

From: [Janet & David](#)
To: [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#); [Galindez, Mario F.](#); [Board of Public Works](#)
Subject: PONTIAC TRAIL PROJECT
Date: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 5:08:58 PM

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November 18, 2025

TO:

Madison Board of Public Works

Alder Figueroa Cole

Pontiac Trail Project Manager Mario Galinde

FROM:

David and Janet Daniel

4705 Windigo Trail

Madison WI 53711

RE: Following Madison's COMPLETE STREETS GUIDE

We are very concerned about the city's proposed new design of Pontiac Trail. It is almost 3x wider than the current street.

This does not follow the neighborhood design and character.

Preserving trees and greenery should be important goals while providing a roadway that is smooth and has effective drainage without unnecessary width of asphalt and concrete.

The sidewalk on Hammersley Road does not connect to the exit from the Southwest Bike Path. **Connecting the sidewalk along**

Pontiac Trail to Hammersley Road west to the bike path will be useful to bikers and walkers.

Do NOT add an unnecessary exit from bike path to Zook Park. There are already two exits that feed into the Pontiac Trail area (at Midvale bike crossing and the Hammersley Road exit) which give access to ZOOK PARK.

ZOOK PARK is designed for young children and parents with sand box, swings, and small climbing equipment and slides.

The back area has a backstop for pitch/catch with slightly older children. A direct entry to the bike path would be a hazard for the children.

PLEASE BE SURE your decisions fully considers concerns of residents for balancing accessibility with environmental concerns.



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From: [Mya Starling](#)
To: [Board of Public Works](#)
Subject: 19 Nov Board of Public Works Meeting Agenda Item 90845. Handout for Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2025 1:17:37 AM
Attachments: [Pontiac Trail Before And After.docx](#)

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To Whom It May Concern:

Attached is my exhibit for my public comment for agenda item 90845.

Best,

Mya

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MYA J. STARLING
P | 360.528.9993
E | myajstarling@gmail.com

These are renderings to illustrate the impact of this project on the character of Pontiac Trail, the loss of canopy, and the change of the look and feel of the neighborhood.

Using Google Maps and superimposing the Proposed Street Design Option 1, conservatively estimating that the existing road is 22 feet wide in all places (it varies between 20 and 22 feet), adding 2 feet of road width, 6 inches of curb, 5 feet of sidewalk and the width of road verge varying as indicated in the Proposed Street Design Option 1. Trees were removed as indicated in the Option 1 Proposed Street Design, as well as where their location was incompatible with planned sidewalk placement. Removal of canopy was limited to known tree removal in the immediate background; distant canopy was not addressed. Therefore, canopy removal was conservative.

901 Pontiac Trail

BEFORE



AFTER



927 Pontiac Trail

BEFORE



AFTER



946 Pontiac Trail

BEFORE



AFTER



1101 Pontiac Trail

BEFORE



AFTER



1210 Pontiac Trail

BEFORE



AFTER



From: [kim sprecker](#)
To: [Board of Public Works](#)
Cc: [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#); [Galindez, Mario F.](#)
Subject: Nov 19 Public Works meeting - comments from a neighborhood resident on Agenda Item 5
Date: Monday, November 17, 2025 3:15:21 PM

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Dear Board:

Many neighborhood residents have voiced concerns about the proposed Pontiac Trail project, but many of these concerns are not reflected in the city's plans. Decisions are moving forward without fully considering the majority opinion or balancing accessibility with environmental concerns.

The proposed redesign of Pontiac Trail contradicts the Green Streets Principles, is not responsive to neighborhood scale and character, and does not reflect the Guide's call for restraint, balance and environmental sensitivity. I urge you to reject the proposal in its current form.

Green Streets calls for human-centered streets that prioritize safety, environmental sustainability, and accessibility for all. It advocates for "right sized" design by tailoring street width and infrastructure to the surrounding context rather than defaulting to oversized solutions. The current proposal clearly falls into the "oversized solutions" category. It is almost 3 times wider than the current street! It does not have to be this way.

