CAMPUS FORWARD
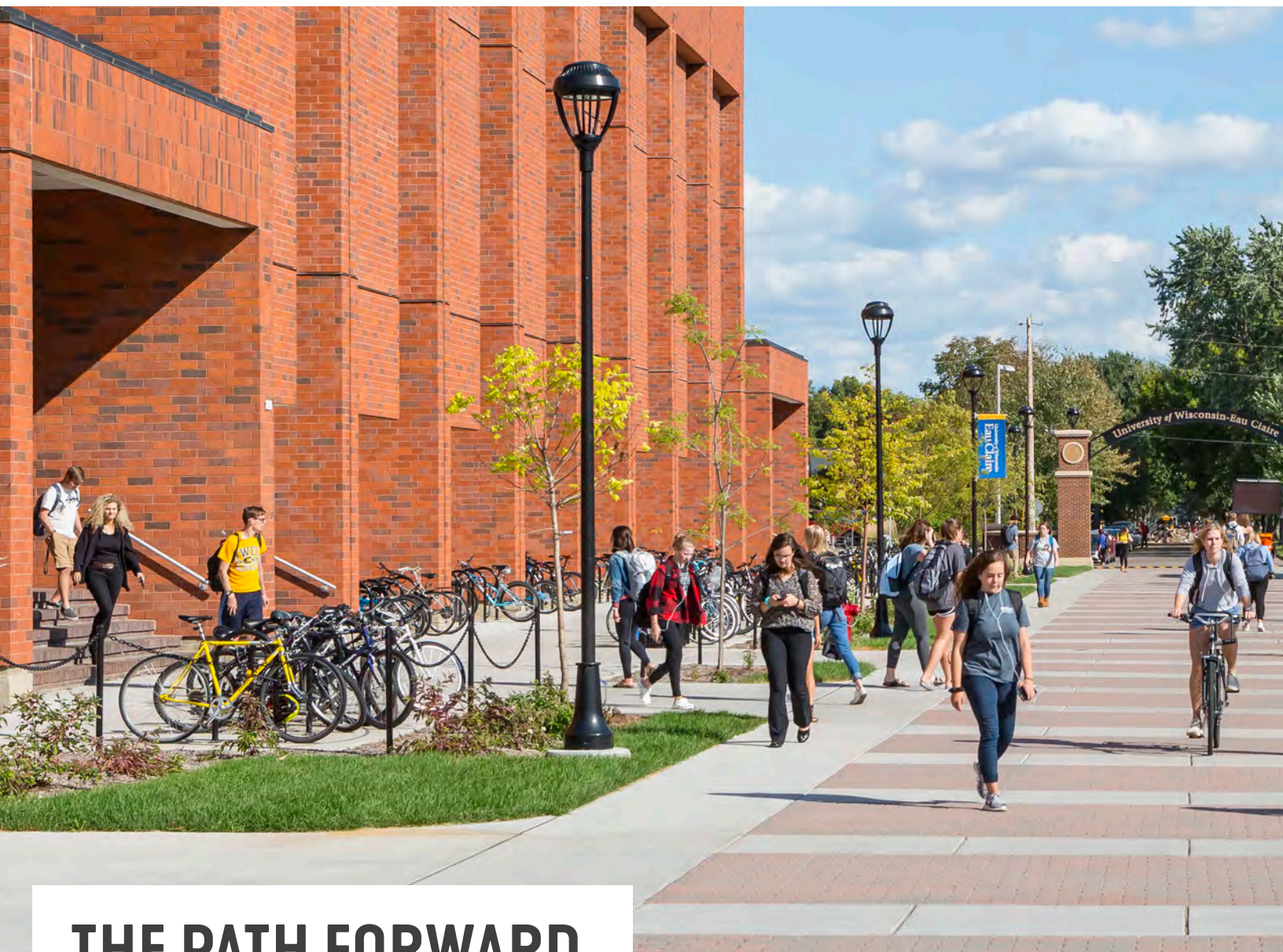
PREPARING FOR SPRING 2021 AND BEYOND

SMITHGROUP

THE PATH FORWARD

Colleges and universities across the nation are grappling with tough decisions due to the unknown long-term implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Questions around maintaining social distancing, effectively and equitably deploying hybrid learning, adjusting for fluctuating enrollment numbers, and retaining students and faculty amidst the drastic changes on campuses cannot yet be answered.

In light of the events of 2020, SmithGroup interviewed academics, administration and faculty from various institutions across the U.S.—through the lens of the CampusForward framework described on the following pages—to gain insight into how they are responding to the short and long term impacts of COVID-19. The following synthesis is intended as a starting point for further dialogue and exploration into how the physical learning environments support the continued success of higher education. Through this research, we noted that the four different institution types—Open Access, Regional Comprehensives, Research, and Private Liberal Arts—are being impacted in various ways depending on the driver of change.

"Bricks and mortar more important than ever—students on campus do better than online; experiences are the most important."

Beth Asbury, Director, Facilities Planning and Development
University of Missouri System

CAMPUSFORWARD

TRANSFORMATIVE PLACES FOR LEARNING, RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT

CampusForward is an exploration of the physical planning responses to an evolving enterprise. Our team is tracking the trajectory of higher education over the next 20 years to envision new facility platforms across all scales—campuses, buildings, individual spaces—for teaching, learning, and knowledge creation.

The 21st Century initiated a period of profound change in higher education; traditional models of funding, governance, delivery, accountability, and campus life are all being challenged. The pandemic crisis compounds these changes spotlighting threats and accelerating the need for change. Our ongoing CampusForward research serves as the framework to dive deeper into the immediate impacts and explore scenarios most likely to endure beyond Spring 2021.

Through interviews with academics, administration, and faculty from various institutions plus collaboration with Advisory Board participants and our research advisor (James Hyatt, University of California, Berkeley, Center for Studies in Higher Education), we identified the drivers of change reshaping the landscape of higher education—the Big Seven.

