

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

Located in the rapidly growing Inland Empire area of Southern California (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties), the University of California, Riverside is well positioned to meet the strong and increasing demand for quality higher education in this region.

Over the past decade, changes in interests and lifestyles of the students, faculty and staff have produced campus populations that view social interaction as an integral part of campus life. The demand for access to facilities and programs is far greater and more aggressively pursued than at any previous point in history. Increasingly, students are choosing colleges based not only upon academic criteria, but also upon the social opportunities available.

Currently, the existing Commons is inadequate in its current offerings, amenities, and size. This shortage will become more acute as the campus expects to grow to more than 20,000 students by 2010. To respond to the growing campus over the next several years, the DPP addresses the physical improvements that will allow the Commons to become the “*state of the art hub of campus activity*.” The plan seeks to develop the Commons as a destination for students, faculty, staff, and the community by providing the appropriate social, cultural, and recreational spaces. In essence, the Common’s expansion plan will give the University a “*sense of place*” for the entire community to enjoy.

### 2.2 PROJECT NEEDS

Students were surveyed by Brailsford & Dunlavey in the fall of 2000 to determine their priorities for Commons program spaces.

When the various activity spaces are ranked by depth and breadth of demand, the highest priorities are food service/dining and quiet study lounges. The second priority activity spaces are social/TV lounges and meeting/seminar rooms (2-5 people). The third priority activity spaces are meeting rooms of varying sizes: “small” (6-10 people), “medium” (11-25 people), and “large” (25 or more people).

Based on the demand based programming and the priority of space allocations according to the survey, the program recommendations are as follows:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Priority

- Food Service/Dining: 20,000 to 30,000 sq. ft.
- Quiet Study Lounge: 4,000 to 5,000 sq. ft.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority

- Social/TV Lounge: 2,000 to 4,000 sq. ft.
- Meeting Rooms (2-5 people): 3,800 to 4,500 sq. ft.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority

- Meeting Rooms (6-10 people): 2,100 to 2,500 sq. ft.
- Meeting Rooms (11-24 people): 1,200 to 1,600 sq. ft.
- Meeting Rooms (25 or more people): 3,000 to 5,000 sq. ft.

These spaces would accommodate total campus demand within the user-defined priorities for each space. However, the final program recommendation, discussed in a subsequent section, takes into account such factors as the cost of accommodating certain activity spaces, opportunities to share space through scheduling, qualitative information gathered through focus groups and interviews, and professional judgment to adjust the space recommendations up or down to insure a design that will fully realize the building's mission as well as respond to campus demand.

## 2.3 Planning and Design Guidelines

### ■ Building Goals and Objectives

Based on Workshops and Focus Groups, the following building goals, expectations, and objectives were established:

- A great place to hang out.
- Student Identity spaces to foster school spirit and student pride.
- Non-intimidating spaces. Comfortable for night use.
- Importance of the use of outdoor spaces.
- A secure, easily monitored, and controlled building.
- Easily maintained building and grounds.
- The design should take into account efficient staffing and operation.
- Attention to detail that can enhance building function.
- Allow users easy access and viewing of activities and programs.
- Visibly and audibly interactive “hub” feeling.
- Welcoming ambience.
- Activities should be the central focus of the building.
- Social/Recreational atmosphere.
- The emergency exits should not be mistaken as secondary entrances.
- Activity, but not noise, should be heard throughout the building.
- An opportunity to help set the direction for the next phase of architectural expression on the Campus.
- An opportunity to establish active outdoors places, to be the hub of this part of the Campus.

## Functional Issues

Key functional issues related to the planning of the Commons expansion include the following:

### Clear/Efficient Circulation

The circulation system should provide immediate user orientation as well as allowing adequate visual supervision from the entry points. Circulation elements can also be a significant source of natural light and vistas to the outside.

### Program Visibility

In order to create a “user friendly” environment, particularly for the first time user, it is important to be able to see into the various activity spaces from the main circulation areas. This increases the feeling of life and vitality in the building and gives users the opportunity to observe various programs that they may choose to participate in without feeling pressured or intimidated.

### Natural Light

Certain spaces such as kitchens, and some meeting rooms, do not require natural light. Other functions such as the dining area, lounges, multipurpose rooms, and administration areas benefit from natural light and views, and are also appealing elements to see from the outside as the building is approached.

### Energy Conserving Design

A facility of this type involves developing the optimal mix of energy strategies including building orientation and landscaping, exterior materials and fenestration, the use of natural light, insulation, economy cycles for mechanical equipment, and computer monitoring devices. On-site control of the HVAC system could also be utilized as an energy saving strategy.

### Expansion

Two strategies for the expansion of the building were considered: either by building a satellite facility at another Campus location, or in increments at this building site. The west side of the site is the most logical area for a potential future expansion to take place at this location. Hence, space should be reserved for this purpose as a design consideration.

Campuses that exceed 20,000 students are usually sufficiently large for a satellite facility to be viable. A logical location for consideration of a satellite would be near undergraduate student housing areas. This location would primarily serve residential students, but would include components to serve the growing campus.

### Life Cycle Costs

It is important that materials for the building be chosen carefully with an emphasis on durability and maintenance.

