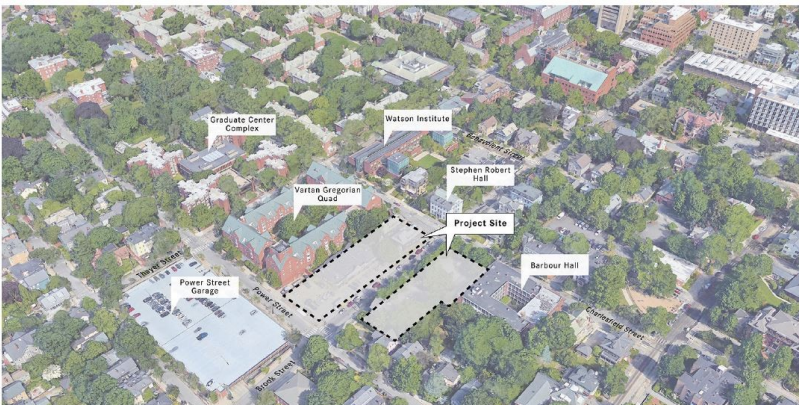


Providence City Plan Commission

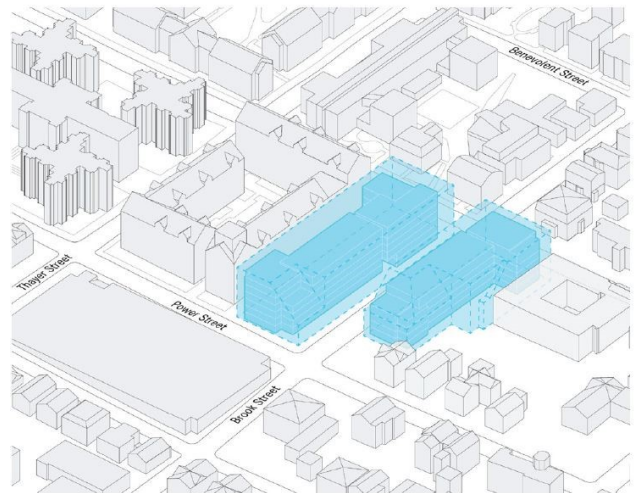
June 16, 2020



AGENDA ITEM 3 ■ BROWN INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT



Proposed development sites



Proposed massing

OVERVIEW

OWNER/APPLICANT: Brown University

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Institutional Master Plan (IMP) Amendment focusing on construction of student dormitories

CASE NO./PROJECT TYPE: Institutional Master Plan amendment

PROJECT LOCATION: Multiple Blocks on Brown's campus

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the Institutional Master Plan amendment

NEIGHBORHOOD: College Hill

PROJECT PLANNER: Choyon Manjrekar

IMP Purpose

Section 1910 of the Zoning Ordinance requires all higher education institutions to file an Institutional Master Plan (IMP) with the City Plan Commission (CPC) that describes the institution's proposed development over the next five years or more. The university is seeking an amendment to the plan approved in 2017. This amendment will focus on construction of student housing on Brook Street, adjacent to the Vartan Gregorian Quad. Approximately 375 new beds will be created on opposite sides of Brook Street, with the possibility of retail and other mixed use. The CPC reviews master plans and amendments for compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Summary

Brook Street Residence Halls

Previous IMPs dating to 2011 have underlined the need for more campus housing. A 2018 study conducted by Brown estimated that 400 new beds were needed to house 80 percent of the undergraduate population, who are required to live on campus for six semesters.

Brown is proposing to construct two buildings providing 375 beds on the east and west sides of Brook Street, located between Charlesfield and Power Streets. A mix of uses including retail, fitness center and multipurpose rooms are proposed. Buildings of 80,000 SF and five stories, and 50,000 SF and five stories are estimated for the western and eastern sites respectively. The massing and design of both buildings is expected to be in harmony with the surroundings.

Four structures, 245-247 Brook Street, 66-68 Charlesfield Street, 70-72 Charlesfield Street and 250 Brook Street will be demolished. Two hundred and fifty Brook Street is a commercial building and the rest are residences. An analysis of the historic nature of the buildings has been performed, which finds that the buildings are listed in the College Hill National Register District, but are not eligible for individual listing. The buildings are not included within the College Hill local historic district.

Parking and Traffic

A traffic impact analysis has been provided. It finds that there will be minimal effect on traffic volume as a result of new construction. The dormitories will reduce the number of students living off-campus. As parking will not be provided, the total number of vehicle trips will decrease. The study does project that there may be an increased number of drop-offs and pickups, which will be accounted for by designing spaces to accommodate those activities in the new buildings. More pedestrian and bike activity is projected, but the study finds that the existing roadway network can accommodate the increased capacity.

Per the 2017 IMP, Brown required a total of 3,849 parking spaces but 3,164 were provided. Brown met the parking requirement as they are grandfathered for a deficit of 931 spaces. The ordinance requires one space for every 8 non-commuting students and one space for every two commuting students. The addition of 375 beds would render 375 students as non-commuting. This would reduce the amount of required parking from 188 to 47, for a net reduction of 141 required spaces. The increased use of pedestrian and bike facilities is expected to further reduce reliance on parking.

Changes in Property Holdings

The IMP contains a statement on Brown's changes in real estate holdings and progress made on current and future development.

