



memorandum

date April 9, 2004

to University of North Texas

from Sasaki Associates

project name The University of North Texas Master Plan

project no. 34490.00

subject Work Session 1 Meeting Notes

S A S A K I

Sasaki Associates Inc.
 64 Pleasant Street
 Watertown Massachusetts
 02472 USA

☎ 617 926 3300
 ☎ 617 924 2748

The following notes summarize by topic the information gathered in Work Session 1 held from March 22 and 23, 2004. The information recorded herein will be supplemented throughout the planning process.

PROGRAM / SPACE ALLOCATION

The following program and space allocation issues were noted:

1.1 Academic Programs

It was noted that the master plan should be coordinated with the academic needs of the institution and the forthcoming strategic plan which will be available in May 2004.

Program opportunities were noted in the Environmental Sciences. The master plan provides opportunities to coordinate with Environmental Studies on issues such as energy efficiency, environment and low maintenance landscape. Sustainability design and green design were noted to be important considerations in the planning process. The proposed Wellness (health) Center was identified as the first potential green building.

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Program Needs

The following facilities will need to be accommodated in the master plan:

- **Wellness Center**
- **Classroom Building for Education and Business** (outcome of the Glenn Dowling study). The facility is intended in part to allow for the consolidation of the College of Education which is located in seven buildings.
- **Distance Learning Classrooms** - Distance learning is increasingly offered and will lead to classroom utilization issues. Flexibility will be a key concern as will the need for a variety of classroom sizes. Noted sizes include rooms with capacities of 75, 125 and 150 seats. Large venue classrooms were noted to be of particular importance for courses such as sociology and political science.
- **Parking Garage** (1,000 cars)
- **Central Ticket Office** - a central university ticket office has been suggested as a way to promote all university activities in one location. The existing athletic offices have been suggested as a location given that it would allow for convenient auto access to off-campus users. It could be combined with a welcome center.

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Potential facilities

- **Auditorium** with capacity of 1,500. The University currently lacks space for large venue events.

Facility Issues / Swing Space

- **ISB** – approximately 30 percent of the ISB building will be vacated when the Computing and Information Technology Center is moved to the Research Park.
- **Visual Arts Building** designed for 850 and now has 1,900. Located in temporary facility in Oak Hall third floor.
- **Deferred maintenance** is a considerable issue and challenge on the campus due to age of many campus buildings.
- The University currently has no **swing space** that would facilitate renovations and new construction. The College Inn was noted to be a potential swing space location provided that a new residence hall is constructed.

Space Allocation

The Office of the President ultimately handles space allocation decisions. State space allocation formulas, known as THECB govern the amount of space allocated for given activities and uses.

Currently, the campus contains approximately 5,000,000 GSF including the residence halls and 2.6 million gsf of Education and General (E&G) space.

Demolition

The following buildings have been identified for potential demolition due to their age and condition:

- Kendall Hall
- Highland Hall
- College Inn (long-term)

PROPERTY ACQUISITION / CAMPUS BOUNDARIES

The definition of the campus boundaries was identified as a key issue for security and identity reasons. Property acquisition will be required to better define the campus boundary. Properties along West Prairie are targeted for priority acquisition. Potential campus boundaries include: Bernard Street on the east and West Hickory to the north. It was noted that HEAF funds could be used to fund acquisition.

HOUSING

The existing 5,000 beds of housing on the UNT campus are managed and operated by the Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs.

Victory Hall at Eagle Point is currently under construction and will house 150 student athletes in double rooms out of a total of 600 places. College Inn, purchased in 1985 for \$3 million has 500 beds and is in poor condition. Residents are not required to purchase the meal plan.

Bruce Hall is a central campus residence hall that is popular with Music students. West Hall has triple occupancy rooms. New halls such as Traditions, Mozart, and Santa Fe fill quickly.

Non-commuter freshman students are required to live on campus leading to a lack of places for upper class students. The objective is to mix first year students with juniors and seniors. Contrary to belief, many transfer students live in University housing. Currently, 1,000 beds are being added to the

campus supply. There is an estimated 2,000-bed shortage given current demand. There is no set target for campus housing or market surveys to confirm actual demand.

