

First Unitarian Universalist Church

Master Plan Report



Prepared by:
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The Mission of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego is to become an increasingly diverse community with differing beliefs yet shared values. In joy and mutual support we offer spiritual nourishment, create beauty, affirm the worth of each individual, and honor the democratic process. From this place we encourage all ages to learn and grow together while we labor for compassionate justice in our society and on our planet.

Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube, Lead Minister
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Associate Minister
Thelest Stewart, Church Administrator
Liz Jones, Director of Religious Education
Kenneth F. Herman, Director of Music
Suzette Southfox, Inreach Coordinator
Alice King, Young Adult and Campus Ministry Coordinator
Rev. Dr. Carolyn and Rev. Dr. Tom Owen-Towle, Ministers Emeriti
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Campus Renovation Team:

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Section 1. Introduction and Method

1.1 Objective

- 1.1.1 The objective of the project was to provide an analysis of the future requirements of the church and to develop a phased master plan for improvements to the facilities to accommodate these requirements.

1.2 Scope of Project

- 1.2.1 The scope of the project encompasses the entire site including the parking lot. (Figure – 1)

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 Working with the Campus Renovation Team appointed by the Congregation and with Southern Cross Properties (the consulting Facilities Manager), the Architect followed the following procedure.
- a Meet with various special focus groups to identify existing deficiencies and future growth requirements
 - b Analyze the existing site conditions and building accommodations.
 - c Review regulatory requirements pertaining to the site
 - d Establish requirements to accommodate existing deficiencies and future growth
 - e Develop conceptual design options and present them to the Campus Renovation Team
 - f Refine the conceptual design option selected by the Committee and present it to the congregation.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 We offer our thanks to the committee members who assisted and guided us during the process.

Rev. Arvid Straube, Senior Minister
John Holl, Board President
Thelest Stewart, Business Administrator
Dave Hunt, Treasurer
Ed Law, Member
Mary Rose, Member
Eli Shefter, Member
Dave Spierman, Member
Marge Wurgel, Member
Kath Hillery, Member
Nick Miller, Member
Andy French, Member

We would also like to thank all other church members who volunteered their help by other means.

Alice Rathbone	Sue Haskin	Bonnie Hough
Caroline Clark	Dan Heiserman	Dave Hunt
Ellie Shacter	Joan Cudhea	John Davis
Kathe Larick	Lee Helterline	Liz Jones
Bonnie Hough	Nancy Moore	Peggy Holl
Pete di Girolamo	Steve Howard	Ardath Schaibly
Suzette Southfox	Victoria Ingram	James Johnson

The Platt/Whitelaw Architects team consisted of Alison M. Whitelaw and Todd S. Lukas; the Southern Cross team consisted of Matthew Boomhower and Robin Bush.

Section 2. Site Analysis

2.1 Existing Site

- 2.1.1 The church property consists of two contiguous lots. The first lot (Lot-1) has a flat area to the North East that contains all the buildings and it extends down into the canyon to the west and south sides. The second lot (Lot-2) fronts on both Arbor and Front streets and contains the parking lot; it also extends down into the canyon on the south side. (Figure-1).

2.2 Site Analysis

- 2.2.1 The site was analyzed to identify its existing characteristics and constraints. Influences identified included solar access, prevailing winds, views, vegetation and ecology, adjacent uses, traffic and pedestrian access, utilities, topography, hydrology, and geology. (Figure-2)

2.3 Regulatory Requirements

- 2.2.1 The property falls within the San Diego Mid-City Communities Planned Development and is zoned MR-3000 (Lot-1) and MR-800B (Lot-2). Churches are allowed under the MR-3000 zone, the parking lot operates under a conditional use permit in the MR-800B zone. The portions of both lots that extend into the adjacent canyons are protected as designated open space, and, as steep hillsides, are considered environmentally sensitive. There is a thirty foot height limit on Lot-1 and a fifty foot height limit on Lot-2.

