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# \$191 million plan would overhaul USC housing

By WAYNE WASHINGTON

The University of South Carolina is considering a \$191-million dormitory construction and renovation plan that would tear down several residence halls, build more and fix up others over the next decade.

A committee of USC trustees heard and approved the overhaul concept Friday. USC's full board, which meets next month, still must approve the plan. It would then vote on specific projects as demolition, construction or renovation dates neared.

The overhaul plan, put together for USC by a trio of outside consultants for \$188,000, would add 1,173 beds to the 7,026 currently in USC's housing stock. All affected residence halls would be renovated or rebuilt and back in use by 2021.

To pay for the overhaul, USC would sell just more than \$156 million in revenue bonds, with the remaining \$35 million coming from students' housing fees.

"There is no tax money involved in this investment," said Gene Luna,

## Housing overhaul for USC?

About 35 percent of USC's undergraduates live on campus, a figure that puts the university in line with nine other schools that USC considers its peers. Those institutions, like USC, require freshmen to live on campus. Here's how USC's residence halls could change if a plan discussed Friday fully is enacted.

Bates West (built 1979): Partially close in 2013 for renovations that would be complete in 2014

Preston College (1939): Renovate in 2013

Legare Pinckney College (1837): Renovate in 2016

Desaussure College (1809): Renovate in 2012

Harper Elliott College (1837): Renovate in 2012

Bates House replacement building: Construction in 2015; open in 2016

USC's director of student development and university housing.

Bradford Noyes, the Brailsford and Dunlavey vice president who presented the plan to board members, told them the plan does not envision the construction of "platinum" or top-of-the-line" buildings.

"This is a relatively modest plan for a flagship institution," said Noyes, who described the buildings that would be constructed as mid-range dorms, neither spartan nor opulent.

USC has grown rapidly over the past several years, admitting a record-sized freshman class in 2010 and again this past August.

Meanwhile, private housing has proliferated near USC, with several complexes offering shuttles to and from campus. USC officials said they have taken off-campus development into account as they formulated their own plans.

Even with the expansion of off-campus housing options, however, USC's growth has put a strain on its own housing, largely limited to underclassmen. Studies have shown those students whom benefit from a more structured and stable dorm environment.

Even with a goal of housing just those underclassmen, USC says it does not have enough dorm space. Last fall, for example, some dormitory resident advisers who had been promised private rooms had to share rooms

Second Bates House replacement building: Construction in 2019; open in 2020

Bates House (1969): Tear down in 2018

Sims Hall (1939): Renovation begins in 2015; reopen in 2016

Wade Hampton Hall (1959): Renovation begins in 2014; re-open in 2015

Woodrow College (1914): Renovate in 2012

Maxcy (1937): Renovate in 2012

McBryde (1955): Tear down in 2017

South Tower Residency (1965): Renovate in 2013

McClintock Hall (1955): Renovation begins in 2014; reopen in 2015

Thornwell (1913): Renovate in 2017

New Honors College wing: Construction in 2017; open in 2018

McBryde replacement building: Construction in 2016; open in 2017

Second McBryde replacement building: Construction in 2017; open in 2018

Public-private Greek building in the Vista: Construction in 2015; open in 2016

with other students because of the shortage.

With one large residence facility, Patterson Hall, renovated and back in use this fall, August's big freshman class did not require the same type of shuffling. But university officials say the school has to adapt to its expanding student population.

"We have pushed the capacity of our infrastructure to the limit," USC provost Michael Amiridis told board members before they were briefed on the housing overall.

Five on-campus buildings – Bates

House, McBryde, the Roost, Cliff Apartments and Carolina Gardens – would be torn down under the plan. Thirteen others – including Thornwell, Maxcy, McClintock, Preston, Legare Pinckney, Desaussure and Wade Hampton – would be renovated. Seven new housing buildings would be constructed.

Alumni often have an emotional attachment to the residence halls they lived in during their college years, a reality underscored by the reaction to the demolition of the old "honeycomb" residence halls – Baker and Burney – to make way for the construction of USC's new Honors College residence hall.

Former students wistfully recalled their time in the buildings, which got their nickname from brick walls that resembled a honeycomb. USC paid homage to those buildings by retaining a section of honeycomb in the honors building.

Each of the residence halls that would be torn down in the housing overhaul was built from 1955 to 1973.

All of the university's oldest residence halls – Rutledge, built in 1805; Desaussure, built in 1809; and Legare Pinckney and Harper Elliott, both built in 1837 – would be renovated.

"The university has to be responsible for the buildings we have," said Dennis Pruitt, USC's vice president for student affairs and dean of students. "We can't just let those buildings die."

Other public-private Greek building:  
Construction 2018; open in 2019

The Roost (1968): Tear down in 2016

Cliff Apartments (1973): Tear down in 2019

Carolina Gardens (1963): Tear down in 2016

*SOURCE: University of South Carolina*