



**Interim Report of  
The Presidential Committee to  
Enhance Campus and Community**

**April 28, 2005**

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## **Attachments**

**"CollegeChoice.pdf"**: Excerpts from the 1997 Stamats Communication, Inc. National College-Choice Survey

**"HoughtonWalkabilityPlan.pdf"**: Walkability/Pedestrian Plan developed for the City of Houghton by U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc. in September 2002

**"RadWasteLot10.pdf"**: March 28, 2001 *Michigan Tech Lode* story on radioactive waste buried in Lot 10

**"Boathouse.jpg"**: Architectural perspective of a boathouse proposed for the area near Michigan Tech's oil tanks

**"Project Report for the Michigan Technological University Waterfront Stair Design."**

## **General Introduction: Economic Vitality, Enrollments, Mission and Place**

Michigan Tech cannot simply cut its way out of its current financial problems; instead, the university must also grow its way out of these problems through strategic improvements in all of its endeavors, including undergraduate and graduate enrollments. If we do not fund new strategic needs at more than a minimal level, we will lengthen the period of time it takes to increase revenues.

Michigan Tech's economic problems are multifaceted and are attributable in part to reductions in state appropriations for higher education. Another facet of Michigan Tech's economic problems, however, is the effect of declining undergraduate enrollments. This, too, is a multifaceted problem. One way in which Michigan Tech is addressing this problem is by increasing the number of majors offered (see Appendix A). As part of another effort to address this problem, and in response to University Senate Proposal 9-04 (see Appendix B), in December 2004, Michigan Tech President Glenn Mroz appointed the Presidential Committee to Enhance Campus and Community (CECC).

Michigan Tech's undergraduate enrollments (exclusive of distance learning) declined from a high of 7,588 in 1980 to 5,303 in 2002 (see Appendix C). The economic effects of declining enrollments include not only reduced tuition revenues but also reductions in fees, residence hall payments, dining service payments, auxiliary services (books, tickets, etc.), alumni contributions (fewer students means fewer alumni), and so on.

With approximately 1,500 employees and approximately \$160 million in annual expenditures, Michigan Tech also has a significant impact on the local economy, affecting everything from downtown businesses to the local school systems. This has the reciprocal effect of diminishing the appeal of the local area in recruiting students, faculty, and staff. For example, an impoverished local economy is less able to provide jobs for spouses of prospective faculty and staff and is less able to support civic improvements, such as implementing the City of Houghton's September 2002 Walkability/Pedestrian Plan. Such improvements—or the lack thereof—can have a significant effect on recruiting students, faculty, and staff.

In 1997, Stamats Communication, Inc. conducted a National College-Choice Survey to which 1,110 students (primarily college-bound high school juniors) responded. The results of this survey indicate that (1) the primary influence on students' college choice is their parents; and (2) the most effective recruiting strategy is campus visits. The survey results also indicate that while the number one "college-choice characteristic" is availability of programs or majors, and the number two college-choice characteristic is cost after financial aid, many of the top 40 college-choice characteristics relate to campus and community, including, safety (#4), teaching facilities (#7), friendly (#11), residence life (#12), computer access from dorms (#21); extracurricular activities (#25); recreational facilities (#26); location (#29); beauty (#33); and ethnic diversity (#37). Combining this information, one might conclude that when parents accompany prospective students on campus visits, favorable impressions of safety, teaching facilities,

recreational facilities, beauty, etc. can have a significant impact on the students' college choices. (Please see attachment "CollegeChoice.pdf.")

Simply promoting the campus and surrounding community is not enough: we need to think as well about enhancing campus and community to take advantage of the opportunities that nature and history have provided us. Recent examples of such enhancements at Michigan Tech include the construction of the Rozsa Center, the enhancement of the Tech Trails, the expansion of the library, and the renovation of residence halls. However, much more could be done. The purpose of the CECC is to solicit, develop, and recommend ideas for such enhancements.

On March 16, 2005, the CECC unveiled a Web site <<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/pcecc/>> that allows Michigan Tech students, faculty and staff and the general public to offer suggestions and to comment on suggestions offered by others. Over the next five weeks, this site received 144 postings and over 3,800 visits/hits (see Appendix D). Most of the suggestions and comments posted to this site are incorporated into this report, having been edited in the following ways: (1) to correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics; (2) to remove criticism of specific individuals; (3) to eliminate comments that were simply dismissive of other people's suggestions; (4) to eliminate redundancy.

We believe that the recommendations offered in this report have both intrinsic and instrumental value. They are of intrinsic value in that they are worthwhile as ends in and of themselves. They are of instrumental value in two senses: first, they may have a direct effect on recruiting and retention; and second, at least some of these ideas—perhaps regarding waterfront enhancements or historic housing—could be developed in ways that would attract national media attention (*The Chronicle of Higher Education, Newsweek, The New York Times*, etc.), possibly including follow-up coverage, to good things being done at Michigan Tech, thereby helping to raise Michigan Tech's national profile.

## **CECC Membership**

The CECC consists of the following members:

Michael (Mike) Abbott, Director, Michigan Tech Sports and Recreation  
Prof. Alison (Kim) Hoagland, Department of Social Sciences  
Dr. Thomas (Tom) Merz, School of Business and Economics  
Elizabeth (Liza) Orwin, School of Technology (undergraduate)  
Carl Schroeder, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (undergraduate)  
Dr. Craig Waddell, CECC chair, Department of Humanities

Jacob (Jake) Emerick serves as a liaison between the CECC and the Student Commission



**Aerial View of the Michigan Tech Campus and the Surrounding Community**

## **I. Classroom Design**

**Objective: To conduct a comprehensive review of Michigan Tech classrooms to identify needed improvements.**

### **A. Background**

Classroom design is arguably one of the most neglected aspects of modern college education. According to the cover story on this topic in the March 7, 2003 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "experts say students learn more if they are comfortable, but few colleges listen."

We recommend that the university conduct a comprehensive review of its classrooms; the faculty and students who use each classroom should be polled as to their recommendations for classroom improvements. We emphasize that the concern here is not only, and not necessarily even primarily, with computer technology. Good classroom design needs also to consider,

among other things, lighting (including, where possible, natural lighting), ventilation, acoustics, and desk or table space and arrangement.

We also recommend that the university review its current policy of assigning exclusive rights to certain classrooms to specific departments.

**B. Case Example: Minerals and Materials Building, Room U115** [Note: Some of these suggestions are already in the process of being implemented.]

Room U115 in the Minerals and Materials Building is a lecture hall that seats approximately 250 students. Among other things, this room is used for one of Michigan Tech's new General Education core courses, UN1002 World Cultures. Each year, three sections of World Cultures are taught in U115. At 220 students per section, that's approximately 660 students who gain one of their key, first-year experiences in this room.

World Cultures is designed to introduce students to various cultural experiences from all regions of the world, including feature films and world music. Unfortunately, the design of U115 presents several problems for this course, and presumably, for other courses as well. These problems are listed below in order of their negative impact on instruction. Eliminating these problems would improve the teaching-and-learning experience at Michigan Tech for both faculty and students.

1. The back three rows of seats, which are separated from the lower rows by a walkway, are not sufficiently elevated to allow students sitting in these rows to see the lower 20-30 percent of the projection screen at the front of the room. Hence, these students miss much of what is included in PowerPoint presentations and all of the subtitles in the international films shown in World Cultures.

Suggested solution (this suggestion would actually solve several problems):

a. Remove the projection booth at the rear of the room, and move control of the VHS and DVD players to the front of the room. The computer equipment is currently controlled from the front of the room; being able to control the VHS and DVD players from the front of the room as well would simplify instruction.

The projection booth was included in U115 at a time when the room was used to project 16mm films; the room is no longer used for this purpose.

b. Replace the three back rows of seats with two rows of seats. This should allow sufficient room for elevating these rows to a height at which students will be able to see the full screen. Removing the projection booth from the rear of the room would allow space for additional seating, which would make up for at least some of the seating lost with the elimination of one row of seats.

c. If the above suggestion will not provide the necessary line of vision, remove all three of the back rows of seats and use the resulting area for tables that could be used to facilitate the distribution and collection of materials from 220-plus students. Then add two or three additional rows of elevated seats to the main section of seats (that is, on the west side of the walkway at the rear of the room, where all of the other rows are located). This might require students entering the seating area from the rear of the room to ascend a set of steps.

2. U115 has only a mono public address system, not stereo speakers. This significantly compromises the quality of the international films and music. It would take only about \$2,000 to install stereo speakers and an amplifier in U115.

3. A third problem with U115 is that sound carries into the adjacent room (U113) through the door that adjoins the rooms. This door needs to be soundproofed so that films and music played in U115 would be less likely to interfere with instruction in the adjacent room.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

**a. Internet Access**

1. "MTU should implement widespread wireless on campus, particularly in the educational facilities. In many classes, when one is taking notes on a laptop, it would be helpful to be able to look up additional information online. The problems that arise are the usual with any class that has computers that can access the Internet: there are those who will use the Internet to access games, entertainment sites, etc. There are several easy solutions to this problem. If it were my call, I would install switches to control the wireless access point's power. If the professor suspects that students are distracted, he can simply hit the switch and kill the Internet connection."

2. "I agree with the parent post. For a school that calls itself a technological university, Michigan Tech's 'Rovernet' access areas are rather sparse. From a student-recruiting point of view, having wireless Internet access across all or most of the campus is a *major* selling point. Intel publishes a list of the top 100 'un-wired' universities; it can be found at <http://www.intel.com/personal/products/mobiletechnology/unwiredcolleges.htm>. If you take a look at it, you'll notice that Michigan Tech doesn't even make the list, while Western Michigan University is ranked at number 8. This is one of the reasons a friend of mine cited for going to WMU and not MTU.

The list of locations where Rovernet is available can be seen at <http://www.rovernet.mtu.edu/locations/index.htm>. According to this list, Fisher Hall has no wireless access whatsoever, and it is the location of the largest lecture hall on campus! The computer science hall is also void of wireless Internet. During the warmer months, it would be incredibly nice to pull up a Web page while I am working outside in the courtyard in front of DHH. I would like to see an increase in the locations where Rovernet is offered. Wireless access in Fisher 135 is top priority, and general coverage in the courtyard by Walker would be really nice too."

3. "I think it would be really helpful to wire more plugs into the classrooms. Also a great addition would be the use of Internet in classrooms. Wireless would help, but as many have said, the wireless on this campus has something missing, i.e., speed reliability. I take notes with my laptop, and it would be great to be able to plug in so the battery will last through the two-hour classes."

#### **b. Multimedia Projectors**

1. "Having permanent AV equipment (computer terminal, projection equipment, DVD player, ability to play music—similar to what is available in Dow 641, for instance) in classrooms in Walker (and, ideally, also in Fisher) would be a tremendous asset to my teaching. Too often, I have to forego use of this equipment simply because it is too time consuming to bring along and set up the portable equipment for a 50-minute class."

2. "Speaking as a student, I agree completely. I was wondering how hard (expensive) it would be to have a permanent projector and laptop docking station in every classroom. It seems that portable PC workstations lead to a lot of setup confusion because the system is always set up slightly different, and the lecturer needs time to find applicable shortcuts, transfer in presentation files, and finally hit the monitor two or three times to turn it on."

3. "When I was teaching, I always brought in my own laptop with the portable projector cart; it sped things up a lot. Then again, when I went to give my thesis defense, the laptop had a broken screen, and the projector didn't want to work with my laptop. I had only just gotten it working when my committee began showing up. But, hey, there went all my stress!"

4. "The problem with permanent AV equipment in classrooms without high ceilings is that such equipment has a history of walking away. People know those projectors are worth \$2,500, so they *have* literally disappeared overnight. That's not an expense that every department is willing to put up with—insurance or no."

