

II. PLANS AND POLICIES REVIEW

This chapter identifies existing plans, policies, and regulations that impact Wheeler's transportation system; and identifies accomplishments needed to comply with the Transportation Planning Rule and 1999 Oregon Highway Plan.

WHEELER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (Adopted October 1979 with Amendment through December 1997)

The following three sections of the Wheeler Comprehensive Plan directly address transportation policies and recommendations:

- Transportation
- Estuarine Resources – Subsection L. Land Transportation Facilities
- Estuarine Resources – Subsection R. Public Access to the Estuary and its Shorelands

These sections are stated below and followed by excerpts from other sections of the Comprehensive Plan that address transportation-related issues.

Transportation (pages 10-11)

Policies:

1. Street development shall be designed to create a minimal need for cutting and filling. All sidehill streets and driveways shall be built entirely in cut-no-fill; surplus excavated materials must be removed to a location where it will not constitute a hazard.
2. The city may permit less than standard right-of-way and surface ways for streets in steeply sloped areas, consistent with safety for traffic and fire protection.
3. Proliferation of new access points to Highway 101 shall be discouraged by the city, Tillamook County, and the State Department of Transportation. Wherever possible, new residential developments shall not have direct access to Highway 101. New commercial uses should be clustered with access being provided by a consolidated access point.
4. The city shall be notified prior to the installation of any underground utility in an city right-of-way. The city will require reasonable efforts to improve or restore the road after construction.
5. The city supports efforts to provide public transportation.
6. The State Department of Transportation, when undertaking major highway improvements, shall address the following considerations:
 - a. The enhancement of pedestrian and vehicular access across Highway 101;
 - b. The maintenance or improvement of parking facilities along Highway 101;
 - c. The minimization of short-term disruptions which would adversely affect the business and residential areas of downtown Wheeler;
 - d. Assist the City in enhancement of the long range viability of the downtown area;
 - e. The minimization of noise and air pollution impacts on adjacent residential areas;
 - f. The provision of appropriate landscaping;
 - g. The protection of views across Nehalem Bay;
 - h. The enhancement of access to the waterfront;
 - i. Where appropriate, the Wheeler Planning Commission shall be used by the Oregon Department of Transportation as its citizen involvement committee.
7. The Department of Transportation shall coordinate any highway improvements with the Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad to insure that their combined improvement plans are consistent with the criteria in policy 6. Future improvement plans should not preclude passenger rail service to Wheeler.
8. The City will participate in the Highway 101 Corridor Study and the Scenic Byway Study toward the end of providing better highway transportation through Wheeler.

9. The City of Wheeler recognizes the need to amend its Comprehensive Plan and Implementing Ordinances to provide more certainty for highway and street construction projects. The City will consider making the appropriate amendments after the Oregon Department of Transportation develops model plan policies and ordinances.

Recommendation:

1. The State Department of Transportation should continue to improve the coastal bike route along Highway 101 by widening the Highway's shoulders or, where feasible, constructing separate bike lanes.
2. The City of Wheeler should develop a street Master Plan and a Multi-Modal Transportation Plan including access to the community without using Highway 101.

Estuarine Resources – Subsection L. Land Transportation Facilities (pages 29-30)

1. Maintenance and repair of existing roads, railroads, airports, bridge crossing support structures and bridge approach ramps, and establishments of low water bridges shall be allowed in all estuary zones. Replacement of bridge crossing support structures and bridge approach ramps may be considered a form of maintenance if the resulting bridge support structure or ramp is the -minimum size necessary to accommodate the same number of traffic lanes as exist on that portion of the highway.
2. In selecting sites for development of new land transportation facilities, priorities are, from highest to lowest:
 - a. upland sites;
 - b. shoreland sites;
 - c. estuary Development (ED) zones.

The City, however, realizes that this priority list is subject to modification by economic considerations, or by the need for services in a particular area.

3. New land transportation facilities within estuarine waters, intertidal marshes or tidal wetlands shall be permitted only if.
 - a. no feasible alternative upland route exists;
 - b. a need (i.-e. a substantial public benefit) is demonstrated and the use or alteration does not unreasonably interfere with public trust rights;
 - c. adverse impacts are avoided or minimized.
4. New land transportation facilities in Estuary Development (ED) zones shall be permitted only if consistent with the purposes of the management area and the maintenance of navigation and other needed public commercial and industrial water-dependent uses.
5. When bridge crossing support structures are needed, the amount of estuarine surface area occupied shall be the minimum amount possible. Bridges, piers, and trestle shall be designed so as not to impair tidal flow in respect to volume, velocity or direction.
6. Proposals for new land transportation facilities shall be reviewed locally to determine land and water use compatibility and resource capabilities.
7. Construction and maintenance of land transportation facilities should be timed and conducted so that mass soil wasting or excessive surface erosion does not occur. Wheeler recommends increased coordination between the State and County Highway Departments and state natural resource agencies in order to meet this objective.
8. In order to preserve significant fish and wildlife habitats and maintain biological productivity, new land transportation facilities in Estuary Natural (EN) zones shall be limited to low-water bridges, bridge crossings and bridge crossing support structures. Bridge crossing support structures are allowed only if consistent with the resource capabilities of the area and the purposes of the management unit.
9. Dredged material stockpile sites shall be used as a source for fill material for land transportation facilities whenever practicable.

