

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: *KB*
Kelsey Bridges
Manager, Neighborhood Planning Branch

DATE: July 10, 2026

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 16-18I – Georgetown Campus Plan Amendment and Further Processing

APPLICATION

Georgetown University (the “Applicant”), in conjunction with the National Park Service, requests an amendment to the Georgetown University Campus Plan and further processing approval to construct a new boathouse on the property located at 3500 Water Street NW. The Campus Plan was approved by the Zoning Commission (ZC) in 2016 through ZC Order No. 16-18 for the period of 2017 through 2036 and was subsequently amended through ZC Order No.’s 16-18A through 16-18H. The property is currently used by a seasonal concessionaire, the Key Bridge Boathouse and the Applicant proposes to rebuild it as a non-motorized boathouse for dedicated use by the Georgetown University rowing programs with a small dock that is publicly accessible.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieving an exceptional quality of life by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. To achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District’s multi-modal transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The project is expected to generate a minor amount of additional vehicle trips in morning peak hour and no vehicular access is proposed for the site. One of the two existing curb cuts will be closed, with the other modified to accommodate movement of boats on trailers manipulated by mechanical dolly (no vehicles);
- The Applicant is proposing 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces, which exceeds the minimum requirement in zoning, which DDOT supports;

- The Applicant’s proposed public space improvements, which were developed in coordination with DDOT, will improve safety and multimodal operations at the of dead-end Water Street NW;
- As part of the Georgetown University Campus, the proposed boathouse will be subject to the University’s Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan.
- The Applicant proposes a Loading Management Plan (LMP) to address the unique nature of the boat loading operations in public space, to ensure safe and efficient operations on Water Street; and
- DDOT is supportive of the Applicant’s concurrent request to close the abutting 35th Street NW, (Surveyor’s Order Case No. 26-01008) which is part of a larger multi-parcel land exchange between the Applicant, the District, and the National Park Service.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of this Campus Plan modification with the following condition included in the Zoning Order:

- Implement the Loading Management Plan (LMP) proposed in the June 8, 2026, Transportation Statement ([Exhibit 13D](#)), for the life of the project, unless otherwise.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

The Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT on the following matters outside of this Campus Plan modification:

- The Applicant will be required to obtain public space permits for all elements of the project proposed in public space; and
- The Applicant will work with DDOT to complete and sign the Maintenance Easement Agreement to be attached as an exhibit to a Land Disposition Agreement with the District related to adjacent lots for construction of the boathouse.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

The following is DDOT’s review of the submitted plans, application materials, and June 8, 2026, Transportation Statement ([Exhibit 13D](#)) to assess the project’s consistency with the District’s vision for an equitable and sustainable transportation system that delivers safe and convenient ways to move people, goods, and services.

Mode Split and Trip Generation

Each trip a person makes is made by a certain means of travel, such as vehicle, bicycle, walking, and transit. The means of travel is referred to as a ‘mode’ of transportation. A variety of elements impact the mode of travel, including density of development, diversity of land use, completeness of pedestrian network, proximity to transit options, availability and cost of vehicle parking, among many others.

The boathouse serves a discreet University use with activity constrained to specific times of day and year when athletes are practicing or competing on the Potomac River. While the project will include a small dock that will enable public access to the water, there are no public services or programs proposed

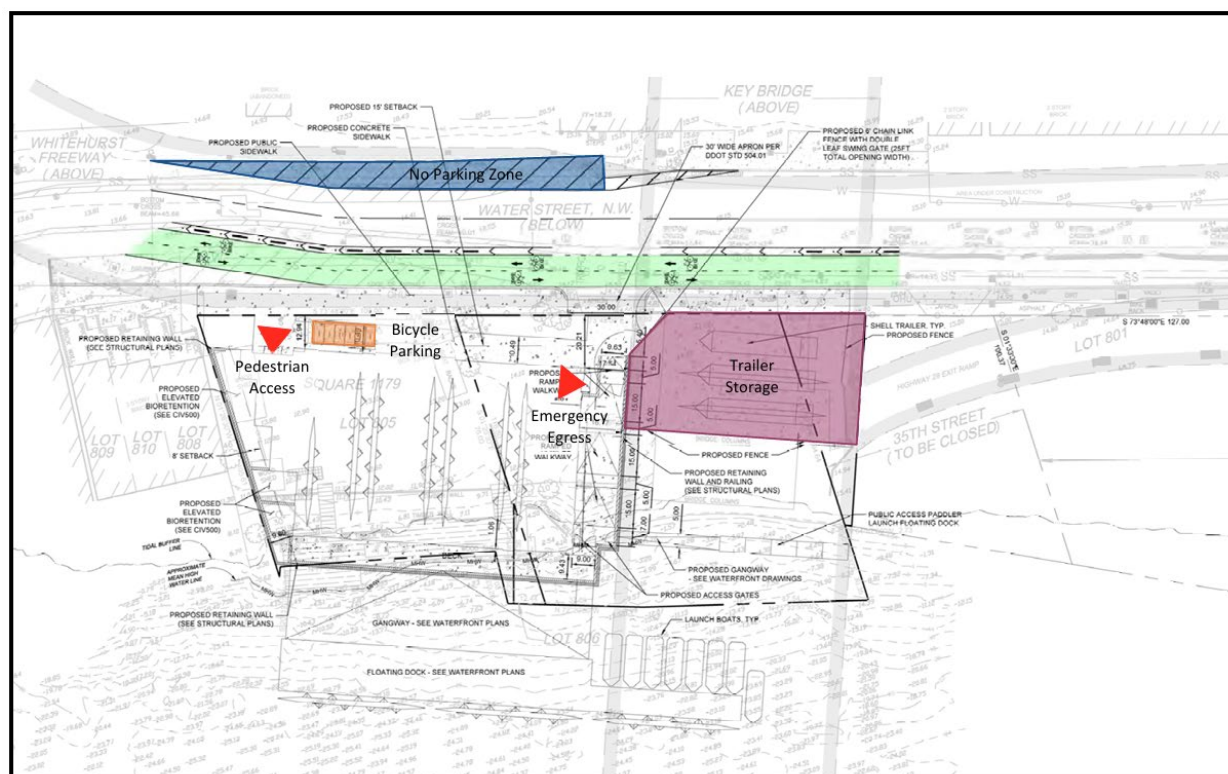
on site. The Applicant's Transportation Statement asserts that seven (7) vehicle trips would be generated during the morning peak hour from coaches and staff who are all expected to drive to morning practices, while all students are expected to walk or bike/scooter to the boathouse. Trip generation is not expected to differ from "home meet" competitions, as visiting teams will continue to launch from the nearby Thompson Boat Center, which they do currently.

