

ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF
TRUSTEES

Resolution No. 2026.02/02
Authorization to Repaint
Watterson Towers Interior
Walls

Resolution

Whereas, Watterson Towers is comprised of two 28-story student residence hall towers and a center service core tower which opened in 1969. Watterson houses 2,700 students and is owned and operated by Illinois State University, and

Whereas, Watterson Towers contains many unique architectural design characteristics, including three separate towers connected by breezeways, 5-story residence style “houses”, a roof terrace, and contains a total of twenty-five floors of student sleeping rooms in each tower, and contains three other floor levels that include management offices, activity spaces, laundry facilities, exercise facilities, and the entry lobby, and

Whereas, responsible building stewardship includes providing residential student buildings that are in good condition and visually appealing, and

Therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Trustees authorizes a capital project to fully repaint the interior of Watterson Towers at a cost not to exceed \$1.5 million.

Board Action on: _____ Postpone: _____
Motion by: _____ Amend: _____
Second by: _____ Disapprove: _____
Vote: _____ Yeas: _____ Nays: _____ Approve: _____

ATTEST: Board Action, February 20, 2026

Secretary / Chairperson

**Board of Trustees
Illinois State University
Authorization to Repaint Watterson Towers Interior Walls**

Background

Watterson Towers is a 28-story cast in place reinforced concrete high-rise building at Illinois State University (ISU) and is one of the tallest residence halls in the world. Construction was completed in 1969. The residence hall is home to approximately 2,700 student residents and features many unique design characteristics. These characteristics include three separate towers connected by breezeways, 5-story residence style “houses” and contains a total of twenty-five floors of student sleeping rooms in each tower, and a roof terrace. The design of the houses makes vertical circulation unique and challenging as the elevators only serve the third level of every 5-story house. Watterson Towers contains three other floor levels that include management offices, activity spaces, laundry facilities, exercise facilities, and the entry lobby.

Justification

As ISU’s largest residence hall, Watterson Towers is a focal point for the campus and the community. Thanks to its convenient location and ISU’s strong enrollment, Watterson Towers has been at full occupancy for the majority of its 57 years of service. As part of the University’s ongoing commitment to building maintenance and responsible stewardship, the interiors of campus residence halls are fully repainted on a cycling schedule. This ensures that the residence halls remain safe, inviting, and visually appealing to current and prospective students.

Project Scope

This project proposes to paint the interior of Watterson Towers. This includes student rooms, common areas, hallways, and stairwells, for a total of over 750,000 square feet of walls. For reference, a football field is 57,600 square feet.

Project Development

ISU has initiated a project (#553655) to seek bids for this work. Facilities Maintenance has floor plans and blueprints for Watterson Towers. Using these, a complete set of bid documents has been prepared. The project will be publicly bid in accordance with State procurement requirements.

Project Schedule

The project scheduled is phased to cause minimal disruption to students, minimal disruption to University Housing Services operations, and maximum likelihood of success for prospective bidders. The plan involves completing the North Tower in Summer 2026, and the South Tower in Summer 2027.

Project Resource Requirements

North Tower, Summer 2026	\$ 700,000
South Tower, Summer 2027	\$ 700,000
Contingency	<u>\$ 100,000</u>
Total Project Cost - Not to Exceed	<u>\$ 1,500,000</u>

Source of Funding: AFS System Housing Resources