

Olympia Update No. 11 • March 19, 2007
House Capital Construction Budget Released

House chair releases \$180 million construction budget for WSU

A \$58 million appropriation to complete construction of the WSU Life Sciences Building in Pullman, \$29 million in new funding for the WSU Vancouver campus, and \$59 million in critical dollars to improve and preserve existing facilities are winning approval in the state House of Representatives.

They were the highlights of a record \$180.6 million WSU construction budget released today by House Capital Chairman Bill Fromhold, D-Vancouver, and strongly supported by the university.

The Life Sciences building is one of the larger projects in the proposed state budget but WSU budget construction for the coming years may be more unique for the critical issues it addresses on existing buildings and facilities. In addition to \$59 million for improvement and preservation of existing buildings, the House budget provides \$26.5 million for projects that improve electrical, water and sewer delivery to university facilities.

It is the first major legislative budget that has been released by a full committee chair in this legislative session, and as WSU had urged, it closely followed the priorities of Gov. Christine Gregoire's budget released last December.

The only disappointment in the budget was that it did not fund the design for the Biomedical Building in Pullman, a research building that was slated to be under construction in 2009-2011 but may now be delayed as it has not been funded by the governor or House.

Each of the projects recommended by the governor are included in the proposed House Capital Budget Committee budget announced by Fromhold. Assisting Fromhold with the announcement of the \$4.2 billion state construction budget was the ranking Republican Capital Chair, Rep. Joyce McDonald, R-Puyallup. McDonald said minority Republicans had some differences but she generally praised the budget as an "investment budget." She indicated her priorities were in K-12 education and higher education.

Both the governor and House proposals would provide funding for WSU to complete the Pullman Life Sciences Building, extend the life of existing older structures, protect the lives of

students and employees, provide for vital infrastructure and build a needed classroom building for the burgeoning Vancouver campus.

There was one significant difference between the governor's budget and the proposed House substitute. The House budget would fund \$4.7 million to design a Vancouver Applied Technology Classroom Building, perhaps accelerating construction to 2009-2011.

It is a capital budget that is good for all of education. K-12 schools, once a small part of the construction budget, received a record \$879.4 million in school construction assistance. Higher Education projects totaled \$1.08 billion. Fromhold indicated his higher education priorities were new enrollment and preservation of existing buildings, particularly at the University of Washington, Washington State University, and at community and technical colleges.

Highlights of the proposed construction budget now under consideration in the House as Proposed Substitute House Bill 1092 include:

- **\$58 million to complete Pullman Life Sciences Building.** The new funding for WSU's top capital construction project will put a four-story state-of-the art research building on the \$10 million foundation that was built by the Legislature in 2006. When occupied in 2009, the building will bring together academic disciplines in innovative laboratory settings in the life sciences, predominately researchers on National Institute of Health-sponsored projects.
- **Construction of the \$24.4 million WSU Vancouver classroom building** is necessary to provide general classrooms and computer laboratory spaces for delivery of lower division programs and to accommodate enrollment growth. The building is WSU's second highest priority for new building construction.
- **Design funding for an expanded Vancouver Applied Technology Classroom Building, the only project in the House budget for WSU that was not recommended by the governor.** This building provides both classrooms and teaching laboratories. The proposed House budget adds \$1 million to the \$3.7 million requested by WSU to accommodate an expanded building that may also house the Washington Technology Center in Vancouver.
- **WSU's \$38.9 million minor works preservation project and \$17 million minor works program is in the top tier of the Public Baccalaureate Prioritized List, ahead of all major construction projects, and fully funded by the House & Senate budgets.** Minor works program money extends the life of existing facilities and infrastructure, and allows older facilities to be retrofitted for cutting-edge research and education. Likewise, preservation money extends the life of buildings by replacement or repair of elevators, roofs, fire alarms, ventilation, pumps, masonry, windows, flooring, painting, and building network cabling and electronics. The funding covers health, safety and code projects needed to protect the lives of students, faculty, staff and visitors and to comply with occupational/public health, and environmental regulations.
- **The Pullman Campus is experiencing a critical shortfall in electrical capacity and a deficit of chilled water production that is solved with an \$11.5 million**

utilities extension in both budgets. This package is ranked as the fourth project overall by the six public baccalaureate institutions.

- **Extended service life and greater capacity to underground utility lines is provided by the \$15 million Library Road Project. It is the seventh ranked project overall by the institutions.** The corridor project also includes accessibility and safety improvements for enhanced pedestrian movement and decreased vehicular traffic.

As the House proposal winds its way through the committee system and onto the House floor, the Senate is expected to be about a week out with a proposal of its own.

Olympia Update is produced for persons interested in state government developments affecting Washington State University. For more information call: Larry Ganders, Assistant to the President, 360-956-2165. From WSU campuses, dial 8-2165. If you wish to subscribe to Olympia Update directly by email, send a blank message from your e-mail account (no signatures or footers please) to: subscribe-olympia_update@listserv.energy.wsu.edu