



CITY OF OTHELLO PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting 500 E. Main St. April 20, 2026 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order - Roll Call
 - a. Excused Absences
2. Public Input
3. Approval of March 16, 2026 Minutes p.3
4. Wahitis Short Plat – Deferrals, Deviations, & Waivers – Recommendation p.8
5. Comprehensive Plan Update
 - a. Community Survey p.15
 - b. Vision 2047 p.16
6. Meeting Topic Schedule – Informational, Volunteers Needed p.25
7. Building & Planning Department Report - March 2026 p.26
8. Old Business
 - a. State Law Updates - New Housing in Existing Buildings; Childcare Locations – We will get back to this as time allows. The state pre-emption on housing takes effect June 2026. We can default to the state regulations until we adopt changes to the OMC.

Next Regular Meeting is Monday, May 18, 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
March 16, 2026
Zuleica Morfin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rob Simmons called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Rob Simmons, Ruth Sawyer, Daniela Voorhies, Donald Burks, MD

Excused: Chad Robbins (ill), Maria Martinez and Jose Garza (both attending leadership conference)

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

Consultant: Aren Murcar (SCJ Alliance)

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

PUBLIC INPUT

Gina Dorow, who is representing Terra Gold Farms as a facilitator, informed commissioners she would be attending future meetings as a resource for any questions or discussions about their land development plans and intended uses. She also stated that Terra Gold Farms is committed to thoughtful growth that benefits both the community and local economy. They're focused on collaboration, transparency, and sustainability throughout the development process.

MINUTES APPROVAL

February 17, 2026, minutes approved with a correction to the spelling of Commissioner Robbins' name on p.2. M/S Voorhies/Burks

March 2, 2026 special meeting minutes approved. M/S Sawyer/Burks

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. Aren Murcar explained that a common way to do goals and policies is to have a cross-referenced table with all goals and policies in the plan.

Commissioners reviewed the document in the packet with existing goals and policies that were identified as needing discussion to determine which to keep as-is, which to modify, and which to delete.

Current Goal Statement

1.1.1 The City of Othello vision should be revisited regularly as new council members join the city council.

Planning Commission notes:

- Set a time frame
- Similar to a corporate strategic plan
- Regularly, at least every 2 years

- “Revisit” could be interpreted as either remind everyone what is in the vision to make sure we are staying on track, or it could suggest reviewing to see if changes need to be made

1.1.2 Promote a service delivery system visible to users, accessible to all, and centrally located.

Planning commission notes:

- Too vague
- Transparent and efficient but could be covered in other goals and policies
- Website is hard to use
- Question about whether vague statements can get the city into trouble. Aren Murcar said he didn’t think so
- Gives flexibility, but might be better covered in other goals and policies
- Commissioner Ruth Sawyer- Had to look up what delivery system is. It feels like it isn’t being accomplished currently. More confusing to leave it in.
- OK to remove

1.1.3 Promote an annexation strategy that ensures requests for expansion results 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.

Planning commission notes:

- Commissioner Daniela Voorhies- Likes keeping statement about “undue burden”
- City can be better facilitators
- Change verbiage “we support and encourage, annexations that will result in development projects”

1.2.3 Development adjacent to transportation corridors, gateways, or intersections of concern, should be responsible for contributing to the development of gateway features.

Planning commission notes:

- Council member Chris Dorow- Burdensome is always bad
- Discussion about whether this was meant as addressing just aesthetics
- Aren Murcar- Recommends removal
- Remove

1.5.2 Annexation areas will automatically be zoned for high-density (R-4 or as amended) residential unless the annexation is accompanied by a land use application and a zone change request for a specific zoning district.

Planning commission notes:

- Keep in mind not everyone wants to live in high density
- Leave a little open for the developer to decide
- We don’t need to list a specific zone, it is based on the Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan
- Remove

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 services provision unless they are annexed prior.

Planning commission notes:

- Needs to be consistent with the resolution on service extension outside city limits
- Will revisit

1.7 Create an attractive development atmosphere where commercial and industrial opportunities can provide local economic growth.

Planning commission notes:

- Possible conflict with 7-1 through 7-3, preservation of agriculture
- Anne Henning- Prime agricultural land shouldn't be in the city or the growth area
- Keep

2.2 Develop an Othello growth area that provides adequate land designated for residential development.

Planning commission notes:

- The growth area has already been designated. Change this to "Evaluate" instead of "Develop"
- Review at least every 10 years

3.4.1 Minimize the impacts to existing infrastructure by requiring development to add a minimal number of taps into city main.

Planning commission notes:

- Unclear what the intention was.
- Possibly remove "taps" and replace with connections

3.5.4 Explore the option of providing industrial wastewater services by the city or in partnership with other entities.

Planning commission notes:

- Genna Dorow- You don't want industrial wastewater going into your domestic system
- Would need a separate industrial wastewater system

3.7-3.7.7 on Animal control issues

Planning commission notes:

- Aren Murcar- Hasn't seen animal control in a comp. plan before
- Too specific for a comprehensive plan
- Remove

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.

Planning commission notes:

- This concept should move to the economic development 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.

Planning commission notes

- This should be addressed by our code enforcement program
- Remove
- The city could purchase and develop parklands

5.1.2 Prioritize infrastructure development in advance of need. Anticipate needs and coordinate city infrastructure with economic development opportunities.

Planning commission notes:

- Not appropriate for existing residents to subsidize developers
- Could be a shared cost
- Re-word, maybe “Consider” instead of “Prioritize”

5.1.7 Maximize the existing short line railroad that serves Othello to facilitate additional intermodal transportation options for new and existing industry.