The planners have proposed a one-size-fits-all-neighborhoods project here that does NOT fit our neighborhood and has largely ignored the neighbors' wishes. As a person who lives in this neighborhood for 25 years and wants the best for all who live here, I support the resident-proposed option 3 that was presented by the neighborhood at the transportation commission meeting. It is a much more right-sized plan with less environmental impact and less cost than the city's over-reaching plan.

In addition, in the current plan, the proposed sidewalk on the west side of Pontiac ends abruptly and fails to connect to the Southwest Path – a key link for pedestrians. If the city is going to spend my money on new sidewalks, they should be useful, accessible, and complete. I ask you to extend the sidewalk to the Southwest Path and create a meaningful connection for all users.

Please listen and act on our behalf. Help protect what makes Pontiac Trail special while guiding thoughtful, balanced improvements.

Sincerely,
Kim Sprecker
4509 Onaway Pass

From: [Layne Larson](#)
To: [Board of Public Works](#)
Subject: Public Comments and Exhibits - Pontiac Trail - Agenda Item 5 - Pontiac Trail
Date: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 1:36:27 PM
Attachments: [Option 1 vs 3 Summary.pdf](#)
[Pontiac Trail - Option 3 Public Comment.pdf](#)
[Pontiac Trail Exhibits -- 11-18-2025B Exhibit.pdf](#)

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Hello,

Attached are my public comment, exhibit, and handout for the Agenda item 5 for the Pontiac Trail, Boston, Nokomis, and Rosewood Reconstruction for 11/19/2025.

Can you please verify that you have received and posted.

Thanks!

Layne

layne_larson@yahoo.com

Dear Board Members, City Staff, Alders, 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 accessibility, character, and nature 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 accessibility, 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 reduces material and labor costs for the second sidewalk. This frees up resources for planting additional trees, 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 best 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