10. Roadway construction shall be scheduled to avoid critical periods of breeding, feeding and migration of coastal species.

Estuarine Resources – Subsection R. Public Access to the Estuary and its Shorelands (pages 34-35)

1. The City recognizes the value of maintaining and improving public access to its publicly owned estuaries for all people.
2. Further acquisition, sale or development of shorelands owned by the County, Federal, State and local governments shall be carried out in a manner to retain existing public access and maximize future public access to these publicly owned shorelands, consistent with resource capabilities and site sensitivity to human use. To this end:
 - a. Existing public ownership, rights-of-way, and similar public easements which provide access to or along coastal waters shall be retained or replaced if sold, exchanged or transferred. Rights-of-way may be vacated to permit redevelopment of shoreland areas provided public access across the affected site is retained.
 - b. Governments should avoid closing their lands to public use unless protection of fragile resources outweighs the benefits to be derived from public use.
 - c. All units of government providing or supporting public access to the public coastal areas should give particular attention to use capabilities in order to protect areas from over-use and to prevent potential damage to resources.
 - d. Public access to shorelands owned by Federal, State and local government should be improved where feasible and consistent with authorized use.
 - e. The City should consider the purchase of conservation of scenic easements whenever opportunities are available to increase public access.
 - f. The City supports the voluntary use of the open space special tax assessment law when it will result in property owners maintaining natural areas or providing visual or physical access to public areas.
 - g. Special consideration should be given to making some designated areas of the City's publicly owned shorelands available to the elderly, handicapped, and physically disabled.
3. The private use of privately owned intertidal areas, tidal wetlands and shorelands is legitimate and must be protected against encroachment. Public access through and the use of, private property shall require the consent of the owner, and is trespass unless appropriate easements and accesses have been acquired in accordance with the law.
4. Where major shoreline developments are allowed, they should not, in combination with other developments in the area, exclude the public from shoreline access to areas traditionally used for fishing, hunting or other shoreline activities.
5. Special consideration of the need to retain open space and improve public access to publicly owned shorelands is necessary in urban and urbanizing areas. Industrial and commercial facilities such as canneries, ports and marinas should, where feasible, provide physical or visual access to coastal waters and shorelands.
6. The City shall carry out a program of providing public access to Nehalem Bay by retaining existing public ownership, rights-of-way, and similar public easements which provide access to coastal waters or replacing such access if they are sold, exchanged or transferred (rights-of-way may be vacated so long as equal or improved access is provided as part of a development project).

Natural Features (pages 3-4)

Policy 1. Site-specific geologic investigations may be required when appropriate to assure safe development. Site-specific investigations shall be conducted:

- d. In cases of roads and streets, fill and excavation will require a site investigation.

Policy 5. Site design which utilizes the natural topography and vegetation is encouraged:

- b. Efforts shall be made to maintain streams in their natural state;
- c. Access roads and driveways should follow natural slopes and contours and need not be constructed in block patterns;
- d. In cases of undeveloped platted lands, legal action to vacate existing lot lines and/or public rights-of-way to permit replatting consistent with natural features may be desirable.

Economic Development (page 6)

Policy 5. The economic land resource of Wheeler – the town waterfront and business district – shall be developed in a manner which encourages beneficial long-term uses outlined below.

- b. Public access to the Nehalem River is encouraged, provided that private property rights, public safety and the shoreline are not adversely affected.
- d. City of Wheeler Goal: To diversify and improve the economy of the local area.
 - 1. The City will endeavor to establish a waterfront revitalization plan and pursue the goals set forth in the plan.
 - 2. The City shall endeavor to promote local markets and develop visitor attractions to the Wheeler waterfront and business district under the City's revitalization plan.

