

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Columbus State Community College

Project Details		
<b>Title</b>	Columbus State Community College's Master Planning Project (Phases III and IV)	<b>Status</b> COMPLETED
<b>Category</b>	8-Planning Continuous Improvement	<b>Updated</b> 09-14-2013
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b> 09-23-2013
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 07-01-2012	<b>Created</b> 09-07-2012
	<b>Actual Completion</b> 08-15-2013	<b>Version</b> 1

### 1: Project Goal

**A:** Phases III and IV of the master planning process will result in a composite College Master Plan, integrating all of the major planning issues and providing design direction for the future development of the College. It will address the following scope:

1. Consideration of the most advantageous growth opportunities and characteristics of the downtown Columbus campus, including partnership opportunities and synergies with other development projects
2. Exploration of the relationship between the College's two campuses and its regional learning centers, particularly the future role of the Westerville and Dublin sites with regard to the Delaware Campus
3. Recommendation for a strategic approach to the use of existing and potential parking resources on or near the downtown Columbus campus, and identification of pedestrian-friendly access routes and additional green spaces
4. Development of a plan for future land/facility acquisition linked to projected needs
5. Strengthened linkage between future facility development and specific institutional goals and priorities.
6. Continued engagement of internal and external partners

### 2: Reasons For Project

**A:** With the College's neighbors all engaged in major master planning efforts, and the College being the largest landholder in the neighborhood of the Columbus Campus, and with a desire by the Delaware Campus community to engage more actively in future plans for that campus, it became clear that a master plan for the college needed to be crafted and assimilated into broader planning efforts at this time so that the College could participate as a leader rather than a follower in the development of the neighborhoods. The master plan will give the college a context within which to make future facilities and related strategic decisions throughout its 4-county service district. The college last completed a master plan for its Columbus campus in 2001 which arose out of a narrow necessity rather than through strategic consideration with active stakeholder engagement.

### 3: Organizational Areas Affected

**A:** Every division within the college is impacted by changes in enrollment, facilities and space decisions. Most immediately, however, the college seeks to address current and future space needs for its Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Divisions.

### 4: Key Organizational Process(es)

- A:**
- Data-driven space planning
  - Community partner engagement

### 5: Project Time Frame Rationale

**A:** Master planning is divided into 4 phases; the completion of each phase is a milestone. The four phases are: Data Collection; Synthesis and Needs Assessment; Options Development; and Master Plan Development. The College has completed Phases I and II, this Action Project addresses Phases III and IV. Target date for Phase III completion is December 2012, and for Phase IV, March 2013.

## 6: Project Success Monitoring

A: The College has a comprehensive master planning communication plan which includes a Steering Committee responsible for stakeholder engagement and input and feedback throughout the process; the creation of a master planning web site (<http://www2.csc.edu/about/master-planning/>) to keep stakeholders aware of the planning process and activities; the use of campus-wide communication tools; outreach and engagement with community stakeholders; and the use of focus groups, open forums, surveys and other tools to assure widespread engagement by a diverse student body, faculty, staff, neighborhood partners and civic and corporate leaders.

## 7: Project Outcome Measures

A: The College has:

- Established collaborative relationships with community stakeholders to assist the College in achieving its mission
- Established assumptions for future growth, planning principles and goals that guide the development of the plan
- A master plan and an implementation strategy for space necessary to meet the region's demand for its services

## Project Update

### 1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A:

**The goal of this project was to produce a comprehensive master plan that integrated major planning issues involving facilities and partnerships that will advance and align with the college's strategic goals of student success, workforce development and civic engagement. The plan was to:**

- **Consider the most advantageous growth opportunities and characteristics of the downtown Columbus campus, emphasizing partnership opportunities and synergies with other development projects;**
- **Explore the relationship between the College's two campuses and its regional learning centers;**
- **Recommend a strategic approach to the use of existing and potential parking resources on or near the downtown Columbus campus, and identify pedestrian-friendly access routes and additional green spaces;**
- **Develop a plan for future land/facility acquisition linked to projected needs;**
- **Strengthen the linkage between future facility development and specific institutional goals and priorities; and**
- **Continue to engage internal and external partners.**

**The final plan addresses the entire scope as reflected above. Therefore, Columbus State can close out this project.**

### 2: Institution Involvement

A:

**Columbus State engaged the College and community by conducting more than 100 interviews, focus groups, and open forums to capture the ideas and reactions of students, staff, faculty, civic and community leaders, and neighboring landholders**

including the Columbus Public Library, the Columbus Museum of Art; the City of Columbus; corporate partners including State Auto, Motorists, and Nationwide; other educational institutions including Columbus City Schools, Columbus School of Art and Design, Franklin University; and other landholders in the Discovery District, the neighborhood in which the Columbus Campus resides.

