



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

January 25, 2008

Dear Fairmount Neighbors,

I write to provide an update (attached) on the arena project and to respond to questions and comments we have received. I welcome your continued engagement in this process and encourage you to send your questions and comments either to me directly at pres@uoregon.edu or to Greg Rikhoff, our director of community relations, at grikkhoff@uoregon.edu.

On January 17, the legislative Joint Committee on Ways and Means approved bonds to construct the arena. If approved by the Legislature in February, we will return to the State Board of Higher Education this spring seeking approval to sell the bonds.

Last week, we announced the latest conceptual design for the arena. I believe the final structure will be stunning and a definite improvement on the industrial bakery building. In addition, the latest design addresses some of the key concerns expressed by Fairmount neighbors. For example, the facility will not have a "back door" facing the neighborhood. We do need to keep in mind though that the design details are still preliminary at this time.

There are still many details that have yet to be decided, and as the project progresses some of the current plans may change. The university and the project team hope to work with neighborhood residents to identify solutions that work for everyone.

Let me reiterate the university's commitments regarding the arena and its impact on the Fairmount neighborhood. We pledge to:

- Answer questions and consider and respond to suggestions.
- Work together with the Fairmount Neighborhood and the City of Eugene to identify and propose options to manage university impact where possible.
- Remain available to the community and open to input, including a commitment to attend more neighborhood meetings.
- Communicate in a timely fashion.

It is my hope that the end result will be an arena that benefits the neighborhood and the community, as well as a process that strengthens and enriches our relationship with each other.

Warmest regards,

Dave Frohnmayer
President and Fairmount Neighbor


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January 25, 2008

TO: Fairmount Neighbors

FR: President Dave Frohnmayer 

RE: Responses to Specific Arena Questions and Comments

Arena Site

The University of Oregon has been planning for the replacement of 81-year-old McArthur Court for several years. I made the decision to construct the new arena on the former Williams' Bakery site following a feasibility study that considered numerous options. The advantages to this site include its proximity to campus and student housing, its location on a major thoroughfare on the edge of the neighborhood, access to LTD's EmX bus route, the site's appropriate zoning for university use, and its former owner's willingness to be relocated to a different site. The site also supports the university's vision for a new gateway to the university and the community.

It's the best site for our students. The university prefers the on-campus location for the arena as this will allow students easy and safe access during the dark winter months when the facility will be most heavily used. I strongly prefer the site for this reason alone. In addition, student athletes are students first. We want to emphasize this by having athletic venues near the central part of the campus as well as near Autzen Stadium.

The site supports the transportation goals of the university and community. Based on years of experience with Mac Court, we recognize that the best location for the arena is on a major thoroughfare with easy access to public transportation that serves Eugene, Springfield, and out-lying areas. Other on-campus locations, including the Mac Court site, would actually result in more traffic through the South University, West University, and Fairmount neighborhoods.

The university will submit its traffic impact analysis to the city, request the city to vacate an alley on the project site, and initiate a review of a final design by city planners.

Environmental/Demolition concerns

As part of the sales agreement with the university, Williams' Bakery removed items and structural elements from its facility that could be reused. In keeping with the university's commitment to be environmentally and economically responsible, the bakery building will be deconstructed, not demolished. Partnering with BRING Recycling and Hoffman Construction, we anticipate the reuse or recycling of more

than 95 percent of the materials, keeping them out of landfills. I am proud of this, knowing it reflects the values of both the university and its neighbors.

The university will work to minimize the negative environmental impacts or noise, dust or erosion on the campus and the surrounding neighborhoods during the deconstruction, site preparation and construction periods. In keeping our commitment to the environment and to sustainable development, the process will also meet and likely exceed community expectations about air and water quality. We are striving to ensure that both demolition and construction reflect a commitment to sustainability and have minimal environmental impact. We appreciate your support of our efforts.

