



CITY OF OTHELLO PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting 500 E. Main St. March 16, 2026 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order - Roll Call
 - a. Excused Absences
2. Public Input
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a. February 17, 2026 Regular meeting p.3
 - b. March 2, 2026 Special meeting p.9
4. Comprehensive Plan Update - Goals & Policies p.15
5. Meeting Topic Schedule – Informational p.20
6. Reports
 - a. Building & Planning Department Report - February 2026 p.21
 - b. Annual Rental License Report (March 2025-Feb 2026) p.23

Next Regular Meeting is Monday, April 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM

*For those who would like to attend remotely, see virtual instructions on the next page.
Remote attendees will be in "listen only" mode unless prior arrangements have been made.*

Webinar Link for Planning Commission Stream

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84188552465?pwd=J7XZ2evkdvnPEC2uuoiBSD7lZb8Isc.1>

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City of Othello
 Planning Commission Meeting
 February 17, 2026
 Zuleica Morfin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rob Simmons called the meeting to order at 6:04pm

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Rob Simmons, Ruth Sawyer, Jose Garza, Maria Martinez, Daniela Voorhies, Donald Burks MD, Chad Robbins

Staff: Community Development Director Anne Henning

Attendees: Council member Chris Dorow, Council member Alma Carmona, Council member Kelli Camp, Bob Carlson

PUBLIC INPUT

None

MINUTES APPROVAL

January 20, 2026, minutes approved. M/S Voorhies/Sawyer

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – EVENT AND TOPIC SCHEDULE

| Date | Event | Topic |
|----------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 3/16/26 | PC mtg | Public Workshop: Goals & Policies |
| 4/20/26 | PC mtg | Public Workshop: Goals & Policies, continued |
| 5/2/26 | Little League Opening Day | Public engagement: Survey flyers, interactive boards, vision |
| 7/4/26 | 4 th of July Celebration | Public engagement: Survey flyers, interactive boards, maps (Land Capacity Analysis, Land Use), policies |
| 7/20/26 | PC mtg | Public Workshop: Future Land Use Map |
| 10/19/26 | PC mtg | Public Workshop: Review findings/direction |
| 12/5/26 | Miracle on Main Street | Public engagement: Draft Plan rollout/feedback |

Ms. Henning went over upcoming events and asked planning commissioners to consider participating in some of the public engagement events.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – COMMUNITY PROFILE (UPDATED)

At the January meeting, the Commission reviewed the Draft Community Profile prepared by our consultant, SCJ Associates. This document summarizes characteristics of Othello, such as population growth trends, demographics, economic indicators, and housing. The Commission had some questions about Table 5, Job Counts by Places Where Othello Residents are Employed, such as whether the figures included those working in unincorporated areas and those working remotely. Staff and the consultant have dug deeper into this topic and determined that the numbers presented did not include people working in unincorporated areas. New information has been gathered, by county, to better capture where

Othello residents are working. 2023 data for this topic has also become available since the report was first drafted, so the most current data was used. The updated Community Profile with revised Table 5 was provided in the agenda packet.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – DRAFT COMMUNITY SURVEY

With input from staff, the consultant for the Comprehensive Plan Update has drafted a proposed community survey. Before it is released to the public, the Planning Commission should review it to determine if any changes need to be made. Note that the section about “Community Vision” (starting with #9) has placeholders for now since it can’t be finalized until after the Commission works on the Vision tonight. The draft vision statement will be included in this section of the survey when it is released to the public.

Commissioners went over the community survey. Vice Chair Daniela Voorhies felt like the survey was too long. Council member Kelli Camp also thought the survey was long and suggested it be broken down into 4 surveys with a QR code for each. For upcoming events, Commissioner Chad Robinson suggested having a paper survey. Council member Alma Carmona and Council member Chris Dorow remembered surveys that were done in the past, one was sent with utility bills, and the other was an online survey. Both received good responses. Council member Camp felt that the survey would miss young adults who live with parents so don’t get the utility bill. She also suggested working with the library as a place where people could answer the survey.

