

Updated 9/18/2017

Initial project info

WMU Valley Neighborhood Master Planning and New Valley Residence Hall Project

Background and History

As a public institution, a commitment to adding value while containing costs so that access to higher education remains attainable and affordable is integral.

Both the Residence Life and Dining Services operations at WMU are self-operated and managed and report through the Vice President for Student Affairs. As auxiliary operations, these functions are self-supporting and do not receive tuition revenue or state funds. This organizational structure permeates a commitment to student development and recognition that a safe, structured and engaging living experience enhances academic success.

Integrated Planning and Budgeting (IPB) is a resource management and planning model that captures synergies and leverages efficiencies by combining planning and budgeting as a single process. IPB integrates and synergizes institutional goals with key strategic initiatives, objectives, performance management, collaborative budgeting and financial guidance. Elemental to IPB are cost containment, quality control, and resource management. Collectively, the Fund 41 IPB Group integrates institutional goals with key strategic initiatives. The group plans, leads, and tracks performance indicators through continuous assessment and evaluation. The planning process results in resource allocation decisions and personal actions that move the division and university towards success. The process influences everyday decisions and actions by defining success and focusing on accountability in lieu of control.

Project Connection to WMU Strategic Plan

WMU Goal #1: Ensure a distinctive and supportive learning experience that fosters success.

Objective 1.6: The student living-learning environment enhances learning, personal development, and engagement in campus communities.

Student Affairs Goal #2: ENHANCE INFRASTRUCTURE TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT LEARNING AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Objective 2A: The development and maintenance of high quality facilities supports student engagement, retention, and degree completion.

Overarching Goals of the Housing and Dining Master Plan (HDMP)

- Support WMU Strategic Plan
- Support Recruitment and Retention
- Create Residential Neighborhoods
- Align Planning with Facility Condition
- Ensure Diverse Housing Mix

Plan 2025 Overarching Goals

- Support Recruitment and Retention
- Continue Momentum
- Align Planning with Facility Condition
- Distinctive, WOW!
- Differentiate WMU from Other Universities
- Use Campus Surroundings

Project Goals

- Serve the Valley Residential Neighborhood
- Targeted at a range of students, primarily freshmen
- Provide innovative living concepts for students of the future
- Encourage academic and community engagement
- Promote living-learning environments
- Provide unique living concepts that round-out the housing portfolio
- Create a visual connection between Valley Dining Center and adjacent buildings
- Approximately 1,000 beds
- LEED Silver target

Project Description

As part of the Housing and Dining master plan (HDMP), the Valley Residential Neighborhood residences should be re-envisioned, with a mix of living styles that complement the total housing mix. Meeting diverse student needs, spaces for small and large group interactions, as well as connection to academics should be integrated into the program to help cultivate learning and development.

The design should result in an innovative living concept that offers environmentally conscious features, socialization through the purposeful use of public areas, improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, making a positive impact on student life in the Valley Residential Neighborhood. The new housing complex will introduce future students to the next generation of university living. The design should create multiple levels of community engagement and facilitate academic success.

Project Status

August 1 update

In July 2017, after a highly-competitive RFP process, CannonDesign was hired as WMU's partner for the planning and redevelopment of the Valley neighborhood along with design of the first phase of new housing. WMU's core team members are:

Steve Palmer, Director of Residence Life

Katie Jacobs, Project Manager

Janice Quakenbush, Director of Finance and Infrastructure

David Dakin, Director of Planning, Space Management and Capital Projects

Vernon Payne, Associate Vice President

The project kicked-off with workshops held on July 25-27, 2017. The workshops covered a number of topics, such as decision-making, success expectations, project visioning and discussions with various constituent groups. Master planning the Valley Neighborhood is a critical component to the success of the project. The design team was encouraged to explore options that are innovative, sustainable, multidisciplinary and will appeal to now-elementary-aged students. The next project workshops are planned for August 29-30, 2017.

September 18 update

Workshops 2 and 3 were held during the month of September. Workshop 2 focused on visioning that will assist in developing a long-term vision and master plan for the Valley residential neighborhood. The scope of the discussions centered around looking 10-20 years forward and how demographics, technology, social mobility, wellness and general needs and expectations of students will be met. A success aspiration is to have students and families saying Wow!, 10-plus years after completion.

Workshop 3 highlights included a session with our diversity and inclusion professionals at WMU and lead designers at CannonDesign to get insights related to intentionally integrating diversity through building design along with a town hall meeting in the Bernhard Center lobby that was open to the public.

Quotes (8/11/17)

Steven C. Palmer, Director of Residence Life

"We are excited in Residence Life to be leading the newest on-campus housing project that will begin to transform our Valley neighborhood. Along with the new Valley Dining Center the Valley is transforming into the future of Housing and Dining."

Janice Quakenbush, Director of Finance and Infrastructure

"The planning and redevelopment of the area comprising Valley 1, 2 and 3 can be a game-changer for WMU. The designers are being challenged to deliver an experience and environment that will be relevant for students who are in 3rd and 4th grade today. Ten, twenty years from now, the goal is for students who arrive to this area of campus for the first time to still be saying, 'Wow!'."