

Safe Routes to School Action Plan – Kamiah, Idaho



Background

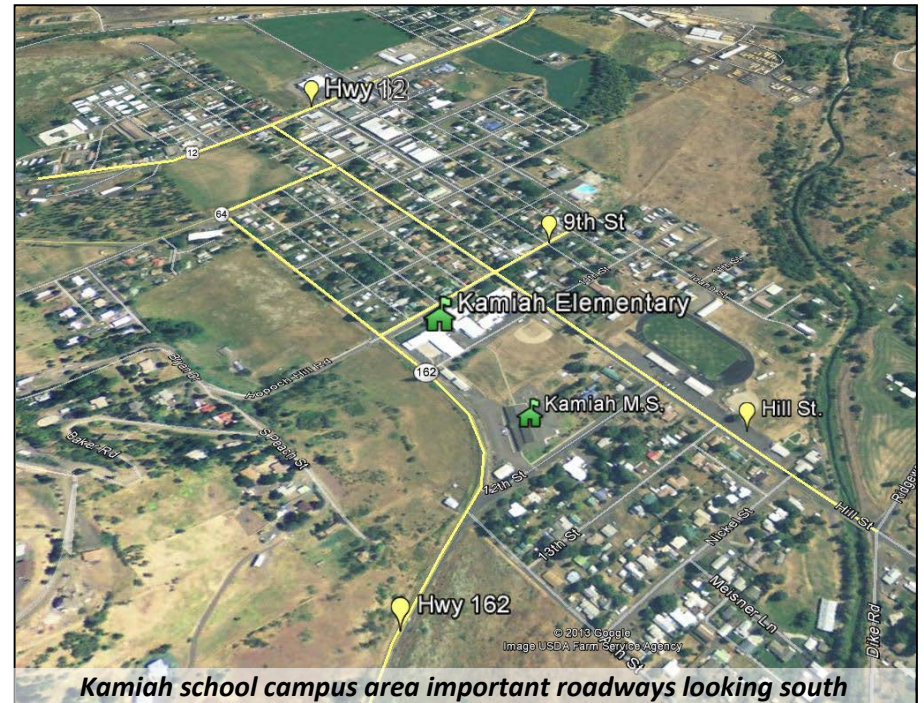
The city of Kamiah, Idaho is home to nearly 1,300 people and lies on the edge of the Clearwater River on the eastern side of Lewis County. With an extensive history, including being a sacred site and seasonal home to the Nez Perce tribe, and scenery to rival anywhere in the state of Idaho, Kamiah is a proud community eager to improve walking and bicycling conditions for area students.



Aerial view of Kamiah, ID and Clearwater River looking north

Two schools, Kamiah Elementary and Kamiah Middle School, were the focus of the Safe Routes to School project. The two campuses are southwest of downtown Kamiah adjacent to the high school and share a grass area and ball field and two common roads: Highway 162 on the west and Hill Street on the east. Highway 162 is a rural route with two travel lanes and without a paved shoulder, bicycle facilities or sidewalks. Hill Street spans the length of Kamiah north/south, changing from a narrow rural section with no shoulder or sidewalk at the north; to wider without sidewalk; to urban with curb/gutter sidewalk/on-street parking; to rural again on the south after it crosses Highway 12.

The elementary school fronts 9th Street which has intermittent sidewalks and curb, no bicycle facilities and few pavement markings. A new pick-up and drop-off was recently instituted that directs parents to 9th Street



Kamiah school campus area important roadways looking south

utilizing a one-way pattern in the block in front of the school to reduce danger for students being dropped off. Maple St. creates a T-intersection on 9th between Highway 162 to Hill St. and there is front-in graveled parking in front of the schools from Highway 162 to Hill St. The area directly across from the intersection is cordoned off during drop-off and pick up times. There is a marked crosswalk on the west side of the Maple St. intersection, however the parents dropping off often form two lanes as they leave resulting in poor visibility of pedestrians by those parent cars. In addition the gravel area is potholed creating puddles.

