



## **Capital Budget Testimony to the Maryland General Assembly**

Presented by Dr. Robert L. Caret

President, Towson University

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## Towson University: Maryland's Metropolitan University is Building Excitement

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to come before you today to discuss Towson University's role as a leader in higher education, the primary growth institution, and a workforce engine for the State of

Maryland. We created a clear vision for our future in our strategic plan, *Towson 2010: Mapping the Future*.

### Towson University – Our Campus

Towson University is an urban campus covering 328-acres in the county seat. Our campus is surrounded by strong neighborhoods, divided by major county and state roads and intertwined with 3 local hospitals. The TU campus includes 44 structures, including 24 academic/support, 12 university residence halls, 2 dining halls, and 3 parking garages. Our academic buildings date from 1914 with most of the campus built in the 1960s and 70s.

Towson University's Master Plan presents a plan to guide current and future growth of the institution as well as renovating and refurbishing our older structures to meet the space and technological needs of the campus.

I testified earlier in the legislative session about our progress in terms of enrollment growth and mix, the geographic expansion of critically needed academic programs, and our thriving partnerships. I discussed how Towson University's leadership role in the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities has helped us focus on our mission to offer a high quality education to a broad cross-section of Maryland's citizens. Today, I would like to share with you our needs for capital resources that fully support the State's goals of educational accessibility and institutional growth. First and foremost, Towson University wants to fulfill the educational needs of our current students and meet the complex academic needs of a growing population of future learners.

## Working Together to Build a Bright Future

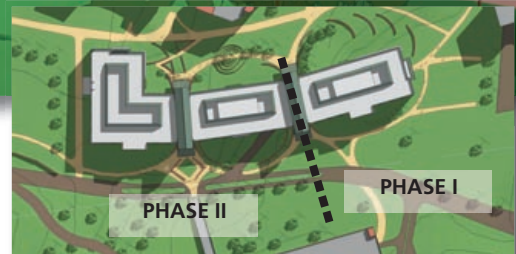
I would like to thank the Governor and members of the General Assembly for your continued support of Towson University's capital improvement plan, and I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our current projects.

The completion of both phases of the **College of Liberal Arts Complex** (253,000 gross square feet) will enable the University to deliver additional classroom, research, laboratory, and student study spaces as well as offices for faculty and staff. Phase I of the building is slated for completion

in June 2009 with the construction of Phase II beginning in July 2009.

By adding a temporary wall between Phase I and Phase II of the building, we plan to occupy Phase I in fall 2009. This will partially alleviate some space constraints on campus. Planning funds for the College of Liberal Arts project were received in FY05 and FY06. Phase I construction funds

were received in FY07. In FY08, we are scheduled to receive an additional \$13.5 million to complete construction of Phase I. In FY09, we are scheduled to receive \$4 million for equipment to furnish the first phase of the building. Phase I of the College of Liberal Arts Complex is on schedule and will deliver approximately 100,000 of the 253,000 gross square feet of the total approved building complex. With your assistance, we can keep the College of Liberal Arts Complex on track to be ready for the fall class of 2011.



Maintaining this schedule along with authorization to contract for the College of Liberal Arts facility as one project (with phased funding) will allow the university to take advantage of contractual, logistical and financial opportunities to deliver the entire building in a timely manner to support enrollment increases.

College of Health Professions Building

The other two projects that are in the Governor’s five-year budget are the **Campus-Wide Site, Safety, and Infrastructure** and the **College of Health Professions** projects. Phase I of the Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Infrastructure Improvements project received a funding allocation in the FY07 budget. The construction funding amount of \$16.5 million for Phase I to be allocated in FY08 has been deferred to FY09. The deferral of this funding and further deferral of Phase II design and construction for the Campus-Wide Site, Safety, and Infrastructure Improvements lengthen construction times and lead to prolonged disruption of our campus. Significant cost savings that can be realized through the coordination of the Campus-Wide Site, Safety, and Infrastructure Improvements project with the College of Liberal Arts project will be compromised. In addition, the first year of design funding for the College of Health Professions building was deferred three years from FY09 to FY12. It is essential to fund and complete these projects on time in order to meet the academic needs of our current students and accommodate planned enrollment growth. There are critical workforce shortages in the health professions in Maryland. These shortages will not be addressed without Towson’s participation.