Recreation and Open Space (page 8)

Policy 4. Riparian vegetation within identified riparian zones shall be protected and retained. A fifteen foot riparian zone (measured from the ordinary high water line) is established on each bank of Zimmerman, Gervais, and Vosberg Creeks. A twenty-five foot riparian zone (measured from the mean higher high water line or line of non-aquatic vegetation, whichever is most landward) is established adjacent to Nehalem Bay. (This policy is stated because it may need to be addressed if pathways are recommended parallel or near creeks or Nehalem Bay.)

Energy (page 12)

Policy 1. The city promotes domestic energy conservation efforts, including:

- c. Bicycle and pedestrian access within the city is encouraged.

Estuarine Resources – Policy C. Boats, Ramps, Docks, and Moorage (page 15)

- 2. Safe navigational access to boat ramps, docks and moorages should be provided and maintained.
- 3. New boat ramps, docks and moorages shall be allowed only where sufficient back-up land exists without the need to fill tidelands or marshlands.
- 4. To encourage the most efficient use of waterfront and water surface area, alternatives to individual, single purpose docks and moorages (such as cooperative use facilities mooring buoys or dry land storage) are encouraged....
- 6. To preserve significant fish and wildlife habitats and provide for continued biological productivity, docks and moorages shall not be permitted within Estuary Natural (EN) zones. Boat ramps for public use where no dredging or fill for navigational access is needed shall be allowed, where consistent with the resource capabilities of the area and the purposes of the management zone.

Estuarine Resources – Policy G. Fill in Estuarine Water, Intertidal Areas and Tidal Wetlands (page 22)

Policy 5. New fill in the Estuary Natural (EN) zone shall be allowed only for:

- c. installation of public boat ramps or bridge crossing support structures.

Estuarine Resources – Policy S. Recreation and Recreational Facilities (Page 36)

Policy 4. Recreational off-road vehicle use shall not be permitted in estuarine waters, intertidal areas or tidal wetlands.

Estuarine Resources – Policy V. Shallow Draft Port Facilities and Marinas (page 40)

Policy 4. Safe navigation access to existing and future port facilities shall be maintained.

Public Facilities (page 44-46)

Policy 2. Key public facilities and services (water, sewer, and approval of transportation and storm runoff designs) shall be provided in an orderly and efficient manner.

Policy 11. Because of the major impacts such activity has on the life of the community, major highway and railroad developments, such as realignment, relocation, purchase of additional right-of-way, construction of intersections or abandonment of rail lines, should be controlled through the City's Conditional Use procedure. Minor improvement such as repaving, and addition of bike lanes in existing rights-of-way shall be outright use.

Recommendation 3. The City should consider establishing a joint venture street paving and drainage program whereby the City and adjacent property owners would share in the costs of improvements.

Recommendation 5. The city needs to undertake a study of System Development Charges.

Shorelands (pages 47-48)

Policy 8. Public access to publicly owned shorelands shall be maintained and improved wherever possible, consistent with the authorized use.

Policy 12. (This policy addresses the intent of the City to develop a Waterfront Revitalization Plan. This policy is addressed here because transportation facilities will be a primary element of any revitalization plan.)

WHEELER ZONING ORDINANCE

Transportation related provisions of the Wheeler Zoning Ordinance are identified in this section.

Definitions

1. Access. Means the way or means which pedestrians and vehicles enter and leave property.
3. Alley. A street which affords only a secondary means of access to property.
6. Bridge Crossing. The portion of a bridge spanning a waterway not including support structures or fill located in the waterway or adjacent wetlands.
7. Bridge Crossing, Support Structures. Piers, piling, and similar structures necessary to support a bridge span but not including fill for causeways or approaches.
- Highway Development or Railroad Development. Major or significant realignment, change of grade, rerouting or expansion of an arterial highway or abandonment of a railroad line or reconstruction thereof, not including routine maintenance activities such as repaving, widening for bicycles, or installation of traffic signs.
40. Marina. A facility for the docking of boats in the water, involving eleven (11) or more boats or boatslips.
44. Moorage. A facility for the docking of boats in the water, involving ten (10) or fewer boats or boatslips.
45. Navigational Aid. A beacon, mooring buoy, or channel marker.
46. Navigational Improvements. Pile dikes, groins, fills, jetties, and breakwaters that are installed to help maintain navigation channels, control erosion or protect marinas and harbors by controlling water flow, wave action and sand movement.
51. Parking Space. Parking space means an area of 9 feet by 18 feet or full size spaces, and an area of 8 feet by 16 feet for compact spaces, located off the street right of way, and intended for the parking of vehicles.

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2000-2001***

54. Recreation Vehicle. A vacation trailer or other unit with or without motive power, which is designed for human occupancy and to be used temporarily for recreation or emergency purposes and has a floor space of less than 220 square feet, excluding built-in equipment such as wardrobes, closets, cabinets, kitchen units or fixtures and bath or toilet rooms.
60. Street. The entire width between the right-of-way lines of every public way for vehicular and pedestrian traffic and includes the terms “road”, “highway”, “land” (believe this is supposed to be “lane”), “place”, “avenue”, “alley”, and other similar designations.

Zoning Districts

All zoning districts (Articles 2-7) state, in the Development Standards, that parking shall be in accordance with Section 11.090 (described below).

Article 2. WRC Zone – Water-Related Commercial

Permitted principal uses/activities include marine transportation-related uses and facilities. Conditional uses/activities include railroad development and bicycle paths.

Article 3. IND Zone – Water-Related Industrial

Permitted uses/activities include marinas, piers, and wharves; navigational improvements; and boat ramps. Conditional uses/activities include park, wayside or bicycle paths; and railroad development.

Article 4. GC Zone – General Commercial

Conditional uses permitted include RV Parks on 4.5 acres or more.

Article 6. R-2 Zone – Residential Type 2

Permitted principal uses include park, wayside, bicycle paths and public owned recreation areas.

Article 7. P Zone – Public Lands Zone

Permitted principal uses (exclusively) include park and wayside area; bicycle paths; public dock; and new highway or railroad development.

Article 8. Estuary Zone

Within the Estuary Natural Zone (EN), uses permitted with standards include navigational aids and bridge crossings and bridge crossing support structures. Conditional uses include boat ramps for public use where no dredging or fill for navigational access is needed.

In the Estuary Development Zone (ED), permitted uses include navigational structures and navigational aids; and bridge crossing and bridge crossing support structure.

Conditional uses include water access structures, boat ramps, commercial docks, moorages and marinas, and water-borne transportation.

Article 10. Planned Development

Development standards include: Streets and Roads. Necessary streets and roads within the Planned Development shall be dedicated to the public and constructed to standards determined by the Planning Commission.

Article 11. Supplementary Provisions

Section 11.050. Design Review – parking lots should be divided into groups of no more than 8 spaces with landscaping and walkways dividing the groups. Plantings and/or fences should be provided to separate the parking from public streets and adjacent property.

Section 11.070. Access

Each lot and parcel shall abut a street other than an alley for a width of at least 25 feet or have vehicular access by means of a recorded easement for a width of 25 feet.

Section 11.075. Maintenance of Public Access

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The City shall review, under ORS 368.326-368.366, proposals for the vacation of public easements or rights-of-way which provide access to estuarine waters. Existing rights-of-way which provide access to estuarine waters. Existing rights-of-way and similar public easements which provide access to coastal water shall be retained or replaced if they are sold, exchanged or transferred. Right-of-way may be vacated so long as equal or improved access is provided as part of a development project.

Section 11.080 Clear Vision Areas

A clear-vision area shall be maintained on the corners of all property at the intersection of two streets. See pages 58-59 of the Zoning Ordinance for a detailed description and standards.

Article 11.090. Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements.

RESOURCE TEAM REPORT FOR WHEELER BY THE BAY, OREGON

Oregon Downtown Development Association, March, 2000

The ODDA report is a plan that provides several recommendations and plans for improving downtown Wheeler. The report focuses on three subjects: Strengthening the Sense of Community & Place, Design: Private Space, and Design: Public Place. The Strengthening the Sense of Community & Place discusses:

- the importance of strengthening downtown as the “heart” of the community and as a logical place for people to do business, interact, shop and do business;
- increasing Wheeler’s retail shopping and art gallery experiences which would help attract visitors and underscore the need for a more comprehensive business mix combined with pedestrian friendly pathways on, and between main street and waterfront activities.

The Design: Private Space section identifies Highway 101 building façade and signage improvements, and infill opportunities.

The Design: Public Space addresses several topics including many transportation-related elements including pedestrian-bicycle trail opportunities, parking, street lighting, street trees and plantings, utilities, public art/amenities, identification of downtown Wheeler, and a proposed Special Transportation Area (STA).

The report includes a downtown master plan that addresses these elements for the area from Hospital Street at Highway 101 to north of Rector Street, from approximately First Street west to the waterfront. Descriptions of these elements are provided below. Please note the ODDA report recommends some street closures, realignment, and new streets in the downtown core. This includes closing Gregory Street between the highway and First Street, making Rorvik Street the connection from the highway, and extending First Street to indirectly connect to Hospital Street. This is a good plan with many good features however, there may be other street alignment opportunities that may be appropriate. The TSP recommends a detailed study and design through a public process, i.e. an STA plan, that will address these elements in more detail.

