

<b>Policy Name: Access to Building Information Policy</b>		
<b>Effective Date:</b> 02/01/2011	<b>Revision Date:</b> 09/19/2016	<b>Department/Area/Division:</b> BIS/AD/FA
<b>Department/ Area Policy #:</b>	<b>Departmental Contact:</b> Todd Blue, Director of Building Information	

**Purpose:**

On occasion, there are requests for access to building plans, architectural drawings, blueprints, engineering plans, building specifications, shop drawings, etc. (collectively known as “building information” or “plans”) for buildings and related structures on the University of Alabama (University) campus and other locations under control of the University. For the most part, these requests come from students studying various engineering, building science and related disciplines. While not often, other parties not affiliated with the University may request similar access for a number of reasons.

**Policy Statement:**

The University recognizes the need to provide plan access to student to allow progress in their field of study and support the academic mission of the University. The University also recognizes the need to provide a safe and secure environment for the students, faculty, staff, and visitors, as well as to protect confidential or proprietary operations that may exist in certain buildings and to protect the University’s assets from theft, damage or other inappropriate or illegal acts.

This Policy has been implemented to allow access to plans for legitimate reasons and in support of the University’s academic mission, but only when the concern for safety, security and protection of confidential operations can be addressed to a reasonable level of confidence and the misuse of the plans are related building information can be managed to the satisfaction of University administration.

**Policy:**

The University will enthusiastically entertain the request for plans from students and other members of the University community where there is a legitimate reason for the request and any known or perceived elements of danger, reduced security or a potential of diminished confidentiality do not outweigh the potential benefit of the request for access to plans.

There are certain buildings that the University considers safety or security critical due to the nature of the operations or use of the buildings. While not specifically listed, the plans for certain buildings will not be released under normal circumstances, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Residential Halls
- Fraternity or Sorority Houses
- Medical Centers and Medical Facilities
- Operations with Children or Occupied by Persons with Diminished Capacity
- Research Laboratories with Confidential or Proprietary Operations
- Buildings Containing Critical Operation (e.g. Data Centers, Energy Plants, etc.)
- Law Enforcement or Public Safety Operations
- Buildings with the Routine Presence of Chemicals or Hazardous Materials
- Buildings with a Significant Building Assembly (i.e. 500+ persons)

The University will establish procedures for the requesting party to follow in making the request for access to plans and will implement an approval process to allow University administration to consider the risk factors, potential benefits of the request and compliance with this policy. The approval process may vary

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depending on the request, but in most situations the review process will include representatives from Public Safety, Construction Administration, Research Compliance, Risk Management and the Dean/Department Head(s) of the academic or operational unit(s) occupying the building.

When it is agreed to allow access to the requesting party, the plans may be viewed in the Construction Administration Plan Room. The Construction Administration Plan Room Coordinator (205-348-5950) will schedule a time for viewing.

The requesting party is encouraged to consider requesting buildings that have been razed, which requires a request just as with an existing building, but does not require approval and the use of the plans are not restricted.

In some cases, access to plans will be subject to the removal or alteration of certain building information that is considered safety or security sensitive. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the parties reviewing the request. This may include, but is not limited to the removal of room names or numbers, removing any reference critical equipment or building infrastructure, removal of references to security and access control systems, etc.

The University will consider public-access laws, where and when applicable to address requests from parties not affiliated with the University. Unless required by law or other University program or policy, requests from outside parties will not be considered.

This policy is not intended to alter or supersede any existing practice related to the availability or release of building plans currently in place or later adopted by Construction Administration in the normal course of business. Construction Administration will give prudent consideration of how the plans are made available and if controls should be considered to prevent the undesired release or access to potentially confidential information.

Office of the Vice President of Financial Affairs and Treasurer:

Approved by: 

Date: 9/19/16