



The Cove Dining Hall - Čeqʷəŋín ʔéʔləŋ (Cheko'nien House)

University of Victoria

2024/25 Five Year Capital Plan

July 2023

A. Introduction

The University of Victoria has a long-standing commitment to providing high-quality education and ensuring an exceptional student experience. We are dedicated to excellence in research and teaching, fostering a diverse and welcoming environment. Our Five Year Capital Plan reflects our academic priorities as outlined in the [Planning and Budget Framework](#), [Aspiration 2030](#), [Indigenous Plan](#), [Campus Plan](#), and our [Institutional Accountability Plan](#) and Report to the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSEFS). Our goal, as articulated in these planning processes, is to create a campus that offers extraordinary teaching and learning experiences within spaces that promote collaboration and connection. The Capital Plan serves as a vital document that outlines our infrastructure needs, which are crucial for achieving these objectives.

B. Background

Continuous facilities planning is essential for addressing the evolving demands of student programs, support services, and research and teaching requirements that align with societal needs. To ensure that we meet these changing needs, we engage in planning activities that inform our future capital requirements, including major capital projects and annual routine capital investments. We also consider expansion requirements beyond the next five years, considering our long-term objectives.

The goals and priorities set out in our mandate letter and provincial objectives align with our university's vision. These priorities encompass supporting academic programs that contribute to a strong and sustainable economy, promoting affordable housing, combating climate change by reducing carbon emissions, enhancing climate resiliency, embracing wood-first building design, fostering lasting and meaningful reconciliation, and renovating existing infrastructure. We have recently completed a comprehensive [Climate and Sustainability Action Plan](#), which sets ambitious targets to accelerate our response to climate change and foster a culture of sustainability across our institution. Furthermore, the development of a new university-wide Indigenous Plan is also a priority for us. This strategy will ensure that Indigenous ways of knowing are respected and supported, requiring us to engage in important conversations about our values, priorities, and contributions to the process of decolonization.

The implementation of these plans will have a significant impact on space utilization and demand throughout our campus. Our institution currently faces a gap of 21,884 net assignable square meters (NASM) based on the PSEFS space standards, which represents approximately 11% below the established norm (refer to Appendix 1 for details). Guided by this institutional assessment, we are engaged in planning efforts to identify priority projects that address the space pressures resulting from gaps in academic and administrative offices, and laboratories (as outlined in Appendix 1). These space pressures are a direct consequence of student growth and program realignments driven by changing student demand. In our pursuit of a culture that embraces collaboration, innovation, and sustainability, we will be developing new space planning guidelines that promote alternative work methods and facilitate collaborative, functional, and supportive work environments. These guidelines aim to optimize flexibility in layout designs, enabling our facilities to adapt to organizational changes,

promote equitable and purpose-driven floor plans, and move away from hierarchical space allocation. They will also inform our future routine capital renovations and guide space optimization strategies.

Finally, this plan addresses the critical need for additional student housing. The challenges of housing supply and affordability persist in the Victoria region and require our ongoing attention and efforts.

C. Capital Project Priorities

Capital projects fit into seven different categories: new priority, whole asset replacement or renewal, student housing, routine capital, carbon neutral, information technology and linear infrastructure.

The following, in priority order, are the major capital projects for the campus:

i. Student Housing (Category 3)

The development of new student housing is the university's top priority to address the pressing housing pressures in Victoria. The project aims to provide approximately 500 new affordable student housing beds, featuring a combination of pod-style dormitories and studio units. In addition, this project could be phased to support an additional 500 beds as part of future planning for residence expansion. The project will be constructed to Level 4 of the BC Energy Step Code and LEED V4 Gold. The project will include full electrification of space heating and domestic hot water systems to support the university's goal of a 50% reduction in campus operational emissions by 2030. This project would increase the total number of student housing beds on campus by 15% to approximately 3,743.

Recognizing the critical need for affordable and accessible housing for students, this initiative is a significant step towards alleviating the housing challenges in the Victoria region. By expanding the university's housing capacity, it will enable more students to secure safe and suitable accommodation, enhancing their overall academic experience and contributing to community sustainability and well-being.

Project Funding

The estimated total project cost for 500 new beds is between \$190-\$200M. This project addresses critical need for new housing on campus and within the greater Victoria region. It is expected to be funded through a Provincial loan and grant funding program.

ii. Mearns Centre for Learning - McPherson Library Interiors Modernization and Seismic Upgrading (Category 2 – Whole Asset Replacement and Renewal)

The Mearns Centre for Learning located in the McPherson Library which is one of the oldest buildings on campus. The main library was completed in two phases (1963, 1974) and remains the busiest building on campus with between 1.4 and 2 million annual visits by students, faculty, staff, and community members. The library provides access to core learning and research materials and acts as a central nexus of campus academic life and community. The

Mearns Centre for Learning - McPherson Library is a key enabler of innovation in teaching and research and provides physical and virtual sites that build connections between a diverse range of people within the university as well as with community partners, and is ideally positioned to provide open, engaged, and enduring access to knowledge.

