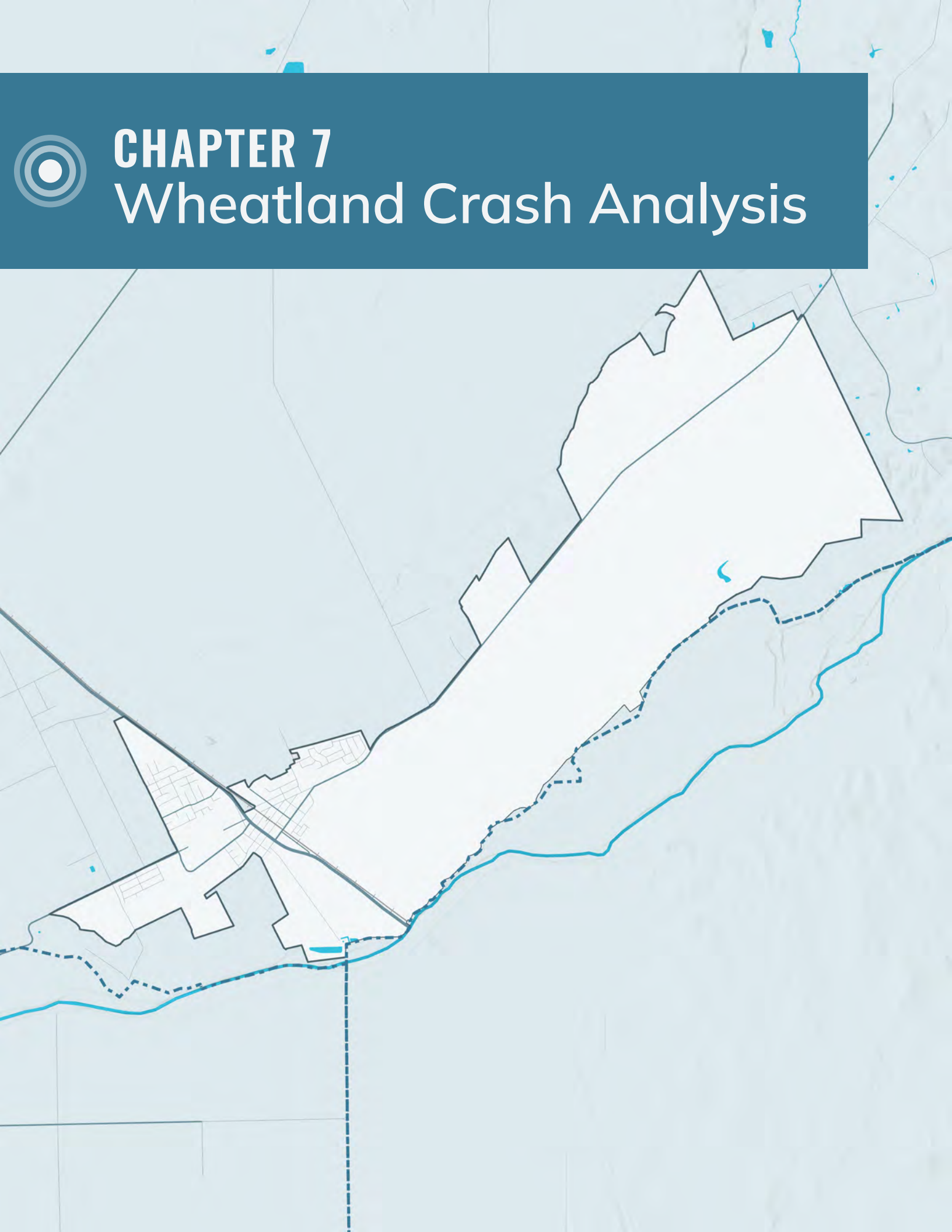




CHAPTER 7 Wheatland Crash Analysis

Introduction

Wheatland is located in southern Yuba County, about 40 miles north of Sacramento. The Beale Air Force Base, Toyota Amphitheatre, and Hard Rock Hotel & Casino are located nearby. It is the gateway city to Camp Far West, a regionally significant recreation area. Wheatland is a small but growing community with a population of approximately 3,700 residents. The city's roadway network is centered around State Route 65/D Street, a vital north-south corridor that bisects town and connects Wheatland to other parts of the region, such as Marysville and the greater Sacramento area. Adjacent to this road is the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). Spenceville Road is another key corridor, extending from the middle of town to the east, and provides access to the Camp Far West Reservoir and Beale Air Force Base via the Vassar Lake Gate.

Wheatland is a predominantly residential community, with about half of the city's population living on either side of State Route 65 and UPRR tracks. All of the schools are situated on the west side and the primary retail destinations on the east or along the highway. Wheatland Elementary School and Virginia School are accessed off Olive Street near SR 65, and Wheatland Union High School and Bear River Middle School via Wheatland Road. The historic downtown core is a compact, walkable district east of the highway that features a collection of well-preserved 19th- and early 20th-century buildings that house local businesses. Most residents must cross SR 65 multiple times per day either by driving, biking, or walking to access their destinations.

