

# ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

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**SESSION:**

Public   
Non-Public

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Decision   
Discussion/Direction   
Information

**TO:** Academic Council  
**DATE:** April 25, 2023  
**FROM:** Brad Maclsaac, Vice-President, Administration  
**SUBJECT:** Campus Master Plan Update

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**BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:**

The university merges a long-term vision for space planning (i.e. how do decisions impact the Campus Master Plan (CMP)) with short-term implementation planning (i.e. based on hiring plan, academic program growth/changes and faculty research what space do we need in the next one to three years).

Ontario Tech is currently working with Durham College to update the Joint CMP 2015 (as seen in Appendix A). We have engaged WSP, who worked on the original plan and is a recognized leader in land use planning studies, environmental planning and urban design. WSP is passionate about providing innovative solutions that foster the creation of complete and sustainable communities. This work will first update the CMP to show the changes since 2015 (i.e. four new buildings including the Software and Informatics Research Centre (SIRC) and Shawenjigewining Hall (SHA) for Ontario Tech and the land swap with the City of Oshawa). Second, we will work together to look at different phases outlining what each of the next three decades could look like based on today's plans. This would include how the growth plan impacts academic needs, support services, housing, athletics and other amenities. We are expecting a late fall 2023 review.

Concurrently, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) has a taskforce looking at space standards. The Task Force on University Space Transformation is a cross-functional group that takes a birds-eye view of space planning to incorporate all the different elements and perspectives of our campus leaders to inform what transformations may be needed to create campuses of the future (reflecting on EDI, sustainability, health and safety etc.). Through a competitive RFP process ECS was contracted in late 2021 to undertake a jurisdictional scan to "help build universities of and for the future by examining current space guidelines and identifying efficiencies." This work is expected to wrap up in Fall 2023.

Noting that the two above reviews are ongoing we are bringing forward a few key items that the University is considering and items it has implemented in the recent past which help us get there. For illustrative purposes, using one of our growth plan scenarios, if we were to maintain the current net square meter

(SM) per student full-time equivalent (FTE) we would need three buildings of 10,000 SM (about the size of our Energy Research Centre) in the next decade and six over the next twenty years.

	2022-23	2027-28	2032-33	2037-38	2042-43
Total SM	106,080	106,080	106,080	106,080	106,080
Total FTEs	9,450	11,000	12,500	13,700	15,200
SM/ FTE	11.2	9.6	8.5	7.7	7.0
New Build		1.7	3.4	4.8	6.5

As mentioned above this is a general formula to show long term vision. What we actually need will be reviewed in the short term to see how changes such as offering more hybrid courses and flexible work options impact our actual space requirements. Ontario Tech currently has about 70% of the COU guideline for space so we are already running very efficiently. We are going to look at how we can maximize this; but as we grow, we know we will need to invest more in space and technology.

We are also exploring what will be required for other amenities with a focus on housing. We have engaged a consulting team to aid in the creation of a long-term plan regarding the amount and types of housing we may need in the future. To date, the University has left housing for outside vendors to provide. With a priority on “sticky campus” we are now exploring with Durham College what it would look like if we started to provide more of this service.

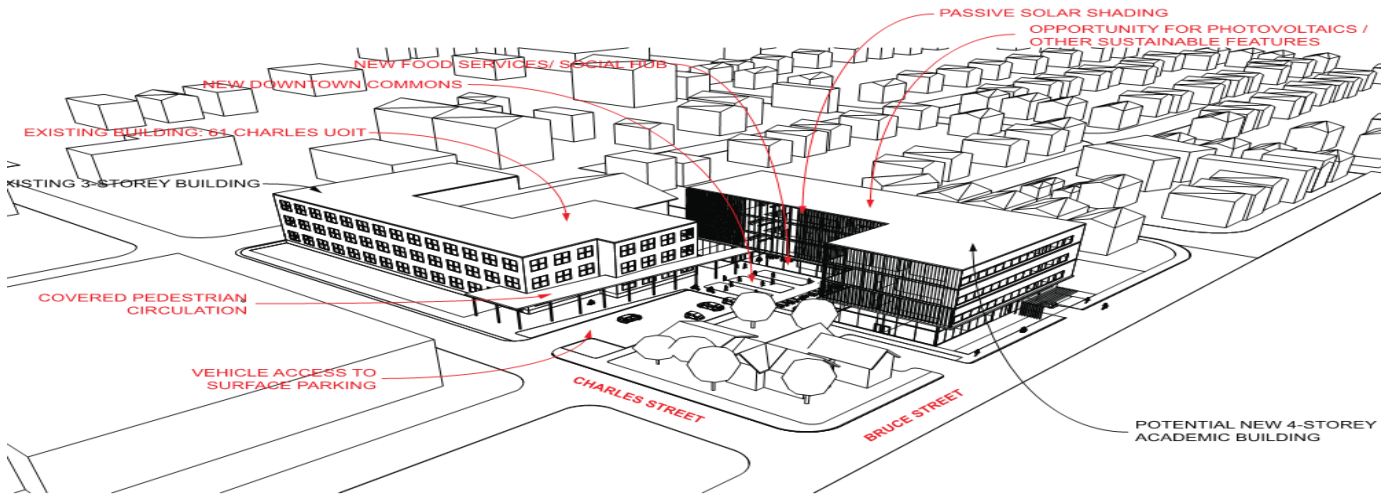
The Integrated Academic Research Plan 2021- 2023 outlined a vision for the alteration of physical space with enhanced technological supports to move the university towards a place that can adapt to the ever-changing educational landscape. In February 2021 management opened consultations on a Re-imaging Space Paper: **The proposed grand challenge discussed is how can we work together to reduce our total office and traditional lecture theatre space to allow us to reallocate more space for dynamic learning and research activities, whilst at the same time reduce our reliance on leased spaces?**

