

## Master Plan Report - Short Form

### Executive Summary

This report represents the periodic 5 year review of the Victoria College facilities master plan. A team of 17 faculty, staff, and students examined program and facility needs at the college and crafted recommendations for future facility initiatives at VC.

VC operates 17 buildings on a campus of approximately 60 acres. There are 71 classrooms, 41 teaching labs, 7 computer labs, and 15 meeting rooms, along with offices and many special purpose areas. The college also operates two teaching centers (Gonzales and Calhoun County), two off-campus vocational nursing schools (Cuero and Hallettsville), and the Adult Education Center on Crestwood Street in Victoria.

In general VC facilities are in good repair. The primary deferred maintenance needs are roofing and chilled water cooling systems. The enclosed walkway between Academic Building and Johnson Hall is in need of serious repair to correct damage from roof, window, and doorway leaks. Also the elevator in this area is antiquated and in need of complete replacement. The other area with significant deferred maintenance requirements is the library, where the window glazing needs repair, and the mechanical systems are inefficient and out dated.

Long term enrollment growth is difficult to predict. VC had essentially no growth between 2000 and 2009. However, beginning with Spring 2009 the college experienced back to back semesterly increases of 3 to 6%, bringing credit enrollment to an all-time high of 4562 for Fall of 2011.

The college presently uses 82% of available space in the 60 acre main campus. At the current method of class scheduling, and if the college continues to build in the same style, spacing, and density as the current campus there is enough usable space for an enrollment growth of approximately 1000 additional students on the main campus.

In its 2009-2012 Strategic Plan VC identified "Creating a Unified and Welcoming Campus Physical Environment" as a strategic action item directed to meeting the Priority Goal of **Institutional Excellence**. The strategic plan also identifies **student success** as a priority area. The emerging trend in educational style is a focus on collaborative learning; successful students on modern campuses work in groups, and need spaces that facilitate group study and projects.

Campuses focused on student success focus on making students feel involved, welcomed, and connected both socially and physically to their college. Surroundings that enhance the experiences during registration, advising, payments and other interactions with college operations are very effective in maintaining positive attitudes toward Victoria College.

A part of the strategic priority goal of meeting **Community Needs**, is to work regionally to meet continuing education, public service, and workforce training needs.

Several projects are currently in progress:

- Fine Arts renovation and expansion to provide improved instructional spaces for music and art
- Gonzales Center Expansion to add welding and construction trades programs and increase science lab capacity
- Tutoring and KEY center relocation to a more central setting
- Construction of a new building to house the Cuero VN program

## **MASTER PLAN 2011-2020**

(summary)

The college seeks to continue creating a campus that manifests VC's commitment to student success. Such a campus is welcoming, student centered, and fosters a collegial environment for engaged learning. The campus should continue to be scalable for growth, yet flexible to meet new educational and community needs. The campus should clearly demonstrate VC's commitment to stewardship of resources, permanence of mission, and the college's status as the premier institution of higher education for the Crossroads region.

The college should undertake the following new facilities initiatives in the near future, which are detailed in the comprehensive report:

- Comprehensive facilities plan for Student Life
- Workforce training center
- Enrollment Services facility
- Business continuity
- Parking
- Public Service training center
- Library/Museum renovation
- Recital Hall

Several additional initiatives were also identified for immediate implementation:

- Ensure that Deferred maintenance needs are met annually
- Focus on maintaining a safe and secure campus
- Keep technology current and highly functional
- Develop a easily navigable, appealing campus
- Expand facilities for the Instrumentation program, including offerings at Gonzales
- Replace the Sports Center equipment
- Provide a student area at Calhoun center
- Enlarge the Hallettsville VN Lab
- Provide cooling for Gonzales Center's assembly hall

## **MASTER PLAN 2011-2020**

The college seeks to continue creating a campus that manifests VC's commitment to student success. Such a campus is welcoming, student centered, and fosters a collegial environment for engaged learning. The campus should continue to be scalable for growth, yet flexible to meet new educational and community needs. The campus should clearly demonstrate VC's commitment to stewardship of resources, permanence of mission, and the college's status as the premier institution of higher education for the Crossroads region.

