

# IOWA CITY Press-Citizen

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## Regents Ask UI to Rethink Union

Regents concerned with security issues, design

By Kristen Schorsch

Iowa City Press-Citizen

CEDAR RAPIDS -- The University of Iowa will go back to the drawing board for some of its Iowa Memorial Union design aspects presented Thursday to the Iowa state Board of Regents.

In particular, regents asked UI to rethink its design on the building's east side terrace entrance facing Madison Street, which would include a three-story addition with a two-story curved glass wall. They also asked school officials to think about security concerns.

"In my view, this tries to blend too many architectural styles in too short a distance," Regent Robert Downer said.

Downer would like to see an architectural style more in line with the rest of the building's original architecture, which dates to 1925. The facility has had additions in 1927, 1955, 1965 and 1988, records show.

UI student body president Mark Kresowik said the glass facade is what students want. Once renovated, that space would house offices for student government and about 60 recognized student organizations.

"Bringing in that light is crucial in terms of what the students want, especially for what is in that space," said Kresowik, a UI junior. "From an energy perspective, daylight has benefits."

A 1999-2000 survey conducted by Brailsford & Dunlavey said renovations would increase student usage of the union from 53 percent to 79 percent, records show. Students showed a major interest in more convenient hours, better service and space dedicated to students, such as lounge spaces, computer labs and quiet study areas, according to surveys.

Bradd Brown, a principal at OPN Architects, said the glass design, among other aspects, draws out the vitality and energy inside the building.



This schematic design from OPN Architects in Cedar Rapids shows a concept for the Iowa Memorial Union renovation. **Special to the Press-Citizen**

Regent Teresa Wahlert said having an appealing look and being safe were achievable; she asked UI to further discuss safety issues.

Phase one of the planned \$30 million overhaul to UI's student union -- regents approved the \$9.9 million budget Thursday for phase one -- includes a new terrace facing the Iowa River with an amphitheater and more study space for students. Also included are renovating the bookstore below the east side terrace and addressing deferred maintenance.

A new \$29 mandatory student building fee per academic year is helping fund the project, records show. An additional \$66 a student would be needed to fund the renovation's second phase, records show.

The project is an increase of 2,675 net square feet, records show. Construction is slated to begin in fall 2005 and is estimated to last about 16 months.

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