QUAD CITIES, IDAHO HIGHWAY 2/200 CORRIDOR

A REGIONAL COLLABORATION STRATEGY FOR MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION AND INVESTMENT

FEBRUARY 2016

WWW.NEWMOBILITYWEST.ORG

Project Partners

ABOUT NEW MOBILITY WEST

New Mobility West (NMW) provides communities across the Rocky Mountain West with the tools and resources necessary to become stronger, more prosperous places through building smarter transportation systems. NMW offers technical assistance to communities in this region looking to generate real, on-the-ground progress with targeted issues and opportunities at the nexus of transportation planning and community development. Beyond their local impact, these assistance projects create models that inform and inspire smart transportation and land use throughout the region.

This report is the product of a collaborative effort between NMW team members and the partner communities that were selected for technical assistance through the program. It provides an overview of the project's goals, process, outcomes and recommended next steps.

NMW is an initiative administered by Community Builders, a non-profit organization that inspires and enables community decisions and public policies that respect the land and people of western North America. Information about the New Mobility West technical assistance program can be found at www.newmobilitywest.org/community-assistance.

CHARLIER ASSOCIATES

Charlier Associates, Inc. (CAI) is a multimodal transportation planning firm based out of Boulder, CO, that specializes in innovative approaches to improving community mobility. CAI assists cities and regions interested in moving beyond traditional solutions and approaches by encouraging flexibility in transportation mode choice and creating "Great Streets" and vibrant, healthy communities where the quality of daily life is positively enhanced by careful planning and design of the built environment.

PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Their pioneering Placemaking approach helps citizens transform their public spaces into vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation and serve common needs.

HIGHWAY 2/200

*As a **common thread** running through our small mountain towns, the Highway 2/200 corridor connects our communities - all framed by the scenic beauty of our region. Highway 2/200 should nurture **our unique sense of place**, characterized by small historic towns in a rural setting. The corridor should also spur regional and local **economic opportunities**, while balancing **safe circulation and access for everyone**, giving full consideration of mobility for **all modes** of travel.*

Facilitating Regional Discussion of:

Role of Corridor as State Highway & Local Street

Freight Route

US Bike Route #10

Pedestrian Crossings & Activity Nodes

Community Gateways & Land Use Context

ABOUT THE PROJECT

After participating in a Community Builders Leadership Institute in Boise in November 2014, the four Bonner County communities of Dover, Kootenai, Ponderay and Sandpoint united to form a Highway 2/200 Committee. This group was charged with addressing the need for new, regional coordination relating to land use and transportation investment along 8.2 miles of State Highway as it traverses the Quad Cities.

The 2/200 Committee successfully applied for assistance from the New Mobility West (NMW) program to help them in crafting a unified vision for the Highway 2/200 corridor in collaboration with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). A technical team from New Mobility West was created to assist the region in developing an action plan to support multiple needs and goals of the four communities, the various important nodes along this stretch of highway, and accommodation of all modes of transportation.

On December 8-11, 2015, a four-day planning workshop was held at the Columbia Bank Sandpoint Center to identify ways in which the communities and IDT could improve the safety, livability, community identity, and multimodal friendliness of the Highway 2/200 corridor. Key issues included pedestrian safety along several parts of the highway, needs for regional bicycle system connectivity, lack of transit stops, freight movement concerns, imminent modifications to vehicular traffic flow within Downtown Sandpoint, and desired investment in and development of various properties along the corridor.

The week-long event included public open houses, site visits, stakeholder focus sessions with local businesses, schools, and trucking representatives, a luncheon for elected officials and key stakeholders, and hands-on design sessions to identify site-specific issues and develop design concepts for various portions of the corridor. Approximately 80 people participated.

This report summarizes the outcomes of the planning workshop, includes drawings created by various charrette participants, and outlines regional strategies to create a collaborative approach for moving forward.

CORRIDOR PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

During the NMW planning workshop, event participants identified and refined a set of common Highway 2/200 principles to use as a guide in developing concept plans for each of the four communities. These principles shall also guide future design decisions, infrastructure investments, and land use redevelopment projects within the study corridor.

1. Preserve and enhance the small town and rural **character** of the region by:
   - Supporting individual community visions for the character of the corridor while creating a cohesive aesthetic for the corridor
   - Concentrating development in the core of the four cities and allowing for green space transitions between them
   - Creating a welcoming entrance to the communities that enhances local tourism and sense of place

2. Promote safe **multimodal connections** (driving, walking, biking, and public transit) between and within the communities that helps people connect to key destinations, as well as protects children and other vulnerable populations.

3. Use a **context sensitive approach** to balance the mobility needs of regional vehicle and freight traffic with the safety and access of local users.

4. Support and highlight **local natural assets** including trails, scenic views, lake access and the mountains.

5. Bolster regional and local **economic opportunities** by:
   - Helping people connect to jobs and key destinations
   - Fostering strategic locations for new jobs and business
   - Supporting a world class network of regional trails and active transportation opportunities that attract tourists, residents, and investment to the area.

Charrette Design Team

A special thank you to the following individuals who invested their time and talents to establish this vision for regional collaboration to address transportation and land use considerations along Highway 2/200 as it transverses our communities:

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Lisa Adair . . . . . Cities of Dover & Kootenai/Ruen-Yeager & Associates, Inc.

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Aaron Qualls . . . . . Director of Planning & Economic Development, City of Sandpoint

Don Davis . . . . . Former District 1 Planner, Idaho Transportation Department

Damon Allen . . . . . District 1 Engineer, Idaho Transportation Department

Marvin Fenn . . . . . District 1 Resident Engineer, Idaho Transportation Department

Larry Davidson . . . . . Friends of the Bay Trail/Pend Oreille Peddlers/Northern Idaho Bikeways

Clif Warren . . . . . SPOT Bus/Northern Idaho Bikeways

Phil McNearney . . . . . Ponderay Community Development Corporation

Tim Closson . . . . . Independent Highway District

Annie Shaha . . . . . Mayor, City of Dover

Rick Larkin . . . . . Council Member, City of Ponderay

Shelby Rognstad . . . . . Mayor, City of Sandpoint

Steve Holt . . . . . Business and Property Owner, City of Sandpoint

Molly O'Reilly . . . . . Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, City of Sandpoint

Rebecca Holland . . . . . Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, City of Sandpoint

Kody Van Dyke . . . . . Public Works Director, City of Sandpoint

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Eric Olson . . . . . HMH Engineers

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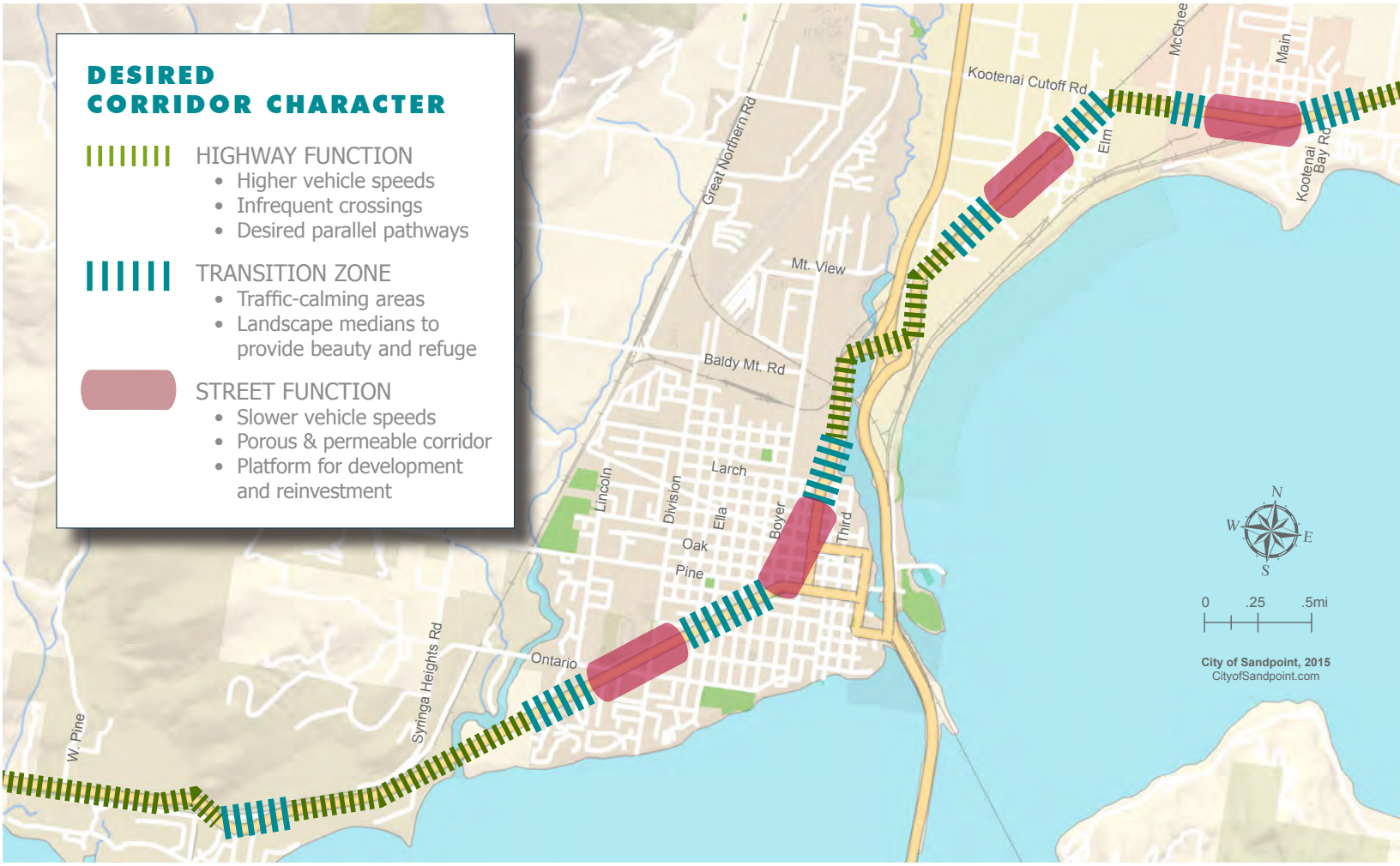
Corridor Overview

The Highway 2/200 corridor runs through the four cities of Dover, Kootenai, Ponderay, and Sandpoint, located within Bonner County along the western shores of Lake Pend Oreille in the Northern Idaho Panhandle. Known as the Quad Cities area, the region is characterized by its small town feel and significant regional tourism – with the lake, mountains, nature and world-class recreation facilities attracting families, innovative businesses, and retirees alike.

- **Dover** is a community in change. Historic Dover was originally a mill site; the community currently has limited commercial, but has experienced significant residential growth and now offers a diversity of housing.
- **Sandpoint** is the largest of the four cities, with aerospace, software, biotech, food production, and other manufacturing. Sandpoint wants to maintain its authenticity and character, not be seen as just a tourism town. It is a great place to raise children, and walkability and bikeability are important.
- **Ponderay** is the region's commercial and regional retail hub. Ponderay started as a small company town, then became a bedroom community of Sandpoint; interested in a 'town and country' model and small town feel.
- **Kootenai** is an affordable, working-class bedroom community, with most people traveling elsewhere for work. The city is currently targeting manufacturing and distribution redevelopment opportunities.

A context-sensitive planning approach used by the NMW planning team identified a continuum of place types occurring along Highway 2/200 within these communities, as depicted below. Future public infrastructure investment and private development is desired that will respect and enhance the unique character and function of each of these areas.



