Site Selection Process – Summary Memo

Corresponding with the launch of the UO Campus Physical Framework Vision Project (FVP), the university sought to identify locations for three major construction projects: a 500-bed on-campus residence hall for incoming freshmen; a 1,500-seat softball stadium; and a 100,000-sf research laboratory building.

General Review Process

The 13-member Advisory Group to the FVP provided oversight to the site selection process, and ultimately provided siting recommendations to the university president. Consistent with established Campus Plan procedures, the president solicited recommendations on siting from the university’s Space Advisory Group and the Campus Planning Committee. The president then made the final decision on project siting in consideration of the advice and recommendations from the advisory bodies.

Evaluation

The FVP Advisory Group established variety of candidate locations on a “long list” of potential sites for each project, and approved factors to be used in evaluating the various sites, grouping these factors into four major criteria clusters:

- **Feasibility of Development** – factors that affect the readiness of a site for development and the site’s compatibility with existing and/or anticipated adjacent uses;
- **Campus Planning Framework** – the degree to which the respective sites comply with Campus Plan policies and subordinate campus planning documents and directives, as applicable;
- **Space Needs Plan** – assessing consistency with the four theoretical campus growth scenarios outlined in the UO Space Needs Plan; and
- **User Needs** – considerations that address the ability to meet the programmatic and facility needs of the proposed use, as determined by the Project Sponsor (e.g., UO Athletics, Housing, etc.).

Using these major criteria groupings, a consultant team led by Cameron McCarthy Landscape Architects and Planners conducted research of the candidate sites for each project. Specifically, there were 11 potential sites – both on- and off-campus – considered for the softball project; the housing project considered 6 potential sites – all within the campus plan boundary and/or on property currently owned by the university; and the science project considered three potential sites, all on-campus and/or adjacent to campus and in ownership by the university or the UO Foundation.

Preliminary reports providing information on these sites relative to the four criteria clusters allowed the Advisory Group to evaluate all of the sites against these criteria, and develop a “short list” of sites for each of the projects. The Advisory Group selected a single “short list” site for the softball and science projects (i.e., the Howe Field and Frankling Boulevard sites, respectively), and narrowed potential residence hall sites to three – all of which were located generally south or southwest of the Global Scholars Hall.
Outreach
These “short-listed” sites were then subjected to a campus-wide outreach effort (which also included engagement with leadership in abutting off-campus residential neighborhood associations). This outreach process had three primary objectives:

• To provide information about the overall Framework Vision Project and site selection process and potential building project sites;
• To solicit feedback on the potential building projects and sites; and
• To discover from on- and off-campus input whether there were issues affecting site(s) that were not understood or discerned through earlier research and analysis.

Among various observations and preferences expressed through the engagement process, there was also discovery of agreements made by earlier university administrations relative to the potential residence hall site. Specifically, future design of the residence hall would need to account for cultural traditions associated with the winter solstice and the importance of maintaining solar access onto a future ceremonial area to be located east of the Many Nations Longhouse.

Expert Opinion and Area Studies
The sites were also subjected to further evaluation conducted by another consultant team led by campus planner and landscape architect Robert Sabbatini, AICP, ASLA. The Sabbatini team was tasked with providing expert opinion on the sites, and conducting studies of the areas around the potential project sites.

The expert opinion sought to evaluate whether, from an outside expert’s objective view, there was any fatal flaw in the short-listed sites identified. The Sabbatini team concluded that the Howe Field and Franklin Boulevard sites were ripe for further consideration through area studies analysis that they conducted. However, they recommended that the Advisory Group reject two of the three potential short-listed residence hall sites and focus on a single site located basically south of Global Scholars Hall (i.e., a site bounded by Columbia Street on the west, Moss Street on the east, and 17th Avenue on the south).

The Sabbatini team’s area studies explored the context surrounding the short-listed sites for each of the three projects, and developed recommendations for the Advisory Group to consider in making their final site recommendations.

Siting Recommendations
Informed by the outreach process; expert opinions and further area studies evaluation and consultant team recommendations; and recommendations from the Advisory Group to the FVP, Space Advisory Group, and Campus Planning Committee, the university president approved sites for each of the three building projects subject to conditions and considerations outlined below.

Science Project – Franklin Boulevard Site
The president approved the Franklin Boulevard site – located north of and across Franklin Boulevard from the Lewis Integrative Science Building - with the following provisions recommended by all three advisory bodies:

1. Continue the orthogonal campus grid; establish a build-to line for the future Science building along Franklin Boulevard.
2. Extend the designated open space along the Millrace corridor; establish pedestrian circulation/pathway north of the proposed Science building along the southern edge of the Millrace corridor.
3. Extend the Gallery Walk designated open space axis through the site to Franklin Boulevard, and connect to the Millrace open space/pedestrian corridor.

**Residence Hall Project – South/Southwest of Global Scholars Hall**

The recommendation is to site the new residence hall south of Global Scholars Hall and existing and recommended future designated open space areas south of GSH, on a site bounded on the west by Columbia Street, on the east by Moss Street, and on the south by 17th Avenue.

