Introduction

Metropolitan Community College (MCC) directed the development of the 2010 Master Plan Update for Campuses and Centers (Master Plan Update) in partnership with the Board of Governors, the Office of the President, and committees comprised of students, faculty, staff, administrators, community members, and stakeholders. This Master Plan Update builds upon the 2003 Master Plan for Campuses and positions MCC for smart and sustainable growth of space and facilities to efficiently accommodate its growing population over the next 10 years and beyond. This plan is also built upon the key objectives of the MCC Mission Statement outlined in the Mission Achievement Plan:

- Serve the community.
- Create a quality learning environment that promotes student success.
- Encourage lifelong education.
- Support personal and professional enrichment and training.
- Stimulate economic and workforce development.
- Provide a transferable path to baccalaureate institutions.

Context for the Master Plan Update

MCC embarked on the Master Plan Update with several contextual issues that formed a foundation for the physical development of the plan.

Unprecedented Enrollment Growth

The Master Plan Update comes at a unique time in history. On the heels of one of the greatest economic downturns our country has ever experienced, community colleges across the United States are experiencing unprecedented growth. With a 2009 fall enrollment of over 17,000 and a 1-year growth of nearly 13%, MCC, like other institutions that welcomed students during the economic downturn, is experiencing a period of the largest enrollment growth in the institution’s history. The goal of this master planning process was to build a framework for growth at all campuses and centers.

Sustainability

At a time when sustainability trends have found their way into mainstream culture, MCC is poised to be on the front end of developing a holistic and integrated approach to institutional environmental sustainability. In response to the admirable sustainability path already forged by MCC leadership, this Master Plan Update unifies solid planning recommendations with quantifiable and defensible sustainability targets in the following categories:

- Energy
- Water
- Transportation
- Food
- Stuff (Materials, Waste, and Recycling)
- Curriculum
Need for Immediate Planning Solutions and a Long-Term Vision

There is a shortfall of space at many of MCC’s campuses and centers. Enrollment projections for the 10-year plan horizon indicate additional space needs at each campus and center based on a 2% average participation rate as the population in the service area of Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, and Washington Counties continues to increase.

The most widely used state guidelines to measure physical capacities at higher education institutions suggest that a desirable range for classroom utilization is 30 room hours per week with 60% of the student stations occupied on average. MCC is operating at an average of 34 room hours per week with 67% of the student stations occupied. In the college’s current state, there is very little opportunity to explore new programs without taking on substantial off-site real estate costs. Additionally, only 1.57% of the four-county service area population attends MCC, compared to a 2.42% market penetration that other Nebraska community colleges have in their service areas. Much of this difference may be due to the lack of available space to serve a larger student population.

The Master Plan Update analysis and planning process has uncovered an inefficiency in MCC’s delivery of education. Findings indicate that several programs are not geographically located in proximity to where students reside. This issue will escalate if programs continue to grow at their current locations. The JJR team utilized a geographic information system (GIS) mapping platform to link MCC enrollment data to the Douglas County database in order to suggest the most efficient and appropriate growth solutions for MCC. The graphical mapping output was used to visually answer specific questions essential to the master plan vision, including:

- How many students from each zip code are attending each campus or center?
- How many students from each zip code are attending each program?

Several foundational planning recommendations of the Master Plan Update were based on data gathered through the GIS mapping output, revolving around the creation of centers of specialization within the MCC system.
Program Migration to Create Centers of Specialization

The Master Plan Update is built upon the premise of system-wide program migration in order to reduce facility redundancy and improve the effectiveness of MCC’s delivery of education to the community. The Master Plan Update enhances general education opportunities at all locations while creating several centers of specialization among MCC’s three campuses. Locating the Culinary Arts and Management program at the Fort Omaha Campus is a successful example of implementing a center of specialization. The Master Plan Update will not only build upon and enhance this center of specialization, but will also identify similar opportunities at MCC.

