



Insite

ENRICHING COMMUNITIES FOR LIFE

Steed | Hammond | Paul

Taken from the pages of Insite magazine

Planning to Grow

Going to college used to mean crowding your belongings into a tiny dorm room, learning to get along with roommates and sharing a bathroom with dozens of other students.

But campus life has improved considerably for today's college students. They've come to expect the comforts of home, as well as amenities that would have been considered luxuries just a few years ago—cutting-edge computer labs, well-equipped recreation centers and apartment-style dorms complete with private bathrooms. These facilities are increasingly necessary for colleges and universities as they struggle to compete in the crowded higher education marketplace.

The College of Mount St. Joseph is a small, private college near Cincinnati founded over 80 years ago by the Sisters of Charity. Mount St. Joseph's strategic plan outlines several goals. It aims to increase residential enrollment by 20 percent within five years, add six athletic teams to its sports program and reconfigure or add facilities to enhance the overall campus experience. Facilities will be updated and the campus environment will be expanded for increased learning, living and student activities.

To accomplish these goals, administrators knew they had to take a close look at existing facilities and develop a master plan for the campus, one that will meet the expectations of incoming students while supporting the school's mission and tradition.

The case for master planning

An effective campus master plan helps guide long- and short-range planning for colleges and universities. It provides a comprehensive assessment of all of the university's facilities and makes recommendations for improvements. It is a tool for establishing priorities, guiding decision-making, identifying funding and scheduling implementation. The plan helps prevent out-of-sync facilities decisions that might be implemented when a broader overall vision has not been established or communicated.

Mount St. Joseph administrators turned to 2enCompass, a joint venture between Steed Hammond Paul and Messer Construction, to develop their master plan. They selected 2enCompass because of the firm's commitment to involving constituent groups in the planning process and the firm's ability to create a vision

based in reality. They knew 2enCompass had the experience and credibility to provide a true cost to implement the master plan.

The first step in the planning process was to conduct research among the college community to determine priorities for campus facilities. This consensus-building strategy helps incorporate fresh ideas into the master plan and gives all interested parties a voice in the process.

Mount St. Joseph wants a more community feel to its campus and more natural light in its buildings.





The campus plan includes sketches and 3-D renderings of how the college will look after the improvements.

The rendering below shows how the chapel will look from the quad.



After reaching out to potential students, parents, faculty and administrators, 2enCompass was able to determine a set of values and requirements for campus improvements.

“The research helped us clearly define the issues that affect the school and its surrounding community,” said Dick Thomas, vice president of Steed Hammond Paul. “Our charge is to enhance the quality of life on Mount St. Joseph’s campus. We couldn’t be successful without the input of the people who would benefit from our efforts.”

Sister Francis Marie Thraikill, president of the college, adds, “Campus environment is an essential part of the learning and living concept here. So when it was time to talk about renovations, the entire campus community joined in a discussion about how the college’s mission can serve our current and future students.”

The Mount St. Joseph of today

The buildings on the Mount St. Joseph campus were built in the 1960s. Although well maintained, many of the facilities will soon require costly improvements to mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.

“Each day, we see evidence of the careful planning by the Sisters of Charity who envisioned and built this campus,” says Sister Francis Marie. “Now in the 21st century, we must also be stewards of the college to serve students well into the future.”

The 2enCompass research determined that students are looking for more common areas and access to social activities. The college wants to take its campus atmosphere to the next level by adding space to accommodate these requirements.

Creating a “best-in-class” school

With strategic goals already in place, 2enCompass developed a master plan to bring them to life. The short-term plan will concentrate on new athletic facilities, a community commons, renovation of residential dorms, parking and classroom upgrades. The long-term plan includes construction of a residential center and additional classroom space.

The proposed community commons will make the campus easier to navigate and give students a place to socialize with friends. New residential facilities will replace traditional dorms with more comfortable suites.

The new master plan has helped prioritize facilities needs for both the near and long term. It has also created a focus for fund-raising efforts, and will help protect and enhance the school’s financial investment in the existing facilities.

Through careful planning, Mount St. Joseph will soon have the attractive campus environment and amenities it envisioned in its strategic plan. With exciting new amenities in place, it will be able to attract top students and faculty, securing its reputation as a “best in class” choice in today’s higher education marketplace.



The long term plan also called for increased parking facilities like those shown above.