Character and Growth

1) Which aspects of Othello's atmosphere are most important to you? *Select your top 3.*

- Size and population
- Pace of life
- Local events and traditions
- Family-oriented
- ~~Community identity~~ - Commissioners didn’t feel this answer would be useful
- Access to nature and green spaces
- Business friendly
- Housing affordability
- Other - Write In: _____

2) What are your biggest concerns regarding growth in Othello? *Select up to 5.*

- Strain on city services and infrastructure
- Change or loss of small-town character
- Increased traffic congestion
- Water shortages
- Environmental impacts (reduced wildlife or wildlife habitat, etc.)
- Increased traffic collisions
- Rising housing costs and affordability
- Loss of farmland
- ~~Wildfire risk~~ - Remove and replace with jobs. Commissioners thought wildfire risk wasn’t worth taking up a place on the survey list.
- Increased crime
- Other - Write In: _____

3) What industries would you like to see expanded in Othello? *Select any that apply.*

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Education
- Food Processing
- Healthcare & Social Assistance- **These are different, would be better separated.**
- Retail Trade- Needs to be explained better. Replace with shopping and restaurants.**
- Other - Write In: _____

Add Tourism- Hotels & recreation

4) What can the City do to improve the living experience in Othello? *Select up to 5.*

- Increased access to jobs
- Increased access to childcare
- Increased access to arts and culture
- Increased access to affordable housing types
- Increased access to shopping
- Increased access to healthcare
- Increased access to green space/parks/nature
- A centralized, walkable city center
- More local businesses to work and shop at
- Better facilities for walking or biking
- Other - Write In: _____

Commissioner Jose Garza would like to see another survey specifically for young people that is shorter and more focused.

5) What would best foster economic growth and retain young people in the Othello community? *Select up to 3.*

Re-word question to "What would attract people from outside of Othello".

6) What would best support business development and ~~retainment~~ (retention) in Othello? *Select up to 3.*

- Incubator opportunities- **Needs to be explained better. Replace with business startup hub.**
- Small business training and mentoring programs
- Partnerships between private businesses and the city
- Access to desirable locations for business development (downtown sites, neighborhood commercial sites, etc.)
- Tourism and a customer base for business- **Provide more opportunities for tourism as a customer base.**
- ~~Amenities~~ in Othello that attract business- **Replace amenities with infrastructure (Broadband, natural gas, advertising)**
- Other - Write In: _____

7) Thinking about parks and recreation in our community, what types of improvements or features would most enhance your experience when visiting parks, trails, or recreational facilities? *Select up to 5.*

- More shade (trees, shelters)
- Additional restrooms
- Expanded playgrounds and play areas
- Community gardens
- Improved accessibility for all ages and abilities
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Sports fields/courts
- Gathering spaces- **Replace with open space.**
- More event spaces (for concerts, festivals, etc.)
- More natural areas, habitat restoration, and/or trails
- Nothing - existing parks meet my needs
- Other - Write In: _____

Add dog park

8) If the city were able to acquire funding, which types of recreational amenities do you think would be most beneficial to residents? *Select up to 3.*

Commissioners agreed to combine #7 and #8 with adding lighting, benches, and drinking fountains. Also keeping small neighborhood parks, safe and comfortable ways to walk or bike around town from #8.

Community Vision

13) Rank these items based on how important they are to you in Othello:

This question isn't really vision, it's more community character. They asked for it to be moved into the first section.

Housing in Othello

14) During your time in Othello, have you rented or purchased housing? *Select all that apply.**

Commissioners didn't see what would be gained by including this question. Ms. Henning will ask the consultant how important it is. Will revisit.

15) When it comes to rental housing, what specific housing challenges have you or someone you know experienced in Othello? *Select all that apply.*

- Difficulty finding rental housing
- Poor condition or quality of housing
- Difficulty navigating rental applications or credit requirements
- Barriers for seniors or people with disabilities
- ~~Lack of housing near work or school~~ **Everything is close by in Othello**
- ~~Housing not located near transit routes~~ **Transit is so limited, this question isn't relevant**
- Cannot find the housing type I want (e.g., single family home, duplex, apartment, etc.)

Cannot find the right housing size (# of bed/bath)

I haven't experienced rental housing challenges

Other - Write In: _____

Add cost with options like not affordable.

17) Do you believe there are enough rental housing options available in Othello for people with a range of incomes and family sizes?

18) Do you believe there are enough housing options for ownership available in Othello for people with a range of incomes and family sizes?

Commissioners agreed to remove #17 & #18. They felt like they already knew the answer to these questions and didn't feel like they're gaining any information that they already don't know.

19) How should Othello plan for new housing development in existing neighborhoods? Select one option that best reflects your values. Use the image below for an example of what housing types may look like in a current single-family neighborhood.

