

# BOSTON COLLEGE

## RECREATION CENTER

### INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN NOTIFICATION FORM FOR AMENDMENT AND RENEWAL



SUBMITTED TO

---

Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston, Massachusetts

SUBMITTED BY

---

Boston College  
140 Commonwealth Avenue  
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

MAY 2016

# Boston College Recreation Center

Brighton, Massachusetts

SUBMITTED TO **Boston Redevelopment Authority**

One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

PROPONENT **Trustees of Boston College**

140 Commonwealth Avenue  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

PREPARED BY **VHB**

99 High Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

*In association with:*

Cannon Design  
Stephen Stimson Associates  
Haley & Aldrich, Inc.  
Skanska USA Building  
The Brennan Group

May 2016

# Table of Contents

## **Boston College Institutional Master Plan Amendment and Renewal**

1.1 Introduction .....	1-1
1.2 Boston College Mission and Objectives .....	1-2
1.2.1 Major Programs and Initiatives .....	1-2
1.3 Status of IMP Projects and Need for an IMP Amendment.....	1-4
1.4 Existing IMP Proposed Institutional Project .....	1-5
1.5 Amended IMP Proposed Institutional Project.....	1-5
1.6 Waiver of Unchanged Plans.....	1-6
1.7 IMP Renewal .....	1-6

# List of Tables

<b>Table</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table 1-1	Proposed Changes to the IMP.....	1-6

# Boston College Institutional Master Plan Amendment and Renewal

## 1.1 Introduction

In the spring of 2004, Boston College ("the University") embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning initiative to assess its academic program and to set institutional goals for the next decade and beyond. After several years of planning, a strategic plan was adopted by the Board of Trustees in February of 2006. After working almost two years with the surrounding neighborhood, Boston College submitted an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMPNF") outlining the institutional needs of the University in December of 2007. Based on the Scoping Determination on the IMPNF issued by the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA"), Boston College submitted an Institutional Master Plan ("IMP") in June of 2008. In subsequent IMP filings with the BRA and the Boston Zoning Commission in January and March of 2009 respectively, Boston College changed the IMP in response to community concerns. The IMP was ultimately approved by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) on June 10, 2009 and renewed in 2013 for a four-year period until June 10, 2017, in accordance with section 80D-8(1) of the Code.

The purpose of this document is to amend the existing IMP to reflect de minimus dimensional changes in the Recreation Center project (the "Proposed Institutional Project" or "Project") and to renew the IMP pursuant to the requirements of Article 51, Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District zoning, of the Boston Zoning Code ("Code"). These proposed de minimus changes described below meet the requirements for a waiver of further review of unchanged plans pursuant to Section 80D-5.2(e) of the Code.

The renewal of the IMP, which is required every four years by Article 51, Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District zoning, does not add any new projects or any new land to the IMP, does not change any Proposed Institutional Project previously approved in the IMP other than for de minimus dimensional changes and does not result in any significant greater impacts than previously projected in the IMP. Accordingly, the IMP renewal also meets the requirements for a waiver of further review of unchanged plans pursuant to Section 80D-5.2(e) of the Code.

## **1.2 Boston College Mission and Objectives**

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive educational heritage.

Boston College pursues this distinctive mission by serving society in three ways:

1. By fostering the rigorous intellectual development and the religious, ethical and personal formation of its undergraduate, graduate and professional students in order to prepare them for citizenship, service and leadership in a global society.
2. By producing nationally and internationally significant research that advances insight and understanding, thereby both enriching culture and addressing important societal needs.
3. By committing itself to advance the dialogue between religious belief and other formative elements of culture through the intellectual inquiry, teaching, learning and community life that form the heart of the University.

### **1.2.1 Major Programs and Initiatives**

#### **The Strategic Plan**

Since 1975, Boston College has engaged in a comprehensive, long-range strategic planning process to guide its institutional vision and assess its academic program. In February 2006, the Board of Trustees approved a Strategic Plan titled "Excellence, Distinction, Leadership: Boston College in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," which was the result of a two-year assessment and planning process that involved more than 200 faculty, staff, and students. The Strategic Plan outlined the following seven strategic directions for the future of Boston College:

1. Commit Boston College to becoming the leader in liberal arts education among American universities.

2. Develop and implement a student formation program that will be a contemporary model for colleges and universities committed to student formation.
3. Identify and support selected research commitments that will achieve excellence and distinction in addressing urgent societal problems.
4. Commit targeted resources to selected natural sciences emphases that will establish Boston College as a national leader in these areas.
5. Build on the strengths and reputations of Boston College's professional schools to establish leadership in critical professional areas.
6. Become a significant intellectual and cultural crossroads by leveraging Boston College's international resources and partnerships, and its Jesuit and Catholic networks.
7. Become the world's leading Catholic university and theological center.

