This document updates the March 2002 Facilities Master Plan

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Introduction

In June 2006 Onondaga Community College retained JMZ Architects and Planners, P.C. of Glens Falls to prepare an Update of the Facilities Master Plan they created for the college in 2002. Much of the information contained in the original report is still valid and is not repeated here. Instead, this document focuses on the changes that have taken place and the new initiatives that have emerged in the last five years.

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan identified nearly $80 million in potential projects. Many of these have now been completed. Others are still valid and have been carried over with updated cost estimates. Some of the projects proposed in 2002 no longer seem necessary and have been deleted. At the same time, new projects have been added in response to academic initiatives and changing priorities. After all these adjustments, the total cost for all proposed projects is now just over $129 million, or about 60% higher than the figures contained in the previous report.

The State University of New York is contemplating a Capital Construction Program for the fiscal years 2008-09 through 2012-13. This Update will put the college and its sponsor in an ideal position to take full advantage of any funding that may become available. However, the state will not require implementation of any of the proposed projects. These decisions will continue to be left to the discretion of the OCC Board of Trustees and the local sponsor.

Changes to the OCC Campus Since 2002
The College has made remarkable progress implementing the projects identified in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan. The most significant of these have been the renovation of Storer Auditorium; the completion of a campus-wide signage project; the expansion and renovation of Gordon Student Center to create a one-stop student services center (Student Central); the renovation of several science laboratories; and the renovation of Academic One, now renamed Mawhinney Hall, which is currently underway. The parking lots adjacent to Mawhinney
The most visible change to the campus has been the construction of three student housing units containing a total of 499 beds near the Route 175 entrance to the campus. These attractive buildings have changed the character of the campus and spurred a significant growth in enrollment. They are all fully occupied, principally with Onondaga County residents who desire a comprehensive college experience.

All of these projects have been completed in exemplary fashion. The results have been even better than envisioned in the Facilities Master Plan. The OCC campus has truly been transformed for the better.

Three parcels of land have been added to the campus, as well. One eight acre parcel east of the Route 173 entrance (Onondaga Road) was donated to the OCC Foundation in conjunction with a road realignment project undertaken by the State of New York. In early 2007, the College completed the acquisition of two adjacent parcels on Route 175 (Seneca Turnpike) just west of the College’s main entrance. The two properties total approximately 14 acres and include the scenic confluence of West Brook and Furnace Brook, which runs through the campus. The OCC campus now comprises 230 acres.

All of these changes to the OCC campus have been shown on the Existing Campus Plan.

**Enrollment Growth and Change**

OCC has recently set new enrollment records. Enrollment increased by nearly 14% in fall 2006 to surpass 10,000 students for the first time in the college’s history. This was the highest rate of growth among all 30 community colleges in the SUNY system. The jump was fueled, in part, by the opening of the new residence halls. Approximately 10% of the College’s full-time students now live on campus. The College sustained this positive momentum with a 6% growth in full-time enrollment in spring 2007.
A factor that has contributed to this growth has been the recent increase in the number of high school graduates in Onondaga and surrounding counties due to what has been termed the “echo boom” or “baby boomlet.” Central New York high schools will graduate 13,044 students in 2007. The number of graduates is expected to peak at 13,497 in 2009 before subsiding. The swing will be dramatic. By 2013, only 11,691 are expected to graduate from area high schools. There will thus be a net decrease of 1,353 potential students in OCC’s primary catchment area in just six years, a drop of nearly 12%.

**Strategic Enrollment Management**
OCC’s administration recognized several years ago that it will become more challenging for the College to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision as a result of these demographic shifts. Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) has become one of the College’s highest priorities. Under SEM, policies, procedures, organizational structures, and facilities have all been revised to maximize the accessibility and quality of services provided to students. As a result of this important initiative, OCC is likely to continue outperforming its peers when recruiting new students. The SEM emphasis on the personal delivery of services is likely to enhance the College’s already high retention rates, as well.

**Changing Expectations**
There has also been a subtle change in the academic goals of OCC’s students in recent years. In parallel with national trends, fewer students are now matriculating in Certificate or Associate degree programs, particularly in technology. In recent years, a greater number of students has been attracted to OCC’s liberal arts and transfer programs. The administration has carefully monitored this shift and has appropriately directed the College’s resources to the areas with the greatest need. In the coming years, it is likely that some technology based programs will be eliminated due to under-enrollment. One of the challenges for administrators and planners will be to reallocate the space these programs now occupy to faster growing programs.
Planning for the Future

Onondaga Community College will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2011. The administration has recently updated the College’s strategic plan, *A Framework for Success: 2006-2011*, to sustain the positive momentum that has been established and ensure that the College is in peak condition when it reaches this milestone. *A Framework for Success: 2006-2011* identifies key performance indicators and establishes appropriate metrics. It also specifies critical success factors that will require careful attention from management.

Closely related to this document is the Mission Review process initiated by the State University of New York. As with other colleges in the system, OCC worked with the SUNY Provost to establish mutually acceptable goals for the coming years. These discussions were commemorated in a Memorandum of Understanding that recognized OCC’s distinctiveness and achievements, made appropriate comparisons to peer institutions, and set goals for the coming years. The MOU noted that the College and its sponsor have been responsible stewards of the campus physical plant and acknowledged the importance of keeping the Facilities Master Plan up to date. Four construction projects were assigned the highest priority: Mawhinney Hall renovations; the Children’s Learning Center; Phase Two of the Gordon Student Center renovations, and construction of a Community Recreation Center. These projects have become the cornerstones of the Facilities Master Plan Update.

Other internal and external studies have focused on the College’s specific needs. These have included:

 • Athletic Facilities Master Plan and Conceptual Design prepared by Appel Osborne Landscape Architecture, March 2005
 • Classroom Design Guidelines and Standards, adopted October 2005
 • Information Technology Master Plan, 2005-08 Update prepared by OAVS Digital Imaging, November 2005 (with subsequent updates)
 • Development/Feasibility Study, NYS Route 175 Property Adjacent to OCC Campus prepared by RZ Engineering, PLLC, March 2006
 • Preliminary Findings and Recommendations (Study of Gordon Student Center) prepared by Porter Consulting, May 2006
 • Parking and Sidewalk Master Plan prepared by Appel Osborne Landscape Architecture, December 2006

**Themes of the Facilities Master Plan Update**

Facilities master plans don’t lead; they follow. The consultant therefore reviewed all of the changes – past, present, and future – affecting the College before proposing alterations to the physical facilities. The results of the previous studies were incorporated into the consultant’s work. Every effort has been made to bring these studies, the Memorandum of Understanding, *A Framework for Success: 2006-2011*, and the Facilities Master Plan Update into alignment.

The consultant’s recommendations have been organized into five overarching themes to give them greater clarity and coherence. Each has become a chapter in this report. These themes are:

 • Enhancing Opportunities for Student Engagement
 • Providing Premier Facilities for Premier Programs
 • Preparing for Continued Growth
 • Enhancing Campus Sustainability
 • Expanding Opportunities for Community Use
Enhancing Opportunities for Student Engagement

Studies of student engagement have consistently shown that students who participate in athletics, recreational programs, clubs, or other social activities have higher rates of perseverance. This is because students who participate in the co-curricular life of their colleges are likely to feel more connected to their institutions and to their fellow students. As a result, they report greater satisfaction with their college experiences and generally do better academically. Enhancing opportunities for student engagement will therefore help OCC achieve its student retention goals.

