Appendix F:

Pedestrian/Circulation Safety Evaluation

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

We Make a Difference

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 9, 2025

TO: Barbara Chiavelli, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD)

FROM: Jacob Swim, TE, Michael Baker International

SUBJECT: Franklin Elementary School Project – Pedestrian/Circulation Safety Evaluation

Introduction

Michael Baker International (Michael Baker) has completed an assessment of vehicular circulation and pedestrian safety conditions for the proposed Franklin Elementary School Project (Proposed Project) in the City of Santa Monica, California. The Project site is located at 2400 Montana Avenue, three blocks (or approximately 2,000 feet) northwest of Wilshire Boulevard, 1.25 miles north of Interstate 10, 2 miles southwest of Interstate 405, and 1.75 miles northeast of Santa Monica State Beach and the Pacific Coast Highway; refer to **Exhibit 1, Regional Vicinity Map**, and **Exhibit 2, Project Vicinity**.

The Proposed Project would result in increasing the campus building area by approximately 29,286 (gross) square feet (from 63,002 square feet to 92,288 square feet), adding new classrooms and increasing storage space, and creating flexible teaming spaces that can be used as additional classrooms during the phased implementation. The planned two-story building at the campus perimeter would open up the center of campus for better visibility and more shared activities while providing a clearer security perimeter. All existing portable buildings and two existing modular buildings would be demolished and removed entirely. Specifically, the Project would remove and demolish seven permanent buildings, two modular, and seven portable buildings; construct seven new buildings; and renovate one building and outdoor areas on the existing school campus and satellite facility over four phases. Additionally, the Proposed Project would relocate the existing transitional kindergarten/kindergarten[1] (TK/K), currently located at the school's adjacent satellite location northeast of the school campus along Montana Avenue (at Montana Avenue, between 24th Place [alleyway] and 25th Street) to the main campus, and in turn, relocate the existing staff/visitor parking to the satellite location.

The proposed improvements would not result in an increase in student enrollment, nor would the Proposed Project expand the school's capacity. **Exhibit 3, Existing Campus Facilities,** shows the existing campus layout. **Exhibit 4, Proposed Campus Facilities**, shows the proposed campus layout and site plan.

The school bell schedule is shown in **Table 1, Bell Schedule,** and would not change with the proposed improvements. As shown, students would only be walking around the drop-off/pick-up area for approximately 15 minutes during such times, thereby limiting the timeframe of interaction between students and vehicles. Further, school staff would be present during pick-up/drop-off periods to ensure efficiency and student safety.

[1] Transitional kindergarten is a program offered in California public schools to prepare children for kindergarten by offering an additional year of early education, prior to kindergarten attendance.

Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. Class is dismissed for TK/K at 1:30 p.m. on regular days and at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesdays and minimum days. First and second grades are dismissed at 2:45 p.m. on regular days and at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and minimum days. On regular days, third grade is dismissed at 2:50 p.m. and grades fourth through fifth are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Grades third through fifth are dismissed at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and minimum days.

TABLE 1 – BELL SCHEDULE

		Time	Days
Drop-Off	Regular (All Grades)	8:15 - 8:30 AM	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
Regular Dismissal	TK/K[1]	1:30 PM	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
	1st-2nd	2:45 PM	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
	3rd	2:50 PM	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
	4th-5th	3:00 PM	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
Minimum Day Dismissal	TK/K	12:15 PM	Wed & Minimum Days
	1st - 2nd	1:30 PM	Wed & Minimum Days
	3rd - 5th	1:30 PM	Wed & Minimum Days

Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. 2024. Franklin Elementary School, Bell Schedule 2024-2025. https://www.smmusd.org/domain/280.

[1] TK/K = transitional kindergarten/kindergarten

Pedestrian Safety Assessment

Project Location and Existing Conditions

Franklin Elementary School's regional and vicinity context are shown on **Exhibit 1**, **Regional Vicinity Map**, and **Exhibit 2**, **Project Vicinity Map**. As shown, the main campus is bordered by Montana Avenue on the northwest, 23rd Place to the southwest, 24th Place to the northeast, and Idaho Avenue on the southeast. The intersections formed by these streets border the Project site and are summarized in **Table 2, Adjacent Intersection Pedestrian Safety Considerations**. The main student entrance to the campus is through a gated entrance next to the auditorium on the west end of the campus off Montana Avenue, and a second entrance provided along Idaho Avenue, adjacent to the western side of the playfield. Students are required to enter the school through the gated entrances. Designated drop-off/pick-up lanes are delineated shoulders along Montana Avenue and Idaho Avenue with appropriate signage. Alternatively, parents and guardians may park along the residential side streets and walk their child to and from school (SMMUSD 2025).[2]

As mentioned, the school includes a satellite transitional-kindergarten and kindergarten facility next to the main campus on the northeast side of 24th Place (alleyway), along Montana Avenue. Access to the satellite campus is provided from 25th Street.

Additionally, Franklin Elementary School is currently participating in the City of Santa Monica's Safe Routes to School Program. The program prioritizes designing and constructing streets to enhance the safety of students walking, biking, and skating to and from school, while promoting safety, health and well-being, as well as transportation programs such Bike It! Walk It! and Kidical Mass.[2]

An existing staff parking lot with 28 spaces and an additional pedestrian entry point is located at the southwest corner of the campus along 23rd Place and Idaho Avenue, as shown on **Exhibit 3**, **Existing Campus Facilities.** The parking lot is accessed via 23rd Place, where vehicle traffic would have to cross either the Montana Avenue-23rd Place intersection or the Idaho Avenue-23rd Place intersection.

[2] Kidical Mass is a free international bike ride movement that encourages children to safely ride bicycles.

TABLE 2 – ADJACENT INTERSECTION PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

	Location (Relation to School Site)				
	Northwest Corner of Campus	Northwest of School	Northeast Corner at Satellite Campus	Southwest Corner of Campus	Southeast Corner of Campus
Major Street (north/south)	Montana Avenue	Montana Avenue	Montana Avenue	Idaho Avenue	Idaho Avenue
Minor Street (east/west)	23rd Street (north and south of Montana Avenue)	24th Steet (north of Montana Avenue)	25th Street	23rd Place	24th Place(1)
Intersection Control	Minor-Street-Stop	Traffic Light	Minor-Street-Stop	Minor-Street-Stop	All-Way-Stop
High Visibility Crosswalks	Yellow Continental Crosswalks	Yellow Continental Crosswalks (two approaches)	Yellow Continental Crosswalk	Yellow Continental Crosswalks (two approaches)	Yellow Continental Crosswalks (three approaches)
Crossing Guards(2,3)	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes

(1) Note that the intersection of Montana Avenue and 24th Place is not included as the 24th Place alleyway is normally closed to traffic entering from Montana Avenue.
(2) SMMUSD Franklin Elementary School Safety Guidelines 2025.
(3) Crossing guards are also present at 26th Street and Montana Avenue.

Analysis of the Site Access and School Drop-Off/Pick-Up

As mentioned, the main student entry points to the campus are through gated entrances along Montana Avenue and Idaho Avenue, which will be preserved with implementation of the Proposed Project, for grades 1 through 5. The adjacent intersection pedestrian safety considerations (**Table 2**) would also remain unchanged with implementation of the Proposed Project.

Under the proposed condition, the TK/K learning space, which is currently located at the adjacent satellite location, will be relocated to the southeast portion of the campus, along Idaho Avenue and 24th Place, as shown on **Exhibit 4**. The relocated TK/K facilities would have a dedicated entrance, and parents and guardians would be able to directly drop-off and pick-up TK/K students at designated drop-off/pick-up locations along Idaho Avenue. These design features would facilitate a more orderly drop-off/pick-up pattern, and would allow for a more organized, efficient, and safe flow of the TK/K students into/out of the school; refer to **Exhibit 5**, **Existing and Proposed Drop-off/Pick-up Zones**. Additionally, with relocation to the main campus, the TK/K students would be integrated into the main campus and would be readily able to participate in school-wide events (see **Exhibit 4**), in contrast with the existing condition, where the younger students would need to cross the alleyway next to vehicles traveling along Montana Avenue, to reach the main campus.

Student drop-off/pick-up logistics along Montana Avenue, Idaho Avenue, and the adjacent surface streets are anticipated to remain generally unchanged with the proposed improvements and would be similar to existing conditions. Refer also to **Exhibits 3** and **4** showing the existing and proposed campus configurations. Further, fencing is proposed along 24th Place and a portion of 23rd Place to prevent students from wandering onto the alleyways. Note that the school may also have additional doors on buildings or gates along fenced areas that would routinely remain locked to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the school.

New Surface Parking Lot

As part of Phase 1 improvements, the satellite campus, which currently supports the existing TK/K complex, would be demolished and a new faculty/staff parking lot with a total of 37 parking spaces would be constructed. The new parking lot would provide 15 standard spaces, 18 tandem spaces, and one American with Disabilities Act (ADA), one ADA van, one Electrical Vehicle (EV), and one EV van space. As shown in **Exhibit 6**, **New Surface**

Parking Lot, vehicular access to the parking lot would be via 25th Street. The driveway/entry to the proposed parking lot along 25th Street would be located approximately 50 feet south of its intersection with Montana Avenue to comply with stopping sight distance standards (50 feet stopping distance required at a design speed of 10 miles per hour) according to the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (Caltrans 2020).[3] Distancing the driveway from the 25th Street/Montana Avenue intersection would provide greater sight distance for drivers exiting the driveway onto 25th Street, while also reducing the potential for queueing to occur as drivers pull into the lot to park.

Vehicles would not be permitted to access the parking lot via 24th Place (alleyway). The new parking lot would be gated along the alleyway to restrict vehicles and pedestrians from crossing. Although access to the west of the parking lot to/from 24th Place would be provided, such access would be gated and is not intended for daily use. Access to the parking lot from 24th Place would be limited to special circumstances, such as periodic events held at the school. When the new parking lot is constructed, faculty and staff would walk along the existing sidewalk on Montana Avenue to access the main school campus. The new parking lot would increase pedestrian activity in the area due to faculty and staff walking to/from the lot each day. However, compared with current conditions where TK/K students and TK/K teachers would have to cross the alleyway to access the main campus during intermittently-held school-wide activities, the relocated parking lot would result in greater safety for the students. Additionally, the parking lot relocation from the main campus at the intersection of Idaho Avenue and 23rd Place to the satellite location would also shift the teacher/staff traffic away from the Idaho Avenue-23rd Place intersection, and therefore, away from the pedestrian/student drop-off/pick-up areas along Idaho Avenue.

Conclusion

The Proposed Project would result in improvements to the existing Franklin Elementary School campus, increasing classroom and storage space, and improving the school's facilities to align with the District's Educational Specifications. However, as proposed, the Project would not increase student enrollment or allowed capacity of the school, and would therefore not be anticipated to increase overall pedestrian or vehicular trips associated with daily school operations.

Although the Proposed Project would reorganize portions of the existing campus layout, student drop-off/pick-up logistics along Montana Avenue, Idaho Avenue, and adjacent surface streets are anticipated to remain generally unchanged with the proposed improvements. The relocated TK/K facilities with a dedicated entrance would facilitate organized pick-up/drop-off activities for the younger students, and would provide a safer means for the students to participate in school-wide activities. Further, although pedestrian activity along Montana Avenue may increase due to faculty and staff walking to/from the new parking lot to the main campus each day, the Proposed Project would eliminate the need for younger students (TK/K) to cross the 24th Place alleyway to access the main campus (as occurs under current conditions), and would shift teacher/staff vehicular traffic away from Idaho Avenue and 23rd Place, thereby enhancing pedestrian safety at the school.

After reviewing the proposed modifications and improvements to the Franklin Elementary School campus, this assessment concludes that vehicular circulation, pick-up/drop-off logistics, and pedestrian access are generally forecast to operate at similar capacities as that which occur under existing conditions, but with improved efficiency and organization, which would increase safety. No adverse effects on the area circulation system or to pedestrian safety would result with the proposed campus improvements.

[3] Caltrans. 2020. Highway Design Manual. Accessed December 17, 2024. Online at: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/manual-highway-design-manual-hdm.

If you have any questions pertaining to the analysis results summarized in this memo, please contact me at (619) 456-1410.