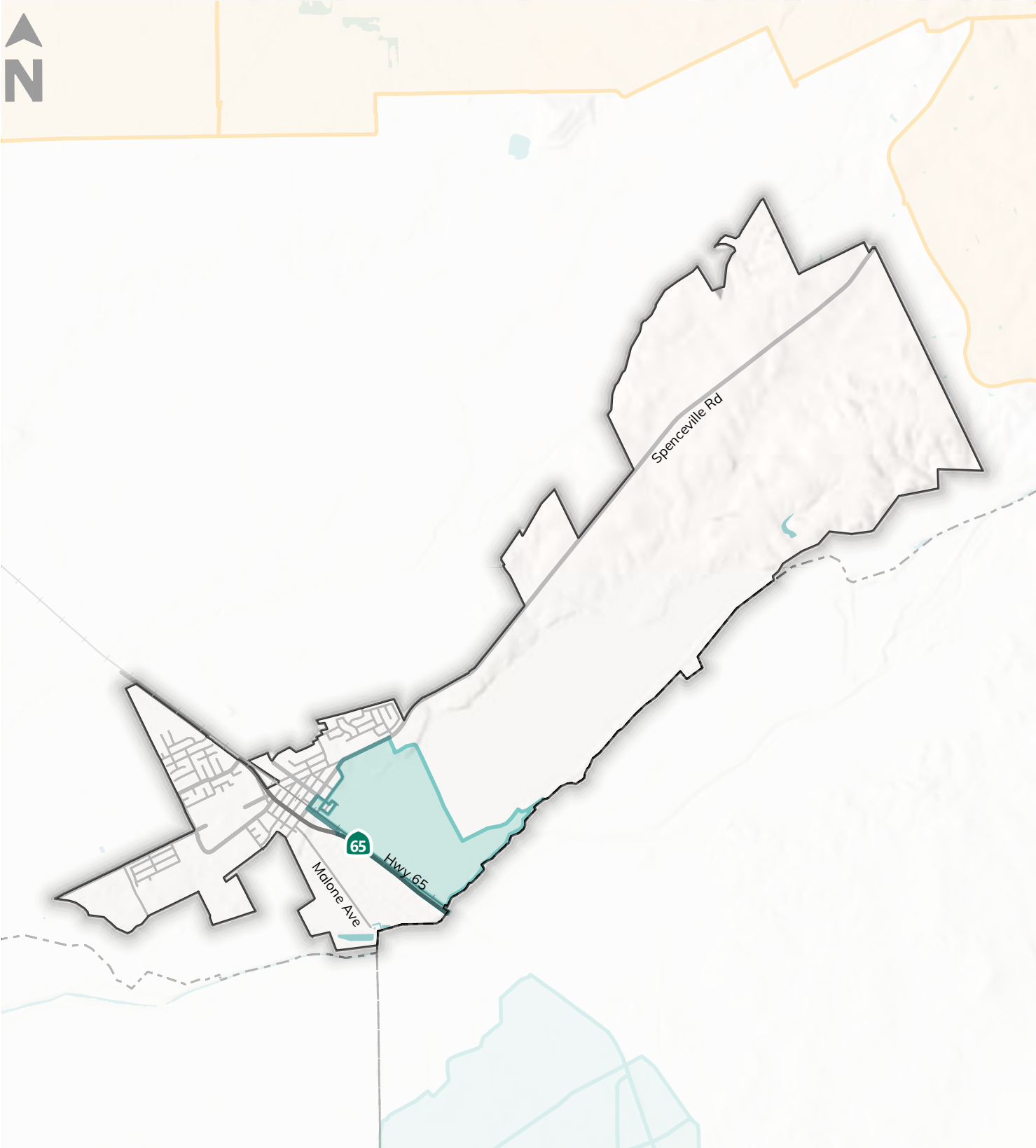
Communities of Concern

Sociodemographic data sources are helpful to better understand the community, as well as when applying for state and federal grant funding to implement infrastructure projects. Figure 7.1 shows locations in Wheatland that meet the criteria for two community metrics relevant to grant applications:

- Caltrans Transportation Equity Index (EQI) Transportation-Based Priority Populations: 2 percent of Wheatland's population meets Caltrans' threshold for Transportation-Disadvantaged status, compared to 16 percent of Californians.
- USDOT Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities: none of Wheatland qualifies as an area of persistent poverty or historically disadvantaged community, compared to 28 percent statewide.

In CalEnviroScreen, which evaluates environmental burdens including air pollution, traffic density, and health vulnerabilities, Wheatland received a score of 22, where the state had a score of 23, indicating parity between Wheatland and the state as a whole.

Figure 7.1: Caltrans Transportation Equity Index & USDOT Areas of Persistent Poverty



Legend

-  Caltrans Transportation Equity Index (EQI) Transportation-Based Priority Populations
-  USDOT Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (APPHDC)

Plans

The City of Wheatland has already made commitments to improving roadway safety through policies set in the Wheatland General Plan:

- 2.A.10: The City shall give priority to street and highway improvements that increase safety, minimize maintenance costs, and increase the efficiency of the street system.
- 2.C.2: The City shall promote street, alley, and sidewalk maintenance to encourage their safe use.
- 2.C.4: The City shall require ADA compliance for existing and proposed street sidewalks.
- 2.C.5: The City shall promote elderly friendly roadways, including the use of bikeways for golf carts and motorized wheelchairs.

Projects

There are numerous improvement projects currently underway or planned within Wheatland. There is a series of safety improvements planned on state facilities owned and operated by Caltrans along State Route 65 between Evergreen Drive and State Street, including rehabilitating pavement, adding bike lanes, upgrading facilities to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, constructing a multi-use path, and enhancing existing crosswalks. There are newly installed traffic signals at the State Route 65 and McDevitt Drive intersection.

In addition, improvements are planned at the intersections of SR 65 & Oakley Lane and SR 65 & Dairy Lane. While both these intersections are located in unincorporated Yuba County, they are frequently traveled by Wheatland residents, with members of the community expressing concern during the community engagement process.

Typical Intersection in Wheatland



INJURY CRASH TOTAL

73

KSI CRASH TOTAL

2

Figure 7.2
Injury Crashes by Year, 2018 - 2023

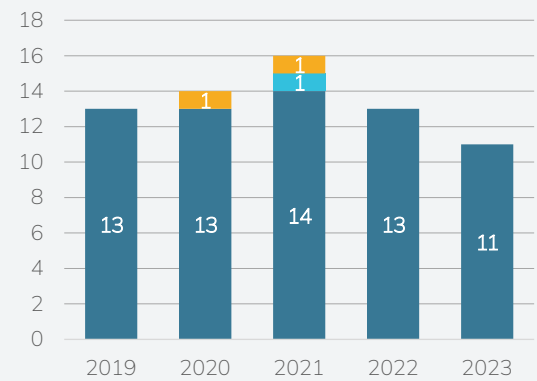
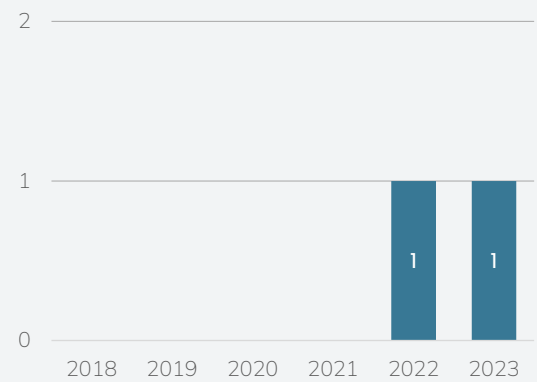


Figure 7.3
KSI Crashes by Year, 2018 - 2023



KSI = Killed or Severely Injured

- Vehicle-Only Crashes
- Bicycle-Involved Crashes
- Pedestrian-Involved Crashes

Crash Summary

This section summarizes key findings from the city’s crash data obtained from the California Highway Patrol’s Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) database, for the years 2018 to 2023. The analysis includes all crashes that led to injury and excludes property-damage-only crashes.

Within the six-year period, Wheatland saw a total of 73 crashes that led to some degree of injury. One crash involved a bicyclist and two involved pedestrians. In total, there were two crashes that involved at least one person that was killed or severely injured (KSI).

There was a concentration of crashes on D Street/ SR 65 between Main Street and State Street where cars traveling northbound rear-ended other vehicles as the posted speed limit drops from 55 MPH to 35 MPH, right before the signal at Main Street.

Figure 7.4:
Wheatland Crash Heat Map



About KSI Crashes

Severe injuries resulting from a traffic crash can result in a number of catastrophic impacts, including permanent disability, lost productivity and wages, and ongoing healthcare costs. These injuries can include:

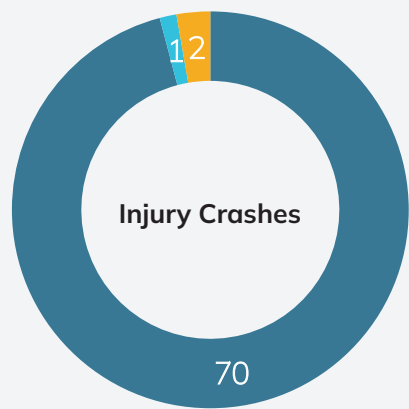
- Broken or fractured bones
- Dislocated or distorted limbs
- Severe lacerations
- Severe burns
- Skull, spinal, chest or abdominal injuries
- Unconsciousness at or when taken from the collision scene

Throughout this analysis, the acronym KSI is used to denote crashes where someone was killed or severely injured.

