

## Groundbreaking for the LLE Building Expansion

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Groundbreaking to celebrate the construction of the new addition to the LLE Complex occurred on 17 August with representatives from federal, state, and local offices; University senior leadership; and LLE (Fig. 1).



Figure 1

(a) Artist rendering of LLE building expansion. (b) Groundbreaking ceremony. Shown from left to right: Senior Associate Vice President for Facilities and Services, Michael Chihoski; Provost, David Figlio; Brighton Town Supervisor, Bill Moehle; New York State Senator, Jeremy Cooney; Executive Vice President of Administration and Finance and CFO, Elizabeth Milavec; University Trustee, Larry Kessler; University Trustee, Wayne LeChase; New York State Representative, Sarah Clark; LLE Director, Chris Deeney; University of Rochester President, Sarah Mangelsdorf; U.S. Congressman, Joe Morelle; Deputy State Director for U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Jarred Jones; Director of Economic Development, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Kevin Hale; and University of Rochester Interim Vice President for Research, Stephen Dewhurst.

Initial planning work for the project began in 2019. In January 2020, the Board of Trustees Committee on Facilities approved entering into a contract for the design of the addition at a cost of \$3,538,700. Design work kicked off in November 2020 and was completed in March 2022. For construction, four bids were solicited and two competitive bids were received, with LeChase Construction being the lowest bidder. The University entered into a Guaranteed Maximum Price contract with LeChase Construction for the addition. The total cost of this project will not exceed \$42,265,736, inclusive of previously approved design costs.

Achieving permitting approval for the project with the Town of Brighton was an unexpectedly difficult and drawn out process. A primary sticking point was a conservation easement to accommodate a vernal pond on the LLE site. Diligent efforts by LLE

staff, Nixon Peabody, and the Office of Government and Community Relations were ultimately successful in finding a mutually agreeable solution; however, the start of construction was slightly delayed. The final approval for this project also accounts for a potential future EP-OPAL expansion.

The new 66,600-sq.-ft, three-floor building will house laboratory and office space for approximately 110 scientists and LLE personnel and includes a class-1000 target fabrication laboratory and thin-film coating laboratory, a laser computing facility, and several other wet laboratory and general laboratory spaces. The largest laboratory space will house the AMICA Laser System—a state-of-the-art, high-energy, long-pulse laser that scientists at LLE are assembling for Stanford University’s SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory Matter at Extreme Condition Upgrade (MEC-U).

A team consisting of 23 local companies was contracted and mobilized to start the building construction project. Site clearing began on 5 July 2023 and progressed into foundation work through September 2023 (see Figs. 2–4). Over that three-month period the site was cleared and graded, and foundation work was started. Exceptional weather allowed the team to perform better than originally scheduled. Although it is early in the construction project, the team is still on track for a March 2024 completion.



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Figure 2  
The second day of site clearing  
on 6 July 2023.

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Figure 3  
Foundation work in full swing at  
the end of September 2023.

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Figure 4  
Footers being poured for the  
perimeter of the new building.