



To: Town of Wellesley Planning Board

Date: September 2025

Memorandum

Project #: 12920.21

From: Michael A. Santos, PE, PTOE
Vinod Kalikiri, PE, PTOE

Re: Wellesley College Campus Renewal
Residence Hall Swing Space – Project of Significant Impact (PSI)
Transportation Evaluation

On behalf of Wellesley College (the College), VHB has prepared this memorandum to summarize the transportation evaluation prepared in support of the proposed Residence Hall Swing Space to serve as temporary student housing at Wellesley College (the Project) on the College campus.

The Project will construct five residential buildings to support 150 students that will serve as swing space during the renovation of the residential halls on the Wellesley College campus. To support the construction of the Project, the existing Dower Hall will be demolished. It is important to note that there is no proposed increase to student enrollment or faculty as a result of the Project. The existing use is residential space for 53 students. The existing 51 space parking lot will also be removed from the site. The Project will construct a total of seven parking spaces on the site for a net loss of 44 parking spaces in this area of the campus. Based on field observations conducted in September 2025, a total of 31 vehicles were parked in the existing lot during the peak period for parking demand. This parking demand will be accommodated by other parking facilities on the campus. As all displaced parking will continue to be accommodated on-campus, the Project is not expected to result in any changes to traffic volume and traffic patterns outside the campus. The proposed design includes new pedestrian connections to the existing pedestrian facilities along Wellesley College Road, providing connectivity throughout the campus and to the surrounding roadway network.

Overall, the evaluation finds that the construction of the swing space results in no additional permanent campus traffic and will materially not affect traffic operations on the public streets serving the campus. Nonetheless, the contextual background information and transportation-related information is summarized in the following sections of this memorandum to complete the PSI record.

Traffic Characteristics

Under existing conditions, vehicle traffic accesses the Site through the existing on-campus roadway network. The Site is located nearest to the Wellesley College entrance on Washington Street (Route 16) but can also be accessed via Central Street (Route 135). College Road at Washington Street is a three-leg signalized intersection with a single lane for each approach. College Road at Central Street is a three-leg signalized intersection with a through and a left turn lane on the Central Street westbound approach to the intersection and single lanes for all other approaches.

The Project will not result in any increase in enrollment or faculty and will provide temporary residential facilities for students that already live on the campus. As such the Project is expected to have no impact on the volume of traffic or the level of service entering or exiting the campus via public roadways.

Pedestrian traffic is expected to primarily use existing foot paths within the campus. Pedestrian traffic during construction that is detoured around the construction area will use existing paths and roadways and will be contained within the campus.

Parking

A review of the existing conditions plan and the proposed layout plan for the Project indicate that there will be a net loss of 44 parking spaces. Students that currently use the Dower Lot will be reassigned to the existing student lot in the northwest portion of the campus. Employee parking that currently uses the lot will be relocated to other areas of the campus, with some assigned to the parking lot at the Wellesley College Club immediately south of the Project. Visitor parking for admissions will use the five of the seven parking spaces that will be provided on the Site, with two additional spaces provided for maintenance staff. Overall, the amount of parking that is impacted by the Project is minimal and will be accounted for on the Site and in other areas of campus.

VHB conducted parking utilization observations at the Dower Lot on Wednesday September 10, 2025 at 11:00 AM. The existing parking lot consists of 51 spaces inclusive of 7 spaces reserved for visitors and 3 accessible spaces. Based on information provided by Wellesley College staff, the lot is used by a combination of students (approximately 20 spaces), employees, and visitor parking for admissions. A total of 31 vehicles were parked in the Dower Lot during the observation period, resulting in an occupancy of 61 percent.

The number of temporary displaced spaces represents a small percentage of the total campus parking supply. With on-going fine tuning and adjustment of parking-related directional information provided to students/staff, it is expected that available unused spaces on the campus can adequately support the regular parking needs of students, staff and faculty who currently use the Dower Lot. More importantly, from a PSI traffic impact review standpoint, the Project will not result in any impacts outside the campus due to the small number of parking spaces being displaced. All traffic impacts will be limited internally to the campus and the immediate surroundings of the Project Site.

Sidewalk Inventory on Public Streets

VHB conducted an inventory of the sidewalks located within 600 feet of the Project Site along the Washington Street frontage with Wellesley College in September 2025. The inventory identified the condition, type and location of the sidewalks in addition to crosswalk locations within the area reviewed. The findings of the September 2025 review are summarized below.

For the purpose of this inventory, sidewalk condition was classified into four categories:

- › Excellent: No deterioration observed.
- › Good: Minimal deterioration such as cracking, heaving, sinking and intrusion or encroachment of vegetation observed.
- › Fair: Some deterioration including more severe cracking, heaving, sinking, intrusion or encroachment of vegetation observed as well as presence of patching. No serious hazardous walking impediments observed.
- › Poor: Severe deterioration observed making walking conditions hazardous or prohibitive.

The sidewalk conditions assessment is based on visual inspection of the sidewalks and engineering judgment. It is noted that there could be some overlap between conditions, particularly between “fair” and “good” classifications.

Washington Street between 667 Washington St and 735 Washington St (The President's House)

Sidewalks are located along both sides of Washington Street, except west of Service Drive on the south side of the street. The sidewalk is asphalt with granite curbs and is in good condition with minor cracking and patching. The sidewalk is generally 6.5 feet wide, with some areas that are slightly wider and narrower.

