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Greetings,

After months of community and campus meetings, I am pleased to present the University Expansion Master Plan for Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi.

Along with the formal transfer of approximately 140 acres of City land, the completion of the University Expansion Master Plan secures the continued growth of our institution in the future. Expansion was identified as one of the centerpiece visions of our Momentum 2015 strategic plan, and providing a plan for physical campus growth enables us to meet additional Momentum goals.

The new site will primarily house non-academic programs, enabling us to concentrate the University’s academic functions on Ward Island. Studies indicate that in shifting the non-academic facilities to the new campus and developing additional academic space, the University will be able to increase its enrollment capacity from 10,000 to 16,000 students. With the current student population rapidly approaching 10,000, the ability to increase enrollment capacity allows Texas A&M–Corpus Christi to serve a greater portion of students from the South Texas region and beyond.

Finally, I wish to thank City of Corpus Christi officials and staff, University employees, and Pharaoh Valley residents who participated in the making of the University Expansion Master Plan. Although we are known as the Island University, we seek to be good neighbors in the Coastal Bend Community. We value our partnerships with the community, and we appreciate the support we receive from it.

Sincerely,

Flavius C. Killebrew, Ph.D., President
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007, the City of Corpus Christi donated 137 acres of City land, including portions of South Guth Park, to Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi. The property is roughly bound by Ennis Joslin Road on the East, the Oso Golf Course on the North and West, and by the Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood on the South. The site includes portions of Nile Road, and it surrounds one of the City’s wastewater treatment facilities. Of the approximately 140 acres gifted, approximately 90 acres are buildable due to flood zone restrictions, City easements, and setbacks.

The South Guth Park land gift will allow the University to expand its athletics and graduate housing options for students, since space on Ward Island is limited. The athletics facilities are planned to include tennis, track & field, baseball, softball, and soccer stadiums, along with practice facilities, press-boxes, seating, parking facilities, boat storage and ROTC training grounds.

Additionally, the University plans to locate some graduate and married student housing on the campus expansion which will provide affordable housing to students not currently accommodated in housing on the main campus. In the future, the University may locate a convocation center for graduation ceremonies or conferences on the South Guth property, and community-focused business development, hotel management, or other research offices may also be accommodated on the site.

The Campus Expansion Master Plan considered several scenarios for development on the site, and the consultants – Broaddus & Associates of Austin, Texas – met with various stakeholder groups throughout the process in order to gather information and garner support for the new campus. Key stakeholders involved in the process included the University President’s Cabinet Members, Deans from University Departments, representatives from Student Life, Athletics Program Directors and Coaches, Facilities Management Directors, Wetlands
Researchers and Specialists, Representatives from ROTC, Corpus Christi City Council Members, the Mayor of Corpus Christi, City Engineers, and members of the Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood Association.

The Master Plan for the Campus Expansion includes all of the programmatic scope as determined by the University, and was based upon two, guiding, conceptual principles. These are:

1. Ennis Joslin Drive is the Front Door to the new campus because of its prominence. Ennis Joslin Drive is a good location for larger, prominent buildings such as the convocation center, research buildings, and graduate student housing.

2. Land west of Nile Drive is reserved for Back-of-House facilities. Boat Storage, ROTC training grounds, and practice fields should be located on this portion of the site.

Key features of the Master Plan include: a convocation center that would be visible from Ward Island, first-phase development that creates an immediate synergy on campus, an internal road that maximizes access through the site, hotel management, research buildings, and housing units that overlook Oso Bay, and a centralized parking garage that would service multiple sports arenas.

This report details the planning process and stakeholder input, the various development scenarios that were considered, and the Final Master Plan. The Introduction includes background information about the project, the planning process, and the preliminary programmatic development. The Observations & Analysis chapter discusses the opportunities and constraints of the site, ranging from physical issues to social and environmental concerns. Next, the Scenarios section provides a pros and cons dialogue of various site development options that were evaluated for the Master Plan. Lastly, the report discusses the preferred Master Plan, its features and phasing.
INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In October 2007, the City of Corpus Christi donated approximately 137 acres of City land, including portions of South Guth Park, to Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi. This site is presently home to the City’s youth baseball fields, but the City is planning to relocate the complex south of South Padre Island Drive, which made the land available to convert for University use.