5. "I actually considered buying my own (which now that I'm working as a contractor I may actually have to go ahead and do), but on my school salary, I really couldn't afford it. I'm hoping to see projectors drop in price to be perfectly affordable by most teachers."

#### **c. Universal Access to Departmental Computer Labs**

1. "Computer labs should be accessible to all students, not just students in a particular department. Most other universities offer 'universal' computing. It is annoying not being able to easily collaborate with students from other departments because you're not allowed to log into the same computer lab."

2. "This is very true especially in your freshman year as an engineering 1001/1002 student. Yes, you can access the programs you need from your own department, but it is overly complicated to

transfer files back to Dillman. I also found that many times my group-mates could get into Dillman while I could not. This left me in a bad situation if I didn't get there before them."

3. "I agree. On a group project, my group-mates all had lab access in the MEEM. I can't login there, which means I have to stay in Dillman and talk to them on a cell phone and transfer files to them. Annoying."

4. "I completely agree that there should be universal computing labs, but what suggestions do people have to combat lots of people using just a few labs? For those living in the dorms, I'm sure they're not going to walk all the way to the MEEM because they're ME if they are going to have access to Walker, Dillman, or Fisher."

5. "I have been complaining about lack of universal computer access for 10 years."

6. "The problem we found with this, when it was discussed while I was at school, was that all the departments use different systems and own different software."

7. "The Humanities computer labs have PCs and Macs. Across campus, you can find Solaris machines, Unix machines, and various other operating systems. If I logged into a machine in another lab, would I still be able to access software that only my department owned licenses for? (The way it's set up now, *no*, since some labs use images and others load directly from the network.) Should I be able to go into another lab and use Ideas? Or should somebody be able to come into my department and use the Macromedia and Adobe suite without so much as paying a fee? If the departments are using their budgets to pay for their software, well.... no."

8. "It'd be very nice to have universal basic login access (Web browser, email, Office). Then, if you are taking a class in that department, you get access to the programs that you will be using in the class."

9. "But that wouldn't solve the group project problem at all. You could log in, but if specialized software is being used, you could still be hosed. But we simply don't need to be paying for campus-wide licenses of software that will only be used in one lab."

#### **d. Furnishing and Windows**

1. "Our classrooms are all designed for lectures, but we are encouraged to teach using group interactions. It would be nice to have at least some rooms with *sturdy* round tables instead of rows that make forming groups difficult. Teachers could then walk among their students and listen to group interactions, probe with questions, and get to know students better. There would be no 'back of the room.' PowerPoint projections or slides could be shown from anywhere with a remote control."

2. "The university, like most universities in the nation, has a standard for left-handed desks in the classrooms. Unfortunately it is not adequate or fair. Lecture halls must utilize space efficiently, which normally means the end columns are left-handed. Short of making right-

handed students aware not to sit in these seats, there is nothing the university can do. The problem lies in the classrooms with desks. The desks should be replaced with ambidextrous desks or tables to facilitate group activities. This way, every chair can be used."

3. "Most of the desks in the older buildings (Fisher, EERC, ChemSci) are becoming quite unstable. The color scheme is not an appealing contribution to the university. It is time for an update, and when this update occurs, why not be fair to all students?"

4. "Provide some way to keep from placing book bags directly on snowy floors, such as racks under desks."

5. "I'd like some windows as well. I don't know how many times I've been stuck in a class in the EERC and haven't known what it looks like outside. Plus, the EERC is always too hot, so some fresh air every once in a while would be nice as well."

## **II. Recreational Spaces**

**Objective: To further enhance the lives of Michigan Tech students, faculty, and staff through recreational opportunities.**

We recommend that Michigan Tech's Intramural and Sports and Recreation Programs continue to examine the needs of sports not already accommodated on campus.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

### **a. Frisbee**

1. "Frisbee golf is an up-and-coming recreational activity all over the US. It would be nice if MTU had a course. Disc golf courses are relatively cheap and easy to create. Most of the design, fabrication, and installation could be done by the students of MTU as class projects. Please take the time to look into this option."

2. "At this time, there is no disc or Frisbee golf course on the Tech Trails. There has been some discussion about putting a course in. Maintenance and cost of installation and upkeep are the major issues to be addressed. If there is enough interest, we should get a working group together."

3. "Here's another vote for Frisbee golf."

4. "DiscoTech Ultimate club would likely be willing to help."

5. "While formal disc-golf 'nets' [for Frisbee] may be expensive, there is little maintenance. I'm sure either students or Facilities could put together something similar from scratch for much less—basically some flat and angle iron, chains, and paint."

6. "Our softball fields are [prioritized?] for intramural softball and flag football. We also have played soccer and ultimate Frisbee on these fields. One lighted field would really enhance our IM Program. We could play games late at night, which would be beneficial to the students. Currently, in the fall when we play these sports, it gets dark early, and our game schedule is limited. With lights, we could offer more games and more activities in the fall. The community also uses these fields, and it would benefit their leagues. This area is not anywhere near its full potential. Frisbee golf and sand volleyball courts also could be added."

### **b. Tech Trails**

1. "How about building an eco-friendly motel/cabin complex next to the ski trails so you literally step onto the trails out your back door. It could be rented to out-of-town skiers in the winter, mountain bikers and nature enthusiasts in the summer, and reserved for VIPs periodically during the year. I know Tech hasn't done so well in the motel business in the past, but perhaps it could be done in small increments to test the market if a master plan were drawn up first. I imagine it would make a real good impression on families visiting the university—those who wanted a bit of the Northwoods experience."

2. "I think one of the great things about the MTU trails is that they are an in-the-woods experience. If MTU puts up rental cabins around the trail so people can step out the back door onto the trails as you suggest, we will lose that in-the-woods experience. Let the local businesses have their hotels downtown, and keep the trail for what it is meant to be: a good, clean, outdoor recreation, not a sidewalk between housing complexes."

3. "I enjoy the current trails; however, all the down hill one way followed by only uphill is annoying. A trail with rolling hills would be nice."

### **c. Badminton [Note: These suggestions are in the process of being implemented.]**

1. "There should be separate badminton courts. Each time we go to SDC, the multipurpose room is occupied, so it would be great if there could be some separate badminton courts."

2. "I too feel that badminton players should have separate badminton courts. Most of the time the marked badminton courts in the multipurpose room are occupied."

If new courts can't be made immediately, I propose the following solutions:

a. Please make sure that at least one court is reserved for badminton players irrespective of the day, year, and time. I feel strongly that we shouldn't discriminate among players of different sports. We badminton players also pay our SDC fees every year, and we should have the same rights as hockey or basketball players to courts in the SDC.

b. If the above is not possible, at least mark all the courts in the SDC multipurpose room with badminton marker lines, and shift the badminton poles to places accessible to all players. If we

have a hockey game in the SDC, in the multipurpose court room, all the badminton poles are blocked and, hence, are inaccessible to badminton players."

#### **d. Sledding**

1. "I think that the university should review its policy on sledding on campus. Right now, there is no way for any organized sledding on campus even if it is as regulated and safe as possible. It doesn't make sense to me that Michigan Tech students aren't allowed to enjoy the most abundant natural resource on campus: snow"

#### **e. Pool/Billiards**

1. "How about fixing the price of pool and other MUB activities? \$4 a person for an hour is insane. Reducing student prices for things like that would be very nice. There isn't much to do around here that is reasonably priced. Charge the community more, but give the students a break."

### **III. US 41 Corridor through Campus**

**Objective: To enhance visual appeal and improve pedestrian safety.**

#### **A. Background**

The US 41 corridor between 4th Street to the east and Peal Street to the west is both the central corridor for most pedestrian traffic at Michigan Tech and the first sight that most visitors get of the university. The landscaping of the islands between the east- and westbound lanes of US 41, the addition of the Rozsa Center, and the improvements to the Van Pelt Library have all enhanced the visual appeal of this corridor, but much more could and should be done both to enhance visual appeal and to improve pedestrian safety.

#### **B. Recommended Additional Improvements**

1. Students and other pedestrians need safer ways to cross US 41, especially between 1st Street (just east of McNair Hall) and the area just east of Fisher Hall. The possibility of one or more elevated walkways (e.g., from Wadsworth Hall to Fisher Hall) is mentioned on page 9 of the MTU Campus Master Plan 1999 Amendment. However, research has shown that most people will not go significantly out of their way to take a safer route; consequently, many elevated walkways tend to be under used. Hence, pedestrians who are not already at or near the same elevation as the walkway are unlikely to use it.

Upper Peninsula Engineers & Architects President Pat Coleman has recommended, "changing grades at Townsend/MacInnes to create an at-grade pedestrian link, rather than an overpass."

This would take advantage of the natural terrain of this section of US 41: the roadbed is elevated near the Rozsa Center, descends to a low point near the crosswalk between Wadsworth Hall and the Walker Building, and then rises again as it continues west toward MacInnes Drive. Hence, we recommend that—in addition to considering the possibility of one or more elevated walkways—Michigan Tech and the City of Houghton work with MDOT to construct pedestrian underpasses between East McNair Hall and the Rozsa parking lot and between Wadsworth Hall and the Walker Building.

2. Construct a sidewalk along the full length of the north (Portage) side of US 41 between 4th Street and the west end of Cliff Drive.
3. Landscape the hillside between US 41 and the Rozsa parking lot, perhaps with assistance from the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service's Master Gardeners Program (contact Ralph Duffek, 482-5830). Construct safe access down this hill across from the stairs to East McNair Hall.
4. The campus development plan "Michigan Technological University: A Guide to Future Physical Development" developed for Michigan Tech by Johnson, Johnson, & Roy, Inc. in 1965 considers the possibility of rerouting US 41 along Sharon Avenue. This possibility should again be reviewed with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Houghton.
5. We recommend that Michigan Tech work with the City of Houghton to encourage implementation of the City of Houghton Walkability/Pedestrian Plan that was developed for the city by U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc. in September 2002. (Please see attachment "HoughtonWalkabilityPlan.pdf.")

According to Peter Lagerwey, manager of Seattle's pedestrian-and-bicycles program, *pedestrians are an indicator species*: their presence indicates that a lot of good things are happening in a community—people are interacting more and isolated less. A recent Federal Highway Administration study showed that pedestrian crashes are reduced by approximately 50 percent where sidewalks are installed. A second, 1999 study showed an 88 percent reduction in "walking-along-road" crashes on roads where sidewalks exist. A network of sidewalks also encourages walking rather than driving. Hence, it encourages a healthier lifestyle and less dependence on gas and crowded parking areas.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

#### **a. Visual Appeal**

1. The scrubby bush at the roadside that covers the view of the Rozsa be removed or at least thinned. In addition, I would like to see funding allocated to cover the cost of expanding and improving the Rozsa gardens, which could be one of the most beautiful areas on campus for people to sit and study or relax in the warm weather. Perhaps this would mitigate the view of the parking lot.

The addition of hedging—which would enhance the area and make it feel more garden-like and detract from the proximity to the parking lots—and seating (not picnic tables) appropriately positioned would be good. It would also tie in to beach development.

The approach to Tech from the east is only marginally better than it used to be. A better designed sign and surrounding shrubbery would help. It would have been better to have had the Rozsa architects design it. They were seriously unimpressed when they first saw it. In addition, the Rozsa road sign should be raised; in the winter the snow banks hide it."

2. "Improve the approach from Chassell by removing about 100 feet of the scrub trees on the campus side, so that you can get a complete view of the Rozsa Center. This would probably only take a day to do and would cost nothing but time."
3. "Wouldn't this just give us a nice view of the two parking lots there? Sure, clear it out, but let's plant something there."
4. "While you can not eliminate the MUB loading dock, if you planted a row of thick, 8-foot evergreen shrubs along the strip of grass leading the US mail box, you could do a better job of hiding the dock and dumpsters."

