

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 2026
TO: Amy Banes-Berceli, Vice Provost for Operations, Office of the Provost
FROM: Thomas Raffel, Chair, Campus Development & Environment Committee (CDEC)
SUBJECT: 2025-2026 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 II (SBA); Adam Gould (CAS); Dan DeVescovo (SECS)
 - **Students:** Valentine Fayette-Etes, Clover deVore, Nia Matthews, Riley Demond (OUSC Director of Sustainability)
 - **Administrative Professionals:** Chad Bousley (eLis); Matthew Holtz (OUWB); Lori Posey (CAS-SMTD); Kasey McGrath (OUWB)
 - **VP for Student Affairs designee:** Christopher Reed
 - **Campus Facilities & Operations designee:** Jennifer Myers (through February 2026)
- **Ex-Officio Members:**
 - **Associate Provost for Operations:** Amy Banes-Berceli
 - **Associate VP for Facilities Management:** Designee for A.V.P. is Ryan Giorio

Committee Charge:

- To consider the aesthetic, ecological, academic, programmatic, cultural, historical, 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 2025-2026:

- Held monthly meetings (minutes deposited in University Senate Committees shared Google drive)
- Revisions to committee charge/composition/policies:
 - 9-19-2025 – Voted to designate the Student Congress Director of Sustainability as an ex-officio member of CDEC, as one of the four student members.
 - 10-17-2025 – Voted to add “cultural” and “historical” to the charge (underlined in the text above).
 - 03-20-2026 – Voted to create a Tree Campus Subcommittee of CDEC.
- Engagement in the planning for the proposed Data Center project:
 - 9-19-2025 – First Data Center discussion with Senior V.P. for Finance & Administration Stephen Mackey and Executive Director for Finance & Administration Penny Vigneau
 - 01-16-2026 – Amy announced that the [Data Center website](#) was live.
 - 02-13-2026 – Received memo from Mackey with data center updates.
 - 03-20-2026 – Data Center presentation by Mackey and Vigneau.
 - 04-10-2026 – CDEC/SPRC joint meeting to hear proposed site options for Data Center
 - 04-17-2026 – CDEC/SPRC joint meeting. Voted to recommend the “P37 adjacent site” over the P35 site for the proposed Data Center. Resolution submitted to Mackey.

- Reviewed & discussed campus projects:
 - 10-17-2025 & 11-21-2025 – Updates on O'Dowd Plaza, OUWB bathrooms, Elliott Hall renovation, safety upgrades to the Blackbox Theatre, Dodge Hall capital outlay project, new equipment in Research & Innovation building, and West Campus renovations.
 - 01-16-2026 – Updates about North Foundation offices renovations, Engineering Center office & student lounge renovations, Research & Innovation Center office & lab renovations, Dodge Hall Capital Outlay project planning; Dodge Hall room 10 renovations
 - 01-16-2026 – Briefing from Facilities about the campus-wide heating system failure in Fall 2025, as well as their plans for emergency repairs and installation of backup systems.
 - 02-13-2026 – Dodge Hall project updates. Elliott Hall project updates.
 - 02-13-2026 – Briefing about proposed expansions to food services on campus.
- Other CDEC business:
 - 10-17-2025 – Discussed creating & posting guidelines for faculty/staff/students who wish to propose projects to alter campus, but concluded that it would be more appropriate for Facilities to develop and post instructions on their website.
 - 01-16-2026 – Discussed potential invasive species removal, native plantings, apple orchard restoration, and potential collaborations with MB Hall & Golf Course. Biopreserve Management Committee is soliciting proposals from companies to generate a Preserve Management Plan.
 - 02-13-2026 – Discussed staff shortages in Facilities and how this impacts campus operations.

Recommendations for 2026-2027:

- CDEC discussed creating 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 the Campus Student Organic Farm, the Pollinator Gardens, and the Biopreserve trail system. We concluded that creation of such a web form shouldn't be a CDEC responsibility but would be a good idea for Facilities to implement on their own website.
 - **We should follow up to see whether and how Facilities implements this recommendation.**
- **Facilities staff shortages.** Ryan explained that personnel have been greatly reduced in all Facilities offices in recent years. We agreed to invite key leaders from Facilities Management to discuss the issue, but the discussion needed to be postponed.
 - **This is an important issue that requires follow up.**
- The joint CDEC/SPRC committees agreed that several concerns should be prioritized during the design phase of the Data Center, regardless of site selection. These include:
 - Noise mitigation to avoid disturbing humans and wildlife in the Biological Preserve. We should aim for a noise level no greater than that of the current Central Heating Plant.
 - Campus involvement in any re-wilding projects stemming from decisions about the Data Center location.
 - Improved accessibility to trail system and Heritage Site, and ensure sufficient parking is available for users of these sites.
 - We recommend that Facilities consider the possibility of re-wilding P35 instead of P37, as part of the design phase. Assuming that either lot is re-wilded, we recommend making improvements to alternative lots to accommodate student organizations that currently use P37 for various events, and to prioritize enhancing and publicizing our current process for coordinating various groups that use these lots.

Incoming Faculty Chair:

- Steven Stanton II was selected to chair CDEC in 2026-2027 (05-15-2026)