1.0 STRATEGIC ASSET VALUE ANALYSIS

Objectives

Nationwide, colleges and universities recognize the important role that campus life facilities play in meeting institutional goals and enhancing campus life. On many campuses, these facilities are used as strategic assets. In order to help achieve enrollment goals and address other priorities related to student recruitment and retention, the university can use campus life facilities to develop a comprehensive campus community that raises and maintains student satisfaction.

B&D acknowledges the administration’s objective to enrich residential facilities that will serve as strategic assets and enhance enrollment management goals by improving recruitment, retention, and satisfaction among students. Although many factors impact the University’s ability to meet institutional goals, the following report provides evidence that carefully planned “quality of life” facilities are important components of the overall strategy. As a result, B&D identified Montana State University Billings’s strategic goals with the Athletics and Auxiliaries Master Plan Project Committee and reviewed the University’s mission to contribute to the realization of these objectives.

Methodology

B&D uses a “Destination Value” approach to facility development to respond to the constant challenge of assuring that campus life improvements respond to the University’s strategic objectives. More specifically, B&D proceeded with the understanding that:

“All of the project objectives must be expressed in specific terms that demonstrate their relevance to furthering the school’s mission, reinforcing campus values, responding to institutional commitments and responsibilities and improving the school’s competitive position in the market.”

B&D’s approach required a working relationship with Montana State University Billings and MSUB administrators to develop a detailed understanding of the institution’s mission, relevant stakeholders, customer groups, and strategic project objectives which best serve that mission.

The Strategic Asset Value matrix and commentary can be found in Exhibit A.

Summary of Findings

As the first step in assessing the market for improved campus life facilities and programs at MSUB, B&D identified project objectives for the purpose of evaluating their conformance with the institutional objectives. These objectives are important in forming facility recommendations and determining operational parameters because they ultimately are the standard by which demand for the project will be determined.
Priority Order of Space Needs / Project Concepts

- Auxiliary spaces are for all MSUB students, however, the needs of MSUB students vary based on the variety of demographic groups on the campuses. Non-traditional students and commuter students at the College of Technology present different needs and opportunities than incoming first-time freshmen. Any concept developed must be able to meet the needs of multiple groups of students or be of separate projects meeting those needs.

- Spaces that are newly constructed or renovated should be flexible for a variety of users and programs.

- The integration across campus of multiple users in the same building should continue within any proposed concept. A division between some of the recreational fitness and athletic spaces may be required due to the heavy demands placed on existing facilities by both populations.

- Where possible, opportunities to create space solutions with minimal budget impact to maximum effect are desired. Short-term solutions may provide the University with time to plan greater long-term athletic and auxiliary improvements.

Architectural & Construction Quality

- Improvements to athletic and auxiliary facilities on campus should produce a “wow” factor in students and patrons. Extravagant designs are not needed, but sufficient resources should be applied to the design of spaces to create an appealing aesthetic that is also highly efficient for program use.

- Construction quality can vary depending on campus location and visibility to the surrounding community. Campus edge facilities may require a higher cost per square foot budget due to location, and housing located proximate to residential areas should mountain contextually appropriate design and density.

Target Markets / Campus Locations

- Given the multiple points for students and the difficulty in establish a new centralized gathering point; some auxiliary components may need to be decentralized across campus. Housing and Food service for the general student is the most likely space for decentralization. The infrastructure currently in place for athletics, recreation, and union services necessitates keeping their current position on campus.
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• Services are to be provided to all students, however, special focus should be given to creating spaces and services appealing to international students, non-traditional students, students with families, and first generation students. These groups have specific needs that can all be addressed in one location on campus but effective signage and marketing is required for high utilization rates.

Operating Paradigm / Financial Performance

• Historically MSUB has been a risk averse campus. The improvements projected for the athletics and auxiliary facilities will require a more risk tolerable approach in terms of debt coverage ratios and financial expectations.

• Auxiliary enterprises should generate more revenue for themselves and the campus. Initial investment in improving spaces and marketing of services may be required to increase revenue collections.

• The University should be viewed as a partner on these improvements and support fundraising and other donor support.