



Gilham Road Sidewalks Design Concept

September 2020

Proposed sidewalk project on Gilham Road: sidewalks on both sides of the street between Ayres Road and Ashbury Lane; and sidewalks on the west side of the street between Ashbury Drive and Sterling Park Place

Acknowledgements

This is a community-driven project under the leadership of:

The Northeast Neighbors

Funding Provided by:

The Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization

Project Management and Technical Team:

Peggy Keppler, County Engineer

Jay Blomme, County Surveyor

Kerry Werner, Project Manager and Design Engineer

Sasha Vartanian, Transportation Planning Supervisor

George Tkebuchava, Engineering Associate

Danielle Stanka, Engineering Associate

Becky Taylor, Senior Transportation Planner

Jeremy Sherer, Right-of-Way Engineering

Kevin Brown, Environmental

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the project purpose and process.

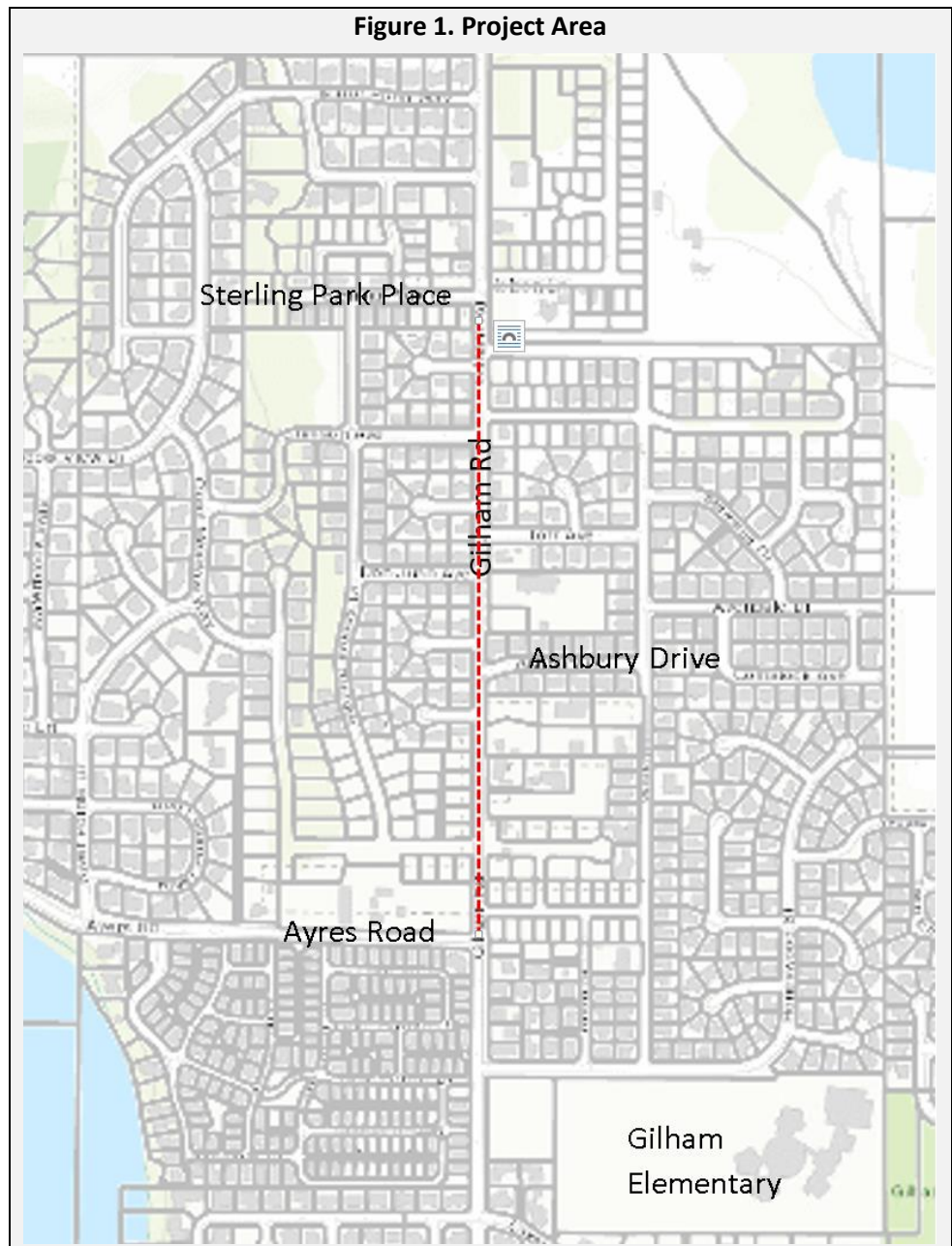
Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve safety for all users of Gilham Road. This project would provide a sidewalk on the west side of Gilham Road between Sterling Park Place and Ashbury Drive; and would fill in sidewalk gaps on both sides of Gilham Road between Ashbury Drive and Ayres Road. These improvements would connect to the sidewalk network south of Ayres Road.

