

HNTB

Mr. Gerard Gager, AIA
University Architect
American University
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016-8115

RE: Addition to the McKinley School of Communication

Dear Mr. Gager:

At your request, HNTB Corporation has reviewed the Campus Plan Further Processing Application of American University for an Addition to the McKinley School of Communication. The purpose of our review was to assess whether there would be a need for an updated traffic study to identify and document any impacts of the University's proposal relative to traffic. This letter explains HNTB's response to your request, and the findings which we made regarding impacts.

In order to assess the need for a traffic study, one must essentially conduct an initial traffic study to understand if the nature of the proposal is such that it may create traffic impacts. Thus, HNTB examined the details of the changes to the McKinley School, and examined them in light of the findings of our previous traffic studies, in particular the *Transportation Analysis of the SIS Parking Facility: Future Conditions Assessment* dated January 2005. In assessing whether there may be traffic impacts, we considered whether the proposed changes to McKinley would imply changes to the forecast conditions relative to trip generation, trip distribution, mode shares, and traffic and parking assignments.

Our findings are these:

1. There would be no material change in the number of trips generated by the American University Main Campus due to the modest increase in square footage of the McKinley Building. This finding is based on the idea that the number of students, faculty, and staff remain essentially unchanged. Its use by the School of Communication, which is heavily oriented towards undergraduates, means that it will serve the group which generates trips to/from campus at the lowest rate, given the on-campus resident population. And the trips being made by all regular users of McKinley were previously accounted for in previous traffic studies at American University, since there is no change in populations stemming from this change to McKinley.

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2. The McKinley proposal does not affect the distribution of trips to/from the Main Campus (i.e., the direction to/from which the trips are made). The modest shifting of activities from one campus building to another does not affect the residence choices of faculty, staff, or students.
3. The proposed changes at McKinley would not affect previously studied uses of different modes and travel behaviors, specifically, parking utilization. Again, those regular users of the new McKinley are already selecting modes and behaviors based on the relative costs and utility of the choices they have, none of which are affected by relocating their on-campus destination from one building to another.
4. The peak hour traffic volumes and the demand for parking estimated in previous traffic studies would not be changed by the proposed changes to the McKinley School. The one change which we can identify would be relative to the new auditorium. This 200-seat auditorium, replacing a smaller facility elsewhere on campus with one that has an additional 100 seats, would chiefly be used for instructional purposes and academic uses. However, it will be used for occasional events normally held in the evening which may be open to the general public. In these times, for such events, the potential additional traffic due to the general public's share of these 100 additional seats would be well within the error of the estimates of future traffic, which is to say, they would be too small to be readily identifiable as different from the previous estimates of evening traffic. Moreover, these minute changes in traffic due to these 100 extra seats would be expected to be outside (i.e., later than) the critical hours of traffic at American University and on the adjacent streets and intersections of concern.

Based on these findings, HNTB has concluded that the project would not have a perceptible impact on traffic.

Please let me know if I can provide you with any additional information on this matter.

Very Truly Yours,
HNTB Corporation



Owen P. Curtis
Associate Vice President
Director of Transportation Planning