



S A M S C H W A R T Z
E N G I N E E R I N G

Memorandum

To: Mr. Richard Bumstead, Associate Director of Campus Environment

From: Mark de la Vergne, Project Manager

Jeff Meindl, P.E., Senior Engineer

Morgan Whitcomb, EIT, Transportation Engineer

Date: November 10, 2011

Re: Traffic, Transportation, and Parking Assessments of New Projects

Project No: UC-09-159

The University of Chicago retained Sam Schwartz Engineering (SSE) in 2009 to conduct a traffic and parking study for the entire campus. The study area for this project included 55th Street to the north, 63rd Street to the south, Stony Island Avenue to the east, and Cottage Grove Avenue to the west. SSE has continued to work with the University to review traffic and parking issues for new projects.

As part of the review for the proposed amendment to the Institutional Planned Development #43, SSE has conducted traffic and parking studies for the projects that are requiring the amendment and determined if the new projects comply with the University's Traffic Management Plan. These three projects are:

- William Eckhardt Research Center at 5640 South Ellis Avenue
- Childcare Center West at 5610 South Drexel Avenue
- Coop Bookstore in McGiffert House at 5751 South Woodlawn Avenue

We have concluded that the projects comply with the Traffic Management Plan. This memorandum provides our findings and analysis for each of the three projects.

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WILLIAM ECKHARDT RESEARCH CENTER

The William Eckhardt Research Center will be a new research facility that will house approximately 500 faculty and students. In order to construct the new 277,000 SF facility, the existing laboratory and research institute building, low temperature laboratory, and astronomy and astrophysics center near the northwest corner of Ellis Avenue and 57th Street will be razed. The Research Center will be accessible 24-hours a day. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the new facility will be provided at several locations. The study area for this project includes the adjacent public streets and is bounded by 57th Street on the south, Ellis Avenue on the east, the Knapp Center for Biological Discovery/Biological Sciences Learning Center building on the west, and the accelerator building on the north.

TRAFFIC, PEDESTRIAN, AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION

The intersection of Ellis Avenue and 57th Street is a 4-way stop controlled intersection with one lane in each direction and parking on both sides of both streets. CTA bus routes run from north to south along Ellis Avenue adjacent to the site. The nearest bus stop is at the southwest corner of Ellis Avenue and 57th Street. Pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks exist on all legs of the intersection. Traffic volumes are fairly low on both Ellis Avenue and 57th Street.

The new WERC facility is not anticipated to generate considerable new traffic demand and will not require any change in the existing on-street traffic patterns upon its completion. Ellis Avenue and 57th Street in the vicinity of the site will remain as two-way, two-lane streets with parking on both sides. The site plan does not propose any off-street parking that would impact the surrounding traffic flow. The existing bus stop will not be impacted.

An existing curb cut and driveway will be removed from Ellis Avenue near the north end of the proposed research center building. A new curb cut and driveway will be installed on 57th Street approximately 100 feet west of Ellis Avenue.

The sidewalks along 57th Street and Ellis Avenue and the pedestrian bridge over 57th Street will remain in use and operate similar to the existing conditions as part of the proposed development. The pedestrian and bicycle traffic circulation north and west of the new WERC will change somewhat. The new facility will include additional pedestrian routes on the west and north sides of the building and there are bike racks proposed in the northwest part of the site. The new routes will allow pedestrians and cyclists to circulate between the WERC and the existing accelerator building, and to traverse directly between the WERC and the Knapp Center building. Additionally, there will be a new pedestrian bridge providing direct access between the accelerator building and the WERC. These new routes will likely encourage some pedestrian traffic to

remain within the site rather than using the sidewalks adjacent to 57th Street and Ellis Avenue.

PARKING AND LOADING

There are no off-street parking spaces currently serving the existing laboratory building and off-street parking is not proposed as part of the current proposal. There is a considerable amount of visitor and permit parking provided in nearby off-street structures and surface lots as well as on-street metered spaces. The new driveway on 57th Street will eliminate two parking spaces and removal of the existing driveway on Ellis Avenue will provide two additional on-street spaces. This will result in a net gain/loss of zero parking spaces.

There are no on-street loading zones within the existing study area and none are proposed. An existing loading dock, with access from Ellis Avenue between the accelerator building and the existing research institute, currently serves the site. The dock is used by single-unit delivery vehicles. That dock and access will be removed as part of the proposed construction.

There is an existing area for loading and unloading west of the existing research institute between the Low Temperature Laboratory and the Astronomy and Astrophysics Center. Access for that area is from 57th Street, between the Knapp Center for Biological Discovery/Biological Sciences Learning Center and the Biopsychological Research Center building. The proposed plan will utilize the same access location on 57th Street but the loading area will be reduced in size. The primary function of that loading area will be for access to the tank enclosure. It will accommodate single unit and multi-unit vehicles.