Gilham Elementary is located immediately south of the project area, on the east side of Gilham Road, south of Ayres Road. Sidewalks and bike lanes on Gilham Road abruptly end at Ayres Road. North of Ayres Road, there is a patchwork of incomplete sidewalks constructed by more recent residential subdivisions; and north of Ashbury Drive, Gilham Road has no sidewalks and has very narrow roadway shoulders with roadside ditches that force people to walk in the vehicle travel lane.

The Northeast Neighbors have been advocating

for sidewalk improvements on Gilham Road for several years (see Appendix B). Funding for this project was made possible by the Central Lane Planning Organization (MPO). As a member of the



MPO, Lane County applied for this funding which was awarded by the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC).

Process

The MPO funding requires compliance with applicable federal requirements. The funding is administered through the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Lane County and ODOT staff had a project kick-off meeting in October 2019 and met on-site in November 2019. The requirements associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and storm water management increased the project cost estimates. Further, the site assessment identified the potential for more significant property and natural resource impacts (i.e. ditches and trees).

In January 2020, Lane County obtained a Metro Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) amendment to reprogram funding from a cancelled project to provide additional funding for this project. The current project funding programmed through the MPO is \$1,849,321.58. The project funding is phased for design in 2019-2020, right-of-way in 2021, and construction in 2022.

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. This report demonstrates consistency with these procedural requirements.