Public Participation

Brown conducted a series of meetings with residents, community groups and stakeholders prior to submission of the amendment, which is outlined in the submission.

FINDINGS

Zoning Ordinance

The intent of the I-2 zone, where Brown is located, is to allow for the orderly expansion of higher educational institutions while protecting neighborhoods. This amendment follows the format prescribed by the Zoning Ordinance, including the required elements outlined in Section 1910. Brown has included a schedule of public participation as required.

Providence Tomorrow

Strategy F of Objective LU-7 of Providence Tomorrow: The Comprehensive Plan requires educational institutions to provide five year IMPs to ensure that there is limited growth and limited negative impacts on neighborhoods. In addition, IMPs are expected to be updated with any new developments between plans. Brown has described changes that will occur since the plan was last presented, and identifies sites where development will occur.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis and findings contained in this report, it is the DPDs opinion that the CPC should approve the amendment finding that it conforms to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan.



INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN 2017
AMENDMENT #3

SUBMITTED MARCH 24, 2020

“The mission of Brown University is to serve the community, the nation, and the world by discovering, communicating, and preserving knowledge and understanding in a spirit of free inquiry, and by educating and preparing students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation. We do this through a partnership of students and teachers in a unified community known as a university-college.”





CONTENTS

Planning Context

Building On Distinction.....	4
Handbook for Physical Planning.....	4
Community Engagement.....	5

Campus Footprint

Projects Recently Completed	6
Projects Currently Under Construction.....	6
Recent Changes in Real Estate Holdings.....	6

Seeking Approval

Brook Street Residence Halls	7
Project Enabling.....	8

Campus Infrastructure

Transportation & Parking.....	9
-------------------------------	---

Appendix

A. VHB IMP Transportation Report Update	
---	--

PLANNING CONTEXT

BUILDING ON DISTINCTION (BROWN'S STRATEGIC PLAN)

www.brown.edu/facilities/sites/facilities/files/brown.edu_web_documents_BuildingOnDistinctionOct262013.pdf

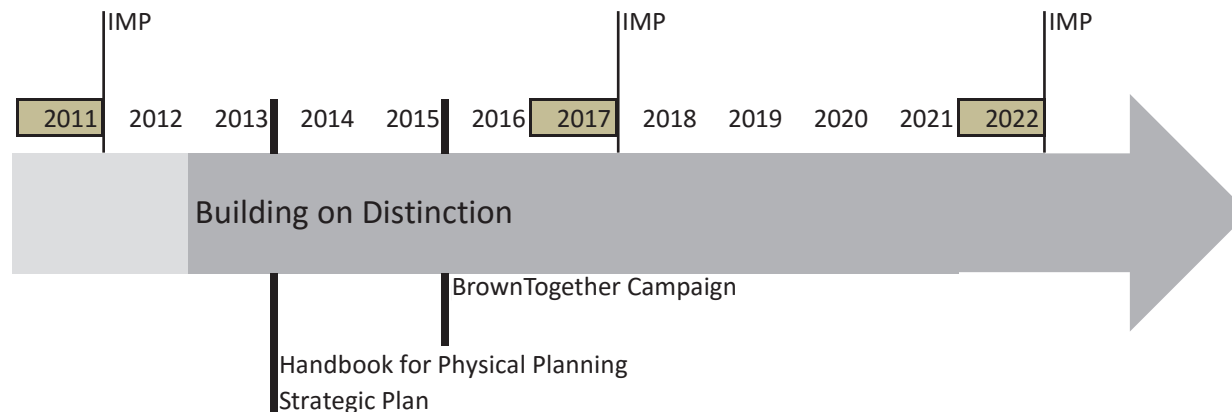
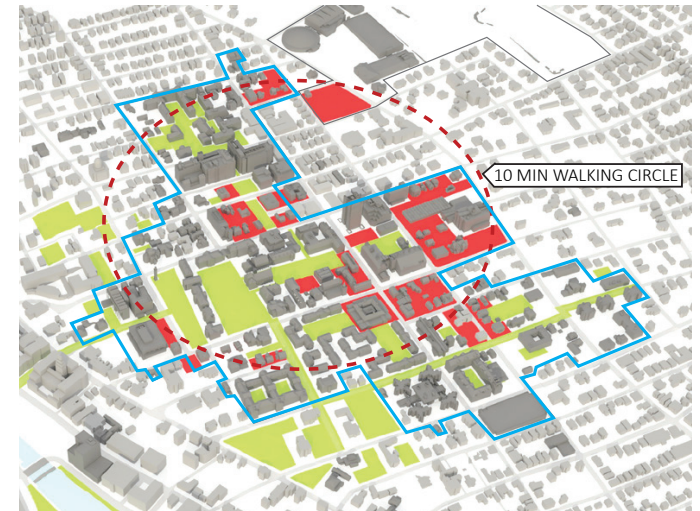
In 2013, the Corporation of Brown University approved the Building on Distinction strategic plan, which established a far-reaching set of goals that will enhance the quality of our academic and campus environment. This plan is constantly monitored and adjusted, and it continues to focus the University's efforts in its pursuit of excellence.