Similarly, the Delaware County community was engaged throughout the process, including the neighbors immediately adjacent to the Delaware Campus and many civic, governmental and other stakeholders in Delaware County.

The Board of Trustees was involved at every stage of the Plan, providing input and guidance to the President and the executive team. A college-wide Master Planning Steering, co-chaired by the Chief Academic Officer, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Senior Vice President for Business & Administrative Services/CFO actively engaged in the process at each phase of the process.

This was arguably the most comprehensive internal and external stakeholder engagement process in the college's 50-year history.

### 3: Next Steps

A: While this project is closed, the work of implementing the plan continues. In the coming years, Columbus State will work with its partners to meet the needs of a growing student body and a changing workforce.

The immediate "next step" is the submission of a 6-year capital plan to the State of Ohio, due this Autumn at a time yet to be established, for consideration in the context of the biennial capital funding process for a funding cycle that will begin July 1, 2014. Additionally, the Board's authorization in July 2013 of the guiding principles and the vision plans for the two campuses has elicited significant enthusiasm among participating stakeholders and potential partners. Follow up on these conversations has been and will be ongoing.

### 4: Resulting Effective Practices

A:

- The College created a comprehensive master planning communication plan which included a Steering Committee responsible for stakeholder engagement and feedback throughout the process; the creation of a master planning web site (<http://www2.csc.edu/about/master-planning/>) to keep stakeholders aware of the planning process and activities; the use of campuswide communication tools; outreach and engagement with community stakeholders; and the use of focus groups, open forums, surveys and other tools to assure widespread engagement by a diverse student body, faculty, staff, neighborhood partners and civic and corporate leaders.
- In order to create a master plan that truly meets the need of the future, the master planning project used extensive qualitative and quantitative data to inform its decision-making process. The College collected and analyzed space usage, census, employment and graduation data for all surrounding counties to determine how the College would need to grow over time to serve students and the communities which we serve. The numerous stakeholder

**engagement sessions provided qualitative data that informed the Plan.**

- **Recognizing the critical importance of partnerships in the pursuit of its**

**strategic goals, the College's President, Dr. David Harrison, led by example in establishing visible and substantive partnerships with institutions including Ohio State University and Reynoldsburg City Schools to illustrate the potential for partnerships, and the critical need to continue building more as resources become increasingly limited.**

## **5: Project Challenges**

- A: Recognizing that resources will continue to be limited, the Columbus State intentionally illuminated the need for partnerships and new ways of thinking in the guiding principles that emerged through the master planning process. Balancing the addition of bricks and mortar with the changing nature of higher education and advancing technologies will be a key challenge in continuing to offer quality, affordable higher education.**

## **Update Review**

### **1: Project Accomplishments and Status**

- A:** Columbus State Community College developed a plan to address the master planning and incorporation of the campuses into the regional community and city. The strategic planning efforts are commendable in that the college was proactive in their approach to extending their outreach to the community. As well, the college became part of the urban development efforts for downtown renewal thus improving the quality of life for those in the inner city community. The plan was a systemic approach that addressed how best to accomplish the goals with other community efforts- this is a strength. The utilization of resources both internal and external to the college is an important consideration in that use of funding, manpower, and other city services are effectively and efficiently considered in the building of community partners.
- The decline of inner cities is problematic associated with blight, poverty, and crime. How cities collaborate and work together is a community effort that requires all stakeholders to be invested. The strengths and limitations of development is evident in that issues associated with parking, green spaces, and people friendly spaces was considered in the planning efforts. The collaborative and integrated approach to the building of community and how the college will be a part of the community is clear.
- The project accomplished the goals and targets that were established in the initial proposal. Additional details on how faculty development and the alignment with institutional goals and priorities as a component of this project would have been useful and added depth and clarity.

### **2: Institution Involvement**

- A:** Strategic planning efforts are commendable in the inclusion and investment of a wide and diverse group of constituents. By including all internal and external stakeholders in the early stages of development and throughout the plan, the likelihood of success is evident through sustained efforts and community involvement. Early efforts that used a SWOT analysis including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were considered in the long-term planning efforts. Community engagement is a commendable plus of the project. It is often a challenge to build and sustain efforts associated with long range planning; by involving the larger community including business, K12 education, residents, city service officials, and civic leaders, the plan addressed their concerns and needs as a part of how the college would be integrated into the larger community. Each phase of the plan included college leaders- this is vital for the success of the plan and ultimately the college. Strategic planning processes included evaluation and review of each phase with appropriate data and information collected and analyzed. The engagement of a broad and diverse groups stakeholders both internal and external to the college will bring to the forefront of future efforts both insight and understanding of the issues and needs of the larger community.

