

COUGAR CONSTRUCTION CONNECTION



Facilities/Construction Management
Division of Administration
& Finance

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Welcome to the Cougar Construction Connection. Our quarterly newsletter is dedicated to updating the Cougar community about the many exciting construction projects happening around campus.

In this issue, you'll find updates on key projects including:

- Renovations for Charles F. McElhinney Hall, Agnes Arnold Hall, and the Texas Medical Center
- Developments of new buildings such as Innovation Hub, the Hobby School of Public Affairs, and more

As construction continues, we know that getting around campus can be a challenge. Be sure to check out the online map for construction zones and open pathways: <https://www.uh.edu/maps/>

Building Futures, Maintaining Excellence

Charles F. McElhinney Renovation Complete

As part of its Core Renovation Project, the University of Houston has completed renovations for Charles F. McElhinney Hall. These renovations, which included the full replacement of electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems, supported the College of Education's relocation to McElhinney Hall.

The award-winning College of Education now calls McElhinney Hall its home. Located in the heart of campus, the building contains many classrooms, student support spaces, teaching labs, and offices for faculty and staff.



Agnes Arnold Hall Renovation Update

The scope of building renovations at Agnes Arnold Hall features important upgrades to building-wide safety/security, electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems, bringing them up to current day standards.

The project will also renovate classrooms while refreshing student support spaces and faculty/staff offices. It remains on track to be ready for the start of Fall 2027 classes.



Centennial Construction Project in Motion

University Drive

The University Drive project will display the transformation of the roadway(s) between MLK Blvd. and Cullen Performance Hall with additional enhancements between MLK Blvd. and Spur 5. The new University Drive will prioritize pedestrian movement and feature outdoor gathering spaces, trees and landscaping, and a gateway marker. New spaces have already opened, so be sure to stop by and see.



Centennial Plaza

The new Centennial Plaza will offer new benches, tables, and chairs, inviting students to gather together and connect. The University also looks forward to Centennial Plaza's role as a beautiful space for hosting ceremonial events, with improvements to the fountain and upgraded landscaping. The first space in the area has just debuted with many more to follow.



Wilhelmina's Grove

The University revealed the newly refreshed Wilhelmina's Grove in November 2025. The Grove now features improved accessibility, a covered stage and beautiful amphitheater, greenery, and a fountain. Be sure to take a stroll and experience this newly upgraded environment.



Centennial Hall on the Rise

Centennial Hall is a new Freshman dorm that will add about 1,000 new beds, bringing the University to its goal of being able to house 10,000 students starting with the Fall 2027 semester. Centennial Hall is next to Cougar Woods.

Amenities at Centennial Hall will include lounges, study rooms, and shared kitchens to help foster the student community. There will also be apartments for faculty in residence.

In late March, representatives from the University, design partners, and construction industry came together to celebrate the topping-out ceremony, a key construction milestone.



Read more about the topping-out ceremony here:

<https://www.uh.edu/facilities/news-and-events/stories/2026/may-26/topping-out-ceremony.php>

Innovation Hub Underway



Fencing is now up and construction has begun at the Innovation Hub Building site, formerly the location of the now-demolished Technology Annex Building.

The Innovation Hub Building project will create a dedicated center for makers, entrepreneurs, and innovators. The building will house the Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Center for Entrepreneur-

ship, the Energy Transition Institute, a multidisciplinary maker space, an energy innovation space, dry labs, and faculty/staff offices. The Innovation Hub building is also expected to house the Dakri Center for Economic Inclusion and Aspire Institute.

Hobby School Building

The Hobby School of Public Affairs will call a new building home in the new two years. Construction zone fencing for the Academic Building went up on May 2026 at the site of the former John O'Quinn Law Library, where the new project will be built.

The three-story facility will span approximately 60,000 GSF. Designers have planned features such as classrooms, dry labs, student-centered gathering spaces, staff spaces, and an auditorium within the building. The project will reuse the former O'Quinn site to keep open green space available for the campus.



The Texas Medical Center

The University of Houston's Texas Medical Center Building is currently undergoing renovations in order to house UH health initiatives including the new Population Health Complex. The spaces will feature workplace elements and amenities for students, faculty, and visitors.

Construction and design representatives celebrated project progress with a dry-in ceremony in late May 2026. Dry-in ceremonies mark the moment when a building's exterior is completely enclosed and sealed to protect it from inclement weather, allowing crews to pivot to interior work.



New Medical Research Building



The new three-story Medical Research Building will feature research/teaching laboratories, faculty and staff offices, and a vivarium, in support of College of Medicine Researchers.

This project is the next in the series for development of the University's medical campus, also adding additional infrastructure such as parking, roads, and utilities. The groundbreaking will take place soon and construction will be completed in 2028.

Student Center North Expansion

With student mental health and wellbeing a top priority for the University, UH will expand Student Center North to centralize student services programs. The Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Career Services, Veteran Services, and Student Organizations will be housed in the expanded building to make it easier for students to access these services all at one location.



The expanded site will feature counseling spaces, student spaces, faculty/staff offices, and conference rooms. The University has scheduled the project to begin this winter.

Campus Lighting Map

The University is pleased to share two new resources in support of the campus lighting project: an interactive map and a progress video. Users can click on different areas on the map to see which parts of the project are complete, in-progress, scheduled, and more. The progress video shows before- and after- drone footage of improvements to parking lots. All lighting improvements serve one purpose: to make campus safer for the UH community.

See the map and video here:

<https://www.uh.edu/facilities/campus-lighting-map/>



Check out the Live Construction Webcams



The University offers several webcams that show live construction underway. Check out the following projects and more at <https://www.uh.edu/web-cameras/>

- Centennial Projects
- Freshman Student Housing - Centennial Hall
- Innovation Hub
- Hobby School of Public Affairs

Explore quick facts on major projects approved by the UH System Board of Regents on our projects website: <https://www.uh.edu/facilities-planning-construction/bor-projects/>



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Have any feedback? Email us at FACCOMM@Central.UH.edu. We'd love to connect with you.