

A NEW STUDENT CENTER & DINING COMMONS

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY

Amherst College

A VISIONARY SPACE FOR OUR THIRD CENTURY

For every student or graduate who has walked the halls and hills of the **Amherst College** campus, there are places filled with meaning, not only for their beauty but also for the connections made there.

As we begin our third century, it is time to envision a new space where future generations of Amherst students can define their own connections. A **place** where all students can come together to **recharge, connect, reflect,** and **create**.

The new, multiuse **Student Center & Dining Commons** will become the signature space on campus essential to supporting and sustaining a vibrant student experience in ways that go beyond the classroom.

“Space matters. Together, we can create a different kind of space that will define the campus for Amherst’s third century and instill pride in every single Amherst College student about belonging to this campus and this community.”

—PRESIDENT MICHAEL A. ELLIOTT '92



A PLACE FOR ALL

The Student Center & Dining Commons project is part of our **holistic approach to student well-being**. The multifaceted, state-of-the-art facility will provide a home for student life activities; a place for dining and gatherings of all sizes; and an environment where all who enter find meaningful experiences and opportunities to interact with the collective Amherst College community.

We have a growing need for a **campus crossroads and destination** for today's students. Amherst students want to be a part of something. They seek out places to share laughter with friends, spark inspiration through conversation, and find comfort in connection.

The building will be a 24-hour destination for all members of the Amherst College community. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni can gather in ways that are intentional or spontaneous.

In this new space, students will experience a fusion of elements and opportunities designed to promote happiness and well-being—from healthy food to recreational and spiritual activities to spaces for community engagement and fun.



A PLACE TO RECHARGE

The new **DINING COMMONS** will have the infrastructure necessary to meet and exceed standards set across our peer institutions. The new culinary offerings will honor Amherst's ongoing commitment to locally produced, sustainable, and high-quality food and will provide kosher and halal meals, as well as allergen-free areas for dining.

The space will seat 900 people, nearly 50% more than Valentine Hall's capacity, in a variety of configurations that accommodate different sizes and types of gatherings and events.



Dining Commons



Dining Commons Seating Areas



Café

The **CAFÉ** is located on the corner of the building facing the Quad. With seating indoors and outdoors on the adjacent terrace, this will be a popular place for relaxing, connecting, and people-watching.

A new **GRAB & GO** area will allow us to offer a wide array of meals and snack options, creating a new ease of flow that will greatly reduce time spent waiting in line. Students can also learn about farm-to-table food production, resource management, and adaptation to climate change at the **BOOK & PLOW OUTPOST**.



Game Area

The **GAME AREA** is a large indoor space on level three with an adjacent roofed outdoor area that will be outfitted with recreational equipment such as pool, ping-pong and foosball tables, and spaces for card and board games. A dedicated room for **ELECTRONIC GAMING** can be found on level one.

A PLACE TO CONNECT

As much a gathering space as a way to get from one level to another, the **CENTRAL STAIRS** provide a dramatic grand boulevard linking the outdoor areas of the Quad and the Greenway, with seating on either side and a lively flow of foot traffic. Inspired by the Spanish Steps in Rome, it will be an ideal spot for chance encounters and casual chats.

The **MAIN LOUNGE** is a large indoor piazza that will be a hub of activity where people come and go, with ample space for socializing, studying, and relaxing. It is the central point of access for the café, the cultural resource centers, the game area, a large event space, and multiple meeting rooms and gathering spots.



Central Stairs



Alumni Pub

A much-needed addition to campus, the **ALUMNI PUB** will embrace and welcome alumni in a highly visible way and provide a venue for alumni-student interaction.



Event & Banquet Space

The **EVENT & BANQUET SPACE** will feature a wall of glass facing the Greenway, with doors opening up to a patio. Ideal for special events, this flexible area will have the capacity to seat more guests than the existing spaces in Valentine can accommodate.



Main Lounge



Lounge

A **LOUNGE & OUTDOOR TERRACE** will offer a comfortable, homey place to relax and visit with friends. This lounge will feature a fireplace, a large-screen TV, and a spectacular view of the Holyoke Range and the Pelham Hills.

A PLACE TO REFLECT & CREATE



The **WINTER GARDEN**, an intimate green space at the heart of the building, will be a welcoming oasis that brings natural light, sky, and plants into the building.

