

# Lane County Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Lundy Elementary Sidewalk Project



*Improving safety and supporting kids walking to school in the City of Lowell*



Lane County Public Works  
**DESIGN CONCEPT REPORT**  
July 2021

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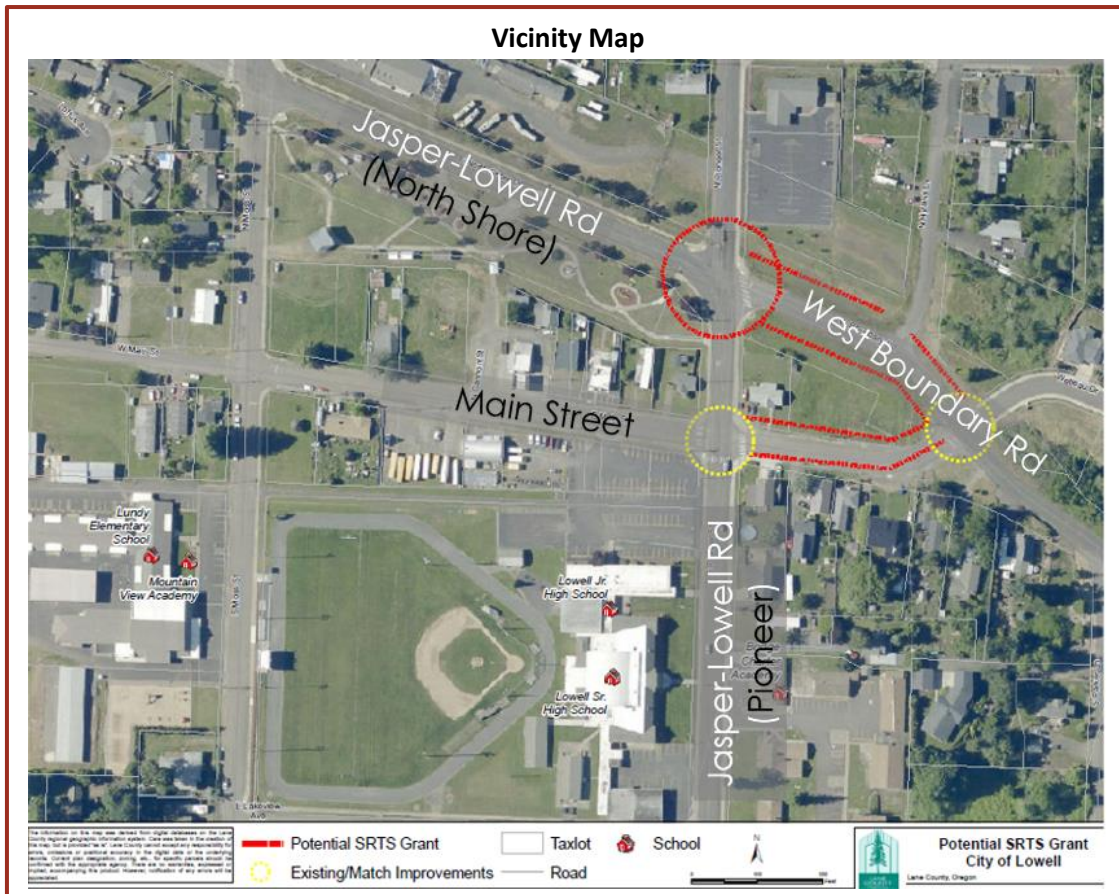
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## APPENDIX: Design Concept Drawings



## Introduction

The purpose of the project is to improve the safety and comfort of children walking to the schools within the City of Lowell, especially to Lundy Elementary School. This is a Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) grant-funded project which aims to improve physical safety through engineering improvements and to encourage children to walk to school. The project includes: 1) sidewalk reconstruction on both sides of Main Street, between West Boundary Road and Jasper-Lowell Road (also known as Pioneer Street); 2) new sidewalk construction on both sides of West Boundary Road, between Main Street and Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street); and 3) pedestrian crossing improvements at the west leg of the Jasper-Lowell (Pioneer Street)/West Boundary Road intersection to include a pedestrian-refuge island to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians while still enabling through truck movements. The project expands upon the ADA improvements the County constructed in summer 2020 at the intersections of: West Boundary Road/Main Street and Main Street/Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street).



