

2023

OWYHEE COUNTY Demographic Analysis



COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETING | JUNE 20, 2023
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Demographics

Introduction

Situated in the southwestern region of Idaho, Owyhee County stands as the second-largest county in terms of area within the state, spanning 4,926,841 acres. The County predominantly consists of State or Federal lands, comprising approximately 88.1% of its total area, while privately owned parcels amount to 587,080 acres. Owyhee's western border neighbors Oregon, while Nevada lies to the south, and the Snake River serves as its distinct northern boundary.

Population

Owyhee County has experienced a gradual and inconsistent growth in its population over the past few decades, according to the U.S. Census Bureau data obtained through (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Via TidyCensus, 2023) in 2023. Between 2010 and 2020, the county saw an increase of 387 individuals, representing a growth rate of 3.4%. As of 2021, the estimated population reached 12,336 people (Census Bureau PEP, 2023), indicating a 3.6% increase. However, alternative sources like the Census Bureau's American Community Survey suggest a net loss in population.

Among Idaho's 44 counties, Owyhee County ranks as the 27th most populous. In terms of growth rate during the previous decade, it stands as the 27th fastest-growing county by percentage and 28th in terms of total population change. In comparison, only seven counties in Idaho experienced a decrease in population since the 2010 decennial census.

Table: Decennial Census Population Table: Decennial Census Population

Year	Owyhee County	Change Over Previous	Owyhee County % Change	Year Over Year % Change
1980	8,272	-	-	-
1990	8,392	120	1.5%	0.1%
2000	10,644	2,252	26.8%	2.7%
2010	11,526	882	8.3%	0.8%
2020	11,913	387	3.4%	0.3%
Total Change	3,641		-	
Recent Change	387		5.8%	
Average Change	10,619		10.0%	

Between 1990 and 2000, Owyhee County witnessed its largest population surge, with an addition of 2,252 individuals to the area. While specific factors contributing to this above-average growth in the county were not identified, similar growth trends were observed in other parts of Idaho during that period.

Owyhee County maintains about an equal distribution of males and females, with males constituting 52.2% of the population and females comprising 47.8%. The median age in the county is 40.0, experiencing a 13.3% increase since 2010 when it stood at 35.3. The median age for males is 38.7, while for females it is 41.2. Like many other regions in the United States, Owyhee County is undergoing an aging population shift. The 65 and older age group has witnessed a 37.3% increase since 2010 and now represents 17.8% of the total population.

