



BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE MEETING #7 AGENDA CAMPUS DISTRICT VISIONING PROJECT

Meeting Objectives

1. Review BRC Meeting #6 outcomes and responses to information requests and questions.
2. Review and discuss the draft Concord Campus District Vision Framework document.

When

April 18, 2019
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Where

Concord Senior Center
2727 Parkside Circle, Concord

BRC Members

Dominic Aliano, Concord Councilmember
Susan Bonilla, Council for Strong America
Edward Del Beccaro, East Bay Regional
Manager, TRI Commercial
Greg Feere, Trades, Retired
Dr. Glenda Humiston, UC ANR
Randell Iwasaki, CCTA
Sharon Jenkins, John Muir Health
Buck Koonce, Lawrence Livermore NL
Bob Linscheid, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Satinder Mahli, CSUEB
Dr. Nellie Meyer, Mt. Diablo USD
Carlyn Obringer, Concord Mayor
Victor Tiglao, Student Representative
Dr. Peter Wilson, Retired Dean, CSUEB
Dr. Fred Wood, CCCC
Jim Wunderman, Bay Area Council

Project Team

Valerie Barone, City of Concord
Kathleen Treppe, City of Concord
Guy Bjerke, City of Concord
Daniel Iacofano, MIG
Dan Amsden, MIG
Jamillah Jordan, MIG

- I. Welcome and Agenda Review.....6:00 PM
- II. Planning Process Overview.....6:10 PM
 - Overall Process Schedule
 - BRC #6 Summary
- III. Additional Information.....6:30 PM
 - BRC Submitted News Articles
 - UC Berkeley Student Engagement
 - Portland State University (campus model)
 - University Center of Lake County (campus model)
- IV. Draft Concord Campus District
Vision Framework Document.....7:00 PM
- V. Public Comments.....8:30 PM
- VI. Close.....9:00 PM

Concord

B.R.C

3.21.19

PHYSICAL PLANNING CONCEPTS

CAMPUS LAYOUT

HIGHLY INTEGRATED

PORTLAND STATE UNIV...

ART MUSEUM
SPORTS FACILITIES
RAIL TRANSIT

INTERCONNECTED

DESIGN IS NOT CONSTRAINING
P3 POSSIBILITIES

CLASSROOMS EMBEDDED

MAKE CLASSROOMS FLEXIBLE

SIZES
SM, MED, LRG.

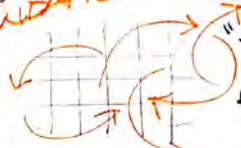
* CENTRAL AND SPACE

* BUILD A COMMON IDENTITY

* MULTI-CULTURAL STUDENT UNION LACK OF BOUNDARIES

* BE VERY FLEXIBLE

* TAKE OUR CUES FROM OUR PARTNERS...



"PARKING LOT" IN SLDS...
LEAVE SPACE FOR FUTURE USES...

"MASH-UPS"

#7: DARK FIBRE
HIGH SPEED
5G TEST BED.

#4: CITY COUNCIL CONTROL
RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CONCORD COMMUNITY

IMPLEMENTATION

OBTAIN BEST PRACTICES ON SPAT-UP.

APPROVE S.P.

STUDENTS (in/out)



GO MENTOR

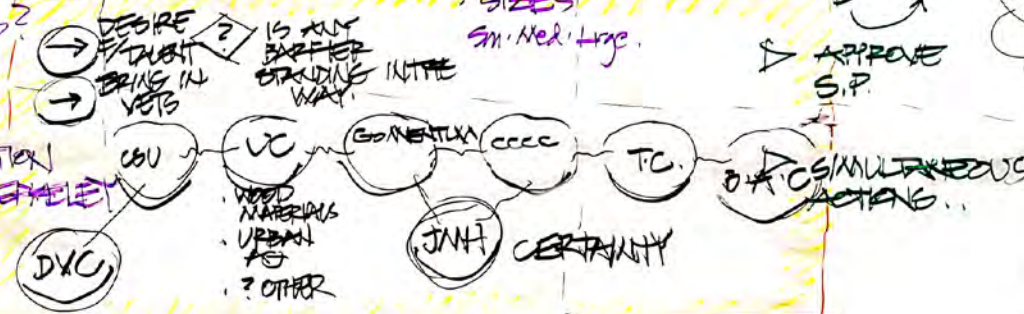
"AUTONOMOUS VALLEY"

WHERE WILL THE VEHICLES BE BUILT?

WHO ARE THE CORP PARTNERS?

AIRPORT

GLOBAL INNOVATION FORUM - UC BETHELEY





CONCORD CAMPUS DISTRICT VISION FRAMEWORK

Blue Ribbon Committee Review Draft | April 12, 2019



"More California high school graduates are ready for college than ever before, but many **qualified applicants are being turned away**. Expanding access to college economically benefits both individuals and the state, and can ensure opportunities for students who have **traditionally been underrepresented** in postsecondary institutions..."

– Public Policy Institute of California
September 2017



CONTENTS

- 1** INTRODUCTION
- 2** DEFINING THE NEED
- 3** VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- 4** PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

APPENDICES

A: Relevant News Articles

B: Detailed BRC Meeting Summaries

C: Topical Presentations

1



INTRODUCTION

Overview

Reuse Project Background

Campus Visioning Process

Blue Ribbon Committee

Additional Community Engagement

Overview

Higher education and the innovative economy are rapidly changing. The needs of industry, and the associated technical and intellectual skills required from students, are constantly evolving. Staying “ahead of the curve” is vital for ensuring local students succeed in the future workplace and local companies have the people and resources they need to stay competitive on a global stage.

Contra Costa County is currently the **largest county in California by population not served by a four-year public higher education institution.** As a result, many graduating high school students and community college transfer students are seeking to further their educational careers outside of the County. This hinders the ability of local industry to retain talent and growth nearby.

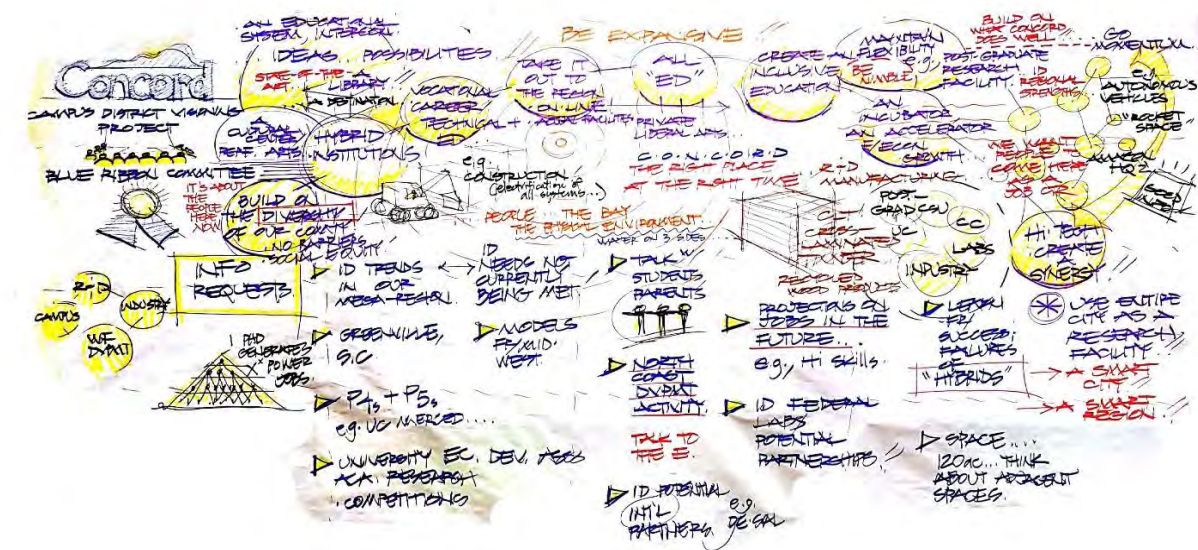
Concord is uniquely positioned to address these concerns through the creation of a new higher education campus. The city is located at the epicenter of the Northern California Megaregion and has land available adjacent to BART and an entirely new community. What is most important is that the City and community have a desire to strategically support regional economic and higher education through a new campus model—**one that combines multiple intuitions at various grade levels, research and development, and manufacturing opportunities.**



Over the past two decades, the City of Concord has worked with local residents, the business community, regional partners, and other agencies to transform the former Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) into a new, dynamic mixed-use neighborhood supported by a full complement of essential services and public open spaces. A key component of the comprehensive vision for the Reuse Project is the allocation of approximately 120 acres for a higher education campus. This new campus is envisioned to address academic and applied research needs in the region and beyond.

In August 2018, the City formed a **Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC)** composed of education leaders, business and industry representatives, and regional stakeholders to help identify and articulate a shared vision and set of guiding principles for the new campus. The culmination of this collaborative process revealed substantial interest in developing a world-class inclusive hybrid campus district with a diverse range of academic programs, degrees, and training opportunities for students of all ages. In addition, the BRC identified the need and opportunity to include private industry in the campus, helping to bolster unique research and employment opportunities that support Concord and the Northern California Mega-region.

This **Vision Framework** report defines the vision for the campus district and outlines a strategic action plan to implement the ideas as articulated during the BRC process.