#### **Downtown Update:**

At the October 2021 S&P meeting, management outlined a business case that solidified a commitment to our downtown location with a focus on moving away from leased space into more space that is owned by the University. This document built on the space consultations (outlined above), the overall Campus Master Plan (2015) and the “Framework and Action Plan to Develop Downtown Oshawa” (2011). A few of the key points in that paper are:

- Acquiring space in downtown is based on a desire to maximize efficiency while over time creating more space for a wider variety of learning, research, and social spaces for all campus community members.
- In 2021, nearly 30% of the University’s space was temporary or leased. Many of the leases were set to expire, with a need to replace over 6,000 square meters in the next 5 years and a further 7,000 in the following 5 years. This doesn’t account for further planned enrolment growth and therefore new space opportunities were explored downtown.
- S&P and the Board agreed that from a strategic and stakeholder perspective, plans are required for additional space downtown. They supported purchasing additional space rather than leasing and were supportive of a transaction that is capable of being funded out of cash reserves.

In May 2022 management reported back to S&P that it had purchased land located at 154 Bruce Street, which is connected to our Charles Hall location. This gave us the ability to expand when we needed and were able to.



Further to this land purchase, after consultations with Durham College, the Board approved moving forward with a public request to solicit interested development partners and gain ideas on mutually beneficial projects. Essentially, we know that we are not going to create six new buildings on our own and so partnering will be one alternative we look at as we continue to fundraise and advocate for government aid. As the University was going through this process the owner of 55 Bond Street, which we currently lease, came forward with an offer to purchase the building. In November 2022, Audit & Finance was presented with a Business Case for purchase that outlined taking over the remainder of the mortgage (which is similar to our annual lease) and an acquisition cost of \$7.5M. After looking at comparable building prices, a broker's appraisal of \$13M and noting that the University is currently paying over \$1M a year to own nothing in 2030, it was determined that consistent with the October 2021 direction, buying is better than leasing. Budget for the purchase will be drawn from current in year cash and reserves. A&F supported the transaction, and it was subsequently approved by the Board of Governors December 2022. The building at 55 Bond Street was acquired February 2023.

With the renovations the Charles Hall, which allowed us to consolidate from 11 Simcoe and get out of that lease, plus work we have completed to with the Ministry Colleges & Universities to get Charles recognized as our building for reporting purposes, the 2023 facilities report is forecasted to show about 6% temporary/ leased space.

**North Update:**

Looking at the growth plans we will need more academic space and a decision on what amenities we want to go with those. The current Phase 1 of the CMP shows finalizing the "quad" around Polonsky Commons and an expansion on the north side of Conlin Road. To prepare for this we will be removing the portable (UL) behind the library in summer 2023. However, we will need to look further at the next location for buildings as we may not be ready to move Athletics from their current location to north of Conlin. This is complicated as the internal lands are not serviced yet. We will be working with Durham College to prioritize spaces in Founders parking (south of Conlin) and looking north of the Ice Centre.



In addition to partnering with developers we are also looking at alternate sources of revenue. With current government funding sources frozen the operating budget alone is not sustainable as we have a structural deficit with expenses growing faster than revenues. To mitigate this, we are exploring a potential sale of the lands north of Conlin along Thornton Drive. At the June 2022 BoG meeting a Real Estate Asset Management Planning Framework was discussed to see how the university can partner to help achieve academic and research priorities. By working with others to offer complimentary activities such as housing, recreation and commercial services there may be opportunities to secure funds to support our core needs. The University has prioritized retaining ownership of its lands, considering outright disposition only to achieve significant strategic benefit. Based on a thorough review of future space needs and the lack of connection of the land to the rest of precincts the University, management is exploring the sale of the Thornton lands (dark green section precinct 7). As a reminder the light green in precinct 7 is the land swap with the City such that we will receive the lands north of precinct 4.





# Appendix A: CMP 2015

