

Executive Summary

Overview

As Inver Hills Community College increases its offerings in response to service area needs, its pleasant, pastoral campus is expected to reach its carrying capacity in the next twenty-five years. With this in mind, the college's Campus Master Plan seeks to balance the development of its new facilities and meet its anticipated parking needs in a manner that preserves and enriches the valued character of this academic village.

Background

College Location. Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) is located in the City of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, which is in the southeast quadrant of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Inver Grove Heights and other nearby communities in Dakota and Washington Counties continue to experience population growth. Between 1970 and 2006, Dakota County's population has increased from 78,303 to 388,000 (est.) and Washington County's population has increased from 52,432 to 225,000 (est.). The college also serves Ramsey County, which, while growing more slowly, has still experienced a population increase of 77,000 (est.) during the same period. This rapid development and population growth in the college's service area is expected to continue for the next five to ten years then level off to rates of growth that are typical of the remainder of the metropolitan region.

IHCC is one of the most beautiful college campuses in the state. Its campus has the feeling of an academic village with small brick buildings nestled into a lush valley. When IHCC opened, the campus was a three building "settlement" in a pastoral setting of rolling woodland accented by picturesque ponds. The woodland seemed boundless in 1970. Now, roadways and development hem in the college's 90-acre campus and its woodlands are among the last untouched parcels in the vicinity. This makes the campus a treasured resource in the community for its physical character as well as its academic offerings.

History of the College. IHCC received its initial accreditation in 1972 offering academic programs in the liberal arts and occupational programs. From an initial full year student body of 363, the college grew steadily to 2,864-fulltime students in 1994-95. Following several years of stable or declining enrollment, IHCC experienced significant 49.5% student body growth since 2000-08. The college annually serves over 7,500 individual students and currently has a full year equivalent (FYE) of 3,656.

The college continues to offer a traditional liberal arts program leading to an Associate of Arts degree and has articulation agreements with state universities and the University of Minnesota to facilitate students' pursuit of baccalaureate degrees. IHCC is strengthening its customized training programs, working with area businesses to provide training to current and prospective employees, and its professional programs in health care, teaching, computer technology, paralegal, law enforcement, and business.

Employment Outlook. With the labor force in tri-county area expected to increase by 120,000 in the next twenty years and many businesses locating or expanding their operations in the area, prospects for employment in the area are excellent. Employment opportunities in the metro area are anticipated to be greatest in professional, paraprofessional, and technical groups. This presents IHCC with significant opportunities to increase their traditional, occupational, and customized training programs.

The college is currently collaborating with the following business and industry partners:

Cisco	Wells Fargo	Allina Hospitals
West Group	Fortis	Mayo Clinic
Northwest Airlines	Qwest	BF Goodrich
U.S. Postal Service	Cray Research	Gold Cross

The service area is among the most affluent in the nation and its employers need well-educated and highly trained employees to continue their growth.

The Planning Process

This Update to the Facilities Master Plan is a continuation of planning that began with a Campus Master Plan in 1995 and the 2002 Facilities Master Plan.

The 1995 Plan was developed with campus-wide participation and directed by the college's Strategic Planning Committee. Beginning with a review of growth assumptions and the College community's input, this plan enduring value is its recognition of sensory issues in the campus's landscape and buildings. Goals, guidelines, and strategies for remodeling and new construction were articulated in the 1995 Plan and continue to inform the development of the campus. As a result, Inver Hills' landscapes and buildings have become increasingly humane environments.

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan was developed through a collaboration of academic, facilities, and administrative staff and input from students. The varied perspectives on the planning team generated thoughtful discussions with regard to the relationship of programs to facilities, space utilization, and the future of learning methodologies on the campus. The team toured campus buildings together to develop a shared knowledge of the existing facilities and individuals brought their own work to meetings for discussion. The resulting 2002 Plan focused on the relationship between academic programs and programmatic space requirements.

