



CITY OF OTHELLO PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting 500 E. Main St. February 21, 2023 6:00 PM

For those who would like to attend remotely, see virtual instructions at the end of the agenda

1. Call to Order - Roll Call
2. Public Input
3. Election of Chair & Vice-Chair
4. Approval of January 17, 2023 Minutes p.3
5. Active Transportation Plan – Public Hearing & Recommendation to Council p.5
6. Columbia Street Local Improvement District (LID) p.70
7. Municipal Code Update – Landscaping – OMC 17.74 p.72
8. January Building & Planning Department Report p.87
9. Upcoming Meeting Topics
 - a. **March 20:** Fence code OMC 14.36
 - b. **April 17:** Possible public hearings for Landscaping code and Fence code
10. Old Business
 - a. Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) – Council adopted 1-23-2023.
 - b. ADUs – Council directed the Commission to not work on ADUs at this time
 - c. Increase Planning Commission membership – Tentatively scheduled for introduction at 2-27-2023 Council
 - d. Housing – As time allows, we will look at further implementation possibilities from the [Housing Action Plan](#) (see attached) p.90
 - e. Subdivision Update – OMC Title 16 – This should be the next big project for the Commission
 - f. Zoning Update – Home Occupations – OMC 17.59 – We will come back to this as time allows

Next Regular Meeting is Monday, March 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Remote Meeting Instructions:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81894213261?pwd=MjMwZ01Ubmdaai8xdlFua0dvd3dMUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 9421 3261

Passcode: 357731

One tap mobile

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City of Othello
Planning Commission
January 17, 2023
Zuleica Morfin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chris Dorow called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Chris Dorow, Brian Gentry, and Daniela Voorhies

Absent: Kevin Gilbert, Alma Carmona

Staff: Community Development Director Anne Henning, Building and Planning Secretary Zuleica Morfin

Attendees: Bob Carlson

This was a hybrid meeting with Zoom available for remote attendees.

MINUTES APPROVAL

November 21, 2022 minutes approved, M/S Gentry/ Voorhies.

December 19, 2022 minutes approved M/S Dorow/ Voorhies.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REVIEW DRAFT

The city's consultants, SCJ Alliance, have completed the draft of the Active Transportation Plan, addressing pedestrian, bicycle, and other forms of non-motorized transportation. This work is supported by a planning grant from QuadCo. Tonight is the Commission's review of the finalized draft before it is released for public comment.

Chair Chris Dorow stated that there are points that might be debated. He felt the plan could be used as a toolbox, where the city wasn't necessarily committing to do everything in the plan. The plan includes a lot of opportunities. Commissioner Brian Gentry commented the plan had been cleaned up a lot since the last review. Commissioner Daniela Voorhies noted there is a lot of information in the plan and she asked if there could be a summary or condensed version for people who don't have the time to read all 53 pages. The summary could be used in the public announcement of the plan. Ms. Henning mentioned she was planning to do a mailing with the utility bills to get comments on the plan, and sending a summary would be perfect. She will work on getting a summary.

The Commissioners felt they would be ready to hold a public hearing on the Active Transportation Plan at their February meeting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS, LATECOMER AGREEMENTS/ REIMBURSEMENTS, TAX INCREMENT FINANCING - INFORMATIONAL

At the November meeting, the Commission expressed an interest in stimulating economic development by completing missing street and utility improvements. Staff provided information on several options, including debt financing, Local Improvement Districts, Latecomer Agreements/Reimbursements, and Tax Increment Financing. After reviewing the options, the Commission agreed that a Local Improvement District (LID) was probably the best choice for what they had in mind along Columbia. They are hoping to see development like a hotel, grocery store, and restaurants. The Commission felt there is a lot of

opportunity with the college traffic that passes by. They asked staff to prepare more information about a possible LID for Columbia Street and 7th Avenue and the associated costs. Chair Dorow said he knew the owners of the middle and eastern properties so he would talk to them. Ms. Henning said she would contact the owners of the western property to determine if they were interested in an LID and also to discuss factors that have been holding back development of their property.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS)

Commissioners discussed that there have only been two ADUs built since the regulations were changed to allow them. Ms. Henning mentioned that a local landlord told her that the owner occupancy requirement and parking requirement are preventing construction of more. The Commission didn't think the Council really wanted to see many ADUs constructed by one landlord all at once. Ms. Henning suggested either an annual limit on the number constructed by one owner, or a limit on the number of ADUs allowed in one block. The Commission thought limiting the number within a block might be an option. Commissioner Gentry mentioned that parking is an issue. However, he felt the Commission should concentrate on the subdivision regulations before discussing ADUs again.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Continued discussion about expanding Commission membership from 5 to 7 to allow more voices to be heard. The Commissioners especially felt there should be a developer or contractor on the Commission, due to their specialized knowledge of building and planning.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm. Next regular meeting is Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

_____ Date: _____
Chris Dorow, Chair

_____ Date: _____
Zuleica Morfin, Building and Planning Secretary

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: February 21, 2023

SUBJECT: Active Transportation Plan—Public Hearing and Recommendation to City Council

Through a planning grant from QuadCo (our Regional Transportation Planning Organization, consisting of Adams, Grant, Lincoln, and Kittitas Counties), the City hired a SCJ Alliance as a consultant to prepare an Active Transportation Plan. Having this plan in place to address non-motorized transportation will be beneficial when we apply for grants, as well as provide direction when projects are being done. The plan primarily addresses walking and biking, although it is relevant to other ways to get around, such as wheelchairs, scooters, skateboards, etc. that would use the same facilities. This plan was drafted to fit with other planning documents and ordinances, such as the Parks Plan and Complete Streets ordinance.

The Commission has been reviewing the draft plan as it has taken shape. There have also been several opportunities for public input as the plan has been developed, including a survey with over 200 responses, an in-person event to gather comments, and a mailer with a summary of the draft plan. We are now at the point of holding a public hearing to take any additional input. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission should make a recommendation to the City Council.

Staff Comments

1. Based on the Commission's request at the January 2023 meeting, the consultant created a 1-page summary of the plan and included a link to the plan and a link to provide comments. We translated it into Spanish mailed to all utility customers at the end of January, to inform the public and solicit comments on the draft plan. Staff also did the SEPA review. Through these outreach activities, we received 3 comments:
 - a. Debbie Hamm commented: "I support enhancing the active transportation opportunities in our community, HOWEVER, my biggest worry is once more pedestrians are out and about, it is highly likely they may be more at risk for getting injured. The residents in this town do NOT drive the speed limit and I always see them with their heads down looking at their phones. The Othello Police Department needs to step it up and start catching these people. Thank you."
 - b. Shirley McCullough asked if sidewalk on the east side of 14th Avenue was included, from Main to CBHA. She said she sees many people walking on this side of the street and feels it is unsafe. (14th Avenue is shown on the Pedestrian Network Map (p.27) as a Priority 1 Pedestrian Route)
 - c. WA State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) provided extensive comments. The consultant and staff have drafted some initial responses for consideration by the Commission.
2. Because the WSDOT comments were received Feb. 17, there wasn't time to make changes to the Plan before the public hearing. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission make their recommendation contingent on addressing the WSDOT comments, and any other comments that need to be addressed.

Timeline:

Action	Date
Council authorization to apply for planning grant through QuadCo	July 26, 2021
Notified by QuadCo that we received grant	Sept. 2, 2021
Advertised for consultants	Nov. 24 & 27, 2021
Council approved contract with consultant	Feb. 28, 2022
Planning Commission discussion of public engagement process	May 16, 2022
Survey mailed with utility bills (English/Spanish)	June 30, 2022
Display boards in front of Walmart (with English- & Spanish-speaking staff)	July 6, 2022
Planning Commission review of public engagement process	Aug. 15, 2022
Survey closed	Aug. 31, 2022
Planning Commission review of framework, vision, goals, policies, priorities	Oct. 17, 2023
Planning Commission review of drafts	Nov. 21, 2022 Dec. 19, 2022
Planning Commission review of draft before released for public comment	Jan. 17, 2023
DNS issued (SEPA review)	Jan. 20, 2023
Summary & request for comments mailed with utility bills (English/Spanish)	Jan. 31, 2023
Introduced to City Council for questions and comments	Feb. 6, 2023
Planning Commission public hearing	Scheduled for Feb. 21, 2023
City Council public hearing	Scheduled for Feb. 27, 2023

Attachments

- WSDOT comments & City responses
- Plan summary
- Draft Plan

Public Hearing: Notice of a public hearing was published and posted for February 21. The Planning Commission should hold a public hearing and take testimony on the proposed Active Transportation Plan.

Action: The Planning Commission should discuss the draft plan and make a recommendation to City Council, which may include changes based on comments received.

WSDOT Comment	City Response
<p>Recommend showing which paths/trails are recreational and which provide transportation options since this determines eligible funding sources.</p>	<p><i>Staff's opinion is there can be significant overlap between recreational and transportation uses of the same facility, depending on the needs and desires of each user. Unless there is a need to classify as one way or the other, staff prefers not to categorically designate facilities.</i></p> <p><i>The Walk Path and Bike Loop could be noted as our priority recreation routes (although they would provide transportation options as well).</i></p> <p>Planning Commission should discuss.</p>
<p>WSDOT is concerned about the proposed pedestrian and bike shared use paths located near SR 26. If these are located outside the state highway right-of-way, please indicate this. If they are located inside the state highway right-of-way, please contact Shaun Darveshi, the North Central Region Planning Manager at darves@wsdot.wa.gov to discuss the process for obtaining permits to use rights-of-way. To learn more about WSDOT's active transportation please contact Kathy Murray, North Central Region Complete Streets Coordinator at murraka@wsdot.wa.gov.</p>	<p><i>The shared use path is intended to be outside of highway ROW, aligning with the existing dedication south of Sagestone Street.</i></p> <p><i>The plan can be clarified to better explain this future path.</i></p>
<p>ii: Add Title VI and ADA statements in English and Spanish, if applicable.</p>	<p><i>We can add but need clarification on exactly what is needed in the plan. City Engineer has the Title VI documents. SCJ may be able to assist. City staff can provide Spanish translations.</i></p>
<p>5: Consider adding data for car-ownership by household. If there is no significant difference from data for "Means of Transportation to Work in Othello," then include statement acknowledging that.</p>	<p><i>Car ownership data is provided in the green box on the left side of this page.</i></p>
<p>18: Strava data comments: The Strava heatmap used on page 18 shows a combination of pedestrian and bicyclist data - that is why the high school track is showing so much activity. Given the type of user who uploads data to Strava, the pedestrians are likely runners or other exercise enthusiasts. Therefore. Outside of the urban center, activities are more likely to be recreational unless there is a nearby population center that a bike commuter would connect to.</p> <p>The plan would benefit from describing the limitations from Strava data – specifically that this data is limited to those who record their</p>	<p><i>Strava data limitations are discussed on p.17. We will replace the map on p.18 with separate maps for walk/run and bike. (Or we could delete the Strava data since it is so limited and doesn't add a lot to the overall plan, just extra justification of the need for active transportation facilities in general.)</i></p>

WSDOT Comment	City Response
<p>activity with Strava. Thus, the data tends to not capture paths that children take to bike or walk to school or users who rely on active transportation to reach their destinations. WSDOT recommends showing the bike-only map – not the combination map. This is because it shows which urban roads bicyclists are choosing, which likely correlates with a feeling of safety or ease of travel.</p>	
<p>21: Describe targeted outreach to people who speak Spanish as primary language. If none, include a statement describing barriers to that outreach and plans for future outreach to gather that data.</p>	<p><i>English/Spanish flyer mailed with utility bills June 2022, with links to survey.</i> <i>Survey was available in both languages (with separate QR code for each)</i> <i>In-person outreach event July 2022 had bilingual staff the entire time.</i> <i>English/Spanish flyer mailed with utility bills Jan. 2023, with plan summary and request for comments.</i></p>
<p>27: The map shows a walk path and then pedestrian routes. This is confusing. Are these sidewalks or shared use paths? Recommend being specific.</p>	<p><i>The Othello Walk Path is described on the previous page.</i></p>
<p>27: The map shows a pedestrian route along SR 26. It is unclear whose property this route is located on. If this is intended to be located on the state right-of-way, please coordinate with the North Central Region before finalizing plans. It is unclear the purpose of the route and who will use it. WSDOT recommends shared use paths are located along city streets, so they are more accessible and less likely to be interrupted by future driveways.</p>	<p><i>It would be difficult to show on the map, but the intention is for the path to be outside of the ROW of SR 26. We will add some text to the plan. There is property already dedicated for a portion of this path, and future dedications would be in the same alignment (which is also a USBR easement for a portion of the route). There is significant pedestrian activity currently along the highway, so providing an off-highway option would greatly improve safety for local residents.</i></p>
<p>36: The map is confusing because the legend is labeled Proposed Bicycle Routes, yet the map includes bike lane (blue) and shared use paths (green) which indicates these are existing, yet it also shows future shared use path and future bike loop. Recommend changing label and showing existing bike lane, existing bike-friendly streets, existing shared use paths. Also show proposed shared use path.</p>	<p><i>The only existing facilities are some shared use paths. Othello currently has no bike lanes or bike-friendly streets. We will change the legend label to “Bike Routes”, then add “Existing” or “Proposed” for each line type.</i></p>
<p>36: What is the Othello bike loop and is it for recreational use? Will it connect to a regional trail network?</p>	<p><i>The bike loop is discussed on the previous page. There is no regional trail network. The closest is the Palouse to Cascades Trail, which is discussed on p.11. This trail has a gap from Warden (about</i></p>

WSDOT Comment	City Response
	<i>20 miles northeast of Othello) to near Smyrna (about 25 miles west of Othello)</i>
<p>36: The maps shows that adjacent to SR 26 there is an existing shared use path, a future shared use path, and a future Othello bike loop. Please clarify the purpose of the paths. Recommend placing bike loops and shared use paths along city streets to be more accessible.</p>	<p><i>We will change the color to show that it is only a future shared use path/part of the future bike loop (some property has been dedicated but no path has been constructed yet).</i></p> <p><i>Shared use paths are described on p.15 (Paved Paths). They are intended to be facilities separate from streets to provide a non-street atmosphere, mostly for recreation but also potentially useful for transportation. The existing paths are within parks, adjacent to school properties, and along a canal ROW (the canal was piped underground). The future bike loop is described on p.35, to reserve land and provide a future trail, inspired by the Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle (but at Othello scale).</i></p>



Othello Active Transportation Plan Summary

About the Plan

The City of Othello has identified the need to enhance active transportation opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists. Through implementation of this plan, the City aims to improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians, creating a reliable network that connects different destinations throughout the city.

What is Active Transportation?

Active transportation is any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking or bicycling.



SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
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Priorities

This plan gathered public feedback during a summer outreach event and through a community survey in which 218 people responded. This outreach revealed the following priorities for active transportation in Othello:

- ♦ Improve existing sidewalks and ensure they are well maintained.
- ♦ Add sidewalks where there currently are none, especially around schools.
- ♦ Create opportunities to walk and bike on pathways around town.
- ♦ Ensure safe crossings on busy streets and near parks and schools.
- ♦ Expand traffic calming efforts to slow down car traffic and improve driver behavior.

You can view the full plan here:

www.othellowa.gov/ActiveTransportationPlan

Recommendations

The plan recommends various actions that the city should take to achieve the priorities above. The plan also establishes strategies and funding opportunities to make these concepts become reality.

Short Term:

- ♦ Close gaps in the sidewalk network
- ♦ Improve street crossings for pedestrians and cyclists
- ♦ Enhance the Othello Walk Path route
- ♦ Add bike lanes on the routes designated in the plan
- ♦ Develop a bike safety and a bike rack program
- ♦ Continue implementing traffic calming measures in neighborhoods

Long Term:

- ♦ Add buffers between pedestrians/cyclists and vehicle traffic
- ♦ Create regional connections to the active transportation network
- ♦ Develop a network of protected bike lanes and paved pathways
- ♦ Develop a wayfinding system
- ♦ Expand the active transportation network to new development

 Othello aims to become a more walkable and bikeable city. 



Resumen del Plan de Transporte Activo en Othello

Sobre el Plan

La Ciudad de Othello ha identificado la necesidad de mejorar las oportunidades de transporte activo para pedestre y ciclistas. A través de la implementación de este plan, la ciudad tiene como objetivo mejorar el entorno para ciclistas y pedestres, creando una cadena confiable que conecta diferentes destinos en toda la ciudad.

Qué es el transporte activo?

El transporte activo es cualquier modo de transporte autopropulsado por humanos, como caminar o andar en bicicleta.



**ESCANEA EL
CÓDIGO QR PARA
OBTENER MÁS
INFORMACIÓN**



Prioridades

El desarrollo de este plan involucró la recopilación de comentarios del público a través de un evento de divulgación y una encuesta en toda la comunidad en la que respondieron 218 personas. Este alcance reveló las siguientes prioridades para el transporte activo en Othello:

- ♦ Mejorar las aceras existentes y desarrollar un programa de mantenimiento de aceras para garantizar que las banquetas y los caminos estén bien mantenidos.
- ♦ Cerrar las brechas en la red de banquetas agregando banquetas donde actualmente no las hay, especialmente alrededor de las escuelas.
- ♦ Desarrollar más oportunidades para caminar y andar en bicicleta en los caminos de la ciudad.
- ♦ Garantice cruces seguros en calles transitadas y cerca de parques y escuelas.
- ♦ Aumentar los esfuerzos para calmar el tráfico para reducir la velocidad del tráfico de automóviles y mejorar el comportamiento de los conductores.

Puedes ver el plan en total aquí:

www.othellowa.gov/ActiveTransportationPlan

Recomendaciones

El plan propone varias acciones recomendadas que la ciudad debe tomar para ayudar a lograr las prioridades enumeradas anteriormente. Además, el plan establece estrategias y oportunidades de financiación que pueden ayudar a hacer realidad estos conceptos.

Corto Plazo:

- ♦ Rellene los espacios en las banquetas a lo largo de las rutas prioritarias.
- ♦ Mejorar los cruces de calles para pedestres y ciclistas
- ♦ Mejorar la ruta del sendero peatonal de Othello
- ♦ Agregar carriles para bicicletas en las rutas demarcadas en el plan
- ♦ Desarrollar un programa de seguridad ciclistas y un Programa de Portabicicletas
- ♦ Desarrollar medidas para calmar el tráfico en los vecindarios

Largo Plazo:

- ♦ Agregar amortiguadores entre la calle y la banquetas
- ♦ Crear conexiones regionales a la red del transporte activo
- ♦ Desarrollar una red de carriles bici protegidos y caminos pavimentados
- ♦ Desarrollar un sistema de orientación
- ♦ Ampliar la red del transporte activo a nuevos desarrollos



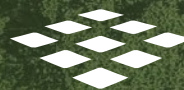
Othello aspira a ser una ciudad más transitable a pie y en bicicleta.



City of Othello

Active Transportation Plan

January 2023



SCJ ALLIANCE

Project Information

Project: City of Othello Active Transportation Plan
Prepared for: City of Othello, Washington
500 E Main Street
Othello, WA 99344
Plan Adopted: February 2023 (Anticipated)

Contact Information

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Introduction

The City of Othello has identified the need to enhance active transportation opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists. Major destinations such as schools, parks, downtown, and residential neighborhoods are not connected by safe active transportation infrastructure, making it difficult and risky to get around town without a car.

Through implementation of this plan, the City aims to improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians, creating a reliable network that connects different destinations throughout the city. This plan establishes goals, policies, and prioritized projects that will help guide the city on a path forward to implementing the overall network and make getting around by foot or bike safer and more accessible.

This plan also lays out a strategy for achieving the goals of community access, physical activity, and promoting healthy lifestyles as required by the Growth Management Act.



What is Active Transportation?

Active transportation is any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking or bicycling. While this plan mainly focuses on addressing the needs of people walking and cycling, active transportation improvements can benefit multiple other forms of transportation as well, such as skateboarding, scooters, and other micro-mobility methods, as well as wheelchairs and other mobility-assistance methods.