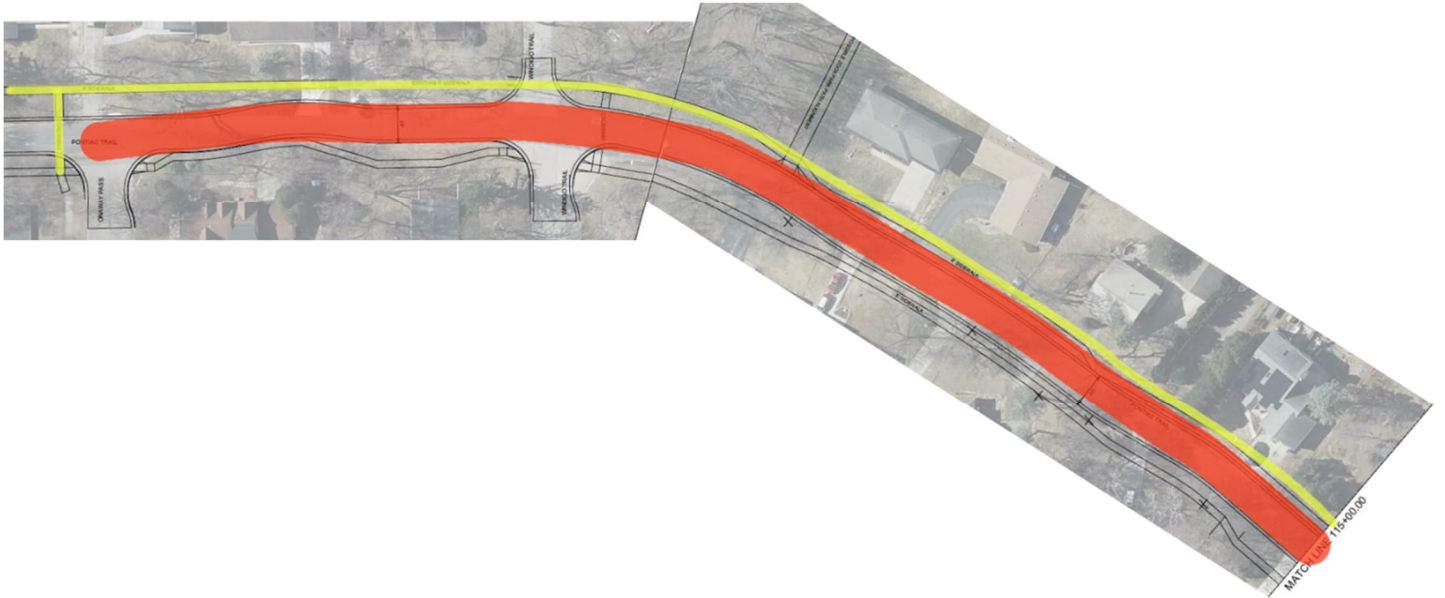


Figure 2 - Middle Segment – Sidewalk on west side (yellow). Road (red) is aligned to preserve greenspace. On the East side there would continue to be green space and canopy trees. Sidewalk shown on plans would not be built to preserve the x out trees and allow additional plantings, rain gardens and vegetation.

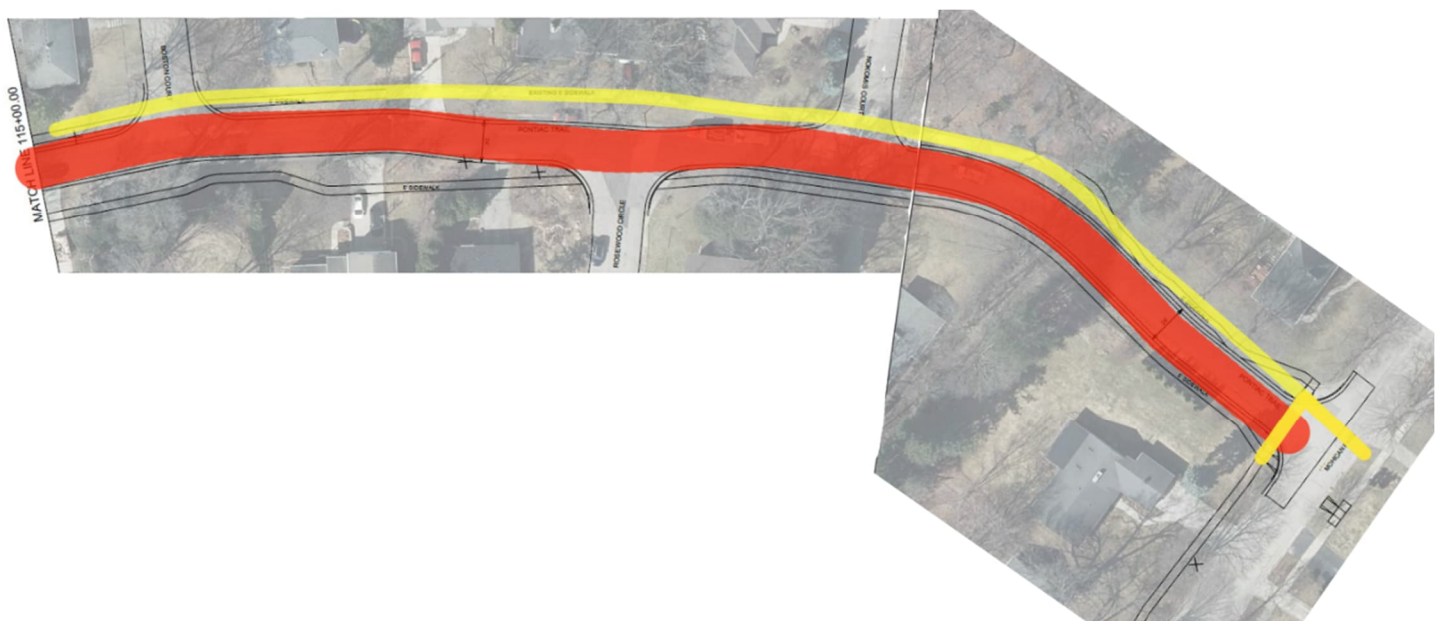


Figure 3 - North Segment - Single side. Preserves green space, large canopy trees, and reduces stormwater issues. Maintains historical characteristics and character of Summit Woods. Also, should preserve the large grouping of arborvitae trees that would likely be removed.

