

CDEC Annual Report, 2016-17

The Campus Development and Environment Committee met six times this year, on a monthly basis, for an hour and a half each time. The December and February meetings were canceled.

The committee dealt with a number of issues in 2016-17. The most prominent and concerning matter to those on the committee involved a major parking initiative that threatened to remove large numbers of mature trees and pave over a wetland used in biology courses. The parking initiative was fast-moving, and from the perspective of CDEC members, the planning discussions involved only concerned students, Chief of Police Mark Gordon, VP of Facilities Management Terry Stollsteimer, and Oakland's COO Scott Kunselman. There was no faculty/staff input and no publicity regarding this plan until the CDEC was informed at our November 2016 meeting. The committee was then in the position of having to raise concerns during the Good and Welfare segment of the December Senate meeting regarding a project that had been described as a foregone conclusion and for which the planning was already underway. CDEC members felt strongly that if faculty and staff had been part of the conversation from the start, the process would have been much more collaborative and in keeping with the spirit of university shared governance. The CDEC also wishes to point out that Oakland faculty and staff are deeply invested in the institution and do not see themselves only as employees. Rather, Oakland faculty and staff also share a long-term vision for the institution's well-being that is informed by teaching and research needs (after all, we care about our students and where they learn), and can offer perspectives that not only complement but can also differ fundamentally from those of students. I shared these concerns with Scott Kunselman during the winter semester while meeting with him regarding the parking issue, and he seemed to be receptive and quite concerned about faculty/staff perceptions of how such plans are conceived and implemented across campus.

The committee also participated in a search for a new VP of Facilities Management, an important position that affects all parts of the university's day-to-day operations. The committee also toured the Biological Preserve in an effort to understand the challenges facing this important part of campus.

At the end of the year, the committee was in the process of discussing how to implement a tree protection policy on campus so that conversations regarding tree removal on campus happen as a matter of course. A tentative plan for making Oakland a Tree Campus, USA campus was discussed, with the rationale that Oakland's forested campus deserves to be shown off as one of our attributes and something that sets us apart. Concerns about financial issues stymied that discussion for the time being, but discussions are ongoing. (There is a working rationale for pursuing a Tree Campus, USA, designation included in the April 2017 meeting minutes.) The committee also resolved to re-dedicate the Biological Reserve through the Senate next year, and to re-affirm its boundaries with Facilities Management.

Attached are minutes from this year's meetings with an appendix containing the December Senate address. It was a pleasure to serve the university as chair of the CDEC.



Respectfully submitted on behalf of the CDEC,
Melissa Hoag, Committee Chair, 2016-17

Campus Development and Environment Committee

9.23.16 Meeting Agenda
9:10-10:30 am, Varner 218

Attendance: Kelly Berishaj, Julie Chapie, Anders Engnell, Sheldon Gordon, Melissa Hoag, Tracey Taylor, Steve Zmich

Absent: James Serocki

Excused: Sherry Kerby, Greg Jordan, Margaret Merogi, Lena Mishack

1. Meeting called to order
2. Introductions
3. Introductory discussion of CDEC committee charge (posted in advance on espace)

Instructions from Associate Provost Michelle Piskulich:

- a. Discuss your charge and determine if changes are needed or desired.
- b. Discuss the membership and voting privileges. Is the document attached representative of what is happening?
- c. Do you think someone with a particular area of expertise would be helpful to add to your committee?

Deadlines for Inclusion on a Senate Agenda:

November October 31
December December 1

Committee members in attendance determined that this will need to be an ongoing discussion; since the committee did not meet last year and everyone is new, any substantive changes will need to be made as the year progresses instead of at the beginning of the year so that members have a chance to learn how the committee functions.

3. Master Plan (documentation posted on espace), Steve Zmich

Discussions:

- a. Parking (concern brought up by student body VP, Anders Engnell)
-possibilities of parking permits to encourage fewer cars on campus? Problem is that area has no good public transportation

- improvements of bear bus as transportation system
- students don't always want to walk to apartments at night because of safety issues (Ravine Drive is not well-lit at night)
- Possibility to have Bear Bus only running at night?

b. Donors:

Capital outlay requests are determined by what projects are most likely to be funded. Varner has been highest priority request for years but just doesn't get funding. Varner has been up for capital outlay request for ten years, will be taken off if not funded this year. (Discussion of Varner Elevator.)

4. Southern Student Housing - Update on schedule

Will be completed S2018

A second dorm expected to be built on the other side of Pioneer Dr. If this happens Pioneer Drive will be closed off at the roundabout (or near there).