HANDBOOK FOR PHYSICAL PLANNING

www.brown.edu/facilities/sites/facilities/files/HandbookforPhysicalPlanning_Sasaki.pdf

In 2013, the Handbook for Physical Planning was created as a corresponding physical framework for Brown's strategic plan. This handbook serves as a guide for decisions about campus planning and design. The handbook focuses on the following interdependent planning principles:

- Strengthen the physical campus as an analog for the Open Curriculum
- Prioritize academic uses in the core
- Celebrate the Brown scale
- Energize the core with a mixture of uses
- Engage Thayer Street
- Connect the campus
- Consolidate landholdings and catalyze partnerships



INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN PROCESS

IMP 2017

- Amendment #1 (2018)
- Amendment #2 (2019)
- Amendment #3 (2020)

IMP 2022 - Next anticipated IMP

PLANNING CONTEXT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The University's planning process is open and iterative, with regular opportunities for community engagement. Brown staff meets regularly with neighborhood organizations, elected officials, and allied institutions to share Brown's plans for development and solicit feedback.

The public engagement process in the development of this Institutional Master Plan Amendment is as follows:

01/15/20	City Planning Staff Briefing
02/25/20	Community Working Group Meeting
03/02/20	Public Community Meeting
03/02/20	College Hill Neighborhood Association Meeting
03/03/20	Public Community Meeting
03/04/20	Providence Preservation Society: Planning & Architecture Review Committee Presentation
03/09/20	Fox Point Neighborhood Association Meeting
04/07/20	(Planned) Thayer Street District Management Authority Meeting
04/21/20	City Plan Commission Meeting

CAMPUS FOOTPRINT



School of Professional Studies / Wexford Innovation Center



1 Euclid Ave Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship



Sharpe House Relocation

SEEKING APPROVAL

- Brook Street Residence Hall

PROJECTS RECENTLY COMPLETED

- 225 Dyer Street School of Professional Studies / Wexford Innovation Center
- 1 Euclid Ave Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship
- Sharpe House Relocation
- GeoChem Renovation

PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Center for Lacrosse & Soccer
- Wellness Center & Residence Hall
- Performing Arts Center
- Marston Boathouse Renewal Phase 2

RECENT CHANGES IN REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS

Since the 2017 Institutional Master Plan Amendment #2, the University has made changes in property holdings reflecting the planning principles in the Handbook for Physical Planning.

Acquisitions:

- 172 Cushing Street

Dispositions:

- 271 Tockwotten Street

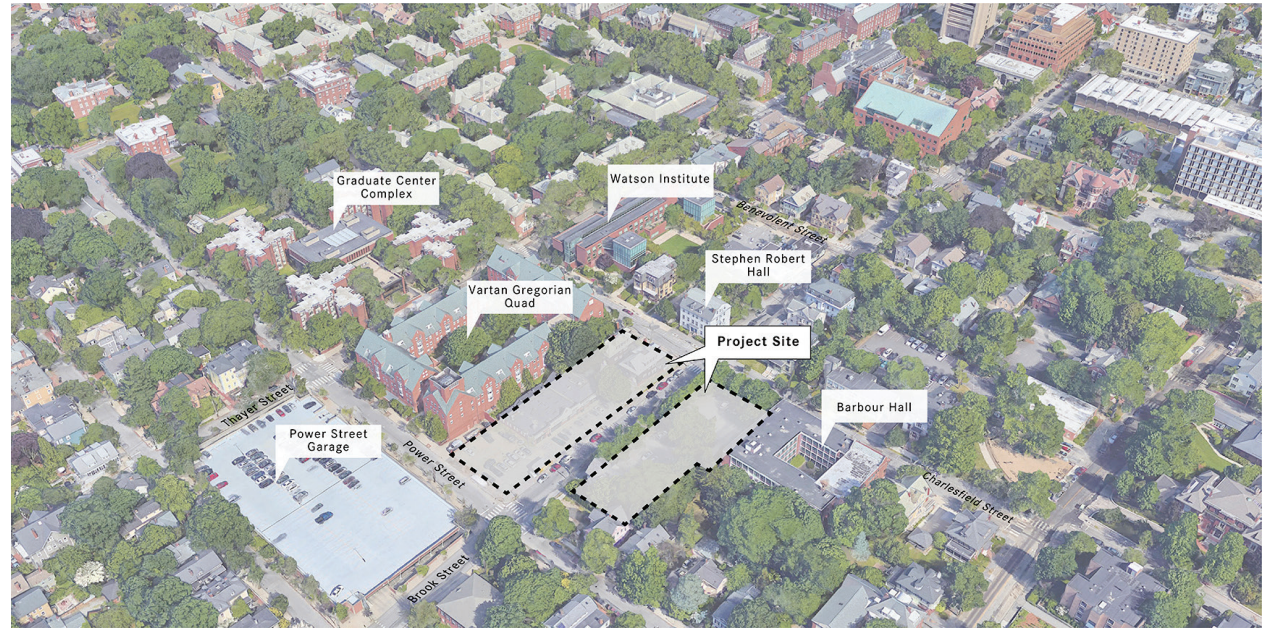
SEEKING APPROVAL

BROOK STREET RESIDENCE HALLS

The University's last major student housing project was the Vartan Gregorian Quad constructed in 1991. The IMP 2011 described the need for 300 new beds and the IMP 2017 identified new residence hall(s) as an anticipated project over the next ten years. In 2018, Brown completed a Housing Study that reaffirmed the need for approximately 400 new beds in order to house 80% of the undergraduate population and support the University's policy that requires undergraduate students live on campus over six semesters.