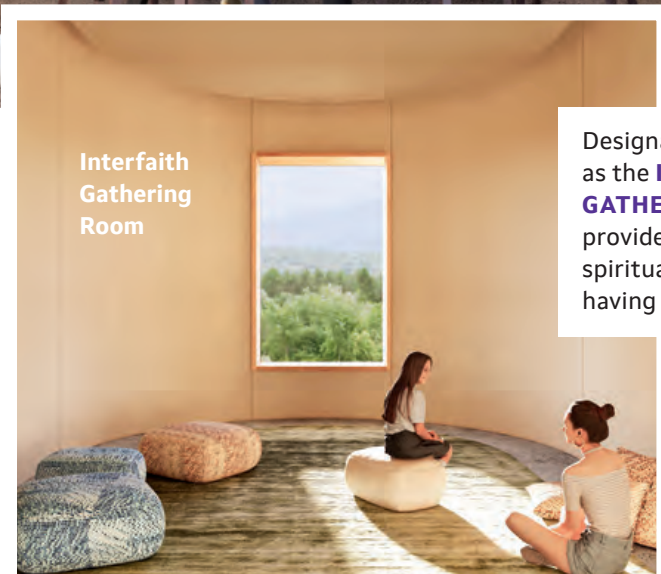
Winter Garden



Suites for the Cultural Resource Centers and Affinity Groups

SUITES for the cultural resource centers will bring together the Multicultural Resource Center, the Class and Access Resource Center, the Queer Resource Center, the Women's and Gender Center, Religious & Spiritual Life, and other resources that are currently scattered across campus.

Affinity groups will have the space to host gatherings that bring together students with common identities or interests.



Interfaith Gathering Room

Designated spaces such as the **INTERFAITH GATHERING ROOM** will provide students with spiritual solace without having to leave campus.



Theater

Situating a **THEATER** within the Student Center gives performing arts a central location on campus. With high ceilings and a large northern window, this multipurpose arts space can host students and the public for film screenings, theatrical productions, dance performances, and more.

There will be student artwork on the walls and **MUSIC ROOMS** available for practice and collaboration, providing new ways to extend the arts across campus.

A dedicated **MAKERSPACE** will allow students to explore their creativity to enhance their well-being, de-stress, and connect.

WAMH 89.3 AMHERST COLLEGE RADIO provides alternative radio listening in the Pioneer Valley. Amherst students have benefited from the communication experience gained through radio programming and production since the 1950s. Broadcasting music, talk shows, and events throughout the school year, the new location will also be a recording studio for musical performances and podcasts.



Radio Station & Recording Studio

A BLUEPRINT FOR CONNECTION



LEVEL 1 ACTIVITIES, SOCIAL SPACES, AND GRAB & GO

Includes the Alumni Pub, radio station, a suite of practice rooms for instrumentalists and singers, flexible event spaces, and kitchen and prep areas.

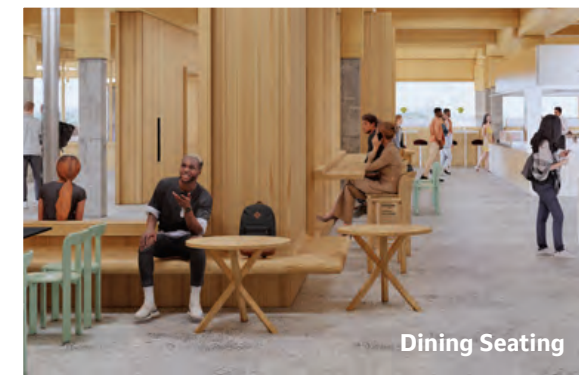
- 1:1 Grab & Go
- 1:2 Radio Station
- 1:3 Makerspace
- 1:4 Book & Plow Outpost
- 1:5 Music Practice Rooms Suite
- 1:6 Party Room
- 1:7 Alumni Pub
- 1:8 Event & Banquet Space
- 1:9 Electronic Gaming



LEVEL 2 MAIN DINING

Includes the central stair, open dining area and serveries, and a multipurpose room.

