



**OFFICE OF MAYOR VIRG BERNERO**  
124 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE – NINTH FLOOR  
LANSING, MI 48933

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Randy Hannan  
517/256-7633  
Rick Jensen  
616/706-2608

## Davenport University Proposes New Life for Blighted Downtown Site

(LANSING) – Davenport University President Dr. Richard J. Pappas today joined Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero and Patricia Baines-Lake, Executive Director of the Lansing Housing Commission (LHC), to announce an exciting new initiative that, if successful, will result in the construction of a new campus for Davenport University in the heart of downtown Lansing.

The new Davenport campus would be built on an adjacent site to the long-blighted Oliver Tower building, located two blocks north of the State Capitol Building. Oliver Towers, a former low-income housing development that experienced a catastrophic fire in 2000, would be demolished as part of the project.

“Today marks the beginning of a public process that we hope will culminate in Davenport University building a new campus in the heart of our downtown,” Mayor Bernero said. “It is an extraordinary opportunity that would locate Davenport’s new facilities right next to the downtown campus of Lansing Community College, creating a new ‘university district’ that would become a major new focal point for higher education and student-related economic activity. Thankfully, the long-blighted Oliver Towers building would finally be razed in the process, eliminating a major headache that has resisted attempts at redevelopment for more than a decade.”

“With the creation of Davenport University’s Vision 2015 almost two years ago, we outlined a path to achieve an unprecedented level of quality in the service we provide to our students and to employers of our graduates,” said Dr. Pappas. “Market research shows that Lansing will continue to be a growth market for us, but that our current facilities are not adequate to support that growth. We are thrilled at the prospect of building a new campus that will help us achieve our Vision. While approvals are still needed, we are optimistic we will move forward on this project as expeditiously as possible.”

Davenport's plan is to construct a new, 60,000-square-foot, three-story facility designed to eventually support an increased enrollment of up to 2,000 full- and part-time students. The new campus, an investment of more than \$10 million, will feature a library, public meeting rooms, faculty offices, high-tech classrooms, and state-of-the-art science and nursing labs.

Under the terms of a preliminary accord negotiated between the City of Lansing, Davenport and the LHC, the three entities would execute an equitable land trade that would result in the LHC moving their offices to the current Davenport campus, now located at Grand Avenue and Kalamazoo Street, across from the new Michigan State Police headquarters.

LHC Executive Director Patricia Baines-Lake said her organization, which is currently headquartered at Oliver Towers, is excited about the prospect of moving to a new location that will allow the non-profit housing agency to continue serving low-income clients from an improved facility.

Bernero and Pappas noted that the proposed transaction will require approvals by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Davenport University Board of Trustees, the Lansing Housing Commission Board of Directors and the Lansing City Council.

“President Pappas and I look forward to working with all of these entities to make a persuasive case for this tremendously exciting project,” Bernero said. “We also will engage the broader Lansing community and the surrounding neighborhood to explain the significant benefits of retaining Davenport University in our downtown and finally redeveloping this languishing and underutilized parcel of land.”

Bernero noted that the city would also make use of the current Davenport campus to expand parking facilities in a key section of downtown Lansing where future growth is anticipated.

### **About Davenport University**

Founded in 1866, Davenport is a private, non-profit university with campuses across Michigan and online courses serving an enrollment of more than 13,000 students. With tuition among the lowest of all private universities in the state, Davenport provides high academic quality, small class sizes, conveniently located campuses, faculty with real-world experience and more than 40 dynamic undergraduate and graduate programs addressing in-demand careers. More information is available at [www.davenport.edu](http://www.davenport.edu).

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