

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 23, 2025
TO: Amy Banes-Berceli, Associate Provost for Operations, Office of the Provost
FROM: Thomas Raffel, Chair, Campus Development & Environment Committee (CDEC)
SUBJECT: 2024-2025 Annual Report of the Campus Development & Environment Committee

Committee Membership:

- **Voting Members:**
 - **Faculty:** Thomas Raffel (Chair and Ecologist designee; CAS); Sara Blumer-Schuetz (CAS); Steven Stanton (SBA); Julie Ricks-Donnen (SEHS); Brendan Kredell (CAS)
 - **Students:** Hannah Fosnaugh; Emily Lunger; Daniela Meson de la Fuente; Nicholas Skinner
 - **Administrative Professionals:** Nicholas Bongers (eLis); Chad Bousley (eLis); Maria Ebner-Smith (Purchasing); Matthew Holtz (OUWB)
 - **VP for Student Affairs designee:** Christopher Reed
 - **Campus Facilities & Operations designee:** Jennifer Myers
- **Ex-Officio Members:**
 - **Associate Provost for Operations:** Amy Banes-Berceli
 - **Associate VP for Facilities Management:** Ryan Giorio

Committee Charge:

- To consider the aesthetic, ecological, academic, programmatic, and sustainability impacts of both present practices and future plans for the physical maintenance and development of the campus,
- To recommend and review proposals, guidelines, and policies in these areas, and to advise the administrative officers responsible for campus development,
- Such issues as new construction and renovation, location of utilities and parking facilities, aesthetic accouterments, the environment and sustainability, maintenance and the identification of areas for outdoor education shall fall within the purview of this committee.
- Members of the committee may be asked to meet over the Summer semester as needed.
- This committee will establish an information sharing process including timelines with Facilities Management to ensure timely execution of the committee charge.

Actions taken in 2024-2025:

- Held monthly meetings (minutes deposited in University Senate Committees shared Gdrive)
- Committee leadership change from chairmanship by Steven Stanton to co-chairmanship by Tom Raffel and Amy Banes-Berceli (10-02-2024)
- Reviewed & discussed campus projects:
 - Dodge Hall renovation project. Amy Banes-Berceli and members of Facilities (Omar Alhyari & Michael Decoster) provided updates and answered questions at multiple CDEC meetings (10-02-2024; 02-25-2025)
 - Capital Outlay. Jen Myers provided updates about this annual funding request to the State of Michigan. (10-29-2024; 11-20-2024)
 - Elliot Hall renovations. Ryan Giorio presented concept-phase plans for this project (02-25-2025)
 - Trail system development. Tom Raffel presented plans to formalize of the trail system through the Biological Preserve and construct a stepping stone path across the beaver-dam flood zone (10-29-2024; 01-31-2025; 02-25-2025).

- o Oakland Center Dining Services. Chris Reed informed CDEC about proposed changes to how OC dining services are structured, based on ideas developed with Arcadis consultants (12-09-2024).
- o Ongoing renovations. Amy Banes-Berceli provided brief updates about ongoing projects including as Varner renovations, O'Dowd renovations, Research & Innovation Center renovations, LORACS greenhouse & hoophouse construction, Elliot Hall renovations, BRSF Facility upgrades, and the SECS cybersecurity training lab (10-29-2024).
- Approved new policy & procedure documents (discussed 11-20-2024; approved 12-09-2025). The following two procedure documents were deposited in the CDEC shared Gdrive:
 - o **CDEC Operating Procedures** – focus on defining which types of campus development activities and projects warrant different levels of review by CDEC.
 - o **Roberts Rules for Small Boards & Committees** – standard procedures for setting CDEC meeting agendas and making formal decisions.
- CDEC engagement with Campus Plan 2035 development process:
 - o The Steering Committee for Campus Plan 2035 included five voting members of CDEC (Jen Myers; Amy Banes-Berceli; Steve Stanton; Tom Raffel; Chris Reed).
 - o Jen Myers and/or Tom Raffel provided updates and answered questions at every monthly CDEC meeting in 2024-2025.
 - o CDEC invited Arcadis representative Nicholas Kothari and engineer Nathan Knapp to our March 2025 meeting to ask questions and provide feedback on an early draft of Campus Plan 2035 (03-14-2025)
 - o CDEC was not provided an opportunity to review the final Campus Plan 2035 document prior to its presentation to the Board of Trustees. However, CDEC compiled individual feedback from committee members (see Appendix A) and discussed the Campus Plan 2035 development process at our 05-22-2025 meeting.

