

Mendota Elementary Safe Routes to School Plan (March 2026)

About the School	
Number of Students ^a	Approximately 285
% Economically Disadvantaged	79%
% Non-white	84%
Arrival/Dismissal Times	7:35 AM / 1:10 PM (Mon) 7:35 AM / 2:30 PM (Tue-Fri)

^aStudent data source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Major Streets and Highways	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) ^a
Troy Drive	4,250
School Road	1,300
Northport Drive	28,300

^a Source: City of Madison Street Centerlines

Safety Concerns at Mendota

What we heard from the Principal (or Designee)

- The principal noted walking and biking safety concerns on School Road and Northport Drive because of speeding and traffic congestion. Additionally, a Madison Metro Transit bus has recently been temporarily routed down School Road, adding to the existing traffic.
- Student families have limited access to bicycles or scooters, often due to financial hardship and lack of secure bike parking at home, which restricts students' ability to bike or roll to school.
- The area directly in front of the school on School Road is where the majority of vehicle drop-off/pick-up occurs but is also where the school buses and specialized transportation vehicles park, and where the crossing guard is located, making this portion of the street extremely congested.
- Because of the congestion in front of the school, many caregivers do not consistently follow the school's traffic safety.

What we learned from the crossing guard

The crossing guard noted that many people, especially parents, cross wherever they want in front of the school instead of using the designated crossing area where he is stationed. A lot of the crossing

occurs by students and caregivers who park on the east side of School Road and then cross near where they park their car, versus at the marked crossing with the crossing guard.

Hazardous Transportation Busing

According to the UHT plan, students are bused less than 1.5 miles due to hazardous walking conditions, including narrow roadways and a lack of sidewalks, from the following areas: south of Troy Drive in the vicinity of Shasta Drive, west of Green Avenue near W Sauthoff Road, and north of Knutson Drive near Westport Road.

What we learned from surveys and other caregiver feedback

- Survey respondents mentioned that the sidewalk from the parking lot and field ends abruptly to the west of the school, leaving students who live in that direction, including those at the Ridgecrest Apartments, without a complete path to school.
- At Troy Drive and Marcy Road, a safer crossing is needed to reach the sidewalk leading to the tunnel under the railroad tracks.
- The crosswalk across School Road at Blaine Drive connects to the side of Blaine Drive without a sidewalk (the north side).
- Some survey respondents said having more students walking and biking to school could improve attendance by being a more reliable form of transportation than commuting by car or bus.

