Introduction:
The following is a compilation of input related to the strategic renewal project that was received between the above-noted dates. It is unedited except where noted, primarily due to the need to remove personally identifying information. These compilations are prepared regularly and each is provided to all members of the Strategic Renewal Advisory Committee for their information and consideration.

Input has been received through various channels including the strategic renewal email account (“email commentary), the strategic renewal website (“web posting”), and from other sources such as Alumni Affairs & Development (e.g., via AA&D -- signaling that has been provided following a conversation with a donor and/or alumna/us).

Email Commentary
1. What makes us exceptional? What is our story so far?
The story so far is that we are an agriculturally rooted university who, even after 50 years in existence, is just now starting to gain momentum and stretch our legs. Our popularity amongst students and researchers is continuing to grow and yet I feel there is more that can happen....or do we? That really is the question that needs to be answered. Are we happy with what we are now as a university and if so, why? If we are not happy and want to continue to grow....what are we looking to grow into or towards? What makes us exceptional is that we are very much a student focused university. We empower our students to be involved in this university....whether it's in student jobs on campus to allow them to simplify the school/work juggle or being a part of the Board of Governors where we encourage the student voice in order to help shape the decisions that are made. The students, the community, the warmth and openness is what makes us exceptional and has always been the story so far. If the decision is made that we want to grow then how does that impact the ability for the university to hold on to that community feel. Is it possible to connect close community with cutting edge/international presence? If you look at the university from the eyes of it being a town....then that is a tricky model to follow as, typically, the larger your "town" gets.....the less of a community feel you have.

2. How can we increase our impact on lives in our community and around the world?
By staying true to who we are, we continue to make an impact on communities by holding on to the values of which communities are built. We continue with the research that helps communities grow and flourish. We continue with the research that helps communities build strong people, strong environments, strong economies and strong infrastructure. We continue to understand that what works for a community in northern Ontario isn't necessarily the same as what will be needed in a small community in India but understand that with research and compassion we can provide a hand up, not a hand out to those communities to reach their full potential. We pride ourselves on community and that does translate into the global market.

3. What do you want us to be, to look like, to be known for in 10 years? What would it take for us to do our job with pride and have more impact (especially given our roles)? Paint the picture of what we need to have, and what we need to be in 10 years!
I want us to be who we truly are. I want us to be able to keep up with the latest trends/technology/innovation but not lose sight of who we are and what we want. I want us to look back in 10 years and be proud to who we've become, be proud that we are still student focused, be proud of our accepting community and be proud of the fact that we continue to encourage those values. I want us to look back and know that the students who are/have been on campus are/were here because they want to make a difference in the world, that the faculty [members] are passionate about what they do and how they can impact. I want to continue to be proud of the job we do in that we opened a student’s eyes to
Guelph because we showed an interest in them as an individual vs them as a dollar sign. As for what we need .....we need to figure out how to juggle all the different elements in a changing world, how to juggle all the different components associated with the word community. We need to embrace the technology that is coming at us fast and furious and yet, not forget the power of a firm handshake, a look in the eye, an encouraging word to that young student who has the world at their feet. We need to stand firmly with our feet planted in yesterday, today and tomorrow.....and that is a tricky balance.

**Email Commentary  [The text that follows was received twice from 2 different correspondents.]**

I am writing to share my thoughts on the current Strategic Renewal Process. The University of Guelph is known and advertised as being a ‘green school’. However, the University currently invests $26 million into fossil fuel companies, directly supporting and profiting from the fossil fuel industry. In turn, this contributes to rising greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change. These investments, therefore, contradict the University of Guelph’s commitment to sustainability.

I am asking that the University of Guelph freeze all new investments in fossil fuel companies, and divest completely from these companies over a period of five years.

Global climate change is one of biggest challenges we face as a planet. How we adapt will affect not only the future success of the endowment fund, but also our success as a species. At the University of Toronto, an advisory committee recently recommended divesting the University’s endowment fund from the fossil fuel sector. Divesting from fossil fuels is an opportunity for the University of Guelph to be a leader in sustainability and to set an example for other educational institutions.

**Email Commentary**

U of G is good at encouraging people to make life better.

