
OREGON STATE
U n i v e r s i t y

CAMPUS MASTER PLAN
2004-2015

APPENDIX D – OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER STATEMENT

Oregon State University Neighborhood Charter Statement

Oregon State University is a major, comprehensive university. Its mission is determined by the state government and is beyond the scope of the Campus Master Plan (CMP). The CMP focuses on campus resources including buildings, transport systems, and parking facilities. These are designed to serve the needs of students, faculty, other employees, and university visitors. However, the campus is located in Corvallis where campus land use decisions impact the adjacent neighbors and neighborhoods – in both positive and potentially negative ways.

This charter statement is an attempt to characterize how OSU hopes to interact with its neighbors, adjacent to the borders of campus, when updating the Campus Master Plan. OSU will use the planning approach it followed while developing the current CMP in 2004, when it worked with the neighbors along its northern boundary in a cooperative and productive manner. To this end, OSU fully expects that representatives from other adjacent neighborhoods are likely to recognize their own concerns and to desire to be included.

The Charter consists of five basic parts: 1) a statement of purpose; 2) a description of neighborhood participation; 3) a description of the desired relationship between OSU and its neighbors; 4) an identification of likely considerations when the CMP is updated; and 5) an outline of the planning assumptions for future CMP updates

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Oregon State University Neighborhood Charter Statement (Charter) is to encourage productive interactions between OSU and its adjacent neighbors when the CMP is updated. The hope is that mutually-beneficial outcomes can be maximized and undesirable outcomes can be minimized.

OSU would like to establish continuing relationships with all of the neighborhoods that border the campus. The goals would be to achieve dialogue about each neighborhood's concerns, to address common interests, and to reduce conflicts.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

With the creation of the new CMP, OSU would like to try a new approach to neighborhood participation in the planning process. This trial is envisioned for the period of the CMP as long as it is productive. Participation will take several forms.

a. Annual meetings

One venue for participation will be annual meetings hosted by the University. At these meetings the University will 1) discuss campus plans for the next year, other plans that are in various stages of development at the time, and all proposed CMP updates, 2) share data which the University has gathered over the past year with regard to such topics as traffic, parking, green space, etc., and 3) solicit, compile, and report feedback about neighborhood/campus concerns.

These meetings will help to encourage system-wide solutions, which incorporate the needs of all adjacent neighborhoods, and at the same time, to take the surprise element out of the campus planning process. Meetings will be open to the public. They will be announced in local media, and invitations will be sent to all the adjacent neighborhood associations.

b. Neighborhood task forces

A second venue for participation will be neighborhood task forces. OSU plans to participate in task forces, which include the University, the City, and representatives from the adjacent neighborhoods. The reports of these task forces will be made public. The prototype task force will be the Parking and Traffic Task Force, which was approved by the Corvallis Planning Commission in 2004. If this task force can be successful, the task force approach will be expanded to address other around-the-campus issues.

c. Review of final documents

A third venue for participation will be incorporated into the development process for CMP updates. Before each update is completed, adjacent neighborhoods will be given an opportunity to review final drafts. This form of peer review will improve and clarify the language of the final output.

d. Campus committees

A fourth venue involves campus committees. Representatives of adjacent neighborhoods will be allowed to join on the Campus Planning Committee and the Campus Parking Committee. Committee meetings will be open to the public for observation purposes. Neighbors will be notified about the times and locations of meetings.

e. Informal comments

The University will continue to receive compliments and complaints from neighbors at any time, particularly through the Facilities Services Department. Simple problems can be dealt with quickly as they arise. Larger problems will be directed toward the annual meeting, campus committee, and task force venues.

3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OSU AND ITS NEIGHBORS

OSU and the neighbors used the final stages of the CMP development process as a new beginning in their relationship. Neighbors participated in the 2004-2015 Campus Master Plan to a much greater level than in previous planning documents. Their efforts and commitment have provided OSU with a deeper understanding about their concerns over potential OSU development and its impact on: existing neighborhood character, land use equity, traffic and parking, solar access, building scale, mass and height, historic preservation, etc. CMP updates shall, at a minimum, review these concerns with the community to determine if additional mitigation measures are necessary. If OSU and the neighbors determine additional measures are required to ensure OSU development meets the spirit of the 2004-2015 CMP and this Charter, then such measures shall be included.

OSU and the neighbors developed the foundations for respect, effective communication, trust, equity, and cooperation during the completion of the 2004-2015 CMP. As such, these are the tenets of the relationship between the neighbors and OSU for CMP updates. The goal of these tenets is to establish a system and structure for future relations so that the work and efforts of the current OSU staff and neighbors will be carried on through the years.

a. Respect

Representatives of OSU and its neighbors should place high enough value on what the “other side” is concerned about to listen and understand. They all should answer questions in a straightforward manner, and attempt to seek mutually beneficial solutions. When compromise seems impossible, they should – very respectfully – agree to disagree.

b. Communication

OSU and its neighbors should engage in a dialogue during the preparation of CMP updates, both listening and explaining. Between now and any future CMP updates, OSU and neighbors will already have had formal and informal meetings to discuss matters of concern with the intent of forming clear and objective methods to address these concerns.

c. Trust

OSU and the neighbors should strive to ensure that the trust established through the efforts of preparing the 2004-2015 Campus Master Plan are safeguarded during any update. All parties must recognize that in order to sustain the trust over the years all parties must continue to be truthful and make good faith efforts to follow through.

d. Equity

For the purposes of this Charter, equity is defined as a high standard or value of property beyond that of ownership. Each party will respect one another's property and the need to safeguard its function, value, and livability as if it were their own. No need of one will automatically cancel the other without a fair and just (i.e., balanced, honest, open-minded, and straightforward) discussion of impact. If future impact of development, preservation, or protection of certain tangible and intangible uses or functions of one's property is determined to occur then each party will agree to review options that either minimize or remove such impact.