5. Oakland Center Expansion/Renovation

Very exciting, will be completed Dec. 2018—will include destination dining branded to OU. Will be a major hub on campus and bring a major update to campus life.

Will include gender-neutral and accessible bathrooms

Zinc corten material being discussed for exterior. Color changes as it oxidizes to a burnished bronze.

6. Anibal/Fitzgerald Renovation

\$5 million lipstick renovation

These are old dorms that go away in the Master Plan

We are adding ADA accessibility—there are currently no elevators and no AC

Major challenge: how to renovate Fitzgerald because it is still a dorm.

7. Elliott Hall Addition

8. Phase 2 Vandenberg Hall Renovation

This is in phase 2 of a three-phase plan.

Phase 1 is complete. This is all infrastructure, plumbing/electrical, things that can't really be seen. All takes place in the summer since it's a dorm. Next year: still phase 2, central core plumbing renovations.

We've also renovated dining options in Vandenberg—Chartwells managed project

9. Other questions:

What are the most likely near-term Master Plan projects to be completed first?

Depends on capital outlay; classroom building by SFH badly needed

Athletics and rec – basketball practice facility (not funded totally, but design is going on)

Question raised about smoking ban on campus and whether it has gone away—signs seem to be gone and lots of smoking is happening on campus.

CDEC committee charge

Charge:

1. To consider the aesthetic and ecological effects of both present practices and future plans for the physical maintenance and development of the campus,
2. To recommend policies in these areas, and to advise the administrative officers responsible for campus development,
3. Such issues as new construction, location of utilities and parking facilities, aesthetic accouterments, maintenance practices, and the identification of areas for outdoor education shall fall within the purview of this committee.

CDEC Minutes
10.28.16

Present: Melissa Hoag, Julie Chapie, Sherrill Kerby, Anders Engnell, Tracey Taylor, Greg Jordan, Ryan Giorio (storm water engineer), Sheldon Gordon, Kelly Berishaj, Terry Stollsteimer

Absent: Margaret Merogi

Excused: James Serocki

1. Approved minutes from 9.23.16 meeting—minor modifications

2. New business:

EPA Project for OU's streams that connect into Clinton River: See following paragraph from Terry Stollsteimer:

We have a \$1.5M grant that is under way. They have identified about 800 trees that need to be removed, and plan on installing about 1,200 trees to replace them. Over 200 are dead, 400 are scrub trees, and we will have better facts on the remainder in terms of their size and quantities for the next meeting. This project is environment project managed by EPA on our project that we are monitoring and reviewing.

Taking out low-quality trees, scrub trees, keeping 100 high-quality trees

They are re-meandering the creek because it is blocked in by the golf course. This will fish enough depth to swim and also slow the water enough to enable them to swim.

Slows erosion. Creek naturally spreads out over a huge area. 10-15-20 feet over the sides.

The problem is that Auburn Hills dumps all its water into Galloway Creek, which creates erosion. Project will put in trees that depend on the increased water. Nothing will come off the site. They will plant more hardwoods than come down. Working with Army Corps of Engineers (grantee from EPA), MDEQ, EPA (\$2 million grant), Consumer's Energy (to move gas line), DNR, Stan-Tec, Oakland.

Question was raised about effects on wildlife: none, hopefully. Brown trout and rainbow trout numbers will hopefully be raised. Want creek to be cooler. Will create a low canopy of trees, and upper shade. Looking to cut trees down in January before bat season, construction looking to start in spring.

Clinton River has “beneficial use impairments,” and wants to be delisted—there are restrictions for fish, kinds of fish that can't be fished, etc. From the website:

- Restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption
- Eutrophication or undesirable algae
- Degradation of fish and wildlife populations
- Beach closings
- Degradation of aesthetics
- Degradation of benthos

- Restriction on dredging activities
- Loss of fish and wildlife habitat

CDEC officially moved to endorse Galloway Creek Restoration.

CDEC
11.18.16
9:00-10:30 am

Present: Melissa Hoag, Terry Stollsteimer (facilities), Steve Zmich (facilities), Tracey Taylor, Sheldon Gordon, Greg Jordan, Julie Chapie, Sherri Kerby, Anders Engnell

Absent: Margaret Merogi, James Serocki

Excused: Kelly Berishaj

1. Parking plan

On the heels of a tour of the Biological Preserve the previous day, the committee is astonished and concerned to discover that a major parking expansion plan is in the works that will result in the removal of many trees. The plan has not been publicized yet, but is slated to begin in the spring. After much discussion, the committee decides that a presentation must be made to the Senate outlining our concerns.

