

## Colorado College Long Range Development Plan

### Core Values and Planning Principles – Community Focus Group Dialogue

October 25, 2004

On October 11 and 12, members of studioINSITE met with four focus groups to discuss the October 8 draft of the Long Range Development Plan Core Values and Planning Principles. The focus groups were comprised of Colorado College faculty and staff members, neighbors and other community representatives. Students were invited to the focus group discussion, but none were present. Each participant received, in advance, a letter outlining the objectives of the Vision, Core Values and Planning Principles, the October 8 draft, and the previous (September 15) draft of the Planning Principles and Objectives.

The objective of the focus groups was to obtain feedback on the Core Values and Planning Principles and their “fit” with Colorado College. Participants were encouraged to discuss any and all issues pertaining to campus planning in order to have an active dialogue.

Overall, participants were comfortable with the Core Values and Planning Principles. The following points represent larger thoughts and ideas that came from the discussions:

- Beauty and prestige were strong themes, as many of the participants would like to see a more physically-beautifully campus. There was some concern that the dedication to sustainability may sacrifice beauty.
- Concerns about campus integration and access were common, especially related to the traffic corridors around and through campus.
- The relationship of Colorado College to the Colorado Springs – especially in terms of policy and planning – was a strong theme. There is a strong sense that the College should work with the City and surrounding communities to ensure plans are consistent.
- It is important to make visitors aware of both campus boundaries and destination points, without isolation the campus from the community. The sense of arrival on campus needs to be strengthened.
- There is a general lack of social spaces on campus today. Strong support was voiced for fountains and other outdoor spaces that would encourage community interaction while serving as the “heart” of campus political/social interplay.

The following are additional notes from the focus groups:

- How can we better integrate the community with the College?
- Colorado College should be seen as a more integral part of the Colorado Springs community – too many people in town aren’t aware of the College beyond the hockey team.

- There really is no “entrance” to the campus – the College needs a clear identity without creation isolation or boundary.
- The local and global “view” of CC in Pikes Peak – should we take advantage of that and orient our buildings and views to the Peak, or is relying on the setting turning our back on a reliance on academic excellence?
- There are many “in-between” spaces on campus that could better serve the campus community through thoughtful design and space making.
- Does CC want to be part of – or distinct from – the community? We have to cast our die on this – we cannot do either or.
- CC has to maintain good access through the campus for the community. Can we redefine some of the corridors (i.e., Cascade, Nevada, Tejon) while maintaining good access?
- CC should be attracting more near-campus retailers, but are rents too high?
- The population of the College and proximity to downtown will limit the ability of businesses to support themselves near campus.
- Is there an opportunity to create a pedestrian mall along Tejon from the campus to downtown Colorado Springs?
- The College should take a mall concept to the arrival on campus – directory and direction at every conceivable entry.
- Energy use should be considered a component of sustainability – is there a design standard that we should incorporate in the Plan?
- How can we encourage the community to use the campus as a gathering place?
- In the cross-pollination of the campus – do we also want to cross-pollinate the community across the campus? Can we facilitate this by providing space on or near campus for retailers – i.e., a bookstore now that Chinook is gone?
- Sustainability can conflict with beauty – do we want to be sustainable at the cost of beauty on campus?
- Beauty as a value is not appreciated on campus today.
- There should be fountains on campus as outdoor gathering areas for the campus community.
- There should be a sense of visual surprise and adventurousness with respect to the design of campus buildings and outdoor spaces.
- Given the nature of the Block Plan, we need to create places that are bustling to encourage high levels of activity on campus.
- How can we deal with the noise generated by traffic on Cascade, Nevada and I-25?
- The campus has turned its back on Monument Valley Park. How can we better connect to the regional park system?
- The Plan should be honest about what can or cannot be done with Armstrong Hall – people need to have realistic expectations about what may happen with the building.
- The Plan should consider the long-term management of College resources, not just near-term.
- What encourages interaction – events, such as all-campus picnics; or fountains, picnic areas, benches, etc.?

- The sense of arrival from the south should be enhanced – Tejon Street ends in a parking lot, which isn't the best arrival from downtown Colorado Springs.
- The Downtown Action Plan organizes a ring of parks through the city, including regional trails along Cache La Poudre.
- There is no central location on campus that you just “get to.” A campus core should be better identified.
- What opportunities exist for the purchase of J's Motel?
- Building design and architecture on campus would benefit from some sort of uniformity.
- Reducing the speed of traffic on Nevada would help make the east campus feel more integrated with the rest of campus.
- There should be uniform signage located in the proper places to alert vehicles about visitor destinations, building locations, parking, etc.
- Is the Spencer Center the best location for Human Resources?
- The new Wellness/Fitness Center should be located as close to parks and trails as possible.
- Satellite fitness facilities should be located across campus.
- There should be a differentiation between facilities for athletics and student/faculty/staff recreation.
- We need to understand how the City's plans affect our ability to work toward CC's plans – i.e., transportation plans related to Uintah, Nevada.
- Partying in the neighborhoods and the destruction of private property are the primary concerns of neighbors today, while parking issues seem to be better.
- Should we provide more residential units on campus to reduce the number of students living off campus?
- The campus seriously lacks student social spaces today.
- Prospective students/families are typically positive about the appearance of the campus.
- Adequate visitor parking needs to be provided in apparent and obvious locations.