The president approved the following CPC recommendation concerning siting for the new residence hall:

A. Approve the preferred site (including the Advisory Group provisions as revised) with the understanding that:
   1. The comments listed in the next action item will be considered as the project moves forward.
   2. The Advisory Group provisions are revised as follows:
      1. Respect and honor Native American cultural traditions by observing solar access requirements associated with the Many Nations Longhouse. Specifically:
         a. Preserve sunlight from the winter solstice onto the roughly 28-foot diameter Expression Place ceremonial space planned due east of the Longhouse.
         b. Ensure that the new building(s) do not cast shadow onto the ceremonial center of the planned Expression Place at any time throughout the year.
         c. Ensure that the Many Nations Longhouse Axis is not in continual shadow. Shadows across the axis are permissible.
         d. Future building(s) should not extend into the Columbia Street designated open-space axis to maintain solar access onto the planned Expression Place during the equinox.
         e. Future building service areas should not be located to face the Many Nations Longhouse.
      2. Create a new east-west designated open space north of the new residence hall and adjacent to and south of the Many Nations Longhouse Axis, with the south edge of the open space aligned with the north edge of the Vivian Olum Child Development Center.
      3. Establish a build-to line for the residence hall along the south side of the new designated open space as a defining edge to the open-space corridor.
      4. Ensure that the residence hall building along 17th Avenue is articulated and engages the streetscape.
      5. Amend the Campus Plan density standards to accommodate the planned residence hall building program.

Furthermore, the committee recognizes that taking this action means that they will act on proposed density amendments to the Campus Plan at a later meeting.

B. Support the identified Campus Plan patterns and policies for the project with the understanding that the following comments will be considered as the project moves forward:
   1. Consider how the proposed residence hall development would affect the solar access of existing and future development in the surrounding area.
   2. Take the opportunity to fully consider and address universal access.
   3. Recognize the importance of addressing the street face. Carefully consider the building’s articulation to help improve the streetscape.
C. Support the identified user-group representation for the project with the following suggestion:

Take into consideration comments provided by guest Karin Logvin about effectively engaging the children’s centers.

**Softball Project – Howe Field Site**

The recommendation is to site the new softball facility – dubbed the Jane Sanders Softball Stadium – at approximately the current Howe Field softball site. Provision was made, however, by the FVP Advisory Group - with concurrence from the Space Advisory Group and Campus Planning Committee - that the siting of the project would be moved to the east to accommodate a future academic building along University Street, among other provisions for open space and connectivity set forth in the Campus Planning Committee’s final recommendations.

The president approved the following CPC recommendation concerning siting the new softball stadium:

A. Approve the preferred site (including the Advisory Group provisions) with the understanding that the comments listed in the next action item will be considered as the project moves forward.

B. Support the identified Campus Plan patterns and policies for the project with the understanding that the following comments will be considered as the project moves forward:

1. Carefully consider options for service access routes that could serve future academic buildings. Service areas for future academic buildings should not be directly on University Street. Possible alternate access points (e.g., 18th Avenue) should be considered to ensure that the Softball Project does not eliminate the potential to resolve this issue.
2. Carefully consider service access to the new softball stadium site, which is essentially landlocked. Providing service access from 18th Avenue is preferred, at least in the long term.
3. Carefully consider the design of the east/west pedestrian connection as part of the softball proejct to ensure it successfully connects to the north/south mid-block pathway. In addition, carefully consider the design of the north/south mid-block pathway.
4. Ensure that the proejct does not preclude the opportunity to refine the proposed new open space as part of the Framework Vision Project.
5. Ensure close collaboration with the Outdoor Program throughout the design process. In particular, be sure to retain the function of the turn-around space.
6. Make every effort to maximize the opportunity for a future academic building along University Street (beyond the 70-foot minimum building width requirement).
7. Pay attention to the 18th Avenue edge and make an effort to improve the university’s public face.
8. Recognize that the Howe Field gates and fence have historic significance and thoughtfully consider how they tie into the design.
9. Thoughfully consider how to provide bike parking, including game-day parking.

C. Support the identified user group representation for the project with the following suggestion:
Be sure to engage the Outdoor Program throughout the process. Consider adding a representative from the Outdoor Program to the User Group.

FVP Advisory Group provisions included:

1. Space for future academic building should be reserved along the site abutting University Street.
2. The minimum width of a future academic building is 70 feet; further study is required to establish the space reserved for this building, including the potential for vertical overlap of structures for athletic and academic use, as long as there are no blank walls along University Street.
3. Establish a build-to line along the eastern edge of University Street, based upon the current Esslinger building
4. Designate approximately 100 feet of open space south of McArthur Court for a future east-west open space corridor.
5. Establish a minimum width for pedestrian corridors (e.g., 25-foot minimum width for the east-west corridor south of the indoor tennis facility and north of Howe Field, connecting University Street to the north-south pathway).
6. Amend the Campus Plan density standards to accommodate the planned softball stadium building program.