



Maxfield Elementary Banner © Copyright 2023 Saint Paul Public Schools. All Rights Reserved.

MAXFIELD ELEMENTARY COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SCHOOL
380 Victoria St N, St Paul, MN 55104

COMPETITION CHALLENGE

As the prompt for the 2023 Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Award competition, Minnesota's young architectural professionals are asked to reimagine the Maxfield Elementary Collaborative Learning School at its 150th anniversary in the year 2041. At its core, the proposed project is an exploration of future placemaking at this pride-filled community school site which marks the heart of the Rondo neighborhood. It is a vehicle for whole community healing—for young and old alike. The school finds itself at the crossroads of catalytic community change and long overdue social justice.

The restorative power of community can be heard in the very words of the Maxfield Elementary School Mission and Core Beliefs:

"Our Mission:

Maxfield Elementary School provides a restorative and nurturing learning community committed to achieving academic excellence. All are welcome here."

"Our Core Beliefs:

- *We believe in the transformative power of relationships.*
- *We believe every child can and will learn - no exceptions.*
- *We believe in the inherent innocence and good of each child.*
- *We believe in restoration of the mind and body."*

[Mission and Vision / Mission and Core Beliefs](#)

"Maxfield Elementary School has served the Rondo community for over 130 years. Each year we grow stronger through the involvement of families and the community. At Maxfield our teachers tap into each student's curiosity, enthusiasm, and imagination to engage them fully in learning. Our students experience a full range of learning activities, from gaining skills in reading and writing to performing with African drums. Maxfield is, above all, a community that works together to help our children succeed."

[Maxfield Elementary School / Homepage](#) + [About Maxfield / About Maxfield](#)

2023 Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Award Competition Brief
Minnesota Architectural Foundation

What will community-based education for our young children/scholars look like in our future world? Maxfield Elementary Collaborative Learning School in the heart of historic St. Paul Rondo neighborhood is positioned in a milieu of both deep history and exciting future change. Here are several current developments impactful to Maxfield Elementary:

- As a Collaborative Learning School, Maxfield Elementary will partner with the University of St. Thomas to train teachers, develop and apply best practices for teaching and learning, and provide professional development to create incredible student-centered learning environments. This innovative model will enhance our students' ability to think critically, pursue their dreams and change the world. [Saint Paul Public Schools, University of St. Thomas Announce Partnership for Maxfield Elementary Collaborative Learning School](#)
- The Center for Culture, Families, and Learning (CCFL) is a partnership between Maxfield Elementary and the Cultural Wellness Center, that encourages the generative practice of moving from race to culture, where one engages the transformative process of being and becoming oneself through the lens of culture. The knowledge produced from this process creates the space for one to heal themselves and build community. [Center for Culture, Families and Learning](#)
- With the goal to transform Minnesota schoolyards into park-like spaces, designed by the community to improve health, equity, climate, and educational outcomes, the Trust for Public Land is working to create a dynamic green space for everyone to enjoy. [Maxfield Elementary Community Schoolyard - Our Work in MN](#)
- ReConnect Rondo—with its community partners—is leading a restorative movement to reignite an African American cultural enterprise district interconnected with a land bridge over I-94. The Rondo Community Land Bridge will serve to catalyze vitality and prosperity in the Rondo neighborhood. It will be located immediately south of Maxfield Elementary, extending four blocks from Grotto St. to Chatsworth St. [The Land Bridge - ReConnect Rondo](#)





<https://www.google.com/maps/@44.951903,-93.1357317,360m/data=!3m1!1e3>

SITE

The competition site is the entire existing St. Paul Public Schools property bounded by:

- Victoria Street North to the west
- Avon Street N to the east
- Central Avenue W to the north
- St. Anthony Avenue to the south

In addition to the blue location link to Google Maps above, a scalable site plan with parcel dimensions is attached to this competition brief. The detailed parcel description can also be found on the Ramsey County GIS Map. [Map Ramsey](#)

Competitors' solutions should be cognizant of the future land bridge. Although the eventual land use program is still in development, the competition design should recognize that many new patterns and activities are anticipated, and the north/south streets of Victoria and Avon will cross the bridge.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

This Rapson ideas competition invites participants to redesign the entire two block site from the ground up with the following programmatic considerations. Although a current Maxfield planning strategies document and a current St. Paul Public School project are provided as benchmarks in the APPENDIX of PROGRAM RESOURCES, competitors are encouraged to ideate and think expansively about future possibilities:

1. Collaborative Learning School

An innovative school design serving the local Rondo community with approximate enrollment of 500 young scholars:

- Pre-K through 5th Grade learning environments for three (3) sections per grade level. Sections range in size from 20 students in the lower grades to 27 in the upper grades.
- General Instructional Space: 25,000-28,000 sf
- Special Instructional Spaces:
 - Art: approx. 1,000 sf
 - Science: approx. 1,000 sf
 - Special Education: approx. 5,000 sf
 - Embedded UST School of Education classroom: approx. 1,000 sf
- Media/Resource Center: approx. 3,000 sf
- Gymnasium/Activities: 5,000-6,000 sf
- Performance/Auditorium/Assembly/Music: approx. 3,000 sf
- Cafeteria/Food Service/Prep: approx. 4,000 sf
 - seating for 167 children (3 lunch shifts)
- Administrative/Teacher Space: 3,000-6,000 sf
 - Reception/waiting, offices, conference, lounge & work area, wellness
- Support Space: 6,500-7,500 sf
 - Restrooms, storage, custodial, mechanical, electrical, recycling
 - Service area should accommodate parking for two service vehicles.
- Circulation gross-up: approximately 30%
- Baseline target program area: approximate range of 75,000 gsf to 85,000 gsf
- Separated parent and bus curbside pick-up and drop-off areas.
- Sustainability initiatives aiming to contribute to world climate-neutrality by 2050.

2. Early Childhood Community Hub

This community-based program area will provide a variety of areas to support public-facing functions and community support spaces. The program space will offer opportunities for families to connect with other parents of young children and learn more about your child's development. These may include early childhood family education (ECFE), early childhood special education (ECSE), and community partnerships such as childhood mental health. It would also include an array of community support spaces.

- The Community Hub would equal approximately 10% to 20% of the overall square footage.
- The Community Hub may connect to and integrate with space assets of the Elementary School Program. Competitors are invited to speculate on how community-based services may integrate with the elementary school program to serve as a resilient community hub.