Arena Noise and Lighting

Because of the building's energy efficiency, noise inside the arena will be significantly muted to those on the outside. The athletic director, the design team, and I heard first-hand the desire of some residents to keep noise and light from the arena to a minimum. Members of the design team are confident they can successfully achieve these goals. The building's energy-efficiency goals reinforce the need to have a well insulated and air-tight structure. Existing university properties will also provide a buffer between the university and residential properties. As an indoor arena, there will be no outdoor speakers or field lighting as at Hayward Field and Autzen Stadium. Regarding inside lighting, based on the latest design the north side of the structure (facing Franklin, not the neighborhood) could have a glass facade.

In general, outdoor lighting will be sufficiently focused to provide safe pedestrian access to and from the arena without transferring unnecessary illumination into the surrounding neighborhood. In concert with both university and city policies relating to outdoor lighting, energy efficient solutions will be implemented to provide safety and minimize and hopefully eliminate light spill in to adjacent neighborhoods or into the sky.

Foot Traffic Noise and Litter

We will have litter picked up following games and events. The university works with litter pick-up groups after football games at Autzen Stadium, and we envision a similar program for the arena that can also serve as a fundraising opportunity for local non-profit organizations.

We will encourage ticket holders to be respectful regarding noise, litter, and trespassing. In the spirit of the Good ConDUCKt campaign at football games, we will educate ticket holders to be good neighbors and to respect private property. The university will work with Fairmount Neighbors to monitor and address the impact of litter in the neighborhood and will explore ways to clean up after games and events.

Sustainability and Green Construction

The new arena will reflect our values and standards on sustainability and those of the state and the community on sustainability. At a minimum, the structure will meet both the university's and the state of Oregon's standards for sustainable development, presently a LEED Silver equivalent building. This also coincides with my support of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment that promises to reduce the university's greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by the year 2050 and calls for LEED silver equivalency on new construction.

The site itself reflects our commitment to sustainable design. It is a redevelopment project replacing a former industrial facility with a lower-impact facility. Its proximity to campus provides an easy walk for the campus community, and its location on a major thoroughfare with LTD EmX access supports the community's alternative transportation goals. In addition, deconstruction of the bakery building, as opposed to demolition, will reuse and recycle 95 percent of the materials by weight.

Effect on Other Neighborhood Businesses

Numerous Fairmount neighbors expressed concern about losing Market of Choice and Hirons specifically. The arena site does not include either store, and the university has no plans that involve these sites. We are committed to minimizing disruptions to these and other commercial neighbors. Neighborhood businesses like Market of Choice and Hirons are important to our students, faculty, and staff. By the same token, those members of the university community play an important role in supporting the neighborhood's economic vitality. This may be a good moment to note the successful relocation of Williams' Bakery to a state-of-the-art production facility in Glenwood illustrating the very positive effect this project has already had on a long-standing business in our community.

Actions are pending on three properties that are part of the arena site. The university has reached an agreement for a voluntary acquisition of the Wagenknecht property. The university continues to negotiate with the leaseholders of the 7-Eleven property. And the university is proceeding to acquire the final outstanding parcel.

Arena Size and Scale

The new arena will be significantly smaller than Autzen Stadium with less than a quarter of the maximum capacity (12,500 to 13,000 in the new arena compared to just under 60,000 at Autzen Stadium). Early designs show a building of about six stories in height at the highest and tapering to lower heights on the edges of the site. For comparison, this is not much higher than McArthur Court, the difference being that the new arena's lowest floor, indeed the court itself, will be 30-40 feet below the level of the street, effectively lowering the overall height of the building.

Future of McArthur Court

It is my intention that the McArthur Court site will transition to academic use with the opening of the new arena. Although it is likely the existing facility will be deconstructed to make room for a more sustainable, safer building, no final decisions have been made.

I have asked Robert Melnick, UO professor and former dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts—and a nationally and internationally recognized expert in cultural landscape evaluation and historic landscape preservation planning—to chair a university advisory group that will consider the best uses for Mac Court and its footprint after the new arena opens. I hope to announce appointments to this important study group in the near future.

Parking

Parking will be studied and vetted by almost as many stakeholders and experts as the financing plan for the new arena. Transportation consultant David Evans and Associates—a firm that is well respected and has worked on highly visible projects across the state—is studying the transportation needs of the arena including its parking needs. We expect to receive a report in early March. We are waiting for the final updated study to help inform our decisions and in particular how to best integrate the parking needs of the arena with those of the entire campus.

