

Complete Streets Policy in Wenatchee - How Bicyclists and Pedestrians Have Benefitted

by Charles Hickenbottom

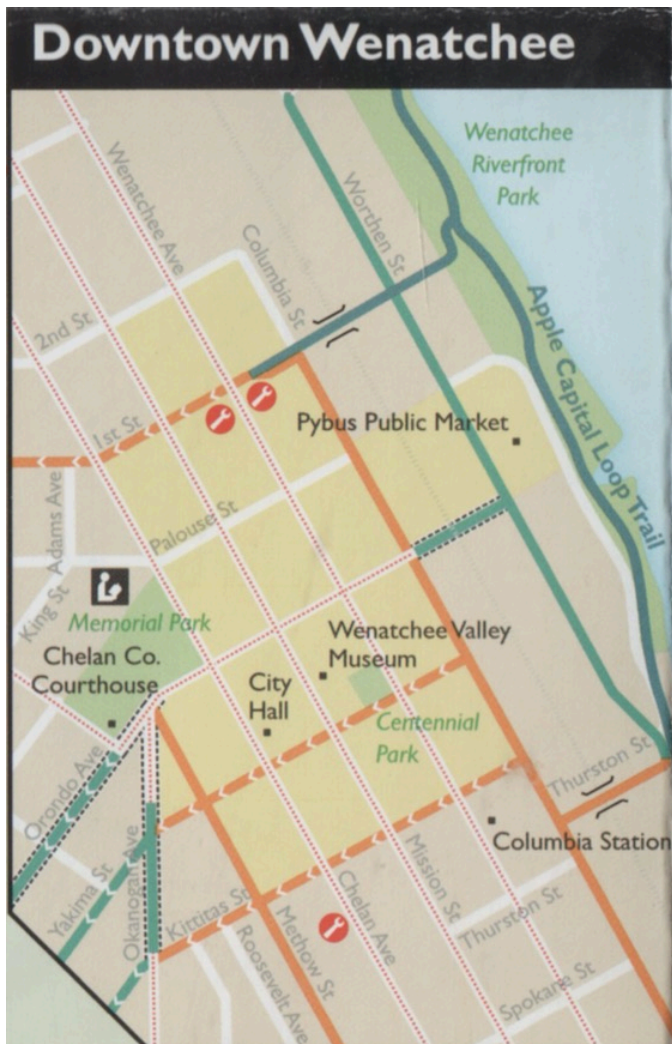
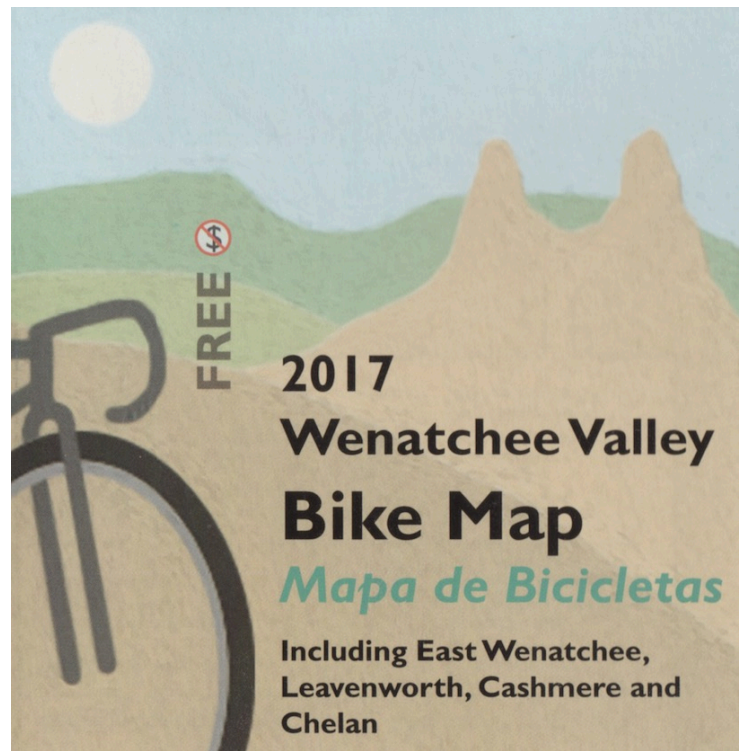
A little background is in order to understand how important the policy of Complete Streets is with regard to how multiple user groups access and use public right of ways in Wenatchee. The first bike lanes in Wenatchee in 1997 were on Orondo St from Washington St to Miller St. These lanes were placed with little fanfare or objection. The street width was sufficient to stripe bike lanes without removing any parking. Some of Wenatchee's Public Works engineers of that era were openly against adding any street or sign markings to encourage the use of bicycles around town. The thinking behind that mentality was that the bicycle was just a toy, and that bicycles belonged on the Loop Trail. But the Greater Wenatchee Bicycle Advisory Board's (GWBAB) adopted bike plan (1999) included more bike lanes. The bike lanes on Fifth St between Riverside Dr and Miller St (2004) were more controversial, with the City Council needing to sign on to an urban upgrade that included removal of some parking spots.