Addendum: in the process of preparing for the 2016 December senate meeting presentation, it came to light that, in addition to destroying hundreds of trees, the plan would also pave a wetland that is used in Biology courses and for faculty and graduate student research. The address to the Senate, delivered during Good and Welfare, is included in an appendix to the report, along with two handouts I distributed to supplement our address.

CDEC

1.6.17 meeting

9:00-10:30 am

Present: Greg Jordan, Melissa Hoag, Tracey Taylor, Julie Chapie, Patricia Engle (new VP facilities management), Anders Engnell, Sherry Kerby, Steve Zmich (facilities)

Excused: Kelly Berishaj

Absent: James Serocki

The committee met with new VP of Facilities, Patricia Engle, in a getting-to-know-you session. The committee's charge was explained, introductions were made, and activities to date were highlighted.

<February meeting canceled due to chair's illness>

CDEC

3.3.17 minutes

Present: Steve Zmich, Julie Chapie, Tracey Taylor, Sherrie Kerby, Fay Hansen (visiting), Greg Jordan, Pat Engle, Kelly Berishaj

Absent: Margaret Merogi, Anders Engnell, James Serocki

New Business:

1. Fay Hansen, Organic Garden presentation

Boundary organization: interact with many different units and stakeholders

Around 25 courses use the organic farm as a classroom

Engineering students using it for capstone project

Farm=classroom without walls

Flipped classroom approach—students do writing work and studying outside of class, online—in-class time is spent in the garden.

Classes also offered in fall, not just summer

Permaculture: sustainability in their own lifestyles and in the built and unbuilt environment

Field trips:

Nature center in oxford

Strawbale studio in oxford

2014: built a hoop house, 6 classes and many volunteers—allows for organic farming class in the winter

Farm stand, been going on for six years

A minor in urban agriculture and agroecology is offered

Goals:

Increase revenues

Increase educational opportunities

Increase community engagement

Needs:

Increase growing space

Add hoop house, season extension

Storage space

Refrigeration, etc.

Public relations side to Student Organic Farm:

Students operate FB page

People come from off-campus to buy produce

Fay gives talks off campus, consults on urban gardens

Invited to come to Rochester Farmers' Markets

2. Proposed rope course (Steve Zmich)

Adventure park, high and low ropes course (there is also one in W. Bloomfield—has been there 4-5 years)

RFP prepared—to gauge interest in developers

Having fun—student amenity

Need to keep pricing in line with what students can pay

Would reinforce trail system, go off campus proper

Private company building on campus—used as teambuilding, but mostly just for student fun, amenity

Committee questions what is in this for Oakland, considering that this is a private company building on campus; fun and reinforcement of trail system is emphasized.

CDEC Minutes

4.7.17

Present: Tracey Taylor, Julie Chapie, Sherri Kerby, Sheldon Gordon, Greg Jordan, Melissa Hoag, Steve Zmich (facilities), Paula Reyes (purchasing), Scott Tiegs (guest commenter from Biology)

Absent: James Serocki, Margaret Merogi, Anders Engnell

I. New business

Ropes course (Paula Reyes, Purchasing, and Steve Zmich)

Original bids were due on April 5. This would be a ten-year lease.

We had been approached years ago to do this, Scott Kunselman was interested.

Would have to build the course so that it could be removed upon expiration of the lease.

This would be a land lease – shared revenue.

Students should be able to participate for free or for very reduced entrance fee

Hopefully could offer internship or employment opportunities; at the Grand Rapids ropes course, 80% of employees are students.

Four possible locations: one in front of Meadowbrook, one to west of barn, one to east of the barn, one back where the old mag lab used to be

CDEC member asks how many acres these typically are and no one is sure.

Negatives to environment? The presenters say there is little environmental impact. They clean up underbrush, tag and survey all the trees before they construct

There is no drilling through the trees; they attach the rope in a way so that it goes around the trees.

They hire an arborist when they design the courses, to show which ones are healthy and which ones are not

Develop courses around healthy trees – clean up diseased or dead trees

Are blue lights needed for this? (They do not seem to be needed here, but are a major concern for other areas of campus like the Student Organic Farm—reason for this is unclear.)

Likely to open Spring 2018.

Could sell Grizzwear, Pepsi products, snacks; there would be some kind of building – could use part of the barn if location by Meadowbrook is utilized.

Talking point is that these are spaces that we are looking at are used for no other purpose.

2. Tree Campus USA

On hold for the time being; Steve Zmich advised perhaps just striving for a tree protection policy instead. Some committee members felt that this would be harder to pass because there is nothing to brag about with a tree policy, but a designation like Tree Campus USA would be something the university could publicize.

