

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS PLAN
Questions & Answers & Issues

As the campus plan process continues, a number of questions are being asked, for which we will respond with information as it comes available to enable members of the communities affected to better assess the potential impacts of the plan proposals. This list will be ongoing, with updates to come.

1. What is the total number of new beds being proposed in the Campus Plan for new student housing?

The planned housing increase was presented at the Campus Plan Task Force meeting on May 25, 2010 and posted on the AU/Campus Plan Web site. At the beginning of the 2009 fall semester, AU had a capacity for 3,465 beds on campus which is insufficient to meet the current housing demands. More than 340 instances had three people in rooms designed for two, and our current lack of housing led AU to lease 100 apartments (housing 200 students) at the Berkshire apartment building on Massachusetts Avenue.

AU's strategic plan places a high priority on strengthening the overall experience for undergraduates – and a key part is to provide more and better housing on campus. At the start of the fall 2010 semester, we expect to have 3,533 beds on campus. We have renovated Roper/Clark to add 116 beds and have reduced the number of “triples” for a net gain of 68 beds.

At the end of this next campus plan (2020) – we expect to have 4,940 beds on campus, a net gain of 1,407 beds. The large thrust of this increase is to bring students back onto campus, replace beds lost during other campus changes, and reduce our “triples” as follows:

Replace Beds Lost Due to:

• End Berkshire Bulk Leasing	200
• Tenley Replacement	497
• Clark/Roper Replacement	116
• Reduced Tripling	300
• <u>Subtotal</u>	1,113

The remainder of the “new beds” developed over the next 10 years will increase AU's capacity to have students on campus and strengthen their undergraduate experience.

Increase Capacity to:

• Accommodate Undergrad Growth	150
• Accommodate Demand	144
• <u>Subtotal</u>	294

Total: 1,407

2. What is the number of beds for each of the new buildings being proposed?

American University's strategic plan commitment to improve the undergraduate experience includes a focus on housing as a key component of the campus plan that will guide actions over the next ten years. In addition to the number of beds, (addressed in question #1), the on-campus location of beds is an important consideration. This will allow us to bring students back to campus, meet the demand for space, and improve the quality and variety of residential experiences.

The campus plan creates a new East Campus, with housing on the now underutilized Nebraska Avenue parking lot. In addition, we will develop a residential community on the South Campus and add housing to Nebraska Hall and the Clark site.

- **Nebraska Hall Addition** – 120 +/- beds in 56,000 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- **East Campus** – 860 beds +/- in complex which includes:
 - Res. Hall One = 160 beds in 57,500 sf. with Commercial/Conference in 8,500 sf. Total = 66,000 sf. FULL SUITE.
 - Res. Hall Two = 290 beds in 63,700 sf. with Commercial/Conference in 10,000 sf. Total = 73,700 sf. LARGE DOUBLE WITH BATH.
 - Res. Hall Three = 280 beds in 62,900 sf. with Commercial/Conference in 8,000 sf. Total = 70,900 sf. LARGE DOUBLE WITH BATH.
 - Res. Hall Four = 130 beds in 61,000 sf. with Commercial/Conference in 3,000 sf. Total = 64,000 sf. FULL SUITE.
- **South Campus** – 670 beds +/- in complex which includes:
 - Res. Hall One = 240 beds in 110,000 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE.
 - Res. Hall Two = 240 beds in 110,000 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE.
 - Res. Hall Three = 190 beds in 84,000 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE.
- **Clark Site** – 370 beds in complex which includes:
 - Res. Hall One = 200 beds in 77,680 sf. with Academic/Conference in 17,250 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE; Total = 94,930 sf.
 - Res. Hall Two = 170 beds in 66,900 sf. With Academic/Conference in 14,500 sf.; FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE; Total = 81,400 sf.

3. What is the square footage and footprint for each of the new student housing buildings being proposed?

The square feet are listed above (question #2). The conceptual footprint is included in the handouts from the May 25 Task Force meeting and is posted on the Campus Plan Web site.

We believe the size of the proposed new construction will be appropriate for our neighborhood and the following buildings will be dedicated to student housing:

- Nebraska Hall Addition – 56,000 sf
- South Campus/Hall One – 110,000 sf
- South Campus/Hall Two – 110,000 sf
- South Campus/Hall Three – 84,000 sf
- Clark Site/Hall One – 94,930 sf
- Clark Site/Hall Two – 81,400 sf
- East Campus/Hall One – 66,000 sf
- East Campus/Hall Two – 73,700 sf
- East Campus/Hall Three – 70,900 sf
- East Campus/Hall Four – 64,000 sf

4. Which buildings will feature "traditional student housing" as defined by AU and which buildings will feature "apartment type housing?"