2.4 Parking Analysis

- 2.4.1 The church has an existing parking lot which operates under a conditional use permit and provides public pay parking during times of lower church use during the week. This existing parking lot accommodates 138 spaces and the service road along the north edge of the property accommodates 13 spaces. There is a parking structure adjacent to the church property on the UCSD medical center site. 277 of the spaces in the structure are patient/visitor parking. Approximately 200 of which are unreserved and metered, and therefore available to church users. On Sundays the church currently has an agreement with UCSD for a reduced rate which is paid by the church. Accessible parking spaces for those with disabilities are located at street level.
- 2.4.2 The number of spaces required to serve the church according to the Municipal Code is governed by the capacity of the sanctuary. The sanctuary has 479 seats (including the choir); at the required 1 parking space per three seats, the minimum required parking is 160 spaces. Since the size of the sanctuary will remain the same, the legally required parking capacity remains the same.
- 2.4.3 The Church currently experiences a shortage of parking spaces at various times: between Sunday services, when those who attended the first service have not yet left but those attending the second service arrive; during large weekday events such as memorial services; and during heavily scheduled evening events. The weekday events are especially impacted by the use of on-site and street parking by UCSD medical center users.
- 2.4.4 Several factors are placing additional pressure on the adequacy of the parking accommodations. As meeting facilities are expanded and improved, there will be increased parking demand. The parallel parking spaces along the service road

are a potential hazard since this is the fire access lane and the cars could impede emergency access. Future plans for the UCSD medical center could include increased outpatient service which would increase the demand for parking in the area.

2.4.5 While there is a minimum City requirement for the amount of parking that should be provided, it is clear that peak shortages experienced by the congregation can be significantly eased by exceeding this minimum requirement. Possible methods of providing additional parking spaces include the following

2.4.5.1 Construct parking structure (on-site or off-site)

- a) Jointly with UCSD
- b) Jointly with parking operator
- c) Independently

2.4.5.2 Form shared parking agreements

- a) UCSD Parking structure:
 - Structure has 9 floors
 - Floors 1-7 @ +/- 38 spaces each, use by meter any time, use by code Sat & Sun
 - Floor 8 @ +/- 70 spaces (street level) - accessible parking only
 - Floor 9 UCSD permit parking only
- b) Surface lots:
 - Sharp Reese Stealy
 - UCSD Bachman Place
 - UCSD Arbor/Front

2.4.5.3 Run Shuttle buses

- Run from surface lots (see 2b above)
- Run from transit points
- Run from shopping malls
- Run from Park & Rides

2.4.6 In order to provide an increased parking capacity conveniently located for church access, the construction of a parking structure on the church property that currently accommodates the parking lot has been studied. There is a fifty foot height limit on this property, and five floors of parking could be accommodated within this height limit. The addition of this parking structure would provide the opportunity to create additional green space, incorporate an enhanced entry/drop off area on grade separating the parking structure from the rest of the church facilities, and to relocate the access driveway on Arbor and reduce much of the traffic congestion that currently occurs at the end of Arbor. An initial study indicates the parking capacity of the property could be increased to 208 spaces using this approach. Further study is required to determine maximum capacity.

Section 3. Needs Assessment

3.1 Focus Group Issues

- 3.1.1 During a previous study of requirements limited to Bard Hall, meetings were held with focus groups representing the kitchen, the music office, administration, the art gallery, and various regular users of Bard Hall. See the Bard Hall Program Needs Assessment prepared by Platt/Whitelaw Architects, dates September 19, 2006. Previous meetings had also been held with the pre-school staff. Information provided by those groups was incorporated in the master plan process.
- 3.1.2 During the master plan process, meetings were held with various additional congregation focus groups representing the following areas of interest: Religious Education; Courtyard/Environmental Stewardship; Administration; Universal Design/Disabled Access; Ministerial Team Council; and Minister.
- 3.1.3 Information provided by the focus groups was incorporated in the master plan process. Specific requirements were analyzed and incorporated into the design as appropriate and issues that were common across several interest groups were added to the screening criteria (see 3.2 below)

