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Over the last 15 months we've been hard at work gathering information and ideas for the University of Pittsburgh's next strategic plan.

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A major step in defining where we want to go as an institution is to assess where we are today.

The good news is that despite the pandemic and all the instability that it's caused, Pitt is doing extremely well, and our mission has never been more important or more relevant.

This mission has three parts:

1. Who we are.
2. What we do.
3. And the difference we make.

We are a community of scholars, learners and leaders, dedicated to a common cause, the pursuit of knowledge.

Our programs and operations fuel opportunities at the highest quality in three key areas; academics, research and scholarship, and community service.

And we are committed to improving lives and communities at every scale by creating knowledge and leveraging our expertise to tackle some of society's greatest and most pressing challenges.

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Who we are today is also a reflection of our values. These include: academic excellence, collaboration, innovation, inclusion, sustainability and community.

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The final plan for Pitt will take our university's established strengths and values into consideration. A plan, in fact, builds on what we are and then charts out where we need to go.

This plan will prioritize change and identify the actions necessary to get us from where we are today to where we want to be in five years.

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While it's helpful to know what our plan is designed to do, it's also helpful to recognize what it *isn't* designed to do.

Our plan focuses on change, so *it's not* going to shine a spotlight everywhere.

And *it won't* focus on every area of existing strength within the university.

We also know that the final plan *can't be* fixed. In fact, we'll continue to modify it on a routine basis through our annual program planning.

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As you could imagine, deciding how we need to evolve as an institution isn't easy work. That's why we consulted the experts—all of you.

Pitt faculty, students, staff, and key stakeholders all contributed to our planning process.

We heard from Pitt community members on every campus. We met with focus groups, student groups, committees and departments, and we engaged everyone from frontline workers to senior administrators.

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We took all of this feedback and used it to draft a framework—in essence, a blueprint—that can help us move from ideas to actions to results.

This framework—as currently drafted—is divided into three parts, all focused on strengthening elements of our mission.

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Our people—who we are.

Our programs—what we do.

And our purpose—the difference we make.

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The first section, Our People, focuses inward.

It identifies how we strengthen our own community of faculty, students and staff in ways that

enhance our mission.

Success on this front, five years from now, means that we will have:

- Created a welcoming and fair to every member of our community.
- Protected academic freedom, institutional independence and the associated rights, responsibilities and privileges.
- Enriched the student experience with transformative opportunities to learn, to grow, and to excel.
- Enhanced retention and recruitment efforts through workforce development opportunities, incentives and support systems.
- And finally: Updated our physical and operational environment to encourage risk-taking, exploration and collaboration.

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The second focal point—Our Programs—describes how Pitt must evolve at a programmatic level to advance the quality, depth, and breadth of our academic and research programs.

In five years, if we're successful, we will have:

- Strengthened the reputation, relevance and impact of our graduate and professional programs.
- Created more preeminent teaching, research, and learning experiences.
- Increased our participation and presence in team—or multidisciplinary—collaborative and solution-sized research projects.
- Broadened our community of learners to include more non-traditional students and settings.
- And finally: Expanded opportunities for global engagement and civic engagement.

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The third and final section of the framework, Our Purpose, looks outward. It describes the difference that Pitt makes. In other words: Are we really improving lives?

Success on this front means that, in five years, we will have:

- Extended networks and supports to help students graduate on time, secure meaningful employment and realize early career success.
- Enhanced the professional trajectories and financial security of our alumni.
- Fueled economic development throughout the region and economic growth throughout the commonwealth.
- And finally: Collaborated with communities—near and far—to improve outcomes and opportunities for their residents.

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At this point you likely have many questions, such as:

- Is this really our plan?
- What *specific* objectives are we supporting?
- And where's the input that I provided?

It's important to note that this is *not* our final plan.

This is a deliberately simple framework that we'll be using to stay on track as we fill the Plan for Pitt with specific actions and objectives.

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And, as we've done throughout this process, we're looking for your feedback. We want to know if this framework *works* for you.

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To start, we're asking three questions.

1. Are the focal points of the framework clear?
2. Are the values that we highlight the right values for us?
3. And, generally speaking, does this framework help you envision how we'll be different—a better Pitt—five years from today?

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Thank you to everyone in our Pitt community who has participated in our planning process thus far.

As the slide says—and it's true: We couldn't have done it without you.

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