With this context, Brown University is proposing to build new undergraduate housing that welcomes students of diverse physical, social, and emotional capabilities and differences and fosters their well-being. This new construction will significantly increase on-campus student housing in order to strengthen the undergraduate experience in university housing and reduce the number of Brown students in the off-campus housing market.

The development will house approximately 375 beds in two buildings located on opposite sides of Brook Street on the southern end of campus between Charlesfield and Power Streets. Associated amenities may include entry lobby, multi-purpose room, study rooms, communal kitchens and living areas, central laundry, one fitness facility, and building management space. The potential for 2,500 square feet of retail on the ground floor is being studied in order to activate the ground floor along Brook Street.

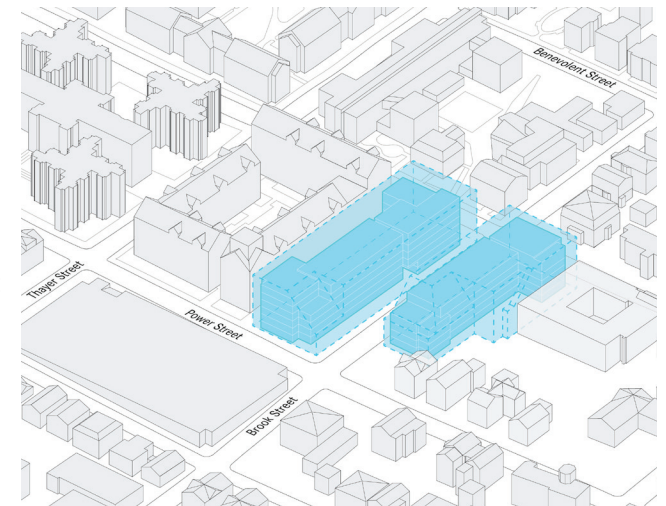


The aerial above identifies the project sites rather than the building footprints.

The proposed program will consist of 80,000 gross square feet up to five stories on the western site, and 50,000 gross square feet up to five stories on the eastern site and will conform with dimensional standards of the I-2 Educational Institutional District. The buildings' massing and design will harmonize with the urban context and surroundings, thus creating simultaneously vibrant and respectful architecture.

The development will include sustainable features that contribute to the University's campus-wide energy conservation and carbon reduction goals.

MASSING STUDY



PROJECT ENABLING



245-247 Brook Street



66-68 Charlesfield St (right) 70-72 Charlesfield St (left)



250 Brook Street

PROPOSED DEMOLITION

The western site, adjacent to and just east of Vartan Gregorian Quad (“VGQ”), is currently occupied by two Brown owned auxiliary houses and a retail strip center. The eastern site is currently occupied by a Brown owned, two-family auxiliary house and surface parking lot(s).

Brown engaged Public Archaeology Lab (PAL) to conduct research that meets the standards of HABS Standard I on the properties in order to establish the historic, cultural, and architectural/engineering context for evaluation and outline the history of each building as a basis for an evaluation of its importance.

All four of the properties included in this study are listed in the College Hill National Register Historic District. None of the buildings are within the boundary of the College Hill National Historic Landmark District, nor are they within the City of Providence’s College Hill Local Historic District. None of the buildings are considered individually eligible for listing in the National Register. Based on PAL’s evaluation and feasibility, Brown plans to demolish the four existing structures on the project sites.

245-247 Brook Street

Two-and-one-half story, two-bay-by-three-bay, wood-frame residence constructed as a multiple family house in 1909 in a hybrid of the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles.

66–68 Charlesfield Street

Two-and-one-half-story, two-bay-by-three-bay, wood-frame, two-family residence constructed in 1915 in the Colonial Revival style.

70-72 Charlesfield Street

Two-and-one-half-story, two-bay-by-three-bay, wood-frame two-family residence constructed in 1915 in the Colonial Revival style.

250 Brook Street

One-story commercial building constructed in 1909 as a commercial automobile garage. The building has been heavily altered since its original construction.

CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

The proposed project location is on Brook Street which will provide pedestrian access and connectivity to the core of the campus located to the north. Brook Street has sidewalks and pedestrian accommodations along the corridor and the sidewalks adjacent to the site will be reconstructed to meet current standards. The proposed development will not include the construction of parking facilities. Nearby spaces will be provided for drop-offs and pick-ups.

The construction of the Brook Street Residence Hall will not require the addition of any new parking spaces. Although the siting of the Residence Hall will result in the loss of +/- 60 parking spaces, this is offset by the addition of approximately 375 students moving on campus, which reduces the campus parking requirement by over 140 spaces, under the City's formula. At the completion of the project Brown will maintain its current parking surplus.

The University has engaged traffic engineers VHB to study the transportation impact of the proposed Residence Halls. The full report can be found in the appendix of this document.