Figure: Population Area by Census Blocks

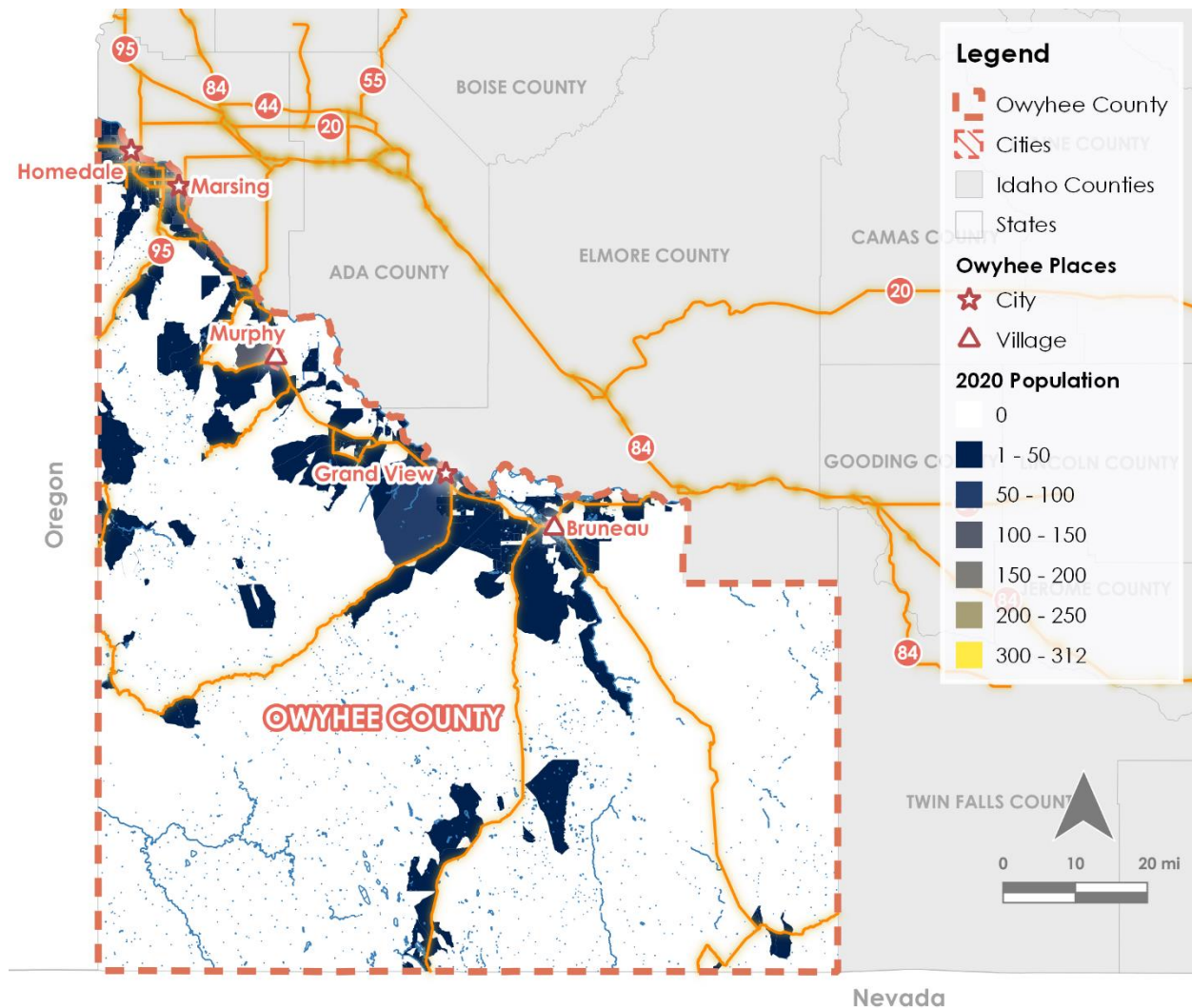


Figure: Population Area by Census Blocks – Homedale and Marsing Focus

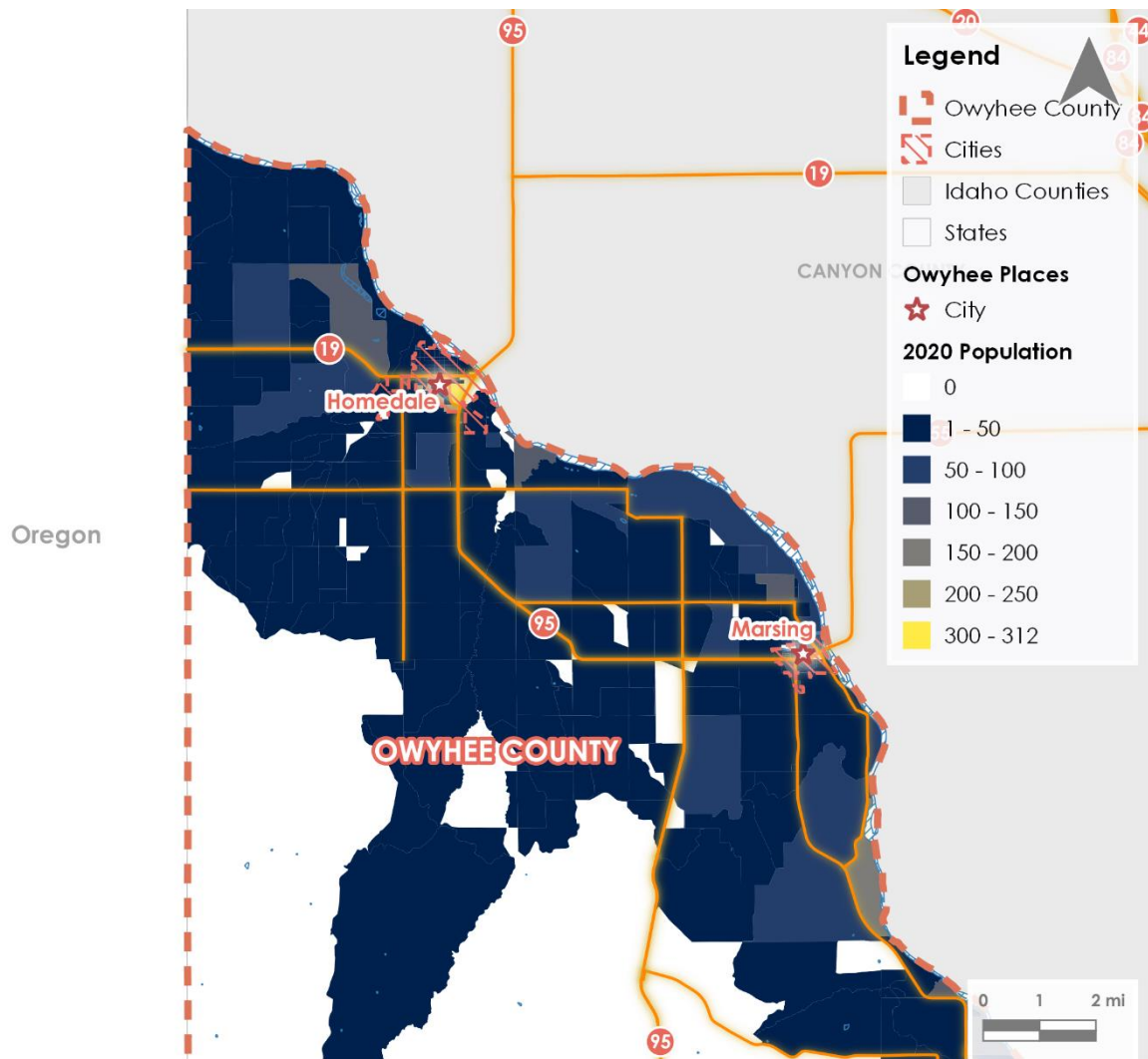
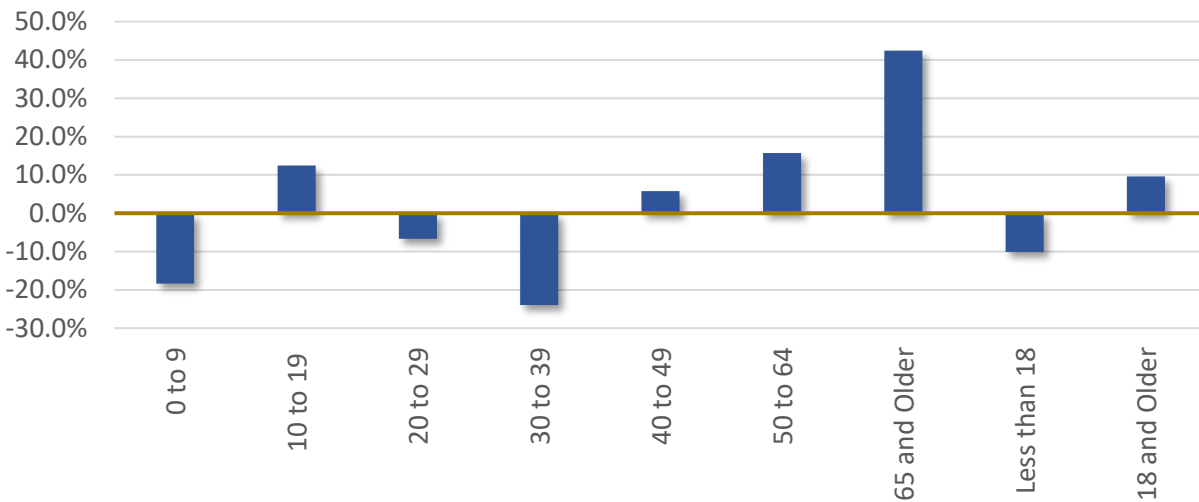


Figure: % Change in Age Groups, 2010 to 2021



Note: See Appendix for complete list of American Community Survey Values.

Forecast

To forecast the population of Owyhee County, historical growth serves as a foundation, which is then adjusted to accommodate other factors. Since 1980, the average decennial growth rate has been 10.0%, while a more recent average of 5.8% has been observed. Although the rate of growth has declined in the past few decades, both in terms of percentage and magnitude, the latest population estimate from the Census PEP program indicates a year-over-year increase. Therefore, the population estimate for 2021 (12,336) is utilized instead of 2020 values when calculating recent and historical averages. Recent averages are employed for the first decade of the forecast year before transitioning to historical averages, accounting for the changes in 2021.

Based on these considerations, the projected baseline population forecast for Owyhee County is as follows: 12,825 people in 2030, representing a 7.7% change, and 14,223 people in 2040, indicating a 10.9% change from the previous projection. The long-range baseline (mid) forecast for 2060 is 17,943 people.

Table: Historical and Future Population Projection

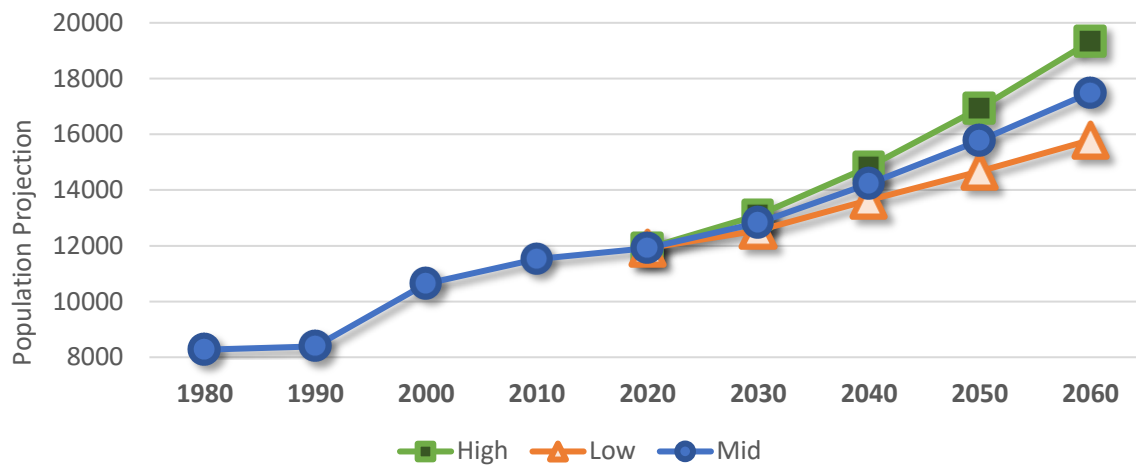


Table: Population Forecast

Year	Low Forecast		Mid Forecast		High Forecast	
	Low Forecast	Low % Change	Mid Forecast	Mid % Change	High Forecast	High % Change
2020	11,913	7.7%	11,913	7.7%	11,913	7.7%
2030	12,552	5.4%	12,825	7.7%	13,099	10.0%
2040	13,631	8.6%	14,223	10.9%	14,827	13.2%
2050	14,671	7.6%	15,773	10.9%	16,929	14.2%
2060	15,791	7.6%	17,493	10.9%	19,327	14.2%

Note: 2030 values reflect change use of the 2021 population estimate.

Accurate population forecasting relies not only on historical trends but also on various external factors, including land availability, social and market influences, changes in state and local policies, and crucially, the presence of essential services such as sewer and utilities. It is essential to regularly update and maintain the forecasting process to account for infrastructure developments and regulatory changes over time to ensure calculations and forecasts remain current and correct.

Considering the current state of services, land ownership, and the overall development readiness of both the cities and the county, the Low Forecast may be a more realistic projection. Accordingly, for 2030 and 2040, the Low Forecast estimates a population of 12,552 people (reflecting a 5.4% increase) and 13,631 people (representing an 8.6% increase), respectively. These figures are lower than the growth rates observed in previous decades, but the improvement of services within the cities could potentially accommodate significant additional growth.

During discussions with County staff, it became evident that Owyhee County is facing the challenge of accommodating transient populations, which has put a strain on

existing services. While addressing this challenge is important, it is worth noting that the population forecast presented in this report does not consider this population group.