The college should undertake the following new facilities initiatives, which are detailed in the next section:

- Comprehensive facilities plan for Student Life
- Workforce training center
- Enrollment Services facility
- Business continuity
- Parking
- Public Service training center
- Library/Museum renovation

As a long-range objective the college should seek to provide a recital hall appropriate for the music programs offered at VC.

Furthermore, ongoing facilities activates should incorporate the following into all facilities decisions:

### **Deferred maintenance**

Annual budgets and capital spending should allocate sufficient funds to address the current deferred maintenance schedule and meet future DM needs in an optimal time frame. Most urgent among the deferred maintenance needs is renovation of the Academic-Johnson Hall walkway and elevator

### **Campus safety**

All construction and renovation projects should incorporate improvements to campus safety by using lock and access control systems, lighting, landscaping, and patterns of use that optimize the personal safety of the campus community. Inclusion of an audible alert system, such as sirens, and of emergency call kiosks would enhance the security options for the campus.

### Technology

Construction and renovation projects should continue to include upgrades to communications, cabling, wireless networks, and classroom technology to keep VC at the leading edge of campus technology.

### Wayfinding/branding/eye appeal

In addition to a comprehensive plan for campus wayfinding, all campus projects should carefully consider maintaining an attractive and unified campus appearance and encouraging ease of navigation for new students and visitors.

### Student Life

Projects undertaken at the college should always be designed with an eye to enhancing student life. Taking the opportunity to incorporate seating and study areas, appealing colors, interesting architecture, and excellent technology helps solidify the positive experiences students have at VC.

Several smaller projects were also identified:

- Instrumentation Lab: To meet increasing enrollment, a second lab for instrumentation/electronics is needed.
- Instructional area improvements in Process Tech lab: The current teaching area in the PTech lab is open to the full lab room and is often too noisy for adequate instruction.
- Sports center equipment: The fitness and weight room equipment in the Sports Center dates from the early 1990s and has had considerable wear and tear. The equipment should be replaced to give participants a better workout experience and to head off impending breakdowns.
- Student area at Calhoun: The Calhoun center currently only has a small student lounge area. Providing additional seating in the outdoor areas will create a more student-friendly environment
- Cooling for Gonzales Assembly hall: The large assembly area at the Gonzales center is heavily used by students and by the community. The room is un-air-conditioned and thus becomes unsuitable on many days. The current practice of using small fans creates unsatisfactory levels of noise.
- Hallettsville VN Lab: The current lab is small and crowded for the 20 students that attend the Hallettsville VN school. Enlarging the lab would be very beneficial; however the building is owned by the Lavaca Medical Center and will require a collaborative effort to make any modifications.

## **Scope of Recommended Projects:**

### **Student Life**

Creating a campus that emphasizes student life is not a function of simply constructing a single facility, rather it is a process of crafting the many spaces used by students into an overall environment that fully engages the student body. VC should design a comprehensive plan for developing just such an environment. The key components of such an environment are study areas, leisure and recreation areas, sports facilities, and events facilities. The following items were specifically identified by the team as beneficial for improving the student environment:

- additional comfortable seating areas
- game room
- an outdoor pavilion
- alternate food options
- an intramural field
- a better sound system for events

### **Workforce Training Center**

One of the goals of the Strategic Plan 2009-2012, is that the college will collaborate with regional leaders to develop and align programs that result in a trained workforce. Towards this end, the college declared a strategic intention to establish a regional training facility that will allow Victoria College to provide customized training and to host conferences. Thus, there is a need for a **Workforce Training Center** that will provide a solution to one of the biggest challenges that Workforce & Continuing Education faces - - lack of adequate space. (Appendix A1)

An effective workforce training center will have the following features:

- Computer classrooms
- Regular classrooms
- Large meeting room with breakout rooms
- Small meeting rooms
- Catering kitchen
- Industrial training lab

A conceptual plan for this center is included in Appendix A1. It is appropriate for this building to be located away from the main campus in order to conserve campus space for future growth.