KSI Crash Summary

In the six-year period, there were two crashes within Wheatland that resulted in severe injury; there were no fatalities. Both crashes involved only vehicles, with no pedestrians or cyclists affected.

Figure 7.5
Crash Mode Share by Severity



- Vehicle-Only Crashes
- Bicycle-Involved Crashes
- Pedestrian-Involved Crashes

Figure 7.6: Wheatland KSI Crashes



Crashes by Crash Type

Overall, rear-end crashes were the most common type of crashes in Wheatland, making up 62 percent of all crashes resulting in injury. Most of Wheatland’s crashes occurred on SR 65, the main corridor in town. Rear-end crashes were most common approaching Main Street, as the speed limit changes from 55 MPH to 35 MPH.

Crashes by Primary Crash Factor

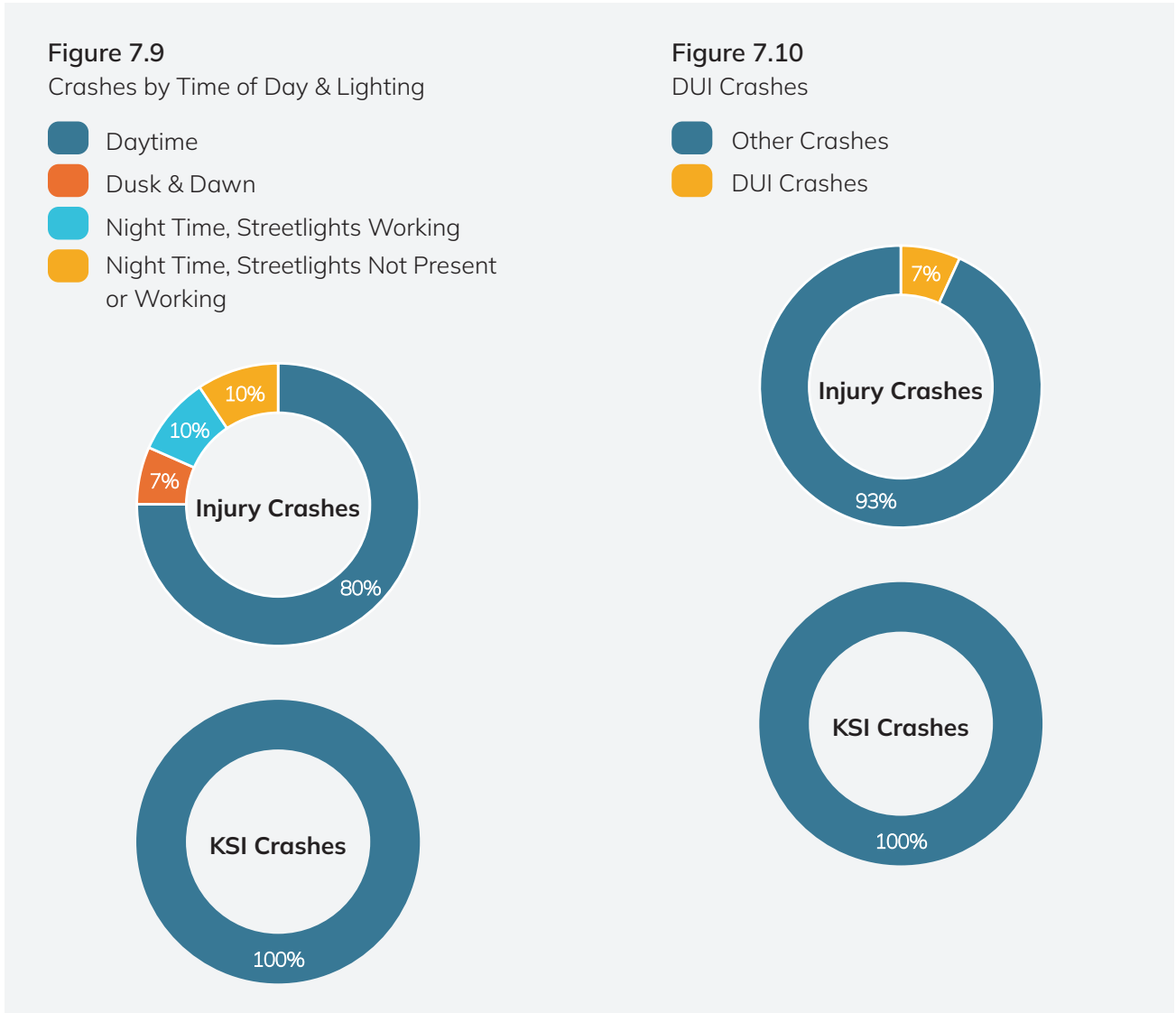
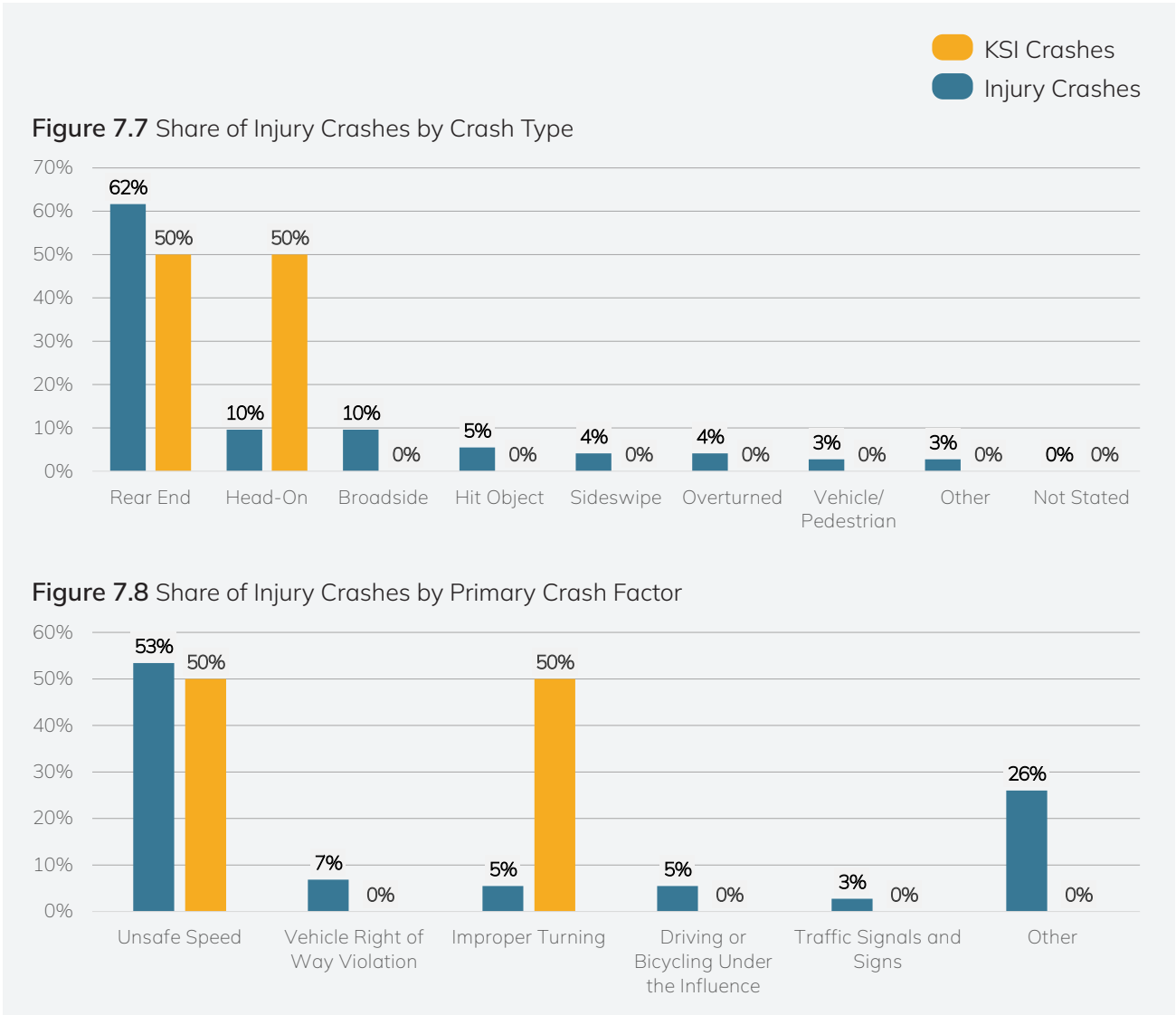
Unsafe speed (53 percent) was the leading reported primary cause of crashes in Wheatland. The remaining crashes were attributed to several other factors, such as vehicle right of way violation, improper turning, and driving under the influence, etc. Unsafe speed and improper turning were the causes behind one KSI crash each.