**Email Commentary**

1. **What makes us exceptional? What is our story so far?**
   -multifaceted institution looking to make a difference in the world, whether it’s through human/animal health, social wellbeing, environmental science to build a better plant, food research on finding solutions both economically and socially responsible in feeding the world, and our community
   -a place more than just learning...it truly is a home for all its students, faculty and staff... that place that continues to help us and a place that continues to challenge us to make a difference for others

2. **How can we increase our impact on lives in our community and around the world?**
   -For the most part, the campus and the University of Guelph is the centre of the city... We need to make our campus accessible and inviting to the city. Everything we build, create, run, organize, not only needs to be directed to the students on campus, but also the local community... Bringing the entire city to one centralized place, like our campus, builds a dynamic and fun relationship among the students, faculty, and community... This also builds the relationship and influences Guelph HS students to stay in Guelph... Could build more potential to donors in all areas of campus
   -can we have free events.
   -celebrate all sorts of holidays and traditions campus wide

3. **What do you want us to be, to look like, to be known for in 10 years?**
   -I want us to be known as the best university in Canada I'm not sure how that can be done.. Continue to fund research initiatives... Be involved locally, nationally, globally
   -continue to be pioneers in the agricultural and environmental aspects these are our biggest issues now, and will only get worse with time.. We need to celebrate accomplishments more in all aspects of campus... but specifically those that do changes lives and improve life... If that is our tagline, let’s show how we are doing that... Spending money on the
accomplishments of departments on campus (broadcasting those,...social media...tv...radio) will create a buzz, increase our popularity.... for our job specifically, increase our numbers if people are saying – [Oh,] Guelph solved that problem....Guelph created this... Invented that... The first time I ever heard about Omega 3 eggs and milk, was reading over the welcome speech in 2011. Something even as small as that needs more attention... more praise...
Because, it is showing what our university is doing on a daily basis.

Email Commentary
1. What makes us exceptional? What is our story so far?
I've had this question when chatting with students, and my answer is often the same. Whenever I am describing U of G, I often say ' if you are looking for the total package, the whole University experience... that is what we are all about and what makes us exceptional. I think we offer an amazing student centered, first class, academic experience. A Guelph degree is a well-respected degree, we are leaders in research, have award winning yet approachable faculty and provide all the tools and support for students to succeed in the classroom. But we are so much more than what happens inside of the classroom as well. From our food, to residence, to clubs and athletics... all of this adds up to the 'total package' experience. Then there are the more intangible factors. It is the feeling you get on our campus of being at home....never wanting to leave such a supportive, friendly, caring, down to earth, inclusive and engaged community. The smiles from strangers you pass on Winegar, to the doors held open, to the genuine desire of our population to make a difference and have an impact. We are a special place, a place that is hard to describe in words sometimes, as you really just need to be here to feel it.

As for our story, I think it is constantly evolving, changing and keeping up with (if not surpassing) the times and trends. What I love about Guelph though, is that throughout this evolution, I really believe we have stayed true to ‘us’, and stayed true to our history, tradition and our roots.

2. How can we increase our impact on lives in our community and around the world?
I really feel that we do a good job of having an impact on lives in our community and abroad. How can we increase this? I think by continuing to offer such an exceptional education...knowledge is power, and what our students are learning here and taking with them wherever their path may lead after graduation...this likely has the most significant impact. Continued excellence in research is also imperative in increasing our impact around the world. The improvements, discoveries and innovation we have brought to every facet of life through our research truly has 'changed life and improved lives' around the world.

I think we also need to continue to promote, support and value our spirit of volunteerism and giving. Whether that be on a small or large scale, local or abroad....it all matter and all makes a difference.

3. What do you want us to be, to look like, to be known for in 10 years? What would it take for us to do our job with pride and have more impact (especially given our roles)? Paint the picture of what we need to have, and what we need to be in 10 years!
In ten years from now ... hmmm... that is a good question!
I think that overall, we need to stay true to who we are and what we do (and do well). However, staying true to us (and our genuine love of Guelph, desire to help students and expose them to a place that means so much to all of us), doesn't mean that for the next 10 years we stay status quo. I feel that we need to continue to embrace change, even when that change may push us outside of our comfort zone. Whether this be technology, latest innovations, new and more effective ways of doing things, staying on top of current trends, I feel that in order to grow over the next 10 years we need to continue to critically evaluate everything we do. We need to look at our roles and responsibilities through different lenses and perspectives, ask for and implement feedback, and be open to not being always being 'comfortable'. I think that by doing this, yet staying true to ourselves, we will move towards a pretty awesome future as a team and individually as well.
Via AA&D

...I wanted to pass along some thoughts from one of our parents who I recently had coffee with ... donor and really loves U of G...

-We discussed the Strategic Plan. [She] indicated that she loves the University of Guelph because of how much we care about students. She cited several examples where U of G went above and beyond to help her sons with their courses and ensure they were able to take their pre-reqs. She said it goes beyond student services (which all universities have)

-U of G genuinely cares about students and we should never lose that. She also hopes that we keep our ‘modesty’ as a university

-Our quirkiness is what makes us so great! In other words, she doesn’t believe we should necessarily brag about being world-class, as we may lose the charms that make this such a great place for students.