### **The Campus Master Plan**

Upon the completion of the Strategic Plan, Boston College developed a long-range Campus Master Plan that would provide the University with an opportunity to achieve excellence by using the strength and distinctiveness of its campus to reinforce its mission and strategic objectives. During this process, the University established the following six guiding principles essential to fulfilling its institutional objectives:

1. **Create One Campus**—That the former Archdiocesan property become fully integrated with the Boston College campus, and that the 120-acre Chestnut Hill Campus, the 40-acre Newton Campus and the 65-acre Brighton Campus each provide a notable setting that contributes to the campus learning environment and the life of the University.
2. **Develop Mixed Campus Uses**—That Boston College's campuses host a mix of academic, residential and co-curricular facilities, and provide open space areas that foster a vibrant and engaged University community.
3. **Emulate the Character of the Middle Campus**—That the new facilities on the Lower Campus reflects the distinctive character of the Middle Campus with its combination of Gothic architecture and collegiate open spaces, linked quadrangles, and walkways.
4. **Provide Appropriate Campus Density**—That campus development emulate the Middle Campus' proportion of open space to building space, reflecting the Middle Campus height (four to five stories) and open-space pattern, while respecting the character of the surrounding community.
5. **Promote Student Formation**—That the Lower and Brighton Campuses develop undergraduate student housing reflecting the University's commitment to student formation that supports intellectual development and responsible student behavior in smaller living communities.
6. **Achieve Sustainability**—That development on each campus achieve higher levels of energy efficiency and champion the natural environment, and that sustainability goals be carefully considered with each project.

### **1.3 Status of IMP Projects and Need for an IMP Amendment**

The Boston College IMP approved in 2009 lists a total of 17 Proposed Institutional Projects in the City of Boston that the University plans to construct over a decade's time (see Table 5-2 of the IMP). The following is a list of renovation and new construction projects that have been completed or are currently ongoing in Boston and Newton since the approval of the IMP:

#### **Boston**

1. Renovation of 129 Lake Street (formerly known as Bishop Peterson Hall) for administrative office space completed in 2011.
2. Renovation of the Cadigan Alumni Center at 2121 Commonwealth Avenue (formerly known as the Chancery) for administrative offices for University Advancement completed in 2012.
3. Renovation of 2101 Commonwealth Avenue (formerly known as the Cardinal's Residence) for the relocated McMullen Art Museum and University Conference Center completed in January of 2016.
4. Construction of 2150 Commonwealth Avenue Residence Hall consisting of 490 student beds and the University Health Center is ongoing with expected completion in August of 2016.
5. Renovation and conversion of 2000 Commonwealth Avenue for a 540-bed student residence hall is ongoing with expected completion in August of 2016.

#### **Newton**

1. Construction of Stokes Hall, a 183,000-square foot, academic humanities building with classrooms and faculty offices completed in 2012.
2. Renovation of St. Mary's Hall for Jesuit community residences and academic space for the University's Woods College of Advancing Studies, and the Communications and Computer Science departments completed in 2015.

The proposed Recreation Center project is also described as a "Proposed Institutional Project" in the approved Boston College IMP and only de minimus dimensional changes are being made to the description of the Project appearing in the approved IMP. While this Proposed Institutional Project's siting and general uses are primarily consistent with the institution's goals and objectives and the approved IMP, the current design of the Proposed Institutional Project reflects some further evolution and refinement since 2009 and its height and gross square footage now vary slightly from the original IMP description. Therefore, an IMP amendment waiver of further review of unchanged plans is being sought by the University as part of the Article 80 review process as described below.