Planning commission notes:

- Important to keep this

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.

Planning commission notes:

- Buffers
- Keep

5.2.4 Facilitate food processing equipment manufacturers to foster horizontal expansion of and support for the food processing industry.

Planning commission notes:

- Horizontal development has already been done
- No longer relevant

5.2.5 Encourages distribution, logistics, and fulfillment centers, capitalizing on the abundant regional transportation system in the Othello region.

Planning commission notes:

- Add data centers
- Keep

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.

Planning commission notes:

- Already accomplished
- Remove

5.3.11 Actively participate in economic development efforts including partnerships, recruiting efforts, and attendance of conventions.

Planning commission notes:

- Remove

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.

Planning commission notes:

- Doesn't fit Othello
- Remove

5.5 Develop a sense of place to increase civic/community involvement and expand visitor traffic and tourism in the Othello region.

Planning commission notes:

- Vision work was more specific
- Good to keep as a goal
- Expand on it

5.5.3 Foster expansion of the Othello beautification projects to include all points of entry into Othello, First Avenue, and Broadway Avenue.

Planning Commission:

- Keep
- Beautification Committee still active and looking for new members
- Explain what the projects are. Lighting? Gateways?

5.7.3 Serve as an anchor member of an Othello Community Roundtable to collect and share critical information about ongoing projects and activities.

Planning commission notes:

- Keep this idea but update the wording
- Promote community efforts that share critical information about projects

4.a. Each general – use park should have no more than half its area developed with formal facilities.

Planning commission notes:

- Important to have open space for unprogrammed activities. Keep

7.1 Protect prime agricultural land from development.

Planning commission notes:

- Set buffers for Ag.
- Keep

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm. Next meeting is Monday April 20, 2026.

_____ Date: _____
 Rob Simmons, Chair

_____ Date: _____
 Zuleica Morfin, Building and Planning Secretary

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: April 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Wahitis Short Plat – Deferral/Deviation/Waiver Request – Recommendation

Othello School District (OSD) started the process to plat the Wahitis site in 2011, in conjunction with building the school. Through various staff changes at the city and OSD, and several platting attempts derailed by Covid and delays at USBR, the plat has never been finalized. In March, the School District submitted a new application to finish the plat. Deferrals, deviations, and waivers for street and utility improvements associated with platting were granted in the past but have expired.

OMC 16.40 sets up the process for deferring or waiving street and utility improvements and deviating from the improvement standards. This process includes a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Staff Comments

1. The Commission is reviewing only the deferral/waiver/deviation requests. The short plat itself is reviewed administratively.
2. Note that OMC 16.40 requires specific findings about the nature of the site or the area that justify granting the deferral, deviation, or waiver:

The Planning Commission shall not recommend granting a waiver, deviation, or deferral of the subdivision regulations unless it shall find that the following conditions exist in each case of a request:

- a. *Where, because of the size of the tract to be subdivided, its topography, the condition or nature of adjoining areas, or the existence of unusual physical conditions, the strict compliance with the provisions of this title would cause an unusual and unnecessary hardship on the subdivider.*

3. Here are the requests from the March 11, 2026 letter from OSD:

Request	Notes
Deviation: Allow 38’ street width for the constructed portion of Scootney Street from 14th Avenue to where the right-of-way abuts the south property line of the plat.	This request was previously granted in 2019. This request may no longer be needed. The constructed width for neighborhood streets was reduced to 36’ in the 2022 Public Works Design Standards. However, the constructed width of a neighborhood collector is required to be 48’. This portion of Scootney is not designated as a collector on the 2021 Street Classification Map , but the portion of Scootney to the west is designated as a collector.
Deviation: Stormwater infrastructure for Scootney Street. The current stormwater infrastructure has worked for 15 years. Othello	This issue was one of the sticking points that affected the progress of the plat previously.