Dear Board,

I believe that both Options 1 and Options 3 should be considered. I believe that both options are aligned with Green Street Guide. I support option 3, but I think a discussion regarding both options will provide the best outcome for Pontiac Trail.

Option 1 offers maximum sidewalk infrastructure and aligns with more traditional newer urban design standards, but at the cost of greater environmental disruption and higher expense.

Option 3 offers a context-sensitive, greener, and less expensive solution that preserves the neighborhood's natural feel while still ensuring safe and inclusive access.

Option 1 vs Option 3

Feature	Option 1 (Engineering Recommended)	Option 3 (Community-Proposed)
Sidewalk Coverage	Both sides throughout all segments	Both sides in South; west side only in Middle and North
Accessibility	ADA compliant, more meandering	ADA compliant, straighter and more consistent
Tree and Green Space Preservation	More impact on canopy and terraces	Preserves more mature trees and natural yards
Stormwater Impact	More impervious surface; higher runoff risk	Less hardscape; supports more green space, rain gardens and absorption
Construction Footprint	Larger; more excavation and disruption	Smaller; less disruption and lower maintenance
Cost	Higher due to dual sidewalks	Lower; frees funds for green infrastructure and additional plantings
Neighborhood Character	Uniform infrastructure; reduced greenery	Open, livable streetscape with historic charm

Pontiac, Boston, Nokomis, and Rosewood Reconstruction

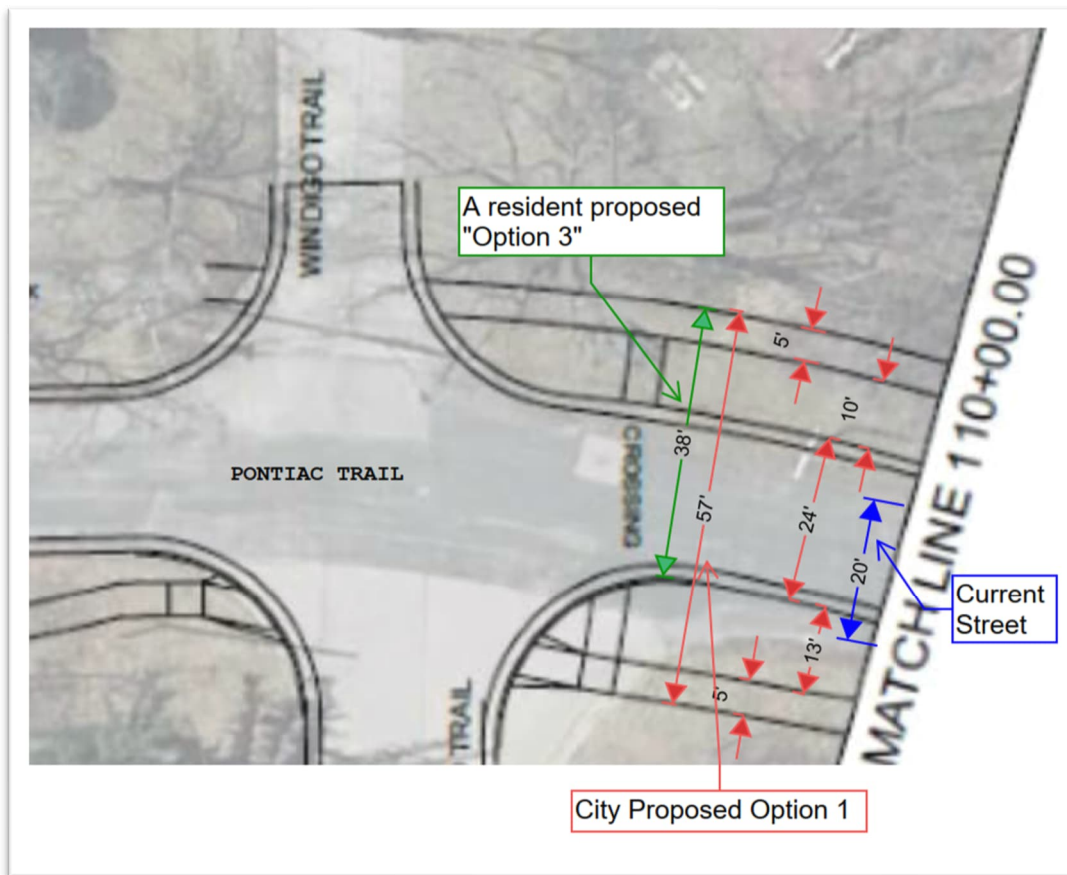
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/projects/pontiac-boston-nokomis-and-rosewood-reconstruction>