In the meantime, here is a working proposal for working toward a Tree Campus USA designation that incorporates the Strategic Plan:

Institutional Goals

Three goals comprise the OU 2025 Strategic Plan:

1. **Foster student success** *through a robust teaching and learning environment and comprehensive student services.*

SERVICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES for students in biology, taking gen eds in biology, or perhaps even students in grizz orgs

1. way to apply what students learn in the classroom to real-life situation; always more effective than classroom-learning only
 2. give back to the community at the same time in a concrete way.
2. **Be recognized as a strong research and scholarly environment** *focused on creative endeavors and on the discovery, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge.*

Protecting our campus environment in general, including a tree plan of any sort, encourages Oakland's recognition as a strong research institution, focused on discovery and utilization of knowledge. If we want to be taken seriously as a research institution with sincere scientific interests (and as an institution that produces Ph.D.s in the sciences, we should), we need to show that we are invested in our campus environment.

3. *Become a leader in serving the needs and aspirations of our communities and region through expanded community relationships, institutional reputation and visibility, and engagement.* Over the decades, Oakland University has become increasingly committed to community outreach and engagement. Whether local governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, K-12 schools, arts councils, or other groups and organizations, the University seeks to engage the community in order to maximize regional resources, enhance student success, strengthen teaching, and help address challenges.

A Tree Campus USA designation requires the inclusion of a community member on the Campus Tree Advisory Committee.

A Tree Campus USA designation (and the service learning projects included within this designation) could make campus more inviting for the public, if we choose to promote it in that way.

Tree Campus USA's required service learning projects also encourage community engagement (see list on p. 3 of Tree Campus USA Standards document).

Other Tree Campus USAs in Michigan include Western State University, U of M, Calvin College, and Kalamazoo Comm College.

3. **Biological preserve (Scott Tiegs, present as interested guest)**

Information on how the preserve is used for outreach with students from Pontiac High School. Focused on preserve, restoration activities, summer programs.

Galloway Creek re-meandering – very controversial. Scott Tiegs commented:

- This sort of project is a money grab for environmental consulting firm
- They will have to level a lot of trees
- There is very little evidence that these restoration approaches/techniques do any good
- Hydrology/water quality is the problem, not the stream channel

4. Goals for next year:

- Re-define boundaries of the Preserve, publicize it, make sure that facilities is aware
- Re-state definition of preserve to Senate, reaffirm
- Include biology/environmental faculty in discussions as a matter of course
- Change to committee charge – seek out faculty who are affected by these things
- Work toward tree policy, Tree Campus USA designation – start actively pursuing these things to prevent a repeat of the Parking Expansion issue from this year, where hundreds are trees are razed with little or no faculty/staff notification or input.
- Would be good to include faculty representative from biological sciences as a regular member of the committee? Chemistry (environmental science)?
- Would be a good idea to establish regular updates from the CDEC to the senate, in Good and Welfare segment of the meetings.

Appendix

Senate Good and Welfare presentation regarding Parking Expansion Plan, 12.15.16

Campus Development and Environment Committee
Senate resolution for 12.15.16 meeting

My name is Melissa Hoag, and I am associate professor of music theory in the department of music, theater and dance. I came to address the parking issue as chair of the Campus Development and Environment Committee (CDEC for short). At our November 18 meeting, the CDEC was presented with a parking expansion plan that included several specific areas that would not only result in removal of many mature trees and destruction of a wetland, but also diminish campus's aesthetic appearance. The CDEC wishes to voice its concerns regarding two of these areas and to seek support in the form of a Senate resolution. The committee is sensitive to the current state of parking on campus and the monetary costs of possible alternate solutions, as well as the pressure on the administration to respond to parking needs; our concerns address only those areas where mature trees and wetlands would be affected, and also considers those elements a high-price cost of a different sort.

The first area of concern, Lot P-43, is just to the right of the main Squirrel Road entrance as you enter campus. Expansion of this lot would result in a gain of 96 parking spaces, but require removal of 60 mature trees [35 mature and 25 large], and would be detrimental to campus's aesthetic appearance, as this is in a public location.

The second area of concern, Lot P-37, is located off Pioneer drive, as you head south off the roundabout toward the Biological Preserve and look to your right. Expansion of this lot according to the plan shown on your handout would gain 587 spaces, but would also result in the removal of around 54 mature trees [50 mature and 4 large] trees. The CDEC also consulted with some members of the Biology department and learned that expansion and paving of this lot would result in the destruction of a wetland that is often used for instructional purposes in Biology courses and for faculty research. This type of wetland is called a vernal pool, and because they are so ecologically valuable, they are often protected by city ordinances (although Auburn Hills unfortunately has no such ordinance).

