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Construction starts on new apartments

■ Two buildings, each with 36 one-bedroom apartments, will be built to the east of the University

By Brooke Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

About 25 people attended Tuesday's groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the University's construction of a new apartment complex for graduate and law students.

The complex will consist of two buildings, each with 36 one-bedroom apartments. The new housing project will be located between Moss and Villard streets, east of the current Bean Complex and north of 15th Avenue.

Michael Eyster, director of the Office of University Housing, said the one-and-a-half-acre complex will be ready for students by fall of 2001, and the city has given project organizers permission to begin construction.

The University should have a bid for a construction contract by early next week.

The State Board of Higher Education approved the \$4.5 million housing project in June. The project is being financed by state bonds that will be repaid with generated rent revenue from the future tenants. The apartment rental rates have yet to be determined.

Deciding where the new apartments should be located was the most difficult decision, Eyster said. He is satisfied with the final site,

however, because students will have several advantages. The complex will be close to grocery stores, bus lines and the law school.

A disadvantage of the complex's location is noise from the nearby bread bakery, but Jim Lewis, principal architect of gLAs Architectural Group, which designed the project, is addressing the problem. He said there will be a parking lot north of the apartments to provide a buffer between students and the noise.

University President Dave Frohn-mayer said he is looking forward to the new complex because he thinks it will establish a sense of community among graduate students. Frohn-mayer said one advantage of the new housing is that students will be surrounded by other people engaged in research, which should promote a positive atmosphere for studying and learning.

"I remember from my days as a student," he said, "that a sense of community really occurs on a small scale."

At least one group is unhappy about the housing project. Fliers were posted near 13th Avenue prior to the groundbreaking event, stating that several trees and historical homes will be cut down to make room for the apartments. No groups in opposition appeared at the event.

Eyster said that no historical buildings were torn down. There were two houses in question — one was falling apart and the other has been moved, he said.

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