

Board of Governors approves alumni, conference center and hotel at FIU

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Today the Florida Board of Governors approved a public-private partnership to establish an alumni, conference center and hotel on FIU's main campus, right on Tamiami Trail.

The \$66 million project is privately funded and will include a 13,700 square-foot alumni center, approximately 33,000 square feet of meeting space and a 150-bed hotel. South Florida's first university-affiliated conference center and hotel is expected to open by the fall of 2021. This kind of facility, which is common in large research universities, is part of a larger vision for development in the area that includes several student housing and mixed-use buildings. The Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida must approve the project before construction can begin.

"This project brings together our vision for an alumni center with a privately-funded hotel and conference center that will serve the university, the surrounding business community and will draw added visitors and job creation to our area," said FIU Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration and CFO Kenneth A. Jessell.

The 13,700 square-foot alumni center is funded with private donations as part of the **Next Horizon Campaign**. The alumni center is designed to be a home away from home for FIU's more than 215,000 alumni. It will help connect alumni to mentorship opportunities with FIU students, as well as support them with professional and leadership development. The center will feature a library and lounge area.

"The alumni center will bring the Panther Nation together and provide all of us with expanded opportunities for career development and networking," said President of the FIU Alumni Association Maria D. Garcia.

The new on-campus project will host academic, research, and professional conferences; student campus tours; orientations and family weekends; special events; award ceremonies and guest speaking engagements. It will also connect FIU students to hands-on, real world training by providing part-time jobs, internships and work-study opportunities to undergraduate students, as well as full-time jobs to business, hospitality and tourism management, finance and accounting FIU graduates.

The project will be developed by Concord Benchmark LLC. Rabun Architects, Inc. will design and Moss & Associates, LLC will build the project, which will be located on the northwest corner of

campus near the recreation fields and the Florida Turnpike.

The new alumni, conference center and hotel will be across the street from a seven-acre property being developed by Global City Development. The mixed-use complex will eventually house approximately 2,300 students in two 20-story towers. A third tower will provide housing for faculty and staff, along with several hundred thousand square feet of commercial space focused on uses that are complementary to the mission of the university such as incubators, software development and training facilities. The first phase of this complex is under construction.

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