



## Q&A with Brian Litchfield

Project Manager,  
Office of Planning, Design & Construction

### On pedestrian traffic:

"In the short-term during construction, pedestrian traffic will be impacted due to the need to perform work on the site. Long-term, the impact to incoming students and tours will be very positive. Along with the enhancement to the pedestrian paths of travel, the plaza will allow additional paths of travel through the west side of the campus, as well as increased gathering areas for students to meet safely without the concern for vehicle traffic."

### On bike traffic:

"The current design does not include designated bike paths through the center of Colachis Plaza. The focus is on safe travels for pedestrian traffic through this area, and the priority will be to keep this a calm and relaxing place to meet, gather and pass through safely. Bike as well as vehicle traffic will still maintain easy access routing through the perimeter North and South Loop through the west side of campus."

### On tram routes and handicap accessibility:

"Tram routes will be adjusted to provide drop off points that allow for easy access to the main pedestrian thoroughfare. Handicap accessibility will be maintained to all buildings and, in most cases, will be greatly improved due to the larger walkways and paths through the mall."

### On freshmen move-in:

"With Spring semester starting back up last week, we met with all those affected in setting up areas along side the east side of Founders for students to temporarily park and move back into Founders Hall. We also set up another area along the west side of Copley Library for all Camino Hall students to temporarily park and move back in. This worked well last week, and we anticipate the same upon completion of this project this Fall 2017. Housing services is also in the process of developing their final plans for the long-term process for move-in days."

### On parking:

"This Colachis Plaza project has been written into the University Master Plan. As a part of that Master Plan, the removal of the parking spaces that previously existed in the plaza are slated to be replaced with future campus projects that would include underground parking garages."

### On the completion date:

"The completion date for this project is August 2017. We feel very confident in completing this project by that date."



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# New year, new campus:

The Colachis Plaza Project will drastically change the center of campus from Copley Library to the Immaculata.

**KELLY KENNEDY**  
Feature Editor

For several months, talk of a vast renovation to the University of San Diego's landscape has spread within the student body. Melissa Plaskonos, Assistant Vice President of Facilities Management, announced the start of the construction this January. The project is scheduled to conclude sometime this August.

According to an email Plaskonos sent to the campus community on Jan. 9, the development will create a beautiful pedestrian mall in the plaza space between the Immaculata and Copley Library. Colachis Plaza, named after its benefactors, the Colachis family, will include a central lawn, garden, and gathering spaces. The plaza will also include a grand fountain.

USD's 2016 Master Plan touted Colachis Plaza as a part of its Master Plan Vision. The report described the new plaza an enhancement to the central spine of campus.

"Colachis Plaza will be a central gathering point for student life, acting as the crossroads for pedestrian access," the report said. "[Colachis Plaza will] build on the traditional concept of the 'quad' or 'commons' as a convening space for scholarly interaction, social activity, and community identity."

The plaza is actually an extension of the existing Colachis Plaza, located between the Immaculata and Hughes Administration building.

In accordance with USD's sustainable initiatives, the project will feature drought-tolerant native plantings, energy-efficient lighting, and irrigation technology to minimize watering based on weather conditions.

While the up-and-coming green space has been promoted as a unifying element of campus, Colachis Plaza will also affect parking and accessibility between Copley Library and the Immaculata, which includes Olin Hall, Manchester Hall, Camino/Founders Halls, and the Hahn School of Nursing.

The project will permanently remove 60 to 70 parking spaces along Marian Way and temporarily affect some parking in the Olin and Hughes lots. With parking already limited on main campus, traffic delays will become more common due to construction.

For bicycle owners accustomed to quickly navigating this area, the cross-campus commute may become more difficult. USD's 2016 Master Plan admits that the campus lacks bicycle accessibility and storage.

USD has also altered tram services on the west side of campus. Jonathan Oberg, Tram Services and Fleet Safety Manager, emailed the campus community asking students and faculty to arrive earlier than usual to tram stops to account for delays in service.

Oberg also stated that the office of Tram Services is in the process of enhancing the GPS-based tram tracking system that is compatible with mobile devices and the MySDMobile application.

This project will have a major impact on the west side of campus. Foot traffic will increase, while vehicle traffic will be redirected to the outer roads that run through campus. As construction moves forward, The USD Vista will continue to cover these campus changes.

60-70

parking spaces eliminated on Marian Way

8

months of estimated construction time

1

grand fountain