

Measure J funds give Bakersfield College a face-lift

- By EMMA GALLEGOS egallegos@bakersfield.com
- Feb 1, 2021



A new science and engineering building is being constructed on the campus of Bakersfield College because of funds brought on from Measure J, a \$502.8 million bond that was approved by Kern County voters in November 2016.

- Alex Horvath / The Californian

Bakersfield College opened its Panorama Campus nearly 65 years ago. To help the campus gracefully age, the college asked voters to approve Measure J in 2016 to do everything from small changes that make buildings more accessible to important infrastructure changes to teardowns all around campus.

Those who haven't been on campus for some time — maybe because they have been attending classes online — can see the first signs of a Measure J face-lift on the

perimeter of campus in the new signage, welcoming them to campus. But that's only a start.

Kern County voters approved the \$502.8 million Measure J bond, and BC received \$415 million for various improvement and construction projects across campus. The college has been using the 30-year bond to build on an accelerated timeline.

Construction had been in progress well before the pandemic hit, but coronavirus hadn't greatly affected construction, according to Mike Giacomini, the vice president of Finance and Administrative Services. There might be a supplier or manufacturer issue, but on the other hand, he adds, it was sort of nice to not worry about jackhammers interrupting classes this year.

One set of buildings nearing completion is the Campus Center. One is a multistory student center that includes a 450-seat conference room. The smaller dining commons with its fireside room was revamped and modernized for increased capacity rather than torn down, because it held historic value to the campus.

The pair are part of a larger plan to focus all student services in one section of campus, so students won't have to trek all over to find what they need. The current bookstore and business services will later house College Safety, the Health Center, Marketing, Human Resources, Institutional Research and Financial & Administrative Services.

"Student services will all be consolidated into one area," Giacomini said.

The new three-story Science and Engineering Building has gotten literally off the ground. Though there will be some faculty space, it will largely be a space for students to do lab work and attend lecture. Giacomini said the college had long waiting lists for these classes that were unacceptable.

"Really, it's a space dedicated to student learning," he said.

Memorial Stadium, the most historic place on campus, is well on its way to being modernized. It has new synthetic turf, a new PA system and scoreboard. Its concession stands have been revamped and made more accessible with lower windows. The last phase is an overhaul of the press box.

Nearby construction hasn't yet started on the Gym & Field House but space has been cleared for the space for the new gym, office spaces, classrooms, weight room, a field house, locker rooms, training rooms and a fitness center.

Throughout the campus are all sorts of less-visible but crucial infrastructure changes. One of them has been especially important to students who sit in the free parking lot doing homework or attending classes in their cars: WiFi.

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Print](#)
- [Save](#)