

Campus Issues Summary

These are reoccurring Issues that were raised in the course of the Phase 1 comments received from consultant workshops and Advisory Committee meetings that were held with dozens of campus committees and user groups. Some of issues will be addressed by the physical Master Plan. Others will be considered by campus groups and sub-committees. Some issues will take root and some will not. All are worthy of serious discussion.

CAMPUS CONCEPTS & DEVELOPMENT

Campus Development

- Land rich, but cash poor - undeveloped land is a great resource. The real land reserve on campus is the surface parking.
- Except for original Netsch plan, UIC has not had a deterministic vision. It should be “a mosaic developed over many years.” Develop frameworks to rapidly understand if development proposals presented to the university are good opportunities.
- Campus needs identification of broad categories of land use.
- Limit “sprawl,” to increase concentrations of activities – keep compact and infill.
- Close a few more streets, especially on the West Side.
- Determine Olympics potential impact on the campus.
- Maintain key “historic” buildings on the West Side such as College of Medicine East & West Towers along Polk Street and University Hall and Student Center East on the East Side.
- Halsted St. Garage could be expanded upward to contain two more levels of parking to help reduce surface parking.
- Sustainability: Recycling and composting are occurring on campus and are trucked off-site.
- Sustainability: Consider alternative energy sources
- Need critical mass with campus housing to change culture.
- Development of “centers of activity” as opposed to “colleges.”
- East Side of campus does not have much “in between”. Needs functional, social, & interactive diversity between centers of activity.
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- West Side: Need connections between the 6 colleges + Hospital + Clinics in addition to creating Image, boundaries, way finding, as means to get people to connect.
- Consider public-private development opportunities.
- Building removal: several buildings could be torn down (Roosevelt Bldg. & Applied Health Sciences Bldg.) including finding new home for child care centers. On the West Side, Easter Seals building and School of Public Health East are prime removal opportunities.
- Remove inactive ComEd substation site on East Side
- Need more child care centers on campus. UIC to indicate need of locations/buildings.
- Correct the absence of “wow” spaces

Learning Environments

- The ‘sage on the stage’ is being replaced by the ‘guide on the side,’ to help students learn. Today’s students need more interactive, interdisciplinary learning environments.
- Education paradigm shift is toward diversity and collaborative learning environments.
- UIC wants to blend informal learning into every available campus opportunity.
 - Students are used to peer learning and more informal learning areas. Current facilities are in old instructional paradigm and not easily set up for collaborative learning. Learning zones don’t always require walls and can occur in hallways, public areas, and outdoors.
 - West Side was historically developed with a building for each college but current thinking would like to move away from that. West Side has plan for Health Sciences Learning Center to bring college together to share resources and information.
- Project Oasis provides interior space for comfortable interactive “way-sites”. This concept needs to expand throughout campus plan. Look at Innovation Center (SSB) for interactive learning spaces.

Academic Buildings

- Campus acoustics needs to be considered. Big meeting spaces have bad acoustics. So does exterior space like “the Quad”.
- Campus needs environments for commuters. Needs to “socialize” the commuters.
- Look at the new Recreation Center and the South Campus development as examples of recent success.
- Graduate students need more seminar space & office space.
- Need a “Forum” for people to talk and bump up against divergent views/diversity
- When walkways came down, UIC lost outdoor community places.
- Clean up “hodge-podge” of facilities.
- East side – renew facilities & West Side – replace facilities.

Campus Identity

- UIC, an urban campus, whose strength is accessibility. This campus is easily accessible to many people via expressway and public transportation and is located on the edge of the downtown of a major city and is surrounded by many neighborhoods.
- Reinforce the identity and integrity of both the east and west sides of a single integrated campus.
- Need Improved Signage and Graphics to signify campus and provide better campus identity and provide some color (e.g., indigo blue and flame red)
- Take advantage of being in the city: academically, architecturally, culturally.
- Display a consistent symbol throughout the campus graphics.

Technology

- Need to be wireless interior and exterior to facilitate informal, interactive learning.
- Consider the effect of “remote learning” on the campus environment.

EXTEND CAMPUS DAY (aka 24/7)

Campus Activity and Amenities

- Trajectory shows an increase in campus vitality due to new Student Rec. Center & South Campus.
- 24/7 campus - Internet will continue to influence the 24/7 hybrid model for academic activity.
- Campus has become more important as the common ground for face to face interaction for students that learn remotely: crave interaction.
- Programming is the key to link and cross-pollinate activity across campus and colleges.
- Can't see activity on campus – reveal life behind dark glass and solid walls.
- Develop a 24-hour campus.
 - A 24 hour campus desirable for the West Side (at least till 3 am), but safety is a concern.
 - East Side open till at least 1-2 am.
- Need food and drink service extended hours to foster collaborative learning late night.
- Need campus/community amenities within walking distance (1/2 mile)
- Consolidate Student services (duplicated on East and West Sides, so different student populations never mix).
- Encourage mixed-use development but bars should be limited because they disturb the neighborhoods.
- Bridge together the different ethnic neighborhoods UIC borders: Little Italy, Chinatown, Pilsen, etc.
- Provide space for faculty to connect to other faculty (i.e. Engineering Research Building has atrium that is having limited success).
- Determine the “critical mass” of students and faculty living close to campus required to make the campus (East and West) feel vital.

