

Dear Transportation Commission Members, City Staff, Alder, and Neighbors,

I'm writing to express my strong support for **Option 3** in the Pontiac Trail Reconstruction project. This option offers a balanced, sustainable, and cost-effective approach that aligns with the principles of the **Green Streets initiative** while preserving the character and ecology of our neighborhood. Option 3 is an option that the city is not currently considering.

Option 3 Design Summary:

- **Sidewalks on both sides** of Pontiac Trail in the **South segment**, where residential density is higher.
- **Sidewalks on the west side only** in the **Middle and North segments**, preserving green space, canopy trees, and the historic character of Summit Woods.
- **Accessible crosswalks** at Onaway Pass and Mohican Pass to ensure safe pedestrian movement across the street.

Option 3 respects the environmental, historical, and aesthetic character of Pontiac Trail—particularly in the northern segment—while still ensuring safe and accessible pedestrian infrastructure. Below are the key reasons why this option best serves our community:

- Preserves Historic Green Space and Tree Canopy

Pontiac Trail is a mature, historically rich corridor in Madison. Installing a sidewalk on just one side of the northern segment helps preserve the natural yards and ground cover that define the neighborhood's charm. Most importantly, it protects the dense canopy of mature trees on the east side, which contribute significantly to shade, air quality, and ecological health.

- Allows for Wider Terraces and Enhanced Greenery

Consolidating pedestrian infrastructure to one side opens up space for wider terraces—ideal for rain gardens, native plantings, and additional trees. This not only beautifies the streetscape but also supports biodiversity, improves stormwater absorption, and enhances the pedestrian experience. In contrast, current designs with sidewalks directly abutting the road leave little room for greenery and compromise the potential for ecological improvements.

- Minimizes Construction Impact and Disruption

Option 3 reduces the overall construction footprint—less excavation, fewer materials, and less disruption to residents and traffic. It also lowers long-term maintenance costs and reduces impervious surface area, helping mitigate stormwater runoff and flooding risks.

- It's the Least Costly Option

By limiting sidewalk installation to one side in the northern segment, Option 3 significantly reduces material and labor costs. This frees up resources for higher-quality finishes, green infrastructure, or other community improvements—without compromising safety or accessibility.

- Supports a Balanced, Livable Streetscape

A sidewalk on one side maintains a more open and green aesthetic while still providing safe pedestrian access. This approach reflects the values of Summit Woods residents, who prioritize livability, sustainability, and neighborhood character.

- West Side Is the Logical Choice for Sidewalk Placement

Residents agree that the west side of Pontiac Trail is the most practical location for the sidewalk. It already contains existing sidewalk segments, borders Zook Park, and has fewer canopy trees due to utility infrastructure. This makes it the least disruptive and most efficient side for development.

- Accessibility Is Preserved and Enhanced

While sidewalks on both sides may seem ideal, they are not necessary to achieve safe and inclusive access. Option 3 includes well-marked pedestrian crossings at Onaway Pass and Mohican Pass, ensuring connectivity without compromising green space. Moreover, the current designs for dual sidewalks neglect key Green Street principles—prioritizing hardscape over holistic environmental planning.

In short, Option 3 is the only proposal that truly balances accessibility, environmental responsibility, neighborhood integrity, and fiscal prudence. I urge the city to adopt these options and continue investing in infrastructure that reflects Madison's commitment to sustainability, residents' concerns, and community-centered design.

Thank you for your time and dedication to making our neighborhood, Summit Woods, a healthier, greener, and more livable place.

Sincerely,

Layne Larson

Option 3 Design:

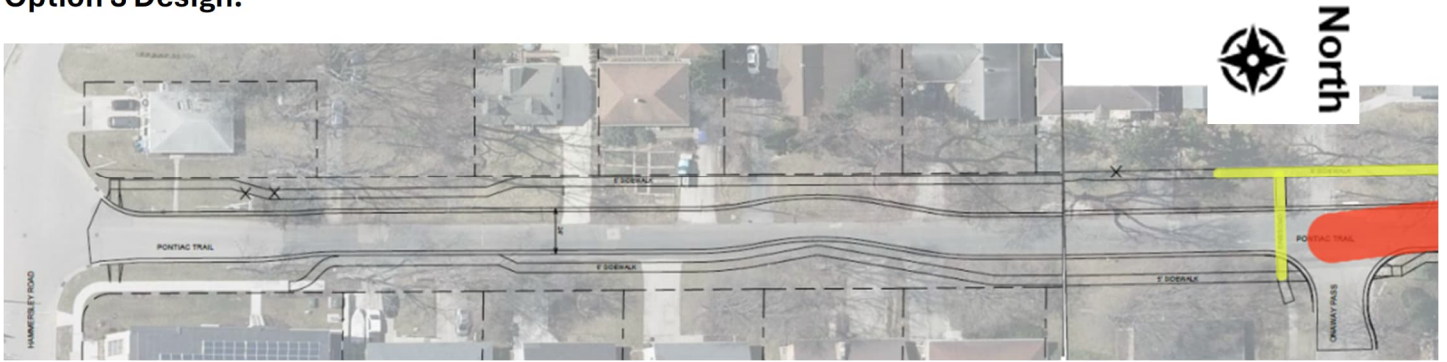


Figure 1 - South Segment - Sidewalk on both Sides due to higher density apartments

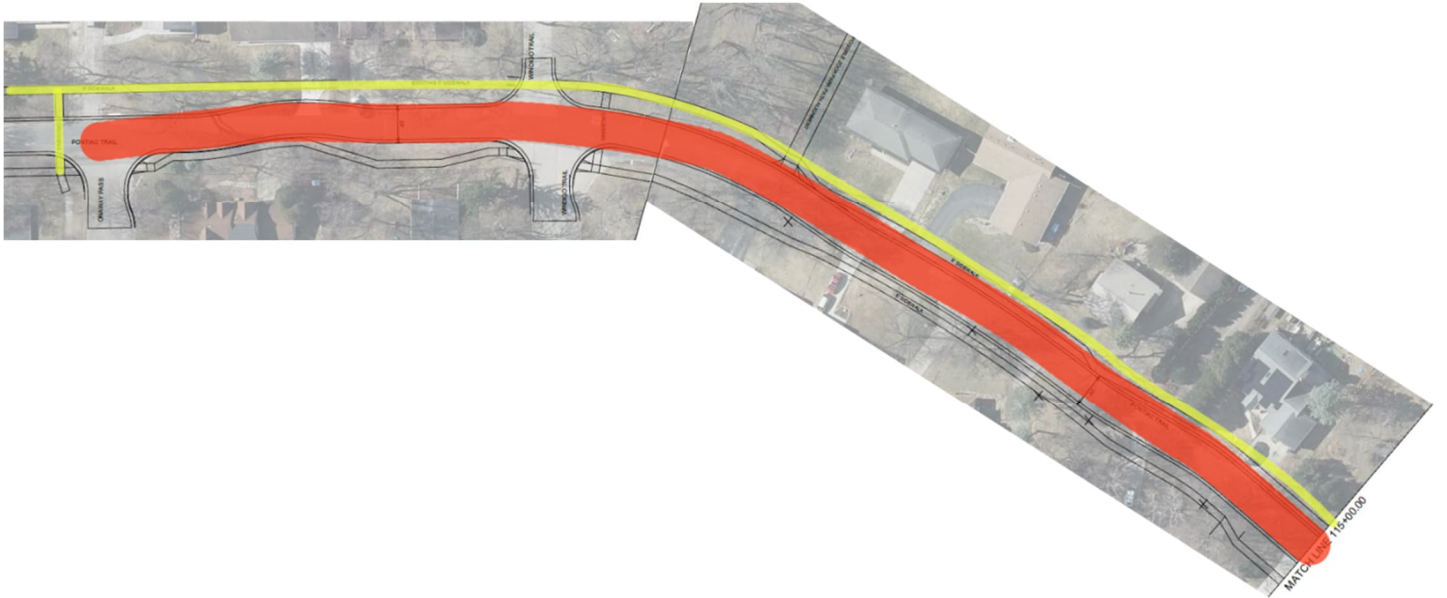


Figure 2 - Middle Segment – Sidewalk on west side (yellow). Road (red) is aligned to preserve greenspace. On the East side there would continue to be green space and canopy trees. Sidewalk shown on plans would not be built to preserve the x out trees and allow additional plantings, rain gardens and vegetation.



Figure 3 - North Segment - Single side. Preserves green space, large canopy trees, and reduces stormwater issues. Maintains historical characteristics and character of Summit Woods. Also, should preserve the large grouping of arborvitae trees that would likely be removed.