

11. Improve Appearance of Campus Including Grounds and Entryways. Improve Access to Upper Levels of Campus Buildings, Particularly in the Bonnell and Mint Buildings.

Goal C7 and C22

- C7. Explore feasible options to reduce the College's dependence on escalators as a form of vertical transportation.
- C22. Continuation of efforts outlined in the 1997 Master Plan to enhance campus aesthetics including: signage, exterior lighting, fencing and landscaping, campus art, entryway/lobby upgrades, and information kiosks.

Problem Statement

A significant amount of discussion during the 1997 facility master planning process was focused on the general College environment. While the College's main campus buildings are generally functional, durable and generally well-designed for their instructional purposes, the campus was felt to lack a presence that would be ideal for a higher educational institution in an urban setting. Concerns were raised that the campus blended too easily into the surrounding neighborhood, and that the impact of entering the College campus was really not present when one moved on and off of the College's properties. Specific concerns raised were issues such as fencing, landscaping, exterior lighting, and the "jaggedness" of the campus at the southern end, i.e., the fact that the College was not identified or visually evident as an entity when approaching the campus from the southern end of the campus (the Center City side). Within the main campus buildings concerns were raised about the sterile quality of the College, the lack of campus art, the fact that the entrance corridors had a "subway quality" to them, and that there was no sense of arriving at a higher educational institution when one walked into the College's buildings. The most heavily used entrance, the 17th Street Bonnell Building, lacks any architectural interest and brings students and staff into a heavily trafficked corridor with no entry space to welcome students and staff. Of great concern was the heavy dependence on aging escalators in the Bonnell Building and the lack of visible options for vertical movement in the building at times when one or more of the escalators is out of service.

The exterior signage of the campus is limited and does not promote visibility for the College from Center City or from individuals in vehicles using Spring Garden Street or the cross streets. Most of the exterior signage is relatively small in scale and more appropriate for pedestrians than vehicular traffic. The College does not have any event signage which highlights major events on campus for staff and visitors. There is



no convenient way to inform visitors to the campus about special events' locations. Event announcement, within the campus buildings, is chaotic. For many events, flyers are posted throughout the campus on walls. Event bulletin boards are available in some locations, but most are controlled by an office or organization for special purposes. There are no central kiosks to which students can turn to for information about current activities and events.

Many of the issues raised in 1997 have been partially addressed. A significant campus art project has resulted in art being installed in many places throughout the campus. A new elevator was installed in the Bonnell Building adjacent to the escalators which has facilitated access to upper floors for disabled individuals. A significant overhaul was undertaken of all College escalators and increased reliability in the escalators has been achieved. Directional and room signage has been improved facilitating room location. A significant commitment of institutional resources to exterior landscaping and the beginning of a college-wide uniformed fencing program have helped to improve the exterior appearance of the campus and demarcate the College campus from the surrounding neighborhood. The new Center for Business and Industry will create a significant presence at the southern end of the campus and create increased visibility of the campus from Center City. Despite these accomplishments, many of the issues raised in the 1997 Plan remain as valid criticisms of the main campus's appearance.

Proposed Solution

Two major modifications to the Bonnell Building are proposed within the Master Plan. The most significant suggestion is to alter the western ground entrance to the Bonnell Building by creating a four-story entryway attached to the existing curtain wall. This would provide a new formal entrance to the Bonnell Building and incorporate four new elevators and a four-story staircase which would provide visible vertical access to all levels of the Bonnell Building. Stairways reached upon immediate entry to the building would reduce the current dependence on the escalators. The escalators would be removed and replaced with new program space on all four levels.

The need to improve vertical circulation in the Bonnell Building presents an opportunity to not only solve a pragmatic issue, but to create an inspiring beacon for the entire Main Campus. The new Stair and elevator tower, with its abundant use of glass and its dynamic physical presence, serves to create an immediately recognizable icon. Seen as a companion to the new Dining Hall, located diagonally across the central campus quadrangle, the two buildings will resonate architecturally with each other. Their curvilinear shapes and transparency both day and night will activate and enliven an otherwise gray, rectilinear outdoor space.



In 2000, an architectural firm undertook a comprehensive review of exterior campus lighting and recommended a comprehensive lighting program with an approximate cost of \$300,000. This program included exterior light washing of several buildings, as well as significant upgrading of exterior lighting throughout the campus.

