



Virginia Department of Planning and Budget
Project Request Justification

2006-2008 Biennium Date: July 22, 2005

A. General Information

- 1. Agency name: Virginia Tech
- 2. Agency code: 208
- 3. Project title: Improve: Residence and Dining Halls
- 4. Agency priority: 20
- 5. Contact Person: M. Dwight Shelton, Jr.
- 6. Contact's telephone number: (540) 231-8775
- 7. Contact's e-mail address: mdsjr@vt.edu

B. Proposed Project

1. Project Cost:

General Fund/General Fund supported debt	
Nongeneral fund	
9 (c) revenue debt	10,000,000
NGF supported 9 (d) revenue bonds	
Total request	10,000,000

2. Project cost changes:

NONE.

3. Description:

- This project has been on the university's plan since 1999, formerly titled Major Residence and Dining System Improvements. This request is an improvements project to make renovations and upgrades to the existing residential and dining facilities.
- The university's facility inventory includes 44 residence halls and five dining facilities with an average age of about 32 years. In order to ensure this substantial facilities asset remains up-to-date, the university has developed a long-range improvements strategy that minimizes service disruption and minimizes financial impact to the students.
- This facilities initiative is an on-going, long-range improvements strategy that addresses programmatic and facilities deficiencies with a steady funding stream. This strategy will keep the housing and dining system facilities safe, clean, and up-to-date with modern service practices and student expectations.

- The strategy includes a renovation request every biennium of the six-year plan and beyond. It is estimated that all residential and dining facilities will be covered by the plan over the course of a 20-year span using about a one percent annual user fee increase allocated for facilities improvements.
- The university is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan with the help of an outside consultant to prioritize the building needs and develop a renovation sequence strategy. The analysis work should be complete by winter 2006 and this \$10 million request for the 2006-2008 budget addresses the top priority item(s) on the upcoming plan.
- The top priority item envisioned for this project request is the upfit of Ambler Johnson Hall. This facility was built in 1969, includes 272,019 gross square feet, houses 1,288 students, and has a replacement cost estimated at \$81,605,700. The exterior Hokie stone structure on the 36 year old building is sound, however, the mechanical systems, bathrooms, lounges, and electrical systems are all in need of repair or replacement. This building currently does not meet the needs of today's students. The mechanical systems beyond repair, and the building is not air conditioned. This project is phase one of a two phase Ambler Johnson project and proposes to: replace the mechanical systems including adding air conditioning, upgrade electrical wiring and replace elevators. The project also will refurbish all bathrooms and add additional bathrooms to create a ratio of about 35 residents per shared bath. It will create more programming space within the residence hall to facilitate co-curricular learning.

4. Project scope change:

NONE.

5. a. Approved Master Site Plan:

Yes No

If not, explain:

b. 2004-10 Capital Outlay Plan:

Yes No

If not, explain:

6. Equipment for a previously funded project.

NONE.

7. Supplement to a previously funded project.

NONE.

C. Project Justification

1. a. Existing condition:

- The residential hall system includes 44 residence halls that cover 2,000,000 gross square feet with an average age of 32 years. The inventory includes a mix of modern facilities (only

five residence halls, housing 900 students) and outdated facilities, housing 8,000 students. Students avoid the outdated facilities in favor of the modern facilities. In the case of the residential program, this results in more requests for the modern residence halls than can be met. The students who are not selected for the newer residence halls are generally less satisfied with the remaining on-campus housing options because the rooms are commonly smaller, are without air conditioning, are fitted with gang showers and toilets (instead of suite arrangements), have less available study space, and have less power and telecommunications infrastructure. The outcome is an imbalance in the delivery of services that results in unsatisfied customers.

- The existing buildings are engineered and constructed to last at least 80 years and with proper maintenance may last longer. The programmatic and utilities infrastructure are generally outdated within 20 years and some elements may become outdated in 5 or 10 years. When the programmatic elements of a facility become outdated, the students become dissatisfied with the level of service and then underutilize the operations of the building or consider the outdated program as a reason not to select the university as a place for their higher education study. Outdated residential halls have a significant negative impact on the quality of student life on campus, a student's overall evaluation of the university, and the program operations.

Higher Education Only

b. Facility Condition Index:

FCI _____

c. Space deficit:

Yes No

2. Programmatic information:

- The Student Programs mission is to provide services, staffing, and programs that support the educational programs of Virginia Tech and enhance the quality of campus life. The Dining program operates two all-you-can-eat dining centers in addition to three a la carte dining venues, an express grab-n-go location, and a gourmet coffee, pastry, and ice cream shop within five facilities. The dining division serves about 3.7 million meals a year. The Housing division is responsible for promoting the personal and academic success of the 8,900 residents in the University's 44 residential halls.
- Through services, programs, and activities, staff members offer a positive educational and physical environment within the residential communities for graduate and undergraduate students and the facilities provide a safe, clean, attractive, and inviting place that supports the program. Housing program examples include the Corps of Cadets, scholarship athletes, Honors Program, Summer Transition Program, the WELL, and First Year Experience.
- Safe, high quality, modern facilities are needed to support the program operations and to meet the service and living environment expectations of a contemporary student. Attracting high quality students in higher education is competitive, and the Housing program is often a deciding factor for students because of its link to quality of life and academic support. Parents and students expect on-campus housing to keep pace with safety, technology, and convenience improvements. A program that does not keep pace will lose students to other peer institutions, possibly in other states.

- The overall instructional mission of Virginia Tech is the “education of the whole person”. This goal recognizes that a significant and important part of student education happens outside of the classroom. The co-curricular opportunities for learning happen within residence halls, in student union buildings, through campus recreation and intramurals, campus organizations, and campus leadership opportunities. A student learns many things through being part of a residence hall community. They learn conflict resolution by living daily in a room with another person and having to communicate their needs, and respond to the other person’s perceptions and needs. They learn responsibility by sharing a room and having to consider the other person’s rights as an equal in that shared room. They learn to communicate with one another, and learn what positive methods of communication are and what unproductive methods are. Students learn to live with different people and come to appreciate differences in culture, race, and ethnicity. There is continual intentional programming in residence halls by student development educators that address a wide range of topics from relationship problems to study skills. This learning is part of the residence hall experience and different from living in an apartment. Studies have shown that students that live on campus are more involved in the other areas of learning on campus. It is clear that a key to co-curricular learning is to attract and retain students on campus. This is accomplished through offering modern and up to date residence halls.
- Currently, of the 8,922 beds available on campus only 10 percent (900 beds) are in air-conditioned space. Residential space that is not air-conditioned is unsatisfactory to the students and is a distraction in the learning process. This \$10 million project will positively impact residential students and increase air conditioned living space on campus. A student’s living environment is a critical component of University life at a comprehensive institution, and therefore, the accommodations should be conducive to learning. Other upgrades would be: additional study space, refurbished bathrooms, improved lighting, additional lounge and gathering space, and structural and HVAC system enhancements which meet today’s code.

3. Alignment to strategic plan:

These renovations and upgrades of existing residence and dining halls will support Virginia Tech’s strategic plan in the area of Undergraduate Education. These improvements will increase the quality, safety, functionality and attractiveness of residential and dining facilities available to current and prospective Virginia Tech students and support the following university goals:

Undergraduate Education:

1. Maintain a current, relevant, and comprehensive undergraduate curriculum.
3. Create learning experiences for undergraduate students that maximize the benefits of attending a large research university.
5. Manage the undergraduate enrollment to ensure a quality undergraduate experience and fiscal responsibility.

D. Options Considered

The options considered, but not selected, include building a new facility (\$35 million replacement cost) to replace the existing facility and deferring the improvements until a future biennium when system-wide repairs are needed. Both of these options were not

selected because of their high cost relative to a steady, on-going renovation plan. Further, deferring renovations until system-wide improvements are needed will cause a significant disruption in service delivery when buildings are taken off-line for extended periods of time. Removing one or more buildings from service for more than a year has significant consequences because student demand for services cannot be met for an overdue period of time and there is significant loss of potential revenue from user fees. Thus, the University must make every effort to avoid this potential outcome by implementing a strategy to keep facilities up-to-date with smaller, incremental improvements that address student needs and minimize the amount of time buildings are off-line.

E. Project Schedule Changes:

NONE.