

**TOPIC: UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER PROGRAM PLAN FOR
THE COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING**

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I. BACKGROUND

This item is for Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) review of a FY2009-2010 program plan for the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado Denver (UCD). The project is requesting a mix of both state and cash funding sources for FY2009-2010. In practice, the Commission has formally approved all program plans requesting greater than \$0 in state-funds.

The plan is being brought forward at the present time since the University will be able to fund-raise more effectively for projects that have received program approval from CCHE. Consideration of this project at this time will not change the Commission's normal state-funded project prioritization process and the project will be considered for prioritization by the Commission in October of 2008. Additionally, the program will have no special consideration and the merits of the project will again be evaluated by Department staff and the Commission along with all other FY2009-10 state-funded considerations. Approval of this agenda item will constitute the approval of the program plan as submitted to CCHE on February 1, 2008.

II. SUMMARY

The project involves the design and construction of a new 120,000 GSF building for the UCD College of Architecture and Planning. Current budget documents show a total request of \$42,000,000 in FY09-10 with \$27,000,000 in state-funds and \$15,000,000 in cash-funds. Given current revenue forecasts which show very little state-funding available for capital construction over the next several years, the ability for CU to raise additional cash-funds for this project will be crucial to project financing.

The space within the new facility will include integrated and flexible studio and critique spaces, classrooms and lecture hall, a visualization laboratory and computer center, faculty and administrative offices, galleries and multi-function spaces, and specialized center space – including Historic Preservation, Sustainable Urbanism, Emerging Practices, Healthy Environments with a prototyping laboratory and wood/plastics/metal shop, student activities space and related building support spaces.

The building site is the Auraria Higher Education campus in Denver, Colorado. The building will connect Auraria to the Downtown Area, strengthen the connections between Auraria campus and the rest of Downtown and foster public-private partnership to attract development of the campus edge.

The UCD College of Architecture and Planning is currently among the five or six largest colleges in the U.S. with architecture-related disciplines, with 830 undergraduates in Boulder and 480 graduate students in Denver. The college's undergraduate program offers the only pre-professional education in the fields of architecture and planning in the state of Colorado. Within the vision of Integrative Design, the college is building prominence and distinction in four key areas: emerging design practices, sustainable urbanism, healthy environments and preserving heritage. At this current time, the Departments of Architecture and Planning and Design within the College span across the two campuses, offering the undergraduate programs in Boulder (at 40,000 sq ft) and the graduate programs in Denver (at 54,000 sq ft). Graduate professional degrees in architecture, landscape architecture and urban and regional planning are offered by the college on the university's Denver campus – located in CU-Denver building. This space is considered inadequate to meet the current College's needs.

III. ANALYSIS

The program plan as submitted will provide improved academic space for the unique space needs of the College of Architecture and Planning. The program plan includes estimates that they will need an additional 21,508 assignable square feet to meet its graduate academic and research program needs by the year 2014. The largest space needs, as identified in the program plan, are instructional laboratories, studios and exhibition space.

The current program plan would efficiently address the programmatic needs of the college, is in conformance with the revised CU five-year capital improvements program and is in conformance with the recently approved 2007 Facility Master Plan Update for the Auraria Higher Education Center.

Staff contacted UCD regarding the following six questions, all of which have been answered sufficiently. University responses are show below in italics.

- 1) Given very little state funding is likely to be available over the next several years, please comment on the feasibility of completing this project using only cash funds.

The college is actively fundraising. Because UCD has taken on the responsibility for funding the Business School Building and has purchased two other properties for the state, we believe that this project will receive a favorable response from the legislature.

- 2) Currently how much money has been pledged toward the project? If possible, please predict the nominal affect on fundraising CCHE approval could have.

\$1M has been raised for this project. Further fundraising efforts require proof that the project has CCHE approval.

- 3) Once the facility is constructed, what options are there for current classroom space in the CU Building?

Space that is vacated by the College of Architecture and Planning will be backfilled by current needs for program space in the College of Arts and Media and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Both of these colleges exclusively utilize the pool of shared classrooms located on the Auraria Campus, in large part because this is most convenient for students and reduces their travel time between classes. In addition, the office needs of both colleges are extensive. Therefore, it is most likely that this space will be programmed as faculty office space.

- 4) Was housing the A&P Building considered as an option when purchasing the building at 1475 Lawrence? Why was the business building considered a better option?

The Business School was a higher priority of the Downtown Denver campus. In addition, it is a better match of location and space-type to reuse a downtown office building for the business school space needs rather than to remodel an existing downtown office building for studio space and other specialty spaces that are needed by the College of Architecture and Planning. All floors of 1475 Lawrence will be programmed for meeting the needs of the Business School.

- 5) Diagrams of the current UCD Building show no college functions on floors 6 or 8. What are the current functions in this space?

Floor six is occupied by the Math Department, part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Floor 8 is occupied by the College of Arts and Media and the Academic Technology and Extended Learning group. All are UC Denver entities.

- 6) Are current facility plans congruent with current City of Denver view plan restrictions? If not, please explain.

Yes. Design of the Architecture and Planning facility would not be restricted by view plane constraints if the St. Elizabeth's site is selected. If the Lot R site is chosen, the building design will conform to whatever view plane restrictions are in place at the time for that site. UCD, along with its Auraria partners, is in discussions with the city regarding the Bell Park view plane that currently restricts the development of the Lot R site.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approves the Program Plan for the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado Denver.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

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