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Subject Regional Master Plan for 5 year plan

John Robinson has drafted the following to be sent to Pres. Kenny representing the Campus Environmental Committee's response for the need of the University to lead in developing a Regional Master plan. Please send me your responses, comments, edits.  
Gil

Draft Comment on Draft Five-Year Plan: 2007-2012 27 Sep 2007 J. Robinson

The Draft Five-Year Plan recognizes SBU's status as "one of America's great research Universities (p.3) and as one that will "continue to develop its role as greater Long Island's research university, supporting a robust regional economy and contributing to a vital regional community, with *a focus on environmental sustainability* (p.3., italics added). However, SBU currently has a very large negative impact on the regional environment and quality of life, particularly in term of traffic, but also on other dimensions such as housing, waste effluence, trash generation, and greenhouse gases emissions. It is well known that SBU's reputation as a neighbor to the surrounding communities and environmental steward is a poor one. The planned increase to 27,000 students, and associated increases in staff and faculty, will only serve intensify these impacts. Furthermore, it is the role of great universities to show society the way to new and better ways of living, and this is a unique time for SBU to finally come into that role.

The goal of Priority 12 of the Draft Five-Year plan ("Support sustainability through a green campus initiative") is a significant step in the right direction. However, it does not reach far enough in that all of its action items simply adjust the level (e.g. "increase, "decrease", "expand") initiatives that are already underway and are limited to. In no way do these action items attempt to have the University *lead* the regional community. While laudable, they are modest, uncreative and shortsighted. Because of its size, stability, intellectual and financial resources, SBU has the unique ability to bring together many players in the regional and state economy and government, to work in a coordinated manner not possible otherwise. But being a regional entity, SBU also has the local clout, regional sensitivities, and intimate knowledge of the community not held by state or federal agencies. Regional environmental problems cannot be solved by uncoordinated, piecemeal efforts, and the needed coordination can best be provided by a regional leader. SBU is the only entity that can provide this on Long Island, but SBU needs to think outside of its campus borders and its one or even five year time horizon in order to embrace this role.

Therefore, we call upon the University to include the action item under the Five-year plan of:

Stony Brook will initiate and lead the regional community in producing and

implementing a long-range, regional master plan.

This plan will apply the most modern planning methods, including “form based planning”, and other techniques designed to involve the regional community in developing a shared vision of how they would like greater Long Island to be in 10 to 30 years. This will include developing sustainable transportation, waste management, housing, open space preservation, and other policies in an integrated manner, and then shepherd the implementation of these policies over the long term. Determining the specifics is a major part of this process, so the first step simply involves the bringing together of the relevant parties to produce the consensus needed to move forward. This could be done within the year and could dovetail on the momentum created by the decision of the University to become a zero-carbon emissions campus.

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