Crashes by Time of Day and Lighting Condition

Overall, most crashes occurred in the daylight (80 percent), 10 percent occurred in the dark where streetlight was present, and 10 percent happened in the dark with no lighting. All crashes that took place under no lighting conditions occurred on SR 65, except for one at the Spenceville Road and Boyd Lane intersection. Both KSI crashes occurred in daylight.

Driving Under the Influence

7 percent of crashes (5 crashes) involved someone driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. No KSI crashes involved a DUI.



Safety Corridors

Safety corridors are the roadway segments within Wheatland that had the highest number of crashes resulting in severe injury or death (KSI) between 2018 and 2023. Priority safety corridors are the safety corridors that experienced the highest rate of KSI crashes, are adjacent to sensitive land uses, and have high potential for severe crashes and thus, should be prioritized for improvements.

The following is a list of Wheatland’s priority safety corridors as identified through a safety corridor systemic analysis, task force input, and community feedback. Figure 7.11 displays Wheatland’s network of safety corridors, which are shown in orange. Priority corridors are shown in red. Refer to **Appendix C** for a more detailed explanation of the safety corridor identification technical methodology.

- SR 65 beyond the city limits, from Dry Creek Levee Road to Bear River
- Main Street from SR 65 to Spenceville Road
- Spenceville Road from Main Street to east of McCurry Street

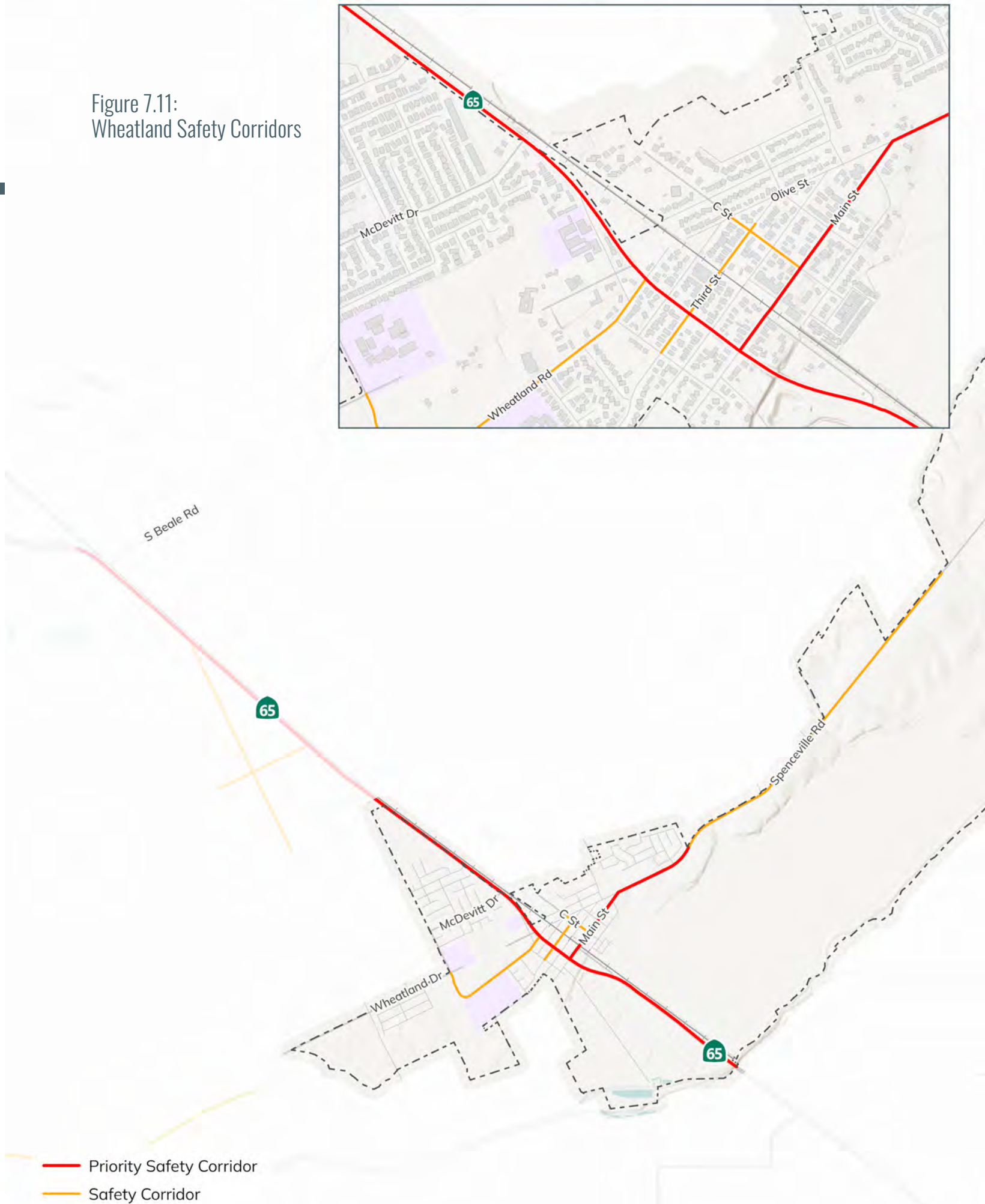
Priority Safety Corridors were identified to provide the list of locations for actionable next steps with additional study. Studies could include recommended engineering safety countermeasures with targeted improvements to address crash history or focused programs identified in the Action Plan chapter.

