Often research is performed in single-use, and auto-dependent ‘parks’ in the suburbs. The Purdue Innovation District will capitalize on the campus community and its advanced research to create a lively mixed-use district that generates a unique place and local economy.
The district sits adjacent to a variety of land uses. The site will act as a transition into the campus from the west. This location will create a unique opportunity for businesses to interface with the university's research and create a culture that mixes academic theory with real-world applications.
Designers used soil types, tree health, and watershed analysis to place development in the least ecologically valuable land. Solar potential was continuously studied throughout the design process to ensure the viability of renewable energy. Land conservation for recreation, provisioning, and agricultural research became major drivers for density.
Community Engagement

Purdue Innovation District Master Plan

Design charrettes and open forums were held with members from neighborhood groups, campus communities, business owners, and local experts to inform the master plan.
The project creates a gradient of density moving from west to east in coordination with urban transect zones. The gradient eases the transition from rural land uses to the university campus, while facilitating a wide variety of uses and opportunities within a walkable distance.
The plan creates an urban center to support an active live-work-play environment. A variety of open space types and housing typologies have been mixed to create a dynamic fabric and to attract people with diverse needs. The streets and parks networks act as regulating threads connecting the district.
Creating Neighborhoods

Purdue Innovation District Master Plan

The district is sectioned into individual neighborhoods to create more closely related communities and respond to urban transect densities of the master plan. While each area holds a mix of uses, their unique identities create a rich district with placemaking identifiers integrated.
The street tree network identifies four specialty boulevards to have their own visually distinctive streetscapes. These streets are important connections beyond the district and will have the majority of gateway moments, while the connector streets act an ecological network of diverse plantings.
These two blocks connect the innovation district to the campus bike network and act as a major retail street, culminating in an urban central park. The quadruple allée of trees creates a sense of grandeur, while the pedestrian-scaled section makes a seamless transition to the campus.
Most streets in the district are defined as connector streets. They are designed to yield a high number of ecosystem services and give the district a significant level of biodiversity. They contrast with the boulevards by allowing for irregular spacing of varied tree species.
The open space network offers a variety of parks and plazas that respond to existing site conditions and needs of each neighborhood. The system integrates community amenities and the street network to create a seamless district experience.
This urban central park preserves healthy, mature trees by designing paths and program between their roots zones. The park connects to a community center to create a strong central node of activity in the district.
Civic Square

Purdue Innovation District Master Plan

The civic square expands the right-of-way to create a flexible plaza to host everyday activities and small events that cater to the urban core of the research district. This plaza runs parallel to the street, advancing the pedestrian experience through planting, tree canopy, and movable cafe seating.
The Greenbelt will act as a regional amenity that serves recreational, research, and ecological functions. The park is connected through a series of winding trails that span orchards, woodlands, community gardens, playgrounds, and flexible play fields. This park will support large seasonal events that are currently lack enough space.