

COMMENTS ON UW-MADISON DRAFT CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

Prepared by City of Madison

Department of Planning & Development, Planning Unit

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Overall Comments on the Plan

At this point, the plan consists of a Draft Campus Plan map and five pages of summary bullet points that include: the planning principles, assumptions, major plan elements, the Long-Range Transportation Plan recommendations, Utility Master Plan elements, and recommendations for East Campus, West Campus and the Central Campus. The Planning Unit supports the planning principles, assumptions, and major elements of the plan as summarized in the April 22, 2005 document entitled "Summary of Draft Master Plan Concepts." The Planning Unit supports the maintenance of the current campus boundary, the emphasis on promoting alternative modes of transportation, the maintenance of existing levels of parking and the conversion of surface lots to parking structures, public open space and building sites. We would like to compliment the University on their approach to the preparation of the plan, the public participation process, and their willingness to actively involve the community in the preparation of the plan. This document provides a very good basis for the drafting of the actual plan.

The University is in the process of drafting the narrative for the plan document, and preparing design guidelines for the campus. The City will also review and comment on these documents when they are available.

Major Elements of the Plan

The Planning Unit strongly supports the preparation of design guidelines for future development based on the "neighborhoods of architectural design" concept. We would like to work with the University on the development of the design guidelines, in particular for the edges of campus and in the southeast campus area, where the edges of campus interface with non-campus neighborhoods.

The design guidelines being developed will be key to whether the buildings being proposed are appropriate for their locations. Careful attention to these guidelines (especially related to height, scale, massing and sight design) must be given to ensure that the buildings fit within the context of their site, especially along the edges of campus, as well as along the major thoroughfares serving the campus (e.g. University Avenue, Campus Drive, and Johnson Street).

The design guidelines and major elements of the plan should include a recommendation which calls for the integration of mixed non-University commercial and service uses into University buildings within new University development projects, particularly within the area south of University Avenue and Campus Drive and east of Park Street. New development proposals should incorporate street level retail and service uses opening onto the street. We would much rather see access to services needed by employees or students, visitors and City residents provided through entrances off of public sidewalks and public streets at the street level, rather than being internalized within institutional buildings. Future campus buildings can relate much

better to the street than many of the buildings which have been built on campus in the last 40 years.

The Planning Unit does not necessarily object to the University's acquisition of some additional lands within the campus boundary. However, some of the properties located within the campus boundary have been identified as historic and architecturally significant properties, which should be preserved. In addition, some of the properties provide the types of commercial services noted in the paragraph above and we do not want to see the University eliminate these services from the south and east campus neighborhoods. These uses should be replaced within new campus development as part of mixed University/private sector projects, such as University Square.

West Campus Proposals

The development proposals within the west campus area appear to be well conceived. In particular, we encourage the University to move forward with the development of a new west campus union near Marsh Lane and the development of 700 new beds of residential housing in the Lakeshore Residence Hall complex.

Central Campus

The plan recommendations for Linden Drive under the central campus section and long-range transportation section do not appear to be consistent. Additional discussion should occur with City staff related to the traffic impacts of closing Linden Drive completely to vehicular traffic. The Planning Unit realizes that a decision has not been made on the future of Linden Drive. The plan should recognize that these additional discussions should occur prior to any final decision being made.

The development of a new Union South, the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery, and other campus facilities south of University Avenue should incorporate a mix of commercial uses on the first floor to serve campus and non-campus purposes.

East Campus

There is a strong need to prepare a comprehensive development plan for the south campus area extending from University Avenue on the north to Regent Street on the south, and from Monroe Street/Randall Avenue on the west to Park Street on the east. Development plans being proposed by the University of Wisconsin within this area and by private property owners suggest that this area has the potential to undergo significant redevelopment within the very near future. It is important that the University and the City work together with property owners, residents and neighborhoods to thoughtfully plan for the future development of this area. This area has the potential to accommodate a significant increase in population (primarily students) which will need additional services and recreational space, beyond that currently planned by the University. The University and the City need to jointly develop design guidelines for University and non-University uses.

