

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

FERRIS FORWARD

Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan FY 2027-2031

October 2025

Ferris State University
Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan
FY 2027-FY 2031

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I. Mission Statement

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and career-oriented, broad-based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.

II. Instructional Programming

- a) Ferris' Academic Plan will provide a clear vision for academic program planning, including distance education, at the University. Closely aligned with the University's Strategic Plan, Ferris intends to pursue growth in areas of demonstrated need and interest. The University's current Strategic Plan (AY 2024-2029) includes a metric for the development of three market-driven programs annually.

This academic year the University has, or plans to, implement the following new programs:

- Automation Manufacturing and Production, CERT
 - Cost Engineering, CERT
 - Data Science and Analytics, BS
 - Exercise Science, BS
 - Data Science and Analytics
- b) Unique characteristics of Ferris State University include the institution's focus on career-oriented, technical, and professional programming. With the College of Engineering Technology and Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids, Ferris houses the largest individual colleges of design and technology in the region. Ferris also established the State of Michigan's first AI degree program and has a top 20 nationally-ranked internet security and intelligence program, in addition to the state's first degree program in E-Sports Business. Ferris also serves a statewide function, with five (5) statewide hubs that partner with 22 Community Colleges throughout the state to share expertise in the areas of career decision-making and workforce development. Ferris' statewide commitment is enhanced by K-12 partnerships developed with the Kent County ISD, and with the Rockford Public Schools, in addition to the College of Pharmacy's presence in Grand Rapids and at clinical practice sites throughout the state.
- c) Initiatives that may impact facilities usage:
- *Health Care and Health Professions*
Ferris has a strong tradition in the health professions, with accredited programs in Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Sonography and Radiography that have upwards of two-year admissions wait lists due to space limitations. Recent efforts have eliminated or reduced the wait time for Ferris' Nursing and Dental Hygiene programs by launching of additional cohorts that focus on providing diverse student populations access to enrolling in these programs. Initiatives underway to address critical needs in rural

health and substance abuse disorder include, but are not limited to, building on the foundation created by the \$1 million HRSA grant for CMREN. Faculty from the Colleges of Health Professions and Pharmacy are developing proposals to ensure sustainability of the three-year implementation grant. Advanced initiatives in pharmacy are underway including approximately \$1 million in grant funding supporting research into Bio Polymers and Fluorine, as well supporting the Collaboration to Harmonize AntiMicrobial Registry Measures (CHARM).

- *Scientific and Pharmaceutical Research*

Ferris continues as a national leader in providing career training to students in a variety of fields. Students enrolled in the sciences and pharmacy-related programs have impactful, applied research experiences with faculty, focused on solving real-world problems (e.g., antimicrobial resistance). Faculty and students have received National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants and National Science Foundation (NSF) grants to fund their research. The College of Pharmacy is committed to advancing scholarship and research in areas of scientific discovery, practice-based research, health informatics and data sciences. The College's successful research efforts have led to increasing collaboration with programs and colleges across the university and expanded visibility for the programs and faculty. The following needs associated with continuation and expansion of this work, include:

1. Emergency power back-up for the Science building and the Hagerman Pharmacy building laboratories.
2. Alarm systems for the Science Lab walk-in refrigeration unit and the sub-zero refrigeration unit, and renovation of laboratory spaces in the Science and Pharmacy buildings to accommodate cutting-edge interdisciplinary research with students.
3. Modernization of research laboratory facilities across campus with emphasis in colleges with substantial research efforts.
4. Support for operation of the Shimadzu Core Lab for Academic and Research Excellence (SCLARE), a shared resource on campus that includes state-of-the-art analytical and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) instrumentation, to remain relevant and responsive to scientific pursuits of students and faculty.

- *Virtual Learning*

Ferris authorizes 20 charter schools (with enrollments that total more than 9,500 students) and offers teacher education and doctoral degrees in Community College Leadership and Nursing Practice (DNP). There remains a strong need to embed virtual learning within each of these fields in both preparation and delivery of program content. This requires a significant update to facilities and development of new classrooms and learning laboratories that enable and leverage technology.

Ferris has a strong and growing online presence. Ferris currently offers 57 degrees and certificates entirely online. These degrees provide flexibility for the non-traditional student market in search of higher education credentialing and career advancement. Online programming also expands the reach of the Ferris brand, while extending educational opportunities to a larger, more diverse audience throughout the state.

Ferris' return to campus following the COVID pandemic complies with local, state and federal guidelines to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff. Alternative methods of delivering academic instruction have complemented Ferris' ability to provide as many face-to-face opportunities as possible during the COVID19 pandemic.