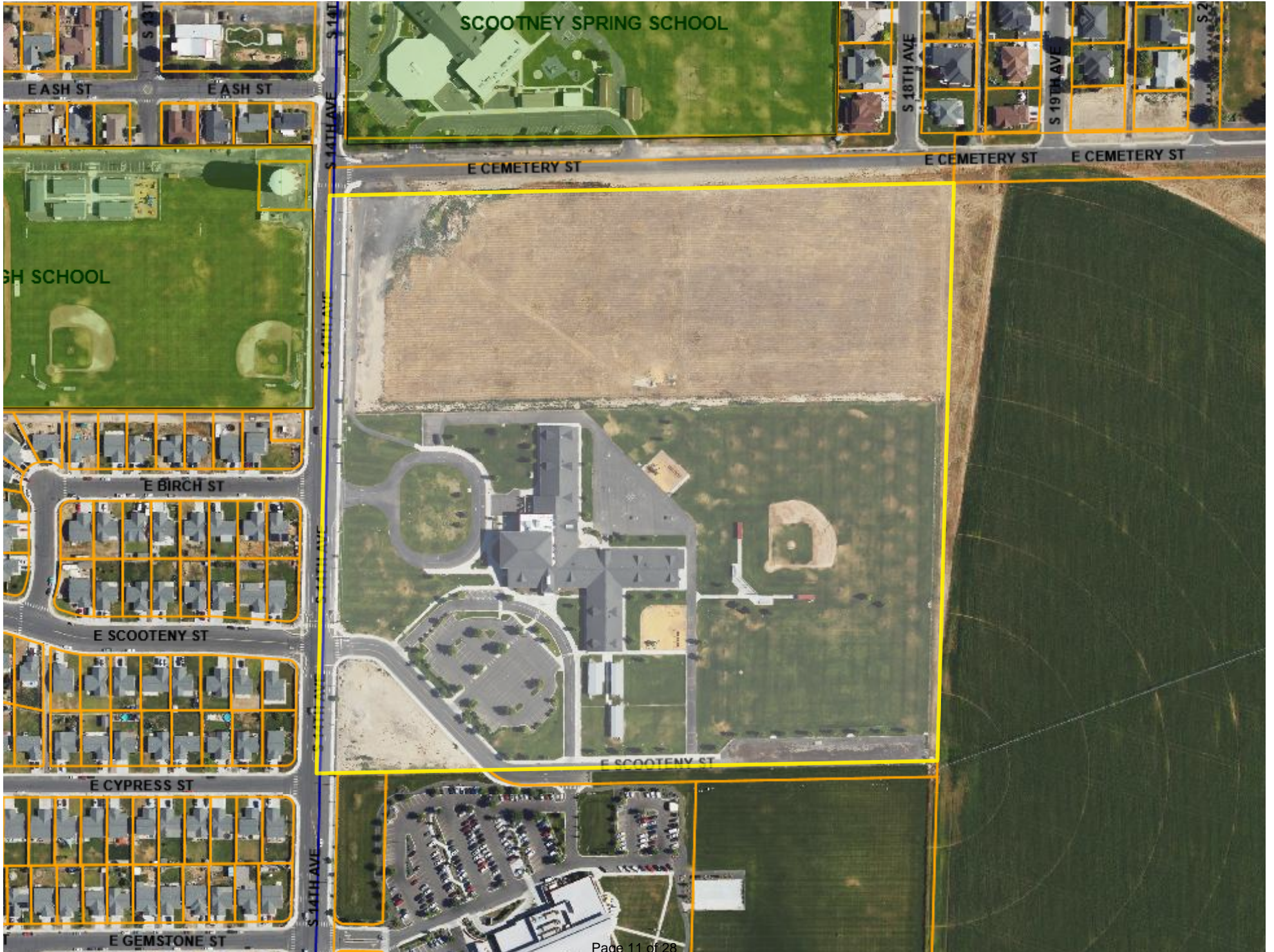
has allowed similar infrastructure to be built since the school was constructed.	Public Works/Engineering has not identified any concerns currently.
<p>Deferrals: Completing the Scootney Street improvements to the East property line (pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and turnaround at the end).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OSD requests to defer these improvements until development to the East of Wahitis Elementary School would necessitate the improvements. ○ Upon passing of a bond, OSD would construct the district's portion of Scootney Street to approximately 65' for the eastern property line. Leaving a deadhead turn around and the rest of the improvements for development east of Wahitis Elementary School. 	
<p>Deferral: Street improvements for Cemetery Road (pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm water).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OSD requests to defer these improvements until the vacant land along Cemetery Road is developed and/or Scootney Elementary School has a major remodeling project. 	A deferral of street and utility improvements for Cemetery Road was granted in 2019.
<p>Waiver: Sanitary sewer in Scootney Street. OSD is requesting a waiver as this is not needed, because the property to the East can be served by the future sewer on Columbia Street. This would also require reconstruction of the existing Scootney Street.</p>	This waiver was previously granted in 2019.
<p>Sewer and water mains in Cemetery Road. OSD requests to waive these improvements. They may not be needed for future development.</p>	<p>A deferral of street and utility improvements for Cemetery Road was granted in 2019.</p> <p>The school sites function currently without needing these utilities in Cemetery Road.</p>

4. The Fire Chief commented that he has no problems with the deferrals if the school district has the funding to complete Scootney and Cemetery Roads when needed.
5. Public Works and Engineering had no comments on the deferrals, deviations, or waivers.
6. Typically with deferrals, a covenant is required. OSD representatives have expressed in the past that a covenant is very difficult for them as a public agency, to commit funds for a future project at an unknown time. McCain Foods in 2019 expressed a similar concern (they had no mechanism within their corporate funding guidelines that would allow for an agreement to a deferred expense), and that plat was allowed to proceed with the understanding that they would participate in a local improvement district or similar.

Attachments

- Vicinity map
- Wahitis Short Plat Sheet 1
- 3-11-26 Deviation/Deferral/Waiver request letter from Gregg Fultz, Othello School District
- OMC 16.40, Waivers, Deviations, and Deferrals