Towson University is planning to grow to 25,000 students by 2012 assuming additional facility and operational funds are provided by the State. We have planned our facility growth to coincide with targeted enrollment growth in order to increase capacity without compromising academic quality. Again, the timing of funding for the design and construction of the College of Liberal Arts Complex, the Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Infrastructure project, and the College of Health Professions project is extremely important if Towson University is to meet the academic and space needs of the current student body and achieve our goals related to accessibility and enrollment growth and mix.



Artist’s rendering of the new ‘Main Quad’ area of campus, highlighting the College of Health Professions Building. From Towson University Campus Master Plan 2003-2013.

## Creating Space for a Growing Campus: Current and Five Year Capital Project Priorities

Our capital budget priorities are consistent with and advance the University's strategic plan, *Towson 2010: Mapping the Future*, as well the *Towson University Campus Master Plan, 2003-2013*. The University's two highest priorities for the FY08 Capital budget year are to:

- Maintain in FY08 the \$13.5 million for construction of the College of Liberal Arts Complex, Phase I.
- Restore back to FY08 the \$3.6 million for design of Phase II of the College of Liberal Arts Complex.

For Towson University to meet the needs of today's students and the enrollment growth goals of the future, funding for the following capital projects is needed over the **next five years**:

- **Phase II of the College of Liberal Arts Complex project.** As stated, completion of both phases will result in an academic building with 253,000 gross square feet that will provide much-needed classroom, laboratory, and office space. In addition to accommodating planned enrollment growth, completion of the project will consolidate ten departments of the College into one integrated facility. Currently, departments within the College of Liberal Arts are housed in four separate buildings. Bringing the Liberal Arts faculty, staff, and students together in one building will improve instructional delivery and operational efficiency.
- **Both phases of the Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Infrastructure Improvements project.** Upgrades to roadways, pedestrian walkways and lighting systems will improve infrastructure and increase safety across campus. Storm water drainage and other infrastructure and utility systems will be improved to support new building projects and comply with state regulatory requirements. It is important to note that most of the infrastructure systems in the main campus area were designed and constructed over 30 years ago to serve a student population of approximately 9,000 and a much smaller campus physical plant. These systems are inadequate for the current enrollment of 19,000 and not capable of supporting the additional buildings and enrollment proposed over the next several years.
- **Completion of the College of Health Professions project.** Towson University is committed to addressing projected workforce shortages by creating, improving, and expanding our academic programs in the health professions. The completion of this project is essential for us to provide more instructional, research and clinical spaces to prepare students for careers in nursing, occupational therapy and other critically needed science and health professions. Towson University is the largest producer of graduates with bachelor's



The Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Infrastructure Improvements Project includes a new main entry plaza for the university.