3.2 Screening Criteria

- 3.2.1 As a result of the site analysis, the existing building analysis, the regulatory requirement analysis and the focus group process, criteria for evaluating master plan concepts were developed.
- 3.2.3 Screening Criteria:
 - 3.2.3.1 Parking – provide relief for the maximum parking load which is during the time between the two Sunday services, and during high attendance special functions.
 - 3.2.3.2 Universal design – campus should be fully accessible to all ages and physical/mental abilities.
 - 3.2.3.3 Quantity & variety of meeting spaces due to scheduling crunches – provide sufficient facilities to meet growing demand. Need variety of spaces & flexibility to accommodate all activities and age groups.
 - 3.2.3.4 Expand capacity for worship services via overflow spaces and multi-purpose rooms – even though a South Bay campus is anticipated it will probably not draw many congregants from the Hillcrest location. Further growth of the congregation (in accord with the SD demographics) is anticipated.
 - 3.2.3.5 Improve visual connection between Meeting House and exterior environment – view out of meeting house needs improvement.
 - 3.2.3.6 Upgrade communications technology – need AV links for overflow worship spaces; better AV accommodations in Meeting house; campus wide network, wireless internet link.
 - 3.2.3.7 Environmental Stewardship – improve whole site landscape and pedestrian flow; reflect stewardship goals of the Congregation; energy efficient systems & controls, efficient use of resources, quality of interior & exterior environments, enable sustainable operations (recycling, etc).
 - 3.2.3.8 Architectural identity – the campus is not readily recognized as a Unitarian Universalist facility, the architecture should reflect the philosophy of the congregation and increase the visibility from Arbor and Front Streets.
 - 3.2.3.9 Way finding & exterior lighting – safety and security concerns, especially at night; it should be easier to find the various facilities.

- 3.2.3.10 Flexibility for future growth/re-structuring – as the congregation grows, the administrative and ministerial support must grow/adapt to serve it; technology may change work patterns, allow for telecommuting.
- 3.2.3.11 Useable exterior areas – appropriately zoned exterior spaces can allow for better flexibility of use, Sunday morning coffee service is a special concern.
- 3.2.3.12 Use of plateau & relationship to canyon – this location is highly valued.
- 3.2.3.13 Appropriate landscaping – drought resistant plant materials/Xeriscaping, water efficient irrigation.
- 3.2.3.14 Memorial wall expansion – consider how this is integrated into the site. (In conjunction with the designs and art of Gerald Thiebolt)
- 3.2.3.15 Facilitate maintenance and operations – allow for ease of maintenance and operations.
- 3.2.3.16 Security – improve security of persons and premises, special need for secure access to restrooms for RE overnights.
- 3.2.3.17 Maintain existing on-site significant/sacred artifacts and provide accommodations for additional items/spaces.
- 3.2.3.18 Improve the physical relationship between Bard Hall and Meeting House, and each building's relationship/integration with the courtyard.

3.3 Program

3.3.1 As a result of the site analysis, the existing building analysis, the regulatory requirement analysis and the focus group process, a program of anticipated future requirements was developed, identifying increases and improvements to the campus.

3.3.2 Administration Building

<u>Current Use</u>	<u>Area sf</u>	<u>Programmed Use</u>	<u>Proposed Area sf</u>
Reception/Office	120	Reception	100
		Sitting Areas	120
Office (Admin Dir)	165	Office (Admin Dir)	230
Office (Minister)	208	Office (Minister)	230
Office (Minister)	213	Office (Minister)	213
		Office (Intern Minister)	145
Office (Coord)	144	Office (2 Coord)	200
Office (Coord)	229	Office (2 Coord)	220
Office (Coord)	153		
Office (Book)	153	Office (Book)	213
Office (Admin)	78	Office (Admin Staff)	360
		Conference	200
		Conference	165
Workroom	314	Workroom	220
		Workroom	80
Total Storage/ Util	51	Total Storage/ Util	169
Toilet (Private)	50	Toilet (Public)	200
Net Assignable	1725	Net Change	1340 sf
Actual Gross	2517		
		Subtotal Net Square Feet	3065
		Efficiency Factor = 65%	
		<u>Total Gross Area</u>	<u>5075 sf</u>

