The Oregon Research Institute announced last week that it will partner with Trammell Crow Company of Portland to develop a new research building in the University's Riverfront Research Park.

ORI currently rents an office on Franklin Boulevard and a second space in the Riverfront area. But the need to consolidate continues to be an issue.

"Great scientific ideas happen when scientists run into each other in the hallway," said ORI Executive Director Cynthia Guinn. "Having two separate sites isn't working. We need that collaboration."

Guinn said ORI looked at five different sites and five different developers, but the ultimate decision to go with Trammell Crow came from the ORI Board of Directors. The 15 who make up the board includes five scientists, five research support representatives and five community members.

"It'll be an environmentally advanced building," said Guinn. "We hope it'll be an inviting place for people. We're a growing organization. We hope to be there for the next 20 years."

Trammell Crow Business Development Manager Bill Bach said he is looking forward to the new construction project.

"This is a great opportunity to work with ORI's caliber," said Bach. "And the University is going to be a great partner as well."

Bach said with all the changes in the location – from the street construction to the new U.S. Courthouse – the area will feel like downtown.

Bach said he hopes Trammell Crow will be able to start construction by April 2009.
and finish in one year. He said he expects to have the building occupied by summer 2010.

Guinn said it is important to ORI to have a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, certified building. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, LEED is a Green Building Rating system that encourages sustainable building practices.

Buildings are LEED–certified based on a point system given by the national LEED organization. Bach said until recently it was too expensive to get LEED certified, but manufacturers are starting to come around, and it is now economically affordable.

Bach said Trammell Crow is aiming to build at least a Silver–rated LEED building. He said the site will be approximately 80,000 square feet and four stories tall.

Diane Wiley, director of the Riverfront Research Park, said she hopes the new building will have a positive impact on the community.

"The University and ORI have a long history of collaboration," said Wiley. University faculty members helped start ORI in 1960, and in turn ORI works closely with the University's psychology department and the College of Education, Wiley said.

"It will be beneficial because ORI is one of the most significant behavioral research institutes in the U.S.," said Wiley. "Having it located here is an incredible opportunity for University students to participate and also for future employment."

She added, "It is beneficial having a group like this in town."

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