A raised crosswalk is located across Washington Street at 667 Washington Street, approximately 60 feet east of Upland Road. This crosswalk has pedestrian actuated rectangular rapid flashing beacons and warning signage. The crosswalk uses ladder-style markings and is in excellent condition. Curb ramps are located at either end of the crosswalk with no detectable warning panels.

A crosswalk is located across Upland Road with curb ramps on both sides of the crosswalk. Detectable warning panels are not present on the ramps. The crosswalk uses ladder-style markings and is in good condition.

A crosswalk is located across Dover Road with curb ramps on both sides of the crosswalk. Detectable warning panels are not present on the ramps. The crosswalk uses ladder-style markings and is in good condition.

Two crosswalks are located at the signalized intersection of Washington Street and College Road, one across Washington Street on the eastern approach and one across College Road. The crosswalks at the intersection are controlled by pedestrian signal heads and push buttons. Both crosswalks have curb ramps without detectable warning panels. The crosswalks use ladder-style markings and are in good condition.

A crosswalk is located across Washington Street, approximately 25 feet east of Service Drive. This crosswalk has static pedestrian warning signage and curb ramps without detectable warning panels. The areas of the crosswalk that meet the curb ramp are in fair condition due to extensive cracking. Based on the field review, there may be drainage issues at the crosswalk due to the amount of sand and silt buildup near the curb ramps.

Summary of Current Transportation Services on Campus

Parking at Wellesley College is only provided to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Students who wish to maintain a vehicle on campus are required to register it with the Wellesley College Police Department for a fee. Freshmen, other students as well as faculty and staff who may choose to not travel by personal automobile have access to excellent transportation resources for travel in the greater Boston area. Following is a summary of the various transportation options available at the College.

- › **Wellesley-MIT Exchange Bus:** The Wellesley-MIT Exchange Bus provides weekday transportation between Wellesley and MIT on weekdays for Wellesley and MIT students, faculty and staff. The Exchange Bus picks up and drops off at the Wellesley Chapel, Alumnae Hall (Wellesley College), 350 Massachusetts Avenue (MIT), Building 34 on Vassar Street (MIT), Kendall Square MBTA Stop, 77 Massachusetts Avenue (Cambridge), and 45 Massachusetts Avenue/Marlboro Market (Boston). The first bus leaves the College at 7:30 AM and the last bus returns at 11:05 PM. The bus runs with approximately one-hour headways. The cost of a ride on the bus is \$3.00.
- › **Senate Bus:** The Senate Bus runs between Wellesley and Cambridge from Friday evening through Sunday evening with stops at the Chapel, Alumnae Hall, Harvard Square at Johnston Gate, 77 Massachusetts Avenue (Cambridge), and 45 Massachusetts Avenue/Marlboro Market (Boston). Schedules and headways vary between Friday evening (6:00 PM first departure to 2:10 AM last arrival at the College), Saturday (9:00 AM first departure and 2:10 AM last arrival) and Sunday (9:00 AM first departure and 12:35 AM last arrival). The cost of a ride on the bus is \$3.00.

- › **Wellesley-Olin-Babson Shuttle:** This shuttle runs on half hour headways between the Wellesley College, Olin College and Babson campuses on Monday through Saturday. The first shuttle starts at 7:40 AM at Wellesley College and the last shuttle returns to the College at approximately 11:07 PM. This shuttle is free for students.
- › **Malls/Movies Shuttle:** This shuttle runs on Saturday only between Wellesley College and retail/entertainment destinations in the Framingham/Natick area including stops at Natick Mall, AMC Theater on Flutie Pass, Barnes & Noble on Route 9 and Target on Cochituate Road. The first shuttle starts at 11:00 AM at Founders Hall and the last shuttle returns to the College at approximately 9:35 PM. A round trip ticket on this shuttle costs \$3.00.
- › **Zipcar:** Wellesley College has six (6) Zipcars on campus for use by the campus community. Zipcar accounts can be opened for individual use of the vehicles or faculty/staff have the option of using an existing department account.

In addition to the private shuttles/buses and Zipcar service noted above, the following public transportation options are also available to students, faculty and staff.

- › **MWRTA – Catch Connect:** The MWRTA operates a MicroTransit service called Catch Connect within the Town of Wellesley between 6:45 AM – 8:45 PM on weekdays. Catch Connect allows users to schedule rides within the Town of Wellesley. Catch Connect allows customers to schedule rides between points of interest and is used to provide connections to the available transit services within the Town.
- › **MBTA Commuter Rail:** The Wellesley Square commuter rail stop on the Worcester/Framingham line is located approximately 1/3rd mile from the intersection of Central Street/Weston Road and provides the College a great commuting option.

Construction Traffic

Since the Project is still in the permitting phase, construction-related planning and scheduling is in a very preliminary stage of development. More details will be available when the final construction plans are developed. The following information is based on past planning considerations and may be subject to change during later stages of design development and development of the Construction Management Plan.

Primary construction employee vehicle access to the campus is provided by existing roadways from both the east and west along Route 135 (Central Street) and Route 16 (Washington Street), each of which connects to the regional highway system. Typical construction work shifts are expected start and end outside of the commuter peak hours in the area, thereby minimizing the effect of the trips on area roadway operations.

Upon their arrival on the campus, construction personnel will be directed to park in designated areas and walk to the construction area. All contractor parking is expected to be handled in existing parking areas.

Additional construction traffic information, such as construction hours, estimated truck volumes, contractor employee counts, etc. will be submitted by the Contractor as part of the Site Plan Approval submission when such information is available.