Housing

Existing

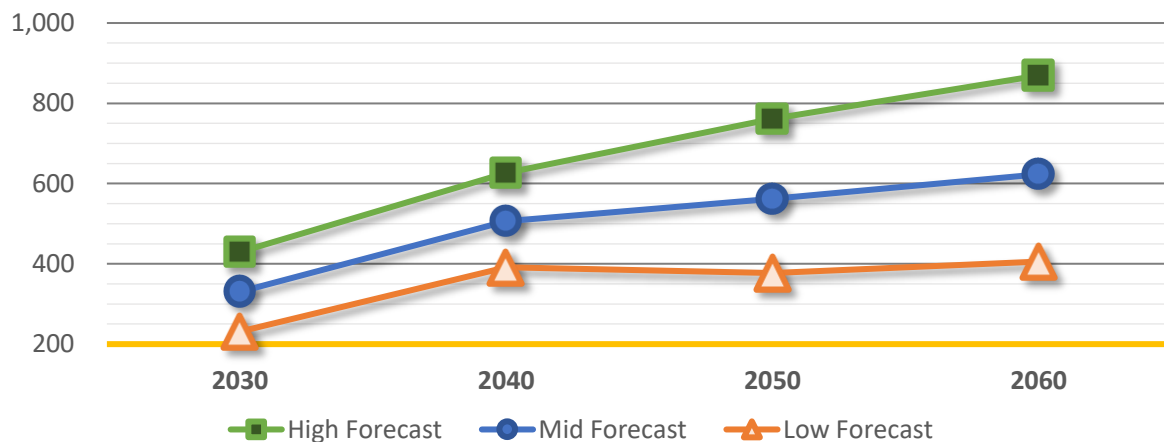
- Based on the Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), it is reported that 71.0% (3,004) of housing units in Owyhee County are occupied, with 29.0% (1,228) being renter-occupied. The data indicates a general trend towards an increasing number of owner-occupied homes since 2010, although the progression has been inconsistent. While the current number of occupied homes in Owyhee County likely exceeds 4,232, this owner-versus-renter ratio is likely accurate and valuable for understanding the housing needs of the local workforce.
- The ACS data from the previous decade suggests a growing influx of more affluent residents into Owyhee County, which may potentially impact land and housing prices beyond the effects of inflation, material costs, and labor changes. Several trends observed in the ACS data support this notion:
 - Notable aging of the overall population.
 - Significant increases in household income.
 - Substantial changes in educational attainment.
 - These trends collectively indicate a shifting demographic landscape in the county, possibly influenced by the migration of more affluent individuals, which could have implications for the local real estate market.

Projections

Ensuring adequate housing in Owyhee County involves addressing not only the housing needs of current residents and natural population growth but also accommodating the anticipated influx of future individuals to the area. Failing to accommodate migration in regions with appealing natural features or attractions often leads to escalated land and housing prices, making it challenging for existing residents to find affordable housing.

The following chart presents a housing forecast based on the earlier population projections. This forecast relies on the County's existing average of 2.76 people per household. Across many areas of the country, there is a trend toward smaller households with fewer births, longer lifespans for aging adults who remain in their homes, and couples waiting longer to have children. However, there are also segments of the population experiencing the opposite trend, with an increase in the number of children and larger household sizes due to the inclusion of non-related members aiming to reduce costs.

Figure: Housing Forecast, Additional Need



The housing demand discussed encompasses the entire county and can be met through a combination of market-driven development, expanded construction of multi-family housing, and government-supported housing programs. These initiatives can be implemented within the county itself or within the cities and villages that constitute Owyhee County. By utilizing these approaches, the housing needs of the population can be effectively addressed.

Education

Based on the Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey (ACS), there have been notable changes in educational attainment since 2010. The data reveals increases in both the total count and percentage of individuals with some college experience, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of individuals with less than a high school degree. The only category that has seen a decrease in its percentage is individuals with a high school degree as their highest level of education, without any additional college experience.

Figure: Changes to Educational Attainment

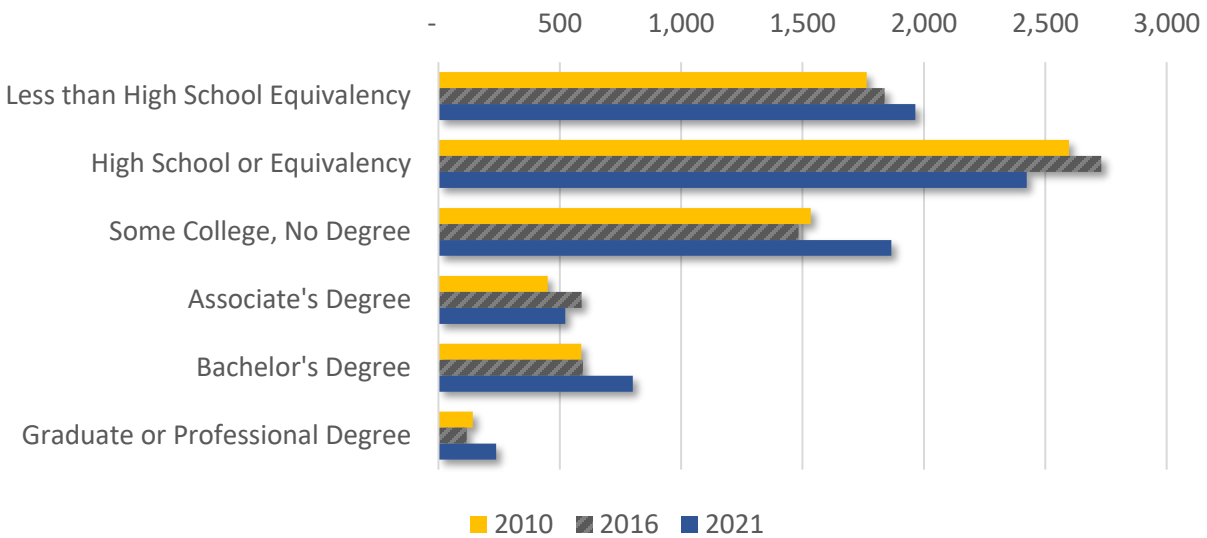
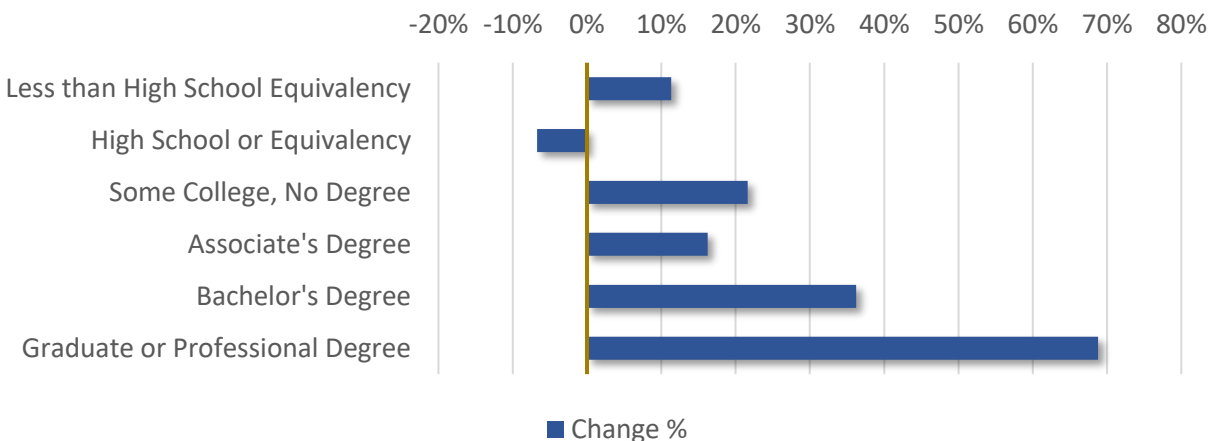


Figure: % Change to Educational Attainment



Workforce and Economic Activity

The American Community Survey (ACS) data from the Census Bureau offers valuable insights into economic activity by examining shifts in the workforce. This workforce data provides average figures and tracks changes over time, allowing us to observe trends. However, it's important to note that the actual values for any specific year may vary significantly. The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) data provides some indicators that help to indicate economic activity by exploring changes to the workforce (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). This workforce data represents averages and changes over time. Actual values for any given year may vary significantly.

