

New Landscape for Learning Program Update

A return to full parking capacity and tantalizing hints of the dramatic changes to come in 2004 marked the end of the fourth year of the New Landscape for Learning campus enhancement program.

The North Campus Parking Deck opened weeks ahead of schedule in late August. Clad in two colors of brick with stone trim and substantial windows, the deck is linked to central campus via

a glass-enclosed bridge that spans East Buchtel Avenue. The facility also is the headquarters for the Department of Parking Services and has space for future retail or professional offices.

The big news about the deck, however, is that it adds 1,150 new parking spaces to campus. That raises the University total to 10,643 spaces, or 350 more than when the New Landscape for Learning program began in 2000. The deck is accessed from

Forge Street and East Buchtel Avenue, and serves patrons of E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall as well as students and faculty.

The north corner of campus is a busy area these days. After formally opening the parking deck with a dedication ceremony Sept. 17, University trustees simply turned to the east and broke ground for the new Student Affairs Building on the corner of Buchtel Avenue and College Street.

This one-stop shop for student administrative needs will house 10 departments and the University College. Next summer students will come to this location for registration, orientation, academic advising, financial aid, counseling and testing, and other services.

By walking next door, students can get their parking permits. And, if they're in the University Honors Program, they will be able to walk across Buchtel Avenue and go to their residence hall.

The new Honors Complex is taking



North campus parking deck and walkway

shape at the corner of East Buchtel Avenue and South College Street where Lot 23 and a basketball court were located. The combination residence hall/academic facility was designed with input from the University Honors staff to create a living and learning environment for some of the University's top scholastic achievers.

About 300 students will move into the facility next August, which includes amenities such as a computer lab, seminar and discussion rooms, study lounges and a social lounge. It even comes with easy access to the program's director, whose offices will be located in the complex.



A Hint of Things to Come

On the campus' south side, two jewels of the New Landscape for Learning program are fast taking shape. The Student Recreation Center and Athletic Field House, and the second phase of the Student Union already are part of the University's skyline.

Construction teams at both projects are racing the coming winter to complete exteriors so that interior work can continue through the cold months. Ted Curtis, vice president of capital planning and facilities management, says the Student Recreation Center will be 80 percent complete by Christmas, and is on schedule for opening in May 2004. In a nod to campus heritage, terra cotta ornamentation from Spicer Hall, which was demolished to make room for the Student Recreation Center, will be installed in the new building's interior and terra cotta landscape portals will be included on its exterior.

The Student Union's second phase is creating buzz on campus as construction reveals the scope of its multistory, triangular atrium. Some of the areas' landscaping changes have become evident as well. Immediately adjacent to the new wing of the Student Union are three flights of low, wide steps that descend from Memorial Walkway and the rear of Buchtel Hall to Carroll Street. When the Student Union is completed next summer, the steps will link the project to Jackson Green, one of several new green spaces created by the New Landscape for Learning program.

For a taste of what these new spaces will look like, take a walk down Buchtel Common and visit the new Women's Committee Garden, which sprouted in the middle of the brick walkway. The garden is a circle, 60 feet in diameter, located just east of the Goodyear Polymer Center, near Ayer Hall and Sisler-McFawn residence hall. Landscaped with trees, flowers and shrubs, the garden is quartered by two footpaths and includes 12 benches. Completed shortly after classes began in August, the garden already has emerged as a favorite spot for students to enjoy. ■