BRC meeting wallgraphic recording of committee comments and ideas

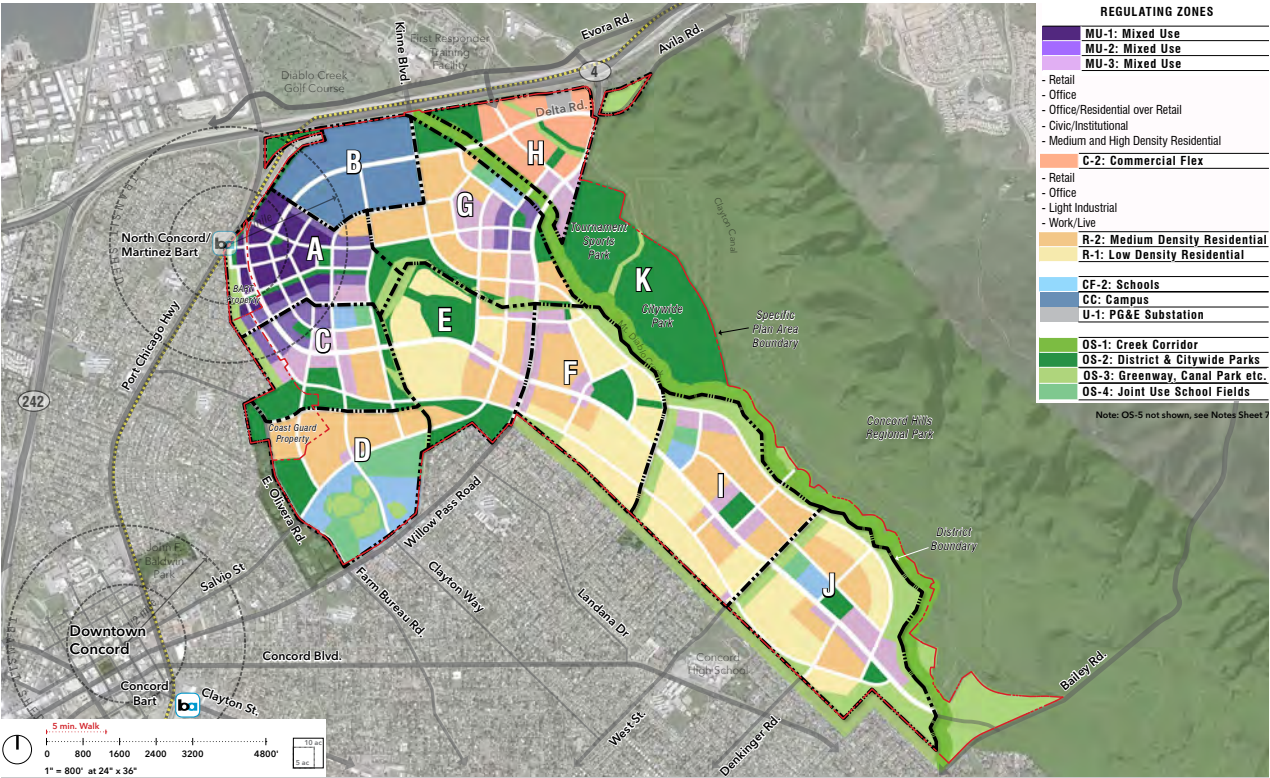
Reuse Project Background

In 1942, the U.S. Navy established the CNWS along Contra Costa County's northern waterfront to serve as its primary Pacific Coast ammunition port, supporting maritime operations during World War II and later military operations in the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars. Following the 1944 disaster at Port Chicago, in which 320 sailors were killed by a deadly munitions explosion, the Navy purchased an additional 5,200 acres south of the port to serve as its new **Inland Area**.

Plans to redevelop the site gained momentum at the onset of the 21st century. Due to the changing landscape of geopolitics and U.S. military objectives, the Federal government announced the official closure of the CNWS Inland Area in 2005. The following year, the City of Concord was designated as the Local Reuse Authority (LRA) responsible for guiding all subsequent redevelopment efforts, paving the way for a collaborative process of blank-slate thinking.

In 2012, the City adopted a comprehensive **Area Plan** that established the conceptual framework for the redevelopment of an approximately 2,250-acre portion of the CNWS Inland Area. The Plan envisioned a chain of distinct, yet complementary mixed-use districts supported by a diversity of housing options, commercial and retail amenities, passive and programmed open spaces, and an array of community benefits.

This high-level vision plan forms the foundation upon which several concurrent planning processes are being built. In particular, the Plan included a 120-acre piece set aside for a higher education campus (see area **"B"** on the diagram to the right). The campus site was strategically located close to an existing BART station and a planned mixed-use hub (area **"A"**).

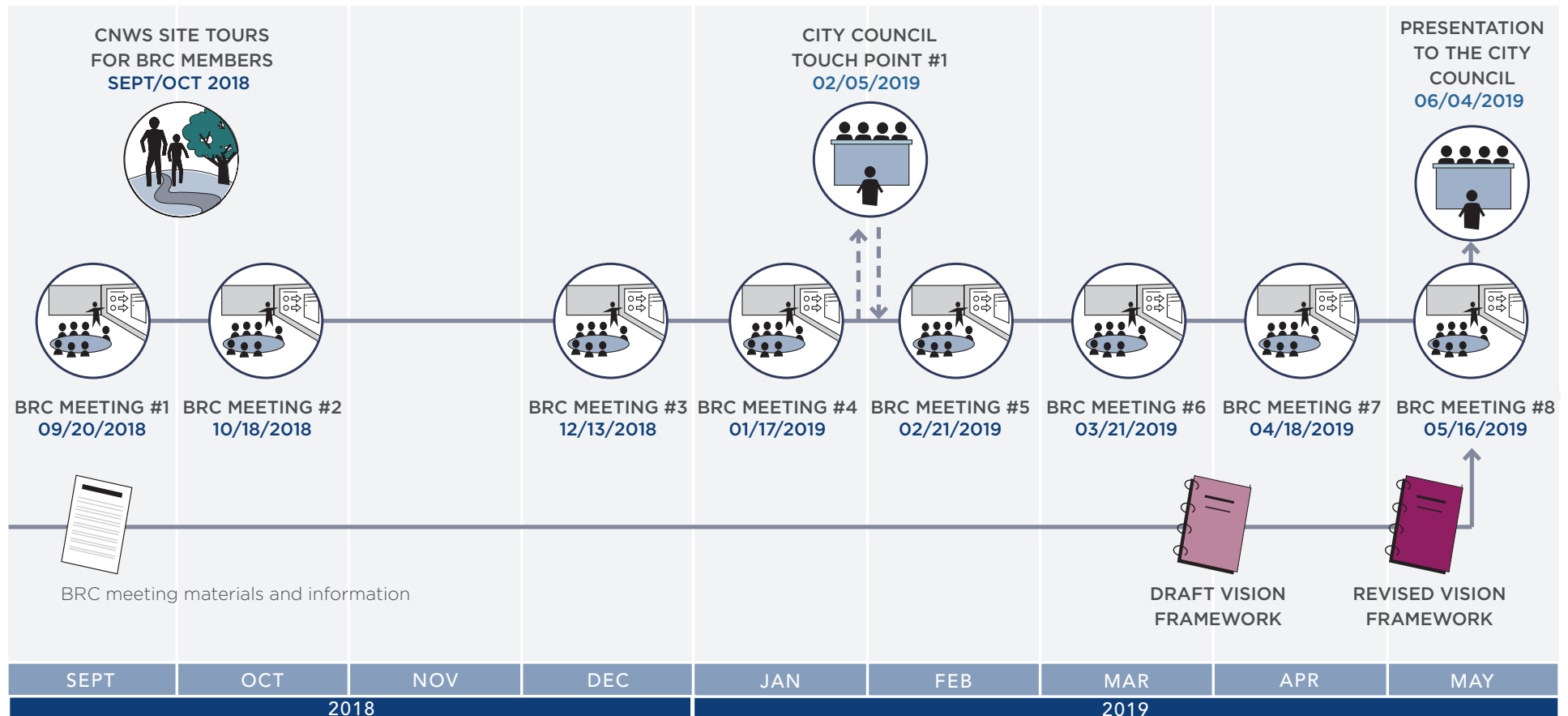


Campus Visioning Process

Between August 2018 and May 2019, the City led a collaborative planning process for the Concord Campus Visioning District that included a site tour, eight topical BRC meetings, and two presentations to the City Council (as shown below). Each BRC meeting included a unique agenda that typically included: a summary of current news items; presentation of research and comparable projects; open discussion of ideas from BRC members; and opportunities for community comments.

Each BRC meeting was facilitated by MIG—a Bay Area-based campus planning and design firm that has assisted the City with visioning the future of the CNWS site for over a decade. MIG, working closely with City staff, prepared materials and presented information during each meeting. In addition, they recorded BRC member comments on large posters to help coalesce ideas and identify strategies (see example below).

The BRC meetings served as the primary forums in which the vision, guiding principles, and implementation actions for the campus district were discussed and refined, ultimately leading to the groundwork for the comprehensive planning framework proposed in this document.



Blue Ribbon Committee

The new campus in Concord presents a “**blank slate**” opportunity to creatively and thoughtfully envision what the next generation of a higher education campus should look like and how it should function. Since there are no existing uses on the site, it also provides an opportunity to think of ways to create a landmark hybrid campus, while ensuring it is seamlessly integrated into the surrounding Concord community.

In order to ensure a creative and comprehensive campus visioning process, the City of Concord formed a Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) consisting of regional academic leaders, local industry representatives, and elected officials who have both the knowledge and understanding of Contra Costa County and the future of education and industry in California. The BRC was organized as an advisory committee to the City Council with the charge of helping the City and community:

- **Identify** the specific research and academic needs of the City of Concord, Contra Costa County, and the broader region.
- **Understand** the facility sizing and programming needs of various potential university and college partners.
- **Evaluate** financial, regulatory, and legal solutions that will encourage a new institution to locate in Concord.
- **Reach** a general consensus on the desired outcome and strategic next steps.

The following pages summarize the topics and key discussion points from each BRC meeting.



BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE MEMBERS

City of Concord

Carlyn Obringer, Concord Mayor
Dominic Aliano, Concord Councilmember
Ron Leone, Former Concord Councilmember

Bay Area Council

Jim Wunderman, President and CEO
Matt Regan, Senior Vice President

California State University East Bay

Satinder Mahli, Assoc. Director, Government and Community Relations
Dr. Robert Phelps, Concord Campus Director

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Bob Linscheid, Special Advisor for Economic Development, Office of the President

Contra Costa Community College District

Dr. Fred Wood, Chancellor
Mojdeh Mehdizadeh, Executive Vice Chancellor

Contra Costa Transportation Authority

Randell Iwasaki, Executive Director
Tim Haile, Deputy Executive Director

Council for Strong America

Susan Bonilla, California Director

John Muir Health

Sharon Jenkins, Employer Broker Relations

Lawrence Livermore National Lab

Buck Koonce, Senior Advisor
Scott Wilson, Community Relations Officer

Mount Diablo Unified School District

Dr. Nellie Meyer, Superintendent

Public Member

Dr. Peter Wilson, Retired Dean, California State University East Bay, Concord Campus

Student Representative

Victor Tiglao, Diablo Valley College Student

Building and Construction Trades

Greg Feere, Retired CEO
Dan Torres, Business Agent

TRI Commercial

Edward Del Beccaro, East Bay Regional Manager

University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dr. Glenda Humiston, Vice President



BRC MEETING #1

This meeting formally kicked-off the project and provided an opportunity for BRC members to introduce themselves and learn about the current Reuse Specific Plan process. The focus of the discussion was to review and understand national employment and academic trends. BRC members also brainstormed preliminary ideas for campus design and programming, highlighting several key features to study for the campus district.

Key Discussion Points

- Campus design and programming should be value-driven, prioritizing principles of equity, inclusivity, regional integration, program diversity, flexibility, and facility modernization.
- Campus features should include a library, cultural center(s), postgraduate research facilities, and an applied industry incubator.
- The campus should aim to serve and collaborate with firms in the technology, manufacturing, construction, biomass, and renewable energy sectors throughout the region.

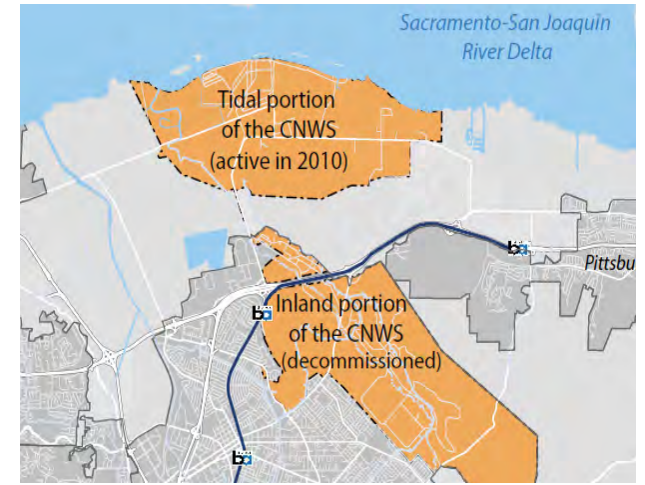


SITE TOUR

Following the first meeting, BRC members and the project team took a tour of the Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) site to better understand the area's physical characteristics, including its assets, constraints, and strategic opportunities.

Key Discussion Points

- There is a vast amount of available land on the former CNWS site with strong connections to existing Concord neighborhoods and BART.
- Several transit connections make the site easily accessible for residents, employers, and employees within the Northern California Mega-region.
- The planned Tournament Level Sports Complex is an asset for the future campus, and there are many opportunities to co-locate uses between the campus and new/existing neighborhoods.
- The campus site is situated on a knoll and provides beautiful views of Mount Diablo and surrounding areas. And in turn, the campus will be visible from major roadways and BART.



BRC MEETING #2

This meeting included a review of the physical conditions on the CNWS site and an opportunity to further advance initial concepts for the campus district. BRC members also discussed demographic and programming priorities, and refined overarching planning principles that were discussed during the first meeting.

Key Discussion Points

- The campus should be envisioned as part of a hybrid educational system, based on partnerships with regional industries and educational institutions offering different types and levels of education.
- The campus should maintain flexibility to adapt to evolving workforce needs and student preferences, both in terms of programs/degrees and also physical spaces.
- The campus should respond to the needs and trends of the regional economy and population.



BRC MEETING #3

This meeting was focused on reviewing comparable campus planning models and trends, discussing conceptual programming options, and brainstorming potential public-private partnership opportunities. BRC members discussed issues related to financing, but also opportunities for partnerships and examples of innovative new funding models.

Key Discussion Points

- The campus should be a leader in the production of cutting-edge research and innovation, closely collaborating with industry and public institutional partners.
- The campus should offer a hybrid education system, based on partnerships with regional industries and aiming to maintain flexibility to adapt to evolving workforce needs and lifelong learning opportunities.



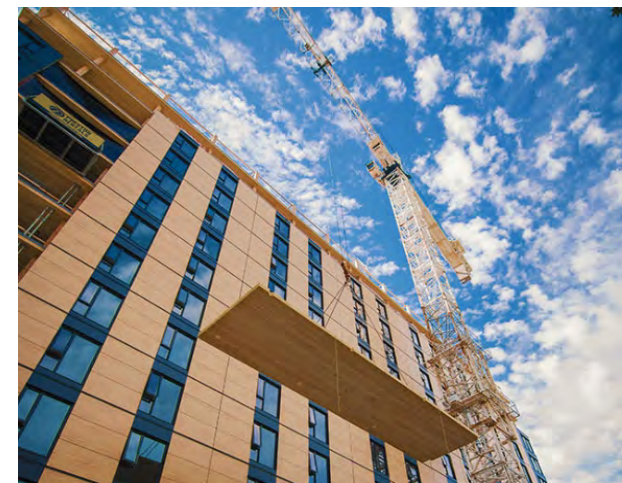
BRC MEETING #4

This meeting included a review of campus and innovation district financing mechanisms that have worked successfully on other projects. A guest speaker (James Birkey from JLL) presented three successful case studies on public-private financing, lessons learned, and other potential strategies to align public and private interests.

Following the presentation, BRC members framed initial concepts for the campus vision and guiding principles, laying the foundation for the framework proposed later in this document.

Key Discussion Points

- The campus will likely need multiple financial approaches to ensure it is economically feasible.
- All forms of Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) should be explored to help finance the campus.
- While the ultimate goal is to create an integrated and comprehensive world-class campus, there needs to be a strategy to attract the first major institution to the campus.



BRC MEETING #5

This meeting included a robust discussion around the potential for a “hybrid campus” partnership. There were presentations on the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ (ANR) Nano-Fiber program, which included a description of the new technology and government mechanisms currently in place to expand research.

The BRC also discussed emerging cyber security opportunities that cross-cut different industries (e.g., health care, banking, public administration, etc.), and ways to leverage cyber security related to educational clusters and industry needs.

Key Discussion Points

- Work with existing employers and survey company representatives.
- Support the existing autonomous vehicle industry and identify ways to complement the Northern Waterfront Initiative (see page 20).
- Tour the Auraria Campus in Denver (see page 24) to get a better sense of administrative roles, student housing, K-12 programming, and flexible organizational structure.



BRC MEETING #6

This meeting included a detailed review of several important community assets that can be bolstered by the new campus, including: GoMentum Station; Buchanan Field Airport; and the UC Berkeley Open Innovation Lab. There was also a review of the CSU San Marcos campus, which highlights innovative ways for academic and financial partnerships.

The BRC also discussed a series of initial district physical planning concepts that included flex spaces; hyper mixed-use; joint-use and shared spaces; and compact/walkable campuses. The last part of the discussion focused on initial implementation concepts and actions.

Key Discussion Points

- The CSU San Marcos example shows a creative way to seamlessly blend academic uses with new private development, while also include creative public-private partnership (P3) financing opportunities.
- Actions needed to implement the Vision Framework will be taken by the City and many local and institutional partners, including organizations/institutions represented by individual BRC members.



BRC MEETING #7

(TBD)



BRC MEETING #8

(TBD)

Additional Community Engagement

STUDENT SURVEY

During the BRC Campus Visioning process, a graduate class from UC Berkeley developed a survey to understand what local high school students would like to see included in a future Concord campus. The survey was administered in Fall 2018 and input from students was used to help refine the guiding principles included in this document.

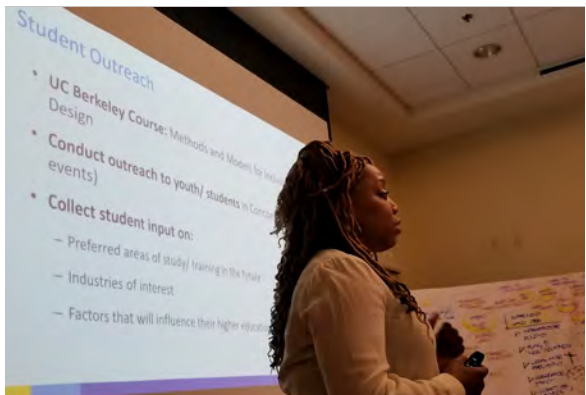
CITY COUNCIL TOUCH POINT


Midway through the process MIG and City staff met with the City Council, Planning Commission, and Design Review Board to update them on the Campus Visioning process. This included a presentation on an emerging vision and guiding principles. The decision makers complemented the BRC on their thoughtful approach to the project, and provided key feedback and direction, including:

- Ensuring that the future campus addresses local Concord needs as well as regional needs.
- Confirming interest in a hybrid campus that can serve many different functions and institutions, while also cautioning that the campus not turn into a corporate office park.

PROJECT WEBPAGE


Throughout the process the City maintained a project web page, linked from the Reuse Specific Plan website, that included all BRC materials (e.g., agendas, presentations, summaries, etc.).








Concord Community Reuse Project
for the Concord Naval Weapons Station


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
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
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▼ Blue Ribbon Committee Campus District

20192018

Agenda	Minutes	Download
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 Feb 21, 2019 — Posted Feb 15, 2019 3:54 PM 2019-02-21 BRC Campus District Agenda		Download ▼
 Jan 17, 2019 — Posted Jan 14, 2019 9:56 AM 2019-01-17 BRC Campus District Agenda		Download ▼

13

2





DEFINING THE NEED

Overview

Higher Education Trends

Regional Demand

Campus Case Studies

Other Planning Projects and Local Assets

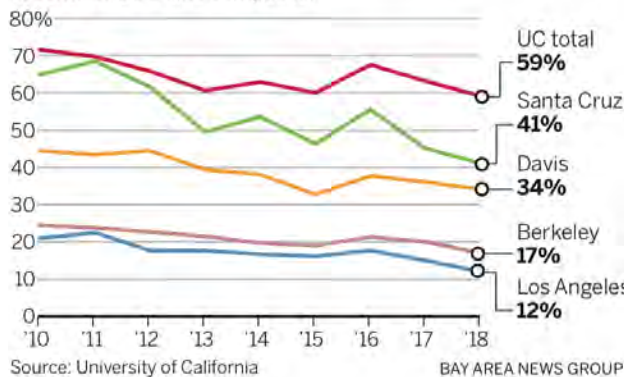
Overview

The way students, industry, and governments interact with higher education is changing. No longer are colleges and universities isolated enclaves that operate in a “bubble” removed from outside forces. Today, the **line between education and industry is rapidly blurring**. Students are finding themselves opportunities to apprentice and learn on-the-job training while studying for a certificate or degree. Industries have the ability to leverage their internal resources with academic “brain trusts” to create approaches to research that are mutually beneficial. This change is happening rapidly—and the megaregions that are embracing this new way of learning and innovating are **reaping benefits for both the economy and community**.