## Process

The project is currently in the design phase. Lane Manual 15.580 establishes a public involvement process and requires Design Concept approval by the Lane County Board of Commissioners (BCC). Prior to BCC action, the Lane County Transportation Advisory Committee (TrAC) considers the staff recommendation, holds a public hearing to receive comments from the public, and adopts a recommendation for the Board's consideration.

A written report documenting the process, public comments received, and the recommended design concept is required to be provided as part of the Board Order. This report serves as documentation consistent with these procedural requirements.

The project is programmed for construction in summer 2022. Following approval of the Design Concept, staff will continue to develop the design into construction drawings. Staff will continue to work with property owners affected by the project.



## Background

### Project Need

Schools in the City of Lowell, including Lundy Elementary School, are located within its downtown area. Roads that connect Downtown Lowell to surrounding residential areas currently lack: a complete and connected sidewalk network; and safe and comfortable crossings. These deficiencies create unsafe conditions that limit the ability for children to safely and comfortably walk or bike to school. The location that this project addresses is a vital connection between Lundy Elementary School and its surrounding residential areas.

In summer 2020, Lane County constructed ADA ramps and installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the intersection of West Boundary Road/Main Street

and replaced deficient ADA ramps at the intersection of Main Street/Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street). These pedestrian crossing improvements address only part of the problem. There are no sidewalks on West Boundary Road and deteriorated sidewalks on Main Street between the new ADA ramps and the schools. This project will build

Existing Conditions (2019)



South side of E. Main Street (looking west)



W. Boundary at Pioneer St. (looking east)





sidewalks on both sides of West Boundary Road and will reconstruct the sidewalks on Main Street -- from Main Street to Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street).

The intersection of West Boundary Road/Jasper-Lowell Rd (Pioneer Street) is very wide (36 feet), making it difficult for people walking, especially school children, to cross. Further, northbound traffic on Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street) is permitted to make left-hand turns onto Jasper-Lowell Road (North Shore Drive) without stopping, increasing risks to people trying to cross the intersection on-foot. This project will install a pedestrian-refuge island at the west leg of this intersection.

### Project Selection

Lane County applied for SRTS Infrastructure Grant funding for sidewalk construction in the City of Lowell in 2018 and 2020. Learning from the first attempt at the funding, which was broader in scope (included Jasper-Lowell Road and Moss Street), and leveraging the support developed with regional partners and the relationship strengthened with the City of Lowell, Lane County narrowed the scope of the project and was able to secure the grant funding the second round. Between the two grant cycles, in 2019 and 2020, Lane County constructed ADA ramps at the Jasper-Lowell/Main Street and West Boundary/Main Street intersections with County Road Funds earmarked for implementing Public Works' ADA Transition Plan.

Consistent with the SRTS grant funding eligibility requirements, the project is within one mile of an elementary school (Lundy Elementary). The application received high scores for the Lowell School District having the highest percentage in Lane County of students eligible for free and reduced lunch. The crossing distance exceeding 30 feet at the proposed pedestrian-refuge location at Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer St.)/West Boundary Road qualified the project as a safety priority resulting in additional points.



## Public Involvement

Lane County has made a strong policy commitment through Lane Manual Chapter 15 by requiring all projects (other than maintenance and bridges) to have design concepts approved by Board Order. The process requires stakeholder identification and involvement, notices to abutting property owners, and a public hearing and recommendation by the Lane County Transportation Advisory Committee. The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the project was developed to help the project team develop and organize public involvement activities, to be effective and meaningful in accomplishing project goals, and in compliance with applicable regulations.

### The purpose of public involvement is to:

- Increase transparency
- Earn public trust
- Ensure compliance with law
- Establish expectations for Lane County employees
- Ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate
- Consider the needs of all affected users and communities

To increase transparency, earn public trust, ensure compliance with law, ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate, and consider the needs of all affected users and communities, the following goals are expressed as expectations for Lane County employees on the project team.

- **REALISTIC** Be clear about the project constraints, objectives, and parameters
- **ACCOUNTABLE** Respond to public feedback in a timely manner
- **INCLUSIVE** Reach out to project area stakeholders and reduce participation barriers
- **MEANINGFUL** Ensure that the public's input will be taken into account by decision makers
- **TRANSPARENT** Make the decision-making process easily understandable and accessible with key project materials available on the project website
- **TIMELY** Provide early, accurate, easily accessible, and widely available project information for the public to provide well-informed feedback

The public involvement strategies detailed in the PIP were designed to achieve these goals, with an eye towards diversity, equity, and inclusion to identify opportunities for engaging transportation-disadvantaged populations, such as youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities, people of color, people with limited English proficiency, and low-income people.