The University estimates that there are in the range of 12,000 students living in the areas surrounding the campus. The number of students living on and near campus has increased since the completion of the new recreation center. Recent additions to the off-campus housing supply include the 700-unit complex at the Flow Hospital site and 500 units adjacent to University Court. Bradley Apartments for international students are inadequate.

It was noted that apartment style housing is needed for faculty, staff and temporary faculty/staff.

EAGLE POINT

The Eagle Point campus has been the subject of several recent studies and project development. The current plan includes an infrastructure plan for the site as well as several lighting, traffic and other studies.

The existing and proposed uses for the site include the following:

Radisson Hotel

The Radisson Hotel (150 rooms) is located on University property leased through 2043. Current purchase price is estimated to be \$7 million.

Newton Rayzor Property

The 10-acre Newton Rayzor property, located on Bonnie Brae, was purchased as a potential parking site and is estimated to accommodate 1,000 spaces. The site is a former floodplain and soil conditions are understood to be problematic resulting in high site development costs.

Stadium

A new 35,000 seat stadium is estimated to cost in the range of \$35 to \$40 million and must be funded entirely by private funds. No state funds are available for athletic projects. The timeline for construction is estimated to be 3-5 years away. The existing stadium will be demolished and all parking will remain east of I-35.

The athletic program has hired a fund raising manager who will focus on this and other efforts. The focus will be placed on suite sales, seat licenses and major corporations.

Indoor practice facility – an indoor football practice facility is not required; however, a site needs to be identified for a 40 to 50 yard bubble.

Tennis Complex

Funding is in place for this fast track project. Eagle Point is the preferred location but this is flexible. The tennis team as well as the broader community will use the facility. The facility will be used for NCAS and regional competition. Other sites considered include: north of the recreation center, Newton Rayzor Property, PEB field (not feasible) near the current recreation fields.

The program for the \$2.4 million facility includes 12 outdoor courts one of which will be a stadium court with 600 seats. Support facilities will include an entrance way, combination dressing and restroom and a small pro shop.

Track Facility

A new track is required to replace the facility located in the existing stadium. Seating capacity for 800 and a press box (east side) are needed. Other facilities include restrooms and concessions, which could be shared with other facilities on the Eagle Point Campus such as the Tennis Complex.

Golf Practice Facility

A golf practice facility is proposed in collaboration with the Radisson Hotel. The facility will include three holes adjacent to I-35.

Baseball

A baseball field is also proposed for the Eagle Point campus perhaps on the Newton Rayzor property. The potential exists to cooperate with Texas Summer wooden bat league.

Liberty Christian School Site

UNT has purchased the 89,000 gsf (17 acre) Liberty Christian School on Bonnie Brae for the Women's Athletic program including NCAA softball, soccer and academic programs. The facility will be used to meet Title IX requirements – 60 percent of the facility will be used for academic and 40 percent for athletics. The facility will address space shortfalls and quality issues on the main campus. Location of Visual Arts to the old gym (graduate student studios) is being considered. Some School of Education uses are also being considered for the Liberty Christian site.

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RESEARCH PARK

The research park needs a catalyst and vision based on interdisciplinary activities. The master plan will need to establish the objectives for the research park and provide space for "centers of excellence" and incubator business activity. Businesses are already approaching the University about locating at the Research Park resulting in the need for a development framework for the 190-acre and 96-acre parcels of the site. An anchor tenant or assistance from the government such as a federal lab or the corp of engineers is sought.

The master plan should provide a capacity analysis summarizing what the facility can support and provide a clear understanding of the space that is not committed. The real need is to fast track the land use plan, vision and program.

The mission for the Research Park is to attract high tech or nanotechnology firms, which would tie in with current programs in the material science, computer science, and electrical engineering programs. Revenue generation for the University is important but not the most critical factor. Research opportunities include the use of the extensive DNA samples collected at the medical center for programs such as biological sciences.

