



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas A & M University—Corpus Christi campus shares essentially the same general concerns and physical requirements as other peer universities in terms of capacity, services, urban organization, sense of place, student life, and community interaction. These requirements are the basis of the campus master plan. But TAMU-CC is very different from others in that it is on an island. The size of the island (approximately 240 acres) is a very real limit to traditional growth.

With the limitation of enrollment at the main Texas A & M University campus in College Station, enrollment in the other Texas A & M System universities has grown rapidly. At TAMU-CC the projected enrollment growth is evident in these figures:

2006	Fall enrollment	8,585 students
2020	Projected enrollment	16,000 students

The island is sufficient for a university of its current and near-term size with the exception of the large area requirements of parking and athletics. The 1991 master plan proposed a maximum enrollment capacity of 12,500. That is still a reasonable assertion due to the capacity limitation of the intersection and bridge crossing to the island. To achieve the 16,000 enrollment goal, some of the future parking and much of the growth in housing and student life will necessarily have to be located off the island. Also, to reach the 12,500 capacity on the island, parking garages will be required. Without garages, the practical limitation is 10,000 students. A carefully executed plan will accommodate the growth of the University off-island even while it carefully perpetuates the image of the Island University.

The University’s time and place has given it a mission of environmental consciousness. This awareness has become an important part of the institutional culture. The Plan supports environmental instruction and sensitivity in the build-out of functional requirements. Enhancement of bird habitats and protection of the riparian edge are supported by the plan at the same time promoting observation facilities.

The campus is organized around an axis or “spine” that crosses the island perpendicular to its straight edge along Corpus Christi Bay. Ocean Drive is located on that edge of the island. A grid or urban street pattern is growing to the east and west of the axis.

A central plant with a strategically located loop distribution system and other utilities serves the campus well, allowing for ease of construction for new facilities. Expansion of the loops and the central plant is required to serve the growing campus.

The campus is a pedestrian zone, but it is accessed by cars. The cars are “stored” in two clusters of large parking lots on each side of the campus core. Additional parking on the island will be accomplished by either parking garages for maximum capacity or one additional surface lot for limited growth. Access into the campus core from the parking lots is along landscaped walkways at several locations on both sides. Additional walks with enhanced shading and landscaping, plus potentially a system of second-level walkways, are proposed to increase the pedestrian-friendly character of the compact campus. There is public bus service at the Ocean Drive end of the axis, but this must be expanded in capacity and service and more bus stops added around the campus.

The open space of the University is to a large degree the water of Corpus Christi Bay on one side and of the Cayo del Oso on the other. Its landscape consists of rows of sabal palm trees and mesquite trees on the outside of the campus core and a unique, lush tropical plantings over the



entirety of the core in courtyards and along the major walkways. This landscape is a signature feature of the campus along with its island status.

The buildings of the campus tend to be stark and severe on the outside with open and inviting facades facing inward on the axis. The exterior starkness is relieved by the palm and mesquite tree plantings and by landscape that escapes from the axis by way of the evolving grid. There is a harmony of color and materials without monotony. The materials are sand colored concrete and brick with terra cotta brick for accents and occasional blue, green, and white accents to display the University's colors.

The University presently has a deficit of 259,000 square feet of E&G space. It will also need approximately 1,000,000 additional square feet of all types of space to provide for the growth in enrollment. The intent is to increase density on the island by infilling new buildings around the expanding urban grid pattern and by replacing obsolete, smaller buildings. The Plan depicts opportunities for 14 new buildings in the academic core, some of which are larger replacements for obsolete structures, 3 new research facilities of which 2 are much larger replacements, an enlarged administrative support facility, 3 parking garages, and up to 4 housing facilities (however, these may well be located off-island).

The University has successfully unified its functional mission with its architecture and campus plan to a marked degree. This has greatly enhanced the delivery of its educational services as indicated by the demand for its services.