Sincerely,

Jacob Swim, TE
Senior Transportation Planner
Michael Baker International

Attachment A: Exhibits

Attachment A
Exhibits

EXHIBIT 1 REGIONAL VICINITY MAP

Project Location

EXHIBIT 2 PROJECT VICINITY MAP

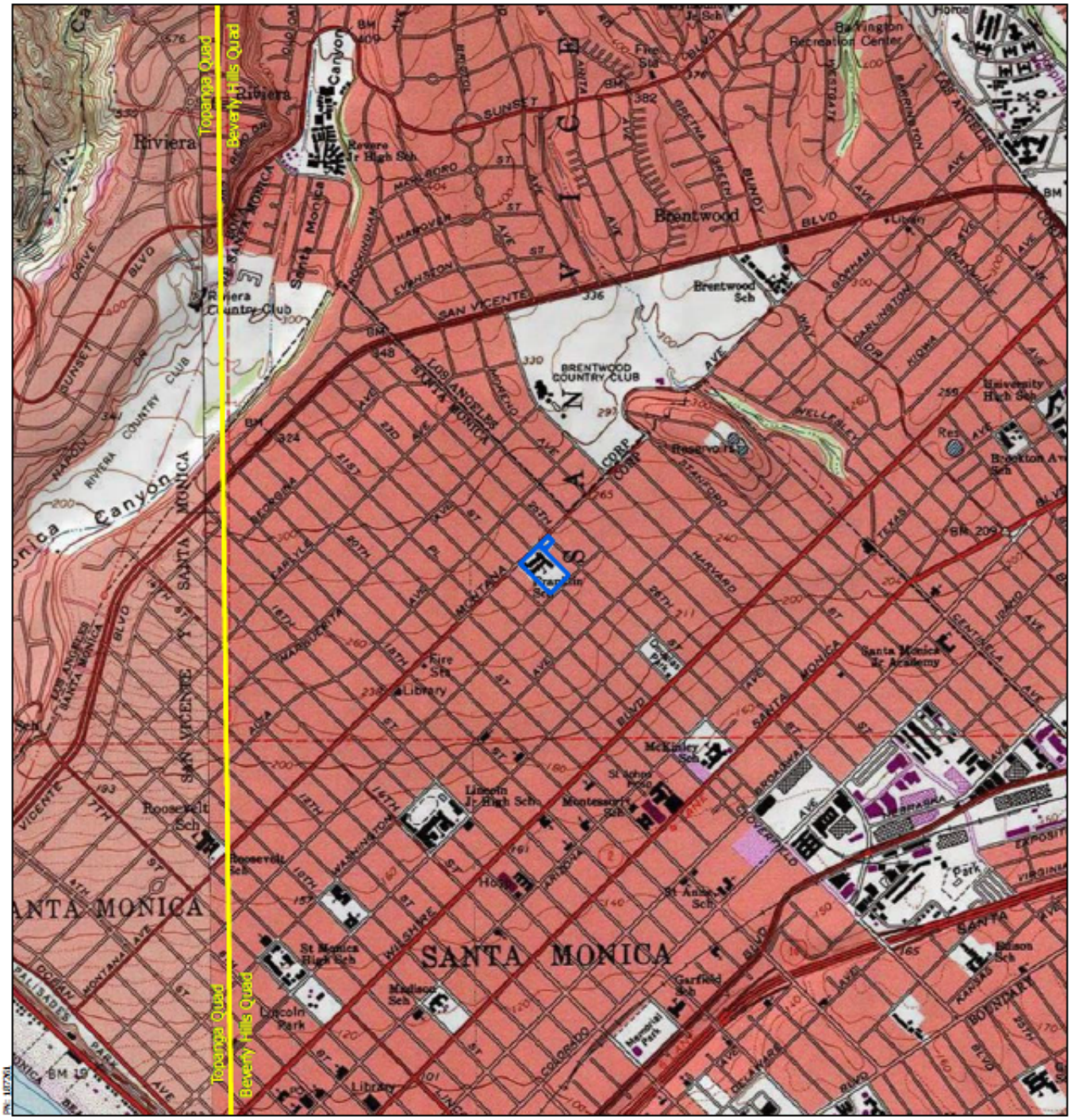

EXHIBIT 3 EXISTING CAMPUS FACILITIES

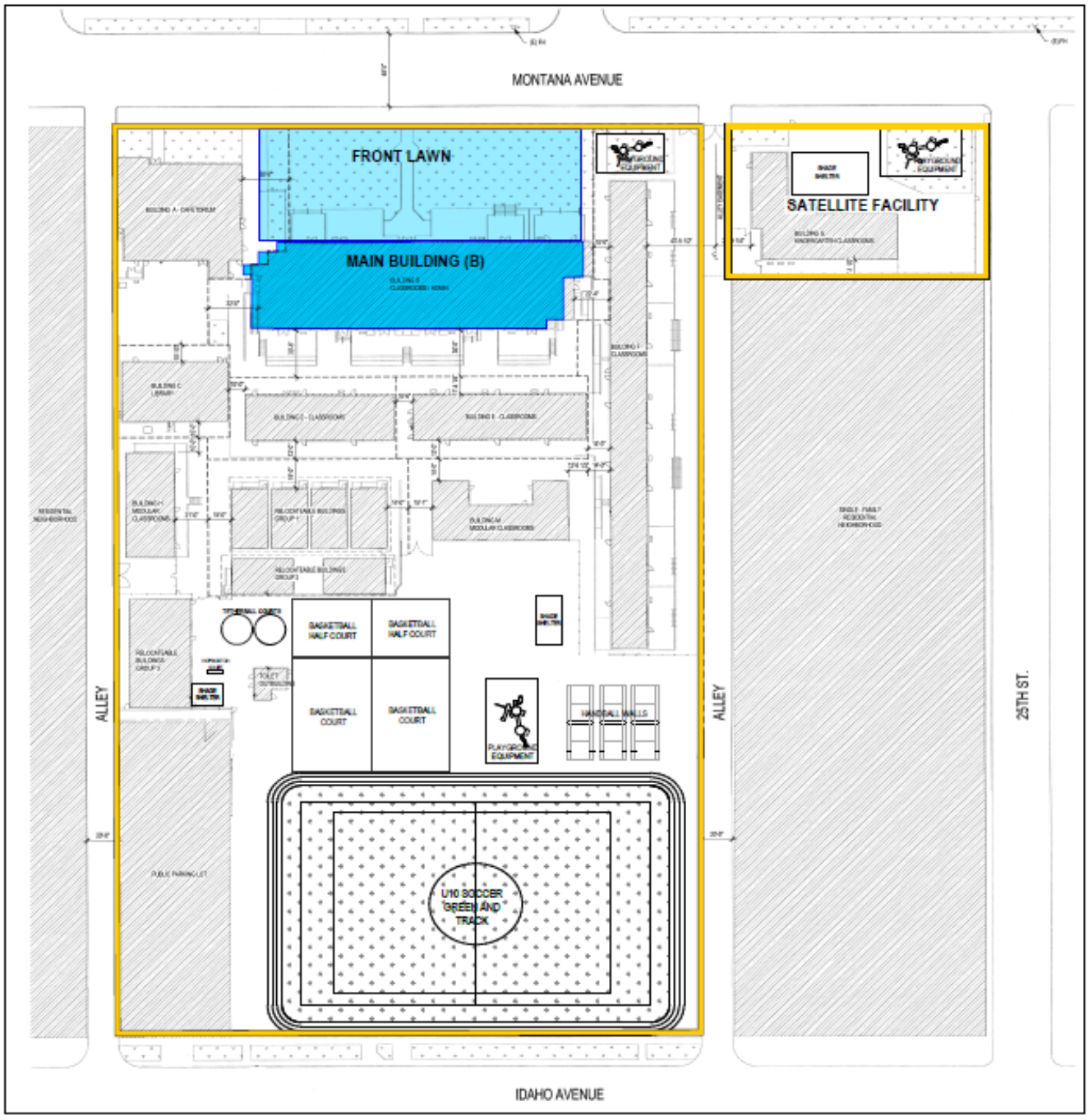

EXHIBIT 4 PROPOSED CAMPUS FACILITIES

1st Floor

EXHIBIT 5 EXISTING AND PROPOSED DROP-OFF/PICK-UP ZONES

Existing Drop-off/Pick-up Zone

Pedestrian Flow

Existing Bicycle Rack

Proposed Drop-off/Pick-up Zone

Pedestrian Flow

Proposed Vehicular Access (Satellite Parking)

Existing Bicycle Rack

Proposed Bicycle Rack (with implementation of Phase 1 only)

EXHIBIT 6 NEW SURFACE PARKING LOT