

TOPIC: FRONT RANGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE- LARIMER CAMPUS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

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I. SUMMARY

The Front Range Community College (FRCC) Larimer Campus has experienced a 368% increase in FTE students from its inception in 1988 to 2005. The campus is expecting continued enrollment growth as well as population growth in Larimer County and has undergone a planning process culminating in the creation of the facilities master plan currently submitted for the Commission's approval.

Supporting 3,015 FTE in 2005, the campus also supports over 400 high school students enrolled in career technical programs and enrollments in non-credit and continuing education classes. Additionally, Harmony Library serves approximately 450,000 patrons (both students and community members) on an annual basis.

The FRCC Larimer Campus service area population has grown over 30% in the past 10 years and students from other campuses in the area such as Colorado State University, Regis University and Colorado Christian University are increasingly utilizing FRCC's 'for-transfer' courses.

Projections forecast a 29.79% increase in enrollment on the campus to 3,912 FTE in fall 2010. Based on these projections, the space analysis used for this master plan predicts a space deficit of approximately 90,000 assignable square feet (ASF) by fall 2010. Space deficiencies occur in all academic, academic support and auxiliary space categories.

During the previous planning cycle, three new buildings were constructed on the Larimer Campus: Harmony Library, Challenger Point and Long's Peak Student Center. Additionally, two renovation projects were completed in 2002: Blanca Peak and Mount Antero's east section. During the summer of 2006, two temporary parking lots were paved and a new entry on Shield's Street was constructed. The campus is currently holds 47 acres of land and may require alternate site developments in the long-term future.

This master plan recommends both long-term and short-term projects to bring campus space needs up to date. Recommended general fund projects include an addition to Challenger Point, a small addition to Mount Antero and minor renovation of space for student services and academic support and an addition and renovation to Maroon Peak. A new Arts and Letters Academic Building is needed to provide needed classroom, office, assembly and laboratory space. An addition to the Harmony Library is longer-term in nature, but could be necessary if enrollment growth continues as projected. Also, additional auxiliary projects will be necessary to create additional student center facilities within this planning cycle.

Currently the campus is requesting an addition to Challenger Point, the school's primary science building. Challenger Point was constructed in 1996 and designed to accommodate a future addition to the west. The existing science laboratories are under-sized, causing crowded conditions for students and an inability to provide adequate space for equipment. The number and type of science laboratories do not support current or projected enrollments. The planned addition will provide a total of 18,700 ASF of new science laboratories and support, which consists of 9,350 ASF of lab expansion and 9,350 ASF of lab replacement. Additionally, the current laboratory spaces will be renovated into 7,718 ASF of offices and classrooms.

The expansion and reconfiguration of the proposed science laboratories will allow additional sections of high-demand core science courses such as Biology, Chemistry, and Anatomy, as well as new space for Biomedical, Biotechnology, Microbiology, Physics, Vet Tech, Geology, Astronomy, and specialized spaces for cadavers and unique instrumentation.

II. BACKGROUND

FRCC is an open-access institution serving anyone 16 years of age or older in college preparatory or two-year college-level instruction. FRCC provides both general and occupational education for those seeking certificates in a number of fields or an associate's degree in Applied Science, Arts, Science or General Studies. FRCC also serves many students who are looking to transfer to a four-year institution.

The Larimer Campus for FRCC was introduced when the college began to expand north and merged with the Larimer County Voc-Tech Center in 1988. After the merger, programs expanded to include transfer and career/technical degree offerings.

According to Department of Higher Education Policies Section III Part D, Commission approved facilities master plans should be re-examined every ten years. Given the changing nature of development needs and fiscal constraints, institutions can submit amendments to their master plans in the interim to incorporate new development strategies and changing needs without undertaking the task of creating a new master plan. Section III Part D of DHE policy states:

A long-range plan must be developed as a flexible framework for campus growth that recognizes the dynamic nature of higher education. As enrollments grow or decline and/or as academic programs change or become more comprehensive to serve new student needs, campus facility needs inevitably will change. A facility master plan must be capable of meeting these changing circumstances. To ensure that a Long-Range plan remains valid, an institution must do one of the following before the ten-year life of the plan expires:

- *Create a new Long-Range Plan;*
- *Send a letter to DHE stating that all assumptions contained in the master plan are still valid and that all facilities' needs outlined in it are still needed but have not yet been completed;*
or
- *Amend the master plan to bring it up to date.*

Thus, at least every ten years the long-range plan for each campus must be re-examined or updated in order to keep it current.

The submittal and approval of this program plan will put the FRCC Larimer Campus in compliance with CCHE/DHE policy.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

1) Which academic programs currently have the greatest demand at the Larimer Campus?

High enrollment programs include English, Math, History, Sciences, Nursing, Psychology, and Business.

2) Has the campus considered parking structures as a partial solution to current land restrictions?

The college considered this but based upon the issues addressed with the residential neighbors when completing the parking lot project in the summer of 2006, along with the significant cost, this is not considered a viable option.

3) The Plan indicates that multi-story facility expansions should be considered in order to maximize the development potential of the current site. Since the campus is surrounded by single family residential uses, it seems that this solution could potentially be out of scale with surrounding uses. Has FRCC engaged in any conversations with Ft. Collins city planning officials regarding multi-story development on the current site?

We have not had formal conversations at this time as those particular buildings are not in the shorter-terms plans for the campus.

4) Do current short term expansion goals include multi-story expansions? If so, which projects?

No---see above.

5) Does the campus currently receive revenues from community use of the Harmony Library?

No, the library is operated jointly by FRCC and the City of Ft. Collins. The college is responsible for all facilities operational costs while the city is responsible for the main daily operational costs (librarians, etc.). There are no funds received directly from the city by the college.

6) What contractual agreements exist between the local library district and FRCC? If any, how do they affect future growth at the Larimer Campus?

An intergovernmental agreement exists to handle the operations described above. The college and city have a good working relationship and routinely work through any issues that arise.

7) Has the campus considered any contingency plans for space needs if state funding is available to construct short term projects?

The college has done some research into privately owned space for potential lease in Loveland due to the significant growth in the area.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission approve the Front Range Community College- Larimer Campus Facilities Master Plan 2007.

Appendix A

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. 23-1-106 Duties and powers of the commission with respect to capital construction and long-range planning

(3) The commission shall review and approve master planning and program planning for all capital construction projects of institutions of higher education on state-owned or state-controlled land, regardless of source of funds, and no capital construction shall commence except in accordance with and approved master plan, program plan, and physical plan.

(4) The commission shall ensure conformity of facilities master planning with approved educational master plans and facility program plans with approved facilities master plans.