

Tennessee State University

How TSU is Addressing the Current Housing Challenges

October 31, 2022

Housing Plan Summary

Overview of Tennessee State University

Tennessee State University is a comprehensive, urban, land-grant university founded in 1912 in Nashville, Tennessee. Through successive stages, TSU has developed from a normal school for Negroes in 1912 to its current status as an international university with students from 46 states and more than 50 countries. TSU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was first obtained in 1946, and enjoys a Carnegie Classification of R2 representing high research. With an enrollment of over 9,000 students, TSU prepares students for professional success by offering 40 bachelor degree programs, 25 masters, 8 doctorates and 14 professional certificates.

Mission Statement of Tennessee State University

Tennessee State University, through its legacy as an HBCU and land grant institution, transforms lives, prepares a diverse population of leaders, and contributes to economic and community development by providing affordable and accessible educational programs at various degree levels promoting academic excellence through scholarly inquiry, teaching, research, lifelong learning, and public service.

Vision Statement

Tennessee State University aspires to be the premier public urban, comprehensive institution achieving prominence through innovation and instruction, research, creativity, and service with the dissemination of knowledge and information.

Objective of TSU Housing Plan

The objective of TSU Housing and Residence Life is to be a premier residential environment that provides students a safe, comfortable, affordable, and engaging living and learning experience, while promoting student personal development and academic success.

The Status of TSU’S Housing

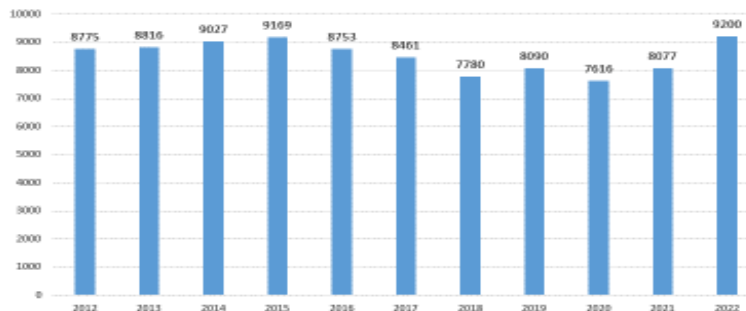
The status of TSU’s housing environment is based on three key factors: 1) the current availability of housing on campus; 2) enrollment trend and projections; and 3) the Nashville area housing market.

Current Housing Availability at TSU					
<u>Residence Hall</u>	<u># of Beds</u>	<u>Yr Opened</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Room Rate</u>
Boyd	364	1951	M	Traditional	\$1,391-\$3,929
Wilson	550	1964	F	Traditional	\$1,391-\$3,929
Watson	318	1966	M	Traditional	\$1,391-\$3,929
Hale	320	1967	C	Suites	\$1,448-\$2,209
Eppse	274	1968	F	Dorm	\$1,391-\$3,929
Rudolph	420	1995	F	Suites	\$1,448-\$2,209
Ford Residence Center	450	1998	C	Apt	\$3,476
New Residence Center	284	2002	C	Apt	\$3,476
New Residence Hall	700	2022	C	Apt	\$4,562
Total	3,680				