Future CMP updates will ensure land use planning efforts on campus are consistent with the merits of the definition of equity used herein. OSU agrees to safeguard needs of resident homeowners; the neighbors desire to have privacy, minimal impact from development that might lower the value of their property, change the character of their neighborhood, or decrease the livability of their community. The neighbors agree to hold to a high standard OSU's mission as a University and its desires to become a top-tier university. OSU's need to provide the most up-to-date facilities to provide a compelling learning environment will be safeguarded.

As such, it is paramount that factors such as parking, traffic, building heights, setbacks, solar access, architectural features, historic preservation, open space conservation, and natural resource conservation are addressed.

e. Cooperation

OSU and the neighbors will proactively cooperate to address all matters of concern in CMP updates. During the completion of the 2004-2015 CMP, both OSU and the neighbors focused on building a system and process for effective and long lasting communication, trust and equity. Both sides recognized that if a strong planning system and structure is in place that incorporates the needs of each party, then the desired product will be achieved.

f. Partnership

In the past, some neighborhoods have perceived the University to be an "800-pound gorilla." To a greater extent than ever before, OSU envisions a process involving full partners. The expected benefits include: saving time and resources, more supportive joint efforts, and better planning outcomes.

g. Representative neighborhood inputs

It is important that the inputs from each neighborhood are representative of the concerns of the neighborhood as whole – rather than of specific individuals. A simple way of conceptualizing neighborhood participation would be to involve neighborhood associations, from adjacent neighborhoods, that are recognized by the City of Corvallis.

4. COMMON CONCERNS WHEN THE CMP IS UPDATED

a. Character of adjacent neighborhoods:

When preparing CMP updates, OSU and adjacent neighbors will discuss the aspects of existing neighborhood character and develop measures and polices to protect such aspects in accordance with this Charter. Maintaining the “graceful edge” is a common goal because it benefits all parties.

b. Traffic and parking

Traffic and parking are interrelated in land use planning and design. The integrity and character of land uses are often impacted by traffic conditions, street design, parking utilization, and traffic management. All of these facets of traffic and parking will be reviewed and discussed with adjacent neighbors during the preparation of CMP updates. Aspects appropriate to review may include, but not be limited to, traffic flow across neighborhoods, parking utilization rates within neighborhoods, and impacts on existing neighborhood character, especially for those neighborhoods designated as historic districts, such as the College Hill West Historic District.

This Charter recognizes the importance of the Neighborhood Traffic and Parking Task Force. OSU and the neighbors will seek its input (as well as other City approved traffic and parking task forces) when preparing future updates to the CMP.

c. Historic resources

Both the neighbors and OSU recognize the importance of the historic resources on campus and the need to protect those resources that are potentially historic. The neighbors understand that OSU will operate with a good faith effort in the future to protect such resources. The neighbors also recognize that OSU needs to balance the preservation of buildings with the need to meet current building and fire codes, energy conservation guidelines, fiscal constraints, and adapting these resources to current needs of academic and research initiatives that require building infrastructure (e.g., media communications, teaching laboratories), that were not originally designed as part of the building.

Future CMP updates will include a review of the current Historic Preservation Plan, and if necessary, OSU shall update it to ensure the policies and measures within the preservation plan adequately address current day circumstances.

d. Natural Resources

OSU’s property contains natural resources (e.g., wetlands, riparian areas) that have been found to be significant by the City of Corvallis. As such, OSU recognizes the importance of its role as a steward of these resources.

5. ASSUMPTIONS FOR FUTURE CMP UPDATES

This Charter for updates to the Campus Master Plan is based on a number of planning assumptions, which will be made explicit here.

- a. OSU will have an on-going relationship with the adjacent neighborhoods.
- b. OSU will seek the participation of its neighbors.
- c. OSU has an important role as an institution of higher education within the State of Oregon with the primary need to support academic, research and service initiatives.
- d. OSU will change and grow to fulfill its mission to the State of Oregon.
- e. The best way to solve problems is to take a systems approach, which would meld University and neighborhood interfaces to common purposes.
- f. Systems thinking also requires that traffic and parking issues are interrelated and must be evaluated together.
- g. Requirements for the “graceful edge,” or transition area between campus and surrounding neighborhoods, will be reviewed whenever the CMP is updated.
- h. In the planning process, benchmark data from other communities similar to OSU/Corvallis will be sought when resolution of opposing positions is in need of an objective standard.
- i. The input of the Neighborhood Traffic and Parking Task Force, and other City-approved agencies will be recognized.
- j. The whole point of the new process identified in this Charter is to prevent disagreement between OSU and its neighbors; however, disagreements can still be appealed through University and City of Corvallis processes.