3. SITE DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL LOCATION
The City of Corpus Christi is located on Texas coast of the Gulf of Mexico about a third of the way from the Mexican border to the Louisiana border. It is on the west side of Corpus Christi Bay opposite Mustang Island in the coastal barrier island chain. Refer to Illustration No. 3.1 CORPUS CHRISTI BAY AREA.

The University is on the edge of the southwest side of Corpus Christi Bay and is about six and a half miles southeast of downtown Corpus Christi. The University campus is on an island of no more than 240 acres in area.

Illustration No. 3.1 CORPUS CHRISTI BAY AREA

THE ISLAND
The Island on which the University’s campus is located is known historically as Ward Island. Between the mainland and the peninsula of the U.S. Naval Air Station, the Island helps define the Cayo del Oso, a small estuary bay adjacent to Corpus Christi Bay. The Island approximates a 3 : 4 : 5 triangle with the long side (a little over a mile in length) along the edge of Corpus Christi Bay. Ocean Drive is on the north edge of the Island along the bay. Ocean Drive is four lanes wide, and it goes along the edge of the bay from the Island all the way into downtown Corpus Christi. The maximum width of the Island is approximately 2,900 feet or a little over a half of a mile. The approximate land area of the Island campus is 240 acres.
**THE MAINLAND**
The City of Corpus Christi is on the mainland and surrounds the Cayo del Oso. Immediately across the bridge to the west of the Island is a largely residential area with two golf courses (one private and one public), a major waste water treatment plant, a large public park with a sports complex, and a public nature preserve on the edge of the Cayo del Oso. Not too distant from the Island to the south is the South Padre Island Drive freeway (S.P.I.D.). To the south of S.P.I.D. is a considerable area of undeveloped land.

**ELSEWHERE**
Corpus Christi is a compact metropolitan region in a unique coastal location. As such there are potential off-Island locational opportunities for the University elsewhere in the region. Two obvious ones are the central business district, and the north side of the bay where the U.S Naval Station at Ingleside is slated for decommissioning.

**EXISTING CAMPUS PLAN**
The existing campus plan is the *Campus Master Plan 1991—2010 Corpus Christi State University* with a subsequent update done by the Physical Plant Department of the University in 1999.

Illustration No. 3.2  CAMPUS MASTER PLAN 1991-2010

**ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES**

**EXISTING**
The *Campus Master Plan 1991—2010* specified thirteen organizing principles to which the University has adhered in its subsequent development. Those principles are as follows:

- Recognize the edge of the island
- Engage the water
- Enhance the axis from water to water
- Develop spatial variety along the spine
• Develop logical landscape zones including natural habitats
• Establish and adhere to campus zones
• Maintain vehicular zones
• Protect pedestrian zone
• Develop campus core
• Develop housing on the Cayo del Oso edge of the island
• Promote a sense of arrival
• Provide for ease of service
• Provide for emergency and maintenance access

The 1991 plan and its organizing principles should be maintained. Of particular importance are the hurricane survivability principles specified in the plan. They are as follows:

Building uses can be categorized as:
A. Functions whose destruction present a risk of life or catastrophic threat. These uses include dormitories and biological research laboratories.
B. Functions whose damage will have substantial long term negative consequences. These include computer facilities, research laboratories and the library collection.
C. Functions whose damage will not have disastrous consequences. These include classrooms, offices and meeting rooms.

To protect from flooding caused by severe storms, the following floor elevations are recommended. All are noted in feet above mean sea level (“msl”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Category</th>
<th>Habitable Space</th>
<th>Sensitive Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>16 feet</td>
<td>20 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>13 feet</td>
<td>15 feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In practice the University has exceeded the 1991 plan’s Category B hurricane protection criteria. For most of the major buildings the University has established a first floor level of approximately 17 feet above msl. If a minimum floor-to-floor height is 14 feet, then the second floor elevation would be at about 31 feet above msl or approximately the floor level of the existing bridges at the Center for Instruction building. This elevation exceeds considerably the Category A elevation in the 1991 plan.

NEW
There are several new organizing principles that should be added to the Campus Master Plan Update 2007.