Like colleges across the country, American University is in a highly competitive education environment and must provide a variety of housing choices for our students. The concept of “traditional student housing” has changed dramatically in recent years. The housing is designed to reflect the interests of our students and their families and includes:

- Nebraska Hall Addition – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- South Campus/Hall One – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- South Campus/Hall Two – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- South Campus/Hall Three – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- Clark Site/Hall One – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- Clark Site/Hall Two – FOUR BEDROOM APARTMENT STYLE;
- East Campus/Hall One – FULL SUITE;
- East Campus/Hall Two – LARGE DOUBLE/w. BATH;
- East Campus/Hall Three – LARGE DOUBLE/w. BATH;
- East Campus/Hall Four – FULL SUITE.

5. Can you specify an action plan for mitigating impacts of locating housing so close to a residential community?

University residence halls have been operating for years in close proximity to residential communities – such as those on the Tenley campus and Nebraska Hall. There have been very few complaints from neighbors about these resident student communities. University residence halls are developed and staffed as communities where students are expected to be considerate of others and where they are accountable for their conduct, both under the Student Conduct Code and under the university's housing license agreement. Resident students live under the supervision of full time resident directors who reside in each building, and resident assistants who reside on each floor. These professionals and upperclassmen are responsible for working with students to maintain an environment built on mutual respect and observance of regulations that give priority consideration to students who are studying and sleeping. When incidents occur in or near the residence halls, Public Safety can respond within minutes to intervene. Incidents

that call for this level of intervention, particularly occurring outside a residence hall, are infrequent.

The impact of the residence halls' physical presence can be mitigated by sensitive placement of windows and common areas and by landscaping that acts as a buffer between university property and the residential neighborhood. We will share building designs as they emerge as part of the planning process.

As a separate issue, the university has been working to strengthen its protocols for off-campus student behavior and expectations for compliance with student conduct code stipulations, and to assist neighborhood residents who have concerns. Information will be posted on the AU community relations Web site at the start of fall semester regarding key contacts; how to file complaints; and steps to ameliorate or resolve issues as they arise.

6. What is the total number of parking spaces currently available on campus and/or at campus parking facilities?

The current number of parking spaces is 2,448. American University fully understands its responsibility to provide parking for faculty, staff and students and to manage its commuter traffic. Over the last decade, AU has invested significant resources into shuttle buses and links to the Metro to meet the needs of our campus community. In the most recent year, more than 1.8 million riders used the free shuttle buses, replacing thousands of individual car trips.

An important part of every campus plan is a traffic study that will include a review of projections, plans, and needs for automobiles and pedestrians in the context of the campus plan objectives. These studies are not yet completed, but a comprehensive presentation regarding initial findings for parking and traffic issues is expected to be made in July at the campus plan task force meeting.

7. How many parking spaces will be eliminated in the most recent iteration of the campus plan?

That number is not yet known at this stage of the campus plan discussions.

8. What is the estimated parking need over the next ten years (a) under the current cap and (b) under the proposed increased cap?

That number is not yet known at this stage of the campus plan discussions.

9. What new traffic mitigation is AU proposing to adopt to (a) reduce automobile trips to and from the campus and (b) reduce parking of AU students, staff, and visitors in residential areas?

A traffic study will be done to include a review of projections, plans, and needs for automobiles and pedestrians in the context of the campus plan objectives. These studies are not yet completed, but a comprehensive presentation regarding initial findings for parking and traffic issues is expected to be made in July at the campus plan task force meeting.

In late May, a proposed *“consensus statement”* was forwarded to the university campus plan team from an ANC 3D commissioner to *“provide you with a snapshot of the perspective of those in the community who live immediately adjacent to the campus in Spring Valley, Wesley Heights, and Westover. It is not intended to be a detailed document or a final document that would discourage further discussion, compromise, or consensus.”* Since this document reflects the viewpoints of some in the community, it may be helpful to respond to some of the issues raised with explanation.

Suggestions:

- **Commit to Law School on Ward Circle parking lot with appropriate setbacks and permanent buffer consistent with DC Comprehensive Plan.**
- **No housing on Ward Circle Parking Lot.**
- **Majority (as much as possible) of new student housing would be built on Tenley campus.**

AU’s strategic plan places a high priority on strengthening the overall experience for undergraduates. A key to that, as we have said from the start of our community meetings, is providing additional and more attractive housing on campus. A second priority is to improve our graduate and professional schools, including the law school which has exceeded the capacity of its current location.

The university leadership carefully weighed these two interests as we explored options to make better use of the East Campus (Nebraska Avenue parking lot) and the Tenley campus.

Students in campus housing need constant access to classrooms, the library, dining, recreation, and other campus services. Placing students almost a mile away from the main campus does not enhance their undergraduate experience. In fact, the university proposes to bring students currently housed on the Tenley campus back “home” to the main campus over the life of this ten year plan to get them closer to where they must be and reduce the commuting back and forth.

AU’s goal is to bring students into the campus borders – and we believe the eight acre residentially zoned Nebraska Lot is an appropriate site for student housing. Current Zoning Commission conditions require AU to house 85 percent of freshmen and sophomores and two-thirds of undergraduates in campus housing. AU is currently able to meet this need only by placing more than 300 students in “triples” – (i.e., three students in rooms built for two) and by housing some 200 students in university leased apartments in the Berkshires complex on Massachusetts Avenue.