The proposed WERC will have a new curb cut for access to a loading dock on 57th Street approximately 100 feet west of Ellis Avenue. The new loading dock will be inside of the building and used for single unit delivery vehicles and garbage trucks. The traffic volumes on 57th Street are similar to the volumes on Ellis Avenue; therefore, the proposed loading dock access is anticipated to operate similarly to the existing access on Ellis Avenue.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- Add wayfinding signage for the route between the accelerator building and the WERC to encourage the use of the internal corridor.

CHILDCARE CENTER WEST

The future Childcare Center West will accommodate approximately 124 children. The study area is bounded by 56th Street to the north, Drexel Avenue to the east, construction offices to the south and a public alley to the west. There is an existing three-story residential building north of the future Childcare Center West. The site is currently used as construction office parking and a vacant gravel lot.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

56th Street, north of the site, is one-way eastbound with parking on both sides of the street. Drexel Avenue ends at East 56th Street and is a two-way street with parking on both sides of the street. There is a stop sign at the intersection for eastbound traffic on 56th Street. There are crosswalks on the west and south legs of this intersection and accessible ramps for each of those two crossings and sidewalks on both sides of all adjacent streets. To the west of the site, there is a relatively wide public alley which is accessible from 56th Street and 57th Street.

The proposed site plan includes a one-way westbound driveway and parking area to the north of the Childcare Center West. The vehicle entrance is on Drexel Avenue and the driveway exits onto the public alley to the west. The addition of trips to and from the new facility is not anticipated to any change in the existing on-street traffic patterns upon its completion.

PARKING AND LOADING

There is no off-street parking currently associated with the site (not taking into account the parking for construction) and the proposed condition will add nine regular parking spaces and one accessible space. Adjacent to the site, there are approximately eleven on-street parking spaces. The entrance to the driveway/parking entrance will eliminate approximately three parking spaces. This results in a net increase of seven on- and off-street parking spaces in the proposed condition.

There are no existing curb-side loading zones adjacent to the site and no loading zones are proposed. The proposed passenger pick-up and drop-off area is located in the driveway/parking lot to the north of the Childcare Center. Loading and unloading of goods and garbage pick-up will occur in the public alley to the west of the Center.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- A wayfinding sign on 56th Street between the public alley and Drexel Avenue directing drivers to the Childcare Center (with an arrow to the right) could be considered to discourage drivers from entering the Childcare Center driveway the wrong way via the public alley.
- On-street directional arrows painted onto the driveway/parking area (pointing to the west) should be considered.

- A stop sign on the southeast corner of Drexel Avenue, for northbound right turning vehicles should be considered to ease pedestrian crossing in the area.
- The vehicle entrance to the existing gravel lot should be removed and the pathway and sidewalk in that area be restored. This will add approximately one on-street parking space to the proposed condition.
- Add a “DO NOT ENTER” sign at the alley exit.

CO-OP BOOKSTORE RELOCATION

The Seminary Co-operative Bookstore will move from its current location on University Avenue to the first floor and part of the basement of 5751 South Woodlawn Avenue, the McGiffert House. This future location will be renovated prior to the Co-Op Bookstore's relocation. The site is bounded by South Woodlawn Avenue to the west, a faculty and staff parking lot to the north, a public alley to the east, and The Robie House to the south. The nearest intersection is Woodlawn Avenue and 58th Street.

TRAFFIC/PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Woodlawn Avenue is a two-way street with parking on both sides of the street. 58th Street is one-way westbound with parking on both sides of the street. The intersection is stop-controlled. There are sidewalks on both sides of all streets and crosswalks and accessible pedestrian ramps on all legs of the intersection. The faculty and staff parking lot to the north of the site has a one-way entrance from Woodlawn Avenue and exits onto the public alley to the east of the site.

The renovation to the building will include an accessible semi-circular ramp on the southwest corner of the property.

It is not anticipated that the relocation of the Co-Op Bookstore will warrant any additional mitigation to traffic or pedestrian conditions in the area.

PARKING AND LOADING

In addition to the staff and faculty parking lot to the north of the site, there are six off-street parking spaces behind the site, which are reserved for other various University personnel. There is no off-street parking added in the proposed condition.

There is on-street parking available on Woodlawn Avenue and on 58th Street. None of the proposed renovations affect the availability of on-street parking.

There is a curbside loading zone on Woodlawn Avenue south of the site, approximately two spaces long, which is in effect from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday. The existing building has a loading dock to the rear, accessible from the public alley which can accommodate a single unit truck. Garbage collection occurs in the public alley. No changes to these loading facilities are proposed.

MITIGATION MEASURES

- The garbage and recycling bins for the site are currently located in the loading dock. It is recommended that they be moved to the location noted in the plans provided by Tigerman McCurry, north of the rear parking area, as it is anticipated that the Co-Op Bookstore will use the loading dock area.