



U of W Outlines New Master Plan

THE WINDSOR STAR

By Dan Lajoie | Tuesday June 19, 2013

The University of Windsor's Board of Governors has approved a new master plan to establish its vision for the next 50 years and to position the school to be more competitive.

And University President Alan Wildeman said the first step in bringing those visions to life has already been taken, with the Board of Governors approving plans to award a design and build contract for the development of a new Welcome Centre.

The conceptual plan, released to help mark the University's 50th anniversary, is designed to guide development for the next 50 years and to "enrich the student and community experience," according to a news release that accompanied the announcement. It is expected to work in conjunction with the institution's Campus Transformation Plan.

Wildeman said it took a year to develop the plan. Although the vision is to span a half century, he added, that some of the ideas could come to fruition sooner, citing the initiative for the Welcome Centre, to be built near the northwest corner of the campus at Sunset Avenue and Wyandotte Street "as the first tangible result of the plan."

Construction of the centre, to act as the "front door" of the university, is expected to begin this fall within a budget of \$8 million. The structure, at 20,000 square feet, will house the administrative offices of student admissions and recruitment, alumni affairs, public the offices of affairs and communications and a bookstore kiosk.

Awarding of the contact is expect this August with construction to follow beginning in the fall and completion scheduled for the end of 2014.

"It was a great opportunity to develop a vision for the future," said President Alan Wildeman. "We held a number of cafe (meetings) with different people who were invited to blue sky their ideas for the campus. We wanted to develop a stronger sense of what the campus is all about."

The result, he said, is a plan will determine how spaces between the buildings will be used, will act as a guide for future decisions regarding the aesthetics of new structures and will identify Key projects, to be undertaken as funding opportunities permit.

The university hired +VG Architects, the Ventin Group Ltd., to conduct consultations with the administration, faculty members, students, the Board of Governors to develop the new plan. Those sessions resulted in recommendations that included new pedestrian pathways, enhanced lighting, cultural displays and gathering places with more seating.

Other projects could include a landscaped pedestrian bridge over the railway tracks to link the central campus to the Human Kinetics and sports facilities.

Also the plans might see the residence quad, near Wyandotte Street and Huron Church consolidated into new buildings located on Sunset "to create a village atmosphere."



Paul Sapounzi, a partner in the architectural firm, said: “Careful attention was paid to ensure accessibility to all and to incorporate car-free areas, locate parking at the campus perimeter and accommodate future technology such as hybrid vehicles and transit”

+VG Architects is a full-service architectural firm offering new design, expansions and heritage restorations for cultural, educational, municipal, justice, healthcare, residential and recreational facilities. Our staff of +50 operates in four offices in Ontario, in Brantford, Kitchener, Toronto and Belleville.

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