

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

To: Tom Porter
CC: Phil Feola
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From: Jim Watson, PTP
Erwin Andres, P E
Date: December 4, 2012
Subject: Excel Academy Traffic Statement

Building Hope
Goulston & Storrs
Excel Academy

Introduction

This memorandum presents a Traffic Statement performed for Excel Academy in support of its application for a special exception to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). Excel Academy Public Charter School has applied for a special exception to allow for a variance approval from the parking requirements for elementary schools at Excel School, which is located at the northwest corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Sumner Road in Southeast Washington, D.C. Currently, Excel Academy shares the former Birney Elementary School building with Septima Clark Public Charter School, which is planning to move to another location off-site. With the relocation of Septima Clark School, Excel Academy will take occupancy of the entire school building and, as such, anticipates growth in its faculty/staff and student populations.

Due to the displacement of Septima Clark School's faculty and staff to another location and the anticipated increase in faculty and staff to serve the student population, Excel Academy plans to increase its faculty and staff to 162 people over the next three years. In the 2012-2013 school year, the combined Excel Academy (77 employees) and Septima Clark School (50 employees) employed 127 faculty and staff members. As a result, 35 more faculty and staff members will be on-site in the future than there are in existing conditions

Excel Academy seeks variance approval from the parking requirements for elementary schools due to this change in the number of faculty and staff members. The site is currently served by 48 parking spaces. Zoning Regulations stipulate that 2 spaces for each 3 faculty and staff members must be provided, resulting in a total of 108 spaces required on-site. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the request for a variance approval can be accommodated without adverse impact to the surrounding community. Prior to completing this Traffic Statement, interaction with DDOT determined the scope of this statement and the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and parking components as proposed. The first section describes the existing conditions of the site. The second section describes the proposed conditions. The third section discusses the proposed TDM and parking strategies that will help Excel Academy serve its parking demand. Figure 1 presents the site location and local roadway network. Figure 2 presents the site location in context with the adjacent neighborhood.

Figure 1: Site Location and Local Roadway Network



Existing Conditions

Excel Academy is an all-girls charter school that currently shares the former Birney Elementary School building with the all-boys Septima Clark Charter School. Excel Academy currently houses 509 Pre School through 5th Grade students and employs 77 faculty and staff members (71 full-time and 6 part-time). Combined, the two schools currently house approximately 759 students and employ 127 faculty and staff members. Excel Academy's current school day begins at 7:40 am and ends at 3:20 pm. Septima Clark's current school day begins at 7:30 am and ends at 4:05 pm. Both schools begin accepting students for Before Care programs at 7:00 am, lasting until school begins. After School programs begin immediately following the school day and last until 6:00 pm at Excel Academy and 7:00 pm at Septima Clark.

The school is well served by transit, located approximately 750 feet from the Anacostia Metrorail Station which is served by the Green Line. Metrobus services the site via stops in front of the school on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue for the Anacostia-Congress Heights Line (routes A2, A6, A7, A8, A42, A46, and A48), the Anacostia-Fort Drum Line (routes A4 and A5), and the United Medical Center-Anacostia Line (routes W2 and W3). In addition, the Anacostia Metro Station is served by the Potomac Ave Metro-Skyland Circulator route as well as the U Street-Garfield Line (route 90), Stanton Road Line (route 94), Anacostia High School Line (route A33), Bladensburg Road-Anacostia Line (route B2), Anacostia-Eckington Line (route P6), Oxon Hill-Fort Washington Line (route P18), Minnesota Avenue-Anacostia Line (route U2), Deanwood-Alabama Avenue Line (route W4), Garfield-Anacostia Loop Line (routes W6 and W8), and the Bock Road Line (route W14). The existing transit service is presented in Figure 1.

Bicycle infrastructure in the immediate are of the school includes a Capital Bikeshare station at the Anacostia Metro Station as well as a connection to the Suitland Parkway Trail at the Anacostia Metro Station and via a bridge over Suitland Parkway approximately one block from the school on Stanton Road. Figure 2 presents the existing bike conditions.