*ADU: Additional Dwelling Unit

**DADU: Detached Additional Dwelling Unit

Council member Alma Carmona felt like this question would confuse people because the City doesn't have the influence to tell people what to build. Commissioner Donald Burks, MD thinks we wouldn't get good answers because people don't really think about these questions. It could also be a misleading question. Chair Rob Simmons suggested Ms. Henning re-word the question and commissioners revisit it at the next meeting.

Transportation in Othello

20) How well do the current transportation options in Othello meet all of your traveling needs? Commissioners would like to see the paper version as a multiple-choice and not a write-in answer.

Tell us about yourself

23) Where do you live?*

City of Othello With in

Adams County, but outside of Othello

Other - Write In: _____

Commissioners would like to see the options to this question as two (in Othello or out of Othello). They are also ok with not keeping this question, they felt many people may not know whether they live inside City limits. Ms. Henning will ask the consultant what is being gained with this question to determine whether to keep the question with two options or remove it entirely.

24) What best describes your current housing type in Othello?

Single-family home

Apartment or condo

Duplex

Unhoused

Manufactured/Mobile home

Other - Write In: _____

Add ADU/ Back yard cottage/ Apartment

25) Do you rent or own your housing?

Rent

Own

Add another option (neither option)

26) What is your age range?

~~Under 19~~ 19 and under or under 20

20-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60-69

70 or older

28) Do you have dependent children currently living within your household?

Commissioners questioned what this question adds to the survey. Will revisit.

29) What ethnic or racial group do you identify with? *Select all that apply.*

Council member Kelli Camp suggested adding “prefer not to say” as an option. Commissioners agreed.

30) What languages are most often spoken in your home? *Select any that apply.*

Commissioners questioned how this question would be useful.

SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 2, 2026

A special meeting will be held on March 2, 2026, to discuss the Comprehensive Plan Update - Vision 2047 and State law updates - New housing in existing buildings & childcare. Commissioners were asked to fill out the Visioning exercise ahead of time if possible.

BUILDING & PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Building & Planning Department reports for 2025-year end and January 2026 were provided in the packet.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm. Next meeting is a special meeting Monday March 2, 2026.

_____ Date: _____
Rob Simmons, Chair

_____ Date: _____
Zuleica Morfin, Building and Planning Secretary



City of Othello
Planning Commission Special Meeting
March 2, 2026
Zuleica Morfin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rob Simmons called the special meeting to order at 6:01pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Rob Simmons, Daniela Voorhies, Ruth Sawyer, Jose Garza, Donald Burks MD, Chad Robbins, Maria Martinez

Staff: Community Development Director Anne Henning

Attendees: Council member Chris Dorow, Council member Alma Carmona, Bob Carlson, Veronica Alsumaeel, Eva Gamboa

Remote: Council member Kelli Camp

PUBLIC INPUT

None

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE –VISION 2047

The foundation of a Comprehensive Plan is the community’s vision for the future: How do we see Othello, now and in the next 20 years? What do we want to preserve and what do we want to change? What do we hope to accomplish in the next 20 years?

Commissioners went through the Othello Vision 2047 worksheet. Below are the worksheet prompts and Commissioners’ responses.

North Star - Your Hopes & Dreams for the City of Othello

*Imagine that reality is suspended – time and money limits do not exist. **What are your greatest hopes and desires for Othello?***

Council member Chris Dorow shared a vision statement adapted from a strategic plan that was worked on in the past but was never formally adopted: “To be the most welcoming small city in Washington where families and businesses grow, thrive, and prosper.” He mentioned the original had said “town”, while he felt that once Othello reaches 10,000 residents, it will be a small city. Commissioners all liked this statement as a starting point for the vision statement. There was discussion that “welcoming” is the most important part, whether “small” needed to be part of the identity, and if farming or agriculture could be worked in.

In this version of Othello: What makes the city unique?

Commissioner answers included:

- Welcoming
- Community
- Not one thing, it’s the people
- Culture

- Diversity within the culture
- The city resists traditional class structure:hovels next to mansions
- Geographic center, hub for industries
- Wholesome, strangers smile at you
- Good weather, safe, school staff
- Generations of families
- Commonality, not ways to separate people

Commissioner Maria Martinez made the following statement “Othello is a cultural-rich, rural agricultural community with deep family roots and a strong sense of identity where diverse cultures, language, and traditions are visible and celebrated.”

What is it like to live in this City?

Commissioner Maria Martinez said living in this city is safe, welcoming and community- centered. As rural city residents value connection, open space, and strong neighborhood relationships, while having access to stable housing, parks, schools and essential service. Below are other responses from commissioners.

