Dear faculty and staff,

I hope your summer is off to a good start. I’m writing to share news that the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) and the Auraria institutions are embarking on the development of a 2023 Master Plan that will serve as a roadmap for the Auraria Campus’ next 10 years and beyond. AHEC has named the global design firm Sasaki to lead this effort in close alignment with the four Auraria Campus institutions: AHEC, CU Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver), and Community College of Denver (CCD).

**Background Information**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) requires a campus masterplan to be completed every 10 years. A master plan serves as a blueprint for future physical development, considering several key factors including institutional needs, land use, space management, landscape, transportation, and utilities. A master plan also draws on institutional missions, strategic plans, and future growth. Recommendations that come out of this process will be contingent on several factors, including available funding.

**Goals**

This project will focus on the Auraria (west of Speer Boulevard) portion of campus. Though still in the very early phases of development, project leaders have identified four goals to guide this important work: to provide exemplary service that will support student success; create a thriving and diverse campus environment that is activated by community partnerships; establish a stronger sense of campus cohesion that will strengthen institutional identities; and revitalize the Auraria Campus overall.

**Design Firm**

Sasaki was selected as the design firm by the Master Plan Committee, which includes representation from AHEC, CU Denver, MSU Denver, and CCD, as well as a representative from the neighboring Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP). I am representing CU Denver on the Master Plan Committee, along with Sarah Buller, director of organizational effectiveness, who is representing our executive vice chancellor for
finance and administration.

Sasaki is known for blending disciplines, engaging with communities, drawing on history and context, and using data and emerging technologies to shape the built environment.

Process

As CU Denver makes progress on its 2030 Strategic Plan and ambitious goals—and as the city around us plans for redevelopment and revitalization—this is an opportune time for us to be part of a larger discussion about the future of the Auraria Campus. Sasaki will be involving campus community members in the year-long planning process through community outreach, which is expected to begin in fall 2023 with a survey and information sessions.

We will share regular updates with our campus community. In the meantime, we encourage you to visit AHEC’s website to learn more information about this project. We look forward to our campus community being part of this process and encourage you to participate in upcoming engagement opportunities.

Cary Weatherford
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities and Campus Development