Over the next decade it became more common for municipalities to upgrade city roads with consideration of transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists, thus Complete Streets policy became more mainstream. In 2015 the Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council (CDTC) formally adopted Complete Streets policy. The adoption was somewhat symbolic, given that CDTC does transportation planning for the region, but typically does not implement specific projects. More significant was the City of Wenatchee's adoption of Complete Streets policy the next year (2016), followed later by a similar adoption in East Wenatchee (2018). Numerous streets in Wenatchee upgraded since 2016 now include bike lanes, those upgrades largely influenced by Complete Streets policy. The following pages chronicle those projects with descriptions and pictures.



2017 - Bike lane on Western Ave south of Cherry St and bike lane on #2 Canyon Rd east of Skyline Dr. Access to the Wenatchee Swim and Tennis Club and to the Jacobsen Preserve Trailhead was improved. Funding for this project was limited, thus the bike lane was constructed on the east side of Western Ave and on the south side of #2 Canyon Rd, thus is designed for the downhill direction. A new sidewalk alongside the bike lane was also part of the project. While it is not ideal for bicyclists and pedestrians to share a sidewalk, riding the sidewalk uphill (yielding to pedestrians) alongside #2 Canyon Rd is an option for bicyclists heading toward Skyline Dr and the Jacobsen Preserve Trailhead. The hope is that grant funding will be secured to pay for right of way acquisition along #2 Canyon Rd and Western Ave for a sidewalk and bike lane to be constructed to match the other side of the road.

2017 - Regional bicycle map constructed, printed, and distributed to numerous locations, with free distribution. Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council produced the map with cover art by Marlin Peterson. Complex symbol use included color-coded lines to note comfort level. Uphill arrows helped portray the lay of the land. A downtown Wenatchee insert (below) provided a map to show possible routes to downtown. A regional map included other cities in Chelan County, plus East Wenatchee.



Bicycle Comfort Level <i>Nivel de Comodidad de Bicicleta</i>	
	Most comfortable <i>Lo más cómodo</i>
	Somewhat comfortable <i>Algo cómodo</i>
	Use caution <i>Use con precaución</i>
	Striped bicycle lane <i>Carril para bicicletas</i>
	Arrows point uphill <i>Las flechas apuntan cuesta arriba</i>
	Adventure Cycling Route <i>Ruta de Adventura para Ciclistas</i>
	Paved trail <i>Sendero pavimentado</i>
	Unpaved trail <i>Sendero sin pavimentar</i>
	Park <i>Parque</i>
	Central business district <i>Distrito central de negocios</i>
	Railroad <i>Ferrocarril</i>
	School <i>Escuela</i>
	Library <i>Biblioteca</i>
	Hospital <i>Hospital</i>
	Camping <i>Área de acampar</i>
	Paved trail access <i>Acceso al sendero pavimentado</i>
	Unpaved trail access <i>Acceso al sendero sin pavimentar</i>
	Bike shop with repair service <i>Tienda de bicicletas con reparaciones</i>

BIKEWENATCHEEVALLEY.ORG

A Local Web Resource For Bicycling In Chelan And Douglas Counties



Website managed by [Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council](#)

2017 - BikeWenatcheeValley.org website went on-line, hosted by Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council. This website quickly became a clearing house of bicycling information. Screenshots (above and below) show the masthead and various topics.