Pedestrian – Bike Trail Opportunities

An opportunity exists to create better pedestrian and bike linkages throughout the city. The new Gervais Plaza, located between existing Gregory Street retail stores and Rorvik Street should have curbs and sidewalks. Sidewalks and bicycle pathways should lead from the upper park along Gervais Creek through the town square and down to the docks on Nehalem Bay. A new bike trail along the new “Bay Front Drive” would allow for bicycle and pedestrian traffic to view wildlife and estuary habitat apart from Highway 101 traffic.

Parking

Moving the Post Office ½ block closer to the new city hall/community center site would allow for the town center space to be developed with additional angled parking. The Gervais Plaza parking area could be constructed to alternate as public parking and as a public square devoted to special outdoor events like a growers

market or art fair. Properly developed and landscaped parking by the waterfront that includes a non-motorized boat launch will accommodate non-trailer vehicles. RV's would be encouraged to park in five new spaces on Hall Street. Additional RV parking and boat trailer parking would be located north of town and off of Hwy. 101.

Street Lighting

Lighting for streets, sidewalks and park should be provided to encourage pedestrian movement, improve the visual environment, and enhance the safety and security within the town square area. Light standards are manufactured in a number of styles that are "historic" in appearance. Many of these would be appropriate for Wheeler and would certainly enhance downtown.

Street Trees and Plantings

Provision should be made for street trees and plantings along the Highway 101 that buffer the parking zones of the town center. Planting beds should be sited at appropriate locations within the new Gervais Plaza. Cutouts for trees should be street level and can be planted with maintenance free ground cover plants or contained with a new paver material that allows for moisture to reach the tree roots. Tree specimens should be colorful, non-fruiting ornamentals. The city could use several varieties, but it is important to simplify the tree planting scheme and maintenance by keeping the number of tree species to a minimum.

Street trees should not be planted along Hwy. 101 between Hall Street and one block north of Rector. The significance and impact of the businesses along this side of the street should be emphasized, and views of the bay and mountains left open. Benches and planters can be used along this area to provide amenities and add color and foliage.

Utilities

Most downtown power lines should be moved underground. Visually, power lines, poles and transformers are the most troublesome due to their penchant for creating visual clutter. It is important to ensure adequately functioning underground systems such as storm water sewers. Streets must drain rainwater to roadside curbs and adequate storm drains.

Identification of Downtown Wheeler

Entryways into Wheeler can be identified by signage at the north and south entrances to the actual commercial district. Evidence of arrival into the downtown core could be pedestrian scaled lighting, benches, planting, trash receptacles, paving and clearly defined crosswalks. In addition, the traditional beach character could be enhanced by the presence of banners, flags, sails, kites, and windsocks. Visitors arriving into downtown and Gervais Plaza should be provided with adequate information about the town's attractions and services. A system of directional signage should be designed and positioned to orient travelers to specific destinations within the community.

Proposed Downtown Refinement Plan/Special Transportation Area (STA)

An important opportunity for Wheeler to consider is partnering with ODOT to prepare a downtown refinement plan and consider designating Highway 101 in the downtown area from Hospital Street to one block north of Rector Street as an STA. This downtown refinement plan will lead to Highway 101 improvements i.e. parking, reduce highway speed, and articulate more clearly defined pedestrian crosswalks. Traditional downtown development has smaller contiguous storefronts that are not set back from the sidewalk. It will be important to keep downtown development, in-fill and building rehab within these traditional downtown design guidelines.

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE CITY OF WHEELER

Malcolm Johnstone, December 1997

***Wheeler Transportation System Plan
2000-2001***

The goal of the Waterfront Development Plan project was to provide waterfront planning and development framework which protects the waterfront amenity values and helps revitalize the economy of the City of Wheeler. The plan's project limits were west of Highway 101 from Hall Street to the north city limits. The Wheeler Waterfront Access Plan identifies vehicular circulation, turn lanes, pedestrian access and crosswalks, and landscaping improvements for the Highway 101/Rector Street intersection and along Marine Drive.

Plan recommendations for improvements to the public realm include many transportation-related elements:

- Improve the entrance to the waterfront at Marine Drive and Rector Street where it intersects with Highway 101,
- Establish landscaping plan for area for Marine Drive that will promote pedestrian usage,
- Create a pathway development plan for Marine Drive that will promote pedestrian usage,
- Approve conceptual parking plan developed by the Port of Tillamook Bay to be established at the north end of Marine Drive,
- Develop signage guidelines that will encourage highway monument signs at the entrances to the marina,
- Enhance parking on the west side of Highway 101,
- Daylighting Gervais Creek.