- People watch out for each other
- Safe and close-knit community that is growing from a town into a small city
- Small city feel but high housing prices
- Home-grown: teachers’ kids are now teachers, coaches’ kids are coaches. People come back
- Local businesses
- Easy and efficient to get anywhere in town
- Quiet

What is it like to work in this City?

Othello supports a resilient rural economy rooted in agriculture while expanding into food processing, healthcare, education, tourism, and locally-owned small businesses. Employment opportunities provide stability and long-term growth within the region.

- Diverse types of jobs
- It feels like working with a big family. (But some things are needed currently: Livable income for all, affordable childcare, high-speed internet)
- Easier modes of transportation: Walk or ride a bike without being on the road with cars

What kinds of things do locals enjoy doing in this City?

- Othello will host conferences, art shows, and performing arts
- Fishing, hunting, golfing, school sports, festivals, fundraisers, and outdoor recreation
- Painting events
- Downtown gatherings

Things that Othello needs:

- More events
- More shopping
- Musical instrument teachers

What kinds of things do visitors enjoy doing in this City?

- Farmers market
- New amenities at Lions park (playground, basketball court, pickle ball, baseball fields)
- Visting restaurants (Golden Fountain Chinese, many great Mexican restaurants)
- Sand Hill Crane Festival
- Hunting, fishing
- Future entertainment district: Restaurants, bars, theaters. Like Winthrop or Leavenworth. Or like other cities that don't necessarily have a theme.
- Drive-in theater

Back to reality, but it's now 20 years in the future – the year 2047.

20 years is a long time to still accomplish big things! But let's take a more realistic approach now.

Use a few words or short phrases to describe life in Othello in 2047.

What is it like to live in Othello?

- Diverse shopping & dining options, entertainment
- Despite explosive growth, Othello has maintained its small-town feel, new industrial growth has allowed the city to prosper
- Data centers to bring in revenue but not a lot of workers, maintain small town feel
- Enough water
- Addressed affordable housing shortages by significantly increasing affordable homes and rental options. Families, seniors, and workforce residents are able to remain in the community without being cost-burdened. Rural character is preserved while neighborhoods are safe, connected, and supported by reliable infrastructure.

What is it like to work in Othello?

- Livable income, competitive market
- Opportunity for many types of careers
- Maintains agricultural strength while diversifying into complementary industries. Locally-owned businesses thrive, and work force development programs support living wage employment.
- Key infrastructure investments set the table for a dramatic increase in the quality of life. Visionary growth management plans allow Othello to keep its small town feel while everyone prospers.
- Technology will affect agriculture. Fewer workers but higher wages (maintaining equipment instead of working in the fields). New crop varieties.

What kinds of things do locals enjoy doing in Othello?

- Farmers market
- Fairgrounds host more events: arts, concerts
- Shopping, dining, sports facilities and fields

- Outdoor recreation, large eco park. School sport complex. Hwy 26 commercial district & Main Street. Historic district/entertainment district. Amphitheater in eco park at old rodeo grounds. All summer Shakespeare
- Eco Park with hiking trails, wetland restoration, wildlife. Manage water in the eco park to draw specific wildlife. Like Spokane Mirabeau Park
- Auditorium
- Leader in recycling and repurpose because of entrepreneurs

What kinds of things do visitors enjoy doing in Othello?

- Giant farmers market with commercial kitchen like Scale House in Spokane
- Small business products: meat and cheese

What are the City's biggest accomplishments, assets, and values over the past 20 years?

- Rail access to deep water port in Pasco
- Main Street business built all the way to Hwy 17
- Decorative street lighting project finished
- More festivals
- Water independence through ASR project (aquifer storage & recovery)
- 3 roundabouts for safety and commercial growth
- City has purchased Irrigation District property and converted it to farmers market, RV park, food hub, business incubator
- Eco park with amphitheater
- Neighborhood design kept small town feel
- New industry: Brewery, 3 data centers, distribution center
- City & school district work together to create trade school for agriculture
- Emergency preparedness. Regular drills make us one of the safest cities in the nation
- 12 new physicians
- More cold storage

***What do you think each item below looks like in 2047 in Othello?** Think along the lines of accomplishments, new developments, trends/patterns, or goals across the 2027-2047 timespan.*

Land Use and City Expansion:

- Safer access across Highway 17 and 26 to promote growth past those boundaries
- Industrial land developed
- Existing annexations have been built out
- Highway interchange at Cunningham (Main) and Hwy 17