- *Career and Technical Education*

For many years Ferris State University has been a leader in the state for Career and Technical Education programs. Workforce demands drive a strong need to expand these programs, connecting them with technical education programs at the community college, tech center, and secondary levels. Within Michigan there also exists a strong need for leadership to promote this kind of education to help fill existing and future job opportunities with skilled workers. This aligns with the current state initiatives that focus on promoting technical and apprenticeship education in Michigan.

- *Advanced Vehicles Technology and Autonomous Vehicles*

Ferris has a strong working relationship with major automotive manufacturers, service providers and the automotive aftermarket. As the world of vehicular transit continues to evolve, Ferris' innovative programs will provide the education and support these industries need. During the Academic Year 2023-2024, Ferris State University received a significant grant from MEDC in this area, which has generated program development in alternative energy sources.

d) Economic development impact of current/future programs:

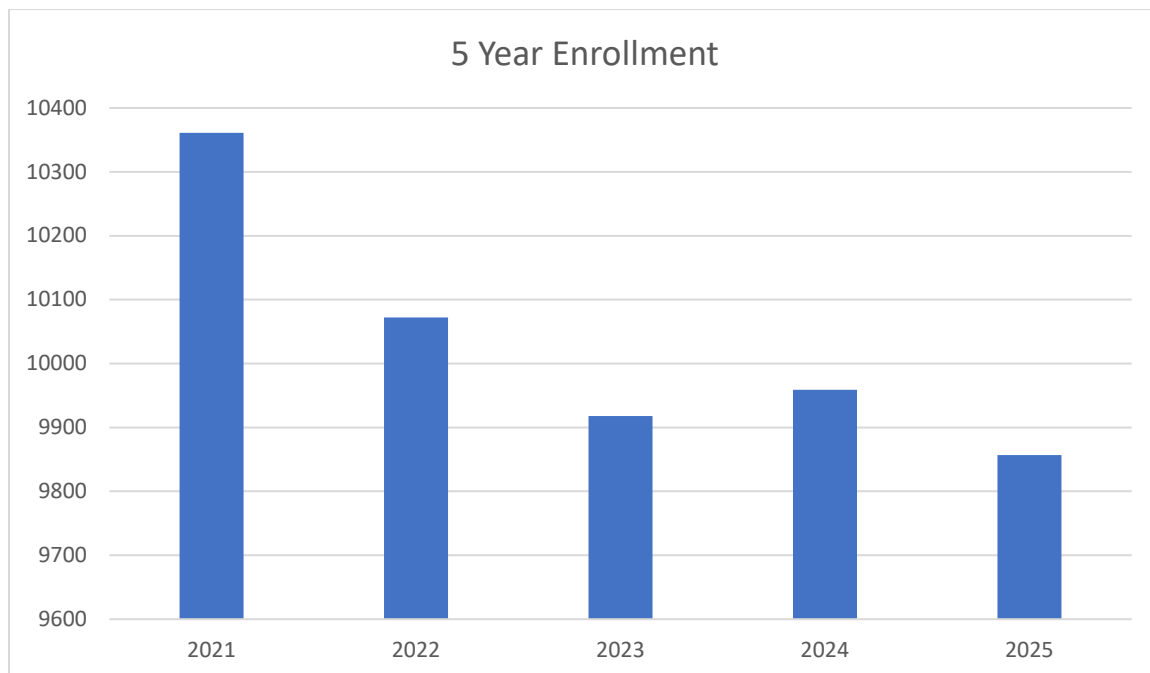
- As a career-oriented University, Ferris serves as a major driver of the economy in West Michigan and throughout the state. Programs in health professions provide numerous opportunities for employment and support the growing field of healthcare. In the last five years, the University has started master's level programs in Health Administration and Public Health, as well as interdisciplinary concentrations in the online MBA program that include concentrations in interprofessional health education (e.g., Pharmacy and Optometry). In addition to professional doctoral programs in Pharmacy and Optometry, Ferris launched a Doctorate in Nursing Practice in August 2017.
- Each of the technical programs previously mentioned represents areas of present and future economic growth. Ferris' hands-on engineering programs – Architecture and Facilities Management; Automotive Technology; Computer Networks and Systems; Construction Management; Electronics and Automation Engineering Technology; Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration; Heavy Equipment Technology; Industrial Technology and Management; Manufacturing; Mechanical Technology; Plastics; Product Design Technology; Quality Technology; Rubber Engineering Technology; Surveying; and Welding Engineering Technology provide technical fields for new professionals, and opportunities for retraining and upskilling for current professionals.
- Ferris' educational leadership in charter schools, teacher preparation, and a doctorate in Community College Leadership continues to provide the resources needed to develop the educated workforce for a knowledge-based, technological economy.
- The Ferris State University process of Academic Program Review and new academic program development is a national leader in best practice. Ferris faculty are committed to developing new programs to support developing trends and needs. The nimbleness of these academic initiatives created 31 new academic programs in the past seven years.