Kamiah Middle School is accessible off 12th Street, a long single block, with sidewalk on the north along the school property only, and no bicycle facilities or paint markings. Pedestrians from the south walk in the street until they reach the sidewalk. Pick-up and drop-off takes place by driving into the parking lot from 12th St. to the front entrance and looping back out to 12th. Pedestrians from the north can use a pathway across the back of the campus.

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Infrastructure Recommendations

Hill Street is the most important local road connecting most of the residential areas of Kamiah with the local schools. The road should be a focus of Kamiah as it likely carries many of the walking and bicycling trips currently made, and that should continue to increase with various infrastructure improvements.

Hill Street, 5th St. (Highway 64) to 9th St.

1. Hill Street can be a street that is more “complete” simply by employing a paint scheme. Stripe a 7.5’ parking lane and 12’ travel lanes; in addition shared lane arrows should be used in accordance with AASHTO guidelines to give comfort to bicyclists and give motorists a reminder to expect bicyclists.
2. The section of Hill Street from 5th Street (Highway 64) to 9th Street has curb gutter and sidewalk on both sides along most of it. However, the sidewalk is in poor repair and there are no ADA ramps at the intersections. It is connected to nearly all in-town routes to the school. Segments need rebuilt and other segments may be able to be repaired. The city should determine a construction plan and may be able to design it in phases if necessary. We recommend that the city make this section the highest priority local sidewalk project and begin those repairs, replacements and addition of ADA ramps as soon as funding can be found.

Hill Street crossings at football field

3. Construct a crossing at 12th St. and another mid-block crossing across from the outfield fence. These crossings would connect the campuses to the football field. Two crossings should discourage crossing at unmarked locations. Besides providing pedestrians a safer and more orderly crossing this treatment should slow traffic coming down Hill St. from the south and give pedestrian movements greater predictability for drivers.

Hill Street south of 12th St. to Apple Lane

4. There are currently no pedestrian or bicycle facilities on this section. To optimize the existing pavement space, slow traffic and provide a designated area to both walk and bicycle, paint two 10’ lanes to the east of the pavement with a center stripe and fog lines on each edge. There will be left-over shoulder pavement on the west side of the fog line providing space for pedestrians. Place lane markers (turtles) along the

western shoulder fog line to provide enhanced safety. Continue the fog line on the eastern edge to the end of the football field parking lot. Begin this work with the resurfacing of Hill St, scheduled for next year. The long term recommendation is an eventual expansion of the roadway shoulders to provide walkways on both sides of the road.

Hill Street between US Highway 12 and 5th St. (Highway 64)

5. Work with ITD to reconstruct the two block segment (which has failing pavement) and pave the on-street parking. Stripe or mark the roadway for bicycle facilities either shared lane arrows or eventually bike lanes in accordance with AASHTO guidelines.

Hill Street (Highway 64) and US Highway 12

6. Work with ITD to install a crosswalk at this intersection. The treatment should include a rectangular rapid flash beacon, and appropriate signage. This is a vital crossing for residents north of US highway 12 and improvements should be timed to coincide with the repaving of the two blocks from 5th St./Hwy 64 as noted above.

9th Street and Maple St. crossing at Elementary School Entrance

7. The crosswalk landing accessing the school is in a degraded state. Fix the crosswalk landing area by filling potholes, reapplying gravel and grading. Also, move the strips that guide drivers back into the street away from the crosswalk area by 10’-15’ to remove the car/student conflict.



8. The sidewalk on the north side of 9th Street between Hill St. and Highway 162 has some segments in disrepair and some missing segments. We recommend repairing, completing ADA ramps at all corners and filling in the missing gaps on this sidewalk.

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Hopoch Hill and Hwy 162 (Pine Street)

9. This intersection is near the eastern edge of the elementary school and utilizes a crossing guard to help kids cross. However, the crosswalk landing area on the southwestern corner gives little space to turn and orient students towards the north side of Hopoch Hill to utilize the existing sidewalk. Consider adding a safe landing area on the southwest corner and repaint both cross walks. This will have to be coordinated with ITD as the intersection is a state highway.
10. Additionally, there is only one sign marking the crosswalk from both directions, and no forward warning signs to indicate the crosswalk presence or telling drivers they are entering a school zone. Increase the profile of the crosswalk signage by working with ITD to add a solar-powered flasher denoting school zone on Highway 162.

