

University of Nebraska At Kearney 2006 to 2015 Facilities Development Plan

Mid-Plan Progress Report, April, 2012

The University of Nebraska at Kearney Facilities Development Plan 2006-2015 approved in January, 2007, lays out a vision of opportunities for the future development of UNK, considering the historic Main Campus, and the adjacent property currently called South Campus.

12 major projects have been completed, are underway, or are in planning, since UNK adopted the 2006 Development Plan. And, this list excludes the pending development of South Campus.

Planning Imperatives

The University of Nebraska at Kearney Facilities Development Plan 2006-2015 was designed to integrate with the Strategic Planning Framework adopted by the Board of Regents, as well as the role, mission, and core values of UNK. At that time, we envisioned facilities development tasks undertaken would produce the following outcomes:

- “RESIDENTIAL RENEWAL – We will renew our residential capabilities with new or refurbished residence halls that offer a variety of housing choices. These facilities, along with a multi-faceted Student Union..., will provide the main infrastructure supporting student development outside the classroom and laboratory.”

In 2006, the housing inventory offered about 15% of beds in spaces less than 40 years old. These were served by gang showers lacking the privacy typically expected by incoming students. Accessibility to upper floors in most halls was limited at best. Only 16% of beds were sprinkled.

A plan for constructing over 160,000 new square feet for 332 beds was approved by Board of Regents in December, 2005. This project developed Antelope (2007) and Nester Halls (2008) as two- and four-bedroom suite-style housing. Development of this suite-style housing broadened campus living options, especially for returning residents. This project was funded by sale of revenue bonds.

A plan for renewing the remaining, older halls was reviewed with Board of Regents in March, 2008. This plan included renovating and razing buildings to achieve an appropriate number of beds in support of the university’s residential mission.

Plans were developed and projects completed in Mantor (2009), Men’s (2010) and Randall (2011) Halls to improve over 170,000 square feet of existing space. Life-safety improvements included the addition of fire sprinkler systems, replacement of fire alarm systems. Accessibility was expanded by installation of elevators. Renovations to gang showers focused on privacy and accessibility. New space conditioning systems were installed for Men’s, adding cooling and improving heating for these rooms. These projects were funded from revenue bond surplus funds. Windows in Mantor and Randall were replaced using revenue bond surplus funds to match Nebraska Energy Office grant funds.

Additional work is needed to complete this renewal plan. Renovations are planned to begin in Centennial Towers West in May, 2012; Centennial Tower East in May, 2013. Martin Hall will no longer be used as a residence hall after these projects are completed, as part of right-sizing the

number of available beds. New space will be developed to replace the University Heights apartments. Martin Hall renovations and University Heights are discussed further, below. Upon completion, all campus sleeping quarters will be sprinkled, and over 35% of beds are in spaces less than 20 years old.

Not all older halls are being renovated. Conrad Hall will be razed as part of the Martin Hall renovations, see below. Case and Ludden Halls were razed as part of the Antelope and Nester development. Stout Hall was razed during Randall renovation. It was determined that the benefit of renovating these spaces for these few beds was outweighed by their funding needs for structural, accessibility, heating and cooling, and other improvements.

Parallel to these improvements are recent renovations to UNK dining facilities. These projects upgraded room finishes, expanded preparation space, and increased seating space, all focused on improving customer experience.

- ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT – “Landscape to promote beauty and functionality; move vehicular traffic increasingly to the campus perimeter; building architecture and grounds development initiatives will maintain the “academic village” nature of main campus.”

Many architecture improvements have been made to campus during this first portion of the planning period. Antelope and Nester developed interior and exterior spaces that encourage student interaction and collaboration. Bruner Hall developed interior and exterior destination sites. The development of Central Utility Plant on University Drive changes the image of the site from a neglected space to one worthy of notice.

The razing of Stout Hall provides the opportunity to improve the entry into Randall and Mantor Halls. The planned new entry will develop a mid-campus focal point along the growing pedestrian mall. Parking spaces west of Cope Fountain have been used as staging area during construction of Men’s and Randall renovations, and will be used during the completion of this entry. When construction is complete, the area will be converted to green space. The pedestrian mall will then extend from the View, which connects north and south portions of Nester Hall, to the location of this new entry. Other landscaping initiatives continue, including tree replacements (impact of storms, adding diversity), garden areas, and standardizing site furniture.

