

2 projects receive bull's-eye for post-pandemic approval

BY RILEY MORNINGSTAR
THE JOURNAL

CLEMSON — With the outlook on the COVID-19 pandemic appearing to improve through the use of vaccines, Clemson University is likely to ramp up action on two capital projects — including a major one at the heart of its main campus.

The first project has already had conceptual design work finished, focusing on the demolition of the University Union and Johnstone Hall.

In the 2017 framework plan, officials identified a future demolition of Johnstone Hall and the University Union for campus life, academic and/or housing. Johnstone, one of Clemson's oldest residence halls, has been empty for more than three years. The total project would cost roughly \$21 million and would be paid for with state institution bonds.

"We're not recommending approval yet, but it's certainly one of the projects that will be teed up when we come out of COVID," executive vice president of finance and operations Tony Wagner said during a recent Finance and Facilities Committee meeting. "At some point, it'll be a project that we will bring back and ask for phase two approval."

The project would save the school \$1.6 million in annual utility maintenance and security costs in taking Johnstone down alone, according to Wagner. The move would also cost between \$8 million and \$10 million in lease upfit costs. The project would create 450 gameday parking spots and return 6.7 acres of core campus to student outdoor recreational space.

"This is a project that will allow us to move a lot of the facilities operations from that high-value core campus real estate," Wagner said. "You've got almost 7 acres of green space that we could create right in the core campus that would be very advantageous and close to Memorial Stadium."

Earlier this year, trustees agreed to spend nearly \$4 million to acquire the former National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) building

located at 280 Seneca Creek Road in Seneca. The move would allow officials to move facilities maintenance operations stationed along Klugh Avenue and Alpha Beta Circle — centered in the heart of campus — to the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Center, where Y Beach is located.

BRYAN MALL TWEAKS

Across campus at Bryan Mall, tweaks have already been made in the predesign work of several building renovations.

Last February, officials projected an \$80 million renovation project at the location that has 1,600 beds across six buildings and represents more than 20 percent of Clemson's on-campus beds.

Now, Wagner said, the focus of the renovation will now likely center on Byrnes, Lever and Manning halls.

"The project originally envisioned a full renovation of the high-rises and low-rises," Wagner said. "What we've learned through further study is that renovating the high-rises is the most efficient way to move forward. The low-rises, that's

just not the best use of space right in the core of our campus. Those apartment-style rooms that we have in the high-rises provide a really good price point and traditional style of residence hall housing."

The low-rises in the area of Bryan Mall include Barnett, Smith and Mauldin halls.

"Just signaling that it's really one of the ones we're looking at (to approve)," Wagner said.

As Clemson works toward a more open and pedestrian-friendly campus, the December 2017 long-range framework plan said Bryan Mall would go from allowing vehicles to an open space, only allowing access for emergency services, as well as for moving in and out.

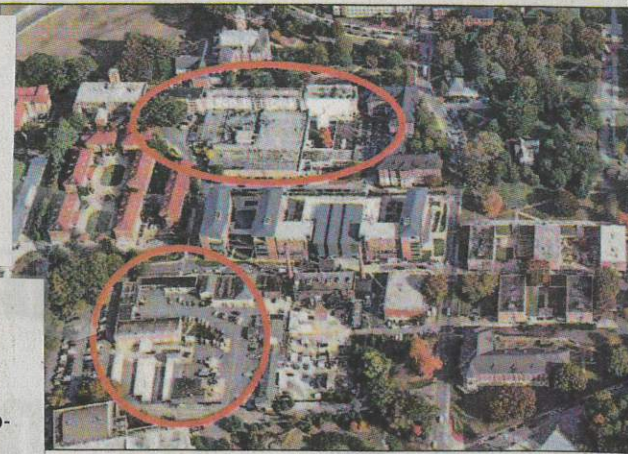
Last year, chief financial officer Rick Petillo said the buildings were "safe, but at high risk for mechanical failure.

"We do not have any life safety deferred maintenance," he said.

Petillo said for every \$1 spent on preventative maintenance, housing saves \$2.73 in reactive or deferred maintenance. Bathroom reconfigurations, HVAC, plumbing and electric replacements have been identified as part of the renovations. Officials have also looked at working on common space areas in the dorms. With an undergraduate enrollment of 20,195 in 2019, officials are projecting an increase to 22,300 by 2026, with 35 percent of those students living on campus.

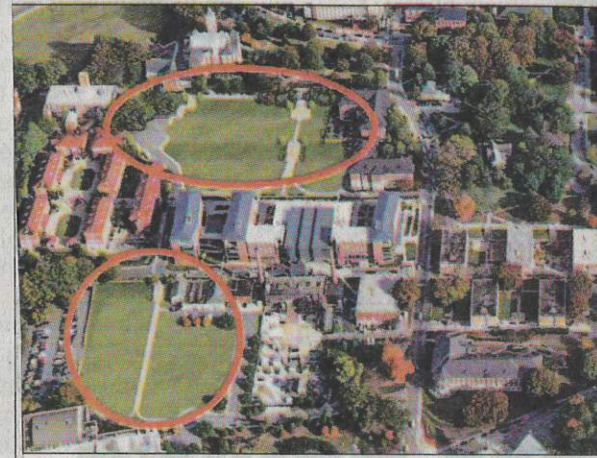
Any action on the future of the two projects would likely happen in the second half of this year.

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RENDERINGS SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Clemson University officials approved work to potentially demolish Johnstone Hall and the University Union nearly 10 years ago. The move would create 6.7 acres of green space and open up around 450 gameday parking spots.



JERRY BEARD | THE JOURNAL

Clemson University's Bryan Mall is set to go from allowing vehicles to an open space as the school works toward a more pedestrian-friendly campus, according to a 2017 long-range framework plan.