KU Today: Major transformation of university's Central District now underway

McCollum and Stouffer Place to be razed soon, a bevy of new buildings constructed in three years

This conceptual drawing from the Kansas University Campus Master Plan shows what mixed-use development in KU's Central District might look like. The master plan calls for mixed-use development featuring student apartments and retail near the northeast corner of 19th and Iowa streets, where McCollum Hall and Stouffer Place will be razed. Enlarge photo

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When the last parents, couples and children moved out of Stouffer Place apartments earlier this summer, they closed an era of family housing at Kansas University.

The shuttering of Stouffer Place also closes a broader era for the entire hillside — which for decades has been a somewhat pastoral, tucked-away edge of campus. KU’s Campus Master Plan calls for a new era there, that of a bustling neighborhood with mixed-use development, new science buildings, new student housing facilities and a multi-modal path.

The new era, in fact, has already begun.

Construction is complete or nearly complete on several new buildings within KU’s Central District. More are expected to begin after Stouffer Place is razed, starting sometime this fall, and McCollum Hall is demolished, set for Nov. 25.
The Master Plan for the Central District — the first section of the Master Plan to be put in motion — is expected to be realized and construction complete in just three years, university spokesman Joe Monaco said.

"Redevelopment of the Central District is a once-every-half-century opportunity to fundamentally change the way we educate students, conduct research, and serve the state and nation," Monaco said. "This is not a case where we’re simply putting up some new buildings to fit some immediate needs. Rather, this is a comprehensive plan to add new interactive spaces that facilitate collaborative learning and research like we’ve never seen here before."

KU’s Central District is bounded roughly by 19th Street on the south, Iowa Street on the west, 15th Street on the north and the Ambler Student Recreation Fitness Center on the east, according to the master plan. Also within it lie the Daisy Hill residence halls, the Burge Union, Allen Fieldhouse and Oliver Hall.

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The Central District is sandwiched between the North District (the oldest part of campus, including Jayhawk Boulevard and Memorial Stadium) and the West District (everything west of Iowa Street).

Funding details have not been finalized, but officials have said KU is looking to a combination of sources, including philanthropy, business partnerships and public-private partnerships.

One part of the redevelopment plan that has not yet broken ground but is one of the most important to KU is integrated science buildings.

They’re part of a broader Master Plan concept called Innovation Way, building new and linking old science facilities campuswide to foster interdisciplinary teaching and research.

“Right now, we have science facilities that were built before man landed on the moon,” Monaco said. “This project not only gets us caught up, but it catapults us into the future and among an elite group of national leaders. Once complete, the redeveloped Central District and Innovation Way will enable us to recruit more top students and researchers, and it gives them the environment and resources they need to learn and conduct world-class research.”

Here’s a summary of what’s going and what’s coming to KU’s Central District — and there’s a lot more coming than going.

**What’s coming out**

**McCollum Hall**

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This 1965 residence hall, the largest of the Daisy Hill dorms, is scheduled to be demolished at 7 a.m. Nov. 25, which is the first day of Thanksgiving Break. KU expects to firm up and share further details when the date gets closer.

In the meantime, KU has been dismantling the 10-story, three-wing building’s interior, including removing and donating old furniture and securing new homes for the McCollum brothers’ portraits that hung in the lobby for decades.

KU also is accepting submissions and posting McCollum memories online at housing.ku.edu.

**Stouffer Place**

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/jun/30/293636/
Stouffer Place apartments, which opened in 1957 as married-student housing, has been vacant since Aug. 1.

The complex’s 25 buildings — scattered along 19th Street and across the east slope of Daisy Hill, with plenty of grass and several playgrounds in between — will begin to be torn down sometime this fall, said Diana Robertson, director of student housing.

Stouffer Place’s cheap rent and on-campus location kept it in high demand, but KU says the buildings have exceeded their useful life. Building new family housing would be too expensive to rent at the prices students sought out Stouffer Place for, KU has said.

**What’s going in**

**Oswald and Self Halls**

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/jul/15/294334/

The first students were scheduled to move into KU’s newest residence halls mid-August — and they’re booked solid, said housing director Robertson.

