



Langdon Winter Walkability Assessment

MARCH 15, 2017

Report

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INTRODUCTION

A community may be designated walkable if it is easy as well as safe for the pedestrians to walk about (to schools, stores, parks, post office etc.) Additionally, a walkable community is such that encourages safe usage of existing infrastructure while expanding transportation options for users with varied ranges of mobility.

SITE SELECTION

As recommended from the Langdon Walkability Assessment reported in August 2016, a follow-up assessment was suggested to be done in the winter months for comparison. The Langdon High School Health Careers Class organized and participated in the Winter Langdon Walkability Assessment. With special emphasis to focus on the path conditions usability for the mobility impaired. The sidewalks/crosswalks around 3-block area from Langdon Area High School north end starting point to south end of the Langdon Area Elementary School. This area also includes part of the City Park, City Pool, and the Langdon Day Care Center.

ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Walkability Checklist from www.pedbikeinfo.org was used as an assessment tool. A brief training was provided prior to the site visit assessment. The training included background information regarding the checklist and also detailed information regarding the rating scale used in the assessment. See sample of checklist used attached.

ATTENDANCE

Instructor and Health Careers Class

Cavalier County Public Health

Superintendent of Langdon Area Schools

Principal of Langdon Area Elementary School

Special guest with mobility impairment/wheelchair

Guests by Interview

Langdon City Park Board

Langdon Day Care Center

Langdon City Street Department

SITE WALK/VISIT

The site visit was completed March 15, 2017. Starting at the Langdon Area High School and looped around the 3-block area, encompassing the Langdon City Park, Langdon City Swimming Pool, Langdon Area Elementary School, and the Langdon Day Care Center.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-Road north of High School, rugged terrain, uneven and heaved pavement.

Figure 2-Road south of High School, cracked with faded crosswalk.

Figure 3- Road SW of High School, no sidewalk, ramp covered with ice and snow.

Figure 4- West sidewalk adjacent to City Park, cracked and covered with snow and ice.

Figure 5- SW corner of High School, ramp missing, partially covered with snow and ice.

Figure 6- Handicap parking area in front of Elementary School main entrance, cracked and ice covered ramp.

Figure 7- NE side of Elementary School, obstructed sidewalk and crosswalk.

Figure 8- SW corner of Elementary School, crosswalk leads to snow hill and fence.

Figure 9- East side of Elementary School, no sidewalk and broken pavement.

Figure 10- East side of Elementary School, no sidewalk and road obstructed by snow and ice.

Figure 11- North of High School, no sidewalk and road heaved with potholes.

Figure 12- Ramp missing at the crosswalk connecting City Park and Day Care Center.

Figure 13- Sidewalk starts and stops across driveways leading to the parking lot south of the High School.

ASSESSMENT/OBSERVATION

Special guest, mobility impaired using wheelchair as means of mobility, was unable to maneuver throughout the walkability assessment independently. Sidewalks were not wheelchair accessible leaving the road as the alternative for traveling the established path. The pavement had cracked, heaved uneven sections, and obstructed with partial snow and ice throughout the path, proving to be a difficult area to maneuver without assistance for the mobility impaired.

INTERVIEWS

Thoughts and Suggestions on walking path and street improvement progress

Langdon City Park Board Representative

- Would like to see better illumination around the walking path for safety.
- More trash bins available throughout the walking path to cut down on litter.
- Improving the conditions of the existing sidewalks and adding sidewalks where needed.

Langdon Day Care Center Director

- Wider curbs
- Signs that are clearly visible

Langdon City Streets Department Manager

- Purchased a \$4000 curb and crosswalk striper April 2017, with the intention to start stenciling around the schools, pool, and day care.
- Purchased signage for the improved safety surrounding the Day Care Center.
- Discussed the difficulty of receiving grant funds, due to the City of Langdon not meeting the requirements needed to qualify.
- Health Careers Class suggested speed bump placement strategically throughout the walking path. This issue would need to be presented to the Langdon City Board for approval.
- Health Careers Class would like to volunteer for a walkability improvement project as determined and approved by the City of Langdon Street Department Manager. The project will take place in May 2017. Which entails, designated placement of handicap parking street signs, for the main entrance parking places in front of the Langdon Area High School. The City will supply the signs and materials needed for placement, and the Langdon Area High School Health Careers Class will assemble and install the handicap parking signs.

