

December 8, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Andrew Agwunobi, MD, MBA   
Interim President | University of Connecticut  
Chief Executive Officer | UConn Health

RE: Transfer/Return of Bergin Correctional Institute and Additional Adjacent Land to OPM

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees authorizes the Administration to enter into an agreement, and any other ancillary documents required, to transfer to OPM approximately 60 acres of land for the construction of a technical high school, consisting of a 35-acre parcel formerly known as the Bergin Correctional Institute and approximately 25 additional acres of adjacent and contiguous undeveloped UConn property.

RESOLUTION:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees authorizes the Administration to enter into an agreement, and any other ancillary documents required, to transfer to OPM approximately 60 acres of land for the construction of a technical high school.”

BACKGROUND:

UConn has been in discussions with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) acting on behalf of the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS), to assess the return to OPM of UConn land and buildings formally known as the Bergin Correctional Institute (“the Bergin Property”) for the purpose of construction of a new technical high school. The Bergin Property was initially transferred to UConn by OPM in March 2015. At that time, the Department of Education also requested the Bergin Property, but the transfer was ultimately approved to UConn with the understanding that a future “division of the property” with the Department of Education might be required.

CTECS plans to construct a new technical high school, with associated parking and recreational fields, to replace the existing Windham Technical High School (Windham Tech) in Willimantic. As the scope and need for the new high school progressed, OPM determined that the Bergin Property by itself was too small to accommodate the planned facilities. Accordingly, OPM expanded its request for a property transfer to include approximately 25 additional acres of undeveloped UConn land for the high school development. As shown in the attached exhibit outlining the approximate boundary of the proposed property transfer, the additional UConn land is located immediately to the north of the Bergin Property. OPM will have to address potential conservation issues with the Town of Mansfield related to this portion of the land as part of the development, but initial discussions have been very favorable.

Under CGS 4-67g, OPM is the responsible agency for all long-range planning for state real property and determining its appropriate use. Since UConn has no current plans to alternatively redevelop the Bergin Property or to develop the additional 30 acres of land, OPM has concluded the most appropriate use of the property is as a technical high school.

The primary material condition attached to this transfer is that if the high school development does not proceed to construction within a stipulated period, all of the transferred land will be returned to UConn. OPM intends to demolish and prepare the Bergin Property for development immediately, so any future return of the land would be without the existing buildings and with a relatively well-prepared site for development. Additionally, the new technical high school will require the installation of significant regional utility infrastructure improvements, which may have long-term benefits to the Depot Campus and may present future opportunities to address upgrades on this campus as well.

UConn would incur no cost related to both the present proposed transfer of the approximately 60 acres of land and buildings to OPM, or if necessary, the future reversion of the land to UConn.

Attachment

TRANSFER/RETURN OF BERGIN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTE  
AND ADDITIONAL ADJACENT LAND  
DECEMBER 8, 2021



*Bergin proper and portion of adjacent conservation area*

