

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Jennifer Davies

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Artistic rendering of the new UC San Diego Innovative Cultural and Education Hub in downtown San Diego

Making a Mark in Downtown

The University of California San Diego is going urban.

In December, the university announced its plans to build an Innovative Cultural and Education Hub in downtown San Diego at the corner of Park Avenue and Market Street. The new center will connect a wide range of campus programs to the downtown innovation community and more closely link diverse neighborhoods throughout San Diego's urban core.

UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla said the new facility is designed to deliver on the core tenets of the university's Strategic Plan to ensure both equity and excellence.

“Our establishment of an urban innovation and educational hub demonstrates our commitment to be bold and build a better university, a better community and a better world,” Khosla said. “This new hub will support economic development downtown while delivering new educational opportunities for our students, faculty and staff and provide a greater connection to communities throughout San Diego.”

UC San Diego Extension will manage the 66,000-square-foot center, which the Holland Partner Group is developing as part of a larger project at the location. The center is slated to be completed in 2020 and will offer educational and cultural programs; it also will house a 3,000-square-foot restaurant on the ground floor and an outdoor amphitheater space. The center will be home to:

- academic and outreach programs for middle and high school students from surrounding communities
- business incubation and entrepreneurship resources for entrepreneurs throughout the urban core
- a venue for arts events and exhibits to showcase the university’s and the larger community’s cultural offerings.
- a hub for civic engagement, including applied research and volunteer opportunities.
- courses, workshops and seminars relevant to downtown’s growing workforce.

Mary Walshok, UC San Diego’s associate vice chancellor for public programs and dean of Extension, said the new Innovative Cultural and Education Hub will redefine the role of a research university in the 21st century by offering unique educational experiences and research opportunities as well as arts and cultural activities.

“With the diverse neighborhoods surrounding the urban core, including Barrio Logan, the Diamond District and Golden Hill, this project reinforces UC San Diego’s role as a key partner in spurring economic prosperity and inclusion through engaging events and educational offerings.”

The selection of the Park and Market site was driven because of its proximity to the UC San Diego Blue Line. The line will run from San Ysidro to University City and link the main campus in La Jolla with the greater San Diego region and ensure a stronger connection between the university and diverse communities.

“These transportation links that connect the university with the larger community are critical as the city comes of age,” Walshok said. “We want to build this facility to demonstrate that no matter where you come from, there is place for you in the new economy.”



The 66,000-square-foot center, at the corner of Park Avenue and Market Street, will also include a restaurant and outdoor space.

Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer applauded UC San Diego's efforts and its commitment to the City of San Diego's ongoing efforts to education and economic development.

"Landing a university presence in downtown San Diego is a game changer and the result of years of hard work to make it a reality," Faulconer said. "This new project will continue the revitalization of the East Village neighborhood and, with UC San Diego's top-notch reputation, provide countless opportunities for collaboration as we prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow."

No state funds will be used to finance the construction of the project and ongoing financing for the facility will come from a combination of program underwriting, contracts and grants, fees for services and lease revenues, all of which UC San Diego Extension will manage.

The Holland Partner Group received final approval of the entitlements for both the Innovative Cultural and Education Hub and its larger residential project from the San Diego City Council on Dec. 13. The residential project includes 341 market-rate apartments, 85 rent-restricted affordable apartments for very low-income residents and preservation of the historic Remmen House. Construction is slated to begin during the summer of 2017.

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