

Events Center Construction Moves Forward

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This artist rendering is a “looking to the east” view of the new events center to be built at SWOSU.

The new events center at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford will have multiple uses to accommodate the functions and expectations of the university, its students and area residents.

Construction managers for the 90,000 plus square feet center are Joe D. Hall and Jim Loomis, both long-time western Oklahomans with many years of construction experience. Hall and Loomis will oversee the approximate \$19 million in construction costs.

Bids have been awarded to various contractors. Expected completion date for the center is late 2012/early 2013.

When the idea for the events center started during the City of Weatherford’s “Vision 2020” strategic planning process, the proposed center was expected to be around 72,000 square feet. A design team—comprised of university, city and community representatives—started work on the concept/design and developed the larger building that is expected to meet the needs of SWOSU students and western Oklahoma residents for many years.

“It simply came down to this issue,” SWOSU President Randy Beutler said. “Do we build the 72,000 square feet center and leave out several key components or do we build a center that is functional for all types of events and that our students and residents will be proud to use for many years to come? We didn’t want to be looking back in years to come saying we wished we would have built the larger facility.”

As promised in the *Yes! Weatherford* campaign, the facility will be a site for conferences, trade shows, concerts/entertainment, athletic events, tournaments and more. The center will also serve as home for the SWOSU men's and women's basketball teams and women's volleyball squad.

Funding for the events center is made possible by the *Yes! Weatherford* sales tax campaign (\$7 million), SWOSU students (\$7 million) and the balance from various resources of the university.

Weatherford voters approved in April 2010 a penny sales tax extension to finance various projects as part of the *Yes! Weatherford* campaign, and one of the projects receiving support was the events center, which is being built just south of Milam Stadium on the SWOSU campus.