Demographics

To understand the growing need for active transportation, the following demographic analysis provides a snapshot of the current trends in Othello that impact the need for alternative transportation modes.

Population Growth

The 2020 Census reported a population of 8,549 in Othello. In Othello's 2015 Comprehensive Plan, it was projected that medium growth by 2020 would be a population of 8,262 and high growth would be 8,885. The fact that their population reached 8,549 in 2020 shows that Othello is experiencing medium to high population growth.

While the official population projection in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan was established as 17,825 people by the year 2035, more recent trends show that Othello is more on track with the OFM projections mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan than its separate official projection. For this reason, it is now assumed that Othello will have a population of between 9,896 and 11,007 by 2035, aligning with the OFM projections as stated in Table I-1 of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The City will likely update these numbers in the next periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan, but it is safe to assume that the City will continue to experience medium to high population growth in the foreseeable future.

As the population grows, there will be more and more opportunities to build and promote an active lifestyle in Othello. Citizens are already asking for alternative transportation options for commuting and/or recreation, and this demand is expected to increase as the population grows.

Othello Population Growth and Projections

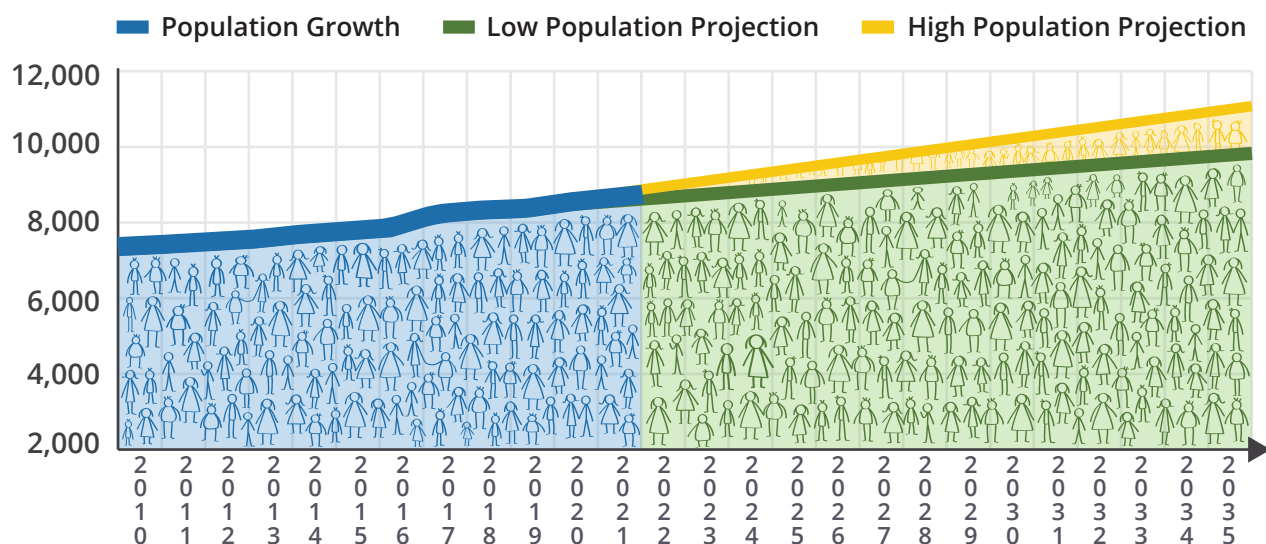


Figure 1: Population Growth and Projections



Age

In Figure 2, it is notable how many young people, specifically under the age of 14, there are in Othello. Kids ages 0-14 make up 35.4% of the total population. People under 30 make up 59.5% of the total population. Active transportation use tends to decline at higher ages, while peaking in young to middle-aged people¹, so the high number of people in these youth and young adult age groups must be taken into consideration while planning for transportation needs in Othello.

Language

Othello is home to many people who speak a language other than English. Of the population age 5 years and older, 34.9% of the population speaks only English, and 65.1% speaks a language other than English, whether that is in addition to English or not. The main language spoken apart from English is Spanish, with 59.8% of the population over the age of 5 speaking Spanish. This high percentage of people who speak Spanish in Othello should be taken into account when establishing informational signage, materials, and wayfinding for active transportation users. Active transportation options will be more accessible and more widely used if community members have information available in the language they are most comfortable with.

Alternatively, information and signage could utilize symbology to help communicate to a wide range of languages, not just the two most common in Othello.

Percent of Population

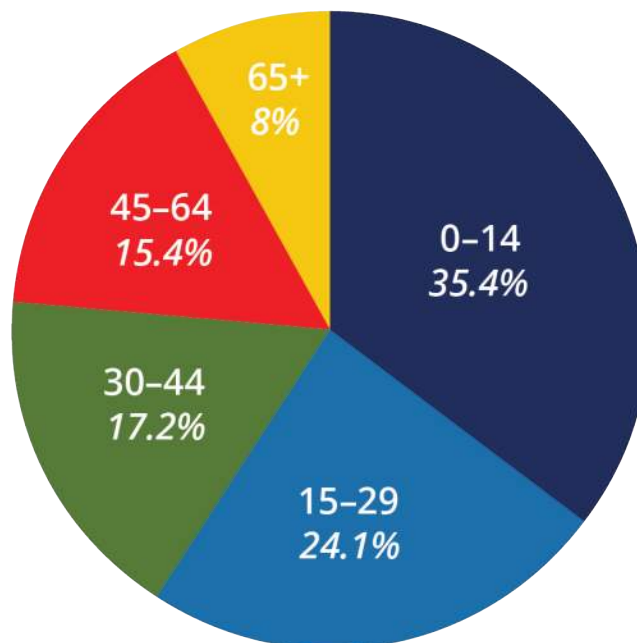


Figure 2: Population by Age in Othello

Disability

A major consideration in active transportation planning is ensuring that everybody in the community will be able to access what they need. On the following page, Figure 3 notes that 6.2% of Othello's population experiences ambulatory difficulties, which means that they have trouble walking or climbing upstairs. 2.5% of the population have vision difficulties, and 2.6% have hearing difficulties.

By making infrastructure accessible to those who need extra support with their hearing, vision, or mobility, the city can ensure that its active transportation network is accessible by all. While ADA compliance is required in new infrastructure construction, the city should also consider strategic improvements and upgrades to existing sidewalks, crossings, and pathways to ensure that people with disabilities can access the active transportation network.

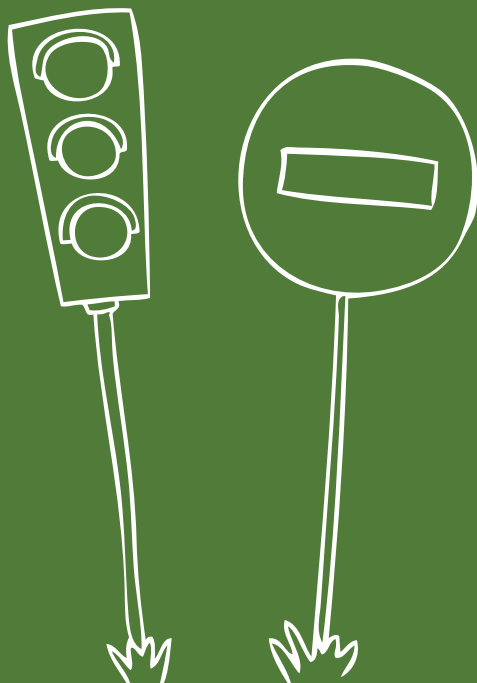
¹ Dill, J., & Voros, K. (2007). Factors Affecting Bicycling Demand. Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board, 2031(1), 9-17.



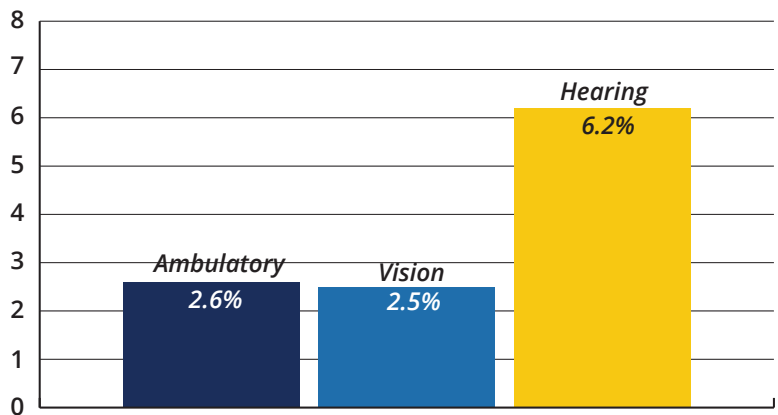
Vehicle Ownership & Transportation to Work

The 2020 American Community Survey estimates that there are 2,967 workers over the age of 16 in Othello. Of these workers, 1.4% have no vehicle available, 12.1% have 1 vehicle available, 50.3% have 2 vehicles available, and 36.3% have 3 or more vehicles available. Figure 4 on the right shows the breakdown of how people in Othello commute to work.

While vehicle ownership is common among the majority of the working population in Othello, there are still at least 40-50 people without a car who need to figure out an alternative way of getting to work. This further emphasizes the need for active transportation improvements in Othello, indicating that not everyone has the option to drive themselves to work.



Othello Population with Certain Disabilities



% of Population with Certain Disabilities

Figure 3: Percentage of People in Othello who experience certain disabilities

Means of Transportation to Work in Othello

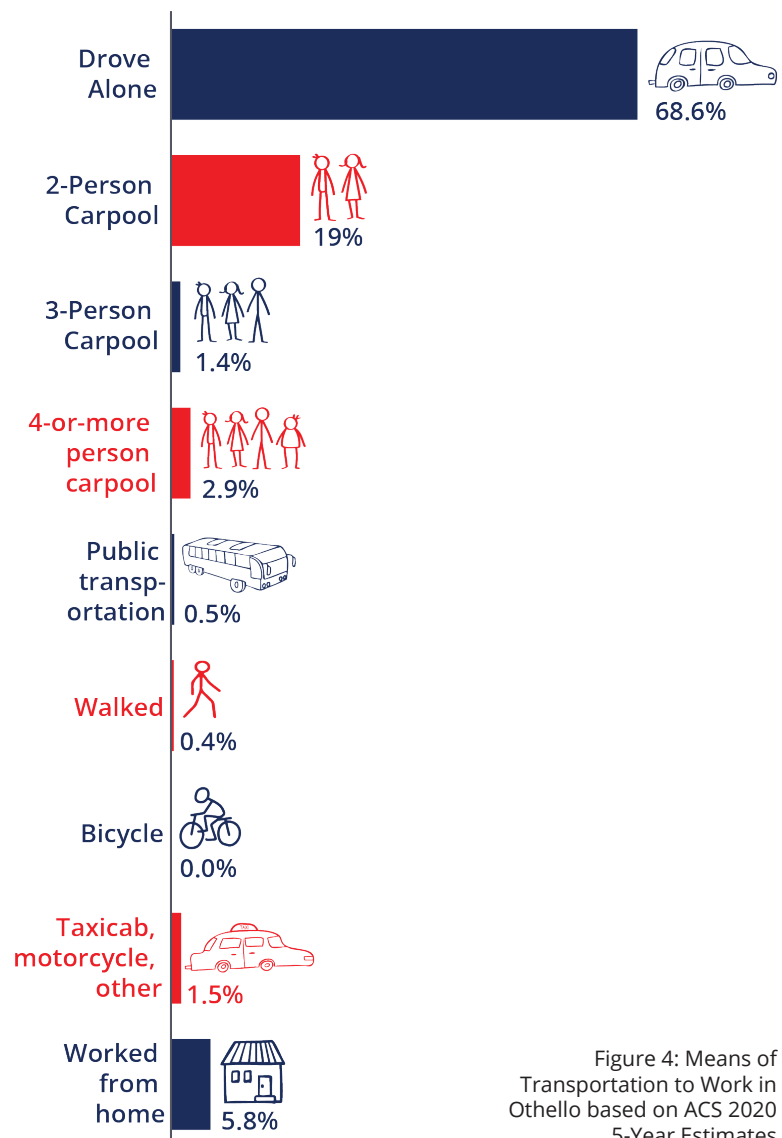


Figure 4: Means of Transportation to Work in Othello based on ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates



This is important for understanding how many people are commuting within Othello and outside city limits. 1,510 people stay within city limits, and since the city is not large in size, it is reasonable to assume that a portion of this population would be willing to walk or bike to work. In planning for active transportation improvements, it will be beneficial to consider how the city can grow the number of people who both live and work in Othello and also grow the portion of those people that walk or bike to work.



Context Map

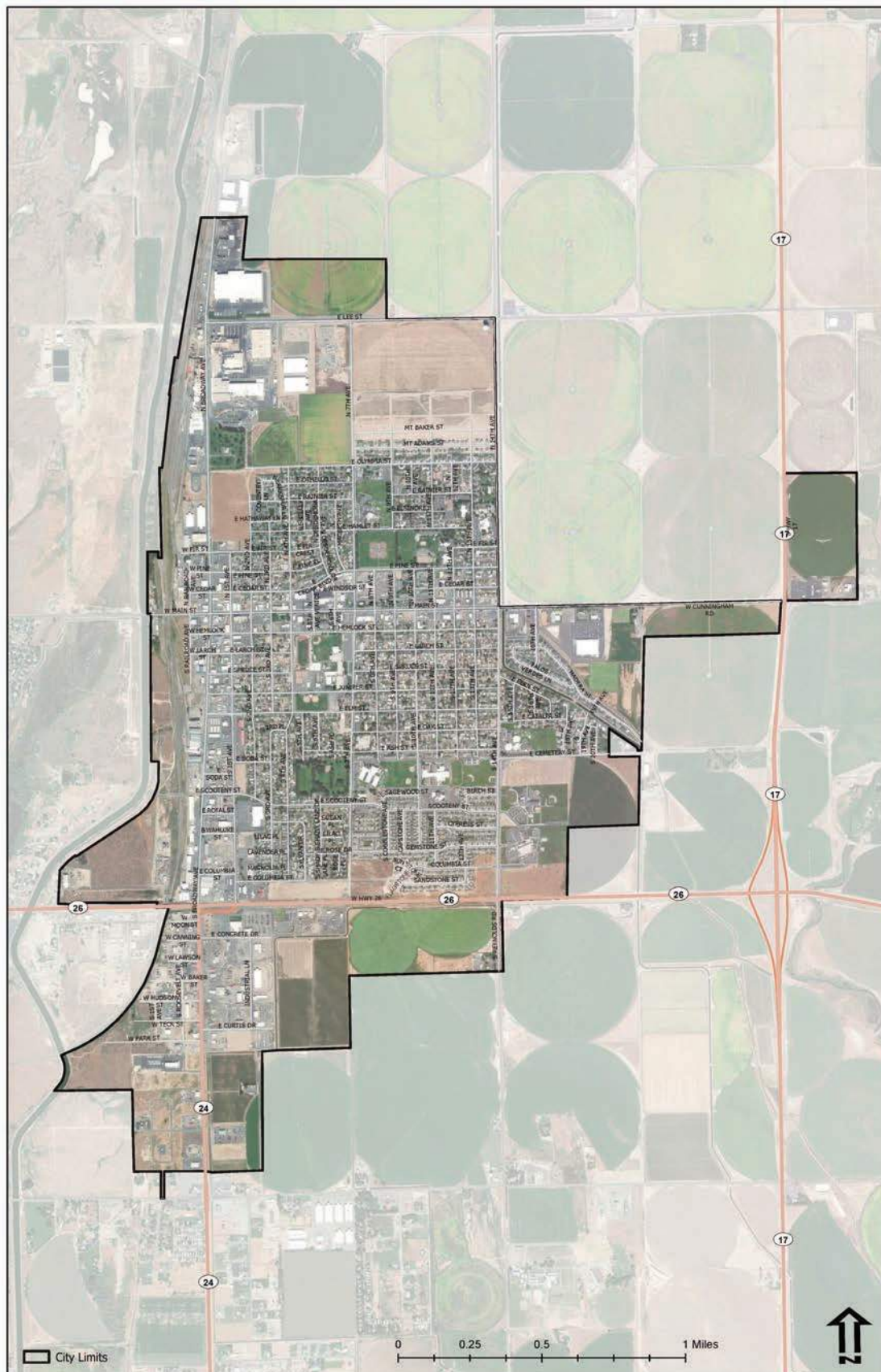


Figure 7: Context Map



Policy Review

The Department of Commerce states that “development of a community’s pedestrian and bicycle component occurs in the context of federal, state, and regional policies.” This section outlines those relevant policies and describes how Othello’s proposed active transportation network aligns with local, regional, state, and national transportation policies.

Othello Comprehensive Plan

Othello’s Comprehensive Plan provides context for how and where the city is looking to grow. As noted in the demographics section of this report, Othello is predicting a medium to high growth rate and needs to plan accordingly.

Some of the active transportation-related goals and objectives to note within Othello’s transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan are:

- ♦ Objective 4.2.3 – Pursue implementation of the Parks & Recreation trail plan within the growth area.
- ♦ Goal 4.3 – Incorporate ADA standards into all capital improvement projects and private development improvements that will become part of the City’s transportation infrastructure.
- ♦ Objective 4.4.2 – Implement the Parks & Recreation trail plan as part of any capital improvement project if the trail plan and street plan overlap.
- ♦ Objective 4.4.3 – Develop a greenway plan for Highway 26 and Highway 17.
- ♦ Goal 4.5 – Develop, prioritize, and implement an ongoing list of transportation Capital Improvement Projects.

These goals and objectives support the development of a safe and accessible network of walking and biking paths, sidewalks, crossings, and bike lanes. This plan aims to remain consistent with the comprehensive plan, and further build on its goals for active transportation.

Othello Complete Streets Policy

Othello adopted a Complete Streets Policy as Chapter 11.80 of the Municipal Code in 2020. This policy defines and outlines what complete streets in Othello will look like and the standards they are required to meet, emphasizing that the people of Othello should have options when it comes to transportation.

The policy ultimately aims to provide infrastructure for “pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, emergency responders, freight, and users of all ages and abilities in new construction, retrofit, and reconstruction projects of public streets.” Additionally, the Complete Streets Policy “focuses not just on changing individual streets but on changing the decision-making process so that all users are considered during the planning, designing, building, and operation of roadways.”

Othello’s Complete Streets Policy sets a strong foundation for the work proposed in this plan. The recommendations set forth later in this plan will have the support of the city code behind them, providing an extra dimension of feasibility to the proposed recommendations.



Othello neighborhood traffic calming measures.
Source: Columbia Basin Herald



Othello Housing Action Plan

Othello's Housing Action Plan (HAP) was adopted in June 2021 with the purpose of providing clear direction on increasing production of market-rate and affordable housing, and the need for greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels. With a review of goals surrounding housing, transportation always needs to be addressed, as different housing options lead to a change in demand for specific types of transportation. Often, with increased density, active transportation options become more desirable.

Regarding parking and transportation standards, the HAP lays out strategic recommendations. It states, "The provision of parking and rights-of-way can affect the amount of land available for development and the costs of new projects. Adjusting these standards can help make developments more efficient, reducing costs and improving project feasibility". The plan suggests reviewing off-street parking requirements, encouraging or requiring alley-access, rear, or shared parking, and to reduce neighborhood street width requirements.

The overall HAP objectives are:

1. Make it easier to build affordable ownership and rental housing
2. Increase housing variety and choice
3. Ensure opportunities for families with children
4. Promote housing for agricultural workers

Expansion of the active transportation network in Othello can support these objectives, so that both housing options and active transportation opportunities improve, making Othello an even better place to live and work.

City of Othello HOUSING ACTION PLAN



Othello Parks and Recreation Plan

Othello's Parks and Recreation Plan was adopted in February 2022. Included in the plan is a map that outlines Othello's Parks & Trails Plan. That plan highlights some active transportation components including existing trails, proposed trails, and greenway trails. This helps identify some of the routes that have previously been prioritized. Through the Active Transportation Plan, Othello aims to further develop this network of paths and trails, aligning with the analysis and outreach conducted as part of the Parks and Recreation Plan.

