

DRAFT Memorandum of Understanding between

- **Mundo Verde Calle Ocho (Mundo Verde),**
- **Parents of Mundo Verde Students (Parents) and**
- **the Surrounding Community Represented by SMDs 5A03 and 5B05 (the Community)**

Problem Statement - December 2022

All parties to this agreement (Mundo Verde, Parents, and the Community) recognize that having three schools and other community services/institutions on a street with only one means of access/egress leads to traffic problems and a number of safety concerns:

- Pedestrian safety
- Safety for bicyclists
- Potential for car accidents
- Potential for blocking any emergency vehicles
- Potential for blocking city service vehicles (e.g., trash and recycling)

The following are among the currently observable traffic and safety concerns or challenges:

- The current Mundo Verde / Scrilli School traffic management plan has the flow of traffic cross itself at the point that the single lane driveway shared by the two schools intersects with Varnum (behind MV and adjacent to 900 Varnum St NE).
- There are a large number of families whose primary method of bringing students to school is to drive. In addition to the parking spaces at Mundo Verde (4401 8th Street NE), parking spaces at 817 Varnum St NE, families also park on the streets surrounding the school.
- Varnum Street NE is highly congested from 8th Street to 12th St NE with cars arriving and departing from MV PCS twice a day for up to 30 minutes.
- Though many families park in legal spaces, some parents park in no parking zones, particularly on the north side/ westbound side of Varnum Street NE from 12th Street to 8th Street.
- There is only one primary (non-private, non-alley) method for leaving the neighborhood. The only other street - 10th Street NE - is one way northbound. Cars cannot turn south onto 10th Street after drop off/pick up. As a result, drivers that need to continue westbound on Taylor Street often use the alleys in the 900, 1000, and 1100 blocks of Varnum Street to access Taylor Street.
- The traffic signal at 12th and Varnum Streets NE has a very short cycle for those on Varnum Street. Drivers jump the line (i.e., drive eastbound in the westbound lane and run the red light) or use the alleys in the 900, 1000, 1100 blocks of Varnum Street to head south bound.
- Individuals driving through the alleys are not obeying DC traffic laws for alleys, even with pedestrians and bicyclists present - e.g., exceeding the 15 MPH, or not coming to a complete stop when required to. Vehicles are required by law to come to a full stop before any part of the vehicle crosses the sidewalk running perpendicular to the alley.

- Drivers are verbally abusive to pedestrians, cyclists, other drivers in the neighborhood, and city workers performing essential services (e.g., regular trash and recycling collection).
- Parents that park in the neighborhood and walk their children to drop off/pick up occasionally jay walk, causing pedestrian safety concerns.

The existing traffic problems will be exacerbated by the planned addition of 140 students to Mundo Verde's Calle Ocho campus and the construction of the addition that will be needed to support those students, along with the other development / changes taking place nearby at the the Kennedy School and the Providence Hospital sites.

Process

In October 2022, ANC 5A03 Commissioner Lucio requested volunteers to work with representatives of Mundo Verde to identify the impacts of Calle Ocho (4401 8th Street NE) campus traffic on the neighborhood and parents. A task force formed including nearby neighbors, Mundo Verde parents, and representatives from the school. This task force met multiple times in November and December 2022 to discuss the impacts of vehicle traffic associated with the Calle Ocho campus and attempt to address the ongoing challenges in ways that balance the needs and concerns of all parties.

Representatives of Mundo Verde, Providence Hospital, EYA -Michigan Park, Washington Jesuit Academy, and The Kennedy School met on November 15 with representatives of The Stuart Center, the St Louis Friary, and The Marist Society to discuss respective plans for construction, and the importance of coordination across projects and mitigating impact of construction on neighbors. This latter group will continue to meet and hopes to include representatives of the Police and Fire Clinic and the Scrolli School moving forward. Among the near-term steps identified were sharing construction timelines and the development of a single map identifying construction planned for 2023-2025.

Proposal and Review

Mundo Verde, Parents, and the Community together recognize that each of the parties has a role in improving the traffic flow. The primary piece will be a new traffic management plan agreed to by Mundo Verde and based on a traffic study that will begin the week of December 5-9, 2022 and conclude no later than January 31, 2023.

The new study will review and make recommendations to address many of the pain points listed above. Mundo Verde will provide the study to VMDO, the architecture team working on the 817 Varnum St site and direct them to incorporate solutions into the design for use of the property. Mundo Verde will also share the traffic study results with parents and the community and use the results to develop a traffic management plan. Part of the new traffic management plan will include a regular review of said plan by Mundo Verde, Parents, and the Community to discuss what works and what could be improved.

The parties will meet prior to the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, and at least once a semester thereafter to review the plan and discuss. Mundo Verde will host the meetings on their premises and via Zoom), coordinating with the ANC Commissioners for 5A03 and 5B05. Additional meetings could be requested by any party.