BIKEWENATC

A Local Web Resource For

- BIKE SAFETY
- BIKE LAWS
- BIKE SHOPS
- LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
- BIKES & BUSES
- COMBATting GOATHEADS

.ORG

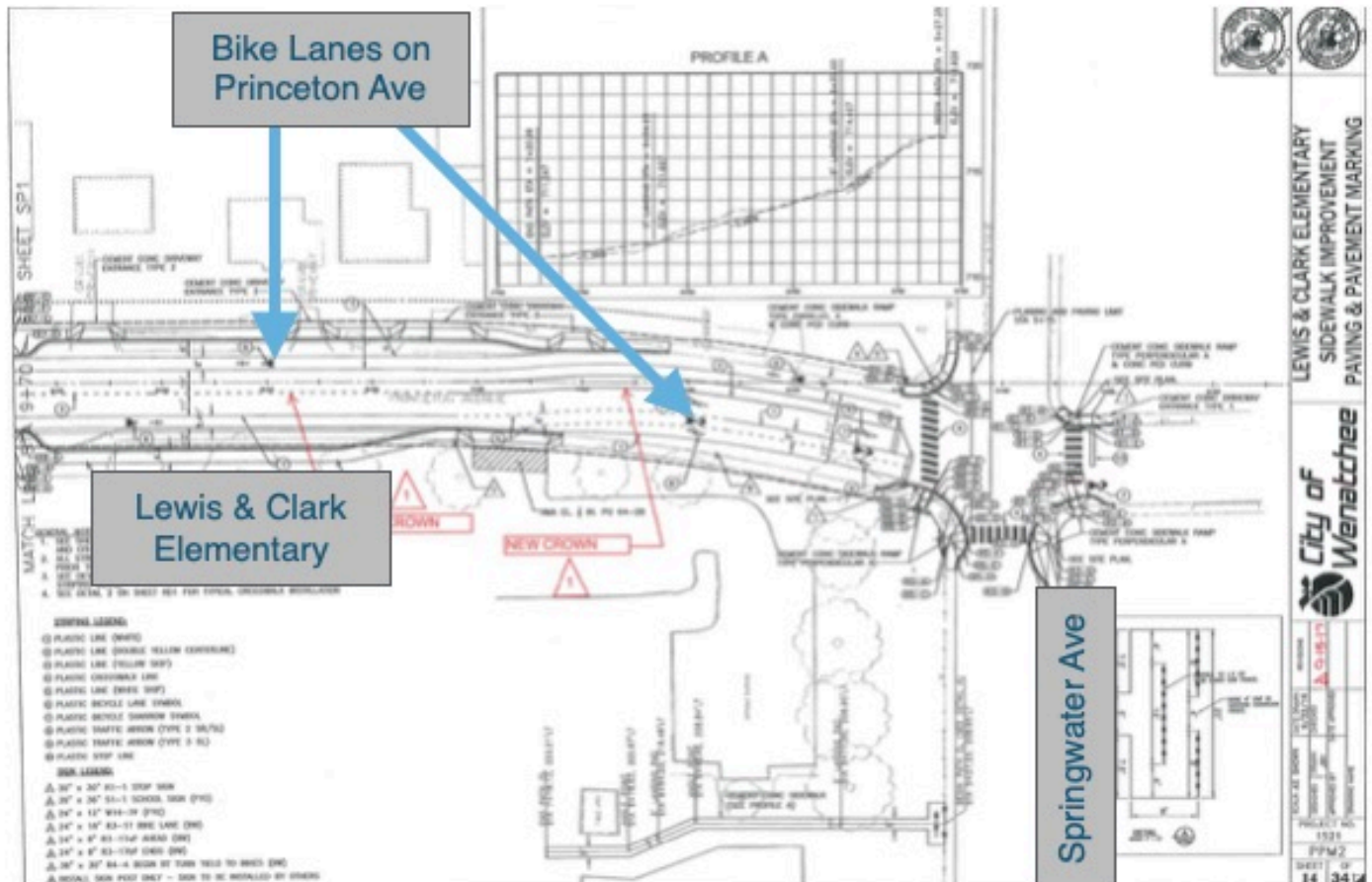
Counties

2018 - Bike lanes on Western Ave between Maple St and Cherry St. With that done, bicycle lanes now connected Walmart and Home Depot on Maiden Lane with the Wenatchee Swim and Tennis facilities on #2 Canyon Rd. The vision of GWBAB in 1998 was that Western Ave and Fifth St would form a T shape of bike lanes to connect with the Loop Trail. Twice during the ensuing twenty years the City of Wenatchee, without a Complete Streets policy, had opportunities to add bike lanes on Western Ave between Cherry St and Maple St, but political capital was insufficient to move that direction.





2018 - Bike lanes on Princeton Ave in front of Lewis & Clark Elementary School. State funding in the form of a Safe Routes to School grant for the project would not have been available without the City of Wenatchee's Complete Streets policy. The new bike lanes strengthened the Princeton Bike Route, which has been in existence since 1984.





