

ASU construction projects for 2026 will include 2 iconic buildings

Improvements to student buildings, new residence halls also in store

By Mary Beth Faller, ASU News
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Work on one of Arizona State University's most significant construction projects is scheduled to start this year, joining a lineup that includes signature new builds to support the community and renovations to improve the student experience.

The new ASU Health building, a 200,000-square-foot structure in downtown Phoenix, will house the John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering, the Health Observatory at ASU and the School of Technology for Public Health.

Other projects this year include the John S. McCain III Library and Museum in Tempe, new residence halls and the university's first 3D-printed structure, which will be on the Polytechnic campus.

Here's a closer look at the university's construction plans for 2026.

ASU Health

Construction for the ASU Health building is expected to begin in July and finish before the start of the fall 2028 semester. It will [join downtown's Phoenix Bioscience Core](#) innovation zone.

The project budget is about \$200 million for construction and equipment, according to Tim Smith, vice president for facilities development management at ASU.

"The unique thing about ASU Health is that the med school of the future is not defined. So we're trying to define that as the train is moving and the tracks are being laid," he said.

“A lot of it will be tech driven. The augmented reality, virtual reality and ways that our students will learn are not the way that most traditional med schools have approached it.”

A related project is the \$8 million renovation of the Mercado building on the Downtown Phoenix campus, which is wrapping up now because that site will house ASU Health until the new building opens.

John S. McCain III Library and Museum

Another iconic project for this year is the John S. McCain III Library and Museum, dedicated to the legacy of the former Arizona senator and war hero.

A [ceremonial ground-breaking](#) was held in January and construction on the \$187 million project is expected to begin in late spring and finish in the fall of 2028. The 80,000-square-foot building will include an immersive museum, library, café, lecture hall, event spaces and multipurpose space for ASU and the community.

In 2012, McCain donated his archives to ASU, which will digitize the documents in the new facility.

The museum will be on the site of the former Community Services Building on Curry Road, which has been demolished. That building, constructed in 1963, was originally a tuberculosis hospital.

Polytechnic campus projects

Two student-centered projects are happening this year on the Polytechnic campus, which serves more than 6,100 undergraduate and graduate students.

The Student Union will be renovated — roughly doubling its size — and a 3D-printed shade and market structure will be added at the campus shuttle stop.

The \$66 million Student Union work will also include renovating the existing space — including the dining options and bookstore — plus adding lounges, classrooms and meeting rooms for student organizations.

Work is scheduled to begin this summer and finish next summer.

The 3D-printed structure, which has no timeline yet, will be next to the ISTB 12 facility and is a collaboration with Aramark, ASU’s dining service provider. The 1,200-square-foot building, which will be the university’s first 3D-printed project, will include a market and will provide shade for people waiting at the campus shuttle stop.

It works like this: The site is gridded, and, instead of using filament like the 3D printers in a makerspace, the large-scale construction printer nozzle layers coils of concrete in a computer-set pattern.

Bateman Physical Sciences Center's H-wing

An ongoing project is the modernization of the Bateman Physical Sciences Center's H-wing, which has started and will be done in phases.

"We're doing a lot of the infrastructure related to the mechanical equipment, a lot of the stuff behind the walls that most people don't see," Smith said.

Then the west side of the building will be upgraded while classes are held on the east side, with completion expected in summer 2028.

The \$115 million project will include new laboratories, infrastructure and mechanical systems and modernization of the laboratories that were built in 1991.

"It's going to give us 17 wet labs, 15 dry labs and 24 offices. So that really improves the efficiency and the modernization, which is the primary focus of this project," he said.

Desert Financial Arena

Another signature upgrade this year will be at Desert Financial Arena, a [\\$100 million project](#) to energize the fan experience at the home of the Sun Devils' men's and women's basketball, volleyball, gymnastics and wrestling teams.

The three-year, multiphase renovation will begin this summer with replacing more than 700 seats in the lower bowl with padded seats that include cupholders. Two-hundred wider "premium" chairs will be installed.

"A lot of the infrastructure that goes under the court, for all the multimedia requirements like instant replay and broadcast capabilities, will be modernized this summer," Smith said.

Other upgrades will include a new court, new loge boxes, new restrooms and the renovation of existing restrooms, locker room renovations, new and upgraded concession stand offerings, an elevator and a new video board.

The project is scheduled to be completed by December 2029.

The arena was built in 1974.

"With a complete modernization, it'll have a little bit more of a 21st-century kind of feel as opposed to mid-century," Smith said.

New residence halls

Another project will improve the on-campus living experience for students on the Tempe campus.

Best, Irish and Hayden halls will be demolished this year and construction will begin on a new residential complex to replace them on the site that's between ASU Gammage and the Apache Parking structure, Smith said.

"These are 1940s and 1950s-era buildings, so they're pretty aged. And we're looking at including a bookstore and campus marketplace in addition to the residential complex," he said.

The first phase of the project will result in about 800 beds, available by fall 2028, plus more efficient space and a better student experience.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



The Student Union on the Polytechnic campus as seen from a drone on April 8, 2025. The building will start undergoing renovations this year. Photo by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University