## Stakeholders

The key to developing meaningful and inclusive public participation is to understand the needs of stakeholders – to identify the people and communities affected by the project. Of particular concern are populations typically underrepresented in planning and decision-making processes, but often bear transportation burdens and experience other barriers to opportunity at disproportionate rates. An analysis of demographic data surrounding the project area is provided below.

### Schools

The purpose of the project is to improve safety for children walking to the schools in the City of Lowell; therefore, school children, parents/guardians, teachers/faculty are natural stakeholders. The Safe Routes to School program includes not only the ODOT oversight associated with the grant funding, but leveraging Lane County's SRTS Rural Program which was created in 2019 to provide elementary and middle school children in rural Lane County with bicycle and pedestrian safety education programs. The Lowell School District is the pilot for this new education program which made the infrastructure grant application compete so successfully.

The Lane County SRTS Rural Program Coordinator was involved in outreach and education activities for this project. In August 2020, the Coordinator partnered with the school district and PeaceHealth to donate helmets and providing fitting instructions to families as part of the summer meals program. The SRTS Rural Program will continue to provide safety and encouragement activities before, during, and after the project is constructed.

Helmet Donation and Fitting in Lowell (2020)





### Community

The entire City of Lowell will benefit from the project. Making streets safer for children improves the safety and comfort for everyone. A major focus of the Lowell Downtown Master Plan is improving the walkability of the city core which is where the schools are located. The City owns property on both sides of West Boundary Road abutting the proposed sidewalks as well as the park located at the southwest corner of the Jasper-Lowell Road/West Boundary Road intersection. A new city hall and library is proposed on the north side of West Boundary Road.



### Abutting Property Owners

The proposed sidewalk construction directly affects abutting property owners and residents. There are five private residences located on the south side of Main Street. The project is not expected to need additional right-of-way, but the construction may affect front yards and driveways. Staff will continue to work with property owners throughout the project.

### Freight/Trucks

None of the affected roads are officially-designated freight routes; however, the permissive left turn with wide truck-turning radius at the proposed location of the pedestrian-island refuge required careful consideration. The design proposes mountable curbing to accommodate truck turning movements.

### Elected Officials

Lane County Commission Heather Buch, representing the affected area, is very supportive of the project and announced the grant award at the Lane Area of Commission on Transportation. The Mayor of Lowell has expressed appreciation and excitement about the project.



## Equity: Title VI/Environmental Justice

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act** of 1964 is the federal law which protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin in programs that receive federal financial assistance, such as Lane County Public Works.

**Environmental Justice (EJ)** is a term that comes from the Presidential Executive Order 12898, building upon the antidiscrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. EJ is also expressed as “social justice” and “equity” all of which is grounded in the practice of making sure that both benefits and burdens of transportation investments are shared as equitably as possible among all affected communities. The focus is on inclusive planning approaches that reach out to traditionally underrepresented populations, particularly low-income and minority populations.

### Lane County’s Title VI Policy Statement

(Lane County Public Works Title VI Plan, 2016):

*Lane County, acting through its Public Works Department, assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or income as provided by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any County sponsored program or activity. The County further assures that every effort will be made to ensure non-discrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.*

### Populations of Concern

Based on the 2019 5-year estimates from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey, which is the most recent data available, **the project area has the greatest proportions of youth (22%), elderly (23%), and disabled (18%) populations.** The data indicates less than one percent of the population in the project area includes people of color or people with limited English proficiency. Although the area as a whole does not have a significant proportion of the population in poverty, the Lowell School District has the greatest percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunches based on household income than any other school district in Lane County.

- **Youth:** Children and young adults under the age of 18 have very different transportation needs than the adult population. The vast majority of people under 18 are unable to drive a car, and therefore rely more on walking, bicycling, public transit, carpooling, or rides from family, if available. Other youth-related vulnerabilities may include lacking knowledge of safe travel behaviors. Road



design and sidewalk conditions are key factors in determining youth physical activity. Safe crossings, well-built sidewalks, and traffic calming strategies are all associated with greater physical activity in children and young adults.