Existing Mode Choice

Excel Academy surveyed its students and faculty and staff in November 2012 to determine the school's commute patterns. The survey results are presented in Table 1 and reveal that 64 percent of the current staff members arrive on-site via single-occupant vehicles (SOVs) and 10 percent carpool. The remaining 26 percent of staff members arrive via Metrorail, Metrobus, or walking. For the student population, 45 percent of current students arrive via single-child occupant vehicles and 12 percent carpool. The remaining 43 percent of students arrive via Metrorail, Metrobus, or walking. Based on observations and discussions with Excel Academy staff, most students arrive between 7:15 and 7:45 am and most faculty and staff arrive prior to 7:00 am.

Table 1: Commuter Survey Results

	<u>Staff</u>		<u>Student</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Drive (SOVs)	49	64%	231	45%
Carpool	8	10%	63	12%
Metro	15	20%	150	29%
Bus	1	1%	15	3%
Walk	4	5%	50	10%
Existing Total	77	100%	509	100%

Source: Excel Academy

Figure 2: Existing Site Location



day The expansion of Excel Academy's populations is anticipated to occur over the coming 3 years, through the 2015-2016 academic year

Projected Parking Demand

The existing peak demand consists of 75 spaces for 127 faculty and staff, corresponding to a peak parking demand ratio of 0.59 spaces per employee. The future employee population of 162 faculty and staff would correlate to a practical peak demand of 96 spaces. The future parking demand for the school was determined using a linear growth rate based upon the increase in employees utilizing the parking lot from 127 to 162. Although demand is anticipated to continue to exceed the existing 48-space parking lot, the future parking demand does not take into account any future transportation demand management strategies that may be implemented, nor does the future parking supply take into account any modifications to the parking available on or off site.

Transportation Demand Management and Parking Strategies

The goal of TDM strategies for the school is to increase use of public transit, walking, biking, and/or carpooling in order to minimize the parking demand generated by the school. In addition, given the current and anticipated parking demands for the school, on and off site parking strategies may add parking capacity to meet the existing and future parking demand of the school. Excel Academy will implement TDM with the goal of reducing overall parking demand and on and off site parking strategies to meet the remaining demand that may be serviced. The Excel Academy does currently utilize the SmartBenefits program for employees to withhold tax-free funds for transit from their paycheck.

TDM Strategies

The proposed TDM strategies that Excel Academy will commit to are listed and described below.

- **Coordination**

A TDM Coordinator will be designated to oversee and implement TDM measures. The contact information for the TDM Coordinator will be provided to DDOT.

- **Education**

Educational information will be developed by the TDM Coordinator and distributed at the beginning of each school year to educate faculty, staff, and students on the benefits of sustainable transportation practices. New employees and new student families will be given information on transportation options and TDM programs offered by Excel Academy.

- **Carpooling**

For schools, carpooling can be a very effective way to reduce both staff and student trips. Excel Academy plans on providing an incentive for preferable parking locations to encourage employees to carpool. The TDM Coordinator will also speak with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) SchoolPool program coordinator, Stephen Finafrock. This program helps parents at a school find other parents to share trips. By

As can be seen in Figure 1, Excel Academy's primary parking lot is accessed from Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. A secondary parking area can be accessed from Sumner Road as well. Student pick-up and drop-off currently occurs along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Sumner Road, immediately adjacent to the school.

