Those with concerns are encouraged to make comments on the Open City Hall website at www.slcgov.com/opencityhall. A final decision is expected in January 2013.

NEW WOODBURY BUILDING IN RESEARCH PARK
Jonathan Bates, Director, University of Utah Real Estate Administration

The new building currently under construction at 630 Komas Drive in Research Park is being developed and built by the Woodbury Company, in partnership with Blackrock Microsystems, one of the tenants moving into the building. Blackrock is a research-based company that currently occupies 156,000 square feet of space in several office buildings in the park. They will move all their operations to the new building. The three-story, 60,000-square-foot building, located near Foothill Drive, has been under discussion for at least two years and was under construction for at least two years and was mentioned at the last Community Forum on Oct. 12, 2012. Research Park includes both University-owned as well as non-University-owned buildings, all of which go through a design approval process. The design review committee, in place since the park opened, includes university as well as outside third-party individuals. As the new Woodbury building is privately owned, not a university building, it falls under Salt Lake City for code review, etc. The park’s design covenants are enforced for the University by Salt Lake City.

The building, with a setback to avoid having a large mass on the street corner and to minimize the impact of the scale, will provide accessible classroom seating and other ADA elements—the narrow sidewalk, limited street parking, residential housing, and bus stop, all located on University Street; the nearby Stadium bus and TRAX stations and all they imply; and perhaps most importantly, the steep incline—the 30-foot rise in elevation from the corner of University Street and South Campus Drive diagonally to the northeast corner of the building’s footprint. In addition, the gateway concept calls for providing pathways into campus and further up toward Presidents Circle—difficult challenges with such a steep grade. But planners are confident they can make it work, and say the new law school is uniquely positioned to be a gateway—especially for transit riders using the stadium TRAX and bus stops—and will revitalize the western edge of campus. This strong commitment to support forms of transportation that are beneficial to society as a whole will be evident in the design of the building and its landscape, which will encourage transit, bike, and pedestrian use and includes plans for accessible and secure bike storage.

The building, with a setback to avoid having a large mass on the street corner and to minimize the impact of the scale, will be constructed near the northeast corner of University Street and South Campus Drive. The site has environmentally challenging elements—the narrow sidewalk, limited street parking, residential housing, and bus stop, all located on University Street; the nearby Stadium bus and TRAX stations and all they imply; and perhaps most importantly, the steep incline—the 30-foot rise in elevation from the corner of University Street and South Campus Drive diagonally to the northeast corner of the building’s footprint. In addition, the gateway concept calls for providing pathways into campus and further up toward Presidents Circle—difficult challenges with such a steep grade. But planners are confident they can make it work, and say the new law school is uniquely positioned to be a gateway—especially for transit riders using the stadium TRAX and bus stops—and will revitalize the western edge of campus. This strong commitment to support forms of transportation that are beneficial to society as a whole will be evident in the design of the building and its landscape, which will encourage transit, bike, and pedestrian use and includes plans for accessible and secure bike storage.
questions from neighbors?
Q. will the building attract more people to campus?
A. the newly-designed corner will increase incentives for using transit and divert people from using their vehicles to campus. independent of this project, enhanced bike and pedestrian routes east and north of the site will make the new facility more inviting to the general campus user.
Q. does carlson hall need to be demolished?
A. the decision to raze carlson hall was made at a campuswide level outside the scope of this project. after studying the highest and best use of the facility, it was determined that preserving the building would pose challenges from a campus planning aspect and would not be the best use of the property.
Q. will the sandstone wall along university street be modified?
A. a small portion of the wall will be modified. wherever it is moved, the stone will be reused adjacent to the existing wall. and where the original footprint of the wall was, the stone will be laid in the ground flush with the pavement so the continuation of the wall and the footprint of the wall where it existed will be seen.
Q. to what extent should the design of the law school take into account future plans to develop the west side of the stadium parking lot?
A. it already has. the school views it as a long term advantage to have some sort of scale development in that location. right now, law building plans are focusing on a gesture to commuters by creating a major entrance into campus, but the school also will be designed to embrace and capture the value of what might be built across the street in the future. it is unknown when it would happen, but when it does, this community forum would be involved.
Hiram Chodosh welcomes your questions and comments. send them to him at hiram.chodosh@utah.edu.

