

CITY OF WILLOWS
CALIFORNIA

**CITY-WIDE
BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Established for Application for State Bicycle Transportation Account Monies



December, 2008

CITY OF WILLOWS BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this proposed Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP) is to identify the need for bicycle routes and paths throughout the City to provide better safety for bicyclists and provide better connectivity between schools, shopping areas, businesses and other attractions (parks, hospitals, etc.) The BTP is needed to ensure the City is eligible to compete for grant funds; in particular Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) and Safe Routes to Schools funding. In addition, the BTP serves as a tool to identify the City's proposed bicycle network when future local development decisions are made that may impact the system.

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and improving all roadways in the City. As such, the BTP will assist the Departments efforts to safely and equitable provide bicycle facilities, as well as implement roadway projects that are bicycle friendly throughout the City.

The recommended network coordinates with the County's 2007 Bicycle Plan. The State's BTA requires that any project funded by BTA be included in an adopted bicycle plan. Other funding sources also encourage that funded projects be part of a coordinated bicycle plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Although streets within the City are typically wide enough to fit bicycle facilities, no current facilities exist. One of the highest user groups of bicycles currently are students. As residential areas are spread out within the City, bicyclists use several of the streets within the City to get to and from points of interest. Of primary concern to the majority of bicyclist is crossing Wood Street (Highway 162) and Tehema Street (Old Highway 99). Bicyclists crossing these routes typically focus on getting to a controlled intersection (traffic signal) for safety reasons.

TYPES OF BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bicycle facilities are typically segregated into three categories – Class I, Class II and Class III facilities.

- Class I bicycle facilities provide a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with interaction by motorists minimized. These paths are typically paved and at least 8 feet wide to accommodate two-way bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

- Class II bicycle facilities provide a striped bicycle lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway. These separate lanes are typically 5-feet wide and are in-between either the gutter and the travel lane or in-between the parking area and the travel lane. For two lane streets with combined parking and bicycle lanes, a curb to curb width of at least 48-feet is needed. For two lane streets without parking (travel lanes and bicycle lanes only), a curb to curb width of at least 34 feet is needed.
- Class III bicycle facilities provide for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic. They do not include any striping and are typically designated by signage as a “Bicycle Route.”

As the City of Willows typically enjoys wide streets, Class II bicycle lanes will fit on the majority of streets within the City. It should be noted that striped bicycle lanes in areas of angled parking are not encouraged due to safety concerns. Accordingly, as you will see in the attached plan, some of the downtown areas are simply designated as Class III bicycle routes. Because of needed right-of-way to install Class I (separated) bicycle facilities, no Class I bicycle paths are proposed with this plan.

COSTS AND POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

As the City does not currently have bicycle facilities and such facilities are not a part of the current city budget, costs and potential funding sources need to be identified.

With respect to future costs, cost estimates (based on 2008 cost data) have been completed and are attached to this report. The cost estimation for the proposed bikeway plan is based on an engineer’s estimate for the proposed bikeway project. As can be seen on the attached, the total cost for the installation of the bicycle lanes and bicycle routes, (including traffic control, striping, signing, engineering and construction management), is estimated as \$265,860.

There are a variety of sources used to fund transportation project and programs. Most funding comes from the federal and state programs earmarked for specific types of transportation improvements, although some funds are generated through local programs. There are a few funding sources specifically designed for bicycle facilities; however, at the discretion of the local jurisdiction, most funding available for local streets and roads may also be spend on bikeway improvements. The following fund sources represent the typical funding associated with bicycle projects:

Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) – The BTA provides state funds for city and county projects that improve safety and conveniences for bicycle commuters. To be eligible for BTA funds, a city or county must prepare and adopt a Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP) that complies with Streets and Highways Code Section 891.2

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) – The STIP is a biannual process through which the California Transportation Commission allocates the State Highway Account to transportation projects. It is made up of essentially two programs – a local discretionary fund called the Regional Improvement Program and a state discretionary fund called the Interregional Improvement Program.

Transportation Development Act (TDA) – TDA funds provide regular, guaranteed sources of funds for local transit. These funds are administered by the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and apportioned to jurisdictions on a per-capita basis. While there are funding programs provided under TDA, only the Local Transportation Fund program can be used.

Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) - The Federal-aid SRTS Program) provides Federal-aid highway funds to State Departments of Transportation over five Federal fiscal years (FY2005-2009). These funds are available for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects, and to administer State Safe Routes to School programs that benefit elementary and middle school children in grades K-8. The SRTS program is typically used to fund pedestrian and bicycle safety projects.

As the BTA monies are available and the facilities proposed with the BTP are congruent with the requirements of this program, it is recommended that the first funding source that should be pursued is the BTA monies.

As mentioned above, there are certain criteria and findings that must be made in order to comply with the BTA funding program. The compliance issues and how the City of Willows BTP meets those criteria are shown in the next section of this report.

CALTRANS BTA COMPLIANCE INFORMATION

One of the criteria in Caltrans' BTA application is to ensure that the bicycle transportation plan developed by any community complies with Section 891.2 of the California Streets and Highways Code. The following information outlines the sections from the Streets and Highways Code and a statement as to how this proposed BTP meets the criteria.

891.2. A city or county may prepare a bicycle transportation plan, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

(a) The estimated number of existing bicycle commuters in the plan area and the estimated increase in the number of bicycle commuters resulting from implementation of the plan.

According to the National Sporting Goods Association, 43.1 million Americans age seven and older were estimated to have ridden a bicycle six times or more in 2005. Cycling is the seventh most popular recreational activity in the U.S. According to the California Bicycle Coalition, California has more than 8 million regular bicyclists.

There are currently no existing bikeways within Willows; however Sperling's Best Places states the following:

- The average one-way commute in Willows takes 19 minutes.
- Zero percent of the commuters take mass transit.
- 80% of the commuters drive their own car alone.

Additionally, per a recent plan prepared by Butte County, it is estimated that 2.6% of the people use bicycles as the primary means of transportation. It should be noted that this census does not measure how many people use their bicycles for other transportation trips such as shopping, errands or visiting friends. Given the fluctuation in gas prices and the promotion of Green living, it is anticipated that the addition new Class II and Class III bikeways will encourage new bicycle activity in the area due to the increased safety.

(b) A map and description of existing and proposed land use and settlement patterns which shall include, but not be limited to, locations of residential neighborhoods, schools, shopping centers, public buildings, and major employment centers.

The Zoning Map included in this report shows residential, commercial, County and open space areas, as well as the downtown area, public facilities and services areas that are in compliance with the City's adopted General Plan and any of the most recent changes to Zoning.

c) A map and description of existing and proposed bikeways.

With respect to existing bikeways within the City, the City does not currently have any existing bikeways – hence the need for this plan. The Proposed Bikeway Plan attached to this document shows the proposed Class II and Class III bikeways throughout the City, as well as the identified County bike routes and how the proposed bikeways connect to these County facilities.

It should be noted that the Class II bike lanes will be established along existing streets as 5 foot, signed bike lanes. Clarity of how these bicycle lanes will fit within existing streets is shown on the typical street sections provided with this report. The Class III bike routes will be shared lanes with signage designating the road as part of a bikeway system.

(d) A map and description of existing and proposed end-of-trip bicycle parking facilities. These shall include, but not be limited to, parking at schools, shopping centers, public buildings, and major employment centers.

Along with the proposed bike lanes and routes, the attached Bikeway Plan also shows existing schools, parks and additional node locations such as shopping centers and public buildings. The major employment center is shown on the Zoning Map as 'Downtown Willows.' It is anticipated that all of these locations would be desirable biking destinations. For the longer commute, or for the more advanced recreational rider, the connections to the County bike routes will be a great advantage. As funding allows, bicycle parking facilities will be installed at the major destination locations to facilitate bicyclists.

(e) A map and description of existing and proposed bicycle transport and parking facilities for connections with and use of other transportation modes. These shall include, but not be limited to, parking facilities at transit stops, rail and transit terminals, ferry docks and landings, park and ride lots, and provisions for transporting bicyclists and bicycles on transit or rail vehicles or ferry vessels.