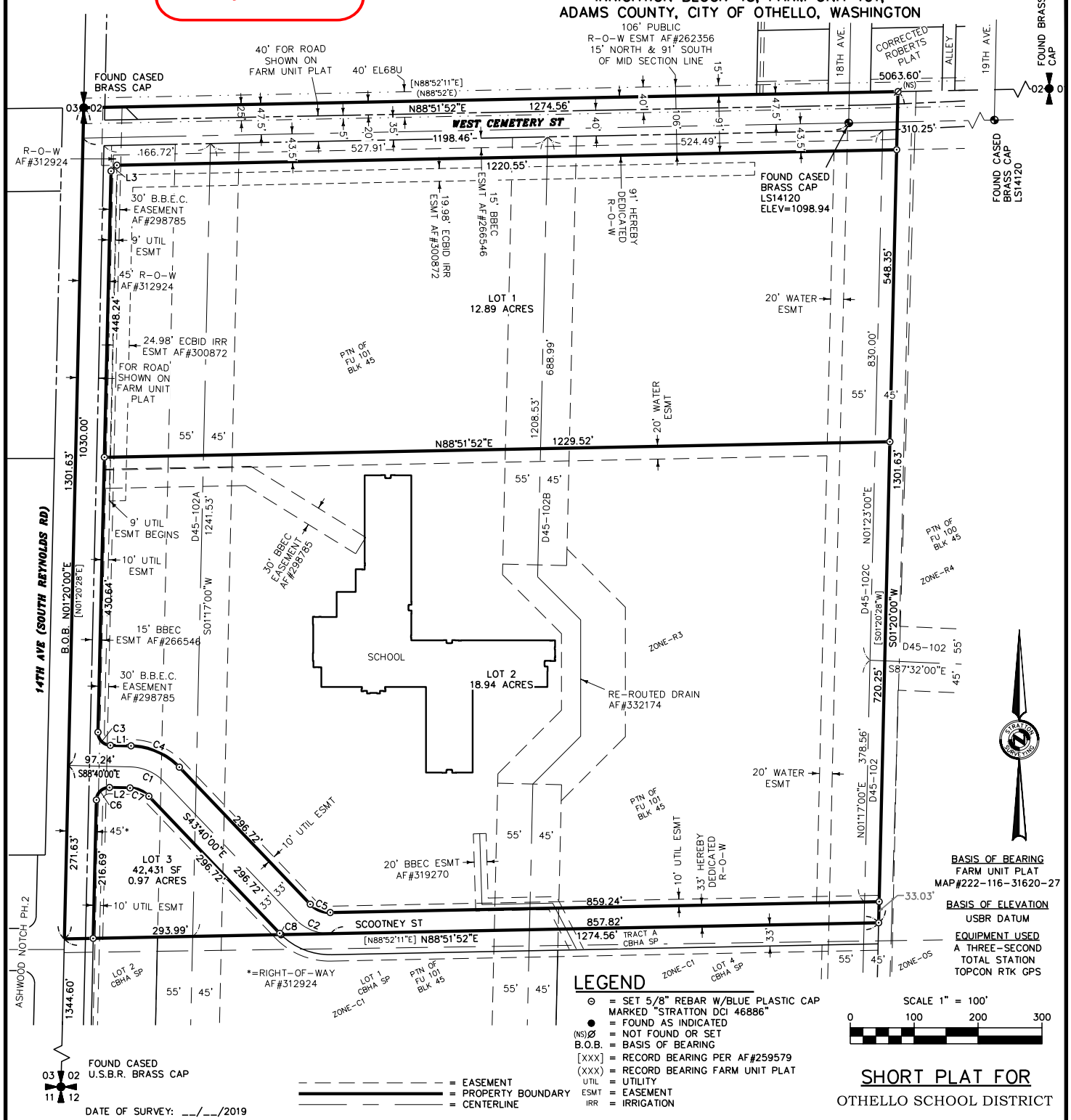
Action: The Planning Commission should discuss the requests and make a recommendation to approve or deny each request, with or without conditions. The Commission should make findings of fact to support its recommendations.



Received By
Othello Bldg & Planning
May 06 2024

WAHITIS SHORT PLAT

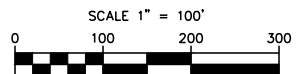
N.W. 1/4 OF THE S.W. 1/4 OF SEC. 02, T.15N., R.29E., W.M.,
IRRIGATION BLOCK 45, FARM UNIT 101,
ADAMS COUNTY, CITY OF OTHELLO, WASHINGTON



BASIS OF BEARING
FARM UNIT PLAT
MAP #222-116-31620-27

BASIS OF ELEVATION
USBR DATUM

EQUIPMENT USED
A THREE-SECOND
TOTAL STATION
TOPCON RTK GPS



SHORT PLAT FOR
OTHELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT

SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE
I, DEREK C. INGALSBIE, A REGISTERED LAND SURVEYOR,
HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE SHORT PLAT AS SHOWN IS BASED
UPON ACTUAL FIELD SURVEY OF THE LAND DESCRIBED AND
THAT ALL ANGLES, DISTANCES, AND COURSES ARE HEREOF
CORRECTLY SHOWN AND THAT THE LOT CORNERS HAVE BEEN
STAKED ON THE GROUND AS SHOWN ON THE MAP.

DEREK C. INGALSBIE LS46886 DATE _____



INDEX

1/4	SEC	T.	R.
1	02	15N	29E

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AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE
FILED FOR RECORD THIS _____ DAY OF _____
20____ AT _____ MINUTES PAST _____
____M. AND RECORDED IN VOLUME _____ OF
SHORT PLATS PAGES _____ THROUGH _____
AT THE REQUEST OF DEREK C. INGALSBIE, P.L.S.

ADAMS COUNTY AUDITOR
DEPUTY _____

STRATTON SURVEYING & MAPPING, PC
7525 W. DESCHUTES PL. UNIT 1C
KENNEWICK, WA 99336
(509) 735-7364
stratton@strattonsurvey.com

3939SP1B.DWG © 2019
DATE: 04/22/24 SHT. 1 OF 3
DRAWN BY: DCI JOB # 3939

Anne Henning, AICP
City of Othello
500 E Main St
Othello WA, 99344

Received By
Othello Bldg & Planning
March 24 2026

March 11, 2026



Please consider this letter as the Othello School District's request for deviations, deferrals, and/or waivers regarding Wahitis Short Plat items as identified by City of Othello Staff and shared with the Othello School District.