### **Enrollment Services facility**

In order to provide excellent service to students, the college should design an enrollment services facility that can provide a positive experience in all of the interactions involved in enrollment. (Appendix A2)

This facility would incorporate the following activities in an efficient and pleasing environment:

- Welcome Center/Admissions
- Advising/Counseling
- Veterans Services
- Financial Aid
- Student Payment Center
- VP Student Services

Additionally the following should be in close proximity to the enrollment center, if not a part of the actual building:

- Testing
- Tutoring and KEY Center
- Bookstore
- Food Court
- Convenient Store
- Coffee House
- ATM/Banking

One potential arrangement is to incorporate all of the enrollment services activities in a larger building which also houses the student center and student activities.

### **Business continuity**

Necessary infrastructure for business continuity should be considered a facilities priority. (Appendix A3) Such infrastructure would be primarily comprised of:

- Modern phone system
- Backup power supply
- Redundant internet connections
- Off-site data backup
- Redundant off-site servers for basic business and instructional functions

### **Parking**

In addition to parking that would accompany any new facility on campus, the college should seek to add 200 to 300 additional spaces, preferably in proximity to the HSC and other high occupancy buildings.

### **Public Service Training**

If VC is to remain the leader in Public Service training for this area then the development and construction of a Public Service training facility should be considered so that VC will have the ability to provide training beyond what is currently offered, and to a customer base that is presently sending their employees out of our service area for training. This facility could be developed in partnership with other local government entities. (Appendix A4)

The primary need in the region is for a facility focused on firefighting.

### **Library**

The library was originally constructed in 1974. Since that time the basic requirements for a functional higher education library have changed significantly. Modern libraries no longer function primarily for storage and retrieval of hard copy materials. Instead, they focus much more on technology access; collaborative learning; teaching of study and research skills; and small group and interactive study. Additionally, the VC library has taken on an important community role in hosting the local history collection, and collaboration with the museum of the Coastal Bend.

Any planning for library renovation must be made in conjunction with the University of Houston-Victoria since the changing requirements of UH-V may affect the use of this shared structure.

The proposed library renovation would include measures intended to enhance the collaborative and technology aspects of library function, while also increasing the library's appeal as a site for student engagement. Recommendations include:

- Providing a gathering space for a learning commons.
- Creating a computer lab.
- Remodel the service and office areas for greater efficiency.
- Create additional study rooms and collaborative work spaces for students.
- Provide better sound-proofing for current study rooms.
- Remodel Room L-2 into a state of the art classroom.
- Provide better storage for the regional history center.
- Collaborative with improvements at the Museum to improve collections storage, museum labs, and display areas.

The current building received a roof replacement in 2011 and is scheduled for much-needed window repairs. A mechanical system upgrade is needed to improve energy efficiency and to improve comfort for occupants. (Appendix A5)

### **Museum**

The museum has experienced significant growth in both collection size and visitors since opening in 2003. In order to fulfill its potential, the museum will need to expand its area for collection storage (on site or off-site), expand its exhibit area, and create an archeology lab that is better suited for teaching and demonstration. Conversion of the board room into an exhibit

space will allow some expansion. Any plans for museum improvements should be coordinated with the library renovation plans. (Appendix A5, A6)

### **Auditorium/Recital hall**

The VC auditorium, originally built in 1966, has a seating capacity of 967. The auditorium has experienced slow deterioration in mechanical systems, structural weakening from roof and sub grade leaks, and due to its 1960's era design no longer provides the efficiency, functionality, or aesthetics expected in modern auditoriums. Thus, in 2011 the college's board of trustees decided to avoid further investment into the structure and authorized its demolition. This left the performing arts programs with only a small performance hall on campus (Johnson Symposium - capacity 185). Additionally the college has access to the VISD performing arts center (capacity 1482) and Welder center (private non-profit- capacity 476)

In the long run, quality instructional programs in music, drama, and other performing arts will require a modern performance hall. A capacity of 250 to 300 would meet the typical audience size for most performances of VC instructional programs. Such a venue would provide quality performance space for music and drama, as well as the ability to make multi-media presentations, host receptions, and display student art.