3.3.3 Religious Education Building			
<u>Current Use</u>	<u>Area sf</u>	<u>Programmed Use</u>	<u>Proposed Area sf</u>
(Areas include integral storage/closets)			
Craft Room	434	Craft Room	320
Senior High Room	554	Grp Room	554
Junior High Room	350	Grp Room	400
Group Room	303	Grp Room	384
Group Room	313		
M Toilet	245	M Toilet	245
W Toilet	245	W Toilet	245
Common Room	951	Common Room	1050
Storage	127	Storage	165
Kitchen	240	Kitchen	240
R.E. Office	497	R.E. Office	620
		Outdoor Courtyard	75
Net Assignable	4259	Net Change	00 sf
Actual Gross	4574		
		Subtotal Net Square Feet	4298
		Efficiency Factor = 90%	
		Total Gross Area	4775 sf

3.3.4 Religious Education Building			
<u>Current Use</u>	<u>Area sf</u>	<u>Programmed Use</u>	<u>Proposed Area sf</u>
Bard Hall	1910	Bard Hall	1910
Kitchen	498	Kitchen	498
Lounge	685	Lounge	685
Utility	317	Utility	140
Men's Toilet	136	Men's Toilet	240
Women's Toilet	195	Women's Toilet	240
Total Storage	146	Total Storage	170
		Foyer	290
Meeting Room	402	Meeting Room	260
Office	222	Office	180
Office	229	Office	160
Library	360	Library	480
File/Storage	225	Storage	75
		Toilet	50
		<u>2nd Floor</u>	
		Conference	500
		Meeting	350
		Meeting	300
		Lounge/Workroom	140
		Storage	135
		Toilet	120
Net Assignable	5325	Net Change	1598 sf
Actual Gross	6325		
		Subtotal Net Square Feet	6923
		Efficiency Factor = 80%	
		Total Gross Area	8385 sf

3.3.5 Programmed Requirements			
<u>Existing</u>	<u>(Whole campus)</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	
Total Net Areas	11462	Net New	2938
Programmed needs	14400	Total New Gross	17960
<u>Total Existing Gross</u>	<u>13416</u>	Total New proposed	4544 gsf

Section 4. Master Plan

4.1 Master Plan Design

- 4.1.1 The recommended master plan design is illustrated in the attached drawings
- 4.1.1.1 (Figures 3-5B) The site plan illustrates how the proposed parking structure could fit onto the site, at the far East corner, and allow for an improved drop off at the church campus entry. A single vehicular entry point moved east from the turnaround, and separate drive aisle for church users would dramatically lessen the congestion on Front Street and improve the overall pedestrian safety for church members. The improvements result in an increase in green space to be utilized by pedestrians and to provide a tool to lessen the impact of storm water run-off into the canyons.

A covered walkway entry at the drop-off extends the entry of the campus to the edge of the street increasing its visibility and identifying, and providing a secure entrance to the site. The existing parking along the service drive is removed and the area incorporated into the campus as a new protected courtyard onto which the administration, library and music office suite would open. Drop off and emergency vehicle access shall remain.

Courtyard improvements include providing gentle walks and appropriate sloped ramps to connect the upper and lower areas, increased vegetated areas, and improved pervious surfaces. Maintaining healthy mature trees for shade, and protecting and incorporating sacred artifacts and objects becomes significant to the circulation and identity of spaces within the courtyard. Additional areas for memorial monuments and/or gardens are provided.