Table: Owyhee County, ACS Changes in Labor Force

Workforce	2011	2016	2021	Change 2016 2011	Change 2021- 2016	Aver. 5-Year Change	Change 2021 2011	2021 to 2011 % Change
Population 16+	8,458	8,664	9,158	206	494	350	700	8.3%
Not in labor force	3,549	3,729	3,789	180	60	120	240	6.8%
Civilian labor force	4,909	4,916	3,789	7	-1,127	-560	-1,120	-22.8%
Unemployment Rate	10.2%	8.8%	2.9%	1.4%	-5.9%	-3.7%	-7.3%	-71.6%

For contrast, the following 5-year data is from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Via TidyCensus, 2023).

Table: Owyhee County, BLS Labor Force Data

year	Month	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2022	January	5,527	5,274	253	4.6
2021	January	5,457	5,111	346	6.3
2020	January	5,383	5,121	262	4.9
2019	January	5,233	4,947	286	5.5
2018	January	5,214	4,909	305	5.8

The following industry groups reflect the employed workforce in Owyhee County during the same periods as indicated in the Owyhee County Workforce table. Utilizing ACS data provides a comprehensive perspective on this data, as it encompasses all types of employment, not just covered employment (which excludes individuals without employment insurance and often includes part-time and seasonal workers). This aspect sets it apart from other datasets, making ACS a valuable source. It is important to note that the workforce data represents individuals residing in Owyhee County. (U.S. Census Bureau, Via TidyCensus, 2023)

When examining the industries as a percentage of the total workforce over the years, there have been minimal changes. However, several industries have demonstrated significant growth in terms of the total number of workers. Wholesale trade, professional services, and other services have approached or even exceeded doubling in size, reflecting their notable expansion.

Table: Owyhee County, ACS Workforce Industries

Workforce	2010	2021	% Change by Total	2010 % of Total	2021 % of Total	% Change
Ag, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	865	1,171	35.4%	19.4%	22.5%	3.1%
Construction	561	599	6.8%	12.6%	11.5%	-1.1%
Manufacturing	401	383	-4.5%	9.0%	7.4%	-1.7%
Wholesale trade	71	174	145.1%	1.6%	3.3%	1.7%
Retail trade	367	391	6.5%	8.3%	7.5%	-0.7%
Transp and Warehousing	282	252	-10.6%	6.3%	4.8%	-1.5%
Information	45	35	-22.2%	1.0%	0.7%	-0.3%
Finance and ins, and real estate, and rental and leasing	186	205	10.2%	4.2%	3.9%	-0.2%
Professional	131	258	96.9%	2.9%	5.0%	2.0%
Education and Social Services	877	827	-5.7%	19.7%	15.9%	-3.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Food	252	377	49.6%	5.7%	7.2%	1.6%
Other Services	147	283	92.5%	3.3%	5.4%	2.1%
Public administration	263	247	-6.1%	5.9%	4.7%	-1.2%
Total Workforce	4,448	5,202		100.0%	100.0%	

Summary

While Owyhee County is not experiencing the same level of sustained population growth and new construction as its neighboring counties to the north, there are signs of an increase. Despite fluctuations in the labor force, there has been significant growth in educational attainment over a 15-year period, particularly in higher education, indicating a possible influx of individuals from outside the county. The county is also likely attracting new residents who are seeking to escape the rising housing prices in the Treasure Valley or being forced out due to affordability issues.

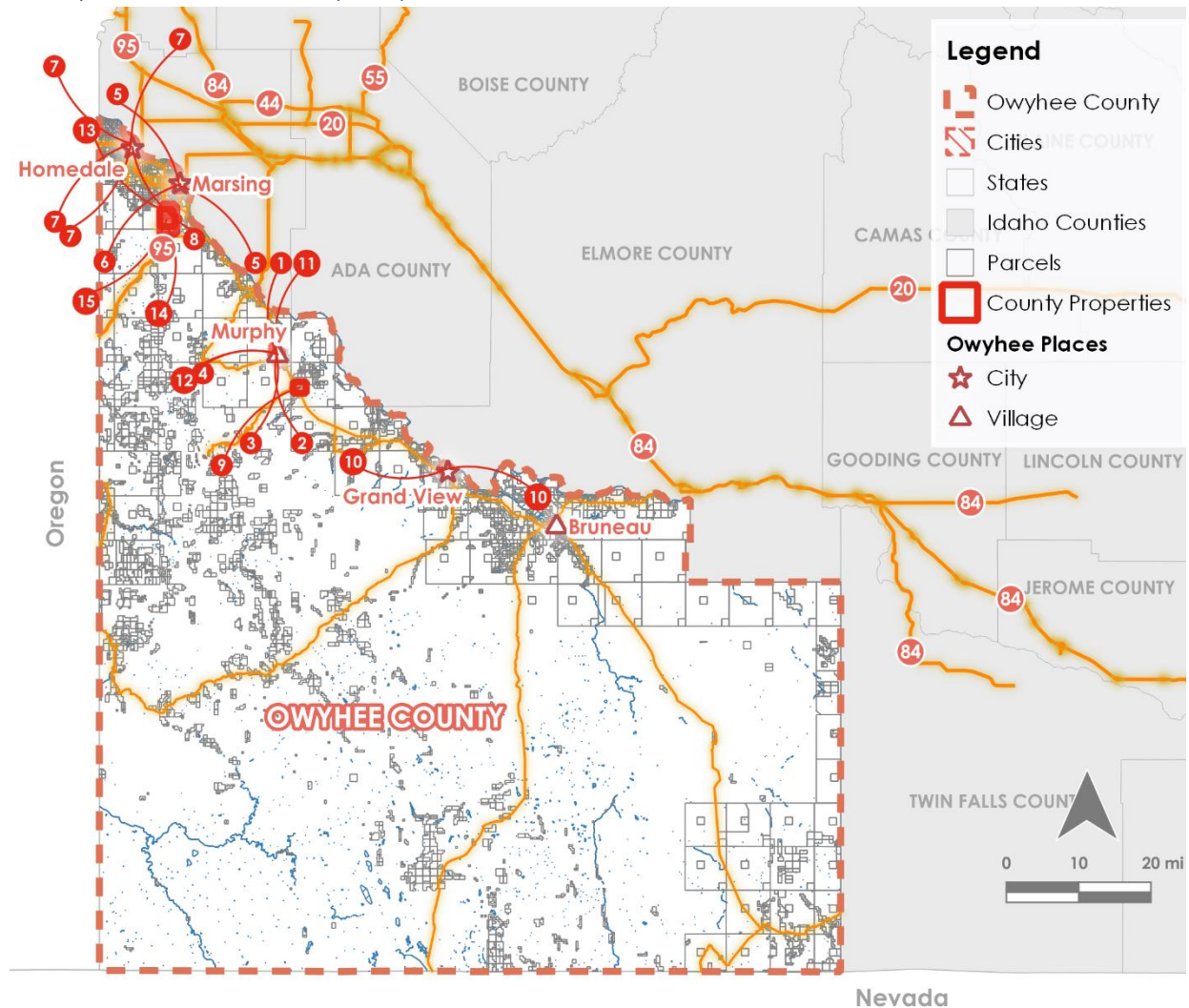
County staff have observed a rise in transient living conditions, such as RVs and mobile homes parked on existing home sites and overcrowding RV facilities originally intended for tourism. This has put added strain on county services without generating sufficient income to cover the costs.

As the Treasure Valley continues to experience growth despite the increasing cost of living, Owyhee County will likely continue to bear some of the burden of population expansion in the state. Additionally, Owyhee County possesses attractive natural amenities that make it appealing for growth on its own. It is crucial for the county and the cities within Owyhee to work together collaboratively and proactively to address the

associated demands and impacts. The cities can focus on planning more efficient utilities and services, while the county should prioritize preserving land for agricultural-related industries, special services, and offering unique housing options further away from the cities. This approach will help manage service demands sustainably in the future.