Exhibit A -- Overbuilt Design Contradicts Green Streets Principles

The Madison Complete Green Streets Guide calls for human-centered streets that prioritize safety, environmental sustainability, and accessibility for all. It advocates for “right-sized” design by tailoring street width and infrastructure to the surrounding context rather than defaulting to oversized solutions.

The Guide is explicit: “There is no one design of a Complete Street.” A cross section nearly three times wider than the existing does not reflect that context-first approach. “Streets should be designed for today’s needs, with additional right of way reserved for the future if needed.” (Page 7 GSG)

The new design is almost 3x wider than the current street!



Google Maps View: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/7tUrBCzwSkkMJKg87>

Is this design truly responsive to neighborhood scale and character? Does it reflect the Guide’s call for restraint, balance, and environmental sensitivity?

Could you please discuss?

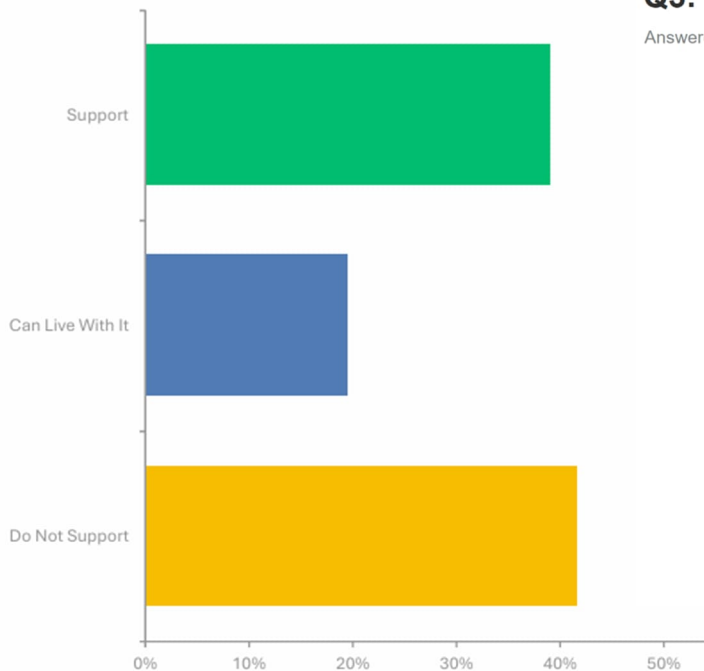
Exhibit B - Community Support Is Unclear at best. We Need a New Survey!

The public was presented with two design options (Options 1 and 2). Even members of the Transportation Commission struggled to distinguish between them. Many residents I spoke with felt the need to select an option, unaware that “neither” was a valid response. The ideas in option 3 were not considered in the City survey.

Less than 40% support the project. Without genuine buy-in, this project risks falling short of its potential.