Deviations:

- Allow 38' street width for the constructed portion of Scootney Street from 14th Avenue to where the right -of-way abuts the south property line of the plat.
- Stormwater infrastructure for Scootney Street. The current stormwater infrastructure has worked for 15 years. Othello has allowed similar infrastructure to be built since the school was constructed.

Deferrals:

- Completing the Scootney Street improvements to the East property line (pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and turnaround at the end).
 - OSD requests to defer these improvements until development to the East of Wahitis Elementary school would necessitate the improvements.
 - Upon passing of a bond, OSD would construct the district's portion of Scootney Street to approximately 65' for the eastern property line. Leaving a deadhead turn around and the rest of the improvements for development east of Wahitis Elementary School.
- Street improvements for Cemetery Road (pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm water).
 - OSD requests to defer these improvements until the vacant land along Cemetery Road is developed and/or Scootney Elementary School has a major remodeling project.

Waivers:

- Constructed width for Scootney. Standard for a neighborhood street is 42' from front face of curb to front face of curb.
 - The finished portion of Scootney, West end off of 14th Ave. to the Wahitis/CBHA entrances is 38' face of curb to face of curb. At that point, it becomes 42'. OSD is requesting a waiver on the existing finished roadway from 14th Ave. to the current gravel transition. Future development of the current gravel section will meet current city standards.
- Sanitary sewer in Scootney Street.
 - OSD is requesting a waiver as this is not needed, because the property to the East can be served by the future sewer on Columbia Street. This would also require reconstruction of the existing Scootney Street.
- Sewer and water mains in Cemetery Road.
 - OSD requests to Waive these improvements. They may not be needed for future development.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at gfultz@othelloschools.org or at 509-488-3741 Ext. 1112.

Respectfully,

Greggory Fultz
Othello School District Project Manager

Chapter 16.40
WAIVERS, DEVIATIONS AND DEFERRALS

Sections:

[16.40.010 Waivers, deviations and deferrals.](#)

16.40.010 Waivers, deviations and deferrals.

There is established a procedure for granting waivers, deviations, and deferrals of the regulations contained in this title, as follows:

(a) Any subdivider can make application to the planning commission for a waiver of, deviation from, or deferral of any provision contained in this title, provided the request is received concurrently with the proposed subdivision or dedication. Such application shall include any and all details necessary to support the application. All waiver, deviation, and deferral requests must be forwarded to the review authority with the preliminary plat or binding site plan and with the planning commission's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

(b) The planning commission shall not recommend granting a waiver, deviation, or deferral of the subdivision regulations unless it shall find that the following condition exists in each case of a request:

(1) Where, because of the size of the tract to be subdivided, its topography, the condition or nature of adjoining areas, or the existence of unusual physical conditions, the strict compliance with the provisions of this title would cause an unusual and unnecessary hardship on the subdivider.

(c) In recommending granting waivers, deviations, and deferrals, the planning commission may recommend requiring such conditions as will secure, insofar as practicable, the objectives of the requirement waived, deviated from, or deferred. Any waiver, deviation, or deferral recommended shall be entered in the minutes of the planning commission together with the circumstances that would justify granting the waiver, deviation, or deferral.

(d) If a short plat has not been submitted for final approval within one year after the waiver, deferral, or deviation is granted, that waiver, deferral, or deviation shall become null and void. (Ord. 1640 § 1 (Exh. A), 2025; Ord. 1270 § 1 (part), 2008; Ord. 947 § 2 (part), 1995).

City of Othello Comprehensive Plan Update Survey

Encuesta para la Actualización del Plan Integral de la Ciudad de Othello

We want to hear from you! The City of Othello is updating its Comprehensive Plan, a long-term vision that guides how the community grows, changes, and invests in the future. This plan will shape decisions around housing, transportation, economic development, parks and open space, and the preservation of Othello's unique community character. **Share what matters most to you by taking our short community survey!**

¡Queremos escuchar de usted! La Ciudad de Othello está actualizando su Plan Integral, una visión a largo plazo que guía cómo la comunidad crece, cambia e invierte en el futuro. Este plan dará forma a las decisiones sobre vivienda, transporte, desarrollo económico, parques y espacios abiertos, y la preservación del carácter único de la comunidad de Othello. **¡Comparta lo que más le importa completando nuestra breve encuesta comunitaria!**

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/OthelloCompPlanSurvey to participate and help shape our community's future!

¡Escanee el código QR o visite bit.ly/OthelloCompPlanSurvey para participar y ayudar a dar forma al futuro de nuestra comunidad!



For more information, please visit the City's website at www.othellowa.gov/ComprehensivePlanUpdate2027. Para más información, visite el sitio web de la Ciudad en www.othellowa.gov/ComprehensivePlanUpdate2027.





Othello Vision Statement

To: Othello Planning Commission
From: SCJ Alliance
Date: April 20th, 2026
Project: Othello Comprehensive Plan Update
Subject: Draft Vision Statement

Please review this memo before the April 20th Planning Commission meeting. No action is needed in advance. Come prepared to share your reactions and help refine the vision direction.

Introduction / Purpose

This memo presents a draft vision framework for the Othello Comprehensive Plan, informed by the Planning Commission's February 2026 visioning workshop.

The purpose of the April 20th discussion is to **refine a shared vision for Othello's future**. At the meeting, we will walk through what we heard from the February workshop, discuss key tensions and tradeoffs, and then work through the Alternative Vision Directions table row by row to land on updates to the vision statement.