Since initiating this effort in 2017, we have hosted several design forums grouped by institution type—Open Access; Regional Comprehensive; Research; and Private Liberal Arts—to connect the impacts of the Big Seven Drivers of Change to the physical space solutions unique to their institutions' set of characteristics.

THE BIG SEVEN
DRIVERS OF CHANGE

DEMOGRAPHICS & CULTURE

While enrollments are in decline, the student population is increasingly diverse in ethnicity, religions, age, and life experience.

TECHNOLOGY

As frameworks for remote engagement and assessment emerge, online learning has the potential to be effective at a global scale, significantly reducing the cost of delivering higher education yet challenging experiential learning.

FUNDING

Public sector support for higher education has been dramatically reduced over the past two decades, therefore shifting more costs to students and their families in the form of tuition increases.

PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Private sector industry and community partnerships both in the form of sponsorship of, and direct participation in, research and scholarship have been emerging over the last decade.

PEDAGOGY & SCHOLARSHIP

Faculty are experiencing rapid change in curriculum and pedagogy. The experiential learning revolution has propagated "flipped" classrooms and "new materialism," which fundamentally links learning to making and doing.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The mission of campus is to make place-based learning an added value for all learners across the demographic spectrum. Just as program and degree options are evolving to offer greater flexibility, many higher education institutions are redefining student life.

RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

The need to improve an institution's resiliency is growing and garnering greater attention. From climate neutrality to financial health, planning and implementing innovative sustainability and resiliency measures are of paramount importance to the long-term viability of a campus.

PROACTIVE MEASURES FOR JEDI IMPACT

## ? WHAT IF YOUR INSTITUTION COULD MAKE A BROADER IMPACT?

- Opportunity to redefine relevance and clarify the institution's mission in a way that may impact culture and groups who are not actively benefiting.

- Institutions serve as provider of many basic students needs; how can this be sustained or complemented in future models?

- Reimagine your market and demographics; could there be a new geographic reach or better local connectivity to industry needs?

- Longer-term focus on next generation learning; build a pipeline that supports your mission and changing demographics.

"As we think about the future, I hope there will be a parallel product to help multiple demographics fulfill requirements."

Ann Sherman, *Vice President for Business and Finance, California State University, Chico*
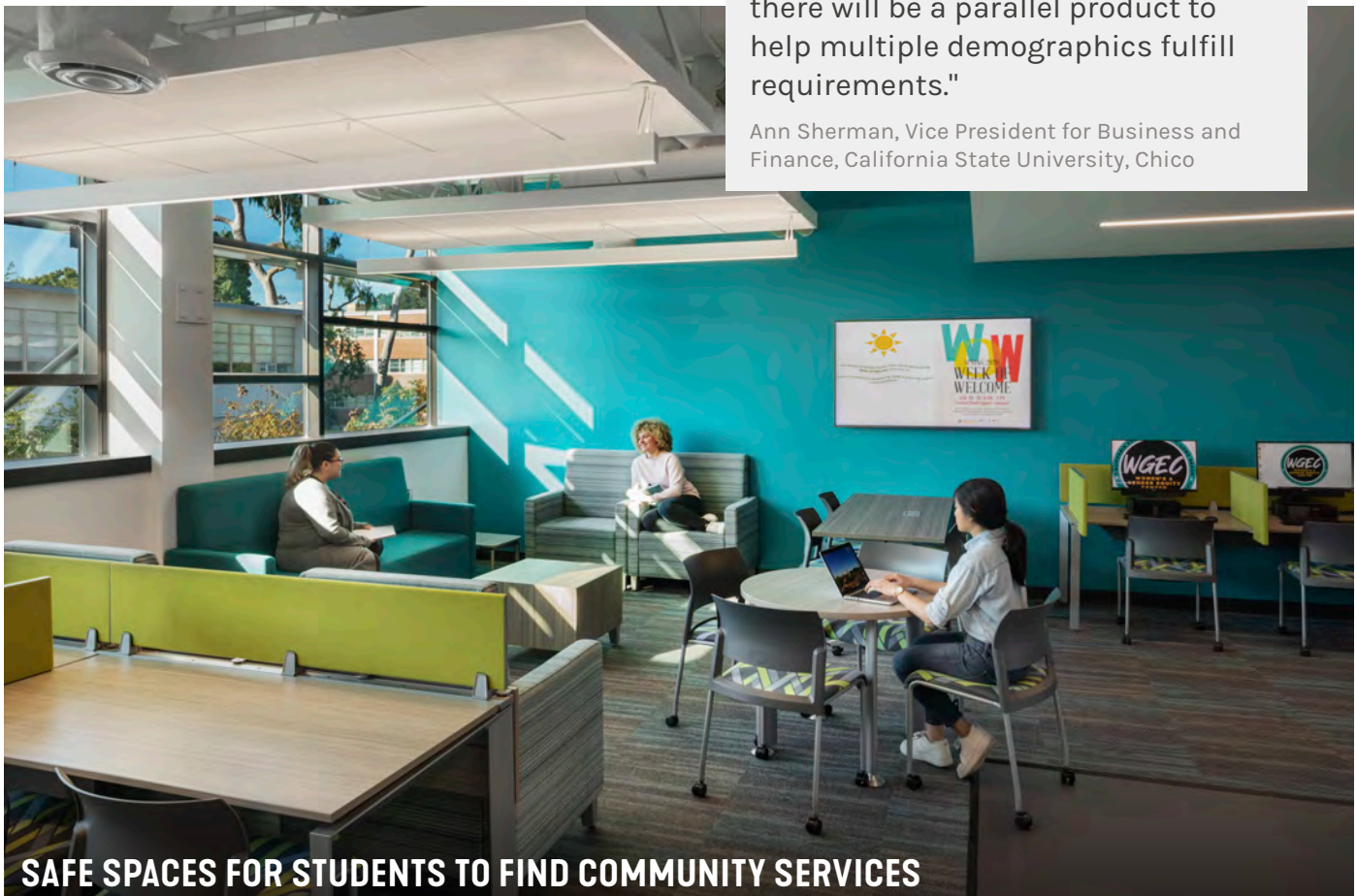
SAFE SPACES FOR STUDENTS TO FIND COMMUNITY SERVICES

DEDICATING SPACE TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC SUCCESS
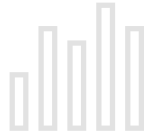
"...there was a need for students to be a connected to food pantries and other types of essential resources. The goal of the Saginaw Center was to make connections with other providers, such as mental health counselors."