Questionnaire Results

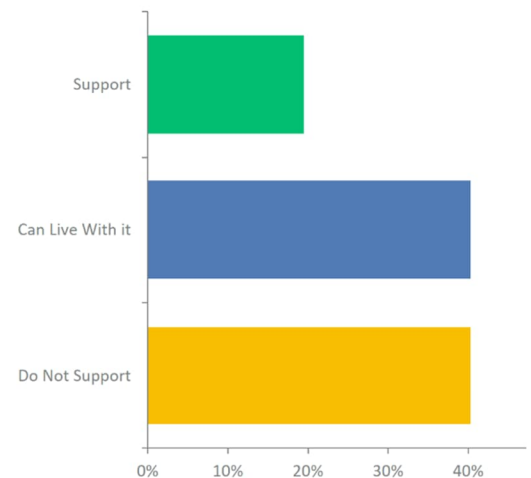
- Preliminary results: *Option 1, 24' Street*



Option 2 Survey

Q3: Do you support the above layout for P

Answered: 72 Skipped: 8



I urge the Board to request a new survey to accurately gauge current neighborhood support.

Could you please discuss?

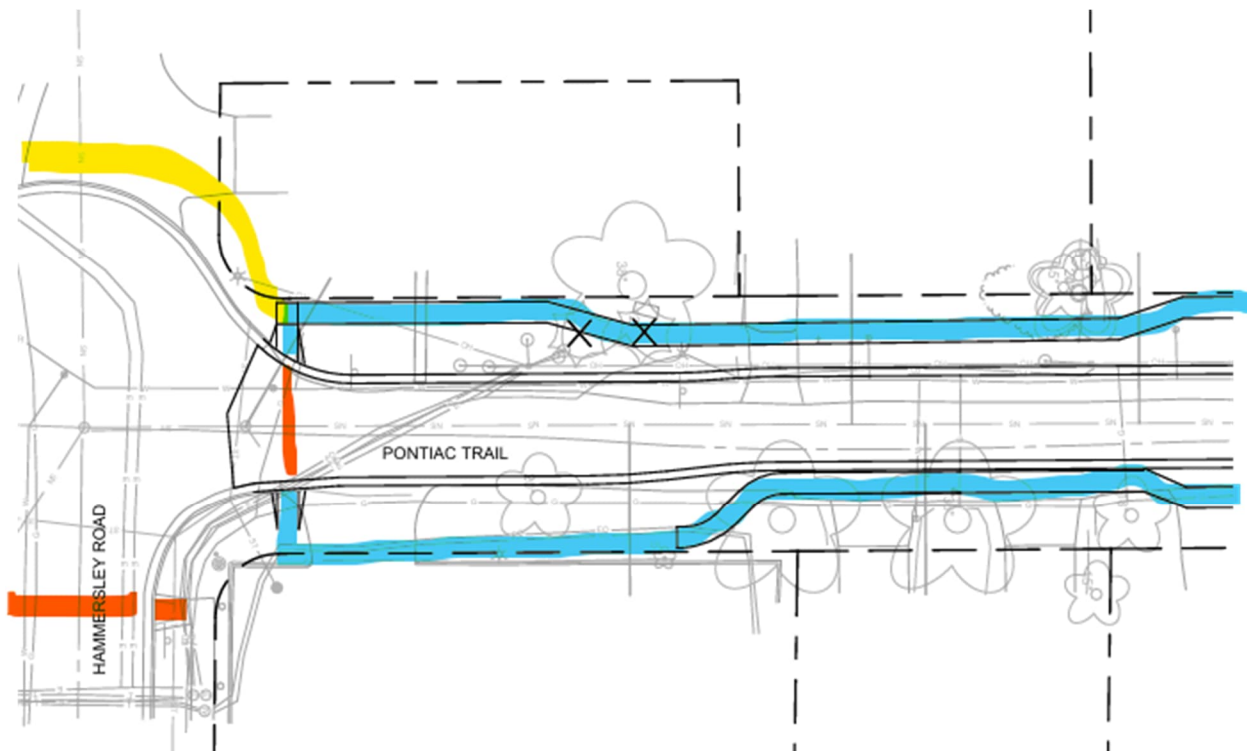
Exhibit C - Accessibility Must Be Meaningful

Accessibility Issue 1 – Shifting, Meandering Sidewalk Alignment

By squeezing in sidewalks on both sides of the street, the current design prevents the creation of a single, straight, and consistent sidewalk that would better serve all users. True accessibility means providing a reliable, predictable route. It is not enough to simply meet the basic requirements of ADA compliance.

