

UH LAW CENTER

NEW BUILDING FOR LEADING LAW SCHOOL IN NATION'S 4TH LARGEST CITY

The University of Houston Law Center is nationally recognized in health, intellectual property, energy, and environmental law. UHLC is also a hub of professional excellence that supports Houston as a world class city. To showcase its academic excellence and capture the natural advantages of its location in Houston, the Law Center is planning a new, \$90 million, five-story building to secure its place among the nation's top tier law schools. With construction scheduled to begin in 2021, the facility will be a true center for cross-disciplinary education and scholarship. The new facility will also replace a storm-damaged structure. The new building with its modern technology and flexible space will enhance student learning and faculty teaching capabilities and draw industry leaders to UHLC – increasing its economic and social impact across our state, the region and the globe.



A FACILITY BEFITTING A WORLD CLASS LAW SCHOOL

- Established in 1947, The Law Center has grown in prominence with three nationally ranked programs- Health Law #2, Intellectual Property #5, and Part-Time Program #7. The LL.M. programs in Health Law and Energy Law are ranked in the top 10 in the world.
- The faculty is nationally recognized, annually publishing over 150 law review articles, books, book chapters, and monographs. Twenty of the faculty are members of the American Law Institute, an organization of the most prominent judges, lawyers, and law professors in the country.
- The Law Center has grown to more than 16,000 alumni world-wide, who are leaders in the judiciary (like Ruby Kless Sondock, Raul Gonzalez Jr., Gray Miller, and Jeff Brown), corporate law firms, C Suites, and government and public interest offices.

A NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The Law Center has one of the oldest non-adapted law school buildings in the U.S., and the building has several significant deficiencies.
- The building has no lobby or central entrance, making it difficult for visitors to find their destination. In particular, the Law Center's ability to serve the public is hampered because clients of the legal aid clinics cannot easily find or access them.
- Built before the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), the Law Center's present structure is largely noncompliant with the ADA.
- 54 percent of the facility's square footage is below ground, which forces students to spend much of their time underground in a perplexing maze of multiple buildings, limiting student opportunities to interact or study. These below-ground spaces are most prone to future storm damage.



LEAKAGE, WATER INTRUSION, AND FLOODING

- The Law Center has never fully recovered from the severe flooding of Tropical Storm Allison in 2001. Hurricanes Ike and Harvey or even moderately heavy rainfall continue to plague the facility, demonstrating that it is beyond justifiable repair.
- The building is 54 percent underground exposing operational space that continues to suffer recurring storm damage from constant leakage and flooding.
- Since Tropical Storm Allison flooded the subterranean levels of the Law Center in 2001, the Law Center has suffered flooding and water intrusion costs, repairs and damages of approximately \$70 million, including \$40 million in a rare-book and library collection and approximately \$30 million in damage to the facility.
- Due to flooding, the Law Center has lost the ability to utilize a large percentage of its library space.
- Since Allison, the University of Houston has regularly poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into water mitigation and resiliency efforts at the Law Center, but these have served only as a temporary fix, marginally minimizing ongoing and future flooding losses and ongoing repairs.
- Today, the Law Center continues to suffer water intrusion and flooding from large storms like Hurricane Harvey and the tax-day floods and smaller downpours events we experience regularly in Houston.

FUEL OUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

- The Law Center needs a building suited to a modern, integrative curriculum. It needs a building that enables, not hinders, its ability to produce leaders and serve its community.
- With modern online technology, every classroom can be a portal to the world, and every faculty office can be its own production studio.
- A new Law Center facility will have an ample-sized, modern library with more electronic sources than stacks and more space for students to study on campus.
- Law schools that have built new law school buildings in the last decade have experienced a positive “rankings effect.” The typical pattern of this “effect” occurs in the decade following the completion of a new building, where a law school will settle into a permanently higher ranking, oftentimes 10 or 20 spots higher than before the building was built.
- A new, modern building with collaborative teaching spaces, accessible and professional clinical facilities, and spaces to engage the greater community, should ensconce the Law Center within the top tier, benefitting the city of Houston and the University of Houston.
- Building a new UHLC facility should significantly increase the UHLC’s overall rankings, adding another top-ranked public law school for the residents of Texas.