#### **b. Pedestrian Safety**

1. "While it may seem like a good idea to construct an underpass to allow students to cross US 41, this will require a lot of planning. The amount of stress from the passing logging trucks and other traffic, in addition to the high flow of traffic through this road, would make such a tunnel structurally difficult to construct. In addition, there are vehicles that use US 41 daily that would find it hard to use a detour during the construction (logging trucks trying to make it through a residential detour for several months would cause problems). So the first major downfall of this plan is the construction. A detour would have to be found that would allow the high rate of traffic, in addition to the large sizes of the logging trucks, to move easily, and a design would have to be made that would support the stress that the tunnel would undergo. These can be figured out with time and effort; I am simply pointing out that they must be addressed."
2. "Having the sidewalk on the north side of the street between Wads and the corner plowed on a *regular* basis would encourage people to use the light."
3. "I say connect the second floor of Wads to Fisher. Many students travel from and through Wads in the winter due to the cold. This would connect everyone to Fisher, so they wouldn't have to cross the road."
4. "My suggestion is to put a sidewalk on the north side of US 41 along the Walker Building. That area is already highly traveled by students, which makes it difficult to keep grass alive. Making a sidewalk would concentrate the traffic to the sidewalk, improving the health of the grass. I also agree with the landscaping of the hill by the Rozsa parking lot."

5. "Keep in mind that in order for a sidewalk to make sense, there needs to be a crosswalk. Sure, students cross anywhere on US 41 between the Administration Building and East McNair, but a sidewalk without a crosswalk? Well, that's saying it's okay to cross wherever you want. And getting crosswalks on US 41 is harder than pulling teeth."
6. "I understand what you are saying. I live in West McNair. I think that part of the problem is that people do cross whenever and wherever they want to. I offer only one response: possibly a crosswalk at the base of the McNair hill."
7. "College Avenue/Townsend Drive are important visually, as a gateway and as a pedestrian link. The sidewalks on College Avenue are pretty bad in winter (auto spray, slush, snow from plow) and could be improved if set back. This would require major shifts in thinking by the city and the neighborhood, but could be something MTU could push the city and MDOT on. MDOT would like to improve safety, possibly adding a center turn lane."
8. "People like to drive everywhere. Thus I'm not surprised at the lack of pedestrian right-of-ways. But why don't we have a sidewalk on the campus side of US 41? And for those students living in the dorms, there isn't a sidewalk to get to the parking lot on the far east side of campus. No sidewalks along Cliff Drive, either. We have to walk in the road instead. If the people in charge of planning would walk where the students do, then they would see the poor planning of pedestrian spaces."
9. "Build stairs (and shovel them) from Lot 12 up to US 41 at one of the crosswalks that goes up Blanche Street. Students access campus this way now, and there is an ugly dirt path, or snow path in the winter."

## IV. Parking Lot 10

**Objective: To enhance both the usability and the visual appeal of one of the first things visitors to Michigan Tech encounter.**

Note: Any modifications to Parking Lot 10 should take into consideration that fact that (as reported in the March 28, 2001 issue of the *Michigan Tech Lode*) between 1958 and 1962, low-level radioactive waste from Michigan Tech's radiochemistry laboratory was buried beneath this lot and remains there to this day. For a copy of the *Lode* story, please see the attachment "RadWasteLot10.pdf." [Correction May 17, 2005: This waste is below the Rozsa parking lot.]

We recommend paving Parking Lot 10 and including a brick-paver pathway through the lot, directing people to Prince's Point. In addition, we encourage considering lowering the level or otherwise modifying the design of the lot in order to improve the view of Portage Lake from US 41.

We understand from Facilities Management Director Bill Blumhardt that paving this lot may need to wait for another year to allow time for the fill deposited in this area to settle. We also

understand from Bill that because of the substantial amount of fill in this lot, the lot may not be a candidate site for construction.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "For the last two years, I've either known someone with a car in Lot 10 or I've had my own car parked there myself. Getting out there in the summer is not impossible, but try making that trek in the winter. Not only does the university plow maybe once a week, but also because it's not paved, it's extremely hard to get around. Also, most people out there don't seem to understand the concept of parking in a straight line, so a lot of space is lost when people spread their cars out. Paving the lot, painting some lines, and maintaining it during the winter would make things so much easier for students who park out there."
2. "The point of Lot 10 being an eyesore is something that, as a freshman, I noticed driving into town. Entering town for my first time (ah, those were the days) I saw cars and Lot 10 before I saw the MTU sign or Rozsa Center. That idea had gotten lost in the shuffle of the past few semesters, but being reminded of it, I don't know of any other lots on campus that are even comparable to Lot 10 in regards to appearance and organization. Better yet, look at Lot 21 & 26, way up there where incoming families/students seldom venture, and they are paved, marked and everything, what a concept."
3. "Many people complain that Lot 10 is an eye sore and a horrible way of welcoming visitors to the MTU campus. Again, by paving it, the university would be eliminating that dusty eye sore in the spring, summer, and fall."
4. "Perhaps we could turn that parking lot into part of the water front park that the school is envisioning, and build a parking structure behind the SDC, or into the hillside between forestry and main campus."
5. "The parking lot off US 41 as you approach Tech is a real waste of waterfront property. It makes a terrible first impression of MTU as well. The parking lot should be minimized and/or relocated, and better use made of this property—perhaps for a park, which can lead down to the waterfront. Or the site for new construction that is appropriate to the location. Maybe a good site for the proposed new building for the School of Business and Economics, if that is ever funded."
6. "An earthen berm with grass and landscaping separating the lot from the highway will be a cheap, quick, and green way to eliminate the eyesore."
7. "While I can understand the frustrations of the people who park in Lot 10, there is some history to the situation which may help understand why it is the way it is. The Residential Hall parking lots are separate from the rest of the lots on campus. Any improvements to those lots are paid for from the Residence Halls budget. Just because the residence halls paid for the improvements doesn't mean that the lot won't be repossessed by the university. This has happened before."

Before the Rozsa Center was built, there was another lot there for DHH residents. After the Rozsa was built, that lot was taken for commuter parking, and the DHH residents were put over to Lot 10. When there was funding available to improve Lot 10, the Board of Control was asked if they would guarantee that the lot would not be taken; they said that they couldn't promise anything. Without that assurance, the decision was made to make the improvements in a lot that was most likely to stay in Residence Hall control, Lot 21. The residence halls are operated as businesses, and they have customers. Why would they pay for improvements that may not benefit their customers?"

8. "If Lot 10 were eliminated, DHH residents would have no parking lot. Wads and McNair both have lots right behind them. Lots 21/26 aren't that far for those students either. Those of us in DHH, still have to walk quite a way to reach our cars. I'm willing to make that sacrifice now, but if Lot 10 was turned into a building or a park, I wouldn't be happy."

9. "Why doesn't the university look into using some sort of natural wall to hide the parking lot?"

## V. Other Parking

**Objective: To provide convenient parking while mitigating parking lots' deleterious visual impact.**

### Background

Michigan Tech's main campus is inward facing in that the central spine is pedestrian oriented and green. This is good. However, this design has also led to parking lots being pushed to the campus perimeter. As the MTU Campus Master Plan 1999 Amendment indicates, "the campus presents itself within a moat of surface parking further complemented by weak to non-existent landscaping. Considering that first and last impressions are important relative to selecting an institution (according to current student surveys), MTU must do a better job of putting its best face forward" (p. 6).

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "Our campus looks to all like a shopping mall, with parking lots all around. This not only looks cheesy, but it sends a message of ignorance about environmental issues. The same can be said for most campuses. Everyone wants to park near their workplace, but the result looks very bad, especially to outsiders and visitors. People who wish to visit places like the Seaman Mineral Museum cannot find their objective, and all are battered by parking gates. If parking lots were converted to green areas with landscaping, and art and recreation and landscape architecture principles were used, we would notice a huge transformation.

Of course this means changing a whole perception by faculty and students and necessitates a realization that driving to work is not part of a university. The university should embrace this to show an environmental commitment. The world can no longer afford cars to the extent we use them. Let's lead in finding another way. Let's do it in Houghton, where in many ways it is easier

than most places. We cannot do this all at once either. Make a sliding goal of gradual elimination of parking lots, with 50% being eliminated over the next decade. Establish parking priorities (disabled and visitors should have high priority).

Other ways to get to work should be enhanced, especially walking, bicycling, skiing, and other non-motorized ways. Get rid of the most unsightly lots first, and do spectacular landscape changes that all can see. Increase fees for campus parking, and plough the funds into improvements for those who don't park on campus. Keep track of things publicly—how many parked on campus today compared to last week? last year? etc. Publicize successful changes, ideas about how to solve this problem, which is a really difficult one and one that needs eco-engineering skills. Make the elimination of campus parking a campus project that can lead to national and international solutions.

I realize that this is a long-term idea, but I believe it will be an important leverage to help many of the issues your group has outlined, including the US 41 corridor, the lakeshore, and more. Parking should not be the dominant design element of a campus or a town. This is an important issue to deal with directly. Now we surrender to it and assume there is no solution."

2. "Cheesy, yes, but removing parking would make it extremely difficult for people to access campus in the winter months. Sure, there is public transit, but with a widespread elimination of on-campus parking, the demand on the bus line would be overwhelming. With the condition of the roads and sidewalks during the winter months, it is inconvenient, borderline dangerous, to have to walk from off-campus lots. Just doesn't seem like it makes sense. Every person I have spoken to thinks we need *more* parking."

3. "I think we need to think long term and start planning on spending some money on a parking deck. It could be underground, and then you would only have to plow the entrance and the upper level. Heck, instead of an upper level, you could have green space or recreation space! Can you imagine a park and sculpture garden instead of the Rozsa parking lot? And you wouldn't have to scrape and sweep snow and ice off your windshield! Too bad it's going to take cash."

4. "In the short term, plant some tall evergreens or shrubs around the perimeter of parking lots. Just be sure to have some paved/brick entrances and exits, so people don't trample the plants."

5. "Yeah, this is difficult. I know how to be green. My senior year in high school, I decided I didn't want to pay for parking. I rode my bike 6 miles to school and 15 miles to work, every day, even in the Minnesota winter. I think I had 8,000 miles of commuting alone that year.

ESC is working on a bike-share program, but even in the Student Commission I've heard complaints from cyclists. Fact is, there isn't even a decent place to bike commute on campus. Pedestrians everywhere! And man, I *love* riding in the winter, let me tell you. With all the sand Houghton and Tech use, it's like riding in 10" of mashed potatoes. You can't ride on the sidewalks downtown; there's no shoulder due to street parking. Just got to grab a lane and deal with angry motorists. Unfortunately, Tech sits in a bad location: giant hill plus residential zone to the south, lake to the north. Not much room east or west either.

Fact is, for visitors, faculty, and off-campus students, there is a real demand for parking that is going to be difficult to reduce. Even as green as I am, working as a photographer, there are times I need to drive to campus. I can't carry 25 pounds of photo gear in my shoulder bag. It's not safe, or practical. Reducing parking is going to reduce the productivity of this university.

I came across a visitor this morning who couldn't find a place to park. He was on campus to help us out as a member of an external advisory board, and I was embarrassed that I couldn't tell him where to park."

6. "Winter travel is a challenge. But traveling to the university in Houghton, even in winter, is a small problem compared to commuting in a real city. Sure, everyone wants more parking! That is the easiest and most expensive solution overall. But we need creative solutions, such as carpool rewards and rewards for those who don't buy or claim campus parking permits and higher costs for those permits, plus real creativity about solutions that address the problem for those who do commute from outlying areas."