Improved way-finding is accomplished through single point entries to buildings identified with similar canopy structures and through an improved and comprehensive signage program.

- 4.1.1.2 The building first floor plan illustrates the program layout and additions to accommodate congregation growth and needs identified. (Figures 6,8,10)

The administration building is re-organized and the first floor accommodates administrative functions as well as a new lobby and entry on the North to provide improved campus security. Work areas and conferencing spaces are included.

Changes to the Religious Education building are organizational. Meeting rooms are grouped around an improved and enlarged interior courtyard, the RE office and library is enlarged and directly adjacent to all group rooms, and the common room is enlarged to accommodate increased and more functional storage and an entry foyer. The kitchen shall remain.

The Bard Hall improvements identify an enlarged and relocated library which will allow for small meetings, a new music suite to house choir and music director, a dedicated meeting room and toilet and service spaces. A single entry is provided that opens onto the courtyard, and the music suite and library spaces open to the new upper courtyard to extend the joys of reading and the sounds or service to interact with the outdoors.

Lower Bard hall improvements include enlarged toilet rooms, family changing room, kitchen layout and improvements, brides room/lounge, and a new foyer to better relate to the courtyard and to the meeting house.

- 4.1.1.3 The building second floor illustrates the program layout and additions to accommodate congregation growth and needs identified. (Figures 7,9,11)

The second floor accommodates the ministry and coordinator offices, small and large conference rooms, and shared workspace. A small balcony overlooking the courtyard provides a connection to the exterior while a bridge connects to Bard Hall. The bridge acts as an outdoor space and provides the physical buffer at grade, providing for a secure courtyard and dramatic entry sequence.

The second floor of Bard Hall is devotedly entirely to meeting and congregation public spaces. Three varying size meeting rooms, toilets and storage, and a kitchenette serve the group users. The rooftop of lower Bard Hall is utilized to support a photovoltaic array and a rooftop patio. A connecting bridge is shown to allow for a convenient and accessible path to the UCSD parking structure. (Approval of UCSD and the Fire Marshall required).

- 4.1.1.4 The conceptual sketches illustrate the potential views of the preliminary design from various locations.

(Figure 12) From Arbor and Front Street intersection and vehicular way, the view shows the parking structure with its patterned 'green screen' (a vegetated exterior). An important element to the success of the master plan is the inclusion of visual elements, beginning at the signage at the intersection, incorporated into the parking structure and its vertical circulation tower, and the application at the entry to the campus. This continuous material and color language defines the campus to its edges, and provides users visual clues to the sequence of entry.

(Figure 13) A closer view of the entry shows the entry canopy, the bridge tower, the new upper courtyard and the second floor volumes at the administration building and to Bard Hall.

(Figure 14) Exiting the Meeting House the view of the courtyard shows the improved curved ramp, creating an upper green space and a vegetated slope. The toilet room addition at Bard Hall and the colonnade frame the courtyard while the bridge, entry tower and administration building provide the entry sequence. The living green walls of the parking garage can be seen in the background.

(Figure 15) At the far south of the narthex, at the corner of the meeting house looking back towards Bard Hall shows the improved translucent canopy opening to the courtyard and extending and connecting to the new foyer at Bard Hall. A small trellis ties the buildings together while providing a portal to a discreet and protected patio and adjacent drop off at the service road.

4.2 Phasing

4.2.1 The implementation of the improvements can be phased to match an appropriate fund raising program. It is suggested that phasing could accommodate physical and program needs, and proceed according to the following sequence.

4.2.1.1 Bard Hall improvements and courtyard improvements

4.2.1.2 Administration Building improvements

4.2.1.3 Parking structure and vehicular drop off improvements

4.2.1.4 If the parking structure is not constructed (e.g.: if additional off-site parking arrangements are provided instead), it is recommended that improvements to the existing parking lot be made to relocate the driveway entry and to improve safety at the building entry off the parking lot.

END OF SECTION