Housing Types & Affordability:

- Expanded affordable rental units, starter homes, ADUs, townhouses, and senior housing
- More multi-family options
- With new homes built, older homes become more affordable

- Manufactured homes are recognized as an affordable housing option, and are easier to finance than currently

Transportation Networks (including Bike and Pedestrian):

- Safety
- Sidewalks
- Education for drivers
- E- bikes/scooters
- Trails to get around
- Trees along trails for shade
- Solution to Main & 14th bottleneck

Public Services (Utilities, Schools, Government Services, etc.):

- New high school, new K-8 schools
- Childcare centers
- Public transportation
- Upgraded water and sewer
- Upgraded natural gas, electric, broadband internet
- Better communication about community events

Climate & Weather Resilience:

- Shaded parks and more tree canopy
- Water conservation planning
- Infrastructure built for long term resilience

Parks & Recreation:

- New parks
- Everything proposed in the current park plan has been built by then
- Shaded gathering areas
- Sports facilities
- Accessible playgrounds
- Dedicated youth spaces offering affordable programming
- Youth infrastructure includes evening and weekend access to reduce financial barriers and support all families

Local Economy & Business:

- Health care
- More industry
- Businesses along Main Street
- Local businesses
- Tourism

Commissioners did not get through the last few pages of the Vision worksheet during the meeting. They were asked to send their thoughts to Ms. Henning by Friday.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE - DRAFT COMMUNITY SURVEY

Based on the Planning Commission’s review at the February meeting, staff and our Comprehensive Plan consultant have modified the online survey and created a shorter paper version. The Planning Commission did a quick review to determine if any further changes need to be made. Commissioners were mostly comfortable with the changes made to the online and paper survey. There were suggestions that the online version was still too long, and maybe the City could offer an incentive to encourage people to complete the survey.

STATE LAW UPDATES – NEW HOUSING IN EXISTING BUILDINGS AND CHILDCARE

Ms. Henning noted that there wasn’t time to discuss these topics tonight. If the City does not make the required changes by the June deadline, the only impact will be that we must default to the state requirements. She felt the Commission could work on these topics as time allows in the next few months, but it is not urgent.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm. Next meeting is Monday March 16, 2026.

_____ Date: _____
Rob Simmons, Chair

_____ Date: _____
Zuleica Morfin, Building and Planning Secretary

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director
MEETING: March 16, 2026
SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update – Goals & Policies

The next step in our Comprehensive Plan Update is to review Goals and Policies from the existing Plan and determine which to keep, modify, or delete. The attached document has existing goals and policies that were identified as needing discussion.

Attachments

- Goals & Policies chart

Action: The Commission should review the attached Goals & Policies and determine which to keep as-is, which to modify, and which to delete. If time allows, the Commission may wish to discuss new goals and policies that should be added to the 2027 Plan.

Othello Comprehensive Plan

Existing Goal and Policy Statement Analysis

Note: These are **NOT ALL** of the goals and policies from the existing Comprehensive Plan. These are the ones that the staff/consultant team thought needed discussion with the Planning Commission. Other goals and policies will be added to address gaps and requirements. This group will be able to review a full draft version of the goal and policy framework at a later date.

| Current Goal Statement | City/SCJ Notes | Keep/ Remove/ Change | Planning Commission Notes | Follow Up Needs |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.1.1 The City of Othello vision should be revisited regularly as new councilmembers join the city council. | How about "revisit every few years", and eliminate the specific reference to the Council? | | | |
| 1.1.2 Promote a service delivery system visible to users, accessible to all, and centrally located. | | | | |
| 1.1.3 Promote an annexation strategy that ensures requests for expansion result in development projects; effective and efficient service delivery; and that do not place undue burden on city tax-payers for the expansion of city services. | Is this reasonable? Is here a way to ensure that annexation results in projects? | | | |
| 1.2.3 Developments adjacent to transportation corridors, gateways, or intersections of concern, should be responsible for contributing to the development of gateway features. | This idea has not been added to the development code. Is this still desired? Recent direction has been to reduce development standards to make business more feasible. | | | |
| 1.5.2 Annexation areas will automatically be zoned for high-density (R-4 or as amended) residential unless the annexation is accompanied by land use applications and a zone change request for a specific zoning district. | Changes needed. Zoning for annexed areas should match adopted land use designations instead of having 1 default. There could be a preference for residential designations to be zone R-4 unless specifically requested otherwise. | | | |
| 1.6.3 In order to prevent premature rural-density development within the growth area, lots created in the County after the CP is adopted should not be considered for service provision unless they are annexed prior to division. | <p>City services should not be provided outside of official city limits unless an annexation and/or development agreement is in place for areas within the City's future growth area.</p> <p>City services should not be provided outside of the City's future growth area except for essential public facilities.</p> | | | |
| 1.7 Create an attractive development atmosphere where commercial and industrial opportunities can provide local economic growth. | Tension with 7.1-7.3 (preservation of Agriculture) Need to explore this tension. | | | |
| 2.2 Develop an Othello Growth Area that provides adequate land designated for residential development. | Growth Area was designated in 2015 Plan (based on previous), so maybe change to something like: | | | |

