

Technical Appendix J, “ULI Report Relevance to the BCP”

Table of Contents

J.1	Urban Land Institute (ULI) Panel Assignment
J.2	Urban Land Institute (ULI) Panel Recommendations
J.2.1	Overview
J.2.2	Solve the Infrastructure Problem
J.2.3	Develop a Strategic Plan for the UC Merced Brand
J.2.4	Identify Immediate Building Projects
J.2.5	Find Money
J.2.6	Evaluate Each Project Using the Guiding Principles
J.2.7	Build
J.3	Recommended BCP Policy Concepts
J.3.1	Overview
J.3.2	Recommended Policy Statements

Urban Lane Institute Advisory Services Panel Report – Application to the *Bellevue Community Plan*

J.1 Urban Land Institute (ULI) Panel Assignment

The *Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Panel* was requested to identify and describe a path to the most cost-efficient and programmatically effective means to meet its capital facility requirements in order to achieve a 10,000 student enrollment by the year 2020.”

While the topic of the ULI Report is growth of the UCM Campus, the report accurately identified the importance of local leadership and resources as key elements to address the challenge. The City of Merced’s planning project, the *Bellevue Community Plan* (BCP), is a pivotal component of these potential resources. This technical memorandum presents recommended policy concepts the BCP can make which support the university’s efforts to grow.

J.2 Urban Land Institute (ULI) Panel Recommendations

J.2.1 Overview

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) Report includes seven recommendations, in the form of steps (below), to achieve benefits and opportunities in satisfying the university's interest to meet its capital facility requirements in order to achieve a 10,000 student enrollment by the year 2020.

Steps

- Step 1: Get Real Estate Expertise
- Step 2: Solve the Infrastructure Problem
- Step 3: Develop a Strategic Plan for the Brand
- Step 4: Identify Immediate Building Projects
- Step 5: Find Money
- Step 6: Evaluate Each Project Using the Guiding Principles
- Step 7: Build

Other than Step 1, all of recommendations could have some application to the BCP. Excerpts from the ULI Report comprise the entirety of Section J.2 (other than topic headings); the page number where the citation can be found is provided in parenthesis.

J.2.2 Solve the Infrastructure Problem

Common Purpose/Collaboration: Key services and infrastructure required by the university must be delivered by the city even though the campus is not currently within the city limits. UC Merced is therefore required to work closely with both the city and the county of Merced, which frequently have conflicting priorities and objectives. Developing the next phase of UC Merced requires that the university, the city, and the county work together more effectively and with a common purpose. They must increase the frequency and enhance the quality of their communication and work in a more collaborative way. Currently, monthly meetings are held by the city, the county, and the university to ensure that communication among them is maintained. These meetings have yet to address the obstacles to UC Merced's growth, such as accelerating the annexation of the campus by the city (pg. 14).

Annexation/Service Needs/Traffic Mitigation: Solve the problems of annexation into the city, future service needs, and potential traffic mitigation with the city of Merced, Merced County, and key surrounding landowners by reaching revised agreements that reflect the current conditions of the campus and its projected growth. This step is likely to be the linchpin in the entire development process and must be tackled and resolved quickly and efficiently (pg. 12). The resolution of annexation and on- and off-site infrastructure issues is the major and critical impediment to building out the remaining campus and realizing the goal of 10,000 full-time-equivalent students. A significant issue uncovered by the panel is that rigorous analysis, and identification and evaluation of alternative project delivery strategies for on- and off-site infrastructure have not been performed to shape the implementation of campus development (pg. 14). The proportional off-site infrastructure costs imposed on the university by the city and the county for its share of offsite infrastructure are based on the campus's full buildout projections of 25,000 students (pg. 18).

Annexation/Infrastructure:

"The resolution of annexation and on- and off-site infrastructure issues is the major and critical impediment to building out the remaining campus and realizing the goal of 10,000 full-time-equivalent students."

- Given UC Merced's revised medium-term buildout to 10,000 full-time-equivalent students, these infrastructure cost allocations should be revised. For example, current wastewater facilities may be adequately sized to meet the 10,000 medium-term target. Given the new growth target, the university should revisit capital commitments for the Campus Roadway and Bellevue Road (pg. 19).
- As the university renegotiates its off-site infrastructure commitments, it should also develop a strategy to guide its decision on whether to be annexed into the city (pg. 19).

