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## **Background**

The rapid expansion of UNCP's student body, faculty, and staff in the years 2000-2008 was not always accompanied by equivalent expansions of campus facilities, which has led many to voice concerns about overcrowded classrooms and dining/recreational facilities, as well as competition for parking, housing, and office space. Components of the Campus Master Plan created in 2006 have been or are in the process of being instituted, and a new Master Plan exists that, if fully implemented, will address many of the concerns raised by stakeholders during the data-gathering phase in 2011, including lighting, security, and drainage as well as physical buildings.

While all stakeholders praised the physical beauty of the campus, most also complained about the facilities at some point. Students expressed concerns about safety, flooding, limited dining options, limited spaces for group studying and classwork, significant inequities in housing between newer and older dorm buildings, and limited parking. Visitors to campus and some employees also mentioned parking as a weakness. Faculty and staff have noted inadequate office space, as well as the fact that some academic buildings do not have sufficient restroom facilities to accommodate the heavy traffic they receive during peak class times. Finally, we have regularly dealt with increased enrollments by slipping extra seats into classrooms, an unsafe arrangement.

The research undertaken to create the new Master Plan for the campus suggests that our current spaces meet current demands—although in some cases, just barely. The decreases we saw in enrollment this year, as well as a shift in legislative priorities from growth to retention, suggest that our population will not expand nearly as rapidly over the next ten years as it did in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Outdated facilities, however, may hinder our ability to attract and retain good students and employees. Students expect (and deserve) nice places to live; they also are demanding improvements to recreational facilities to balance the sense that there is “nothing to do” in our surrounding community. Meanwhile, many of our classroom and study spaces need to be renovated or replaced so students are better prepared to meet the demands of a workforce that prizes flexibility, teamwork, and efficient use of technology. The most significant roadblock to progress in this area will most likely be funding.

Finally, students in particular expressed a series of safety concerns that should be addressed. Pathways connecting outlying and off-campus residential areas to the main academic core are poorly lit and insufficiently policed. Poverty and crime in the surrounding area have caused some students to demand both a clearer delineation of the campus and a greater security presence to detract people from entering the campus for criminal purposes. While

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improvements to the campus itself will likely address some of these security concerns, creating a safer campus also touches on issues of personnel and communication, and will thus be addressed more specifically in a separate document of recommendation to the Chancellor.

### **Lessons Learned**

The budget crises of the past three years tell us that University cannot depend solely or even primarily on state funds for building projects. It is absolutely imperative that we seek alternative sources of funding to implement the new Master Plan. Patterns of donation and investment at this and other institutions suggest that some types of buildings and facilities attract greater interest than others, and we should plan to compensate for this. It is likely, for example, that new facilities for departments and programs that provide pre-professional training in occupations our region most needs will be more attractive to our donors. As the nursing, social work, and eventually business programs move into new facilities, it will be important to renovate existing buildings so that students and faculty in all departments have excellent spaces in which to learn.

Rapidly increasing demands for space has also created a situation in which academic and administrative departments are often located in counterintuitive places on campus, and even in some cases divided between non-contiguous buildings. The new plan should locate related administrative and academic departments together, and should leave space for projected expansion over the next ten years, so that new employees (whether permanent or temporary) will have work spaces in locations convenient to their immediate colleagues.

### **National Trends/External Picture**

The national trends for campus renovations all emphasize flexibility. New classroom buildings feature classrooms that can accommodate 60-100 students in a lecture setting (in keeping with both rising enrollments and lower budgets) but can also be divided with moveable walls for smaller discussion-style classes. The same flexibility applies to classroom furniture—seating options in every room should be able to accommodate lectures, seminars, and small-group hands-on approaches. All classroom and study spaces should have outlets spread evenly throughout the room; computer-lab style classrooms or those with portable laptop stations are also increasingly important. Libraries are emphasizing accessible remote storage, so that they can continue to increase holdings of physical books and journals while providing more computer terminals, wired workstations, and spaces for group study.

Changes to residential and recreational spaces focus on most colleges' desire to keep students in on-campus housing to the greatest extent possible. Suite-style housing continues to be

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popular, as do residence halls that will accommodate learning communities. Restaurant and food-court style dining options that offer more options than traditional cafeterias are most popular, with an increasing emphasis on local food sources and sustainability. Indeed, environmental awareness is another key trend in campus design; green rooftops and sustainable landscaping rank high on many schools' lists of priorities.

### **Strategic Themes**

All members of the university community should understand that funding for building projects, whether it comes from donors or from the state budget, does not detract from funds available for salaries and other operating expenses. In addition, no portion of students' tuition payments goes to new buildings or major renovations. Still, past and likely future cuts in state appropriations do affect the budget for these improvements, all of which are quite costly.

As for concerns raised about the Pembroke area, it would probably be counterproductive for the university to take too large a role in local development. Larger and wealthier universities have invested significant sums of money in the areas around their campuses, usually to the detriment of their relationships with longtime residents. While UNCP should find ways to support community-based plans that would bring improvements to the area, we should not direct that process. While UNCP will continue to be more isolated than many other institutions in the UNC system, if we can offer students, faculty, and staff outstanding campus facilities—including recreational spaces that all would appreciate—then any perceived limitations of our local community become less prominent.