REGIONAL PLANNING COORDINATION

The regional vision created by the New Mobility West planning initiative builds upon several existing plans and upcoming projects relevant to this 8.2-mile stretch of highway, as summarized at right.

To provide a more unified regional approach and guide future implementation of the various plans and projects, charrette participants identified ten common themes needed to implement the Highway 2/200 Corridor Vision through the Quad Cities. The top 10 issues and opportunities are summarized on page 9, followed by site-specific details proposed within each community.

These recommendations will need to be implemented through a series of ongoing smaller projects throughout the length of the 8.2-mile study corridor. The regional collaboration strategy developed through the New Mobility West planning process is intended to establish guiding principles to be incorporated into more detailed design plans. Some projects may be completed by ITD; many others will need to be undertaken by the individual communities, coordinated with private development investment and regional transportation needs.

- Each of the cities has its own comprehensive plan, which includes a transportation component. Kootenai has a Highway 200 plan; Sandpoint has instituted form-based codes and alternatives analysis as part of its Dowtown Streets Plan; and Ponderay has conducted studies of different parts of the corridor.
- ITD started a corridor study in 2005 for the segment of US-2 from Dover to Sandpoint. The draft concept report recommended expanding the highway to a 5-lane section. The report was not approved; need to study other alternatives including a 3-lane option.
- The four cities and the Independent Highway District (IHD) investigated US-2 and SH-200 as part of the 2007 Urban Area Transportation Plan. The Quad Cities would like to see the Plan refreshed to better reflect the needs of their communities relevant to the highway and the realities of a 21st century economy.
- In 2008, Ponderay, Kootenai, Bonner County and ITD completed the SH-200 Corridor Improvements study to examine existing and anticipated congestion on 3.5 miles of SH-200 between US-95 and Shingle Mill Road. The goal of the study was to provide for the efficient flow of traffic through the 2026 design year while maintaining the integrity of the communities and enhancing safety.
- The Local Highway Technical Assistance Council/Dover evaluated a west access from Railroad Avenue to US-2. A few scenarios were studied and included in a report; all were found to be very expensive. No decisions were made on a path forward. As Dover develops, a westerly connection to US-2 will likely be necessary for safety, capacity and connectivity.
- US Bicycle Route 10 was designated in 2014 from Northern Washington to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The route follows Highway 2/200 through the Quad Cities. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to develop a wayfinding plan to identify the route and access to local destinations, and fund implementation of the signing.
- In order to remove the US-2 designation and ITD maintenance responsibility from Pine Street, 1st Avenue and Cedar Street within Sandpoint, various options using 5th Avenue and the former Union Pacific Rail Road right-of way (the Curve) were proposed, including using the Curve for a two-lane westbound US-2 and 5th Avenue (Pine to Cedar) for a two-lane eastbound US-2. The proposal was not acceptable to the City of Sandpoint and an interim 5th Avenue layout between Pine and Cedar was proposed and accepted. Implementation of one lane in each direction with left turn lanes at the intersection with a traffic signal at Church Street will be made during the summer of 2016, and Pine, 1st and Cedar will revert to the City for maintenance, operation and ownership.
- ITD has a corridor study programmed for US-2 in 2016 – prompted by the US 395/North Spokane Corridor project in Washington, which may, as early as 2021, result in increased truck traffic on US-2 through the Quad Cities.

Top 10 Issues & Opportunities

1. GATEWAYS
- sense of arrival
- change in corridor feel/land use

2. CORE AREAS
- School activity node
- Downtown Sandpoint
- Ponderay Village
- Kootenai Triangle

land use context

3. MULTI-USE PATHS
- regional bicycle network
- multi-use path design parallel to highway
- US Bike Route #10 wayfinding

4. FREIGHT
- truck mobility
- new street connections

5. RAILROADS
- crossings
- parallel multi-use paths

6. SPOT TRANSIT
- service zones
- bus stops and pullots

modal considerations

7. SNOW & STORM WATER
- bioswales
- reductions in hard surface area
- additional vegetation

environmental considerations

8. PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
- more frequent spacing
- safer designs

9. MEDIANS & CENTER TURN LANES
- business access
- beautification
- traffic calming and safety

10. ANGLED INTERSECTIONS
- safer designs
- consolidation of intersections

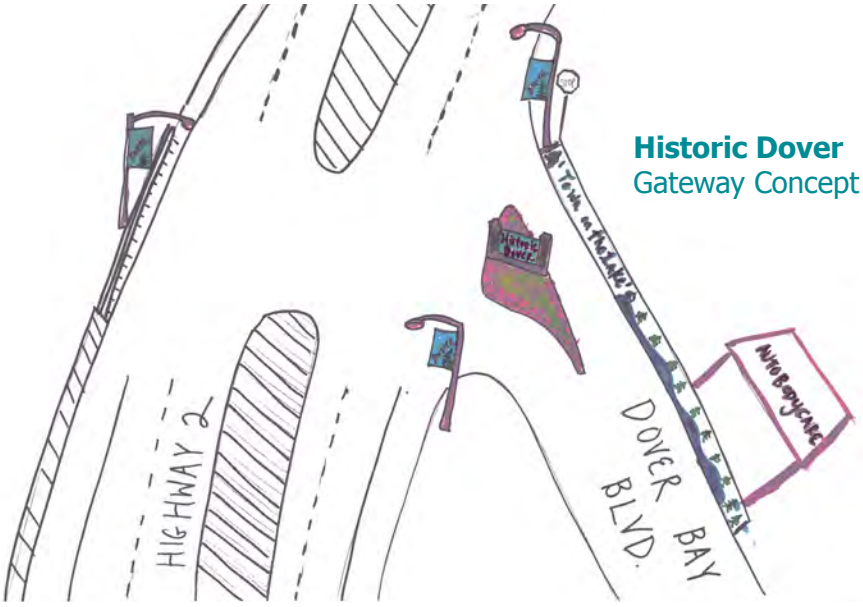
corridor design details

1. Gateways

A gateway is defined by a landmark, streetscape, or other feature that a visitor or resident sees when entering a community, neighborhood, or district. Attractive gateway features at key entry points or corridors develop and maintain community identity and public pride, while also defining the physical limits of a place. Gateways also foster economic development by promoting a community to both visitors and potential investors.

DOVER

- Create a community gateway with the following elements:
  - Landscape planting island with a Welcome-to-Dover signage element at the entrance to Dover Bay Boulevard.
  - Banners on light poles and art along existing jersey barrier to enhance gateway at intersection.
  - Wayfinding signage to direct users of US Bike Route #10 onto the Community Trail.
- Consider also slowing vehicular speeds on US-2, adding tree planters on the highway bridge to mitigate traffic noise, and restriping the roadway from five lanes to three.



Historic Dover
Gateway Concept

SANDPOINT

- Add traffic-calming, artwork and gateway features when entering city from the west, signifying start of the school activity node.
- Welcome-to-Sandpoint signage element upon entering city from the east, after crossing river.
- Additional gateway design elements signifying arrival into the Downtown Core.

PONDERAY

- Welcome-to-Ponderay signage element upon entering city from the west, after crossing river.
- Traffic-calming and gateway features signifying entrance into the proposed Ponderay Village area.

KOOTENAI

- Traffic-calming and gateway features/welcome signs at McGhee Road and Kootenai Bay Road.

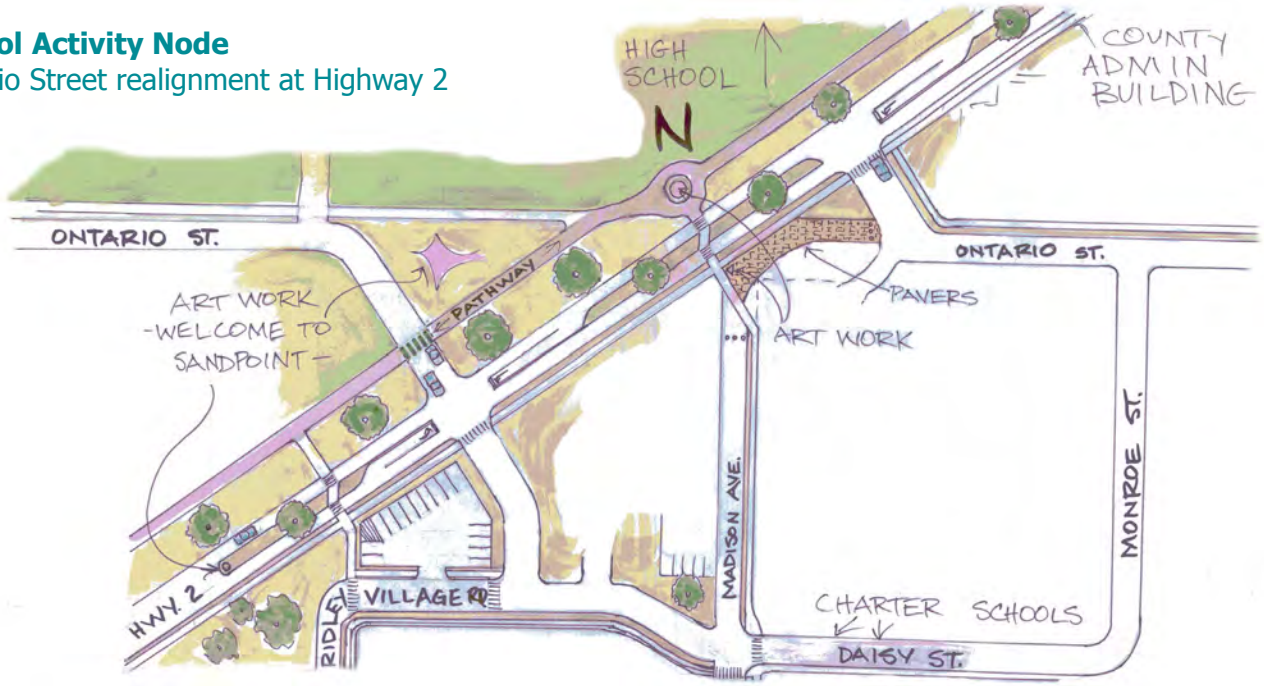
2. Core Areas

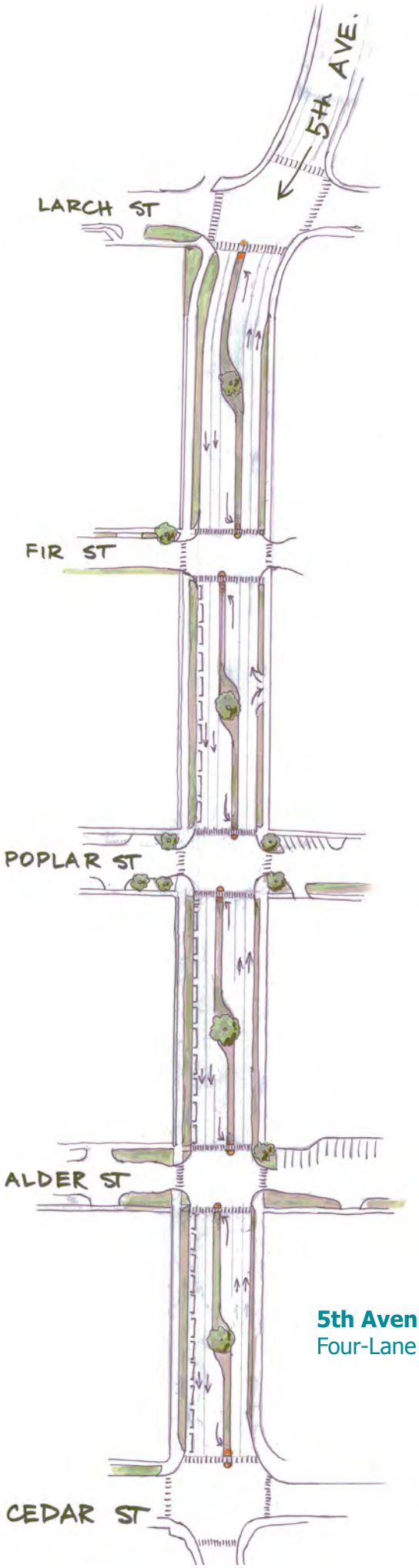
Core areas are focal points of a community and often serve as centers for commercial activity. They are locations within a community that have distinct character, development patterns, relationship to surrounding neighborhoods, and streetscapes. Examples may include a downtown or central business district.