Before I discuss our internal estimates and the additional surface parking spaces available to the university in the interim, I want to stress some key points. First, as with all new development, the arena project will meet city code regulations addressing parking and traffic. Second, what needs to be addressed is the incremental increase in capacity from Mac Court (9,087 seats) to the new arena (12,500-13,000 seats). In other words, we are not required to provide additional parking for 12,500-13,000 spectators but rather the 3,500 +/- additional patrons. Third, as any Fairmount, South or West University neighbor knows, campus parking is an issue that needs to be continually assessed and addressed with or without a new arena. It is my goal to address the university's parking needs as part of the planning for the added capacity of the new arena. Fourth, included in the price tag for the new arena will be a modest number of on-site parking spaces. And finally, we challenged David Evans and Associates to develop a plan to encourage the use of alternate means of transportation – one that is as least as aggressive as the very successful plan at Autzen Stadium. We are fully committed to the most aggressive plan we think is practical.

Our preliminary assessment of the transportation needs of a 12,500-seat arena on the Williams' Bakery site for evening and weekend events (when almost all of the university parking spaces used by students, faculty, and staff will be available) indicates a need for about 450 off-street parking spaces (again, we are waiting for the consultant's study for a more accurate assessment). The acquisition of the Romania site (now owned by the university) and the former DMV/ODOT site (pending)

provides some 675 surface parking spaces without touching any of the existing buildings on those properties. On the north side of Franklin Boulevard, depending on the interest and willingness of the private parking lot owners who currently allow parking for football games, we could park 265 more for a total of 940 vehicles. This is an interim solution to be sure, but it does address the need for additional spaces when the arena opens.

Please allow me to take a moment to expand on the acquisition of the Romania and ODOT sites. Acquiring these properties is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the university to address future needs. They are the only parcels available east of and nearly contiguous to our current campus boundary that do not require encroaching upon the residential portions of the Fairmount neighborhood. We will be planning for their use, both in the short term and more permanently. I hope this explains why we are comfortable in describing these sites as appropriate to address interim parking solutions.

Traffic and Transportation

I am confident that working collaboratively with the neighborhood and the City of Eugene we can minimize the traffic impact. Placement of the arena directly on Franklin Boulevard should help greatly in this regard.

Last year, the city completed a traffic study that was initiated as a result of a joint request by the neighborhood and the university. The study looked specifically at ways to limit undesirable “cut-through” traffic in the neighborhood. As you know, the city has implemented several of its recommendations such as new speed bumps. As plans for the basketball arena proceed, it is likely the city’s study will form the basis for future traffic-control efforts.

Property Values

We do not anticipate any negative impact on property values in the Fairmount neighborhood as a result of the removal of an industrial site and its redevelopment as a more architecturally pleasing arena. I am confident that the arena will generate lasting value to the university, the immediate neighborhood, and the community.

The arena could bring new attractive businesses to the Franklin Boulevard corridor, thereby increasing property values in a neighborhood that has maintained high property values, healthy appreciation, and high residential demand regardless of national, state, or local economic conditions.

Moreover, this \$200 million project will be a substantial boost to our local economy. The prevailing-wage construction jobs alone will have an enormous impact.

Process and Communication

I am committed to working with you to address the arena's impact. To that end, I will be creating a neighborhood liaison group to provide input on litter, noise, traffic, and parking for the project. I will work with the Fairmount Neighborhood Association and our project manager on how best to convene the liaison group.

In addition, university officials will be present and accessible at neighborhood meetings. We will endeavor to update and maintain an arena website that allows you to provide feedback. Furthermore, we will post information at neighborhood kiosks and at the Market of Choice bulletin board. I also pledge to inform you of developments in a timely fashion, fully admitting that we can be more diligent in this regard.

Conclusion

I hope you find these responses informative and assuring.

You may send questions and comments to me directly at pres@uoregon.edu or to Greg Rikhoff, our director of community relations, at grikkhoff@uoregon.edu.