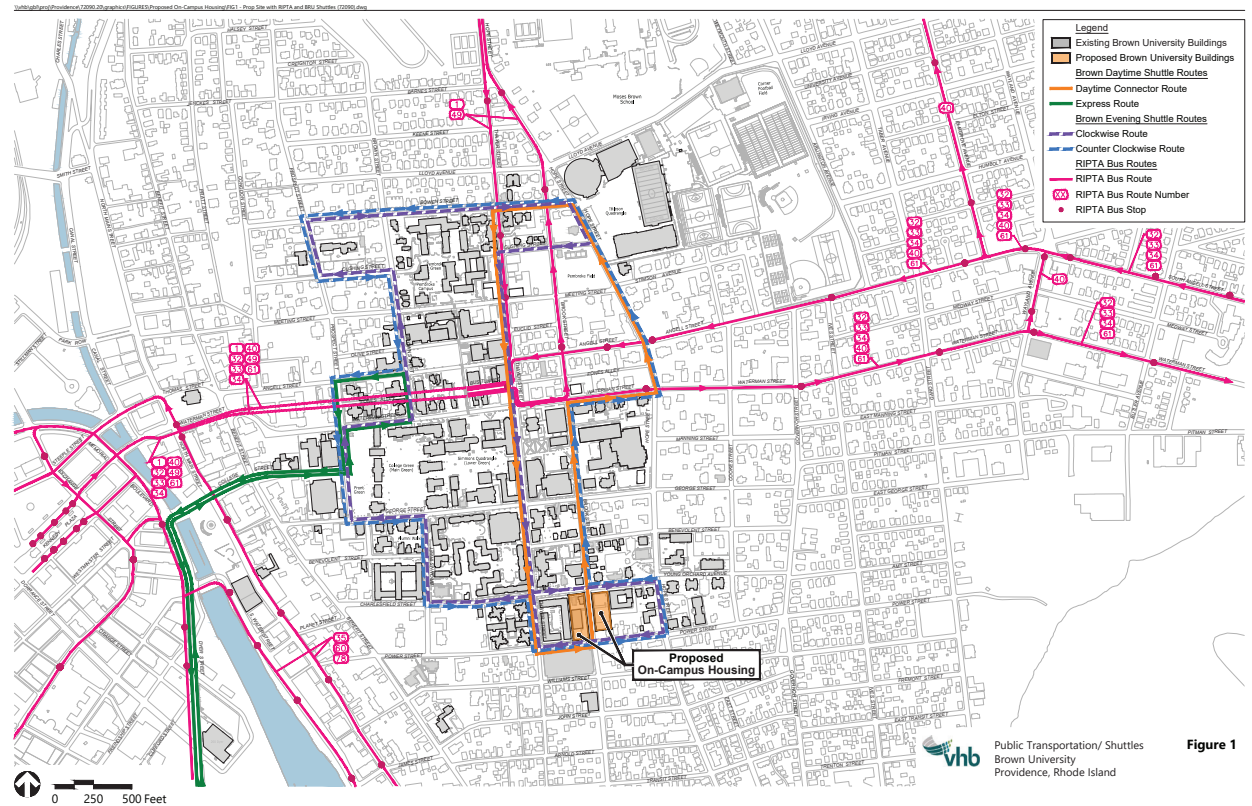


Figure 1

APPENDIX

A. VHB INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN TRANSPORTATION REPORT UPDATE



Memorandum

To: City of Providence
Planning Department
444 Westminister Street #3a
Providence, RI 02903

Date: March 19, 2020

Project #: 72090.20

From: Robert J. Clinton, PE
Project Manager - Transportation

Re: Proposed On-Campus Housing
Institutional Master Plan
Transportation Report Update
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

VHB has conducted a traffic and parking assessment to evaluate the potential transportation, traffic, and parking impacts/issues associated with the proposed construction of new on-campus housing on both sides of Brook Street between Charlesfield Street and Power Street. The proposed building locations and the public transportation/shuttles are shown in **Figure 1**. Please note that a Comprehensive Transportation Study was filed with the City of Providence in February 2017 as part of Brown's Institutional Master Plan (IMP). VHB completed that Transportation Study as well as the previous Transportation Study filed in 2013; therefore, providing comparative data and analysis over time.

Proposed On-Campus Housing

Brown University will be constructing two new buildings to provide new on-campus housing on Brook Street between Charlesfield Street and Power Street. The building on the west side of Brook Street will provide approximately 224 beds including amenities, retail and some beds on the first floor. The building will be constructed on lots that are currently occupied by the following uses:

- 66-68 Charlesfield Street – two family house (5,545 GSF)
- 70-72 Charlesfield Street – two family house (5,798 GSF)
- 250 Brook Street – Commercial property including a Providence Police Substation (7,513 GSF)

The building on the east side will provide approximately 153 beds including amenities (no retail space) and some beds on the first floor. The building will be constructed on lots that are currently occupied by a 5,140 GSF multifamily house and surface parking.

Existing Conditions

Roadway Geometry and Traffic Control

- Brook Street is approximately 30 feet wide. Parking is prohibited on the east side of the road with limited parking allowed on the west side due to the multiple curb cuts.
- Charlesfield Street is approximately 26 feet wide. Parking is prohibited on the south side of the road with parking allowed on the north side.
- Power Street is approximately 28 feet wide. Parking is prohibited on the north side of the road with parking allowed on the south side.



- Brook Street at Charlesfield Street operates under four-way stop control. There are crosswalks on all approaches.
- Brook Street at Power Street operates under four-way stop control. There are crosswalks on all approaches.