### **Options**

The proposed new Master Plan calls for landscaping and water management changes that would help solve our persistent drainage problems, create more environmentally-sustainable (and thus lower-maintenance) plantings, and clearly designate campus boundaries along Odum and University Roads. While creating boundaries, the plan makes the campus more inviting to visitors by providing clearly marked "entrance zones" near buildings and parking areas designed to welcome them.

The plan also enhances safety by expanding the pedestrian zone from the University Center to Livermore Library, and by providing wider and more clearly-delineated pathways between the central and outlying areas of campus. A shuttle service that connects those outlying areas, as well as some high-density off-campus housing zones, to the main academic core of the campus would also enhance safety and resolve some of the parking shortages we experience. This shuttle service could be partially subsidized by the students who use it, with single-use fees and

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a semester or annual pass (that would cost significantly less than a parking permit, to encourage students to use the shuttle). If the shuttle proves popular and not cost-prohibitive, we might consider expanding it to service other areas of the town.

Proposed building/renovation projects to take place over the next ten plus years include (in chronological order):

1. A new Information Commons (library and media center) located on the current site of Jacobs and Wellons Halls
2. Renovation of Livermore Library to serve as a “student services hub” housing Admissions, Financial Aid, Enrollment Management, the Registrar’s Office, the Bursar’s Office, Disability Support Services, and the Center for Academic Excellence
3. A new School of Business to be located between Dial and Sampson Buildings
4. Renovation of the existing Business Administration Building for academic use (classrooms and departmental offices)—these renovations will focus on resolving HVAC/ventilation/lighting problems, creating useable office space for academic departments, and improving classroom and student work spaces
5. A new “Visitor Center” at the main entrance to campus (along Odum Rd, opposite Lumbee Hall)
6. Demolition of West Hall and the creation of a parking lot on its site

Longer-Term Proposed Projects Include:

1. Extensive Renovations to the Givens Performing Arts Center, including an expanded lobby, elevator access to the second and third floors, relocating the Black Box theatre, reconfigured access for loading vehicles, and the construction of an additional 300-500 seat lecture facility behind the building, with lobby and hallway spaces that connect to both GPAC and the University Center Annex
2. The construction of a new athletic complex on a to-be-determined piece of land west of the current football stadium.
3. Repurposing the areas near Lumbee Hall currently occupied by tennis courts and athletic fields into parking lots and an open “green space” (that could become a new academic quad, if more classroom buildings are required)
4. Renovate the DF Lowry Building to house additional departmental office suites, as well as computer labs, study spaces, and meeting rooms for student organizations
5. Renovate Old Main to expand the Native American Resource Center, create new meeting/function spaces for campus and community events, and provide office space for Alumni and Community Relations (this plan also calls for the relocation of the Mass Communications and Geography & Geology Departments to unspecified locations)

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6. New residential buildings near Cypress Hall and the University Courtyard Apartments
7. Renovate the School of Education Building to provide more spaces for collaborative student work
8. Construction of new dining facilities, as directed by a Dining Plan study and the final locations and styles of new residential buildings

We have noted some potential problems in the proposed plan that should be addressed. One is that while the plan eliminates small, scattered lots in favor of larger parking areas, it does not seem to add many parking spaces, except those that will be located far from the main campus in the new Athletic Complex. This will make a shuttle service more necessary. In addition, the plan as currently proposed does not include renovations or expansions of Belk Hall, North Hall, or the University Center dining facilities, all of which were recommended by students. Finally, while the plan does include new office spaces for faculty and staff, it does not necessarily take into account the need to keep academic and administrative departments in common buildings, or provide them with appropriate communal and administrative assistant work spaces.

### **Projected Costs**

For the landscaping, access, and pedestrian zone changes: Unknown

For the first 10+ year phase of construction and renovation:

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|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Information Commons           | \$59,450,000 |
| 2. Livermore Library conversion: | 8,349,848    |
| 3. School of Business            | 30,000,000   |
| 4. Renovations to BA Building:   | 4,406,569    |
| 5. Visitor Center                |              |
| 6. West Hall demolition          |              |

The estimated annual cost for running a partially-subsidized shuttle service is: Unknown

### **Short-Term and Long-Term Plans**

The first step toward implementing this plan is securing funding for as many of the projects as possible. We must also make arrangements to accommodate displacement during the construction process. For example, Wellons and Jacobs Halls must be demolished, and parking space eliminated, in order to begin construction on the Information Commons, but the new office and parking areas that would replace them will not be completed until later in the plan.

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The Master Plan lays out the details and steps of each phase of construction, so it would be redundant to list them all here. The stated goal is that the new Information Commons and Livermore Library conversion would be completed within five years, and that the new School of Business building would also be under construction by that time (2016). Our goals for the next two years should be:

1. Secure funding for the construction and renovation projects we would like to see completed by 2020
2. Convert the roadway between the University Center and Livermore Library to a pedestrian zone
3. Improve the pathways connecting outlying residential and parking areas to the campus core
4. Establish the plantings along Odum Rd that will help delineate the campus boundaries and best entrances for visitors