Office of the President
June 2, 2003

TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS:

ITEM FOR ACTION

For Meeting of June 11, 2003

UPDATE ON FEASIBILITY STUDY TO RECOMMEND A SYSTEMWIDE GREEN BUILDING POLICY AND CLEAN ENERGY STANDARD

The President recommends that the Committee on Grounds and Buildings recommend to The Regents that the President be authorized to:

(1) Adopt, as University policy for all capital projects, the principles of energy efficiency and sustainability[1] in the planning, financing, design, construction, renewal, maintenance, operation, space management, facilities utilization, and decommissioning of facilities and infrastructure to the fullest extent possible, consistent with budgetary constraints and regulatory and programmatic requirements.

(2) With the overarching goals of improving the University's effect on the environment and reducing the University's dependence on non-renewable energy, implement programs to reduce consumption of non-renewable energy by creating a portfolio approach to energy use, including energy efficiency, local renewable power, and green power purchases from the electrical grid, with the intent of minimizing increased use of non-renewable energy for the University's built environment during this next decade of growth.

(3) Develop and implement this policy for all proposed and existing University facilities, and provide an annual report to The Regents that examines impacts on energy utilization and building design and the effects of this policy on capital and operating costs.

BACKGROUND

At the December 13, 2002 meeting of the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, The Regents requested that the President undertake a feasibility study, for presentation at the May 2003 Regents' meeting, for the adoption of a Green Building policy and Clean Energy standard for all proposed and to-be-renovated buildings. The study was to assess the financial impacts of the recommended sustainability policies and standards, on both capital and building maintenance programs.

[1] Sustainability refers to the physical development and institutional operating practices that meet the needs of present users without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, particularly with regard to use and waste of natural resources. Sustainable practices support ecological, human, and economic health and vitality. Sustainability presumes that resources are finite, and should be used conservatively and wisely with a view to long-term priorities and consequences of the ways in which resources are used.

To initiate the Green Building and Clean Energy policy process, the University assembled a committee made up of state government officials from the California Energy Commission and the State Consumer Services Agency, faculty members with expertise in these disciplines, and administrators from each of the ten campuses and the Office of the President. The committee met at least once a month from January through May 2003, with numerous subgroups and ad hoc meetings to complete the work. In late February, student representatives from each campus that had passed referenda requesting that the University develop policies for integrating sustainability into its energy purchasing practices and building guidelines met with the committee to share information and provide input about sustainability policy. The committee also met with representatives from GreenPeace, the U.S. Green Building Council, and the Center for Resource Solutions.

Consistent with The Regents' request, the feasibility study has been conducted in two parts, one for Green Building design policies and the other for Clean Energy standards. Both included input from and coordination with students, faculty, staff, government agencies, and other higher education systems, as well as non-governmental organizations. The feasibility studies for Green Buildings and Clean Energy are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.

A proposed draft Presidential Implementation Policy is attached as Appendix 1.

These recommended policy actions are the first steps toward developing and implementing a larger and comprehensive sustainability policy for the University.

(Attachments)