The 2007 Update to the Facilities Master Plan has been guided by a sub-committee of the College's Institutional Effectiveness Council. This subcommittee continued the collaborative team approach of the previous planning efforts. The subcommittee held three listening sessions with the College community and undertook a survey of students, staff and faculty to broaden the perspective of facilities shortcomings and opportunities. During the 2007 planning process, sustainable concerns became a key concern merging the previous plans' focuses on sensory qualities and on facilities condition and utilization.

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The Existing Site and Buildings

The Campus Master Plan is grounded in the attributes of the existing site and buildings. IHCC is fortunate to have attractive, well-maintained buildings in a beautiful campus setting. While the buildings are showing their age and need to be upgraded to address changing program needs, the college community values the “feel” of the campus. Renovation of the buildings and site as well as new construction need to build upon the physical qualities of the campus and embrace the character of IHCC.

The Academic Master Plan

The college's academic mission is grounded in the values of the college community. Faculty and staff are dedicated to:

- Sustaining the liberal arts
- Being innovative in teaching and learning
- Delivering learner-centered instruction and services
- Providing multiple and flexible points of success
- Partnering with educational institutions, business, and the community
- Being responsive to emerging careers and technologies
- Creating and delivering curriculum responsive to global and societal needs
- Insuring student access to critical academic and technological skill development.

The Master Academic Plan revises and renews existing programs and develops new initiatives in customized training and professional programs. The Campus Master Plan is called upon to provide appropriate instructional space for these programs while incorporating interior and exterior spaces that create a well-rounded educational and social experience for all the college's students.

The Campus Master Plan

In preparing the Campus Master Plan, the college reviewed a range of scenarios for enrollment growth and tied the remodeling of existing and construction of new facilities to this growth. For the purposes of this plan, the facilities implementation and phasing are based on a student body enrollment of 4,500 FYE (Full Year Equivalent) in 2032.

An alternative enrollment growth scenario considered the impact of web-based and off-campus course offerings on facilities requirements. Using the 4500 FYE model, the enrollment growth in this model is reduced by 8.5% to account for reduced facilities needed to support web-based and off-campus offerings. If these projections are correct, Inver Hills require 33,000 GSF less than for the traditional model.

The initial phases of each alternative are identical, so Inver Hills can evaluate its actual facilities needs over time to determine the actual impact on facilities of web-based and off-campus offerings. The alternative plans showing 382,800 GSF and 349,800 GSF of facilities are included in the Framework for Campus Development.

It should be noted that parking will be a significant limiting factor on the growth at Inver Hills. Alternative means of transportation need to be implemented, if the College is to grow, or the character its natural setting will be eroded by parking lots.

This update to the Campus Master Plan builds upon the goals and guidelines established by the 1995 Campus Plan and updates recommendations made in the 2002 Campus Plan:

- Connect the college campus to the surrounding community to re-enforce the emerging "civic center."
- Preserve the natural setting to the greatest extent possible.
- Improve way finding throughout the campus.
- Enhance the Mall as the primary space of the campus.
- Build new structures in response to the character of the existing campus buildings by incorporating the attributes identified in the 1995 plan.
- Seek alternatives to ever-expanding parking lots by developing partnerships for shared parking in close proximity to the campus.
- Work with the city and Metro Transit to provide viable, competitive transit alternatives for the college and its service area.

Plan Updating Strategy

The Master Plan for Inver Hills Community College is a living document supporting the strategic direction of the college. A checklist based on MnSCU's "Guide to Campus Master Planning" has guided the development of the Master Plan. While this document provides Inver Hills' with the foundation and guidelines upon which to base future planning decisions, an annual review of the check list by the College's Executive Team is recommended to keep the Master Plan current and to extend it.

With the College's rapid growth since 2000, a formal review process is needed for minor programmatic and functional projects. The College is instituting a Facilities Improvement Review and Advisory Committee to prioritize projects to be accomplished primarily with College operating funds. The Committee has representation from faculty, staff, and students.

As a guide for significant facilities projects requiring general obligation bonding, the Capital Improvement Plan lays out a schedule for predesign through occupancy for each funding phase. If enrollment grows at a faster or slower pace than modeled in the plan, the Executive Team can adjust the phasing plan based on historical program space per FYE data.

