

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE RESIDENCE EXPANSION  
REPORT OF THE PROJECT COMMITTEE  
Revised Report | September 09, 2002**

**Note: The title page, the Table of Contents and the Executive Summary  
are attached.**

**The full Report is available at the following URL:  
<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/bac/details/pb/2002-03/pba20020917-04c.pdf>  
or a copy can be viewed in the Office of the Governing Council.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The demand for residence places at the University of Toronto, especially places for first year students, has grown steadily over the last few years. To cope with this growth, *Expanding Residence Capacity at the University of Toronto*, which was developed from the *Raising Our Sights* companion document *Student Housing: A Plan for the Next Phase*, called for the addition of 1935 places for undergraduate students at the colleges on the St. George campus.

University College is the founding college of the University of Toronto and as such plays a special role in the life of the University. It has a proud history of openness and diversity. UC alumni can be found among the leaders nationally and internationally in business, the arts, politics and academia. The development of additional residence spaces is a critical component of the current UC plan. In order to maintain its role as a leader in undergraduate education and attract and retain the best students, the College must have adequate housing facilities.

University College has the most critical need for student housing of all colleges on the St. George campus. It currently can only house 12% of its students. This compares unfavorably with similar colleges, Victoria (24%), St. Michael's (24%) and Trinity (36%), and consequences of this includes displacement of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students, little housing for exchange, transfer or international students and most critically, diluting its ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest students.

University College's current residences – Whitney Hall and the Sir Daniel Wilson residence – together house approximately 450 students. Based on the guideline in *Student Housing: A Plan for the Next Phase* that the University should have the capacity to house ~25% of its student population, University College's residential capacity should be approximately 900 places. The Project Committee has recommended the construction of 282 new residence places for undergraduate students including two handicapped accessible/short stay rooms, a number which will bring the housing capacity at the College to approximately 20% of the College's full-time equivalent enrolment. In addition to student residence beds, the space program calls for five dons' suites and a Residence Life-Coordinator apartment. Thus, the expansion program calls for the addition of 288 places to the College's housing stock.

In January 2000, the Principal of University College brought together a Project Committee composed of students, faculty and staff. Key alumni have also formed an informal advisory group to the Principal. Over the past two and a half years the College has examined a number of potential building sites. These have included the western edge of the back campus, adding a north/south wing to complete the eastern edge of the Sir Daniel Wilson residence quadrangle and the current choice using an approved building site (Site 22). Because of the sensitive nature of the University College precinct lands, the College has been committed to examining all siting possibilities and feels the current choice best meets UC needs and recognizes the historically sensitive position the College plays on the St. George campus. Numerous town hall meetings have taken place. College Council has unanimously approved both the need for residence and the current location and the University College Alumni Association and University College Committee have both unanimously recognized the need for a residence and support the location.

The new residence will be built in a dormitory style, with washrooms and small common kitchens shared by houses of approximately 55 students. Two bedrooms will be fully accessible, and the layout of all spaces will incorporate the principles of universal design.

Students will be grouped into 5 “houses” of approximately 55 persons; each house will have a common room assigned to it. Two television rooms, a music room, a meeting room, two short-term stay rooms, and a laundry facility will be shared by all students. As much as possible, in order to reduce costs to students, common space will be designed to have multi-purpose use.

The new residence places will house a mix of first-year and upper-year students. Careful attention will be paid to security issues, especially in light of the expected lower age of direct-entry students as a result of the elimination of Grade 13 in Ontario.

The design and detailing of the new residence will be of a good quality, particularly in its exterior finishes; it will be compatible with the historic buildings that surround it and will reflect their collegiate character.

Site planning for the residence expansion program at University College anticipates the new residence will allow the creation of newly defined and improved green spaces within the University College precinct of the St. George campus.

The new residence will eliminate the surface parking from Site 22, but will allow for the creation of an improved east-west pedestrian walkway and sight lines connecting the Back Campus to St. George Street adjacent to the University College Union building. The existing sunken rose garden south of the UC Union will be revised in place or re-located and incorporated into the over-all University College landscape plan.

The space program for the residence expansion totals 4836 net assignable square meters (7406 gross square metres, including switchgear and mechanical room). There will be an increase in all residence fees to achieve this plan: 8% per year for 3 years and then adjusted annually to carry the cost of the construction and operation of the residence. This financial model has been reviewed by the Financial Services Department and conforms to University policy guidelines.

Based on preliminary approval in April 2002, the Sorbara Group was engaged to facilitate the design and construction of the University College residence. In order to best achieve an economical project, this firm – known for their recent experience with the particularly economical and recently completed St. Michael’s College residence - were hired to expedite the process.

Five architectural firms, with proven University residential experience, were asked to respond to a request for proposals to construct the residence. The Zeidler Grinnell Partnership were chosen to design the UC residence and have been working with Sorbarra and the Project Committee since their hire in June 2002. Based on the collaborative work between Sorbara and the Zeidler Grinnell Partnership, the building program, building area and total project cost have been revised and are included herein.