One planned enhancement will move some campus traffic to the perimeter. Office of Admissions is a common destination for campus visitors. Its present location in Memorial Student Affairs Building requires visitors to travel into the heart of campus. Relocating Admissions to Martin Hall on the campus perimeter re-uses an available resource while creating an easily accessed destination.

Purchase of the property at 9th Avenue and 25th Street allowed additional environmental enhancements to the campus. The initial benefit of this effort was razing the existing buildings. This provides visitors a better visual access to that portion of campus. The addition of this property also allowed the opportunity to enter into discussions with City of Kearney concerning improvements to this awkward intersection. Concepts have ranged from simple reconfiguring to develop a signalized tee intersection, to construction of a dual lane roundabout.

- ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURAL RENEWAL – “We will modernize the infrastructure supporting our academic mission.... Planners will respect UNK’s historical commitment to small-class sizes and comprehensive undergraduate research capability throughout the curriculum. UNK’s information technology infrastructure will feature comprehensive wireless networking capability in every

building. The infrastructure will support on- and off-campus teaching, outreach, and student support services as well as administrative computing.”

The renovation of Bruner Hall of Science improved 84,900 existing square feet. This project also constructed a 17,800 square feet addition, replacing a 200- seat lecture hall, two small lecture halls and a sub-grade planetarium. This project addressed deficiencies and met the goals of the College of Natural and Social Sciences, including:

- Providing quality laboratory space to support the teaching, learning and research activities;
- Providing adjacent classroom space to support the non-laboratory classes.
- Providing classrooms better matching typical class size.
- Providing a larger planetarium with high public visibility and accessibility.
- Providing space for students to collaborate, study, socialize and build a sense of community.

This project was funded with revenue from LB605, and a grant from NASA.

Proper support for this and other academic operations requires reliable utility service, including dependable and efficient delivery of thermal needs. Construction of the Central Utilities Plant improves the academic environment by meeting this need. This development followed industry practice for reliability by installing N + 1 boilers and chillers, that is, the largest unit could be off-line and still meet peak loads. Improvements resulting from plant location allow significant future load growth with reduced investment in distribution. This project was also funded from revenue from LB605.

Recent improvements to Ryan Library include the development of a Learning Commons. This is the first facility of its kind in the state, and brings together UNK Writing Center, Academic Peer Tutoring, additional group study rooms, and other services and activities focused on student academic success.

West Center projects include development of the Global Marketing Research Lab, providing students with hands-on learning opportunities. The room is equipped with a state-of-the-art Smart Board, and two-way mirror with an adjoining observation room with ear phones and TV monitor for collecting focus group data. Not only can students learn the skills of conducting marketing research but they are able to fine tune their presentation skills using this facility. The facility can also be utilized by regional businesses needing to conduct research.

Data Analysis

In 2006, assumptions on space management were based on reaching a goal of 7,500 FTE by the end of the planning period. In 2009, an Enrollment Management Council was initiated, to establish and monitor enrollment and retention goals. This group, working with Noel Levitz consultants, revised the enrollment goal to 7,100 students. UNK reached this goal in fall, 2011.

Planning Concepts, Recommendation

The planning imperatives, and related goals noted above, also led to initial planning for several future projects:

Wellness Center

A new Wellness Center is proposed to be located adjacent to Cushing Fieldhouse. This project will provide a facility for teaching and research on health and human performance, student fitness activities, and wellness programming for students, faculty, and staff.

The new Wellness Center will enhance UNK's ability to apply university expertise to citizens' needs, by locating a major center of health and wellness teaching and research in modernized, readily accessible facilities at the heart of campus. It also addresses a need identified by both students and administrators to augment current facilities for student recreation, fitness activity, and associated co-curricular programming.

The Wellness Center will provide new space and equipment for student recreation and fitness activity and for a variety of organized activities including cheerleading and dance team practices, group instruction/training and club meetings.