There is no rail or ferry service within Willows. Glenn County, which incorporates the City of Willows has a public transportation system called Glenn Ride. The Glen Ride buses follow a fixed route system with seven round trips every weekday and three round trips on Saturday from Willows to Chico with service to Artois, Orland and Hamilton City. There are 12 bus stop locations within the City of Willows. Of the 12 locations, 10 of these are on the proposed bikeways. Two of the bikeway locations are park and ride lots, and one is at a downtown parking lot.

(f) A map and description of existing and proposed facilities for changing and storing clothes and equipment. These shall include, but not be limited to, locker, restroom, and shower facilities near bicycle parking facilities.

It is anticipated that future ridership will be predominately home to school and home to work. Clothes changing areas and facilities are anticipated to be available at those locations. Shower facilities are not anticipated as necessary at this time.

(g) A description of bicycle safety and education programs conducted in the area included within the plan, efforts by the law enforcement agency having primary traffic law enforcement responsibility in the area to enforce provisions of the Vehicle Code pertaining to bicycle operation, and the resulting effect on accidents involving bicyclists.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is currently responsible for bicycle safety in the County as a whole. The CHP has developed several educational pamphlets

to inform bicyclists about safe riding. The CHP also uses press releases and other media information to spotlight bicycle safety. The Willows Kiwanis Club sponsors an annual bicycle rodeo to promote safe cycling at various schools in the City. The Willows Kiwanis Club, the CHP and the Willows Police Department together conduct bicycle inspections for safety and licensure.

(h) A description of the extent of citizen and community involvement in development of the plan, including, but not limited to, letters of support.

Numerous groups including The California Highway Patrol, the Willows Kiwanis Club, the Willows Police Department, the Willows School District and the City of Willows will work together to educate and involve the community in the development of this project. Letter of support from both the Willows Police Department and the Willows Unified School District are attached attesting to support for the establishment of bicycle facilities within the City.

(i) A description of how the bicycle transportation plan has been coordinated and is consistent with other local or regional transportation, air quality, or energy conservation plans, including, but not limited to, programs that provide incentives for bicycle commuting.

The City of Willows has coordinated their bicycle lanes and bicycle routes to tie into the Glenn County Bicycle Transportation Plan. The County has developed a comprehensive system of bikeway facilities using goals, objectives and policies found in the County General Plan. The Willows bike system is designed to meet both the recreation and transportation needs within Willows while coordinating with interagency transportation plans and programs.

Encouraging bicycle usage by developing this bikeway system will have a direct impact on improving air quality and reducing energy usage, thereby reducing greenhouse gasses. There are currently no incentive programs offered by the City for bicycle usage (other than the increased safety factor.)

(j) A description of the projects proposed in the plan and a listing of their priorities for implementation.

The Class II and Class III bikeway projects proposed in this plan were determined based on the following criteria:

1. Safety
2. Connectivity
3. Cost Effectiveness
4. Route Conditions
5. Type of Use

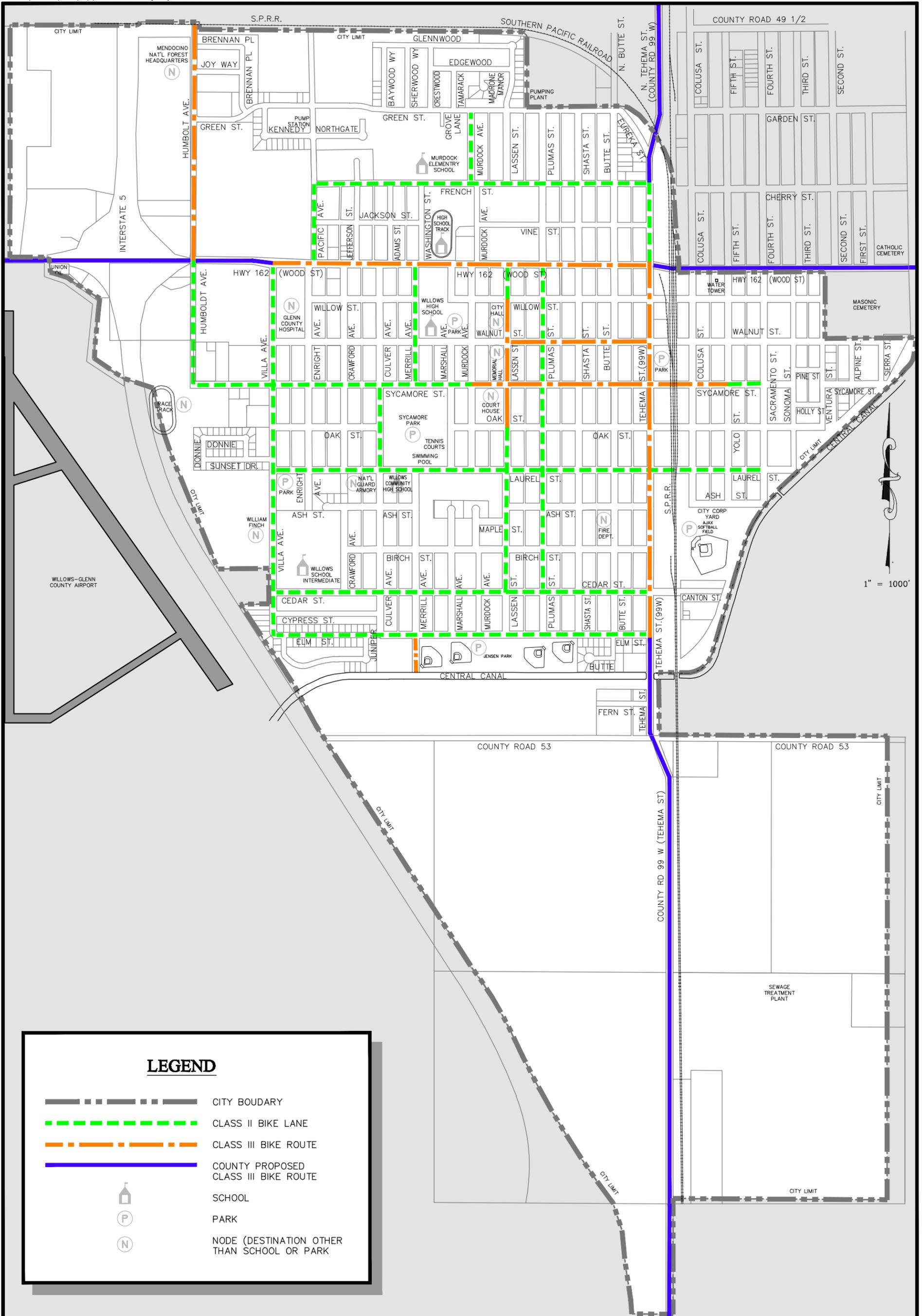
One of the biggest factors in establishing bicycle routes within the City is safety. In particular, grammar school, middle school and high school students that use

bicycles as a means to get to school need safer routes to get to each of the schools. Also, connectivity of schools, parks, shopping areas and other areas of interest were a large factor in order to provide bicyclists direct and safe routes to get to these areas.

(k) A description of past expenditures for bicycle facilities and future financial needs for projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters in the plan area.

As there are currently no bicycle lanes or significant bicycle facilities within the City, there have been no significant past expenditures for bicycle facilities in Willows.

With respect to future costs, cost estimates (based on 2008 cost data) have been completed and are attached to this report. The cost estimation for the proposed bikeway plan is based on an engineer's estimate for the proposed bikeway project. As can be seen on the attached, the total cost for the installation of the bicycle lanes and bicycle routes, (including traffic control, striping, signing, engineering and construction management), is estimated as \$265,860.



