

# THE OPUS DB<sup>3</sup>™ APPROACH ENHANCED VALUE & EFFICIENCY for Iowa State University's Geoffroy Hall



*Whether expanding for growth, optimizing efficiencies or creating an inspiring environment, every building project starts with a unique purpose. The design and build process you choose will have a significant impact on how accurately and efficiently your vision comes to life. The Opus DB<sup>3</sup> project delivery method was developed to help clients achieve greater value, within any budget, by maximizing quality, efficiency and aesthetics to achieve their goals. Geoffroy Hall at ISU showcases these benefits and the overall value the Opus DB<sup>3</sup> approach can have on facilities and real estate.*

## **Opus DB<sup>3</sup>: A Truly Integrated Design-Build Approach**

Clients seeking to maximize speed, savings and overall value have come to appreciate the benefits of design-build. Opus DB<sup>3</sup> is a holistic, client-centered approach, built on the foundation pioneered by Opus founder Gerry Rauenhorst more than 60 years ago, and continuously improved over the years as client needs have evolved. It differs from the traditional design-bid-build process managed by a general contractor in that Opus DB<sup>3</sup> fully integrates all stakeholders—client, architect and builder—for meaningful collaboration from the day

the project is conceived until the last detail is finished. This collaboration results in maximum client value.

To achieve this high-level of integration, Opus has a full team of in-house experts with diverse experience who work with you, employing a process that brings all key roles to the table from the beginning of your project.

**The Department of Residence (DOR) at Iowa State University (ISU) saw the value of the integrated Opus DB<sup>3</sup> approach when it selected Opus for the design and construction of a new student residence, Geoffroy Hall, which was completed in December 2016.**

# Achieving the Best Possible Design & Outcome

The “best” solution achieves a client’s overall goals, as well as balances aesthetic, cost, functionality and schedule demands.

With a long list of requirements and a finite budget, ISU needed a partner that could deliver the most value for every dollar. They recognized the strength of design-build project delivery and that the Opus DB<sup>3</sup> approach would offer an elevated project experience and maximum value.

With the Opus DB<sup>3</sup> process, Opus focused on the specifications that were most important to ISU and stretched aspects of the design to exceed their expectations. Opus was able to clearly identify and understand priorities (including

their primary goal of optimizing bed count) and provided a design that **gave ISU everything they wanted and more—for over \$1 million less than their target budget.**

**More specifically, Opus’ solution added 12% more beds than ISU’s minimum requirement at a cost per bed that was up to 45% lower than that of similar public university residence hall projects.**

In addition to maximizing bed count, Opus elevated ISU’s Geoffroy Hall to state-of-the-art student housing by integrating additional features, including more bathroom fixtures, washer and dryer connections and mailboxes per bedroom. It also exceeded ISU’s expectations with a better overall aesthetic than was originally thought possible.

Opus’ design gave ISU everything they wanted and more, including 12% more beds with a cost per bed that was up to 45% lower than that of similar public university residence hall projects. All of that, for over \$1 million less than ISU’s target budget.

A large outdoor plaza leads to a gracious lobby entrance over twice the size of the minimum requirement. Thoughtful architecture integrates massing to define the houses, and differing planes, colors, parapet heights and materials add interest and reduce scale. The exterior load-bearing design eliminates interior col-

With a lower cost per bed—and more beds than requested—ISU can recover their investment sooner than other comparable projects while providing a high-quality, unique and vibrant student living experience.

	Opus DB <sup>3</sup>	Other Traditional Approaches		
	ISU’s Geoffroy Hall	Rose Avenue Residence	West Campus University of Iowa	17th Ave Residence Hall University of MN
beds (#)	784	540	501	585
cost per bed	\$49,681	\$64,049	\$68,332	\$91,100
total project cost	\$39 million	\$28.8 million	\$53 million	\$53.3 million
gross square footage	193,061	155,000	not available	230,000
project delivery method	Opus DB <sup>3</sup> Design-Build	Design with CM at Risk	Design-Bid-Build	Design with CM at Risk





## ISU Geoffroy Hall Residence Features & Amenities *by the Numbers*

- 20 months contract to completion
- 193,061 square feet
- 8 floors | 7 residential floors
- 784 beds
- 392 rooms
- 14 houses
- 1 kitchen
- 1 activity room
- 4 elevators
- 10 study rooms
- 5 huddle rooms

umns, allowing for future renovations and possible reconfiguration as space needs change over time.