Exhibits: Facility Maps

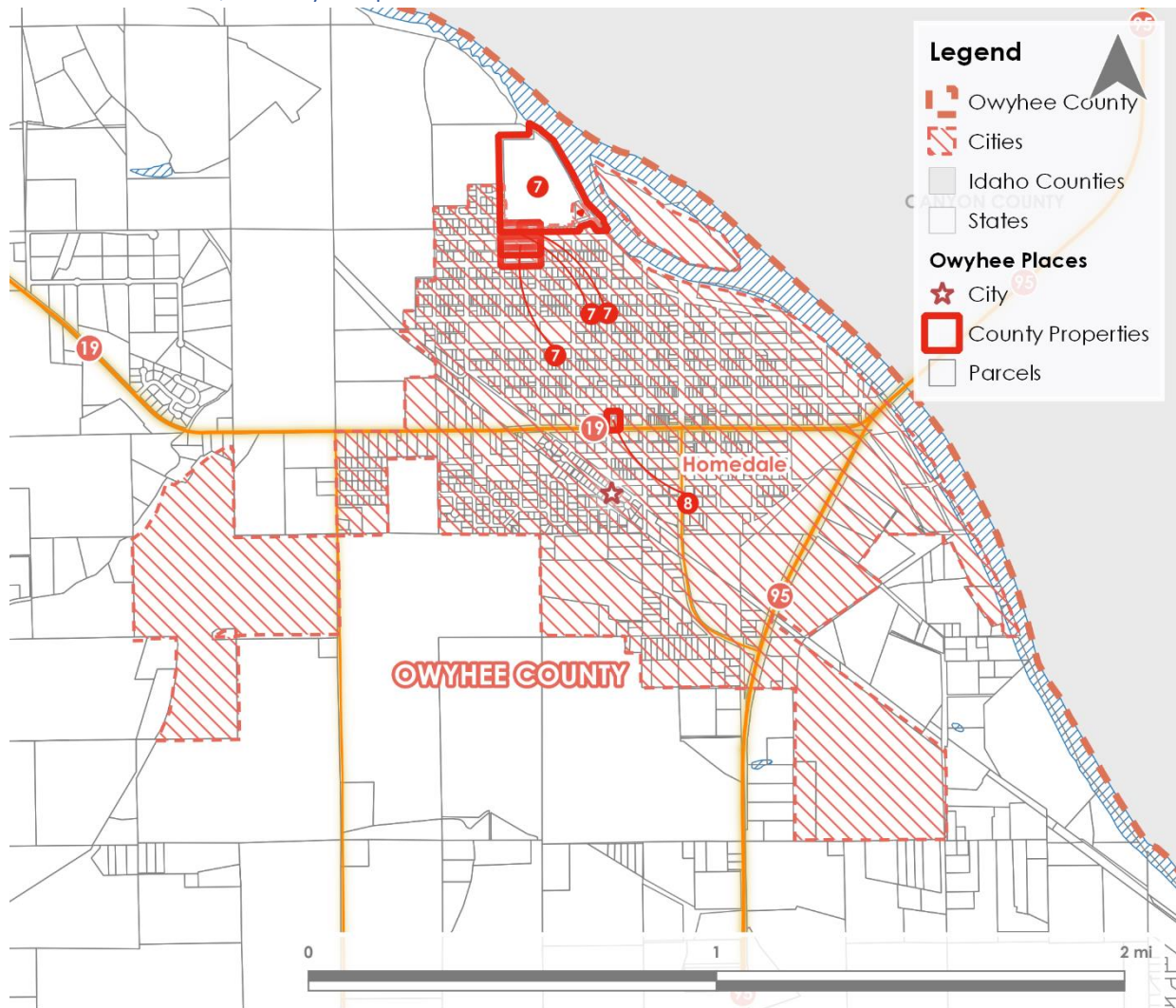
Countywide Parcel/Facility Map



- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Justice Facility | 7. Owyhee County Fair Board |
| 2. Owyhee County Prosecutor | 8. Owyhee County Probation Office |
| 3. Owyhee County Planning and Zoning | 9. Owyhee County Gravel Pit |
| 4. Owyhee County Road and Bridge Department | 10. DMV Office |
| 5. University of Idaho Extension | 11. United States Postal Service |
| 6. Owyhee County DMV and Building Department | 12. Owyhee County (Vacant lot) |
| | 13. Owyhee (Vacant Land) |
| | 14. Owyhee (Vacant Land) |
| | 15. Owyhee (Vacant Land) |

Note: See the following City and Village maps, from the west side of the County to the east, for enlarged views.

Homedale Parcel/Facility Map

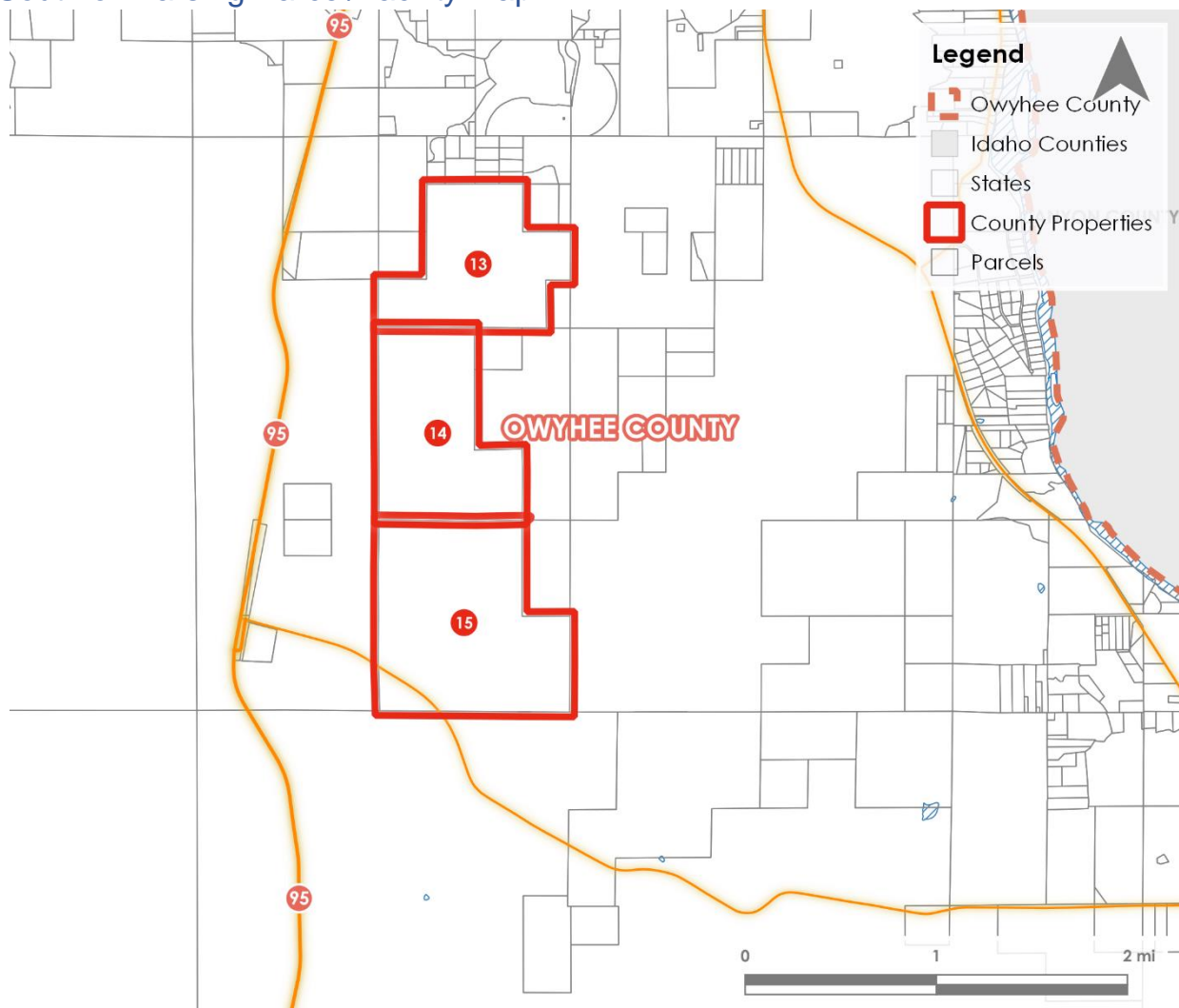


7. **Owyhee County Fair Board**
 - 420 W. Nevada Street, Homedale ID 83628
8. **Owyhee County Probation Office**
 - 8 N 2nd Street W, Homedale ID 83628