| Current Goal Statement | City/SCJ Notes | Keep/ Remove/ Change | Planning Commission Notes | Follow Up Needs |
|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| | Evaluate the need for changes to the growth area occasionally? Also need to distinguish it from a fully-planning UGA. | | | |
| 3.4.1 Minimize the impacts to existing infrastructure by requiring developments to add a minimal number of taps into City mains. | Seems too vague to enforce, and unclear. Suggest removing or significantly clarifying. | | | |
| 3.5.4 Explore the option of providing industrial wastewater services by the City or in partnership with other entities. | Explore. Connected to 5.1.6. | | | |
| 3.7 – 3.7.7 on Animal Control Issues | Discuss relevancy to comp plan. | | | |
| 4.4.2 The City wants to create an impression of Othello from the highways. The City wants to be seen as a pleasant place with remarkable landmarks and gateways. | Rework to be more about enhancing gateway areas and connections to regional transportation. Not really about transportation – move to community identity section. | | | |
| 4.4.3 Areas of the City directly visible from a State Highway must be maintained in a manner that reflects the City in a positive way to the traveling public on the highway. | Remove. Should be achieved through other efforts such as gateways, aesthetics, and code standards. | | | |
| 5.1.2 Prioritize infrastructure development in advance of need. Anticipate needs and coordinate city infrastructure with economic development opportunities. | Worth a discussion about whether the city is willing to provide infrastructure in advance of development, or whether that is developer's responsibility. | | | |
| 5.1.6 Consider independent water and wastewater systems to serve Othello Industrial Development Areas. All such systems shall ensure that the City's interests are primary as a condition for participation if the project requires public funds or participation in funding/grant efforts. | Separate industrial water and/or sewer systems could be very beneficial. McCain Foods has their own wells but Simplot uses ~55% of city water total. Both McCain & Simplot dispose of their own process water. SVZ stores process water but discharges to the City system, sometimes with complications. | | | |
| 5.1.7 Maximize the existing short line railroad that serves Othello to facilitate additional intermodal transportation options for new and existing industry. | Need to get an update on current railroad situation. | | | |
| 5.2.1 Position Othello Industrial Development Areas to support the city with little or no impact on areas planned for residential and retail/commercial development. | Is this designation criteria for Industrial? | | | |

| Current Goal Statement | City/SCJ Notes | Keep/ Remove/ Change | Planning Commission Notes | Follow Up Needs |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 5.2.4 Facilitate food processing equipment manufacturers to foster horizontal expansion of and support for the food processing industry. | Still relevant? | | | |
| 5.2.5 Encourage distribution, logistics, and fulfillment centers, capitalizing on the abundant regional transportation system in the Othello region. | Still relevant? | | | |
| 5.3.10 Work with the Othello Area Chamber of Commerce, Adams County Development Council and local business owners to have annual “Shop Locally” campaigns to reduce retail leakage. | Is this realistic? If we are keeping it, is it suitable as a policy? It seems like more of an action item. | | | |
| 5.3.11 Actively participate in Economic Development efforts including partnerships, recruiting efforts, and attendance of conventions. | Do we want to be more specific? Or add some corresponding actions? | | | |
| 5.3.12 Facilitate diverse residential growth that results in an increase in moderate and upper income population levels to support retail expansion and recruitment. | May need to compare with recent housing legislation and overall focus on affordable housing options. Could be seen as exclusionary? | | | |
| 5.5 Develop a sense of place to increase civic/community involvement and expand visitor traffic and tourism in the Othello region. | Expand on what this means in Othello - this would be good to ask the public. | | | |
| 5.5.3 Foster expansion of the Othello Beautification Project to include all points of entry into Othello, First Avenue, and Broadway Avenue. | Not sure if Beautification Committee is still active. | | | |
| 5.7.3 Serve as an anchor member of an Othello Community Roundtable to collect and share critical information about ongoing projects and activities. | Did this group ever get started? Policy or action? | | | |
| 4.a Each general-use park should have no more than half its area developed with formal facilities. | To leave unprogrammed space for running around or hosting events like 4th of July. | | | |
| 7.1 Protect Prime Agricultural land from development. | There should not be any Prime Ag inside city limits or growth area. This is more designation criteria for what should be in or out of the growth area. What about instead a goal/policy set to provide protective transitions on the city outskirts to protect county-managed ag lands? Common transition tools include: buffers, setbacks, right-to-farm notices, compatible zoning, roadway design that limits conflict | | | |