PORT OF NEHALEM MASTER PLAN

The Port of Nehalem has some jurisdiction over the water of Nehalem Bay however does not have any jurisdiction over land facilities, i.e. boat ramp/launch. The Port does contribute limited funds to improvements to water-related facility improvements such as the boat launch.

PORT OF TILLAMOOK BAY RAILROAD TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad owns and operated the existing rail and service through Wheeler. At this time, existing use and service of the rail is planned to be maintained. In addition, the Port is instrumental in potential increase of rail service should the passenger rail line to/from the Portland Metropolitan Area or freight service occur.

NEAHKAHNIE SCHOOL DISTRICT SAFETY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Neahkahnie School District provides school bus service in Wheeler including two stops along Highway 101. Bus service does not extend beyond Highway 101 through Wheeler.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The *Tillamook County Futures: From Vision to Action*, published in September 2000 by the Tillamook County Futures Council, identifies ongoing and planned projects which address strategies of the county and of communities within Tillamook County. Wheeler is identified for working with the Oregon Downtown Development Association to develop a Main Street-type downtown revitalization program. In addition, the document addresses public transportation stating that the transit district is now more affordable and more convenient, and that service has tripled since 1998.

WETLANDS INVENTORY

Wetlands in Wheeler are primarily located between Nehalem Bay and Highway 101. Future development plans and transportation facilities for this land will need to address the significant wetland area.

1999 OREGON HIGHWAY PLAN

The state highway system is a critical component of the state’s transportation system. The 1999 Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) is a mechanism to help the State efficiently and effectively guide the development, operations, and maintenance of the state highway system over the next several years. The OHP is relevant to Wheeler in that State Highway 9 (U.S. Highway 101) traverses through Wheeler and is the primary roadway and only continuous north-south access through the city. The highway will continue to be the primary physical element from which through traffic travels and area residents use to access businesses, residence, and other uses.

The OHP updates state highway directives identified in the 1992 Oregon Highway Plan. The 1999 OHP emphasizes:

- Efficient management of the system to increase safety, preserve the system and extend its capacity;
- Increased partnerships, particularly with regional and local governments;
- Links between land use and transportation;
- Access management;
- Links with other transportation modes; and
- Environmental and scenic resources.

The OHP has three main elements: the Vision, the Policy Element, and the System Element. The Policy Element identifies goals which address the OHP vision and elements. An overview of these elements and their relevance to State Highway 9 (U.S 101) through Wheeler is provided below.

Wheeler’s Relevance to the 1999 Oregon Highway Plan

OHP Policy Element Goals		Relevancy to Wheeler
G O A L 1	<p>System Definition: To maintain and improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, and contribute to the health of Oregon’s local regional, and statewide economics and livability of its communities.</p>	<p>The System Definition recognizes that state highways are the main streets of many communities and strives to maintain a balance between serving these main streets and the through traveler. This is particularly relevant to Wheeler. U.S. Highway 101 is the primary roadway and access for both through travelers and area residents. The Wheeler TSP must incorporate the OHP policies and standards that recognize the need to achieve a balance and accommodate mobility needs of both through travelers and area residence.</p>
G O A L 2	<p>System Management: To work with local jurisdictions and federal agencies to create an increasingly seamless transportation system with respect to development, operation, and maintenance of the highway and road system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguards the state highway system by maintaining functionality and integrity; • Ensures that local mobility and accessibility needs are met; and • Enhanced system efficiency and safety. 	<p>The focus of the System Management policies is on making the highway system operate more efficiently and safely through public, and private partnerships, intelligent transportation systems, better traffic safety, and rail-highway compatibility (where applicable). There is the opportunity and need for the State and City of Wheeler to coordinate and work to together to ensure that improvements are made in a most effective and efficient manner. The State recognizes that this often occurs by assisting cities with off-system improvements. The TSP will identify how off-system improvements in Wheeler will improve mobility and safety along U.S. Highway 101.</p>