SR 65/Oakley Lane and SR 65/Dairy Road

Although these two intersections lie outside Wheatland’s city limits, they are included in Wheatland’s safety considerations due to significant safety concerns from Wheatland residents. Improvements at these sites are expected to enhance safety and mobility for the Wheatland community.

- SR 65 & Dairy Road
- SR 65 & Oakley Lane

Figure 7.11:
Wheatland Safety Corridors



Community Snapshot

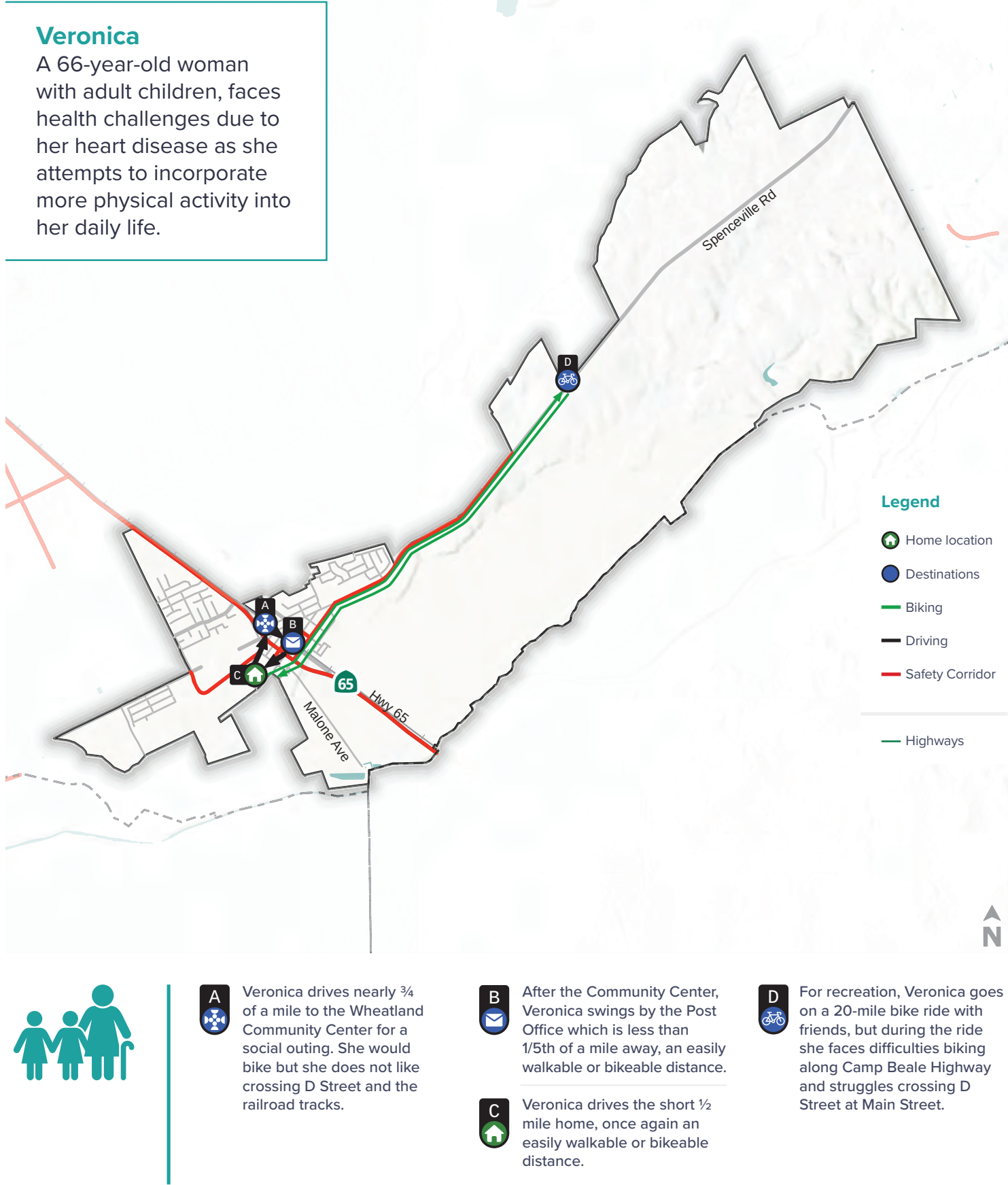
This community snapshot features Veronica, a fictional character created to illustrate the daily transportation challenges faced by a resident in Wheatland. The experiences of this character are based on census data as well as local lived experiences.



Wheatland is a small city where many destinations are within walking or biking distance. However, infrastructure challenges limit the feasibility and safety of active transportation. Veronica, a 66-year-old resident managing heart disease, is seeking to incorporate more physical activity into her daily routine. While walking and biking offer clear health benefits, she finds the current roadway conditions discouraging and unsafe, particularly due to the railroad tracks and lack of shoulders along Spenceville Road. Addressing these barriers is essential to supporting healthier, more active lifestyles for residents like Veronica. Figure 7.12 outlines the travel mode choices made by Veronica and challenges that come with them.

Although a majority of trips are made by car (75 percent), a significant portion still travel by foot (18 percent). This mode share should be given greater consideration when planning and implementing safety improvements.

Figure 7.12: Wheatland Community Snapshot



Focus Areas

Six focus areas were identified through a systemic analysis of crash records to represent the most significant patterns behind injury crashes—and especially KSI crashes—in the region. These focus areas are identified with the letters “A” through “F” and each one is applicable to one, several, or all of the communities covered by this RSAP. Following each crash focus area is a set of potential countermeasures that should be considered for implementation to improve safety outcomes. **Appendix D** contains a more detailed summary of each countermeasure.

Wheatland’s traffic safety challenges can be understood through a subset of these focus areas:



FOCUS AREA A

Crashes on State Highways Serving as Main Streets



FOCUS AREA B

Right-of-Way Issues at Intersections



FOCUS AREA D

Crashes Involving People Walking and Biking

Some of these focus areas pertain to the crashes just outside Wheatland’s northern city limits, particularly where Oakley Lane and Dairy Road intersect Highway 65. These locations remain significant safety concerns for Wheatland residents.

FOCUS AREA A

Crashes on State Highways Serving as Main Streets



State Route 65 is a north-south corridor that serves as a connector for local traffic as well as those passing through Wheatland to get to other parts of the region. This arterial highway bisects the city and is a road residents must cross to get to destinations from one side of town to the other. Between 2018 and 2023, 33 of 73 crashes within Wheatland occurred along the segment of State Route 65 that serves as a main street.