J.2.3 Develop a Strategic Plan for the UC Merced Brand

Clarify and Re-message the UCM Brand: Underlying the challenge of building better relationships with all the stakeholders described is the lack of a clear vision of UC Merced’s “brand.” This absence of a coherent message puts the university at a competitive disadvantage, compared with its more mature sister campuses in the UC system (pg. 15).

Linked Fates: The fates of UC Merced and the city of Merced are inextricably linked. Many panel interviewees indicated they believe that the current quality of life, local workforce capacity, education, amenities, and so on in the city of Merced challenge the growth of the university (pg. 14). The university is also handicapped by a negative perception of the city of Merced (pg. 15). Every real estate and planning decision should reinforce the UC Merced brand (pg. 23)..... Such actions includeboosting the local economy (pg. 23).

Fates

“The fates of UC Merced and the city of Merced are inextricably linked.”

J.2.4 Identify Immediate Building Projects

Maximize infill development On-Campus: This (step) is likely to necessitate swapping uses within the LRDP to target the “low-hanging fruit” (pg. 12). Revising the land use plan to maximize infill development opportunities on the existing campus footprint would more efficiently make use of surface parking lots and other underused land already within the campus’s original “golf course” footprint, ensuring adequate infrastructure (pg. 27).

Maximize Admin Space Off-Campus: The panel believes that a decentralized campus model for academics and core student services will not move the university toward its enrollment goals, and the university has recognized through its own self-assessment that it should preserve the limited space on campus for those with direct interaction with students. The self-assessment, which is to be reviewed annually, seeks to maximize the amount of administrative space that can be located in other places (pg. 26).

Decentralized Campus

“The panel believes that a decentralized campus model for academics and core student services will not move the university toward its enrollment goals.”

Consolidated UCM Office Space in Downtown Merced: Using space on campus more efficiently will result in a growing number of off-campus office space needs. The panel recommends that off-campus space be consolidated in downtown Merced for both its cost-effectiveness and to take advantage of the opportunity the location provides for enhanced community relationships and downtown revitalization (pg. 28).

J.2.5 Find Money

Development of Private Property near the Campus: The long-term development of the campus surroundings depends on high-quality collaboration with the owners of land to the immediate south and west of the campus site. These individuals and entities have a direct interest in the continued development of the UC Merced campus. Development on their properties using private capital could be an important component of solving the space and student housing needs of UC Merced (pg. 14).

Funding Research Operations and Facilities: Today's research universities depend on strong partnerships with private sector entities to help fund research operations and facilities and to disseminate that research to a worldwide audience. Relationships with industry partners who could be vital to the development of UC Merced's research capability remain embryonic. This situation seems in part to stem from lack of a clear research mission or brand for the university as well as lack of resources to build such relationships. Attracting private sector capital to help fund the growth and expansion of the UC Merced campus is one of the few funding sources currently available (pg. 14).

Recapture UCM Capital Costs: "Community North" represents an excellent opportunity for the university to recapture its capital costs to build the UC Merced campus. Explore additional financing mechanisms (grants, tax credits, etc.) that may be available to private developers in a PPP structure to drive down costs and render costs neutral to the university over time (pg. 31).

Collaboration with Adjacent Land Owners

"Development on their properties using private capital could be an important component of solving the space and student housing needs of UC Merced."

J.2.6 Evaluate Each Project Using the Guiding Principles

Engagement/Catalyst: Support and Nurture the City of Merced First: UC Merced real estate holdings, leases, operations, and outreach activities should support and nurture the city of Merced first and second the San Joaquin Valley region (pg. 23).

On-site Space and Use Efficiency: The University has limited shovel-ready land and entitlements with which to satisfy the need for various kinds of office, academic, and lab space as well as housing, including complementary off-site markets, otherwise known as *captive demand* (pg. 23).

On-site Space and Use Efficiency: A project cannot be sustainable if it does not reduce the university's environmental footprint, does not meet the needs of the community, and is not affordable to the end user. UC Merced must seek innovative ways to make sustainability a reality (pg. 24).

