

## Investing in Our Core Resources Sub-Committee Recommended Goals and Initiatives

### I. Introduction- Investing in Our Core Resources

As Western Carolina University prepares for growth, it is imperative that we ensure a readiness of our core resources. Specifically, we must end a dependence on one-time money and identify other financial resources for stability. We must update our current technology infrastructure needs for the campus and prepare for the future. In addition, we must examine our current physical infrastructure in view of other strategic directions, sustainability, and the health and safety of faculty, staff, and students. Finally, for efficiency and effectiveness we must examine and refine our current business practices and procedures. This strategic direction positions the university to implement the other strategic directions. In other words, the goals and initiatives below help to secure a solid foundation for the academic mission and service to the region.

### II. Strategic Goal 1: Ensure fiscal stability by creating sustainable funding models.

Rationale: Western Carolina University has been operating in some areas, especially in information technology, with one-time or end of the year money for on-going operational expenses. Information Technology, for instance, has a 1.6 million dollar operational deficit as a result. To ensure fiscal stability, we can grow enrollment, raise tuition and fees, find other funding sources, reallocate resources, and/or become more efficient.

*Strategic Initiative 1.1: Reallocate budget to eliminate operational dependence on one-time funding.*

*Strategic Initiative 1.2: Identify and launch or revitalize programmatic areas or services with the most potential for region need and enrollment growth while identifying and eliminating low performing, redundant, or inefficient programs and services that do not represent high areas of need or potential growth.*

*Strategic Initiative 1.3: Develop detailed plans for targeted enrollment growth and ensure the availability of funding for said growth while balancing enrollment growth/fees with tuition rates.*

*Strategic Initiative 1.4: Maintain a favorable bond rating.*

*Strategic Initiative 1.5: Create and execute a plan for more aggressive grant funding and fund raising and for identifying other revenue sources such as summer revenue opportunities, certificate programs and cooperative education to reduce dependency on state funding and tuition and fee increases.*

*Strategic Initiative 1.6: Develop a task force and/or relationships at the federal, state, and local levels to be involved and active in researching and analyzing developments and advocating successfully at the appropriate levels.*

**Strategic Goal 2: Increase Information Technology capabilities and capacity that are required to meet the goals of the university, instructional/research needs and expectations, business process improvements, university growth, and ensure business continuity.**

Rationale: Information Technology has become an integral and critical component for curriculum delivery and university business process operations. The Division of Information Technology is currently critically underfunded with respect to operational requirements and is stretched in its ability to provide future technology needs.

*Strategic Initiative 2.1: Establish a sustainable funding model for technology which encompasses operational, replacement, university growth, and strategic initiative components.*

*Strategic Initiative 2.2: Implement capacity planning, management, and implementation processes to ensure anticipated and necessary information technology needs can be met to include both people resources and technologies. (For example these technologies could include: bandwidth, storage, servers, digital media, software licenses, wireless networking, wired networking, cloud services, etc.)*

*Strategic Initiative 2.3: Establish a multiyear technology capability planning process that is revisited annually, that encompasses technologies to enable academic instructional and research plans, needs, and directions; that improves university business processes and provides the infrastructure needed to meet faculty, staff, and student technology usage.*

*Strategic Initiative 2.4: Assess the Information Technology disaster recovery plan against university instructional and business requirements and define a plan for addressing variances.*

**Strategic Goal 3: Perform an update of the existing University Master Plan utilizing a comprehensive and holistic process to incorporate current strategic directions and evaluation of applicable core resources; this plan should include growth assessment, capital construction placement, renovation needs, and campus design standards.**

Rationale: Previous Master Planning efforts (Initial Plan 1999 and update in 2006), primarily reviewed potential University growth, its impact and consideration of associated new facility placement and renovation required. Now, more specific thought needs to be given to other critical items such as physical infrastructure, emerging technology requirements, current space utilization and optimization, sustainability practices, campus safety and security, and transportation.

*Strategic Initiative 3.1: Engage a third party consultant to provide a comprehensive facility condition assessment for existing buildings and infrastructure (utilities, information technology, roads, etc.) which will include a detailed list of deferred maintenance, required code updates, and life safety improvements as well as a cost and prioritization of each item.*

*Strategic Initiative 3.2: Collect and use comprehensive space utilization data to assign new space and to evaluate (and where appropriate, reallocate) existing space in accordance with strategic priorities.*

*Strategic Initiative 3.3: Prepare a campus Sustainability Plan that incorporates the strategies outlined in the UNC Sustainability Policy adopted October 2009 and includes systematic integration of sustainability principles and energy efficiency practices throughout the institution's operations, processes, administration, teaching, research and engagement.*

*Strategic Initiative 3.4: Develop a campus Safety and Security Plan that includes a review of existing procedures and structures associated with campus safety, updates the existing occupational health and safety plan, identifies required staffing levels for public safety agencies to address the needs associated with an increased enrollment, identifies and provides adequate awareness resources to reduce crime on campus, and provides an extensive facilities review to identify potentially hazardous areas.*

*Strategic Initiative 3.5: Develop a Campus Parking and Transportation plan including, but not limited to, future parking needs due to enrollment growth, vehicular routes, shuttle service study, bike routes, and pedestrian routes with a focus on accessibility.*

**Strategic Goal 4: Improve business efficiencies by encouraging units to collaboratively reengineer business processes and to leverage enterprise tools that shorten cycle time, lower labor components, eliminate expendables and foster an atmosphere of continual assessment and improvement of processes.**

Rationale: The institution would be better served to have its business practices better connected. This improvement should result in increased efficiency across the institution and lead to a more sustainable institution through, for example, a decrease in the amount of printed documentation generated and an increase in available physical space within offices that house large numbers of physical files.

*Strategic Initiative 4.1: Review the use of expendables, including printed documentation, and where reasonable, cut such usage and/or transition to digital alternatives.*

*Strategic Initiative 4.2: Identify and eliminate unnecessary processes while collaborating across units and improve efficiency and sustainability by leveraging existing enterprise solutions. (For example: SharePoint, Blackboard, Blackboard Analytics, Digital Measures, OnBase, etc.)*

*Strategic Initiative 4.3: Continue to identify, support and evolve enterprise solutions in order to continuously improve business process efficiencies.*

### **III. Conclusion:**

The Investing in Our Core Resources Subcommittee has listed our four goals in what we consider priority order. This strategic direction and its four goals serve to facilitate the creation of a secure foundation for the rest of the strategic directions. However, we feel that Goal One, “Ensure fiscal stability by creating sustainable funding models,” is the most critical. Western Carolina’s dependence on one- time funding for operational expenses is not a sustainable funding model and creates tremendous anxiety each year as units hope for these funds to pay operational expenses. We recognize that hard choices must be made concerning the reallocation of existing funds but economic uncertainty and the need to provide stability and the resources needed to provide for our students make these hard choices necessary. Without stable funding models, we cannot upgrade our aging information technology infrastructure nor use technology to improve our business processes and efficiencies. At the same time, we must use our creative energy and research to seek alternative funding sources.

Anna McFadden, Chair

Fred Alexander

Lauren Bishop

Shea Browning

Craig Fowler

Larry Hammer

Alison Joseph

Bill Kwochka

Steve Lillard

David McCord

Bill Perry

John Sherlock

Joe Walker

Nancy Wike

John Williams