

Construction to begin on major campus pedestrian pathway

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Construction of the major pedestrian artery on the UCSD campus--the long-envisioned "Library Walk"--is scheduled to begin March 28, according to Boone Hellmann, assistant vice chancellor, Facilities Design and Construction.

Considered the most significant pedestrian path on campus, the walkway will provide access from the University Library to a large number of student facilities such as the Price Center, the new Classroom Building 1, the International Center, Career Services and Student Health. The walkway crosses Gilman Drive and ends in a newly-completed plaza at the north end of the Molecular Biology Facility.

The Library Walk project was scheduled this spring so that it will be completed when the 2,100-seat Classroom Building opens in September, 1995. This new facility will bring approximately 4,200 students into the area every hour, on the hour, Hellmann noted, a magnitude of pedestrian traffic which couldn't safely mix with the present parking and traffic flow.

Designed by Peter Walker Associates of San Francisco, a nationally-known landscape architectural firm, the design creates an active linear open plaza which will serve both as a pedestrian walk and a gathering area for the campus community. The walkway will separate an urban core, University Center, from the rustic grove of eucalyptus trees on the west.

A major reforestation plan to be included in the project will replace some 230 mature, but diseased, eucalyptus trees with approximately 680 healthy young trees. Along with associated landscaping, the project includes drainage improvement and new and relocated parking facilities.

Initially the area adjacent to the walk will be visually barren, Hellmann noted. The buildings along the west side of the walk will be quite exposed, since the young trees will be four to five feet tall. However, in two to three years the trees will increase in size, as evident in the recent eucalyptus plantings along the east side of 1-5.

The relocated parking includes one 44-space parking lot now under construction between the Administration Complex and Classroom Building 1 and a 124-space lot to be located on the previous site of the Quonset huts, north of Gilman Drive.

Not only will Library Walk provide a safe pedestrian area, it also will improve access to the buildings in the area. New paths and ramps accessible to wheelchairs will be provided to buildings along the west side of the walk. A large portion of Lyman Avenue will be turned into a vehicle-free zone with pedestrians and bicyclists sharing the space.

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