- 2:1 Multipurpose Room
- 2:2 Central Stairs
- 2:3 Main Dining

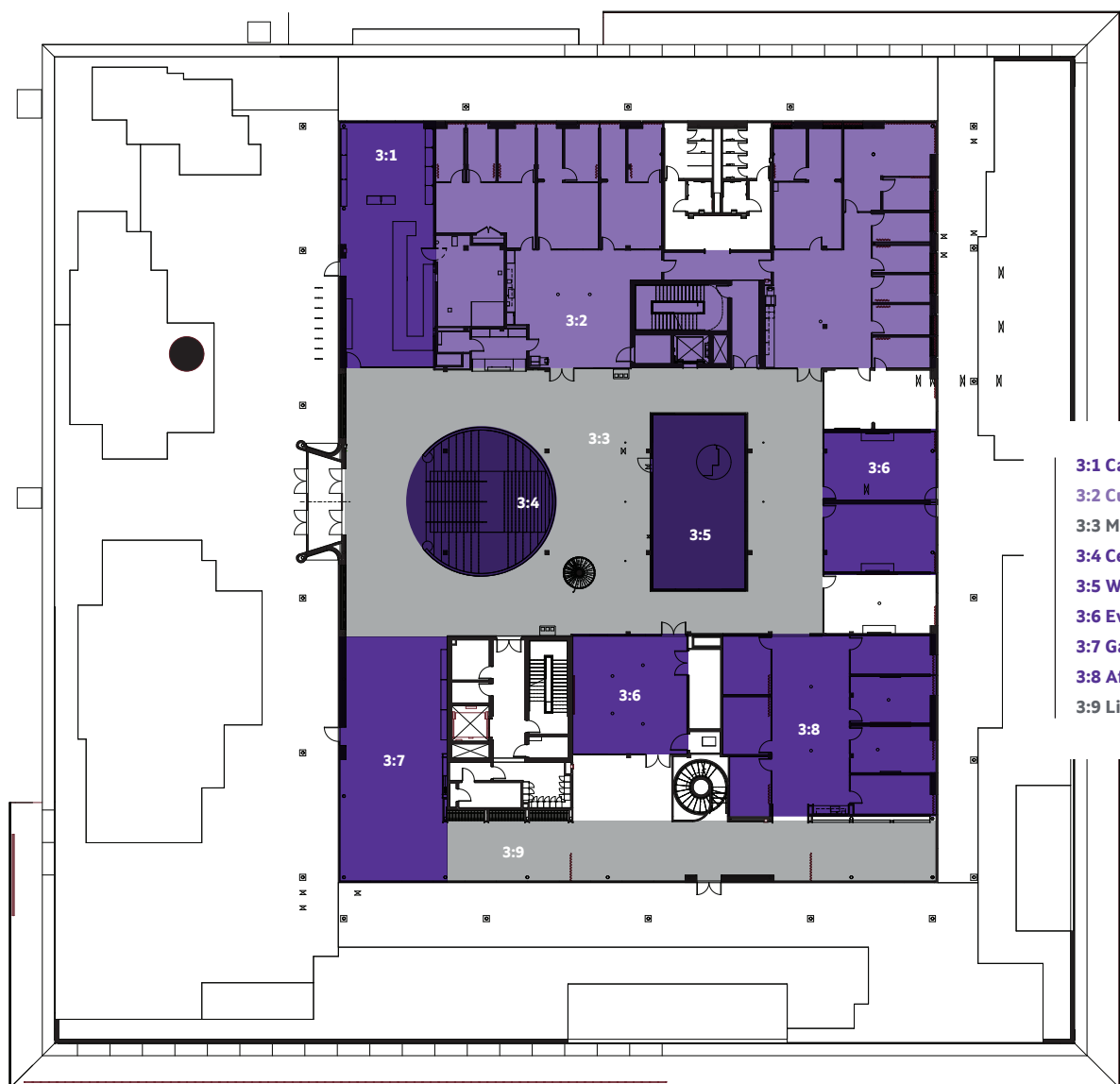


LEVEL 3
STUDENT AREAS, EVENT SPACES, AND MEETING ROOMS

Includes the main lounge, café, winter garden, meeting and study spaces, and suites for affinity groups and cultural resource centers.



