

UW Oshkosh busy with construction, growth

by Mandy Potts - Tuesday, June 05, 2012

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/18484/uw-oshkosh-busy-with-construction-growth/>

Each year, around this time, we're reminded that it's construction season in Wisconsin. Orange barrels appear, over-sized equipment makes noise, blocks traffic and causes what seems like unnecessary dust and debris. The landscape as we know it changes.

It is no different at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. It's construction season here, too.

And in the midst of what may seem like inconvenience, there's a silver lining: growth.

"This is going to be a busy summer," said JoAnn Rife, planning director at UW Oshkosh. "It's pretty much, well, craziness."

Rife, who is for the most part is used to the crazy of construction seasons, said she doesn't quite see any slow-down for the next six to eight years on the UW Oshkosh campus, which is a good thing.

"The footprint of UW Oshkosh is much larger than the one I remember. It extends on both sides of the river and to the University's credit, we have also not forgotten to retrofit and improve upon the existing," said Jim Rath '76, vice president of the UW Oshkosh Alumni Association. "It has been stated that if you are not changing, you are dying. Trust me, UW Oshkosh is changing from good, to better, to best in class."

Expect to see the following construction projects and updates around the UW Oshkosh campus in the coming months:

- **Horizon Village**

Among the most visible, student-facing projects nearing an end is the construction of Horizon Village. The five-story, 340-bed residence hall, which has been under construction since November 2010, is expected to be completed in the coming weeks and ready for students to move in at the beginning of the fall semester.

Horizon will replace the former Breese, Nelson and Clemans halls between Elmwood Avenue and Algoma Boulevard and is the first new residence hall constructed in 40 years. The \$34 million project was funded through student fees and will provide sophomore, junior, senior and graduate students housing.

In support of UW Oshkosh's commitment to sustainability, Horizon Village is designed to meet a platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. The building includes eco-friendly elements, including a green roof, trash enclosure, geothermal ground-source heat pump for heating and cooling, heat recovery from Residence Life data center, geothermal hot water production and specialized bicycle

storage.

The building will also provide amenities to students such as outdoor patio areas, in-building laundry facilities and group lounge and study areas.

The dedication of Horizon Village will take place in September as part of the annual Fall Fest festivities.

- **Kolf Sports Center**

Beginning this month, Kolf Sports Center will see a renovation of its own. The main field house athletic floor will be replaced, as will the bleachers.

Rife said the flooring hasn't been redone in 40 years and the bleachers need a safety update to make them ADA compliant.

"The way the bleachers are now, they are very steep," Rife said. "We'll add aisle ways and handles and the rows won't be quite as steep."

- **Student Health Center**

Also beginning this month, the UW Oshkosh Student Health Center, located in Radford Hall, is getting a lobby renovation.

During construction, which is scheduled through June 29, a temporary entrance to the Student Health Center is located on the north side of the building.

"At the moment, the lobby is all very open near the waiting area," Rife said. "Creating more privacy for students is the goal of the upgrades."

Beyond a facelift, as Rife calls it, the Health Center will also add kiosks for self-check in, which is also expected to help with patient privacy.

- **River Center**

In the summer of 2008, torrential rains ripped through Oshkosh destroying campus' River Center conference space, located along Pearl Avenue.

Since, the space has been unusable. Now, the demolition of the building is in the design phase, which is a three month-long process, Rife said. Next, the project will go to bid and demolition is anticipated to take place between September and November.

In its place and approved by students in March, a Recreational Field Complex (Recplex) will be built to expand opportunities for student intramurals, club sports and athletics. The Recplex will contain a large field with markings for various sports and will be covered by an inflatable dome during the winter months so the area can be used throughout the year.

- **Clow Social Science Center**

Last fall, the state legislature's Building Commission authorized UW Oshkosh to seek design and engineering work for the estimated \$26 million renovation of Clow Social Science Center.

Currently in the architectural engineering phase, there are several firms competing for the work, Rife said. This month, the recommendation of which firm will go to the governor. From there, predesign will begin this fall and the first phase of construction would most likely begin in January of 2013.

The Clow renovations also include renovations to the Nursing Education building, which would be considered a second construction phase, Rife said. Phase two of construction would likely begin in September 2014.

- **Other upcoming projects**

Rife said there are also many other smaller projects, such as landscaping and the day-to-day fixes and department requests inside campus buildings that take place while campus is less busy with students during the summer.

Down the road, renovations to existing residence halls, Gruenhagen Conference Center, Reeve Memorial Union, Polk Library and Dempsey and Swart Halls can also be anticipated, Rife said.

For those who haven't checked out the UW Oshkosh campus recently, Rath recommends making the trip.

"This would be a good time for everyone to clear their calendars for Homecoming 2012 to see how UW Oshkosh has matured into a campus for the 21st Century that we can all be proud of," Rath said.

Read more:

- [UWO Foundation announces plan for riverfront alumni center](#)
- [Downtown Oshkosh hotel officially under new ownership](#)