Now that you know the problems, you can find the answers.

Improving your community's score

1. Did you have room to walk?

Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
Sidewalks broken or cracked
Sidewalks blocked
No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
Too much traffic

What you and your child can do immediately

- pick another route for now
- tell local traffic engineering or public works department about specific problems and provide a copy of the checklist

What you and your community can do with more time

- speak up at board meetings
- write or petition city for walkways and gather neighborhood signatures
- make media aware of problem
- work with a local transportation engineer to develop a plan for a safe walking route

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

Road too wide
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair

- pick another route for now
- share problems and checklist with local traffic engineering or public works department
- trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask your neighbors to do the same
- leave nice notes on problem cars asking owners not to park there

- push for crosswalks/signals/ parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings
- report to traffic engineer where parked cars are safety hazards
- report illegally parked cars to the police
- request that the public works department trim trees or plants
- make media aware of problem

3. Did drivers behave well?

Backed without looking
Did not yield
Turned into walkers
Drove too fast
Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights

- pick another route for now
- set an example: slow down and be considerate of others
- encourage your neighbors to do the same
- report unsafe driving to the police

- petition for more enforcement
- request protected turns
- ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas
- ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations
- organize a neighborhood speed watch program

4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen
Stop and look left, right, left before crossing
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic
Cross with the light

- educate yourself and your child about safe walking
- organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school

- encourage schools to teach walking safely
- help schools start safe walking programs
- encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school

5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass, flowers, trees
Scary dogs
Scary people
Not well lit
Dirty, litter
Lots of traffic

- point out areas to avoid to your child; agree on safe routes
- ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced
- report scary dogs to the animal control department
- report scary people to the police
- report lighting needs to the police or appropriate public works department
- take a walk with a trash bag
- plant trees, flowers in your yard
- select alternative route with less traffic

- request increased police enforcement
- start a crime watch program in your neighborhood
- organize a community clean-up day
- sponsor a neighborhood beautification or tree-planting day
- begin an adopt-a-street program
- initiate support to provide routes with less traffic to schools in your community (reduced traffic during am and pm school commute times)

A Quick Health Check

Could not go as far or as fast as we wanted
Were tired, short of breath or had sore feet or muscles
Was the sun really hot?
Was it hot and hazy?

- start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days
- invite a friend or child along
- walk along shaded routes where possible
- use sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher, wear a hat and sunglasses
- try not to walk during the hottest time of day

- get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking
- call parks and recreation department about community walks
- encourage corporate support for employee walking programs
- plant shade trees along routes
- have a sun safety seminar for kids
- have kids learn about unhealthy ozone days and the Air Quality Index (AQI)

Need some guidance? These resources might help...

Great Resources

WALKING INFORMATION

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC)

UNC Highway Safety Research Center

Chapel Hill, NC

www.pedbikeinfo.org

www.walkinginfo.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School

Chapel Hill, NC

www.saferoutesinfo.org

For More Information about Who Can Help Address Community Problems

www.walkinginfo.org/problems/help.cfm

State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinators

<http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contacts.cfm>

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Federal Highway Administration

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Team

Office Of Safety

Washington, DC

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Traffic Safety Programs

Washington, DC

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/pedSAFE

SIDEWALK ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

US Access Board

Washington, DC

Phone: (800) 872-2253;

(800) 993-2822 (TTY)