Email Commentary
[Note: this email is an addition to two other examples surrounding ‘Food’ and ‘Wellness’ highlighted in the Input Summary previously released]

... After much rumination I have developed a model for the environmental focus as well. I have tried to go beyond sustainability to look at a very broad range of interactions with the environment. Once again it is clear that broad swaths of our institutional activities, both in and out of classroom, on and off campus, can be meaningfully and synergistically encompassed.
Email Commentary
Following the strategic renewal workshop late last term we did some brainstorming about a possible community outreach project that might showcase our skills and brand.

... we started talking about this with you at the end of the workshop so this is a follow-up on that initiative.

Please see the attached concept note for one modest initiative that we think would be fun, at a lot of value, and relatively easy to obtain. [We] stand by to have further conversations and are keen to see if we can push this initiative forward a little bit.

Content of concept note:

In brief
• The University of Guelph should establish a recurring evening of publicly accessible talks organized around the themes that emerge from the strategic renewal process and feature experts from across campus.
• These evenings can be hosted in the River Run Centre or other central Guelph location or in other Canadian cities depending on specific outreach goals and budget.
• The format will mirror Ted and Walrus Talks events in that each evening will be organized according to a theme and feature approximately 8 seven-minute talks, drawing primarily on Guelph faculty (and graduate students?).
• Each evening will also feature other University of Guelph’s (plus others as useful) expertise including:
  o Music by students or faculty from the School of Music to be played at the intermission.
  o Food and beverages served by students from hospitality and tourism.
  o Art exhibited from the School of Fine Art.
• Talks would also be recorded and edited for presentation on the Internet where they can be utilized for educational purposes on our campus and elsewhere.¹

¹ Here we would note a bigger issue: the University of Guelph probably needs to invest more heavily in creating online materials both as a recruitment tool but also for pedagogical reasons. In particular, we would like to think we could move towards creating a “food course” that is equivalent to Harvard’s flagship Justice Course (http://www.justiceharvard.org/). Developing the food Guelph talk evening would help move us towards this goal.
Possible elements of a pilot project: Guelph Talks on Food

- The first of the *Guelph Talks* events could be on the topic of food. It could contain the following elements:
  - We would ask eight dynamic speakers to prepare 7 minute talks related to different aspects of food. Possible names are included below.
  - We would organize a “Taste of Guelph” reception immediately after the talks ....
  - Arrange for food themed art the School of Fine Art to be displayed (and auctioned?) and a display of cookbooks from our collection in the archives on at the reception.
  - We would arrange for music to be provided by the School of Music before the talks and at the reception.
- In terms of logistics we have two possible proposals for this pilot project:
  - This event could be organized for late April or early May and happen somewhere in Toronto such as at the Art Gallery of Ontario and be timed to raise our profile with the public on this issue and hence seen as part of the CFREF Communications strategy.
  - Alternatively (or as well as) this event could happen at the River Run Centre in the fall of 2016 and be seen as a way of increasing the University’s profile with the local community. [Information included about approach to and cost for renting local venue.]
  - [Name omitted] would have seed funding to start this initiative that could be run out of the Food Institute and in collaboration with BIO.
  - There are a range of possible partners we could approach including....

Beyond the pilot study: making Guelph Talks a feature at the University of Guelph

- We propose that the event focusing on food could be the “proof of concept” for a longer-term initiative.
- As a result, we would propose that a university level steering committee be established ... that would steward program development for this initiative, in collaboration with other University stakeholders such as Alumni Affairs and Development, Hospitality Services, Office of Communications, SPARK, etc.
- The goal of this committee would be to organize events that would draw explicitly on the themes identified by the strategic renewal process to better brand the different elements of the University of Guelph’s identity.
- Subsequent events could occur in Ottawa and Toronto, thus helping fulfill the University’s need to establish a better identity outside of our local region, with parallel events happening a week or two later at the River Run Centre if desirable to help maintain our connection with the local community.
- We would sell tickets to defray the costs of running this event.

[Information was also included outlining a preliminary budget for the proposed initiative and a list of individuals who might be approached as speakers.]

**Email Commentary**

1. What makes us exceptional? What is our story so far?

As an 11 year old girl I was introduced to the University of Guelph community during College Royal. I was immediately aware that Guelph was known for agriculture, but even at that young age I could sense the close knit community feeling. I remember coming home from one College Royal visit and saying to myself that I I wanted to be a Gryphon! It was the feeling of belonging that drew me in and that was because of the friendly people. This feeling of belonging continued during my studies here and has stayed with me as an alumna and employee. I always feel supported, valued, and appreciated when I am on campus.