The Growing Interest in Sports

In recent years many of the SUNY campuses have placed an emphasis on athletics and recreation as a means of recruiting and retaining students. Several nearby campuses, including Cortland, Oswego, and Buffalo have recently completed major athletic venues and similar projects are currently being planned at SUNY Brockport, the SUNY College of Technology at Canton, and the SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica-Rome. In March 2007, Brockport announced plans for a $44 million, 80,000 square foot student recreation and special events center that the school hopes will be a “magnet” that will attract and retain students. While plans are still being developed, it is likely to include an indoor running track, fitness center, and weight room. Canton has completed a program study for a new ice arena that will cost at least $18 million to construct. SUNYIT has received $20 million in state funds for a new synthetic turf field and field house.

Area community colleges have been making similar investments. Herkimer County Community College completed Wehrum Stadium in 2005 and is now able to host regional and national tournaments in soccer and lacrosse as well as numerous high school events. The all-weather synthetic turf field is used for up to 300 events per year and has been a boon to the college and an economic stimulus to the Herkimer region.

Herkimer County Community College’s Wehrum Stadium is used for 300 events each year.
Tompkins Cortland Community College is currently constructing a major athletic facility that includes a performance gymnasium, a field house, a large fitness center, locker rooms, a synthetic turf field for soccer and lacrosse, a baseball field, and a softball field. Part of their business plan is to host regional basketball and volleyball tournaments in the new gymnasium, which will be air-conditioned and will also function as a convocation center for commencement and other college events. The field house has been designed to accommodate the needs of youth soccer leagues at times when the college will not be using it. It will also provide a venue for a wide variety of community events and trade shows.

Monroe Community College is trying to raise the final $12 million it needs to build a 53,000 square foot athletic facility.

Genesee Community College is just completing a Facilities Master Plan Update that recommends major improvements to their athletic facilities. Plans include construction of a synthetic turf field for soccer and lacrosse, a running track, and a Community Wellness Center. The Community Wellness Center will include a field house similar in size to the one now being completed at Tompkins Cortland Community College, a large fitness center, a classroom, a multi-purpose movement studio, and supporting offices and locker rooms.

One of the principal factors driving all of these investments is the climate in Upstate New York. Colleges have found it difficult to provide outdoor facilities for athletics and recreation during the school term. Fall sports are limited by darkness and can be curtailed by falling temperatures and early snows. Winter is long and spring, when it comes, is typically wet. Spring sports teams rarely get outdoors to practice before the season starts and often have to reschedule early games if field conditions are too wet.
The College’s 2002 Facilities Master Plan analyzed the College’s facility needs in accordance with the space planning guidelines developed by the State University of New York. The analysis pointed out several space deficits on the OCC campus, the largest of which was in the Physical Education category. The report also noted:

“The College’s outdoor athletic facilities, located east of the Health and Physical Education Building, are inadequate to meet the needs of the Athletic Department. Many practices and games are held at local county fields and no soccer games have been played at OCC for over two years due to the lack of proper facilities.”

In response, Onondaga Community College commissioned Appel Osborne Landscape Architecture of Syracuse to prepare an Athletic Facilities Master Plan and Conceptual Design. Their report, issued in March 2005, set out an ambitious plan for expanding practice and competition fields, principally in the area to the northeast of the Health & Physical Education Building (HPE). It included natural grass fields for baseball and softball and a multi-purpose synthetic turf field for soccer and lacrosse. The most significant component of their plan was the construction of a large field house.

Two versions of the concept plan were developed. Option One proposed realigning the eastern portion of Ransom Mackenzie Drive (the campus loop road) to make room for a Stadium Complex within its circumference and was predicted to cost $22,120,000 in January 2005. Option Two reduced the scope of the project so that it would remain within the confines of the existing loop road and was predicted to cost $21,460,000 in January 2005. Both versions were consistent with the 2002 Facilities Master Plan.

The College’s Memorandum of Understanding with the State University of New York and its newly adopted strategic plan, A Framework for Success: 2006 – 2011, commit the College to improving its
recruitment and retention of Onondaga County students, particularly those from underserved populations, and enhancing its efforts to recruit and retain non-resident and international students. The College recognizes that offering a more robust array of athletic and recreational opportunities will significantly help it achieve these goals.

Community Recreation Center
Given the climate in Upstate New York, and the need to provide safe, well-lighted facilities for athletics and recreation, the College proposes to construct a Community Recreation Center (CRC) that would be connected to the existing Health & Physical Education building. Major components in the CRC and HPE may include a gymnasium; practice basketball and volleyball courts; indoor tennis courts; fitness center; climbing wall; training rooms; locker rooms; concession area; storage; administrative spaces; and other support spaces. Additionally, the Community Recreation Center would be capable of accommodating a wide range of College and community events, including commencements, convocations and trade shows.

The CRC is anticipated to have 60,000 gross square feet of space and will cost $16 million to construct. Soft costs, including fees, testing, contingency and escalation will bring the total project cost to just under $20 million.

Synthetic Turf Athletic Field
Closely related to the Community Recreation Center would be the construction of a multi-purpose synthetic turf athletic field. These facilities were once thought to be a luxury, but as prices for artificial turf have come down and maintenance costs for natural turf have gone up, the economics of investing in a synthetic turf facility have become more favorable. Industry data show that the annual costs of fertilizing, watering, mowing, and striping a natural grass field can exceed that of maintaining a synthetic turf field, even when periodic replacement of the “carpet” is factored in. Earlier versions of the synthetic turf were thought to contribute to a higher incidence of athletic injuries, but newer materials now seem to be nearly as safe as natural grass.
The most compelling argument for synthetic turf is that it can be used throughout the year for both practice and competition by a variety of sports. The “cost-per-use” or “cost-per-event” is therefore much lower because natural grass will quickly wear out from repeated use and requires recovery time between events. A multi-purpose synthetic turf field would also conserve valuable space on the OCC campus.

**Revised Athletic and Recreation Concept**

As the Athletic Facilities Master Plan demonstrated, many areas of the campus are characterized by steep slopes and are therefore costly to develop for large athletic and recreational facilities. Fortunately, the westerly portion of the 14 acres of land along Route 175 that the College acquired in 2007 is relatively flat and can readily be used for these purposes. This strategic acquisition has enabled the planners to improve upon the previous concepts.

As shown on the Site Concept Plan, the Community Recreation Center (CRC) and the synthetic turf field would still be constructed adjacent to the existing HPE building. This will maximize the sharing of resources among these facilities. For instance, the fitness center (discussed below) can be located in the existing building and still be convenient to student athletes using the CRC. Concession and public toilet facilities can serve all three venues.

The planners recommend locating some of the College’s proposed athletic and recreational facilities on the newly acquired land on Route 175. This area offers the ideal topography and orientation for a multi-purpose practice field, a softball field, and cross-country ski trails. Light duty bridges would connect these facilities to the west side of the campus near the Service & Maintenance Building and to the east side of the campus near the residence halls. Construction of an access drive from Route 175 and a small parking area would facilitate public access and community use of these facilities. The northeast portion of the site would be preserved as a nature center as discussed in the section entitled Enhancing Campus Sustainability.
Renovated HPE and Expanded Fitness Center

One of the most important projects proposed in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan – at least as viewed by the students – was the relocation and expansion of the fitness center. The current facility is located in a former hallway of the HPE Building and forces circulation through the gymnasium. This unwanted traffic interrupts classes and hastens the deterioration of the wood floor. The 2002 plan recommended moving the fitness center to the west wing of the building that has long been home to the Children’s Learning Center where it could be expanded and updated.

Relocation of the Children’s Learning Center thus became an “enabling” project that needed to precede construction of a new fitness center. When plans to construct a stand-alone Children’s Learning Center proved to be too costly, both projects were stymied.

The College and the consultant still believe that the 2002 concept for relocation of the fitness center and renovation of the HPE building makes sense. The recent signing of an articulation agreement with SUNY Cortland for the Exercise Science program makes it even more compelling.