The distance from the main campus is considered to be a critical issue for the success of the Research Park. A key objective will be to avoid isolation and meet the City of Denton's expectation to create an economic engine. The city has placed particular emphasis on the Research Park to fuel local economic growth and generate tax revenue.

To avoid isolation, graduate and undergraduate housing have been considered, with a preference for graduate housing. Good transport links to the main campus will be a key consideration. Transit connections are currently provided on a 15-minute headway during the week. No service is provided at the weekend.

The Centennial campus at North Carolina State is considered to be a good prototype for the mixed-use development that may be appropriate for the Research Park. Like Centennial Park, the UNT Research Park could support a blend of research, business, and educational activities. This approach will require a coordinated land use and zoning plan with the City of Denton.

The University has an obligation to identify locations for gas wells and associated tanks (40-50 year lease on wells).

ENGINEERING

Engineering is a new College at UNT which is justified in part by the fact that Texas is a net importer of engineers. The College enrolls 1,200 students in three departments but 3,000 would be a more appropriate enrollment level given the size of the University. Graduate enrollment totals 300 students in computer science. PhDs are offered in computer science and material science.

Interdisciplinary study opportunities include bioinformatics. The Center for Advanced Research Technology (CART) is an active nanotechnology research program.

The College is about to receive a \$3,000,000 High Resolution Electron Microscope which will be located in the material science area. The microscope has significant temperature and vibration control issues, the specifications of which have not been received. Physics and material science will benefit from the microscope, as will others.

VISION / MISSION

Enrollment Growth

Potential increase to 41,000 to 45,000

Technology Mediated Delivery (Blended or Hybrid Learning)

President Pohl has articulated a technologically mediated delivery vision for the future. Currently 1/3 of graduate student hours are delivered via the web with 4,500 students totally on-line, 2,500 of which live beyond 50 miles from the campus.

Web-based education will help the University become more competitive and will reduce the need to travel to the campus. Web-based undergraduate education is the next focus. The library science program is well advanced in web delivery with students coming to campus in the summer for 8 days only.

In the future, education will be outcome based and students will come to campus less often. For example, courses will meet once a week or at the beginning, middle and end of the term. This will result in fewer students on campus. Estimates suggest in the range of 27,000 per day even with enrollment growth.

This could transform the residential experience but will require new types of space and flexible scheduling as well as appropriate human resources. The University will offer a web-based experience as well as a residential experience. The living/learning experience is a possibility. Traditional residential students will use technology and will expect electronic delivery of course content.

Course structures could include:

- 1.5 hours of orientation
- 2 three-hour lectures for 150 students (star lectures)
- 36 hours of group study (25 students)

Strategic Academic Plan

The draft Strategic Academic Plan includes three main areas of interest:

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1. Undergraduate education strategies: Building on or toward excellence; strategic use of assets.

2. Interdisciplinary research and education: programs that focus on the region, high tech, engineering, education etc.
3. Internationalization of programs

Three critical areas: 1) alumni; 2) faculty; 3) Image

Facilities are a key consideration in attracting the best faculty and students, in particular, better student/ faculty social spaces are needed as are research and residential facilities. The strategic plan will include a focus on undergraduate opportunities in research but this will require facilities to support this aim.

Image is an issue that must be addressed. The overall appearance and physical design character of the campus will need to be improved and configured to support and encourage interdisciplinary activities.

The Research Park provides the opportunity to create "research centers" and should focus on the convergence of ideas and activities. Two types of centers are envisioned: 1) centers for excellence in research; and, 2) a series of centers with origins in academic units.

The Strategic Academic Plan considers the possibility a new school of Mass Communications including journalism, radio/TV, film, SLIS and community relations.

The master plan will need to address the aim of providing each College/School with an address and building identify. Residential facilities should be conceived as living/learning environments and classrooms will need to incorporate more technology and flexibility.

