

Woodland High School Community Design Symposium Summary

On Saturday, January 14, 2012, the Woodland School District held a community Design Symposium to help gather community input for the proposed new high school project. The symposium ran from 9:00 AM to approximately 1:45 PM and was attended by approximately 60 members of the Woodland community, school staff, and all five members of the District's Board of Directors. The symposium was facilitated by:

- Superintendent Michael Green
- Doug Nichols, ESD 112, Program Manager
- Chris Lilley, Principal in Charge, McGranahan Architects
- Michael McGavock, Programmer, McGranahan Architects
- Darrin Filand, Lead Designer, McGranahan Architects
- Tom Dennis, Civil Engineer, HDJ Design Group

The symposium had three primary objectives:

- Understand community priorities and culture with respect to education and facilities; what will the community support?
- Learn what the community needs to know to make an informed decision on the bond measure.
- Gather input on global concepts that will drive development on the site.

INTRODUCTION

The symposium began with a welcoming statement and introductions by Superintendent Green. That was followed by a presentation of general background on the project; including why a new high school is needed and what has been done to date. The introductory and background information was followed by a brief presentation by Michael McGavock about current trends in school design. The symposium then moved into group activities.

BREAKOUT SESSION 1: BRAINSTORMING

The first breakout activity was a brainstorming session about the potential scope of the new school. This session was facilitated by Michael McGavock. The attendees were broken into small teams of 5-8 people. Five leading questions were introduced one by one to the group at large. After each question was introduced the teams were given 5 minutes to discuss the topic and write down any and all responses their team came up with on index cards that were provided. After the discussion period the cards were collected for use later in the symposium (see breakout session 3) and the next question was introduced.

Teams were given the instruction to include all ideas, even contrary ideas from the same group, rather than trying to reach a consensus. Responses ranged from very conceptual ideas to very specific and direct recommendations. They also ranged from single word responses to full declarative statements.

The questions and the responses (verbatim) are as follows:

Question #1 – What are the greatest, most IMMEDIATE needs and program elements for the new high school?

- Ability to expand technology as needed
- Technology, set-up wiring, classroom speakers, demonstration stations
- Facilities for students not preparing for post-high school education
- Technology, learning for today’s and tomorrow’s students
- New technology and tech. spaces
- State-of-the-art technology, every student, every class
- Modernize, can have more technology, have to go to a classroom that has technology now, keep up with other districts
- Security? Close to freeway, Walmart?
- Safety – access for community
- Safety – access from outside, supervision
- Power Issues – HVAC, electrical
- Safe and large places to assemble
- Adequate access and security
- Set-up for facility to be used by community while maintaining adequate safety/security
- Security (5 cards)
- Large enough spaces for all students, current overcrowding
- Large commons area
- Space
- More space
- Bigger halls
- More restrooms
- More lockers
- Student capacity
- Addition of classrooms (size), great spaces (size)
- Current traffic congestion at present shop
- Transportation issues
- Buses vs. car traffic
- New gym, double court
- Additional stadium on other side
- Gravel driveway along stadium fence line, pave because walkers and cars

Question #2 – What would you prioritize as the greatest FUTURE needs and program elements for the new high school?

- Multi-use, wired for growth
- Infrastructure to support future growth
- Space with room to expand
- Flexibility of use of the building for things we may not even visualize at this time
- Leave portables behind
- Build-in flexibility structurally
- Future plans, pool (footprint)
- Expand with growth for people and technology

- Existing operating system able to be updated
- Improve parking situation
- Vocational/skill center
- Voc-Ed such as robotics and nano technology
- Community education classes
- Vocational classes here
- Trade classes here
- Things skill center doesn't offer
- Athletic trainer program
- Career center
- Voc-Ed + skilled labor, training + capabilities all on campus
- Include additional ball fields?
- Include stadium in bond?
- Include performing arts center in bond?
- Include all three (fields, stadium and PAC)
- Choir, band, drama in auditorium – needs to be upgraded

Question #3 – What should be included in the new high school for COMMUNITY USE in Woodland?