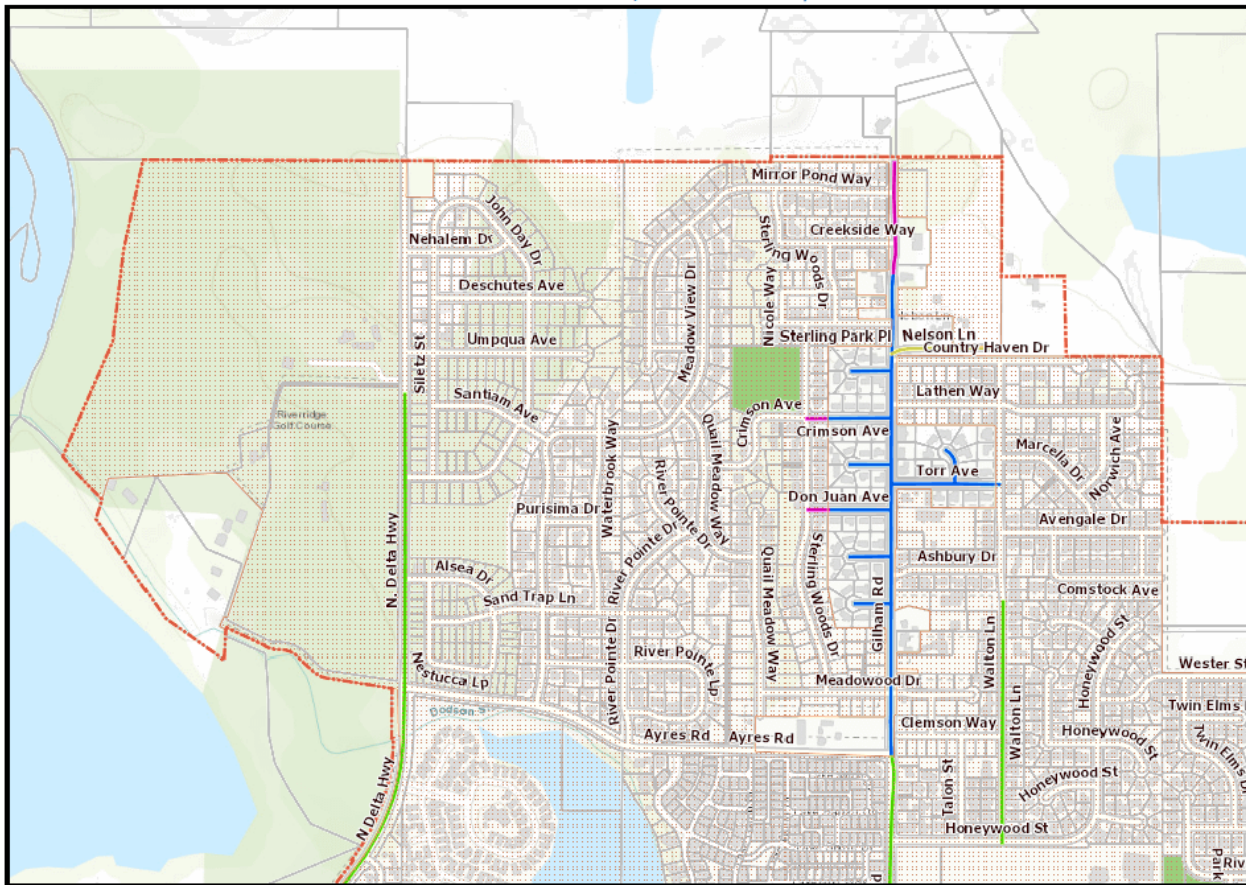
Chapter 2 – Existing Conditions







This chapter describes constraints and opportunities of Gilham Road

Jurisdiction

Currently, Lane County has jurisdiction of Gilham Road north of Ayres Road to about Sterling Park Place (see Figure 3). This portion of Gilham Road is located within the City of Eugene’s urban growth boundary (UGB) and is rapidly developing and urbanizing. As population growth occurs along this section of road, additional demands and stresses are being placed upon the roadway.

Figure 3. Boundaries Map



 Lane County Road (County owned & maintained)	 Local Access Road (LAR) – A public road maintained by abutting property owners. Not owned or maintained by government. Would become City street if annexed.	 Urban Growth Boundary (urban development allowed within upon annexation)
 Former County Road – Transferred to City	 City Limits (Inside City)	

As adjacent lands develop, the City of Eugene has collected Transportation System Development Charges and Advance-Payment Equivalent Assessments. In some instances, developers have built half-street improvements, including sidewalks, adjacent to the land being developed. Several properties have not been annexed and are already developed; it is, therefore, unlikely that sidewalks will be completed as the result of land development.

Like all County roads within urban growth boundaries, a desired outcome of this project is jurisdictional transfer to the City of Eugene. Jurisdictional transfer is when ownership of a roadway is transferred from one roadway authority to another. When an agency has jurisdiction of a street or highway, that agency is responsible for the upkeep of that facility, including reconstruction, maintenance, and preservation.

Farther to the north, Gilham Road is a Local Access Road (LAR). A local access road is a road that has been dedicated to the public, but it has not been accepted as part of the publicly-maintained road system. The County still has jurisdiction within the rights-of-way of local access roads, but local landowners have the responsibility for maintenance.

Roadway Conditions

North of Ayres Road, Gilham Road has a patchwork of incomplete sidewalks constructed by more recent residential subdivisions. There is a bike lane only on the east side of the road. North of Ashbury Lane, Gilham Road has no sidewalks and has very narrow roadway shoulders with roadside ditches that force people to walk in the vehicle travel lane.

Figure 4. Existing Roadway Conditions



Incomplete Sidewalks Between Ayres Rd. and Ashbury Dr.



No Sidewalks North of Ashbury Drive

Vehicle Volume and Speed

The average daily traffic (ADT) of Gilham Road north of Ayres Road is 3,050 vehicle trips. At the request of neighbors, Lane County applied to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) in 2017 to reduce the posted speed from 35 mph to 25 mph. The speed-setting methodology, however,

only supported reducing the posted speed to 30 mph. Speed measurements revealed that most people were driving over 30 mph: 50 percent drove 33 mph; 85 percent drove 38 mph; and the maximum speed recorded was 86 mph.

In response to neighborhood complaints about speeding, Lane County has deployed speed feedback signs on Gilham Road. Lane County has about eight speed feedback signs that are rotated throughout the county. These signs include radars that display the actual driving speed which typically results in drivers reducing their speed.

Crashes

There are no crashes of record.

Environmental

Prior to the construction of any improvements, a more detailed review of environmental impacts will occur, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or other applicable regulations.