<p>G O A L 3</p>	<p>Access Management: To employ access management strategies to ensure safe and efficient highways consistent with their determined function, ensure the statewide movement of good and services, enhance community livability and support planned development patterns, while recognizing the needs of motor vehicles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists.</p>	<p>Access management balances access to developed land while ensuring movement of traffic in a safe and efficient manner. In Wheeler existing access management along U.S. Highway 101 and downtown has a fairly well-established framework. Through the core area of downtown (from Hospital Street to one block north of Rector Street) access points are generally limited to local side streets that intersect with Hwy. 101 from the east side of the highway. There are limited access points from private property. The west side of the highway (between the highway and the railroad) is used for parking. Access is limited to streets that access the marina and commercial uses located along the waterfront. The current access will be examined in the TSP and recommendations for improvements and/or maintenance of the existing system will be provided.</p>
<p>G O A A L 4</p>	<p>Travel Alternatives: To optimize the overall efficiency and utility of the state highway system through the use of alternative modes and travel demand management strategies.</p>	<p>The Travel Alternatives Policies focus on reducing barriers to efficient freight movement, using alternative modes. Although U.S. Highway 101 is not a designated freight highway through Wheeler, the highway is the sole source of access for through freight and vehicular traffic. There is an opportunity to improve the movement of through traffic by introducing an improved pedestrian friendly environment. The scale of Wheeler is conducive to a pedestrian friendly environment. The current inefficiencies are primarily related to vehicular, pedestrian, and parking conflicts. Improvements to parking and pedestrian facilities along the highway and adjacent local streets and property will increase multi-modal movement throughout Wheeler, improve safety, and enhance efficient movement of through traffic.</p>
<p>G O A L 5</p>	<p>Environmental and Scenic Resources: To protect and enhance the natural and built environment throughout the process of constructing, operating, and maintaining the state highway system.</p>	<p>The Environmental and Scenic Resources Policies recognize ODOT's responsibilities for maintaining and enhancing environmental and scenic resources in highway planning, construction, operation and maintenance. This is particularly relevant in Wheeler. The city and Highway 101 was built along the edge of Nehalem Bay. The bay offers a significant amount of environmental and scenic resources, provides spectacular views, and is a significant attraction to motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The TSP will address the protection and enhancement of this significant natural resource while addressing the mobility needs of through travel and local travel.</p>

For Wheeler and the development of the TSP, a critical element of the OHP is the Special Transportation Area (STA) designation. The TSP includes evaluation of Wheeler for a designated STA and initial findings support the criteria for a Wheeler STA designation. OHP Policy 1B Land Use and Transportation describes Special Transportation Areas. The primary objective of managing highway facilities in an existing or future STA is to provide access to community activities, businesses, and residences and to accommodate pedestrian movement along and across the highway in a downtown, business district and/or community center. Wheeler, along Highway 101, fits this description. The TSP addresses STA criteria identified in the OHP.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING RULE

The Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) sets out specific guidelines for the development of a TSP. In development of this plan, individual modal plan elements will be produced for:

- Roadway network plan
- Public Transportation
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Air/Water/Rail Pipeline Plan

In addition to these modal elements, the plan must include policies and regulations for implementing the plan and a determination of transportation needs.

In development of the modal elements, the plan must include inventories for road, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation facilities. These inventories will not only provide the location of facilities, but also information on their condition and service demand. The TPR also requires the TSP to include information on the location of planned major improvements.

PACIFIC COAST SCENIC BYWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR HIGHWAY 101 and SCENIC BYWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN for the NEHALEM, TILLAMOOK, AND NESTUCCA REGIONS of the U.S. 101 CORRIDOR IN OREGON

Recognition of the Oregon Coast as a special and unique natural resource, coupled with U.S. Highway 101 providing access along the coast led to the designation of U.S. Highway 101 as one of 12 State Scenic Byways. The 1997 Pacific Coast Scenic Byway Management Plan for Highway 101 will help improve the tourist experience and will also benefit residents by improving a variety of traveler amenities. A primary purpose for the plan is to create a plan for developing and managing the U.S. 101 corridor as a scenic byway in accordance with its state designation. As a current Oregon Scenic Byway, the U.S. 101 corridor will benefit from the Corridor Management Plan through:

- The improved coordination between agencies and jurisdictions working to improve the visitor experience and quality of life that have been achieved during plan development,
- The plan's identification and prioritization of projects to improve these aspects of U.S. 101,
- The plan's utility as a resource for developing grant applications for identified projects,
- The plan's value as a general information resource for local governments, agencies, and private businesses.

The plan's secondary purpose is to serve as an application for designation of the U.S. 101 corridor as a National Scenic Byway through the Federal Highway Administration. National designation would recognize the value of this unique resource and good work being done to protect and enhance it. National Scenic Byway designation for the corridor will result in the state and its local partners realizing the following benefits:

- Access to National Scenic Byway grant program funding,
- National marketing and advertising exposure,
- The status of being formally recognized as offering one of the nation's premier travel experiences.

