

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Detroit Observatory  
Classroom and Accessibility Addition

Action Requested: Approval of Schematic Design and Authorization to Proceed with Construction

Background:

At the February 2018 meeting, the Board of Regents approved the Detroit Observatory Classroom and Accessibility Addition project and the appointment of Harley Ellis Devereaux as the architectural firm for its design. Constructed in 1854, the Detroit Observatory is the second-oldest building on campus and the university's first dedicated scientific research laboratory. Two additions were constructed in 1868 and 1908 as the facility's teaching mission evolved, and in 1999, a restoration of the building was completed. The Detroit Observatory is a historic resource for the university and surrounding community, but it lacks accessibility, classrooms, restrooms, and support spaces that would allow it to be a destination that links the university's history of scientific study to the present and beyond. This project will construct an addition of approximately 7,000 gross square feet to the Detroit Observatory that will provide a flexible multi-use classroom, a new entry and reception area, restrooms, storage, and catering and support spaces. Additional improvements include a new elevator and stair as well as site work to allow for improved accessibility and greater connectivity. The project includes significant earthwork and specialized footings and foundations to protect the historic building and support the partially below-grade addition and landscape above. Only a minor renovation of the existing building to accommodate the addition is planned. The scope of this project includes the architectural, electrical, and mechanical work necessary to accomplish these improvements. Although there will be a temporary loss of some adjacent parking spaces during construction, there will be no permanent impact on parking from this project.

The estimated cost of the project is \$10,000,000. Funding will be provided from Bentley Historical Library gifts and resources and investment proceeds. The construction cash flow may be provided, all or in part, by bond proceeds or increasing the commercial paper issuance under the commercial paper program, secured by a pledge of General Revenues, and authorized by the Board of Regents. The project is expected to provide an average of 13 on-site construction jobs. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2020.

We recommend that the Board of Regents approve the schematic design for the Detroit Observatory Classroom and Accessibility Addition project as presented at the meeting and authorize proceeding with construction providing that bids are within the approved budget.

Respectfully submitted,



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Kevin P. Hegarty  
Executive Vice President and  
Chief Financial Officer