UC IN-STATE FRESHMEN ADMISSIONS

Admission rates for applicants from California fell in 2018 at some of UC's elite campuses.



Higher Education Trends

California is endowed with world-class academic institutions, headlined by the ten University of California campuses, 23 California State Universities, and over 100 community colleges. The San Francisco Bay Area region is particularly renowned as one of the world's premier higher education hotspots, home to countless institutions at the cutting-edge of research and development (R&D) initiatives and producing some of the nation's most skilled and best educated graduates.

STUDENT ACCESS AND COMPETITION

There is an urgent need in California to address the barriers that restrict access to public higher education institutions. In an effort to compensate for State funding cuts during the last recession, California's public universities are now charging the highest tuitions in the State's history, saddling several thousand students with debt repayment obligations well into their professional lives.

Though the State has increased financial aid to lower-income students, a 2016 survey from the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) revealed that 57% of all respondents still considered college affordability a "big problem," given high tuition and living costs.

Increased student competition for enrollment spaces poses another major obstacle. Though the proportion of high school students meeting entrance requirements is steadily rising, thousands of qualified applicants are being rejected due to the limited number of spaces available. Unless access to high-quality affordable education is significantly expanded, California will face a severe labor market

imbalance in the coming years. Though the demand for skilled workers is growing precipitously in most economic sectors, California is anticipated to have a deficit of one million college-educated workers by 2025 should current trends continue. This projected shortage indicates that the State's higher education system is neither responding to nor keeping pace with the changing needs and priorities of its economy.

EMERGING PARADIGM SHIFTS

The very nature of higher education will itself undergo significant changes as societal needs, desires, and trends continue to evolve through the years. The proportion of national college students classified as non-traditional—that is, already in the workforce but lacking a post-secondary credential—is anticipated to increase through at least 2026. This growing trend should compel higher education institutions to expand their target demographics and cater to the unique needs of individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

Traditional higher education curricula are also growing increasingly outdated and out of touch. Although the dominant narratives surrounding education suggest that all individuals should pursue a college degree, approximately one-fifth of all graduates ultimately occupy jobs that do not require a degree. The implication is not that academic degrees are unimportant, but rather that they are not always necessary to achieve success in certain professions. Rather than continue to promote solely the pursuit of a degree(s), the higher education system must adapt to destigmatize skills-based competency training and promote their continued value in today's multi-faceted economy.

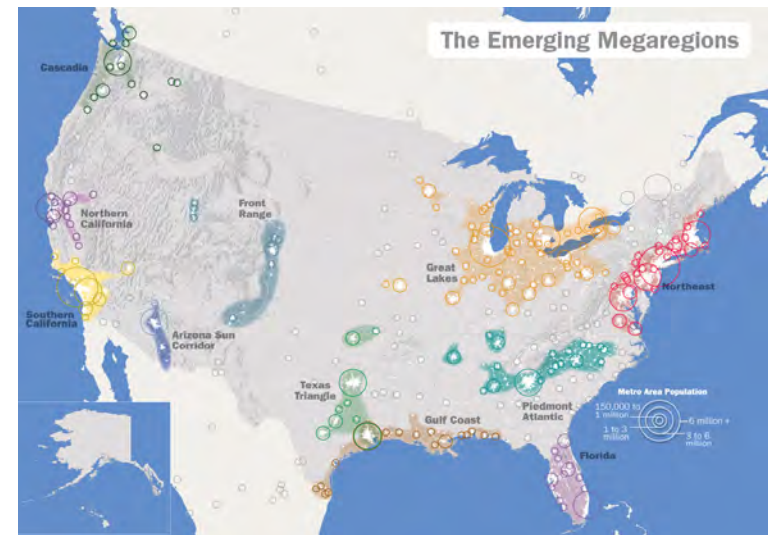
Regional Demand

The need to establish a new higher education campus in Concord is clear. Not only is there a strong desire to serve local academic needs for residents of all ages, but the booming Tri-Valley economy demands local research and partnerships that can support innovative companies and emerging industries.

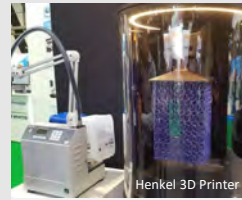
DEFINING THE “MEGAREGION”

Northern California comprises a network of clustered metropolises in which the people, firms, and labor markets of four distinct regions—Bay Area, Sacramento Area, Monterey Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley—are functionally interconnected and interdependent. This economic and cultural agglomeration has created one of the nation's fastest growing “Megaregions,” with Gross Regional Product (GRP) growing at an annual rate of at least 5% since 2010.

As the Northern California Megaregion continues to evolve and grow over the coming decades, it is imperative that innovation remains at the forefront of this change. In order to sustain this, higher education needs to continue to partner with industry in new, creative ways. Concord, as shown in the diagram to the right, is strategically located in the center of the Northern California Megaregion, well-positioned to have easy access for students, affordable housing for academics and professionals, and physical connections to all major subregions and urban centers.



Concords Existing and Emerging Industry Sectors



ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Henkel
Bishop Wisecarver
Pulse Systems
Telemetry Solutions
Pacific Instruments
Bazell Technologies



HEALTHCARE AND BIOTECH

BioRad
Fresenius
Sigray
Biocare
Medical
BioZone
BioMicroLab



AGRISCIENCE AND FOOD

Ramar Foods
Naia Gelato
Black Diamond
C&H
Dow/Corteva



TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY

GoMentum
BART



CLEAN TECHNOLOGY

MCE Solar
Chevron



CONSTRUCTION/ BUILDING MATERIALS

Gilbane Building Company
UC ANR



BANKING AND FINANCE

Wells Fargo
Bank of America

EXISTING AND EMERGING INDUSTRIES

Constant innovations are creating high demand for various evolving technical positions. The jobs with the highest growth potential in the coming decades are predominantly found in technology-related sectors, such as blockchain development, machine learning engineering, and data science. The demand for such positions has grown so precipitously in recent years (e.g., 650% demand increase for data scientists since 2012) that it is difficult for the supply of qualified candidates to keep pace. These estimates notwithstanding, the continuously evolving nature of technological innovation renders it difficult to appropriately forecast the nature of jobs in the future. Indeed, it is estimated that 65% of children currently enrolled in primary school will ultimately hold jobs that do not exist today.

Recent technological innovations have also contributed to a national resurgence in manufacturing. The emerging advanced manufacturing industry—also known as “Maker Tech”—is defined by the use of interdisciplinary, cutting-edge technologies to stimulate product and/or process innovations, bringing together scientists, engineers, skilled trade workers, and production line operators. Though Maker Tech firms are generally relatively small in size and contract to larger corporations, they have contributed steady growth in the manufacturing sector since 2010.

This growing demand for technical expertise does not, however, diminish the significance of so-called “soft skills.” Demonstrated proficiency in oral communication, business management, and leadership underpin a variety of emerging positions across economic sectors, such as sales representatives, customer success managers, and brand managers.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

Public colleges and universities contribute greatly to the civic and economic vibrancy of a region. At one level, they spur economic development by producing applied research that may contribute to industry innovation—training skilled graduates who help meet regional employment demand, and employing thousands of local workers in various technical and service-oriented capacities. Critically, these institutions also serve local community needs by offering educational access to those with insufficient means to either commute or relocate from their hometowns. This is especially true for lower-income individuals and adult learners with family or other employment obligations.

Contra Costa is the most populous County in California without a public four-year college, constraining the ability of many prospective local students from pursuing higher education. The Contra Costa Community College District (CCCD) encompasses three academics institutions—Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, and Los Medanos College—where students pursue up to two years of preliminary education, but cannot obtain a Bachelor's degree or higher. This lack of local four-year degree awarding institutions is likely partially responsible for a relatively low rate of educational attainment. While approximately 46% of eligible workers in the Bay Area have a Bachelor's degree or higher, the proportion falls to 40% in Contra Costa and even lower to 33% in Concord.

Despite the county's lack of a public higher education infrastructure, Concord is nonetheless considered an attractive destination for corporate firms seeking relocation or new opportunities for growth. Concord is home to 5.8 million square feet of industrial space, 4 million square feet of Class A office space, and 690,00 square feet of research and development (R&D) space, all of which are

significantly more affordable than comparable facilities in nearby markets of Silicon Valley, San Francisco, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek. These financial advantages, coupled with the city's array of business-friendly policies, relative housing affordability, and strong transit infrastructure, have increased Concord's desirability for firms across a wide range of economic sectors. Overall vacancy in Concord's industrial, warehousing, and R&D markets is at an historic low of 5.1%.

Furthermore, Concord's economic base is approaching a technological transition that could provide an ideal foundation for new growth and industry innovation. Traditionally a stronghold of the healthcare and service sectors, Concord has also emerged as a national hub for autonomous technology testing. Established in 2014, the internationally-renowned GoMentum Station provides vehicle testing grounds for innovative firms such as Uber, EasyMile, Baidu, and Honda to test their new and emerging technologies. In 2017, the City also approved two pilot programs to operationalize sidewalk-roving personal delivery devices (PDDs) that transport parcels, groceries, and food orders to customers across Concord within 30 minutes.

These prevailing conditions make Concord an ideal home for a new, world-class higher education institution. The socioeconomic benefits of this endeavor would be manifold. Expanding access to world-class public education would, at one level, help train the next generation of industry professionals in a dual effort to both replenish California's labor pool and provide a local resource for residents with few academic options. Attracting California's best and brightest minds to the region would also expand possibilities for collaborative partnerships to spur further advancements in competitive economic sectors, such as high-technology.