III. Staffing and Enrollment

- a) Ferris’ academic mission - to provide hands-on, career-oriented instruction that meets the business and industry needs of our state - continues to attract students to our institution. While recent enrollment at the University reflects the impact of declining high school graduates, the institution remains confident that Ferris’ programs will continue to attract new freshmen, transfer students, and adult learners.

Ferris continues to attract students to the Big Rapids campus for hands-on, career-focused instruction that requires specialized equipment and face-to-face instruction. The University provides bachelor’s degree completion programming to place-bound students throughout the state by leveraging strong partnerships with community colleges, while offering upper-level program opportunities to students in the communities where they live. Ferris utilizes the facilities of community college partners to offer bachelor’s degree programming to community college students who have earned associate degrees through partner community colleges. These relationships continue to expand and include a growing network of high school partnerships, notably with the Grand Rapids and Rockford Public Schools. At the same time, Ferris continues to increase online offerings to provide alternative instruction opportunities to students where this method of instructional delivery has become more attractive, especially during the pandemic. Specific enrollment information by program and site is available online in the University’s [Fact Book](#).

- b) Since 2020, Ferris has experienced a decline in enrollment due to the decrease of Michigan high school graduates .



- c) In Fall 2025, enrollment at Ferris consisted of 9,857 students. Students are enrolled in 8 colleges including Arts, Sciences and Education; Business; Engineering Technology; Health Professions; University College; Kendall College of Art and Design; Optometry; and Pharmacy. Additionally, students can take classes in Big Rapids at one of our community college sites throughout the state, and online.

- d) Depending upon the academic program area, student-to-faculty ratios will vary based upon whether the course is offered as a hands-on, equipment dependent laboratory, or a general lecture class. The current University student-to-faculty ratio of 15.1 to 1 indicates that classroom space continues to present major planning challenges for the University. This is due to our unique programming mix requiring small class sizes dictated by the equipment-intensive nature of many of Ferris' programs. The total University student-to-employee ratio has remained approximately seven to one over the last few years.
- e) Staffing levels are expected to remain stable.
- f) The current average class size for Fall 2024 is 16.5 students per class. Again, this small class size reflects the University's mission of providing hands-on education.

IV. Facility Assessments

- a) Ferris completed an update to the [Campus Master Plan](#) in May 2021. In addition, an updated August 2025.
- b) Ferris' classrooms are highly utilized. The unique programming requirements of our curricula make cross-utilization of some facilities challenging. Many hands-on laboratories (automotive, welding, HVAC, etc.) are specifically designed with the special equipment these disciplines require.
- c) The University believes all specialty laboratories and classrooms conform to federal/industry standards to ensure safe practices and compliance in classroom and research laboratories.

The functionality of existing structures is addressed in the Master Plan and Facility Condition documents. The chiller/HVAC in the Allied Health Building failed in the fall of 2024. Plumbing systems in the Allied Health Building are in critical need of replacement and are no longer adequate for a healthcare facility. Various elevator code upgrades on the Big Rapids campus are needed to remain compliant with new elevator code requirements. Failed generator at the 17 Fountain (KCAD Facility). Various building LED lighting upgrades. The Pharmacy Building MAU failed in March 2025. Multiple roof replacement projects are needed (Starr, Prakken, General Services, Granger, KCAD). The Prakken Building exterior glazing system has failed and is in need of replacement. Multiple parking lots across the Big Rapids campus are in need of replacement. See the attached Pavement Assessment document that outlines the deficiencies.

- d) The replacement value of existing facilities is detailed [Current Facilities Property Value report 2021/2022](#).
- e) The University completed a comprehensive assessment of its underground sanitation and wastewater systems in 2016 as part of the Michigan DEQ SAW Grant Program. A copy of this report is available upon request. Various sections of the water main are in need of replacement on the Big Rapids campus. Portions of the electrical infrastructure are beyond their useful life and require replacement (West loop). Steam and condensation line replacement is required from the Pharmacy Building to the Southwest Boiler section. The main boiler used for steam generation (Boiler #1) at the Power Plant is 60 years old and in need of replacement. Steam tunnel repair/replacement is required for multiple

sections of our underground steam tunnel distribution system.