Safety

- Lighting is a safety issue. Campus must appear safe, and be safe.
- Additional lighting can come from both increased exterior lights and from light emanating out from inside buildings.
- Cameras and other safety technology should be present, and visible to deter crime.
- Landscaping needs to be considered in regards to safety and visibility.
- Student/faculty safety should be considered when they get off the EI and in neighborhoods.
- Buildings should be placed to deter crime by increasing the continuity of activity.

Housing

The University has created a taskforce to study the need for student housing, and the relationship between housing and academic success on the campus.

- More housing on campus will aid in the intellectual mission of the University.
- More residence halls would benefit the College of Engineering - applications are up 25%.
- Many international students live on east side of Ashland Ave. in private housing.
- Studies show that students who live in residence halls are more academically successful, and the residence halls are more diverse than most surrounding neighborhoods.
- 75% of Applied Health Sciences students live in dorms, and all of them would if they could.
- West & East Sides need graduate/married student housing with child care. (Absence of graduate students housing sacrifices a potential academic community.)
- Faculty would like to live closer to campus.
- Visiting Scholars need housing. (e.g., Applied Health Sciences = 30 visiting scholars/year; Pharmacy = 10-15/yr)
- How to run a campus that encourages off-campus living in a neighborhood setting? (Approx 5,000 students live within 1.5 miles)

CONNECTIONS

Campus and the City Connections

- UIC could be more of an economic stimulus for the community.
- Neighborhood is underserved by UIC.
- Mixed use development should provide student amenities, residential, and funding.
- Plan should protect the surrounding neighborhood. Develop spaces on the margin of the campus that connect to the surrounding neighborhood while “protecting”.
- The city is growing more residential and will eventually envelop UIC.
- Improve perimeter permeability - punch holes in walls and fences. Students should be able to engage the community without barriers (East side primarily) however blurred boundaries need balance between safety & access.
- Need definable entry spots (gateways) with services that visitors expect.
- Improve paths between the campus and mass transit including the paths from Ogilvie & Union Station.
- Identify West Side boundaries that say you are “at UIC”.
- Locate a School for Continuing Studies that draws people from the city, and helps create a 24-7 campus.
- Connect East Side to South Campus.

Bridging East and West Sides of Campus

- Intellectually/culturally connect two sides of campus.
- Circulation between East and West Sides need to improve and “flow back & forth” more effortlessly.
- Make East/West feel closer together >> must be ONE campus of UIC for identity. (One mile distance from the center of one campus to the other)
- Look for opportunity to provide campus functions between sides of campus.
- Facilitate multiple modes of economical, eco-friendly and predictable transportation between the two sides of campus
- UIC Shuttle Buses are unreliable. CTA buses are more reliable.
- Strike a deal with CTA and eliminate the shuttle bus completely? Univ. of Chicago has a CTA deal.
- Develop a workable bus connection: Roosevelt Road might be best for improved bus connections

- Develop a pedestrian “wander” or “meander” between East and West Side, through the neighborhood . Taylor is a potential 24/7 campus connector and
- Polk St. could be the pedestrian “pastoral neighborhood” connection.

Campus Circulation

- Bicycle circulation needs to be planned for, as well as bicycle storage, security and the provision of showers for bikers.
- Relieve many Pedestrian pressure points or conflicts with traffic.
- Location of Halsted St. Garage forces circulation through Student Center East which is difficult in off-hours – review mid-block crossing.

SENSE OF PLACE

Sense of Place

- West Side is “a complex not a campus”. The traffic doesn’t even know they are driving through the UIC.
- Announce UIC from the expressway.
- Need Campus “center(s)”
- Need Campus “Icon”. (i.e. Northwestern’s Arch or Urbana Champaign’s Alma Mater)
- At CTA Blue Line stops (UIC Halsted & Racine), create an appropriate “front door” to campus
- Indicate that visitors are ON campus with signage, landscape, gateways, building ID, etc. (Columbia College uses super-graphics effectively for wayfinding).
- Need new Gateways.
- Need signature (quality) architecture at key locations because existing architectural design (concrete) strongly shapes the current perception of the institution.
- Invite the community into campus.
- Campus as Destination, Campus as Community, Campus As Neighborhood

Image & Color

- Not enough color.
- Need bold consistent identifying graphics

Building Entries

- First Floor building entry areas should be a place for community, interactive activities.
- Can not find building entries.

Landscape – Open Space

- Need more green space or greening of campus.
- Provide an attractive winter landscape
- Outdoor spaces need a function or program definition of use.
- Campus has a severe lack of outdoor recreational spaces for Frisbee, football, volleyball, ice skating, pep rallies, picnics, interactive science, sculptures, etc.
- Need usable outdoor seating.
- Adding trees helps create pride for alumni who visit.
- Remove and reduce uneven and excess paved surface
- Locate future geothermal well open space.
- West Side is opportunity for needed green space.
- Need to review left-over or residual open spaces such as highway overpasses and under El tracks to make more inviting.
- Need outdoor art to be more centrally located

