



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UC MERCED PLANNERS TO UNVEIL CAMPUS VISION AT UC REGENTS MEETING

Campus will be built utilizing environmentally sustainable concepts

San Francisco, CA – The newest University of California campus in Merced will be created with a unified vision for master planning and architecture that accents environmental sustainability and maximizes utilization of natural heating and cooling.

Planners will today convey this vision to the Regents of the University of California at an open session of the Regents meeting. The briefing is scheduled to take place beginning at 10:30 a.m. at UC San Francisco's Laurel Heights facility, located at 3333 California Street in San Francisco. The presentation will be made by UC Merced staff and representatives from Skidmore Owings & Merrill, and Fernau & Hartman, Architects.

UC Merced will be the first major research university built in the United States in the 21st century, and will ultimately serve 25,000 students. Said UC Merced Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey: "We see an enormous opportunity to create a truly beautiful and functional campus that is constructed and organized under an environmentally friendly system. In creating the new campus, we want to set a new standard for energy efficiency, water conservation, utilization of recycled materials, and protection of air quality -- and to utilize all possible efforts to conserve and preserve natural resources."

Master Plan Principles

At the Regents meeting, John Kriken from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill will present the principles upon which the master plan will shape the organization and feel of the new campus. Six main principles will be employed: 1) creating a model for land use and protection of natural resources, 2) carefully organizing a "social heart" of the campus, 3) creating separately identifiable academic and residential "neighborhoods," 4) utilizing a green belt and Lake Yosemite views to provide beautiful landscape features, 5) creating movement corridors that are predictable and extendable with campus growth, and 6) utilizing breeze corridors and shading techniques to make campus outdoor life comfortable in climate extremes.

Architectural Character Guidelines

Laura Hartman of Fernau & Hartman, Architects, will discuss architectural guidelines. The architects envision that all UC Merced buildings will share common, fundamental sustainable design strategies. These will include shaded outdoor circulation, careful orientation of building facades to the sun and use of sun screens where necessary, use of masonry materials which retain cooler nighttime temperatures to help to dampen daytime temperature extremes, and the use wherever possible of natural ventilation and natural daylight within buildings. The

campus will seek to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design [LEED] criteria of the U.S. Green Building Council. The architects want to develop a campus where landscape and building strategies are inseparable, with outdoor spaces as significant as buildings.

Regional Environmental Conservation

The University of California, Merced campus is proposed to encompass 2,000 acres consisting of a portion of the 7,030-acre Virginia Smith Trust lands northeast of the City of Merced. The campus is planned to consist of an academic life area of 910 acres, with a land reserve of 340 acres for potential future use. The remaining 750 acres are proposed as a Campus Natural Reserve to be used for scientific observation by faculty and students seeking to understand grasslands and vernal pool habitats in eastern Merced County. The remaining Virginia Smith Trust [VST] lands, comprising 5,000 acres, will be preserved in perpetuity as an example of California's natural heritage.

The acquisition of the VST site by the University of California is being made possible by a grant of almost \$12 million from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. In addition to the Packard gift, which was announced in March, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation in May provided a \$2 million grant to the University for preservation and management of the natural reserve.

Last year, as part of the new campus initiative, Governor Gray Davis and the state legislature approved creation of a \$30 million fund to purchase conservation easements of vernal pool habitats in eastern Merced County. With these funds, a habitat conservation area is being created that is expected to eventually protect as many as 50,000 acres of sensitive habitat.

LRDP, EIR Release

A Long Range Development Plan [LRDP] for the UC Merced campus is currently being created for approval by the Regents. The draft plan will be publicly released in early August. Accompanying the release of the LRDP will be a draft Environmental Impact Report [EIR]. Public workshops and hearings will be held subsequent to the release of these documents, and the EIR process includes a 45-day public comment phase. It is expected that the final LRDP and EIR, as well as other items related to creation of the campus, will be brought to the Regents for certification or approval in November 2001.

UC Merced currently employs approximately 70 educators and professionals. Groundbreaking for the new campus is expected to take place in early spring 2002, and the University is scheduled to open in fall 2004 to serve 1,000 students. Over the subsequent three decades, the campus will grow to the planned build-out capacity of 25,000 students.

UC Merced contributes to educational access through the entire San Joaquin region via special educational and outreach centers in Fresno and Bakersfield. A new UC Merced center will open in Modesto later this year.

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[**Note to reporters and editors:** visuals of the new campus design are available in jpeg format via e-mail. Please contact Sheryl Lichtig Wyan of UC Merced for visuals: Tel. 209-724-4408. E-mail: Sheryl.lichtig@ucop.edu]