In 2017, the university developed plans to seismically upgrade the structure. In addition to life safety improvements, interior spaces also require renewal to provide innovative and contemporary spaces that facilitate new directions in teaching, research, and community learning. Interior renovations will also improve spaces for university and community engagement, increase graduate student research and study space, and address the needs of the university art collections. Depending on the availability of funding, these projects could occur simultaneously or be phased to minimize disruption to library services.

The renovation of the Mearns Centre for Learning - McPherson Library will transform and elevate the current user experience and extend the on-site services that the library and its campus partners provide to students, faculty, and the community. The programmatic changes to the existing structure will enable the extension of learning and research services that are in heavy demand and provide more opportunities for the types of collaboration and intellectual exploration that often result in innovative solutions to the benefit of society.

Project Funding

The estimated total project cost is \$186.9M. This project addresses significant deferred maintenance and presents an opportunity to support innovation in dynamic learning. It is expected to be funded through a combination of sources including Provincial, Federal and university funding. Project timing and phasing will be dependent upon securing government funding.

iii. Jamie Cassels Centre Farquhar Auditorium Seismic Upgrade (Category 2 – Whole Asset Replacement and Renewal)

The 1,200 seat Jamie Cassels Centre Farquhar Auditorium is the premiere performing arts space on campus. The facility was completed in 1972 and hosts a variety of campus events including convocation as well as community events such as the Victoria Symphony. This project includes improvements to the structural performance of the roof structure while minimizing impacts on the acoustic qualities of the performance venue.

Project Funding:

This project is estimated at \$9.1M and will be funded through the Province and/or another government infrastructure grant program and from the routine capital funding envelope.

iv. Petch Building Seismic Upgrade (Category 2 – Whole Asset Replacement and Renewal)

The Petch Building was completed in 1986 and contains the Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology and the Centre for Biomedical Research. The seismic upgrade project includes interior and exterior re-enforcement of the building structure.

Project Funding:

This project is estimated at \$48.4M and will be funded through the Province and/or another government infrastructure grant program and from the routine capital funding envelope.

v. Fraser Building Seismic Upgrade (Category 2 – Whole Asset Replacement and Renewal)

The Murray and Ann Fraser Building is home to the Faculty of Law. The university is investing in a New National Centre for Indigenous Laws as an addition to the building and numerous safety and mechanical upgrades within the existing building. The seismic upgrade project includes interior and exterior re-enforcement of the building structure.

Project Funding:

This project is estimated at \$81.9M and will be funded through the Province and/or another government infrastructure grant program and from the routine capital funding envelope.

vi. Accessible and Active Transportation Improvement Program – University Drive (Category 6 – Linear Infrastructure)

The Accessible and Active Transportation Improvement Program will enhance active transportation and accessibility infrastructure through the renewal and upgrading of University Drive as outlined in the university's Campus Cycling Plan and Campus Greenway. Once implemented, this project will improve pedestrian and cycling access on and through campus. Upgraded amenities are a key strategy in supporting BC's Active Transportation Strategy and increasing our sustainable travel mode share from 62% to 70% of all trips to campus utilizing transit, cycling, walking, or carpooling.

Project Funding

The total projected budget for the Accessible and Active Transportation Improvement Program – University Drive is estimated at \$8.7M and is expected to be funded through a combination of Federal, Provincial and university funding.

D. Self-Funded Projects

i. District Energy Plant Electrification

Consistent with the CleanBC goal of reducing emissions by 40% by 2030 and with the recent adoption of the university's [Climate and Sustainability Action Plan](#), the university is developing pathways to reach net zero emissions from campus operations. A key driver of greenhouse gas emissions is the university's District Energy Plant, which is powered by natural gas. To meet these shared goals, the university must implement new infrastructure projects that adopt less carbon-intensive energy sources. This project will include replacement of one natural gas fired boiler with two, smaller electric boilers. It is expected that this project will make significant progress toward reaching the university's goal of a 50% reduction in campus operational emissions by 2030.

Project Funding

The total projected budget for the District Energy Plant Electrification project is estimated at \$6.4M and will be funded through a combination of Federal, BC Hydro and university funding, financed from the utilities budget.

ii. Accelerating Community Energy Transition

The University of Victoria will lead a national, multi-partner research initiative that will help get Canada to net zero—one community at a time— thanks to an \$83.6-million investment from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF). The funding for Accelerating Community Energy Transformation (ACET) will support the work of more than 40 partners from academia, First Nations, private, public, and philanthropic organizations. The ACET initiative will include a significant renovation to create new offices and collaboration areas.

E. Capital Projects in Planning

To ensure that institutional infrastructure and future five-year capital plans continue to reflect institutional needs and priorities, each year planning activities are undertaken to inform future capital development and planning. In the near term such planning activities will include:

a) Student Housing

In response to the pressing housing demands in Victoria, the university continues to plan for additional student housing, beyond the 500 beds already identified. The university is currently in the planning stage for an additional 500 beds to meet the growing housing needs of students. This project is aimed at addressing the critical need for affordable and accessible housing. The project will encompass a combination of units providing a diverse range of living options and could move forward as part of a phased housing program as noted above.

b) University District – Housing, Commercial Opportunities and Partnerships.