- This project is intended to directly benefit this population by constructing sidewalks and reducing the crossing distance of a busy intersection.
  - Lane County's SRTS Rural Program will continue to provide safety education resources to the Lowell School District.
- **Seniors:** The population over 64 years of age may require more alternatives to driving and thus have more mobility needs than the general adult population. Older adults increasingly depend on active transportation modes, such as using public transit, walking and/or biking when they decrease or stop driving. Prioritizing active transportation needs enables older adults to maintain positive well-being, despite the onset of functional limitations. Older adults are especially vulnerable to social isolation, which can result in significant declines in physical health; increasing walkability enhances older adults' ability to connect with others.
    - This project will benefit this population by providing sidewalks, reducing the crossing distance of a busy intersection, and constructing ADA ramps.
    - Project outreach activities eliminated the need travel to participate by providing direct-mail postcards.
- **Disability:** Mobility is a top issue for most people with disabilities, and often determines the extent to which they can participate in the community. Most people experience disability at some point in their lives, if only temporarily in some cases. A variety of temporary and permanent cognitive, visual, and physical disabilities can prevent people from being able to drive a car, making a variety of transportation options essential. Active and public transportation options are essential for the inclusion of people with disabilities in our communities.
    - This project will benefit this population by providing sidewalks, reducing the crossing distance of a busy intersection, and constructing ADA ramps.
    - Project outreach activities eliminated the need travel to participate by providing direct-mail postcards.



## Outreach

- **Direct mailings** – postcards announcing the project and the opportunity to provide public comment at the July 28, 2021 TrAC meeting were mailed to the entire Lowell zip code which is approximately 806 addresses.
- **Webpage** -- this project has webpage that will be updated throughout the process with relevant project information:  
[www.lanecountyor.gov/LowellSidewalk](http://www.lanecountyor.gov/LowellSidewalk)
- **Interested Parties (IP) List** – interested parties will be updated regularly throughout the life of the project
- **School Newsletters** – the Lundy Elementary School principal committed to providing educational information to students. The Lane County SRTS Rural Program coordinator will also work with students on pedestrian safety education
- **Public Meetings** – in addition to the TrAC public hearing, the BCC meetings at which the final decision will be made are open to the public. Staff presented the project to the Lowell City Council at a public meeting on April 6, 2021. Staff also presented the project to the TrAC at their May 26, 2021 meeting which is open to the public.

## Summary

As of the date of this report, staff has only received comments in support of the project. No concerns or objections have been expressed. Project support has been building with the community for years.

Public support was garnered through the grant application process. The application was signed by the City of Lowell Administrator and the Lowell School District Superintendent. Letters of support were provided by the Lundy Elementary

School Principal, the Lane Area Commission on Transportation; and the Safe Lane Transportation Coalition. Lane County staff worked closely, for several years, with the City of Lowell to develop the grant application. The partnership began in 2018, when Lane County staff participated in the City's Downtown Master Plan update process, walking the streets, and identifying priority infrastructure needs to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.



## Design Recommendation

The design concept drawings are included as Appendix A. The design elements are summarized below.

- **Sidewalk reconstruction on both sides of Main Street**, between West Boundary Road and Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street). This will replace deteriorated sidewalks and will connect each end of the sidewalks to ADA infrastructure that was installed by Lane County in 2020. Driveway approaches will be reconstructed. The improvements are anticipated to fit within the existing right-of-way.
- **Sidewalk construction on both sides of West Boundary Road**, between Main Street and Jasper-Lowell Road (Pioneer Street). This will be new sidewalk where there is none. The sidewalk will be setback from the road which currently only has a narrow shoulder. Curbs and gutters will be added to West Boundary Road and the roadway shoulder will require additional fill to support the new sidewalks. There are no known natural resource impacts associated with this fill activity – or with any element of the project.
- **Pedestrian crossing improvements at the Jasper-Lowell (Pioneer Street)/West Boundary Road intersection** to include:
  - Painted continental crosswalks at all four sides of the intersection
  - ADA ramps at all intersection corners
  - A pedestrian-refuge island within the west leg of the intersection crosswalk. This is intended to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians.
  - A curb extension at the southwest corner of the intersection to channelize the vehicle turning movements to reduce vehicle speeds. This curbing will be mountable by larger trucks.