12th Street behind Middle School

11. 12th St. can be utilized to a greater extent to improve safety for walkers and bicyclists immediately in front of the Middle School entrance. Currently, the drop-off and pick up-activities take place at the school entrance in the parking lot of the school which is up a slight hill and has a driveway access off of 12th Street. However, 12th Street has both adequate sidewalks on the street and leading to the school entrance, and a long uninterrupted shoulder on the north side making it ideal as an new drop-off/pick-up location. We recommend moving drop-off and pick-up on-street on 12th St. south of the school building. This allows the parking lot that is currently shared with motorists to be used exclusively by students on foot and bike and will result in a safer and healthier overall space. The city or school district may need to stripe the shoulder adjacent to the sidewalk on 12th to create the drop-off and pick-up area.

New drop-off/pick-up area at the Middle School



School site recommendations:

12. Either independently or with the city, work to clean up the adjacent sidewalks to help define the school area.
13. Improve, add and change the location of the bike parking. Move this to a more high visibility area, with easier access for users.

Main Street

Main Street is the most complete street in town currently. It has complete sidewalks for its entire length. Downtown merchants use sandwich board signs in the middle of Main Street to advertise; they do a great job calming traffic and helping the economy.

14. Some intersections on Main St. need ADA improvements and those should be completed as funding is available.
15. Main St could be striped with shared lane arrows, of sharrows, to remind motorists to watch for bicyclists and to tell bicyclists that they are welcome on Main St. This will encourage the many touring bicyclists to stop in town and will provide safety for students and others who are reaching the destinations located on Main St. by bike.



Idaho Street and 8th/Idaho intersection

Idaho Street is a north-south route in town that connects to the tribal recreation facility and the swimming pool.

16. The sidewalks on Idaho are intermittent and in poor repair. Repair and fill in the gaps on these sidewalks and install ADA curb ramps as funding becomes available or as development occurs.

Example of back-in diagonal parking



17. Idaho Street has plenty of width for bike lanes. It currently has a diagonal parking scheme (though the paint is long worn off.) Add bike lanes and change to back-in diagonal parking as backing out of the diagonal parking creates a hazard for bicyclists. Sharrows could also be used.

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18. To help facilitate students using Idaho for after school activities, consider a crosswalk at the intersection of 8th Street and Idaho Street, linking to the community pool.

US Highway 12 crossings

19. Highway 12 crossings in town should be improved with crosswalk markings, in-pavement pedestals and curb extensions. The Gateway plan for US Highway 12 should be implemented as opportunities arise, such as building the curb extensions called for with curb ramp funds.



constructed with adequate curb, gutter and sidewalks and applicable bicycle facilities. This would also enhance safety by removing a significant volume of vehicles and trucks now using the downtown and residential streets to travel through Kamiah.

Policy Recommendations

The consultants reviewed planning and policy for the city, tribe and school district.

City Recommendations

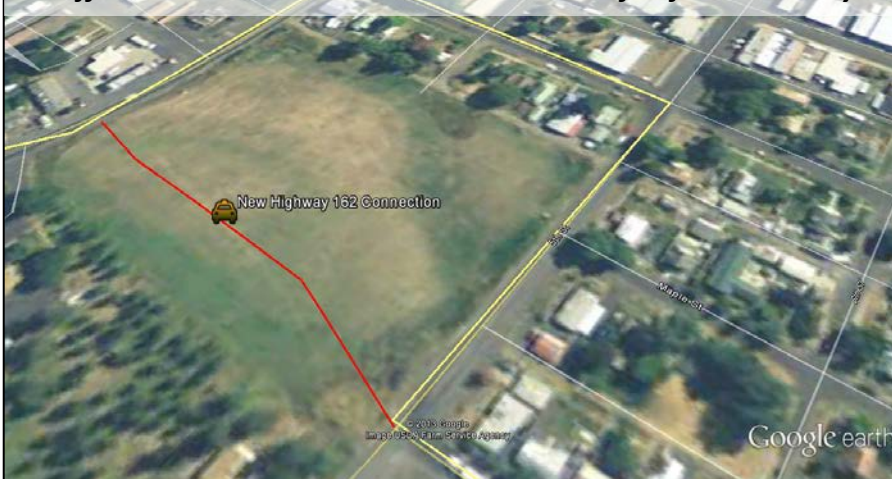
1. Consider updating zoning standards in downtown area with model mixed-use zone. This includes a variety of housing near the downtown core, with basic design standards to make sure that all buildings and uses remain compatible.
2. Limit cul-de-sacs except for reasons of topography. Consider a connectivity policy if development picks up inside the city limits that describes block lengths, limits cul-de-sac length and requires connections at regular intervals.
3. Review city policy on sidewalk maintenance. Enforce adopted policy to maintain sidewalks collaboratively with adjacent owners, prioritize fixing sidewalk repairs and gaps in plans and budgeting actions.
4. We recommend that the City of Kamiah and the Nez Perce Tribe initiate a collaborative process to plan for the development of vacant of tribal and trust lands within the city's core. Development on these lands will enhance the walkability of Kamiah by introducing housing and destinations within walking distance of many Kamiah residents and will fulfill the city's Comprehensive Plan Goals