3. Playground + Playfields

Community engagement always supports the importance of ample exterior playspace. Quality space on the Maxfield site should be preserved and amplified.

- Soccer pitch-scaled open field space
- Improved playground environment

4. Renewed Community Gardens

Community gardens can enrich academic learning, nurture relationships, and create a positive neighborhood environment that enhances students' lives outside of school.

[Starting a Community Garden on School Grounds - KidsGardening](#)

The community envisions re-siting the existing Victoria Community Gardens from its Concordia Avenue site to grow, integrate, and gain synergies with Maxfield Elementary programs:

- Community Greenhouse facility for year-round learning and food production.
 - The greenhouse may be integrated with the Collaborative Learning School building or stand separately.
 - Solar exposure and a distinct community entry point are design criteria.
 - Size is at the discretion of the designer's vision.
- Exterior Community Gardens
 - Shared and individual growing plots/beds for community use
 - Gathering space and pizza oven or similar.
- Minimal service access for loading and unloading to community garden facilities.

Playspace and Community Garden space will be prioritized over vehicular parking. The current need for 32 stalls on site is imagined nearly obsolete by future autonomous vehicle services. Only essential site program access and service should be available to motorized vehicles.

RALPH RAPSON TRAVELING STUDY AWARD COMPETITION DETAILS

Judging Criteria

- Response to program
- The design as it relates to the site and larger contextual concerns
- Degree of design skill and invention
- Attention to craft and detail as commensurate with the length of the competition
- Sustainable design concepts & conservation of resources
- Adherence to the submission guidelines and requirements
- Graphic skill

Design Expression

The Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Award Competition stresses the comprehensive quality of the overall design, character, and development of the proposed architecture and its site—in the unique and thoughtful voice that each competitor brings to the design challenge. Competition entries are to be the individual work of each competitor.

Submission Requirements

No more than two (2) digital boards may be submitted. Boards must be formatted in 20" x 30" proportions for possible printing and easy display.

A minimum of two perspectives are required as part of the presentation, including one overall project perspective. Other perspective sketches are at the option of the competitor. No additional digital information, links to websites, etc. are allowed. In the tradition of the Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Fellowship Competition, hand drawing is always encouraged but is not mandatory.

All boards must be labeled 2023 Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Award.

APPENDIX of PROGRAM RESOURCES

Maxfield Elementary School Stakeholders

Maxfield Elementary partners with several organizations to support families and students. Partners bring incredible value to Maxfield students' education everyday:

- Cultural Wellness Center
- Saint Paul Eastside YMCA
- Assistance League of Minneapolis and Saint Paul
- Target Corporation Business Councils
- Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood Initiative Partners
- Children's Dental Services
- Wilder Foundation
- MN Reading Corps
- Reading Partners
- University of Saint Thomas
- St. Catherine's University
- ReConnect Rondo
- Rondo Roundtable



[Welcome to Maxfield!](#)

Competition participants are encouraged to remain mindful of the broad community of stakeholders that impact and are impacted by the synergies of programming and built realm decisions that an architect and the school district's facilities planners and leadership needs to be sensitive to when designing a community school facility. This foremost includes the children. But also the parents, teachers, the school principal/administration, the Superintendent and School Board, the partners listed above, Maxfield School alumni, the nearby neighbors, and the neighborhood community as a whole.

The following is a set of links for additional information regarding the Rondo neighborhood:

[Remembering St. Paul's African-American Neighborhood - YouTube](#)

[St. Paul's Historic Black Neighborhood Destroyed By Highway - YouTube](#)

[Rondo-Past-Prosperity-Study.pdf \(reconnectrondo.com\)](#)

[A Survey of Public Spaces.pdf \(reconnectrondo.com\)](#)

[Could a land bridge project help minority communities recover from displacement? | PBS NewsHour](#)

SPPS Maxfield Elementary 5-YR Maintenance & Capital Implementation Plan

Attached to this brief are the St. Paul Schools' current conceptual facility diagrams for Maxfield in the current capital planning five-year cycle. They are a snapshot in time for the conceptual vision of where Maxfield should go in order to meet their full vision, principals, and standards while retaining and augmenting the existing facility. They show the existing building plan layout and are for reference and program scale only. The intent for this Rapson ideas competition is to dream big and to speculate further out into the community's future without the immediate constraints of the current capital planning.

Additional background information on the school districts capital planning can found at [Five-Year Facilities Maintenance and Capital Implementation Plan](#)

Benchmark Project

As a benchmark for current facility/program development by the St. Paul Public Schools, the [Bruce F. Vento Elementary](#) is approximately twice the size and student enrollment of the imagined Maxfield Elementary Collaborative Learning School. Bruce Vento Elementary is receiving a newly-constructed, multi-story school building of approximately 160,000 SF. In rough terms, The new building will continue to serve grades PreK-5 for approximately 700 children and is being expanded to include an Early Childhood and Community Hub providing early childhood programming, specialized services, and community support services through the Achievement Plus model. Achievement Plus is a partnership between the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation and the Saint Paul Public Schools to improve the academic achievement of low-income children in Saint Paul urban schools. [Achievement Plus | Wilder Foundation](#)

- The new building will model sustainability by including a high-performance building envelope, geothermal system, and the future installation of photovoltaic panels.
- [Inclusive restrooms](#)
- Playgrounds for both the elementary and early childhood programs, along with a general play area.
- Separated parent and bus drop-offs, and service area are carefully planned
- The top three community engagement responses on how might the new school better serve the community as a hub?
 - Community play space outdoors
 - Access to healthy food (on-site gardens)
 - Community resiliency

A site plan for the benchmark Bruce Vento facility and more details are found at: [Planning, Design and Construction / Bruce Vento Elementary School](#)

Partnership with University of St. Thomas (UST)

[Maxfield Elementary Collaborative Learning School](#)