Dr. Jean Goodnow, President
Delta College

SENSE OF BELONGING IN A HUB DESIGNED TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING

LEVELING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

? HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CAMPUS AND STUDENT SUCCESS?

- Many campus's do not have the infrastructure for equitable access to technology and the appropriate online tools. Working with the community for universal access can help bridge the divide.

- With digital scholarship taking rise, could investing in training instructors enable and empower them to teach more effectively online?

- While the majority of the generation in college are digital natives, many are not accustomed to using it as an effective learning tool. Connecting with local school districts to include virtual learning as a program could better prepare students.

- Experiential online learning requires virtual tools, such as VR and simulation, to bridge hands-on learning. How can you prepare to invest in next gen technology that will enhance online and hybrid learning?

EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVING LEARNING OUTCOMES VIRTUALLY WITH THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGIES
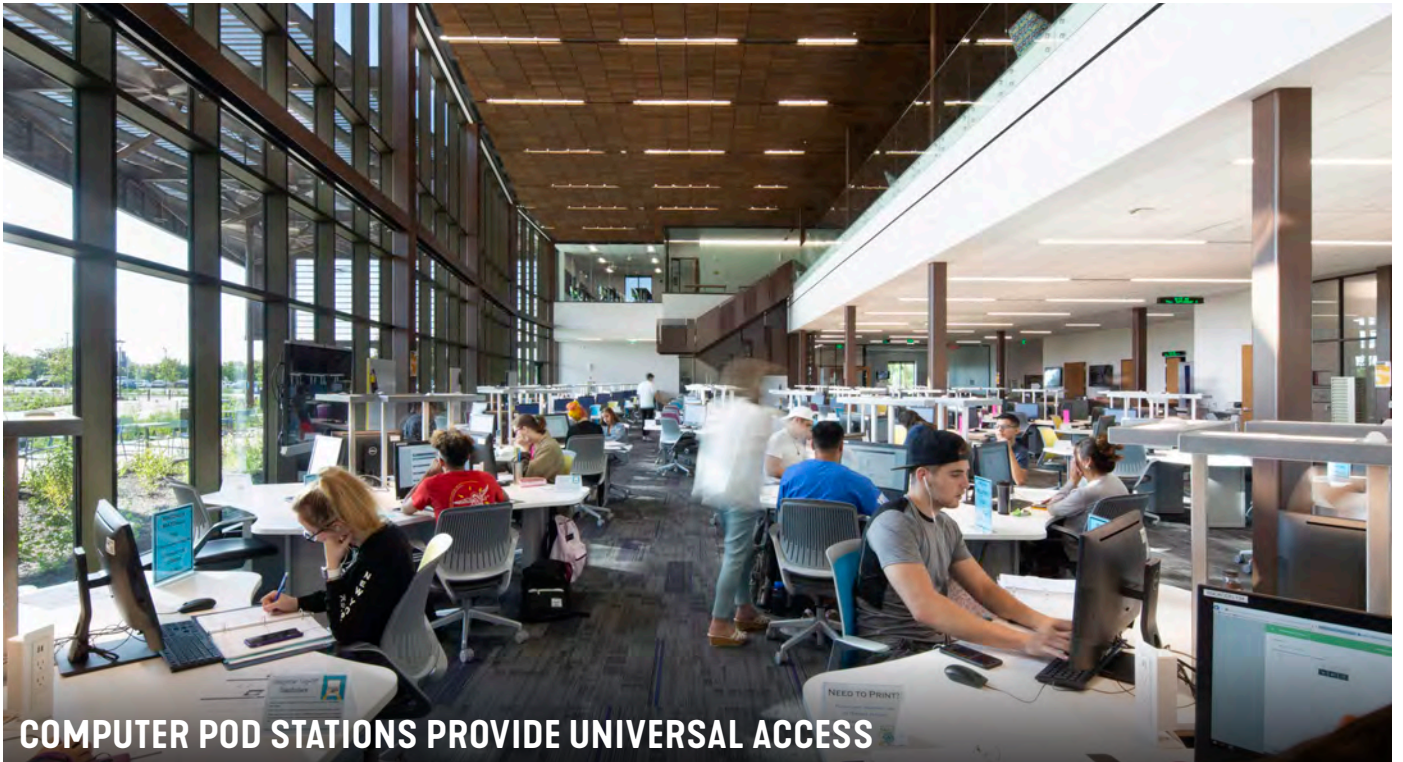
COMPUTER POD STATIONS PROVIDE UNIVERSAL ACCESS