Today's draft is not final. The goal is to provide clear direction so the vision can be refined and brought forward for broader community input.



What We Heard

The February workshop highlighted a strong and consistent vision for Othello's future, grounded in both its current identity and aspirations for growth. Several key themes emerged:

- ◆ **People define Othello.** The community is welcoming, close-knit, and culturally vibrant, with strong multi-generational roots and a shared sense of belonging.
- ◆ **Growth is expected, but should be intentional.** Othello is transitioning from a small town to a small city, and future development should feel coordinated, connected, and reflective of community values.
- ◆ **Housing and affordability are critical.** There is a need for more housing options to support families, seniors, and the workforce.
- ◆ **Infrastructure, especially water, is foundational.** Long-term growth depends on reliable infrastructure and services.
- ◆ **Economic opportunity should expand.** Agriculture remains central, but there is a strong desire to diversify jobs and support local businesses.
- ◆ **Quality of life matters.** Parks, youth opportunities, events, and community spaces are essential to retaining residents and supporting long-term livability.

Overall, there was a shared understanding that Othello should grow in a way that maintains its identity while addressing key gaps in housing, infrastructure, and economic opportunity.

Tensions / Tradeoffs for Discussion

The workshop also revealed several areas where priorities may compete or require further direction. These tensions are intended to support discussion and help clarify the vision.

Small-Town Character vs. Growth and Opportunity

Othello values its small-town feel and close-knit community, while also planning for significant growth and expanded opportunities.

Discussion Prompt: What aspects of Othello's character are essential to preserve, and what changes are acceptable as the city grows?

Agricultural Identity vs. Economic Diversification

Agriculture is central to Othello's identity, yet there is interest in expanding into new industries and economic sectors.

Discussion Prompt: How should Othello balance preserving its agricultural foundation with attracting new types of development?



Housing Diversity vs. Neighborhood Character

There is support for a wider range of housing types alongside a desire to maintain the character of existing neighborhoods.

Discussion Prompt: Where and how should new housing types be integrated into the community?

Development vs. Infrastructure Reality

Many ideas for growth and amenities depend on infrastructure capacity, particularly water and sewer systems.

Discussion Prompt: How should infrastructure shape the pace and location of growth? Does development pay for development, or should the City invest in strategic improvements to incentivize development?

Baseline Vision Statement

The draft vision is organized into key topic areas to support discussion. **These statements reflect Planning Commission input and are intended as a starting point for further refinement.**

Othello Vision Statement

Othello is a welcoming rural city where agriculture, culture, and community remain at the heart of daily life. Through thoughtful and coordinated growth, expanded housing opportunities, strong local businesses, and vibrant parks and public spaces, Othello continues to be a place where residents, families, and visitors thrive.

Community Character

Othello remains a welcoming and close-knit community where diverse cultures, traditions, and generations of families shape the city's identity. As the city grows, it preserves its friendly atmosphere, strong sense of belonging, and rural heritage.

Land Use

Othello manages growth to protect surrounding farmland and rural character while supporting well-planned development. New neighborhoods and businesses are coordinated with infrastructure, reinforce a strong business district, and create connected, cohesive development patterns.



Housing

Othello provides a wide range of housing options that allow residents of all ages and incomes to live in the community. Diverse housing types support families, seniors, and the local workforce while being thoughtfully integrated into existing neighborhoods.

Transportation

Othello maintains a safe and efficient transportation network that connects neighborhoods, schools, parks, and businesses. Expanded sidewalks, trails, and roadway improvements support safe and accessible travel for all users. Freight traffic for agricultural and industrial products is managed appropriately, providing access and connectivity to regional routes, but also protecting local neighborhoods from freight disruption.

Utilities and Public Services

Othello provides reliable and modern infrastructure that supports responsible growth and a high quality of life. Water, sewer, broadband, schools, and public services are expanded in alignment with development to meet current and future needs.

Parks & Recreation

Othello offers a connected system of parks, recreation facilities, and community gathering spaces that serve residents of all ages. Expanded parks, trails, and recreational amenities support healthy lifestyles, youth opportunities, and community connection.

Economic Development

Othello supports a resilient economy rooted in agriculture while expanding opportunities in food processing, healthcare, education, tourism, and small, locally owned businesses. Economic growth provides stable employment, supports local entrepreneurs, and strengthens the community.

Environmental Resilience

Othello protects its natural resources, including agricultural lands, and prepares for long-term environmental challenges. Expanded tree canopy, water conservation, and sustainable land stewardship support a healthy and resilient community.



Alternative Vision Directions

The following options illustrate how the vision could shift based on different priorities. These are options for consideration based on different priorities.

- ◆ **Baseline Vision:** This is the original draft presented above, for comparison.
- ◆ **Growth & Opportunity Focus:** These ideas lean into city expansion, jobs, and regional importance.
- ◆ **Community Character & Livability Focus:** These ideas lean into identity, steady pacing of growth, and quality of life.

These different focus area refinements provide contrasting priorities for the City’s future. Consider the differences and whether you prefer one over the other, or a combination of both. If both, consider the tradeoffs. It is important to have a vision that it is achievable, but also not too limited. **At the April 20th meeting, we will work through this table row by row together. As you review it in advance, note which direction resonates most in each row, or whether a hybrid captures it better.** The Notes/Hybrid Option column is for capturing that discussion.