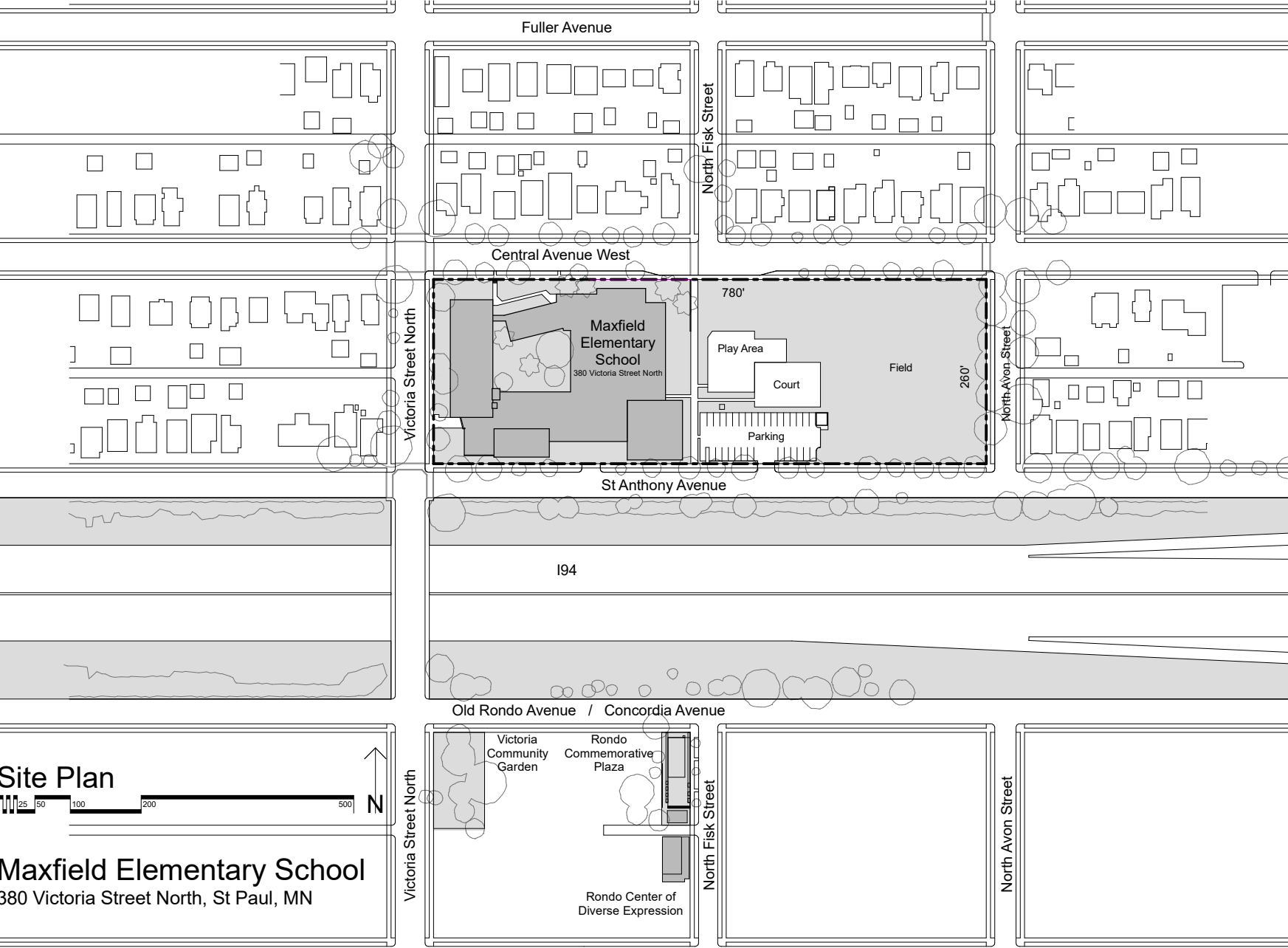
[St. Thomas Partners With St. Paul Public Schools to Enhance Teacher Prep - Newsroom](#)

As a Collaborative Learning School, Maxfield will partner with the University of St. Thomas to prepare teachers, develop and apply best practices for teaching and learning, and provide professional development opportunities to create incredible student-centered learning environments. This innovative partnership incorporates promising practices for addressing the needs of all students while preparing and developing effective teachers.

Serving primarily African American, Hmong and Latino students, Maxfield has served the Rondo neighborhood for 130 years. This new partnership comes at a time when Minnesota faces a disparity gap in educational outcomes in testing and graduation rates of students of color compared to white students. The leaders expect the collaborative learning environment will be a way to not only increase educational outcomes for the elementary students, but also better inform the methods of future teachers as they train under Maxfield's veteran educators.

Also unique to this model compared to similar programs across the nation is that St. Thomas will have a classroom within Maxfield for instructing its School of Education students. The collaboration will place six to eight teacher candidates to complete yearlong field experiences at Maxfield each year, in addition to initiatives to help improve reading and math literacy. Starting this spring, St. Thomas students and faculty will bring a math enrichment program, the Rational Number Project, to third grade classrooms. And the award-winning Playful Learning Lab at St. Thomas will lend expertise as well. [The Playful Learning Lab](#)

END



Maxfield Elementary School

Project Summary:

Our school’s 124 years of tradition grow stronger with each passing year through the involvement of families and the community. At Maxfield our teachers tap into each student’s curiosity, enthusiasm and imagination to engage them fully in learning. Our students experience a full range of learning activities, from gaining skills in reading and writing to performing with African drums.

It was originally constructed in 1954 at 20,080 square feet. Later additions were completed in 1973 and 2002. It is now 71,334 in total square feet.



Top 10 Site Identified Priorities

- 1. Resurface main hallways throughout the entire building
- 2. Furniture that better supports 21st century learning
- 3. Kitchen-Nutrition - needs walk-in freezer
- 4. Alternate/more secure main entrance
- 5. Room aesthetics and cosmetics including illumination control to provide warmth and calm environment
- 6. Upgrade YMCA space into a workable office space - heat, technology, bathroom facility
- 7. Increase school’s footprint for community partners
- 8. Additional Instructional Spaces
- 9. Create an assembly space
- 10. More parking space for staff and visitors