VR PROVIDES AN ALTERNATIVE TO IN PERSON HANDS-ON LEARNING

RIPPLE EFFECTS FROM LOSS OF REVENUE

❓ WHAT IF INSTITUTIONS EXAMINE NEW MODELS FOR SPACE ALLOCATION AND FUNDING?
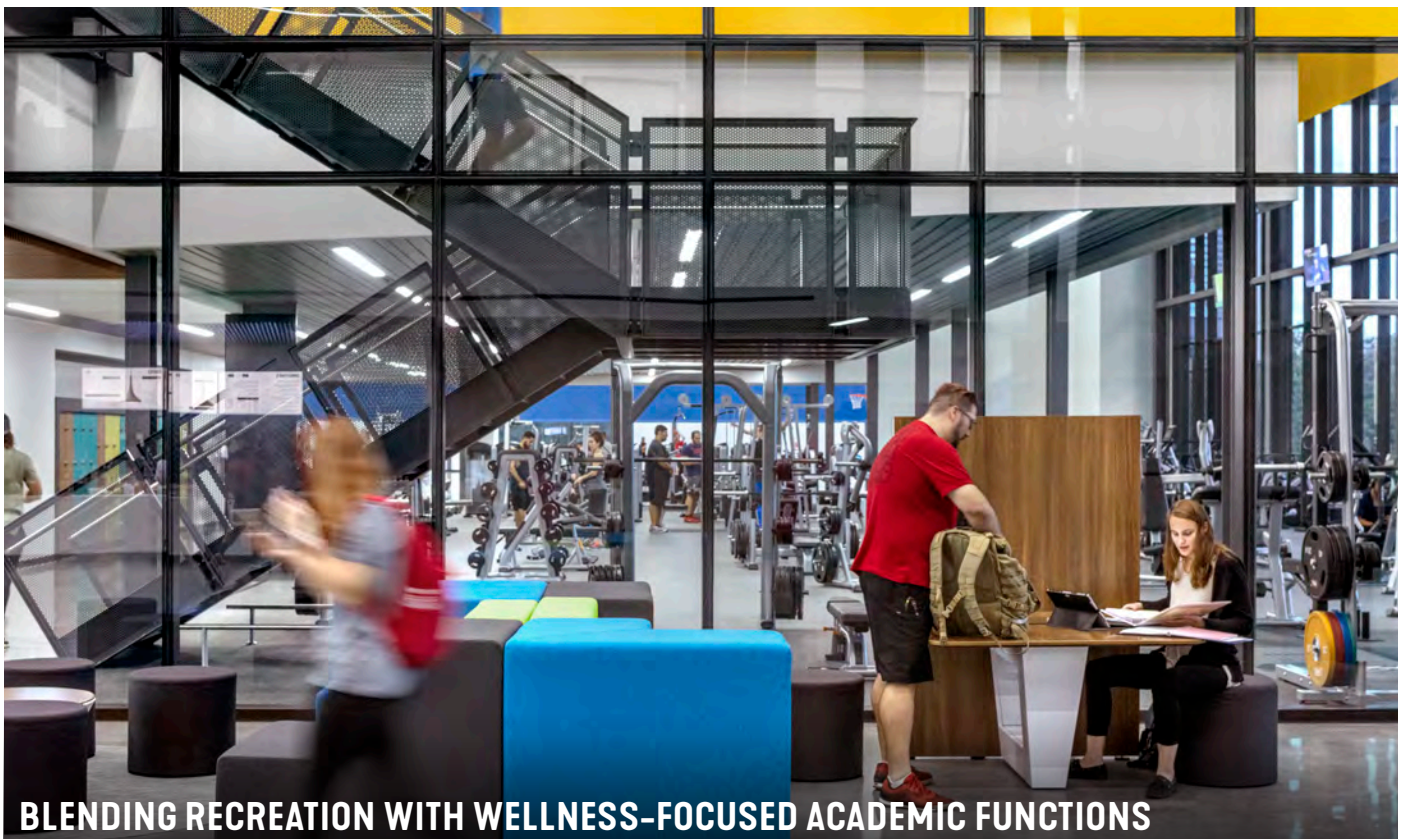
- Evaluate space utilization across campus; consider centralized control of space to improve efficiency and/or new approaches to departmental space allocation.

- With the shift to work from home in the pandemic, industry is evaluating future models of work. Consider how these future models may apply to workplace environments in higher ed, both administrative and faculty.

- Consider alternative funding sources through partnerships and alternative delivery models for an expanded set of project typologies including academic space, research, recreation in addition to student life.

"Significant savings can be realized while maintaining quality simply by making data-informed decisions around how and when learning takes place."

Rick Staisloff. (2020). The Post Pandemic College, *The Chronicle of Higher Education.*

REMOVING PERCEIVED ENTRY BARRIERS TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DEDICATED SPACE TO STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS

BLENDING RECREATION WITH WELLNESS–FOCUSED ACADEMIC FUNCTIONS

BUILDING BRIDGES TO CLARIFY AND STRENGTHEN MISSION

? WHAT IF THE CAMPUS SERVES AS AN INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INNOVATION HUB?

- Strengthen centers of excellence and high demand programs including research endeavors.

- Increase cross-institutional collaboration with new networks and/or new roles for existing networks, spanning technology, operations, etc.