Traffic Volumes

Peak hour turning movement counts were performed on February 13, 2020 at the Brook Street intersections with Charlesfield Street and Power Street. The morning and evening peak hour traffic volumes are shown in **Figure 2**. The morning and evening peak hour bike and pedestrian volumes are shown in **Figures 3 and 4**, respectively. These traffic counts were compared with the 2016 peak hour traffic counts that were performed for the Transportation Component of the 2017 Brown University Institutional Master Plan (IMP). The following is a summary of the peak hour traffic volume comparison:

Morning Peak Hour:

- The morning peak hour volumes at both study area intersections have remained relatively constant (total volume traveling through the intersection is within 5 to 10 vehicles). Most of the movements are comparable to the to the 2016 volumes (within 5 vehicles per hour).
- The morning peak hour bicycle volumes have remained relatively constant.
- The peak hour pedestrian volumes have increased during the morning peak (likely due to the construction of the Watson Institute).

Evening Peak Hour:

- The evening peak hour volumes at both study area intersections are slightly higher (volumes on the Power Street eastbound/westbound approaches have increased by 25 – 35 vehicles per hour and the through volume on Brook Street southbound have increased 10 – 25 vehicles per hour. Most of the other movements are comparable to the to the 2016 volumes (within 5 vehicles per hour).
- The evening peak hour bicycle volumes have remained relatively constant.
- The peak hour pedestrian volumes have remained constant during the evening peak (no increase during this time period due to the construction of the Watson Institute).

Traffic, Parking, and Bike/Pedestrian Impacts

Traffic Impacts

- The construction of the new on-campus housing is anticipated to reduce the number of students living off-campus, resulting in less traffic and parking issues.
- The site is conveniently located on the Brown University daytime shuttle route. There are also nearby high frequency RIPTA bus lines on Thayer Street, Brook Street, Angell Street, and Waterman Street.



- The retail space on Level 1 of the building located on the west side of Brook Street is not projected to generate a significant amount of vehicular traffic. The space will serve the residents of the new on-campus housing and be a community resource for people already in the vicinity of the site.
- There will be an increase in on-street drop-off/pickups on the study area roadways. The proposed development is being designed to provide nearby drop-offs/pick-ups.
- Loading and service activity will be handled by small, single unit/box trucks (no large tractor-trailers are anticipated).

Parking

- No new parking will be provided for the proposed residence hall. The development may result in a minor increase in on-street parking due to the elimination of curb cuts.
- A few on-street parking spaces could be added along Brook Street due to the elimination of curb cuts.