## Funding

The total project cost is \$1,203,616 which includes the value of the 2020 Lane County ADA construction project to fulfill the 20% cash match requirement of the grant. The available grant funding is \$931,616. The design concept cost estimate is approximately \$864,878.





Due to the grant funding awarded to this project, property owners with land that borders the sidewalks will not be financially responsible for sidewalk construction costs. They will, however, be responsible for maintenance.

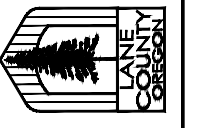
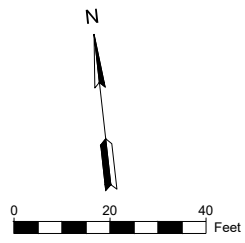
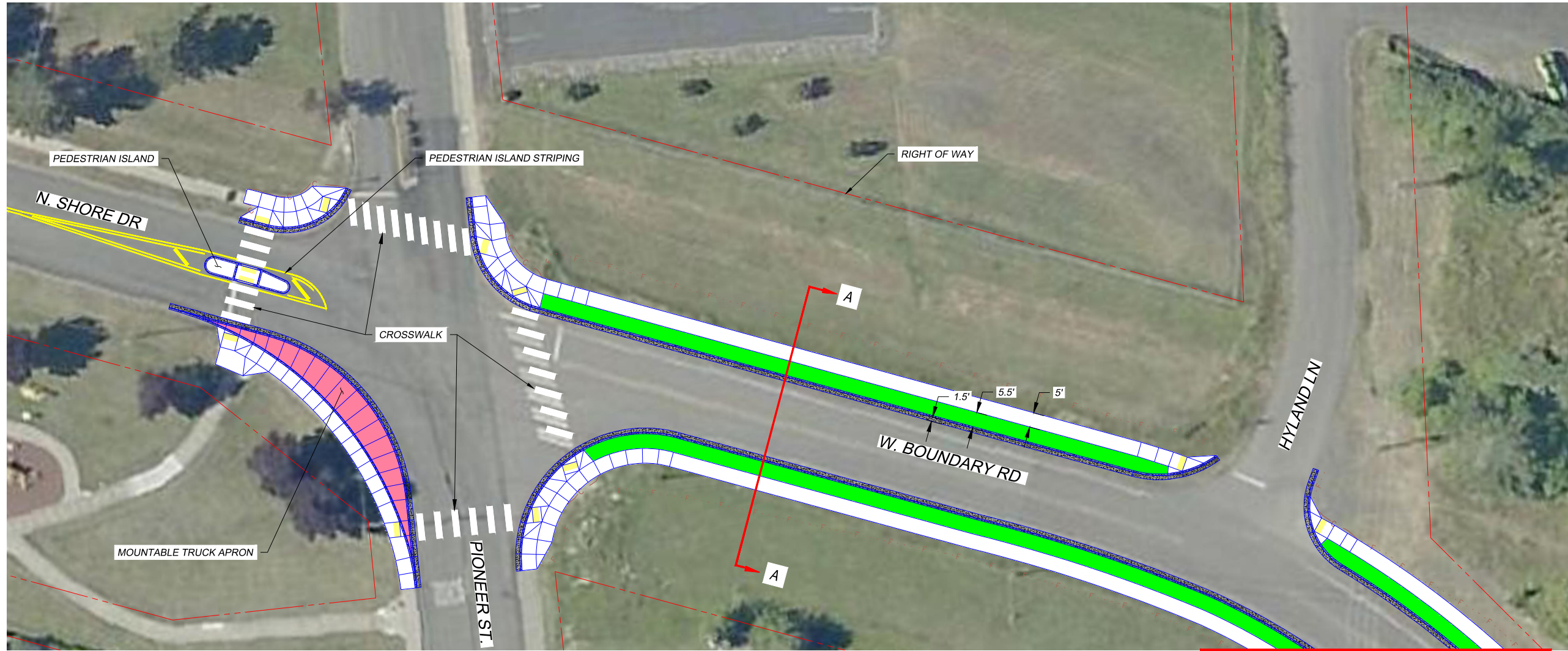
#### **Just Compensation (Right-of-Way Acquisition)**

No additional right-of-way acquisition is anticipated. The proposed design fits within the existing right-of-way. Temporary construction easements may be necessary, especially to construct ADA ramps at the intersections. Property owners will be offered Just Compensation for the portion of their property needed to complete the project. The Just Compensation amount is determined by an appraisal and forms the basis of monetary offers presented to property owners. Just Compensation includes the estimated value of all the land and improvements within the needed area. Staff will work with property owners affected by the project, such as temporary construction easement acquisition and coordination on mitigating impacts to fences and landscaping.