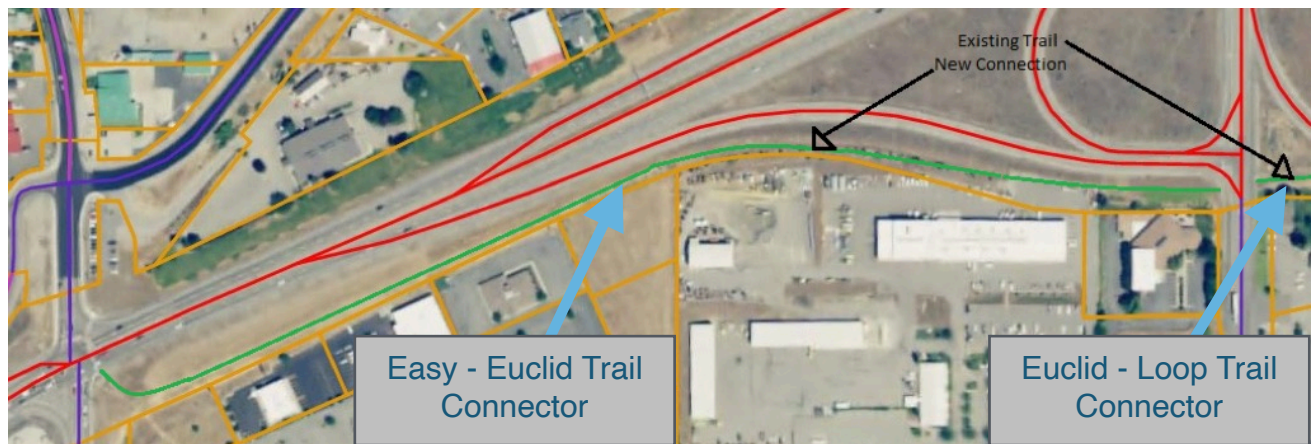
2018 - Bike lanes on Red Apple Rd between Miller St and Okanogan St. The bike lanes pass by the Confluence Health facility which lies between Miller St and Fuller St. It is interesting to note that parking was removed on the north side of Red Apple Rd to make way for the bike lanes project. Property owners on that side of the street did not object publicly to the removal of parking in front of their homes. This was in marked contrast to a small number of property owners on Western Ave who objected loudly at a city council meeting in 2001 to a proposal for bike lanes on that street. Perhaps Complete Streets policy makes more sense to citizens in Wenatchee now compared to decades ago. A recently completed multi-story parking garage built by Confluence Health was a key factor in the health facility supporting the bike lanes.





2018 - Bike lanes on Millerdale St between Miller St and Gellatly St. There was sufficient road width to only require the removal of a few parking spots. This project made a lot of sense, with Wenatchee High School located along Millerdale St west of Miller St. The new bike lanes also strengthened the Princeton Bike Route, with that route terminating at Wenatchee High School.





2018 - Bike Trail connecting Easy St with Euclid St. This WSDOT project, termed the Easy-Euclid Trail Connector extended an existing bike trail from Euclid St to the Loop Trail. This project improved bicycle and pedestrian access from the Easy St business corridor to the Loop Trail, as well as becoming the standard route for heading towards Cashmere from the Loop Trail.



2018 - Interactive web mapping showing implementation of bicycle improvements went on-line with Wenatchee Valley Bicycle Master Plan Progress Dashboard. This new mapping was part of the BikeWenatchee.org webpage that began earlier in the year.



ABOUT US TRANSPORTATION PLANS COMPLETED STUDIES TRENDS & DATA CURRENT PROJECTS

Bicycle Plan Implementation

This dashboard aids CDTC staff and local planners and engineers in tracking the progress of the recommended bicycle network identified in the 2018 Wenatchee Valley Bicycle Master Plan and the 2022 Regional Bicycle Plan. The dashboard allows local practitioners to identify and prioritize bikeway improvements that either fill network gaps or extend corridors where network implementation has already occurred. The dashboard is updated as bicycle projects are completed across the Wenatchee Valley and is current as of October 2022.