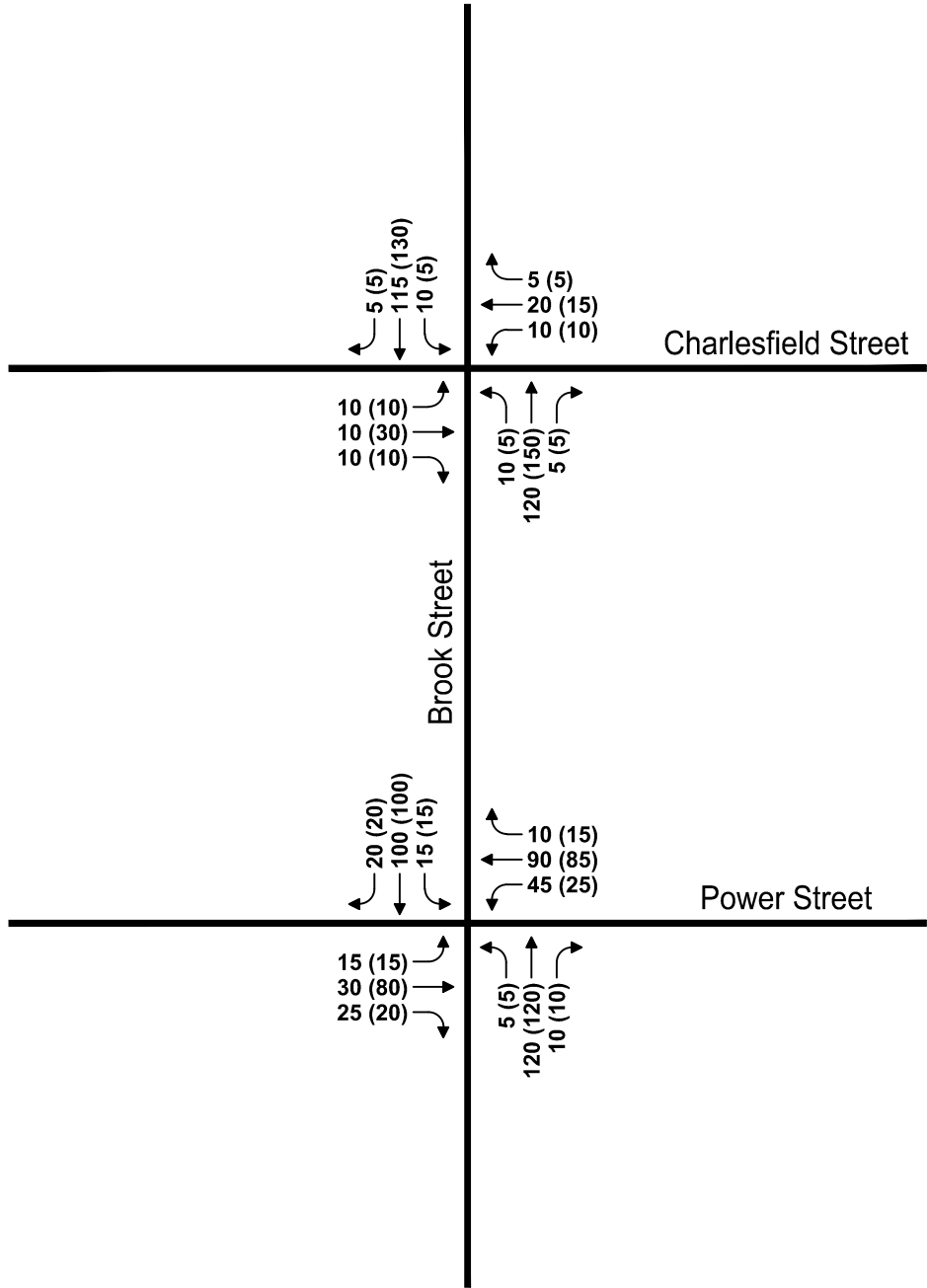
Bikes/Pedestrians

- There will be an increase in pedestrians/bikes along the study area roadways. As previously stated, the Brook Street intersections with Charlesfield Street and Power Street operate under four-way stop control with relatively low peak hour traffic volumes. It is therefore projected that the existing roadway network and traffic control is adequate to accommodate the future pedestrian/bike and vehicular traffic.
- The site's location is on Brook Street which will provide pedestrian access and connectivity to the core of the campus located to the north. Brook Street has sidewalks and pedestrian accommodations along the corridor and the sidewalks adjacent to the site will be reconstructed to meet current standards.
- The proposed development will include ample bicycle racks and associated amenities for cyclists to accommodate the many students, faculty, and staff traveling by bicycle.

Conclusions

- The proposed development is not expected to generate a significant volume of new vehicular traffic; therefore, no changes are required to the previously performed traffic analysis under the 2017 Institutional Master Plan (IMP). In fact, the construction of the new on-campus housing is anticipated to reduce the number of students living off-campus, resulting in less traffic and parking issues.
- Most of the trips are anticipated to be walking/biking or via public transportation. The site is conveniently located on the Brown University shuttle route and located on high frequency RIPTA bus lines on Thayer Street and Brook Street.
- There will be an increase in pedestrians/bikes along the study area roadways. The Brook Street intersections with Charlesfield Street and Power Street currently operate under four-way stop control with relatively low peak hour traffic volumes. It is therefore projected that the existing roadway network and traffic control is adequate to accommodate the future pedestrian/bike and vehicular traffic.