Oswald (the south building) and Self (on the north), mirror-image residence halls in the center of Daisy Hill on the Iowa Street side, replace McCollum. Bond funded, they were constructed at a cost of $48.6 million, Robertson said.

The five-story buildings house 350 residents apiece, Robertson said. They’re connected by Daisy Hill Commons, an area envisioned to be like a living room for all of Daisy Hill.

The Commons is home to the halls’ front desk, a full-size kitchen for students, a recreation area with a ping-pong table and a model room to show prospective students, Robertson said. On the second floor is an academic service center with advising staff, tutoring areas and a classroom.

“It serves to activate the entire complex as a real focal point and a service for students,” Robertson said. “Interconnectedness is a very exciting new direction for us.”

There are three room options, each with its own bathroom: a four-person suite, a two-person room and a two-person suite with a private room for each resident — a new layout not offered in any other residence halls, Robertson said. At $7,100 per year for suites or $9,230 per year for the private-room suites, Oswald and Self are now the most expensive residence halls on campus, she said.

The halls are named for three of KU’s most generous benefactors of all time, the late Madison A. and Lila M. Self and Charles W. Oswald.

**DeBruce Center**

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/aug/23/294548/

The DeBruce Center is being constructed to house what may be KU’s most-hyped acquisition of all time: James Naismith’s “Original Rules of Basket Ball,” a document purchased by David and Suzanne Booth for $4.3 million at auction in 2010.

The 32,000-square-foot building, connected to the north side of Allen Fieldhouse, has a pricetag of $18 million, according to initially announced plans. Plans include an activity center featuring retail dining, cafe seating, a training table setting for KU men’s and women’s basketball teams and a catered event space.
DeBruce should open sometime this winter, said Jim Marchiony, associate athletics director for public affairs.

"We can’t think of a better place to house Naismith’s original rules than right here at KU," Marchiony said. "And we think this building will serve as a real testament to not only James Naismith and the rules, but also to Phog Allen and others who were so instrumental in the history of Kansas basketball."

McCarthy Hall

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/aug/23/294347/

A lot of people are calling this "the basketball dorm."

However, KU reminds, the new building’s name is McCarthy Hall, and only half the residents in it will be basketball players.

The $11.6 million building was initially hoped to open in July, according to KU Student Housing. It’s now scheduled to open in the fall.

Residents will be the men’s basketball scholarship athletes, plus about 20 single, non-traditional, upperclass or transfer students with at least 30 credit hours, according to Housing. “As such, it is intended to provide an environment where mature, responsible students already acclimated to the rigors of college studies can succeed.”

The building features two- and four-person apartments with private bedrooms, living and dining rooms and full kitchens. The building has recreation and media rooms, and — fittingly — a half-court basketball court.

“The McCarthy apartments will provide an important component for our basketball program and for other outstanding students at KU,” Marchiony said. “We have what we think is the best venue in college basketball, and we think now we’ll have the best housing.”

Capitol Federal Hall

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/jul/03/293729/

Construction continues on the KU School of Business’ $70 million new home on Naismith Drive, across the street from Allen Fieldhouse.

The 166,500-square-foot building should be finished in spring 2016 and will hold its first classes in the summer or fall.

LEEP2

http://www2.ljworld.com/photos/2015/aug/23/293328/

The Learned Engineering Expansion Project Phase 2 building (LEEP2, for short) at 1536 W. 15th St. was completed this summer and opens for classes this semester.

The $65 million, 110,100-square-foot building — now the centerpiece of KU’s engineering complex — is connected to Learned Hall, Spahr Library, Eaton Hall and the Measurement, Materials and Sustainable Environment Center (M2SEC).

Integrated science buildings

Potentially two or more constructed in multiple phases. One key purpose of the buildings would be housing undergraduate
and other lab space, replacing outdated labs in buildings such as Malott Hall.

**Mixed-use development**

Also still in preliminary planning stages, multiple multistory buildings featuring both retail and student apartments are envisioned near the 19th and Iowa intersection.

**Additional residence hall**

Another student residence hall is tentatively slated to be built behind Oliver Hall. Details and a name have yet to be announced.

**Burge Union redevelopment**

The Master Plan also calls for redeveloping the union, though details have not been announced.