	Baseline Vision	Growth & Opportunity Focus	Community Character & Livability Focus	Notes/Hybrid Option
Community Character	Othello remains a welcoming and close-knit community where diverse cultures, traditions, and generations of families shape the city’s identity. As the city grows, it preserves its friendly atmosphere, strong sense of belonging, and rural heritage.	Othello continues to be a welcoming and inclusive community while evolving into a growing regional center. New residents, businesses, and industries reshape the community while maintaining a shared sense of identity.	Othello preserves its identity as a welcoming, close-knit, and culturally rich rural community, where relationships, traditions, and a strong sense of belonging remain the foundation of daily life.	



	Baseline Vision	Growth & Opportunity Focus	Community Character & Livability Focus	Notes/Hybrid Option
Land Use	Othello manages growth to protect surrounding farmland and rural character while supporting well-planned development. New neighborhoods and businesses are coordinated with infrastructure, reinforce a strong business district, and create connected, cohesive development patterns.	Othello actively plans for growth by expanding residential, commercial, and industrial areas in strategic locations, while also incentivizing medium and higher density infill projects.	Othello carefully manages growth to maintain rural character, protect farmland, and ensure new development reflects the scale and feel of existing neighborhoods.	
Housing	Othello provides a wide range of housing options that allow residents of all ages and incomes to live in the community. Diverse housing types support families, seniors, and the local workforce while being thoughtfully integrated into existing neighborhoods.	Othello’s housing supply is robust, allowing expansion and density to meet demand and support economic growth. Multifamily, workforce housing, and higher-density development are encouraged in key areas throughout the City.	Othello expands housing options in a measured and context-sensitive way, prioritizing neighborhood compatibility, long-term affordability, and stability for current residents.	



	Baseline Vision	Growth & Opportunity Focus	Community Character & Livability Focus	Notes/Hybrid Option
Transportation	Othello maintains a safe and efficient transportation network that connects neighborhoods, schools, parks, and businesses. Expanded sidewalks, trails, and roadway improvements support safe and accessible travel for all users.	Othello invests in a transportation system that supports increased traffic, freight movement, and regional connectivity, including improvements to key corridors and highway access.	Othello prioritizes local connectivity, walkability, and neighborhood safety, with a focus on safe routes to schools, parks, and daily destinations.	
Utilities & Public Services	Othello provides reliable and modern infrastructure that supports responsible growth and a high quality of life. Water, sewer, broadband, schools, and public services are expanded in alignment with development to meet current and future needs.	The City pursues major, proactive investments in water, sewer, and infrastructure systems to unlock growth capacity and support long-term expansion.	Othello aligns growth with available infrastructure capacity, ensuring that development does not outpace water, sewer, and public service systems. In this way, infrastructure growth occurs incrementally.	
Parks & Recreation	Othello offers a connected system of parks, recreation facilities, and community gathering spaces that serve residents of all ages. Expanded parks, trails, and recreational amenities support healthy lifestyles, youth opportunities, and community connection.	Othello expands parks and recreation facilities to serve a growing population and support tourism, events, and regional attractions.	Othello prioritizes investment in neighborhood parks, youth spaces, and accessible community gathering areas that support everyday quality of life.	



	Baseline Vision	Growth & Opportunity Focus	Community Character & Livability Focus	Notes/Hybrid Option
Economic Development	Othello supports a resilient economy rooted in agriculture while expanding opportunities in food processing, healthcare, education, tourism, and small, locally owned businesses. Economic growth provides stable employment, supports local entrepreneurs, and strengthens the community.	Othello positions itself as a regional economic hub, attracting industry, logistics, and large-scale employers while supporting job growth and investment.	Othello supports a stable, locally rooted economy built on agriculture and small businesses, with selective growth in industries that align with community values.	
Environmental Resilience	Othello protects its natural resources and prepares for long-term environmental challenges. Expanded tree canopy, water conservation, and sustainable land stewardship support a healthy and resilient community.	Othello integrates sustainability into growth by investing in efficient infrastructure, water systems, and environmental strategies that support long-term expansion.	Othello emphasizes conservation, tree canopy, and stewardship of natural resources to maintain environmental quality and community comfort.	



Questions for the Planning Commission

These questions are intended to guide your thinking as you review the document. We'll revisit them as part of the April 20th discussion.

- ◆ What aspects of this vision feel most accurate and reflective of Othello?
- ◆ What feels missing, unclear, or overstated?
- ◆ Which of the identified tensions require clearer direction?
- ◆ Which vision direction best reflects Othello's future, or should certain elements be combined?
- ◆ What are the top 2-3 priorities that should be most emphasized in the final vision?

Next Steps

Following Planning Commission discussion, the vision will be refined to reflect Commission direction. The updated vision will then be shared with the broader community for input and used to guide development of goals, policies, and implementation strategies in the Comprehensive Plan. The April 20th meeting is the key decision point for setting vision direction.



TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Anne Henning, Community Development Director

MEETING: April 20, 2026

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

Here are tentative dates and topics for upcoming Planning Commission meetings and public engagement events:

Date	Event	Likely Topic
Mar 31	Staff action	Survey was mailed with utility bills
Apr 3	Staff action	City notifications of online survey (social media & OthelloGo)
Apr 20	PC mtg	Public Workshop: Further work on Vision
May 2	Little League Opening Day/ Cinco de Mayo	Public engagement: Advertise/collect surveys, interactive boards, take feedback on draft vision, top 3 priorities for next 20 years
May 18	PC mtg	Public Workshop: Policy Framework/Goals & Policies
June 15	PC mtg	If not needed for a Comprehensive Plan topic: Housing in existing buildings; childcare
July 4	4 th of July Celebration	Public engagement: interactive boards, maps (Land Capacity Analysis, Land Use), policies
July 20	PC mtg, also possible open house before meeting	Public Workshop: Future Land Use Map
Aug 17	PC mtg	TBD
Sept 21	PC mtg	TBD
Oct 19	PC mtg	Public Workshop: Review findings/direction
Nov 16	PC mtg	TBD
Dec 5	Miracle on Main Street	Public engagement: Draft Plan rollout/feedback
Dec 21	PC mtg	TBD

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. However, volunteers would be appreciated at the May 2 event, to talk to the community about the Comprehensive Plan Update.

