About the University of Minnesota’s UMore Park Property

www.umorepark.umn.edu

Vision

- The University of Minnesota Outreach, Research and Education (UMore) Park is a 5,000-acre site owned by the University and located in Dakota County.
- The vision for the UMore Park property is for development of an innovative, University-founded community where people can live, work and play.
- Development of the University-founded community of 20,000 to 30,000 residents would take 25 to 30 years.
- The community would be differentiated by innovations in renewable energy, health and wellness, education and life-long learning, environmental quality, transportation, arts & culture, diversity, international linkages, housing, technology and other University mission strengths.
- The community would contribute to a vital regional economy characterized by enriched communities, thriving businesses, and educational, social and natural amenities.

Property Location

- In Dakota County, the third most populous county in Minnesota and one of the fastest growing metro counties.
- Fifteen minutes from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and near the Highway 52 corridor between the Twin Cities and Rochester.

Planning and Development

Concept master plan. The University’s UMore Park team completed a concept master plan for the 5,000-acre property in November 2008, in conjunction with a consultant planning and development team. The concept master plan was approved by the Board of Regents in December 2008. The plan captures the intent for a diverse community with a wide range of single- and multi-family dwellings, significant open space and natural amenities, neighborhood commercial and retail, office and light industrial space, recreation and relaxation, and energy efficiencies – while incorporating future market flexibility.

Comprehensive planning. Based on the concept master plan, the University will collaborate closely with the City of Rosemount, Empire Township and Dakota County to update (amend) the comprehensive plans of the local jurisdictions to reflect the development of the UMore Park property. Comprehensive plan amendments will address land use, transportation, housing, parks and open space, economic development and infrastructure. In addition to comprehensive planning, a next step will be a broad environmental assessment called an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) that includes development scenarios for UMore Park. The AUAR is being launched by the City of Rosemount and the University.
Management and endowment. The Board of Regents approved the UMore Development Limited Liability Company (LLC) in October 2009 to manage the development of the property. A nine-person Board of Governors was appointed to direct the company. Charles C. Muscoplat is President of the company. Muscoplat has led the University’s UMore Park project since 2005. The University’s Board of Regents also authorized the creation of the UMore Park Legacy Fund, an endowment for income generated by activities on the property that will help to ensure long-term support for special academic research, education and public engagement opportunities not adequately funded by state, federal or tuition resources.

Academic mission. The new Office for UMore Park Academic Initiatives, responsible for the integration of research, learning and public engagement into the fabric of the new community, opened July 1. Led by Executive Director Carla Carlson and supported by the UMore Park Academic Mission Advisory Board, the new office complements the planning and development work of the UMore Development LLC, with the overarching goal to bring innovation, quality of life and economic benefits to future residents and the broader region through publically-engaged research, education and outreach. To date, the Academic Initiatives office has fostered projects on wind energy research, smart grid design, affordable housing, sustainable housing design, ground source heating and cooling, groundwater quality, and others. Special initiatives lend support to undergraduate learning opportunities and interdisciplinary scholarship.

Gravel resources. In November 2010, the University Board of Regents determined that the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for potential mining of sand and gravel on 1,722 acres of the UMore Park property adequately addressed all potential environmental issues and concerns following a two-year process. The board also authorized the execution of a 40-year lease agreement to Dakota Aggregates, LLC to locate phased mining and ancillary facilities on the UMore Park property. Dakota Aggregates will seek local jurisdictional approvals to mine on the property. These actions follow the September 2008 geotechnical assessment of UMore Park which confirmed substantial deposits of commercial quality sand and gravel across the 5,000-acre property. Following proposed extraction, mining sites can be transformed into amenities such as lakes and ponds that would enhance green space as the new community is developed.

Public engagement. Ideas from citizens and organizations continue to inform the UMore Park team. Opportunities to contribute input and comments in summer 2010 include public forums for both the sand and gravel draft Environmental Impact Statement as well as a wind energy research project on the UMore Park property. Nearly 1,000 citizens contributed ideas both during the development of the final concept master plan in summer 2008 and during six Listening Sessions in September 2007, which helped to establish priorities for the vision for the new community. Comments are welcome at any time via the UMore Park website at www.umorepark.umn.edu.

Public natural area. In March 2010, the joint management Steering Committee completed the concept master plan for the 2,822-acre Vermillion Highlands: A Research, Recreation and Wildlife Management Area, located on the southern edge of the UMore Park property. The property is under joint management by the University and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in conjunction with Dakota County and Empire Township. By action of the legislature and the Governor in May 2006, the University will deed this segment of the property to the State of Minnesota in 2032, to be maintained as a natural area for public access. The University has rights in perpetuity for research, education and public engagement on the property.

For information, contact: Julie Bodurtha, External Relations Coordinator
Phone: 612-626-8431, E-mail: jgb@umn.edu

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