

MEMORANDUM

To: Malihe Samadi, P.E., PTOE
Chicago Department of Transportation

From: Peter Lemmon, P.E., PTOE

Date: September 26, 2017

Subject: Traffic Study Addendum
Aon Center Observation Deck / Entertainment / Retail
Chicago, Illinois

Introduction

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. (Kimley-Horn) was retained by The 601 W Companies to evaluate anticipated traffic impacts for a proposed addition at the Aon Center that includes an exterior elevator and observatory, retail/entertainment venues, and restaurant space. As part of the project review process, several revisions to the plan are proposed in response to feedback received to date, including relocating the observatory elevator from the southeast corner to the northwest corner of the building.

This memorandum serves as an addendum to the February 2017 traffic study to document review of the revised plan relative to the analysis and key findings summarized in the original report.

Revised Development Plan

The proposed plan for the Aon Center has been refined in response to review comments on the previous plan. The following highlights key elements of the revised plan and whether they are notable changes from or consistent with the previous plan.

Key Changes

- Observatory elevator is relocated from the southeast corner to the northwest corner of the building
- Restaurant space (27,375 square feet) on the west wing of the site is removed from the plan
- A new VIP drop-off zone is proposed using the loop access driveway on the north side of the site via Columbus Drive

Consistent with Previous Plan

- Observatory, external elevator, and entertainment venues remain in the development plan
- Observatory entrance pavilion remains on the southeast corner of the site
- Drop-off and pick-up zones for taxis, TNCs, tour/charter buses remain along the east side of the site on Upper Columbus
- Drop-off and pick-up zone for school bus charters remains on the north side of Sub Randolph Street just west of Columbus Drive adjacent to the site

Updated Plan Evaluation

The primary change with the revised plan is the relocation of the observation deck elevator from the southeast corner of the building to the northwest corner. The primary entrance for visitors remains at the southeast corner of the property. Similarly, parking and access for vehicular traffic at the Millennium Park Garage remains the same as the previous plan. Passenger loading for taxis/TNCs, CTA buses, and tour buses are still planned along the west side of Upper-Level Columbus Drive adjacent to Aon Center. Loading for school bus/group charters is also still planned for the north side of Sub-Level Randolph Street on the south side of the site, consistent with the previous plan.

With the relocation of the elevator for the observation deck to the northwest corner of the site, a new VIP entrance is planned with an associated drop-off zone using the loop driveway along the north side of the site that is accessible via Upper-Level Columbus Drive. In order to help facilitate access to this drop-off area, the northbound left-turn lane on Upper-Level Columbus Drive at the access driveway should be re-stripped and available for use (it is currently marked with hatched striping and at times is occupied by staging shuttles or trolleys). Previous concepts for Columbus Drive coordinated with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) included the option of re-instituting the northbound left-turn lane to discourage vehicle staging. It is recommended to incorporate that option into the Upper-Level Columbus Drive improvements to facilitate turning movements into the Aon Center loop access driveway on the north side of the site.

The projected annual attendance for the observation deck and entertainment venues is expected to remain at approximately 2.6 million visitors. Thus, the trip generation projections for these components of the development plan are not expected to change. The revised development plan does, however, remove 27,375 square feet of restaurant space from the southwestern portion of the site that was included in the original plan. With the removal of the restaurant space, trip generation for personal auto traffic and taxis/TNCs will be less than what was contemplated in the traffic study. **Table 1** summarizes the reduction in trip generation associated with removing the restaurant space from the plan.

Table 1. Trip Generation Comparison

Land Use	Size	Thursday PM Peak Hour			Friday Midday Peak Hour			Friday PM Peak Hour			Saturday Midday Peak Hour			Saturday PM Peak Hour		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
<i>Original Plan</i>																
Restaurant	27,375 sf	25	20	45	25	20	45	25	20	45	45	45	90	45	45	90
Entertainment Venue + Observation Deck	2.6 million visitors	105	265	370	350	425	775	210	315	525	485	350	835	175	440	615
Total New Auto Trips ORIGINAL PLAN		130	285	415	375	445	820	235	335	570	530	395	925	220	485	705
<i>Revised Plan</i>																
Entertainment Venue + Observation Deck	2.6 million visitors	105	265	370	350	425	775	210	315	525	485	350	835	175	440	615
Total New Auto Trips REVISED PLAN		105	265	370	350	425	775	210	315	525	485	350	835	175	440	615
<i>Difference (Revised – Original)</i>																
Personal Auto Trips		-20	-15	-35	-20	-15	-35	-20	-15	-35	-35	-35	-70	-35	-35	-70
Taxi / TNC Trips		-5	-5	-10	-5	-5	-10	-5	-5	-10	-10	-10	-20	-10	-10	-20
Total New Auto Trips DIFFERENCE		-25	-20	-45	-25	-20	-45	-25	-20	-45	-45	-45	-90	-45	-45	-90

SUMMARY

Based on review of the revised plan for the proposed addition of an elevator, observatory, and entertainment venue at Aon Center, the updated plan is expected to have a lower impact on traffic conditions in the surrounding area than contemplated in the previously prepared February 2017 traffic study.

Visitors to the site will generally access the property in the same way as previously proposed in terms of pedestrians, personal autos (parking), taxis/TNCs, and buses (CTA, tour, and school/charter). The exception is that the Aon Center loop access drive on the north side of the building will provide drop-off access for VIP guests who will be able to access the observatory at the northwest corner of the building rather than the main pavilion at the southeast corner of the site. In order to better facilitate northbound left-turns into the loop access drive, the median on Upper-Level Columbus Drive should be re-stripped to remove the current hatched striping and re-establish the northbound left-turn lane.

Further, the revised development plan no longer includes 27,375 square feet of restaurant space west of the concourse. Thus, the traffic that the proposed development plan will generate is expected to be less than that considered in the original traffic study.

With the addition of the recommended turn lane striping on Upper-Level Columbus Drive, the recommendations outlined in the February 2017 traffic study for the original development plan remain valid.