The state has appropriated $93 million in capital improvements funding to University of Missouri – Kansas City over the last decade, but $73.6 million, or approximately 79%, has been restricted or vetoed.
University of Missouri-Kansas City

The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) is a selective institution and is the only public university in western Missouri that offers undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and professional degrees. UMKC focuses on three areas: visual and performing arts; health sciences; and urban affairs, which includes law, business, and education. Nearly 17,000 students attend UMKC. Fifty percent of enrolled students are undergraduates, one-third are graduates, and 17% are dual-enrolled high school students.

Capital Improvement & Facilities History

The only significant state capital improvements funding the University of Missouri-Kansas City has received in the last decade is $18 million of Board of Public Buildings bond funds for renovations at the Biological Sciences and Spencer Chemistry buildings. In fiscal year 2015, funding for a $19 million new medical school and a $7.4 million Free Enterprise Center was appropriated. Ultimately, funding for both items was restricted, except roughly 10% of the Free Enterprise Center project which was put toward project design costs. In 2017, the legislature passed a House Concurrent Resolution to authorize the issuance of Missouri Health and Educational Facilities Authority bonds specifically to fund the state’s half ($48 million) of a new UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance. While this funding was not included in an appropriation bill, the resolution’s passage attested to legislators’ intent to appropriate funding. Governor Greitens vetoed the resolution citing the long-term financial burden on the state to make bond payments and estimated ongoing operating costs. When the conservatory is taken into account, over $93 million of state funding has been approved for UMKC capital improvement projects, but the university has only received $19.5 million, or 21%.

Facility Challenges

The UMKC campus consists of 66 Education & General Buildings and 94 Auxiliary Buildings with over 5.2 million gross square feet (GSF). The campus has many historic buildings such as Scofield Hall and Epperson Hall on the Volker Campus. The Hospital Hill campus contains three E&G buildings: School of Dentistry, School of Medicine, and the School of Pharmacy and School of Nursing.

However, over 25% of the E&G buildings on the campus have not had a major renovation in over 50 years and another 36% of the buildings have not had a major renovation in over 25 years. Approximately 45% of the total gross square feet of E&G buildings on the campus have a rating of below average or worse. Currently, the campus has over $395 million in facilities needs, including over $174 million in deferred maintenance. A significant portion of the deferred maintenance is building systems (i.e. mechanical, electrical, plumbing), as well as interior finishes (i.e. painting, floor systems, ceiling systems).
Capital Priorities

The Board of Curators and the University of Missouri-Kansas City have identified the following as the university’s top three priorities for the future. The total state request for these projects is about $83 million.

1. Spencer Chemistry & Biological Sciences Renovation Phase II

This project will continue the renovation of the 153,800 GSF Biological Sciences Building and Spencer Chemistry Building. The second phase will renovate approximately 75,000 GSF in both Spencer Chemistry and the Biological Sciences Building. This project will build on the first phase, which is currently underway and funded by a combination of state bonds and university funding. The current phase was slated for completion in July 2018. The Phase II renovation will address additional deferred maintenance, research space, teaching spaces, and other facility deficiencies that were beyond reach of the Phase I budget. The renovation will provide state-of-the-art teaching labs and support spaces, while providing improved laboratory systems to support research activities, support student retention, meet current lab standards, and encourage student collaborative learning.

The Spencer Chemistry and Biological Sciences Buildings were originally constructed in 1968 and had not been renovated or updated since the 1980s prior to the Phase I renovation currently underway. These buildings serve chemistry and biology undergraduate and graduate majors, as well as those who go into professional schools or graduate studies in medical and dental. They also serve as part of the teaching mission for the pharmacy, medicine, and nursing programs. The facility is outdated and provides inadequate space for teaching, and does not meet current safety codes and standards. This project will eliminate over $35 million of facilities needs.

2. Conservatory of Music and Dance

The Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City has long been a primary source of energy, creativity and talent, through its renowned programs in music, dance, and visual arts.

This regional resource faces timely accreditation risks if facility needs are not met within the next few years. The Conservatory enrollment has outgrown its current 54,000 net assignable square feet currently housed in two separate locations. In 2011 and 2014, facility concerns were raised by the two Conservatory accrediting organizations, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD). Concerns of health risks associated with inadequate, outdated space have been documented by the accreditors.

UMKC has been exploring its options to meet the needs of the Conservatory for almost a decade. The concept of placing the Conservatory adjacent to the Kauffman Center has been reviewed most recently, modeled after successful performing arts school/performing arts center combinations in New York and New England.

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Project Cost: $137,657,000
Local Match: $4,600,000
State Request: $33,057,000

Project Cost: $100 million
Local Match: $50 million
State Request: $50 million

cont. >>
The Conservatory will benefit students, faculty, donors, university and civic leaders alike. The Conservatory enrolls more than 500 students in professional degree programs in vocal and instrumental performance, composition, music theory, and musicology; dance; music education, and music therapy. In a new, expanded facility, enrollment is planned to increase by 24 percent, to 620 students. A new facility will allow UMKC to vacate a significant area within the Olson Performing Arts Center and Grant Hall and this vacated area will allow UMKC to move other academic programs out of older and less efficient buildings, particularly those in off-campus locations, with those buildings then being taken offline or demolished to save on the operating costs to the campus. Discussions are underway among faculty to integrate UMKC’s nationally renowned theatre program into the Conservatory to create an even more comprehensive academic program, to increase competitiveness, and to further enhance UMKC’s reputation.

3. Health Sciences Interprofessional Education and Research Building

This integrated project consists of three neighboring new buildings and two partial building renovations designed to consolidate existing centers supporting UMKC health sciences initiatives. This project combines elements from prior health sciences program planning studies for the School of Dentistry completed in December 2010 and the School of Medicine completed in November 2010. The project is consistent with the campus master plan.

The primary function of the 201,800 GSF Interprofessional Education Building will be to provide shared classrooms, meeting spaces, teaching labs, and a patient simulation lab with state-of-the-art capabilities to conduct research in biomedical informatics and big data initiatives.

The School of Medicine building renovation renovates approximately 200,000 GSF of the existing building to meet current building and instructional standards, and will address $50,500,000 in facilities needs. The School of Dentistry building renovation renovates approximately 195,000 GSF of the existing building and builds a skywalk connecting it to the Pharmacy/Nursing Building, and will address $24,500,000 in facilities needs. On the Hospital Hill Campus, the 53,000 GSF Translational Clinical Research Building will conduct clinical studies in which the community will participate and will include office and treatment space. The 90,000 GSF Health Sciences Research Building will create a flexible environment for collaborative and translational research, and will include office space, core facilities, and specialized research facilities.

The new building in Kansas City will enable the UMKC School of Medicine and School of Dentistry to be more competitive in the recruitment of high-caliber clinician-researchers with a track record of extramural grant funding and, through carefully planned collaborations and combined efforts, enhance the competitiveness of faculty at MU Translational Precision Medicine Center to compete for extramural grant funding.

The UMKC Health Sciences Interprofessional Education and Research Building will complement the work planned for the MU TPMC. It will provide the potential to attract industry partnerships and one health partnerships to focus on advanced treatments for cancer and cardiovascular disease; as well as advance the fields of biomedical engineering, tissue regeneration, and big data. The long-term impact of the collaboration between UMKC and MU TPMC will be to accelerate both discovery and implementation of prevention and treatment of disease that will result in improved health outcomes for Missourians.