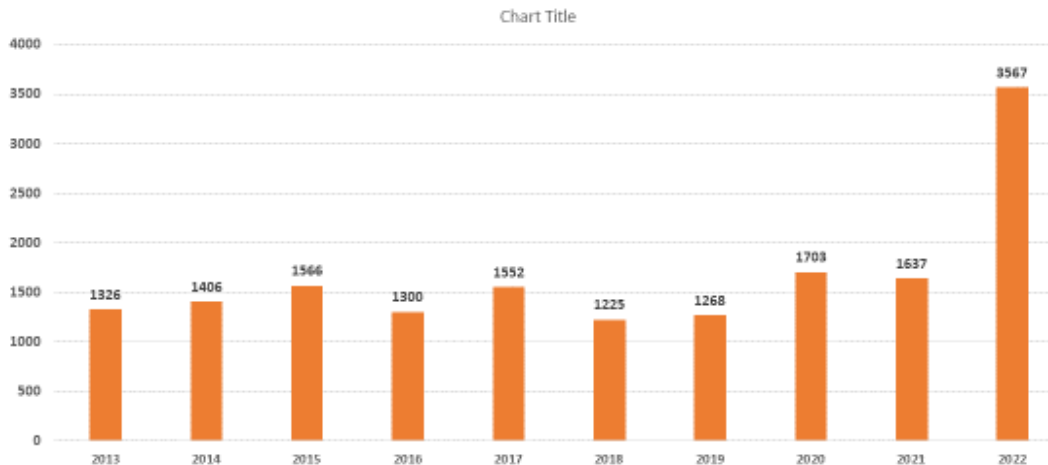
Enrollment

TSU’s record enrollment is a key factor that has contributed to the significant increase in demand for housing. For the fall 2022 semester, TSU experienced the largest first-time freshman enrollment, and the largest overall student enrollment, in the school’s history.

Enrollment for Last Ten Years



Enrollment for First-Year Students



This significant increase in enrollment, coupled with the lack of available housing, support the high demand for on-campus housing. The current supply of 3,680 beds on campus and requests of close to 5,000 demonstrates that the inventory of housing on campus does not support the current demand for housing. Without sufficient housing, TSU is forced with the choice of either telling students to return home and not continue or start their enrollment at TSU.

The Nashville Housing Market – the High Cost of Living

In addition to current enrollment not aligning with available on-campus housing, the Nashville housing market has also emerged as a critical factor in the significant increase in demand for University-supported housing. The high cost of living in Nashville has caused students who had lived off-campus in the past to seek to return to campus due to lack of affordability in the Nashville market. As shown below, the housing rental market has grown exponentially.

The cost of housing in Nashville has increased tremendously over the last several years. In fact, data shows the average apartment rent has significantly increased by 29% over the last year alone according to the rental platform, Zumper. It further suggests that individuals looking to move to Nashville should expect to pay no less than \$1,790 a month for a one-bedroom apartment. Similarly, Costar, a leader in commercial real estate information on analytics, presented data that

showed the average monthly apartment rental rates in Nashville jumped more than 10 percent in 2021, climbing to \$1,817 per month by December of 2021.

Unlike other public universities in Tennessee, private real estate developers have not developed private student housing adjacent or near TSU. In fact, the development around TSU presents that well above the affordable housing rates that TSU has tried to maintain. That coupled with the increased housing costs as well as the lack of affordable housing in Metro Davidson County has forced students to return to on campus housing as their only option.

As a result, many students, a large percentage of whom already come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, can no longer afford to live in the Nashville area. Typically, upper classmen prefer and seek to live off-campus, but due to the significant cost of housing in Nashville, upperclassmen at TSU who generally would prefer to live off-campus have sought to return to on-campus housing.

This is compounded by the fact that there are several other universities and higher education institutions in the Nashville area. Thus, our students are competing with thousands of other students for any limited and available affordable housing. Furthermore, the traffic in Nashville has also become an impediment to living further away from campus.

The unprecedented applications for freshman students was unexpected, and overwhelmingly challenging for the TSU staff. The campus current on housing capacity is 3,680 beds. Typically, we would take housing applications for about 15% above the capacity. This takes into consideration the projection for students that either decided not to attend TSU or found off campus housing options. Like other universities, TSU would secure off campus housing to help alleviate the over flow students with housing situated close to campus, with the plan to relocate these students to campus housing if and when housing became available during the academic year. Previously, we have been able to address this demand with a lease with the House of God facility.

With the overwhelming applications for first time students as well as the significant number returning upper class students, it became difficult to determine the number of actual students who would be attending TSU this fall, to attempt to be able to address this issue, students were added to the wait list, knowing that we may need to find additional off campus housing options.

Housing – Fall 2022

For Fall 2022, TSU experienced the largest first-time enrollment in the history of the university. As the above chart shows, 3,567 first-time students attended TSU. A significant number of those students seek to reside on campus. The total students residing in on-campus or University-controlled housing for Fall 2022 (including hotels) is 4,801. This includes 907 students that reside in off-campus hotels.

