

Wednesday, Jun 08, 2016

New student housing project underway at Oakland University

Oakland University broke ground today on a major construction initiative intended to help transition the campus community into a more blended population of commuter students and residential students.

The new Southern Student Housing Complex, as it is currently called, will create a new 750-bed student housing facility and be the first new housing available on the south side of campus.

The new housing structure is geared primarily for sophomore and junior students, will be 220,000 square feet in size and is scheduled to include an up-to 600-seat dining hall, classrooms and meeting spaces in addition to living quarters.

The project is being built to meet LEED Gold standards and is expected to cost \$77 million. The current construction plan calls for it to be completed and occupied in August 2018.

“We know that we already have more students here that want to live on campus, so this new facility will meet a need we already have,” said President George Hynd at the groundbreaking ceremony.

Vice President for Student Affairs Glenn McIntosh said that other indirect goals of the project include continuing to attract high-achieving students, boosting student retention and increasing graduation rates. He noted that there is abundant research pointing to enhancement of campus life supporting greater levels of institutional success, primarily because students who live or spend great amounts of time on campus have a greater sense of community and become more engaged in academic, cultural and social engagement activities.

Oakland last opened a new residence hall with the debut of Oak View Hall in the fall of 2014. Since then, demand for student housing has continued to soar and all available housing spaces have been filled to capacity with a waiting list, according to Jim Zentmeyer, Director of University Housing.

Two more reasons that illustrated the need for more housing are that student recruitment continues to draw from a wider geographical area and there has been a significant increase in the number of Honors College students on campus whose scholarships allow them to live on campus.

This construction project is moving forward as part of Oakland University’s newly adopted Strategic Plan, which includes a mission statement identifying the institution as “a preeminent metropolitan university that is recognized as a student-centered, doctoral research institution with a global perspective.”

In order to finance the new student housing project, the Board of Trustees elected to issue bonds. Both bond advisers and campus administrators note that the measure falls well within the University’s bonding capacity.

Project timeline:

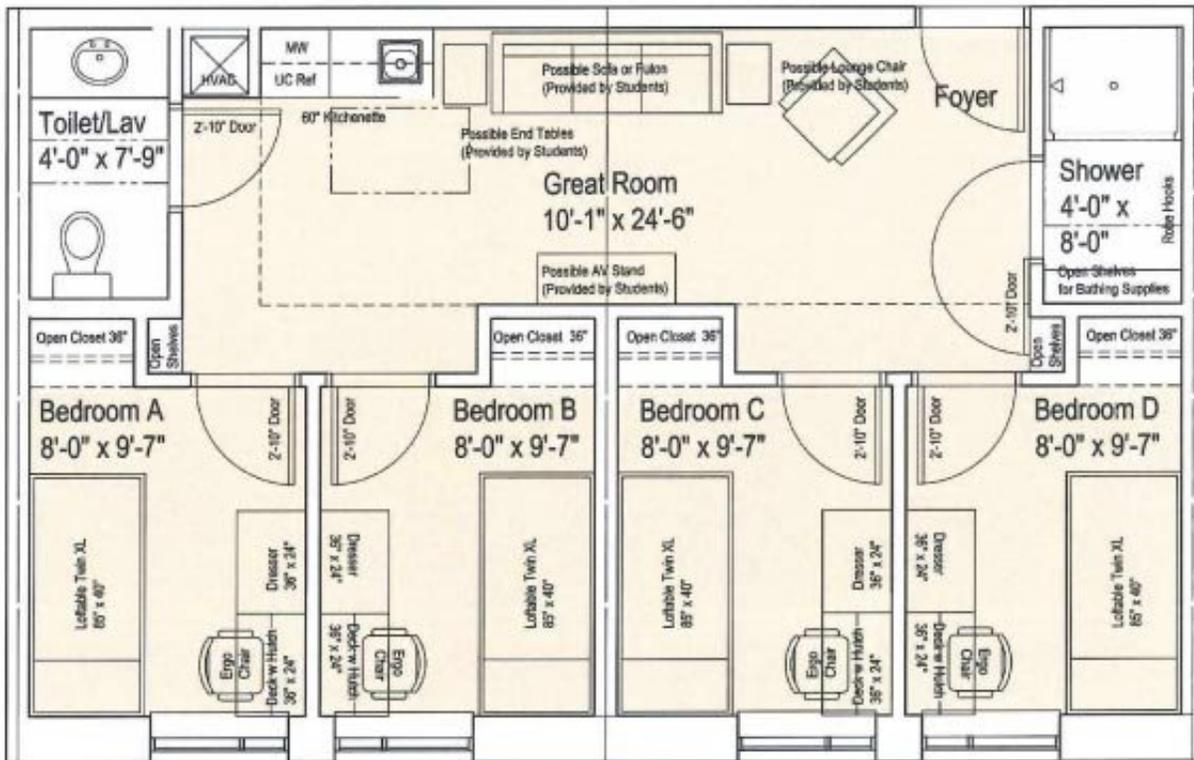
- June 8, 2016 –Groundbreaking ceremony and beginning of construction project
- April 11, 2016 –Board of Trustees approved the schematic designs



From left Richard L. DeVore, Vice Chair Oakland University Board of Trustees, She N. Hearn, student in School of Nursing and part of Resident Hall Association, Alexandria N. Nixon 2016 graduate and former resident assistant, James R. Zentmeyer, Director, University Housing, George W. Hynd, President of Oakland University and Glenn McIntosh, Vice President, Student Affairs.

- Dec. 2, 2015: Board of Trustees approves Neumann Smith as architectural firm
- Sept. 28, 2015: Student Housing Planning update is presented to the Board of Trustees Facilities Committee and the commi directs university administrators to issue an RFP for design services of the project.

Proposed floor plan:



Artist rendering:

