The objective of this work element is to enable the planning team to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the existing wayfinding system on campus and the associated issues to be addressed in the physical master plan.

1. WAYFINDING

The TSU campus is clearly identified on the major Interstate routes in and around Nashville. Both the main and the Avon Williams campuses are clearly located on these highway signs making it quite easy to navigate to the campus. However, once a visitor arrives at either campus, the signage that should guide them to building destinations, parking and athletic fields are not present in any organized way; if at all.

The on-campus wayfinding system is generally inconsistent, difficult to use as a basis for navigation and does not assist users in gaining any clear understanding of the nature of the campus. Building signage is generally present but is not of consistent design. Finally, the current wayfinding system does not convey any information about the campus itself, its history or major achievements leaving visitors with only a minimum of information regarding the names of buildings. This condition, although significant, is not substantially out of the norm when other campuses both within the TBR system and without are considered.

To be successful, a contemporary campus wayfinding system should accomplish the following:

- Provide prospective students and their families with explicit directions to either campus starting at their residence (or any other location) and arriving at their chosen destination. The website does this task very well but directions are to the Floyd Payne Center on the Main campus and the turn onto 10th Avenue for the Avon Williams campus. Further instruction, which may be a part of the admissions package, to the Admissions office, Welcome Center or other destinations are not provided on the website.
Once within the area of either campus, highway directional signs should provide easy to follow guidance to the campus in general and once on campus, to key locations. As reported above, the highway signs are in place and easy to follow which direct motorists to the primary location of each campus. There is no further signage to direct motorists to parking areas. At the Avon Williams campus, the parking area is quite easy to locate so this may not be an issue. However, no clear direction is given to main campus parking other than the signage at the parking lots themselves.

Once on the main campus, motorists should be able to guide themselves to key destinations without having to ask directions. This can be accomplished by amplifying the location of important precincts such as recreation and sports, performing arts, science and general academics, agriculture, engineering, etc. In addition, it is important to direct motorists to student housing facilities as many visitors will be visiting students in their rooms.

Once a visitor has parked, they must be able to navigate to their destination so maps of the “you are here” kind should be located at the parking areas as well as at various locations around campus.

All buildings should be clearly marked with signage at the all entrances. These signs should correspond to the name of the buildings that are identified in the course catalog so that students are directed to their destinations in a clear and consistent manner.

Public open spaces should all be designated with nomenclature that conveys their locations to students, visitors, faculty and staff. Outdoor rooms (minor open spaces) should also be named so that promotion of their use as a meeting place, outdoor classroom or recreation zone is improved.

2. ADDITIONAL WAYFINDING OPPORTUNITIES

TSU has a rich history. It should be displayed throughout the campus in combination with the wayfinding system signage and maps so as to further communicate the evidence of substantial achievement to all who walk the campus.

There are three levels of the TSU History Walk that we feel are important to promote as a concept and address as individual projects:

- Vehicular speed – When entering the campus along John Merritt Boulevard, visitors should be exposed to large, banner sized graphics that identify achievement at a scale similar to public billboards.

- Walking speed – Key areas of the curriculum and campus culture should be identified along important campus paths for observation by persons traveling between buildings. In the master plan, we have identified the Academic Walks of Fame and the Athletic Walk of Fame. The Academic Walk of Fame starts at
the new Alumni facility east of the Administration Building and passes thorough the amphitheater and further west. The Athletic Walk of Fame starts at the new Alumni Center and travels along the west side of the new football arena terminating near the Olympic structure. From the Olympic Structure to Walter Davis Boulevard is an ideal location to again display large banner-sized athletic achievements.

- Stopped – Individual displays of great achievement should be located inside and outside of buildings on campus along both of the significant “Walks”. These pieces should demonstrate an artifact or moment in history with a more in-depth description of what event or achievement occurred.

All of these systems (wayfinding, history and artifact) should overlap; a nugget of information about some campus event being recorded on or adjacent to a campus map, etc.