Therefore, the consultant took a fresh look at the needs of the Children’s Learning Center to see if a more strategic approach could be devised. The new approach is discussed in the following section of this report.

Gordon Student Center

Construction of Student Central completely transformed the east end of Gordon Student Center and laid the groundwork for continuing renovations within the building. The next phase of renovations will focus on food service and student activity space.

The College retained Porter Consulting to conduct market research and suggest strategies for improving the delivery of dining, bookstore, and vending services to students. While the scope of their study included the entire campus, they recommended several changes to Gordon Student Center. For
instance, they proposed renovating the current dining area and servery, both of which they found to be dated in appearance, institutional in character, and noisy. They suggested adding a convenience store in either the servery or the bookstore to offer a “grab and go” option and provide basic necessities for students living on campus.

The College has retained King & King Architects of Syracuse to design these Phase Two improvements to Gordon Student Center. The scope of the work is currently constrained by the space occupied by the Music Department but could eventually include relocation of the bookstore to the upper level of the building and expansion of the popular “Bistro” run by students in the Culinary Arts program.

Mawhinney Hall
The Porter Consulting study also endorsed the idea of expanding the Quad Café in the main lobby of Mawhinney Hall as first proposed in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan. They noted that the current operation services an average of 400 customers per day, even though it has no cooking facilities. Enhancing the café will benefit students, faculty, and staff in the College’s most populated building.

The former “pit” in the center of the lobby would be the ideal location to create a “University Center.” OCC is quickly developing an expanded list of articulation agreements with many public and private colleges, such as Keuka College. Establishing a central office for their representatives would give added visibility to these important partnerships.

Whitney Applied Technology Center
Porter Consulting suggested taking a “wait-and-see” approach to the development of a food service venue in the lobby of Whitney Applied Technology Center. The idea of locating a modest coffee cart in this building was discussed during development of the 2002 Facilities Master Plan and has continued to be a topic of interest. Given the fact that Whitney is now directly on a primary path of travel to and from the student residences, an early morning and late night venue offering “grab and go” options would likely be successful.
The College is also looking at the existing Lean Manufacturing area adjacent to the main lobby in Whitney as a location for a temporary student activity space. In an effort to make the new housing affordable to a broad range of students, little in the way of common space was included with the initial construction. The approved site plan included a 2,500 square foot Commons Building that was deferred. It would be beneficial to provide space for a game room and other student activities in a nearby location until the Commons Building can be constructed. The Lean Manufacturing area is ideally located and because it is acoustically isolated, noise created by student activities would not interfere with nearby academic space.
Providing Premier Facilities for Premier Programs

Renovate Ferrante Hall for the Children’s Learning Center

The Children’s Learning Center is one of the College’s shining stars. The 2002 Facilities Master Plan documented how the current facilities in the Health and Physical Education Building are undersized and inappropriate for the needs of the program. As noted previously, this location would be ideal for a new fitness center.

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan recommended construction of a freestanding building to house the Children’s Learning Center. The planners reasoned that a stand-alone building could provide a convenient drop-off and pick-up area for parents, could have a direct connection to outdoor play areas, and would offer the highest level of security.

The College retained QPK Design in 2003 to prepare a concept design for a new Children’s Learning Center. Their final report, issued in February 2004, recommended a single-story, 19,500 square foot building located on the east side of campus adjacent to the underground reservoir. The attractive design met all of the goals established in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan. However, the predicted cost ranged from just over $4.0 million to nearly $4.5 million. Despite making this project a priority, the College was not able to allocate sufficient funds or attract adequate private support to complete this project. Rapid inflation in the construction industry in recent years has likely pushed this project well beyond the College’s reach. As part of the Facilities Master Plan Update, the College asked the planning consultant to find another option that would meet the needs of the Children’s Learning Center.

Given that construction of a new facility proved to be too costly, the planners realized that the only viable option would be renovation of existing space somewhere on the campus. The consultant quickly focused on the space in Ferrante Hall that was...
recently vacated by the closure of the former Dental Hygiene program. The dental equipment was removed in 2006. Only minimal renovations had been made to a portion of the space so that it could be used for general classrooms while a more permanent solution was found.

As the accompanying diagrams show, the Children’s Learning Center would be a nearly perfect fit for this area. All of the critical program elements can be accommodated. There is convenient parking and a visible public entrance on an accessible route. The space can be separated from other functions within the building to maintain security. And as noted by Michelle Ferguson, Director of the Children’s Learning Center, the central location would facilitate the work of student interns and keep parents and their children closely connected to the life of the College. This will be particularly beneficial now that OCC has established a joint program in Early Childhood Development with SUNY Oswego. In retrospect, she said she realized that the standalone approach might have isolated her program from the College it serves.

The College is acting quickly to move this project forward. QPK Design has again been engaged to develop the detailed design and construction documents, and discussions have already been held with prospective donors.

**Renovate Mawhinney Hall and Relocate the President’s Office to Whitney**

One of the final projects that was funded following completion of the 2002 Facilities Master Plan was the renovation of Mawhinney Hall. The building houses the College’s largest departments and is home to the greatest number of classrooms. It is currently undergoing a phased renovation that will increase the quantity of teaching spaces and improve their quality. The work is being guided by the Classroom Design Guidelines and Standards that were adopted in October 2005. This document addresses all aspects of the learning environment: temperature, furniture, acoustics, lighting, technology, and aesthetics. Meeting these Guidelines is one of the College’s strategic goals. When the Mawhinney Hall renovation is completed,
more than 50% of the College’s classrooms will comply with these Standards.

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan recommended relocating administrative offices elsewhere on campus to maximize academic space within Mawhinney Hall. The planners suggested moving the President’s Office suite from its current location on the second floor to Coulter Library. However, large portions of the second floor of Coulter Library have since been devoted to other uses. For example, the Academic Computing Center Open Lab now occupies the former Founders’ Room. More space is needed for this and other important functions.

As a result, the consultant has suggested reviving the idea of housing the President’s Office on the second floor of the Whitney Applied Technology Center. Doing so would require the shuffling of some community service functions but would not displace classrooms. The office suite would include the current Board of Trustees’ room as was intended when the building was designed.

Alternatively, the President’s Office suite could be located in J. Stanley Coyne Hall. Two drawbacks to this approach are that the president would be less visible on the main campus and her attendance at campus events would be more difficult.

A long-range option would be to construct a new Academic/Administrative Building between Gordon Student Center and HPE as shown on the Site Concept Plan. A two- or three-story building in this location would complete the “East Quad” as recommended in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan.

**Resolve the Overcrowding in Gordon Student Center**

As noted previously, the Porter Consulting study recommended that Phase Two of the Gordon Student Center renovations focus on enhancing food service offerings and creating a convenience store. In the future, the study noted that it might be desirable to relocate the bookstore to the main floor where it would benefit from increased student traffic.
The achievement of these objectives is compromised by the presence of two academic departments within the building: Music; and Hospitality and Culinary Arts. The Memorandum of Understanding with SUNY notes that both have the potential to become premier programs that define the College’s individuality and drive its future growth. The problem, of course, is that space within the building is already tight and further expansion of the building is hemmed in by Student Central to the east, the central quad to the south, and the ravine to the west.

Hospitality and Culinary Arts occupies the large teaching kitchen on the ground floor and the Bistro on the upper level. The Bistro has been successful despite the inconvenience of transporting food and dishes from the kitchen below. The Department’s need for additional space was documented in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan.