SCHOOL ACTIVITY NODE

- A Stakeholder Focus Group meeting was held as part of the NMW workshop with representatives of individual schools and district transportation. A primary area of concern was the activity node created by the proximity of Sandpoint Middle School, Sandpoint High School, and the Sandpoint Charter School. Highway US-2 cuts diagonally through this activity node at Ontario Street.
- Crossing the highway on foot or on bike is difficult for school children who bike and walk to school and/or move between campuses for shared activities. School drop-off and pick-up times also create vehicular turning movement conflicts and congestion for motorists along the highway.
- Recommended modifications to this activity node include:
  - Realignment of Ontario Street to create two intersections with 90-degree approaches to the highway.
  - Adding center turn lanes at intersections with mid-block landscape median islands.
  - Providing pedestrian refuge islands, angled to view on-coming traffic, in mid-block locations to connect with Ridley Village Road and Madison Avenue.
  - Using green crossing markings where the parallel path crosses Ontario Street and Division Avenue.
  - Adding gateway artwork and signage features.

School Activity Node
Ontario Street realignment at Highway 2





DOWNTOWN SANDPOINT

- Corridor 2/200 improvements through this core area will be accomplished in two phases.
- Phase 1 involves implementation of changes recommended in the Downtown Streets Plan (Cedar to Pine) to be completed in 2016. These include:
  - Converting N. 5th Avenue back to two-way operation for the US-2 route through Downtown Sandpoint.
  - Will be one lane of through traffic in each direction beginning at Cedar, with turn lanes provided at each intersection.
- Phase 2 will implement pedestrian enhancements and traffic calming measures in the outer Downtown core (on 5th, from Larch to Cedar) including:
  - Two 11' lanes of through traffic in each direction, on-street parking provided on the west side of the street, median islands, and tree-planted furnishing zones between the street and sidewalk/multi-use path.
  - Right-in, right-out access provided to businesses.
  - Parallel multi-use path along west side of street shall be treated as a cycle track at intersections through use of green crosswalk markings to enhance visibility of the crossing for turning vehicles.
  - Pedestrian crosswalks shall be provided across 5th Street, on both sides of intersections, and shall include center pedestrian refuge islands.

5th Avenue through Downtown Sandpoint
Four-Lane with Medians and On-Street Parking

PONDERAY VILLAGE

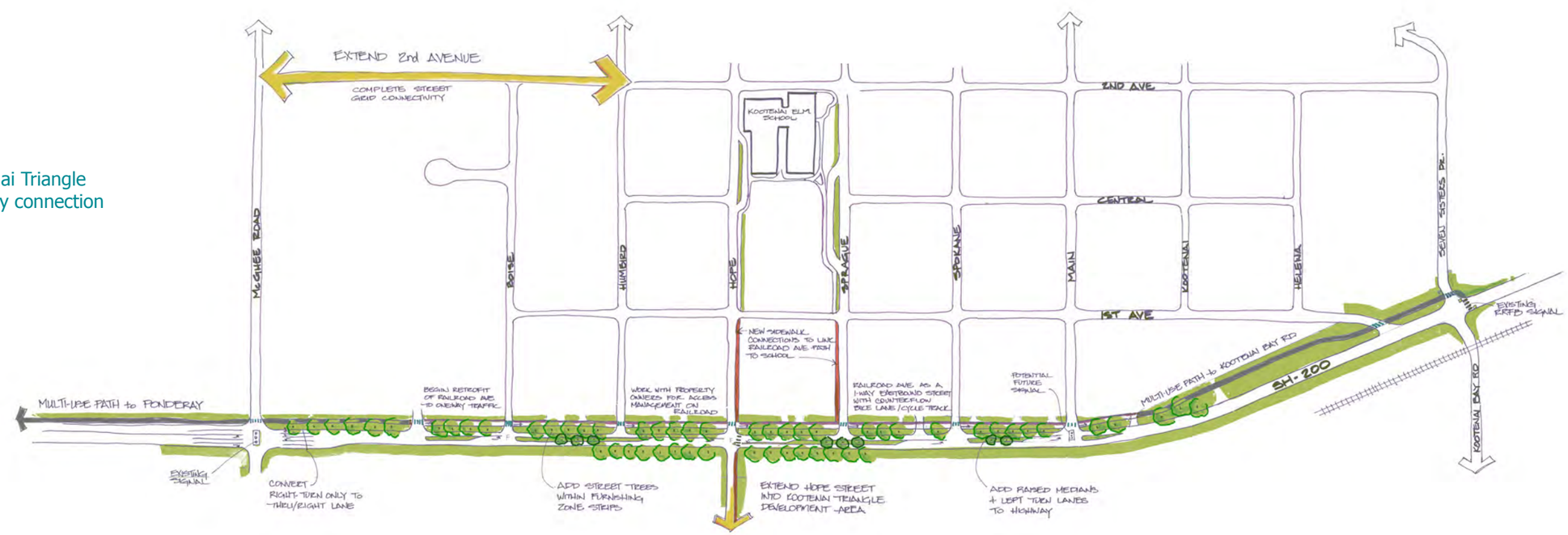
- In 2014, the City of Ponderay hired the firm of StreetPlans to develop a sub-area plan for expansion of a village core concept south of SH-200. Key recommendations of the New Mobility West charrette for the highway and this activity node are depicted on pages 14-15 and include the following:
  - Reducing the number of proposed access points from the local street grid onto the highway and realigning streets to create 90-degree intersection approaches.
  - Maintaining the existing 4-way intersection at Kootenai Cutoff Road/Elm Avenue.
  - Relocating the existing Eastgate Drive railroad crossing slightly to the north and creating a new 4-way intersection to connect Bonner Mall Way to the expanded street grid south of the highway.
  - Connecting the new street grid to the Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail by a proposed grade-separated trail crossing under the Montana Rail Link corridor.
  - Slowing traffic speeds on US-200 through the core area and adding on-street parking in front of proposed new storefronts that face the street.
  - Developing a parallel multi-use path on the north side of SH-200 to connect with the Creekside Trail to the west and the City of Kootenai to the east.
  - Adding pedestrian-friendly crossings with center refuge islands. (See page 26.)

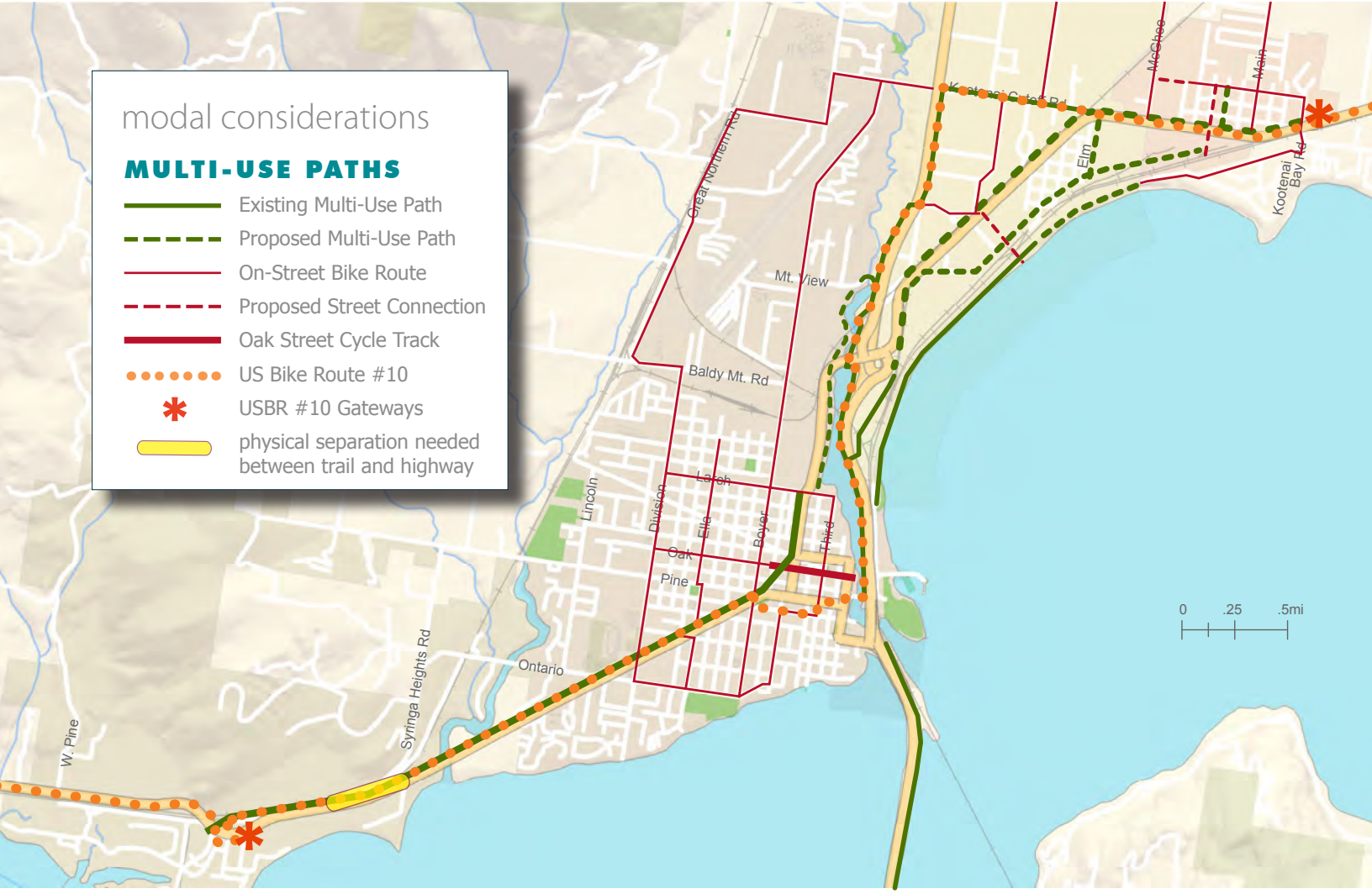
KOOTENAI TRIANGLE

- Similarly, the City of Kootenai is targeting a triangular parcel south of the highway for future development, which is proposed to include commercial land uses and a regional trailhead. Key elements of this future activity node are depicted on pages 14-15 and include:
  - Creating a 4-way intersection and extending Hope Street into new development proposed for the south side of the highway.
  - Slowing traffic speeds on SH-200 through the core area.
  - Adding turn lanes and providing safer non-motorized crossings.
  - Extending 2nd Avenue west to McGhee Road to enhance overall traffic circulation within Kootenai north of the highway and provide access to the existing signal at McGhee Road and SH-200.
  - Retrofitting Railroad Avenue to provide for parallel bicycle/pedestrian travel along the north side of the highway. (See details on page 18.)

Ponderay Village
Reconfigured Local Street Intersections and Regional Pathway Connections

Highway 200 through Kootenai
Turn Lanes, Medians and access to Kootenai Triangle with a Retrofitted Railroad Avenue/Pathway connection





3. Multi-Use Paths

Multi-use paths are paved active transportation corridors where users of all ages can both recreate and commute to important destinations in a community or region. They are physically separated from vehicle traffic. They are designed to accommodate several types of users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and skateboarders and provide access for users with disabilities.