Community Forum newsletter

Collin Simmons, U Commuter Services

During the 2012 football season, the university’s office of commuter services encouraged people to ride transit or bikes, and not drive their cars to campus on game days. for the first three home games, TRAX ridership by current ucard holders was high. an average of 8,000 to 9,000 ucards on bus or TRAX were active each game day, with more than 10,000 people using transit for the first home game.

on non-game day Saturdays, average TRAX ridership was less than 1,000. but on game day, an average of 3,300 ucards was used. the game day with USC had 9,800 TRAX riders.

Utah football games attract between 45,000 and 50,000 people to the stadium. the university’s goal is to get 10,000 to take transit. currently, ridership is at 5,000 or 6,000 per game so there is still work to do with athletics.

for games that fell on thursdays, commuter services worked with athletics to provide additional grass parking lots at the HPER north building on the academic campus, and stiltwell field in Fort Douglas. the grass parking lots did not fill up, which indicates success.

Collin Simmons welcomes your questions and comments. contact him at collin.simmons@utah.edu or call 801-581-4189.

Community Forum newsletter

Federal Credit Union were followed by a “capstone” grant of $3 million from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, providing significant momentum toward the $6 million in private contributions needed for the project, and completing the funding necessary to begin construction. Groundbreaking is planned for March, with the building opening in early 2014. the facility will be open year round, seven days a week, 16 to 18 hours a day.

the lower level of the facility will include racquetball and multi-activity courts, and a recreational pool for students, faculty, staff, and their families. a multi-story bouldering and climbing wall, a major feature of the new building, will be located on the north end in front of a glass wall. at night it will “light up like a beacon on campus,” according to the architects.

the main level of the building will have east and west entrances leading pedestrian traffic through an open public lobby with a fire place and café—a gathering place for students. this traffic flow design also fulfills part of the campus master plan that calls for better accommodating pedestrian traffic moving east and west between the dorms and the academic campus. the lobby will extend west into the HPER mall, encouraging pedestrians to walk between the dorms and the academic buildings. an additional roofed area for emergency shelter and personal training also will be located on the top level. an outdoor terrace will allow for student barbecues and outdoor yoga classes.

The exterior of the building will be a combination of stepstone, glass, and terra cotta walls with a similar palette of colors as the academic buildings in the neighborhood west of campus. the ground floor will extend west into the HPER mall, encouraging pedestrians to walk between the dorms and the academic buildings. an additional roofed area for emergency shelter and personal training also will be located on the top level. an outdoor terrace will allow for student barbecues and outdoor yoga classes.

the second level will feature a three-court gym and fitness room, all with glass walls, providing views through the building. architects are considering a direct connection at this level to the Legacy Bridge.

on the top level, a 5.5 laps-per-mile track will wind around the two major spaces in the building, so track users will have 360-degree views of the valley and mountains, and will be able to look down on the different sports courts below. additional room for exercise, spinning, yoga, and personal training also will be located on the top level. an outdoor terrace will allow for student barbecues and outdoor yoga classes.

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Peggy McDonough -Jan and Brent Agnew

MHTN Architects, Salt Lake City

Plans are underway for a new $45 million Student Life Center to be built at the east end of the HPER Mall. the building will be constructed south of the new Donna Garff Marriott honors housing and adjacent to the Eccles Legacy Bridge and the fort douglas TRAX station. the annex, Tanner Dance Building, and the softball field will be razed to accommodate the project. all recreation programs currently offered in Einar nielsen field house, as well as the outdoor Recreation program and a university credit union office will be housed in the building.

the 127,000-square-foot facility has been a priority of student leaders since 2007. Early leadership gifts of $1 million from kern gardner and a $1 million pledge from the University