The Music Department currently occupies about 5,100 square feet on the west end of the main level; 2,020 square feet of practice rooms and offices on a third level directly above; and 1,760 square feet of space on the east end of the lower level; for a total of just under 8,900 square feet of space. There is no dedicated performance space within the building. The Department currently uses Storer Auditorium or other venues around the campus, none of which was designed to meet the needs of musicians. Faculty point out that it is both time consuming and expensive to move pianos and other valuable instruments to and from these locations. Percussion instruments are particularly susceptible to damage if they are taken outdoors during inclement weather. The 2002 Facilities Master Plan recommended adding a recital hall to the north side of Gordon Student Center, but this would have complicated delivery access to the building. Funding for this initiative does not seem imminent. Recent interviews have confirmed that a flexible performance space with 150-200 seats, adequate storage, and good acoustics is still the Department’s highest priority.

Clearly, the growth of these two important departments can’t be accommodated within Gordon Student Center. It is clear to the consultant that priorities must be established to guide future space allocation within the building. Student Central was
constructed in the Gordon Student Center precisely because the building is the hub of co-curricular student activities and social life. The projects identified in the Porter Consulting study will enhance the services provided to OCC students and will help guarantee the continued success of Student Central. These projects should therefore be given top priority.

The second priority should be that of meeting the needs of the Hospitality and Culinary Arts Department. The teaching kitchen represents a significant investment and requires many of the same services as the commercial kitchen upstairs: a loading dock for truck access; adequate space for refuse storage and removal; and availability of natural gas and ample electrical service for equipment. At many campuses, back-of-the-house facilities are shared between the academic and production kitchens.

There is more than enough space within the building to meet the needs of OCC students and the Hospitality and Culinary Arts Department. There are two appealing options for future space allocation within the building. In the first option, the bookstore would be relocated to the upper level space now occupied by the Music Department. It would benefit from increased exposure and could therefore expand its offerings of convenience items. The College’s increasing success in sports – including the nation’s #1 NJCAA lacrosse team – suggests that sales of “soft goods” and logo items would also increase with a larger and more prominent location. One significant drawback, however, would be the need to transport deliveries from the lower level loading dock to the upper level, but this could be minimized by the introduction of a larger freight elevator. In this first option, the space currently occupied by the bookstore could be used for an expanded Bistro and a multi-purpose meeting and conference room, both of which would have a direct connection to the teaching kitchen. The rarely used land to the west of the building could become an attractive outdoor dining patio overlooking the ravine.

A second option would keep the bookstore in its current location and would expand the Bistro and create the new meeting and conference room on the
upper level. Again, improved vertical transportation would be important to the success of these areas.

Either option should free up additional space on the lower level for student clubs and activities. When fully renovated, Gordon Student Center will be more coherent, student needs will be met, and the Hospitality and Culinary Arts Department will have sufficient space for its programs. The Hospitality and Culinary Arts Department might also gain space at the “Inn at Onondaga” as discussed in the section titled Expanding Opportunities for Community Use.

**Transition the Music Department to Whitney**

The College’s well-known and widely admired Music Department thus has no room to grow in Gordon Student Center. The planning consultant recommends initiating a long-term transition to the Whitney Applied Technology Center, beginning with the performance space.

As noted in the previous section, the Lean Manufacturing Institute area adjacent to the main lobby is available for reassignment to other functions. In the short term, the College intends to use the space as a temporary game room and student activity area. In the long term, the consultant recommends transforming this room into a high-tech, flexible performance and event space. There are several reasons why this high-bay room would be ideal for this purpose. First, with approximately 5,100 square feet of floor space it is one of the largest column-free rooms on the campus. Second, it has direct access from the lobby, which can be used for pre- and post-function receptions. Third, the overhead door to the parking lot will facilitate the movement of pianos, sets, seats, and equipment in and out of the space. Fourth, it has abundant electrical power to support theatrical lighting and sound systems. Finally, it is acoustically isolated from the north wing of the building. Noise-generating activities should therefore not interfere with noise-sensitive classrooms. The only apparent drawbacks are the building code requirement to separate Public Assembly use of this room from the adjacent mechanical technology areas, and the likelihood that the heating, ventilating and air...
conditioning system will have to be modified or replaced.

Preliminary design studies by the consultant suggest that the Music Department’s goal of creating an intimate performance venue can be met. It should be possible to accommodate up to 200 seats in a variety of formats including fixed seating, retractable seating, or moveable seating “wedges.” Adequate storage space can be provided to minimize the movement of instruments to and from the venue. Some seating options appear at left.

The final design should embrace a wide range of College and community functions. It should be able to host small performance events and films sponsored by the Arts Across Campus program. It should provide a venue for student discussions and social events, such as a comedian during college hour or a band on a weekend. And, of course, it should be a focal point of the highly successful M&T Jazz Fest at OCC.

If present trends continue, the College’s technology-based offerings are likely to diminish in the coming years. This will free up additional space within Whitney to enable the gradual transition of the entire Music Department from Gordon Student Center. With larger, improved facilities, the Music Department will be able to achieve its potential as one of the College’s “tall trees.”

**Construct a Regional Public Safety Training Center**

OCC is uniquely positioned to provide a focal point for Public Safety Training in Central New York. It already has strong ties to area law enforcement agencies and currently contracts with the County of Onondaga for emergency management services. The College recently initiated an Emergency Management Degree Program that has already attracted 40 students. The first class graduated in May 2006 and went on to employment with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the State of New York, and various industries. OCC offers both a certificate program and an A.A.S. degree in Fire Protection Technology and is in early
discussions about a Paramedic program and a Professional Firefighters’ program. These programs prepare students for careers in Disaster Preparedness, Emergency Management, Homeland Security, or Civil Defense. This cluster of professions was reported by Forbes Magazine as the fourth fastest growing in the country.

The ideal center for these programs and activities would be a new building on the OCC campus. The model that is frequently cited is the Public Safety Training Facility at Monroe Community College in Rochester. Monroe Community College provides all public safety training for the County of Monroe and the City of Rochester. Construction of the building resulted from this three-way partnership but also serves a number of other county and state agencies.

A similar integrated facility on the OCC campus could provide a common command post for police and fire protection; a backup site for the County’s Emergency Operations Center, which is located in the basement of the Civic Center; space for the Police Academy; a Systems Room for display and training of fire protection equipment; a flexible Situation Room; a training room with videoconferencing capabilities; and supporting classrooms, offices, and locker rooms. The building could be located near J. Stanley Coyne Hall as shown on the Site Concept Plan. Alternatively, the former county “poor farm” on Route 173 might provide a suitable location close to campus. As was the case at Monroe Community College, construction would hinge on the participation of community partners and the availability of grants.

In should be noted that these programs will also benefit from construction of the Community Recreation Center. Many courses include training in defensive tactics and require a minimum level of physical fitness.

The College should also consider partnering with the Town of Camillus to create an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (E.V.O.C.) that would be shared by police, fire, and EMS departments in the region.
Preparing for Continued Growth

As the fastest growing community college in the SUNY system, OCC will need to expand its campus and facilities in the coming years so that it can continue to meet the needs of area students. The majority of this expansion, of course, will occur on the Onondaga Hill campus. But the College should also examine the potential for creating premier off-site facilities, as well.

Acquire Strategic Properties at the Campus Perimeter

The College’s recent acquisition of 14 acres on Route 175 has demonstrated how beneficial it is to acquire adjacent properties. Many of the opportunities discussed within this Facilities Master Plan Update would not have been possible without it.

As a matter of policy, the consultant recommends that the OCC Board of Trustees and County sponsor consider the acquisition of any contiguous properties that come on the market. Not all will be of strategic benefit to the College, but each property should be studied for its potential to support the College’s continued growth, expand buffers between the College and the neighboring community, and enhance sustainability. It would be particularly beneficial to acquire properties that would fill in the gaps along the College’s southern boundary on Route 175. There may be some existing County-owned properties in the vicinity that would benefit the College, as well.

