

Joint Capital Outlay Committee
University of Michigan-Flint Testimony
May 1, 2019
4PM

To Chairmen Inman and Horn, Minority Vice Chairs Love and Santana and the Joint Capital Outlay Committee, good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak about this exciting and important project that will be transformational to both the University of Michigan-Flint and the Greater Flint area. I am Mike Hague, the Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance for the University of Michigan-Flint. Chancellor Susan Borrego says hello and sends her regards to the committee.

I am pleased to share with you details of our top-ranked University Tower project. Joining me to add additional detail to this testimony is George Hakim, our Director of Facilities and Operations; Dr. Stephen Turner, our Interim Associate Provost; and Ryan Craven our Senior Architect for the University.

The University Tower Building (UTB) was purchased strategically from First Merit Bank in 2016 for \$6 million. As you will see from the first insert of your informational packet, it is located in the heart of downtown Flint on Saginaw Street. It is connected to a city-owned parking structure that we currently lease for our School of Management and Riverfront Conference Center and Residence Hall. A completely enclosed walkway connects UTB, the parking structure and our residence hall, making a very attractive city living experience for our students. Many of our Riverfront students who attend our School of Management walk right from their rooms to class without having to go outside. This renovation would give students in many of our other disciplines the same opportunity.

The building, which was formally office space, is approximately 143,000 square feet. For our purposes, the use of an existing building for additional space will be significantly less than the cost to build a comparable new building. The estimated cost of the renovation is approximately \$30 million. We are asking for \$19.8 million of state support for the renovation and we will cover our share of the remaining \$10.2 million with a mix of long-term debt (approximately \$6

million) and institutional capital. No increase of student tuition is needed to cover our share of this project.

We will convert the building to:

- (1) House our Department of Public Safety (DPS) on two floors,
- (2) Provide one floor of community/meeting space,
- (3) Provide five (5) floors of classrooms and academic offices,
- (4) Provide one (1) floor for our Genesee Early College (GEC) which is our highly-successful dual enrollment partnership and a strong pipeline for future UM-Flint students,
- (5) And provide two (2) floors for administrative offices.

The need for these academic and service spaces has been articulated in a number of studies and reports, including our most recent master plan. The renovation of the University Tower Building will position the University to achieve its long-term strategic goals, enable the University to grow academic programs, and to contribute toward creating a more vibrant downtown Flint by utilizing a downtown vacant building.

Notably, the relocation of DPS will have several additional benefits to the City of Flint. It will establish a greater and more visible presence of public safety officers in the downtown Flint area on Saginaw Street. This presence will consequently create a safer zone for several blocks north and south of the building and will also provide the K-12 students in Genesee Early College with a safer pickup/drop-off zone.

These renovations will also enable a very important cascading effect that will allow us to use space in other buildings to enable significant enrollment increases for key healthcare-related fields. This will be accomplished by allowing a number of healthcare departments to expand into the spaces that will be vacated by units moving to the University Tower Building or to other University locations. Allow me to provide a few examples.

The College of Health Sciences (CHS) has experienced significant enrollment growth over the past decade. It requires additional spaces to accommodate continued growth and to be able to support planned future program expansions. It specifically needs classroom and teaching

laboratory space, faculty offices, faculty and student research space, integrated learning labs, and student spaces. The various UTB moves would vacate space currently occupied in the William S. White building and reallocate it partly to the College of Health Sciences, enabling them to locate and expand existing and new programs within the building.

Additionally, enrollment in UM-Flint's School of Nursing has increased significantly over the past 10 years. The school is developing a number of new academic programs and it has been approved by its accrediting organization to expand their Bachelor of Science in Nursing enrollment by up to 96 students, subject to available classroom and lab facilities. Expansion of the Nursing programs will require additional laboratory space, faculty offices and use of larger classrooms. Much like the College of Health Sciences, vacated spaces due to the UTB renovation will be partially assigned to the School of Nursing, enabling them to expand their highly successful undergraduate and graduate programs and to offer new programs in Nursing Education and the graduate certificate in Nursing.

This renovation not only will support and enhance health-related fields, but education and the humanities also.

Since its inception over 19 years ago, the School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) has been located on the fourth floor of our French Hall with less than 6,500 square feet of space. SEHS has experienced significant growth over time and is comprised of the Education Department, the Social Work Department, and the Center for Educator Preparation. The school has had numerous accomplishments including development of several new graduate programs and the Doctor of Education in Leadership. The School launched its Center for Educator Preparation over three years ago with a mission of significantly expanding and enhancing its partnerships with the K-12 community. SEHS will move to the UTB which will provide them with approximately 14,000 square feet of space and access to the planned classrooms and shared conference space. The greater downtown visibility of SEHS will help to facilitate important community engagement efforts and serve as a more effective recruiting tool in the development of its newly offered programs. The Social Work Department, which offers programs that supply graduates in professions growing in Michigan, will also receive significant

new facilities in this building. This move by SEHS and Social Work will allow its vacated space in French Hall to be reassigned to other units within our College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) that are experiencing significant enrollment growth.

Currently, the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) maintains two departments in the William S. White building: Art and Art History, and Communications. The facilities currently occupied by Art and Art History are not ideal for development of artistic objects, i.e. ceramics, painting, drawing, development of statues and other objects. Accordingly, the University is currently in the process of moving some of the Art and Art history programs to our Northbank Center building but additional space is needed. It is our hope that the multiple moves on campus will provide additional space for this program. As for the Communication Department, it is significantly removed from French Hall, where the majority of the College of Arts and Sciences departments are located. The renovations in UTB will enable SEHS and the Office of Extended Learning (OEL) to vacate their current spaces in French Hall, thus allowing Communications to move into portions of the newly available spaces in French Hall.

As you can see, the renovation of the University Tower Building is the primary puzzle piece to increased safety for our students and the Greater Flint Community, better streamlining of academic services for students, and the expansion of growth for existing programs. We are asking for your approval of the planning authorization for this project to make all of these important things come to fruition.

I thank you for the opportunity to outline just some of the important impacts to the University of Michigan-Flint with the proposed renovation of the University Tower Building. Our team would be happy to answer any questions.