- Increase interests in building synergies with community; recognition of co-dependence and renewed value of campus to the local business community.
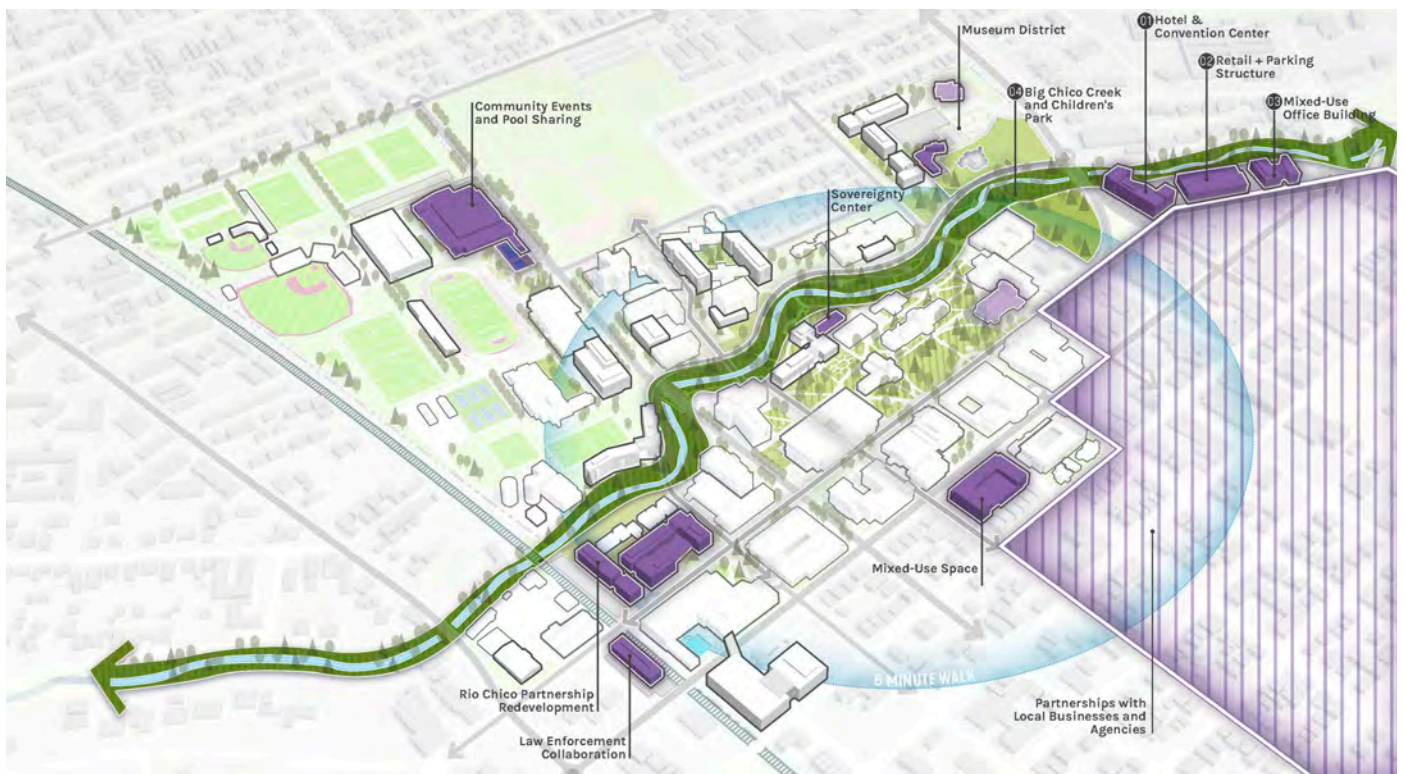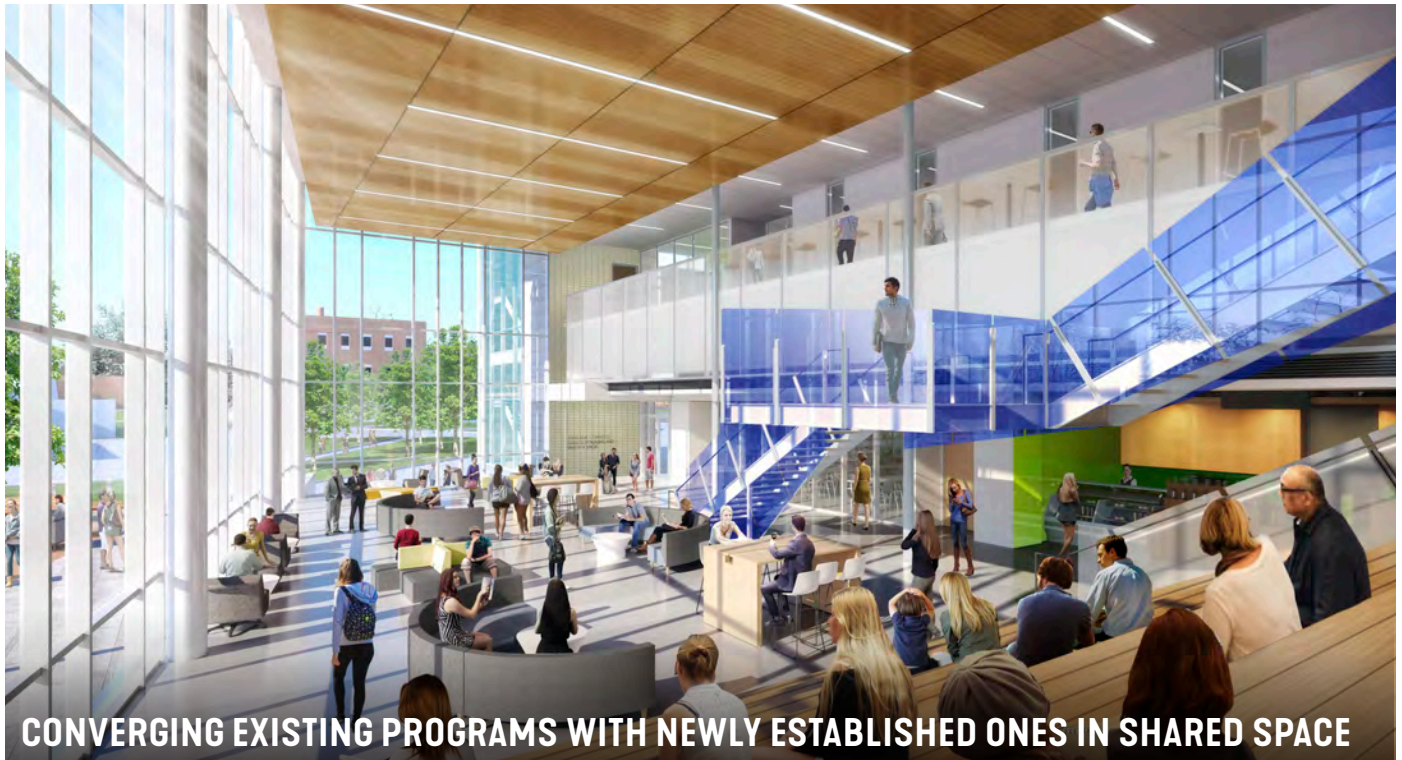
RENEWING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

We believe a stronger networked approach is required to better serve all students. This new educational model needs to offer a relevant and workforce ready education at a competitive price. This approach will require unprecedented cooperation across institutional typologies, state boundaries and political domains.

