



Laney College Sustainability Center “The Green Living Lab”

Context

This project is a Laney College Educational Master Plan identified priority, and it is in sync with the three guiding priorities of the college: clean energy and sustainability, learning communities and arts and design. As well, it makes evident the interconnectedness of our mission—CTE, transfer education and foundation “basic” skills. Further, it renders transparent the industry demand for such a center to demonstrate “zero-net” energy usage. What a powerful educational/training tool (sic) that will help transform the very nature of our lives. Of course this is a very simplistic summary of the nature and potential of this Center, yet it is intended to reveal one of the most invaluable aspects of it.

Background – Shared Governance Due Diligence

This project has gone through the shared governance process at Laney College. As a facilities project driven by faculty, it was vetted during several Laney College Facilities Planning Committee meetings: it was presented, discussed and prioritized a number of times in committee. This prioritization was preceded by the same via departmental program reviews and the Laney College CTE Advisory Council. Given the college’s prioritization process, this Sustainability Center facility was also listed on the college’s short list of facilities priorities that was forwarded to the District Facilities Planning Committee. From this process, the PBIC receive all priorities and renders its recommendations to the Chancellor. The Chancellor then has the opportunity to make a decision based on the district-wide shared governance process and the resulting priorities.

Additional details about Laney College’s process used as part of prioritizing the Sustainability Center:

1. The Ed Master Plan (Spring 2010) has the one of the earliest mentions of the topic on pages 74-76 where we include Green Technology living labs in the Technology Center possibilities and even have a Scenario 'A' in which the Gymnasium is converted into a green technology center.
2. In the 2009-2010 school year Architecture students had a contest to design the best proposal for, what was called at that time, the Green Living Lab. The winning design was chosen by the ECT, E/ET, Carpentry, and Architecture departments and they presented it to the committee in the Spring 2010. (This was the first time the tennis courts were identified as the potential site.)
3. It was among the facilities priorities list in the last two academic years (2010-2011 and 2011-2012)

4. It was part of the review of priorities by VBN Architects and is reflected in all three of their design options. All design options were vetted with the college during this academic year in several shared governance and collegewide forums.

This Sustainability Center topic has been a part of the college's discussion for well over two (2) years. Since the conceiving of the idea, the administration has urged the Laney College faculty and staff leading this effort to go forth efficiently to advance all aspects of this strategically important initiative. These professionals have exceeded even their own expectations in that they have developed a model that brings together the CTE programs across the college while addressing a priority that has national and international implications. In fact, this Center model was developed as a multi-discipline/industry initiative.

The Laney College faculty worked very hard on this project, and we are extremely lucky to be able to witness the District's efficient response to this student-centered, business/industry-centered, and community-centered state of the art educational leadership effort.

Funding

Based on the district's assessment of the actual funding needed to renovate the student center, we expect significant savings from this project. The Laney College president requested that an appropriate level of these savings be used to jumpstart the Sustainability Center, to ensure the completion of phase one. Doing so will demonstrate to our faculty and our partners including the National Science Foundation, the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories, the University of CA at Berkeley and at least 50 other distinct entities that hire our students, the seriousness of our conviction in advancing this critical initiative in more substantive ways now, and in ways that will lead to more jobs in the future.

Given the organized efforts of the Laney College faculty leaders and our partners, we expect that phase two will be funded by major donors and from governmental sources that fund capital projects.