The block located south of Dayton Street, north of Spring Street and east of Randall Avenue, as well as the block southeast of Monroe Street is located entirely within the University Campus boundary. The University owns very few properties within these blocks. It is likely, based on

development proposals within these areas, that there will be significant development pressure to demolish existing buildings and build additional student towers within these blocks. There are currently no University plans or City plans in place which would suggest that this scale of residential development is appropriate within this area. The neighborhood planning and development of design guidelines mentioned in preceding paragraphs will need to take place prior to the consideration of development proposals such as these.

The plan calls for the relocation of the physical plant facilities to Lot 51 north of Regent Street to the site, which recently accommodated the relocation of the University fleet services. This site is located immediately adjacent to newer residential development within the south campus neighborhood. The proposed new facilities need to include quality building materials and high quality design so that the new physical plant facilities become a good neighbor to existing non-campus uses.

The potential capacity expansion of the Charter Street heating plant, including the construction of a new cold storage facility east of Charter Street, could dramatically improve the appearance of the current heating plant. We support the University's efforts to evaluate the use of alternative fuels, including the use of fluidized beds if coal continues to be the primary source of fuel.

While the Planning Unit supports the addition to the Museum of Art, a new music performance facility at the corner of Lake Street and University Avenue, the redevelopment of the Humanities Building with under-building parking, and the redevelopment of University Square, we are concerned with the proposed removal of private sector sidewalk level uses at the corner of Lake Street and University Avenue. We strongly recommend that the University incorporate private sector retail/service uses in the first floor of the music performance facility at the corner of Lake Street and University Avenue. The Planning Unit may not be able to support the demolition of these buildings without the incorporation of such uses.

Long-Range Transportation Plan

We are very interested in reviewing the "Comprehensive Transportation Master Plan," which is currently being drafted. We support the assumptions related to no net gain in parking but increased levels of service in alternative forms of transportation to and around campus, including public transit service, additional bus capacity, streetcar/trolleys and commuter rail alternatives.

The following represents some concerns which will need to be more fully addressed prior to the completion of the master plan. We would anticipate that additional comments will be provided when the full narrative to the master plan is available to review.

1. Elevated pedestrian/bicycle facilities. The Planning Unit recommends that the University limit the use of elevated pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Although the need to increase connectivity is recognized, it is also important to consider the often negative urban design impacts of overpasses. Other alternatives such as additional intersection improvements need to be fully considered.
2. Street vacations. The Planning Unit does not support the vacation of additional City streets such as Brooks Street between Johnson and Dayton Streets, or Johnson Street between Randall and Campus Drive at the present time. This is not to say that staff will not support the vacations but to indicate that the impacts and feasibility of these

possible street closures should be more fully evaluated. There are already too many breaks in the grid street system within the south campus area. Additional street vacations will only serve to further redirect traffic and limit options for the future. The Johnson Street vacation should look closely at the design of the Randall/Johnson intersection to the north. If this intersection could be redesigned to reduce the acute right turn angle, this could work. The Planning Unit supports the development concept for this block.

Attached are the minutes from the Long Range Transportation Planning Commission meeting of April 21, 2005 incorporating their comments on the Plan.

Preservation Considerations

Attached is the current draft of the Landmarks Commission's survey of UW buildings potentially eligible to be Madison Landmarks. This draft is based upon a presentation by the University of Wisconsin to the Landmarks Commission at its April 25, 2005 meeting, and upon the UW Campus Plan Draft. The Landmarks Commission has not yet endorsed this draft report.

The two most significant concerns at the present time include:

1. The University proposes the demolition of the Rennebohm building at 1327-1353 University Avenue. The Landmarks Commission, at its meeting of May 9, 2005 decided to hold a formal public hearing on the potential designation of this property as a Madison landmark based on a nomination for this building submitted by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation.
2. UW representatives stated to the Landmarks Commission that some historic buildings at the edges of the campus planning area are not planned for acquisition. However, the plan seems to indicate that they are, based on the designations on the plan map. This potential inconsistency needs to be clarified in the plan text and on the maps. These buildings include the St. Francis House at 1001 University Avenue, Luther Memorial Church at 1019 University Avenue, Abiel and Mary Brooks House and Wesley Foundation Chapel at 1121-1127 University Avenue, and the Conklin House at 309 North Mills Street.

It should be noted that the Landmarks Commission will be reviewing this draft as will local preservation organizations, both of which could have comments on the draft and additional properties identified as potentially eligible.