Read more: www.smithgroup.com/perspectives/2020/renewing-the-social-contract-of-public-higher-education

ALIGNING DEGREE PROGRAMS WITH REGIONAL NEEDS AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

CONVERGING EXISTING PROGRAMS WITH NEWLY ESTABLISHED ONES IN SHARED SPACE

Community Events and Pool Sharing

Museum District

01 Hotel & Convention Center

02 Retail + Parking Structure

04 Big Chico Creek and Children's Park

03 Mixed-Use Office Building

Sovereignty Center

Mixed-Use Space

Rio Chico Partnership Redevelopment

Law Enforcement Collaboration

5 MINUTE WALK

Partnerships with Local Businesses and Agencies

CAMPUS PLANNING EFFORTS IDENTIFY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
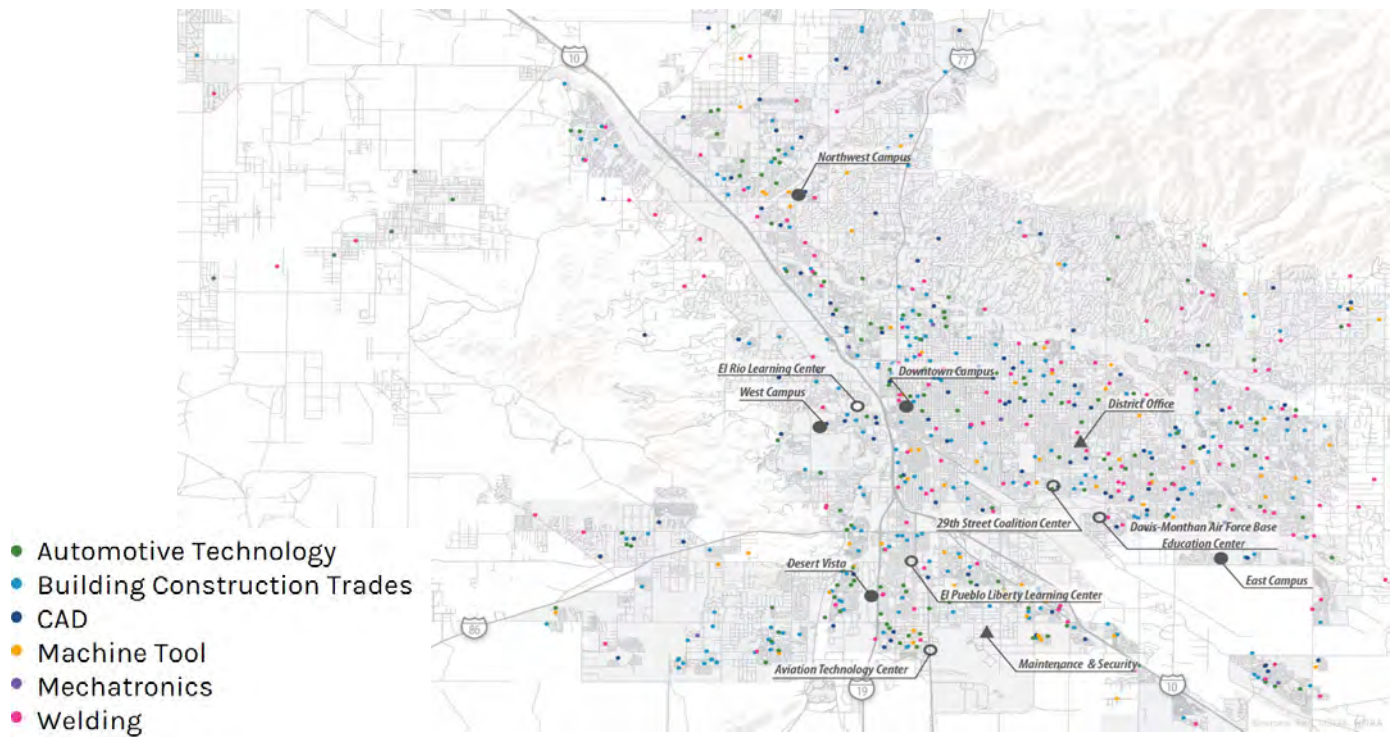
RISE OF THE EXPERIENTIAL CAMPUS

? HOW WOULD YOUR CAMPUS LOOK IF IT SHIFTED TO A DEDICATED FOCUS ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

- Fall 2020 provides an excellent opportunity to learn what can be successful in hybrid models. Identify positive outcomes to inform future changes.

- Explore alternatives to the face-to-face, small group, team-based, learning mode that may be challenged by distancing requirements.

- Create opportunities for entrepreneurial, student-driven learning by increasing open access to hands-on environments, labs and maker spaces.

- In this model, the learning ecosystem is woven across multiple physical locations between campus and community. Explore ways to help students connect diverse experiences in hybrid learning models.

HYBRID LEARNING ALLOWS EXPANDED USE OF ON-CAMPUS SIMULATION SPACE

- ● Automotive Technology
- ● Building Construction Trades
- ● CAD
- ● Machine Tool
- ● Mechatronics
- ● Welding

CONNECTING SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS WITH LOCAL INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS

STUDENTS PUT SKILLS INTO PRACTICE WHILE SERVING THE COMMUNITY

STUDENTS' TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE

? CAN THE CAMPUS PLAY A DIFFERENT ROLE IN SHAPING A STUDENT'S ADULT LIVES— PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY?

- By clarifying the role of the on-campus experience, increase accessibility for groups that have limited access today. This may be possible through a consistent focus with hands-on learning, industry partner collaboration and student peer to peer learning.

- Campus edges are porous. Consider how the campus can increase the ways in which it serves the community in which it is located. In doing so, provide students with more integrated experiences.

- Explore new models for the on-campus residential experience that offer greater adaptability to address changing student needs.

- As student experiences on and off campus potentially become more disconnected, focus on proactive measures to strengthen the longevity of campus brand, traditions and culture in a hybrid context.

WHAT CAN THE RETREAT FROM CAMPUS TEACH US ABOUT THE VALUE OF PLACE?

As designers, we believe that place matters. Without access to a physical campus, students are missing a number of factors that set them up for long-term success.