As a student and now employee I am continually impressed with the faculty and research that is being done here. I studied Child, Youth, and Family Studies and was proud of the education I was getting. I appreciated the hands on components to my education through practicum placements. This unique combination of theory and hands on learning was what gave me a leg up to other new graduates and landed me my first job the day I graduated.
I am also blown away by the emphasis on improving lives here. In a more practical way this is emphasized by all of the construction on campus! As a student and employee, when I see construction happening I feel excited that we are investing in our future and improving our already great facilities.

Overall it is the sense of community, the intertwining of theory and hands on learning, and the continual emphasis on growth and improvement that makes the University of Guelph exceptional.

2. How can we increase our impact on lives in our community and around the world?
In order to increase our impact I think we need to continue investing in the city of Guelph and maintain quality relationships with city officials. I think we need to continue to stress the importance of giving back to our community and not become a university city that is cut off from the larger city of Guelph. I also think we need to continue to stress the importance of diversity on campus and maintain our inclusive environment.

3. What do you want us to be, to look like, to be known for in 10 years? What would it take for us to do our job with pride and have more impact (especially given our roles)? Paint the picture of what we need to have, and what we need to be in 10 years!
In 10 years I would love the University of Guelph to continue to be known as an inclusive close knit community that is always striving to improve! I would like the University of Guelph to maintain the emphasis on quality face to face interactions, but also to be known for embracing new technology as it arrives. If there was a way to capture our community vibe in cutting edge videos or graphics I think it would add to our recruitment initiatives and on campus feel. I also think having a Welcome Center would be an excellent addition to our campus!

Email Commentary
Unless technology as part of education is declining, we've failed before we've begun by not including representation from the Teaching and Learning Technologies department. It’s not the end all and be all but it's a serious flaw to look towards the future without that representation.

Web Posting
Some of the reasons for dwindling research excellence at U of G. Perspectives from a relatively new faculty.... It is very true that the University has paid more attention and importance to teaching and not so much for the research in the past several years. This is obvious as can be seen from the downhill slope of funding received from the tri-councils and the university rankings by several magazines.

1) Lack of diversity and inclusiveness in several levels. The diversity ratio is extremely low and our international graduate and undergraduate students intake is poor relatively to other nearby universities at South West Ontario. We have been ranked several times in the lower scale for diversity by provincial HR and MTCU towards diversity. Opening up the door for international graduate students through reasonable tuition fee payment policy similar to McMaster, Waterloo and London is essential. Diversity within OVC at the faculty levels is at the bottom level, compared to Veterinary Colleges across North America.
2) The OMAF-U of G Partnership is a boon and a curse to the University. If you look at the past funding history and review the recipients lists, you would find that the same persons who have been awarded the grant are being awarded again. This specific funding formula is more of an old boy’s club and unless you include a well-known researcher or the university’s RPD director, it is very hard even to get invited to full proposal stage. The caliber and the qualifications of the evaluation panel for reviewing OMAF proposal is questionable. The ministry OMAF dictates the composition, but the university has a say.
3) Because the cash from OMAF is guaranteed to U of G for research, the so-called recipients and research program directors does not even care to apply for NSERC and other competitive federal funding bodies. University needs to carefully look at this and review. A comparative analysis between provincial and federally competitive funding for researchers and auditing is needed. New perspectives are needed at the University’s management team dealing with OMAF agreements.
4) Promotion policies – Few or some of the departmental chairs, Associate Directors of various units and programs, and even the Research Program Directors of OMAF and some of the Associate Dean (Academics) and Research (ADRs) do not have any peer reviewed ‘federal’ funding grants. If the University wants to promote research excellence, first promote the personnel, faculty member who have demonstrated accomplishments in research. There is also a tendency to hide behind the ‘administrative’ role due to severe lack of research contributions. Administrators, directors and associate directors, Associate Dean (Academic and Research) should be well rounded in research, teaching and service. The decisions made by the departmental chair and the Associate Director for Research for a particular unit without any understanding of research may not have any meaningful impact.

5) DOE – typical DOE is 40, 40, 20. This does not reflect the true nature of individuals. Although there are mechanisms to change this, the faculty can negotiate with the Dean every year, the policies surrounding this are not clear. Many young and new faculty members are not being mentored properly. There should be more flexibility for faculty to make their choices.

6) Some units within U of G have several teaching focus contractually limited faculty members. If it is a 4 year contract, the faculty get to teach only two terms in a year and they get a full term break (typically summer). A regular 40, 40, 20 tenure track faculty do not have this opportunity to enjoy a similar full term break.

Web Posting

As a staff member I am disappointed that the summary of inputs does not include transparency, accountability and respect for the specific community of those who work on this campus every day.