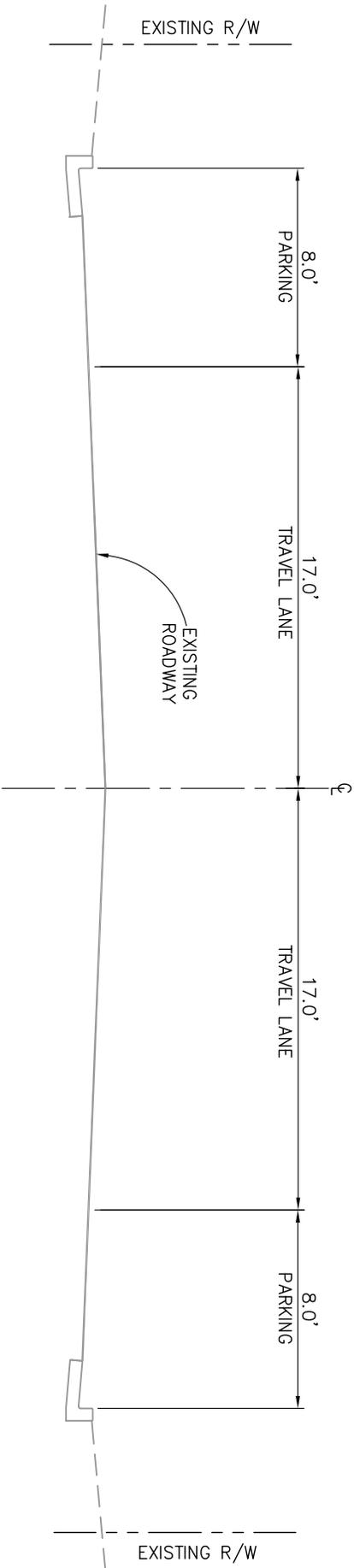
LEGEND

-  CITY BOUNDARY
-  CLASS II BIKE LANE
-  CLASS III BIKE ROUTE
-  COUNTY PROPOSED CLASS III BIKE ROUTE
-  SCHOOL
-  PARK
-  NODE (DESTINATION OTHER THAN SCHOOL OR PARK)



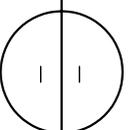
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CITY OF WILLOWS
PROPOSED BIKEWAY PLAN



**BIKEWAY PROJECT
EXISTING TYPICAL
ROADWAY SECTION**

NOT TO SCALE



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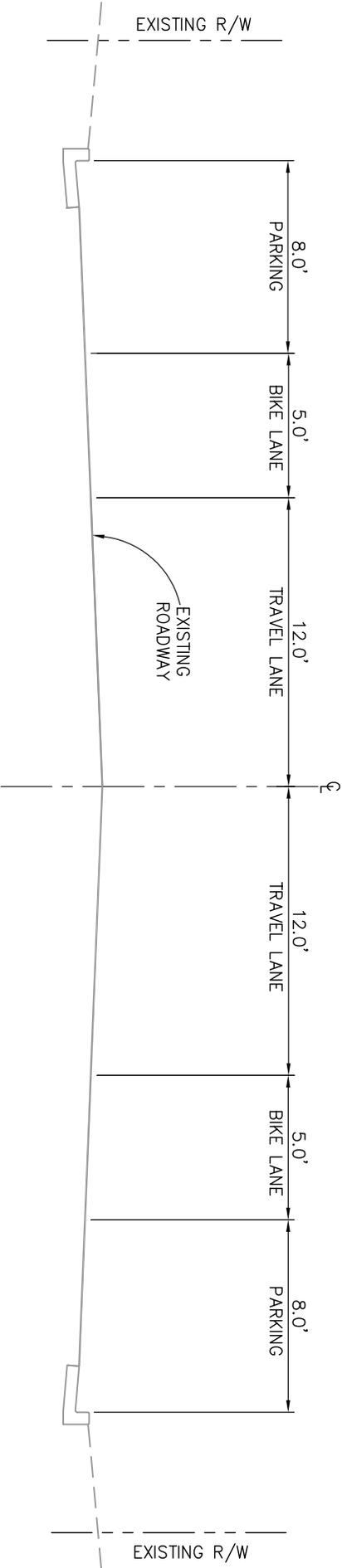


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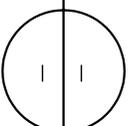
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**BIKEWAY PROJECT
EXISTING - TYPICAL SECTION**



**BIKEWAY PROJECT
CLASS II BIKE LANE
TYPICAL ROADWAY SECTION**

NOT TO SCALE



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**BIKEWAY PROJECT
CLASS II BIKE LANE - TYPICAL SECTION**