• Site all buildings to have public views of the water from upper levels. (For the most part, the water can’t be seen at ground level.)
• Encourage a “second level” (31’ msl) of pedestrian access with bridges and verandas overlooking courtyards.
• Where possible build new buildings at 31’ msl. and put parking decks below them.
• Develop east / west axes crossing the north / south spine.
• Consider a multi-site campus having specialty remote locations with the Island remaining as the Main Campus.
• Keep all undergraduate academic buildings and undergraduate housing on the Island.
• Acquire close-by “off-Island” land for those functions that need much space and don’t have to be on the Island such as athletics, parking, and storage.
Consider a pedestrian / bike bridge across the Cayo del Oso from the nature preserve to the Island that might also include:
- Study cabanas
- Wildlife viewing platforms
- Gray water pipeline

Develop parking garages on the Island.

Develop a satellite parking system on the mainland that would:
- Include a transit center with coffee shop, meeting rooms, study lounge, etc.
- “Brand” the facilities

Develop Design Guidelines and a process for enforcing them.
- Step taller buildings back to be sure of filtered sunlight in courtyards
- Develop a “brand” architecture element (one-story probably) of “Neo-Tropical” or “Neo-Coast Guard” style for entry monum ents, transit centers, cabanas, student housing, etc.

Establish an official “board walk” edge facing the Cayo del Oso that serves as the building service access also. It could be a geometric arc that contrasts with the organic trail. The board walk could be taller than the trail with space between the two filled with native riparian plants. Wildlife viewing and study cabanas can be located south of and adjacent to the boardwalk.

Encourage development of the east side of campus and use of the second entrance.

**DESIRED PROJECTS**

The University has established the following list of major facility needs that have been verified by this study and which forms the root of new development planning. With the exception of the existing list of immediate projects, this list of facilities was derived from extensive interviews and several university community-wide forums. The administration has established the list of immediate projects. Financing of the immediate projects is proposed to be through the use of Tuition Revenue Bonds.

**TUITION REVENUE BONDS (TRB) Immediate Projects**

The University’s administration through its usual planning processes has determined this list of most needed projects, which are proposed as facilities to be funded with Tuition Revenue Bonds.

- Wellness Center
- College of Nursing and Health Science Building
- College of Business Academic Facility
- Performing Arts Center, Phase 2
- Library Expansion, Phase 2

**OTHER NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS**

Community forums were held on campus at the University at the beginning of the campus plan updating process. The following list of projects (buildings, spaces, facilities, etc.) was derived from those forums.

- Central Plant Expansion and Installation of Outer Loop
- Building Service Access System
- Visual Arts Studio Space
- School of Music Building
  - Listening spaces
  - Performing spaces
- Field Research Launching Facility
- Hard Science and Computer Science Laboratories
- Science Research Laboratories
- Fishing pier
• Bird Viewing Platform on Trail
• Landscape Ocean Drive
• Faculty Center
• More Student Housing
• East / West Spine to Connect west Campus Zone
• Improved Wayfinding Signage
• Expansion of University Center
• Additional Playing Fields
• Natatorium
• Track
• Baseball Stadium
• Field House
• Parking Garages
• Gray Water Supply
• Visitor Center
• Beach and Trail Cabanas
• Guest Scientist Housing
• Hotel and Conference Complex
• Gymnasium and Fitness Center
• Faculty Offices
• Improved Surface Drainage
• Downtown Student Housing
• Cafeteria
• Multi Cultural Center
• Amphitheater
• Day Care Facility
• Bike Parking
• Greek Housing
• Business Incubator Facility
• Gathering Spaces
• Covered and Protected Walkways
• Storm Water Runoff Irrigation System
• Alternative Energy Generation

SUMMARY
The limits of the Island University are considerable. Careful stewardship of the buildable area of the Island is necessary. However, the potential of its various metropolitan / regional surroundings readily available on the mainland provide unique and considerable opportunities for the University to grow beyond the limits of the Island.

Recommendations:
1. Continue to honor the existing Organizing Principles from the Campus Master Plan 1991--2010.
2. Incorporate new Organizing Principles of this plan update for 2006, in future development.
3. Carefully consider which functions must remain on the Island and which may be located elsewhere.