## **1.4 Existing IMP Proposed Institutional Project**

The Proposed Institutional Project was described in the approved IMP to include fitness facilities, swimming pool, multipurpose courts, jogging track, locker rooms, and support uses constructed on the site of the existing Edmond's Hall—a 41-year old residence hall that is outdated and in need of extensive repairs. The Recreation Center site was contemplated to be bordered by St. Thomas More Road on the east, Campanella Way on the south, Walsh Hall on the north, and a shallow utility line to the west. The approximately 200,000-square foot Recreation Center was intended to be constructed to replace the outmoded 44-year old Flynn Recreation Complex. As with the Flynn Recreation Complex, the Recreation Center was going to offer local residents access to the facility during the summertime.

## **1.5 Amended IMP Proposed Institutional Project**

The Proposed Institutional Project, as currently proposed for the IMP Amendment, will house a variety of physical activity and support spaces for campus recreation, intramurals, club, and varsity sports programs. Specifically, it will include fitness/activity spaces, an indoor suspended jogging track, swimming pools, multipurpose courts, locker rooms, administrative offices, and accessory University uses, such as meeting rooms and lounge spaces. The Project will replace the existing facility and provide increased meeting and lounge space, as well as an opportunity to engage in physical activities currently not provided in the existing recreation center, such as an elevated jogging track, golf simulator and fitness ramp.

The proposed structure is slightly larger and taller than originally contemplated in the IMP. Specifically, design changes to the Project from what was stated in the original 10-year IMP approved in 2009 include an additional approximately 14,000 gross square feet (approximately 214,000 gross floor area compared to the estimated 200,000 gross floor area), a slight increase in height of just over one foot (from 70 to 71.34 feet), and one additional building story. Table 1-1 provides details on the Proposed Institutional Project's existing description in the IMP and proposed changes.



**TABLE 1-1 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE IMP**

Condition	Existing	Proposed
Gross Square Feet	200,000	214,000 <sup>1</sup>
Building Stories	3	4
Height (feet)	70	71.34 <sup>2</sup>
Use	Pool, Multipurpose Courts, Jogging Track, Locker Rooms, Offices, Fitness Center, Multipurpose Rooms	Gymnasium space (multipurpose courts), Activity/Fitness space, Natatorium (swimming pools), Jogging Track, Locker rooms/Laundry, Administrative office, Lobby/lounge

1. Represents Gross Floor Area based on the Code definition, which does not include building space for mechanical, circulation, etc.

2. Based on the definition of Article 2A of the Boston Zoning Code, which is measured from Boston City Base (BCB) elevation data and the average grade of the project site.

## 1.6 Waiver of Unchanged Plans

Pursuant to Section 80D-5(2)(e), this IMPNF for Amendment and Renewal meets the requirements for a Waiver of Further Review of Unchanged Plans as: (1) no new Proposed Institutional Projects are planned; (2) no changes in the IMP are proposed, other than de minimus dimensional changes to the Recreation Center project; and (3) there are no significantly greater impacts from the continued implementation of the IMP as amended and renewed than were originally projected.

The University hereby requests the Boston Redevelopment Authority to waive the requirement of a Scoping Determination for the Amendment and Renewal pursuant to paragraph (e) of Section 80D-5.2 of the Code, Waiver of Further Review of Unchanged Plans, and approve this IMPNF for Amendment and Renewal and the approved IMP together as the renewed and amended IMP.

## 1.7 IMP Renewal

The Boston College Institutional Master Plan was approved for a 10-year term by the Boston Zoning Commission on June 10, 2009. In 2013, it was renewed for a four-year period until June 10, 2017. In accordance with Section 80D-8(1) of the Code, Time for Renewal of Institutional Master Plan, an IMPNF for renewal shall be filed on or before the time specified in the underlying zoning or in the IMP. In this case, the underlying zoning requires a renewal earlier than the 10-year term of the IMP.

The underlying Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District zoning (Article 51 of the Code) in Section 51-29(6) of the Code requires that an IMPNF for renewal shall be filed on or before the fourth anniversary of the Zoning Commission's approval of the original IMP, or the most

recent renewal thereof (whether by the Zoning Commission or by the BRA under circumstances where the Commission's approval is not required). The IMP was last renewed in May of 2013; accordingly, an additional renewal of the IMP for a four-year period beginning with the approval of this IMPNF by the BRA is being requested.