Living Room & Study Space



- 3:1 Café
- 3:2 Cultural Resource Centers Suite
- 3:3 Main Lounge
- 3:4 Central Stairs
- 3:5 Winter Garden
- 3:6 Event Rooms
- 3:7 Game Area
- 3:8 Affinity Groups Suite
- 3:9 Living Room & Study Space



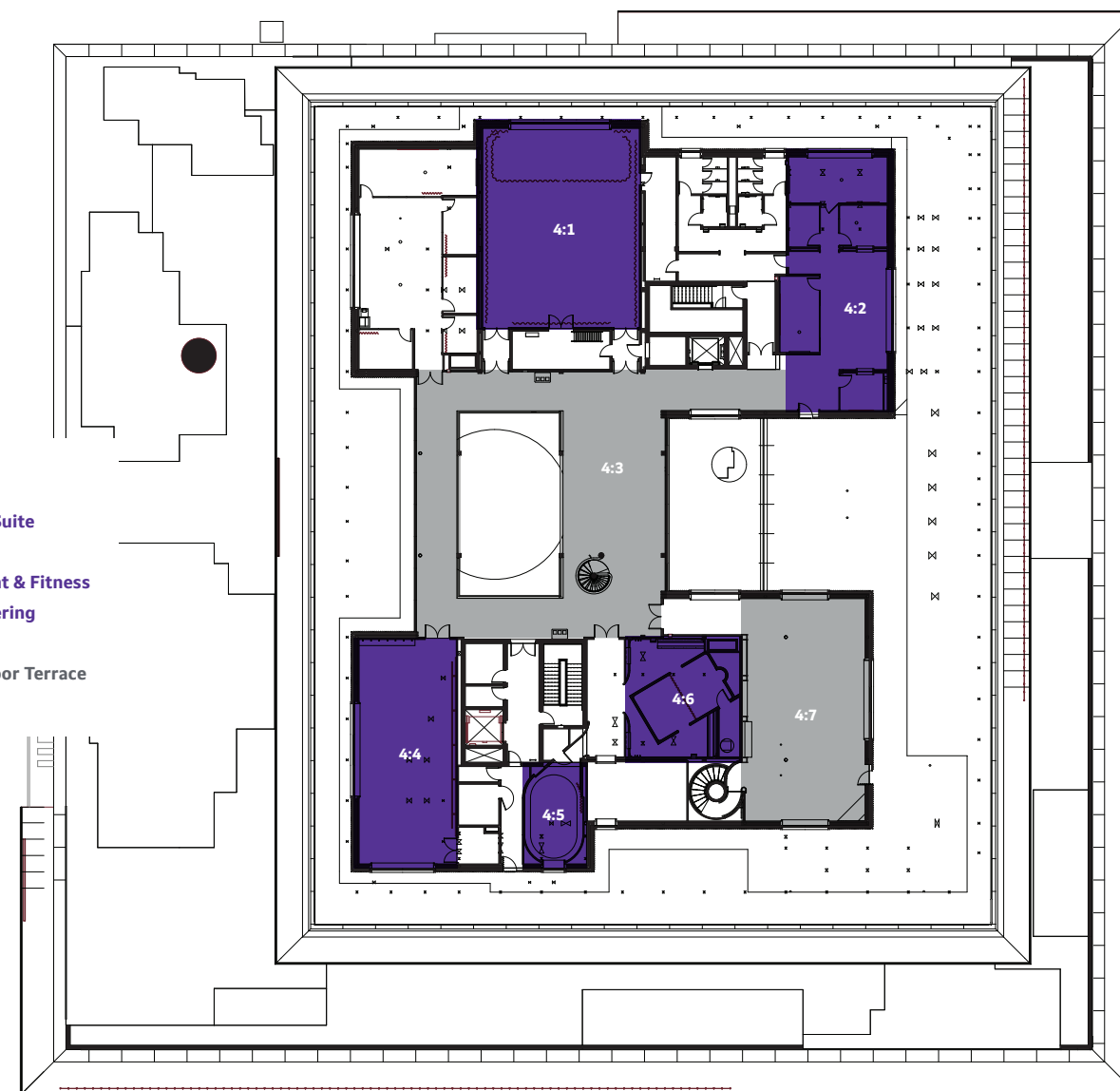
Fitness Area

LEVEL 4
LOUNGES, STUDENT ACTIVITIES, AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

Includes the theater, group movement and fitness area, spaces for prayer and religious activities, and multiple lounges.