Flexibility: The 2009 LRDP should be considered a living document, a template that must adapt and grow. In terms of control, a key idea is that the university gives up a little to gain a lot; one gain is flexibility. This requires using the best public and private thinking and resources to deliver new assets (pg. 24).

Nurture the City of Merced

"UC Merced real estate holdings, leases, operations, and outreach activities should support and nurture the city of Merced first and second the San Joaquin Valley region."

J.2.6 Build

Traffic Impacts of Remote Campus: The remote campus location is creating significant traffic mitigation issues, including high off-site traffic infrastructure costs, parking issues, and lot costs. The university is trying to reduce vehicle miles traveled by single-occupant vehicles by offering a very good bus shuttle system; however, the buses seem to be under or inappropriately used (for example, by staff parking at Castle Airport Aviation and Development Center, in Atwater, and riding to main campus) and expensive to run because of frequency and trips to Castle (pg. 17). A disadvantage to the property (Castle Airport Aviation and Development Center) is its distance from the main campus relative to its use, especially by undergraduate students, and the transportation and associated costs that this distance begets (pg. 17).

Remote Campus

“The remote campus location is creating significant traffic mitigation issues, including high off-site traffic infrastructure costs, parking issues, and lot costs.”

Housing Needs/Location: Currently, graduate students do not have an option for on-campus accommodations (pg. 21). The price differential (between on-campus and off-campus housing) would make off campus housing attractive to upper-class students, even if the supply of on-campus housing were greater (pg. 22). Many students rely on the free UC Merced bus transportation system, CatTracks, to reach campus and the Merced County Transit “The Bus” to move around the city. Unfortunately, CatTracks does not run continuously and has been known to reach capacity during peak periods. The presence of students in these single-family communities also does not promote the idea of walkable neighborhoods or the use of alternative forms of transportation (pg. 22).

J.3 Recommended BCP Policy Concepts

J.3.1 Overview

Based on the recommendations of the ULI Panel (presented above), City of Merced Planning Staff crafted recommended policy concepts to be incorporated into the *Bellevue Community Plan* (BCP) policy set (see Technical Appendix C). For referencing purposes, following each policy concept, in parenthesis, are references back to the ULI Panel recommendations.

J.3.2 Policy Concepts

1. Include BCP as a key document in the collaborative working group's toolkit as they continue to discuss and influence future development actions near the university (Collaboration, Step 2).
2. Recognize that a separate rigorous analysis, and identification and evaluation of alternative project delivery strategies for on- and off-site infrastructure to be utilized by UCM, the BCP and the UCP, may influence the development and implementation of the community plan. (Annexation/Infrastructure, Step 2).
3. Among various BCP annexation scenarios will be the exploration and support for urban growth immediately west of the Campus, which would enable urban infrastructure, private investments, expansion of local economy, and resources for complimentary land uses (Fates, Step 3; Catalyst, Step 6).
4. Encourage the placement of UCM office space in downtown Merced, but allow it within the BCP planning area when it does not conflict with the collaborative goals of the university and community (Downtown UCM Offices, Step 4; Efficiency, Step 6).
5. Encourage the placement of temporary parking facilities within the BCP, in a manner that supports the goals of UCM while fitting into a logical phased development within the BCC area (On-Campus Infill, Step 4; Efficiency, Step 6; Traffic Impacts, Step 7).
6. Provide opportunities near UCM to entitle compatible off-campus services needed by a large academically-focused population (On-Campus Infill, Step 4; Catalyst, Step 6; Traffic Impacts, Step 7).
7. Encourage development of student housing throughout the plan area over the long-term, but emphasize the possibility of locating this use adjacent to the

campus in the near-term (Develop Private Property, Step 5; Efficiency, Catalyst, Step 6; Traffic Impacts, Step 7).

8. Support efforts that guide UC Merced real estate holdings, leases, operations, and outreach activities in a manner that nurture the City. Utilization of infrastructure for development of lands within the BCP, presents an opportunity to nurture the City (Catalyst, Step 6).
9. Include land use designs and policies that result in the attraction of private sector capital to develop research operations and facilities, both on and off campus. (Research, Step 5; Catalyst, Step 6; Traffic Impacts, Step 7).
10. Utilize the BCP as a living document, a template that can adapt and grow, and be flexible to the changing market and implementation methods. (Flexibility, Step 6).