#### **Next Steps**

Following approval of the Design Concept by the Lane County Board of Commissioners, staff will continue to develop the design into construction drawings. The right-of-way / temporary construction easement needs for the project are conceptual at this time and will be more precisely determined as the design drawings are refined. Staff will work with property owners affected by the project, such as right-of-way/easement acquisition and coordination on mitigating impacts to fences and landscaping.





**LANE COUNTY**  
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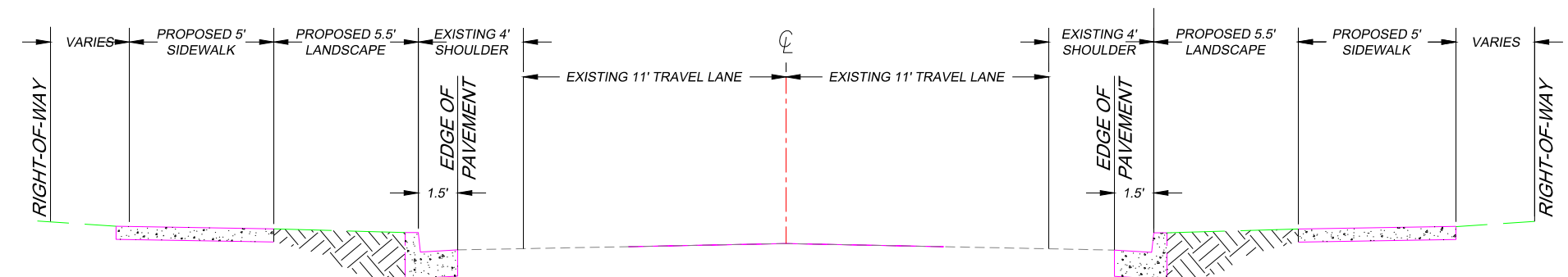
DATE	REVISION	APPROV