In the Parks & Rec Plan's future needs analysis, it is noted that "More walking trails was highly desired by the community in the survey; however, the City doesn't currently have much of a place to put them. It is hoped these trails could be incorporated into the proposed eco park/nature park. Therefore, the trail expenditure is scheduled out beyond the 6-year timeframe of this plan."

The Parks and Recreation Plan, therefore, emphasizes the importance of expanding the existing sidewalk and pathway network to more fully connect throughout the city, which supports the purpose of the Active Transportation Plan.



Adams County Comprehensive Plan

Othello is located within Adams County. Adams County's Comprehensive Plan speaks to the 1,125.5 miles of graveled and 650 miles of paved county roads. Beyond the roads, the plan shares that public transportation does not exist in rural Adams County, besides some transit opportunities for the elderly or people with disabilities.

There are two policies that stand out regarding active transportation in the plan. They are:

Recreational Uses, Policy 7:

"Promote eco-tourism opportunities such as non-motorized interpretive trails that capitalize Adams County's history as well as natural and cultural resources, especially railroad history."

Transportation, Policy 14:

"Provide alternative transportation choices for the traveling public by identifying suitable bicycle routes within the county where incompatibility issues with long haul truck traffic aren't involved."

While Adams County is focused on moving people primarily on roads in personal vehicles, these policies do point toward a desire to have more transportation options for both residents and visitors.



QUADCO Regional Transportation Plan

The QUADO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) includes Adams, Grant, Kittitas, and Lincoln Counties. This plan was adopted in December 2016 and plans for a 20-year period, from 2017 to 2037. The plan highlights six goals, under the themes of economic vitality, preservation, safety, mobility, environment, and stewardship. Within each of these categories, the plan highlights a goal that has to do with active transportation. This shows how moving toward better active transportation options is incorporated through the plan. The top goals identified in this plan are to:

- ◆ Protect the safety of our community
- ◆ Preserve and extend the life and utility of prior transportation system investments
- ◆ Enhance our region's economic vitality by promoting and developing transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods.
- ◆ Enhance the mobility of people and goods throughout the region by providing an interconnected transportation system and opportunities for choosing different transportation modes.
- ◆ Protect our region's environment and high quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.
- ◆ Improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of our region's transportation system and growing communities with cost effective investments that have public support.

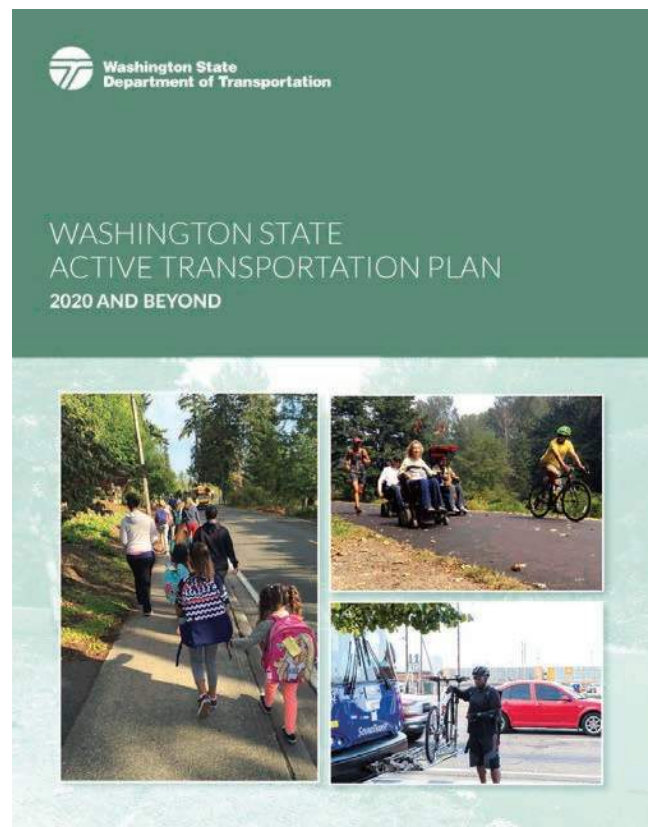


WSDOT Active Transportation Plan

In 2021, the Washington State Department of Transportation published the Washington State Active Transportation Plan: 2020 and Beyond. The plan discusses the importance of reliable active transportation options and the challenges in active transportation if certain facilities or amenities are not complete or are blocked from use. Since this plan covers the entire state, it focuses on both urban centers and the smaller, rural towns like Othello. The main goal for active transportation in the future is stated as, “The integrated transportation system of the future provides safe, welcoming, and connected networks that invite and enable everyone to walk and roll where they need to go”.

There are important benefits of bicycling and walking and these benefits help work toward a stronger Washington for everybody. These benefits include improvements in human health, the environment, the economy, local and regional mobility, accessibility, and congestion relief. This plan is evidence that Washington is planning for a future that involves active transportation as a regular way to travel.

Figure 3-35 in the plan shows how Othello connects to the Great American Rail-Trail, which is a project being undertaken by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Washington’s portion of this trail is



currently known as the Palouse to Cascades Trail, which will eventually connect across both the state and eventually the country. However, there is a large segment of the trail missing near Othello (see Figure 8 below). It would be helpful to consider how Othello might eventually connect to and capitalize on access to this trail. This future connection may play a significant role in the economic development and recreational environment in Othello.

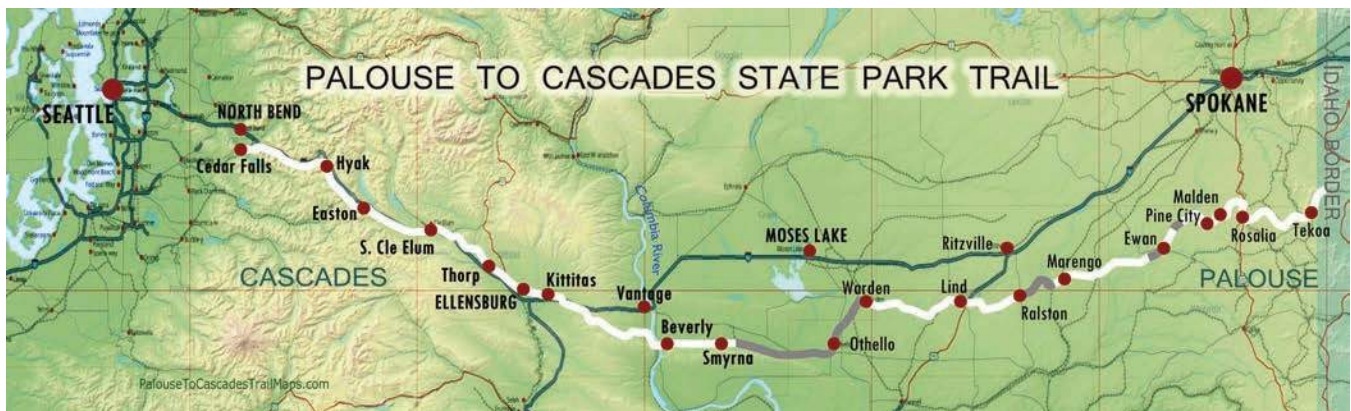


Figure 8: Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Map

Existing Conditions

Sidewalks

Sidewalks provide dedicated space intended for use by pedestrians that is safe, comfortable, and accessible to all. Sidewalks are physically separated from the roadway by a curb or unpaved buffer space and are ADA compliant. Othello aims to have sidewalks on almost every street so that anywhere in town is safely accessible by foot.

Sidewalk Gap Analysis

There are approximately 37 miles of completed sidewalks within Othello city limits. It is also estimated that there are at least 46 miles of additional sidewalk length needed to ensure a complete and connected pedestrian network throughout the City. This accounts for sidewalks being needed on both sides of the street for all of the city blocks displayed in Figure 9.

Most of the gaps in Othello's sidewalk network are in the older, centrally located neighborhoods as well as the industrial areas on the outskirts of town. Newer neighborhoods and major arterials tend to have fewer sidewalk gaps.

These gaps make it difficult for pedestrians to safely access many areas throughout Othello. Lack of sidewalks and abrupt discontinuations can lead to confusion for pedestrians, forcing them into the street



There are many instances in Othello where sidewalks abruptly end, providing no alternative to pedestrians.



where they have to contend with vehicles. In addition, since there are currently no bike lanes in Othello, people frequently use the existing sidewalks to ride their bikes as a way to stay separated from passing vehicles. Until bike infrastructure is provided in Othello, bike riding on the sidewalks is expected to continue occurring. Therefore, sidewalk gaps also lead to challenges for those riding bikes in town.

These sidewalk gaps ultimately incentivize more driving as people decide they would rather drive than walk or bike on unsafe streets.



Bike Infrastructure

Othello currently has very little infrastructure for bicycles. There are about 2 miles of existing off-street pathways, as indicated in Figure 9. These include the city park paths, the path on the south side of Lutacaga Elementary and McFarland Middle Schools, and the path on the east edge of town.

Apart from these unconnected paths, cyclists must share the roadway with vehicles. There are currently no bike lanes in the City of Othello. As with sidewalk gaps, this citywide gap in bicycle infrastructure makes cycling seem like a risky activity, and there are not many people that bike in Othello because of this. Some school children bike to school, but as seen in the demographics review, zero percent of people commute by bicycle in Othello.

By adding some new bicycle infrastructure, such as more paths and bike lanes, that safely connect throughout the city, Othello will likely see an increase in the number of people that choose to get around by bike.

Paved Paths

Othello has been working to develop its paved pathway system. These paths are safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians to get around without the need to contend with vehicles. Othello's city parks already have paved paths, and there is a paved path south of Lutacaga Elementary and McFarland Middle Schools, as well as one on the east edge of town, pictured in the images on the next page.

Figure 9 shows a "Missing Paved Path" type, which outlines where paved paths are either planned to be developed or have been identified as a community need in the past. The missing path along SR 26 is partially planned as a linear park just south of the existing Sandstone Street. The remainder of the missing path along SR 26 is not currently planned, but is an ideal route to provide separation from the highway and a connection to the new linear park.

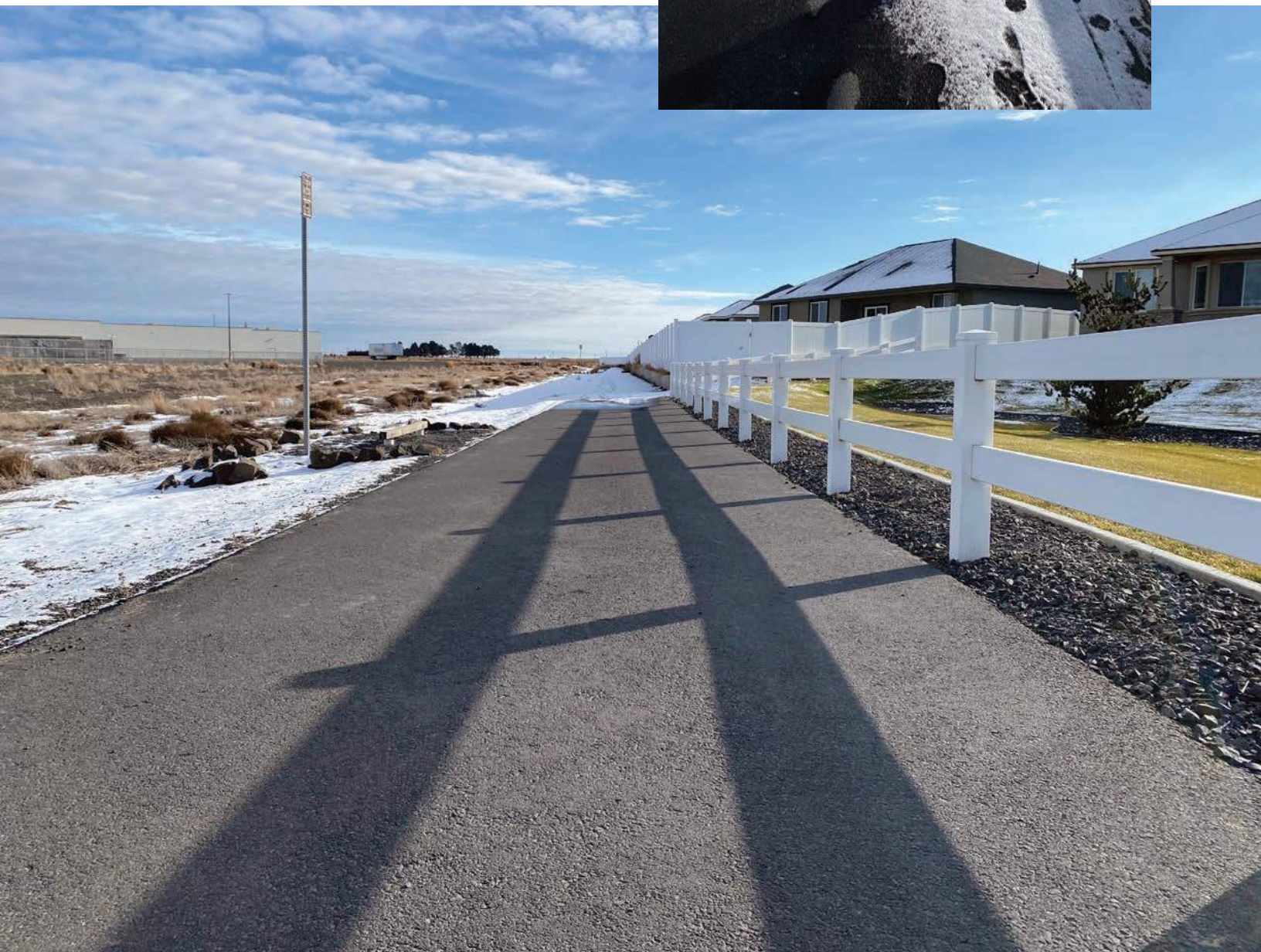


Cyclists currently have almost no dedicated place to get around in Othello, forcing them to choose between riding in the road, or on the sidewalk.



As Othello works to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, these pathways will be vital arteries for the active transportation network. It will be important to create a continuous network of pathways throughout the city to ensure cyclists and pedestrians have a safe, low stress environment in which to get around and recreate.

The paved path on the east side of town is quite popular, even getting use in the winter months.



Amenities

Bike Parking

In addition to providing ways of getting around safely by bike, it is equally important to have a secure way of parking and locking up bikes throughout the city. New development and upgrades to major destinations such as parks, schools, and business districts, should be required to provide a minimum number of secure bike parking spots, or bike racks, in convenient locations to ensure cyclists have an accessible location to park and lock up their bikes.

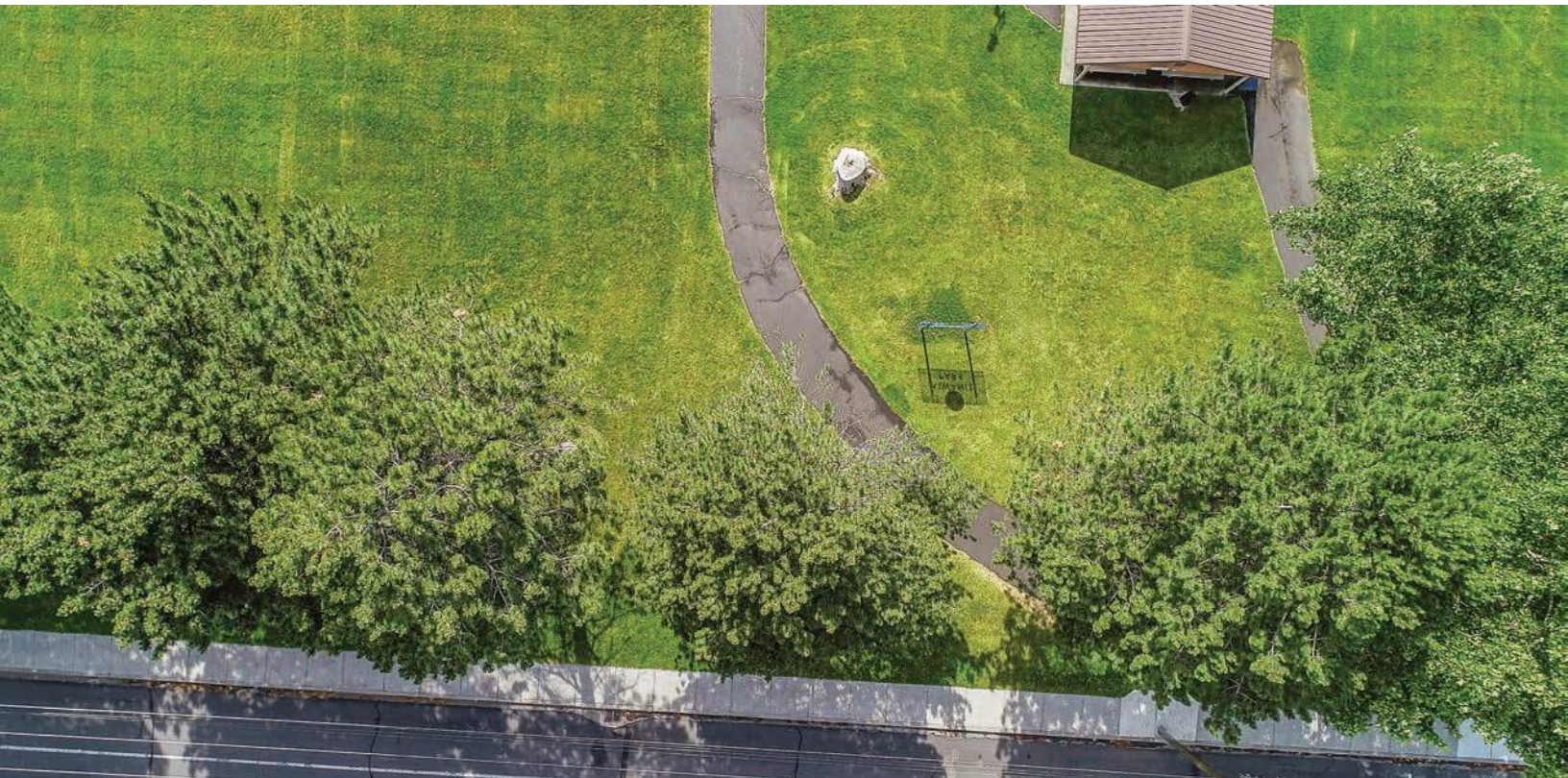
Other Amenities

In addition to bike racks, the city should also consider addition of amenities such as bike repair stations, rest areas with benches, drinking fountains, and shade, as well as wayfinding information posted throughout the community to help guide cyclists to their destination. These extra amenities will ensure a positive, secure, and accessible experience when getting around Othello by bicycle.

Informal Paths & Trails

Othello also has a number of informal pathways, such as the dirt paths along the canal next to North 14th Avenue. This is not a formal pathway or trail but is still regularly used by pedestrians. This is evidenced by the Strava Heatmap in Figure 10, which shows where walkers and runners tend to be the most active. This heatmap helps identify informal paths because it shows pedestrian and cyclist behavior by people who use the Strava App, which provides a sampling of where people gravitate toward when exercising or recreating. Strava data is limited to those who record their activity with Strava, so does not tend to capture more recreational walking or cycling, nor does it likely capture paths that children take to bike or walk to school.

Still, these heatmap paths demonstrate that people are using informal paths, such as those along the canals. It also shows which streets are more popular for pedestrian and cyclist activity.





Opportunities

Wide Rights-of-Way

Othello's streets are very wide, and many of the streets have excess capacity based on current traffic volumes. In other words, there is plenty of publicly-owned space, making it feasible to reallocate more space for sidewalks, bike lanes, and buffers between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Because of this, Othello should consider:

- ♦ Adding bike lanes on streets with sufficient right-of-way
- ♦ Adding parking-protected bike lanes on arterials
- ♦ Making minor changes such as signage, traffic-calming, and sharrows to low-traffic, slow-speed residential routes to make them bike and pedestrian friendly

Street Connectivity

The city's existing street network is largely in a grid pattern, so streets are well-connected with plenty of opportunities for route alternatives and greater accessibility to main routes.

