



June 8, 2023

Dear Foster City Planning Commission,

Thank you very much for the time you are taking to consider our expansion plans. We are very excited to hear your thoughts and ideas as we move forward in our plans to offer more to our students.

The last few years, during and since the pandemic, we have been reinvigorated in our commitment to giving the most we possibly can to our students. We have learned so much about education and have been able to realize the areas where kids may have suffered and need to grow in new and important ways. Although a lot of work, so much of the status quo was erased and we have been able to look at our program through new eyes.

The expansion plans that we have are done to be able to use our building in new ways and bring additional offerings to our existing students. We will not be adding any additional students or staff with this project and our hours of operation will remain the same. Our intent is to offer more to our existing students and families. Below I will give you a brief overview of the different areas of change and the purpose for them.

Back (North) Entrance: For the past 10 years we have used the parking lot entrance (North) as our main entrance. When the city changed the striping on beach park in anticipation of the light going in, we lost the places where parents could park and safely walk their children in the front (South) doors. Instead, they had to park on the back (North) and then walk around to the front (South) through the driveway which created a safety hazard. As a result, we have used the back (North) as our main entrance. Our plans would not change that flow. The only difference is to make it a more visually appealing, but more importantly, a comfortable experience for parents. Right now, the North entrance is a bit of a wind tunnel from the winds off the freeway. There is not a place to sit or wait for their children and they just wait in the parking lot for their child to come out. The redesign that we have included would not make any changes to the traffic flow or parking. We believe it creates a much more comfortable experience for parents and is much more reflective of the quality of the program they are entering.

Front (South) Expansion and Interior Remodel: To reiterate, this project does not add any additional staff or students. We have seen more and more students with learning differences and neurodivergent learning styles; our interior remodel will allow us to create space within the school to allow for individualized instruction. We are also looking forward to expanding our maker space function as part of this project. We are excited to incorporate more outdoor learning with our proposed outdoor learning space to the South.

Safety: Safety has always been at the forefront of every decision we make in our school, both programmatically but also with our physical space. Sadly, we have seen time and time again scary incidents at schools. Although uncommon, elementary schools can no longer say we are immune to acts of violence. Our plans have been made with this in mind. Aside from the pedestrian safety I mentioned above, our new entrance (North) would create a barrier between visitors and our front desk staff, creating critical time to alert authorities if needed. Additionally, the front (South) area is more enclosed which creates a space between the street side entrances and the street. These are done to be not only aesthetically pleasing to the community, but also to ensure that our students and staff are as safe as possible.

Kids Connection plays an important role in the Foster City community as we are the only private (non-religious) school in the city. We provide a local community resource for families who need a more advanced program for their children. I hope you can see that these changes will not impact capacity, parking, or anything beyond our walls. Instead, it just adds value, education, and growth for our students.

If you have any ideas or questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary DeLong". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Mary DeLong
Executive Director



ensō designs

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Project Narrative

October 12, 2023

Helen Gannon, Associate Planner
City of Foster City, Estero Municipal Improvement District
610 Foster City Boulevard
Foster City, CA 94404

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File No: #UP2023-0063

Location: 1998 Beach Park Blvd, Foster City, CA 94404

New North Entryway:

This addition formalizes the North side as the main entrance for safety. To establish this side of the building as the main entrance, an intentional outdoor space is formed with protective and decorative planters while the dimensional sign ("Kids Connection"; permitted separately) establishes way-finding.

The entry also features a metal roof that turns down to double as a windscreen wall, providing needed protection from wind. Though not visible from the main road (Beach Park Blvd.), the proposed entry has horizontal cement board siding in a dark blue accent color to complement the existing light blue siding.

South Additions & Site:

The proposed CMU screen wall and landscaping along Beach Park Blvd. protect students from street noise and activity, enhance the street view for the school, and also clarify that this is not a building entrance (currently a common misconception). The outdoor learning space formed from the screen wall will also be an asset to the school.

The additions on the south side will have roofing and siding to match the existing, resulting in a cohesive elevation.

Proposed landscaping is all drought tolerant.

Michelle Claudio Hecht, Principal Architect
Enso Designs, Inc.