The aging 1960s-era Sycamore Towers complex presented administrators at Indiana State University with a dilemma faced by institutions across the country – what to do with structurally sound yet outdated housing facilities on campus. The need for an innovative yet economical solution was made even greater by a variety of factors: increasing competition for students among peer universities, increasing competition for student housing dollars from private interests, and increasingly sophisticated expectations from prospective students in terms of both campus aesthetics and student housing amenities.

With a desire to enhance student life on campus and increase the number of students choosing to live in university housing, Indiana State chose to renovate and rehabilitate the complex for use as first-year residence halls. Renovations began with Mills Hall as the first of four phases.

Renovations to each of the four towers are comprised of extensive interior and aesthetic renovations, including all new finishes, lighting, accessibility modifications, heating, ventilation, fire protection, and power and data systems. The main entry level and mezzanine underwent a full renovation and rehabilitation to add offices for support services, administration, and provide amenity space and group study and dining access.

Exterior modifications include rehabilitation with new insulated windows, thermal insulation at the existing exterior precast wall panels, and cleaning and patching of the concrete and brick masonry. Additional areas of new glazing will aid in the introduction of daylight and views provided within a new study lounge on each floor, created by combining two existing dorm rooms, removing drop ceilings in favor of exposed precast, and punching out two additional feet through the building envelope. The existing roof-top penthouse screening system was also addressed in terms of aesthetics and maintenance repair.