Applied Technology

Due to high projected space needs and dispersed program locations throughout the four-county area, consolidating the Applied Technology programs is an essential first move for improving efficiencies in the delivery of education at MCC. The Applied Technology programs should migrate to locations that are more proximate to where students enrolled in these programs reside. Students in these programs should also have adequate access to transit. In looking at the existing MCC campuses and centers, the institution does not own property large enough to house all of the Applied Technology programs at one location. Creation
of the Applied Technology Center (ATC) in 2007 was essential for MCC, providing a permanent shared location for several Applied Technology programs for the first time in MCC’s history. At the time of this plan, the center is so successful that it is out of space, and expanding the center is not considered advantageous because of its location and lack of transit connection.

The JJR team, in conjunction with input from the master planning committees, has developed a strategy to migrate the construction-related Applied Technology programs to the Fort Omaha Campus and transportation-related Applied Technology programs to the South Omaha Campus.
Construction-Related Applied Technologies at the Fort Omaha Campus

Construction-related Applied Technology programs should migrate to new state-of-the-art facilities on the south side of the Fort Omaha Campus. This facility is envisioned to bring job-specific Applied Technology training programs to North Omaha, in closer proximity to transit and to where the majority of Applied Technology students reside. MCC projects more than 1,300 students in the consolidated Applied Technology programs, including the following offerings:

- Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating Technology
- Construction Technology
- Electrical Apprenticeship
- Electrical Technology
- Industrial and Commercial Trades
- Plumbing Apprenticeship
- Sustainable Energy Technology
Transportation-Related Applied Technologies at the South Omaha Campus

The South Omaha Campus is home to several of the transportation-related Applied Technology programs. The plan recommends migrating the Auto Collision Technology program from ATC to a new facility on the South Omaha Campus. This will increase efficiency in the delivery of education through shared use of space, resources, and faculty consolidation to one location. Migration of the construction-related Applied Technology programs (Electrical Apprenticeship/Technology, Industrial and Commercial Trades, Plumbing Apprenticeship, and Construction Technology) from the South Omaha Campus to the Fort Omaha Campus will provide necessary expansion space for future growth.

Elkhorn Valley Campus as a Center of Specialization for the Arts

The Elkhorn Valley Campus is home to the majority of Visual Arts programs. Based on the results of an evaluation by the JJR team of where students enrolled in the Visual Arts programs reside, the Master Plan Update recommends that MCC strengthen the Elkhorn Valley Campus as a center of specialization for the arts. Additional classrooms, laboratories, and office space can be placed in newly constructed buildings and renovated space vacated by the Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating Technology program. MCC should continue to offer Languages and Visual Arts opportunities at all of the campuses and centers as part of the enhanced general education model.
ATC and Sarpy as Improved Centers

Maintain Utility Line Technician and CDL-A Truck Driving programs at the ATC. Relocate transportation- and construction-related Applied Technology programs to the Fort Omaha and South Omaha Campuses to provide space for additional general education courses.

In the short term, expand the Sarpy Center building to the north to ensure that the center will be viable for general education purposes within the 10-year plan horizon and beyond. Since demographic trends identify Sarpy County as one of the fastest growing counties in the region, MCC should immediately search for land for a future campus as part of the long-term expansion strategy.

Housing and Student Life

While housing is not critical to the mission of MCC, the topic was an important consideration as part of the Master Plan Update planning process because MCC’s campuses and centers are so deeply ingrained in their surrounding communities. MCC should:

- Encourage market-rate off-campus housing adjacent to campuses and centers.
- Pursue opportunities for an on-campus housing partnership between the Fremont Area Center and Midland Lutheran College.
- Consider option for apartment-style housing at the Fort Omaha Campus.
- Enhance student amenities space at each campus and center.
- Re-examine the housing arrangement at the Fort Omaha Campus within the context of the college’s capacity to provide campus food service for residential students at current collegiate standards.