

CHICO STATE Inside

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Updating Our Master Plan

For nearly five years, the University has been preparing to update its facilities Master Plan. Last accomplished in 1990, this is a periodic exercise that enables the University to review its vision and values and to assess their ongoing validity and achievement through the physical design and direction of the campus. The Master Plan provides principles and guidelines for the physical development of the main campus and the University farm so that Chico State can both build upon and sustain its distinctive strengths into the 21st century. The update this time, geared for a presentation to the CSU Board of Trustees in May, has the additional context of a new president. As with the University's Strategic Plan, I bring new lenses to the Master Plan: the ability to see things freshly and to connect things differently.

What has been most gratifying to discover with the Master Plan—as with the Strategic Plan—is that its basic principles are sound. These are predicated on a rich set of values, none of which is more important than building a community of learning and hope worthy of the trust that our students and the people of California have placed in us.

As the campus prepares for mandated enrollment growth, the Master Plan clearly states our goal to manage that growth on our own terms, to protect our distinctive living and learning environment as a residential campus, to strengthen the extraordinary relationship we have with our host city, and to reinforce the educational experience of our students through the buildings and spaces of the campus and its extended locations.

This Master Plan particularly signals and supports institutional distinction in several important ways.

- It recognizes that learning occurs everywhere—outdoors, as well as in—and that the physical shape and conditions of the campus should foster learning.
- It emphasizes the physical beauty of the campus and harmony between the natural environment and the built environment.
- It celebrates the relationship between the University and the city of Chico, especially the spatial seamlessness between the campus and the downtown and between the campus and surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- It highlights certain architectural features of the campus—such as bridges, arches, brickwork, Kendall Hall dome and lawn, and the Trinity Hall tower—that define the visual vocabulary of the campus and guide campus development in the future.
- It acknowledges open space as an organizing tool for the campus.
- It understands that learning is both intimate and public and that our spaces should enable learning to occur in any fashion.

Above all, the Master Plan intentionally communicates values. We declare our commitment to environmental awareness and respect and to sustainable building and living practices. We affirm openness through a barrier-free campus. We demonstrate civic engagement as a good neighbor and a partner with the city of Chico, committed to building a stronger, more desirable community together. We articulate a keen sense of place, psychologically, historically, and geographically. We express confidence in our identity and pride in our story.

Yes, a good Master Plan reveals, but it also prepares. In compelling us to examine the University's defining values and characteristics, it also challenges us to consider how our identity and mission have prepared Chico State to meet the needs of an increasingly more complex workplace and pluralistic society. Thus, a successful planning effort is simultaneously both retrospective and future-focused, for it underscores the connections between what we have achieved and what we are, and what we will become. Whether examining the historical record or considering the University's next quarter century, we rely upon clarity in such matters to develop a greater sense of shared purpose, to promote institutional community, and to gain the resources we need to support our high standards and aspirations.

A good Master Plan also emphasizes the process of its development as much as the content of its pages. This Master Plan is accessible to anyone through the University's Web site, and it has been the focus of nearly a score of on- and off-campus presentations and discussions, including the most recent on Feb. 8 in Harlen Adams Theatre. I encourage you to check out the Master Plan and to communicate what you like about it, and don't, where you think it needs improvement and further attention, directly to me or to Dennis Graham, vice president for Business and Finance, or Greg Francis, director of Facilities Planning. We each have a lot at stake in this Master Plan, and each of us has the ability to influence its shape.

—*Paul J. Zingg*