The East Campus site has considerable large scale and multi-unit housing close by, including Westover Place, Sutton Place Towers, Embassy Park, the Berkshires, and the Foxhall Condominiums among them. Over the next ten years, AU proposes to increase its housing stock at two additional locations close to the campus heart (South Campus and Clark/Roper/Gray sites).

While AU proposes some 860 beds to be added to the Nebraska Lot/East Campus site – some 1040 beds are being proposed to be added to central campus sites, and an additional 120 beds on the Nebraska Hall site. When all projected campus housing is built, less than 18% of the campus beds would be on the Nebraska Lot/East campus site.

- **Agree to a dorm adjacent to the Gray-Roper-Clark-McCabe site that maintains the two story visual buffer at Rockwood and Nebraska.**

The Clark-Roper-Gray-McCabe site has been identified for additional student housing – ultimately, adding some 370 beds to the housing stock.

- **Open to dorm at site currently housing the Rockwood, Public Safety, Financial Aid, and/or Hamilton buildings.**

AU is proposing that site be used for housing as part of the “South Campus” housing proposal.

- **Oppose any new construction, including a student dorm, at site of the President's house and the Child Development Center. (Neither should be necessary with a dorm adjacent to Gray-Roper-Clark-McCabe site and new dorms at Tenley).**

No construction is planned for the site behind the President’s Office Building. The Child Development Center site is being considered for use as part of the South Campus housing proposal. It is part of the “campus center” AU is willing to devote to housing needs and is a considerable distance from the nearest home.

- **Support new construction at the current SIS site and at Sports Center.**

The university agrees that both sites are appropriate to consider as sites for potential construction to meet facilities needs.

- **All retail commercial space should be maintained in AU-owned commercial property along New Mexico; and first floor retail should be returned to the building now housing the Law School (once the Law School is relocated to Ward Circle).**

Retail tenants already occupy space in many of the AU owned buildings (such as 3201 New Mexico) and some vacant space currently exists into which AU would like to put retail/tenants. Planning for the Massachusetts Avenue site where the law school is currently will be reviewed when the time is appropriate and the future plans for the law school are known.

- **Ensure adequate parking is available (with the proposed elimination of at least three surface parking lots, parking issues are a major concern.)**

American University fully understands our responsibility to provide parking for students, faculty and staff. Over the last decade the University has invested significant resources into shuttle buses and links to the Metro to meet the needs of our campus community.

An important part of the campus plan we are developing is a traffic study that will include a review of projections and plans for vehicle traffic and pedestrian expectations over the decade and the impact of proposed university projects on these projections. These studies are not yet completed, but a comprehensive presentation regarding initial findings for parking and traffic issues is expected to be made in July at the campus plan task force meeting.

- **Bolster the Neighborhood Action Plan to include a requirement that AU inform property owners routinely when AU Public Safety is called to address a student behavior issue at an off-campus leased property and that the student code of conduct is enforced for infractions off campus.**

University representatives have been working with community leaders, neighborhood associations, ANCs, individual landlords, the Metropolitan Police Department, and other city officials regarding off-campus student issues and to strengthen AU's efforts to address off-campus behavior. Student conduct code revisions will now provide greater latitude for campus life officials to take action against unruly or objectionable conduct that occurs off campus and Web based information will clarify and simplify the process for neighbors to file complaints or request help. Ultimately, the most effective response will be a combined effort of university officials and concerned neighbors, and the university will assist in this regard.

- **Maintain and improve the Neighborhood Parking Enforcement program with a goal of better targeting of cars receiving tickets, so that students and staff (not residents) are ticketed.**

A procedure is in place to prevent residents' cars from being ticketed; however, not every resident wishes to utilize this method to ensure that neighborhood cars are on the "do not ticket" list. We will continue to discuss ways to improve the current program to address community concerns.

- **Student Cap -- Maintain cap at current levels, but agree to an increase in the cap to reflect the addition of law school students to the residentially zoned property on campus and agree to the proposed increase in law school enrollment.**

As part of the campus plan discussions, AU has posted a chart listing recent student populations and possible projections toward 2020 (including the law school).

A key to improving our graduate and professional programs is a desire to relocate the law school, along with a desire for modest growth in AU's graduate and professional programs over the coming decade. This modest growth will help the university strengthen these programs and meet the increasing academic demands of graduate students. Over the decade the University envisions a modest growth in total student population of about 10%.

This topic can be discussed more fully at future campus plan meetings and prior to filing the plan so that the community has the most current numbers to review.

- **Any reduction in the number of students on residential property achieved by moving students to nearby commercially zoned property would result in an equal reduction of the cap.**

AU's strategic plan and the campus plan that is emerging to meet its goals, seeks to bring students back onto campus and strengthen their undergraduate experience. Some elements of the plan are still emerging, and the entire plan is part of a continuing dialogue with our neighbors.