Recommendations for 2025-2026:

- Old business:
 - o CDEC discussed but never acted to create a formal process (e.g., Google Form) by which campus groups could submit proposals to modify parts of campus. Examples of past projects that might have been facilitated by such a process include creation of the Campus Student Organic Farm (in the 1990's), creation of the Pollinator Gardens in 2023-2024, and development of a Biopreserve trail system in 2024-2025. CDEC should consider developing such a process in 2025-2026.
 - o CDEC held an initial discussion ("first read") about revising the committee charge to include preservation of cultural resources on campus (05-22-2025). Proposed revisions include adding the word "cultural" to the list in the first line of the charge, and adding one additional faculty member with expertise in cultural resource management. CDEC should hold a second discussion and vote on this proposal at the September 2025 meeting.
- Campus Planning Process:
 - o CDEC members expressed appreciation for being more involved throughout the process of developing Campus Plan 2035, especially in the early planning stages, relative to the development of prior Campus Master Plans. This was an improvement in the process, relative to the development of prior Campus Master Plans.
 - o CDEC members expressed disappointment that CDEC and the University Senate were not provided an opportunity to review the final Campus Plan 2035 document, prior to its presentation to the BOT (as occurred for prior Campus Master Plans).

- o Detailed CDEC member feedback on Campus Plan 2035 is provided as an Appendix to this report, formatted as individual responses to a series of question prompts (Appendix A).
- o **For future campus planning activities, including regular reviews of (and revisions to) Campus Plan 2035 as a “living document”, we request that CDEC and the University Senate be provided with an opportunity to review final drafts of Campus Plan documents prior to their presentation to the BOT. However, we appreciate that CDEC members were invited to join the Campus Plan Steering Committee, and we appreciate that the full CDEC committee was provided frequent updates and opportunities to provide feedback throughout the planning process. We recommend continuation of these practices for future campus planning initiatives, including for future revisions to Campus Plan 2035.**

Incoming Faculty Chair:

- Dr. Thomas Raffel was selected by unanimous vote to chair CDEC in 2025-2026 (5-22-2025)

Appendix A: Detailed CDEC member feedback on the final version of Campus Plan 2035

1. What are some positive aspects of the campus planning process that you have appreciated over the past year?

- I appreciate that so many CDEC members were included in the Steering Committee. I appreciate that the full CDEC committee had many opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback about Campus Plan 2035 throughout the process, including very early in the process.
- It is good that many different groups were consulted in the information gathering stages of the planning process.

2. Are there any negative aspects of the campus planning process that you think could have been improved?

- This last part of the process seems rushed, and CDEC was not given an opportunity to review the final report draft prior to bringing it to the BOT. Only CDEC members who are also on the Campus Plan Steering Committee have been given an opportunity to review that document. CDEC is our primary governance mechanism to ensure faculty, staff, and students have a voice in decisions about campus development. Getting CDEC more involved in these final stages of decision making would have made the process more robust and helped to promote buy-in from various stakeholders.

3. What are some specific proposals within Campus Plan 2035 that you view positively? Why do you support these proposals?

- I appreciate increased acknowledgement of the importance of outdoor academic spaces, and their inclusion in the Campus Plan.
- I like the “Grizz walk” proposal to provide easier pedestrian connection along the North-South axis of main campus. Proposed changes to

- The various building renovation & expansion proposals have struck me as reasonable and data-driven.
- I like that most of the proposals for new buildings focus on already-existing impermeable surfaces, minimizing the need for additional stormwater mitigation efforts.
- I like the ideas surrounding the concept of “park once” on campus. This would hopefully increase pedestrian safety as well as mobility convenience on campus.
- I appreciate the statement on p. 187 that Facilities will “Review designs with Campus Development and Environment Committee (CDEC)”, as part of their implementation of the Campus Plan. This was a late addition to the document.
- Page 135. I very much like the activities but I think phase 3 could help with phase one and also make things better from day one.

4. What specific proposals within Campus Plan 2035 do you view negatively? Why do you oppose these proposals? What kinds of changes would you recommend?

- The proposed data center is a huge building that takes up the entirety of P35 on the map. P35 is more accessible to more buildings than P37, and retaining some of P35 as parking is desirable for access to the Biological Preserve & trail system. Could this building be shifted to the west end of P37, which fewer people use? Could this building be constructed with a smaller footprint so part of the lot is still usable?
- I remain uncomfortable with designating vague “development zones” without providing any specifics about what kinds of development might be considered. Vagueness implies that the specific ideas being considered are SO potentially controversial that administrators would rather not talk about them. Is that the message we want to send?
- Page 108 number 1 and 2. Structure two is wanting to open up 600 beds, but allowing for 400 parking spaces. I think the addition of a parking structure is great but if they get taken by the people who have beds what additional parking are they providing. Or do they expect the people living there not to park there.
- Number 22 on page 111. Development at Northeast Corner. This was already shot down by Students, Faculty and Staff. Why is this even on here.

3. What specific proposals do you think should have been included in Campus Plan 2035?

- I would like to see sidewalks proposed to create new connections from the University Drive “entrance” to the rest of campus.
- I would have liked for the ornamental grasses & perennials recommendation (Pg. 134) to promote variety, native Michigan species, and plantings to support pollinators.