Future enrollment growth, potentially up to a headcount of 41,000, will be accommodated using the hybrid model. The Research Park and Dallas campus will help the university accommodate future increase. The Dallas campus is aiming to attract upper division and graduate students with programs for working professionals.

The undergraduate education strategy is to involve seniors and faculty in extracurricular activities. Currently, most seniors live off campus and have little involvement with on-campus students and the campus community.

UNT is losing too many students with outstanding academic credentials in part due to the lack of a challenging education environment. This leads to a dual mission in that some entering students need remedial learning.

STUDENT LIFE

There is a perceived lack of space on campus for student lounges and social areas. The Student Union was built for an enrollment 15,000 students and needs to be expanded to serve current and future enrollment. The union needs more retail space and more meeting space especially for large venue events. The athletic program is viewed as one way to improve retention and to provide for a more lively campus environment.

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Dining is provided in 5 locations. Food service is provided through a contract with Culinar. A new contract and bids are in the works. The meal plan is mandatory and includes a 5 or 7 day offer.

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The new recreation center is highly popular attracting 3000 people each day. It is believed to have drawn more students to live on and near the campus.

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STUDENT PROFILE

The following information was noted with regard to the student population:

- 55 percent of students commute from outside the immediate area
- 70 to 80 percent work
- Non-commuting freshmen students are required to live on-campus.
- 1,500 international students are enrolled with music being a major draw.
- 40 percent of students graduate after 6 years.
- 52 percent of students are transfers from community colleges and other institutions.

TOWN/GOWN

Denton grew 20 percent from 1990 to 2000. Lewisville grew 67 percent.

The City of Denton has recently completed a master plan which focuses on mixed-use development and tourism. The plan suggests the formation of a downtown partnership with UNT and TWU.

Specific facilities under consideration include a auditorium with seating for 800 to 1,500 people and a convention center.

TRANSPORTATION

The city would like to locate a transportation center downtown that would include the proposed Regional Rail System station. The system is being planned to connect with the DART system within the next 10 years. Other options include light rail on Oak and Hickory.

Pedestrian / Bicycle

A key objective is to pedestrianize the campus and to address vehicular / pedestrian conflicts. Chestnut, Welch and Avenue C are the worst areas for pedestrian / vehicular conflicts. Also, to improve on campus bicycle connections with those proposed by the city.

The goal of the University is to create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment through physical and transit improvements and by locating parking on the periphery.

Transit

Denton County has passed a public transportation tax and formed the Denton County Transportation Authority (www.dcta.org). Campus transit is currently run by the city in conjunction with the University with 850,000 of the 1 million annual rides being university related.

The University is an e-trans partner with the city. The city currently maintains all buses at a facility on Avenue A. The DCTA will take over the bus operations of the city. The University system cost basis is low rate compared to other large institutions in the state: UNT \$33/hour vs. \$38 at UT and Texas Tech.

The Campus system has 850,000 annual riders. The system carries 5,600 passengers /day with 1,800 boarding on the campus.

Demand is estimated to increase by 30 percent per year over the next two years. The number of required buses will increase from 13 to 21 buses. Currently there are 6 routes with 2 new routes to be added: University Court and Sterling. On the highest demand route, frequencies are currently 7-minute headways. The existing buses carry 27-29 passengers.

The University would like to see the "Austin" model – focus on transit. Working with DCTA will help leverage their ability to get federal funds.

Bicycling

Bicycling is not allowed in the central campus area. A plan is needed for cycling throughout the campus and beyond to the proposed city routes.

Roads

Bonnie Brae may be widened and expanded by the city which may be in conflict with the recently installed stormwater management system put in place along the road. The Airport Road Intersection on Bonnie Brae will need to be reconstructed.

I-35 is slated for widening and expansion. A major pinch point is between the Performing Arts Center and the Radisson Hotel.

Street Closures / Reconfigurations

The following have been identified as possible streets for closure:

- Avenue D in order to develop the Commons
- Avenue C (closed in the past but with some difficulties)
- Welch Road could be a major road for the city if the I-35 McCormick exit and Welch Street are reconfigured.