There is also a concern among some faculty that storm-water runoff from the expanded P-37 temp lot would be diverted to Galloway Creek, which is part of the Biological Preserve; this added water intrusion would have a deleterious environmental impact on the creek, and on the Preserve's ecology as a whole. The CDEC would like to encourage Oakland to protect wetlands and other natural areas on campus, not only for environmental reasons, but also for teaching and research purposes—keeping in mind that, as a university, our academic mission should take precedence. In the last year alone, 999 undergraduates, and at least eight faculty along with their graduate students, used the area south of Lonedale for learning and for research.

The expansion and paving of Lots P-43 and P-37 temp would result in removal of at least 104 mature trees. While the CDEC acknowledges the need for squeezing extra parking out of existing lots because it is a cheap and efficient solution, the CDEC opposes expansion of

surface lots where trees must be removed, especially mature trees, and where wetlands will be paved over or adversely impacted. Once something like this is done, there is no going back to the way things were; again, cost can be defined in more than one way.

There has been one tentative positive development already, which is that there is currently a plan being discussed that would alter the P-37 temp expansion so that it does not go beyond Lonedale, but as none of this has been finalized or approved, all options are, as they say, on the table. This is why the CDEC feels it is important for our voices to be heard in this process.

In addition, the committee adds the following points:

1. Not all students will be on campus simultaneously, meaning that this plan will probably impact the parking situation minimally. In other words, we are looking at minimal improvement in parking, and a maximal (and irreversible) adverse effect on the campus environment and appearance.
2. As of Thursday morning, twenty-five students who were concerned about tree removal, campus aesthetics, and the prospect of paving over a wetland had emailed student body leadership; many of these students said they believed that the parking problem on campus was not as bad as it had been made out to be (and in fact, a number of these students said that, in their experience, most of their fellow students were just complaining because they couldn't find close parking when they were running late for class, and that they had never seen completely full lots). Many mentioned that Oakland's natural beauty was an important element in their recruitment and/or appreciation of campus. These students also thought other solutions existed to alleviate the issue. While it's true that the proposal as-is was met with support in Student Congress, the students in attendance were also not informed of the environmental and aesthetic impact of the plan. A few of the many student comments student leadership received are shown on the back of your handout.
3. As noted, other solutions to these issues could be pursued. (These discussion points came from student body leadership.) A paid parking system, which has been discussed among campus groups and in a recent parking survey, would act as an incentive for carpooling or, if a student is living on campus and not working, an incentive to simply not bring a car to campus. The possibility of improving the Bear Bus system in order to make better use of distant lots, and to create an additional carpooling program to reduce the number of cars parked on a single day, has also been discussed.
4. Planting new trees in place of old is not sufficient; some of these trees are very old, much older than campus, certainly older than Auburn Hills. It would take well over 100 years for new trees to return to the dignity and stature of the trees we currently have, and even then the look would resemble more of a man-made landscape.
5. To put this situation in perspective, many campuses have tree protection policies. Oakland has no such policy, and the effects of this can be seen across campus. Michigan State, for instance, has designated the entire campus as an arboretum. Every tree on campus has a unique identifier that is logged in a database. From the website: "No person shall break or cut branches or flowers or fruit, or otherwise damage or mutilate any tree, shrub, herbaceous

plant, or flower upon property governed by the Board of Trustees, or remove from the same any identification tag or sign.” Construction companies can even be fined if they do not adequately protect trees NEAR construction sites. The University of Michigan also has a detailed Tree Preservation Policy in which removal is listed as an absolute last option, only if preservation and relocation are not possible. Western Michigan U was designated a “Tree Campus USA” campus in 2008 and has a rigorous Tree Care Plan and a campus Tree Advisory Committee dedicated to ensuring the protection of campus trees. As much as we want to compete with other Michigan universities, we seem to be going in the opposite direction when it comes to the protection of our natural resources on campus. These features play a role in recruitment and appreciation of the campus by our students, at least as much as a bell tower does, in terms of making Oakland’s campus feel (and this is not a phrase I personally like, but it is one I hear) quote-unquote “like a real campus.”

6. In the not-so-distant future, it’s likely that new developments in the realm of transportation (Lyft, Uber, self-driving cars, and, hopefully, eventual mass transportation system for the metro area) might make much of this parking obsolete. There is no question that this parking expansion, though necessary, is a temporary fix (especially when it is compared to the campus master plan), so it seems best to try to mitigate the amount of long-term damage done to campus’s natural resources.

