

Freeborn Seismic Improvements

Project update and should the campus consider an alternate project?

BACKGROUND

In May 2012, the Provost appointed a Seismic Corrections Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to oversee the Davis Seismic Corrections Program and the subsequent projects to be initiated to correct identified seismic deficiencies. The committee's initial portfolio of improvements included seismic corrections to Freeborn Hall. The Seismic Corrections PAC, including representatives from Student Affairs, has been working to develop a program and budget for the seismic and other necessary building improvements that have cost or schedule benefit to being completed with the seismic project. The results of that analysis are now available and have led the project leadership team to reevaluate the future of Freeborn Hall.

HISTORY AND BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Freeborn Hall was built in 1961 and was funded by a combination of state and donor funds. The building is named in memory of Dr. Stanley B. Freeborn, the first Chancellor of the Davis campus. The facility provides multi-use auditorium space for up to 1700 people for festival style events and can accommodate seated dining for approximately 500. Freeborn was the first performance venue on campus and the largest such venue until the construction of the Mondavi Center in 2002. The building has remained relatively unchanged throughout its 53 years of continuous operation.

Freeborn Hall is managed by the Department of Campus Recreation and Unions. Although a great deal of effort and limited resources continue to be used to support the facility, there is no dedicated fund source for major capital improvements. Freeborn lacks the typical modern amenities, including "green room" and appropriate food and beverage preparation spaces, necessary to serve as a public assembly auditorium. Freeborn Hall has also been utilized on an interim basis to provide large lecture hall space the funding for which was provided by the central campus. The facility is not designed to accommodate this use and is not planned to continue to service as a large classroom following campus delivery of new large classroom space currently in active planning.

The 25,000 square foot first floor of the building is constructed in a roughly rectangular form with a low sloped gable roof and large overhangs. The primary structure is comprised of six interior precast concrete moment frames that support steel wide flange purlins and a metal roof deck. The main floor houses a stage, auditorium, and lobby support spaces. Restrooms for the auditorium are located on a second floor mezzanine within the Lobby. The building also has a 24,500 square foot basement that provides storage space, administrative space, and ASUCD program space. In addition, the basement provides support/office spaces for multiple areas within the Division of Student Affairs, UC Davis Stores and the Department of Campus Recreation and Unions.

SEISMIC SAFETY ASSESSMENT

The University of California has an adopted Seismic Safety Policy designed to provide an adequate level of earthquake safety for students, faculty, staff, and the public. In accordance with this policy, the structural engineering firm of Simpson Gumpertz and Heger was hired in 2011 to perform a tier one and tier two seismic analysis of Freeborn Hall. Their findings recommended a "VERY POOR" seismic risk rating for the building. Based on the safety requirements of the American Society of Civil Engineers Standards 31 and 41, the roof diaphragm, shear walls, and pile foundations are not adequate to provide an acceptable level of earthquake

safety for occupants. The recommended retrofit strategies would strengthen these elements at a project cost of \$3.4 million to be funded from reserves of the Student Facilities Safety Fee.

BUILDING SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT

In 2013, an assessment was performed to evaluate all building systems, including mechanical, electrical, building envelope, and accessibility. The report identified each building system, assessed its condition, and made recommendations to keep, repair, or replace the system. The report recommends that, as a result of the age of the building, most mechanical and electrical systems are in need of extensive refurbishing or complete replacement. While the building's original copper roof has fared well, the storefront window system that comprises vertical portion of the building envelope is failing and it is recommended that the glazing, doorways, and infill panels all be replaced. The building lacks an elevator to the mezzanine level, which renders the main restrooms for the auditorium inaccessible as well as the support spaces for the stage. Hand and guardrails in the lobby space and auditorium are inadequate by current safety and accessibility standards. Only the stage area and basement have fire sprinklers and although the building met fire code requirements at the time of construction, the UC Davis Fire Marshal recommends fire sprinklers be installed in the first floor and mezzanine levels.

The recommended repair and replacement solutions identified in the assessment report would total approximately \$8,000,000 in project cost. That these repairs do not improve programmatic functionality of the facility nor do they address specific acoustic and special lighting needs related to the stage and auditorium.

RECOMMENDATION

The estimated total project cost for the combined scope of seismic and building system improvements total approximately \$11,000,000. This project scope does not address additional renovations to improve the performance quality of the auditorium space and the stage or provide significant aesthetic improvements. **Based on the project cost and programmatic improvements not achieved in this scope, the project leadership team recommends postponing project approvals in order to reexamine long term objectives and consider other options and alternative uses which may better align financial resources and future programmatic needs for the Division of Student Affairs and the entire campus community.**

Freeborn Hall was scheduled to be taken off-line for construction in summer quarter of 2014 and re-opened for winter quarter 2015. It is still recommended to close the building in summer of 2014 in order to mitigate seismic risks to the campus community; however, the timeline and future of the facility will depend on the scope of work resulting from the options and alternative use analysis. During this interim period, it is proposed that the basement portion of the facility remain active, thus eliminating the need to disrupt activities and support for the multiple areas that are now serviced within the "lower Freeborn" portion of the facility.