www.access-board.gov

FEDERAL POLICY, GUIDANCE AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR WALKING FACILITIES

Federal Highway Administration

Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

Office of Natural and Human Environment

Washington, DC

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm



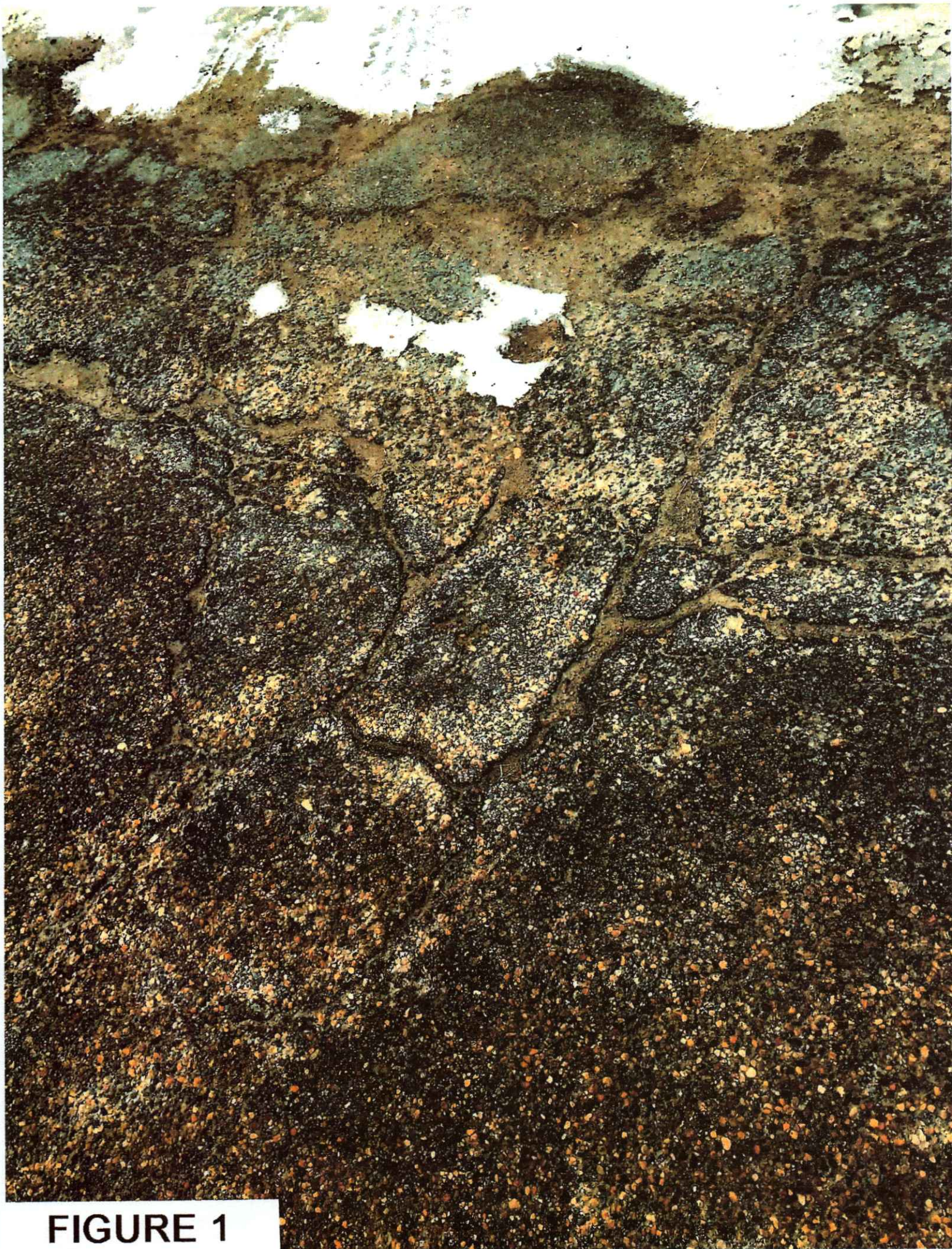


FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

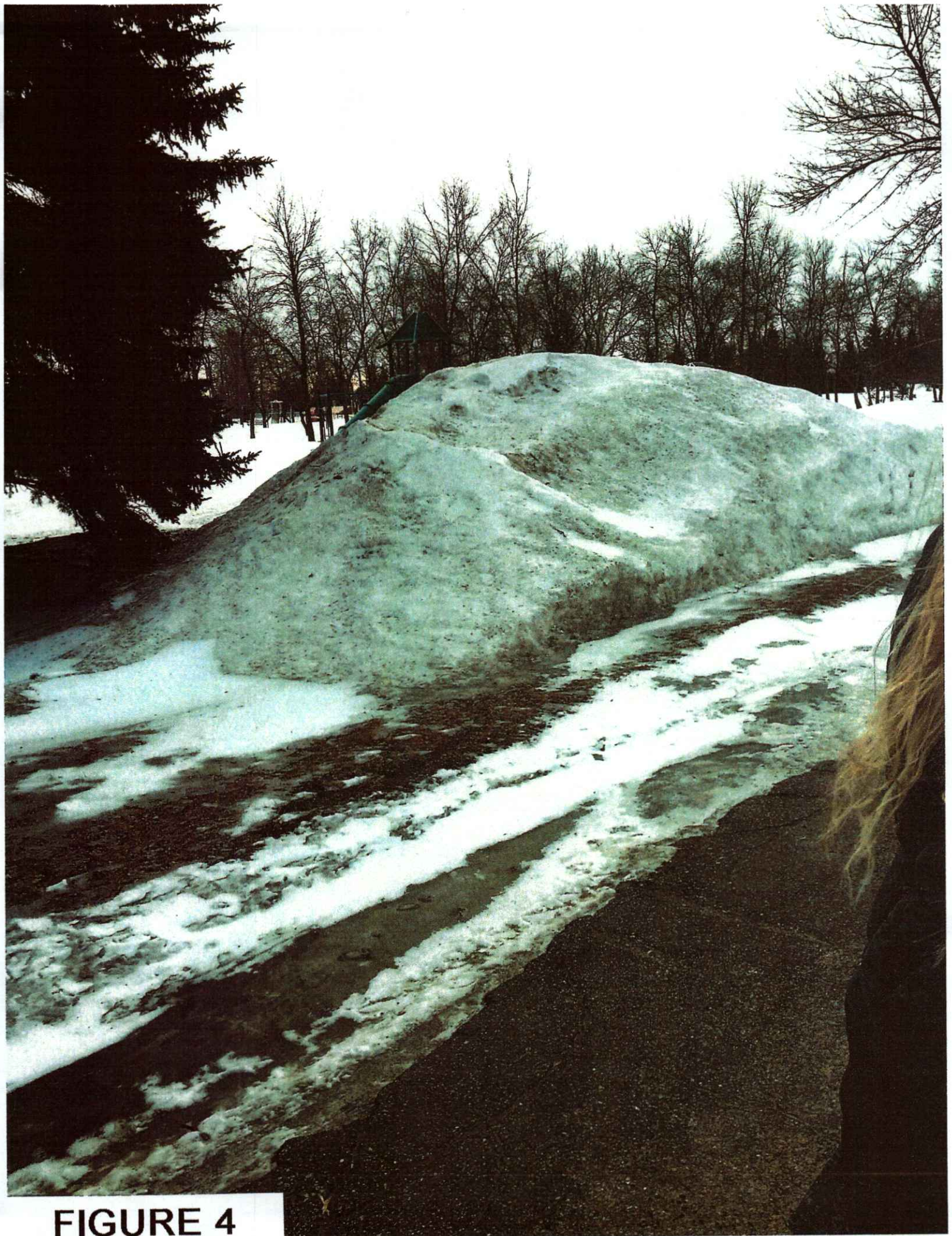


FIGURE 4



FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6