Several multi-use paths are existing and proposed with the region and will combine with on-street bicycle routes to provide area residents with an emerging network of facilities to meet both recreation and active transportation commuting needs. Completion of this system is viewed as an essential component to the high quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors of the Quad Cities.

REGIONAL TRAIL/BICYCLE SYSTEM

A bicycle and trail system plan is currently being developed for the Quad Cities region. Recommendations for applicable portions of this system relating to pathways and bicycle routes along and crossing the study corridor have been incorporated into the New Mobility West recommendations. These routes are depicted above, and include elements of the following plans:

- The local TrailMix Committee and the Trust for Public Land are in the process of mapping all regional trails within the Greater Sandpoint Area.
- The Sandpoint Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee has mapped "Explore Sandpoint" bike routes.
- Ponderay and Kootenai have recently developed Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans.
- Ponderay also has a Greenbelt and Pathways Plan.

U.S. BICYCLE ROUTE #10

The U.S. Bicycle Route System (USBRS) is a developing national network of bicycle routes which will link urban, suburban, and rural areas using a variety of appropriate cycling facilities. USBR #10 routes through the Pacific Northwest from Anacortes, WA, on the Puget Sound to the Montana border near Clark Fork, ID – a total distance of more than 480 miles. Details through the Quad Cities include:

- Official route designation in 2015 – entering Dover on US-2, following the Community Trail into Sandpoint, routing on Boyer, Lake, Third, Pine, 1st and Bridge streets to the Creekside Trail, following the pathway along Kootenai Cutoff Road, then east on SH-200 toward Clark Fork.
- Local jurisdictions are encouraged to develop a wayfinding plan to identify the route and access to local destinations, and fund implementation of the signing.
- Upon completing future projects (i.e. Oak Street cycle track in Sandpoint, Railroad Avenue retrofit in Kootenai) the local communities may apply to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for local modifications to the USBRS routing.

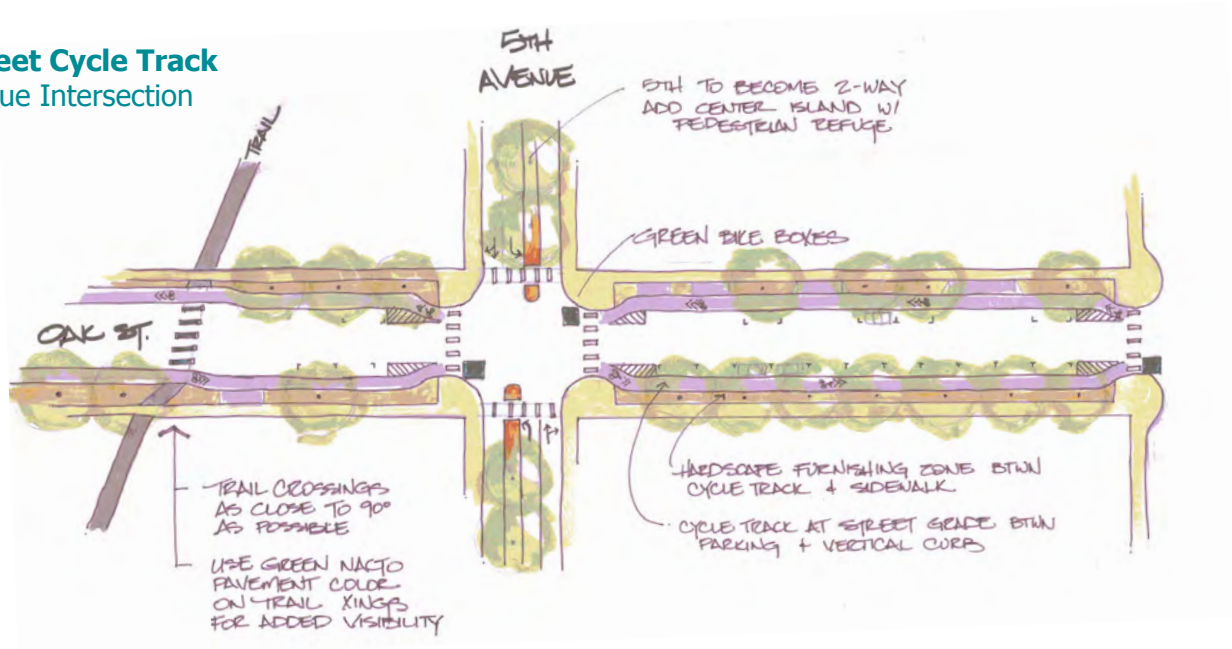
DOVER

- USBRS wayfinding needed as part of the proposed community gateway.
- The existing USBR #10 works well for eastbound cyclists, but directional signage is needed to route cyclists off of US-2 onto local streets and under the highway bridge to access the Community Trail.
- To eliminate a difficult unsignalized highway crossing, westbound cyclists should be provided with a short trail connection and associated signage linking the Community Trail with the westbound shoulder of US-2 as it approaches the highway bridge.
- Where the Community Trail is immediately adjacent to the highway (Syringa Heights Road to Rocky Point Road), jersey barriers or similar a buffer is desired to provide greater separation from high-speed vehicular traffic and mitigate piling of snow storage on the bicycle trail in the winter.

SANDPOINT

- The Community Trail runs parallel to a street/highway that cuts diagonally through the community, creating complex intersection crossings for people on foot or bike. For this reason, all trail crossings shall utilize recommendations of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) for use of green pavement markings within crosswalks for added visibility.
- A cycle track is proposed along Oak Street from 6th Avenue to Main Street to provide a better connection and enhanced corridor for bike access to the Bridge Street bridge and Creekside Trail. NACTO guidance shall be followed for cycle track intersection treatments, as depicted below.

Oak Street Cycle Track
5th Avenue Intersection

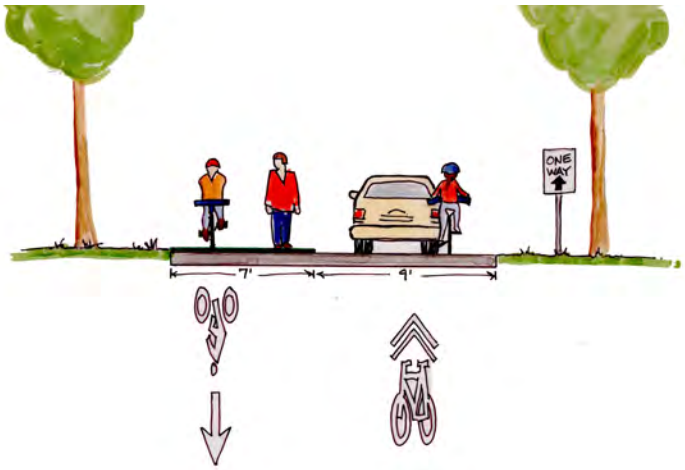


PONDERAY

- Construct a new multi-use pathway through Ponderay, to be located in between SH-200 and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). Will connect the Creekside Trail to the southwest, with Railroad Avenue in Kootenai to the east. (See drawing on page 14.)
- Include bicycle lanes on a new street entrance into Ponderay Village (to be located north of Eastgate Drive). This will connect to a proposed multi-use path underpass beneath the Montana Rail Link (MRL) corridor to link to the Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail.
- Continue this street northwest across both SH-200 and the UPRR line, connecting with Bonner Mall Way, which is also proposed to have on-street bicycle lanes.
- Construct a multi-use path along the northern edge of the MRL railroad right-of-way through Ponderay Village.
- Complete missing link in the Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail to connect with Ponder Point Lane in Kootenai.

KOOTENAI

- Utilize the existing barrier-protected segment of multi-use path from McGhee Road to Railroad Avenue.
- Convert Railroad Avenue into a one-way eastbound street, with two-way bicycle and pedestrian travel permitted.
  - Retrofit is needed to minimize use of Railroad Avenue as a bypass to SH-200 congestion and to reduce conflicts with turning movements onto/off of SH-200 into Kootenai, as well as continuation of a separated multi-use path through Kootenai.
  - Sign Railroad Avenue as a one-way street.
  - Meet with adjacent property owners to discuss minimizing driveway access and parking within the street right-of-way.
  - Restripe existing 16' pavement to provide a 9' shared travel lane on the south side (designated for bicyclist use through use of sharrow pavement markings), and a shared 7' bicycle/pedestrian space (designated as a westbound bicycle lane). Consider use of colored pavement treatment within the westbound bike/ped lane.



Retrofitted Railroad Avenue
One-Way Street with Contra-Flow Bike/Ped Lane

- Construct a new segment of multi-use path from the terminus of Railroad Avenue at S. Main, proceeding west to Seven Sisters Drive to utilize the pedestrian Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB) crossing of SH-200 at Kootenai Bay Road.
- Add high-visibility green pavement crossing markings at all locations where bicyclists traveling on the multi-use path will cross streets.
- Construct sidewalks along both Hope and Sprague streets, for one block between Railroad Avenue and 1st Avenue, to provide non-motorized connections to Kootenai Elementary school.

4. Freight

Freight access supports a vibrant economy. Highways that accommodate local and regional freight traffic are an essential component of a multimodal transportation network, providing necessary links between communities and supporting local industry. Operational efficiency is critical to maintain reasonable travel times, but is not necessarily in conflict with improving the overall livability of the transportation network. By employing context-sensitive design that includes traffic calming as highways transition through core community areas and resolves conflicts between pedestrians and freight in high traffic areas, mobility can be maintained and balanced for all users.

A Stakeholder Focus Group meeting was held with representatives of the freight industry and local trucking companies as part of the New Mobility West Highway 2/200 planning workshop. Discussions centered on routing alternatives, delays at railroad crossings, accommodating truck traffic in street design, truck maneuverability through any roundabouts that may be proposed, and a lack of alternative truck routes to industrial areas. Key initiatives underway to address freight needs are summarized below.

REGIONAL FREIGHT MOVEMENT

The Washington State Department of Transportation received state funding for continuing construction of US-395 between I-90 and US-2 in Spokane. It is estimate that the connection at I-90 could be in place by 2021 and, potentially, truck traffic between Spokane and Canada and Montana may find it faster to take US-395 and US-2 to Sandpoint rather than taking I-90 and US-95. The upcoming US-2 Corridor Study (see page 8) will investigate the likelihood of a traffic shift and any resultant traffic impacts on the cities along US-2 between Oldtown and Sandpoint.

With recent improvement on SH-200, previous restrictions have been removed and trucks of all lengths up to double-trailers are now allowed between Montana and Sandpoint. Missoula trucking firms find it

advantageous to use SH-200 rather than I-90 to move freight between Missoula and Spokane due to the lack of extreme winter conditions on SH-200.