Meeting Room Suite

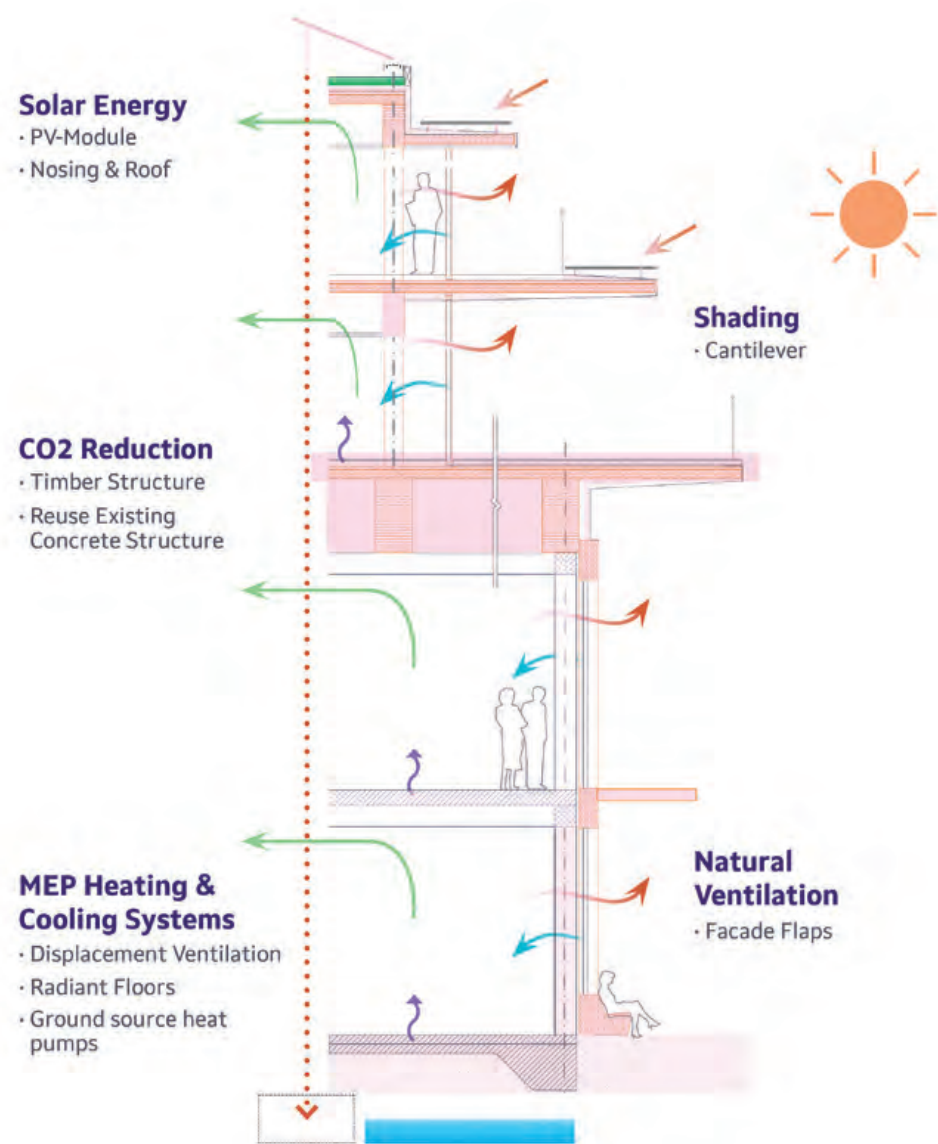


- 4:1 Theater
- 4:2 Meeting Room Suite
- 4:3 Lounge
- 4:4 Group Movement & Fitness
- 4:5 Interfaith Gathering
- 4:6 Muslim Prayer
- 4:7 Lounge & Outdoor Terrace



OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

Designed by the architecture firm **Herzog & de Meuron** with the intention of creating a structure that quietly and effectively brings out the best in its surroundings, the new building will feature spectacular views of the Holyoke Range and the area's distinctive topography. It will exemplify sustainable, environmentally responsive architecture, designed to affirm the connection between the built environment and the natural world, which is integral to the Amherst experience.