These are not new suggestions. During preparation of the 2002 Facilities Master Plan the consultant suggested that the College consider acquiring the wooded area immediately west of Mawhinney Hall. Few members of the College community realize that the property line is just a few feet from the visitors’ parking lot on the outside of the loop road. This land has now been acquired by a developer who reportedly plans to construct a number of single-family homes. The College has initiated discussions with the developer to see if an undisturbed wooded buffer 50 to 75 feet in width can be preserved,
perhaps in exchange for a right-of-way across land owned by the OCC Foundation. This would help maintain the sense of enclosure and community that the College now enjoys.

**Study the Feasibility of Constructing Permanent Off-Campus Facilities**

The College currently offers courses at OCC North, a leased facility within the Seneca Mall in the Town of Liverpool, and at many public schools throughout the county. All of these off-campus locations provide the basics, but most fall short of the quality of comparable space on the campus and do little to increase OCC’s visibility or enhance its image and reputation. Critics of these arrangements at other community colleges have noted that offering college-level courses in high school settings perpetuates the image of the community college as an extension of secondary education. This may be undermining OCC’s carefully developed marketing strategy. On a more practical level, the furniture and technology offered by these community partners is rarely up to OCC’s standards. This is particularly important for the “full-size” adult learners served by the College’s robust Corporate and Extended Learning programs. To the extent possible, OCC students should be provided with a consistent level of services and facilities, regardless of where their classes are situated.

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan considered the construction of more permanent facilities in northern Onondaga County. This is the fastest growing area of the county and the farthest from OCC’s campus. Three factors suggested that it was not yet time for such a move. First, Trustee and current Board Chair David Murphy negotiated a highly favorable extension of the College’s lease. Second, OCC was not experiencing such robust growth at the time. There was concern that construction of a more attractive off-campus facility would simply siphon students from the main campus, making both locations less efficient. Third, there was the recognition that the College needed to make substantial investments to expand and upgrade its aging facilities on Onondaga Hill. With limited resources, it was essential for the College and its sponsor to focus on renewal of the Onondaga Hill campus.
The situation has changed over the past five years. Continuing growth in enrollment is starting to create crowded conditions on the main campus. Construction of an off-campus facility might provide some relief from the mounting pressures on campus and forestall the construction of additional academic space. For instance, continued enrollment growth in the health professions, life sciences, and environmental fields is stressing the College’s six Biology laboratories. Constructing an interdisciplinary laboratory at an off-campus site would relieve some of the pressure.

There is also increased concern about traffic, parking, and energy consumption. Providing suitable facilities closer to where many OCC students live would reduce congestion and enhance sustainability.

Demographics also play a role. The New York State Department of Economic Development predicts that
Preparing for Continued Growth

The population in the Central New York region – defined as Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego counties – will steadily decline through 2030. This is already happening. The population of Onondaga County decreased slightly in the last five years. However, some towns within Onondaga County continue to grow even as others are losing population. The town of Cicero is the fastest growing area within the county and had a growth rate of over 7% between 2000 and 2005. Nearby Lysander, also in the northern part of the county, grew over 6% during the same period. The only other town with comparable growth was Pompey in the eastern part of the county.

The sizes of graduating high school classes is also predicted to drop in the coming years as the “baby boomlet” or “echo boom” passes through. The number of graduates from Onondaga County schools is projected to peak at 4,661 in 2009 before declining to 4,109 by 2013, a drop of nearly 12% in just four years. Because OCC only gains a portion of its enrollment from these “first-time, full-time” students, the effect on the College may be muted. However, the long-term trends are clear.

A permanent facility would enhance OCC’s ability to market itself to the increasing number of residents in the northern part of the county. Not incidentally, some of these residents may now be traveling to Cayuga Community College’s extension center in Fulton, which is slated to become a branch campus offering a full complement of courses and services. Construction of a permanent facility in northern Onondaga County might thus retain more Onondaga County residents and perhaps attract students from neighboring counties, along with the chargeback support they bring.

Building a permanent facility would probably be more cost effective for the College and its sponsor in the long run. The College currently receives 50% funding from SUNY for its leased facilities, but the percentage has vacillated over the years. A few years ago the state legislature only budgeted enough to reimburse community colleges for 17% of their rental expenses. This had a significant impact on the operating budgets of many community colleges at a time when tuition assistance was also
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lean. Shifting the major expense of off-campus facilities from the operating budget to the capital budget would make these costs more predictable.

In addition to re-evaluating the delivery of services in the northern reaches of the county, OCC should study the feasibility of returning to its roots in downtown Syracuse. The City has been undergoing a dramatic revival in recent years that has been spurred by public investment and substantial private development, such as those completed by Pioneer Development and others in the Armory Square area. The College should investigate partnering with the city school district, Syracuse University, and other interested entities to create a joint educational facility in the heart of the downtown area. Doing so would reaffirm the OCC’s longstanding commitment to community development and help it better reach populations that are currently underserved.

Plan the Transformation of Coulter Library

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan advocated a thorough renovation of the Sidney Coulter Library. As noted then, the original layout of the building was confusing and has never worked very well. Large blocks of space located within the two-story north wing and the three-story south wing are joined by a narrow, two-story connecting link. This bottleneck has made circulation within the building confusing and has compromised security.

Yet, the building has great promise. Diagrams in the previous Facilities Master Plan demonstrated that strategic additions and renovations could overcome the building’s deficiencies and bring greater coherence to the services being provided.

Discussions that were held in December 2006 as part of the Facilities Master Plan Update revealed that library faculty still had a high degree of enthusiasm for the earlier concepts. They noted that a “library is a gift that a college presents to its students” and envision Coulter Library as a continuing “oasis of intellectual nourishment” within the College. The challenge for planners and designers will be to preserve these timeless attributes even as the building is transformed by the
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technology that students expect to have at their fingertips today.

Formulating a comprehensive plan for the renovation of Coulter Library should therefore be preceded by thoughtful investigation and purposeful study. This Facilities Master Plan Update includes funds for renovation of the building, but recognizes that construction activities are likely to be the cornerstone of the College’s next five-year plan.

The Program Study should be wide-ranging in scope. It should analyze existing conditions and space utilization within the building; formulate future space requirements using both SUNY space guidelines and planning data developed by the American Library Association; and explore synergistic partnership opportunities. It should consider the needs of OCC’s resident students, commuting students, and on-line students. It should include a thorough environmental scan of recent library capital projects at peer institutions. In the last few years, several nearby community colleges have made significant investments in their libraries. Herkimer County Community College is currently constructing an addition to its library that will include a café, a student lounge, and an expanded learning center. Tompkins Cortland Community College has just awarded bids for a $7 million renovation and expansion project that will transform its library into a learning commons that will include the Fireside Café, the Baker Learning Center, and a greatly expanded open computing lab. The recently completed Campus Facility Master Plan for Niagara County Community College recommends an investment of $15 million to reshape their four-story library into a more manageable and user-friendly learning commons that will have robust technology, as well as the now de riguer café.

The Program Study will probably take six to nine months to complete. Since Coulter Library is a College-wide resource, the study should be guided by a steering committee representing a broad cross-section of the OCC community. It would be particularly beneficial to include members of the Academic Support Initiative Team that has been evaluating student study spaces on the campus and Information Technology staff.
Implement the Information Technology Master Plan

When OCC updated its Information Technology Master Plan in November 2005, it set out several facility-related goals for the coming years. Several of these projects have already been completed. The Data Center has been consolidated in the basement of Coulter Library for greater security and efficiency. The Open Academic Computer Center has been temporarily relocated to the Founders’ Room on the second floor. A new Interactive Videoconferencing Distance Learning room was created, and 33 additional classrooms were equipped with “smart” technology. Presentation equipment has been built into all of the College’s auditoriums. Yet some important goals, such as consolidation of the I.T. department offices, remain elusive.

