

# Clark hones design of east campus

By HOWARD BUCK  
*Columbian staff writer*

Clark College's campaign to spread its community reach and to partner with business is slowly but surely marching toward east Vancouver.

College officials are proceeding with design work on an east satellite campus planned for the Columbia Tech Center near 192nd Avenue, due to open by late 2009.

Publicly, the planning has taken a back seat to the new Clark Center building recently opened at Washington State University Vancouver in Salmon Creek. Also, ground-work is under way for a main campus expansion across Fort Vancouver Way onto the former home of Clark County's health department.

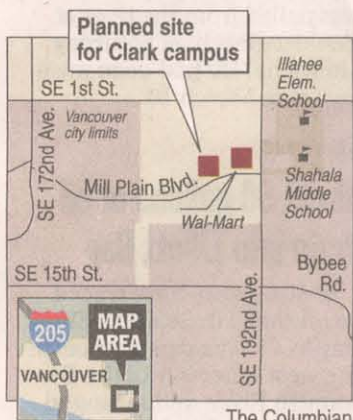
But the east branch campus, intended to serve about 1,100 full-time students when it opens on 9.5 acres near the Wal-Mart store off Southeast Mill Plain Boulevard, is quickly taking shape on paper.

Program directors are close to signing off on predesign specifications to be given to LSW Architects of Vancouver, which will develop a formal building blueprint.

Under specifications outlined so far, the 68,542-square-foot building would provide 20 classrooms and 13 computer or science labs, plus a 5,400-square-foot conference room.

The campus is intended to offer general and adult basic education courses, professional-technical work force training, English as a second language, and high school completion and GED courses. There also would be about two dozen faculty and staff offices in the building, which is projected to cost at least \$30.5 million to build.

The branch campus would provide a long-sought means of reaching the job-rich, high-technology corridor where Vancouver and Camas meet, and the booming population in the vicinity.



The Columbian

## Update

### ■ Previously:

Clark College purchased 9.5 acres in the Columbia Tech Center in east Vancouver to build a branch campus that would serve more than 1,000 students.

### ■ What's new:

Predesign work on a 68,542-square-foot building is nearing completion with the help of LSW Architects of Vancouver.

### ■ What's next:

The 2007 Washington Legislature is expected to fund construction of the \$30.5 million building, due to open by late 2009.

"It's part of an overall plan to match our capacity with the growth in the area," said Sylvia Thornburg, acting vice president of instruction for Clark College.

The college serves nearly 13,000 part- and full-time students, most at its main campus, WSU Vancouver and at the Town Plaza Center where East Mill Plain and MacArthur boulevards meet in McLoughlin Heights. What's clearly missing is improved service to the east county.

"We're trying to start with something that meets our edu-

# Branch campus:

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cational needs," Thornburg said.

## Site switched; vision endures

Clark had originally envisioned its branch campus on a nearby 60-acre parcel off Northeast First Street, where Evergreen Public Schools is constructing a 1,600-student high school.

The shared campus would have given high school students easy access to lower-level college credits through the college's

Running Start program.

But in early 2004, Clark pulled out of the site, instead choosing the Tech Center parcel. Construction of the high school, due to open by September 2007, is in full swing.

High school students and anyone working on a two-year associate degree should still have ample access when the branch campus opens, Thornburg said.

Many east-county residents should be able to earn a two-year transfer degree without ever needing to travel to Clark's downtown campus, she said.

Still, the main draw of the Tech Center location is its proximity to high-tech industry and other employers who can use the

campus for customized training and other adult education, Thornburg said.

The vast chunk of construction funding is due to be allocated by state legislators during the 2007 legislative session in Olympia.

School officials foresee little trouble obtaining the funds, because lawmakers already earmarked money for the building's predesign and design stages.

Purchase of the Tech Center land was funded by the Clark College Foundation, which paid about \$1.4 million.

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