Legend	
XX (XX)	AM (PM) Traffic Volumes



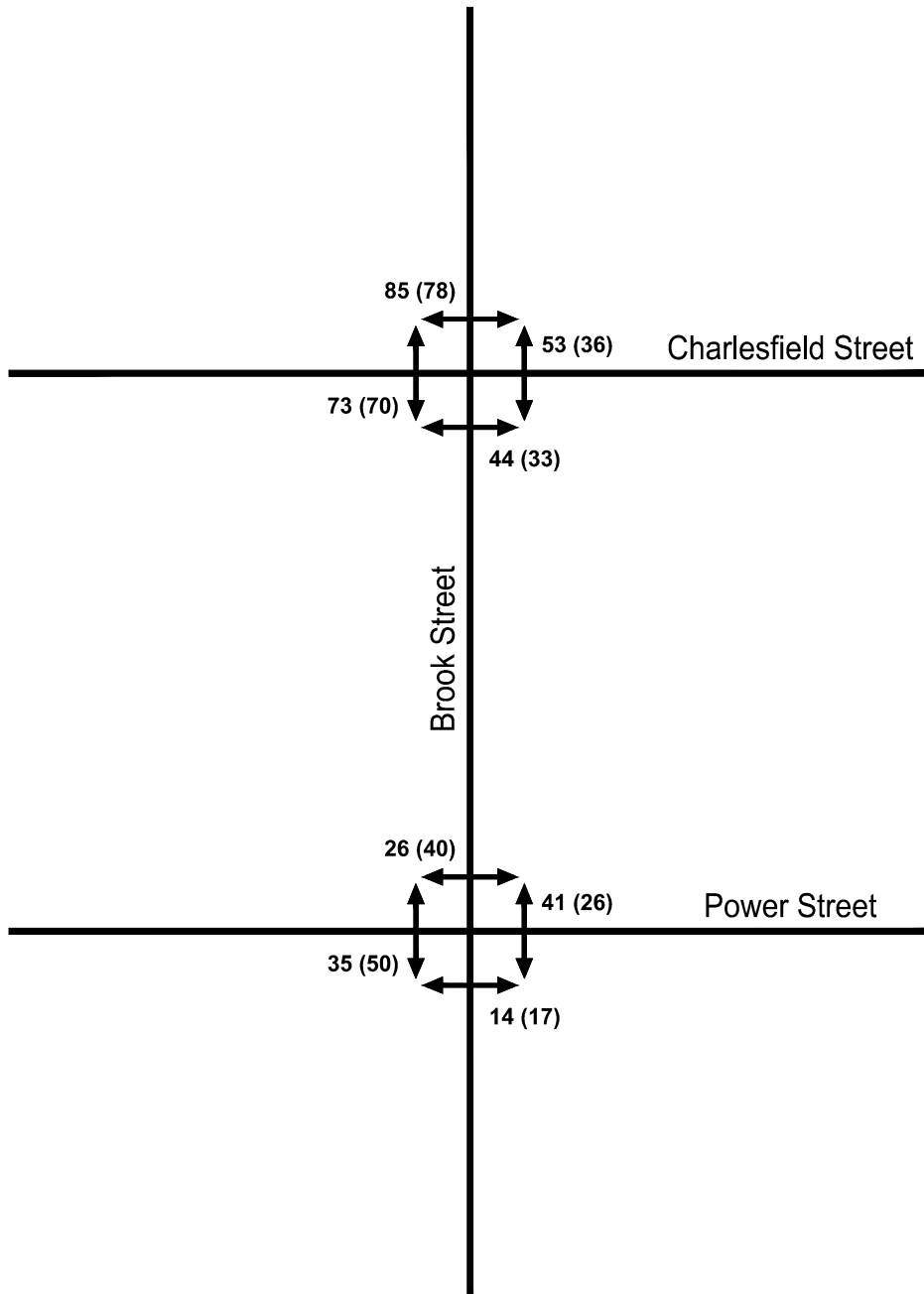
Not to Scale



2020 Existing Morning and Evening Peak Hour Traffic Volumes
 Proposed Campus Housing
 Brown University
 Providence, Rhode Island

Figure 2

Legend	
XX (XX)	AM (PM) Pedestrian Volumes



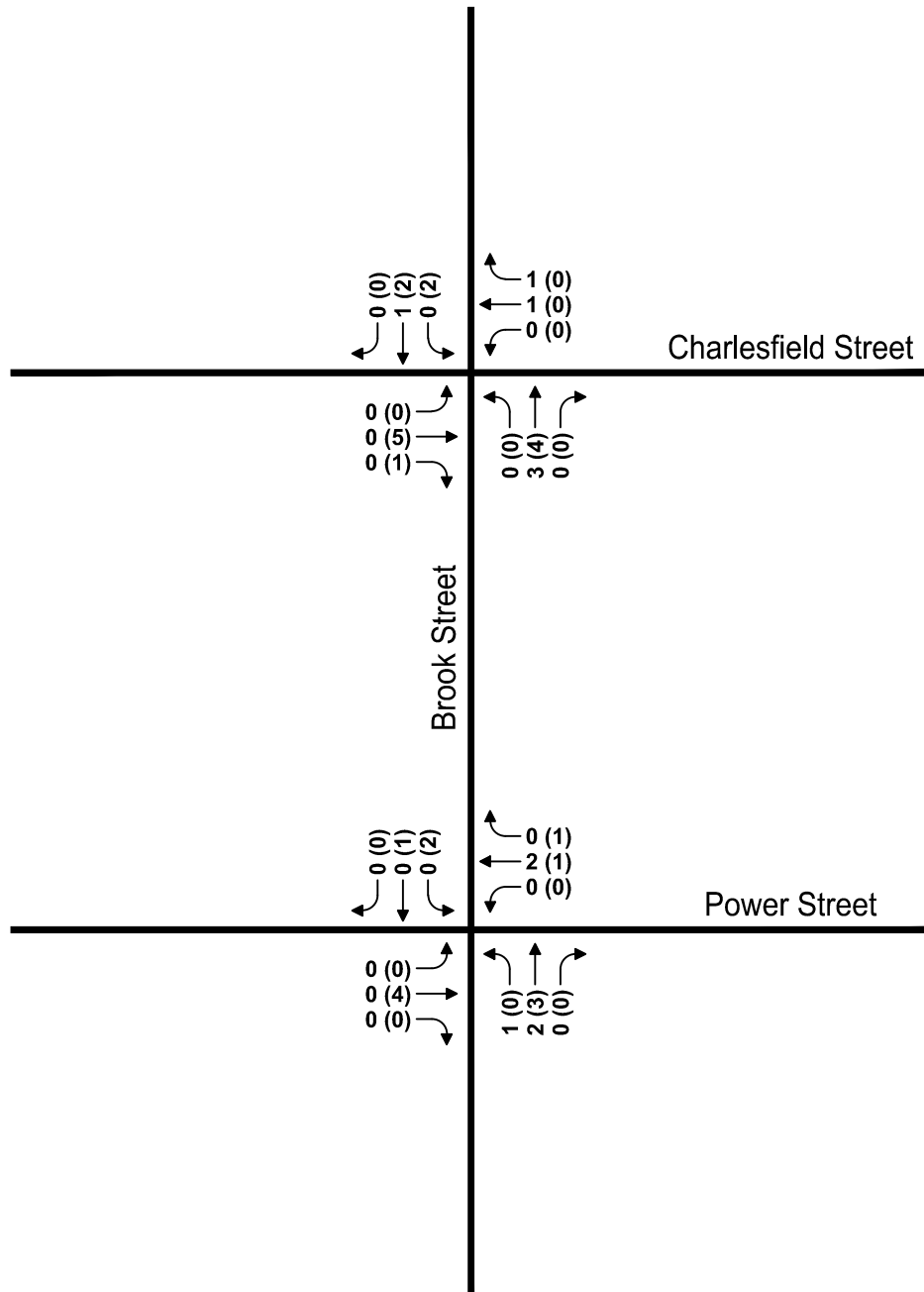
Not to Scale



2020 Existing Morning and Evening
Peak Hour Pedestrian Volumes
Proposed Campus Housing
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

Figure 3

Legend	
X (X)	AM (PM) Bicycle Volumes



Not to Scale



2020 Existing Morning and Evening
Peak Hour Bicycle Volumes
Proposed Campus Housing
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

Figure 4