The cost of housing in Victoria has increased drastically over the past five years, and our region is experiencing a serious housing shortage. The university can help address these regional challenges and transform campus life by creating a vibrant and sustainable housing and commercial district. The [University of Victoria Real Estate Strategy](#) sets out the purpose, objectives and approach to development of properties at the edge of campus. Once completed the project will help address the housing pressures in surrounding communities, enhance the university's extraordinary academic environment and provide revenue diversification.

c) Team-Based Health Care Research and Training Centre

The university is exploring opportunities to develop a new facility that supports team-based integrated health care, academic expansions, interdisciplinary research, and health partnerships. The Health Care Training and Research Centre will support the delivery of health care services to our community and under-served populations in Greater Victoria under an "integrated health care model," in response to BC's critical shortage of health care providers and in support of the Government of BC's Health Human Resources Strategy (2022).

The Centre will notably include the following, a teaching and training clinic with community care provision as well as space to support essential expansion within Nursing, Nurse Practitioner, and Health Information Science programs. This also includes a continued partnership with the University of British Columbia for expansion of Physical Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology and Undergraduate Medicine program offerings within a distributed learning model. The Centre will serve as a learning and practicum space for students training as nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, youth counsellors, and clinical psychologists, with opportunities for expansion into other health related fields.

d) Centre for Integrated Performance and Wellbeing

The university is exploring partnership opportunities to co-locate a new Centre for Integrated Performance and Wellbeing on campus. The new centre will combine academic expertise, high performance and healthy living research, industry, and community engagement to foster a dynamic, active learning environment. The centre will focus on applied and multi-disciplinary research to support healthy living as well as performance, integrated health and sustainable well-being. The centre will increase the vibrancy of campus life through development of infrastructure and programmatic initiatives that offer new opportunities for recreation, promote wellness, and advance health research impacts. Moreover, the centre will be home to new professional programming in performance and health-related disciplines, becoming an important training centre in support of UVic's commitment to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 3: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages." A central tenet of the planning process will be engagement with Indigenous partners and communities to explore how the centre can support reconciliation, particularly with respect to incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing in performance and health research, as well as supporting international and national Indigenous sporting events.

e) Workplace Innovation Strategy

The Workplace Innovation Strategy will provide a comprehensive approach to developing new workplaces that support the university's teaching and research mission, while providing an engaging and productive environment for all employees. The Strategy will explore how we approach the changing nature of work including what new processes and spaces make work effective and how can we reframe research, faculty and staff spaces. The Strategy will provide a toolkit to guide the development of both new and renovated workplaces on campus including academic and administrative areas. The Strategy will also provide guidance for leaders in the scheduling and management of a hybrid workplace including guidelines for hybrid workplace etiquette for employees.

F. SUMMARY

UVic's Five Year Capital Plan aligns with the university's academic priorities, as outlined in our Planning and Budget Framework and Institutional Accountability Plan and Report. Our primary focus is to provide comprehensive support to all students, meet current and anticipated program demands, and maintain the highest quality standards across our programs. To achieve these objectives, our capital planning efforts for the next five years will address the pressing space pressures in both academic programs and student housing through expansion initiatives, as well as tackling deferred maintenance requirements through renewal and seismic projects.

This plan highlights the essential projects necessary to advance these institutional goals. The foremost priority projects include the development of new student housing, electrification of our District Energy Plant, a comprehensive campus building renewal program, and the revitalization of campus active

transportation infrastructure. By prioritizing these projects, we aim to enhance the overall student experience, create an environment conducive to academic excellence, and ensure the sustainability and functionality of our campus facilities.

APPENDIX 1: Space Inventory Compared to Standards

TABLE 1
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
Summary Comparison of 2022 BC Space Standards and 2022 Space Inventory
For Formula Areas

Space Category Number	Space Category Name	BC Space Standards Formula	Nov 1, 2022 Age Adjusted* Inventory	NASM Surplus	NASM Shortfall	Inventory as a Percentage of BC Standards
1	Classrooms	17,496	15,678		1,818	89.6%
2	Undergraduate Labs	22,064	19,966		2,098	90.5%
3	Research Labs	25,803	22,058		3,745	85.5%
4	Academic Offices	49,675	34,488		15,187	69.4%
10	Administrative Offices	23,097	19,084		4,013	82.6%
5	Library Stack/Study/Service	20,051	18,950		1,101	94.5%
6	Recreation/Athletics	12,143	15,541	3,398		128.0%
7,8, 11-15	Student and Central Services	27,365	28,791	1,426		105.2%
9	Maintenance Space	3,508	4,762	1,254		135.8%
				6,078	27,962	
	TOTAL NASM	201,202	179,318		21,884	89.1%

*Inventory adjusted for age by excluding 2 percent of the BC System buildings that are over 45 years old — Huts A, B, E, F, Q, R, and Y were excluded from UVic's inventory.

Institutional Planning and Analysis
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