| Current Goal Statement | City/SCJ Notes | Keep/ Remove/ Change | Planning Commission Notes | Follow Up Needs |
|---|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 7.1.1 Prime Agricultural land used for utilities, infrastructure, open space, recreation, or other governmental purposes may be annexed and developed. | Discuss. Coordinate with County on Prime Ag designation. | | | |
| 7.2 Protect General Agricultural land from urban sprawl and low-density residential development. | Discuss. Pursue edge transition concept. | | | |
| 7.2.1 Urban sprawl is considered a net density of 4 units or less per acre for the overall density for a project. | Ensure this is consistent with the plan's definitions of land use types. | | | |
| 7.3 Protect General Agricultural land from inefficient commercial or industrial use. | Maybe rephrase to be more consistent with the edge transition idea above... | | | |
| 7.3.1 Inefficient use is defined as single commercial use sites without vehicular and pedestrian cross-circulation, and without shared parking. | Why does Ag need to be protected from this type of use within city limits? | | | |

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Planning Commission/Comprehensive Plan Update – Tentative Meeting Schedule

For our Comprehensive Plan Update, we are starting to schedule some meetings and events. Here are tentative dates and topics for upcoming Planning Commission meetings and public engagement events:

| Date | Regular Mtg | Special Event | Likely Topic |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Mar 16 | PC mtg | | Public Workshop: Goals & Policies |
| Mar 31 | | | Survey to be mailed with utility bills |
| Apr 20 | PC mtg | | Public Workshop: Goals & Policies, continued (if needed) and/or further work on Vision |
| May 2 | | Little League Opening Day | Public engagement: Survey flyers, interactive boards, vision |
| May 18 | PC mtg | | State law changes: Housing in existing bldgs., childcare |
| June 15 | PC mtg | | |
| July 4 | | 4 th of July Celebration | Public engagement: Survey flyers, interactive boards, maps (Land Capacity Analysis, Land Use), policies |
| July 20 | PC mtg | | Public Workshop: Future Land Use Map |
| Aug 17 | PC mtg | | |
| Sept 21 | PC mtg | | |
| Oct 19 | PC mtg | | Public Workshop: Review findings/direction |
| Nov 16 | PC mtg | | |
| Dec 5 | | Miracle on Main Street | Public engagement: Draft Plan rollout/feedback |
| Dec 21 | PC mtg | | |

Planning Commission meeting dates without a topic yet will be filled in with Comprehensive Plan discussions if needed, or with other topics as they arise.

Action: Informational, no action needed.

City of Othello
 Building and Planning Department
 February 2026

| Building Permits | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Applied | Issued | Final |
| Residential | 2 ¹ | 1 ⁴ | 1 ⁷ |
| Commercial | 3 ² | 3 ⁵ | 2 ⁸ |
| Industrial | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 5 | 4 | 3 |

¹ Convert shop to ADU, replace water heater
² Addition at Walmart for grocery pick-up area, remodel portion of the 14th Ave Medical Clinic for 15 CBHA staff, reroof at Irrigation Specialists
⁴ Convert shop to ADU
⁵ Reroof at Irrigation Specialists, replace sign at AutoZone, flag sign at 1100 E Main
⁷ Removal of burned shed at apartments at 331 E Cedar.
⁸ Hawk Fuel changed access to restrooms, Othello Museum replaced central air at

Development Projects

- Continued meetings with WSDOT and the engineer designing the mini roundabout for the proposed gas station/convenience store at Broadway and Curtis. It seems like the design is mostly finished.