In a recent SUNY-wide student opinion survey, OCC did not receive high marks for “student access to computers.” There are 119 computers available for student use around the campus, the majority of which are located in the temporary Open Academic Computer Lab in the former Founders’ Room. This area is cramped, and lighting and ventilation are poor. The department estimates that it needs an additional 100 stations to meet the needs of current students. The shortfall has become more acute in recent years as OCC has reinstituted “college hours” at mid-day on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Because few classes are scheduled during these times, many students head for the open labs, which quickly become congested.

An increasing number of OCC students have their own laptop computers. The department therefore hopes that the ongoing installation of a campus-wide wireless network will alleviate some of the concern. However, they also realize that the addition of 499 residents to the campus has created new demands on the department. These students are seeking access to computers, printers, and support late into the evenings and on weekends. They also want collaboration space and quiet space for study. In response, the department would like to establish a late night lab, perhaps one that is even open 24 hours per day and seven days a week.
One of the more interesting concepts being considered by the department is that of providing many of the department’s services in a single location on the campus. While they recognize that this strategy would be counter to the prevailing trend of decentralizing these services and weaving them as seamlessly as possible into the college fabric. A single location would certainly achieve the long-time goal of bringing all department employees under one roof (some staff members are still in the Service & Maintenance Building). It would be easier to manage with a lean staff model. And students and faculty would know that they could get all the support they need at one highly visible, easily accessible location.

Temple University has taken this approach with the recent completion of their TECH (Teaching, Education, Collaboration, Help) Center. The 75,000 square foot facility sits in the heart of the main campus and provides 24-hour support. It includes a Welcome Center, Help Desk, internet radio station, Starbuck’s café, and a variety of specialized computer labs for video editing, graphics, music, and language. According to reports, combining all of these functions in a single high-tech facility has brought a “wow” factor to the provision of I.T. services on the Temple campus.

OCC should explore the concept of renovating and expanding the existing Open Academic Computer Center to include some of these services. While specialized computer laboratories might be more successful if they remain nested within the departments that support them, the Training Room on the third floor of Whitney could be relocated to Coulter in conjunction with the consolidation of the I.T. offices. A new testing room could be provided. This would also be a good location for a 24/7 open lab, perhaps linked to the Library. The Program Study for Coulter Library should therefore include the needs of the I.T. department and encompass the entire building.

**Create a Next Steps Center**

It would be beneficial to create a “Next Steps” center for students in the Library, as well. The College dissolved its career center a few years ago. This
important function could be blended into a new center that would provide a broader and deeper array of services to students interested in transferring to upper division colleges; exploring service learning opportunities; finding out about internships, and seeking permanent job placement.

**Expand Student Housing**

The completion of three residence halls on the OCC campus in fall 2006 was a watershed event in the College’s history. The introduction of student housing has been remarkably successful: Every one of the 499 beds was occupied on opening day. Not only have these residential students contributed to OCC’s record enrollment growth, but they have made a positive change in the campus culture.

The initial study that evaluated the feasibility of student housing predicted a market demand of over 600 beds. The Onondaga Community College Housing Development Corporation wisely chose to develop the project in phases. Given the success of the first phase, it is likely that the market will now support even more beds.

While their presence on campus has certainly been felt, residential students only account for about 10% of OCC’s full-time enrollment. This is a smaller percentage than at nearby Tompkins Cortland Community College, Mohawk Valley Community College, and Herkimer County Community College. All three of these colleges have recently expanded the capacity of their residence halls.

The Onondaga Community College Housing Development Corporation should reevaluate the market demand for student housing and plan for the construction of additional beds in the coming years. A potential site on the “skytop” bluff overlooking the City of Syracuse has been identified on the Site Concept Plan. For illustration purposes, the consultant has shown two additional three-story buildings that would accommodate approximately 330 additional residents.
Continue the Renovation of Ferrante Hall and Coyne Hall

Two of the six Biology laboratories in Ferrante Hall were renovated in 2002. However, with the increased interest in the health professions and environmental sciences, the four remaining labs should be brought up to date in the coming years. If present trends continue, an additional Biology or Interdisciplinary lab may also be needed, either on campus or at an off-campus location. Faculty in the Biology Department point out that it would be desirable to reconfigure at least two of the labs using pods instead of benches. This would improve safety, facilitate teamwork, and create a more effective teaching/learning environment.

Continued renovation is also needed in J. Stanley Coyne Hall, especially if the Regional Public Safety Training Center is constructed nearby and some of the existing occupants relocate.
Enhancing Campus Sustainability

Everything a college does, or doesn’t do, sends a message to its constituents. This is particularly true with respect to its stewardship of the land and buildings that make up its campus.

Acting on behalf of Onondaga Community College, President Sydow has signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment. This document states:

“We believe colleges and universities must exercise leadership in their communities and throughout society by modeling ways to minimize global warming emissions, and by providing the knowledge and the educated graduates to achieve climate neutrality.”

This Commitment establishes specific goals and requires tangible actions in pursuit of climate neutrality. Included are pledges to produce or purchase at least 15% of electricity consumption from renewable resources; to purchase energy-efficient appliances such as those with the ENERGY STAR rating; and to construct all new buildings to at least the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Silver standard or equivalent. (See explanation of the U.S. Green Building Council and LEED below.)

The College is establishing a Sustainability Task Force to guide the development and implementation of these policies.

Benefits of Natural Landscape Improvements

One way that colleges can improve their environmental stewardship is to retrofit their campuses with more natural landscapes. These projects enrich the local aesthetic, reinforce the sense of place, and provide environmental, educational, and economic benefits. By involving students in research and service learning projects, these programs build not only sustainable landscapes, but sustainable learning communities, as well.
There are various definitions of the word “sustainable.” Central to the meaning of the term is the use of materials and methods that conserve resources and respect natural systems while integrating human patterns of development. The rolling topography of Onondaga Community College’s 230-acre campus provides an ideal setting for native landscaping.

Native landscaping promotes biodiversity, thereby providing a greater degree of ecological health in the area in which it is implemented. Soils are nurtured naturally, without the use of fertilizers. Planted buffers remove contaminants that are found in storm water runoff. Eliminating or reducing the use of pesticides and herbicides assures that the ecological cycle (e.g. food chain) proceeds uninterrupted. Once established, such landscaping imparts resilience to the land after physical disturbances such as natural disasters and makes the land more resistant to invasive species.

As native plants attract insects, native wildlife, such as birds, will follow. Sources of native food, water and shelter are provided in appropriate outdoor areas instead of less desirable indoor locations. Economic benefits can be measured when native landscaping is installed. This is especially true when coordinated with building design and associated infrastructure. In these situations site preparation costs are reduced. For example, storm water piping costs can be reduced or eliminated by using natural grassed areas for swales.

Initially, more seedlings are needed to fill in the landscape when planting native materials. This is also a labor-intensive task. However, savings over the long term more than compensate for the higher initial costs. The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission reports that maintenance savings over a 10-year cycle ranged from $3,950 to $4,583 per acre for prairie grasses versus lawn turf. The service life of maintenance equipment is increased and fuel costs are decreased. Corresponding pollution created by fuel combustion, along with noise and dust reduction are a few of the other resulting benefits.
The Importance of Campus Appearance
The first impression a college makes on prospective students, donors, and faculty is vitally important. Well-maintained grounds are a welcoming gesture that can create a very positive image. The consultant recommends establishing three distinct zones on the campus so that grounds personnel will be able to focus their attention where it will have the biggest impact. The landscaping/maintenance zones are identified here as the Institutional Core, Transitional Area, and Conservation Zone.