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South of Marsing Parcel/Facility Map



13. Owyhee County (Vacant Land)

- Between Hwy 95 and Desert Dr. 340 Acres

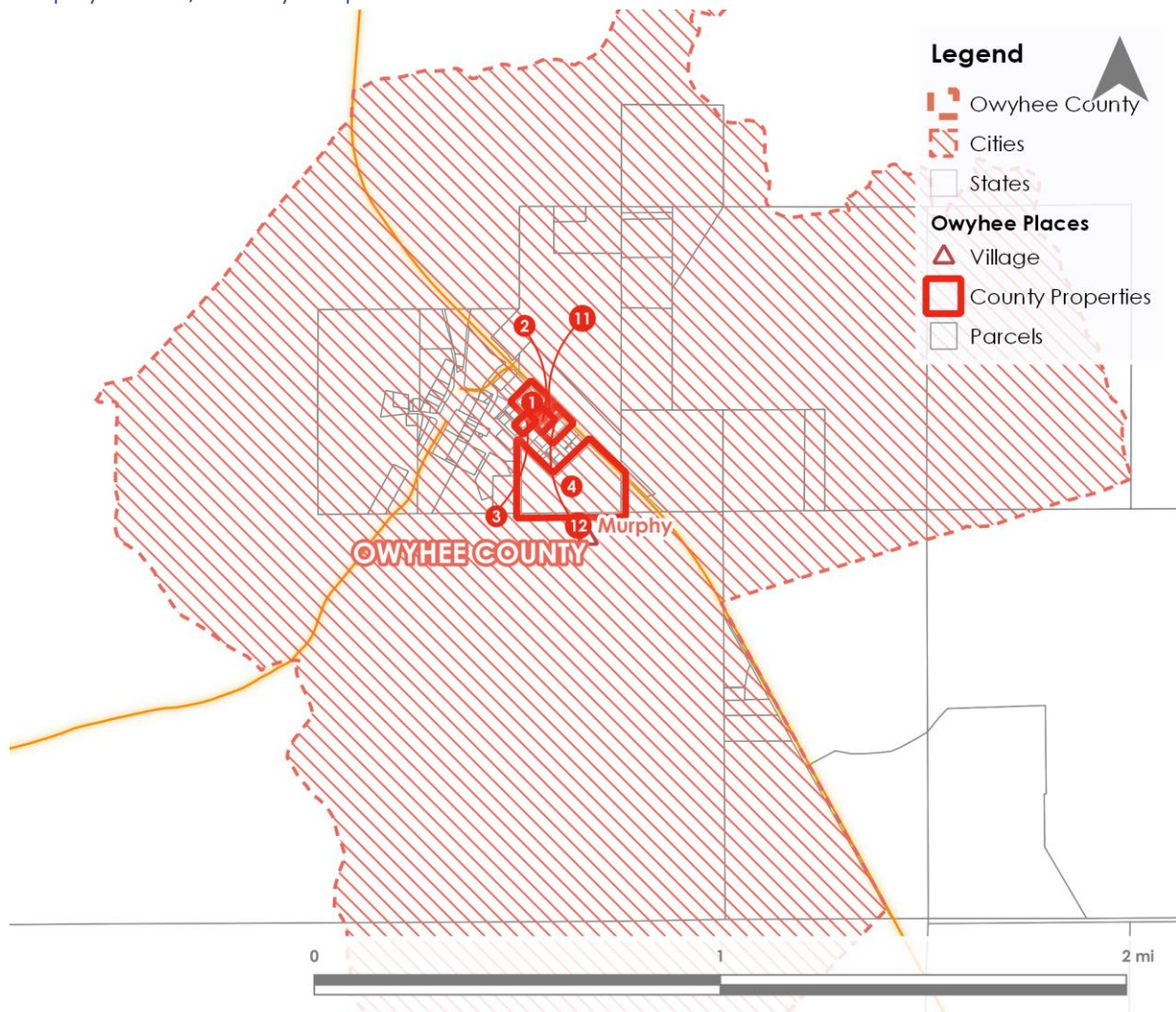
14. Owyhee County (Vacant Land)

- Between Hwy 95 and Desert Dr. 340 Acres

15. Owyhee County (Vacant Land)

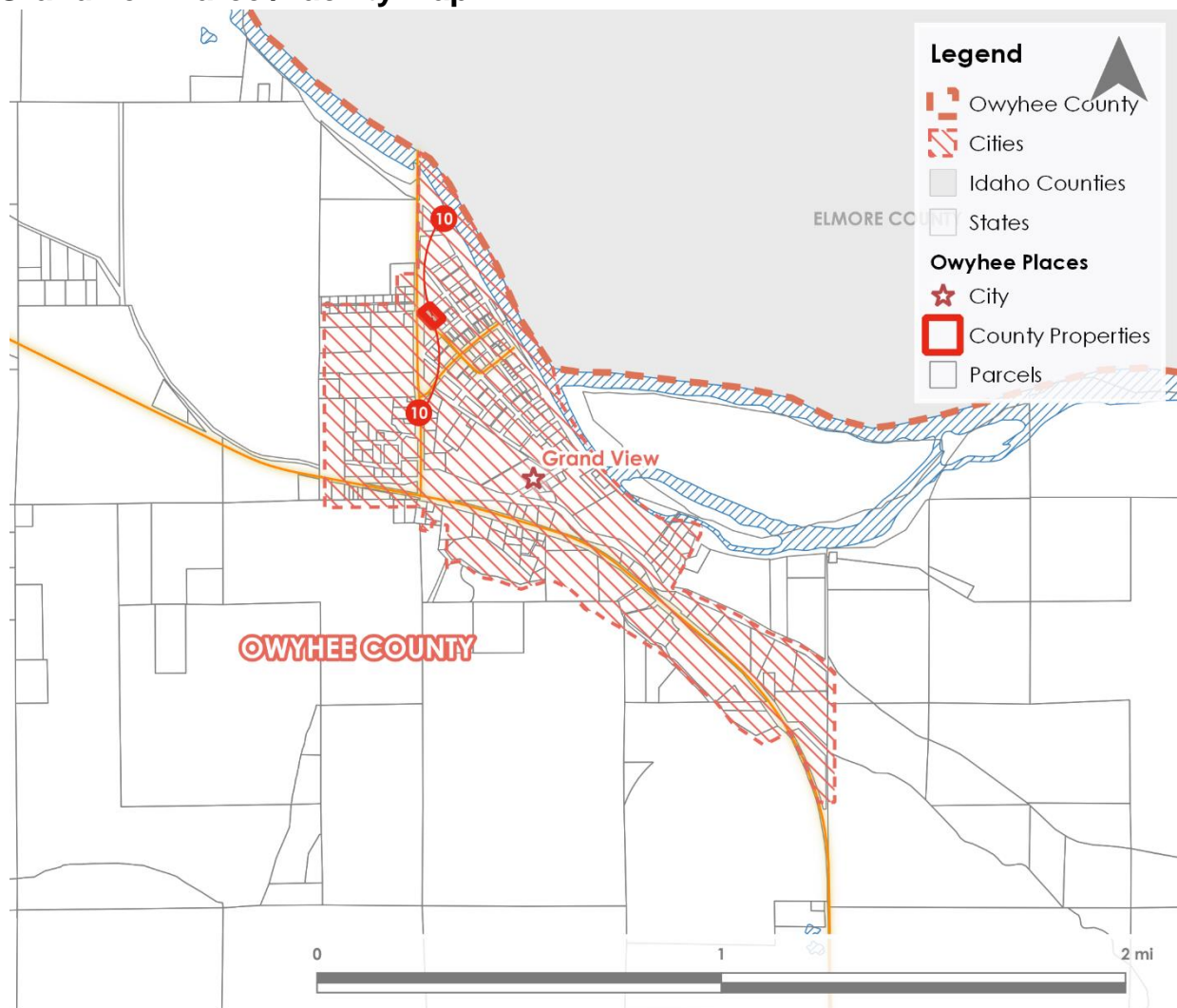
- Between Hwy 95 and Desert Dr. 340 Acres