**W. BOUNDARY RD**

SEE SHEET 2

**LEGEND**

- LANDSCAPE STRIP
- SIDEWALK
- CURB & GUTTER
- RIGHT-OF-WAY



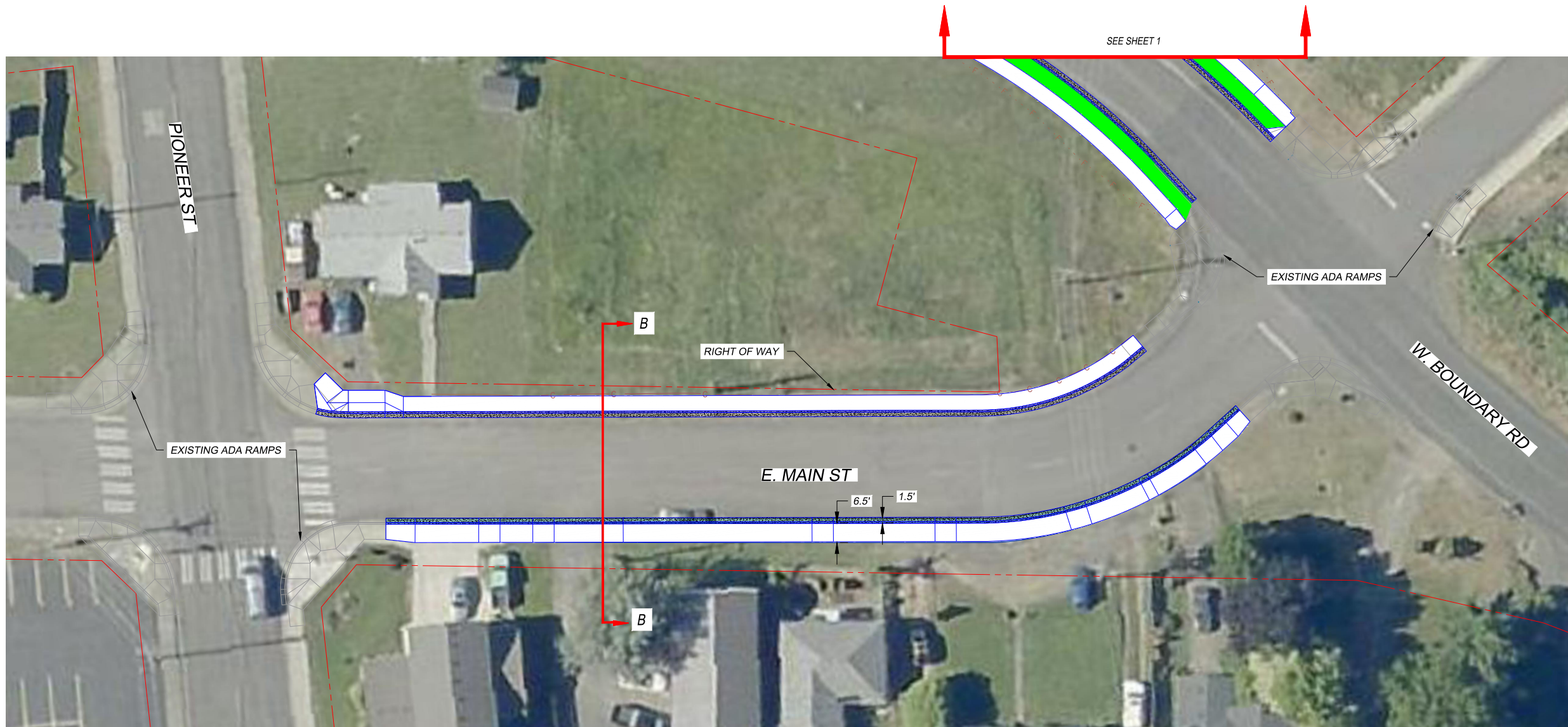
**TYPICAL SECTION A-A**



**LUNDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -**  
**SIDEWALKS**  
**W. BOUNDARY RD**

DATE: 7/19/21  
 PROJECT NO.:  
 ROAD NO.:

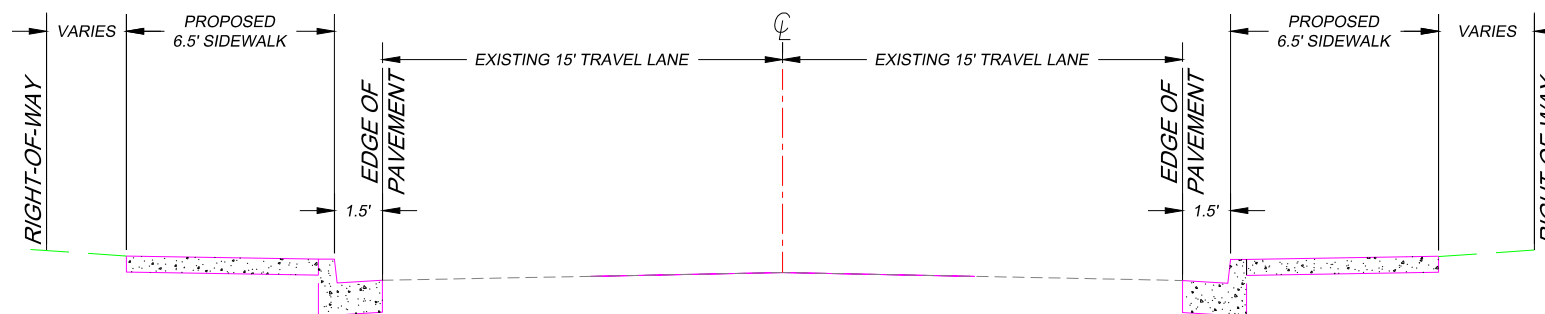




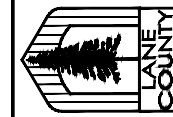
**E. MAIN ST**

**LEGEND**

- LANDSCAPE STRIP
- SIDEWALK
- CURB & GUTTER
- RIGHT-OF-WAY



**TYPICAL SECTION B-B**



**LANE COUNTY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
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 COUNTY ENGINEER

DATE	REVISION	APPROVED

**LUNDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -**  
**SIDEWALKS**  
**E. MAIN ST**

DATE: 7/19/21  
 PROJECT NO.:  
 ROAD NO.:

SHEET NO.  
**2**