Concord Snapshot

Changes in the past five years

Job growth
over last 5 years:

10.2%



Population growth
over last 5 years:

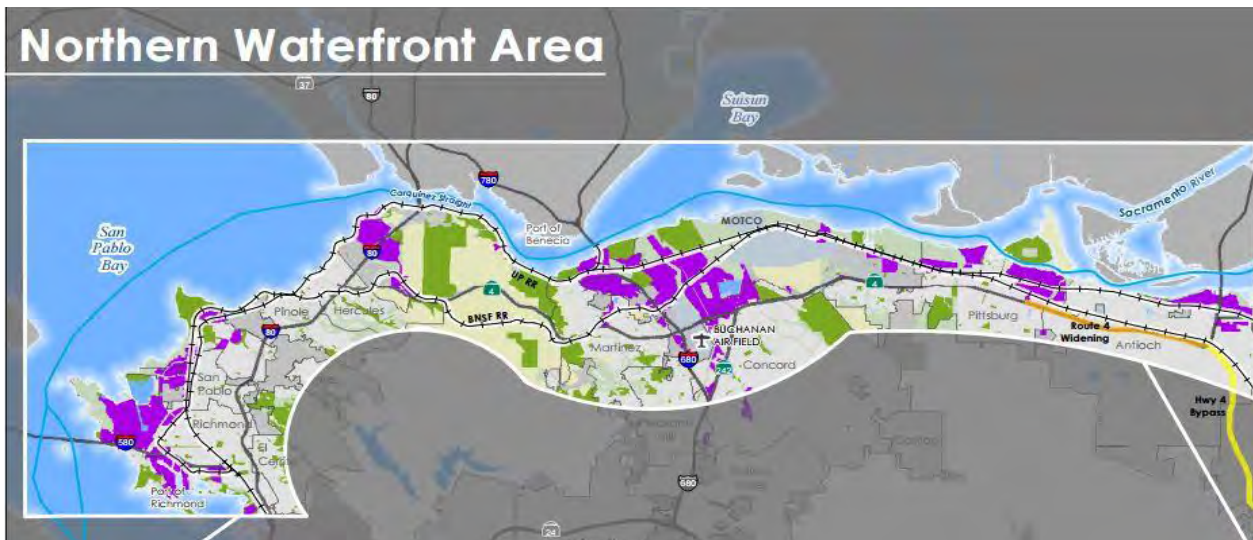
4.3%



House price growth
over last 5 years:

76%





Other Planning Projects and Local Assets

Several large planning efforts are being concurrently developed in the study area's immediate vicinity. Each of these projects and assets can further support and benefit from a higher education campus in Concord. And, through the BRC Visioning Process, there have already been connections and initial partnership discussions around ways to leverage local resources to support the campus district.

BART STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT

The campus district is purposefully located within a comfortable walking distance to the North Concord/Martinez BART station. In late 2018, the BART Board formally solicited developer proposals to construct a transit-oriented community on the 20-acre parking lot next to the station. This project will potentially create housing and commercial uses as an initial catalytic effort to create energy and interest in not only the Reuse Specific Plan area but also the campus district site.

NORTHERN WATERFRONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Contra Costa County established a strategic action plan in 2019 to transform its northern shoreline into a competitive economic hub that aims to create 18,000 jobs by 2035. The Initiative focuses on attracting firms in the advanced manufacturing, transportation technology, biotechnology, clean technology, and agriscience and food sectors.



CONCORD INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Concord has well-established industrial areas that are involved in manufacturing, logistics, storage, and operations for a diverse array of companies. Many of these facilities are located along the Highway 4 corridor near the campus district site. In addition, the Reuse Specific Plan has identified new industrial areas immediately adjacent to the campus district. There is a tremendous opportunity to leverage these industrial areas so they can manufacture the products and ideas that originate from the future research done at the campus.

BUCHANAN FIELD AIRPORT

The airport, located adjacent to Concord, is a full-service public regional airport operated by Contra Costa County. It is a significant aviation resource that serves the region's growing business community. It currently provides corporate jet service, daily scheduled commercial service to Southern California and Las Vegas, executive and general aviation hangars, and a staffed FAA air traffic control tower. The airport provides a strategic resource to the campus not only for convenient commercial service, but it also can easily accommodate feeder cargo aircraft.

GOMENTUM STATION

GoMentum Station is located on the CNWS site and utilizes the base's former roads as a full-scale secure test facility for connected and automated vehicle (CAV) technology. Owned and operated by AAA Northern California, Nevada and Utah (AAA NCNU), its goal is to assist members and the public in adapting to the fast-changing mobility landscape, while continuing to focus on traffic safety.

The innovative technology being explored and tested at GoMentum Station will redefine the next generation of transportation, bring unprecedented mobility options to people, and help advance traffic safety towards zero fatalities. This facility

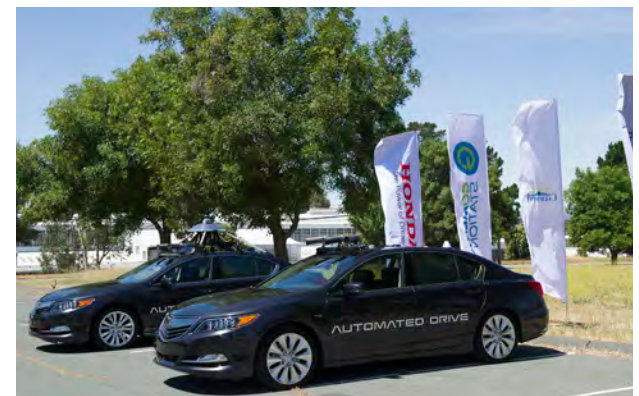
can provide an invaluable hands-on experience to local students. In turn, the strength of this emerging technology cluster will serve to attract more pioneering firms to the region, spawning regional growth, industry innovation, and human development.

Campus Case Studies

To help generate both ideas and best practices, several hybrid educational district case studies were presented to the BRC for their consideration and evaluation. These precedent models offered a wealth of strategic information that was leveraged to help inform the vision and guiding principles for the Concord campus district. While nearly a dozen models were discussed, four specific case studies were examined in detail that provided a particular element applicable to Concord:

- **Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR):** An applied automotive research campus and innovation hub offering skills programs and graduate degrees.
- **Spokane University District:** A multi-institutional academic and applied research campus specializing in health science innovations that includes public and private institutions.
- **Auraria Campus:** A shared multi-institutional education district that includes all levels of public higher education in Colorado.
- **CSU San Marcos/University District:** A creative public-private partnership campus closely aligned with the development of a new downtown neighborhood for San Marcos.

The following pages provide a summary of each campus model and how they are addressing the emerging hybrid campus of the future.





CASE STUDY

CU-ICAR

CU-ICAR is a partnership between Clemson University, BMW, and other automotive industry partners to create the premier automotive research, innovation, and educational enterprise in the world. Started in the early 2000s, the campus will eventually include five technology neighborhoods, each designed for optimizing an innovative and collaborative environment:

CU-ICAR Autopark and Innovation Place

Four-story multi-tenant facility, including classrooms and research labs for Clemson University. Innovation place is the hub for visitors and community interaction, including partnership offices, gallery, fitness center, and rooftop garden.

BMW Info Technology Research Center

Integral part of BMW's research and development network

Graduate Engineering Center

90,000 square foot building housing the automotive engineering graduate program

Koyo/JTEKT

A 118,000 square foot building hosting Koyo/JTEKT Group's design and technology development

Center For Emerging Technologies

A 60,000 square foot multi-tenant facility providing office, administrative, and laboratory space.

CASE STUDY

SPOKANE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

The Spokane University District was created to provide better connections and interactions between several higher education institutions and private healthcare providers. It is home to six different institutions which together enroll more than 11,000 students. Proximity to these urban campuses, and the ability to attract the best and brightest graduating from them, have presented tremendous opportunities to the region and beyond. These institutions are impacting and driving the knowledge economy, medical research, smart urban design, business innovations, and scientific breakthroughs. The District includes individual campuses or facilities for the following institutions:

Community Colleges of Spokane

240 students and 83 faculty/staff

Eastern Washington University

2,213 students and 100 faculty/staff

Gonzaga University

7,024 students and 1,314 faculty/staff

University of Washington

137 students and 63 faculty/staff

Washington State University Health Sciences

1,493 students and 621 faculty/staff

Whitworth University

195 students and 31 faculty/staff





CASE STUDY

AURARIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

The Auraria Campus is a dynamic and vibrant higher education community located in the heart of downtown Denver. The 150-acre campus is shared by the Community College of Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and University of Colorado Denver.

The Auraria Higher Education Center is a separate state entity whose role is to provide and manage shared services, facilities, and property to support these prominent institutions in achieving their goals. The Center includes its own planning department, maintenance staff, and security/police force. This approach has allowed for the efficient governance of a range of shared uses, including a library, student center, athletic facilities, and academic facilities. The collective student population is approximately 42,000, with an additional 5,000 faculty and staff.

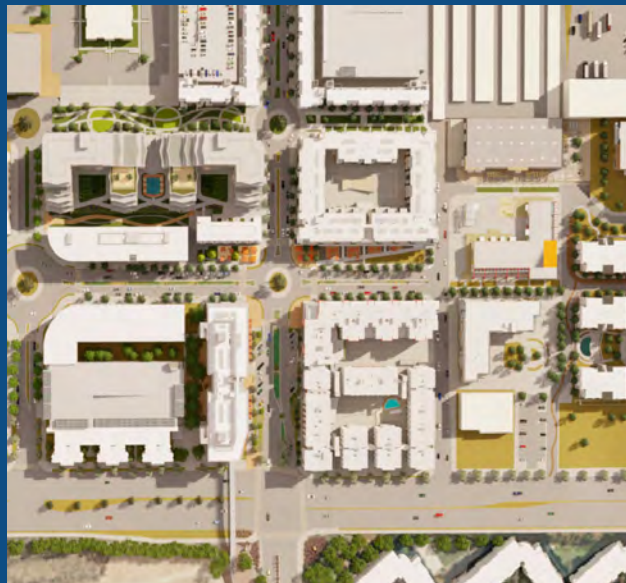


CASE STUDY

CSU SAN MARCOS / UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

CSU San Marcos and the City of San Marcos have worked together to seamlessly blend the new State University with a new Downtown district. Through the creation of an advisory committee and the adoption of the San Marcos Creek District and North City (University District) Specific Plans, they have created a comprehensive downtown core in the heart of San Marcos. In order to finance many of the public university buildings, the University, City and private developers worked together to form creative public-private partnerships (P3)—including California's first P3-funded academic building (currently under construction).

Block K and the California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) Extended Learning Center Building are located along the east side of Campus Way and south of Carmel Street. The project consists of a five-story, 68-unit, market-rate apartment building. The CSUSM Extended Learning Center building consists of a 6-story, 132,733 square foot, educational building with ground floor retail, and is located at the northwest corner of Campus Way and Barham Drive.