Storm Water System

Between Ayres Road and Ashbury Drive, storm water planters with curb cuts already exist along much of the east side of the road in this area. North of Ashbury Drive, a large ditch runs along the east side of Gilham Road up to Don Juan Avenue. At this location, the ditch switches from the east side of the road to the west side. Two pipes convey the flow between the two ditches. The west ditch runs along Gilham Road, roughly 800 feet, until the ditch makes a 90 degree bend and continues. The ditch provides conveyance of storm water along Gilham Road.

Chapter 3 – Public Involvement

The community provided input on the project which is summarized in this chapter.

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, including Lane Manual 15.580 *Citizen Input with Regard to Individual Road Improvement Projects*. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, some public outreach activities had to be modified to be virtual (on-line or by phone) rather than in person. Nevertheless, there has been significant public input on this project (see Appendix B for an inventory of public comments received to-date) with the majority commenting in favor of the project.

Public Involvement Goals

- Develop early communication & rapport with public
 - Increase public confidence in Lane County by improving transparency and accountability
 - Inform all stakeholders (including environmental justice populations) about the project and gain their views, concerns, and values – with an inclusive, fair, and responsive process
- Obtain local knowledge and take account of public inputs in decision making
 - Demonstrate that our approach in addressing the need is reasonable, sensible, and responsible
 - Solicit information, provide timely information
 - Be clear about what ideas can or cannot be explored

Northeast Neighbors

This project was initiated by the neighborhood association (see Appendix B for neighborhood newsletters lobbying for the project). Staff presented the project at the neighborhood meeting on November 12, 2019. Neighbors were excited about the project and appreciative of Lane County pursuing federal funding to avoid assessing abutting properties.

Public Open House

Draft designs were completed in February 2020 and presented to the community during an open house held at Gilham Elementary school on March 11, 2020. Approximately 15 people attended the open house. The open house was promoted through postcards mailed to residents within a several block radius of the project area, the City of Eugene's *InMotion* e-newsletter, the Northeast Neighbors neighborhood association newsletter, and the Gilham Elementary School newsletter. County staff were on hand during the open house to answer questions. An additional presentation scheduled for March 10, 2020 specifically to the Northeast Neighbors was cancelled due to concerns related to coronavirus.

Attendees were generally supportive of the designs. The largest point of contention centered on the end point of the project, Sterling Park Place, instead of the northern terminus of the street, Mirror Pond Way. This was explained as being related to tree and property impacts.

Comments provided during the open house either asked for additional elements to be included in the design or asked for certain elements to be reconsidered. Design elements commented on include bike lanes, sidewalks, visible pedestrian crossings, and planter strips. Several attendees expressed that they would like the urban standards upgrade to be additionally applied to the northern section of Gilham Road beyond Ashbury Drive. Additionally, it was asked that the planned five-foot wide bike lane be widened.

Public Hearings

Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC)

In 2018, the MPC held a public hearing on Lane County's request for MPO funding for the project. As detailed in Appendix B, 28 people testified in favor of the project.

The **Lane County Transportation Advisory Committee (TrAC)** held a public hearing on September 23, 2020. Three people testified: David Martin, Bob Siegmund, and Dan Edgar. All spoke in favor of the project. Mr. Martin and Mr. Siegmund both said they were "happy about a partial solution" – referring to the desire to do more in the future on the LAR portion. In response to Mr. Siegmund's request for street lights, staff explained how lighting is neither included in the budget for installation nor part of Lane County's road maintenance program. Mr. Edgar reiterated his requested included in the written record and also noted that staff should consider additional improvements that the intersection of Ayres Road and Gilham Road. Staff agreed to follow-up with City staff, noting that the intersection is under City jurisdiction. The TrAC voted to recommend approval of the design concept as presented in Appendix A.

Project Webpage: www.lanecounty.org/GilhamRd

Throughout the process, the County updated a webpage dedicated to the project to enable interested parties to review key documents and be informed about upcoming opportunities to provide feedback.

Mailings

Interested parties received project updates via email. Postcards and letters were mailed to abutting property owners at project milestones, such as notices of public meetings.

Environmental Justice and Title VI Civil Rights

Environmental Justice (EJ) and Title VI focus on understanding and addressing the unique needs of different socioeconomic groups, which are vital components to effective transportation decision-making. Key areas of consideration for compliance include: identifying populations so that their needs can be acknowledged and addressed; and evaluating and improving the public involvement process

to eliminate participation barriers and engaging minority and low-income populations in transportation decision-making. Available census data indicated no populations of concern.