Read more: www.smithgroup.com/perspectives/2020/what-can-the-retreat-from-campus-teach-us-about-the-value-of-place

NODES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEER TO PEER LEARNING
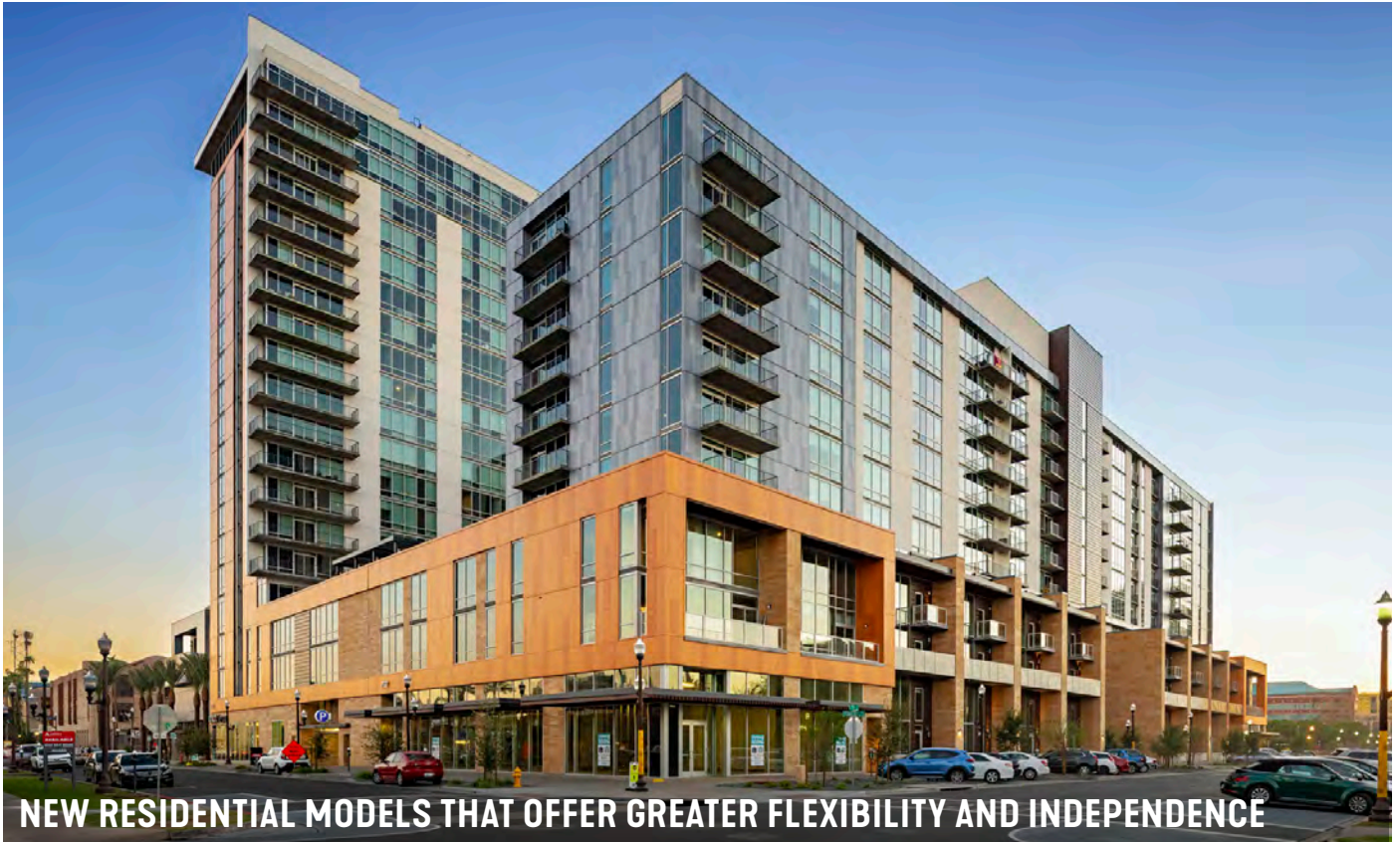
NEW RESIDENTIAL MODELS THAT OFFER GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE

**GREATER STUDENT RESILIENCE EMERGING POST-PANDEMIC**

"I believe this crisis will resurrect the classic on-campus residential experience; in the future, place will matter more."

Jeff Grabill, Associate Provost for Teaching, Learning and Technology Michigan State University

RESILIENCE BASED ON ADAPTABILITY AND OPTIMIZATION

? WHAT PROACTIVE MEASURES CAN INSTITUTIONS TAKE TO WITHSTAND PANDEMICS OR DISASTERS?

- Analyze space utilization in future scenarios to help rightsize the campus footprint for long-term resilience.

- Consider the potential alignment of deferred maintenance funding and the opportunity to strategically re-purpose older, purpose-built facilities to support 21st century programmatic adaptability and changing student needs.

- Capitalize on the strength of existing formal and informal cross-cutting networks to engage in discussions on innovation, new models and culture change that could have long term impacts.