**Completion of the College of Health Professions project, continued**

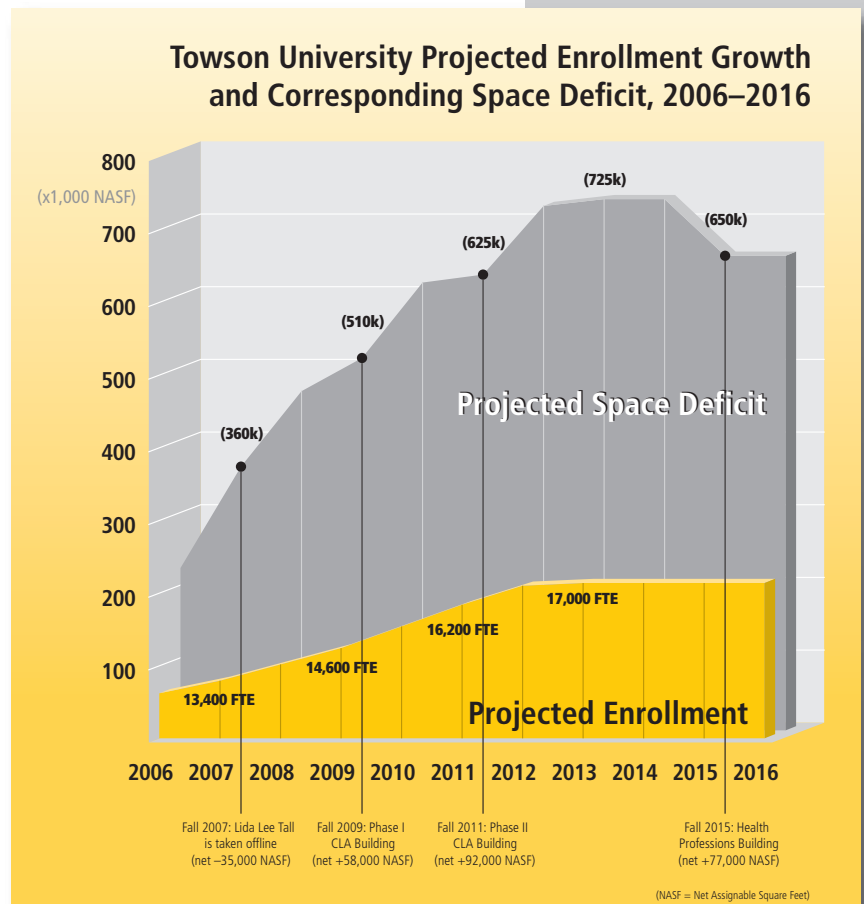
and master’s degrees in health professions and the second largest producer of nurses in the state. If we are to continue to educate students who can fulfill workforce needs in the health professions, we must have adequate classroom and laboratory space as well as appropriate equipment. An additional benefit of the project is the consolidation of five College of Health Professions departments into one building, bringing together expertise and resources to increase efficiency and academic excellence.

**Addressing Challenges: Growing Concerns for FY09-FY12**

Towson University’s key capital projects have been carefully planned to coincide with planned enrollment growth over the next five to seven years. Delays in the capital project schedules will reduce enrollment growth. Our priority is to provide the highest level of academic quality to our students. Growing enrollment without the requisite increase in physical plant capacity will result in substantial growth in campus space deficits and negatively impact our ability to serve more students. The associated chart documents the space deficit growth that will occur with deferral of capital project schedules. Deferrals to funding schedules proposed in the current budget impact our ability to serve our current students and to be accessible to more of Maryland’s students in the future.

Specifically, we have concerns about the following delays:

- Funding for the design, construction, and equipping of Phase II of the College of Liberal Arts Complex has been deferred by one year to FY09, FY10, and FY11 respectively.
- Funding for the construction of Phase I of the Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Infrastructure Improvements project has been deferred by one year to FY09.
- Design and construction of Phase II of the Campus-Wide Site, Safety and Improvements project has been deferred by three years to FY12 and FY13 respectively.
- Funding for the design, construction, and equipping of the College of Health Professions has been deferred by three years to FY12, FY13, FY14 and FY15 respectively.



## **Building Excitement at Maryland's Metropolitan University**

Quality, accessibility, and affordability are important components of higher education in Maryland. It is clear that the State of Maryland, the University System of Maryland, and Towson University are united in their commitment to offer an outstanding education to our citizens. Towson University graduates more than 4,000 students annually. Eighty percent of Towson University's graduates remain to live and work in Maryland, so it is vitally important for us to educate, train, and retain Maryland's talent. This year, Towson University celebrates its 141st year as an institution of higher learning and a workforce engine for the State. As Maryland's Metropolitan University, we remain committed to working with local and State governments and other community partners to ensure the success of our students and graduates. Thank you for your investment in our success in the past and for working with us to develop a compatible strategy for facility and enrollment growth in the future. With your support we will continue to advance our mission, meet critical workforce needs, and provide expertise to address social, economic and community issues- and our physical campus will reflect the pride and energy we bring to that task.

Thank you.





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