7. Student enrollment is projected to decline; we will not always be increasing enrollment, nor are we even likely to stay at this capacity. This is truly a temporary fix, and we will undoubtedly regret destroying what cannot easily be replaced in just a few short years.

Conclusion:

In the short term, the committee considers it more beneficial to implement cost-effective solutions that do not harm our campus environment and aesthetic appearance—not to mention research and teaching spaces for biology and environmental science areas—rather than tear down trees and degrade the look of campus to expand parking, which will have a long-term, irreversible effect—a high cost, if you will, of a different currency. As I mentioned before, it is my understanding that options for the P-37 temp expansion are being discussed to reduce the impact on the wetland, but there is no guarantee that the original vision (or something close to it) will not be realized. The committee feels strongly that the wetland should remain untouched and that mature trees should not be destroyed.

In the long term, the committee feels that it makes more sense to look for ways to encourage fewer students to bring cars to campus; perhaps, to require residential students to park only in residential lots; to use Meadowbrook Music Festival parking in tandem with the Bear Bus shuttle to bring students to main campus; or, to invest in another eventual parking structure, even though the cost is high in terms of dollars. What makes the least sense is further damaging what sets Oakland apart from other campuses for a truly short-term fix: its great natural beauty, with wetlands and a large number of mature trees. This natural beauty is a source of pride to all members of the campus community, and should not be taken for granted.

CDEC resolution:

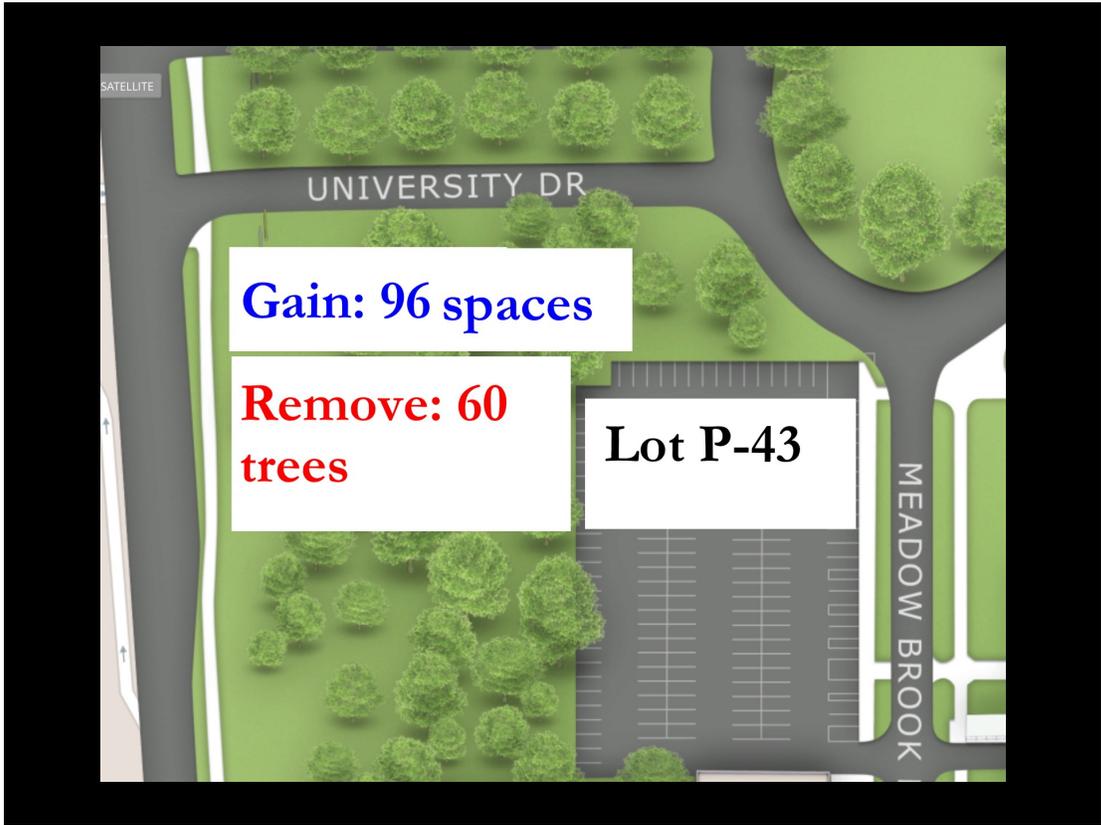
The CDEC seeks the support of the Senate in not endorsing the expansion of Lots P-43 and P-37 temp as described by the attached plans.