Crossing SR 65 presents significant challenges for people walking, biking, and driving due to limited and inadequate infrastructure. There are few signalized intersections, so people needing to cross SR 65 at non-signalized intersections

have to contend with the high-speed vehicles with little traffic control. Crosswalks only exist at the two signalized intersections along SR 65 in the downtown core, and sidewalks are narrow and nonexistent at some locations along and around the highway, making it a hostile experience for people traveling on foot. In addition, the railroad tracks adjacent to SR 65 present an uncomfortable crossing experience for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The combination of high-speed traffic and more active downtown environment can worsen the likelihood and severity of conflicts. In particular, crashes were more common in transition zones,



Wheatland

areas near the edge of a town or city where drivers are moving from higher-speed rural or highway environments into lower-speed urban settings.

Most of the crashes in this focus area (26 out of the 33 crashes) occurred in transition zones, with 13 crashes (50 percent) primarily caused by unsafe speed and 18 crashes (69 percent) that resulted in rear end crashes. Clusters of these transition zone crashes occurred between McDevitt Drive and the Dry Creek

Levee Road on the northern end of the city, and between Main Street and State Street at the southern end.

The following countermeasures can improve safety along highway main streets by slowing vehicle speeds and reducing conflict points between drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Treatments like bike lanes, sidewalks, medians, and lighting enhance visibility and protection for vulnerable users, while speed management and intersection controls help lower the likelihood and severity of crashes.

Potential Countermeasures

- 

Buffered Bike Lanes
- 

All-Way Stop Control
- 

Traffic Signal
- 

Slow Turn Wedge
- 

Road Diet
- 

Speed Feedback Sign
- 

Street Lighting
- 

All-Red Signal Time
- 

Retroreflective Tape on Signals
- 

Separated Bikeways
- 

Add Sidewalk
- 

Roundabout
- 

Advance Stop Bar
- 

Raised Median
- 

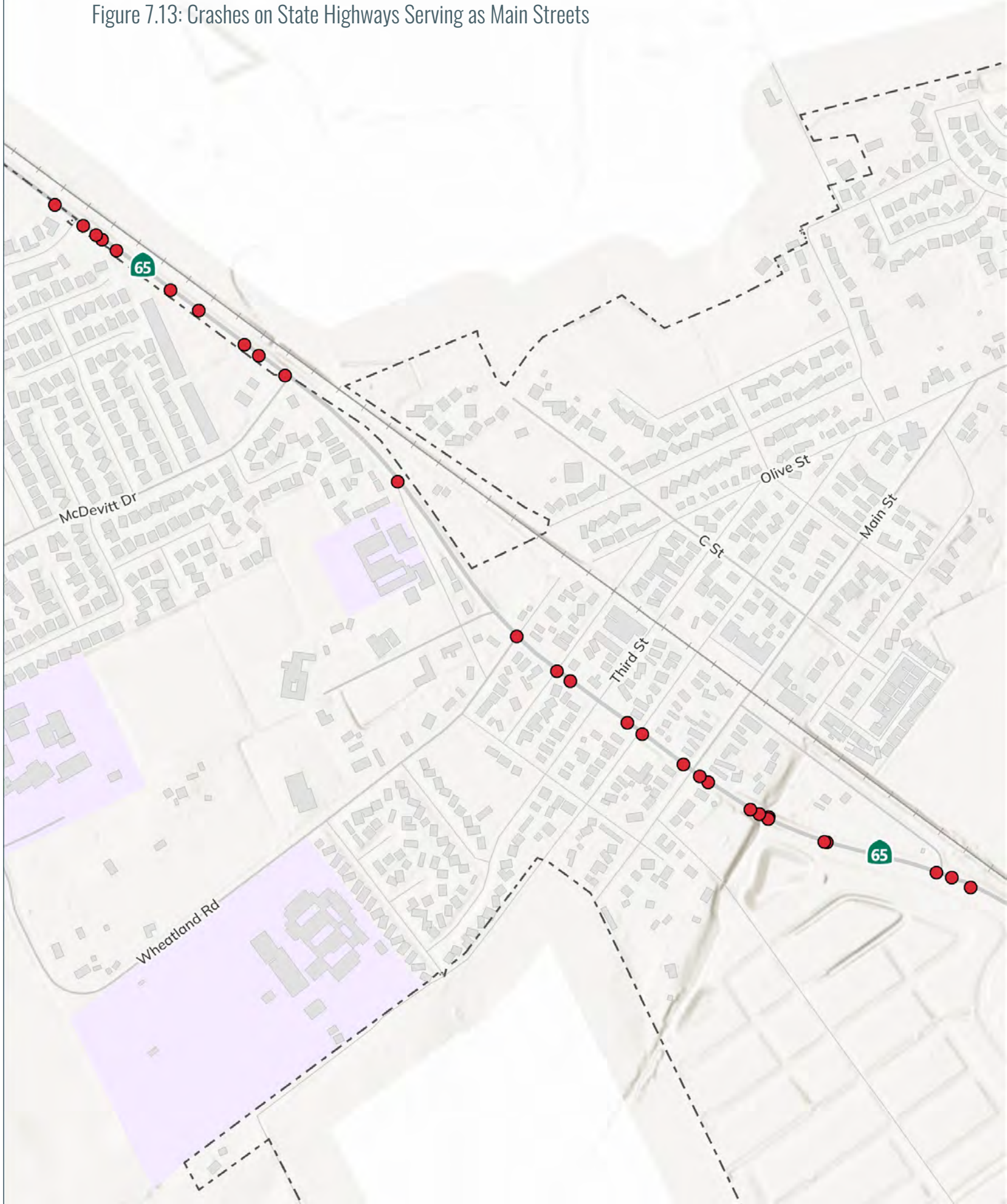
Lane Narrowing
- 

Speed Limit Reduction
- 

Flashing Yellow Turn Phase
- 

Speed Sensitive Rest in Red Signal

Figure 7.13: Crashes on State Highways Serving as Main Streets





FOCUS AREA B

Right-of-Way Issues at Intersections

INJURY CRASH STATISTICS

6 (8%)

Total Injury Crashes

0 (0%)

KSI Crashes

In Wheatland, right-of-way violations at intersections led to six crashes during the study period, with four of them resulting in broadside crashes. The leading causes were drivers failing to yield to vehicles with the right-of-way when making left turns and neglecting to stop at stop signs.

Half of the crashes occurred when at-fault parties from side streets attempted left turns onto the main road, misjudging the time available to complete the maneuver safely; these took place at Wheatland Road & Oakley Lane, State Route 65 & 2nd Street, and SR 65 & State Street intersections. The two crashes that occurred at the E St & 3rd St and C St & 4th Street ensued when at-fault parties proceeded straight through the all-way stop intersections without stopping.