The Institutional Core
The Institutional Core would be the most intensively maintained area, since it includes the landscape and pathways closest to buildings and used most often by faculty, staff, students, and visitors. Native landscaping can be successfully integrated in the core area despite smaller green spaces with which to work. Key points to remember include:

- Acknowledge the human presence by incorporating courtyards, walkways, gathering spaces, seating areas, and sculpture;
- Keep landscaping low adjacent to walkways and parking areas to make sure that clear vision zones are always available;
- Use shade trees to protect outdoor gathering spaces and provide natural cooling in higher temperature months, and allow more sunlight during cooler time periods; and
- Arrange native plantings in an orderly fashion to achieve a balance between the cultural environment and the natural environment.

The Transitional Area
OCC has sizeable tracts of open land, as well as smaller areas around the athletic fields and parking areas that could make up the Transitional Area. Athletic fields certainly require mowing, but the areas surrounding them could become natural meadows instead of mowed expanses of lawn, thereby saving maintenance costs and reducing environmental impacts. Mowed strips would be sufficient to delineate walking paths.

Lands near parking lots should be observed during rainwater storm events to determine whether any
improvements can be made to better direct runoff and best utilize existing green space. Phytoremediation - the practice of using plants to remove, alter or contain contaminants on site - should also be investigated for use near parking lots. There are a number of plants indigenous to the northeastern United States, such as coneflowers (Echinacea purpurea) that can remove contaminants (e.g. gasoline) from soil. These plants would also serve to visually enhance areas adjacent to parking lots.

The Conservation Zone
Conservation Zone areas would encompass the ravine and the low areas surrounding the former Pogey Pond that separate the main campus from the higher land near J. Stanley Coyne Hall. The steeply sloped areas and drainage ways along the eastern boundary of the campus (just outside the loop road) should also remain in their natural state.

The recent acquisition of 14 acres of land along Route 175 includes the dramatic confluence of West Brook and Furnace Brook. Unity Church members reportedly used the high ground between these ravines as meditation space. Few areas are more inspiring. This area should also be preserved. As faculty member Ken Bobis notes, “…the Unity tract could be part of the equation that helps us maintain an overall balance between natural spaces and our built environment.”

The U.S. Green Building Council
The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a coalition of leaders from every sector of the building industry working to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work. They have over 8,500 member organizations and a network of 75 regional chapters working to achieve greater sustainability in the building industry. The U.S. Green Building Council’s core purpose is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life.
The USGBC is the originator of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™, which is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings’ performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

The program uses a point system to determine whether a building can be certified, and if so, at what level. As buildings improve in performance beyond the basic “certified” level, they can attain silver, gold, or platinum ratings.

The SUNY system is a member of the USGBC. Individual campuses may thus participate in webcasts and workshops sponsored by the USGBC. The organization offers a number of programs that can help campuses improve their environmental stewardship. Further information can be found at www.usgbc.org.

**Nature Center**

The 2002 Facilities Master Plan recommended constructing a nature center in the vicinity of the former Pogey Pond. The Biology Department has long felt that construction of a modest facility would support course-related fieldwork; facilitate long-term projects in environmental mentoring; increase campus awareness of the local ecology; expand opportunities for credit and non-credit courses; and facilitate collaborative projects with area schools. In short, a nature center would be able to use the unique attributes of the OCC campus to increase “environmental literacy” within the College and in the surrounding communities.

Several other community colleges have nature centers on or near their campuses. Cayuga Community College has a nature center on the main campus in Auburn. Corning Community College cooperates with the Spencer Crest Nature Center,
which is located on a corner of their Spencer Hill campus. Dutchess Community College leases space from the State Department of Environmental Conservation to operate Norrie Point Environmental Site on the Hudson River.

The recent acquisition of 14 acres of land along Route 175 has given new impetus to the idea of creating a similar center on the OCC campus. As noted above, the confluence of West Brook and Furnace Brook is an exceptionally beautiful place that has special significance for many in the community. It should be preserved as a place for meditation and passive recreation. As OCC faculty have noted, it lies within a mature Oak succession forest. The area just to the south includes a formal stand of pines that were obviously planted to reforest an open space. The richness and diversity of these two ecosystems, along with the steep ravines and perennial streams on either side, make this an ideal extension of the classroom environment.

One intriguing idea that has been advanced by faculty is to create a ropes challenge course on a portion of this land. The consultant also recommends constructing interpretive trails and a nature center. The area would be connected to the west side of campus near the Service & Maintenance Building via a pedestrian/light vehicular bridge, and to the residence halls on the east side of campus via a pedestrian bridge. The trail system would thus be connected to the existing system of pathways throughout the campus. There would also be public access from Route 175 and a limited parking area adjacent to the proposed athletic facilities.

The nature center itself should be designed as a “green” building in accordance with the LEED rating system noted above. It might use an environmentally friendly geothermal heating and cooling system and could even be an “off the grid” facility that generates its own electricity. The building would thus demonstrate sustainable design and construction principles, just as preservation of the land would demonstrate sustainable planning principles.
Expanding Opportunities for Community Use

One of the distinguishing features of Onondaga Community College is its commitment to enriching the lives of residents in the communities it serves. In addition to the broad array of quality educational offerings, the College nourishes the region’s cultural appetite and provides venues for recreational activities.

The public is invited to hundreds of events on the campus each year, including lectures, theatrical and musical performances, and films sponsored by the highly successful Arts Across Campus program. The M&T Jazz Festival draws upwards of 60,000 people to the OCC campus each June. The proposed multipurpose performance and event space in Whitney Hall, the Community Recreation Center, the Regional Public Safety Training Center, and the Nature Center have all been planned to facilitate an even higher level of public participation in the life of the College.

The Inn at Onondaga

The College’s acquisition of 14 acres along Route 175 included the former meeting house used by Unity Church. This two-story building has been heavily remodeled but still retains some interesting features, most notably the broad stone hearth in the “great room.” The building appears to be structurally sound and worthy of renovation.

As discussed previously, the Hospitality and Culinary Arts department has the potential to be one of OCC’s signature programs. Now that the College can offer housing on campus, a fortified program could attract more students from out of the area. While the department’s basic needs would be satisfied by the continuing renovation of Gordon Student Center, faculty have suggested taking an entrepreneurial approach to the use of this building. They envision creating the Inn at Onondaga that would provide a “real world” experience for their students and another point of contact for the community. It might include a few sleeping rooms, but its main feature would be a dining room that would be open to the public.
Cornell University’s renowned Hotel School benefits from having the Statler Hotel right on campus. Students rotate through the various hospitality and food service positions in conjunction with their coursework. Paul Smith’s College operated the Saranac Inn for many years before selling it last year. While smaller in scale, the Inn at Onondaga could provide many of the same benefits for OCC students. Faculty feel it would be unique among two-year colleges in the northeast.

The department’s research into trends in the hotel industry has revealed that there has been significant growth among boutique hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, and small inns. By focusing the hospitality curriculum on these smaller operations, they hope to prepare students for careers that are likely to be in high demand in the Finger Lakes Region of New York and beyond. This specialization would give the program a distinctive edge.

The culinary arts students would also benefit from having a high-end restaurant to hone their skills. Students studying restaurant management would operate the “front of the house.”

The consultant endorses the concept of the Inn and Onondaga and recommends that the department work to revamp their programs accordingly.

**Potential Partnership with the YMCA**

The regional YMCA has expressed an interest in joining with OCC to enhance the services it provides to residents of Onondaga Hill. Students living in OCC’s residence halls would particularly benefit from such an arrangement.

Two other community colleges in New York have undertaken similar joint ventures. Jamestown Community College shares space with the Olean YMCA in a new building that was jointly constructed. Nearly three-quarters of the necessary capital funding was provided by the YMCA. However, the comprehensive lease agreement between the parties gives priority to the scheduling needs of the college.

Genesee Community College leases space for its Warsaw Campus Center from the local YMCA. As part of the arrangement, college students have
access to recreational facilities and programs offered by the YMCA in an adjacent part of the building. The arrangement has been so successful that GCC is considering the construction of a similar shared facility on the main campus in Batavia.

In both cases, cooperation between the colleges and the YMCAs has reduced the capital contributions required of the parties and enhanced the services provided to students and the communities that both organizations serve. These models could be replicated at OCC.

One option would be for the YMCA to purchase land adjacent to the College and construct its own facility. OCC might enter into a lease agreement that would enable students to participate in YMCA programs and use its facilities. OCC could then reduce the size of the proposed Community Recreation Center, or even eliminate it entirely.

An alternative would be for the YMCA to contribute some of the local share of capital needed to construct the Community Recreation Center. In this case, members of the YMCA would have access to College-owned facilities. This would be consistent with the College’s vision for the project and its mission.

Either way, the cost of constructing and operating athletic and recreational venues would be shared, making them more affordable and accessible.
Proposed Projects and Budgets

The consultant updated the list of proposed projects that was included in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan. All projects have been now been re-estimated in 2007 dollars. As before, 35% has been added to the construction cost for each project to cover “soft costs” that will also be necessary. These include testing, fees, contingencies, and escalation to 2008. The Total Project Cost combines these two figures. As before, related projects have been grouped under a common heading.

Continuing Projects
Some projects have been carried over from the 2002 plan in their original form. In such cases, the estimated costs have been increased by 25% to account for the unusually high escalation in construction costs between 2003 and 2007. Examples include:
- Fitness Center
- Coulter Library
- Coyne Hall
- Quad Café
- Storage & Records Building
- Critical Maintenance Projects
- OCC North

Deleted Projects
Other projects have been deleted because they have been completed or are no longer deemed necessary. They no longer appear on the list. Examples include:
- Renovate Storer Auditorium
- Signage Project
- Outdoor Amphitheater

Modified Projects
Other projects have been carried over from the 2002 plan in modified form because their requirements or design approach have changed. The modified projects include:
- Children’s Learning Center
- Multi-Purpose Performance Space
- Nature Center
New Projects
Finally, some projects have been added to the list as new priorities have emerged over the last five years. The new projects include:
• Athletic Fields
• Community Recreation Center
• Technology Improvements
• University Center
• Inn at Onondaga
• Academic/Administrative Building

Categories
The 2002 list of projects included a column titled “SUNY Priority Sequence.” For the sake of consistency across the System, the State University Construction Fund established four broad categories and required consultants to give each project a single designation to reflect its primary justification. In reality, most projects affect more than one category. The Fund no longer specifies a format for these estimates. The consultant has therefore developed seven categories that provide a more informative rationale for the projects and has checked all boxes that apply.

Overall Costs
The total predicted cost for all the projects contained in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan was $79,377,575. That figure has increased to $129,224,558 in the Update, primarily as a result of the expanded concept for the Athletic Fields, the inclusion of a Community Recreation Center, and development of the new 14-acre site on Route 175.

The estimated costs have been based on historical data. However, in recent years construction costs have risen significantly, in part due to the increased demand for such basic commodities as concrete, steel, copper, and aluminum. This volatility makes it very difficult to predict the cost of projects that may not be started for many years. Even without this complication, many of the estimates will likely be too low, while others may be too high.
Implementation

Implementation of individual projects will be at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and the local sponsor. The list of Proposed Projects should therefore be viewed as a “menu” of options for consideration. As before, the administration should prioritize the projects by evaluating their relative importance, determining potential sources of funding, and considering logical construction sequencing. These priorities should be reevaluated from time to time to be sure they continue to reflect the College’s changing needs.

The consultant recommends that the Trustees and the sponsor grant the administration substantial latitude in the implementation of individual projects to be sure the overall objectives of the Facilities Master Plan Update are met.
## Proposed Budgets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Costs</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Construction Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>35% Contingency, Fees &amp; Escalation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total Project Cost</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health &amp; Safety</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Energy Conservation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletic Fields</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New athletic complex including lighted soccer/lacrosse field with synthetic turf; lighted baseball field with synthetic turf; softball field with synthetic turf; relocated tennis courts (6); and relocated basketball courts (2)</td>
<td>$8,060,000</td>
<td>$2,821,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Recreation Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new 50,000 sf two-story building with field house, running track, ticket office, concessions area, locker rooms, classrooms, offices, and pressbox</td>
<td>14,800,000</td>
<td>5,180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site Improvements</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking expansion and realignment to support the new athletic complex; infrastructure improvements to the Route 175 site including bridges to campus; security enhancements; energy efficient lighting</td>
<td>4,405,000</td>
<td>1,541,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children's Learning Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate former Dental Clinic in Ferrante Hall for the Children's Learning Center</td>
<td>1,527,450</td>
<td>534,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gordon Student Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare Program Study of Coulter Library</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health &amp; Physical Education Building</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate the current Children's Learning Center for a Fitness Center; renovate the current Fitness Center for circulation and a Hall of Fame; renovate offices and locker rooms; provide pool dehumidification system</td>
<td>1,650,000</td>
<td>577,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relocate President's Suite</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocate President's Suite</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>262,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multi-Purpose Performance Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate former Lean Manufacturing space in Whitney Hall for 200-seat flexible recital hall</td>
<td>765,000</td>
<td>267,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepare new Facilities Master Plan in 2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare new Facilities Master Plan in 2012</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology Improvements</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand open computing laboratory, provide new testing room and Training Room, and consolidate IT offices in Coulter Library</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>262,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upgrade computer monitors to flat panel displays</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade computer monitors to flat panel displays</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>199,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upgrade Biology Laboratories (4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade Biology Laboratories (4)</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus-wide energy projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus-wide energy projects</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mawhinney Hall Renovations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate 1st floor South and 3rd floor South</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate former &quot;pit&quot; area on ground floor to create University Center for OCC's upper division partners</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>87,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expand Quad Café</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Quad Café</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coulter Library</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate building as recommended by the Program Study</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
<td>4,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coyne Hall</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade the elevator and continue renovating the building as recommended in the 2002 Facilities Master Plan</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Public Safety Training Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new 25,000 square foot building for integrated academic and community facility</td>
<td>6,250,000</td>
<td>2,187,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovations at Onondaga</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate former Unity Church to provide a &quot;real world&quot; venue for students in the Hospitality and Culinary Arts programs</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct new OCC North campus</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new OCC North campus</td>
<td>6,500,000</td>
<td>2,275,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct Nature Center on Route 175 property</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct Nature Center on Route 175 property</td>
<td>725,000</td>
<td>253,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construct new Academic/Administrative Building on East Quad</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct new Academic/Administrative Building on East Quad</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
<td>4,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gordon Student Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3 renovations to bookstore, Culinary Arts, Bistro, and current Music Department</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>1,050,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Whitney Hall</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Renovate space for Music Department</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>1,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residence Halls Community Center</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovate space for Music Department</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>262,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Maintenance Projects - various buildings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Maintenance Projects - various buildings</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Furnishings and Equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnishings and Equipment</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepare new Facilities Master Plan in 2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare new Facilities Master Plan in 2012</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals for all Projects**: $95,877,450 $33,347,108 $129,224,558

*May be covered in part by existing capital funds.*