Murphy Parcel/Facility Map



1. Justice Facility
 - 20381 State Hwy 78, Murphy ID 83650
2. Owyhee County Prosecutor
 - 17082 Basey Street, Murphy ID 83650
3. Owyhee County Planning and Zoning
 - 17069 Basey Street, Murphy ID 83650
4. Owyhee County Road and Bridge Department
 - 17129 County Shop Road, Murphy ID 83650
11. United States Postal Service
 - 17026 Hailey Street, Murphy ID 83650
12. Owyhee County (Vacant Lot)
 - State Hwy 78, Murphy ID 83650

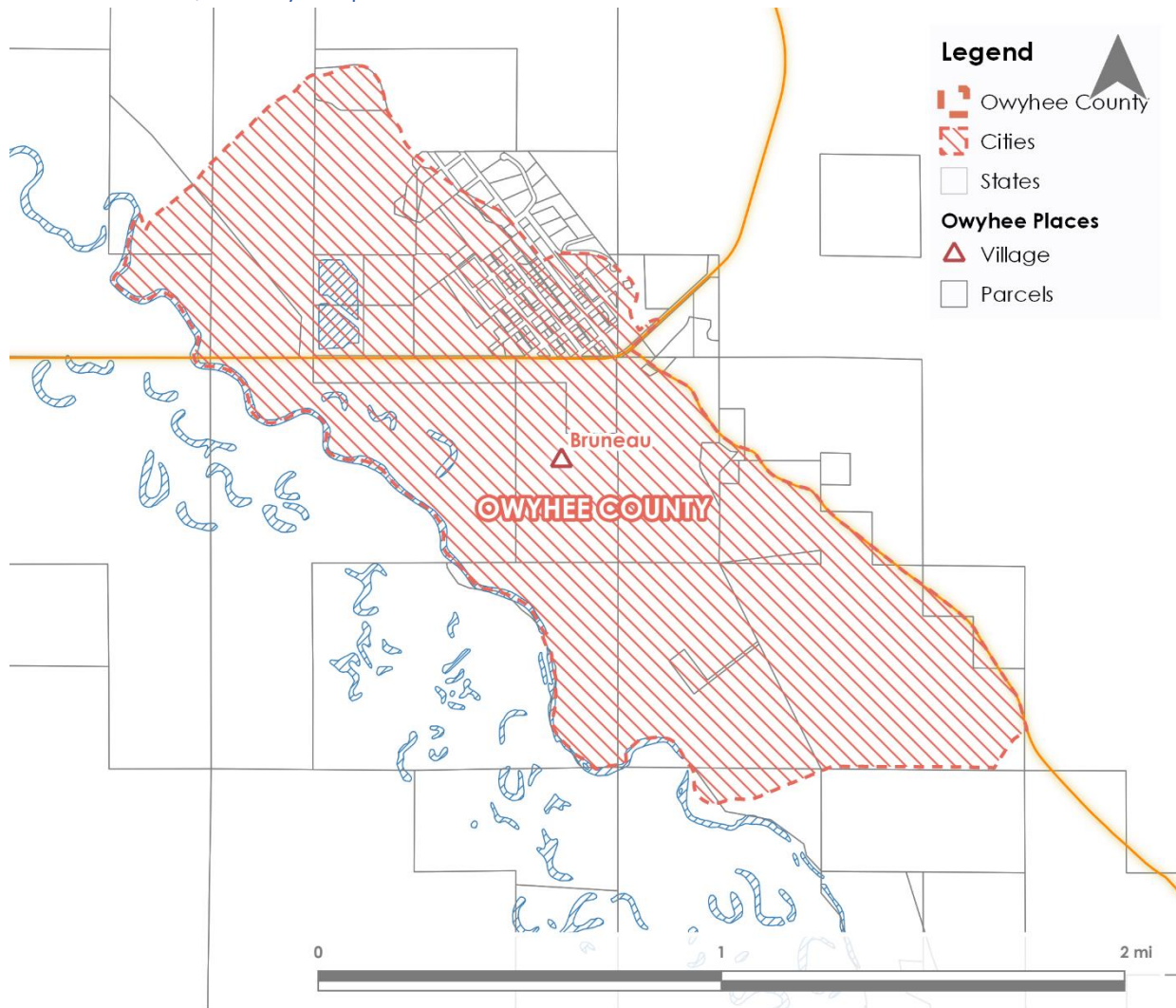
Grandview Parcel/Facility Map



10. DMV Office

- 420 Boise Avenue, Grand View, ID 83624

Bruneau Parcel/Facility Map



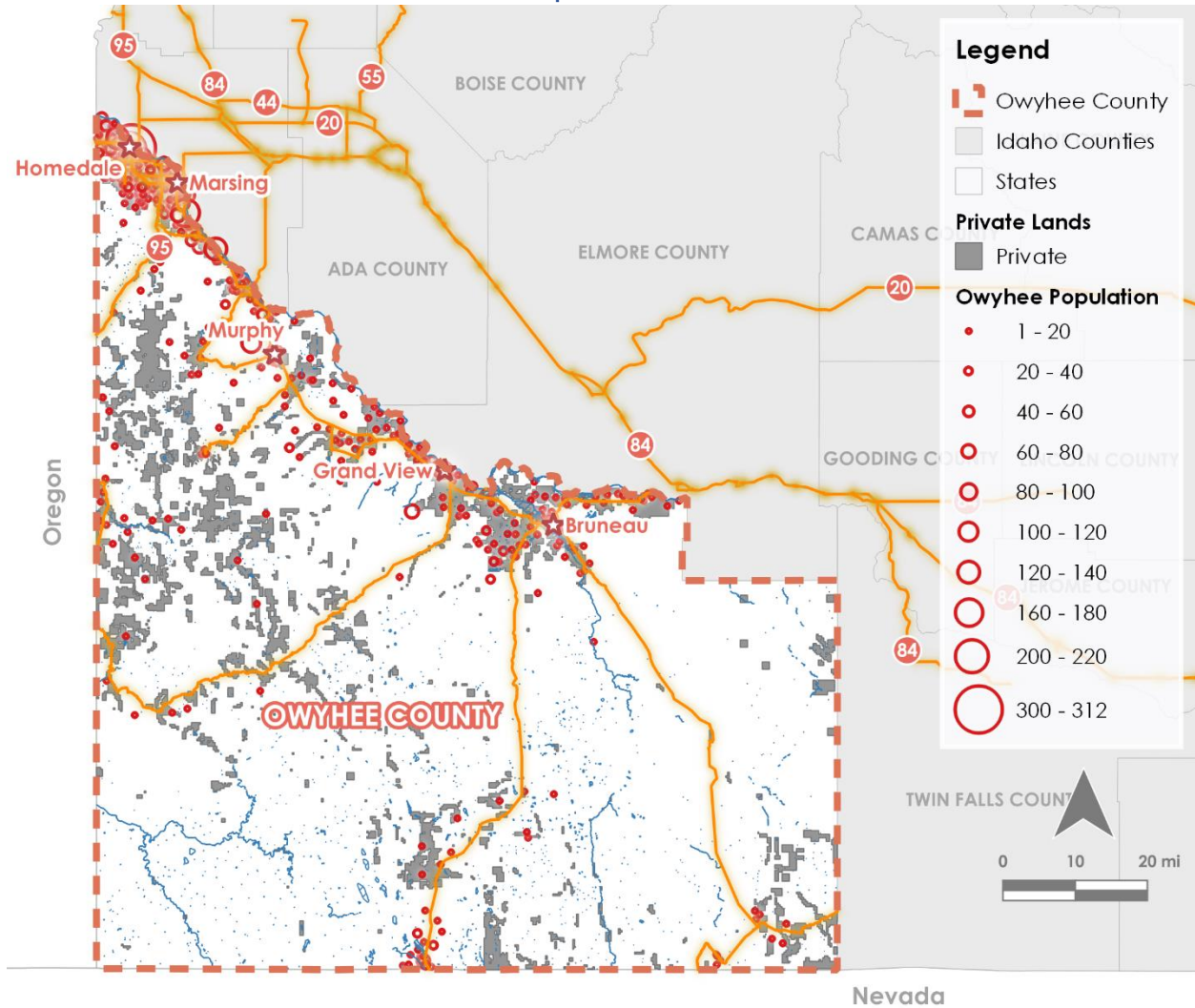
There were no identified Owyhee County facilities in Bruneau.