Existing Parking Demand

Parking counts were performed from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Wednesday, November 28, 2012 both on-site and for on-street parking in the blocks surrounding the school. There are a total of 48 marked spaces on the campus in the parking lot accessed from Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. There is a secondary area where faculty and staff park that is accessed from Sumner Road. Where allowed, on-street parking on the adjacent streets is restricted by Residential Parking Permit (RPP) program for Zone 8 to a two-hour time limit or residential permit holders only. The counts show that the on-site parking demand peaks at 10:00 AM and 2:30 PM with 75 vehicles parked within the on-campus lots. Under existing conditions, parking is provided on a first-come, first-serve basis to employees in the on-campus lots. Parents and visitors to the school park in the surrounding on-street parking spaces. Due to the demand and on-street parking restrictions, employees park wherever space exists in the on-campus lots once all of the 48 marked spaces are occupied. Existing parking demand is given in Table 2. The existing peak parking demand consists of 75 vehicles, which are parked in the 48-space existing parking lot and in areas that are currently not marked for parking. This demand is for the combined faculty/staff population of 127.

Table 2: Existing Parking Demand Summary

Time	Sumner Rd. Area	MLK Jr. Ave. Lot (48 Spaces)	Total Vehicles
7:00 AM	10	44	54
7:30 AM	14	46	60
8:00 AM	17	51	68
8:30 AM	16	51	67
9:00 AM	18	55	73
9:30 AM	20	54	74
10:00 AM	20	55	75
10:30 AM	20	54	74
11:00 AM	20	54	74
11:30 AM	20	54	74
12:00 PM	21	50	71
12:30 PM	21	49	70
1:00 PM	22	50	72
1:30 PM	22	50	72
2:00 PM	22	50	72
2:30 PM	21	54	75
3:00 PM	21	52	73
3:30 PM	21	51	72
4:00 PM	16	48	64

Proposed Conditions

Upon Septima Clark School's relocation to another facility, Excel Academy will be the sole occupant of the former Birney Elementary School building and, as such, is planned to accommodate approximately 1,000 students and 162 faculty and staff members. This will represent an additional 241 students and 35 faculty and staff members that will be on-site each

Excel Academy will introduce these TDM and parking strategies in coordination with the increase in the student and employee population. In order to track progress and determine the most effective strategies, the program will be monitored on a yearly basis. From there, improvements will be made to further increase the effectiveness of the overall program.

signing up for this program, parents are able to create online profiles allowing them to find other parents at the school with whom to share trips (carpool trips, walking trips, or biking trips)

- Subsidies

Employees may withhold tax-free funds from their paychecks for transit as a part of the SmartBenefits program

- Walking/Bicycling

The school will participate in District Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs and work in coordination with the DDOT SRTS liaison to improve access for non-auto modes. Additionally semi-regular “Walk or Bike to School” days will be held, with the incentive of free dress for students used to encourage participation. Biking may be limited to older grades for safety reasons. Bicycle parking for employees and students will be provided.

- Monitoring

Trip generation and mode split for students and employees independently will be monitored annually and the information will be reported to DDOT. Data collection will occur annually in either May or late September (annual monitoring date still to be confirmed with DDOT) each year after school programs settle into typical patterns to demonstrate the actual traffic conditions in the Washington, DC region. The goal of the monitoring is to show progress in the implementation of the TDM program. Because TDM will be implemented with the start of the 2013-2014 school year, counts to be performed by Gorove/Slade in May 2013 will serve as the baseline for pre-TDM levels.

Parking Strategies

The proposed parking strategies that Excel Academy will commit to in order to add additional parking capacity are listed and described below.

- On-Site Parking Options

Excel Academy will examine restriping its current parking areas to determine if more efficient striping could result in additional on-site parking. Several areas exist on-site where vehicles are currently parking in unmarked spaces that could be striped for additional parking, particularly in the parking lot accessed from Sumner Road. It is believed that 10 to 15 additional spaces may be gained by striping areas of the parking lot accessed from Sumner Road. In addition, Excel Academy will formalize a tandem parking strategy that has been used at the school whereby the school’s safety and security staff retains the keys of vehicles that are parking in tandem to more efficiently utilize those spaces.

- Off-Site Parking Options

Excel Academy has entered into an agreement to use 15 parking spaces at Matthews Memorial Baptist Church, located approximately half of a block south of Excel Academy, across Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue.