Chapter 1

Introduction & Overview
I. INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The University of Portland has been operating a college on the North Portland bluff overlooking the Willamette River since the early 1900’s. Founded in 1901, it is the only school in Oregon to offer a college of arts and sciences, a graduate school, and nationally accredited programs in schools of business, education, engineering, and nursing.

Since 1960, the University has been guided by a series of conditional use master plans (“CUMS”). The current CUMS was approved in 1994 and has been amended twice, once in 1999 and once in 2004. The 2004 amendment extended the duration of the existing CUMS to 2014 or until all of the development proposed in the plan was complete. Both the 1999 and 2004 amendments were necessary to permit development that was not anticipated in the years preceding each amendment. Because the development was not specifically described in each previous amendment, the University was required to go through a Type III CUMS process before construction could occur. While the current CUMS does not expire for at least 2 years, the University is now embracing several defining moments that require not another amendment to the existing CUMS, but instead a new plan that will propel the University into its next significant era of providing unmatched educational programs to future national and worldwide leaders.

Defining Moment: The Riverfront

In 2008, the University acquired a 35-acre property along the Willamette River known as the “Triangle Park Property.” This strategic acquisition was critical to the central and primary mission of the University in several ways:

1. The University can now expand its campus to serve its higher education objective in a manner that continues to respect the single family neighborhood to the north across Willamette Blvd.

2. With the purchase of the riverfront property, the University becomes an environmental steward of the land with plans to both remediate existing contamination on the site, caused by another, and to restore natural resources on the site.

3. The University can use the river campus to expand its programs in environmental science and create opportunities for hands-on application of science curriculum that will help future generations.

The University is currently precluded from developing the land within the riverfront property because the purchase was not anticipated in the last master plan amendment. The property is therefore not included in the current CUMS boundary. This application requests a boundary expansion to include the entire 35-acre riverfront parcel.
Defining Moment: McCormick and Baxter Site ("M&B")

The M&B Site is immediately north of and adjacent to the UP riverfront campus. The M&B Site is under a federal and state remediation order. The reuse plan for M&B is for open space and recreational uses. The University currently has no ownership interest in the M&B Site. However, it is possible in the future that the University could develop uses on the M&B Site consistent with the reuse plan. These uses also have the potential of being shared uses with other public agencies such as the Portland Parks and Recreation Department or other entities.

Portland City Code (“PCC”) 33.820.020 requires the University to obtain a CUMS approval for the entire University use, including portions of the use on lands where the use is allowed by right and all affiliates on or abutting the site. Accordingly, if the University can potentially envision using or developing the M&B Site with University uses, it must first include that site in its CUMS boundaries. Such inclusion does not imply any present control over the M&B Site by the University. Rather, under PCC 33.820.020, “the conditional use master plan may encompass lands not presently controlled by the use. The plan will not take effect for those lands until they are under the control of the applicant.” Therefore, the University must include the M&B Site in this new CUMS in order to avoid a major amendment to a newly approved CUMS should opportunities for University use of the M&B Site materialize in the future.

"The project offers many watershed benefits including improving the connectivity between the Willamette River and its floodplain, increasing flood storage, creating shallow water habitat, and improving floodplain habitat."

-Jocelyn Tunnard, Bureau of Environmental Services
Defining Moment: Student Enrollment

Since its founding the University has devoted itself to an education of the heart and mind that focuses on three central themes: teaching and learning, faith and formation, and service and leadership. During its 110 year history, the University has grown to a vibrant intellectual community of 3,800 students world-wide, 321 professors, and more than 450 staff and administrative members.

The University’s academic excellence has been recognized widely in recent years. For the past 17 consecutive years the University has been ranked among the top 10 schools in the West by U.S. News and World Report. The University is ranked first nationally among its peers in the number of its graduates who have earned Fulbright scholarships. It ranks first in the nation for the number of alumni who are currently serving in the Peace Corps. And in August 2011, the University was named the #1 school in the country among 553 “master’s degree-granting universities” for its commitment to community service in Washington Monthly’s annual college rankings.

In 2011 Bloomberg Business Week named the University the top school in Oregon for “return on investment” and estimates that the 30-year net return on investment for graduates is $779,600. Parade Magazine rated the University an “A-List” college for its programs in health sciences (nursing) and in business and accounting. For both categories, only 25 schools nationally were recognized.

The University attracts and enrolls top tier students. In the fall of 2011, the University shattered its record for student applications for the sixth consecutive year with 12,204 – a 30% increase from the 9,366 submissions received just two years ago in 2009. The number of applications received has nearly doubled over the prior five years, from 6,355 applicants in 2006. From that recent applicant pool the University welcomed the Class of 2015, the most academically accomplished incoming class in University history, with an average GPA of 3.68. About 50 of those students were valedictorians of their high school graduating classes.

In 2011 Bloomberg Business Week named the University the top school in Oregon for “return on investment” and estimates that the 30-year net return on investment for graduates is $779,600. Parade Magazine rated the University an “A-List” college for its programs in health sciences (nursing) and in business and accounting. For both categories, only 25 schools nationally were recognized.

Twenty of those valedictorians were from Portland-area high schools, according to a study by The Oregonian. That success ranked the University first overall among private schools nationally in the total number of Portland-area valedictorians enrolled for Fall 2011 and fourth overall among all colleges (behind the large state schools Oregon State University, University of Oregon, and University of Washington).

Fifty incoming freshman were valedictorians of their high school class!
Twenty of those valedictorians were from Portland-area high schools.
The University’s student athletes excel both on and off the field. Soccer star Jessica Tsao and track/cross country standout Natalie Hemphill were each awarded prestigious Fulbright grants upon graduation in 2011. Tsao also was named the West Coast Conference Female Scholar Athlete of the Year for 2011, and was awarded the conference’s prestigious Post-Graduate Scholarship. Since 2004, Pilot athletes have won an incredible 11 of the 32 total Scholar Athlete of the Year and Post-Graduate Scholarship awards given by the conference. During the same period, former Pilot soccer greats Megan Rapinoe and Stephanie Cox helped lead the United States to the Women’s World Cup final in 2011, and Christine Sinclair and Sophie Schmidt played for Canada. Former Pilot point guard Erik Spoelstra ’92 coached the Miami Heat to the 2011 NBA Finals and took the NBA Championship in 2012.

This is all to say that the students are the life-blood of the University of Portland. It is these students that will determine the educational, economic, cultural and civic success of the University, and by association, the City in which we are located.

As a result, this new CUMS uses the students and their activities as a barometer of our growth, as a measure of our impact on the surrounding neighborhood and as a threshold for needed facility improvements to accommodate our neighbors and ourselves. As you will read in Chapter 3 Uses and Functions, the University proposes a new master plan based on student growth, parking, transportation and event management. A new classroom does not bring additional impacts to the University neighborhood unless that new classroom brings an increase in enrollment. This CUMS focuses on the campus activities and populations that can create off-campus impacts, specifically and comprehensively targets those impacts and presents a mitigation strategy for such impacts. Our objective is to create a new long term CUMS that brings the University certainty with its vibrant future and the community protection against unwanted or unreasonable impacts.

Since 2004, Pilot athletes have won an incredible 11 of the 32 total Scholar Athlete of the Year and Post-Graduate Scholarship awards given by the West Coast Conference.