3





VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Overview

Vision Elements

Guiding Principles

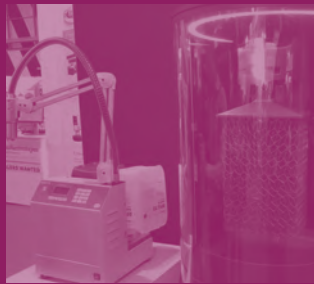
Overview

A successful campus district needs an inspired vision and a strategy for achieving it. The BRC-defined vision and guiding principles, as articulated on the following pages, establishes the conceptual framework that will shape the future planning and development of Concord's hybrid education district. Much thought and discussion has gone into the framing of these ideas, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that the campus fully serves the needs of Concord and the region, while also becoming a model for future public-private partnerships and innovation.

The City of Concord, institutional partners, and other stakeholders will use the vision and guiding principles to **evaluate future proposals and initiatives for new uses, facilities, and programs located within the campus district.** While much interest in the Concord campus has already been generated, there is an ongoing need to ensure that all ideas match the ultimate desires for the campus as outlined in this document.



Flexible and Collaborative Classroom



Henkel Industries 3D Printer



Cyber Security Center



Wood Technology Maker Space



Bio Technology



Competency Building



Community Arts Center



Inclusive Classroom



Public/Private Financial Partnerships



Donor Funded Projects



GoMentum Station



Concord Regional Community

VISION ELEMENT A MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL DISTRICT

The Concord Campus District will offer the opportunity for an integrated master planned area, including a combination of academic programs from K-12 through graduate, providing competency building that addresses the needs of the evolving economy.

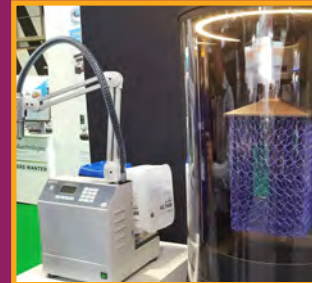
VISION ELEMENT B

STRONG PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

There will be strong partnerships with private companies, public institutions, and NGOs/non-profits to support experiential learning, research and development, technology, production, job creation, and workforce development.



Flexible and Collaborative Classroom



Henkel Industries 3D Printer



Cyber Security Center



Wood Technology Maker Space



Bio Technology



Competency Building



Community Arts Center



Inclusive Classroom



Public/Private Financial Partnerships



Donor Funded Projects



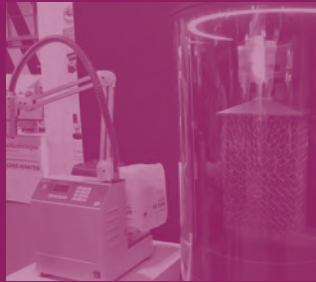
GoMentum Station



Concord Regional Community



Flexible and Collaborative Classroom



Henkel Industries 3D Printer



Cyber Security Center



Wood Technology Maker Space



Bio Technology



Competency Building



Community Arts Center



Inclusive Classroom



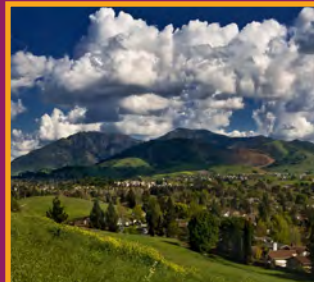
Public/Private Financial Partnerships



Donor Funded Projects



GoMentum Station



Concord Regional Community

VISION ELEMENT C

BLENDED SEAMLESSLY WITH CONCORD AND CALIFORNIA

The campus will blend seamlessly in a physical and programmatic sense, creating a place that engenders economic, social, and cultural interaction with the surrounding neighborhood, the city of Concord, and the region. It will become one of many new models for integrating higher education with industry in California and beyond.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #1

HYBRID MODEL APPROACH

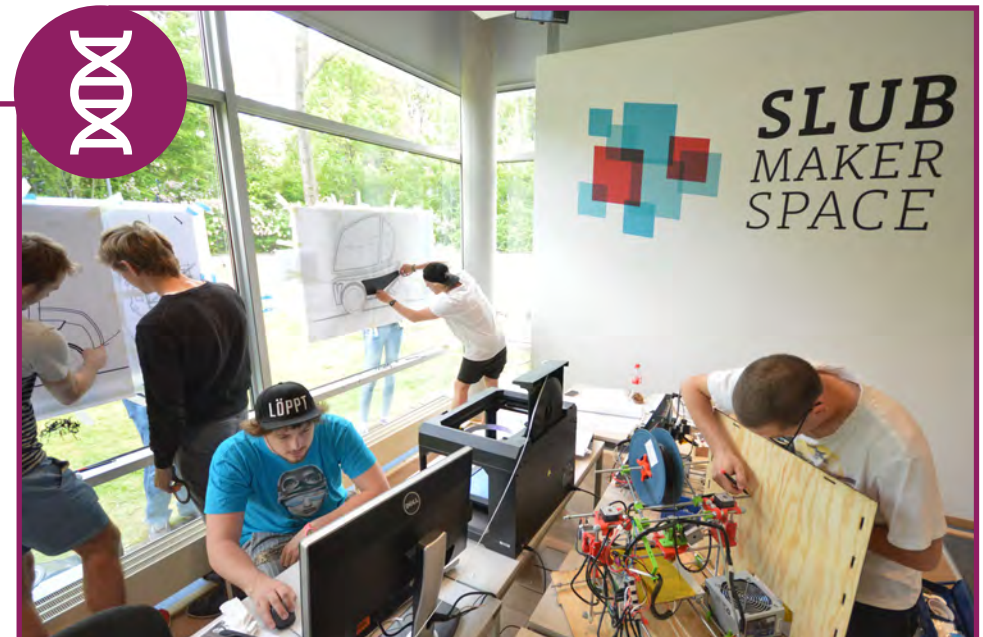
- A.** Encourage a **campus that can serve all ages** and **skill sets**, including K-12, competency building, bachelor's and professional degrees, and graduate/post-graduate degrees and research.
- B.** Form an **innovation ecosystem** that holistically serves many industries (maker tech, robotics, drone delivery, health care, biomass, cyber security, etc.).
- C.** Blend **higher education with local industry**, including research and development, workforce training, technology, and academic research.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #2

STATE-OF-THE-ART

- A.** Consider creative **distance learning** approaches to expand the reach of the campus and offer a flexible learning experience to students of all backgrounds.
- B.** Attract **innovative manufacturing** and **Makertech** businesses that benefit from campus research.
- C.** Include a **“competency building”** approach that allows students to efficiently complete academic programs based on their existing skills and experiences.





GUIDING PRINCIPLE #3 CONCORD REGIONAL CONNECTION

- A. Create a **strong identity** that highlights the campus district's connection to Concord and the Northern California mega-region.
- B. Focus on hiring **workers, students, apprentices, and residents** from the Concord region in all aspects of the campus.

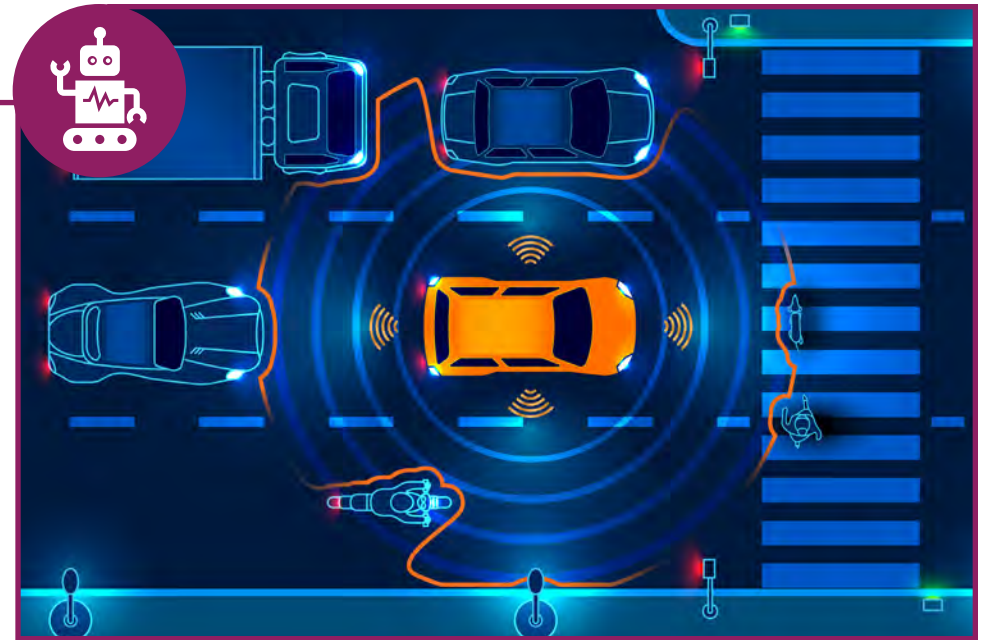


GUIDING PRINCIPLE #4 EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY

- A. Build on the **diversity of Contra Costa County** while improving social equity and removing barriers to higher education.
- B. Make the higher education programs **accessible** and **affordable** to regional area residents.
- C. Identify strategies for **recruiting top talent** to the campus through various incentives or other citywide programs (e.g., housing, local schools, etc.).