7. "We can do something better, and we should focus on this fundamental problem and find a better solution that gets somewhere new. A parking deck is expensive and will encourage the development of higher vehicle/person ratios on campus when we need to encourage lower ratios on campus and everywhere else."

8. "My suggestion to enhance campus is to improve visitor parking. For example, should the lot on the west side of Fisher be visitor parking? Improved visitor parking would enhance recruiting and would also help the museum bring more people on to the campus."

9. "If you drive by Tech, you have very few clues where to go for visitor parking or admissions. Signs along the highway indicating this would be nice."

## **VI. Michigan Tech's Waterfront**

**Objective: To increase the visibility, accessibility, and usability of Michigan Tech's waterfront property. [Among other things, such enhancements could help with the expansion of Michigan Tech's new 14-week summer semester.]**

### **A. Background**

[Note: In earlier documents and on our Web site, we refer to the point of land north of Parking Lot 10 as "Princess Point." Upper Peninsula Engineers & Architects President Pat Coleman has informed us that "Princess Point" is on the Bootjack side of Portage Lake and that the proper name of the point north of Lot 10 is "Prince's Point."]

During most of the previous two centuries, many communities in the United States exploited their waterways for industrial purposes. Hence, these waterways were neither suited for nor valued as residential and recreational resources. By the 1970s, in many parts of the country, this

situation had begun to change as communities began to rediscover and value their waterfront areas.

In the early 1990s, Michigan Tech created a small beach on its property at Prince's Point on Portage Lake (just to the northeast of the Rozsa Center, about halfway between the Minerals and Materials Building and Isle Royale Sands), a key step in taking advantage of Michigan Tech's waterfront location.

Unfortunately, Prince's Point, the adjacent Waterfront Trail, and the adjacent hillside were littered with debris, some accumulated over decades of neglect, some recently dropped there, some recently blown or dumped from construction sites, and some plowed with snow out of parking lots along Cliff Drive. Hence, in 1999, the Department of Humanities began organizing annual clean-ups of this area.

In the first few years of this effort, volunteers cleaned up an approximately 50-year accumulation of debris (dated by license plates and other materials) on the hillside and in the water along Prince's Point Beach. Michigan Tech Facilities Management provided trash bags and hauled away the collected debris.

In addition, volunteers began clearing an old, abandoned hillside trail that begins directly across from the Rozsa Center and descends westward to the Waterfront Trail. Northern Hardwoods of South Range (487-6400) donated 20 cubic yards of wood chips to cover the trail, the City of Houghton donated the use of a small bulldozer to spread the chips and complete the trail (which had been cut off by the Cliff Drive roadbed), and Michigan Tech Facilities Management finished clearing brush and reopened the trail.

In 2004, this initiative was taken over by the Michigan Tech Environmental Sustainability Committee, which recruited the help of the MTU Aquanauts to remove broken glass and other hazardous debris from the waters off Prince's Point Beach.

We understand from Facilities Management Director Bill Blumhardt that plans for further enhancement of Michigan Tech's waterfront property must include access that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

## **B. Recommended Additional Improvements**

Note: These improvements might be made in cooperation with the City of Houghton's plans to develop the East Houghton Waterfront Park just to the west of the Super 8 Motel. There would then be a string of waterfront parks in Houghton—Houghton Beach, the East Houghton Waterfront Park, and Prince's Point Beach—all connected by the Waterfront Trail.

1. Post signs for Prince's Point Beach.
2. Name and post signs for the hillside trail.
3. Landscape the hillside trail, and add a park bench and a trashcan.

4. Create a second trail starting at the same point, but going in the opposite direction (toward Prince's Point Beach).
5. Thin the trees along the hillside, and landscape instead with low-growing trees, bushes, shrubs, and wildflowers. Pages 34 & 36 of the campus development plan "Michigan Technological University: A Guide to Future Physical Development" developed for Michigan Tech by Johnson, Johnson, & Roy, Inc. in 1965 recommend lines of sight from campus to Portage Lake; currently, however, the hillside trees obscure most of these lines of sight. Michigan Tech should maintain a life-cycle approach to urban forestry, including planting, pruning, and removing trees.
6. Build a pavilion at the trailhead across Cliff Drive from the Rozsa Center, overlooking Portage Lake.
7. At the base of the trail, build a dock for canoes, kayaks, and Michigan Tech's crew team (boats could be stored beneath the pavilion and possibly checked out from the Rozsa Box office). Please see the attachment "Boathouse.jpg" for an architectural perspective of a related idea proposed for the area near Michigan Tech's oil tanks.
8. Police the trails for hazardous trees and for the need for woodchip replacement.
9. At Prince's Point, create a path or set of steps from the Waterfront Trail across the poor rock to the beach.
10. Schedule regular emptying of the trashcans at Prince's Point Beach.
12. Work with the DNR to relocate the jet-ski racing course further away from Prince's Point Beach (contact Sgt. Jackie Strauch in the DNR's Baraga office [1-906-353-6651]; the DNR is responsible for issuing permits for jet-ski courses on Portage Lake).
13. Terrace the hillside between Parking Lot 10 and Prince's Point. Or, more ambitiously, build an amphitheatre into the hillside.
14. When the Waterfront Trail was developed following the new sewer lines, electrical service was included to provide the possibility of someday lighting the trail. Michigan Tech should work with the City of Houghton to review this possibility.
15. Repair or replace the guardrails along Cliff Drive.
16. Consider options to dumping over the hill the snow and debris plowed from parking lots along Cliff Drive.
17. Reroute the Waterfront Trail such that it no longer bisects Prince's Point; *this should be done in a way that does not interfere with use of the trail by cyclists and rollerbladers.*

18. Expand the beach area at Prince's Point, possibly to a size that could accommodate one or more sand volleyball courts. As is evident in the aerial photograph on page 3, Prince's Point Beach sits on a shelf such that the water is only 3-4 feet deep for 50 or more feet out into Portage Lake. Add fill to this shelf to expand the beach, and bury the run-off culverts be such that they empty directly into Portage Lake. For permits for such work, contact Mr. Cary Gustafson, Land and Water Management Specialist, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Crystal Falls (1-906-875-2071).

19. Except for the oil tanks and the steam plant, move Facilities Management from the waterfront to the industrially zoned area bounded by on the north and south by Seventh Avenue and Sharon Avenue and on the east and west by MacInnes Drive and Garnet Street.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "I would also like to see some clearing of the trees on the lake side of Cliff Drive to allow a better view of the lake from the Rozsa. This was on the original architect's plans, but it has never been implemented."

2. "The waterfront is underutilized. The master plan for the university should be redone, making the waterfront a central part of the university. The two new buildings fronting the waterfront seem to be built with the same industrial waterway mindset alluded to by the previous author. Instead of a recreational focus, we have parking lots and back entrances."

3. "What a great idea! This committee is long overdue!"

4. "Enhancing the waterfront is a good idea. More walking/biking paths."

5. "I've often wondered why this university had no docks. I'd like to be able to canoe—or eventually even take sailing lessons as one of my P.E. courses—if such a thing became possible in the future. Tech really should take advantage of its location right next to the canal. Why have water if you're never going to use it?"

6. "I think it would be very beneficial to build a boat house to house the MTU research boat so it is more accessible for research opportunities. The boathouse could also house the MTU rowing club, providing them with much easier access to the water. The water is a great resource that is not currently being utilized. I would love to see a place where students can rent or store their own kayaks or canoes. I am a kayaker, and I would love to have a place to store my kayak by the water."

7. "You could include many other things into a boat house. It would be a great place for a coffee shop that looks over the water. It would be a great place to get away from campus for a while, but still be close. You could sell coffee and things in the shop to make money to support the maintenance and expansion of the boathouse. This would also be a great place for anyone on the trail to stop by."

8. "The current beach is a nice place. It would be cool to make it bigger and put in a fire ring. I have been to some bonfires down there, and they are great. It would be much safer if a proper fire pit was installed."

9. "Build an amphitheater into the hillside facing the waterfront."

10. "It is heartwarming to see a discussion of Tech's waterfront. Tech has a huge recruiting advantage over landlocked schools. However, compared to other universities with waterfront assets, ours has been ignored (other than office views)."

11. "A couple suggestions that could be seen by prospective students:

- Build a boathouse/dock area near the "pond" by the oil tanks (can the oil tanks be removed? converted to a round boathouse?)
- Build a stairway east of the Dow Building down to the waterfront. (Right now a weekend visitor who wants to see the waterfront needs to walk to one end of campus or the other.)
- Longer term, building a MUB cafe on the waterside would attract students (and faculty)."

12. "There is quite a bit of state funding that could be available for developing the MTU shoreline along Portage Lake if it includes boat launch or similar facilities. Last year, this grant program had \$20 million in total funding with funding, for individual projects up to \$1.5 million."

13. "One thing that isn't mentioned here is dog walking. Houghton and Hancock beaches do not allow dogs, and Prince's Point is the only place for people nearby without waterfront property to walk their dogs in the summer and give them a chance to swim. I would like to be sure that dogs are not eliminated from plans for use of Prince's Point."

14. "The Waterfront Trail is paved from Houghton Beach to the Isle Royale Sands. The City of Houghton must have paid for this with state recreation grants. I would love to see that trail improvement continued all the way to Chassell.

I understand the railroad right of way that runs through Portage Township and Chassell Township is 100 feet wide all the way from MTU to Chassell (not necessarily 50 feet on either side of the track as the railroad grade was not totally centered on the 100-foot right of way). Currently, more and more landowners along this corridor are ignoring that right of way. That 5-mile section should be paved so that all non-motorized users can enjoy the trail before the local landowners take it over piece by piece."

15. Poison ivy grows prolifically along the Waterfront Trail between Peepsock Trail and the Pilgrim River. To protect visitors to the trail—whether part of the Tech community or not—might some group at Tech (with permission from the City of Houghton) volunteer to make and post along this section for the trail signs teaching users how to identify poison ivy and

warning them to stay on the trail? It would also be helpful if the city could spray the trail sides along this section to keep the poison ivy at bay.

16. "Let's come up with big plans to treat the waterfront as the valuable real estate that it is. Let us plan to move Facilities Management out of the premier spot on campus and identify a much less scenic spot. Let us figure out how to make the waterfront an appealing location for all four seasons. Then we can incrementally start the implementation."

17. "I feel that it is very odd to use waterfront property to store Tech vehicles, snow plows, heavy machinery and like. And the old rail trail makes water access more difficult with the use of poor rock from the mines as a roadbed. A little tiny beach for over 6000 students and employees. What can we do to change this?"

### **C. Construct a Staircase to the Waterfront Trail**

The Michigan Tech's student-led Planning and Development Enterprise (PDE) has designed a wooden staircase—including written report, AutoCAD drawings, and a cost analysis—that could provide safe access from Michigan Tech's main campus to the Waterfront Trail. We recommend that the university consider this design. Please see the attachment "Project Report for the Michigan Technological University Waterfront Stair Design."

#### *Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "I'm sure an easy way to access the waterfront would be appreciated by many students, but I don't think it should become the only way to access the water. One of the reasons I love Michigan Tech and the surrounding area is that it is still natural. It's a place where you can explore and don't always have to follow the paths. Most times when you go some place to appreciate natural beauty you can only observe that beauty from behind a fence or rail. The fact that the natural landscape in the UP is still natural is the thing that makes it great. I think we should take advantage of the waterfront but try to keep it natural and free at the same time."

2. "I think that this is a great idea, since we are fortunate enough to be located on a body of water, we should not turn our backs to it. It would provide easy access for students and be a good place to take campus tour groups."

3. "Assuming this is incorporated mid-campus; like say, near M&M, it could work nicely with the improvements to Prince's Point and the trail that leads to it. Tour groups could walk a relatively short distance along Portage Lake and then loop back through campus."