FIGURE 7

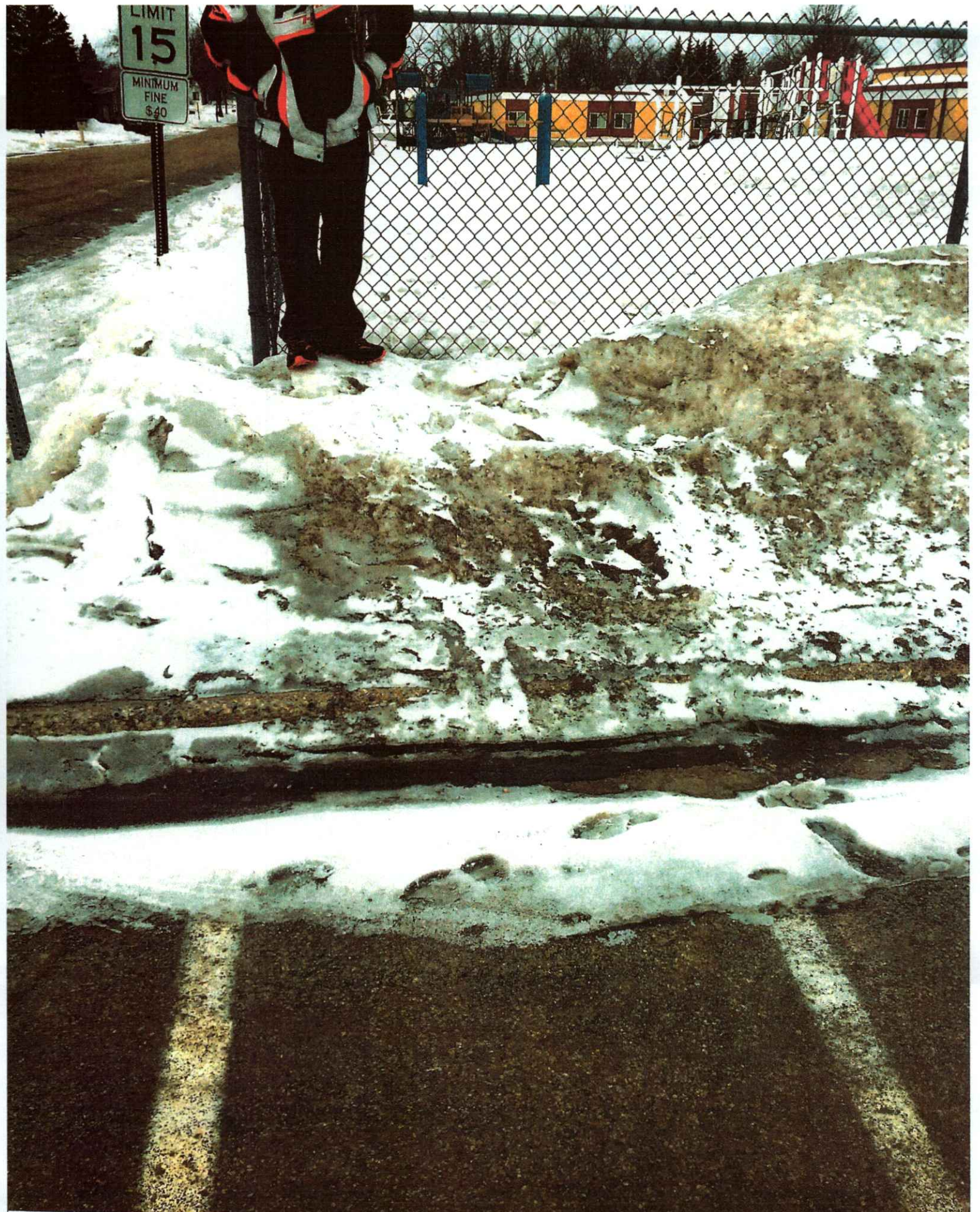


FIGURE 8



FIGURE 9



FIGURE 10

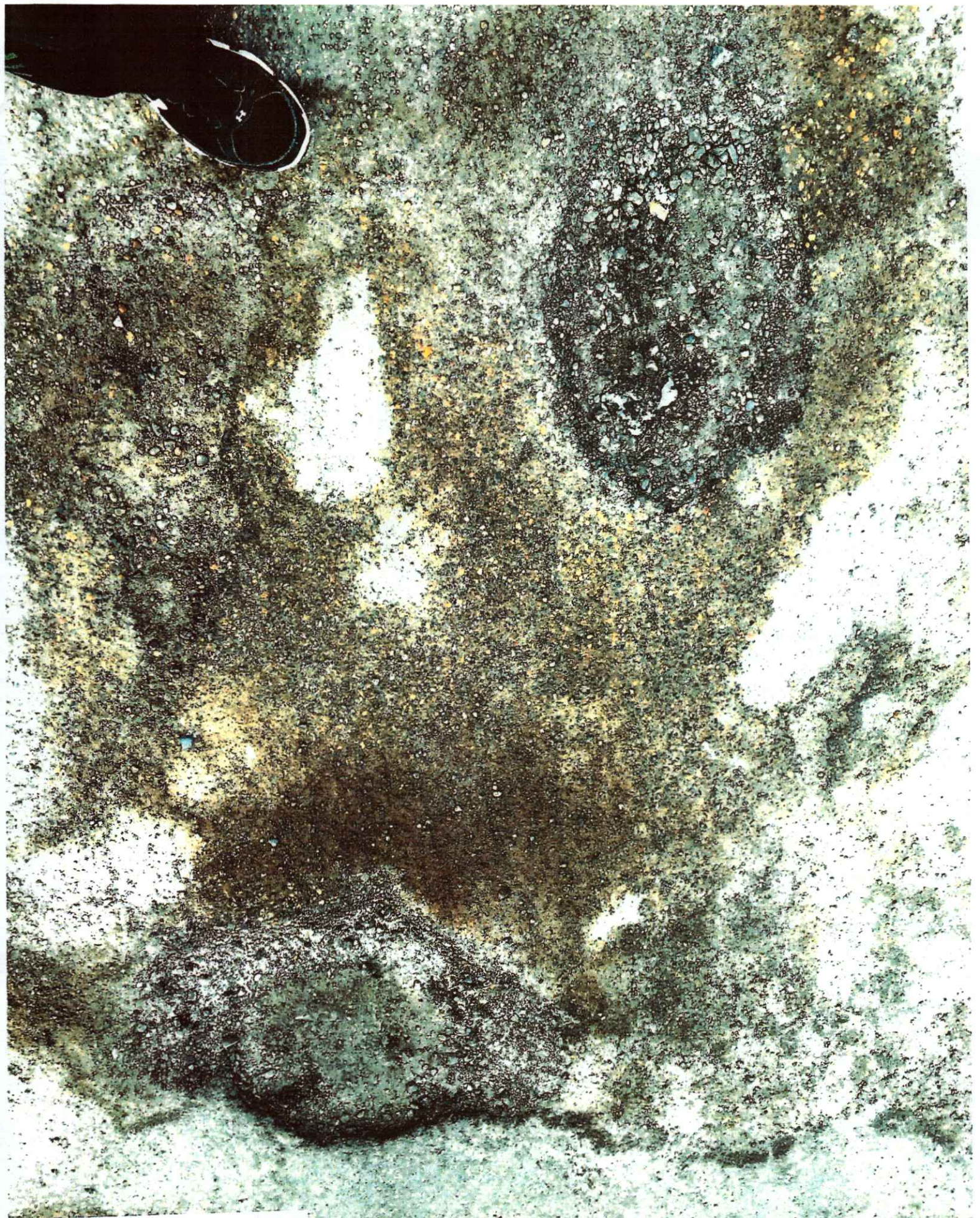


FIGURE 11



FIGURE 12

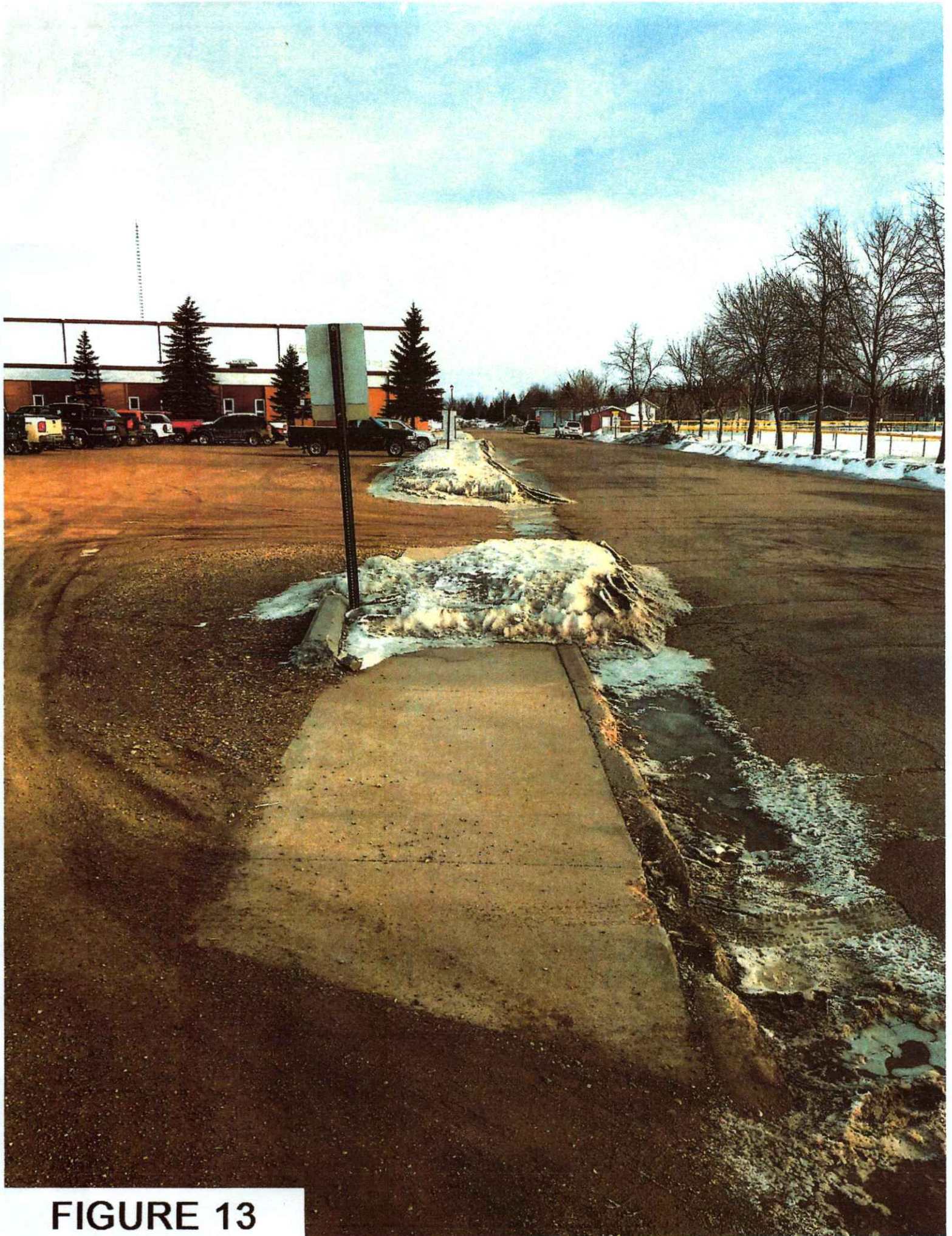


FIGURE 13

Appendix

1. Did you have room to walk?

- Park, Schools, and daycare sidewalks were blocked by snow and/or ice
- No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders on many streets
- Sidewalks cover only about 40% of the area
- Sidewalks not accessible for mobility impaired
- Many cracks on sidewalks