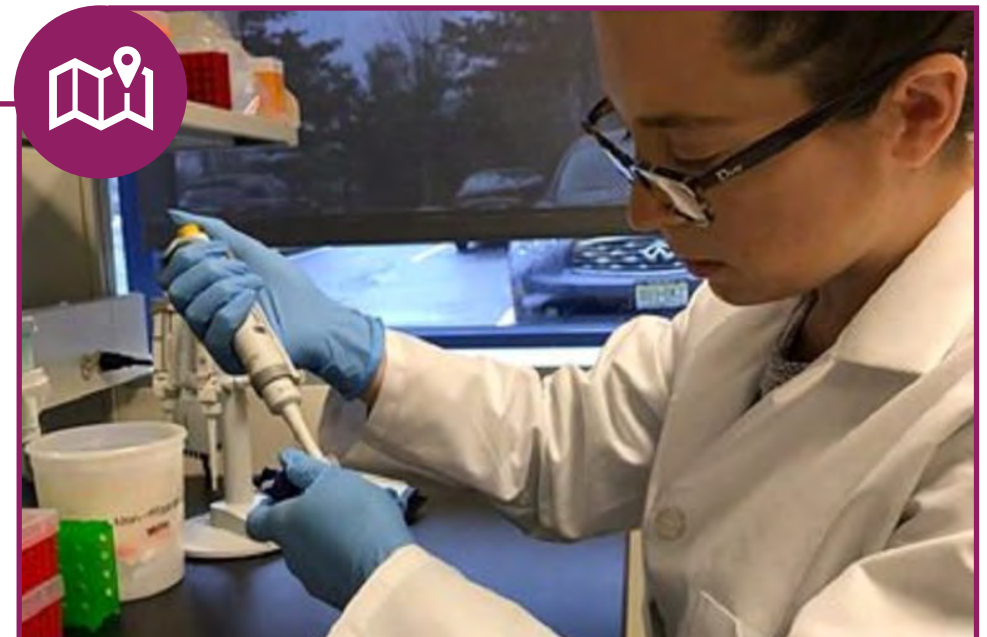
GUIDING PRINCIPLE #5 JOBS OF THE FUTURE

- A. Include a **broad array of specializations** to meet the diverse industry needs of today and tomorrow, while leveraging distance learning opportunities.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #6 INDUSTRY ATTRACTION AND GROWTH

- A. Use the **design** and **programming** of the campus to promote Concord and the broader region as an academic and industry epicenter.
- B. Pursue **international collaborations** to expand the reach and reputation of the campus.
- C. Include **incubator space** and **access to research** that will help grow local start-ups.





GUIDING PRINCIPLE #7 SEAMLESS INTEGRATION

- A.** Ensure the campus district **bends with surrounding development** so education and research uses are adjacent to, and integrated with, surrounding mixed-use, residential, commercial, and civic uses.
- B.** Include well-located and visible **commercial-oriented uses** within or adjacent to the campus, including Research and Development.
- C.** Create convenient and safe **pedestrian and bicycle connectivity** to the North Concord/Martinez BART station and adjacent employment and residential neighborhoods.
- D.** Create a **central, open space area** that becomes the focal point for campus gatherings, events, art, and performances.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #8 FUNCTIONAL DESIGN

- A.** Offer **cutting-edge facilities** with modern equipment and amenities to make the campus an educational and research destination.
- B.** Create a **flexible physical campus** that can adapt to new industries and the services of the future.
- C.** Create **smart buildings** that have flexible interior layouts and high floor plates to allow a variety of future users.
- D.** Identify opportunities to locate educational, research, and **other complementary uses** beyond the 120-acre campus.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #9 ELEGANT DESIGN

- A. Build a **thematic identity** for the campus that attracts students, industries, and partners.
- B. Ensure the new campus fits the **scale** and **character** of the broader specific plan area.
- C. Focus on **placemaking** so the campus can become a gathering space for the entire community to enjoy and celebrate.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #10 SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

- A. Consider the **physical** and **natural environment** of the Bay Area in the design of the new campus.
- B. Capitalize on adjacent **transit connections** and walking distances to future **mixed-use** and **housing**.
- C. Incorporate **sustainability** into the design and operations of the campus.
- D. Strengthen **surrounding neighborhoods**, both existing and new neighborhoods in the specific plan area.





GUIDING PRINCIPLE #11 CULTURE AND THE ARTS

- A. Incorporate **cultural and arts** programs and facilities that support the campus, Concord, and the broader region.
- B. Include **liberal arts curriculum and programs** to ensure a well-rounded education and opportunities for leadership training.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #12 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Integrate **infrastructure** being developed as part of the broader specific plan with the campus to make a more cost-efficient project.
- B. Develop a clear **phasing approach**, tied to the broader specific plan, that will allow the campus to incrementally grow.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #13 PARTNERSHIPS

- A.** Identify and **nurture partnerships** between different education providers (CSU East Bay, UC, community colleges, private colleges and institutions, high schools, international connections, etc.), and top local industries.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE #14 FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

- A.** Identify a **range of funding sources** and **financing strategies** to ensure flexibility as the vision and development of the campus mature over time.
- B.** Identify different ways to create public-private partnerships (P3, P4 and P5) that will allow many different users and industries to **share costs burdens and revenues**.





GUIDING PRINCIPLE #15 GOVERNANCE

- A.** Establish a **separate operating entity** for the campus district to perform the following key functions:

Development: Identify, review, and approve all new capital projects, including buildings, roads, infrastructure, outdoor space, recreation facilities, etc.

Operations: Organize spaces and facilities so they are efficiently programmed and maintained, making sure that all academic and industry partners benefit from the campus.

Management: Ensure that mechanisms are in place to protect the long-term financial health of the campus, as well as the ongoing maintenance and operations of all facilities.



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4





PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

Overview

Concord Campus District Vision Action Plan

Overview

The bold vision outlined in this document will require many individual actions—some relatively small and others much more complex—to take place over the coming years. Coordination between the City of Concord, campus institutional and industry partners, and the community will be critical to ensuring momentum is maintained and the hybrid campus is created. The following page outlines several key strategic action items that will be taken in partnership over the coming years. This list is intended to be a starting point, and additional actions may be added in the future as the vision matures and partners are identified and secured.

Concord Campus District Vision Action Plan



Marketing and Communications

- Develop a comprehensive and coordinated Marketing Strategy to promote the Concord campus
- Prepare digital and physical collateral that can be used by the City to engage the community and interested partner institutions and companies
- In addition to broader marketing campaigns, create targeted outreach to specifically focus major existing and emerging industries in Contra Costa County, as well as larger institutional partners (UC, CSU, CCC, etc.)



Campus Model Refinement

- Continue to refine the types of uses to be considered for the campus district (120 acres) and other complementary uses that can be located in the surrounding Reuse Plan Area
- Prepare detailed building and space programming models to help inform partnerships and financing decisions
- Create a unified design theme for the campus that will create a national image of innovation
- Coordinate all core campus planning with the broader Reuse Specific Plan process



Partnerships

- Continue to identify key institutional and company partners that can create catalytic projects on the campus
- Identify other “support” partners that would benefit from being on the campus
- Develop and formalize an organizational structure and governance system for the campus district, ensuring the City of Concord continues to play a major role in the planning and operations of the area



Financing

- Works closely with campus partners and financing/development specialists to create a public-private partnership approach that is equitable, profitable, and sustainable for all partners
- Establish funding agreements for new major capital projects and infrastructure investments
- Establish long-term operations agreements to ensure the fiscal health of the campus district for generations to come

Acknowledgements

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dominic Aliano, Concord Councilmember
Susan Bonilla, Council for Strong America
Edward Del Beccaro, TRI Commercial
Greg Feere, Trades, Retired
Tim Haile, CCTA
Dr. Glenda Humiston, UC ANR
Randell Iwasaki, CCTA
Sharon Jenkins, John Muir Health
Buck Koonce, Lawrence Livermore National Lab
Bob Linscheid, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
Ron Leone, Former Concord Councilmember
Satinder Mahli, CSUEB
Dr. Nellie Meyer, Mt. Diablo USD
Mojdeh Mehdizadeh, CCCC
Carlyn Obringer, Concord Mayor
Dr. Robert Phelps, CSUEB Concord Campus Director
Matt Regan, Bay Area Council
Victor Tiglao, Student Representative
Dan Torres, Trades
Dr. Peter Wilson, Retired Dean, CSUEB
Scott Wilson, Lawrence Livermore National Lab
Dr. Fred Wood, CCCC
Jim Wunderman, Bay Area Council

CONCORD CITY COUNCIL

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Vice Mayor Tim McGallian
Dominic Aliano
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CONCORD STAFF

Valerie Barone, City Manager
Kathleen Tropa, Assistant City Manager
Guy Bjerke, Director of Community Reuse Planning
Sue Anne Griffin, Confidential Secretary

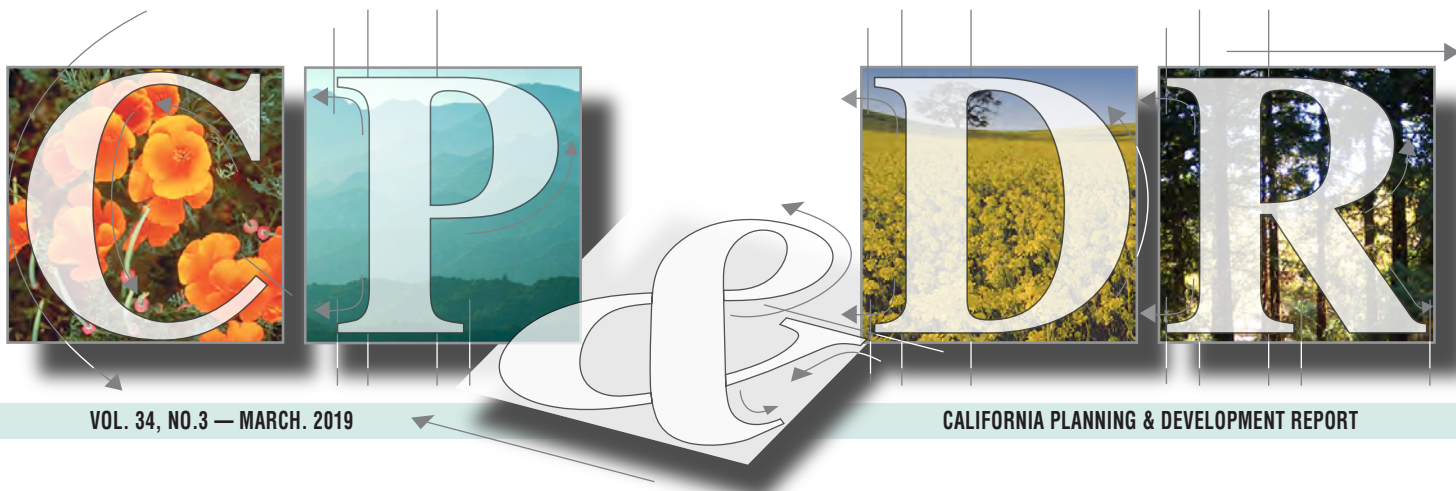
MIG

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CONCORD CAMPUS DISTRICT VISION FRAMEWORK

www.concordreuseproject.org/183/Campus-District





UC Merced Brings Knowledge Economy To Central Valley

BY MORRIS NEWMAN

In the 13 years since its founding, UC Merced has grown from 800 acres of farmland on the edge of nowhere to a full-fledged university of 8,000 students. Though over a century younger than some of its sister campuses, UC Merced has become the most diverse campus in the system, while also serving the lowest-income population in California. More than half of its students qualify as low-

income.