- Gyms and commons spaces
- Workout gym, machines, heart monitors, weight room, etc.
- Open gym space and other meeting or gathering spaces
- Have athletic events for community sports
- Connect school and community
- Gymnasium – balcony walking track for public use
- Walking paths + physical things for student and community use
- Playground area for younger siblings
- Adult education opportunities
- Facility for LCC or Clark CC for evening classes
- Community colleges for running start, students on campus, keep students on campus
- Community school classes
- Space/areas for folks outside of the school to come present/partner with students
- Local training programs for local business and industry
- Open to local business and industry, access to students
- College classes here, safer for our students, not filling up LCC or Clark classes
- Local bank in the school – students can work and gain training
- Connect school and community – offer space for police department/satellite office
- Open the building up for FFA, 4-H, Scouts, Dance on the weekends/after school
- Outdoor education – fish and wildlife
- Upgrade shop – connect to community by making it a business
- Provide classes to the community in the facility, skill center
- Local clubs could use school spaces, Boy Scouts, Little League, etc.
- Early childhood education facility
- Community use

- Community use and access
- Community use of school grounds
- Entrance – security, how do I get to where I need to go?
- What does this \$ amount include?
- Is there a design concept?
- Explore wireless infrastructure
- Community meeting areas, multiple use with the community
- Design for easy access to community for activities
- Community library
- Community partnerships – library, etc.
- Cooperation or joint facility with Ft. Vancouver Library?
- Flexibility

Question #4 – How would you describe an appropriate DESIGN AESTHETIC for the new high school?

- Covered outdoor seating – porch like
- Plenty of natural light
- Natural lighting
- Lofty feel
- Two-story core facility for better space utilization
- 2-story school – core maybe single story but 2-story on outer edge
- Keep “small town” feel – common areas
- Central kitchen, comfortable place to eat
- Fireplace in the library/staff room
- Family friendly environment
- Entrance – is welcoming and well laid out so you know where to go
- Smaller footprint
- Campus feel
- College feel
- Defined entrance/lobby
- Inviting and warm
- Warm and welcoming, not cold or unfriendly
- Covered entrance
- Comfortable, home like
- Welcoming
- Welcome feel
- Rustic, homey
- Historical theme
- Should reflect our value of education
- Local art
- Hockinson – good example
- Simplicity, no Taj Mahal
- Pride
- Style – use Woodland, functional and quality over fancy and form

- Green building, solar heat, geo thermal, timber (reclaimed)
- Nicely landscaped
- Timber!
- Use local resources
- Log, rock – lodge like
- Warm, not sterile
- Natural materials, architecture appropriate to the area, natural wood, rock

Question #5 – What investments would you make (or not make) to get the BEST VALUE in the new high school project?

- Space – more room, advisory, media center, trades
- If we had more space it would accommodate instruction rather than drive it
- Consider viability of modular construction
- Cafeteria, classrooms, library – research cannot be done because its being used for classes
- Utilize spaces at old site for Pre-K programs for two reasons – partner and tie our preschool community to our schools, opportunities to learn early childhood education (CTE type program)
- More flexibility of physical plant
- More flexibility in Voc-Ed and lab sciences – updated and current facilities
- Enough gyms for all sports
- CTE classes near distribution area (loading zone)
- Flexibility
- Quality product
- Choose predictable and proven materials (if we buy cheap you need to always upgrade)
- Lowest total cost of ownership, cost of construction + cost of operation
- Long term investment for long term benefits
- Don't go broke saving money
- Practical
- Innovative – buy what will last but be able to adjust feel of school (may last 60 years)
- Quality vs. square feet, long term investment with low operations
- Get the core now and able to add/grow as needed
- Future expansion planning – utilities
- Build it now with everything on new site
- Don't put money with old facilities that aren't large enough even now
- Present what we need now, plan for adding arts, stadium later
- Invest now with infrastructure, HVAC/power for future growth of unused space
- Build strong for future – combination of steel/wood framing
- Energy efficient
- Lower cost to heat/cool – solar
- Lower maintenance and upkeep
- Flow of students within the building
- Temperature control
- Are we really saving \$ if we are putting some here and some there? Wouldn't it be better to put the \$ into one updated facility? Concrete examples to community on how we spend now – how long will it take to recap that?

