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Subject: Campus Master Plan to be Discussed in Public Open House April 3 at Minnesota State Mankato



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 Wednesday, March 27, 2013

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**Campus Master Plan to be Discussed in Public Open House
 April 3 at Minnesota State Mankato**

Mankato, Minn. – A public open house to discuss Minnesota State University, Mankato’s campus master plan will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 3 in Centennial Student Union Room 284 at Minnesota State Mankato.

All students, faculty, staff and members of the Mankato community are invited to attend the open house, speak with facilities consultants and see and make comments on visions for the future development of the Minnesota State Mankato campus.

Following the open house, there will be a task force work session from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Minnesota State Mankato’s campus master plan is updated and renewed every five years. Updates and renewals to the campus master plan reaffirm or, when appropriate, modify directions from previous plans with evolving academic, economic and environmental considerations, according to Minnesota State Mankato Assistant Vice President of Facilities Management Ron Fields.

Fields said the campus master plan generates a framework for facilities planning, goals development and decision-making, and that work on updating the campus master plan has been in progress for the past several months.

Fields said the efforts have been led by consultants from the Cunningham Group, with representation from a broad-based campus task force. Many campus interviews and planning sessions have already been held that have resulted in thoughts, reactions, needs and recommendations, said Fields.

For more information, please contact Fields by phone at 507-389-6932 or by email at ronald.fields@mnsu.edu.

Minnesota State Mankato, a comprehensive university with 15,413 students, is part of the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities system, which comprises 31 state institutions.

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The Free Press, Mankato, MN

April 3, 2013

MSU presents wish list of campus improvements

By Amanda Dyslin

Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — The Minnesota State University Facilities Master Plan includes all kinds of proposed projects during the next decade or so, from a total remodel of Armstrong Hall to building additions to Morris and Ford halls.

MSU faculty and staff were excited about those changes, but some of the most buzzed-about improvements were beautification aspects. Closing down part of Ellis and Mayfair Street to Warren (which runs along the backside of the library to Trafton) to vehicle traffic, for example, and making the area pedestrian friendly and community oriented was favored.

“We need to break up that concrete,” said Karen Burger, who works in University Advancement. “And I like the mall renovation a lot.”

The idea is to extend the campus mall north, better connecting the residence halls and making the center of campus more inviting for gathering spaces, said Kathy Wallace of the Cuningham Group, which is working with MSU to put together plans.

Besides the extension, the overall look of the mall, including the pavement, is in need of repair, she said.

“The landscape also has sort of reached the end of its attractive life span,” Wallace said.

The mall scene was just one of various sketches and maps that lined a room in the Centennial Student Union Wednesday to update the community on the campus “wish list.”

Ron Fields, MSU associate vice president for facilities management, said every five years MSU updates its list of facilities’ needs and prioritizes projects based on demographic changes, such as increasing enrollment.

Beginning last fall a committee solicited proposals and met with deans, administration, faculty, facilities staff and students, among others, to gather information on what’s working on campus and what needs changing. The proposals released Wednesday were the outcome of those conversations.

“These are not approved. This is not a plan,” Fields said. “This is a possible direction.”

The next step, he said, will be to present the proposals to MSU President Richard Davenport and his cabinet for feedback. As such, funding — which will differ from project to project, including revenue-based and capital bonding — and specific timelines have yet to be determined.

Among the proposals:

* a Clinical Sciences building, which would be added onto Ford Hall

* a building replacement of Carkoski

* a business school addition to Meyer Hall, called the Global Solutions Institute

- * an addition and remodel of Armstrong Hall
- * a parking deck adjacent to the Student Union and additional parking elsewhere, including at the Gage site and south of the free lot
- * additional student housing
- * additional academic buildings, including one adjacent to the Performing Arts Center
- * a pedestrian walkway bridge across Stadium
- * an underground connection between the union and the library
- * a bicycle hub with sheltered bike racks
- * a sports bubble

Wallace said Armstrong Hall was one of the biggest priorities brought up by the campus community, including the comfort/air quality, classroom density and flexibility of space.

“It’s kind of the work horse of the campus with all the classrooms in there,” Wallace said.

However, the project wouldn’t begin for awhile. “The completion of that wouldn’t happen for six-plus years just because of funding cycles,” she said.

Other needs voiced on campus were to make MSU more of a pedestrian campus, thereby improving safety and campus connectivity. Parking, improving academic spaces, accommodating growth, supporting bicyclists and improving energy efficiency also were included.

Wallace said aesthetic improvements are being looked at around the edges of campus, including adding benches and lighting and an atmosphere that signifies the perimeter of MSU — “making campus look like campus all the way around.”

Replacing Carkoski is one of the first projects in the works, Wallace said. Funding will be sought in 2015.

Gregory Wilkins, associate director for Student Activities, brought up traffic issues that exist on Stadium and Warren, which would increase when the traffic on Ellis and Mayfair would be pushed out onto the perimeters of campus.

Wallace said while they haven’t solved the issue, there is a plan to create a “transit plaza effect” in front of the student union with buses and vehicles dropping off and turning around.

Overall, Burger said she was glad to see the objectives laid out graphically.

“It helps me to see what they’re going to do,” she said. “I think it’s a great plan.”