WHEREAS, The Applied Research and Development Facility has been established on campus but not funded; and

WHEREAS, A number of strategies for funding have been attempted and failed; and

WHEREAS, The university has a unique opportunity to contract with a knowledgeable person to help with funding on a fee contingency basis; and

WHEREAS, This attached proposal offers a way to get outside gifts to remodel the building at minimal cost to Cal Poly; and

WHEREAS, Contracting with an outside consultant to seek applied research projects is a departure from current practice; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate endorse the one-year pilot period discussed in the attached proposal to contract Wes Witten who will solicit private industry for applied research awards for the faculty and gifts to remodel the facility; and be it further

RESOLVED: That an evaluation report be made to the Academic Senate on the success of this program at the end of the one-year pilot period.

Proposed By:
Academic Senate Research Committee
October 7, 1987
PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIALIST
TO GUIDE THE
APPLIED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITY

Robert A. Lucas
Associate Vice President for
Graduate Studies, Research, and Faculty Development

This is a proposal to contract for a research and consulting development specialist for the Applied Research and Development Facility (Building 04), who will help raise funds to remodel the building. It has been developed in consultation with the Facility Board comprising Ed Carnegie, Harry Fierstine, Ray Gordon, and Dick Zweifel.

Background: The Applied Research and Development Facility was established over two years ago, but its progress has been slowed by a lack of staffing and resources to develop it. When the plan for converting Building 04 to a research center was approved, no budget was provided for remodeling, equipping it, or day-to-day operation. Other attempts to secure funding, including direct cost line items in project budgets, were not successful.

In May of 1986, a second proposal was drafted that outlined a plan to raise private funds to remodel the building to house a selected number of activities. Funding of the plan depended upon private corporate support, approximately $350,000 to be primed by a seed grant from the University. This proposal outlines a way to take action on that proposal.

Problem: The University has limited resources to put into the development of its applied research facility. Building 04 has 13,000 square feet with significant possibilities, but for these to be realized, considerable capital expense for extensive remodeling is required. Once the building is refurbished, it will need a steady flow of applied research contracts of sufficient scale and instructional relevance so that the facility can support itself. If grants and contracts are maintained at a sufficient level, the facility's operating expense can be handled through the indirect costs earned on research projects.

A catalyst is necessary to begin the process.

Opportunity: Wes Witten, a person with wide industrial experience, a supporter of Cal Poly, Chair of the President's Cabinet for four years, and a distinguished alumnus of the School of Engineering has indicated that he is interested in assisting the University in developing the possibilities of the facility. Through his work in industry and his past role as Chair of the President's Cabinet, he has developed numerous industrial contacts and the background necessary to be an effective entrepreneur for the facility.

Witten has offered to work as an independent contractor to develop the facility, subject to the following mutually agreeable conditions:
That the first call on his energies will be to identify faculty research interest and to locate industries interested in supporting that research, rather than to bring industry problems here in search of a solution,

That once the initial contact has been completed and the link between faculty member and contact at the industry has been established, the principal investigator will be responsible for writing the proposal and shepherding it through university review,

That he will take responsibility for pursuing, at no cost to the university for his services, the corporate matching gifts which will make the facility operational by refurbishing and equipping it,

That the source of remuneration will be an add-on percentage to the indirect costs recovered on industry grants and contracts obtained through his direct agency,

That he will be reimbursed by the University during the pilot phase for out-of-pocket expenses for travel to develop research contracts and facility development gifts, and that he receive office clerical support, and

That he have no responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the facility.

Operational Plan: Witten will enter into an independent consultant agreement with Cal Poly for a one-year pilot period, to seek applied research and development contracts for faculty to pursue activities related to their interests and funded by California industry. That one-year pilot agreement will include work on the capital campaign to locate corporate funds to convert the facility into a working laboratory. The agreement will be signed with Cal Poly Foundation.

Fee for his services will be derived from the overhead on those contracts executed as a direct result of his activity. These contracts will be clearly identifiable from their indirect cost rates. Each will be two percent above normal indirect costs, using a total direct cost base for their calculation. The difference between the normal indirect cost rate and the augmented indirect cost rate will be Witten's fee, payable to him when the contract is executed.

Because some projects will require specialized equipment that is not in the facility, they will be conducted at other sites on campus. Witten will also receive a fee for these projects if he was responsible for their award. Again, his role in their award will be clearly identifiable through the higher indirect cost rate.

Character of Applied Research: The May, 1986, proposal identified a number of research directions the facility could pursue as private funding came in. Such identification may have been premature. This proposal suggests that it is better to focus on projects that have a number of characteristics important to Cal Poly's educational mission. Applied research projects for the facility should be:

RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL DISCIPLINES: Applied research activities will provide learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in their disciplines.

RELATED TO FACULTY EXPERTISE: Projects should build on current research momentum possessed by one or more faculty. Projects to solve industry problems that are of little interest to our faculty are not desirable.
VISIBLE: Visible projects will help the facility make a name for itself in applied research and will further assist the development of the facility.

INTERDISCIPLINARY: Projects that cut across departmental lines offer an excellent opportunity for faculty to learn about and work with others of like interest in different departments.

DIVISIBLE: Projects that have tasks that can be parcelled out have the virtue of involving more than one faculty member and of expanding the base of activity so that more Cal Poly faculty can become involved in research.

CURRENT: Projects which pursue current topics and which are useful to society have the chance of being more readily funded and will highlight the applied nature of the facility and of the instructional program.

Once a number of projects have been funded, new directions will emerge that may suggest an identifiable focus for applied research in the facility. As this occurs, it may be appropriate for us to redefine the facility as a building with a more specific applied research mission.

The capital campaign effort will be coordinated with the Office of the Vice President for University Relations. At the end of nine months, the success of the overall activity will be evaluated by the Facility Board, and a recommendation will be made to the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research, and Faculty Development in consultation with the Academic Senate Research Committee concerning its continuation.
Memorandum

To:    A. Charles Crabb, Chair
       Academic Senate

Subject:  ACADEMIC SENATE RESOLUTION ON APPLIED
          RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITY (AS-262-87/RC)

This will acknowledge your November 24 memo with which you
transmitted the resolution adopted by the Academic Senate in
support of the University contracting with Wes Witten to help
expand research opportunities for the faculty. The resolution
(AS-262-87/RC) is approved, and I have asked Dr. Malcolm Wilson
and Dr. Robert Lucas to move forward with its implementation.