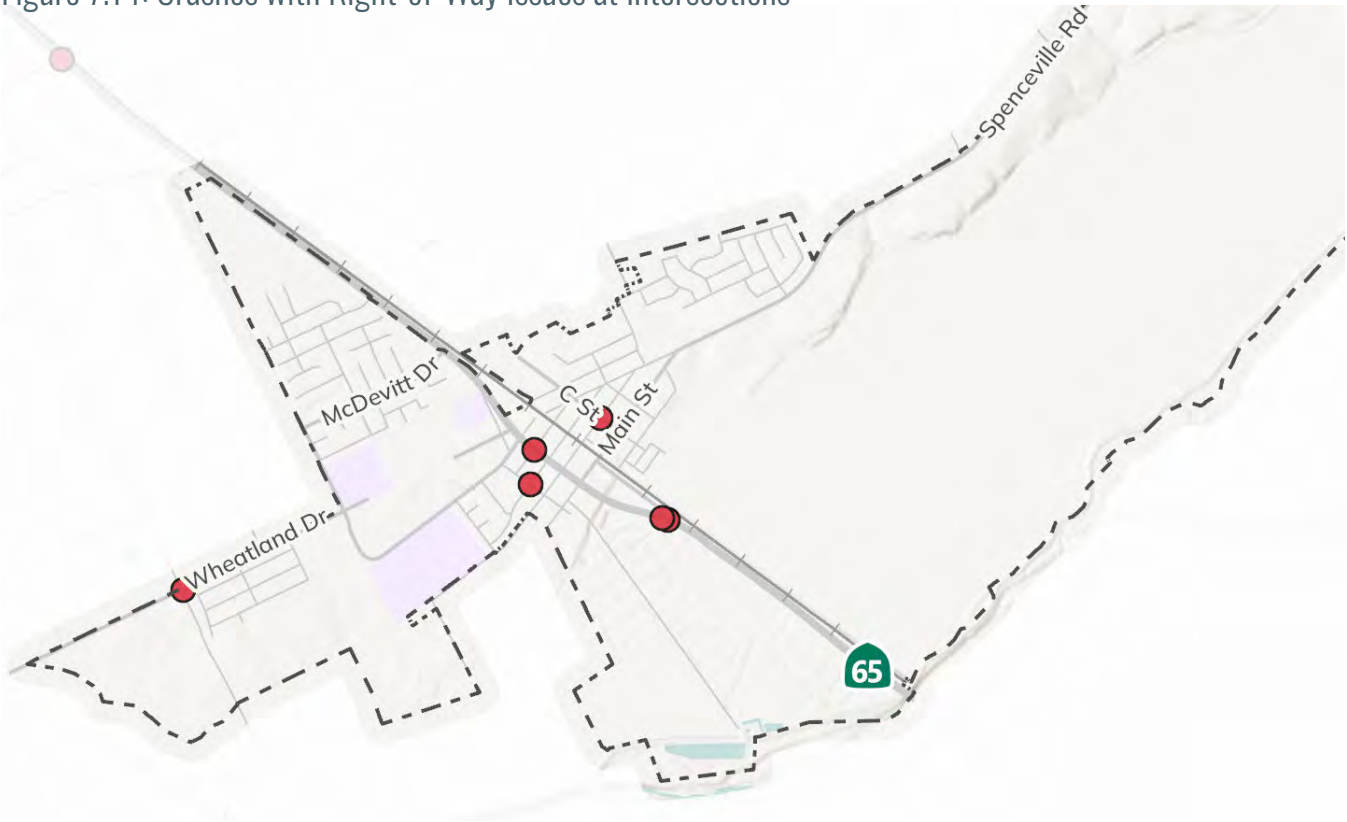
SR 65/Oakley Lane and SR 65/Dairy Road

In addition to the six crashes that occurred within city limits, there were **four** crashes attributed to right-of-way violations where Oakley Lane and Dairy Road intersect SR 65, just outside of the city. Two of them resulted in KSI broadside crashes after the at-fault parties failed to yield when making left turns onto SR 65. Due to the severity of crash outcomes and ongoing community concerns, these locations warrant consideration for targeted safety improvements by the county.

The following countermeasures can reduce crash risks and severity by making intersections more predictable and managing speed. Intersection controls such as roundabouts and protected left turns clarify priority, and treatments such as lane narrowing and intersection tightening further slow vehicles down, reducing impact upon collision.



Figure 7.14: Crashes with Right-of-Way Issues at Intersections



Potential Countermeasures



Roundabout



Neighborhood Traffic Circle



Slow Turn Wedge



Centerline Hardening



Through Bike Lane at Intersection



Flashing Yellow Turn Phase



Traffic Signal



Intersection Reconstruction and Tightening



Advance Stop Bar



Raised Median



Protected Left Turns



All-Red Signal Time



FOCUS AREA D

Crashes Involving People Walking and Biking

INJURY CRASH STATISTICS

3 (4%)

Total Crashes

0 (0%)

KSI Crashes

Pedestrians and bicyclists are among the most vulnerable users of our roadways, often navigating environments not designed with their safety in mind. In Wheatland, three crashes occurred that involved a pedestrian or bicyclist.

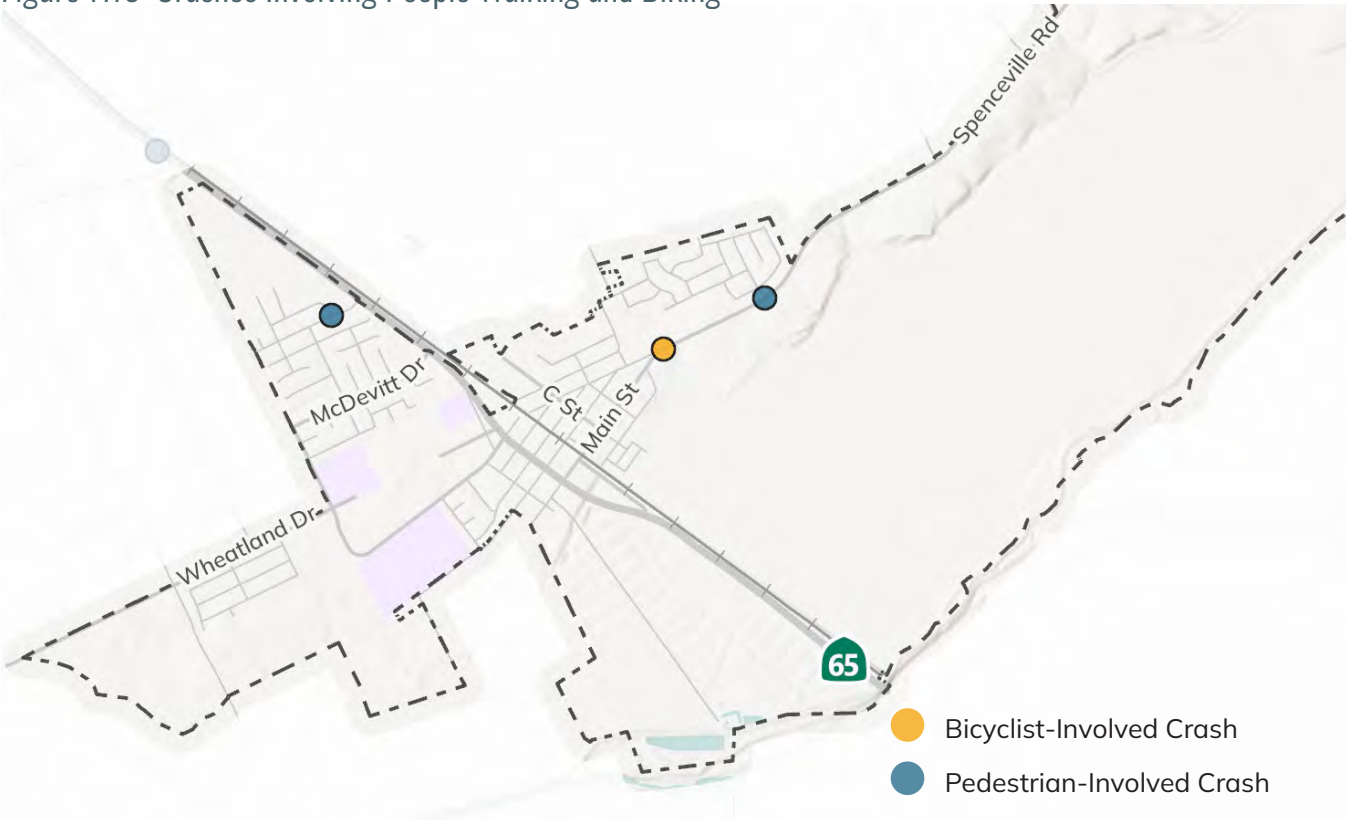
Two of the incidents occurred along Spenceville Road, a two-lane corridor that is generally unwelcoming to those traveling on foot or by bicycle, with narrow shoulders and few pedestrian facilities. One crash took place at the intersection with McCurry Street, where a pedestrian was struck while attempting to cross the wide side street. The second crash on Spenceville Road involved a bicyclist near Olive Street, who was sideswiped while making a left turn, a maneuver made especially