Summary of Public Comments

There has been no public comment objecting to the proposed project. Neighbors north of the project expressed frustration about sidewalks not continuing north of Sterling Park Place. This portion of Gilham Road is an LAR. There is insufficient funding to construct sidewalks along the LAR.

Some property owners have expressed concern about impacts to their property. Additional right-of-way width will be required for the project from some of the abutting properties, which is estimated to range between three to seven feet. A detailed right-of-way acquisition plan will be developed following design concept approval, when more design work is completed to determine the needs for managing storm water runoff and whether there is the potential to include short retaining walls to further reduce private property impacts. Staff will work with property owners affected by the project, such as right-of-way acquisition and coordination on mitigating impacts to fences and landscaping.

An inventory of public comments received to-date are included in Appendix B.

Chapter 4 – Design Implementation

This chapter describes the Design Concept and next steps to implement the project.

Design Concept

The design concept drawings are included as Appendix A. The design fulfills the project’s goal of improving safety for people walking on Gilham Road. This design is for sidewalks on both sides of Gilham Road between Ayres Road and Ashbury Drive and for sidewalks on the west side of the road between Ashbury Drive and Sterling Park Place. Additionally, bike lanes will be painted on both sides of Gilham Road from Ayres Road to Ashbury Drive.

Between Ayres Road and Ashbury Drive, storm water drainage will be built to City of Eugene standards. Planters with curb cuts already exist along much of the east side of the road in this area. In this southern portion of the project, matching storm water drainage systems will be built along the west side of the road and filled in where necessary on the east side.

North of Ashbury Drive, a large ditch runs along the east side of Gilham Road up to Don Juan Avenue. At this location, the ditch switches from the east side of the road to the west side. To construct a sidewalk along the west side of Gilham Road and to continue to provide storm water conveyance, Lane County will install a large pipe along the length of the ditch, up until the bend. After the installation of the pipe, the ditch will be filled with soil in order to provide for a landscape strip and sidewalk.

In addition to funding constraints, design considerations for this project included limiting impacts to private property and the environment. There are an increased number of trees along the eastern side of Gilham that would be disturbed if a sidewalk were constructed on the east side of Gilham Road north of Ashbury Drive. Due to environmental and property impacts, the project extent had to be narrowed to exclude the LAR portion of Gilham Road north of Sterling Park Place.

Figure 5. Physical Constraints Northern Gilham



Funding

The majority of funding for this project is sourced from grants awarded to Lane County from the MPO. The MPO receives a set amount of federal funding each year from the United States Department of Transportation, which it then distributes to local transportation projects through a competitive selection process. Grants supporting this project include the Surface Transportation Block Grant and the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Grant. The current project funding programmed through the MPO is \$1,849,321.58. The project funding is phased for design in 2019-2020, right-of-way in 2021, and construction in 2022.

In the City of Eugene, property owners are normally financially responsible for the construction and maintenance of improvements like sidewalks. 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)

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. Because this project would only require a part of a property to be acquired, the amount will also include any measurable loss in value or damages to the remaining property due to the partial acquisition.

Additional right-of-way width will be required for the project from some of the abutting properties which is estimated to range between three to seven feet from abutting properties. A detailed right-of-way acquisition plan will be developed following design concept approval, when more design work is completed to determine the needs for managing storm water runoff and whether there is the potential to include short retaining walls to further reduce private property impacts. Staff will work with property owners affected by the project, such as right-of-way acquisition and coordination on mitigating impacts to fences and landscaping.

Jurisdictional Transfer

If jurisdiction over Gilham Road north of Ayres Road should transfer from Lane County to the City of Eugene, it would create the opportunity for property owners with property that is connected to Gilham Road to opt into the City. It is important to note that, should the transfer occur, “annexing” into the City would be purely voluntary and not at all mandated.

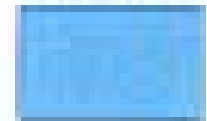



Next Steps

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 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 acquisition and coordination on mitigating impacts to fences and landscaping.