Because of this, Othello should consider:

- ♦ Adding paved pathways to further connect the system of off-street active transportation network
- ♦ Connecting bike and pedestrian infrastructure with major destinations
- ♦ Completing the sidewalk network
- ♦ Improving crossings at strategic locations to ensure safe connections across busy intersections

Flat Terrain

Othello is mostly flat, which makes cycling and walking more attractive options than in other, hillier, cities.



Othello Walk Path

The Othello Walk Path creates a 4.8-mile loop around the east-central side of the city. This path was established in the 2000s and funded through Adams County Paths & Trails. More recently, it was included in the Othello Parks and Recreation Plan and the Othello Comprehensive Plan, indicating that it is still relevant.

The existing path consists of a mix of paved pathways and sidewalks. However, the City has an opportunity with this plan to focus on enhancing this loop by providing more paved pathways, improving crossings along the route, and installing wayfinding signage to make the loop trail more accessible and well-known.



Figure 11: Map of the Othello Walk/Bike Path from the Parks and Recreation Plan

Challenges

Auto-Oriented Roadways

Othello, like many small towns, has developed in a pattern that is largely dependent on cars. Streets are wide, but sidewalks are narrow and most buildings are oriented toward parking lots or driveways rather than the sidewalk. This focus on cars can discourage alternative modes of transportation.

Lack of Existing Transportation Options

There is a lack of facilities for people walking and biking in Othello. While there are sidewalks throughout the city, there are also many gaps in the sidewalk network and long stretches without safe pedestrian crossings.

Maintenance and Funding

Funding the development of appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities is always a challenge, as is the funding and logistics of maintenance for these facilities.



Planning Process

Spatial Analysis

A spatial analysis effort was undertaken in order to determine which routes within the city are most vital to the active transportation network. City staff and the planning consultant group looked at a map of major destinations throughout the city, how these destinations are connected by the existing street and pathway networks, and then determined which routes might be most appropriate for various bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure types to subsequently request feedback on from the public and elected officials.

Public Outreach

Public outreach was an important step to ensure that the residents of Othello had a chance

to provide feedback on the vision for active transportation in Othello. The City gathered feedback through multiple methods of outreach, including a community survey, an in-person outreach event, and through multiple check-ins at planning commission meetings.

The survey was conducted during summer 2022 to gauge how people in Othello felt about active transportation needs in the community. A total of 218 respondents took the Othello Active Transportation Survey. Additionally, an in-person outreach event was held outside of Walmart on a Friday afternoon in July to ask people what they want to see from the active transportation plan (pictured below). Approximately 50 members of the public participated in the in-person outreach event.





Public Outreach Priorities

The following list summarizes the themes that emerged from this public outreach process. These priorities helped establish this plan's vision, goals, and project prioritization.

- 1 Improve existing sidewalks and develop a sidewalk maintenance program to ensure sidewalks and pathways are well-maintained.
- 2 Close gaps in the sidewalk network by adding sidewalks where there currently are none, especially around schools.
- 3 Develop more opportunities to walk and bike on pathways around town.
- 4 Ensure safe crossings on busy streets and near parks and schools.
- 5 Increase traffic calming efforts to slow down car traffic and improve driver behavior.



Vision

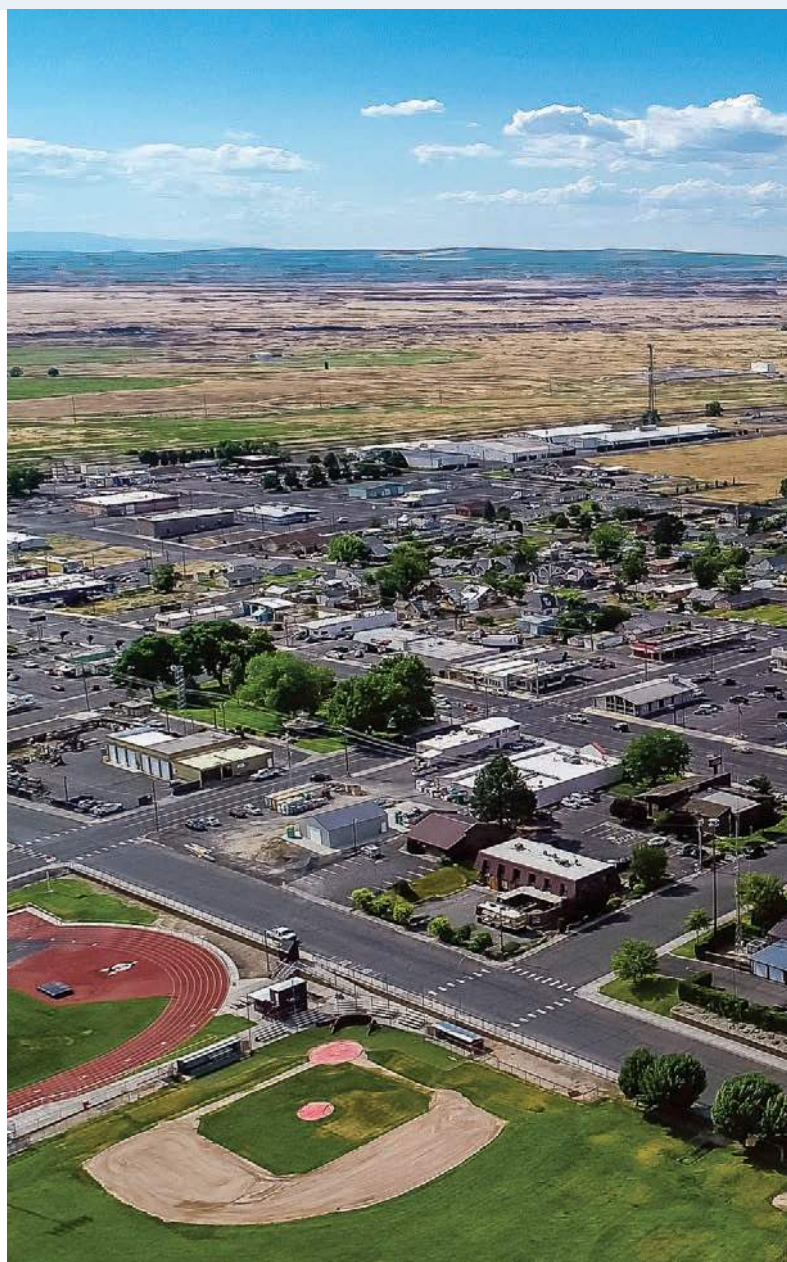
The vision for active transportation in Othello combines objectives from the demographics analysis, spatial analysis, existing policy framework, existing conditions, opportunities and challenges, and public feedback. This vision establishes the active transportation conditions that the City will strive for. The subsequent sections of this plan outline how the vision can be achieved by proposing a network, an action plan, and strategies for implementation.



Vision Statement

Othello aims to become a more walkable and bikeable city.

Othello's active transportation network will be safe, interconnected, and accessible, ensuring all who want to use it are able to. The City of Othello will have an established network of sidewalks, paved pathways, and bike lanes to ensure that there are equitable opportunities for people to get around town without needing a car. This network will connect major destinations throughout the city and enhance local and regional mobility. Active transportation routes will be separated from vehicle traffic to the greatest extent possible and they will connect safely across major intersections. Cyclists and pedestrians will be valued and prioritized by the City and its transportation budget, encouraging residents to walk and bike more often, ultimately increasing the level of active transportation use in Othello.



Goals and Policies

GOAL 1: Provide a complete, connected network of sidewalks, pathways, and bike lanes.

- POLICY 1.1 -- Ensure the bicycle and pedestrian facilities connect seamlessly to schools, parks, transit, employment centers, and higher-density neighborhoods.
- POLICY 1.2 -- Prioritize filling in gaps in existing networks, such as sidewalks, to provide continuous facilities and fulfill the Complete Streets Policy outlined in Othello Municipal Code Chapter 11.80.

GOAL 2: Improve safety for people walking and bicycling on city streets.

- POLICY 2.1 -- Improve crossings where active transportation routes intersect with major arterials and where they connect to schools and parks.
- POLICY 2.2 -- Encourage traffic calming measures along all streets within the active transportation network.

GOAL 3: Provide equitable opportunities to access the active transportation network throughout the community.

- POLICY 3.1 -- Encourage amenities along bicycle and pedestrian routes that increase the comfort with using those facilities, such as street trees, lighting, bike racks, benches, and wayfinding/guidance signage.

- POLICY 3.2 -- Regularly monitor the active transportation network to ensure that travel lanes, signs, pavement markings, crossings, and ADA amenities are well maintained and cleared.
- POLICY 3.3 Ensure information and signage is available in multiple languages and/or designed to be easily understood by all, such as with consistent symbology.

GOAL 4: Prioritize, fund, and maintain active transportation projects as the city grows.

- POLICY 4.1 -- Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian improvements where possible during scheduled street maintenance/construction.
- POLICY 4.2 -- Require development projects to provide their fair share of bicycle and pedestrian improvements if they are located along a designated active transportation route. (Othello Municipal Code 16.33.130)
- POLICY 4.3 -- Identify and apply for funding to design, construct, and maintain active transportation facilities.
- POLICY 4.4 -- Include priority bicycle and pedestrian facilities in local improvement plans such as the CIP and TIP.
- POLICY 4.5 -- Where funding and/or time is short, utilize tactical urbanism approaches to initiate pilot projects. This includes installing temporary bicycle lanes, parklets, street furniture, & traffic calming to inspire long-term change and gauge community support.



GOAL 5: Increase awareness of the active transportation network.

- POLICY 5.1 -- Keep an updated map of bicycle and pedestrian routes available on the city's web page.
- POLICY 5.2 -- Develop a unified signage system for identifying routes and access points within the active transportation network that is consistent with established standards.
- POLICY 5.3 -- Once a sufficient network has been developed, organize educational and awareness programs such as a 'Bike to Work Month' to promote and increase the use and safety of active transportation.



Pedestrian Action Plan

It is Othello's goal to ultimately provide safe pedestrian access on nearly every publicly-owned street in the city. This will ensure that getting around town on foot is doable and safe for those of all ages and abilities.

Othello also recognizes that some streets need safe pedestrian access more than others. For example, ensuring there are safe, continuous sidewalks on local arterials is more important than ensuring there are safe, continuous sidewalks on residential streets simply because there is more traffic and faster speeds on the arterials. Because of this, Othello has identified two different priorities for pedestrian routes in town, Priority 1 Routes and Priority 2 Routes, as explained below and as shown in Figure 12.

Priority 1 Routes

Priority 1 Routes are the highest priority pedestrian routes. These follow arterial and collector streets across the city and provide a high degree of connection. These are also busier streets, making it more important that there are safe and continuous sidewalks and crosswalks.

Priority 1 Routes should:

- include a buffer from the vehicle travel lanes wherever possible
- take priority over Priority 2 Routes when filling in sidewalk gaps
- have safe crosswalks and/or crossing signals wherever two Priority 1 Routes intersect

Priority 2 Routes

Priority 2 Routes are all other city streets because pedestrians should have safe access to all parts of Othello. While it will be important to ensure these routes have sidewalks or safe spaces for pedestrians, they are the routes that provide a lower degree of connection, often connecting to residential areas or city outskirts.

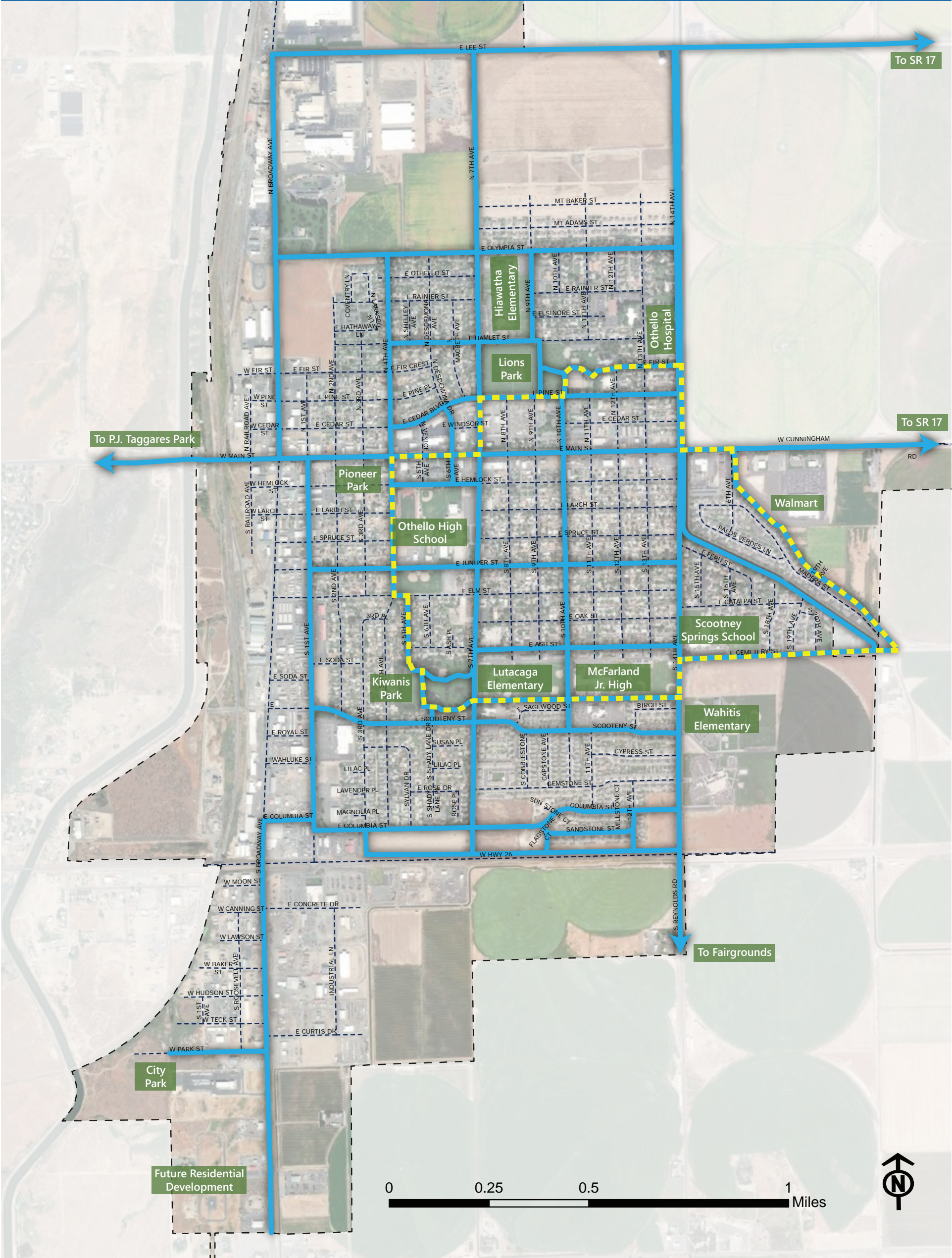
Filling in sidewalk gaps on Priority 2 Routes should be considered whenever other street work is done, or where specific gaps will make a big difference in pedestrian connectivity.

Safe crosswalks and/or crossing signals should be considered where Priority 2 Routes intersect with Priority 1 Routes as some of these intersections may provide beneficial connection points for pedestrians.

Othello Walk Path

Building on the existing Othello Walk Path, this plan aims to enhance this established route to create a safe, accessible, and enjoyable route for walking around Othello. The entire length of the Othello Walk Path is designated as a Priority 1 Route, however this enhanced path will ensure that all sidewalks are buffered from vehicle traffic, street crossings are very safe and visible, and that the route is comfortable, with many areas of shade trees, rest areas with benches and water fountains, and wayfinding signage. This will be the premiere walking route in Othello and maintain an already well-known and established loop.





Othello, WA Pedestrian Network

- Othello Walk Path
- Priority 1 Pedestrian Routes
- Priority 2 Pedestrian Routes
- City Limits

Figure 12: Othello Pedestrian Network

Pedestrian Conceptual Design

The following conceptual designs illustrate a general cross section for the identified facility type. These concept designs focus on the pedestrian realm, and do not represent actual plans and are not to scale.



Figure 13: Residential Street Pedestrian Concept

Residential Street Concept

The Residential Street Concept shows what pedestrian facilities should look like on most residential streets in Othello. This concept illustrates a simple residential street with enough curb-to-curb width for street parking on both sides of the street as well as two vehicle travel lanes – one in each direction. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street, conforming to widths provided by Othello’s Code. Residential streets do not need a lot of changes to become safe streets for pedestrians since there are fewer cars driving by, and often slower speeds.

By providing space for pedestrians on both sides of the street, even in residential areas, Othello will ensure that anyone can get around safely on foot, including children, seniors, and those with disabilities.

Collector/Arterial Street Concept



Figure 14: Collector and Arterial Street Pedestrian Concept

Unlike residential streets, collectors and arterials typically have higher volumes of traffic and higher speed limits. This creates conditions that feel less safe for pedestrians, making it even more important that safe and continuous sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street. It also becomes important to ensure that there is a significant buffer between the vehicle travel lanes and the sidewalks. This buffer can either be a wide shoulder, a street parking lane, or landscape/street furniture buffer, such as pictured in Figure 14.

Figure 14 shows a conceptual cross section of an arterial street with two travel lanes in each direction and a center turn lane, with no parking

lane on the side. Because the vehicle travel lane is so close to the curb, an extra buffer is provided, and can be used for street trees, benches, signage, lighting, utility poles, etc.

This figure is not representative of any particular location in Othello, but simply aims to illustrate that anything that provides a physical buffer between the vehicle travel lane and the sidewalk will greatly increase pedestrian comfort and safety.

The concept also shows a pedestrian refuge island in the center lane. Pedestrian refuge islands are highly recommended for mid-block crossings or wherever the center turn lane is not needed for a



An example of a mid-block RRFB crossing with a pedestrian refuge island in Airway Heights, WA

particular section of roadway, such as at a mid-block crossing or where left turns are prohibited. These refuge islands help pedestrians to cross busy streets safely where they need to navigate crossing multiple lanes of traffic in each direction.

The concept also depicts a HAWK crossing signal, like the ones at the intersections of Main Street at 4th Ave and 5th Ave. Othello may decide that there are other locations where HAWK signals are appropriate, but ultimately the City should evaluate the unique context of each crossing location (see the section on “Choosing a Crossing Type” below).

Overall, collectors and arterials should provide buffered, accessible sidewalks on both sides of the street and regular safe crossing opportunities should be provided.

Pedestrian Facility Improvement Recommendations

The following recommendations are separated into short term and long term recommendations. Short term recommendations are those that are expected to be more feasible within a 5-6 year timeframe (aligning with the TIP), and the long term recommendations are those that may only be possible in a 10+ year timeframe.

Short Term

- ♦ Fill in the sidewalk gaps along Priority 1 Routes.
- ♦ Improve pedestrian street crossings where Priority 1 Routes intersect each other.
- ♦ Improve the sidewalk, paved paths, and crossings along the Othello Walk Path route.
- ♦ Update development standards to reflect pedestrian accommodations.
- ♦ Prioritize pedestrian crossings and align them with the TIP.

Long Term

- ♦ Add buffers (or furnishing zones) between

the street and the sidewalk along Priority 1 Routes. Buffers may vary in size, and the Small Town and Rural Design Guide recommends furnishing zones of 4-6 feet for proper comfort and aesthetics².

- ♦ Fill in the sidewalk gaps along Priority 2 Routes
- ♦ Connect the pedestrian network to regional networks that connect to nearby communities and the Palouse to Cascades Trail.

Strategies

The following strategies can help inform how best to adapt to different situations and contexts for developing pedestrian facilities throughout Othello. **These are not prescriptive and aim to provide guidance on dealing with different situations.**

Using the existing Right-of-Way

Lanes as narrow as 10 feet do not result in an increase in crashes or reduce vehicle capacity on roads with speeds of 45 mph or less. Narrower lane widths of 10 feet or less can contribute to lower vehicle operating speeds, which can increase safety for all roadway users. Othello has many streets with travel lanes much wider than 10 feet. Some of this extra space could be repurposed for pedestrian infrastructure.

