

APU STYLE

Twenty-year plan outlines APU's vision for the future

Azusa Pacific University began to train aspiring Christian workers in 1899. It was founded by several men and women from diverse denominations and was the first Bible college on the West Coast. Now, APU has more than 8,000 students and conducts classes in more than 19 countries.

That story may be familiar; it replays on the APU main phone line when a caller is put on hold. APU today is drastically different than it was 20 years ago; have you ever wondered what it will be like 20 years from now? What will future APU students hear when they are put on hold?

"As APU continues to grow, we get more opportunities," Executive Vice-President David Peck said. "We just need to wade through those opportunities and choose the right ones that match our goals."

In 1999 and 2000, a committee of 20 to 30 members, including students, staff, architects and city representatives, was formed to create a vision for APU's future. Together they crafted a development plan to act as a guide through the upcoming years. Community forums and letters were considered in this process. In 2005, the plan was approved by the city of Azusa. This plan includes comprehensive guidelines and logistics for building projects that APU intends to complete within the next 20 years.

The entire plan can be accessed online at www.apu.edu/community/development/. On the website, APU's statement reads as follows:

"The Azusa Pacific University Specific Plan provides a 20-year outlook of the university's vision for responsible growth as we prepare for the needs of future generations of lifelong learners. The campus development plan will do much more than expand the physical campus. It will open doors to meet the needs of aspiring students, professionals, leaders and Azusa community members. As Azusa Pacific University envisions the growth and development of our Specific Plan, we seek to partner with the local community and the citizens of Azusa. Together, we will enrich the city in which we live."

The development plans outline four design guidelines to allow both community members and students the best experience possible during the process.

The first value, "Excellence and Efficiency," states the intention to maintain community and unity while ensuring safety and privacy during developments. Next, the "Aesthetic Appeal" guideline hopes to connect to the community through enhanced land use, buildings and landscaping on campus. The third guideline, "Open Space," proposes to "develop informal outdoor gathering spaces for meeting, recreating, studying and relaxing." Finally, "Transportation Methods" seeks to improve transportation by minimizing vehicular traffic and maximizing ease and safety of movement

between east and west campuses.

Efforts to ease transportation methods are already in action as APU is helping fund an eight-phase traffic signal at the Foothill and Citrus intersection. This project should be completed by fall 2009 when students return to school from summer break. The light is expected to help traffic run more smoothly and make it easier to commute between campuses. Many parties are contributing to the costs of this addition.

"APU, Citrus College and the city of Glendora are funding the bulk of it, and the city of Azusa [is funding the rest]," Director of Community Relations Ginny Dadaian said.

Dadaian is excited about this project and the unity it brings.

"It's a great partnership," Dadaian said, "I don't think the students or people realize that these types of partnerships don't always happen. We're working on it and will continue to work on it. It benefits everybody, especially the students of APU and Citrus, when we can work together."

The Specific Plan, though carefully constructed, is still changing. For example, the recent purchase of University Village has affected the plan for building more dormitories.

"With the purchase of the University Village, we didn't need dorms right away, so that changed things around," Dadaian said.

In addition, Associate Vice President, IMT Chief Information Officer and Chairman of the Space Committee Don Davis said the new Science Center was originally planned for east campus.

Although some plans have changed, Dadaian is very excited about the progress APU has made so far.

"It's exciting to see what's happening and the growth that we have," Dadaian said. "Our relationship [with the city] is like any other relationship, we continue to work on it. Sometimes we agree and sometimes we disagree. But we're trying to make everything better. I think our students are more aware of what the city is, with regard to APU, and the city residents are more knowledgeable about what we do here. It's a great benefit."

The west campus Science Center and tennis courts are the newest additions to APU's campus. According to Dadaian, each project is prioritized according to need.

"We are looking at what we have the greatest need for, and what we needed most was classrooms and lab space. That's why we built the Science Center," Dadaian said.

The people who helped craft the Specific Plan are very excited for the Science Building, one of the most visible signs of the fruits of their hard labor. Peck

hopes to see a lot of student support when the work is finally finished and dedicated on Sep. 3, 2009.

The completion of the Science Center is only one step in the development process. According to Peck, the next major project is a \$5 million remodel of the Wynn science building, which will become the Wynn Academic Center by Jan. 2010.

The Wynn Academic Center will be "a multi-purpose classroom building, as well as a welcome center for admissions on the bottom floor," Peck said. "When new students come to campus, that's the first place they'll go. Beyond the welcome center, we're going to retro-fit it into multiple classrooms and faculty offices."

Davis said the Space Committee is currently working on a medium-range plan to clarify what APU will look like in five to 10 years. However, they don't have complete control because the funding for projects comes from private donors.

"We are trying to be proactive with what our immediate needs are for the next three to five years," Davis said. "Then [the Office of University] Advancement can take that recommendation and meet with donors and see if interests pop up."

In addition to funding uncertainty, another factor to consider amidst the expansion plans is the limited number of students allowed on campus.

According to Dadaian, the city of Azusa has declared that no more than 8,484 students may be enrolled at the Azusa campus. However, other non-campus programs are not limited in this way. The regional centers, for example, can continue to add more students.

"Although there is no specific plan about regional centers, there's always conversation going on about their growth," Davis said.

When crafting the Specific Plan, the committee consulted city staff members, students and administrators for their input.

"We probably met with about 25 community groups... One thing we heard is that they wanted our campus to be green and inviting. In the new plan, we have a lot of green space—places for students to sit back, lounge, study or maybe catch a nap. The community members wanted to see onto the campus and they wanted to be able to see the mountains," Dadaian said.

In addition to building developments, the master plan also includes community outreach aspects.

"There are some great things occurring between the city and APU. Think of all the things we do here in the community, like tutoring and the Wellness Center," Dadaian said. "What I love is that we are Azusa Pacific—we're not Glendora Pacific, we're not Covina Pacific. We're Azusa Pacific. We need to be a part of this."