The overall score for sidewalks was 2.11 out of 6 equaling 35%

2. Was it easy to cross the street?

- Needed striped crosswalks, traffic signals, and signage
- Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
- Needed curb ramps
- Crosswalks are faded and hard to see

The overall score for crossing the streets was 3.11 out of 6 equaling 52%

3. Did drivers behave well?

- Parking on cross walks
- Very little traffic
- Did not yield to people crossing the streets
- Turned into people crossing the street
- Drove too fast

The overall score of drivers was 4.8 out of 6 equaling 80%

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?

- Difficult to see cross walks
- Difficult for drivers to see crosswalks
- Difficult to walk on sidewalks and shoulders
- Forced to walk in streets
- Did not see a lot of streetlights to illuminate walk ways
- Difficult to walk on streets

The overall score of the ability to follow safety rules was 2.4 out of 6 equaling 40%

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- Very cold
- Dangerous: Pot hole, ice, snowbanks, and cracks

The overall score of the pleasantness of the walk was 4.4 out of 6 equaling 74%

The overall score of the walk was 16.67 out of 30 or 55.6%.

REFERENCES

Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI) at North Dakota State University (NDSU). Advanced Traffic Analysis Center, Fargo, North Dakota.

Walkability Checklist. (n.d.). Retrieved March 2017, from http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/walkability_checklist.pdf

Special Recognition to Cavalier County Health District for training and materials.