EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From November 2012 to February 2013 the University of Indianapolis empowered a Space Task Force to explore the use of space on and around the existing campus. Through this process, a diverse group of faculty, staff, and students outlined critical issues surrounding space utilization within one of two categories: immediate space needs (items that could be accommodated in the next 3-5 years) and future space needs (items that could be pursued in the next 18 years as a part of a larger 2030 Vision).

Various methods were utilized to collect information regarding the existing and potential use of space by the University to create a comprehensive summary of space utilization on and around the existing campus. These methods included departmental reports, campus surveys, a student imagination wall, space utilization analysis, and two interactive planning charrettes (summarized in detail within this report). When considering strategies, emphasis should be placed on sustainability & concern for the environment as a value of the university, which should guide all future projects.

Strategies

In summarizing the research and discussions presented by the Task Force members, six major themes were developed as recommendations to the Planning Commissions for consideration:

A. Grow and/or Reconfigure Existing Use of Space: By understanding the space challenges presented by each department (enclosed within this report), specific attention should be given to how these existing space needs can be resolved. Priorities should be made to react to these identifiable needs in an effort to enable academic growth and success for these departments. Additional consideration should be given to improving space for student life functions, redeveloping areas on and around campus, and consolidating existing services (e.g., clinics, help labs, advising).

B. Define/Grow Specialized Programs and Services: In an effort to support the mission and reputation of the University, strategies should be explored to prioritize specific programs for growth and admissions. Consideration should be given to creating or strengthening specialized academic space on and around campus (e.g., labs, classrooms, work spaces).

C. Increase Access to Academic and Social Resources: These recommendations include issues that surround the need for increased access to academic and social resources by both students and faculty. Consideration should be given to increased academic access (e.g., 24-hour access to academic buildings, hybrid online classes, evening classes), social access (e.g., extended hours for food service operations, additional locations for food services), and physical access (e.g., entrances, classroom design, and elevators).

D. Create a Multi-Modal Transit Network: Inspired by the adjacent rail line, consideration should be given to how a multi-modal transit network could be established to interconnect the various trails, services, and transit options in the area with the Ulndy campus as the central focus. These included ideas that focused on transit-oriented development (TOD), developing key entry corridors around campus (e.g., Shelby Street), public transit, expanding the local trail networks, and exploring mixed-use parking solutions.

E. Support a Cultural District and Incubation Network: Consideration should be given to prioritizing how property currently available directly west of the campus could be transformed into a Cultural District anchoring the west end of the University and serve as a gateway to the existing campus. In doing so, this area could offer space for student and alumni businesses, strengthened political/civic engagement, entertainment and mixed-use development, and house various cultural events and functions.

F. Champion Neighborhood Revitalization: As an extension to the existing programs and services offered by the University, consideration should be given to exploring how existing services (e.g., Clinics) could be externalized as a way to revitalize and redevelop the surrounding neighborhoods. Strategies included housing (married and graduate), adult learning centers, early childhood center, and a University-Based Retirement Community (UBRC).

While these recommendations present a collection of strategies that have grown from various Task Force discussions, the Planning Commission is urged to review the detailed information provided within this report to fully understand the unique and specific issues facing space utilization on and around the existing campus. As priorities are defined in the coming months, these issues will be critical to the future success of the University of Indianapolis.