Choosing a Crossing Type

Intersections pose unique challenges to a pedestrian network. Without proper treatment, an otherwise safe network can suffer from intersection crossings that do not properly accommodate pedestrians.

Different types of crossings will be appropriate in different places, but generally the longer the distance to cross and the higher traffic volume on the road, the greater degree of crossing infrastructure needed. Othello aims to provide enhanced crossings wherever two Priority 1 Routes intersect, and will regularly analyze the need for enhanced crossings wherever Priority 2 Routes intersect with Priority 1 Routes.

²Rural Design Guide. Retrieved from <https://ruraldesignguide.com/>



Othello may consider an array of crossing types, and ultimate decisions about which crossing types to choose will be determined based on the need of the particular intersection based on city and engineering analysis. These crossing types are outlined below.

Crossing Types

1. Crosswalk Markings (Street Paint & Signs)

Painted crosswalks provide designated places for pedestrians to cross safely. They indicate pedestrian right-of-way through painted pavement and signage and are appropriate for low-volume intersections and residential streets.

2. Traffic Control Signal

Pedestrian crossings at traffic signals are already usually provided. However, bicycle and pedestrian safety should be enhanced by adding bulb outs, crosswalks painted in vibrant colors, and signal timing that prohibits cars from turning while pedestrians and cyclists cross.

3. Raised Crosswalks

These are painted crosswalks that double as speed bumps since they require vehicular traffic to slow down as they drive over the raised crosswalk. This also brings greater awareness to pedestrians attempting to cross at these locations and may be appropriate on low-speed streets with high pedestrian volumes.

4. Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)

The RRFB is an enhanced/active crossing type that allows pedestrians to press a button that activates flashing beacons to let cars know to stop. These are particularly effective as mid-block crossings or at multi-lane crossings with speeds of less than 40 mph and may be appropriate at many locations along arterials.

5. High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK)

HAWKS provide a high level of protection for pedestrians. These signals require vehicular traffic to stop long enough for a pedestrian to cross the street. These crossings are ideal for streets with high traffic volumes and multiple lanes in each direction. Othello has found HAWKS to be successful within town, and may choose to increase the number of HAWKS as arterial crossings.

6. Roundabouts

Roundabouts are designed to slow down vehicle traffic as they pass through an intersection. Pedestrian crossings at roundabouts can provide additional safety for pedestrians through design elements that reduce conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.



Adding Accessory Features

Ideally, pedestrian facilities in Othello will consist of more than just the sidewalk itself. The experience of walking should be comfortable and enjoyable, and there are a few things that can help improve that experience on Othello's streets.

Street Furniture

Street furniture is a broad term that describes the various amenities that people walking on sidewalks can use and/or benefit from. This includes things like benches, drinking fountains, garbage cans, lighting, and signage. By adding street furniture, the City will help increase interest and comfort when walking through town.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage helps pedestrians orient themselves within the City, and can make walking around much more comfortable while also keeping

pedestrians on track and not distracted with trying to figure out where to go. Othello should ensure that wayfinding signage is available in both English and Spanish.

Landscaping

Having greenery lining the street makes walking much more enjoyable. Simply adding landscaping in the sidewalk buffer, or street trees along the roadway can make walking feel a lot safer, and can even encourage people to get out and walk more. Street trees also provide shade, which can be extra helpful for pedestrians out walking during the hot Othello summers.

The Role of Trees

Increased Pedestrian Safety

Trees play a role in calming traffic. In 2006, a study was done in Texas of ten urban arterial and highway sites. They compared accident records before and after planting trees. What the study found was a 46% decrease in crash rates after the trees were in place. The trees also helped to slow vehicles by up to 8 miles per hour.³

Additionally, trees give the appearance of narrowing street width. Accidents increased by almost 500% within an 8-year period when streets were widened and trees were not present.⁴

Reducing Heat

It is easily observed that shade cools the temperature for people compared with not having any shade. Trees have started to be recognized as a remedy to the public health concerns that have arisen from increased heat. One way to help keep members of a community from facing dehydration and heat exhaustion, and further caring for and protecting their health, is to provide more spaces where they can cool off. This is especially needed if the hope is for them to use active transportation options.

³ <https://www.deeproot.com/blog/blog-entries/trees-are-a-tool-for-safer-streets-2/>

⁴ <https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/research/transportation/>



Shaded surfaces may be 20-45 degrees cooler than unshaded materials⁵. By providing shade along the areas where people are walking and biking, they become more likely to use these forms of transportation.

Shade Protects Pavement

Shade is not only beneficial to humans, but has a positive impact on built infrastructure as well. A study done in Modesto, California showed that streets that were covered with at least 20% shade had 11% improved pavement conditions compared with streets that did not have shade. This translates to a savings of 60% over 30 years.⁶ Valuable infrastructure like sidewalks and streets can be protected and need less maintenance if they have the proper shading.

Increased Walkability

Trees promote feelings of relaxation, and they promote safety. Research done in the US has shown that tree lined streets encourage people to walk more than those without. A study done in Australia concluded that people who perceived their neighborhood as being highly green had a 1.37 to 1.6 times higher odds of better physical and mental health⁷, based on recreational walking being a significant predictor of mental health.

Overall, if the goal is to have increased walking and biking, trees play a valuable role in working toward that objective.



⁵ <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/using-trees-and-vegetation-reduce-heat-islands#:~:text=Trees%20and%20vegetation%20lower%20surface,peak%20temperatures%20of%20unshaded%20materials>

⁶ <https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/research/transportation/>

⁷ <https://jech.bmj.com/content/62/5/e9>



Bicycle Action Plan

Bike Lanes

Bike lanes are stripes painted along existing roadways that designate space on the street for bicycle use. In Othello, **bike lanes will be prioritized on streets that have higher traffic volumes or faster speeds** to help cyclists maintain distance from fast-moving cars.

Bike lanes can come in many different forms, and the decision to add bike lanes to streets in Othello will require looking at the specific context of the project and determining what is feasible. For example, it may be possible on streets with higher speeds and traffic volumes, to include a buffered bike lane, as pictured in Figure 15, which is a bike lane with a painted buffer between it and the vehicle travel lane, helping provide space for safety between bikes and cars. The Small Town and Rural Design Guide⁸ states that buffers should be a minimum of 18 inches wide.

Alternatively, bike lanes can be fully separated from the vehicle travel lane by including a physical barrier between the bike lane and vehicle travel lane, as pictured in Figure 16. This can take multiple shapes, including a parking lane, where the parked cars provide a physical buffer, or some other sort

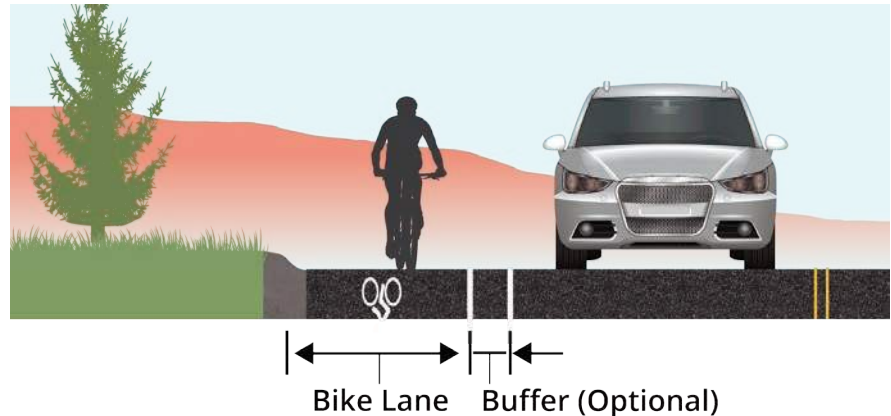


Figure 15: Bike lanes establish an area for exclusive bicycle use outside the path of motor vehicles.

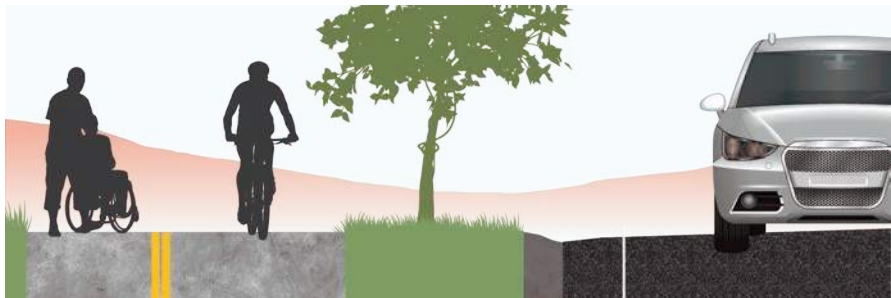


Figure 16: The use of physical separation with vertical elements, unpaved separation, or detectable edges may be more effective than painted buffers.

of physical separation such as bollards, planter boxes, or concrete (jersey) barriers. Separated bike lanes are best for high-speed, high-volume streets.

These various types of bike lanes should be considered, and the safety of the cyclists should be top priority when adding bike lanes to existing streets. **The safer the bike lane, the more likely it is to be used.**

⁸Rural Design Guide. Retrieved from <https://ruraldesignguide.com/>



Bike Friendly Streets

Bike friendly streets are designated bike routes along low-traffic, slow-speed streets. These are often residential streets that connect across town. Some bike riders, such as kids riding to school, may already use these routes because of their calm and safe nature.

By designating these streets as “bicycle-friendly streets”, this plan would help ensure cyclists are continued to be prioritized through investments in safe crossings where these routes cross busier collectors and arterials, sharrows painted on streets to make drivers aware that the road is shared with bicycles (as shown in the example image above), and other traffic calming measures where appropriate.

Shared Use Paths

Shared use paths are pathways or trails that allow both bike and pedestrian use. They are safer for cyclists than bike lanes and bike-friendly streets because they are physically separated from vehicle traffic. These will be prioritized in recreational areas, such as in city parks or along canals, as well as wherever bike infrastructure aligns with roads with speed limits over 35 mph, such as along SR 26.

Future Shared Use Paths

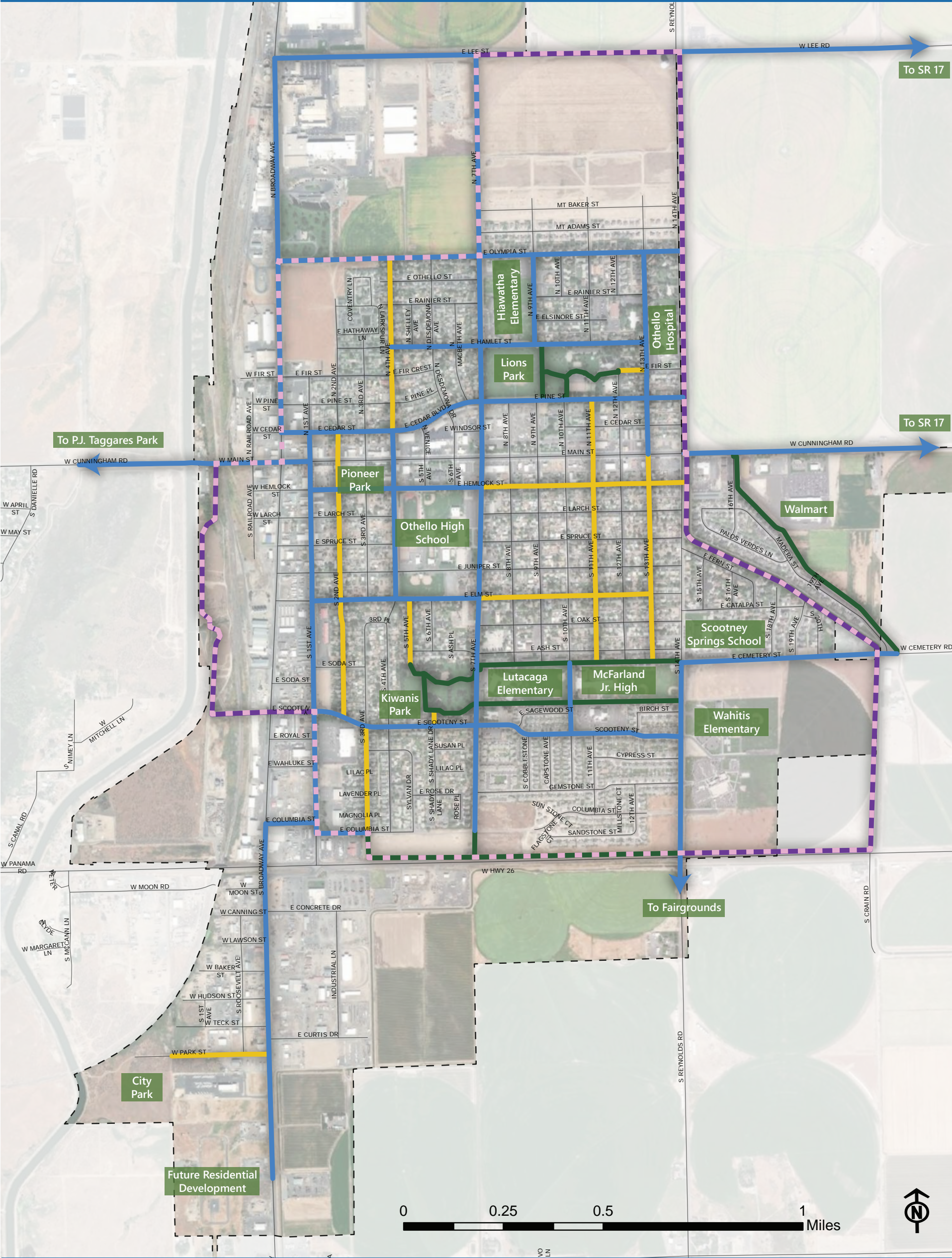
Future shared use paths will have the same characteristics as shared use paths, except these routes will likely take longer to implement. These are long-term projects, but indicate the desire for additional shared use paths in and around Othello, helping create a more cohesive and continuous network of bike paths.

Future Othello Bike Loop

The Future Othello Bike Loop will be a 7.1-mile bike loop around the perimeter of Othello, and will consist of a mix of shared use paths and protected bike lanes.

This concept is a long-term project, but is vital to planning for the future of bike infrastructure in Othello. The goal of the Othello Bike Loop is to provide a long, continuous, recreational bike path that allows cyclists to ride further distances without regularly needing to navigate intersection crossings or vehicle traffic.

Shared use paths on the Othello Bike Loop will require sufficient buffers between the path and any adjacent or nearby vehicle traffic. Likewise, bike lanes on the Othello Bike Loop will necessitate significant separation from adjacent vehicle traffic to ensure that cyclists feel comfortable and safe while riding on Othello’s premier bike route.



Othello, WA Bicycle Network

- Roads
- - - City Limits
- Proposed Bicycle Routes**
 - Bike Lane
 - Bike-Friendly Street
 - Shared Use Path
 - - - Future Shared Use Path
 - - - Future Othello Bike Loop (7.1 Miles)

Figure 17: Bicycle Network Map

Bike Infrastructure Conceptual Designs

The following conceptual designs illustrate a general cross section for the identified facility type. These concept designs focus on the bicycle realm, and do not represent actual plans or designs and are not to scale.

Bike Friendly Street Conceptual Design

Bike Friendly Streets are typically low-speed, low-volume residential streets. Bike Friendly means that cyclists can ride anywhere in the street and feel relatively safe and comfortable. These are streets that most would feel comfortable letting their kids ride their bikes to school on.

Bike Friendly Streets can be configured multiple different ways – but the goal is essentially the same: to calm traffic and prioritize cyclists and pedestrians. Cars should feel like guests on these streets, and Othello can develop methods of accomplishing this, such as:

- ♦ Painting bike sharrows on the roadways to help notify drivers to be aware of cyclists
- ♦ Adding signs that indicate the street is a designated bike route – further signaling to drivers that bikes are the priority.
- ♦ Developing traffic calming measures that encourage drivers to slow down.
- ♦ Improving sidewalks, crossings, and other pedestrian facilities that are complementary to cycling infrastructure.

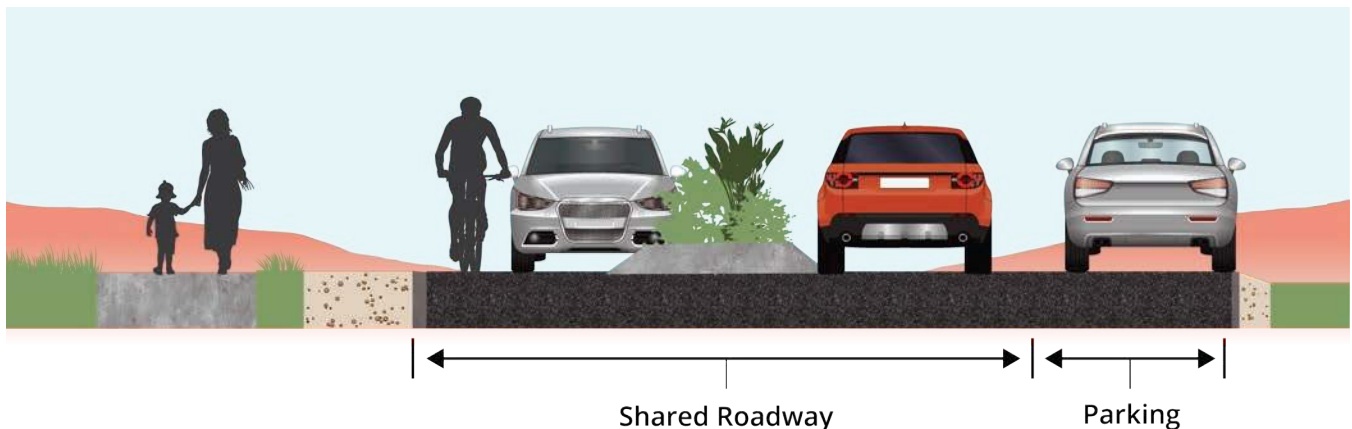


Figure 18: Example diagram with common elements of a bike friendly street.

Bike Lane Conceptual Design

As stated earlier, bike lanes come in many different styles and contexts. The two concepts presented here represent the varying degrees of buffers that bike lanes can have from the moving vehicle lanes. Generally, on roads with more lanes of traffic, more traffic volume, and/or faster speeds, the greater the buffer between the vehicle and the bike lane, the better.

Paint Buffer

Painted buffers do little to actually protect cyclists, since there is nothing except paint on the roadway between vehicles and cyclists. Painted buffers do, however, provide cyclists with extra room to maneuver without feeling like they are competing for space with vehicles. Many cyclists may still feel unsafe on these facility types, but a painted buffer may be the most feasible or logical option for certain places in Othello, as determined at the time of project design. By using existing lane space for a painted bike lane, vehicle traffic lanes become slightly narrower, which can have the added benefit of slowing down traffic on these routes.