City of Othello
 Building and Planning Department
 March 2026

Building Permits			
	Applied	Issued	Final
Residential	13 ¹	12 ⁴	6 ⁷
Commercial	4 ²	5 ⁵	2 ⁸
Industrial	0	0	0
Total	17	17	8

- ¹ 1 single family home, 2 addition, 1 remodel, 1 siding, 2 fence, 1 porch/patio, 5 reroof
² x Pegram Construction new office building, reroof Pilgrim Lutheran Church, minor remodel at Four Square Church, replace sign Scholten Outlet Center
⁴ 1 single family home, 1 remodel, 1 bedroom addition, 1 siding, 5 reroof, 1 water heater, 2 fence
⁵ Remodel portion of the 14th Ave Medical Clinic for 15 CBHA staff , minor remodel at Four Square Church, replace sign at Othello Post Acute, Taco Bell sign refresh, replace sign Scholten Outlet Center
⁷ 4 single family homes, 1 reroof, 1 replace water heater
⁸ Kiwanis restroom remodel, Hotsy enclose front overhang area/increase showroom space

Development Projects

- Ongoing meetings with WSDOT and the engineer designing the roundabout for the proposed gas station/convenience store at Broadway and Curtis, including meeting with the WSDOT engineer who reviews all roundabouts in the state. The proponent is planning to hold an open house April 27. The design requires the proponent to acquire a small amount of neighboring property.

Inspections

- The inspector completed 58 inspections in March, including 4 rental inspections, 1 business license inspection, and 1 beekeeping inspection.

Land Use Permits		
Project	Actions in March	Status as of March 31
Hampton Properties II Phase 1	Preliminary plat application submitted 3/31. Expecting draft development agreement in the near future.	Will need to be reviewed to determine if it is a complete application.
Pegram/Fox Tail Major Plat & Dev. Agreement	Developer’s engineer called to discuss a few more items from the 1/22/26 letter.	Waiting for proponent to respond to 1/22/26 letter.
Wahitis Plat*	New application submitted. Notice of Application routed.	Comment period ends Apr. 9. Waivers/deferrals/deviations scheduled for Apr. 20 PC meeting.
Walmart Grocery Pick-Up Area SEPA	MDNS issued Mar. 23.	Appeal period ends Apr. 6.

* The School District has been working on platting this property since 2011. There have been a number of issues that prevented finishing the plat before it expired each time.

Website

- Updated [Comprehensive Plan](#) page with meeting schedule, Community Profile, survey link.

Rental Licensing & Inspection Program

- 2 sites with 2 units were approved this month.
- There were 4 rental inspections this month.
- 234 locations with a total of 518 units have been fully approved so far.
- There are currently 19 active applications for 34 units in various stages of inspection and correction (including 5 sites/8 units under construction).

Housing & Homelessness

- Submitted annual report to WA Dept of Commerce for our Multi-Family Tax Exemption program.

Long Range Planning

- The Planning Commission held a special meeting March 2 and their regular meeting March 16. The Commission & the Council Comprehensive Plan Committee discussed these aspects of the Comprehensive Plan update:
 - Community Survey
 - Draft Vision 2047
 - Goals & Policies
- Comprehensive Plan short survey mailed with utility bills at the end of March. Translation by Deputy Clerk Yvonne Torres with assistance from Deputy Finance Officer Jackee Carlson.
- Submitted deliverables and reporting to Dept of Commerce for Periodic Update Grant of \$10,000.
- Bi-monthly meetings with the consultant working on the Comprehensive Plan and Critical Area updates. Work products this month:
 - Online community survey (Translation by Deputy Clerk Yvonne Torres with assistance by Deputy Finance Officer Jackee Carlson):
<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8691164/Othello-Comprehensive-Plan-Update-Survey>
 - Social media graphic & flyer for the survey
 - Goal/Policy activity for 3/16 Planning Commission, & summary of the meeting outcome
 - Summary of stakeholder interviews
 - Draft Vision exercise for April Planning Commission meeting, incorporating the discussion at the March 2 Planning Commission special meeting

Training

- Webinars: Preparing Communities for Data Center Development. The Economics of Data Center Growth.

Other

- Attended Adams County Planning Commission meeting, where they discussed the County Comprehensive Plan Update and the related Public Participation Plan.
- Meeting, discussions, and 2 rounds of review with ACDC, Adams County, Port, Ritzville about Opportunity Zone 2.0 applications.

- Attended Federal Partners Coalition in Pasco. Short presentations by USDA-Rural Development, US Economic Development Administration, HUD, US Small Business Administration, USDOT, EPA, HHS, and others about financial and other assistance available to rural communities. USDA-RD alone has 88 programs. Longer presentations on Opportunity Zones and Rural Data Gateway (shows federal investment in each county for each program over the last 10 years, to determine where your county might be missing out).