- Efficiency in operation and maintenance
- Facility efficiency – energy use, material use
- Get school staff input on operating systems (controls, etc.)
- Utilize proven systems – construction, not new and unproven (don't be guinea pigs)

BREAKOUT SESSION 2: DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

The second break out session was facilitated by Chris Lilley and Darrin Filand. In this session the same teams were given the opportunity to be the architect. Each team was given a site plan and a kit of parts that comprise the basic building and site components of the project. After some orientation the teams were given 30 minutes to lay out the school as they thought best. Each team was then asked to present their ideas to the larger group.

There were 8 teams and they arrived at 8 very different solutions. Copies of their solutions are included in this summary. After each group had presented their ideas some general themes were identified that are common to many of the solutions and can be used to guide the eventual design thinking. Those themes included:

- Think of the stadium (whether it is built now or in the future) as a significant icon for the high school. It is universally recognized as a symbol of a high school and can be an effective way finding device for visitors. It also provides a sense of identity to the community.
- The high school building itself should be prominent in defining sense of place and identity for the campus. The message to the community should be that this is a place of education.
- The building should be adequately zoned for community use and community spaces in the building should be easily accessible.
- On-site parking should be distributed to allow for simultaneous activities and reduce congestion.
- The building needs to have a separate identity from Walmart. That can be achieved through buffering, architectural character, how the building is located on the site, or a combination of all three.
- A two-story configuration for the school is desirable.

LUNCH

During the lunch break Mark Prussing presented an overview of the financing and tax considerations for the bond.

BREAKOUT SESSION 3: PRIORITIZING

Michael McGavock facilitated the third break out session in which community members were asked to help prioritize where the district should focus their limited resources. The responses to the questions asked in the first break out session were subdivided into common themes beneath each original question. The themes were worded as action statements that could be an area of focus for the project. There were 22 themes. Each attendee was given 8 colored tape dots. They were asked to use their dots to indicate those items out of the 22 themes that they felt were the highest priority. Individuals could place their dots on 8 separate items or chose to place all 8 on one. The only limitation was that they were limited to 8. The themes and the number of “votes” they each received are listed below.

Question 1 - Immediate Needs

- Provide ample access to technology for all students and teachers, with room for growth in the future. (37)
- Improve safety and security. (13)
- Increase and improve athletic facilities. (9)
- Resolve transportation and traffic issues. (5)

Question 2 – Future Needs

- Provide appropriate facilities for vocational education. (29)
- Future flexibility. (26)
- Provide more/larger spaces (9)

Question 3 – Community Use

- Provide easy access to any facility the community may use. (25)
- Provide space in the school for local businesses and organizations. (12)
- Partner with community library. (7)
- Allow community use of athletic facilities. (6)
- Provide adult classes. (6)

Question 4 – Design Aesthetic

- Create a friendly feel. (16)
- Provide adequate natural light. (11)
- Have a natural, outdoors, feel. (8)
- Local flavor. (5)
- Have an historical character. (4)

Question 5 – Best Value

- Increase the bond scope to include more practice fields, a stadium and a performing arts center. *(Note that all three items were adjacent to one another on the boards so it was unclear how many votes were cast for including all three additional scope items vs. any one specific item).* (51)
- Build flexibility into each space. (21)
- Invest in durable, long lasting, quality materials. (18)
- Invest in energy efficiency to reduce operating costs. (13)
- Build core academics now and provide for future growth. (5)

Fully recognizing that this process is by no means a scientific sampling of the community as a whole, some trends did nonetheless emerge. The highest scoring themes across all five boards included:

- Increase the bond scope to include more practice fields, a stadium and a performing arts center. (51) *(Note that all three items were adjacent to one another on the boards so it was unclear how many votes were cast for including all three additional scope items vs. any one specific item).*
- Future flexibility. (47) *(Note that the similar theme from question 2 and 5 were combined here).*
- Provide ample access to technology for all students and teachers, with room for growth in the future. (37)
- Provide appropriate facilities for vocational education. (29)
- Provide easy access to any facility the community may use. (25)

CLOSING

Superintendent Green closed the symposium with some thoughts about what the next steps will be an thanking all the attendees for giving their time to help plan the new school.