4. "Could we design this staircase around the idea of an amphitheater, this amphitheater could create a performance place, a place to watch the Winter Carnival fireworks, and a staircase down to the waterfront?"

## VII. Residential Neighborhoods

**Objective: To cultivate and maintain vibrant, historic residential neighborhoods adjacent to campus.**

We recommend that Michigan Tech

1. Reconsider the MTU Campus Master Plan 1999 Amendment, which, among other things, designates some of the historic neighborhoods adjacent to campus as "Potential Development Areas" (p. 15). We recommend that, instead, future university development be planned for the industrially zoned area bounded on the north and south by Seventh Avenue and Sharon Avenue and on the east and west by MacInnes Drive and Garnet Street.
2. Work with the City of Houghton to review the quality (including safety) and cost of near-by but off-campus housing for students.
3. The university itself should be a model landlord and should not, for instance, violate city ordinances.

### A. Background

According to the 2000 Census, Houghton County has the oldest average house age of any county in Michigan (*Daily Mining Gazette*, June 3, 2002). For Michigan Tech, this can be either an asset or a liability: When prospective students and their parents visit Houghton, do they think slumlords and firetraps? or do they think historic districts? This suggests a variety of possibilities for innovative programs that could improve the quality of life for residents of Houghton—including but not limited to Michigan Tech students—and simultaneously generate ongoing national publicity for Michigan Tech.

Revitalizing Houghton's historic neighborhoods could create a magnet community that is safe, walkable, affordable, and an environmentally sound choice (no long commutes, no appropriation of wilderness for human habitat, etc.). Working together with city government and with neighborhood groups, Michigan Tech could help to create a national model for revitalizing historic neighborhoods and boost Houghton's population and tax base in the process.

According to "Improving America's Housing," a recent study by Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies, "The residential remodeling industry now rivals home building in size, generating expenditures of about \$150 billion a year and accounting for about 2% of gross domestic product (GDP)." The interest in residential remodeling is also attested to by the popularity of PBS's Emmy-Award-winning series "This Old House," which has been broadcast since 1980, and related programs. Given the "multiplier effect," every dollar spent locally on home improvements will recirculate many times within the community.

Many homes in Houghton's historic neighborhoods—some of them built in Victorian, Queen Anne, and Mansard styles—are undervalued in that their replacement cost exceeds their market

value; hence, many of these homes are excellent investments. In some cases, construction methods (e.g., plaster-and-lath walls), construction materials (e.g., yellow pine), and material dimensions (e.g., of wooden posts, beams, and joists) are rare in contemporary house construction. Older neighborhoods provide a sense of history and continuity often missing from newer developments. They also support healthy generational and socio-economic diversity.

## **B. Michigan Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program**

The Michigan Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program offers a 25% tax credit for rehabilitation work to homes in historic districts. A house does not have to be restored to original condition; any alterations or additions are presumed to be part of a house's history and are permitted (sometimes even encouraged) to stay. Also, the tax credit includes mundane, non-historic work, like putting on a new roof. It might not cover new additions, though, such as putting on a deck or building a garage.

Before homeowners can qualify for these tax incentives, their neighborhoods must be designated as historic districts. Prof. Kim Hoagland's graduate course in Documenting Historic Structures has already surveyed parts of East Houghton and has drafted a historic district nomination. For more information on this program, see [www.sos.state.mi.us/history/preserve/incentiv/taxincen.html](http://www.sos.state.mi.us/history/preserve/incentiv/taxincen.html).

Michigan Tech is located next to thriving residential neighborhoods that provide both housing for many in the MTU community and a pleasing environment with trees and grass, a variety of buildings, and an interesting history.

The houses of East Houghton are mostly single-family wooden homes, built for a broad middle class. They exhibit a variety of styles, reflecting their construction over nearly five decades. They have porches and bay windows, stained glass and wood brackets, broad hip roofs and gable fronts. Each is different, reflecting a certain pride in homeownership and individuality. Only a few houses are grand, and they tend to congregate on College Avenue. The rest are modest but respectable, appropriate for the rising middle class of a flourishing commercial city in 1900.

The history of Houghton is wrapped up in these neighborhoods. They should be treasured as reminders of what Houghton used to be—a flourishing town with a diversity of businesses, reflected in the diversity of its housing stock. The disappearance or erosion of neighborhoods like this lessens the appeal of Houghton for residents and visitors alike.

## **C. Student-Owned Housing**

Many Houghton residents, especially in East Houghton, are concerned about problems related to absentee landlords who allow rental properties (e.g., student rentals) to deteriorate to the point at which they have a negative impact on neighboring property values. Here are three typical comments, all from residents of East Houghton:

"Another thing that is obviously important is the role of absentee or short-term landlords within the city of Houghton. When the US 41 rerouting study was done, we did some looking at ownership patterns of the houses in East Houghton. As you can imagine, there are many who live elsewhere and never see or experience the impact that they have on the neighborhoods around them. Another constant issue in East Houghton is enforcement of local ordinances (trash, zoning, etc.) that are flagrantly ignored despite the courageous and constant efforts of the established residents. I know that some of the MDOT community people who came up here for the US 41 study were absolutely shocked at the condition of the neighborhoods in East Houghton adjacent to the university."

"Student rentals can result in trashing the house, architecturally—tearing off porches, replacing windows with ones with different dimensions, destruction of yard—and overcrowding, resulting in not enough off-street parking, which results in destruction of yards and trees to create additional parking spaces."

"Student rentals that are not well maintained are the biggest threat to my neighborhood in East Houghton and have created problems in West Houghton, too. When the houses go on the market, they tend to turn into student rentals."

One possible means of addressing this problem is by developing a program at Michigan Tech that will encourage students to purchase and renovate homes as an alternative to renting from absentee landlords. This could encourage students to think of a home not just as a temporary place of residence, but also as an investment and a responsibility.

An alternative might be for Michigan Tech to own and manage the houses, which might be renovated in cooperation with the School of Technology's Construction Management Program

#### **D. Case Example: 200 West Houghton Avenue**

[Note: Although this example—which is cited with the permission of the parties involved—is from West Houghton, the lessons apply equally well to East Houghton.]

In March of 1998, two Michigan Tech undergraduate students, Jessica and Lee, purchased the carriage house at 200 West Houghton Avenue for \$34,900. With a lot of help from Lee's father, they made extensive improvements to the house—and to the neighborhood. In December of 2000, they sold this property for \$82,300; after expenses, they made approximately a \$15,000 profit on their investment.

Student Housing Accommodation Residential Exchange (SHARE) of Canada ([www.share.on.ca/history.html](http://www.share.on.ca/history.html)) estimates that housing costs represent more than 65% of the cost of attending post-secondary schools for students who don't live at home. Especially given the increasing cost of a college education, a program to encourage student-owned housing could help students finance their educations, serve as an innovative recruiting tool for Michigan Tech, and improve Houghton neighborhoods in the process.

Such a program might be facilitated by the Michigan Tech Admissions and Financial Aid Offices. If necessary, instruction in financial planning, residential rehabilitation, civic responsibility, and other life skills might be provided by Michigan Tech faculty and staff (e.g., from the School of Business, the School of Technology, the Department of Civil Engineering, the Department of Social Sciences, and the Department of Humanities), perhaps all in one University-Wide (UN) course (offered either during the summer or the fall term).

Ideally, the successes of participants in what would initially be a small and selective program could inspire other students (and their parents) to take a similar approach to financing their college educations.

### **E. Incentive Programs**

1. The university could work with the City of Houghton in some capacity to help establish some model neighbor awards, such as the following:

a. Model Landlord Award.

b. Neighborhood Beautification Award (perhaps for front yards and/or the adjacent right of way).

c. Community Treasure Award (for outstanding contributions to the community).

2. Michigan's adopt-a-highway program has helped to reduce roadside litter. Could the City of Houghton provide some nominal incentive—maybe only a free package of Houghton trash bags—to kick start volunteer, neighborhood adopt-a-block litter patrols?

3. Many older communities encourage historic preservation with historic house plaques. Two designs are available at the following URLs:

<http://www.historicsalem.org/houseplaque/>

[http://frontieria.com/store/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&Store\\_Code=MGS&Product\\_Code=MEDSIGN2&Category\\_Code=MEDFORD](http://frontieria.com/store/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=MGS&Product_Code=MEDSIGN2&Category_Code=MEDFORD)

Could Houghton establish such as program?

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "Perhaps there are so many run down houses because a \$35,000 house rents for \$400 a month, but a \$80,000 house rents for \$800 a month. As awful as it sounds, students need crummy housing because it's cheap. If the area directly around campus was turned into a beautiful historic district, then none of the students could afford to live nearby. Perhaps tearing down the slums and building large, efficient, and attractive apartment buildings would provide better housing at

lower costs. Getting more students to move nearby would also help foster the campus community, because they would eat in the MUB, walk to activities in the evening, and meet more people."

2. "The cost of housing certainly is the major expense of being a student here. Therefore, it stands to reason that MTU should have an interest in the supply of affordable housing in the campus region."

3. "It makes sense that MTU should cooperate with the City of Houghton and have input into various city ordinances that will impact the housing supply. I don't believe this has been happening. The City of Houghton has been steadily passing various ordinances concerning housing and zoning, which have the effect of:

- Reducing the supply of available housing (driving up cost)
- Reducing the allowed number of residents in already established housing (driving up cost)
- Increasing the cost of housing by enacting inspection fees, additional code requirements, etc.

Has MTU had any input into this progressively more oppressive and expensive trend? If MTU cares about the availability of affordable and accessible housing for its students, then MTU should work more closely with the city and oppose further anti-student legislation.

The next proposed ordinance is to reduce the number of allowed non-related persons living together in R1 (residential, single-family) zoned houses (the vast majority of local houses) from 3 to 2. So under the scenario proposed in the first post, a student could buy a house and fix it up, but is not allowed to have more than one other non-related person living there. So much for personal property rights."

4. "There is a shortage of higher quality rental units (apartments or houses) at this university compared to other campuses in the region and nationally, but market forces should be allowed to correct this, not legislation that squeezes the students out of East Houghton's current locales."

5. "I'm curious as to why Tech tears down homes to make parking lots. Two homes have disappeared in the last two years. Cars now occupy those spaces. And the old president's house is slated for the wrecking ball according to plans issued for the new School of Business. Let's think beyond the car. Please."

## VIII. Other Campus Spaces

### A. Background

In addition to academic options and degree strengths, the appearance and feel of campus is critical in both attracting new students and making current students feel at home. First impressions are lasting, whether they occur during a stroll through the heart of campus or along the Waterfront Trail, afloat on Portage Lake, or passing by on US 41.

*Comments from CECC Web Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

#### a. Environmentally Sensitive Improvements

1. "Thanks to this committee for providing this forum, and I'm happy to see so many good ideas suggested. I hope that, whenever practical, the campus tries to model improvements and enhancements that are environmentally sustainable as well as economical and useful.

The book *Ecodemia*, published by the National Wildlife Federation, contains several examples from universities throughout the country that have adopted sustainable improvements. It includes stories of how one campus learned to compost its dorm kitchen wastes, how another saved \$17,000 by ordering recycled paper products, and it explains how a university adopted a plan to incorporate only indigenous grasses and plants in its landscaping design. It also points out how to order environmentally friendly lab equipment, cleaning supplies, and other items for university operations. It lists ideas for expanding recycling programs as well. The committee and others might find this book useful."

#### b. Landscaping

1. "As a non-engineer, I have not found MTU's campus to be very attractive—lots of boring, square, brick buildings. My suggestion is to add lots of perennial landscaping to soften those buildings: flowers, flowering shrubs, less lawn, more brick walkways. I think the forestry building and Rozsa and new library are the most aesthetically pleasing, especially inside. Educational Opportunity in the Alumni Building has a beautiful flower garden out front, as does the Rozsa now. MTU's campus lacks the historic character of U-M and other older campuses."