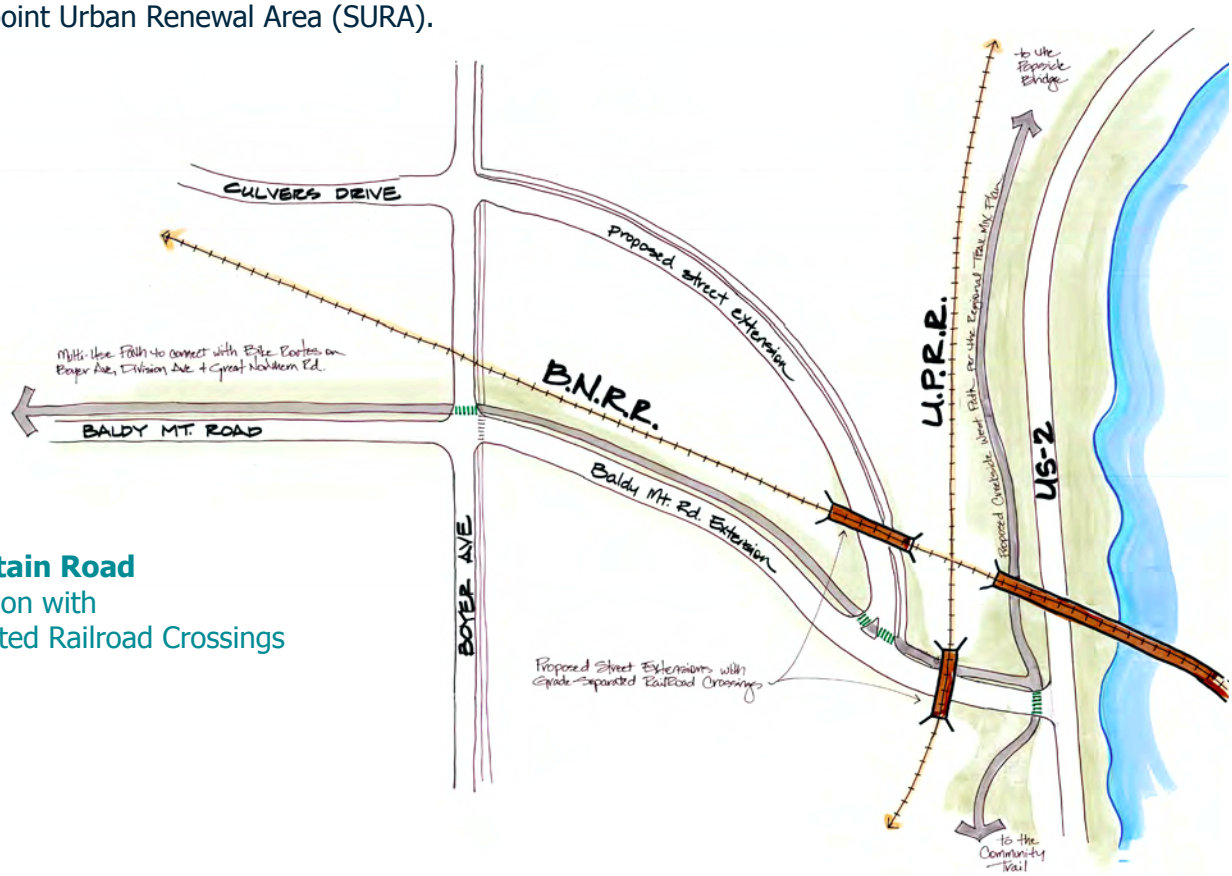
WESTERN BYPASS

The Bonner County Area Transportation Team (BCATT) prepared a twenty-year Bonner County Area Transportation Plan for the time period of 2002-2022. Included is long-term construction of a new three-lane arterial from Rocky Point Road to Great Northern Road, continuing north to Bronx Road and then south on Shingle Mill Road to create a western bypass route around the urban area. Baldy Road from Great Northern Road to N. Boyer Avenue is also proposed to be widened to arterial street standards as a mid-term Capital Improvement Project.

BALDY EXTENSION

In 2007, with development plans pending for the University of Idaho property along Boyer Avenue, a connection study was done in order to create a better route to US-95 and Highway 2/200 from Boyer Avenue. Primarily envisioned to alleviate traffic generated by the development and to insure adequate emergency response across the Burlington Northern Rail line, the process brought to light another growing concern: truck and school bus traffic originating from the industrial areas to the west of the UofI property. Several companies originate a significant amount of truck traffic including Wes Olson Trucking, Interstate Asphalt, Peak Sand and Gravel, Lighthouse foods, as well as the "Bus Barn" where Lake Ponderay School District busses are stored. Moreover, there exists several acres of industrial opportunity sites along Great Northern Road just north of Baldy Mountain Road.

- The NMW workshop Freight Stakeholder Focus Group discussions centered on alternatives to routing local truck traffic through Sandpoint.
- Completing an extension of Baldy Mountain Road that would provide connection to US-2 is desired to create a freight bypass and get trucks out of the flow of community traffic while providing for an alternative route for emergency vehicle response. Proposed project elements include:
  - The preferred alternative in the 2007 Study (Alternative B) calls for an extension of Baldy Mountain Road on the south side of the rail line to US-2 with a railroad underpass connecting to Ebbet Way on the north side of the tracks and a second Union Pacific Rail underpass in order to connect to the highway.
  - Development of a multi-use path on the north side of Baldy between Great Northern Road and N. Boyer Avenue is sheduled for construction in late FY2016 or early FY 2017, funded by the Sandpoint Urban Renewal Area (SURA).



Baldy Mountain Road
Street Extension with
Grade-Separated Railroad Crossings

5. Railroads

Traffic back-ups and crossing difficulties for non-motorized users are common issues along active railroads. In many communities, unused or abandoned rail corridors are converted into trails; others offer shared-use by allowing development of recreational pathways for walking, biking, horseback riding, Nordic skiing etc. parallel to active rail lines. Rail-trails can become great economic drivers, serving not only as a local asset but also a tourist draw.

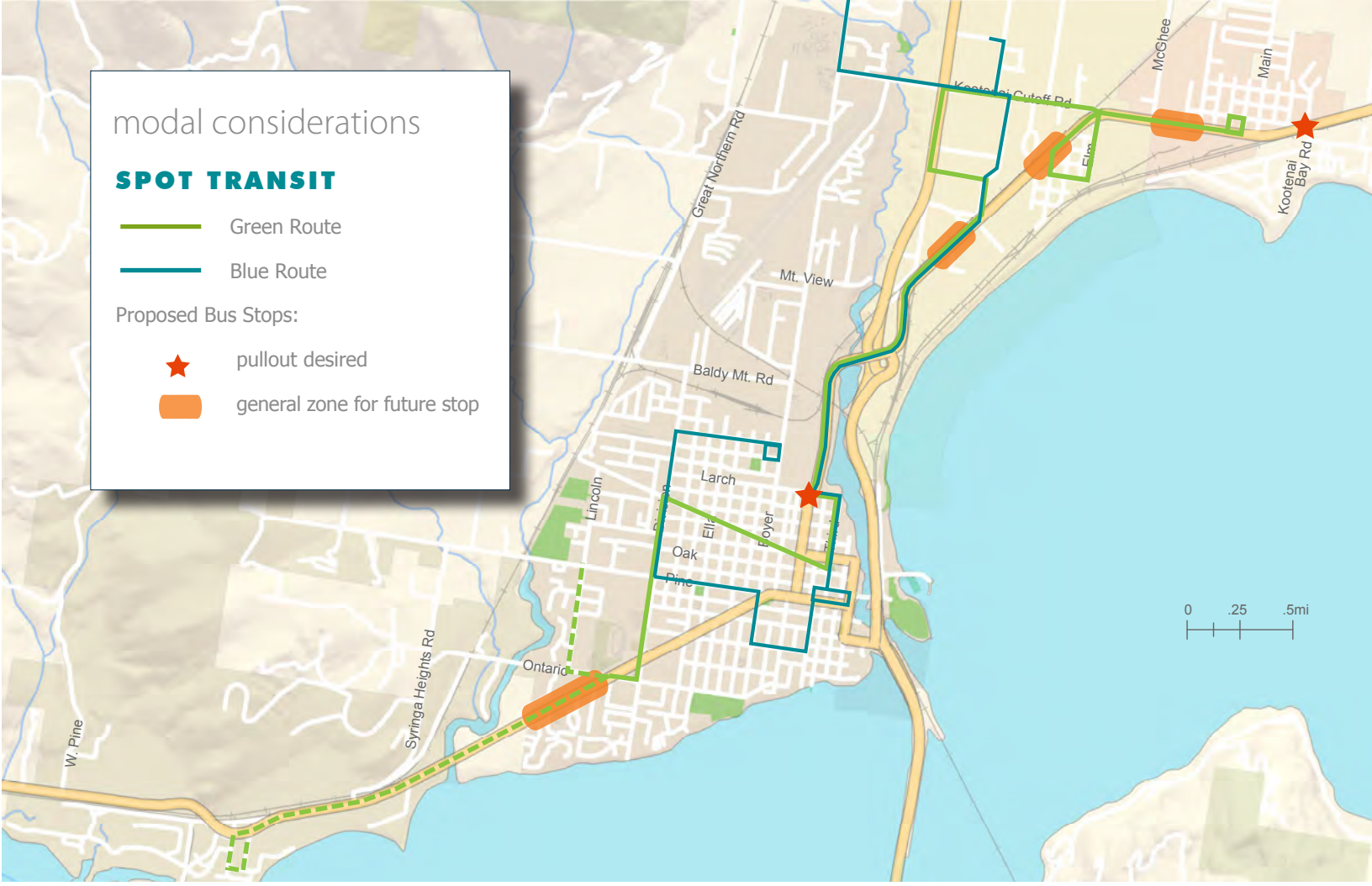
Historically, as mill towns, the Quad Cities developed along the railroads that served the region. Today, six corridors converge in the Quad Cities – served by the railroad companies of Burlington Northern (BN), Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and the Montana Rail Link (MRL). The Amtrak Empire Builder also serves the region, with Idaho's only Amtrak station located in Sandpoint. Project coordination needs with the various railway companies include:

CROSSINGS

- Relocation of the at-grade crossing of the UPRR line at East Gate Drive, shifting north to a new alignment that will connect with Bonner Mall Way and a new entrance to Ponderay Village south of SH-200.
- Safe connection across Kootenai Cutoff Road to link with the proposed multi-use path along the UPRR/SH-200.
- New underpass for a truck route connecting Baldy Mountain Road with US-2/US-95 under the UPRR in Sandpoint. Second proposed truck route underpass to connect Ebbett Way under the BN.
- A proposed multi-use path underpass to connect the Cities of Ponderay and Kootenai with the Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail – to be constructed at one of two proposed locations under the MRL line.

PARALLEL PATHWAYS

- New pathway running along the northern side of the MRL to link Ponderay Village and the Kootenai Triangle to the future trail underpass.
- New multi-use pathway through Ponderay, located between SH-200 and the UPRR line.



6. Transit Service

Transit can be a strong economic driver in a community by drawing pedestrians into an area to support local businesses and activate public spaces. It also reduces traffic pressure, increasing the livability of a community by reducing congestion and travel costs. Transit is becoming increasingly important to rural America because it is aging more rapidly than America as a whole, and many Baby Boomers are choosing to retire in rural communities for the quality of life and affordability. As these individuals continue to age, they may not want or be able to drive as often as in the past, heightening the demand for transit in their communities.

The Quad Cities are served by the SPOT Bus, which currently operates Blue and Green routes. While transit vehicles run along the Highway 2/200 corridor, there are currently no safe locations to stop on the entire corridor. Adding bus stops is desired to increase transit ridership and route efficiency.

BUS STOPS

- Bus pullouts (designated spots on the side of a road where buses may pull out of the flow of traffic to pick up and drop off passengers) are desired in select locations to enhance transit service to the communities.
- In other zones, the addition of pullouts combined with a potential reconfiguration of local streets and intersections will provide opportunities for better transit routing and safer stop access.
- Continuous sidewalks are needed to provide enhanced pedestrian access to transit service. All bus stops, curb ramps, sidewalks, traffic control devices and other pedestrian infrastructure shall meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for accessible boarding and continuous paths of travel within public rights-of-way.

