




CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
344 Broadway
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

www.cambridgema.gov/traffic

Susan E. Clippinger, Director
Brad Gerratt, Deputy Director

Phone: (617) 349-4700
Fax: (617) 349-4747

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Sue Clippinger, Director 
Date: June 28, 2011
Re: Rehabilitation of former Cambridge Police Headquarters, 5 Western Avenue

The Traffic, Parking & Transportation (TP&T) Department has reviewed the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed Rehabilitation of the former Cambridge Police Headquarters located at 5 Western Avenue, by the Cambridge Housing Authority. We certified the TIS as complete and reliable on May 6, 2011.

All three agencies are currently located in Central Square. Today they average 43% of employees driving alone and 40% using transit. The trips generated by the 3 agencies are already in Central Square. When they vacate their current spaces, the new tenants in those spaces will generate new trips.

The proposed project includes the rehabilitation of the 5 Western Avenue building to provide 61,498 s.f. of office and classroom space for the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), Cambridge Learning Center (CLC), Multi-Service Center (MSC), and continue providing at this site a Records Room for the Cambridge Election Commission. Pedestrian access to the site will be from two existing entrances: the Green Street entrance and Western Avenue entrance. Thirteen parking spaces and at least 8 bicycle parking spaces will be provide with access from Western Avenue.

TP&T worked closely with CHA and their traffic consultant's Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. on their TIS. The project will generate approximately 30 peak hour trips and will not trigger any of the planning board criteria:

- 30 peak hour trips is far below the threshold of 240 daily peak hour trip generation.
- For Vehicle LOS and Lane Queue, the most impacted location is Massachusetts Avenue/Western Avenue/River Street intersection which will not have any significant change.
- The criteria for Traffic on Residential Streets will not be triggered because Western Avenue is 1/3 or less residential and the project will not trigger the criteria.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities criteria is not impacted. The City will be reconstructing Western Avenue which will significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle conditions for Western Avenue.

It is worth noting that 5 Western Avenue was formerly occupied by the Cambridge Police Department which generated approximately 235 morning and 300 evening peak hour trips and this project will be a net reduction of vehicle trips from the previous use of the building.

The three agencies currently have a total of 24 spaces; they will have 13 spaces at 5 Western Avenue. The City's Green Street garage in Central Square, which is currently used by some employees, is available for additional off-street parking if needed. In addition, multiple Zipcar vehicles are located across the street from 5 Western Avenue and CHA maintains a Zip Car account and makes the service available to employees as part of their Transportation Demand Management measures to reduce automobile trips.

The TP&T Department supports the Project Special Permit Application for 5 Western Avenue and we will work with CHA on their final building permit set plans as part of our normal review process.

Cc: Brian Murphy, Susanne Rasmussen, Roger Boothe, Liza Paden, Cara Seiderman, CDD, Adam Shulman, TPT, John Woods, CHA.