

**For Immediate Release**

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## **YSU launches campus improvement project**

The first phase of a plan aimed at enhancing the main gateway to Youngstown State University begins this summer.

The estimated \$1.5 million project, funded with a combination of state capital dollars and university parking revenues, includes extensive renovations to two major parking lots on University Plaza, making the lots more attractive and welcoming to potential students, their parents and guests.

The project also is designed to comply with new storm water drainage regulations and to consolidate parking lots for better maintenance management and security.

“This portion of University Plaza is the main gateway to campus,” YSU President David C. Sweet said. “It is important that we provide an entrance and a parking environment that reflects the beauty and enhances the safety of the campus.”

The project is the first step in creating a campus main street extending west from Smoky Hollow and the University Courtyard Apartments, across Wick Avenue, along University Plaza, past Kilcawley Center, the improved university bookstore and the new Andrews Recreation and Wellness Center, and to Fifth Avenue.

The first phase of the project involves the M-8 and M-19 parking lots and calls for a new parking surface, new lighting, ornamental fencing, a rain garden that utilizes rainwater run-off, walkways that connect the lot to campus, and extensive landscaping, including the planting of 100 trees.

Joe Scarnecchia, director of YSU Support Services, said the project was designed in consultation with several institutions near the parking lots, including Holy Trinity Church on Wick Avenue. The church owns a portion of the lot and leases it to YSU.

**(more)**

## **YSU improvements/Add 1**

“The project is part of the overall YSU Master Plan, which calls for improving campus gateways,” Scarnecchia said. “These parking lots are particularly important because it is where visitors park and it provides a first impression of the university.”

The second phase of the project, planned for summer 2006, includes widening University Plaza, improving utilities along the street and creating a small parking lot just north of Tod Hall, YSU’s administration building.

The M-8 and M-19 lots will be closed as early as June 6 and are expected to open again by the start of fall semester classes on Aug. 29.

During construction, visitors and students in the resident halls who usually park in M-8 or M-19 lots will be able to park in the lot by Wick Pollock Inn on Wick Avenue, Scarnecchia said. Employees and others who park in the two lots may instead use the M-4 lot on Wick Avenue or the M-1 parking deck on Wick Avenue.