7. Storm Water and Snow Management

Storm water and snow management are important utilities for handling environmental resources, but can also be unique opportunities for placemaking, and certainly do not have to inhibit it. Green streets can achieve both environmental goals and create streetscapes that are attractive, walkable, and elevate the character of the community. Bioswales are an aesthetically pleasing alternative to traditional stormwater piping and assist with storm water retention and partial treatment. Often utilizing native plants to achieve these benefits, bioswales are usually integrated into parking lots, road medians, or run parallel to roadways.

Snow removal is a big part of any winter city's street maintenance budget. Planning for efficient and safe snow removal is a critical component to street design. Likewise, keeping sidewalks and multi-use trails clear of snow in the winter encourages year-round multimodal transportation, reducing vehicular pressure on the transportation system during the colder months.

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Work with City storm water to use the highway right-of-way for runoff retention and filtration.
- Provide for year-round multi-use trail use by prohibiting winter highway maintenance practices from piling snow onto adjacent pathways. Add jersey barriers or other means of physical separation between the Community Trail and US-2 through Dover; provide buffer strips along new pathways.
- Provide planting areas for deciduous street trees in medians and/or furnishing strips parallel to the roadway to offer shade in summer.
- Adapt roadway design standards that reduce the quantity of hard surfaces and incorporate vegetative bioswales, buffers and other areas for runoff storage.

8. Pedestrian Crossings

Crossing the road is often the most dangerous and stressful situation facing the pedestrian experience. The degree of risk depends on many factors including traffic speed, volume, and the width of the crossing. The most vulnerable pedestrians are children and senior citizens and must be taken into consideration when planning any crossing. Typical solutions to reduce risk at crossings include center medians as a pedestrian refuge, signalized crossings, reducing traffic speed, and enhancing the visibility of the pedestrian with curb extensions and raised crosswalks.

9. Center Turn Lanes and Medians

Center turn lanes, or two-way left turn lanes, can encourage unpredictable behavior from motorists. Many motorists will use this as a "merge lane" or just ignore the turn signs and drive in the lane, which is illegal, as well as dangerous. Medians can be an effective solution to mitigate this behavior. A median is a concrete curb or island that is located at the center of the street and can continue through the street's intersection with another cross street. They can be used to reduce traffic volumes on a street by restricting left turns or through moves from cross streets. They can also be designed to serve as pedestrian refuges and provide beautification with landscaping.

10. Angled Intersections

Angled intersections are a type of complex intersection. Acute angled intersections (less than 90 degrees) reduce visibility for motorists while obtuse angled intersections (greater than 90 degrees) can encourage high speed turning movement. Both of these types of angled intersections can cause complications, particularly with pedestrian crossings. Redesigning intersections to as close to 90 degrees as possible is the ideal solution, but restrictions on turn movements can be an effective interim solution.

These final three common themes found along the Highway 2/200 Corridor are interrelated and can be integrated through thoughtful planning and multimodal, context-sensitive street design. Key elements that are desired to be addressed within various portions of the study corridor include the following, with many also depicted in cross-section in the various charrette drawings presented on page 30.

CROSSINGS

- Use of narrow travel lanes, tight turning radii, curb extensions, and marked crosswalks are complete street elements that may be combined to assist pedestrians in safely crossing streets.
- Painted pedestrian crossings specify proper location for pedestrians to cross a street and legally establish the crosswalk at non-intersection locations. All crossings shall be installed following guidance found in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- Crosswalks should be marked perpendicular to travel lanes/curbs, within intersection sight triangles. Midblock crossings should be as close to 90 degrees as possible to minimize pedestrian crossing distance.
- Minimum crosswalk width is 6 feet or the same width as the approaching sidewalk or multi-use path.
- Ladder style crosswalks shall be used in all locations along the Highway 2/200 corridor where higher visibility markings are desired.

SIDEWALK CURB RAMPS

- Curb ramps are needed to provide access between the sidewalk and street for people on foot, using wheelchairs and walkers, and for bicyclists and other non-motorized users of multi-use paths. Curb ramps or blended transitions shall be provided at all street corners and shall meet requirements for Public Right-Of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Preferred ramp types are a pair of perpendicular ramps aligning the approaching sidewalks with crosswalks; blended transitions with depressed corners that allow direct access to crosswalks; or parallel ramps, as needed on attached sidewalks. A single diagonal curb ramp located on the apex of a street corner shall be avoided whenever possible since it directs users into the intersection, rather than the crosswalks.

CENTER MEDIANS

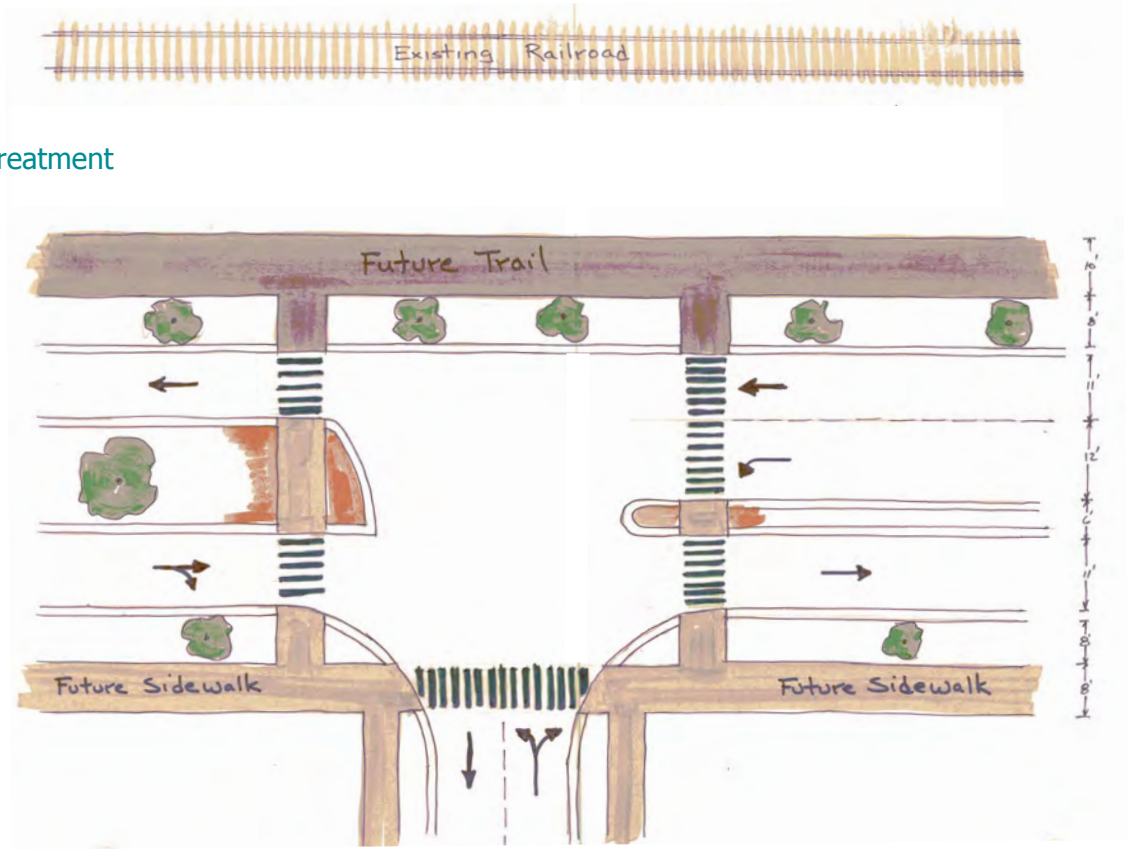
- Medians are desired to signify a sense of place and arrival within the identified core areas, aid in management of turning traffic movements, and beautify the highway corridor with street trees and landscaping.
- The communities would like to provide landscaped center medians in three core areas:
  - Along the diagonal section of US-2 through Sandpoint, from Ontario to Pine
  - On 5th Avenue/US-2, from Larch to Cedar in Sandpoint
  - On SH-200 through Kootenai, from Boise Street to Kootenai Bay Road
- Proposals include use of bioswales or medians with underground storm water storage.
- Medians should be wide enough to transition into a left-turn lane at intersection approaches and include a small raised median at the intersection to provide a pedestrian refuge at the crosswalk.

PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLANDS

- Pedestrian refuge islands, or safety islands, reduce the exposure time experienced by a pedestrian when crossing a roadway. Whether located mid-block or at an intersection, the refuge allows the pedestrian to cross one direction of traffic, then wait in the middle of the street for a safe gap in traffic before proceeding to cross the opposite lanes of vehicular travel.
- All medians at intersections should have a "nose" which extends past the crosswalk. The nose protects people waiting on the median and slows turning drivers.

- Pedestrian refuges located mid-block should have a split crosswalk and an angled median cut-through waiting area that directs pedestrians to view on-coming traffic in the far lanes.
- The cut-through or ramp width should equal the width of the approaching crosswalk and meet ADA PROWAG requirements.
- Pedestrian safety islands are desired to be at least 6 feet wide, based on the length of a bicycle or a person pushing a stroller, but have a preferred width of 8–10 feet. Where a 6-foot wide median cannot be attained, a narrower raised median is still preferable to nothing on roadways with three or more travel lanes.

Ponderay Village
Concept for Typical Intersection Design Treatment



RRFB CROSSING SIGNALS

- Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) signals are user-actuated amber LEDs that supplement warning signs at unsignalized intersections or mid-block crosswalks. They can be activated by pedestrians manually by a push button or passively by a pedestrian detection system, and may be installed on either two-lane or multi-lane roadways.
- ITD has successfully installed RRFBs at several locations along the study corridor.
- Additional locations may be warranted and further study is desired at critical intersections and mid-block refuge crossings.

ON-STREET PARKING

- The communities would like to provide on-street parking to serve adjacent land uses and create desired urban form through two core areas:
  - Along the west side of 5th Avenue/US-2 through Sandpoint, from Larch to Cedar
  - Along the south side of SH-200 in Ponderay, through the proposed commercial core of Ponderay Village

CURB EXTENSIONS

- Where on-street parking is to be provided, curb extensions or bulb-outs should be considered to improve driver and pedestrian sight distances and visibility at intersections, and to reduce pedestrian crossing distance and exposure to traffic.
- This treatment is recommended on local streets with on-street parking where they meet Highway 2/200 at skewed intersections.
- Curb extensions may also be appropriate on the highway in select locations where on-street parking is to be allowed (5th Avenue from Larch to Cedar, and through Ponderay Village). The design of any proposed curb extensions would need to accommodate snow plowing maintenance, and should extend the full width of the parking lane.

FURNISHING ZONES

- Where US-2 and SH-200 traverse the more urban portions of the Quad Cities, parallel sidewalks and/or multi-use pathways are desired to create complete streets and serve active transportation modes. These facilities should be separated from the travelway by a furnishing zone, which is the area of the right-of-way that provides a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles.
- Furnishing zones may be landscaped strips planted with street trees, or in mixed-use and commercial areas, a hardscape zone located adjacent to on-street parking that provides space for shade trees planted in tree wells, bicycle parking, street furniture and pedestrian amenities.
- Furnishing zones are recommended to be at least 6 feet wide to accommodate healthy tree growth and a 1:12 accessible slope as required for ADA sidewalk curb ramps. Wider furnishing zones will be required along street cross-sections without curb-and-gutter to accommodate effective bioswale design.