### 3: Next Steps

A: The development plan has been an ongoing work that will now move to the implementation and evaluation stage. It is important that the college and community partners not lose the momentum that has grounded the efforts. Commitments and timeliness must be maintained as changing demographics, economics, social, and political forces may divert or change the direction of the the initial efforts. While enthusiasm for the development of an inner city campus is a plus, the funding and resources needed require another level of conversation and dedication from other partners within the city. How resources are utilized and parsed out to competing efforts must be considered. The capital plan and funding are the most pressing need and will required sustained efforts. It would have been useful to understand how these efforts and future efforts with respect to capital funding efforts could have been more tightly aligned and crafted into the initial planning efforts.

### 4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: The planning efforts demonstrate depth and is comprehensive in nature in that many aspects associated with effective strategic planning have been utilized as part of the overall process. The use of a variety of processes in order to garner the perspective of stakeholders is impressive and a best practice in strategic planning. As well, the use of different types of data sources and data in a mixed methods approach to gathering of data is a strength.

A leader who can recognize and address both challenges and opportunities of such an expansive plan is a strength as well. Colleges, particularly community colleges, play a vital role in the community specifically with respect to the economy and workforce development. There is ample research that workforce development and specific training programs found at the community college level are showing an increase in student enrollment as funding for college is a challenge. The college is poised to make a significant difference in the community in terms of development as well as improve access to education for the city youth. The partnerships with the local colleges and school divisions is critical to establish a conduit of education offerings to students.

### 5: Project Challenges

A: The institution is to be commended for a proactive approach to address community needs with a changing landscape in higher education. Partnerships that utilize combined resources and hard to find funding will be one way to improve access and quality to higher education. Specific strategies such as distance and e-learning, dual enrollment, grants, community partner initiatives and creative and entrepreneurial ways to support the efforts of this plan. Short-term and long-term goals with specific measures of success focused upon both student outcomes with timelines for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation are the next steps. How the community partners will be engaged is those efforts is equally as important as their contribution to plan.

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## Project Outcome

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### 1: Reason for completion

A:

**The Board of Trustees authorized a proposed master plan, including guiding principles, at its July 18, 2013 board meeting, affirming the attainment of the goals set out for the project. Therefore, Columbus State can close out this project. As a reminder, the goal of this project was to produce a comprehensive master plan that integrated major planning issues involving facilities and partnerships that will advance and align with the college's strategic goals of student success, workforce development and civic engagement. The plan was to:**

- **Consider the most advantageous growth opportunities and characteristics of the downtown Columbus campus, emphasizing partnership opportunities and synergies with other development projects;**
- **Explore the relationship between the College's two campuses and its regional learning centers;**
- **Recommend a strategic approach to the use of existing and potential parking**

resources on or near the downtown Columbus campus, and identify pedestrian-friendly access routes and additional green spaces;

- Develop a plan for future land/facility acquisition linked to projected needs;
- Strengthen the linkage between future facility development and specific institutional goals and priorities; and
- Continue to engage internal and external partners.

## 2: Success Factors

A:

This project was successful because the College benefited as follows:

- Coupled with strategic planning efforts that were occurring simultaneously, the

Master Plan aligns to and creates a flexible framework for current and future needs identified throughout the planning process, and integrates the College's framework with current and potential partners;

- A highly engaged college-wide steering committee that planned and executed

extensive engagement by internal and external stakeholders that included students, staff, faculty, civic and community leaders, and neighboring landholders including the Columbus Public Library, the Columbus Museum of Art; the City of Columbus; corporate partners including State Auto, Motorists, and Nationwide; other educational institutions including Columbus City Schools, Columbus School of Art and Design, Franklin University; and other landholders in the Discovery District, the neighborhood in which the Columbus Campus resides.

Similarly, the Delaware County community was engaged throughout the process, including the neighbors immediately adjacent to the Delaware Campus and many civic, governmental and other stakeholders in Delaware County.

- The use of extensive qualitative and quantitative data to inform the Plan;
- The use of key communication tools including the master planning website as a

key communication vehicle and regular updates and news items in the employee e-newsletter. The President and senior leaders engaged actively in meetings with the Board of Trustees, and with external stakeholders to insure there was ongoing engagement with and buy-in from those who would be key partners in the Plan's implementation.

## 3: Unsuccessful Factors

A:

Columbus State Community College's leadership is very satisfied with the outcomes of this project. While we did not meet our existing timeline of finishing the project by March 2013, the added time allowed us to consider the College's continued strategic planning efforts that helped inform the work.

Having the Board's authorization by July 2013 positioned the College in time for its capital funding request to the State of Ohio, due sometime this Autumn.