The University benefits from the land gift, as the new space will help to accommodate the University’s growing athletics and student housing demands. In its 2007 Master Plan Update, the University identified this City land as a possible location for expansion. Although the site is not directly adjacent the existing campus, it remains in close physical proximity, and it is visible across the Oso Bay from Ward Island.

1.1 The land donation is adjacent one of the City’s wastewater treatment plants.

1.2 The site is also adjacent the Pharaoh Valley residential neighborhood.

1.3 The majority of the land donation is undeveloped.
PLANNING PROCESS

In December 2007, Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi contracted with Broaddus & Associates, Inc. of Austin, Texas, to complete a Master Plan for the new site. The planning team followed a planning process consisting of these five phases: Initiation, Analysis, Vision, Development, and Refinement, which are further described below.

Phase 1: Initiation
Initiation is the exercise of gathering, organizing and prioritizing sometimes disparate information into a common set of goals for the University. In this phase, the consultants spent time at the new, mainland site, as well as on the main campus. The planning team toured the sites and buildings; preliminarily reviewed owner provided information; and sat down with the University’s stakeholders to initiate the master planning process for the project.

Phase 2: Analysis
Analysis involves the accumulation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information necessary to generate a realistic portrait of the planning area. The Broaddus team utilized existing data, studies, visual assessments, reports, and interviews. The team considered outside forces that will influence program growth, the site and facilities.

Phase 3: Vision
Vision focuses on early development of planning scenarios that holistically address the project’s development. The outcome is a simple plan distilled to its salient points. In the vision phase, the Broaddus team strategically identified ways of promoting facility connectivity, interaction among adjacent campus programs, areas, and neighbors, etc. The approach in developing this preliminary plan was to gain an in-depth understanding of historical, current and future growth and development plans. This phase overlaps somewhat with Phase 2 in order to obtain an elegant and appropriate planning response, even in its preliminary forms.

Phase 4: Development
Development involves further study of the preliminary vision plan, including evaluation in greater detail of discrete site areas, so that it may be used to describe innovative development ideas, to obtain input and build consensus from stakeholders. Proposed and existing features were illustrated and differentiated from one another. Peripheral land holdings were evaluated in the context of the campus demographic and other community development, as well as the main campus connectivity and infrastructure resources. Discrete areas of the site were studied at a greater scales of detail in order for the planning team to test technical feasibility and refine vision plan ideas.

Phase 5: Refinement
Refinement of the final plan begins and overlaps the Development phase. This often took the form of a campus and community overlay plan showing existing and proposed configurations, as well as more detailed breakdowns of projections by individual site locations. It included an implementation plan identifying potential future projects and suggested how the plan can be incrementally put in place over time.

Each phase involved input from key stakeholders including the University President’s Cabinet Members, Deans from University Departments, representatives from Student Life, Athletics Program Directors and Coaches, Facilities Management Directors, Wetlands Researchers and Specialists, Representatives from ROTC, Corpus Christi City Council Members, the Mayor of Corpus Christi, City Engineers, and members of the Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood Association.
1.5 Members of the Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood Association were included in the planning process.

1.4 Consultants met with the City of Corpus Christi, Mayor, Staff, and Council members.

1.6 The planning team met with Deans of the University to discuss long-range research & community programs.

1.7 Presenting the final aerial rendering during Phase 5: Refinement to the Campus Community.
SITE PROGRAM

As identified in the 2007 Master Plan Update, the University slated certain programmatic functions for development off Ward Island. These are: student housing, athletics, storage, student recreation spaces, commercial support, and large scale parking. Other University functions that the 2007 Master Plan Update recommended for location elsewhere in the region included professional schools and research functions requiring marine access.

