield, TSU alumnus, Metro teacher, longtime supporter of TSU athletics.

• Crutchfield Athletics Hall of Fame / Lounge – Inez Gibbs Crutchfield, PE Professor and administrator.

• Davis Humanities – Walter S. Davis, second TSU President, A&I grad, professor, football coach, department head.

• Elliott Hall – Janie E. Elliott, founder of A&I cafeteria system, first HBCU cafeteria system, Presbyterian missionary.

• Eppse Residence – Merle R. Eppse, professor, History Department Head.

• Farrell-Westbrook Ag Sciences Complex – James E. Farrell, Fred E. Westbrook, TSU professors and administrators – state, federal, and international agriculture agents.

• Floyd / Payne Campus Center – Otis L. Floyd, TSU President and TBR Chancellor. Joseph A. Payne, Dean of Students and VP Student Affairs.

• Floyd Nursery Crop Research Center – see above.

• Ford Apartments Residence – John Ford and Harold Ford Sr., State Senator, and US Congressman, respectively. TSU benefactors.

• Gentry Athletic Complex – Howard C. Gentry, football coach, Athletic Director, community leader.

• Greer Band Room – Frank Greer – Second TSU Director of Bands.

• Hale Stadium – William J. Hale, first President.

• Hale Residence – Harriett H. Hale, TSU first Lady, professor, administrator.

• Hankal Residence – Edna Rose Hankal, professor, Matron of Ladies Housing, Dean of Women.

• Harned Hall – Perry L. Harned, State Commissioner of Education and colleague of President Hale.

• Holland Hall – Lewis R. Holland, professor and Business Department Head, founder and president of TSU Credit Union.

• Hughes Natatorium / Pool – Thomas “Friend” Hughes, first swim coach, 5 consecutive national championships.

• Humphries Hall – Frederick S. Humphries, TSU President and FAMU President.

• Jackson Industrial Tech – Tom Jackson, State Commissioner of Tourism, TBR Regent and TSU benefactor.
- **Kean** Hall / Gymnasium – Henry A. Kean, football and basketball coach, Athletic Director.
- **Lawson** Hall – Wilfrid Whitehead Lawson, professor and scientist, first Director of Agriculture at A&I.
- **Lewis** HPSS Office Suite – Audrey E. Lewis, professor and Department Head.
- **Love** LRC – Harold M. Love Sr., TSU alumnus, Metro Councilman, State Representative, longtime TSU supporter.
- **McCord** Hall – Jim Nance McCord, Tennessee Governor and TSU supporter.
- **McClendon** Basketball Court – John B. McClendon, basketball coach, 3 consecutive national championships, first African American professional basketball coach.
- **McWherter** Administration Bldg. – Ned Ray McWherter, Tennessee Governor and TSU supporter.
- **Merritt** Blvd. & Merritt Plaza – John A. Merritt – Hall of Fame football coach and community leader.
- **Murrell** Forum – Robert N. Murrell, Director of Housing and Dean of Men.
- **Poag** Auditorium – Thomas A. Poag, actor, coach and teacher of TSU’s famed actors, first African American holder of Drama Ph.D.
- **Rudolph** Residence Center – Wilma Rudolph, Tigerbelle and Olympic Champion
- **Strange** Music Bldg – Marie Brooks Strange, long time music professor and concert pianist.
- **Torrence** Engineering – Andrew P. Torrence, Third TSU President, VP for Tuskegee Institute.
- **Temple** Track and Temple Blvd. – Edward S. Temple, TSU ladies’ track coach, USA ladies’ Olympic coach.
- **Van Gordon** Student Art Gallery – Hiram Van Gordon, artist and benefactor.
- **Washington** Health Center – Queen Washington, staff nurse, head nurse, and administrator of health services for TSU.
- **Watson** Residence – Lena B. Watson, Matron of A&I East Residence Hall
- **Welton** Plaza – Hazael Edward Welton, class of ’32, established first TSU endowment scholarship in 1977.
- **Williams** Honors Center – McDonald Williams, professor and Honors Center Director.
- **Wilson** Ladies Residence – Mary L. Wilson, faculty member 1916, professor and Dean of Women.
- **Young** Poultry Plant – Frank A. Young, Dean of Nashville Sports Writers and A&I supporter.