Site Access

The site is located near the western dead-end terminus of Water Street NW, to the west of 34th Street NW, underneath the Whitehurst Freeway and Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge overhead. Metrobus Routes A58 and C85 serve the proposed boathouse, with stops within ¼ mile of the site at the M and 34th Street intersection. The nearest Capital Bikeshare station is located one block to the east on Water Street at 34th Street.

The Applicant proposes to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the boathouse with the addition of a concrete sidewalk and two-way on-street protected bike lane along its Water Street frontage. These improvements will help to fill part of an existing sidewalk gap also help to establish and clarify intended multi-modal use of the dead-end western terminus of Water Street, as the bike lane transitions to the National Park Service's Capital Crescent Trail. One of the site's two existing curb cuts will be retained and modified to support loading of boats, to be performed by hand with the assistance of a mechanical dolly. No changes to vehicular access are proposed.

Figure 1 | Site Circulation Plan



Source: Wells & Associates 6/8/26 Transportation Statement, Figure 7

Loading

DDOT's practice is to accommodate vehicle loading in a safe and efficient manner, while at the same time preserving safety across non-vehicle modes and limiting any hindrance to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm.

Per Title 11 of the *DCMR*, Subtitle C, §901.1, marine uses less than 30,000 square feet are not required to provide off-street loading facilities. Nevertheless, the proposed boathouse does have unique requirements for loading shells (boats) at this location. To ensure functionality of the boathouse and to minimize conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles on Water Street, the Applicant proposes a 110-foot on- street "No Parking" zone on the north side of Water Street and a curb cut on their frontage. In conjunction with other proposed improvements to Water Street, this will allow space for shells to be loaded and unloaded from trailers by hand, with the assistance of a mechanical dolly. This proposed layout of Water Street was developed in coordination with DDOT and the "No Parking" zone for boat loading is shown in blue on Figure 1, above. The Applicant developed a Loading Management Plan which is included as Attachment C in the June 8, 2026, Transportation Statement ([Exhibit 13D](#)).

Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, price, and supply of parking spaces. However, in urban areas, other factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high-quality transit, frequency of transit service, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, demographic composition, and other characteristics.

The approved Campus Plan requires that the University maintain a parking inventory of no more than 4,080 parking spaces within the Campus Plan boundary. Of the 4,080 allotted spaces, 1,380 spaces are designated for the university and 2,700 spaces are designated for the hospital. The University currently operates with 1,114 vehicle parking spaces. The boathouse proposes no vehicular parking spaces and will not affect compliance with the Campus Plan.

Bicycle Parking

The project is subject to the bicycle parking requirements of the Campus Plan. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a minimum of 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided at the proposed boathouse to accommodate students who bike and the project will include showers and lockers in the men's and women's locker rooms on the upper level of the boathouse.

Streetscape and Public Realm

In line with District policy and practice, any substantial new building development or renovation is expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines. This includes curb and gutters, street trees and landscaping, streetlights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

The Applicant must work closely with DDOT and the Office of Planning (OP) to ensure that the design of the public realm meets current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape for public users needing to access the property or circulate around it. In conjunction with Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the *DCMR*, DDOT's most recent version of the *Design and Engineering Manual* and the *Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant.

The Applicant met with DDOT and OP for a Preliminary Design Review Meeting on March 5, 2026, and has an active public space permit (TOPS #493150).

Heritage and Special Trees

According to the District's [Tree Size Estimator map](#), there are five (5) Special Trees on and around the boathouse property. DDOT expects that the Applicant coordinate with the Ward 2 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Special trees as well as the planting of new street trees in bioretention facilities or a typical expanded tree planting space.

Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special Trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by DDOT's Urban Forestry Division, a Tree Protection Plan will be required.

KB:eo