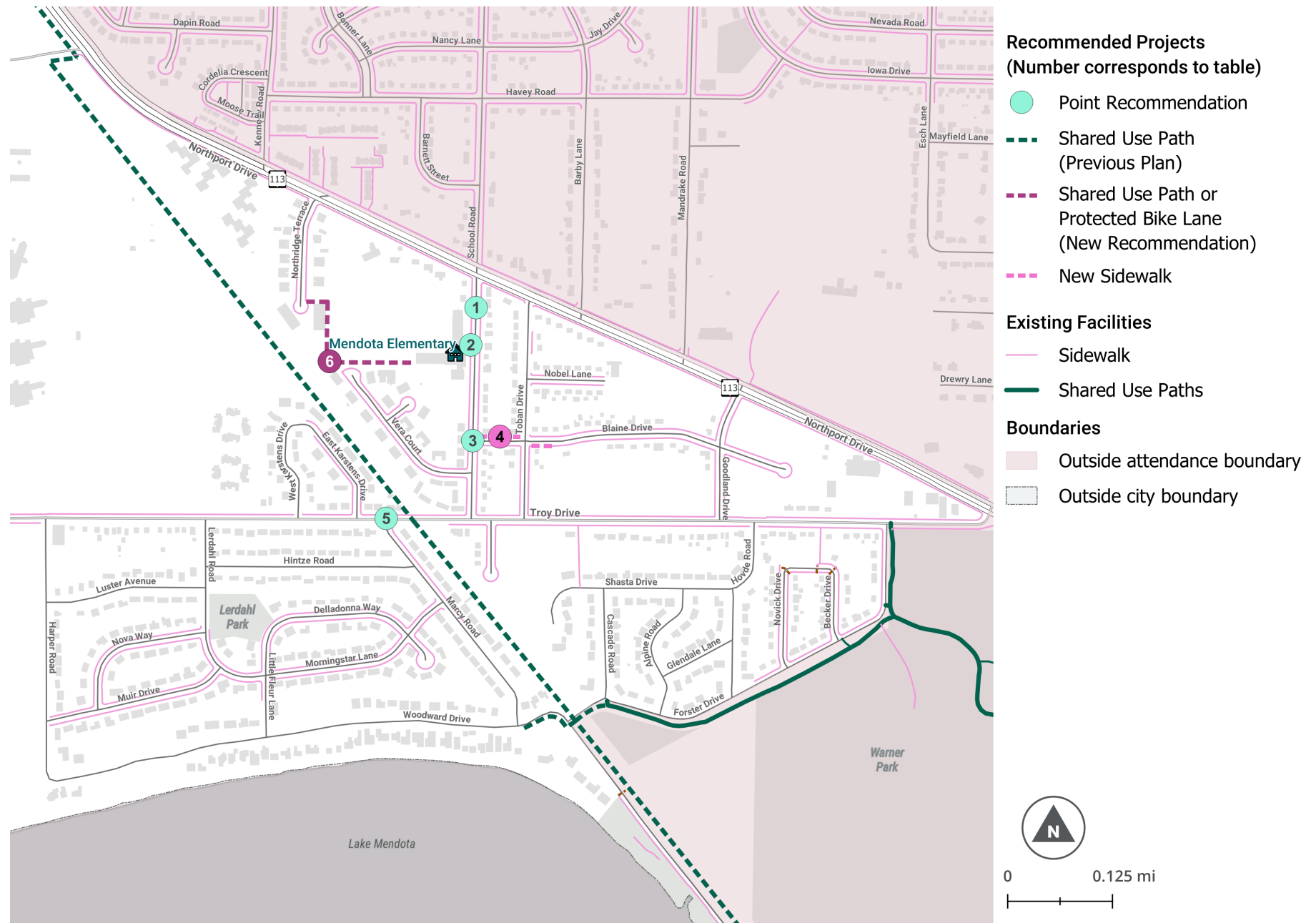
Existing Conditions (and Previously-Planned Bikeways and Paths)



Arrival and Dismissal Observations

Observation Details	
Observation Date	The consultant team observed dismissal on Wednesday, May 7, 2025.
School Buses	Two school buses lined up in front of the school on the west side of School Road.
Specialized Transportation	Before/Aftercare and specialized transportation vehicles picked up students on the west side of School Road.
Caregiver Vehicles	- Most caregivers parked on both sides of School Road to pick up students during dismissal. Others parked on nearby residential streets and walked to meet their children. - Most pickups occurred on the west side of School Road. - There was heavy foot traffic, caregiver presence, and vehicle congestion along School Road during dismissal. - Many people were crossing School Road outside of the designated crosswalk. - The volume of vehicles on School Road created significant congestion. Some cars parked in front of driveways, while others made U-turns or three-point turns to change direction.
School Staff Roles	- All school staff members are involved in dismissal activities. - Some staff stand at exits, while others escort students directly to appropriate buses or their caregivers' vehicles.
Adult Crossing Guards	A crossing guard is posted directly in front of the school on School Road.
Bike Rack Locations and Use	A bike rack is available for students and visitors in front of the school, positioned near the main entrance on School Road.
Students Walking and Biking	- Many students were observed walking and biking to school. - Students walked to school from all directions in the neighborhood, but most predominantly from the south and west of the school across the field. - Over 50 students were observed walking home from school. - Per conversations with the principal, there is a walking school bus at Mendota Elementary that starts at Ridgcrest Apartments at 7:15am and has a second stop at the corner of Northport Dr and Northridge Terrace at 7:20 to pick up more students along the way. Since it only occurs during arrival, it was not observed. The principal estimates that there are typically 10-12 students that participate.

