

**Chancellor's Strategic Planning Task Force
Master Plan Subcommittee
Interim Report**

I. Master Plan Subcommittee Vision

At its first meeting back in October 2006, it quickly became apparent to members of the Master Plan Subcommittee (Subcommittee) that without a well-developed, comprehensive Strategic Plan, the Subcommittee could not successfully develop a meaningful and inclusive Campus Master Plan for UMass Boston. As a result, the Subcommittee has formulated a vision statement for its work that emphasizes the importance of a strategic planning document that clearly defines institutional goals and priorities.

In addition, the Subcommittee's vision statement is predicated on key value propositions and the desired future state of the university as articulated at the September 2006 Strategic Planning Retreat including a commitment to quality teaching and research, service to the local and global community, and construction of a state of the art campus.

Vision Statement: The Master Plan will develop a physical plan for UMass Boston that optimally reflects and supports the strategic priorities and goals developed and recommended by the Chancellor's Strategic Planning Task Force. The physical environment will be renewed and rebuilt to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff as they contribute to the University's leadership in public higher education and research in the twenty-first century while pursuing its urban mission. The re-centering and reorganizing of campus space will result in a more vibrant and engaging University life. State of the art facilities will inspire and connect our students, faculty, staff and researchers with the University's local, national and global communities and serve to bolster ties with our surrounding neighbors.

II. Priorities, Goals and Recommendations

Priority Issues:

At this juncture in the process the Subcommittee's priority issues can best be characterized as big-picture topics that concern the physical re-design of UMass Boston into a more welcoming, purposeful, and functional campus and one that is better integrated with the surrounding Columbia Point community.

- **Orientation of the Campus:** The University has an opportunity to eliminate the existing fortress-like nature of its physical plant and take better advantage of its waterfront location, improve access to the campus, provide more open space, and reconsider the placement of the front and back doors of the campus.
- **Long-Term Viability of Existing Facilities:** An essential component of the Master Plan is a facilities assessment that will help inform the decision-making of

the Subcommittee in relation to the reconstruction or dismantling of existing buildings.

- **Integration with the Surrounding Community:** Through a rebuilding of the UMass Boston campus, options exist to strengthen the University's physical connection with the surrounding urban community and enhance its place in the neighborhood as an accessible public area.
- **Viability of Shared Spaces:** While UMass Boston shares Columbia Point with other public and private entities, in many ways it exists as an island in that it has not cultivated as many formal business, cultural, or communal relationships with its neighbors as it probably should. In this context, not only is there an opportunity, for example, to physically incorporate the JFK Library and State Archives into the campus plan but to develop mutually beneficial educational programs as well. In addition, as has been discussed previously, collaboration between Mt. Vernon Street neighbors, the City of Boston, and the University can help to improve the streetscape and commercial foundation of Mt. Vernon Street as a gateway to the harbor and a means of strengthening community connections.

Goals and Recommendations:

- The Master Plan Subcommittee will work to develop a long-term Campus Master Plan that reflects in the physical environment of the campus, the goals and priorities of the currently evolving Strategic Plan, and provides a framework for campus development by identifying building sites, circulation patterns, and open spaces. The plan will be flexible enough to accommodate changing circumstances and conditions not foreseeable when the plan was formulated.
- Guiding principles and explicit goals will be established for the formulation of the Master Plan including the building of green/sustainable facilities.
- In conjunction with the External Relations Subcommittee, an open and inclusive process will be conducted with the University community, Columbia Point entities, and external constituencies to create a future physical blueprint that supports and responds to the mission and priorities of UMass Boston, and respects the needs and desires of its neighbors.
- The Master Plan will seek to minimize disruption to the University community as facilities are rebuilt and constructed over the course of many years.
- The Subcommittee recommends that UMass Boston explore options for acquiring new real estate in the Columbia Point area as opportunities arise, helping the University accommodate future growth and realize its long term goals and objectives (e.g. living/learning communities).

Critical Success Factors:

- As stated above, a Strategic Plan that clearly articulates the goals and priorities of UMass Boston and details the most pressing programmatic issues for the future is critical for the development of a viable Master Plan.
- Broad participation and support of the Campus Master Plan is necessary if the University is to create a state of the art campus and achieve its strategic goals and aspirations.

- In formulating a long term Master Plan it will be important for the Subcommittee to utilize industry standards and metrics in both assessing current space allocation and utilization on campus and determining future requirements for classroom and research facilities, potential living/learning centers, administrative offices, and athletic and recreational facilities.
- A multi-year capital financing plan needs to be developed and accepted by University officials and other appropriate bodies for UMass Boston to begin to implement a final Master Plan and commit to the long term re-construction of the campus.

III. Plan for Completion

Work Plan:

In partnership with DCAM and Chan Krieger Sieniewicz, a work plan has been devised that will guide the efforts of the Master Plan Subcommittee over the next several months. The work plan is organized into several phases including:

- data gathering and analysis – assessment of current conditions
- formulation of alternative Master Plan scenarios
- obtaining input and feedback on the alternative scenarios
- development of a preferred Campus Master Plan
- finalization of a Master Plan

Interaction with University Community:

The Subcommittee will interact with the University community in two key ways:

- Chan Krieger will conduct individual and small group interviews with a representative cross-section of students, faculty, and staff toward the end of January. This will help inform their team about the character, culture, issues, deficiencies, and history of UMass Boston as they work to support our master planning efforts.
- It will hold a set of open, informal meetings on campus to solicit input and feedback from all internal constituencies on the priority issues discussed above and other master planning concerns. Information obtained from these interactions will assist the decision-making of the Subcommittee and help build support for the recommended Campus Master Plan.

Necessary Resources:

Given the strategic planning timeline, it is critical that the Task Force identify as soon as is practical, the presumptive outcomes and recommendations being considered for its final report to the Chancellor. Even if information is received expeditiously, the timetable still presents challenges for developing a final Master Plan Subcommittee Report by May 16th.