hazardous by the absence of protected turning space and the speed of surrounding traffic. The third incident occurred at the intersection of Evergreen Drive and Rose Avenue, where a pedestrian was hit by a northbound vehicle while attempting a right turn from the east leg of the intersection.

The following countermeasures help make vulnerable users more visible and provide them with dedicated, protected space: high-visibility crosswalks and signal enhancements such as pedestrian hybrid beacons help pedestrians cross safely by reducing exposure time and improving driver awareness. For bicyclists, buffered bike lanes and separated bikeways create safer conditions for turning and through movements, especially along corridors like Spenceville Road.



Figure 7.15: Crashes Involving People Walking and Biking



Potential Countermeasures



Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon



High-Visibility Crosswalk



Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon



Leading Pedestrian Interval and Pedestrian Recall



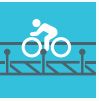
Co-Locate Bus Stops and Pedestrian Crossings



Curb Extensions



Shared-Use Path



Separated Bikeway



Buffered Bike Lanes



Green Conflict Striping

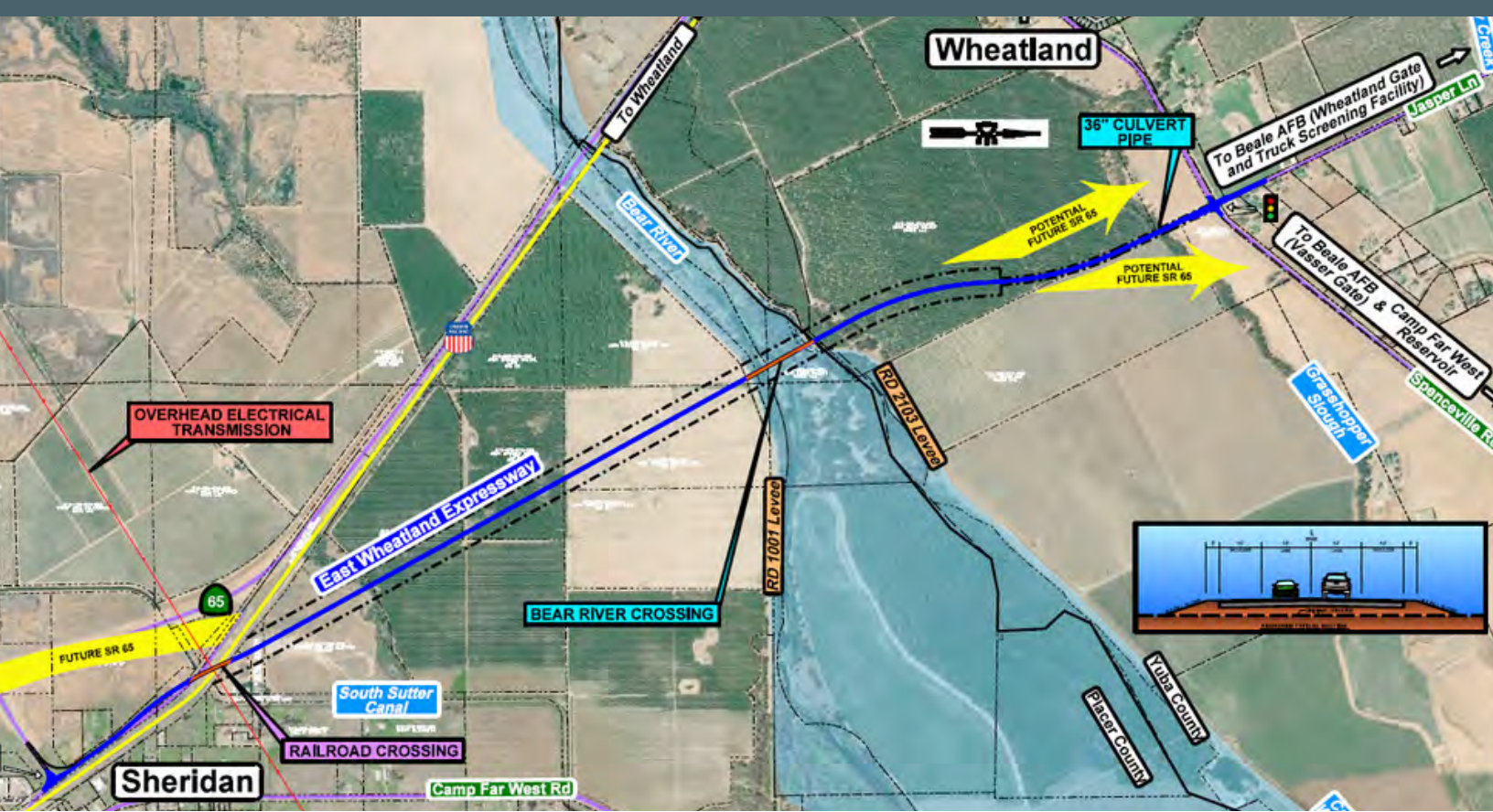


Bike Lane



Add Sidewalk

East Wheatland Expressway



The East Wheatland Expressway will be a new roadway that provides an alternative to SR 65 to people wanting to reach local destinations such as Beale Air Force Base, industrial facilities, and Camp Far West. The expressway would split off from SR 65 north of the town of Sheridan, extending north to Spenceville Road

and connecting to Jasper Lane just east of Wheatland. It would require a new bridge over the Bear River. The proposed project would address ongoing issues with traffic congestion on SR 65 through downtown Wheatland, thus likely decreasing collision likelihood in downtown.

Once completed, the East Wheatland Expressway will divert traffic from State Route 65 through Wheatland. With reduced traffic on SR 65, more safety countermeasures recommended in this plan can be implemented downtown.