Tribal Recommendations

To be most effective it is important that policies and processes be consistent between the city and tribe to the extent possible.

5. We make the same recommendations for the tribe to initiate a collaborative process with the city of Kamiah to plan for the development of vacant of tribal and trust lands within the city's core. Development on these lands will enhance the walkability of Kamiah by introducing housing and destinations within walking distance of many Kamiah residents.
6. Develop policies for new tribal housing that requires sidewalks and connectivity to surrounding uses.

A new connection to US Hwy 12 from Hwy 162/64 to increase safety and allow local traffic on Hill St. without conflict of highway traffic and trucks. This will also extend the life of the roadway.



Extend Highway 162/64 directly to US Highway 12

20. The city should work with ITD to extend the existing Highway 162 on a northerly alignment connecting with Highway 12 and eliminate the zigzag using Hill Street. Ensure that if built this new highway extension is

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7. Limit cul-de-sacs except for reasons of topography. Consider a connectivity policy that describes block lengths, limits cul-de-sac length and requires connections at regular intervals.
8. Require sidewalks in all new development.

School District Recommendations

1. Consider a general board policy promoting healthy living and regular physical activity;
2. School Wellness Policy - Recognize benefits of physical activity.
 - Support walking and biking to school as physical activity.
 - Recognize academic benefits for physically active students.
3. Support active transportation, Safe Routes to School Program when safe for students.

Joint City/Tribe/School District Recommendations

1. Develop policy and process to meet regularly, collaborate on facility planning and share facilities as a means to make most efficient use of tax dollars.

Non-Infrastructure Recommendations

Conditions Inventory, Community Clean-up Day, etc.

1. Keep conditions inventory up to date as improvements are completed.
2. Inform citizens of their responsibilities as property owners to ensure sidewalks are at least clear of overgrowth and debris.



This project was conducted by Idaho Smart Growth and Vitruvian Planning with support from the Idaho Transportation Department



3. Hold a spring clean-up day to uncover and clean-up existing sidewalks (utilize environmental club to help.) Use a pressure washer to clean the sidewalks and help create a new look and feel.

Surveys:

4. Use annual survey findings, possibly institute pedestrian and bicycle counts to continually help identify the locations for needed crossings on local streets. In addition surveys can inform the city where sharrows or other pavement markings may be useful on local streets as walking and bicycling rates increase.

Events/Other

5. Hold a Walk to School Day and annual Bike Rodeo to encourage walking and biking. The city and tribe should participate and support the event with public safety involvement such as emergency vehicle escorts and participation by tribal city and school district community leaders.
6. With school district support, the team should explore walking school buses in Kamiah to ensure that kids use designated routes and have an adult present to help at crossings, specifically if crossing Highway 12.

Note: information about holding events is included in the resources link.



Bike Rodeo at Eastside Elementary School, Mountain Home, ID.

Resources: Model and sample policies and other tools are available at: <http://www.idahosmartgrowth.org/index.php/resources/> – go to Best Practices