7. **U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Discussion and appropriate action regarding approval of the Campus Master Plan**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve the Campus Master Plan for U. T. Rio Grande Valley. A PowerPoint presentation is set forth on the following pages.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Campus Master Plan mission, vision, and values will position U. T. Rio Grande Valley as a model of academic innovation for the distributed institution of the future. By leveraging existing locations, an enhanced bus rapid transit system, and digital connectivity, accessibility to regional, affordable, and high quality education will be maximized.

**Core Priorities**

The Master Plan uses the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board calculation methodology to identify real estate needs. Using enrollment, research expenditures, and benchmarked growth targets to forecast real estate needs over the next 5, 10, and 15 years, building projects have been prioritized at U. T. Rio Grande Valley locations across the Valley.

**Student Success**

The Master Plan envisions physical and digital upgrades to existing locations that enable highly accessible, networked experiential learning, and student services across the Valley. Much needed enhancements to student unions, library, and recreation services will enrich the student experience.

**Educational Opportunities**

Over the next five years, enrollment growth will be absorbed through improvements in utilization and increases in online and hybrid learning. Regional accessibility will be broadened by renovations to significantly increase the use of existing Academic Hubs in Rio Grande City, Weslaco, and McAllen.

**Research Impacting the Rio Grande Valley and Beyond**

Existing research facilities, together with the new Medical Research Building at the Doctors Hospital at Renaissance campus in McAllen, will accommodate five to seven years of growth, but planned increases in research expenditures over 10 to 15 years will require significant space. New space will be decentralized across the Valley at strategic locations defined by the aligning four research themes: Health + Wellness, Innovation, Education, and Environment. These research themes will focus on critical needs relative to the Rio Grande Valley.
Health and Medical Education
The Master Plan envisions expansion of facilities at Harlingen as a major health sciences campus. Focusing growth in interprofessional learning and research, it will unite the Medical School with the College of Health Affairs. Expansion of the Ambulatory Interprofessional Medical Experience (AIME) sites will enable students to engage directly in community health and wellness programs region-wide.

Community Engagement
The increased use of the Academic Hubs and AIME locations to include wider programmatic offerings, economic development, and research programs will provide a network of places to facilitate increased community outreach, service learning, and partnerships.

Digital Connectivity and Bus Rapid Transit
Digital connectivity is considered a high priority for the Master Plan and future planning of the distributed campus model. The existing high-speed data/fiber network and planned substantial upgrades over the next five years at each of the campuses will meet current and future internet needs for teaching and research. It is intended that this will provide for remote teaching, video and streaming needs, and provide the level of connectivity required.

A bus rapid transit (BRT) network and supplementary shuttle system will provide interconnectivity to all three U. T. Rio Grande Valley campuses and Academic Hub locations throughout the Valley. The BRT service is scheduled to start in 2018.