Opus demonstrated a strong understanding of the DOR's focus on supporting student involvement and success through on-campus residential environments and sought every opportunity to integrate features that met or exceeded that desire. While no one is required to live on campus, nearly all new freshmen do and nearly half of current residents decide to return each year. Clearly ISU works hard to ensure their residence halls deliver a high-quality student living experience, and Geoffroy Hall truly supports that effort.

Understanding the importance of the "house" structure to the DOR and the success of its residents,

Opus introduced a "front porch" concept for each house. Located off the elevator lobby on each floor, these light-filled gathering spaces allow for socialization and events. Porches located on the campus side of the building optimize views out and in, showcasing the vibrancy of the housing.

Opus adjusted the site design to mitigate loss of parking and moved storm water detention underground to eliminate issues with traditional above-grade detention basins.

Preliminary LEED evaluation confirms Gold-level certification for Geoffroy Hall.

**ISU's decision to choose Opus' unique process made it possible to exceed their minimum bed requirement while delivering betterments that exceeded their expectations,** fully maximiz-

ing the value of their investment while delivering the best possible experience for student residents.

## Setting Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Sooner

In addition to delivering a facility that exceeds functionality and design expectations, Opus DB<sup>3</sup> mitigates budget risk for clients. By involving all parties early, Opus DB<sup>3</sup> establishes a GMP during the design and development process rather than after designs are locked and contractors are simply bidding on defined specs as with other project delivery methods. Opus' clients know up front what they will get for their budget, and they can be confident their priorities will be met or exceeded.

With Opus DB<sup>3</sup> all participants share their knowledge and ideas to optimize the scope. Participants can also recommend improvements early on, during the design phase, to best meet the

budget, schedule and functional requirements **without shortcutting or compromising the full design process. That's how Opus was able to deliver so many design features well below ISU's target budget.**

**With Opus DB<sup>3</sup>, the client retains more flexibility to adapt the design early on without driving up costs. This process enabled Opus to arrive at a guaranteed cost that was over \$1 million below ISU's target budget.**

## Faster Project Completion

With a guaranteed price established early, construction can also begin and end sooner than with other delivery methods. Opus DB<sup>3</sup> cuts significant time from the schedule. When opportunities or challenges arise, the full team can consider options and provide insight to help the client make informed decisions quickly.

## Mitigating Risk to Keep Projects on Budget

Beyond all that, ISU saw the benefits of the single point of responsibility and continuous involvement every step of the way – uniquely attributed to the Opus DB<sup>3</sup> approach. Open communication and information sharing fosters trust and allows the client to make educated decisions based on potential cost, design and schedule implications. **Project risk is managed collectively by one team with aligned goals, rather than by individual team members working toward individual and somewhat divergent interests.**

## Opus DB<sup>3</sup>: The Client-Centric Process

As leaders in design-build, the idea of a more client-centric process has consistently been embedded in Opus' approach and culture. By listening closely and observing the market, the community and the client's organization, Opus captures their true needs, culture and functional re-

quirements to craft a program and design that meets their goals aesthetically, functionally and financially. Additionally, with construction project management professionals engaging in the design process, Opus is able to deliver a high-quality building with enduring value.

ISU made a sensible choice working with Opus and realized significant benefits. In the end, the DOR gained more beds and higher-end amenities than originally planned, allowing them to appeal to a wider student body and increase rental income, all for over \$1 million below their targeted budget.

**The Opus DB<sup>3</sup> approach enabled Opus to deliver more value than ISU anticipated for Geoffroy Hall—with speed, savings and best overall value—ultimately leading to new ideas for ISU's campus standards and student living.**



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