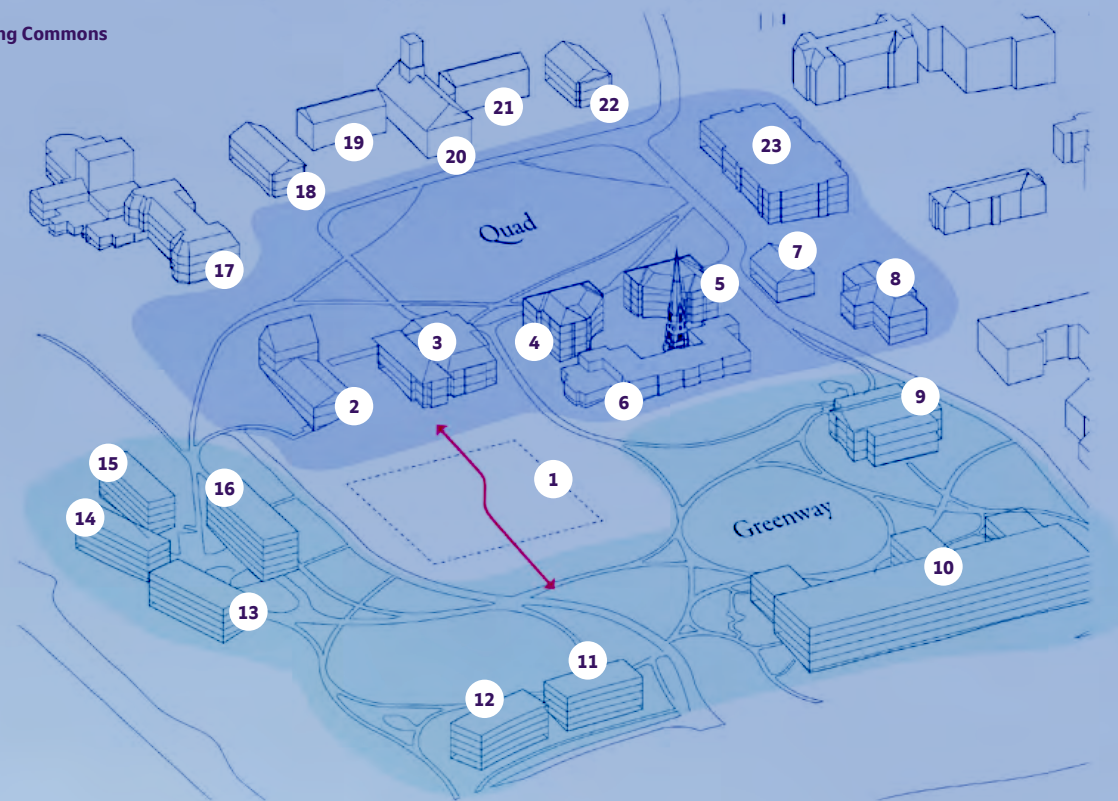


The foundation of the Merrill science building is being repurposed to form the ground and first floors of the new structure. This will reduce the overall embodied carbon for the project and be symbolic of the College's **commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030**. The structure will be primarily made of technologically advanced, durable wood construction—a **low-carbon design strategy**—and will use renewably sourced energy.

The Dining Commons will also reflect a high standard of sustainability and a dramatic reduction in greenhouse gas emissions with state-of-the-art, high-efficiency electric kitchens, making us one of the few colleges—and the first of the Five Colleges—to have an all-renewable-energy kitchen.

Future site of the new Student Center & Dining Commons

1. Student Center & Dining Commons
2. Seeley Mudd
3. Charles Pratt Hall
4. Stearns Hall
5. James Hall
6. Mead Art Museum
7. Barrett Hall
8. Chapin Hall
9. Keefe Campus Center
10. Science Center
11. Wieland Hall
12. King Hall
13. Nicholls Biondi Hall
14. Greenway C
15. Lee Hall
16. Ford Hall
17. Webster Hall
18. Appleton Hall
19. South Hall
20. Johnson Chapel
21. North Hall
22. Williston Hall
23. Frost Library