Welcome to the Wenatchee Valley Bicycle Master Plan Progress Dashboard

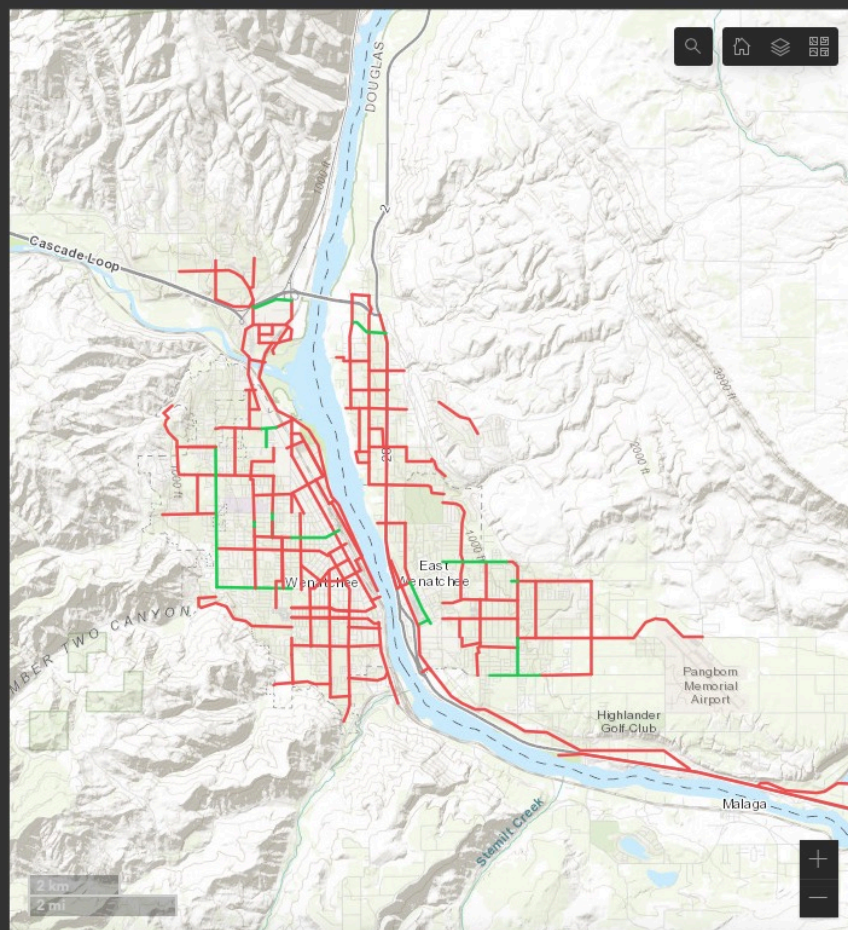
This dashboard helps the Chelan Douglas Transportation Council (CDTC) track implementation of bicycle facility recommendations in the 2018 Wenatchee Valley Bicycle Master Plan and the 2022 Regional Bicycle Plan. This dashboard is updated periodically and is current as of **October 24, 2022**.

For more information on bikeway planning projects, and other bicycle initiatives across the Chelan-Douglas region, please visit: <https://www.bikewenatcheevalley.org/>

Please direct any questions and comments regarding this dashboard to riley@chelan-douglas.org



INSTRUCTIONS: Use the toggle buttons in the top ribbon to filter complete and incomplete bicycle facility recommendations by jurisdiction and facility type. The gauges at the right of the screen reflect the complete and incomplete mileage associated with the selected jurisdiction(s) and facility(s). The default selection shows all complete and incomplete bicycle facilities regardless of jurisdiction and facility type. Additional map layers may be turned on