Mundo Verde Agrees to

1. Develop a traffic management plan that:
 - Supports an efficient and safe flow of car traffic for arrivals and dismissals
 - Addresses the safety of walkers and bicyclists to and from the school
 - Allows for reasonable access for emergency vehicles and local residents to Varnum Street, even during school arrivals and dismissals
 - Emphasizes that alleys should not be used by parents or staff as alternative routes for cars or parking when arriving at or departing from the school
 - Establishes an appropriate number of parking spaces to support parents/caregiver access to the campus during drop off/pick up, Parent-Teacher meetings, and other events as needed.
 - Dedicates adequate staff outside to implement and enforce the traffic management plan.
 - Implements additional strategies that endeavor to reduce the volume of traffic or the number of cars bringing students to and from the school (see list below in # 3).
 - Coordinates with Marist College to ensure the exit from the 817 Varnum St NE property avoids conflicts with the Marist College property's existing driveway.
2. Ensure that its established policies and procedures to manage traffic associated with its Calle Ocho Campus will:
 - Include at least one specific metric measuring an element of the plan - such as the percent of parents driving to / from school. The metric will be explored through the traffic study, committed to subsequent to the completion of the study, and used to evaluate progress in addressing the challenges.
 - Continue to respect the private property rights and parking rights of 8th NE owned by the Marists and the Carmelite Sisters from the western boundary of its property line to the entrance of Carroll Manor, the nursing home at the end of 8th St.
 - Maintain awareness that the only exit from the property of Marist College is on Varnum St, just short of its dead end, in front of the 817 Varnum property.
 - Encourage the use of public transportation by families and staff.
 - Continue to make available to all staff a subsidy for mass transit or bike transportation.
 - Continue to make available to families fee-based school programming before and after school that supports parents in dropping off and picking up students at staggered / alternate times.
 - Promote the safety of walkers and bicyclists to and from the school.
 - Ensure reasonable access for emergency vehicles and local residents to Varnum Street, even during school arrivals and dismissals.

- Continue to ensure designated staff are on duty during drop-off and pick-up times to facilitate smooth traffic flow and to enforce drop-off and pick-up procedures.
 - Promote staff and family carpooling, including by producing zip code lists to help families identify other families for carpooling purposes.
 - Ensure that families / caregivers have access to on-site designated parking spaces during arrival and dismissal times.
 - Ensure that its parking spaces are secured and monitored, that special events and school activities are communicated to Community members, and that events conclude no later than 9:30 pm.
 - Ensure that families are aware of all DC traffic and parking regulations, including those governing the use of alleys.
 - Set the expectation with parents/drivers that they should use only the streets for vehicular traffic, not the local alleyways.
 - Make available and welcome the use of facilities and parking by organized community groups.
 - Regularly communicate and monitor all of the above expectations to staff and families including by
 - Sending letters to all families during the summer and winter informing them of the expectations.
 - Sending letters to all staff during the summer and winter informing them of the expectations and of the school's transportation subsidy.
 - Including traffic management as a defined topic at orientation and beginning of year meetings with staff and families / caregivers. In these meetings, the School instructs families/staff not to park on northside / west bound of Varnum St NE, not to use the alleys for vehicles, and reviews other expectations.
 - Sending families and staff written policies and procedures regarding pick-up and drop-off and provides online access to policies online on the School's website.
 - Including an agreement to abide by the policies and procedures in the parent / caregiver agreement circulated with the Family Handbook.
3. To evaluate and consider additional elements in its traffic management plan including:
- Modify the drop off/pick up procedures (Some examples of what other schools have done can be found [here](#) and [here](#)).
 - Implement the use of school buses or walking shuttles for some of their students (especially considering options from the two closest metro stations).
 - Expand the drop off/pick up time frames, potentially staggering the times by groups or grades
 - Encourage greater use of bicycles for drop off/pick up / Encourage the District to improve bicycle access to and around the neighborhood.
 - Work with DDOT to modify traffic light timing for Varnum Street at 12th Street.

- Ensure that families / caregivers using the carline or parking lot register those vehicles each year with Mundo Verde to receive a school tag. All families / caregivers that drive to school - even occasionally - will be encouraged to have a school tag.
- Ensure that staff drivers also register and receive a school tag.

What Parents Agree to Do

- Understand the elements of the traffic management plan and what is expected of them. To include:
 - Drivers should not use the neighborhood alleys as shortcuts or means to access or depart from the school.
 - Drivers should not stand or park along the westbound lane of Varnum street from 12th to 8th streets NE which is currently signed as NO PARKING.
 - Drivers should respect and follow the directions of the school's traffic monitors/safety agents.
 - Parents should not j-walk or cross Varnum street except where there is an official pedestrian crosswalk.
 - Parents/drivers should follow all DC traffic and parking regulations.
- Agree upon 1-2 representative parents to attend the regular meetings to revisit the traffic management plan.
- Be courteous to those in the community, as neighbors are also managing commutes to work and dropping their children off at school/daycare.

What the Community Agrees to Do

- Understand the elements of the traffic management plan and what is expected of them.
- Collaborate with parents and Mundo Verde to advocate before DDOT and other relevant DC agencies for additional traffic safety and pedestrian safety measures around Mundo Verde.
- Collaborate with Mundo Verde in advocating that other nonprofit and commercial entities pursuing development strategies in the neighborhood be a part of identifying and implementing solutions that mitigate traffic concerns.
- Collaborate with parents and Mundo Verde to identify other, creative ways to improve the flow of traffic and people around the community.
- Attend the regular meetings to revisit the traffic management plan.
- Look into traffic calming / routing options related to 10th Street and other streets as relevant with DDOT.
- Understand that traffic in the neighborhood is a function of multiple factors and institutions, of which Mundo Verde is by far the largest one.

- Ensure that Community members are aware of the traffic management plan, and means to provide input.
- Be courteous to Mundo Verde parents, and staff and faculty.

Process for Reporting Concerns Regarding Consistent Implementation of the Agreement

Mundo Verde will

- Ensure that community members have accurate up-to-date contact information for relevant points of contact on campus to resolve issues that may arise.
- Work with stakeholders to develop a process to report observations on the effectiveness of the plan and implement strategies for addressing ongoing concerns / challenges, including increasing communications.
- Participate actively in regular meetings, at least twice / year to review expectations under this agreement.

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