- f) In most cases, information on facility infrastructure condition is detailed in the Utility Infrastructure Study that is available through hard copy in multiple three-ring binders. Some of this information is also available on the Physical Plant's GIS System.
- g) Existing utilities and infrastructure systems are sufficient and adequate to support the five-year Master Plan.
- h) Ferris approved an [Energy and Water Use Policy](#) in June 2012.
- i) The Master Plan document also provides detail as to land use and capacity.
- j) Details on the bonded indebtedness of our facilities is included in the University's financial statements.

V. Implementation Plan

The Campus Master Plan provides comments on specific needs of the various facilities.

- a) Ferris' top priority for capital projects is noted below:

Priority One: **Allied Health Sciences Building Renovation**

Will support filling critical healthcare workforce shortages by increasing our capacity to expand and deliver programs in nursing, dental hygiene, medical laboratory technologists, nuclear medicine technology, radiography, and more. Additionally, the renovation will provide new, modern clinical space for our community dental hygiene clinic that provides dental care to the region surrounding Big Rapids and clinical simulation space for our nursing students. The project will support significant operational and budgetary efficiencies through modern heating, cooling, air handling, and building technologies. The College of Health Professions, the primary resident of the Allied Health Sciences Building is one of the largest colleges by enrollment for Ferris State University.

- b) The backlog of current deferred maintenance projects is included in the 2025 campus Facility Condition Assessment report. The report is located on Ferris' website on the Facilities Management page under [Planning Documents](#). The University maintains a comprehensive facilities assessment database that identifies the deferred maintenance costs for each building. Contracting for a new Facility Condition Assessment is currently under consideration. The significant backlog (roughly \$18M annually) in deferred maintenance is a major challenge for the university. This challenge is compounded by infrequent higher education capital outlay appropriations that authorize planning and construction.
- c) Ferris continues to expect a significant return on planned capital expenditures.
- d) Ferris has continued to implement a new wireless and wired infrastructure and expects to be completed by the end of 2024. Investments in the new solutions so far have been about \$1 million, and the remainder of the upgrades will be \$1.5 million. We are moving our data center into a newly constructed room in a recently renovated building on campus. The new data center will support our campus network and systems operations for years to come. A campus-wide security project (Big Rapids and Grand Rapids) is currently in place to

provide a \$7.5M dollar investment to upgrade existing security cameras and card access systems, including installation of new security cameras and card access across both campuses, including upgrades to the current dispatch and emergency operations center.

- e) In addition to our current and significant online and hybrid learning options, Ferris State University initiated its network of Student Success Hubs to support student services and academic delivery of Ferris State University degree programs in a distributed format in partnership with 21 of Michigan's community colleges. The Student Success Hubs are located in Detroit; Flint; Kalamazoo; Grand Rapids; and Traverse City.
- f) Ferris' major maintenance items more than \$1 million include (but are not limited to):
 - The Allied Health building was constructed in 1979. It has significant facility challenges and needs a substantial update to meet the demands of modern healthcare education. See above for our top FY 25 capital outlay priority.
 - Automotive Technology Center. This facility was constructed in 1956 and requires a major renovation to keep pace with the electrical and digital nature of the profession. The University funded and completed Phase 1, a \$1.5 million investment, in 2017. This included South Wing improvements to faculty offices, classroom enhancements and a modern fuels lab.
 - Hagerman Pharmacy Building. This building was constructed in 1972. Phase 1 renovations were completed in Fall 2019.
 - Information Technology. Information technology is primarily located in the West Building, a structure completed in 1952, which has a facility condition index of 72.1%, the second poorest on the Big Rapids campus. This need will be met through a \$12.5 million renovation of the Alumni Building scheduled for completion in summer 2024. Upon project completion the West Building will be razed.
 - The Business Building was constructed in 1970. This facility has significant infrastructure and renovation needs.
 - Swan Tower renovation – last renovated floors 2-5 in 2004
 - Science Building renovation – last renovation 1996 via capital outlay
 - Starr building renovation – last renovation 1996 via capital outlay

Ferris recently approved another five-year capital renewal and deferred maintenance plan for the fiscal years 2023-2027. Annual funding includes \$1,800,000 annual general fund support and \$700,000 annual housing and dining funds, for a planned combined total investment over five years of \$12,500,000.

- g. Identify the amount of non-routine maintenance the institution has budgeted for in its current FY and relevant sources of funding.