

# GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING PRIORITIES FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR PUBLIC COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education has the statutory responsibility for recommending funding for higher education facilities at Missouri's community colleges, State Technical College of Missouri, and public four-year universities.

These guidelines for prioritizing capital project requests pertain only to major construction projects in the following categories established by the Office of Administration: Renovation and Rehabilitation; Corrective Construction; Energy Conservation; and New Construction, including planning funds for new construction. It is the current policy of the Coordinating Board that funding for routine maintenance and repair for all institutions should be included in the operating appropriations for the public institutions. Consequently, these guidelines anticipate that maintenance and repair will continue to be considered an on-going operational need that is appropriately addressed in the operating budget.

It is the policy of the Coordinating Board to submit a prioritized request to the Governor and General Assembly for the public four-year universities along with the state's technical college, and a separate prioritized request for public community colleges. This separation allows for proper consideration between the different types of institutions with widely varying needs. Prior to the release of these lists, MDHE will publicize the scoring rubric and the process to be used in their development.

Another funding option, the Missouri Department of Higher Education Capital Improvements Matching Fund, was opened for higher education capital improvements during the 2012 legislative session. It is a 50/50 match that would only be provided to institutions when half the cost of construction is raised through grant and private funds.

## II. FACTORS CONSIDERED IN PRIORITY RANKING

The CBHE goal of providing a coordinated, balanced, and cost-effective delivery system of higher education will provide overall guidance in analyzing existing facility space utilization and in making decisions regarding the need for additional or renovated facilities.

In addition, the following policy statements will be considered when establishing relative priorities for capital funding:

1. **Mission Congruence**: All proposed projects should be congruent with both the mission of the institution within the system of Missouri higher education and the respective mission implementation plans as reviewed by the Coordinating Board. Projects should also take into consideration how well it will assist collaboration with other institutions and meet regional, state, and local needs. Campus facility master plans should address this congruence within a five-year projection of facility requirements for the institution based on enrollment and program needs. The campus master plan, including enrollment trends and projections, will therefore serve as the reference point for documenting facility needs. A copy of the current campus master plan should be on file at the Coordinating Board Office.

2. **Accessibility a Priority**: Projects providing program accessibility to buildings for individuals with physical disabilities shall have a high priority.
3. **Corrective Construction and Renovation and Rehabilitation**: Corrective construction and renovation and rehabilitation should, in most instances, precede new construction projects in priority. An institutional decision to retain a facility constitutes an ongoing commitment to bring that facility up to a good condition and to maintain it. Modernization of classrooms and laboratories to incorporate appropriate technology should be an institutional and Coordinating Board priority, as should updates resulting in utility savings and campus-wide sustainability.
4. **Overall Condition Considerations**: The overall condition of a facility must be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of renovation and the prioritization of capital projects. In some cases, facilities that are in the poorest condition may more properly be candidates for demolition. In other cases, a fiscally responsible deferred maintenance decision may be more appropriate than the development of a capital request. There are other considerations, like state and campus program priorities, that override the condition of a facility in determining renovation or new construction needs.
5. **Planning and New Construction Considerations**: Planning funds should precede funds for new construction and should be requested independently. Planning funds should be used to study several alternatives that address programmatic needs. However, construction funds may be requested first if the institution can provide adequate documentation that planning has already taken place, funded either internally or from donations and other contributions. A project which has received a prior recommendation and appropriation for planning funds from the state will be reviewed again when construction funds are requested for the project.
6. **Expansion Justification**: The addition of new square feet typically requires an ongoing financial commitment for campus security, fuel and utilities, maintenance and repair, etc. Absent justification for additional space based on enrollment change, a direct relationship to an approved mission change or enhancement, and/or the identification of available operational and maintenance funding, an increase in any institution's total square footage should be avoided.
7. **Auxiliary Facilities Ineligible**: Facilities maintained as auxiliary enterprises including, for example, student housing, parking facilities, and facilities related to intercollegiate athletics are considered to be the responsibility of the institution. State funding for construction of facilities serving a dual role involving auxiliary functions and educational and general purposes should be limited to the documented percentage of the facility serving educational and general purposes.