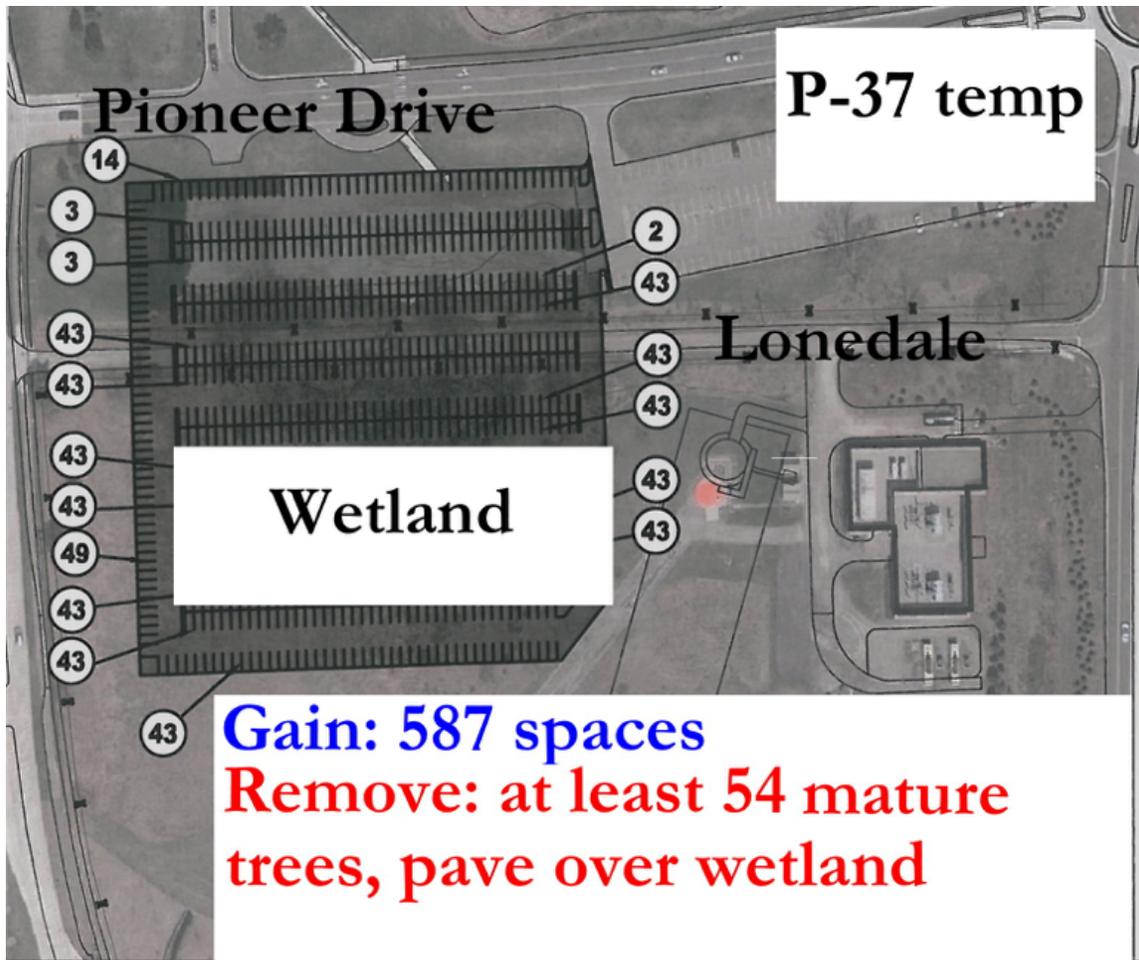
The CDEC also seeks the support of the Senate in actively encouraging any plan that would avoid developing P-37 temp past Lonedale Road (thus avoiding the wetland and saving at least 54 trees), and P-43 altogether (thus saving at least 60 trees, and preserving the beauty of the main campus entrance).

Respectfully submitted for the Campus Development and Environment Committee,

Melissa Hoag, CDEC chair

Campus Development and Environment Committee: Senate Presentation on Parking Expansion handout (12.15.16)





Excerpts from student emails to student leadership regarding plans to remove trees and pave a wetland

“OU, as a well known science school with a new medical school needs to maintain its scientific reputation by **NOT** devaluing the natural resources of our land. What will other scientific institutions think of us if we do this?”

“Mature trees and wetlands are essential to the environment and cutting them down and paving over them would be a great disservice, especially considering this new parking structure is only a temporary fix to the problem and if the root cause is not taken care of, parking will continue to be an issue. Again, I would appreciate if you would speak out on my behalf and the behalf of many other environmentally-conscious students.”