The program was refined throughout the planning process, and ultimately included the following elements:

- Competition Tennis Complex
- Competition Track & Field Complex
- Competition Baseball Stadium
- Competition Softball Stadium
- Competition Soccer Field
- Practice Baseball, Softball, and Soccer Fields
- ROTC Ropes Course
- Storage & Maintenance Facilities
- Married & Graduate Student Housing
- Convocation Center
- Research/Office Buildings
  - Marine Biology & Business Incubators
- Hotel Management & Hospitality Building (Hotel)
2.1 General Site Location
OBSERVATIONS & ANALYSIS

GENERAL LOCATION & SITE INFORMATION

The site is generally located one mile southwest from Ward Island along Ennis Joslin Road. It is 1¼ miles from South Padre Island Drive via Ennis Joslin Road, or ¼ of a mile from Ocean Drive via Ennis Joslin Road. The site overlooks the Oso Bay and includes portions of the Oso Golf Course Drainage Creek.

The site is roughly bound by Ennis Joslin Road and Hans Suter Park on the east, the Oso Golf Course on the north and west, and by the Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood on the south. The site includes portions of Nile Road, and it surrounds one of the City’s wastewater treatment facilities. Of the 137 acres gifted, approximately 90 acres are buildable due to flood zone restrictions, City easements, and setbacks.

PHYSICAL SITE OBSERVATIONS

Topographically, the site can be divided into two areas: a lower-lying, drainage area across the northern portion of the site that ranges from 0 to 12 feet above sea level, and an upland, flat area across the southern portion of the site that ranges from 12 to 16 feet above sea level.

The lower-lying wetlands portion of the site is unbuildable due to FEMA flood restrictions, and is also slated by the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program as a potential wetlands enhancement and restoration area (Corpus Christi Bay National Estuaries Program, “Potential Sites for Wetland Restoration, Enhancement, and Creation: Corpus Christi/Nueces Bay Area,” 15 July 1997). The drainage area, known as the Oso Golf Course Drainage Creek, leads into Hans Suter Park and is a nesting ground for several waterbirds native to Oso Bay.

The uplands portion of the site is relatively flat and ranges only 2 to 4 feet in elevation across the breadth of the site. Some areas of the uplands are prone to rainwater ponding and street flooding, but with appropriate drainage, the flat ground is suitable for the construction of athletics facilities, housing, or research buildings. It is important to construct facilities with possible tropical storm related flooding in-mind.

The new campus site surrounds the City’s Oso Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant, which requires that the University maintain a 10 foot easement from the brick fencing that surrounds the plant. Other easements include access to underground wastewater lines,
2.3 Buildable Areas, Utilities, & FEMA Flood Plain

It is generally perceived that the route between the two campuses is not walkable for everyday commuting. However, there is fair community support for the establishment of a hike and bike trail that could be linked to existing trails within the Corpus Christi parks network. Although the idea to create a hike and bike trail extension across Oso Bay from Hans Suter Park was abandoned after further research into its environmental impact, public support for additional recreational and bird-watching areas near this area remains strong. Trail access to and through the wetlands will help to establish a strong physical link between the two campuses, even if they are not contiguous by land ownership.

Traffic along Ennis Joslin Drive can be heavy at times, and the intersections at Ocean Drive & Ennis Joslin and at Alameda Drive & Ennis Joslin are problematic. The City and the University will need to consider the impact of additional traffic - both vehicular and bicycle - moving through these intersections to alternate campuses.

In order to lessen the impact of increased traffic flow between campuses, the University may consider implementing a shuttle system for sporting events in the early phases of site development. As more continually-occupied programmatic elements are constructed on the site, the shuttle service may expand operations to provide regularly scheduled services throughout the day.

The University may need to establish gateways to identify the new campus property to travelers along Ennis Joslin Drive. The most prominent location for gateway or entry signage seems to be the intersection of Ennis Joslin and Nile Road, just across from the entry to Hans Suter Park.

Other concerns arising from site observations include minimizing the presence of odors from the Oso Wastewater Treatment Plant, maximizing views to the wetlands and Oso Bay, and ensuring privacy of neighboring, residential backyards.

overhead and underground electric lines, stormwater drains, water lines and telecommunications.

