Project: Welcome Center (includes Special Collections and Archives, Alumni Association, and Retirees Association (possibly incorporate a satellite location for Enrollment Management))

Description:

Positive, dynamic, customer friendly front door for the university for prospective students, parents, alumni, donors, and visitors. Easy access with a physical street address for GPS directions, with plentiful free, open parking. Archive exhibits would attract public worldwide and educate them on Wright State and how we connect to the world. Combine museum quality gallery with welcoming public outreach and event space through the various external facing departments. Adding external facing offices like enrollment management, alumni association, and retirees association makes this a welcoming place to visit whether you planned to learn more about Wright State or not.

Actions:

1. Designate the former Wright Patt Credit Union Headquarters for the “Welcome Center.”
2. Create a walkway to easily cross Col Glenn, the City of Fairborn had something similar built into a master plan they were working on a few years ago.
3. Identify space on main campus and relocate current WSU units in the WPCU building.
4. Use Archives fundraising cash from the Foundation to do renovations to the first floor in preparation for Special Collections and Archives to move in. Also provide appropriate signage.
5. Lower level – minor alterations for Archives. (Clean up, shelving, security.)
6. Move in selected outward facing departments to second floor. Archives will take up both main and lower levels.
7. Continue to fundraise for Archive improvements after they move.

Milestones:

- Easy access point for our visitors
  - Visible from Col Glenn with access to plenty of free parking will be an added bonus
- One-stop shop for visitors to gather the necessary information when visiting campus
  - A welcome center would serve as the first point of entry for a visitor who needs additional direction when navigating campus; volunteers and/or staff can provide the necessary visitor info
Set in the right venue, the site will offer a welcoming and cozy starting point for a visit to Archives, a tour of campus, attending a meeting or event, alumni visit, donor visit, etc.

Special Collections and Archives could have rotating and semi-permanent museum quality exhibits that will attract visitors to our campus and educate the public on Wright State.

Metrics:

- Number of visitors annually
- Visitor feedback from a visitor survey
- Use of the space for donor/alumni visits
- Visits to Archives Exhibit Gallery by prospective students, international visitors, donors, etc. Gate count with specific group statistics.
- Fundraising increase due to Archives new location.

Resources:

- Investment would be a designation of an appropriate space for this project that has easy access, lots of open parking, and has a physical street address.
- Additional funding for minor renovations and signage will be provided by private sources through the Foundation and Alumni Association.
- Partner with City of Fairborn

Suggested locations:

- 2455 Presidential Drive (planned future home of the archives) - Preferred
  - The welcome desk inside the front door would remain intact and staffed during open hours.
  - The Special Collections and Archives would occupy all additional space on the first floor and lower level.
  - The second floor would need to allow for:
    - Alumni Relations offices
    - Retirees Association offices
    - Enrollment Management satellite office
- Current Res Life building by the water tower
  - Plans would need to evaluate Res Life offices or a relocation of Res Life offices
  - Archives exhibit of Wright State history
**Success Factors:**

Investing in a “front door” for the university will pay dividends in:

- **Enrollment** – in addition to prospective students and parents, we will be educating our visitors on Wright State and raising awareness in the community
- **Donors** – National research shows having an “alumni center” or “welcome center” to receive potentially donors increases engagement, makes them feel welcome, and ultimately leads to more and greater gifts
- **Community Outreach** – Having a place where community groups can meet and hold events while inadvertently learning about the university helps raise awareness about all we have to offer and be proud of

**Suggested Project Ownership:**

- Special Collections and Archives
- Alumni Relations
- Retirees Association
- WSU Foundation
- President’s Office