Parking

Currently there are 12,500 spaces on campus. About 4 percent of the total supply is available during peak hours. The transit system has eliminated some of the demand for parking. Eighty percent of resident students bring cars to campus. Visitor parking is provided at the stadium (100,000 visitors / year).

Permits Costs

- P permit: \$140 / year
- G permit: \$100 per year.
- D permit: \$177 / year
- Reserved permit: \$275
- Garage permit: \$200

Future demand

A new garage will be needed by 2006/07. A new 1000 space garage is being considered on Chestnut Street.

Graphics and Wayfinding / Image

Major consideration – needs focus and coordination with image / identity. The public view UNT as a Fine Arts institution. Need to instill a sense of place. University is seen as not being concerned about a sense of place.

DENIA NEIGHBORHOOD

The Denia neighborhood is the longest active neighborhood group in the city.

A key issue for the neighborhood is the green space and Duck Pond which it would like to see remain. To that end, 71 trees were transplanted in the buffer zone in July 2003.

Other key concerns include:

- Traffic and bridges
- Widening of Bonnie Brae (Studies indicate that no widening is necessary)
- Emergency access
- Access across I-35
- Safety, lights and noise.
- Runoff from the Eagle Point Campus
- Erosion of property values as a result of the campus development.
- Bridge and pedestrian links
- Access to downtown through the campus (Opposition to the closure of Avenue C)
- Gas well locations – (will be placed on the other side of Bonnie Brae – not on the golf course)

A “land bridge” of 100-200 feet wide has been discussed across I-35 to provide a functional walkway and bikeway.

Greenbelt

The neighborhood considers the following as the appropriate uses for the greenway:

- Natural habitat,
- Memorial forest – west of Duck Pond
- Use of native and adaptive plants
- Walking / hiking trails

Unacceptable uses include

- playgrounds
- picnic areas
- dirt bikes

Site Design and Plant Suggestions

- Buffalo grass – limited growth and mowing required.
- Wetland vegetation at the pond
- Xeriscape
- Low Maintenance requirements.
- Permeable paving
- tree islands in the parking.

Importance of Greenbelt

- Headwaters for hickory creek.

DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The UNT Foundation is a fiduciary for all endowment accounts and charitable trust agreements. Fundraising is now a major focus. Currently there is a pooled investment strategy with little unrestricted endowment. The Cornerstone Fund Society helps build a broad fund raising structure, which was approved six (6) months ago. The Chancellors Council is key to fund raising efforts.

There are 140,000 alumni in the database with 80,000 of them in DFW.

Most contributions go toward trust / endowments to fund academic chairs and scholarships. Capital giving is difficult to obtain for building projects.

The President's Council went from 179 to 980 members. Membership requires annual giving of \$1000 per year. 2/3s of monies are unrestricted.

LANDSCAPE

A native plants list is in use to ease maintenance and address predicted water shortages.

Trees to avoid: Bradford Pear and Live Oak –campus has too many.

CAMPUS DESIGN

Green Axis

The proposed axis needs to be tested and confirmed on a design and technical level. The concept is based on the desire to create a front door and central organizing element for the campus. It is intended to have themed and landscaped walkways.

The following are weaknesses noted with regard to the campus environment:

- No sense of perimeter identity
- Poor landscape
- Mix of architectural styles
- Lacking a good entry

A concern is that people think incrementally about the campus environment. A vision is needed to guide change. A template of architectural features, which encompass the five best features of existing buildings, would be helpful: brick color, roof lines and details, etc.

Along the perimeter, including I-35, better presence is needed. Opportunities exist for mixed use development on the perimeter – more upscale retail. Cement City also has potential. Entries need to be improved.

Preliminary goals

1. Challenging plan that strives for greatness
2. Participatory process – must have ambition for campus
3. Architectural goal – need consistency and sense of place
4. Consensus for the campus vision
5. Explore a full range of ideas
6. Create better relationships among all campuses
7. Explore capacity of the campus at various growth scenarios