The Plan identifies eleven regions with Wheeler located in the Nehalem Region. The Nehalem Region summary states that "the town of Wheeler lies peacefully along the edge of Nehalem Bay". Identified "defining features" in Wheeler include:

- **The City of Wheeler** – The town of Wheeler was incorporated in 1914 and named after C.H. Wheeler, who established a sawmill in the area, after the railroad came through in 1911. Fishing, canning, and dairy production were once the economic mainstays of the community, but tourism gained a foothold in the 1920s. Wheeler hosts the Crab Festival in June and the Salmon Derby in September. The plan identifies the City of Wheeler's intrinsic qualities as scenic, historic, and cultural, with management goals as enhancement, awareness, and access. The access objective is to assess traffic flow to, from, and within the city and its businesses. Strategies are to realign traffic flow to the featured areas, and identify off-highway parking. The

implementation step is for the City to work with ODOT to evaluate needs and possibility of project implementation.

- **Wheeler Waterfront Park and Views of Wheeler** – Wheeler has unique views from several vantage points. The city overlooks Nehalem Bay and River, including Lazarus Island, Dean’s Point, and Fishery Point. In addition, it has a panoramic view of Neahkanie Mountain and Onion Peak, and a peek at the ocean across Nehalem State Park. These features are prominent also throughout the town – a town of hills. The plan identifies intrinsic qualities as scenic, recreational, and natural. Management goals identified in the statewide plan are awareness, interpretation, access, and a priority project, while the regional plan identifies stewardship, awareness, and interpretation as management goals.

The plan identifies the following two “contributing features” within Wheeler:

- **Birding/Wildlife Viewing on the Bay and Estuaries** – From Nehalem to within the town of Wheeler, the opportunity to view birds and wildlife is spectacular. A large variety of waterfowl, raptors, and passerine birds are drawn to the bay/estuaries. Elk are seen frequently on the sand spits, and beaver and seals can be seen playing the water. Intrinsic qualities are scenic and natural with management goals as enhancement, stewardship, awareness, interpretation, access, and priority project. The access objective is to provide parking areas and turnouts along this stretch of the highway. Strategies are to establishing a safe exit/entry from U.S. 101, and to regulate the availability of parking spaces. Implementation steps are for ODOT to investigate opportunities for turnouts and parking areas; if project scope is within ODOT’s maintenance forces ability to construct, the District Manager will determine if the project can be funded in the current budget or attempt to secure funding in a future budget; if project scope is outside of ODOT’s maintenance force’s ability to construct, the project must be added to the State Transportation Improvement Program.
- **Passenger Train Views** – The passenger train that takes people from the Tillamook Industrial Park to Wheeler, May through October each year, passes through the heart of Tillamook County and offers a variety of viewing opportunities, ranging from the lush coastal mountains to agricultural valleys and views of the Pacific Ocean. The plan identifies contributing features as scenic, recreational, and natural with management goals as awareness.

PROPOSED OREGON COAST HIGHWAY CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

The 1995 Oregon Coast Highway corridor master plan recognizes the Oregon Coast as a region of extraordinary beauty, natural wonders, and cultural diversity that will continue to mature as one of the nation's most admired scenic routes, attracting tourist and recreational travelers, while remaining the principal route for commercial and industrial traffic along the coast. The corridor needs to provide for the safety and travel efficiency needs of users, while harmonizing with and, where appropriate, enhancing the inherent scenic beauty of the coastal region. The master plan has goals and objectives that focus on development of a 20-year transportation plan. The subarea identified in the master plan that includes Wheeler is the "North of Manzanita Junction through Wheeler". Recommended "plan activities" relevant to Wheeler include:

- Develop a pedestrian/bicycle circulation strategy including investigation of alternative routes and possibly utility easements west of the highway;
- Improve transit/paratransit service, including transit stops at Wheeler;
- Develop a community design program that incorporates the following elements:
 - Parking strategy for both on-street and off-street parking,
 - Pedestrian and landscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment and circulation features. In Wheeler, replace existing curb and sidewalk on the southeast side of the street. Develop a pedestrian connection from Paradise Cove to Wheeler.
 - Informational and directional signage program, including consideration of consolidating or eliminating existing signs.
 - Clearer definition of the highway's role in these communities,
 - Identify possible locations, and preserve/enhance selected views of Nehalem River for northbound traffic,
 - Analyze the need for providing left-turn opportunities from Highway 101,
 - Preserve open views and natural resources adjacent to the highway,
 - In Wheeler, investigate the opportunity to create an esplanade along the bay side of the railroad incorporating landscaping, street trees, benches, lighting, meandering pathway, and regulated parking,
 - Preserve the integrity of the existing railroad,
 - Investigate the feasibility of developing a left-turn lane for southbound traffic and a pedestrian crossing at Rector or Gregory Street in Wheeler. Consider closing one of these streets.
 - Investigate the feasibility of constructing local street improvements so that traffic can collect onto Gregory Street in Wheeler.

STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP)

The STIP does not identify any project for U.S. Highway 101 through Wheeler.