The Center will also provide new instructional, research, meeting and exercise space for the Human Performance Laboratory (HPL), a core element of UNK's priority program in Exercise Science and supported in part by Program of Excellence (POE) funding. The teaching and scholarship of HPL faculty relate directly to campus and community health and wellness. The Laboratory is now housed in a space that is programmatically overcrowded. With recent HPL growth (including POE funding for two new faculty researchers), the limitations of the existing facility have become significant constraints on its programs and potential impact.

Otto Olsen

The proposed project will provide the first major renovation of the Otto Olsen Building. Ongoing deferred maintenance and ADA projects have been completed using TF309 and LB1100 funding to address the buildings immediate shortcomings. The 66,000 square foot facility was built in 1954 in the original academic core of the campus.

The original mechanical, electrical distribution and lighting systems are still in use in most areas of the building.

The proposed project is related to Deferred Maintenance, Code, Fire and Life Safety Issues and meeting today's educational needs. Department growth and changes have made renovation of the west wing and child care addition impractical. Study and planning are underway to relocate programs in the College of Business and Technology. The present concept, renovating a portion of the existing structure and relocating some departments to other locations on campus, provides the most cost effective alternative that conforms to the comprehensive plan for the University. Should the proposed College of Nursing and Allied Health become a reality, relocating Nursing away from West Center could be a first step in advancing these Otto Olsen projects.

South Campus Development

Previous plans have considered the potential of the South Campus property for development. UNK will begin in March, 2012, a formal feasibility study for this property.

One use of this property will be the replacement for University Heights apartments. This development will complement and complete current residential renewal efforts. The initial development will replace the existing complex with a variety of modern one- and two-bedroom units. Intended initial capacity is about 100 units; future expansion could increase this by 50%. These units

are intended to be appropriate for broad group of customers, ranging from traditional upper class students, to non-traditional students with families, to in-coming faculty.

The development concepts for this site may include restaurants, stores and other retail spaces. Site planning also considers relocating Child Development Center to this site. With a waiting list equal to its current capacity, the current operation suffers from its success. Relocating this non-academic function to the new site allows for expansion, improving short-term parking for picking up and dropping off children, frees space on main campus, and reduces mid-campus traffic. Developing this function adjacent to the apartment complex complements both functions.

The development plan is expected to be completed during the 2012 calendar year.

College of Nursing and Allied Health

A recent legislative study revealed a nursing shortage of 3,800 professionals within the next eight years. Rural areas are especially vulnerable to this shortage. Other health providers such as physician assistants, physical therapists, clinical laboratory scientists, radiographers and diagnostic sonographers are often not available outside our major communities.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center and University of Nebraska at Kearney have joined to develop and promote plans to address this urgent need.

UNMC's nursing program has been offered for 20 years in Kearney. UNMC Allied Health Science programs also have a strong tradition at UNK through the Rural Health Education Network and the Kearney Health Opportunity Program.

Building a Healthier Nebraska would include a first-class UNK/UNMC Health Science Education complex co-located with UNK's existing Bruner Hall of Science. Sophisticated labs and distance technology would bring UNMC programs to UNK. No longer would students have to leave rural Nebraska to receive UNMC's quality programs. There are 180 pre-nursing students at UNK. Nearly 50 percent of the qualified applicants are turned away because of inadequate space and labs.

The number of allied health students at UNK has doubled in 10 years from 323 majors in 2001 to 711 last year. Clearly, there is great interest in allied health, but only 25 percent of the applicants can be accepted. Expanding allied health programs to UNK will grow the number of health care providers, and it is likely that those students would stay in rural Nebraska.

Quality health care will be a key to keeping all of Nebraska an attractive place to live. Building a Healthier Nebraska is a great investment in strengthening health care access and quality in rural Nebraska.

Date for next master plan presentation:

The goals noted in the 2006-2015 plan are recommended to remain unchanged during the remaining planning period. The next UNK 10 year facilities development plan presentation is scheduled for the fall of 2016.

UNK is scheduled for review by North Central Accreditation in 2014. The self-study will be conducted during calendar 2013, and data and information from that study will be the basis for the next round of facilities planning.