Legend

Bicycle Network Recommendations

— Incomplete
— Complete

8.2

Last update: 19 seconds ago

93.4

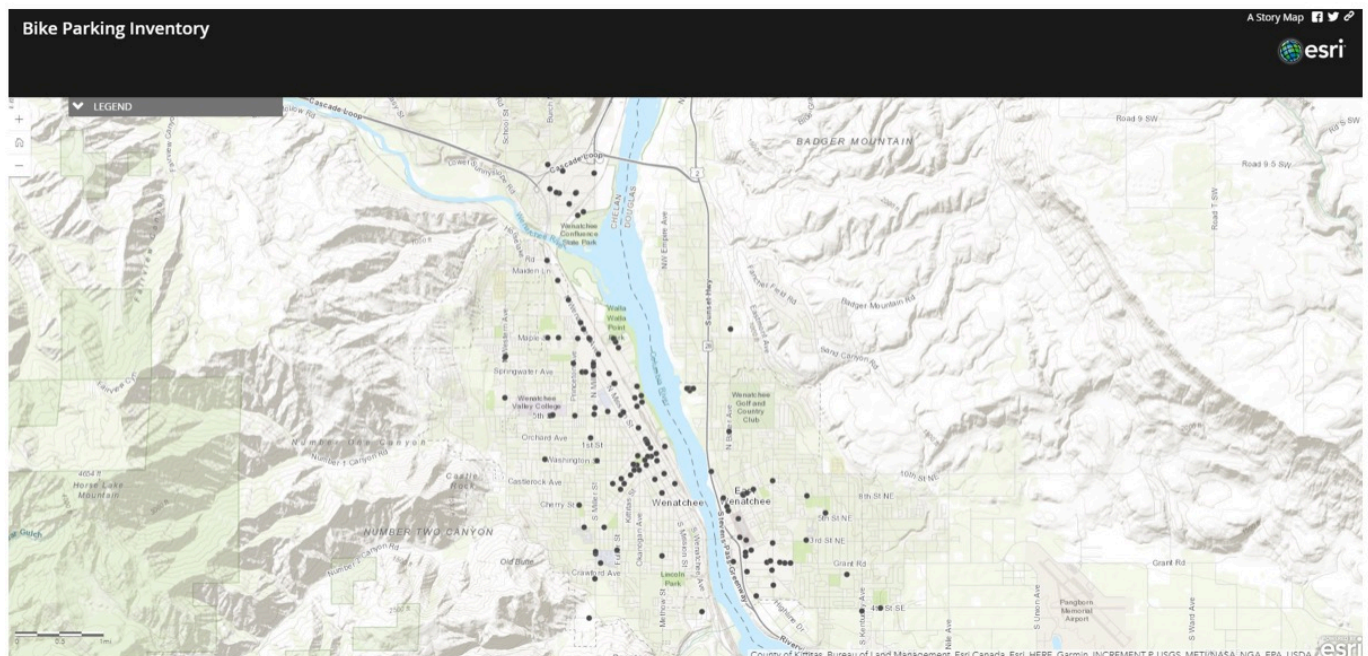
2018 - On-line documentation of bicycle parking began with Wenatchee Valley Bike Parking Map. The bike parking website was also hosted by CDTC's BikeWenatchee.org website.

HOME REGIONAL BIKE PLANNING LOCAL INFO MAPS & ROUTES **BIKE PARKING**

BIKEWENATCHEEVALLEY.ORG

A Local Web Resource For Bicycling In Chelan And Douglas Counties

Wenatchee Valley Bike Parking Map



BIKE PARKING INVENTORY INTERACTIVE MAP

2019 - Spokane St crossing of Mission St improved with safety features for both bicyclists and pedestrians. A bulb-out meant that only two of the three lanes of Mission St needed to be crossed at Spokane St. State of Washington Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) funding was awarded to the City of Wenatchee for this project. Spokane St is an important link between south Wenatchee and the Loop Trail. Access to Methow Park and Pinnacles Prep School were improved by the project.



2019 - McKittrick St bike lanes added between Tacoma St and N Pine St. While this project was only one block in length, it was the beginning of a decade-long larger project, a complete remake of McKittrick St. Fast forward and eventually bike lanes on McKittrick St will extend from Pershing St to Worthen St, pass under the BN railroad tracks, and eventually connect with the Loop Trail.





2020 - Elliott Ave MultiUse Pathway completed. With this connection complete between 2nd St and 3rd St, a bicyclist could now travel on Elliott St from Cherry St to Wenatchee Valley College on a relatively quiet side street. State TIB funds were used, and TIB funds would not have been available without a local Complete Streets policy.





2020 - First St Bikeway between Miller St and Columbia St completed. The importance of First St as an important corridor for bicycling was noted by GWBAB in 2002 when Riverwalk Crossing provided a way to bicycle from First St in downtown Wenatchee across the BN railroad tracks to the Loop Trail. But the City of Wenatchee did not begin planning for the bikeway until after the adoption of Complete Streets policy in 2016.

A lengthy planning process included a contracted design team, public meetings to gather input, a pop-up event to simulate the design features, and a go-ahead vote by the city council. Protected bike lanes and bike boxes at key intersections are new traffic features previously not implemented in Wenatchee. Also of note, the First St Bikeway is Wenatchee's first use of traffic circles along a residential St to purposely shift some of the motorized traffic to the nearby arterials, Fifth St and Washington St. While there are those that are annoyed by the traffic circles while driving a motorized vehicle, the actual travel time is only lengthened by about thirty seconds to drive a motor vehicle through the First St Bikeway.