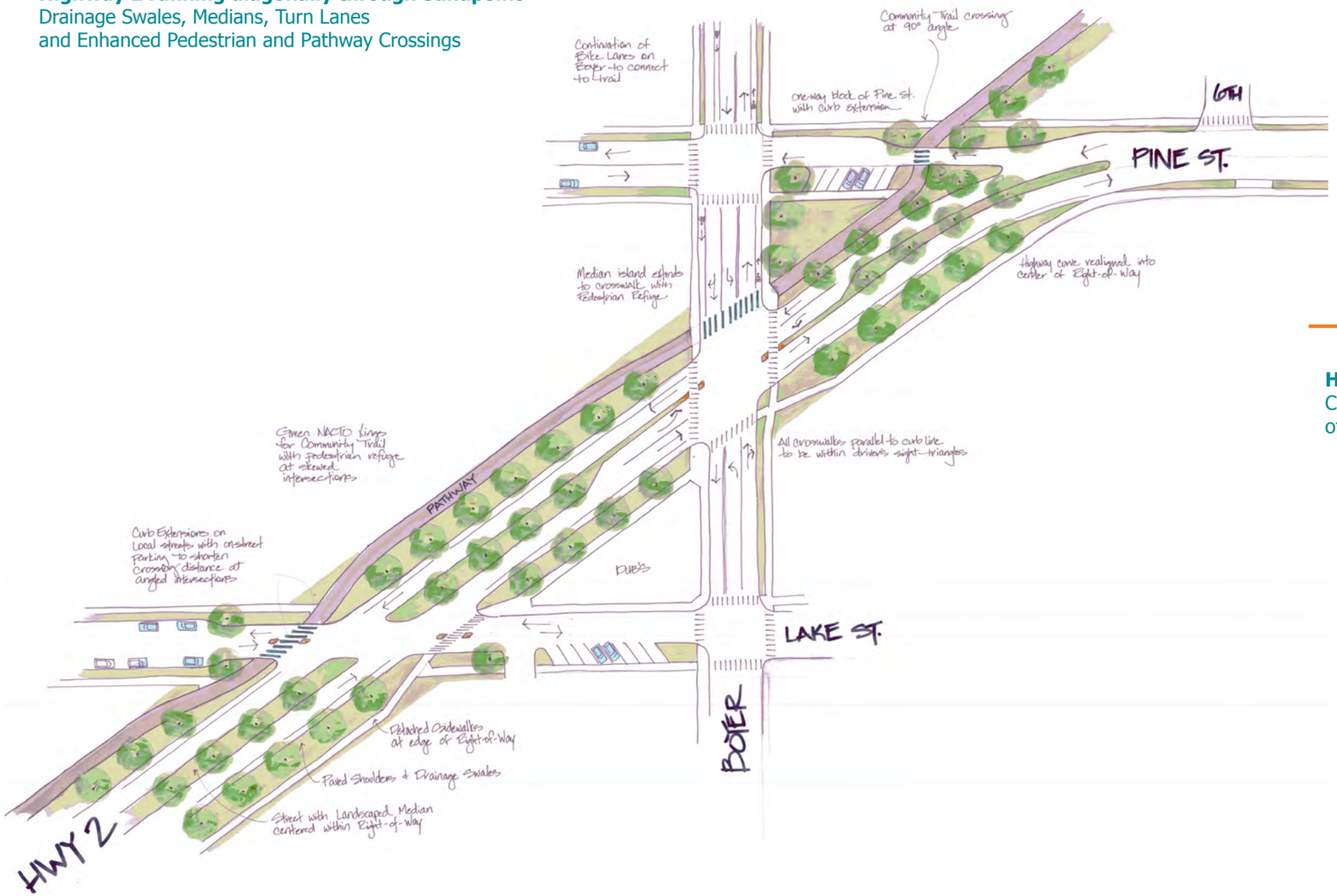
ANGLED INTERSECTIONS

- Several complex intersections are created where US-2 cuts diagonally through Sandpoint, and SH-200 through Ponderay.
- Some intersections (Ontario Street and proposed new streets in Ponderay Village) may be simplified by realigning how the local street approaches the highway to intersect at a 90 degree angle.
- In other areas (Olive/Michigan, Superior/Florence, Lake/Boyer) US-2 is proposed to be realigned and centered within the wide right-of-way, which will offer several benefits including:
  - Allows space for center medians.
  - Provides space on both sides of the highway to provide landscaped furnishing zones/bioswales, wide sidewalks or a multi-use path, and in some areas, a second landscaped planting strip between the sidewalk and edge of right-of-way.
  - Adding a center median may provide storm water storage, be planted with street trees, and offer space for a small pedestrian refuge island at intersections and/or two-stage mid-block pedestrian refuges in strategic locations.
  - The reconfigured intersections may also provide opportunity to incorporate curb extensions on crossing streets that provide on-street parking. This design detail will be especially beneficial at skewed intersections to significantly shorten pedestrian crossing distances.
  - Crosswalks shall be striped parallel to curb lines, permitting pedestrians to cross in the expected intersection location, rather than pushing the crosswalks back from the intersection.
  - Triangular "pork-chop" pedestrian refuge islands within intersections with acute angles may also be considered as an alternate way to create shorter and safer multiple-stage pedestrian crossings.
  - On roadway segments that are desired to be constructed without curb-and-gutter, additional space will be required to accommodate 6' paved shoulders and drainage swales designed with appropriate 4:1 foreslopes and 2:1 backslopes.

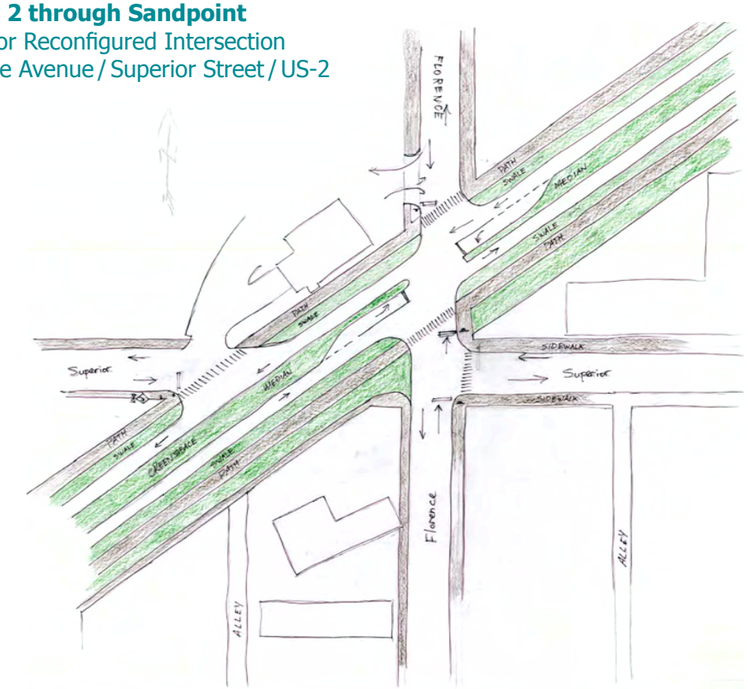
- At all locations, care will be needed in final design and implementation to ensure that non-motorized users have a safe and convenient way to cross the highway as well as travel parallel to the highway.

These concepts were illustrated by NMW charrette participants in plan view for various parts of the corridor, with the Lake/Boyer/Pine/US-2 drawing created post-charrette to show additional details of desired pedestrian connectivity and crossing treatments. Proposed street cross-section details are presented on page 30.

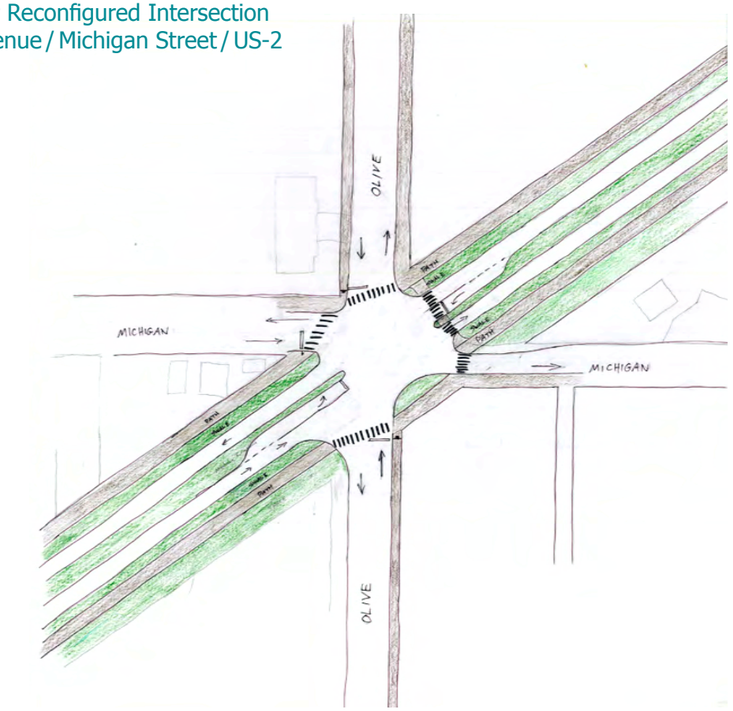
Highway 2 running diagonally through Sandpoint
Drainage Swales, Medians, Turn Lanes
and Enhanced Pedestrian and Pathway Crossings



Highway 2 through Sandpoint
Concept for Reconfigured Intersection
of Florence Avenue / Superior Street / US-2



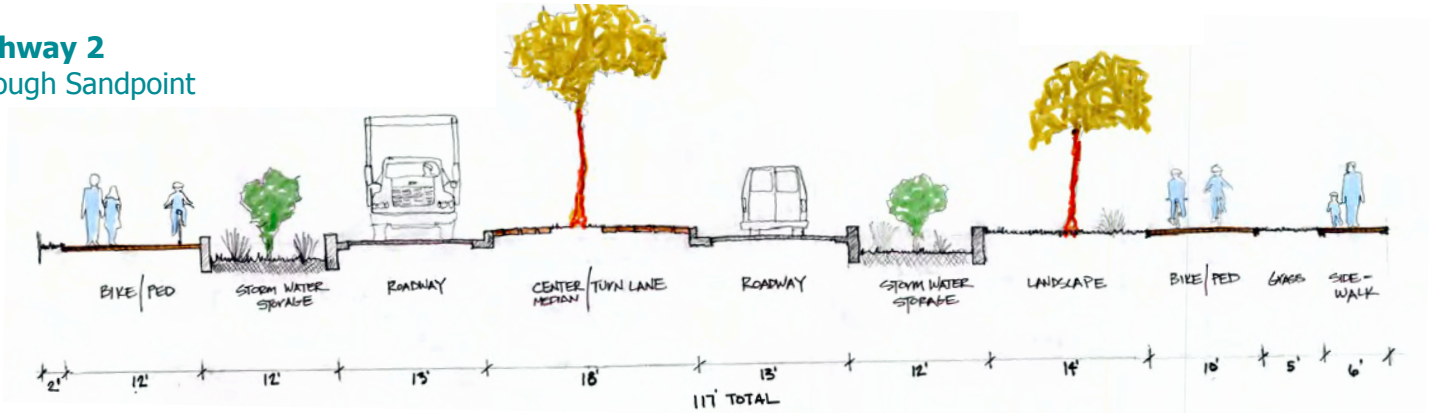
Highway 2 through Sandpoint
Concept for Reconfigured Intersection
of Olive Avenue / Michigan Street / US-2