UC Merced is also an academic success, boasting one of the highest graduation rates in the state university system, and is ranked No. 136 nationally by U.S. News & World Report.

Against this picture of rapid growth and growing reputation of its namesake university, the City of Merced

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

insight
WILLIAM
FULTON

Outlines Of State Housing Strategy Become Clear

The outlines of the state's likely new housing strategy became clearer in March, as Gov. Gavin Newsom provided details about his short-term and long-term housing production strategies, while at the same time a series of bills were introduced to implement the Bay Area's "CASA

Compact" on housing. But legislators pushed back against Newsom's plan to tie transportation dollars to housing production.

Newsom announced he will engage cities in a three-year process to revamp the Regional Housing Needs Assessment

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

IN BRIEF: Page 2

NEWS: Page 5

LEGAL DIGEST: Page 8

inside

>>> UC Merced Brings Knowledge Economy To Central Valley

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

finds itself increasingly caught between two worlds: that of the traditional agricultural economy of the Central Valley, the knowledge-based economy of higher education -- and grappling with the types of urbanism that cater to both.

The town-and-gown relationship is shaping up as a case study of the benefits that a research university can bring to a local community—and of the conflicts that can arise when worlds collide.

Since its founding, the university was intended to a boon to a historically impoverished community, both in hiring and attracting new investment. By some measure, it has fulfilled that promise. In regional terms, the university claims to have brought \$1.7 billion in investment to Merced and the surrounding San Joaquin Valley since 2000, according to UC Merced spokesman James Leonard.

The university has also boosted city employment 13 percent, primarily in the service sector, since UC Merced first opened its doors in 2005, according to a paper in the October 2018 issue of *Economic Inquiry* by South Korean economist Jongkwan Lee.

Even with these benefits, it's fair to ask whether the stage is being set for UC to turn Merced into a "company town" where the university, as the city's biggest employer, could someday have a dominant voice in the planning process. And it's fair to ask what type of town Merced might become into order to serve that function.

Although the campus is located nearly seven miles outside Merced — ensuring that Merced will never become a "college town" like Berkeley or Davis and instead resemble UC San Diego or UC Irvine — the university area was incorporated into Merced's sphere of influence as of its 2012 general plan update. That update, while it does not affect the campus directly, accounts for its presence and planned growth.

"When we did the general update and a couple of years later we did a major overhaul of our zoning ordinance" that took the university into account, according to Merced Planning Manager Kim Espinosa. "It included some regulations for fraternities and sororities -- that's something

we didn't have real experience with."

Despite its peripheral location, the university has become a visible presence in the center city. One noteworthy project is the Downtown Campus Center, workplace to nearly 300 university staffers on Main Street. Meanwhile, the campus' built-up area itself has doubled in size in the past four years.



Rendering of UC Merced's downtown Campus Center.

Rendering of UC Merced's downtown Campus Center.

The residential market is on the rise in downtown too, fueled by students and other university affiliates.

"One of the policies in our general is to encourage housing downtown; we hadn't really had much luck as far as the marketplace went," said Espinosa. "But when the students came to town, they liked living downtown."

Another new development, amid the working-class townscape of mom-and-pop grocery stores and used-goods merchants, is UC Merced Venture Lab, an incubator for startups and small businesses. Frank Quintero, the city's economic redevelopment director, acknowledges the Venture Lab was inspired by a similar facility in San Luis Obispo. "We stole the idea," he said wryly.

Due to the presence of the university and its project growth, investors and developers are buying up property and starting projects in Merced. One new development project is a boutique hotel currently soon to operate out of an historic building and to be run by the Joie de

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

>>> UC Merced Brings Knowledge Economy To Central Valley

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Vivre hospitality chain. The development of a hotel targeting the mid- to high-end market is one indication that provincial Merced is starting to attract its share of national and international visitors.

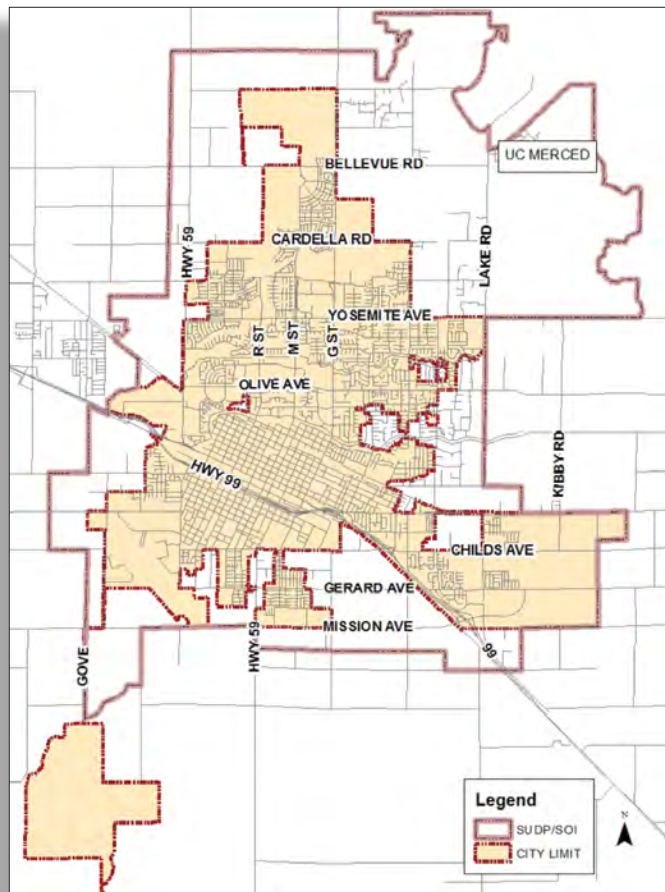
Throughout the city, homebuilding is up, with 31 multi-family projects are either under construction or in the development pipeline in Merced. At least one of them is a large-scale, mid-rise rental complex of the kind favored by institutional investors—another sign that the San Joaquin Valley farm town is gaining visibility in the larger world.

That's good news in a predominately rental housing market with a current vacancy rate of a mere 1 percent.

The city's most recent housing element calls for construction or rehabilitation of 2,032 units of moderate-, low- and very-low housing units, plus another 1,044 at market rate. Those numbers were established in part to accommodate the university's plans to increase to 10,000 students by 2020. (They do not reflect the dormitories and other on-campus housing currently under development on the UC campus.)

That's a profound turnaround from ten years ago, when Merced was one of the cities hardest hit by the housing crisis and the recession and housing construction came to a standstill.

"We went through a 5-6 year stretch where the amount



Merced's sphere of influence was expanded northward in 2012.

of housing was built was under 50 units total," said Espinosa.

Of course, 2020 is only ten months away – and the housing crunch is already in full swing.

"We have plenty in our land inventory," said Espinosa. "It's just that the units haven't been built fast enough." Espinosa added that students have been cramming into single-family homes, with as many as eight students in a single house.

The rash of new jobs and downtown projects is a slightly anomalous event in working-class Merced, where the average household income is in the low \$20,000s. Quintero, the economic development official, sounds upbeat about the role of the university in the local economy. "No question, it's been a catalyst," he said of UC Merced. "Who wouldn't want a major employer like that?"

One issue is that the university may provide more jobs to outsiders and newcomers than to existing Merced residents. UC is more likely to hire "knowledge workers" than service-sector employees, according to economist Lee. "The initial industrial composition in Merced is concentrated in low-skilled manufacturing, so (industrial) workers do not benefit from the opening of UC Merced," he writes.

Unemployment was 8.2 percent in Merced as of December, compared to 4.1 percent in California as a whole, according to Federal Reserve figures.

Beyond a moderate boost in local employment numbers,

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

>>> UC Merced Brings Knowledge Economy To Central Valley

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

the university is also making its influence felt in the planning process: To date, the clearest evidence of the university's influence can be found in the Bellevue Corridor Community Plan. Located just north of the city in an unincorporated area within the city's sphere of influence, the corridor is the principle route between Merced and the university.

"Because the university is on the outskirts and there is a lot of area in between, we've had a lot of discussions about trying to make sure we have good connections between the university and the city," said Espinosa.

A range of new housing, from affordable rental units to conventional single-family homes is in the pipeline in that area, much of it designed to serve UC Merced. A research-and-development park is being planned in the same area.

While some skeptics may raise their eyebrows at the idea of Merced becoming a tech hub, Quintero said he has already had discussions with companies involved in autonomous vehicles and renewable energy. "Those are the knowledge-based industries we have been wanting to draw, and they are starting to look at us," he said.

Again, those knowledge-based industries promise to have only a marginal benefit to the city's unskilled workers with limited education. High-paying tech jobs are likely to be filled by outsiders. It may seem absurd, even laughable, to worry about town-and-gown tensions in some future Merced, where highly paid techies are competing for scarce housing resources with low-paid machine-shop workers. Still, the R&D goals of the university sow the seeds of that far-off possibility.

Even without the university, Merced's population is growing, and may grow at a slightly faster rate in the foreseeable future, due to the city's role as northern terminus of California High Speed Rail, which will, according to its most recent iteration, connect Merced with Bakersfield. In early March, City Council asked LAFCO to begin processing a proposal to annex 70,000 acres adjacent

to the city. (That area does not include the university.)

For the time being, however, if a city must become a company town, perhaps a public university is not a bad way to go. Other, much larger cities with large tech or entertainment employers, such as Anaheim with Disney or Cupertino with Apple, can find themselves pressures into accepting public investments or infrastructure projects that benefit the dominant corporation as much or more than the city at large.

Worrying about the likes of Disney and Apple creating social tensions in Merced is speculative and, perhaps, optimistic. For the time being, there is little daylight between the planning goals of the city and the university: Both want more housing and a greater variety of housing choices. Both would like to see some job creation to benefit local workers.

Improving the dusty image of downtrodden Merced is another common goal, according to UC spokesman Leonard. "The city's continued development helps the university recruit and retain exceptional students, faculty and staff."

For the time being, the goals of the university and those of the city are in sync, he adds. Said Leonard: "Our fates are intertwined." ■

Contacts & Resources

[UC Merced Long-Range Development Plan](#)

[Merced Vision 2030 General Plan](#)

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Photo courtesy of UC Merced.