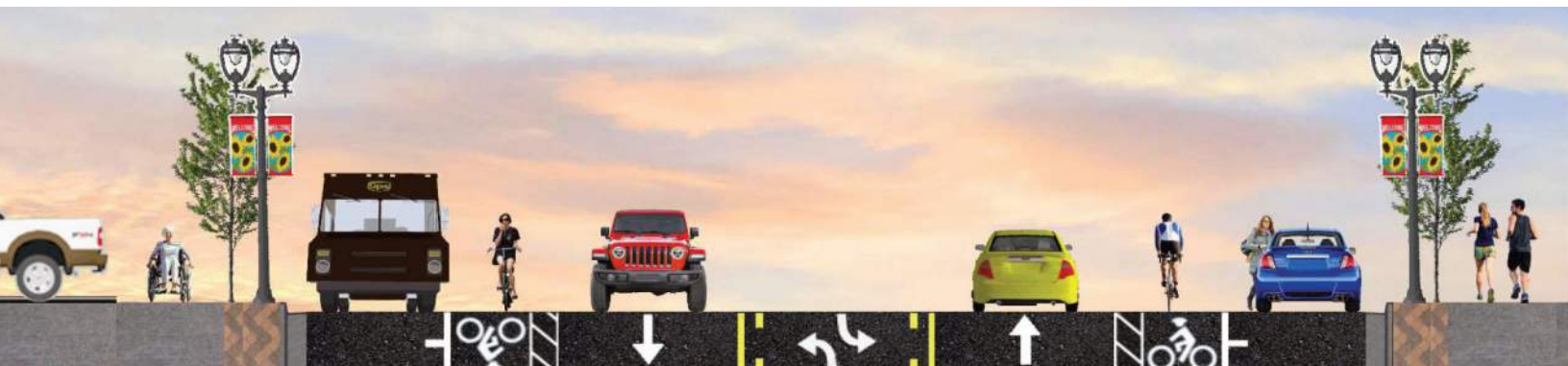


Figure 19: Bike lane with painted buffer

Physical Buffer

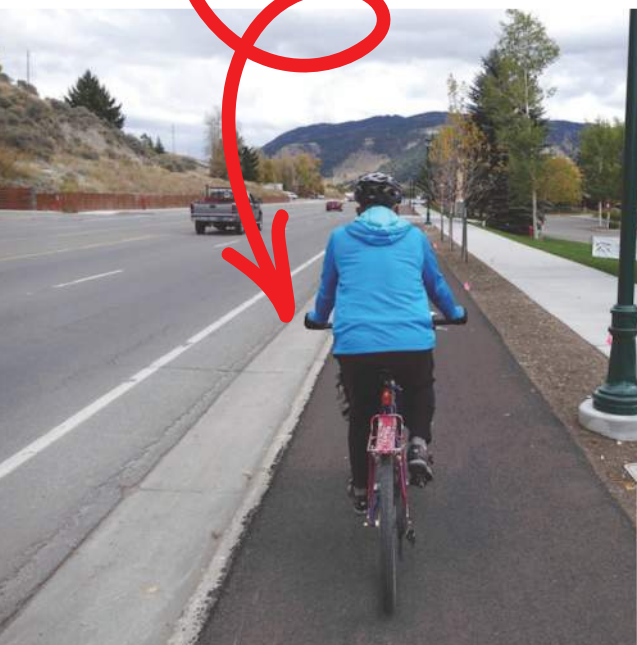
A physical buffer is a material object that separates the bike lane from the vehicle travel lane. This can also take many forms, but a common and more feasible option is the parking lane buffer, as depicted in Figure 20. In this situation, the parking lane is painted next to the vehicle travel lane, and the bike lane is designated between the sidewalk and the parking lane. This is one of the more feasible options because it does not require anything more than paint on the roadway, and instead utilizes the need for street parking as a way to keep bikes away from moving traffic. This is often preferable over a painted buffer, but uses the same amount of resources: paint. See Figure 22 for guidance on when physical buffers are recommended.



Figure 20: Bike lane with physical buffer (parking lane)

Other physical barriers could include:

Bike lane grade separated by a curb



Bollard-protected bike lane (Short Term and Low-Cost Improvement)



Bike lane with a landscape buffer





Figure 21: Paved Path (Shared Use Path) Concept

Paved Path Conceptual Design

Paved paths, sometimes known as “shared use paths” or “shared use trails”, are the ideal bicycle facility. These paths, such as the part of the Othello Walk Path on the east side of town, allow both pedestrians and cyclists to travel on them without any interference from cars (except where they cross streets).

These are the safest types of bike infrastructure and are safe for all ages and abilities. However, paved paths require more space than any other type of bike infrastructure since they are separated from existing roadways, and must be significantly wider than the average sidewalk to ensure there is enough space for both cyclists and pedestrians. Best practices from WSDOT recommend design considerations for shared use paths, including that they have a minimum width of 10 to 12 feet.

Othello aims to expand its network of paved paths where there is room and where it is logical and feasible to do so.

Bike Infrastructure Recommendations

Short Term

- ♦ Add bike lanes to city streets (as designated in the Othello Bicycle Network Map in Figure 17) when completing regular road maintenance work
- ♦ Improve crossings where bike lanes and paved paths cross arterials and collector streets (see strategies section below)
- ♦ Outline a Bike Safety Program (see strategies outlined below)
- ♦ Develop traffic calming measures on designated bike routes
- ♦ Implement a Bike Rack Program
 - Include bike rack locations on bike map
- ♦ Update development standards to reflect bicycle accommodations
- ♦ Prioritize bicycle crossing needs and align them with the TIP

Long Term

- ♦ Develop a network of protected bike lanes
- ♦ Develop a wayfinding system
- ♦ Expand the paved pathway network
- ♦ Expand the bike network to new development



Strategies

The following strategies can help inform how best to adapt to different situations and contexts for developing bicycle facilities throughout Othello. These are not prescriptive, and aim to provide guidance on dealing with different situations.

Reorganizing Street Space

Street space can often be reconfigured to accommodate the same capacity of vehicle traffic while also adding safer active transportation facilities. The strategies below offer some examples of reconfiguring streets to accommodate new or safer facilities.

1. In some cases, curbside on-street parking can be shifted away from the curb face to create parking-protected separated bike lanes. This type of project requires changes to pavement markings and attention to intersection design treatments.
2. On streets with parking on both sides, adding bike lanes or shared use trails may not require the removal of all on-street

parking if the parking is not being used efficiently. Deciding where to remove parking may depend on which side of the street has fewer or no businesses.

3. Converting diagonal parking to parallel parking can generate road width for the creation of bikeways and improve bicyclist safety. Front-in, diagonal parking creates conflicts with bicycle travel.

Choosing Alternative Facility Types

When the proposed non-motorized facility type is determined not to be feasible, other facility types which maximize user safety and comfort should be considered. For example, if the preferred facility type is a shared use trail and the current project is a street resurfacing, it may not be feasible for that project to install the shared use trail. The only practical option may be the installation of a bike lane.

In circumstances where the preferred facility type is not feasible, and the provision of a lower quality facility will not provide sufficient safety, a parallel route should be evaluated as an alternative that provides a similar connection.

"If a project is planned on a roadway that is a critical link in the bike network, including the appropriate bike infrastructure should be prioritized as a part of that project."

-FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide

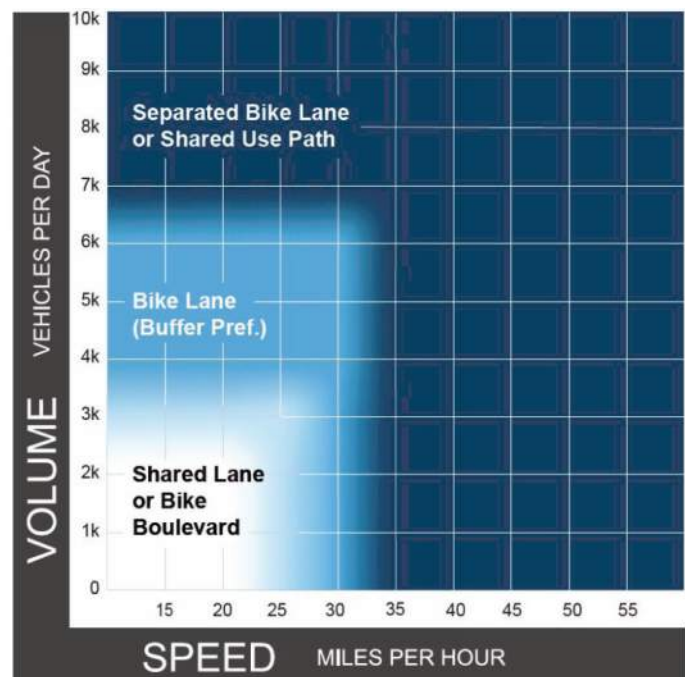


Figure 22: Preferred Bikeway Type Guide
Source: FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide





Installing Pop-Up or Temporary Facilities

Pop-up and temporary facilities can be good demonstration practices that provide immediate and inexpensive solutions. A pop-up bike lane, for example, can show the community what it would be like to invest in a permanent bike lane or path on that segment. Doing this can be a good strategy to gauge the community's reaction to new bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and gain buy-in on projects where some may be skeptical.

These types of projects can be implemented almost immediately because they use inexpensive materials such as traffic cones, pavement tape, planter boxes, and flex delineators.

"[Projects reallocating road space] can be implemented as temporary, or pilot projects to test measures to determine if they meet the needs of all users. This can be an effective strategy to engage community members and build long-term support for more permanent solutions. "

-FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide



Adding Accessory Features

Ideally, bicycle facilities in Othello will consist of more than just the bike lane or paved path itself. The experience of biking should be comfortable and enjoyable, and there are a few things that can help improve that experience on Othello's streets:

Bike Racks

Bike racks are vital to the individual decision of whether to make a trip by bike or not. When people have a safe, convenient place to lock up their bikes, they will be much more likely to choose to travel by bike. Bike racks should be clearly identifiable, and this could even be coordinated with public art efforts. Bike racks should be identified on bicycle wayfinding maps, and the City should consider a bike rack program that works with local businesses to install bike racks outside their business.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding signage helps cyclists orient themselves within the City, and can make biking around much more comfortable. These signs can be coordinated with pedestrian wayfinding.

⁹ <https://summerparkways.com/>

Safety Programs

Bike Safety Programs may include education and training on how to use the roadway, local and state bicycle laws, advice for being safe on the road, the importance of wearing a helmet, and how to be a respectful driver. Other programs could include local campaigns to get people to bike more often, such as a "Bike to Work Week" or a Helmet Distribution event. It is important to get the community involved and make them feel like a part of the changes in town, and show people how these efforts to improve cycling in Othello will be beneficial to them and their families.

A bike friendly street program would help Othello gain momentum in creating a network of bike friendly streets, with support and assistance from the community. A Bike Safety Program could involve:

- ♦ Choosing the first bike friendly routes on the Bicycle Network Map to become bike friendly streets.
- ♦ Identifying funding for small interventions on these routes such as bike sharrows and signage.
- ♦ Continue to monitor and improve traffic calming measures along these streets.
- ♦ Hosting events such as a "Summer Parkways"⁹ that gets community members out biking around these streets.



Speed Management and Traffic Calming

Othello should refer to the Small Town and Rural Design Guide¹⁰ for best guidance on traffic calming measures. The guide outlines strategies such as speed humps and speed tables, mini roundabouts, pinch points, lateral shifts, median islands, speed feedback signs, and speed reduction markings.

The guide also discusses the benefits of traffic calming, highlighting the graphic below that shows how much safer streets with slow speeds are for pedestrians (and cyclists).



Figure 23: Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death

Source: ruralsdesignguide.com

Accommodating Bikes in Street Crossings

Cyclists must also be considered in crossing improvements. Crosswalks, RRFBs, and HAWK signals that align with sidewalks may be difficult for cyclists to access. Therefore, Othello should consider placement of crossing infrastructure on arterials and collectors to be accessible by both pedestrians and cyclists on routes where the two align.

The Small Town and Rural Design Guide provides the following guidance for accommodating bike lanes at intersections:

Design strategies for bike lanes at intersections emphasize reducing speeds, minimizing exposure, raising awareness, and communicating right-of-way priority.

- ♦ *Under most conditions, bicyclists have priority over turning traffic. Markings and signs should support this priority and remind motorists of the obligation to yield.*
- ♦ *Adjacent to a through-right lane, use a modified R10-15 "Turning Vehicles Yield to Bikes" sign to clarify user priority.*
- ♦ *Where a right-turn lane is established to the right of a bike lane, R4-4 "Begin Right Turn Lane Yield to Bikes" sign reminds motorists to yield to bicyclists before entering the lane.*
- ♦ *Where special emphasis is desired, green pavement color may be used within bike lanes and at merging or weaving areas where motor vehicles may cross bike lanes. For more information on the use of color, refer to FHWA Interim Approval 14 2011.*

¹⁰ Rural Design Guide. Retrieved from <https://ruralsdesignguide.com/>

Intersection Crossing Markings



Added Right Turn-Only Lane



Figure 24: A variety of design treatments exist depending on the roadway configuration, available curb-to-curb width, traffic volumes and desire to provide a dedicated turn lane. All designs should strive to reduce speeds of turning vehicles, remind users of bicycle priority, and clarify user positioning approaching and through the intersection. Common signs at intersections include R4-4 "Begin Right Turn Lane Yield to Bikes" and a modified R10-15 "Turning Vehicles Yield to Bikes" sign.

Source: ruraldesignguide.com



Combined Bike Lane/ Turn Lane in Eugene, OR. Source: nacto.org

Additionally, the Urban Bikeway Design Guide by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)¹¹ provides guidance on combining bike lanes and turn lanes, which may be necessary on streets where there is a right turn lane but not enough space to maintain a standard-width bicycle lane at the intersection:

A combined bike lane/turn lane places a suggested bike lane within the inside portion of a dedicated motor vehicle turn lane. Shared lane markings or conventional bicycle stencils with a dashed line can delineate the space for bicyclists and motorists within the shared lane or indicate the intended path for through bicyclists. This treatment includes signage advising motorists and bicyclists of proper positioning within the lane.

¹¹ National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). Urban Bikeway Design Guide. Retrieved from <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/>

Funding Opportunities

There are various funding strategies and grant opportunities to pursue to complete projects in this plan. The City of Othello should monitor these opportunities regularly to ensure grant deadlines are met and program funding is identified well in advance of the proposed project development. The funding strategies listed here are just some of the options available, so looking for funding opportunities outside of this list will be beneficial to the development of the non-motorized network.

Taxes

Motor Vehicle Fuel Taxes (MVFT)

The 49.4 cents/gallon gas tax revenues collected by the state are shared among cities, counties, and WSDOT. Under RCW 47.30 cities may use a portion of their motor vehicle fuel tax funds to establish and maintain paths and trails for pedestrians, equestrians, or bicyclists as a part of streets, roads, and highways.

Sales and Use Tax for Public Facilities in Rural Counties

Monies collected in rural counties for the purpose of financing public facilities that serve economic development purposes in the rural county. Adams County may collect and distribute these funds to utilize in projects, including city transportation improvements. Funded projects must be listed in the county or city economic development plan, comprehensive plan, or capital facilities plan.

Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD)

Cities and counties may establish TBDs to fund capital improvements and operations of

transportation systems. TBDs fund projects through voter-approved tax levies, bonds, sales taxes, motor vehicle fees, tolls, LIDs, and other fees. Othello has established a TBD as outlined in the Othello Municipal Code Chapter 3.30. The TBD consists of the entire city limits. TBD funds may be used to make transportation improvements that are consistent with state, regional, and local transportation plans.

Private Development Fees/Impact Fees

Transportation impact fees are authorized in Washington State by RCW 39.92 as a financing tool to help develop transportation infrastructure improvements.

Recreation Trails Program

This is a FHWA program that develops and maintains recreational trails and trail-related facilities. Funds for this program are from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use (snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks).



Federal Public Lands Access Program

This program funds transportation improvements that provide access to, on, or adjacent to federal lands. This program is an updated version of the Forest Highway Program. Transportation improvements may include public roads, bridges, trails, or transit systems.

WSDOT Funding

Surface Transportation Block Grant and Transportation Alternatives Programs

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds can be used for the widest range of transportation projects including street or sidewalk construction projects, design, and right-of-way acquisition projects, etc.

- ♦ Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds can only be used for bike and pedestrian facilities and programs, trails, some historic preservation projects, and safe routes to schools.
- ♦ Funding priorities and project selection process are established by the funding agency. The funding agency for STP is Adams County, and the funding agency for TAP is QuadCo. STP and TAP funds have different requirements as to which facilities are eligible based on functional classification and project type, with greater flexibility for TAP funds than STP.
- ♦ Putting any federal money onto a project – even a very small amount relative to the rest of the project funding – effectively federalizes the entire project and all monies must be used in ways that meet federal reporting and accounting requirements and the project must comply with all federal standards for design, testing, and record keeping. A project designed with federal funds must go to construction within 10 years or else the earlier expenditure of funds must be repaid. Any federally-funded project other than a planning project must be managed by an agency certified by Highways and Local Programs for

this purpose. Federally-funded projects have a minimum 20% local match requirement.

- ♦ For more information: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/localprograms/programming/stp.htm>

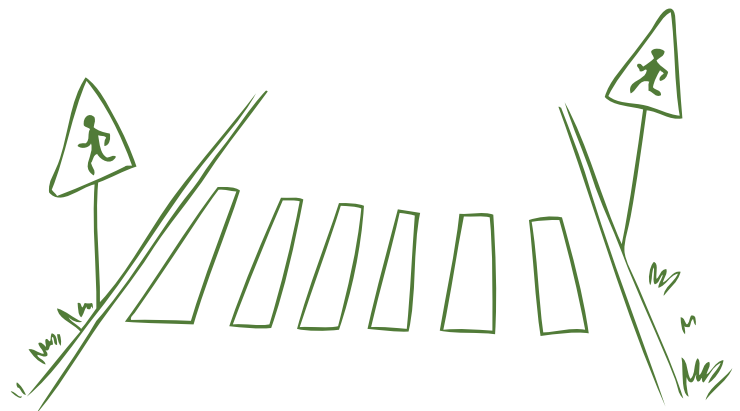
Pedestrian and Bicycle Program

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Program objective is to improve the transportation system to enhance safety and mobility for people who choose to walk or bike. Since 2005, the program has awarded \$72 million for 159 projects from over \$337 million in requests.

- ♦ WSDOT issues a call for projects in the “even year” before the new biennium for selection by the legislature. For example, the application period closed in June 2020 for projects to be considered for funding in the 2021-2023 biennium. The most recent call for projects was in 2022. All public agencies in Washington are eligible to apply.
- ♦ For more information: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/support-local-programs/funding-programs/pedestrian-bicycle-program>

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

- ♦ The WSDOT Safe Routes to School program provides technical assistance and funding to public agencies to improve conditions for and encourage children to walk and bike to school. Eligible projects include infrastructure improvements within two miles of a school and education/encouragement projects.





- ◆ No match requirement but priority is given to projects with cash or in-kind match.
- ◆ The grant cycle is every two years. The most recent application was due June 2022.
- ◆ For more information: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/support-local-programs/funding-programs/safe-routes-school-program>

Regional Mobility Grants

WSDOT provides a grant program for projects that promote multimodal transportation and improve high occupancy travel in order to reduce travel delay for people and goods. Projects can be capital construction, equipment acquisition, and operating. Most projects are transit-related in this program.

Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) Funding

Complete Streets Funding

- ◆ The Complete Streets Award is a funding opportunity for local governments that have an adopted complete streets ordinance, such as Othello. Board approved nominators may nominate an agency for showing practice of planning and building streets to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, access to transit, cyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities.
- ◆ This program awards grants every two years, starting in 2017. Agencies with an adopted complete streets ordinance should confirm their eligibility.
- ◆ For more information: <http://www.tib.wa.gov/grants/grants.cfm>



Washington State Department of Commerce Funding

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

- General Purpose Grants can be used for the planning or construction of public infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, and community facilities that serve lower income populations, affordable housing, and economic development projects. Application materials are available in March and due in June of each year.
- CDBG funds can be used as local match for other federal or state grant programs used to fund CDBG-eligible activities.
- For more information: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/current-opportunities/community-development-block-grants/>

Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

Land and Water Conservation Fund

- The Land and Water Conservation Fund provides funding to preserve and develop outdoor recreation resources, including parks, trails, and wildlife lands.
- Applications are due annually in the spring.
- For more information: <https://rco.wa.gov/grant/land-and-water-conservation-fund/>

Volunteers and Donations

- While the local community may have limited funding resources to tap for capital improvement projects, a number of the projects developed in this plan would be appropriate for smaller-scale contributions from businesses and civic boosters, as well as provide opportunities for community

involvement either for-hire or as volunteers on the design and/or installation.

- Local artists can be used in the design and fabrication of signage and wayfinding features.
- Local contractors or vendors may be appropriate for some of the smaller projects, trail furnishings, art and signage installation, landscaping and painting.
- There are a number of opportunities to partner with private property owners to enhance the streetscape or view corridors where there is no clear demarcation between the public right of way and private property.