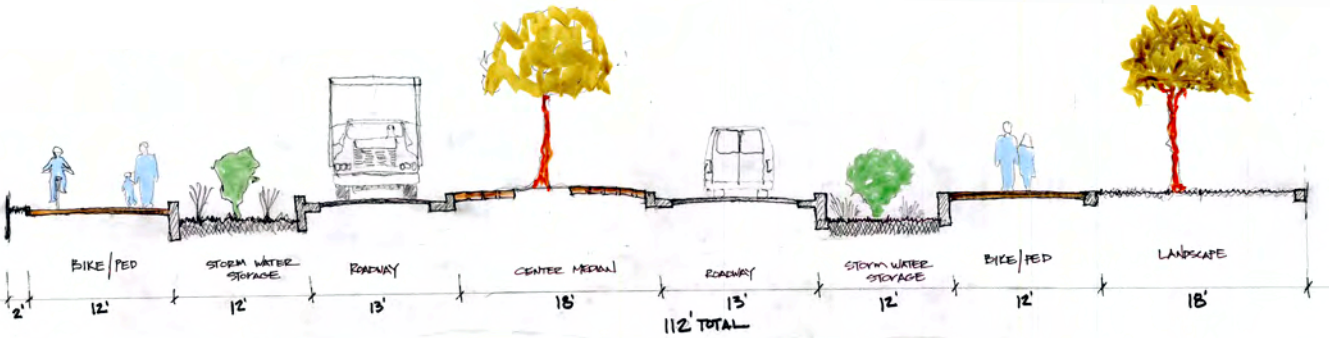


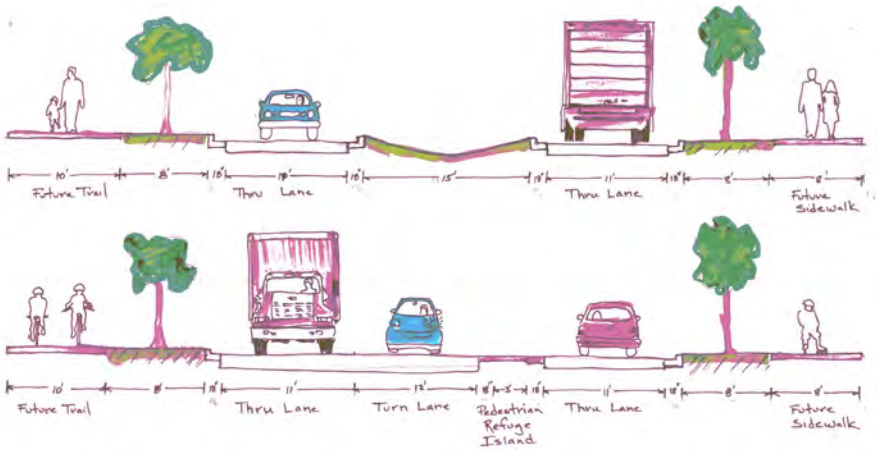
CORRIDOR CROSS-SECTIONS

The following concepts were additionally developed by charrette participants to depict proposed ideas in cross-section for various segments of the Highway 2/200 corridor.

Highway 2
Through Sandpoint

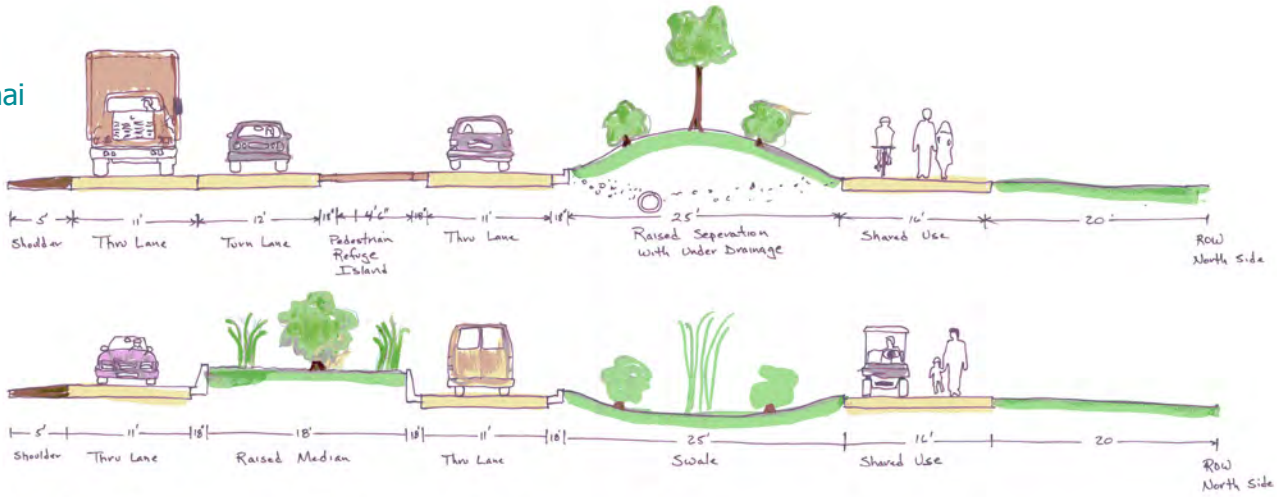






Highway 200
Through Ponderay

Highway 200
Through Kootenai



Action Plan

The Highway 2/200 corridor through the four communities represents both an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity is to apply the best ideas in modern transportation planning and design to achieve the kind of community form and character that residents and stakeholders in each community envision for their future. The challenge is to build momentum and make tangible progress in the face of inertia, competing priorities and the inherent complexities in coordinating local land use development with state highway planning and design.

This "Regional Strategy" concludes with an Action Plan, shown on page 33. The Action Plan is designed specifically to help local leaders build momentum and begin to achieve tangible progress. Five key elements useful in establishing strategic direction are:

Strategic Investment
Much can be accomplished through planning, marketing, coordination and regulation. But, real progress toward the outcomes described in this document will require public investment in infrastructure. As public sector capital investments occur, the private sector will begin to respond with its own investments on abutting and nearby lands. This will generate increased interest and confidence – "mojo" – that will encourage further public and private investment. This kind of progress is possible, perhaps even likely, in this corridor. But it must begin with actual investments in physical infrastructure. Such investments initially should be small and should be selected to catalyze a private sector response. Later, larger and more costly projects will become feasible.

Capital Project Development
Capital improvements require years of effort before physical construction can begin. Planning, conceptual design, final design, and establishing needed rights of way all require time and money. Successful implementation of the recommendations of this report will require many

projects over at least a couple of decades. The best way for the region to make progress on such a large task will be to work together on regional priorities by setting in motion project planning and development for selected near-term projects.

It is a fundamental principle of modern transportation planning that "money comes to plans faster than plans come to money." Local leaders often hesitate to spend on uncertain ventures, looking for others to provide the early money to get projects off the ground. But, while there are many potential sources of funding for final design, right of way and construction (federal, state, local and private), local communities and their partners must "prime the pump" by preparing "shovel-ready" projects.
In today's investment environment, "shovel-ready" means:

- planning and concept design have been accomplished;
- utility and right of way issues have been identified along with potential solutions;
- public awareness and support has been nurtured; and,
- local, state and national elected leadership understands the need.

Leadership Development
It can be enormously challenging for local municipalities to maintain focus and commitment over time. Elections are frequent. Recessions come and go. Sometimes, priorities can seem to fluctuate almost daily with each morning newspaper. Enthusiasm for challenging, long-term priorities can ebb and flow. Successful communities address this by working consciously to develop future elected leaders. Cities and towns don't have "institutional memories," but people who have been involved in public affairs can provide the knowledge, memory and continuity over time that are required to maintain progress toward regional priorities. Workshops like the charrette that is reported in this document bring people together, enabling them to learn about transportation issues and community objectives and empowering them to be active in the public arena. The objective is not that everyone should agree on priorities or desired outcomes, but that a growing body of citizens is involved in discussing and deciding how to proceed. If communities invest in this kind of capacity building, the result is a flow of knowledgeable citizens onto appointed boards and commissions and elected councils that will accelerate local efforts on challenges like the Highway 2/200 corridor.

Partnerships
The Highway 2/200 effort has been accelerated by Dover, Sandpoint, Ponderay, Kootenai and the Idaho Transportation Department coming together in a strategic partnership. Certainly, those involved in the process understand that building and supporting a regional partnership is the key to the success of the four communities. So far, this has been a relatively low-risk undertaking: the collaboration has not been expensive and no community has had to compromise on its objectives or priorities. Down the road, things will get more complicated. Project priorities will have to be determined. Funding for these projects will likely come from sources that require competitive applications. It will be imperative that the four communities and the state DOT work to nurture and support the continuing Highway 2/200 partnership.

As listed in the Action Plan, following, it may be appropriate for the municipalities to consider formalizing a regional transportation planning program or perhaps giving the Highway 2/200 Committee more official status. It may also be advisable to broaden the partnership somewhat by including the Independent Highway District, Bonner County and other stakeholder entities. The partnership will need a forum where objectives and priorities can be discussed and decided.

Monitoring and Reporting
Strategic enterprises require ongoing performance information. Maintaining support for the Highway 2/200 program, keeping the regional partnership together and focused, and developing the required local/regional/state funding all can be facilitated by developing specific objectives and priorities and then monitoring and reporting on progress toward them. The communities should work to develop a reporting mechanism that is transparent and easily available to the public.

NEXT STEPS

To begin implementation of recommendations from the New Mobility West regional planning effort for the Highway 2/200 Corridor, the following priority action items have been agreed upon to be implemented by the designated parties within the time frames specified below:

3-MONTH ACTION ITEMS (MARCH 2016)

- ☐ Scan concepts for 3 immediate projects and forward to ITD (5th and Oak intersection, Ontario intersection, Baldy extension) . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Re-examine purpose and governing structure of the 2/200 Committee and/or Cabinet . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Create project web page . . . . . City of Sandpoint
- ☐ Develop road show for project – elements include a PowerPoint, report, speakers bureau, and meeting-in-a-bag . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Select 1 priority pilot project – regional, small-scale . . . . . 2/200 Committee

6-MONTH ACTION ITEMS (JUNE 2016)

- ☐ Develop schedule and present road show to local officials . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Hold meetings with property owners along select projects:
  - ☐ 5th Avenue, between Cedar and Larch . . . . . City of Sandpoint
  - ☐ School Activity Node at Ontario . . . . . City of Sandpoint
  - ☐ Railroad Avenue . . . . . City of Kootenai
  - ☐ Design path along north side of Highway 200 . . . . . City of Ponderay
- ☐ Build short trail/shoulder link to connect Community Trail with the westbound highway shoulders on Dover overpass . . . . . Independent Highway District
- ☐ Design prototypical bus pullout . . . . . Spot Transit
- ☐ Develop US Bike Route 10 signage plan with ITD . . . . . 2/200 Committee

12-MONTH ACTION ITEMS (DEC. 2016)

- ☐ Develop regional wayfinding plan for the Quad Cities trail/bicycle system . . . . . 2/200 Committee with Trail Mix
- ☐ Develop "tactical urbanism" demonstrations for select projects:
  - ☐ 5th Avenue, between Cedar and Larch . . . . . City of Sandpoint
  - ☐ School Activity Node at Ontario . . . . . City of Sandpoint
  - ☐ Railroad Avenue . . . . . City of Kootenai
  - ☐ Highway 200 restriping through Ponderay . . . . . City of Ponderay
- ☐ Follow-up with ITD on status of 3 immediate projects . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Design/refine concept plans for 5th Avenue medians . . . . . City of Sandpoint
- ☐ Engage property owners and conduct design charette for the US-2/Boyer Ave intersection . . . . . City of Sandpoint
- ☐ Develop concept design, complete traffic network safety analysis, and develop funding strategy for 2nd Avenue connection . . . . . City of Kootenai
- ☐ Explore various funding sources for implementation . . . . . 2/200 Committee
- ☐ Identify a regional project/develop plan for submitting for a TIGER grant . . . . . 2/200 Committee

NEW MOBILITY WEST