2. "The dorms need landscaping—nice flowering shrubs and perennial flowers."

3. "The University Student Commission (USC) is interested in installing decorative walkways where students make trails through the grass every year. I suggested the possibility of the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science creating one of these walkways, possibly in front of the EERC. We are looking into reusing some sort of material for the walkway, such as the concrete patio stones produced as waste from a Civil Engineering lab. Another possibility is PolyPavement, which is a kind of dirt glue. A few years ago, Larry Sutter in the School of

Technology tested some of this material. Additional information is also available at [www.polypavement.com](http://www.polypavement.com)."

4. "This campus does not need more concrete; what it needs is some respect from lazy walkers and even lazier mountain bikers to not use the grassy areas as shortcuts. Every year, Facilities Management spends time and money trying to re-seed these areas, and puts up temporary tape barriers. We need signage and better barriers."

### **c. Art on Campus**

1. "The Tech campus looks wonderful when the ice sculptures are on show. Nothing displays the character and caring of a community better than public art. Currently, MTU has one small and not very distinguished outdoor sculpture outside of the Walker Building. More and more-exciting art could improve the look of the campus—and even bring attention to MTU, just as Christo's Gates project did to Central Park in New York City."

It would be exciting—and not so expensive—to have student groups complete to design outdoor art projects that would be more permanent than ice sculptures and would express the character of MTU. This could be done through an annual competition with judging by the CECC, or by an appointed set of judges."

2. "We do have art on campus: army vehicles, big pickup trucks, Humvees, etc. A school that calls itself a university must provide a well-rounded educational experience. Tech is still stuck on being an engineering campus; thus, the trucks or snowmobiles or something that burns fuel and makes noise. I think our new president is open-minded and interested in expanding the Tech experience and sees art as part of the well-rounded university experience."

3. "I live in West McNair, and I would like to see a mural (or many murals) on the inner walls of the courtyard. Not on the brick but on the poured concrete wall. This could also possibly lead to other murals on and around campus on the similar poured concrete walls. I think this university has a small art program; this could be a public way of displaying the talent."

### **d. Covered Walkways between Buildings**

1. "I think that a covered walkway between the MEEM and Chem Eng buildings would be a good idea. We have a lot of traffic from the rear, east side of the MEEM to the rear, west side entrance of the Chem Eng building. Several of those are handicapped students. With the wind, there are some pretty big snowdrifts. It would also cut down on the amount of dirt and snow dragged into the buildings for the janitors to clean up."

2. "I agree. The buildings are designed to be connected, so let's finish the job even if the connection is underground. This may help alleviate some of the Chem Sci vacuum effect as well."

### **e. Word Processing in the Library**

1. "I am a student at Michigan Tech without a computer. I would like to be able to come to the library to type my essays, but unfortunately the library has no word-processing programs. I would like to see a change in this."
2. "I think that the library is a wonderful place to study because of the windows that supply the study area with natural light, and of course the fact that it is the best place to concentrate without noises of people talking, etc. Unfortunately I do not go there often because it does not fulfill my needs with a word processor."

### **f. More Places to Relax and Study**

1. "It is all well and good to focus on beautifying campus, but this is not a user-friendly campus. Where are the comfortable places for students to hang out, have some coffee, chat with friends, watch some TV? Students frequently have small blocks of time, not enough to go downtown or back to a dorm room, but enough to want to fill with something. Money would be better spent buying upholstered furniture, providing transition zones in our buildings, building a warm, inviting, relaxing space for students to read, unwind, or catch a quick cat nap. The MUB is not that place! Big chunks of money are spent to make things look good. Let's try spending it on substance. Beautiful waterfront is of minimal value to students' everyday life, especially in winter. What would make living on campus more friendly, comfortable, and inviting?"
2. "Most of the year Houghton is a desolate dreary place without a hint of green anywhere to be seen. It can really wear on a person after awhile. There do need to be more places for students to relax between classes, and it would be soothing to have some plants around, possibly a greenhouse or sunroom with open areas."
3. "Its difficult to relax, read, or take a nap on the few remaining grassy areas when there is foot traffic and bikes whizzing by."
4. "The MUB Commons has a total of one couch. Why not have a whole bunch of them in that area, by the windows, or even go for making a full-fledged lounge out of a meeting room?"
5. "Plans for the new Memorial Union look good; that'll give campus a real focal point and make a significant difference too. Years ago, I suggested building a concrete podium close to the Union circle to encourage dialog. Concrete benches placed where the plows won't get them would also be good and allow for seating on nice days before the snow has all gone and before the picnic tables are placed."
6. "I would highly recommend implementing student department lounges similar to those alumni, faculty, and staff lounges and similar to the ones that can be found in the dorms. Many students spend hours and lots of late nights in the lab (especially EEs), so if there was a spot where we could lounge in our respective departments, that would help improve campus and student life tremendously."

7. "In the area outside the large lecture halls in Fisher, MTU has not provided students with the simple necessities of proper chairs, tables, and lighting for studying. The seating in this area is casual rather than task seating; the latter is better suited to doing homework. Students at these tables must sit on the edges of these lounge-type seats because they are designed for relaxation rather than for working at a table. Besides the lack of appropriate seating, there is inadequate lighting and tabletop space. Such examples abound. They impact the perceptions formed by visitors and campus community members alike. We should explore practical ways to improve the perception and reality of MTU as an attractive academic community."

8. "It is a disgrace to the space and to the building itself that folks litter the Dow lobby with flyers. There are sufficient bulletin boards in Dillman and the EERC (just steps in either direction from the Dow lobby), and this gorgeous, sun-lit corridor should be kept free from such wasteful advertisements. Additionally, many of these flyers end up in the garbage (i.e., landfill) despite the existence of *two* recycle bins within 20 feet of the benches. This space used to be a clean, bright place to gather and relax. It now looks like a trashed stadium. I recommend an ordinance/rule that prohibits the solicitation of any event in this space.

Additionally, (this may not be the optimum forum for this complaint), there is sufficient natural light in the Dow lobby to *not* require the use of the round wall lights 24 hours a day. In a building with "environmental" in its name, this is quite hypocritical and conveys a poor message to students and visitors (not to mention the wasteful use and cost of energy)."

#### **g. Food and Dining**

1. "It would be nice to get some more big-name fast-food restaurants in the MUB. For example if we could get a McDonalds or a Burger King."

2. "Or how about pasta at Sbarros instead of only pizza. Not all of us like pizza."

3. "More food in the MUB would be nice. It would be great if you don't use all the meals of a 10-meal plan and aren't allowed to take a 5-meal one, such as those of us who live in apartments. With more food variety, it would be worth eating in the MUB more often. It would be much more likely that there would be something there that you like to eat, or that you didn't eat just a day or two ago."

4. "I know other people like a lot more foods than I do, but I'm sure many of them would still appreciate some more variety in the MUB."

5. "I think it would be a great idea to have an exclusive Indian joint in the MUB. I guess we have a large Indian population here (150 students), and it would be profitable for the MUB too. I also found MUB food to be more expensive than many places downtown, and the food isn't that great."

6. "I don't think we need fast food, or any more of it, on campus. Read *Fast Food Nation*, and you'll understand why I say this. What the MUB could do is charge *less* for healthy food and *more* for food that makes people larger in the waist. Why does staying in good health cost more at the MUB? The U.S.A. is the most overweight country in the world. Let's do something radical at Tech and make not only smarter people but healthier ones too!"

7. "How about a coffee house, eatery, or regular entertainment on campus past 5 p.m. that isn't part of the dorms?"

8. "If more people would mention this, maybe the community would actually do something about it. I hate the weekends when it comes time to figuring what to do. Everything closes by 9 p.m. it seems; even the movie theaters are done with movies by about 10 p.m."

9. "Could you imagine what would happen if there was a restaurant near campus? Most college towns have tons of business across the street. Problem: Everything near Tech is residentially zoned. How much teeth pulling would it take to convince someone somewhere that we need to push to change maybe a block of the space across US 41 from campus into a commercial zone?"

#### **h. Transportation between the Main Campus and the SDC**

1. "Create a constant mode of transportation between the main campus and the SDC. Ideas range from a van that shuttles students and employees back and forth, to a ski-hill-type rope-pull or lift. That would attract students, encourage use of the SDC and enhance usage of the parking lots on a day-to-day basis, alleviating congestion in other day lots."

2. "I like the idea, but I have some questions. How would a rope-pull lift work in the summer and fall, and where would the lift's posts be put? And wouldn't someone who is going to the SDC want the exercise of walking? I know that for classes and sporting events, the shuttle would be a great idea. How often would it run, and who would be in charge of the shuttle (a third-party bus company, MTU, students even?)?"

3. "The residence halls are just down the hill, and it's not worth the effort to run a shuttle service. The people who want to use the SDC already do so. Granted it would be fun to ride a ski rope up there, but it's really not worth the cost and the ensuing increase in tuition."

4. "I agree that an SDC shuttle would be a great idea, as it would encourage more people to go work out or get involved in an activity, and would free up the parking congestion in Lot 9. The farthest parking lots are practically useless in a snowstorm because no one wants to walk 15 minutes in the blizzards we get here. The reason students complain so much about mandatory PE classes is because the walk is usually more exercise than the class. I prefer working out somewhere warm and doing the types of exercise I enjoy, not snow hiking."

5. "I would use such a service, and would even pay 25-50 cents to do so. Or perhaps we could fund it with all the parking tickets I've paid?"

6. "A shuttle is a good idea. I have had a class in the MEEM and then had a class in the SDC or the forestry building right afterward on more than one occasion. While walking is good exercise, there is not enough time between classes to haul up the hill to get to class on time. In between slipping on ice and snow, waiting on traffic and elevators, and getting out late from a previous class, the time is all eaten up. A shuttle would expedite the process. It would also benefit people climbing up the hill to the commuter lots during blizzards."

7. "It's quite an irony when students want a shuttle to bring them someplace so they can work out or take a *physical* education class! Perhaps they can consider the walk up the hill the beginning of the work-out routine."

8. "On a side note, it would be nice to have a sidewalk in front of the forestry building. Many students walk that way to class and on their way home. It would be nice to get out of the road!"

### **i. Snow Plowing**

1. "You can improve the image of MTU by actually plowing the snow on the sidewalks along US 41. Almost every time it is snowed this winter, the sidewalk in front of McNair was not plowed for a day or two, so you had this footpath trenched by students."

2. "I know plowing snow is a big thing, but if planned better I think it would go better."

3. "In AFROTC the cadets get to the SDC at 6 a.m. in the winter—the lot is never plowed until they are leaving at 7:30. Then since there are cars there, the plowing is [not done well]."

4. "On campus, the plows should plow all of the paths."

5. "As one who walks up and down the hill to the SDC, I see lots of students doing the same to or from St. Al's parking lot or the SDC. In winter, the snow often makes the sidewalks tough to navigate. I understand the sidewalks are the City of Houghton's, so Tech can't clear them. Anyway, if there were a way to keep the sidewalks clearer, I think students would appreciate it."

6. "Permanent row markers were added to Lot 9, so they no longer can plow its long paths; they are always avoiding these permanent markers. They used to have removable markers that went away in the winter, and I bet it took half as long to plow the lots."

7. "If someone sat down and figured out the priority of the areas and use, they could schedule their workers appropriately, and plowing would go much smoother. I hear a lot about how the guys who plow have been doing this for years and know best. This sounds like a 'well we've always done it this way' mentality. I assume there is someone in charge who can manage these folks and plan, and schedule. I also hear that the guys who plow all come in at 4 or 5 a.m. and all leave at 2, or work and get paid overtime. It seems like if that is the case, someone could schedule them appropriately and reduce overtime and waste."