- For institutions with fewer resources, consider academic, and/or operational partnerships as a way to build greater resilience for change.
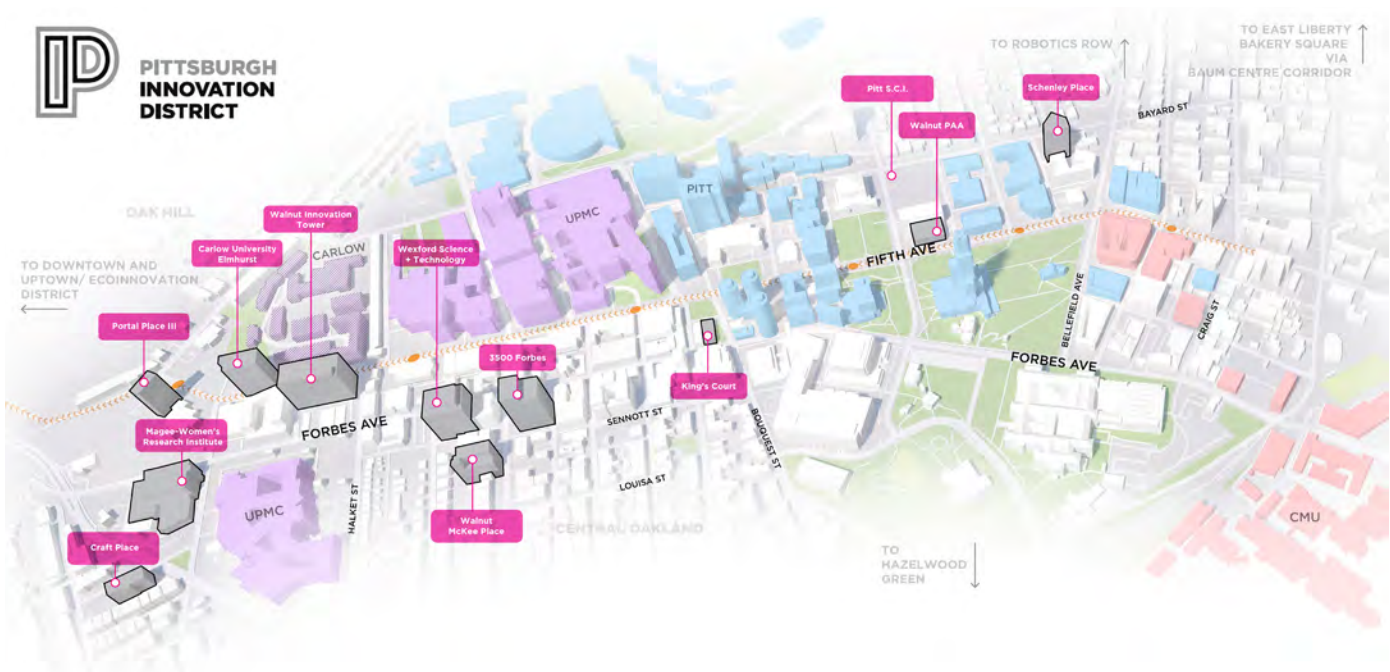
ASSETS ASSESSMENT FOR OPERATIONALIZING THE FUTURE OF THE CITY
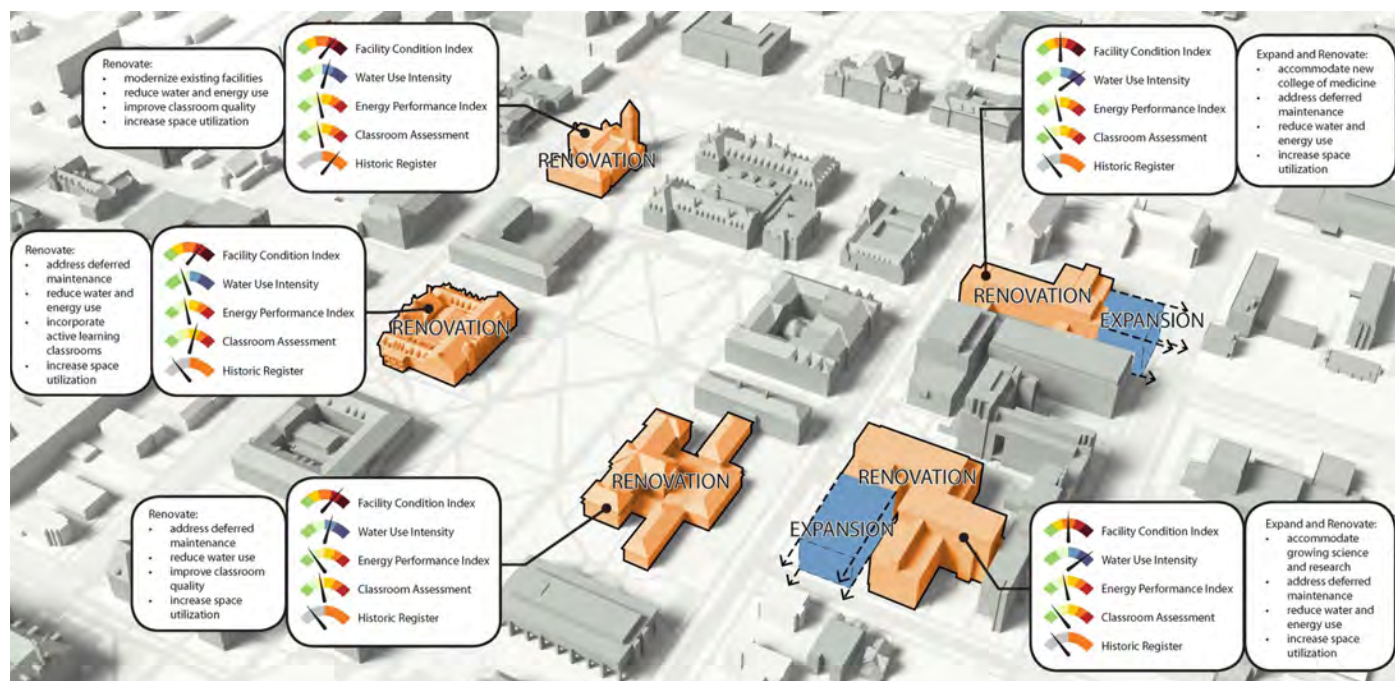
ANALYTICS HELP TO INFORM SPACE OPTIMIZATION AND USABILITY

ADAPTION OF FORMER FACTORY INTO MAKERS' HOT SPOT

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you to our participants from the following institutions who openly shared their points of view. We appreciate the time and look forward to future discussion.

BUTLER UNIVERSITY

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES

DELTA COLLEGE

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE

SANTA ROSA JUNIOR COLLEGE

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SYSTEM

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

As we all look to the future, the SmithGroup CampusForward team will continue to seek opportunities for dialogue around the issues that are transforming higher education. Recognizing that new challenges are emerging all the time, this is an opportunity to learn from what we are all experiencing through sharing and open conversations. That is the true spirit of higher education. We recognize that campuses may look and feel very different, but we are optimistic that the value of being "on campus" will continue to play a critical role in shaping the future of each institution.

SMITHGROUP

Design a Better Future

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