All students who paid housing deposits by the deadline were placed in housing. Several students continued to seek housing after the deadline had passed and were placed on a “Housing Wait List.” These students did not pay housing deposits at the time they were placed on the Housing Wait List; they only paid deposits if TSU was able to provide housing for them. The Housing Wait List initially contained 400 students, and we were able to place all but 75 of them.

Housing Plan for Spring 2023

For Spring 2023, it is estimated that TSU will need 4,360 beds. Total available beds is determined to be 4,425 as shown below.

Beds Available for Spring 2023	
On-campus availability	3,680
House of God	150
Supplemental beds	<u>158</u>
Subtotal	3,988
Hotels (2)	437
Total beds available	4,425

Projected Need Spring 2023			
	Fall Occupancy	Spring Occupancy	% Returning for Housing in Spring
2017-2018	3098	2863	92.41%
2018-2019	3008	2635	87.60%
2019-2020	3063	2753	89.88%
2020-2021	1912	1626	85.04%
2021-2022	3258	2972	91.22%
Five year avg			89.61%

From the table above, approximately 90% of students return to housing for the spring semester. Using 90% as an indicator, TSU projects that 4360 beds will be needed. The projected 65 bed overage allows for additional flexibility in student housing requests. In addition, the TSU Department of Housing is developing a list of preferred suggested locations for students throughout the city that have been vetted and reviewed.

TSU will maintain two of the five hotels for the Spring 2023 semester, and will continue with House of God living quarters which is one block from campus. To facilitate the needs of the students, the housing portal will open in February 2023 which one month earlier for students to apply. The wait list also will close much earlier.

Housing Plan for Fall 2023

Housing needs for Fall 2023 will be similar to Spring 2023, but again includes five hotels. This will be necessary to house the number of students projected based on enrollment growth. It is anticipated that 4,800 students will request housing for Fall 2023. We will seek permission from the State Building Commission to enter into leases with five hotels.

Housing Plan for Fall 2024 and Beyond

The future of housing at Tennessee State University is at a pivotal point in positioning the university for growth and sustainability for students seeking a higher education. Given the previously mentioned challenges pertaining to the cost to reside in the Nashville area, students

seeking to attend TSU will be faced with unsurmountable challenges to live in a reasonable proximity to the only state-supported university in Nashville, Tennessee. To accommodate the various goals as set forth by the state of Tennessee to educate a desired percentage of citizens by a designated date, a transformation of the campus housing at Tennessee State University is required.

Secondly, the current conditions of some of the existing resident halls are obsolete and substandard to students entering colleges today. TSU still has four (4) of the seven (7) residence halls that still have community showers (not including the apartments). This is unacceptable to today's student and severely hurts our recruitment efforts.

Nashville, as the Capitol of the State of Tennessee, has resources available to various citizens not found in other parts of the state. To be positioned by the university to educate these various categories of individuals, individuals must be able to afford to live and study in reasonable proximity of the services/training available.

As stated in the Master Plan, constructing new apartment style housing facilities within the current apartment complex across Ed Temple Boulevard will further strengthen the existing housing precinct. These housing projects would likely serve upper division students seeking a less traditional "residence hall" experience. While there has been concerns expressed with the possible over construction of residential facilities; that is unlikely due to the need to eliminate most of the existing residential facilities due to age, maintenance upkeep cost, safety, and outdated facilities. Assessment of the older facilities has been completed and it has been determined the replacement cost is more advantageous than attempting to do major renovations.

The university has engaged with different agencies completing various studies to validate the Nashville housing market will not reach a decline anytime in the immediate future. With the data provided by the Housing Master Plan Team, the data support the need for additional housing and housing facilities that meet the current housing needs of students of various types (i.e. veterans, graduate students, married students). This effort has been documented in the 2016 Master Plan and we anticipate the supporting data will be repeated in the Housing Master Plan required by Tennessee Board of Regents which is currently in progress.

It is the desire of TSU that the State Building Commission will approve the construction of two new residence halls with a total capacity of 1,000 beds.