380 Victoria Street North

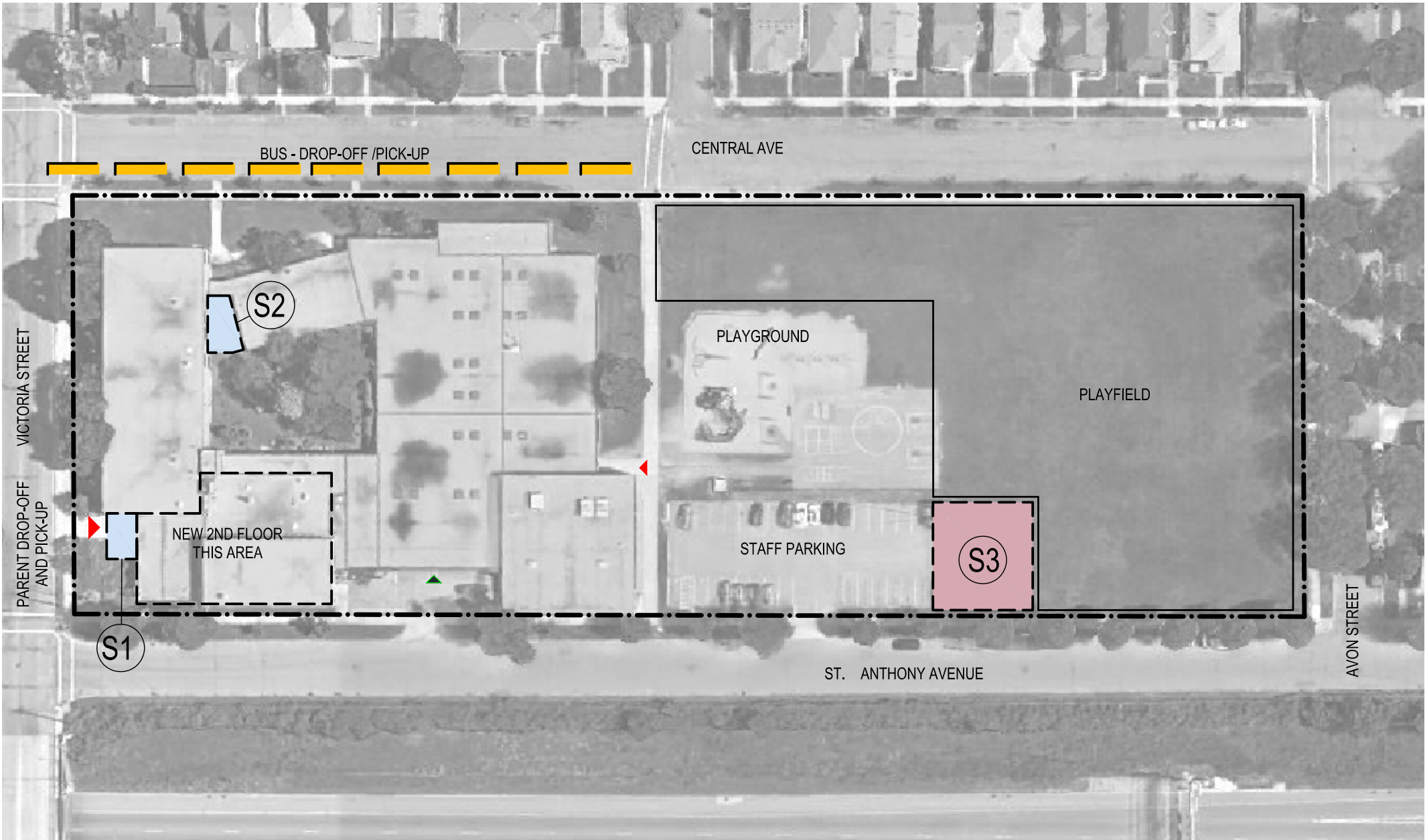
Grade Levels: PreK-5
SY 2014/15 Enrollment: 346
High Poverty: yes
Design Enrollment: 461
SY 2024/2025 Enrollment: (Forthcoming)

Maxfield Elementary School

Site Concept

Legend:

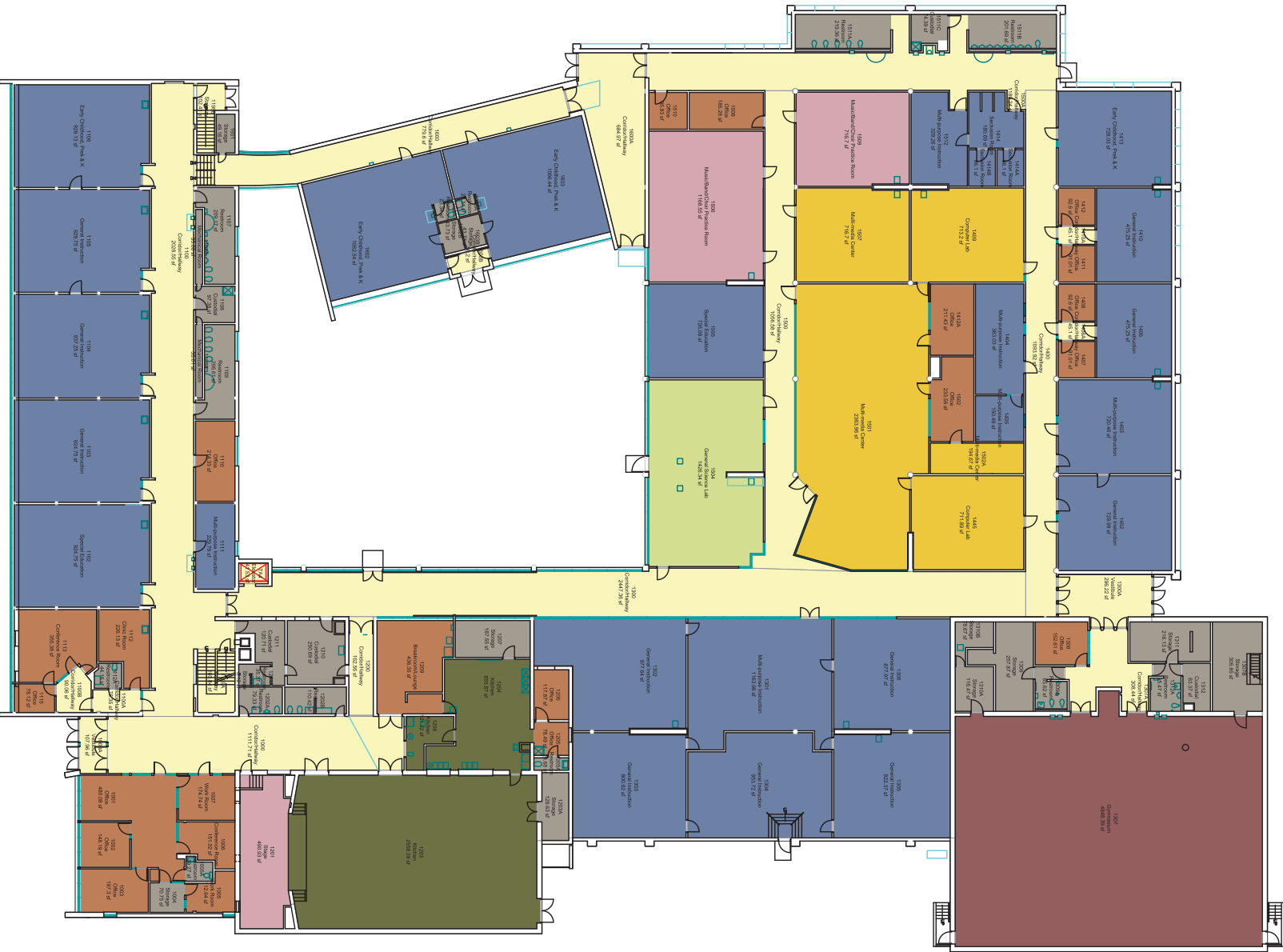
S1.	New Entry	(250 SF)
S2.	Pre-K Instructional Space expansion	(680 SF)
S3.	Additional Staff Parking	(4,000 SF)