Table 1: Funding Opportunities by Facility Type

Facility Type	Recommended Funding
Shared Use Trails	<p>Funding opportunities for shared use trails come from complete streets opportunities, WSDOT funding, and increased opportunities for regional mobility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Regional Mobility Complete Streets Funding
Bike Lanes	<p>Bike lanes are funded mainly through larger program scopes and are a subset of why funding could be awarded to a project. WSDOT and Commerce have opportunities that integrate diverse modes of travel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Community Development Block Grants
Sidewalks	<p>Sidewalks can be funded through a variety of programs. The more connections that are made, such as schools, parks, low income residential districts, the more funding is available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Community Development Block Grants
Routes to Schools	<p>Connections to schools, neighborhoods, essential services, and parks have a variety of funding options through WSDOT, Commerce, and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Routes to School Community Development Block Grants



Conclusion

Othello is looking toward the future and planning for population growth and economic changes. This growth and change will come with increased pressures on the transportation system. Othello hopes to become a safer, more accessible city to help accommodate and capitalize on this growth. A very big part of this will be creating safer streets for all community members, and a big part of that is ensuring safety and accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians.

By moving forward toward these proposed facilities, networks, and strategies, Othello will be able to achieve the vision stated in this plan.





TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: February 21, 2023

SUBJECT: Local Improvement District–Request for Direction

The Planning Commission has expressed an interest in exploring stimulating economic development by completing missing street and utility improvements. At the January meeting, the Commission focused on a Local Improvement District (LID) as the most appropriate choice for completing Columbia Street.

Staff Comments

1. As a reminder, a Local Improvement District (LID) is used when a capital project primarily or wholly benefits only a subset of the community. It is commonly used for projects like street improvements, street lights, sidewalks, water and sewer systems, and underground power lines. Either the City or the property owners can initiate an LID. The process can be blocked if owners who would be paying at least 60% of the cost object. Bonds are sold to pay for the project, then the benefiting property owners pay off the bond over time. LIDs can be a catalyst for economic growth, allowing developers long-term financing at potentially lower interest rates; however, because the construction must be overseen by the city and requires prevailing wage and public works contract requirements, costs are higher than if it were a private construction project. LIDs are very well-suited to filling in gaps in existing infrastructure but “LID financed projects test agency public relations skills like no other projects”. The assessment per parcel may not exceed the benefit to the parcel (the difference between the fair market value of the property before and after the project).

More info: <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/public-works/finance/local-improvement-districts>

2. As requested, the City Engineer did some preliminary calculations of cost and extent of the potential LID. Looking at the scope of what would need to be done, his preliminary rough estimate of cost is about \$635 to \$675 per lineal foot, including design engineering and construction engineering. (We would likely have to bid out the design and construction engineering due to staff workload). Approximate frontage lengths costs are:

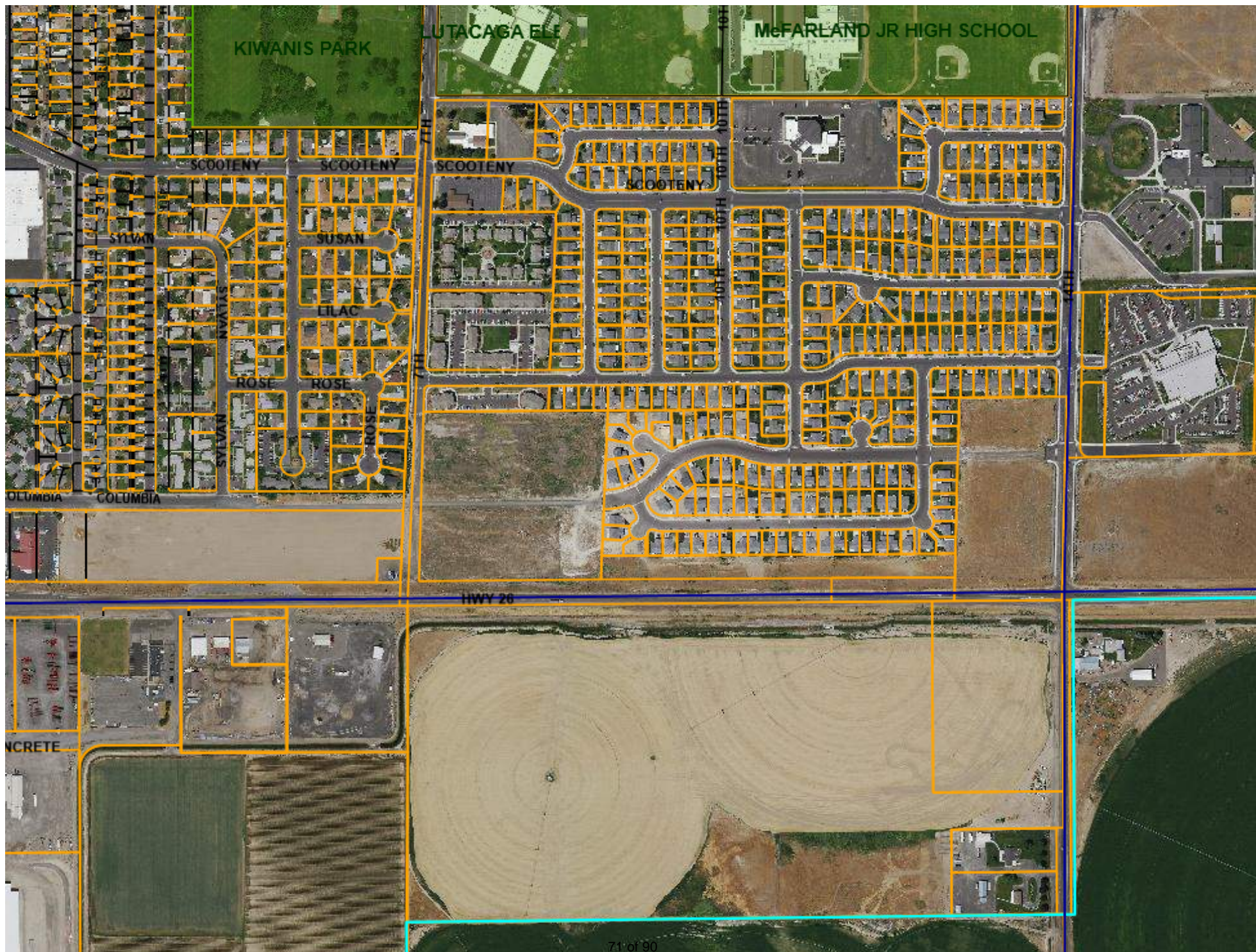
Property Owner	Area	Frontage	Approximate cost
Momentum Investment Properties Corp	433,858 SF	840' with some imprs 640' with no imprs	\$999,000
Garza Enterprises	591,980 SF	775' Columbia 400' 7 th Ave	\$523,125 \$472,500
DDM Enterprises LLC	239,144 SF	370'	\$249,750
		Total	\$2,244,375

3. As discussed last meeting, I contacted the owners of the western property. I asked both about LIDs and whether there are other barriers to development that the City could work on solving. We had several emails and appointments for phone calls, but were not able to connect. My impression is they are not interested in at this time.

Attachments

- Map

Action: The Planning Commission should review the provided information and provide direction to staff on how to proceed.



TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: February 21, 2023

SUBJECT: Landscaping – OMC 17.74 - Discussion

Note: Most of this material was prepared for the Oct. 17, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, but there wasn't time to discuss it at that meeting or the following meetings, so it is being provided again.

Over the course of the May, June, and August 2022 meetings, the Commission reviewed the street tree requirement in OMC 17.74, especially related to Main Street and commercial remodels, at the direction of the Council. The consensus of the Commission was to require trees but not necessarily street trees, for new non-residential projects, and to not require trees for remodels and additions.

The other aspect of the landscape code the Commission discussed is that the current system where landscaping for a single family home can be deferred until a year after the Certificate of Occupancy is not working well, and they gave direction to draft changes which would require landscaping before the project is finished for all projects, including single family residential.

At the October 3, 2022 Council meeting, there was discussion about discouraging or prohibiting the use of lawns and encouraging more water-wise landscaping/desertscares. However, the City has been putting in and requiring developers to build a separate system for irrigation water, so that water is available for landscaping without using drinking water, since canal water is readily available. Additionally, less landscaping in a neighborhood would raise the summertime temperature by having more hard surfaces and less shade (see attached news article).

The attached draft is provided for review before scheduling a public hearing.

Staff Comments

1. The changes made since the August review of the draft are:
 - a. 17.74.020(c) Table 1 modified to delete "Street" in front of "Trees" to match with the change to not require the trees along the street.
 - b. 17.74.050 Section title changed from "Street trees to "Trees", and modifications within this section to reflect the new direction.
 - c. 17.74.090 Delete "within one year of occupancy" for the timing of residential landscaping.
 - d. 17.74.150(b) Delete "Other than for single family homes" to no longer have an exception for single family homes to complete the landscaping after the Certificate of Occupancy.
2. At the August 2022 meeting, the Commission discussed previous objections to requiring landscaping before Certificate of Occupancy, including:

Objection	Commission Response
Including the cost of landscaping in the cost of the home will add to the size of the mortgage payment.	Chair Dorow stated he had discussed this with a banker, who said the increase in payment would be very small.

Objection	Commission Response
Including the landscaping in the cost of the home may keep some borrowers from qualifying for a loan.	The Commission felt people who barely qualify are likely to also have trouble coming up with the funds to install landscaping in their first year as homeowners with all the other new expenses.
There are no businesses in Othello that can do landscape installation.	The Commission felt that if there were a demand for this service, it would create an opportunity for a new business to start.

3. At the May and June 2022 meetings, the Planning Commission expressed a desire to simplify the landscape requirements. So far, we have not really made much progress on simplifying the code, other than to loosen the placement of trees and eliminate the single family timing exception. The Commission should consider if the code structure is too complicated and what could be done to reduce the complexity, or if it is sufficient for now with the changes that have been made and can maybe be revisited again in a few years.

Attachments:

- OMC 17.74 Landscaping and Screening, with draft changes
- Spokesman-Review article: “Where you live in Spokane can mean the difference between a warm day or an unbearably hot one, Gonzaga study confirms” (updated Oct. 8, 2022)

Action: The Planning Commission should provide direction on any further changes to the landscape code, and whether to schedule a public hearing.

Chapter 17.74

LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING

Sections:

- 17.74.010 Purpose and intent.
- 17.74.020 Applicability.
- 17.74.030 General landscaping.
- 17.74.040 Parking lot landscaping.
- 17.74.050 Street trees.
- 17.74.060 Property line screening.
- 17.74.070 Trash enclosure screening.
- 17.74.080 Blank facade landscaping.
- 17.74.090 Residential landscaping.
- 17.74.100 Landscape point values.
- 17.74.110 Approved, discouraged and prohibited plants.
- 17.74.120 Landscape plan requirements.
- 17.74.130 Modifications.
- 17.74.140 Installation, maintenance, and enforcement.
- 17.74.150 Approval of landscape plan and installation of landscaping.
- 17.74.160 Variances.

17.74.010 Purpose and intent.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish landscaping provisions to achieve the following:

- (a) Provide a smooth transition between adjacent properties and buffer different intensities of land uses.
- (b) Maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the city.
- (c) Soften the visual impact of paved surfaces and blank building walls.
- (d) Reduce the effects of light, noise, glare, exhaust fumes, heat, wind, erosion, and other adverse effects.
- (e) Provide shade.
- (f) Reduce environmental impact. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.020 Applicability.

(a) Other than the exceptions listed in subsection (b) of this section, the requirements of this chapter shall apply to all of the following:

- (1) New development.
- (2) Any change in the use of a property requiring a land use permit.
- (3) Any change in the use of a property requiring a change of occupancy permit.
- (4) Any addition, remodel, alteration, or repair of a structure that increases the gross floor area by more than twenty percent or where the cost of the addition, remodel, alteration, or repair exceeds twenty-five percent of the existing assessed value of the structure.

(b) Exceptions.

- (1) This chapter does not apply to any use or development in the C-1 zone, other than parking lots and trash enclosure screening.

(2) Partially Developed Lots. When only a portion of a lot is being developed, the community development director may grant a deferral of the landscaping requirements for the undeveloped remainder of the lot.

(c) Landscaping Required.

Specific types of landscaping are required for the following categories of projects:

Table 1

Type of Landscaping	Subject Property Use				
	Individual Single-Family Houses or Duplexes	Residential Subdivisions	Multifamily Development (Triplex or Larger) and Manufactured Home Parks	Nonresidential Development	Development in Industrial Zones
General	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Parking Lot	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Street Trees	No	Yes	Yes	Yes for new development No for remodels and additions	No
Property Line Screening	No	At time of construction of each house	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trash Enclosure Screening	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Blank Facade	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Residential	Yes	At time of construction of each house	Yes	No	No

(Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.030 General landscaping.

Multifamily and nonresidential projects, except when located in an industrial zone, shall provide the following landscaping points on the site, in addition to other required landscaping:

Table 2

Developed Area	Landscaping Points Required
500—2,500 sq. ft.	25
2,501—5,000 sq. ft.	50
Over 5,000 sq. ft.	50 plus one point for each 200 sq. ft. of area over 5,000

Developed area shall be calculated as the area of the building and amenities including patios, sidewalks, and common areas. Parking area is not included in the developed area calculation and is instead addressed in Section 17.74.040. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.040 Parking lot landscaping.

(a) Applicability. Parking lot landscaping is required for multifamily and nonresidential projects, except for the following:

- (1) Projects located in an industrial zone.
- (2) Display areas for automotive and equipment sales and rental.
- (b) Landscaping Point Requirements. Parking lots with more than ten required spaces shall provide two landscaping points for each required parking space, plus one point for each additional parking space.
- (c) Location.
 - (1) All landscaping shall be located intermittently between parking stalls, at the end of parking columns, or between stalls and the property line. The design should strive to have all parking spaces within fifty feet of the trunk of a shade tree with a fifteen-foot minimum canopy at maturity.
 - (2) When parking islands are provided, trees shall be planted a minimum of two feet away from the edge of the parking island, to prevent damage to trees from vehicle overhang or opening doors.
 - (3) Landscaping shall be protected from vehicle damage by permanent curbs or structural barriers. Curbing or barriers may have openings to facilitate stormwater drainage. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.050 ~~Street trees~~ Trees.

- (a) Applicability. The provisions of this section shall apply to new developments, including multifamily development, residential subdivisions, and nonresidential projects except when located in industrial zones.
- (b) Developments adjacent to public streets shall provide one medium or large tree for each seventy-five lineal feet, or fraction thereof, of street frontage abutting the property.
- (c) Trees shall be approximately evenly spaced. Tree spacing may be modified for conflicts such as utilities, site topography, and visual safety at intersections and driveways.
- (d) Trees ~~are encouraged to should~~ be planted within ten feet of the edge of right-of-way but shall not be planted within right-of-way without approval of the public works director. For non-residential projects, trees are not required to be planted along the street when another location on the lot provides a better site design. Residential subdivisions are required to provide the required trees along the street frontages.
- (e) Street trees shall be chosen from the approved list in Section 17.74.110. Street trees not on this list must be approved by the community development director and public works director.
- (f) Street trees near a side property line shall be planted clearly on one side of the line or the other, to make clear which owner is responsible for maintaining the tree.
- (g) Street trees may be counted toward the landscape points needed for a site. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.060 Property line screening.

- (a) Applicability. Property line screening is required for subdivisions, multifamily development, manufactured home parks, and nonresidential projects in all zones.
- (b) Visual screening shall be installed along the adjoining property line in the following situations:
 - (1) A nonresidential project abuts a multifamily project; or
 - (2) A residential subdivision has lots that back to an arterial street.
- (c) Full screening shall be installed along the adjoining property line in the following situations:
 - (1) A multifamily or nonresidential project abuts a one- or two-family dwelling or vacant land zoned R-1 or R-2;
 - (2) The project is a manufactured home park;

- (3) A project in an industrial zone abuts a different zoning district; or
 - (4) An industrial use has the potential to substantially impact adjacent properties with noise, nuisance, or vibration, as determined by the city administrator or designee.
- (d) Visual screening shall consist of one or a combination of subsections (d)(1) through (3) of this section. Full screening shall consist of subsection (d)(1) of this section plus at least one of subsections (d)(2) through (3) of this section.
- (1) A sight-obscuring fence, which may consist of wood, ornamental iron, aluminum, brick, masonry, architectural panels, chain link with slats, or other permanent materials that are typically used for fencing;
 - (2) A maintained, landscaped earthen berm at least five feet wide with a minimum of ten points of landscaping for every twenty-five lineal feet of property line frontage; or
 - (3) A five-foot-wide landscape screen that shall consist of:
 - (A) A mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees, planted no less than thirty-five feet on center, with a maximum of seventy-five percent of the trees being deciduous;
 - (B) Evergreen shrubs shall comprise at least fifty percent of the plantings;
 - (C) A minimum of eighteen landscape points for every twenty-five lineal feet of property line being screened.
- (e) Height of Screening.
- (1) Visual or full screening shall be a minimum of six feet high measured from finished grade, except where shorter screening is needed for safety, such as within front setbacks and at street corners and driveways.
 - (2) Where the elevation of the finished grade within six feet of the screen differs from one side of the screen to the other (as when a fence is placed on top of a slope or retaining wall), the height shall be measured from the side with the lowest finished grade elevation. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.070 Trash enclosure screening.

- (a) Applicability. Trash enclosure screening is required for multifamily projects larger than four dwelling units and nonresidential projects utilizing trash containers larger than ninety-six gallons, except that trash enclosure screening is not required within industrial zones.
- (b) Trash receptacles larger than ninety-six gallons shall be enclosed on all four sides by a six-foot-high, one hundred percent sight-obscuring barrier. Three sides of the enclosure shall be block wall or similar. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.080 Blank facade landscaping.

Blank building facades more than twenty feet in height or fifty feet in width or length shall be landscaped with trees, trellises, and plantings to provide visual relief and soften the effect of the building on the surrounding area. A blank facade within twenty feet of another building or otherwise not visible from a public street is not required to be screened. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.090 Residential landscaping.

- (a) Front Yard Setback. The required front yard setback of all residential uses shall be landscaped ~~within one year of occupancy~~ and maintained. For the purposes of this section, “landscaping” shall be defined as the addition of lawn, trees, plants, shrubs, and other natural and decorative features. At least fifty percent of the front yard area shall be landscaped. Driveways and parking areas may be located in the remaining fifty percent that is not required to be landscaped.
- (b) Multifamily Structures. Multifamily residential uses shall also landscape the required open space areas so that they are usable for outdoor recreation.

(c) **Manufactured Home Parks.** All areas within the boundaries of the manufactured home park shall be landscaped. All lawns, trees, landscaping, occupied and unoccupied manufactured home spaces, recreation areas, and open space areas shall be continually maintained. A permanent irrigation system shall be installed and maintained for planted common areas. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.100 Landscape point values.

Where this chapter specifies landscape points, the points shall be calculated per the following table. Where drought-tolerant plantings and techniques are used, point values may be increased by twenty percent.