The largest attendance for events in the auditorium has been for lecture-type events such as Lyceum and Genetic Update conference, or for ceremonies such as graduations. Those events with large attendance have typically exceeded auditorium capacity in the past several years, causing the college to issue tickets in order to limit attendance. VC graduation was moved to larger off-campus venues in 2010, and Genetic Update and Lyceum programs began using broadcasts to alternate sites in 2009. A large capacity lecture or meeting room should be considered separately from a performance hall, perhaps as part of a business training center.

### **Renovation of Academic-Johnson Hall walkway**

The glass enclosed walkway connecting first and second floors of the Academic Building to Johnson Hall is in need of complete renovation. A renovation would entail replacement of all windows and door systems, rust removal and repainting of the exterior framing members, construction of porches over the exterior doors, replacement of the elevator, and replacement of floor and ceiling finishes. In light of the extensive repairs needed. The college should consider replacement of the walkway with a completely new structure. A new structure gives the opportunity to incorporate student seating, study, and social areas, or other functions that might be appropriate for the functions within the two adjacent buildings. Consideration should be given to using the new construction to create a unified enrollment services function in the Academic/Johnson Hall complex.

### **Wayfinding**

One of the primary needs associated with this item is to improve the student's or visitor's ability to find buildings, people, classrooms, offices, and functions on campus. This involves appropriately named and labeled buildings, user-friendly directional signs, and other useful



guidance tools. This also includes internal signage in buildings and other informational displays such as digital monitors and bulletin boards.

### **Considerations for Future Growth**

Victoria College has capacity for significant continued growth. With the exception of certain labs and studios, classroom space remains under-utilized during the afternoon hours. Even during mornings, there is still some unused capacity in general classrooms. Construction of a workforce training center would move continuing education and workforce courses off-campus, freeing much of the CEC building as well as various other rooms for other uses. Similarly, a public service training center would free up classrooms currently used by those programs.

The language building was originally constructed to accommodate a third floor, which could add 10 additional classrooms when needed. Likewise, the Technology Center, Sports Center, and Student Center were all constructed with adjacent green space and designed to facilitate lateral expansion. Two of the classrooms in HSC were constructed to easily convert into additional science labs.

As new construction is required, VC has the option to develop the two open tracts on the east side of campus, or to re-develop spaces in the center of the campus. The prime central space currently occupied by the single-story Student Services Building and Building A (the former Administration buildings) is an excellent location for a central parking garage and multi-story, multi-function building for student services and instruction. Also the site previously occupied by the auditorium will be available for future development.

## **Master Plan Review Team**

At the request of the board of trustees the president appointed a committee to review the facilities master plan and develop a new plan for the coming 10 to 30 years. The committee was structured to represent all of the campus stakeholders. The committee met monthly from Jan 2011 through April 2011 to discuss and prioritize issues. Following that the committee collaborated via email to craft a details report of its findings and recommendations.

### **Committee members:**

Bill Byers – Associate Professor of Physical Education  
Betsy Crane – Dean of Career and Technical Education  
Joe Dahlstrom – Director of Libraries  
Robert Duffie – Physical Plant Director  
Elaine Everett-Hensley – Student Activities Director  
Andy Farior – Information Technology Director  
Larry Garrett (chair) – Executive Director of Planning and Special Projects  
Laurie Harvey – Calhoun County Center Manager  
Julie Petru – Student Ambassador  
Missy Klmitcheck - Registrar  
Laura Banda – Phi Theta Kappa President  
James Martinez – Police Academy Director  
Jackie Mikesh – Gonzales Center Manager  
Sherri Pall – Workforce and Continuing Education Director  
Kristi Pfeil – Vocational Nursing Instructor  
Cary Voss – Associate Professor of Speech  
Rachel Winkenwerder – Assistant Professor of Mathematics

## **Appendices**

**For appendices and supporting documentation please see the comprehensive master plan report.**

<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/facilitiesmasterplan>

