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PRESS RELEASE

Singapore Management University Begins Construction of City Campus with Groundbreaking Ceremony

Landmark campus designed to provide more Public space and parkland in Bras Basah

With great anticipation, the Singapore Management University's (SMU) city campus will commence construction works with a groundbreaking ceremony at its Bras Basah site on 27 March 2002.

Guest-of-Honour, RAdm Teo Chee Hean, Minister of Education, will officiate the groundbreaking ceremony, setting into motion SMU's permanent campus, to be built from scratch right in the heart of the city. A two-dimensional model will be raised electronically eight feet high from the ground to mark a project that will change the face of Singapore's civic district and alter dramatically the intricate social network of the Singaporean community.

Developing the entire vision of the city campus with SMU is the talented partnership of Singapore's KNTA Architects and Britain's Edward Cullinan Architects, Master Architects for the 'Bras Basah' project. Handling the administrative building 'Victoria' project are Cox Architects and Planners and DEG Architects.

SMU's new city campus will be developed over a site of six parcels clustered in and around the civic and cultural district, with expected completion of Phase 1 to be by 2005. The masterplan consists of several key principles, developed to respect and respond to the diversity of the historical, cultural and physical infrastructure of the Bras Basah district.

Specifically, the important historical buildings and landmarks that engage with the site set up axial connections to form a necklace of campus buildings. Each of the five-storey buildings has an open courtyard extending from street level or below street level to roof level. These open courtyards link through the concourse level, reinforcing the axial connections. The courtyards and air-conditioned underground walkway link each part of the campus to another.

The facilities in the university buildings will include seminar-tiered and seminar flat-floor classrooms, group study / break-out rooms, simulated trading rooms and research centers. Laboratory facilities will include student technopreneur labs, computer labs, business communication labs and language labs. Apart from the SMU library, campus center and Executive Education center, there will also be premises for cafes, delis, a

food-court, a bookshop, a convenient store and computer shop. The Campus Centre will be the main arena for public activities, with an open-ended courtyard allowing the interaction of members of the public with the students, faculty and staff of the university. Across the campus, the underground and concourse levels are open to the public, allowing us to give more open space back to the community.

Landscaping is also a major component of the masterplan. Designed tree-sheltered courts, porous buildings criss-crossed by breezeways, overhanging facades and strengthened shading, all utilise natural climatic conditions to maximise comfort and connect the campus to the unique setting of Fort Canning and Bras Basah Green. Buildings overlooking Bras Basah Green have glazed facades shaded by a veil of plants to create "green walls" reinforcing their natural setting. Selected existing trees have been preserved and new trees will be added to front the main pedestrian routes and within the campus grounds.

Other SMU "green" efforts include preserving most of the existing trees at the perimeter of the campus site, and replanting mature trees within the site after the construction of the campus buildings. The 70-year-old Bodhi tree which currently sits in the heart of the parkland, will be preserved and form the focal point around which the campus will be built. The campus masterplan has been specially designed to result in as many trees as possible and more usable park space after completion of the campus, than the current Bras Basah site.