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY
Since the new campus is not immediately adjacent to the main University campus, access and connectivity between parcels are primary concerns. As earlier mentioned, the site is located approximately one mile from the Ward Island campus across Oso Bay, but is about 1½ miles via road or bicycle trail on Ocean Drive and Ennis Joslin Road. The land between the new campus and the existing main campus is not University-owned.
2.4 Wetlands Habitats & Hike & Bike trails establish connections between Ward Island and the new mainland campus.
COMMUNITY INPUT

In developing any new University campus, there are many neighborhood concerns that arise as soon as planning begins. Early in the planning process President Killebrew stated, “Until now, [Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi’s] neighbors have been fish.” Starting a mainland campus adjacent an established residential neighborhood meant that the Island University would need to engage their new neighbors.

One group engaged by the University was the Pharoah Valley Neighborhood Association. The first concerns voiced regarded vehicular traffic and access. Primarily, neighbors were concerned that University functions at the new site would increase vehicular traffic through their neighborhood. Pharoah Valley neighbors were also concerned that the University would close Nile Road through the site altogether, limiting their access to neighborhood amenities such as Hans Suter Park. From a campus safety and cohesiveness standpoint, the University was concerned that the amount of public vehicular traffic through the new campus would be problematic.

Limiting public access along Nile Road through the campus will help to relieve congestion and safety concerns while maintaining campus continuity. At this time, there is no need to completely close Nile Road to the public. The City should conduct further traffic analysis to determine options for rerouting through traffic along Nile Road to Ennis Joslin Drive. Nile Road should become a local-access only route, and Ennis Joslin should become the main route for vehicular traffic between Ocean Drive and South Padre Island Drive.

Excessive noise and lighting associated with athletics events were other issues voiced by Pharoah Valley residents. These comments were lessened as the planning team suggested incorporating a green buffer into the Master Plan that would help to screen private backyards from field lighting and noise.

Additionally, residents were concerned that a large student population located on the new campus would affect the quiet character of the neighborhood. Residents...
were uneasy about having large residential structures immediately adjacent their backyards. Just as a green buffer would help to screen noise and lighting from athletics events, it would also help to minimize the impact of noise associated with student housing on the neighborhood.

The making of the Campus Expansion Master Plan involved City of Corpus Christi officials and staff, as well. Representatives met with the City several times throughout the planning process, providing updates and seeking input regarding hike and bike trails, traffic calming, and campus security.

The planners also sought input from Pat Suter regarding bird watching in Hans and Pat Suter Wildlife Refuge and Dr. John W. (Wes) Tunnell of the Center for Coastal Studies regarding the impacts of a pedestrian bridge across the Oso Bay. Although both were supportive of extending a hike and bike trail through the campus, it was determined through these interviews that a bridge could negatively alter bird watching in the bay.

Firstly, Suter was concerned that predatory birds who feed on more sensitive species could use the bridge as a landing perch from which to hunt, thus affecting the otherwise protected environment. Dr. Tunnell also suggested that the bridge’s piers could cause sediments within the bay to build and erode, forming deeper pools of water that would not support the current marshland biology. These concerns negated the general support of a pedestrian bridge, and the University immediately removed the idea from its plans.
OBSERVATIONS & ANALYSIS

Community Input

2.9 Suter Park Boardwalk

2.10 Nile Road

2.11 Oso Bay

2.12 Pharaoh Valley Neighborhood Edge
SITE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

With input from the key stakeholder groups, the planning team generated and revised several site development scenarios. The scenarios considered various conceptual organizations of programmatic elements, and were used to garner further feedback from the user groups.

Scenario A
- Locates Graduate Student Housing as a Buffer between Neighborhood & Campus
- Convocation Center centrally-located along Nile Road
- All Athletics Located west of Nile Road
- Research & Office Buildings along Ennis Joslin
- Shared Parking Garage

Scenario B
- Signature Convocation Center at Intersection of Ennis Joslin & Nile Road
- Green-buffer along neighborhood edge
- Housing Complex centrally-located near Track & Soccer Stadium
- Shared Parking Garage
### Scenario C
- 1st Phase Construction located at Intersection of Ennis Joslin & Nile Road
- Convocation Center centrally located on Nile Road
- Housing Located along Neighborhood Edge

### Scenario D
- Signature Convocation Center at Ennis Joslin & Nile Road Intersection
- Competition Athletics to the West of Nile Road
- Housing along Ennis Joslin
- 1st Phase Development - Tennis Complex & Track Stadium - co-located on Nile Road
Surprisingly, the Pharaoh Valley residents were not fully supportive of organizations that located housing adjacent the neighborhood edge, as they felt any type of student housing would disrupt backyard life. Therefore, future schemes incorporated a “green buffer” idea to help screen the neighborhood from noise, views, and lighting. (See Figure 3.5.)