A PLACE AT AMHERST

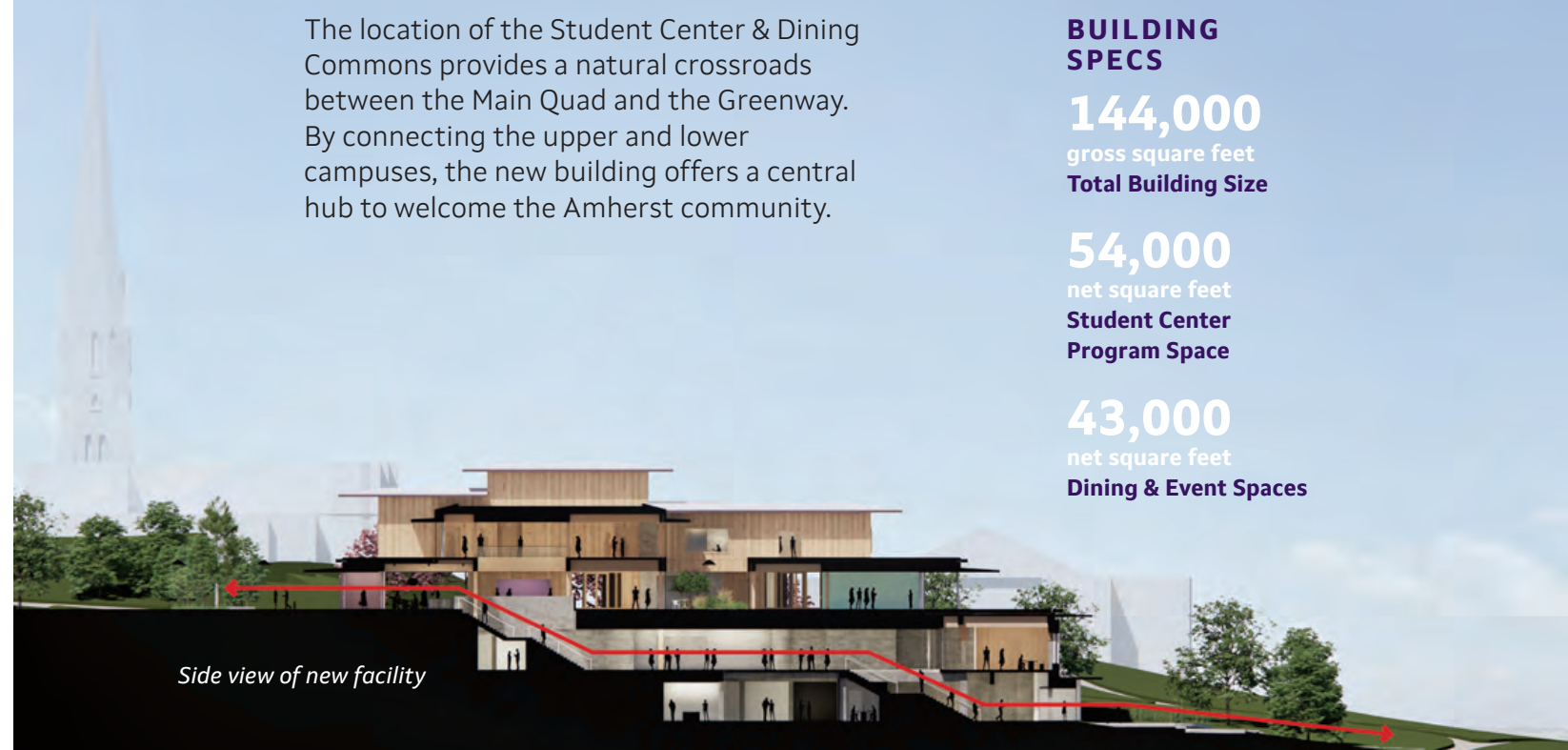
The location of the Student Center & Dining Commons provides a natural crossroads between the Main Quad and the Greenway. By connecting the upper and lower campuses, the new building offers a central hub to welcome the Amherst community.

BUILDING SPECS
144,000
 gross square feet
Total Building Size

54,000
 net square feet
Student Center Program Space

43,000
 net square feet
Dining & Event Spaces

Side view of new facility



WAYS TO SUPPORT

With the support of dedicated alumni, parents, and friends, Amherst College will make this ambitious vision a reality, opening the doors to the Student Center & Dining Commons in Fall 2026.

We invite you to join us in realizing the future of our community at Amherst. Naming and capital support opportunities are available across a range of giving levels.

For more information, please contact us at specialinitiatives@amherst.edu.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, VISIT
amherst.edu/go/scdc.

Artist's conceptual renderings courtesy of Herzog & de Meuron.



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