- Property Line
- Main Entry
- Secondary Entry
- Service Entry
- Alterations
- New Landscape Construction
- New Building Construction

Maxfield Elementary School

Existing Utilization



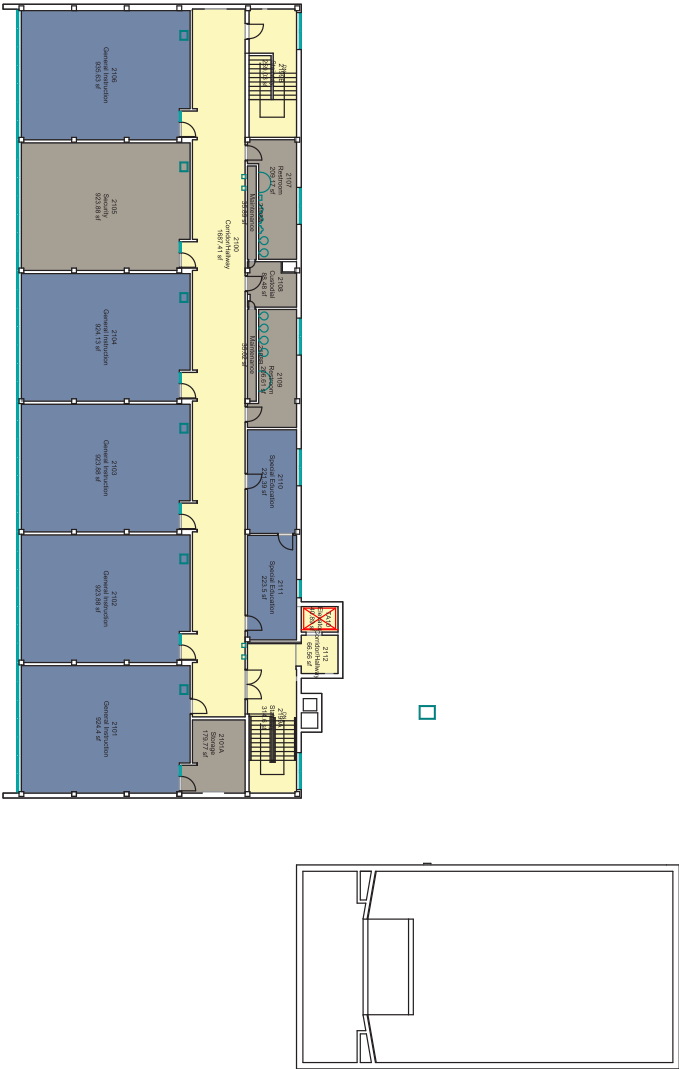
FIRST FLOOR

General Space Class			
Name		Count	Area
Administration		22	4016.57
Athletic		1	4848.39
Circulation		20	11877.7
Dining		3	3335.59
Facilities Support		33	3606.9
General Learning		26	17610.71
Media Center		5	4700.42
Performing Arts		3	2376.17
Science		1	1426.34
Total		114	53,798.7883

- General Learning
- Science
- Performing Arts
- Career & Tech Education
- Media Center
- Dining
- Athletics
- Circulation
- Facilities Support
- Administration
- Art