2021 - Bike lanes added to Tacoma St between Maple St and McKittrick St. This complete remake of Tacoma St also included a sidewalk that previously was not in place. This project also served to strengthen the Princeton Bike Route. Seeing the larger long-range picture, those living on Tacoma St will eventually have a quality bike route to access the Loop Trail via McKittrick St. State TIB funding was used that would not have been awarded to the City of Wenatchee without a Complete Streets policy.



2022 - A formal wayfinding plan was adopted by the CDTC in 2022 (Appendix C, CDTC Regional Bicycle Plan). Unfortunately there was no funding mechanism to implement even a small part of the plan. Wayfinding would guide bicyclists with signs in a comprehensive way. Without a Complete Streets policy, the City of Wenatchee would stand no chance of ever having an application for state funding being awarded.

APPENDIX C

WAYFINDING PLAN





2022 - Bike lanes added on Cherry St from Miller St to Western Ave. Parking along the corridor was removed on the north side of the street. Removal of parking near Morris Park was the key objection of some citizens who objected at a 2001 city council meeting when adding some bike lanes was being considered. It would seem that now, two decades later, there is a nod that the city of Wenatchee has given encouragement for kids and families to use bicycles to access the baseball facility.





2022 - Orondo Bike Lanes extended east to Chelan Ave. This project extended bike lanes that were placed on Orondo Ave and Cherry St between Washington St and Miller St in 1997, Wenatchee's first bike lanes. Access to Memorial Park and Wenatchee YMCA were improved by this project. The pedestrian access between YMCA and Okanogan St was improved by an enlarged bulb-out between Methow St and Okanogan St.





2023 - Bike lanes added on Methow St near Lincoln Elementary School, from Crawford St to Lincoln St. State Safe Routes to School funds were used, funds that would not have been available without a local Complete Streets policy. The project also included sidewalks that previously did not exist, strengthening the safety of the non motorized use characteristic of the school population in the area.





2023 - Easy St Roundabout at the junction of Highway 2 and Easy St improved safety for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians alike. A bicyclist heading upvalley towards Cashmere will likely access Easy St from the Loop Trail via the Easy St Roundabout. This would also be the likely route of someone bicycling from Sunnyslope Elementary School towards downtown Wenatchee and other Wenatchee School District facilities.