8. "Has the university ever looked at having an outside company plow the snow? Contract someone, and set standards and performance expectations. Probably cheaper and better."

**j. Leaking Roofs [Note: We are told that these repairs are already scheduled.]**

1. "Fix the roof of Fisher Hall so that the water stops pouring down in the middle of the hallway of the third floor and in the main office of the Math Department. Half the floor is now occupied by huge containers to catch water pouring through the ceiling. "

2. "If you look into one of the containers you get a shower of water from the ceiling!"

3. "The mess on the third floor of Fisher Hall really makes MTU look horrible! It is a real embarrassment to the university to have such a rundown building!"

4. "The water leak would be a good thing to consider for the money that the governor is providing for improvements that will prolong the life of university buildings."

**k. The Hamar House**

1. "Paint the little white house, or put new siding on it, something along those lines."

**l. Clock Tower and Kiosks**

1. "Walking through campus, it seems kind of empty when it comes to information about Tech and related happenings. A friend of mind is gung ho about an 80-foot clock tower, which could become a sort of Tech Site, something to remember about MTU for future students. I think that this is a bit ambitious, but also a great idea. Another idea that I've been tinkering with is kiosks, similar to the outside of the MUB. That one is horribly disorganized, but there's a group on campus that would update and maintain it with announcements and student events."

## **IX. Other Improvements**

### **A. Minor in Diversity Studies**

[Note: The April 25, 2005 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports on a decline in departments of African American Studies, partly because of limited career options for students with a major in African American Studies and partly because courses in African American Studies are now commonly taught in other departments. This is in part why we recommend an interdisciplinary minor and not a department or a major in Diversity Studies. We also emphasize that we do *not* recommend that diversity studies be confined to gender studies.]

The United States cannot establish and maintain a credible position on promoting a form of globalization that does not obliterate cultural diversity if Americans fail to respect and to celebrate cultural diversity at home. For this reason, among others, corporations and governments promote diversity at home: they have a vested interest in cultivating employees and citizens who are comfortable working and living in culturally diverse environments.

Hence, corporations are less likely to send recruiters to campuses that lack diversity; and government agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), are less likely to award grants to campuses that lack diversity:

"A team of researchers revealed their findings Thursday about the effectiveness of UW-Madison's diversity initiative, Plan 2008. The plan exists to increase racial and ethnic diversity at UW-Madison. According to major corporations that recruit from UW-Madison, campus diversity is important because it produces graduates who can work successfully in interracial groups." *The Daily Cardinal* (University of Wisconsin, Madison) May 2, 2003 ([www.dailycardinal.com](http://www.dailycardinal.com))

The NSF's policy on proposal processing and review includes the following statement on integrating diversity into NSF programs, projects, and activities: "Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens—women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities—are essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports." ([www.cise.nsf.gov/faq/reviewer.cfm](http://www.cise.nsf.gov/faq/reviewer.cfm))

The effect of lack of diversity on Michigan Tech is made evident by Dow Chemical Company's recent announcement that it would no longer recruit on campus at Michigan Tech, primarily because of concerns regarding the diversity of the university's student body (*Michigan Tech Lode*, April 13, 2005; see also the letter in the April 13 *Lode* from Ellen McVey, Global University Relations Manager, Dow Chemical Company).

Michigan has a population of almost 1.5 million African Americans, the ninth largest African American population in the United States and approximately 15 percent of the state's total population (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, Matrices P7 and P9). Nevertheless, in 2003, only 2 percent of Michigan Tech's student body was African American (Source: Michigan Technological University Fact Book, 2002-2003, page 50). More must be done with minority outreach and recruitment.

This cannot and should not be done by representing the campus as being more diverse than it actually is. In 2000, officials at the University of Wisconsin-Madison created a national outrage when they digitally inserted the image of an African American student into a photograph of a crowd of white students at a football game. Many argued that the doctored photograph—which appeared on the cover of the 2001-2002 UWM undergraduate application form—was a crude attempt to misrepresent the degree of diversity achieved at UWM.

Diverse academic programs attract diverse students and faculty. For example, a higher percentage of women on campus as non-engineering majors would help to make Michigan Tech a more comfortable place for women who might then either enroll as engineering majors or change from a non-engineering to an engineering major.

The availability of a diversity studies minor on campus would help to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the importance of diversity in the contemporary world. The faculty, students, and courses in this minor could have a ripple effect—a campus-wide impact far greater than just the number of students selecting this minor might suggest. Such a minor could help to improve the climate for underrepresented groups on campus, and, thus, could help with recruiting and retaining both underrepresented students and underrepresented faculty and staff.

As the above quote from the *Daily Cardinal* indicates, "campus diversity is important because it produces graduates who can work successfully in interracial groups." Hence, a minor in diversity studies could be an invaluable asset not only for students from underrepresented groups but also for students from the currently dominant demographic group (white males).

Options such as the following might allow faculty to teach diversity studies courses in lieu of teaching current general education courses (World Cultures, Perspectives, etc.).

1. Minor in diversity studies in lieu of taking World Cultures.
2. Take a diversity studies course in lieu of Perspectives on Inquiry.
3. Use diversity studies courses to meet their general education distribution requirement.

A diversity studies minor would probably require at least two new faculty lines, perhaps one in humanities (literature?) and one in social sciences (history?).

## **B. Daycare**

1. "Daycare, daycare, daycare! I can't believe that Tech lacks day care facilities *still*, after years and years of complaining and submitting requests. All the discussion of attracting a more diverse student body, and not once has Tech actually taken putting a daycare center on campus under serious consideration.

That leaves those of us with young children without a lot of options and ensures that many more people don't come here. How can we expect to be able to work and/or attend class when the traditional family support network is gone and all friends that you would consider asking to baby-sit are eight hours away?"

2. "If Tech is serious about attracting more diverse students, more women, and about retaining people (faculty, staff, *and* students) who may eventually have families, the first priority should be a quality daycare center."

3. "Good luck! I agree 110%. This is something that Tech needs. I know that the MUB expansion committee would like to incorporate a childcare center in their design, but that is subject to approval and might take a while. So in the meantime, I really hope that it can be created soon!"
4. "I agree completely! I think this would also be a good way to create jobs for students and members of the community as well. This should be a top priority."
5. "A quick search on the MTU Web site gave me this: <http://www.mtu.edu/childcare/> It appears that we already have such a program. Under the news section on that site is a proposal for a new childcare facility at MTU as well. I've also heard about such a preschool or daycare center in the Daniell Heights apartments."

## **C. Recruiting Methods**

### **1. Mailing Lists from *National Geographic Adventure Magazine***

Research by Stamats Communication, Inc. suggests that many students first decide what they would like to major in and then select a university that offers that major. It's probably reasonable to assume, however, that at least some students do the opposite: decide where they would like to spend the next 4-5 years of their young lives and then figure out what they will major in once they are there. Michigan Tech's promotional materials should more often refer to the campus's appealing geological features, such as that the campus is situated in the middle of a glacial valley on the shore of Portage Lake.

In its July/August 2002 cover story, *National Geographic Adventure* magazine included Houghton as the gateway to one of America's top 10 summer sports meccas. Assuming that people who subscribe to this magazine might enjoy spending their college years in a (winter and) summer sports mecca, we recommend purchasing selected mailing lists from *National Geographic Adventure* magazine, perhaps sending MTU literature to subscribers who are either in the college or pre-college age range or to subscribers who might have children in this age range. Such mailings might include reprints of the July/August 2002 article.

### **2. Improved Access by Air**

We recommend that Michigan Tech work with the Houghton County Memorial Airport, the Federal Aviation Commission, and Masaba Northwest Airlink to improve access to the Houghton-Hancock area by air. This might include additional flights and perhaps instrument landing to allow flights to land and take in more diverse weather conditions.

We also recommend that Michigan Tech help to coordinate safe and reliable ground transportation to and from Marquette and Green Bay when flights are unable to land in or take off from Houghton County Memorial Airport.

### **3. Make Campus Visits a Memorable Vacation for the Whole Family (including younger siblings)**

We recommend creating summer vacation packages to the UP for prospective students and their families. These packages might include not only maps but also discount coupons for carefully selected motels, restaurants, and sites along the way, perhaps with different return routes. Different packages could be developed for trips from Green Bay (215 miles), Duluth (216 miles), Minneapolis (352 miles), Milwaukee (330 miles), Chicago (421 miles), Lansing (490 miles), Detroit (550 miles), and Toledo (611 miles). Additional coupons could be provided for selected motels, restaurants, and sites within the Copper Country itself.

Arrange with the *Keweenaw Star* or the *Ranger III* to bring prospective students and their families across Lake Superior from Thunder Bay. This could be a memorable family vacation, perhaps with a stop at Isle Royale National Park on the way back.

*Comments from CECC Forum (and from Posts to the Committee)*

1. "Let's face it, competition is key! NCAA tournaments bring prestige to the university and get kids talking about the school. Even more than that, hockey and basketball are exciting, constructive activities to watch in the long winters up here. I know basketball and women's tennis for example have made it into the NCAA tournament in past years. How exciting! Ideas:

- Continue recruiting athletes that aren't ME and business majors so that they interact with all students.
- Update the facilities. The football concession stand is small and inefficient; the added tent this year was a plus. Gates Tennis Center looks sad.
- Find a way for winning records, and when they have them, publicize it, everywhere.
- Promotional events like the Scholarship Giveaway, BASH at the Big House, etc. They're awesome.

Students need to be proud of their school, athletic teams, and the prestige of their degree when they leave or they won't come."

2. "If you want more recruits, it might be beneficial to advertise for other majors, not just predominately the engineering departments. Tech has many degree programs that are under represented during recruitment and at Tech itself. I can't tell you how many school functions I have attended where there was an engineering speaker, which I had little interest in, as I am not an engineer. I think Tech would greatly benefit from advertising its other degree programs that are very successful."

3. "Many people I know enjoy Tech because it feels like a home/family. Many departments boast quite a low student-to-teacher ratio, and those departments are very welcoming. It's nice to be able to call your professors by their first names. I think many prospective students would find that appealing."

4. "The people in admissions tell us that families on campus tours always remark on the Rozsa, how impressed they are with the building and the talent we present here. We frequently find that students who have not visited campus before attending Michigan Tech have *no* idea such a facility existed here. We have many great images of life at the Rozsa, the crews at work, and company photos. We seldom see anything about the Rozsa in recruiting materials."

5. "The MTU Learning Centers are an absolutely invaluable resource to the students and faculty on this campus and are a wonderful way to recruit new students as well as to retain students who are here. The learning centers offer free assistance to students in their most challenging subject areas and are an advantage that many other schools do not have, especially for such a wide variety of subjects and disciplines.

Promotion of the free Learning Centers on the MTU website, in recruitment brochures, and on campus tours would be an excellent selling point for prospective students and encouraging use of the learning centers among current students would help in retention since they can give struggling and stressed-out students the help that they need. Most centers offer individual or group weekly appointments as well as walk-in hours when assistance is not needed on a continual basis. Continued funding and greater promotion of these centers would be a great way to enhance the MTU campus."

6. "I think that is a really good idea. It would be something to attract new students that would not cost anything to implement, also for the retention of current students."

#### **D. Tuition and Student Records and Registration**

1. "To retain students and have better recruiting, its really simple: lower the tuition. As a current student, it's quite apparent to me that tuition is outrageous. I am starting to think I should have gone to Ferris; it was cheaper and closer to home."

2. "On top of the simple tuition, schools downstate have the advantage of lower traveling costs. It costs a good sum of money every time a person has to make a trip home."

3. "Currently, students can only pay their bills online. This means that students who do not have computer access (or parents who do not) cannot pay bills. In addition, if the parents are paying bills, they must find out the login ID and password to Banweb from their son or daughter. There needs to be a more direct way to pay online, as well as a way to pay over phone or by mail."