Maxfield Elementary School

Existing Utilization



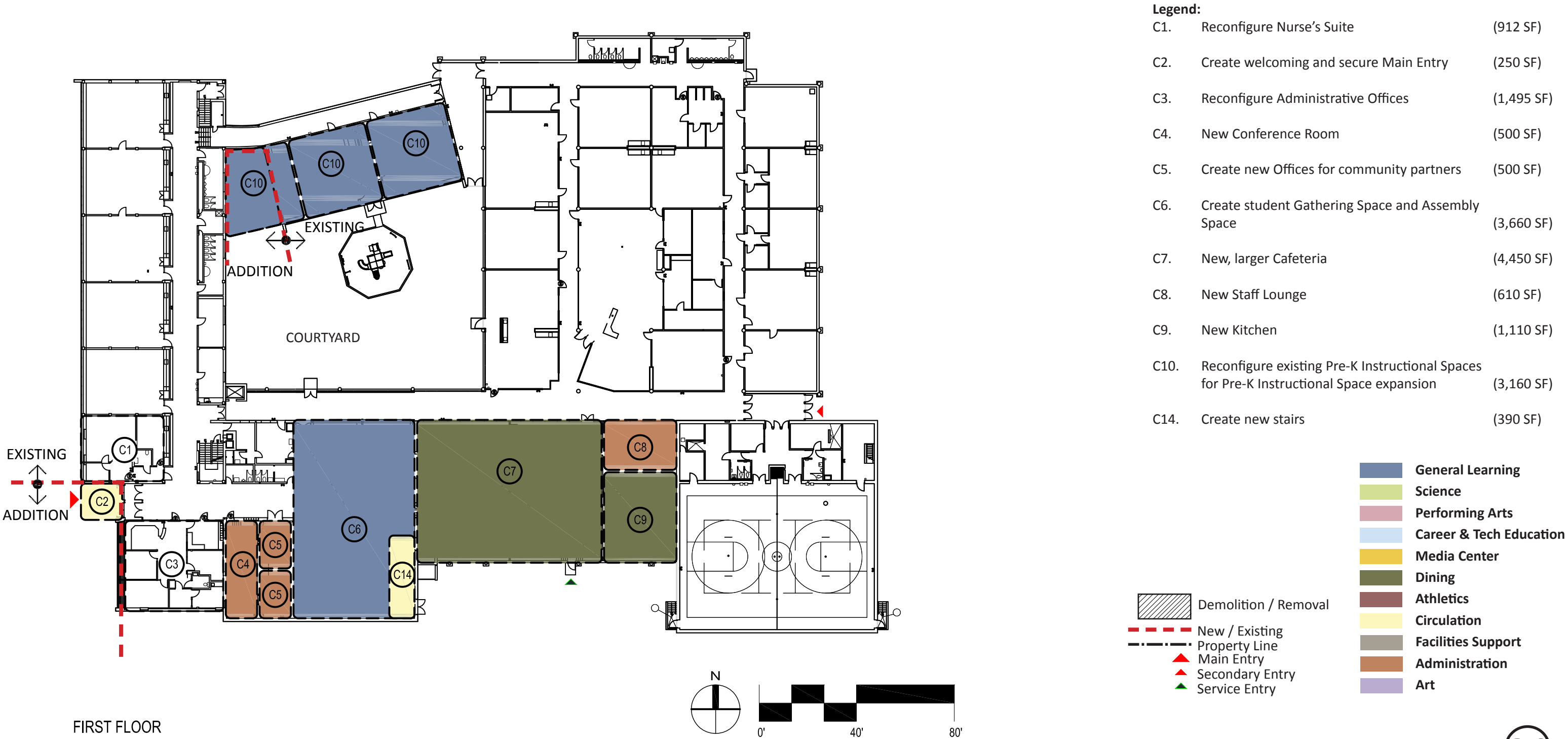
SECOND FLOOR

General Space Class			
Name		Count	Area
	Circulation	5	2368.49
	Facilities Support	7	1678.81
	General Learning	7	5076.79
Total		19	9,124.0962

- General Learning
- Science
- Performing Arts
- Career & Tech Education
- Media Center
- Dining
- Athletics
- Circulation
- Facilities Support
- Administration
- Art