Priority Recommendations at Mendota Elementary



The numbered issues and recommendations in the table correspond to the points in the Recommendations Map (shown on previous page).

Recommendations for School Leadership or MMSD Building Services

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations
1	School Road (entrance to northern Staff parking lot)	- Vehicles were seen doing U-turns or using driveways and the school parking lot entrance to turn around, which is not permitted. - Existing parking restriction signs north of the driveway say No Parking Any Time.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Continue to restrict access to the parking lot during school arrival and dismissal. To discourage caregivers from using the driveway as a turn-around point, move cones closer to School Road to block the driveway. - Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Plan, which should encourage caregivers who drive to use drop off areas.
2	School Road (bus drop off area)	Existing parking restriction signs in front of the school allow stopping and standing, which results in caregiver vehicles mixing with school buses.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Place portable sandwich board signs that say Bus Only/ No Drop Off/Pick Up during arrival and dismissal hours.
6	West side of Mendota Elementary School	There is no pedestrian connection from the sidewalk behind the school to Northern Bluffs, the apartment complex west of the school.	<i>Long Term (6+ years):</i> Work with the City to construct a new pedestrian path connecting the school to the Northern Bluffs Apartments.

Recommendations for City of Madison

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations
1	School Road (entrance to northern Staff parking lot)	- Vehicles were seen doing U-turns or using driveways and the school parking lot entrance to turn around, which is not permitted. - Existing parking restriction signs north of the driveway say No Parking Any Time.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Consider changing some of the parking restrictions to No Parking Drop Off Pick up During school Days north of the driveway to clarify drop off areas.
2	School Road (bus drop off area)	Existing parking restriction signs in front of the school allow stopping and standing, which results in caregiver vehicles mixing with school buses.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Change parking restrictions to No Stopping Standing or Parking /Bus Loading Only to allow space for two school buses and specialized transportation vehicles (100 feet).
3	School Road and Blaine Drive	- The existing crossing is not highly visible to drivers because no high visibility crosswalk markings or school crossing signs are present. - The existing crosswalk does not connect to a sidewalk on Blaine Drive, although most students can and should cross School Road with the crossing guard. - Curb ramps are missing on both legs of the intersection on the west side of School Road. - School Road has a speed limit of 25 miles per hour; the school zone speed is 20 miles per hour.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add high visibility crosswalk markings. - Consider lowering school zone speed limit to 15 miles per hour. <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - Construct missing curb ramp or ramps. Due to the driveway on the southwest leg of the intersection, it may not be possible to build an ADA-compliant curb ramp in that location.
4	Blaine Drive	Missing sidewalks present a barrier to walking and bicycling to school.	<i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - Construct sidewalks on the north side of Blaine Drive (from School Rd to Toban Drive). - Construct sidewalks on the south side of Blaine Drive (east of Toban Drive).
5	Troy Drive at Marcy Street	- At Troy Drive and Marcy Road, a safer crossing is needed to reach the sidewalk leading to the tunnel under the railroad tracks. - The initial All Ages and Abilities Bike Network published in the 2022 Madison Complete Green Streets Guide recommends a low-stress bicycle connection on Marcy Road, Troy Drive, and School Street.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add diamond-shaped Pedestrian Crossing Sign (W11-2). <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - If warranted, add a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon to further improve the safety of the crossing. - Add pedestrian refuge island to shorten crossing distances and improve pedestrian safety.

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations
6	West side of Mendota Elementary School	There is no pedestrian connection from the sidewalk behind the school to Northern Bluffs, the apartment complex west of the school.	<i>Long Term (6+ years):</i> Work with the District to construct a new pedestrian path connecting the school to the Northern Bluffs Apartments. Will require right-of-way acquisition.

Information contained in this document is for planning purposes and should not be used for final design of any project. All results, recommendations, concept drawings, and commentary contained herein are based on limited data and information and on existing conditions that are subject to change. Further analysis and engineering design are necessary prior to implementing any of the recommendations contained herein.