## Program Component Issues

### Lobby/Gallery

- This area should feel like the heart/hub of the building. Everything should be served from this point. From this area users should be able to see a maximum number of activities.
- The building lobby should create a sense of arrival and welcome the users.
- This area provides an opportunity for permanent and rotating art and exhibits.
- It is important that this area provide orientation in terms of both an information counter and information kiosks. Clear information and directional graphics and signage are also important.
- **Lounge and Seating Areas**
  - A variety of seating areas should be provided for relaxation, socializing and study.
  - These areas will provide casual seating in an inviting setting with both natural light and views to various activities.
  - Computer ports should be available in a configuration that supports both casual usage, such as using email, as well as long-term work.
- **Multipurpose Event Space**
  - It is very important that this room have an attractive and inviting ambience. Students desire a venue equivalent to a hotel ballroom/conference area.
  - This space is intended to accommodate (400-500) persons for a variety of functions including banquets, meetings, dances, receptions and performances.
  - This room will have audio-visual infrastructure for lectures, conferences and other events.
  - This space requires a 15 ft.-20 ft. clear height and will have one divider wall.
  - In order to provide the greatest flexibility it is proposed that this space have a wood floor. Acoustical considerations of wall and ceiling materials should be integrated into a wood floor based solution.
  - Adjacent to this Ballroom/Banquet Room will be a staging kitchen and storage area. It is intended that the chairs and tables for this room be stored on site.
  - In addition, the lobby and circulation space should be designed to accommodate prefunction activities.
  - There should be public restrooms adjacent to the Ballroom/Banquet Room.

### **Meeting Rooms**

- This area will consist of rooms for meetings and conferences for a minimum of 20 persons each.
- These rooms will have a clear height of 10-12 ft. and will have carpeted floors.

### **Retail**

This area should be flexible “white box” space to respond to changing demands for general convenience items, such as over the counter medications, personal hygiene supplies, stationery supplies, and magazines, as well as other specialty goods and services.

### **Student Organizations and Programs Area**

- These areas will provide offices and work areas for a variety of student focused programs and organizations.
- It will also include storage lockers for club use, work cubicles, and project work areas for painting banners and signs, etc.

- **Administrative Office Area**

This will include space for the administration of the facility such as Director’s Office, Staff Offices, Secretarial Area, Reception Area, Club Work Space, Administrative Space with Cubicles, and Storage.

### **Building Concept**

The building concept developed by Cannon Dworsky responds to both the quantitative demand-based programming analysis and the qualitative needs and desires expressed by the consumers and providers of student services on campus. The primary goals of the expansion and renovation concept are to expand the amount of space used by students.

The concept strives to incorporate the existing Commons into an expanded, dynamic signature building that caters to every student’s needs. The building is divided into four parts:

- the Administrative Zone
- the Retail/Enterprise Zone
- the Student Services Zone
- the Student Activities Zone

The bookstore will remain as is, but the Commons Expansion will connect it with the rest of the proposed facility.

## 2.4 PLANNING PROCESS

The process had two primary areas of focus. The first was a workshop process to validate and refine the space programs and budget assumptions for the Commons Expansion. The second involved developing alternate site utilization diagrams and evaluation criteria in order to determine the appropriate site locations and site relationships for the facilities identified in the workshop process.

The goal of the workshops was to provide an open and participatory forum for exploring, refining, and achieving consensus regarding the site and building program elements for the proposed Commons expansion.

As part of the sessions, the Planning Committee was provided with an orientation to the building type and its components through slide presentations and graphic layouts demonstrating alternative approaches to various functional issues. The workshops also included discussions of specific site influences and constraints.

In addition to the workshops, specific meetings were conducted to make recommendations for program goals and requirements, including:

- Food Service
- Gallery/Lounge
- Lobby/Circulation
- Social Activity Space
- Meeting Rooms
- Offices/Work Areas (Programs)
- Bookstore
- Engineering Requirements

## 2.5 KEY PROGRAM ASSUMPTIONS

The total space allocation for the Administrative Zone, Retail/Enterprise Zone, Student Services Zone, and Student Activities is approximately 96,200 assignable square feet (asf).

Because this outline program only specifies assignable square footages, an allowance for building core and circulation spaces such as hallways, stairways, mechanical spaces, interior wall widths and chases is made based on an average “efficiency factor” for the building. The core & circulation for the proposed Commons is estimated at 51,800 gross square feet (gsf), based on an efficiency factor of 65%. With this particular efficiency factor, 65% of the final building design will be assignable square footage with the remainder as building core and circulation. However, it must be noted that the efficiency factor could change depending on the final design solution. Using this efficiency factor, the total building is approximately 148,000 gsf.

It should be noted that, independent of a specific design solution, typical efficiencies for this type of building are between 62-65%.

Currently, market analysis supports the addition and renovation of a total of approximately 150,000 gsf. In order to achieve the program requirements, B&D and Cannon Dworsky have created an optimal program that accommodates both the renovation and expansion phases. Existing 42,000 gsf of the Commons will remain and will be renovated and an existing 22,000 gsf will be demolished. Consequently, an additional 105,000 gsf will be new construction. Construction costs vary for these different types of construction.

The program includes all spaces required to effectively respond to anticipated campus demand to 2010. It should also be noted that this program and its allocated spaces best represent the outline program as it was recommended to the University at the time that this report was written. It is also a natural part of the design process for some reconfiguration to take place during the design development phase of the project.

## 2.6 PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Commons expansion are to:

- Support the university's mission by creating a dynamic hub of campus and community activity, providing a home for many of the university's diverse programs and services;
- Provide services to a campus population that will grow to more than 20,000 students.
- Provide the appropriate spaces for a variety of cultural, educational, social and recreational programs, which will allow UCR students, faculty, staff, and community members to develop a better connection to the university, thereby assisting the university's recruitment and retention efforts;
- Become a destination spot for the campus community, providing services and conveniences that are needed in their daily lives;
- Create an environment for getting to know and understand others through formal and informal associations; and
- Develop a flexible, student-centered, technologically sophisticated, architecturally significant student union that becomes one of the premier facilities in the country.