Accessibility Issue 2 – Double Street Crossing from Zook Park to the Southwest Path

The most useful route along Pontiac Trail would be to connect Zook Park with the Southwest path. The current design doesn't do that without requiring pedestrians to cross the street twice. This raises a critical question: why will this not be addressed? Forcing multiple crossings adds unnecessary complexity and risk, particularly for users with disabilities.



Red Highlights: The current design requires two street crossings to travel from the Southwest Path to Zook Park. An unnecessary burden for residents with mobility or vision challenges. Blue Highlights: Proposed and existing sidewalk segments. Yellow Highlight: Route to Southwest Path.

Google Maps View: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/L3RuPB4NxZixtNY78>

Accessibility should be integrated throughout the entire project, not just in the easiest segments or as symbolic gestures. Adding meaningful accessibility at the south end of the project supports independence, dignity, and ease of movement for all users. It is needed!

How does duplicating sidewalks on both sides improve accessibility on Pontiac Trail? Does the current design deliver on consistency and predictability?

Could you please discuss?

I hope you consider discussing these points raised to inform and provide a dialogue that centers the needs and values of Summit Woods and the City.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed time and care to this project, including city staff and neighbors who have shared their insights. While we may not all agree on what is best for Pontiac Trail, the shared goal of making the street the best it can be is truly appreciated. I hope we can continue to work together with a commitment to safety, accessibility, environmental stewardship, and neighborhood character.

Thank you!

Layne

Further questions please contact layne_larson@yahoo.com.

2 Minute - Public Comment Remark Regarding Pontiac Trail.

Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. While I regret that I cannot be speak in person due to a prior commitment with the School District's Special Education Council, I feel strongly about contributing to tonight's discussion, especially regarding Pontiac Trail.

I want to begin with a story from Door County, there are two lookout towers. Both were in disrepair and needed extensive updates.

- The Eagle Lookout Tower at Peninsula State Park was rebuilt from the ground up to be amazingly accessible. Its ramps and design welcome people of all ages and abilities, ensuring that no one is excluded from experiencing the view.
- In contrast, The Potawatomi State Park lookout tower stands as a historic, rustic structure that honors its natural surroundings. It preserves the trees and character of the landscape, reminding visitors of the area's heritage. It was strengthened but not torn down.

These two lookout towers represent two sides of a thoughtful approach—one prioritizing accessibility, the other preservation. **Together, they show us that we don't have to choose between the two. We can achieve both.**

That is exactly what I envision for Pontiac Trail.

Just like the lookout towers, the street has two sides, and each can serve a distinct but complementary purpose. On one side, we should build a sidewalk that is fully accessible, safe, and welcoming for all residents, including those with visual and mobility challenges. On the other side, we should preserve the historic greenery and neighborhood character, maintaining the rustic feel that makes Summit Woods special.

That is exactly what I want for Pontiac Trail.

By balancing accessibility with preservation, Pontiac Trail can become a model for inclusive, sustainable design—just as Door County's lookout towers show us two complementary ways to honor both people and place.

Finally, I want to thank the neighbors who will speak later tonight for their input and passion. I have included handouts that I hope will be taken into consideration as I simply ask that the Board listens, asks questions, and ultimately directs ultimately directs engineering to develop a design that earns broader community support than the current Option 1.



Figure 1 - Eagle Tower - Peninsula State Park was rebuilt from the ground up to be amazingly accessible. Its ramps and design welcome people of all ages and abilities, ensuring that no one is excluded from experiencing the view.



Figure 2- Potawatomi State Park lookout tower is a historic, rustic structure that honors its natural surroundings. It preserves the trees and character of the landscape, reminding visitors of the area's heritage.