4. "Registration, financial aid, accounts receivable, and the cashier's office should have one common representative so that when students have problems, they don't have to spend the whole

day in the Administration Building running from office to office being told different (conflicting) things from all of these offices."

5. "I think that the time to drop a course with a W is too soon. In most classes I have taken, we haven't even had the second exam. Students are supposed to know if they can bring up their grades based on one grade in the class? Sure, week wise we are half through the semester, but as far as grades go, usually we are not. In many classes, the first exam is the hardest because students don't know the type of questions the instructor asks (from the book, specific or general, etc.), so usually the second exam goes a bit better. I think there should either be a rule to make sure that the instructor has at least two exams in before the drop period (though, if the course only has three exams, the third exam will cover a lot of material), or the drop period should be extended to a few weeks after the date it is now."

6. "Your student ID number should not be your Social Security number. It is a major pain on the campus to get this changed to an "M" number. All students should be issued an "M" number when they enroll."

7. "I agree 100%. There are so many times the Social Security number is used and could be intercepted at Tech."

## **E. Campus Involvement**

1. "There are problems that need addressing on campus that are not just landscaping or buying things, such as the serious lack of involvement on campus. Too many students are content to sit in their room and play World of War Craft or some other video game, instead of getting involved. It's not a matter of having the opportunity to get involved. Left and right students have choices regarding what organization they can get involved with; it's just a fundamental lack of incentive. I think there are a few things that our campus could do to increased student involvement.

First, get a grassroots campaign going that promotes getting involved. Show students how much employers value it, how many opportunities it opens up, and how much fun it can be.

Second, allow the policy and staff on campus to meet the needs of the organizations, not the other way around. Right now there is way too much politics and digging that any organization has to do to get things done on campus. This frustrates and demoralizes groups that are trying to improve campus. The policies and staff should be there for the students, and right now the policy and staff don't do enough to help them.

Third, give organizations the attention they deserve for their hard work. Recognize the people that work in organizations and get them energized about what they are doing.

I think the sooner as you can get every student on campus in an organization, the sooner you will see Michigan Tech thrive."

2. "I heard a rumor the other day that Tech is one of the most involved campuses in Michigan. I laughed. However, there is hope when you see that a committee like this has student members who are not getting recognized, who have no other motive besides to better something. ESC is another example."

3. "I feel that this relates to CECC in this way: if you want truly good ideas, appeal to the students more. Faculty do have good ideas, and are willing to come on here and post their thoughts. They are here for long periods of time, usually 15+ years in a row. While students are here for four, or sometimes more years, they make up the overwhelming majority of campus. If you want to know what the members of Tech want, what they see, you have to go to them. They are not the involved people who are also willing to post; they are the video-game players. Show them that they can make a difference, that they can voice their opinion on how Tech looks and operates, and you'll receive a larger voice of Tech, as well as get the students involved. Two birds with one toss. Give them a taste of what could be if they did something, and they'll want more.

Good luck appealing to them, though. Your deadline or budget is helpful to this sort of outreach, but it's something they need, that Tech needs."

## **F. Emergency Facilities and Personnel**

1. "There should be an ambulance service and a doctor on campus 24 hours a day. If a student is working in his lab late hours (when nobody is around) and faces an accident, then in the present scenario he/she will have to go to the Hancock clinic and that too on his/her own. Tell me how he/she will manage that emergency."

**Appendix A**  
**Number of Undergraduate Degree Programs**  
**Offered at Michigan's Public Universities, 2001-2002**

<b>University</b>	<b>Assoc. Degrees</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degrees</b>	<b>Total Degrees</b>
Michigan Tech	7	35	42
U. of M.-Dearborn	0	60	60
Grand Valley	0	64	64
Saginaw Valley	0	66	66
Lake Superior	25	45	70
U. of M.-Flint	0	92	92
Central Michigan	0	98	98
Oakland	0	114	114
Eastern Michigan	0	120	120
Wayne State	0	127	127
Michigan State	2	128	130
Northern Michigan	25	124	149
Western Michigan	0	168	168
Ferris State	73	99	172
U. of M.-Ann Arbor	0	272	272

Source: Michigan Office of the State Budget, Office of Education and Infrastructure

## Appendix B

### University Senate Proposal 9-04

# Enhancing The Campus And Community

<http://www.sas.it.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/04/9-04.htm>

A study released in February 2003 by the National Bureau of Economic Research <http://www.nber.org/papers/w9482> concluded that "high aptitude students are nearly indifferent to a college's distance from their home or whether it is in-state or public." **However, this same study found that the mean distance between a student's high school and the college attended for 3094 respondents was 575.6 miles.** This suggests that although the majority of students are not averse to traveling farther away from home to attend a college or university, more than half of all students find an acceptable university within 600 miles of home. These are two related but independent variables. Together they suggest that to overcome the inertia of distance, Michigan Tech must entice prospective students with a combination of programs, price, and place (that is, aspects of place other than distance from home).

*National Geographic Adventure* magazine included Houghton in its July/August 2002 cover story as the gateway to one of America's top 10 summer sports meccas; Norman Crampton included Houghton in his book *The 100 Best Small Towns in America* (second edition, Macmillan, 1995); and *Men's Journal* included Houghton in its March 2002 cover story "The 50 Best Places to Live: The Healthiest, Safest, Most Fun Towns in America." Beyond academic excellence, these surveys provide strong evidence that students might be persuaded to travel long distances to attend Michigan Tech. However, simply promoting the place is not enough. We need to think as well about enhancing the place to take advantage of the opportunities that nature and history have provided us.

Therefore, the University Senate proposes that Michigan Tech solicit, screen, and implement proposals for further enhancing and better promoting the campus and surrounding community. Proposals should be screened by a campus-wide committee established for this purpose. Successful precedents for such efforts include the recent call for Vision Initiative Proposals and the Budget Reduction Advisory Committee's (BRAC's) call for feedback from across campus.

This effort should be broadly construed to include everything from renovating residence halls to improving classroom design. Successful examples in this area include the construction of the Rozsa Center, the enhancement of the Tech Trails, and the proposed Center for Integrated Learning and Information Technology, MUB expansion, and residence hall renovations. Much more could be done, however, with classroom design (see, for example, the cover story on this topic in the March 7, 2003 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*) and with developing recreational use of our waterfront location--especially the land between the Minerals and Materials Building and Lot 10--which could be particularly helpful with plans to develop a full, 14-week summer semester.

**Appendix C**  
**Michigan Tech Undergraduate Enrollments**  
**Exclusive of Distance Learning**

Fall	Enrollment
<b>1972</b>	4,814
<b>1973</b>	4,777
<b>1974</b>	5,112
<b>1975</b>	5,686
<b>1976</b>	6,150
<b>1977</b>	6,557
<b>1978</b>	6,885
<b>1979</b>	7,425
<b>1980</b>	7,588
<b>1981</b>	7,471
<b>1982</b>	7,330
<b>1983</b>	7,084
<b>1984</b>	6,564
<b>1985</b>	6,173
<b>1986</b>	5,913
<b>1987</b>	5,746
<b>1988</b>	6,037
<b>1989</b>	6,158
<b>1990</b>	6,107
<b>1991</b>	6,355
<b>1992</b>	6,360
<b>1993</b>	5,938
<b>1994</b>	5,776
<b>1995</b>	5,699
<b>1996</b>	5,541
<b>1997</b>	5,674
<b>1998</b>	5,620
<b>1999</b>	5,661
<b>2000</b>	5,490
<b>2001</b>	5,411
<b>2002</b>	5,303

Source: Michigan Tech Institutional Analysis

**Appendix D**  
**Postings to and Viewings of CECC Web Forum**  
<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/pcecc/>  
**March 16 - April 22, 2005**

Topic	Postings (including original posts)	Views/"Hits"
Michigan Tech's Waterfront Plus "Lot 10" and "Staircase to waterfront"	10 + 6 + 6	243 + 108 + 110
Total	22	<b>461</b>
US 41 Corridor	16	<b>415</b>
Residential Neighborhoods	11	<b>326</b>
Classroom Design	17	<b>573</b>
Recreational Spaces	16	<b>335</b>
Other Campus Spaces Less "Lot 10" and "Staircase to waterfront"	27	<b>755</b>
Other Improvements	33	<b>870</b>
Administrative Posts	2	<b>86</b>
Total	144	<b>3,821</b>

## **Appendix E: Recommended Reading**

### **Overall Campus Design**

Daniel R. Kenny, Ricardo Dumont, and Ginger Kenney. *Mission and Place: Strengthening Learning and Community through Campus Design*. Westport, CT: American Council on Education/Praeger Series on Higher Education, 2005.

Alana Klein. "The Space Challenge: IHEs are building facilities and outdoor spaces that are designed to encourage collaborative learning, social interaction, and student well being." *University Business*, April 2005, pp. 75-78.  
<http://www.universitybusiness.com/page.cfm?p=777>

Julian Keniry. *Ecodemia: Campus Environmental Stewardship at the Turn of the 21st Century : Lessons in Smart Management from Administrators, Staff, and Students*. Washington, DC: National Wildlife Federation, 1995.

### **Classroom Design**

Daniel Niemeyer. *Hard Facts on Smart Classroom Design: Ideas, Guidelines, and Layouts*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003.

Robert L. Allen et al. *Classroom Design Manual*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Office of Information Technology, University of Maryland, College Park, 1996.

### **Walkability and Pedestrian Safety**

Charles V. Zegeer et al. *Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities: A Recommended Practice of the Institute of Transportation Engineers*. Washington, DC: Institute of Transportation Engineers, 8.

Barbara McMillen et al. *Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access: Review of Existing Guidelines and Practices*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 1999.

Walter M. Kulash et al. *Residential Streets*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 2001.

Michael Southworth and Eran Ben-Joseph. *Streets and the Shaping of Towns and Cities*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.

## **Landscaping**

James van Sweden. *Architecture in the Garden*. New York: Random House, 2002.

Susan Lang and the Editors of Sunset Books. *Hillside Landscaping: Retaining Walls, Construction Techniques, Planting Guide*. Melno Park, CA: Sunset Books, 2002.

James D. Bloom et al. *Step-by-Step Landscaping: Planning, Planting, Building*. Des Moines, IA: Meredith Corp., 1991.

## **Neighborhoods and Historic Homes**

Pratt Cassity. *Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District*. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

The National Park Service, National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. *Preserving Your Community's Heritage through the Certified Local Government Program*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2000.

Judith L. Kitchen. *Respectful Rehabilitation: Caring from Your Old House: A Guide for Owners and Residents*. National Trust for Historic Preservation. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1991.

Thomas Hylton. *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns: A Plan for Pennsylvania*. Harrisburg, PA: Seitz and Seitz, 1995.

Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University. *Improving America's Housing: The Remodeling Futures Program*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, undated.

Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University. *The State of the Nation's Housing, 2000*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2000.

## **Community Design**

Joan Chadde, Linda Rulison, Ruth Ann Smith, Jean Dunstan, Kristine Bradof, et al. *Design Guidelines to Enhance Community Appearance and Protect Natural Resources*. Houghton, MI: Michigan Technological University, 2005.

Norman Pressman, Harold Hanen, and Patrick Coleman. *Winter City Planning*. Houghton, MI: UP Engineers & Architects, 1997.

Roberta Brandes Gratz. *Cities Back from the Edge: New Life for Downtown*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.

Eric Damian Kelly and Barbara Becker. *Community Planning: An Introduction to the Comprehensive Plan*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2000.

Judy Corbett and Michael Corbett. *Designing Sustainable Communities: Learning from Village Homes*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2000.

Randall Arendt. *Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances*. Natural Lands Trust. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1999.

Peter Katz. *The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994.