As the programmatic elements - both near and long-term - were finalized, the scenarios evolved to incorporate the differing features. Athletics facilities were grouped around parking, access road locations were established, and stadia were test-fit into site surveys to ensure constructibility.

Ultimately the Master Plan for the South Guth Park Campus was based upon two, guiding, conceptual principles, which were developed in stakeholder meetings. These are:

1. Ennis Joslin Drive is the Front Door to Campus because of its prominence. Therefore, Ennis Joslin Drive is a good location for larger, prominent buildings such as the convocation center, research buildings, and graduate student housing.

2. Land west of Nile Drive is reserved for Back-of-House facilities. Boat Storage, ROTC training grounds, and practice fields should be located on this portion of the site.

The following pages illustrate some of the final schemes that were considered for the Master Plan and describe the positive and negative features of each plan.
**Pros**
- Tennis Complex in visible location
- Maintains 70-80 foot green-buffer
- Graduate Student Housing away from neighborhood edge
- Centralized Parking Garage(s)
- Convocation Center / Hotel along Ennis Joslin

**Cons**
- 1st Phase Tennis Complex built on existing youth baseball fields
- Only one road to access housing
- Research buildings scattered

**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Campus Expansion Master Plan**
PROS

- 1st Phase Tennis Complex & Track Co-located
- Tennis Complex site keeps youth fields temporarily in-place
- Centralized Garage
- Housing Located Along Ennis Joslin for easier access

CONS

- Not able to expand stands on Track & Field Complex
- Green buffer would be limited to approximately 50 feet
### PROS

- 1st Phase Tennis Complex would allow Little-League fields to remain
- Track & Field located across Nile Drive
- Centralized Garage allows for shared parking
- Housing located along Ennis Joslin for improved access
- Research Buildings along Ennis Joslin
- Boat Storage & ROTC located toward northwest side of site

### CONS

- Housing Located near to neighborhood side of campus
The Master Plan

The Master Plan follows the conceptual principles as outlined on page 16: the Ennis Joslin side of campus is the front door, and the western portion of the site is reserved for back-of-house facilities.

A signature convocation center with a curving wall of glass is situated on the southern corner of the Ennis Joslin and Nile Road intersection. A large, public plaza with gateway signage is featured at this intersection - becoming an extension of the Hans Suter Park.

Mid-rise research and office buildings take advantage of the site’s views and overlook the Oso Bay, while smaller, married-student housing buildings line the southern corner of the site.

The intersection of Nile Road and a new intra-campus access road becomes the heart of the athletics facilities: the tennis complex and the track stadium are co-located across Nile Road, with the baseball and softball fields located deeper in the site.

Lastly, practice fields and storage buildings fill the western portion of the site. The access road loops to the north side of the Oso Wastewater Treatment Plant, providing emergency and service access.

Likely phasing for the project is described on the following pages, beginning with construction of the tennis complex in 2009.
4.1 Phase 1: 2009

A. Demolition of youth league baseball fields
B. Tennis Complex & Parking (300 cars)
C. Track & Field Complex & Parking (470 cars)
D. Access Road
E. ROTC Ropes Course

PHASE I: 2009

4.2 Tennis Complex - Texas A&M Univ. - College Station
**PHASE 2: 2011**

A. Competition Baseball  
B. Competition Softball & Parking (300 cars)  
C. Practice Fields  
D. Track & Soccer Stadium Expansion  
E. Boat Storage  
F. Maintenance
PHASE 3: 2014

A. Convocation Center
B. Hotel / Conference Center (75 Bed Hotel)
C. General Office Building
D. 1500-Car Parking Garage
PHASE 4: 2017

A. Married & Graduate Student Housing
B. Research & Office Buildings
C. 1300-Car Parking Garage