Inspections

- The inspector completed 40 inspections in February, including 6 rental inspections.

| Land Use Permits | | |
|--|---|---|
| Project | Actions in February | Status as of February 28 |
| Pegram/Fox Tail Major Plat & Development Agreement | Developer’s engineer called to discuss a few items from the 1/22/26 letter. | Waiting for proponent to respond to 1/22/26 letter. |
| Replat of Sand Hill Estates #6 Major Plat Preliminary Plat | Due date for appeals passed with no appeals. Street & utility construction plans submitted to Public Works for review. | Preliminary plat completed. After street & utility construction plans are approved and constructed or bonded for, the developer can submit the final plat. |
| Walmart Grocery Pick-Up Area SEPA | Environmental Checklist submitted & reviewed. Notice of Application routed & published. | Comment period ends 3/20. Expecting to issue MDNS. |

Website

- Posted updated [Zoning Map](#)

Rental Licensing & Inspection Program

- 1 rental application for 1 unit was submitted this month. 5 sites with a total of 7 new units under construction were added to the rental licensing program.
- 1 site with 1 unit was approved this month.
- There were 6 rental inspections this month.
- 232 locations with a total of 516 units have been fully approved so far.
- There are currently 21 active applications for 36 units in various stages of inspection and correction (including 6 sites/9 units under construction).
- By OMC, units are required to be inspected every 3 years. We have started the process of reinspecting the 70 units that were approved more than 3 years ago.
- Tenants at one site had to move out while the landlord is addressing serious mold issues.

Housing & Homelessness

- City and County staff and HopeSource met in February to discuss the next steps on implementing the Adams County 5-Year Homeless Housing Plan. A task force will be organized.

Long Range Planning

- At the regular Planning Commission meeting, the Commission & the Council Comprehensive Plan Committee discussed these aspects of the Comprehensive Plan update:
 - Schedule for public engagement events (Little League Opening Day, 4th of July, Miracle on Main Street) and dates to discuss Goals and Policies and the Future Land Use Map
 - Updated Community Profile (Addressing previous questions about the table showing where Othello residents are employed)
 - Draft Community Survey
- After working so thoroughly on the other topics this month, the Planning Commission did not get to Visioning, so scheduled a special meeting for that on March 2.
- Bi-monthly meetings with the consultant working on the Comprehensive Plan and Critical Area updates. Work products this month:
 - Draft community survey: online & 1-page paper versions
 - Finalized Community Profile (addressing previous comments)
 - Visioning exercise for Planning Commission
 - Updated Housing Allocations/Land Capacity Analysis
 - Draft Goals & Policies exercise for Planning Commission in March

Training

- Open Government 101 Training by City Attorney Joanna Eide attended or watched later by almost all of the Planning Commissioners.
- Building Inspector attended week-long training by the International Code Council (International Building Code, International Residential Code, International Fire Code, etc.)
- Webinars: Land Use Capacity Analysis. How Can City Planning and Finance Work Together to Support Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability. Opportunity Zones.

City of Othello
Building and Planning Department
Annual Rental Licensing & Inspection Report
March 2025-February 2026

The Rental Housing Safety Inspection Program was adopted by the City Council on Feb. 8, 2021 ([Ord. 1562](#)) and codified as [OMC 4.40](#). We have just completed the fifth full year of the program.

| Rental License & Applications | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Status | As of Feb. 28, 2026 | | As of Feb. 28, 2025 | | As of Feb. 29, 2024 | | As of Feb. 28, 2023 | | As of Feb. 28, 2022 | |
| | Sites | Total units |
| Fully approved | 233 | 517 | 209 | 422 | 166 | 335 | 78 | 134 | 28 | 51 |
| Active applications (corrections needed) | 20 | 35 | 16 | 32 | 17 | 49 | 76 | 168 | 44 | 119 |
| Total applications | 253 | 552 | 235 | 454 | 183 | 384 | 154 | 302 | 72 | 170 |

| Inspections | | | | |
|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Year 5 | Year 4 | Year 3 | Year 2 | Year 1 |
| 39 | 60 | 194 | 130 | 83 |

- In the first years of the program, there were many serious violations that were corrected. In the past few years, there have been very few serious violations, suggesting that the worst problems have been addressed. There was one instance of black mold this year.
- Most units need only small safety corrections like smoke alarms, GFIC outlets next to sinks, seismic straps for water heaters, house numbers, etc. While these corrections are simple, they are also easy for a landlord to put off if it weren't for the requirement of an inspection.

Re-inspection:

- In February, we started the process to re-inspect units that first received their rental license more than 3 years ago. The OMC requires inspections every 3 years.