Table 3: Landscape Point Values

Type of Plant Material	Minimum Size (at time of planting)		Point Value	
	Deciduous Trees (in caliper inches)	Evergreen Trees (in feet of height)	New Vegetation	Preserved Vegetation
Large tree (mature height > 60')	Over 25" caliper	>41'		58
	20.1 to 25"	37—40'		46
	15.1 to 20"	33—36'		40
	10.1 to 15"	29—32'		35
	8 to 10"	22—28'	26*	30
	7"	19—21'	24*	28
	6"	16—18'	22*	25
	5"	13—15'	20*	23
	4"	11—12'	18*	21
	3"	9—10'	15*	17
Medium tree (mature height 25—60')	2"	7—8'	12*	14
	1.5"	6—7'	10*	12
Small tree (mature height <25')	1"	5—6'	9*	10
*Points for a tree are increased by 25% if planted within 10' of a street right-of-way line				
Large shrub	5-gallon, 24" height at planting		3	4
Medium shrub	3-gallon, 12" height at planting		2	3
Small shrub	2-gallon, 8" height at planting		1	n/a
Ornamental grass or perennial >12" tall	1-gallon		1	n/a
Groundcover plant	1-gallon		1/2	n/a
	4" pot		1/4	n/a
Landscaped berm	30" height, 10' length, 3:1 slope		1 point per 5 lineal feet	n/a
Turf grass	n/a		1/4 per square yard	n/a
Basalt column			1/2 per cubic foot	

Type of Plant Material	Minimum Size (at time of planting)		Point Value	
	Deciduous Trees (in caliper inches)	Evergreen Trees (in feet of height)	New Vegetation	Preserved Vegetation
Boulder			1/2 per cubic foot	
Beautification committee approved red planter pot			Small = 15 points. 18 points with plants Medium = 19 points. 22 points with plants Large = 23 points. 26 points with plants	
Barrel with plants	2' minimum diameter		5	
Curbing			1 point per 10 lineal feet	
Original artwork/sculpture			1/10 per cubic foot	
Decorative rock groundcover			1 per 10 square yards	

(Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.110 Approved, discouraged and prohibited plants.

(a) General. Any plant listed by the Adams County weed district as a noxious weed is prohibited from being planted or allowed to exist anywhere within the city limits of the city.

(b) Trees.

(1) Approved trees are preapproved, specific trees that the city of Othello has approved to be planted as park trees and city-planted public trees in the right-of-way. This list is also advisable to use for private landscaping outside the city right-of-way on private property: flame maple, trident maple, tatarian maple, common hornbeam, zelkova, tree lilac, red sunset maple, Kwanzan flowering cherry, chanticleer flowering pear, white ash, red maple and spring snow crabapple.

(2) Discouraged trees have particular negative attributes that should be considered for sustainability for the specific location prior to planting in Othello. Research these trees carefully: box elder maple, hickory, autumn brilliance service berry, imperial honeylocust, kousa dogwood, redbud, black pine, Chinese chestnut, catalpa, hackberry, hawthorn, black walnut, aspens, elms, fruit-bearing trees, fruit-bearing crabapple, and any tree within seven feet of a building or four feet of concrete.

(3) Prohibited trees have a clear and definitive reason not to plant anywhere in Othello: tree of heaven, silver maple, box elder, poplar, black cottonwood, pin oak, willows, Russian olive, Siberian elm, sycamore, sweetgum, sequoia, four oak, Norway maple, and black locust. Said trees are only prohibited from being planted by any person within city rights-of-way and/or easements, or within one hundred feet of a public sewer.

(c) Plants Discouraged from Use.

(1) Thorny plants in locations that tend to catch wind-blown trash, such as barberry.

(2) Plants that need significant maintenance to retain an attractive appearance, and are difficult to remove once established, such as yucca.

(3) Plants that are very large and hard to control, such as pampas grass. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.120 Landscape plan requirements.

(a) Landscape plans shall be to a standard scale and shall include the size and type of landscaping materials and vegetation, the dimensions of the lot, the developed area, parking areas, point calculations showing compliance with this chapter, and an irrigation plan detailing types of irrigation delivery and controller.

(b) A landscape plan shall be prepared by a person experienced in the selection and installation of plants. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.130 Modifications.

The city administrator or designee may approve modifications to the landscaping requirements of this chapter when the applicant demonstrates that:

- (a) Required landscaping directly interferes with the operation or maintenance of existing stormwater facilities or natural drainage systems; or
- (b) Existing development, improvements, utilities, or easements directly preclude installation of the required landscaping. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.140 Installation, maintenance, and enforcement.

- (a) Landscaping shall be primarily vegetative and consist of trees, shrubs, and groundcover. Nonliving natural features may also be incorporated.
- (b) All plant material shall be in a healthy condition at the time of planting and shall meet quality standards set forth by the American Standard for Nursery Stock.
- (c) All newly planted trees and shrubs shall be mulched and maintained in healthy conditions and to give a clean and weed-free appearance.
- (d) Maintenance of required landscaping shall be the responsibility of the property owner. All unhealthy or dead plant materials shall be replaced within the next planting season, not to exceed one hundred eighty days from the date of loss. Planted areas shall be maintained free of trash and weeds.
- (e) The type and location of vegetation shall not interfere with utilities and the safe and efficient flow of street traffic. Approval by the appropriate city departments and utility providers shall be required.
- (f) Where turf grass is used, it shall be planted, seeded, watered, and maintained in such a manner as to completely cover all exposed areas of soil after one full growing season.
- (g) Disturbed ground shall not be left exposed. Mulch or vegetative ground covers shall cover all unpaved and undisturbed areas.
- (h) Landscaping may be included within stormwater facilities, provided it does not conflict with the operation of the stormwater facility and complies with state and local stormwater regulations.
- (i) Irrigation. All portions of any irrigation system shall be maintained in order to perform its original function. Uncontrolled emission of water from any pipe, valve, head, emitter or other irrigation device shall be considered evidence of lack of maintenance and a violation of this chapter.
- (j) Hardscape. Maintenance of all landscape areas shall also include the painting, repairing, reconstruction, and restoration of landscape structures such as fences, walls, trellises, etc. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.150 Approval of landscape plan and installation of landscaping.

(a) After receipt of a complete landscape plan, all development applications shall be reviewed by the planner for compliance with this chapter concurrently with and as a part of the review process of the principal use or structure and prior to issuance of any grading, building, or land use permit or approval.

(b) ~~Other than for single family homes, a~~No certificate of occupancy, or final inspection approval if no certificate of occupancy is required, shall be issued until one of the following occurs:

- (1) The required landscaping is installed.
- (2) A bond or some other form of cash surety acceptable to the city is submitted at a value of one hundred twenty percent of the estimated cost to complete the landscaping according to the approved landscape plan. Upon completion of the landscape installation, the city shall promptly release the surety. (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

17.74.160 Variances.

A variance from the regulations of this chapter may be obtained through the hearing examiner in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 2.16 entitled “Hearing Examiner.” (Ord. 1547 § 6 (part), 2020).

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

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Where you live in Spokane can mean the difference between a warm day or an unbearably hot one, Gonzaga study confirms


Oct. 6, 2022 | Updated Sat., Oct. 8, 2022 at 8:57 p.m.



By **Garrett Cabeza** 

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On a summer day, volunteers drove throughout Spokane collecting thousands of measurements of temperature and humidity in an effort to map out “urban heat islands.” 

The result was what they and residents knew for a long time but never confirmed with data – some neighborhoods are hotter than others because of what’s known as the urban heat island effect. It occurs when pavement and buildings absorb heat and create higher temperatures than in shaded neighborhoods.

“What it reveals is confirmation and more precision of what we expected to find, which is that different neighborhoods in Spokane experience different magnitudes of heat on a given day,” said Brian Henning, director of Gonzaga University’s Center for Climate, Society, and the Environment, which [collected the data](#) as part of the center’s “Spokane Beat the Heat” initiative.

The ultimate goal is to use the high-resolution heat maps and survey results from Spokane residents about their extreme heat experiences to develop a plan for future heat waves so that no one else dies.

Scorching temperatures killed 20 people in Spokane County in 2021, more than the previous eight years combined, according to the county. The Center for Climate launched Spokane Beat the Heat in response to the 2021 heat deaths.

“There’s no reason why anybody should be dying of extreme heat in Spokane,” Henning said.

For Spokane, extreme heat refers to days with high temperatures of at least 90 degrees and low temperatures of at least 68, according to Henning.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration funded the group’s urban heat island mapping campaign, which it conducted July 16, with a \$10,000 grant, Henning said.

Spokane was one of 14 U.S. cities and counties the NOAA chose for the campaign, and the only one in the Northwest. The Center for Climate partnered with the Spokane City Council Sustainability Action Subcommittee, the Lands Council, 350 Spokane and KXLY-TV for the grant.

The official high temperature July 16 at the Spokane International Airport was 88 degrees, but Henning said temperatures reached as high as 94 degrees in parts of the city where tree coverage and green spaces are sparse or where pavement and buildings are plentiful. >

Henning said community members might be more vulnerable than they realize. He said a 100-degree day in one neighborhood could mean 108 degrees in another, putting those residents more at risk.

For example, during that July afternoon, the temperature in the Emerson-Garfield, Riverside and East Central neighborhoods was as high as 93 degrees, while the Manito and Comstock neighborhoods were closer to 85 degrees.

The largest temperature difference July 16 was 13.9 degrees. That morning, it was 57.8 degrees near the Downriver Park Conservation area along North Pettet Drive and 71.7 degrees at East Trent Avenue and North Regal Street near the railroad lines.

“What we’re figuring out is exactly how much that difference can be,” Henning said.

The nearly 14-degree difference highlights the urban heat island effect in which the open, commercial area with few trees at Trent and Regal was hotter than Downriver Park, where dense vegetation and a nearby river provided a cooler environment.

Henning said people's lives, especially young children and vulnerable adults like seniors, could be at risk when overnight temperatures do not cool off enough, such as the 71.7-degree morning in East Central Spokane.

Henning said the next phase of the project is gathering Spokane residents' [extreme heat experiences](#). Some of the survey questions ask whether residents have air conditioning and can afford to use it. The survey can be found at gonzaga.edu/HeatSurvey.

The goal is to get a large enough sample size from people of different income levels, so the Center for Climate can gain a sense of which neighborhoods are vulnerable to extreme heat, Henning said.

The final phase is working with the city and other entities to create solutions.

Henning said one example is changing building codes to incentivize using light-colored components for large commercial rooftops instead of black ones, so they do not retain as much heat. That also lowers energy bills. >

The city could also adjust its codes to incentivize more green space in and around parking lots, Henning said.

Building or improving cooling centers is another option, he said.

Henning said the city did a good job this summer making its four libraries available as cooling shelters so people could escape the heat. Spokane Transit Authority gave riders traveling to cooling centers a free ride.

Henning said he hopes to implement at least some plans by next summer, but the progress depends on interest and capacity from the city and other partners.

He said he has had preliminary talks with the city that have been encouraging.

Tree plantings is one solution the city has implemented to bring shade and cooler temperatures, as well as a host of other benefits, to neighborhoods.

Katie Kosanke, urban forester at the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, said her department conducted studies about canopy cover in the city, but the Center for Climate's heat map will also prove useful.

"It really is helpful in kind of providing more information to support plantings in especially low-canopy neighborhoods, which is primarily the northeast," Kosanke said.

Kara Odegard, city manager of sustainability initiatives, said the city is prioritizing planting in northeast Spokane, where pockets of some neighborhoods are as low as 8% canopy coverage. Odegard said downtown Spokane also needs more trees.

Odegard said the city is working with the Lands Council to plant the street trees as part of a program called SpoCanopy. The program's objective is for every neighborhood to have 30% canopy coverage by 2030.

Kosanke said some neighborhoods, like Shiloh Hills, in northeast Spokane are as low as 11% canopy coverage. Hillyard is 13%, Nevada Heights is 13.6% and Logan is 13.9%.

Kosanke said the city partnered with the Lands Council and planted 100 trees in the spring. About 100 new street trees will be planted this month in the West Central and Bemiss neighborhoods as part of SpoCanopy, according to a Spokane Parks and Recreation Department news release.

Kosanke said the city and Lands Council are expected to team up to plant another 200 trees next year, doubling what the city typically planted. They plant magnolias, oaks, elms, ginkgos and lindens to name some.

"We're trying definitely to add more trees and canopy cover so everybody can enjoy the benefits that trees provide," Kosanke said.

The plantings do not include trees planted as part of other city projects, like engineering and park projects, or trees required to be planted as part of a development.

A Spokane 2020 urban tree analysis report concluded that while the size of the neighborhood contributed to the amount of tree canopy coverage, it also appeared the distribution of tree canopy correlated with a neighborhood's income level. It said tree canopy coverage is high in South Hill neighborhoods, like Manito, and low in lower income areas like Logan.

The report said the highest tree canopy coverage was Manito at 38.5% and the lowest was Riverside at 7.8%.

“The benefits of tree canopy coverage in an urban area have been identified and are a priority for the city of Spokane to take action on to promote equity and justice across the city,” the report said.

Odegard echoed the idea of tree canopy coverage being an equity issue.

She said cities across the country have also implemented “blue infrastructure,” like splash pads and drinking fountains in parks, so people can cool off while hydrating.

“I do think that there’s a lot more opportunity for us going forward to continue to invest in that green and blue infrastructure across the city,” she said.

She said the city should partner with other jurisdictions, like the county, as well.

Gerry Bozarth, Spokane County disaster recovery specialist, said he and the Center for Climate intend to apply for a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant that would make air conditioning units available for those in need. Bozarth said the data the Center for Climate compiled will be some of the basis for future grant applications. >

As part of the study, Henning said the center and its partners will develop an educational heat awareness campaign so that residents, especially vulnerable ones, know the risks associated with extreme heat and what to do and where to go during heat waves.

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Local journalism is essential.

Give directly to The Spokesman-Review's Northwest Passages community forums series - which helps to offset the costs of several reporter and editor positions at the newspaper -- by using the easy options below. Gifts processed in this system are not tax deductible, but are predominately used to help meet the local financial requirements needed to receive national matching-grant funds.

City of Othello
Building and Planning Department
January 2023

Building Permits			
	Applied	Issued	Final
Residential	9 ¹	2 ⁴	6 ⁷
Commercial	2 ²	1 ⁵	0
Industrial	0	0	0
Total	11	3	6

¹ 1 single family, 4 residential foundation, 1 addition (bedroom/bathroom), 1 interior remodel, 1 siding replacement, 1 fence
² Emmanuel Church dining hall & kitchen remodel, Mid-Columbia Library sign
⁴ 1 interior remodel, 1 replace siding
⁵ Mid-Columbia Library sign
⁷ 3 additions (1 living room, 1 bedroom, 1 living room/bedrooms/bathroom), 1 interior remodel, 1 HVAC, 1 re-roof

Inspections

- The Inspector completed 132 inspections in January, including 1 rental inspection.

Land Use Permits		
Project	Actions in January	Status as of January 31
Active Transportation Plan	Completed Environmental Checklist. Issued, routed, & published DNS.	Waiting for comment period on DNS to end.
Charan Short Plat	Heard from a new contractor potentially taking over the project, they were gathering information. (Prelim plat approved in June, owner put on hold in Sept.)	Next steps will be sidewalk and final plat.
M. Gomez Boundary Line Adjustment (Matching lines with businesses at 724-728-740 E. Main St)	No change (BLA approved in April.)	Waiting for copy of recorded BLA
Ochoa Short Plat	No change (Deferrals heard at Aug. 2021 Planning Commission meeting.)	Waiting for proposed covenant language from applicant's attorney, as specified in PC recommendation.
Sand Hill Estates #4 Final Plat	Council approval of final plat and acceptance of easement. Notice of Decision issued. Plat recorded.	Waiting for recorded mylars (rec'd 2/2)
Sand Hill Estates #5 preliminary plat	Submitted draft revised decision document to Hearing Examiner for review.	Next step will be construction plans for street and utility improvements.

Land Use Permits		
Project	Actions in January	Status as of January 31
	Hearing Examiner issued revised decision. Formal Notice of Decision issued and posted. Appeal period ended 1/27.	
Story Rentals Final Plat (Ace Hardware)	Notice of Incomplete issued 1/3	Waiting for additional items to make complete application.
Wahitis Short Plat	Received notice from School District that USBR has formally released the easement that has been holding up this project.	Need to schedule a meeting to discuss the next steps. Street improvements must be completed or guaranteed before accepting mylars for recording.

Rental Licensing & Inspection Program

- No new rental application were submitted in January. One site (2 units) was approved.
- There was 1 rental inspection in January.
- 70 locations with a total of 120 units have been fully approved so far.
- There are currently 85 active applications for a total of 186 units in various stages of inspection and correction. In January, we sent letters to these applicants, giving them until February 28 to make corrections and schedule inspections. The 85 sites are owned by a total of 26 landlords. Deputy Clerk Yvonne Hernandez also called landlords on the list that she knew and was able to get them to schedule inspections.
- Requested that Code Enforcement send another round of letters to the 10 known landlords who have not applied for rental licenses yet.

Development Projects

- Building Inspector Tim Unruh is helping to finalize the City Hall/Court remodel, painting, carpeting, etc.
- Prepared report requested by Planning Commission about economic development and financing mechanisms, including bonds, Local Improvement Districts, and Tax Increment Financing.
- Pre-application meeting for Othello Ambulance Facility (new building on hospital site).
- Attended Port of Othello meeting where they were again considering an offer to sell property to a developer for a master-planned community.

Municipal Code

- Helped proofread and review the replacement Title 8 & 9 (Criminal Code & Traffic Code) before Council adoption.
- Council public hearing on the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) ordinance Jan. 9 and Jan. 23. Ordinance adopted (OMC 3.40).

Housing

- We still have grant funds available for the MFTE project, so asked consultant to draft the forms we will need. Initial review of the 8 forms he provided.

- Research in response to question about converting an existing building into farmworker housing and/or shelter space.

Transportation

- Reviewed final draft of the Active Transportation Plan with the Planning Commission, who approved it to be released for public comment.
- Planning Commission suggested a summary of the Active Transportation Plan for people who don't have time to read the whole document. Asked consultant to prepare; they did 2 versions: 1 a standard summary, the other included a box about how to comment on the plan. We sent the comment version with utility bills at the end of January. Deputy Clerk Yvonne Hernandez provided the Spanish translation, with assistance from Deputy Finance Officer Jackee Carlson.

Website

- Updated webpage for [MFTE program](#) now that it is adopted, to give information to developers about how it works. Asked consultant to prepare a summary.
- Updated webpage for the [Active Transportation Plan](#) with the most recent draft, the summary, and a link to provide comments.

Other

- Provided input for the Othello section of the Adams County draft Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Preparations and kickoff meeting for the 2-year Othello Rural Placemaking Initiative funded through USDA-Rural Development. Othello is one of 17 communities nationwide to receive an award this cycle. Othello's project is being facilitated by Rural Development Initiatives ([RDI](#)) and will focus on small food and agriculture businesses, youth entrepreneurship, Hispanic community involvement, and broadband. Council member Danae Valdez hosted the meeting with RDI and USDA-RD.
- Several rounds of responses to objections that we weren't being stringent enough in applying WA State Energy Code to a remodel project. We requested and received input from several other jurisdictions to make sure our application of the code was similar to what theirs would have been.
- Participated in tour of current housing options with John Boyd of the Boyd Company, who has been hired to focus attention on Othello as a location for food processing.
- Participated in interview panel for Public Works Water Lead.
- Testing system for applying for permits online through Citizen Connect (Permit Trax).

Exhibit 5. Matrix of Strategies and Relationship to Housing Objectives

		Housing Action Plan Objectives			
Strategy		1. Make it Easier to Build Affordable Ownership and Rental Housing	2. Increase Housing Variety and Choice	3. Ensure Opportunities for Families with Children	4. Promote Housing for Agricultural Workers
1. Revising Zoning and Building Standards					
1.1	Coordinate future upzoning in areas likely to experience redevelopment	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2	Modify setback, lot coverage , and landscaping standards for site design	✓	✓	✓	
1.3	Require minimum residential densities for development	✓		✓	
1.4	Add provisions for ADUs or smaller lot homes in some residential zones	Partial ✓	✓		✓
1.5	Adopt design standards or guidelines		✓		
1.6	Remove extra lot area requirements in the R-4 zone	Completed ✓	✓	✓	✓
1.7	Continue with long-term planning for annexation and infrastructure extension	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Parking and Transportation Standards					
2.1	Review off-street parking requirements	✓	✓		✓
2.2	Encourage or require alley-accessed, rear, or shared parking	✓	✓		
2.3	Reduce neighborhood street width requirements	Partial ✓	✓		
3. Affordable Housing Incentives or Investments					
3.1	Offer density bonuses for affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2	Offer alternative development standards for affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.3	Offer fee waivers for affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.4	Explore the use of a Multifamily Tax Exemption (MITE) program for affordable housing.	Completed ✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Process Improvements					
4.1	Streamline permit review	✓	✓	✓	