



Thursday, March 8, 2001

## New student apartment construction to begin in June

By **Jeff Samoray**, *OU Web Writer*

In order to meet student-housing needs and attract more on-campus residents, Oakland University will begin construction on new student apartments this summer.

In a design-build agreement with Capstone Development Corporation of Birmingham, Alabama, and Demarest & Associates Architects of Dallas, the first phase of construction will comprise six Tudor-style buildings located between Meadow Brook Road and Walton Boulevard, across from the upper playing fields. Each of the 144 units will have single bedrooms for two or four residents with no more than two individuals per bathroom. A central clubhouse will have a manager's office, lounge, two fireplaces, a game room and a deck overlooking basketball and volleyball courts. The total capacity will be 510 residents.

The apartments will emphasize independent living comparable to existing apartments in the area, but with the conveniences of on-campus residency. Each apartment will include basic furnishings and other amenities such as computer connections in all bedrooms, cable television, kitchens and in-unit washers/dryers.

"In our discussions with students, and in viewing the trend across other universities, we see that students want apartment-style living," said Mary Beth Snyder, vice president of student affairs. "We want to be able to attract more students to live on-campus who would typically have lived at home and commuted to school for all four years. We think the addition of the apartments will make a huge change in campus life."

Apartment residency will be limited to juniors and seniors, with priority given to students who have lived in the residence halls for two years. Rental fees have not yet been established, but will be comparable to area apartments and competitive with OU's residence halls, Snyder said.

"We want more students to have a full college experience and not miss out on campus life," she said. "By living on-campus they'll have a better opportunity to make friends and get to know the faculty, which oftentimes is the most valuable part of college life."

The projected cost for phase one is about \$20 million, which will be financed by the issuance of general revenue bonds. Revenue generated by student rentals will cover the debt service.

Groundbreaking will be on OU Founder's Day April 18 at 9:30 a.m. A 14-month construction period will begin around June 1, with occupancy beginning in Fall 2002. In keeping with the OU campus master plan, units for an additional 500 residents will be added within the next ten years as part of phase two.

Architectural renderings, floor plans and a description of the apartments are on display in the Oakland Center, next to the OC Reservations and Administration office.

### SUMMARY

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