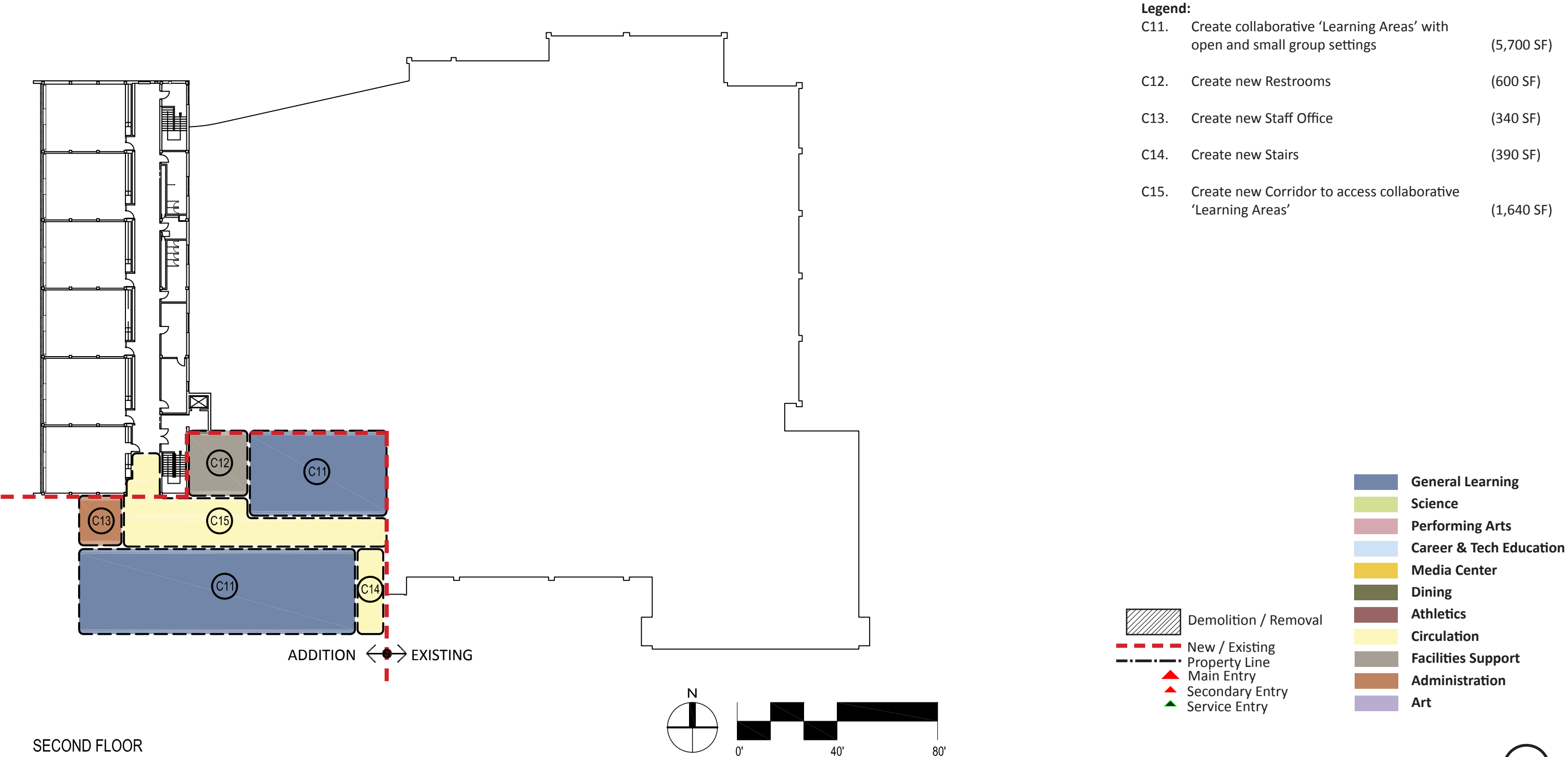
Maxfield Elementary School

Conceptual Utilization Plan



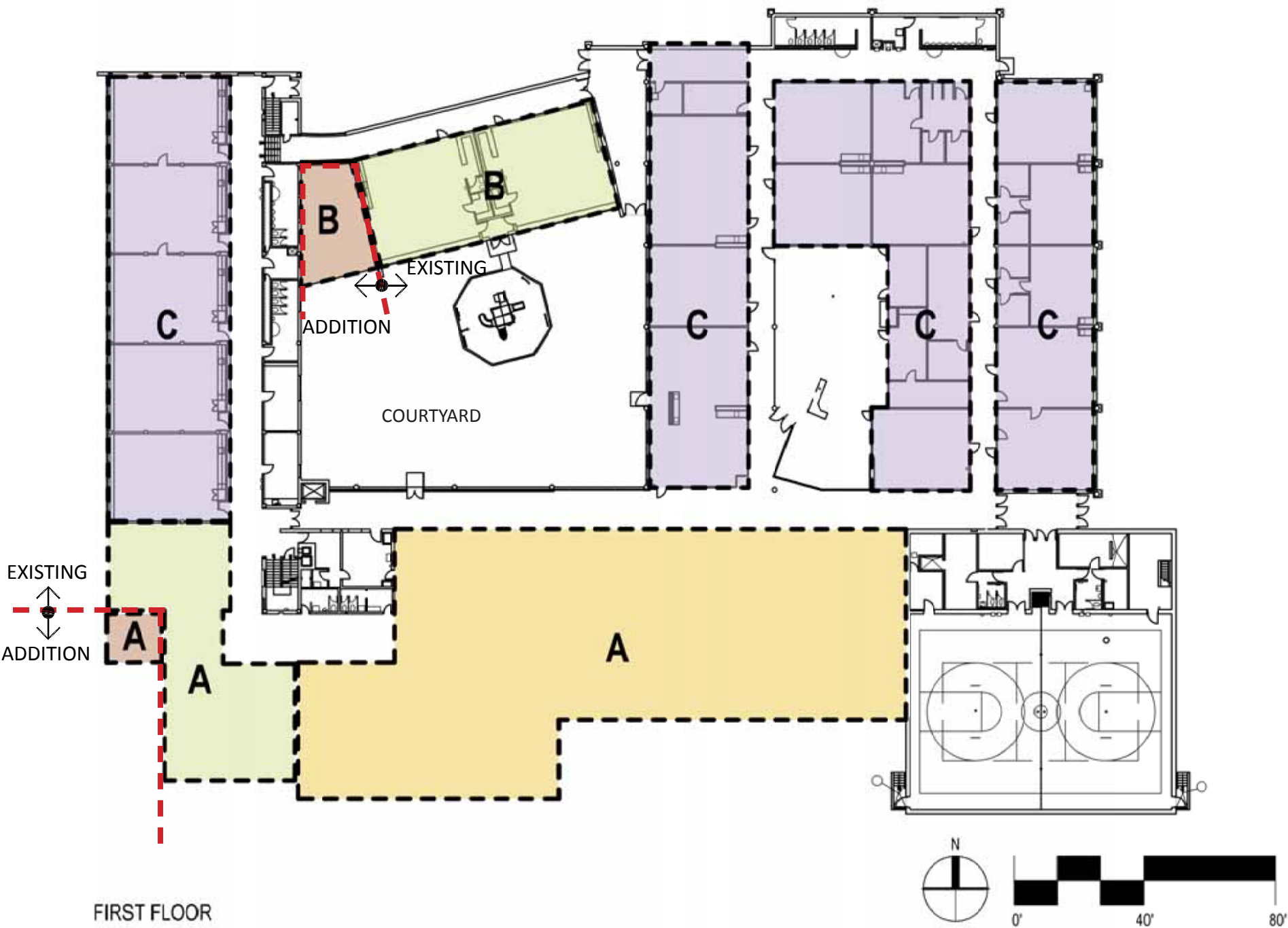
Maxfield Elementary School

Conceptual Utilization Plan



Maxfield Elementary School

Conceptual Construction and Package Plan

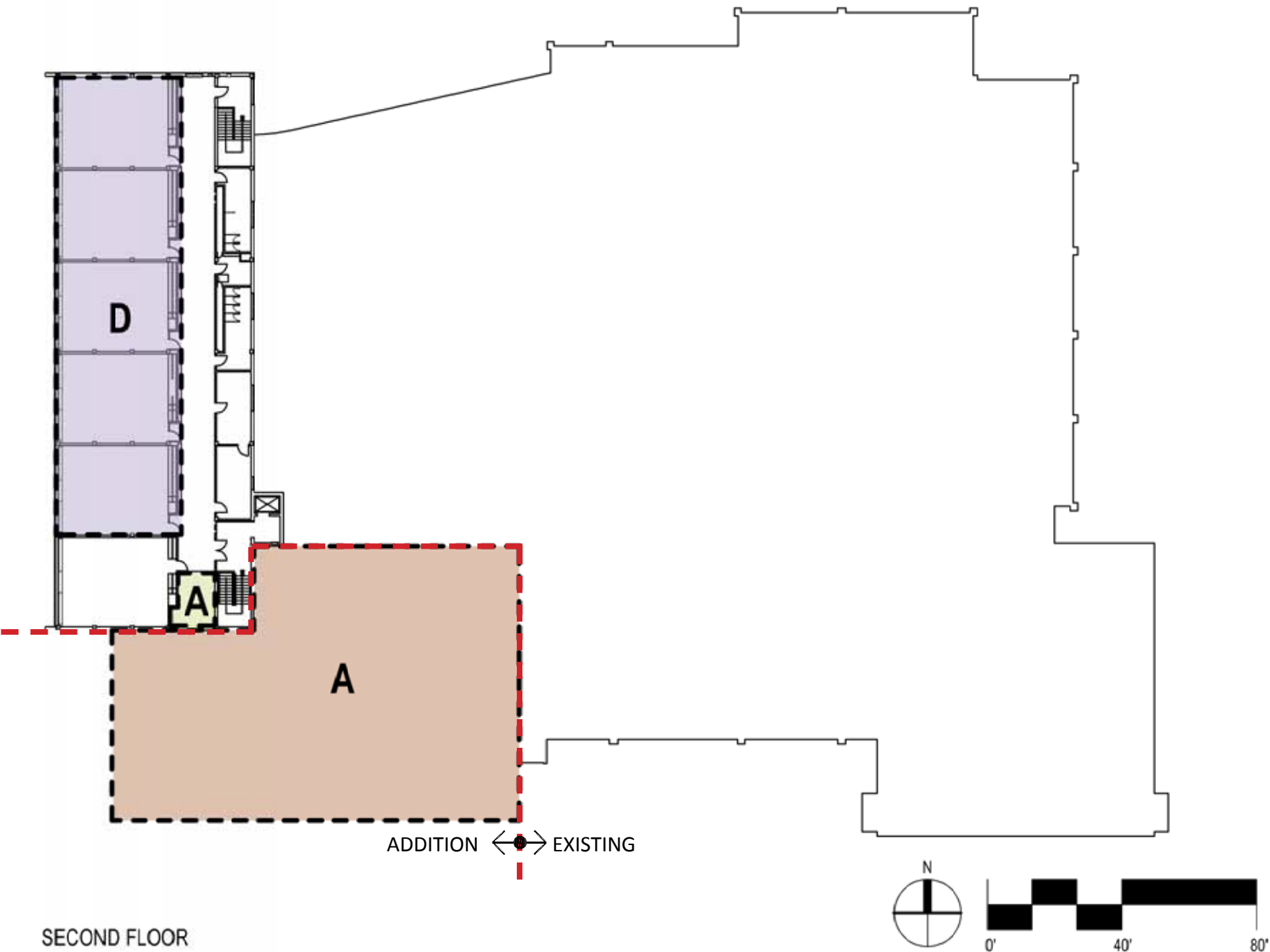


Scope Package	New Construction	Heavy Remodel	Medium Remodel	Light Remodel	Finishes Only
A	250 SF		2,715 SF		11,620 SF
B	700 SF		2,542 SF		
C					18, 014 SF
TOTAL	950 SF		5,257 SF		29,634 SF

Line Items	Unit	Lump Sum
Resurface Main Corridors		
Instructional Space Furniture		

Maxfield Elementary School

Conceptual Construction and Package Plan



Scope Package	New Construction	Heavy Remodel	Medium Remodel	Light Remodel	Finishes Only
A	8,845 SF		208 SF		
B					
C					5, 084 SF
TOTAL	8,845 SF		208 SF		5, 084 SF

Line Items	Unit	Lump Sum
Resurface Main Corridors		
Instructional Space Furniture		



BUILD A BRIDGE TO BETTER

Who is ReConnect Rondo?

ReConnect Rondo is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring equity and opportunity in Rondo by leading a united effort in pursuit of one common goal—an African American cultural enterprise district connected by a community land bridge.

ReConnect Rondo is leading a restorative movement

ReConnect Rondo is leading a restorative movement in Minnesota. Our mission is to lead the effort to revitalize the Rondo community with a land bridge that reconnects Rondo and reignites a vibrant African American cultural enterprise district in Saint Paul. We will do that by connecting Minnesota leaders, equity organizations and the Rondo community to ensure a better, brighter and more equitable future.

Why is this so important?

The 1960s construction of I-94 divided the Rondo neighborhood, devastating African American homes, businesses and lives. This vibrant and thriving community was literally torn in half. ReConnect Rondo is determined to right that wrong by inspiring equitable development success for Rondo, Saint Paul and Minnesota, centered around the upcoming reconstruction of I-94.

Why a community land bridge?

A community land bridge is the catalyst for restoring what was lost with the original I-94 construction and for developing a vibrant African American cultural enterprise district.

Reconnecting the land in Rondo will result in:

- Critical support for a thriving African American community
- The chance to make up for the loss of over 700 homes and 300 businesses
- A firm foundation for generational wealth accumulation

Why an African American cultural enterprise district?

An African American cultural enterprise district will not only repair, restore and revitalize Rondo, it's a significant way to reverse racial disparity gaps in Minnesota. This exciting district will realize many other critical benefits, particularly to those who have lost so much. It will help:

- Restore wealth and control for African Americans and the Rondo community
