

# Union renovation costs pile up as project passes halfway point

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Assignment Reporter

As construction crews pass the halfway mark on the Nebraska Union renovation, the project costs are adding up to be higher than expected.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is now just eight months away from a new and improved union, but funding may be the project's next obstacle.

Daryl Swanson, Nebraska Union director, said everything seems to be running on schedule, although some problems have slowed progress.

"When you are working on a project as big as this and that impacts so many individuals, you have to be flexible," Swanson said.

"Certain things are ahead of schedule, while others are behind. But no matter what phase we are in, we are moving in the right direction."

Larry Blake, project manager, agreed and said when problems do arise, each has to be handled accordingly.

Blake said workers have found more asbestos in the building than expected, and the total cost to remove it all is reaching \$1 million.

"The surprising - yet not uncommon in an old building like this - amount of asbestos has set us over our budget by \$800,000," Blake said.

Swanson is concerned with the current - and potential future - funding problem.

"We are in the process of review and assessment for funding," said Swanson. "I admit, we are having a slight problem with funding, and the quest for additional funds has been difficult."

Swanson said no funding source has been identified yet. If a potential source is found, a request for additional funding will be submitted at the end of the month to Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs James Griesen.

The \$12.67 million project is funded by a revenue bond issue through student fees. Beginning this fall, and continuing every semester over a 20-year term, a charge of \$20 per student will be added to tuition statements and bills.

"We didn't want to have students pay until they were able to fully use it," Swanson said. "The students who pay for the remodeled union will be the sole beneficiaries of the union."

The expansion was needed to accommodate the 24,000 students now enrolled at UNL and will hopefully last well into the future of the university, Swanson said.

Swanson said a lot has been completed already, but there is still more to do. It is hard to tell what will be completed next.

Blake said the added benefits to the union should be welcomed by every student and faculty member.

"When the union is all finished, it is going to have a tremendous impact on the university," Blake said.

The new Union Plaza, located outside of the north entrance, will remain the same size as the former Broyhill Plaza. A new water feature

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DARYL SWANSON  
Nebraska Union director

will replace the old Broyhill Fountain. But Swanson said the new water feature will still be known as Broyhill Fountain.

"I know Broyhill Fountain has a lot of sentimental value to students, faculty and visitors on campus," he said. "However, the new Broyhill Fountain is sure to bring just as many memories as the old one."

Additions to the basement of union will include:

- A convenience store run by the University Bookstore.

- A big-screen television lounge and game room.

- A renovated and expanded Daily Nebraskan office, which can be found at the bottom of the southwest staircase.

Planned additions on the first floor will include:

- A secured art lounge to house student artwork and displays.

- Expanded dining space in the food court.

- A 24-hour computer laboratory with 28 computers, accessible from inside the union during normal hours, as well as through a handicap-accessible west entrance after hours.

- A copy center next to the com-

puter room.

"We wanted to make sure everyone was accommodated here at the union at all hours, and to do this, the new north and west entrances will both be fully accessible to the handicapped, as well as the elevators and restrooms found throughout the building," Blake said.

On the second floor, an auditorium, seating 320, and more meeting rooms are being built. Student Involvement will be relocated to a larger area to accommodate the increased involvement on campus, and the Nebraska Union administrative offices will be remodeled, Swanson said.

Blake said he is amazed how resilient students are, and how the union has had tremendous use.

"I walk into the union and see practically every seat filled, and it really brings a smile to my face," Blake said. "I guess in reality, students don't care if there is not ceiling above them, or if there is unwanted noise."

"The union is here for the university, and it is great to see that everyone still loves it, even with the construction going on."

## Police recover sculpture taken from Sheldon

SHELDON from page 1

houses on East Campus during his usual security rounds.

The statue, moderately damaged during its misadventure, was left anonymously for police to find, Gallery Director George Neubert said.

The way the sculpture was found - standing upright in plain sight - led Neubert to believe the thieves wanted the piece of art to be found.

Most of the damage was confined to the base of the sculpture where repairs can be made without altering the sculpture, Neubert said.

An Omaha art conservator assessed the damage and repairs will begin as soon as possible, Neubert said, and the sculpture should be back on display this spring.

Restoration of the statue will cost an estimated \$15,000-\$20,000, the art conservator said.

Additional costs will be involved in reattaching the statue to its base, Jacobs said.

"It is unfortunate because this art was designed to be viewed in a natural setting," Jacobs said.

In light of this theft, Jacobs said, the gallery will review its security procedures.

Before the theft, the statue was secured to the ground with three bolts. In the future the gallery may run a rod through the sculpture into the ground, Neubert said.

"We have cameras in the new parking facility to protect cars, which are replaceable. Hopefully we can have cameras to protect these things that are irreplaceable," Neubert said.

The University Police department is still investigating the theft and vandalism.

# The Daily Nebraskan has moved!

Our new entrance is accessible through the west stairwell of the Nebraska Union.

You'll find us in the basement where the old game room used to be.

Please come down and check us out.

The office may have moved, but the numbers remain the same.

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