References

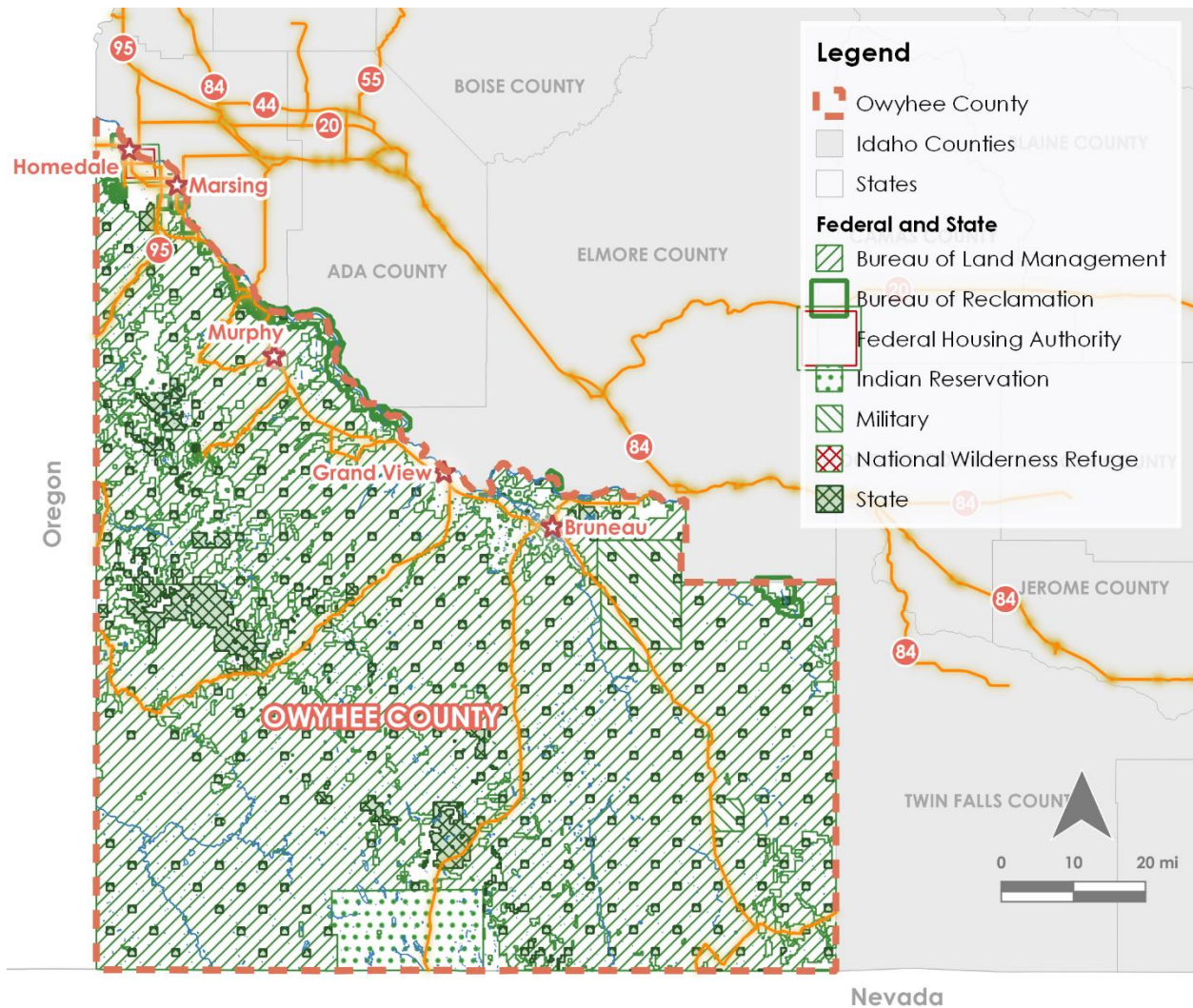
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Attachments:

Attachment 01: Private Lands and Population Densities



Attachment 02: Federal and State Lands



Attachment 03: American Community Survey 5-Year Data Tables

ACS Data for 2010, 2016, and 2021					
Population	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
Total Population	11,389	11,356	11,815	426	3.7%
Total Male Population	5,913	5,826	6,173	260	4.4%
Total Female Population	5,476	5,530	5,642	166	3.0%
% Male	51.9%	51.3%	52.2%	0.3%	0.6%
% Female	48.1%	48.7%	47.8%	-0.3%	-0.7%
Age Groups	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
0 to 9	1,862	1,643	1,520	(342)	-18.4%
10 to 19	1,720	1,753	1,934	214	12.4%
20 to 29	1,336	1,221	1,247	(89)	-6.7%
30 to 39	1,590	1,414	1,209	(381)	-24.0%
40 to 49	1,376	1,208	1,455	79	5.7%
50 to 64	2,027	2,246	2,345	318	15.7%
65 and Older	1,478	1,871	2,105	627	42.4%
Less than 18	3,379	3,046	3,038	(341)	-10.1%
18 and Older	8,010	8,310	8,777	767	9.6%
Overall Median Age	35.3	37.7	40.0	4.7	13.3%
Overall Median Age Male	34.3	37.4	38.7	4.4	12.8%
Overall Median Age Female	36.3	37.9	41.2	4.9	13.5%
Income	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
Less than \$10,000	302	350	154	(148)	-49.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	255	345	192	(63)	-24.7%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	496	305	293	(203)	-40.9%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	314	354	174	(140)	-44.6%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	374	378	301	(73)	-19.5%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	373	310	239	(134)	-35.9%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	242	250	186	(56)	-23.1%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	115	211	270	155	134.8%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	165	183	132	(33)	-20.0%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	429	273	391	(38)	-8.9%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	344	407	565	221	64.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	285	314	548	263	92.3%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	107	202	320	213	199.1%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	55	83	229	174	316.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	60	34	96	36	60.0%

\$200,000 or more	100	69	142	42	42.0%
Median Income (2019 Inflation)	33,441	34,785	54,669	21,228	63.5%
Poverty	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
Below poverty, All Attainment	1,210	1,411	839	(371)	-30.7%
Below Poverty, Less than High School	601	634	389	(212)	-35.3%
Below poverty High school	425	403	255	(170)	-40.0%
Below poverty Some college	160	334	172	12	7.5%
Below poverty bachelor's or higher	24	40	23	(1)	-4.2%
Households	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
Total Housing Units	4,016	4,068	4,232	216	5.4%
Owner units	2,722	2,711	3,004	282	10.4%
Renter units	1,294	1,357	1,228	(66)	-5.1%
% Owner Occupied	67.8%	66.6%	71.0%	3.2%	4.7%
% Renter Occupied	32.2%	33.4%	29.0%	-3.2%	-9.9%
Owner units Less than high school graduate	384	478	558	174	45.3%
Owner units High school graduate	1,064	948	983	(81)	-7.6%
Owner units Some college or associate degree	879	968	996	117	13.3%
Owner units bachelor's degree or higher	395	317	467	72	18.2%
Renter units Less than high school graduate	552	412	451	(101)	-18.3%
Renter units High school graduate	378	494	372	(6)	-1.6%
Renter units Some college or associate degree	265	364	293	28	10.6%
Renter units bachelor's degree or higher	99	87	112	13	13.1%
Workforce	2010	2016	2021	Change #	Change %
Total Workforce	4,448	4,484	5,202	754	17.0%
Total Full Time	3,202	3,201	3,347	145	4.5%
Ag, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	865	1,276	1,171	306	35.4%
Construction	561	230	599	38	6.8%
Manufacturing	401	611	383	(18)	-4.5%
Wholesale trade	71	79	174	103	145.1%
Retail trade	367	441	391	24	6.5%
Trans and warehousing, and util	282	282	252	(30)	-10.6%

Information	45	20	35	(10)	-22.2%
Finance and ins, and real estate, and rental and leasing	186	97	205	19	10.2%
Prof, sci, and mgmt, and admin, and waste mgmt services	131	199	258	127	96.9%
Edu services, and health care and social assistance	877	658	827	(50)	-5.7%
Arts, ent, and rec, and accom and food services	252	224	377	125	49.6%
Other services, except public administration	147	179	283	136	92.5%
Public administration	263	188	247	(16)	-6.1%