- Support prosperous new opportunities for African American businesses
- Revitalize, protect and promote Rondo as a thriving, heritage-rich neighborhood

Note: Rondo is one of seven destination areas selected by the city of Saint Paul as key cultural districts.

For more information, contact ReConnect Rondo Executive Director Keith Baker at 651-644-4926 or keithb@reconnectrondo.com



BUILD A BRIDGE TO BETTER

It's (past) time for an African American cultural enterprise district connected by a community land bridge

Minnesota ranks 2nd best place to live in terms of affordability, education, health, safety, economy and quality of life, but 50th for racial disparities. Rondo is one egregious example of that disparity. This vibrant and thriving community was torn apart with the construction of I-94 in the 60s. The loss to the community was staggering. We must **BUILD A BRIDGE TO BETTER**.

MISSION

ReConnect Rondo is driving equitable development success by leading a restorative movement in Minnesota. Our mission is to lead the effort to revitalize the Rondo community with a land bridge that reconnects Rondo and reignites a vibrant African American cultural enterprise district in Saint Paul.

Land bridge length **2,600-3,200 linear feet**

"We will do this work through the lens of One Minnesota, because we know that when Mankato thrives, Moorhead thrives. When Rondo thrives, the Range thrives."—Minnesota Governor Tim Walz

POTENTIAL IS GREAT

A restorative land bridge in Rondo will yield:



HOUSING

468 - 576
new housing units



COMMUNITY

1000+
new residents



JOBS

1,304 - 1,872
new permanent &
construction related jobs



RETAIL

87,750 -
108,000
square feet



NONPROFIT

29,250 -
36,000
square feet



REVENUE

\$3.8 million -
\$4.2 million
annually

Source: Rondo Land Bridge Feasibility Study

WRONG IS WRONG

The development of I-94 cost:

- Loss of 700 homes (\$35M intergenerational loss)
- \$35M = 4,800 college degrees at U of M (1980)
- Loss of 61% of Rondo residents
- Loss of 48% of Rondo homeowners
- \$157.5M home equity value loss
- Inadequate compensation



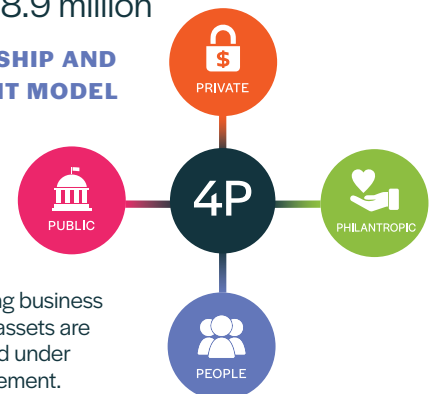
Source: Rondo Past Prosperity Study

SUPPORT IS NEEDED

ReConnect Rondo is a collaborative organization built on the strength of community partners, such as the Rondo Roundtable and policy leaders. Funding needs include:

- Pre-development costs—\$6.2 million annually
- Total capital costs—\$458.9 million

A COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MODEL



The 4P model is a self-sustaining business and financing structure where assets are placed, leveraged and managed under a collective impact equity agreement.

To make your mark in Minnesota, become part of this restorative movement. To learn more about revitalizing the Rondo community with a land bridge that reconnects Rondo and reignites a vibrant African American cultural enterprise district, visit reconnectrondo.com or contact info@reconnectrondo.com