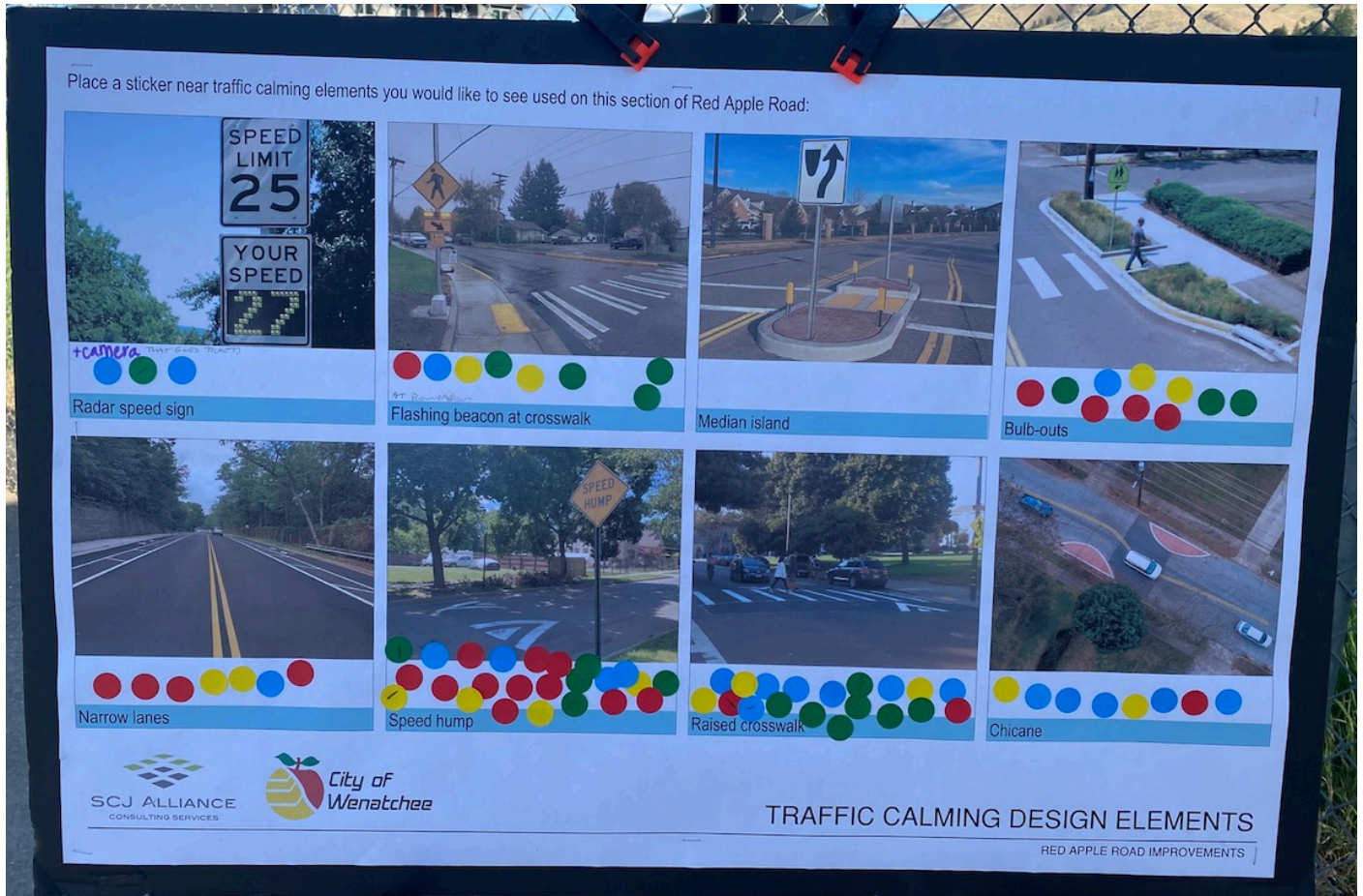




2023 - Unfinished projects in 2023 that carry over into the 2024 construction season include bike lanes on Springwater St and Maple St, both west of Western Ave. State TIB funds only available to communities with Complete Streets policies are being used.



2023 - Planning for an upgrade of Red Apple Rd west of Miller St included a pop-up event during the summer. Traffic calming design elements are planned for the portion of Red Apple Rd adjacent to Wenatchee High School. This project will continue in 2024.



The sheer number of City of Wenatchee Public Works projects since 2016 that have been of benefit to non-motorized use of public right of way is impressive. Certainly, Complete Streets policy has been the overriding force. Thanks should go to the five city council members that voted for Complete Streets policy back in 2016:

Mike Poirier - now mayor

Linda Herald - current council member

Ruth Esparza - finished term as a city council member

Lyle Markhart - finished term as a city council member

Mark Kulaas - finished term as a city council member

List of Links

Wenatchee Valley Bike Map <<https://www.bikewenatcheevalley.org/bike-map>>

BikeWenatcheeValley.org <<https://www.bikewenatcheevalley.org/bike-map>>

Princeton Bike Route <<https://wenatcheeoutdoors.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CharliesBikeRoutePrinceton.pdf>>

Wenatchee Valley Bicycle Master Plan Progress Dashboard <<https://www.chelan-douglas.org/bicycle-plan-implementation>>

Wenatchee Valley Bike Parking Map <<https://www.bikewenatcheevalley.org/bike-parking>>

First St Bikeway <<https://wenatcheeoutdoors.org/2024/02/06/first-street-bikeway-riverwalk-to-miller-street/>>

CDTC Regional Bicycle Plan <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/533203c6e4b00ce9525a703e/t/655ce1e116d57039141dd64e/1700585971599/BikePlan_FINAL_Adopted_Web.pdf>



Charles Hickenbottom is the author of *Greater Wenatchee Bicycle Routes - A History Told Through Maps, Drawings, and Pictures*. The book is available for purchase through the Wenatchee Valley Museum, and can be checked out from North Central Washington Libraries. Rights to the book have been donated to the museum.

Hickenbottom has served for 25 years on local bicycle advisory boards. For most of two decades he commuted by bicycle to Lewis & Clark Elementary School from his home near Chase Park. Most of his errands around town are done by bicycle. Since finishing the history book in 2022, he has completed several informational articles for the website *Wenatchee Outdoors*, focusing his efforts toward educating bicyclists and motorists about bicycling around Wenatchee. 2-20-2024.