Gilham Road: Ayres Road to Ashbury Drive, Image 1



LEGEND

-  CURB RAMP AREA
-  DETECTABLE WARNING SURFACE FOR CURB RAMP
-  TO BE DETERMINED BASED ON SURVEY
-  RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW)

NOTE

1. THE DESIGN SHOWN IS A ROUGH ESTIMATE BASED ON AERIAL IMAGERY. THIS DESIGN WILL CHANGE WHEN THE SURVEY WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND THE ACTUAL RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE IS IDENTIFIED. THE ADA RAMP DESIGN IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON THE GRADES FROM THE SURVEY.
2. ROW—PUBLIC LAND OR PROPERTY THAT IS ACQUIRED OR DEDICATED TO THE PUBLIC FOR TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES.

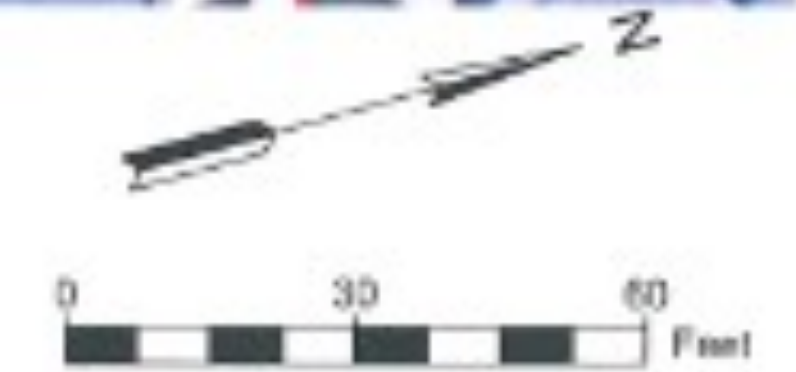


Gilham Road: Ayres Road to Ashbury Drive, Image 2



LEGEND

	BIKE LANE		RETAINING WALL
	SIDEWALK		LANDSCAPE STRIP
	DRIVEWAY		CURB RAMP AREA
	RIGHT-OF-WAY		DETECTABLE WARNING SURFACE FOR CURB RAMP
			CURB AND GUTTER



NOTE

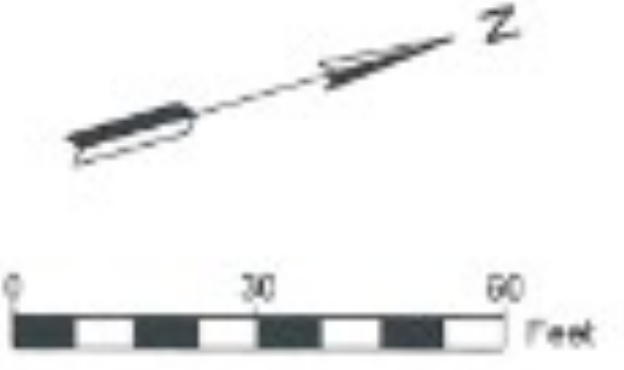
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2. ROW - PUBLIC LAND OR PROPERTY THAT IS ACQUIRED OR DEDICATED TO THE PUBLIC FOR TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES.

Gilham Road: Ashbury Drive to Sterling Park Place, Image 1



LEGEND

- LANDSCAPE STRIP
- CURB RAMP AREA
- SIDEWALK
- DETECTABLE WARNING SURFACE FOR CURB RAMP
- RIGHT-OF-WAY



NOTE

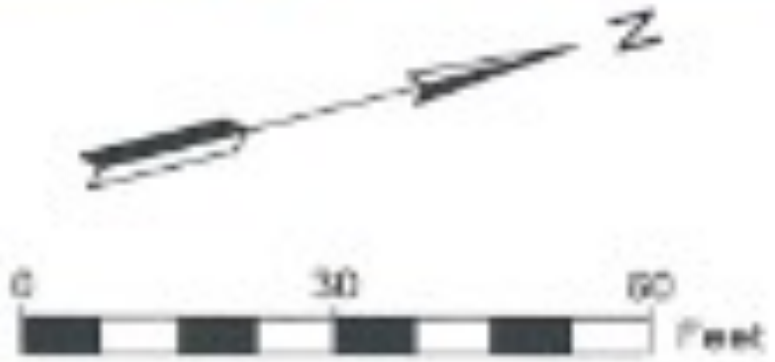
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Gilham Road: Ashbury Drive to Sterling Park Place, Image 2



LEGEND

- LANDSCAPE STRIP
- CURB RAMP AREA
- SIDEWALK
- DETECTABLE WARNING SURFACE FOR CURB RAMP
- RIGHT-OF-WAY



NOTE

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