“I understand that we do need more parking and as a commuter I wouldn't be against this, but at the expense of our natural resources I would have to disagree. **As a biology student and being able to do research from the natural resources in the wetlands I feel it is an invaluable resource that we have.** With the observatory being torn down in the summer, there is not much left to enjoy of the natural beauty on campus. Galloway Creek and the surrounding areas provide a refreshing escape from school and I would hate to lose that. **I chose OU because of its natural treasures and historic background. As an OGL I promoted all of our wooded area for**

running and observing wildlife. Future OU generations deserve to enjoy that as well. While I understand we want to grow and expansion is inevitable, I think we should reconsider the price of growth.”

“Many environmental science students go to OU for the chance to conduct research on campus using these natural habitats. Your [sic] one of the few universities on the east side of the state to offer this program. It was the major point of me attending college here. I strongly hope you do not encroach any further on these lands. Many endangered plant species are found within them and are documented to thrive there. I know parking can be a struggle at times but this is not the solution this student wants to see.”

“OU needs to set a precedent that it will not default to destroying natural land areas just for the convenience of having more parking. **If they build on this wetland, what is to prevent them from building on another precious land mass when students complain that there is still not enough parking?**”

“Hi my name is [redacted] and im [sic] an OU junior. I ask that you use your influence to safeguard our natural wetlands and trees at the university. I would prefer to have a longer walk to class and get exercise in the process than for any more of the land and trees to be torn down simply for a parking lot. **The surroundings are one of the things that make OU stand out as different and vibrant. There is enough parking people just need to arrive leaving themselves enough time to get to class and not expect to come at the last minute and get a good space to park. The trees are important and the more the better.**”

“**I do not believe that putting in more parking lots is worth destroying the natural beauty of Oakland's campus. Please do not cut down any trees to put in a parking lot. One of the reasons I love OU so much is because of the natural beauty of the wetlands and mature trees we have here on campus.**”

“I was just writing in regards to the planned construction of parking lots around the OU campus. From what I understand, this will be over several natural areas on campus. If this is true, **I would strongly recommend that an alternative plan be considered in order to preserve the natural beauty of the campus. It's great to see how dedicated the OU administration has been to preserving this, and it would be sad for this to change.**”

Excerpts from student emails, continued

“I am writing to you because it has come to my attention that at the next OU senate meeting, there is a matter about adding additional parking lots on campus. In order to add these parking lots, I have been informed that a large number of mature trees on campus will have to be cut down. **Not only is it sad just to have these mature trees cut down, but it may alter the ecology of our preserve as well as Galloway Creek.**

As a senior environmental student, **I have learned how adding impervious surfaces to a landscape will alter stream morphology as well as the ecology. When parking lots are added, runoff rates increases significantly. This will lead to a faster and larger peak in stream discharge, which can lead to an increase in erosion and destroy habitat for micro invertebrates.**

If this plan takes place, not only will erosion and stream discharge increase, but **paving over a wetland will create even more negative impacts. Wetlands act as nature's filtration system. Most of the pollutants carried off impervious surfaces via runoff are filtered through wetlands and are not carried further into streams and rivers. So by paving over a wetland, Galloway Creek is further at risk of being polluted,** especially after the snow melts and all of the salts from the roads will be washed into the river.

I know that with an increase in student enrollment, maybe more parking is needed. However, this location is not ideal if it means cutting down mature trees as well as paving over an essential wetland.”

“I am a current Environmental Science student and I heard about the purposed [sic] addition of parking lots on campus that will result in the cutting down of large trees and a wetland. **The parking situation at Oakland is not bad enough that our environment needs to be damaged. There are lots on campus that still have remaining spots. I do not see the parking problem worth the loss of nature. Deforestation continues to increase and I would be very disappointed to see that the university I attend would take part in that.** If you would please pass on my feelings about this matter that would be much appreciated.”

“**I believe that it would be an egregious [sic] error to use our wetlands and local forrest [sic] as a lot for cars. While we do have a parking issue (or a walking issue, as some believe), I do not believe that the removal of these areas should be traded for parking spaces.** If you'd like to sit down and talk, I'm sure we could find that time to perhaps find a solution to this issue. I have a copy of the campus master plan for the 10 year plan.”

“It has been brought to my attention that there are plans to build more parking lots on OU's campus, which involve paving over wetland and cutting down numerous trees. I encourage you to reconsider that aspect of the plans. I am sure that parking can be improved without destroying our remaining nature areas. **The nature areas are a valued part of campus, and deserve to be respected as such.**”

“Please do not cut the mature and lovely trees that make **Oakland the beautiful campus that I know and love.**”