

BURTON CONNER FAQs

Why is Burton Conner being renewed?

- Burton Conner was built in 1928 as the Riverside Apartments and later acquired by MIT. It has served as a residence hall since 1948. Over the years, Burton Conner's exterior envelope, interior finishes, and infrastructure have aged and are in need of renewal.
- Burton Conner is scheduled to go offline for renewal after Commencement 2020 and is targeted to reopen in August 2022. This is primarily for an extensive infrastructure and building systems update, which will include modest updates to finishes and spaces. It's possible that building code may dictate that some spaces need to be reconfigured to allow for accessibility updates. This could necessitate some space redesign but, at this early stage, it's too soon to know for sure. If a redesign of space is warranted, DSL will engage the House team and House leaders.

How will the House be involved in the planning process?

- This spring, DSL will work with Burton Conner leadership to assemble a Transition Team, which will include House team members, student leadership from the house, and DSL staff. The group will work to identify student and community needs, surface renewal related issues and develop strategies to address them, work through logistics of relocation, provide input to project plans as needed, and communicate with key stakeholders in Burton Conner.

How can Burton Conner maintain its community?

- While we understand this creates uncertainty, we are committed to helping Burton Conner during this transition. Improving our residential communities is exciting news; the Burton Conner community will have an updated space when it reopens.
- The Transition Team will identify ways to promote and support the community during the course of the renewal period. Burton Conner student leaders will have standing in the Undergraduate Association and DormCon. We will work with student leaders and the House team to develop community events.

Some of your GRTs may choose to serve as community liaisons, and the Heads of House will remain on campus and will help to support the community.

Where can questions be directed throughout the planning process?

- The easiest way to reach us with questions, ideas, or concerns is by emailing burtonconner-renewal@mit.edu.

**Will all students have to move out during the construction when Houses are being renewed?
Will they be able to move to another residence hall with their friends?**

- For the Burton Conner project, as well as for future renewal projects, all students will have to move out during construction. An empty building allows work to be completed more efficiently and avoids impacts to residents such as utility shutdowns, multiple relocations, and noise.
- DSL will make every effort to offer students housing options that best meet their needs. The goal is to provide positive and supportive living experiences for all of our students, where each student feels welcomed in their new residence and is eager to participate fully in the life of the house in which they live during the renewal period.
- Our goal is for students to have new experiences and to engage in house activities, making new friends and contributing to the community.
- In order to provide students with the opportunity to move with friends to new residences, we are working on a plan to facilitate the ability for groups of up to eight students to transfer together. Housing and Residential Services (HRS) will work with the Room Assignment Chairs (RACs) to prioritize rooming assignments for transferring students so that they can move as a group of eight. While students may be able to live with a roommate, RACs will make room assignments according to their in-house processes, and HRS cannot guarantee that all eight members of a group will be able to live on the same floor as the spaces may not be available.
- Burton Conner students will have priority in the housing lottery. Eligible students who were living in Burton Conner in spring 2020 and choose to move off campus during the renewal project will be guaranteed housing in Burton Conner when it reopens.

Will Burton Conner and other renewed residence halls change to tier 1 pricing once they reopen? Can returning Burton Conner residents from the Class of 2023 be “grandfathered” so they don’t have to pay tier 1 rates?

- In the past, when other residence halls have undergone major infrastructure and building system renewals, or new ones have been constructed, rates have been set at tier 1 pricing. Burton Conner and all other future renewed residence halls will change to tier 1 pricing when they reopen.
- MIT’s financial aid program is designed to meet student need for educational expenses, and financial aid packages are adjusted related to the standard increases in the costs of attendance each year. Financial aid packages are calculated based on the double room rate in a tier 1 building.

- Grandfathering rates presents many complications and questions about fairness. Housing rates are set with the assumption that they reflect the condition of the building. It is important that different students are not paying different rates for the same space/amenities in the same building, so we will not grandfather Burton Conner students from the Class of 2023 who return to the building.

How will some of Burton Conner’s current features be impacted by renewal?

- As stated above, this renewal is primarily for an extensive infrastructure and building systems update, which will include modest updates to finishes and spaces. DSL and their partners in the Department of Facilities and Office of Campus Planning are currently gathering data and surveying the building to better understand the full scope of renewal work. Modifications to the building may be necessary to make the building more accessible. As a result, some spaces may be reconfigured. We hope to be able to provide Burton Conner residents, as well as the broader MIT community, with more specifics about the scope of work in fall 2019.
- The Transition Team will have opportunities to provide input on any potential changes to student residential and program spaces. Unlike the New House renewal project, we have more time – 1.5 academic years – to plan with the community for this project and transition.

Which residence hall will be renewed after Burton Conner?

- No decisions about the next renewal project have been made yet.

What are the plans for New Vassar? Will it be used as a “swing” dorm during the renewal of all residence halls?

- As with our other residence halls, it is important for New Vassar to have its own identity, so the new community will not serve as a “swing” dorm in the short or long term.

Being a swing dorm would be disruptive to the New Vassar House team’s and House leaders’ ability to establish a house identity and cohesive spirit if a large number of spaces are reserved for another residence hall that functions independently from New Vassar. Because residential renewal projects will extend for two years (typically half of a students’ time on campus), we want students to welcome and embrace their new community as a positive addition to college life; cherishing the friendships that they made in their former residence, while working to develop a new group of friends and experiences in their new residence hall.

An additional reason New Vassar will not be a “swing” dorm: New Vassar is a dining dorm, and residents will be required to purchase a meal plan. While we continue to see

a growing number of students enrolling in MIT meal plans, not all students wish to be on a meal plan.

- New Vassar will have a Founders' group, which will be appointed by Chancellor Barnhart and Vice President and Dean for Student Life Nelson and be convened in the fall of 2019. The Founders' group will include students, staff, faculty, and the House leadership team.