With respect to signage, four major actions are required: (1) a redesign of the College's major exterior building signage including the erection of large lit signs on the 17th Street bridge so that visibility for the College is readily established from both the northern and the southern points of 17th Street. (2) The entire exterior signage program for the College should be refreshed and updated to reflect current building use and to promote consistency in the exterior image that is presented for the College. A large LED sign announcing major events on campus should be acquired and installed in a highly visible location for students, staff and visitors. (3) An interior kiosk program should be developed which will ensure that information on campus events and activities is available for students and staff at key locations throughout the campus. (4) A comprehensive building directory program should be established.

Another potential opportunity exists in improving the plantings and landscape in the traffic median along Spring Garden Street on the campus' northern boundary.

Cost Estimate

New Elevator/ Stair Tower addition to Bonnell Building

Total Construction Cost	\$4,779,040.00
-------------------------	----------------

Unit Costs for Site Improvements (allowances)

Internally Lit Signs over 17th Street	\$100,000.00
Exterior Signage (per sign)	\$3,000.00
LED Announcement Board	\$30,000.00
Interior Kiosks (per kiosk)	\$6,000.00
Building Directories (per directory)	\$2,500.00
Street Trees (per tree)	\$1,000.00
Street Furniture (each)	\$1,500.00
Lighting (per additional light)	\$2,500.00





1 Existing Bridge Over 17th Street



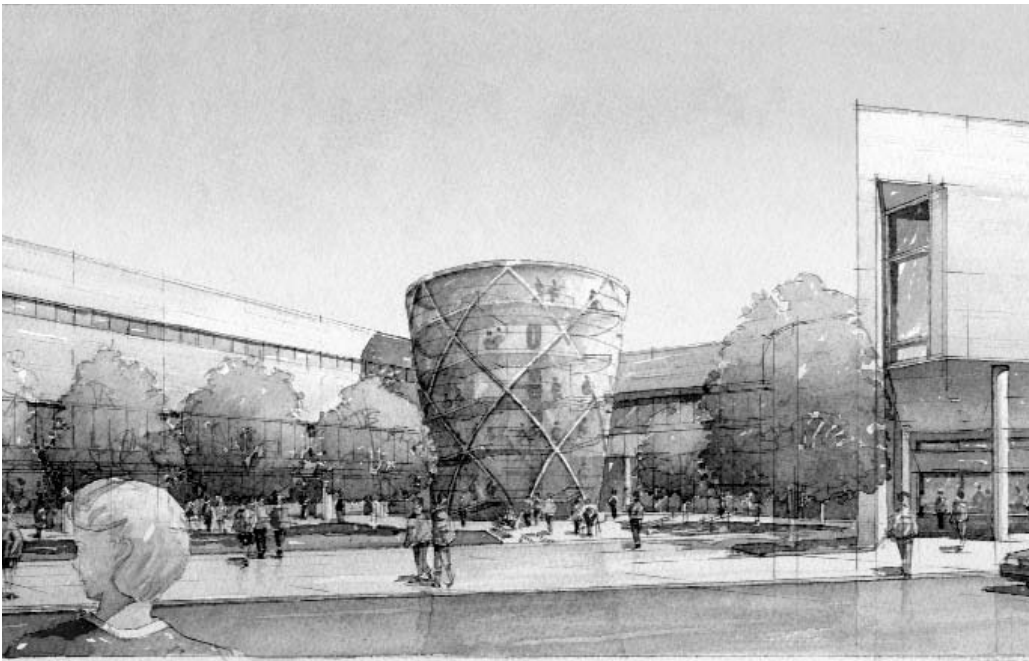
Existing escalators in Bonnell Building frequently break-down, are noisy, and block views through the space



View from the second floor of the Bonnell Building, looking northwest (approximate location of new elevator and stair tower)



View of Bonnell Building from 17th Street, looking east



Conceptual sketch of new Bonnell Elevator and Stair Tower, with Bonnell Building shown beyond.

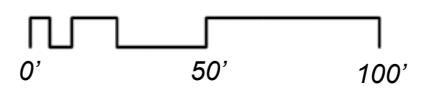


Master Plan Update

2003
H2L2



1 Vertical Circulation



Master Plan Update
 2003
H2L2

Bonnell Building
 new vertical circulation