

Parking at St. Leos

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Entrance to St. Leo's parking lot. Photo by Lina Coppola ('28).



St. Leo's parking lot. Photo by Lina Coppola ('28)

At the end of this school year, construction began for Westhill's new building, which significantly impacted student parking. The possible loss of the senior parking lot created concerns about students' ability to reliably commute to and from school. Fortunately, St. Leo's generously offered parking space, helping to accommodate students during this period.

Although the arrangement helped students continue driving to school, many students say the new setup changed their routines. It changed student schedules and the ease of getting in and out of school. Before construction started, students were able to park on campus. This made arrival and dismissal convenient for student drivers because it was a quick walk. The congestion of getting out of school was overall bearable. But now, the walk from St. Leo's to the school building has added extra time to the commute. This has resulted in arrival and dismissal becoming significantly more challenging than before.

"It usually takes me a 6-minute walk from St. Leo's to school," Sophia DaSilva ('27) said.

Parking has even caused some students to lose more sleep because they have to leave home earlier to get a good spot or rush to school. They often say that they feel rushed in the mornings because of the longer walk. "I leave my house

at 6:20 to get a good spot on the hill and often am late rushing to school," Sophia DaSilva ('27) said. Since then, arrival and dismissal have also become more stressful due to increased traffic and congestion around St. Leo's.

In addition, it's also changed how people in sports, clubs, and after-school activities experience challenges. Since many students remain on campus that day, walking back to St. Leo's after clubs can be inconvenient in bad weather conditions.

Students must qualify to park at St. Leo's and apply for a parking permit through the Westhill website. Due to limited parking, not all students are guaranteed a spot and still have to fill out permits to park.

Some students believe the parking solution has been helpful under the circumstances.

"It's better than having nowhere to park," Sofia Caurant ('27) said.

"It lets us have a place to put our cars before school," Daniel Riley ('27) said.

As construction continues and the school year eventually comes to a close, students will still have to adapt to the temporary parking systems. Opinions may differ, but the St. Leo's parking solution remains an important part of getting students to and from school daily.