

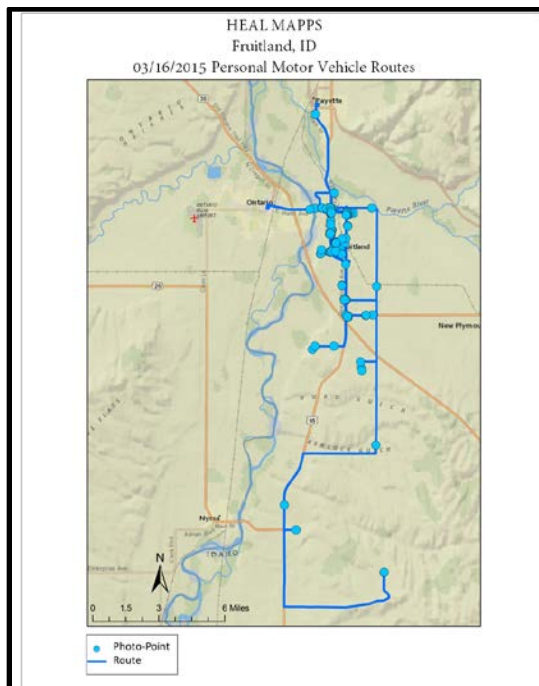
Fruitland Community HEAL MAPPS™ Report

Fruitland is a rural city located in Payette County, Idaho. Fruitland is in southwestern Idaho, separated from the state of Oregon by the Snake River and from Payette, ID by the Payette River. The community is positioned in a large fertile valley of irrigated farmland known as the Treasure Valley. The community experiences all four seasons and is considered dessert with an average rainfall of less than 10 inches a year.

Fruitland's population is 4,684. The racial and ethnic makeup of Fruitland is 86.6% White. Black, Native Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders make up less than 10% of the community population. Hispanic is the leading ethnicity at 22.6% according to the US Census.

The Fruitland School District is composed of Fruitland Elementary School, Fruitland Middle School, Fruitland High School and Fruitland Preparatory Academy (an alternative high school). You can find four gas station/convenience stores located in the community but no full service grocery store. The two closest grocery stores can be found in Ontario, Oregon and Payette, Idaho. The community holds multiple events throughout the year. You can find families at the Fruitland Spring Fair, Fruitland Family Fun Days, Apple Jam (fundraiser for future events), and Christmas in the Park (concert and tree lighting).

Fruitland has completed a Parks and Trails Master Plan. The plan identifies five potential new park sites; suggests expansion or improvements to four existing parks; identifies approximately 20 miles of potential trail system network; suggests near-term and long-range bicycle lane implementation goals.



Generating Rural Options for Weight Healthy Kids and Communities (GROW HKC)

is a USDA-funded, participatory childhood obesity prevention study conducted by Oregon State University's (OSU) Extension researchers in partnership with rural residents and communities. GROW HKC and the Fruitland community have partnered to map features of the local environment and discuss residents' perceptions of the community supports and barriers to regularly eating healthy and being physically active, particularly for children and families. Community members were mobilized and trained to

use HEAL MAPPS™ (Healthy Eating Active Living: Mapping Attributes using Participatory Photographic Surveys), our community resource and readiness tool, to assess community resources for and readiness to improve and implement healthy eating and physical activity supports – environmental and policy actions to make easier these obesity preventing behaviors.

HEAL MAPPS™ projects conducted in partnership with rural communities across several Western States (CO, ID, NM, NV, OR, WA) will provide evidence and insights that will drive the development of a rural obesity prevention model. The model will be used as a framework for rural community actions aimed to promote environments and policies that enable healthy eating and physical activity behaviors to prevent overweight and obesity among children and families.

The problem of obesity in children is in the forefront of nationwide research efforts and there are documented physical and mental health outcomes associated with childhood obesity that contribute to lifelong chronic health problems which may disproportionately affect people living in rural places. Rural residency tends to increase the risk of overweight and obesity for children and adults; the prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity is higher among children living in rural areas.

To date, most evidence-based strategies to combat the childhood obesity epidemic target either individuals or environments and have been developed and tested in non-rural settings. The overall goal of the GROW Healthy Kids and Communities (HKC) project is to learn more about the factors influencing weight health behaviors in rural places in order to prevent obesity in rural children **by improving their behavioral environments – at home, in school, and in the community** – to make healthy eating and physical activity their easy option and preferred choice.

Relevance for Fruitland Community

A significant number of families in Payette County are low income. Overall county poverty is at 19.2% compared to the state poverty level of 16.5%. Almost 27% of children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 21% for the state average. The participation rate in the free and reduced meals for the Fruitland School District was 52.04% for 2013.

According to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in 2013, 14.6% of Idahoans used food stamps or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. The state's highest rates of food stamp participation occurred in these counties:

1-Canyon (22.2%)

5-Bannock (17.9%)

8-Bonneville (17.1%)

2-Payette (18.9%)

6-Jerome (17.6%)

9-Twin Falls (17.0%)

3-Power (18.9%)

7-Lewis (17.5%)

10-Owyhee (16.9%)

4-Shoshone (18.4%)

Helping children develop healthy habits and providing healthy eating and activity supports to balance their energy intake with energy expenditure is an important aspect to maintaining healthy weight, preventing overweight and obesity, and minimizing chronic disease risk. Because obesity prevention among rural populations requires an understanding of the supports and barriers to healthy eating and active living within and among rural communities, we are pleased to provide this report of resources and readiness to take action on childhood obesity for the community of Fruitland.

Methods and Preliminary Results

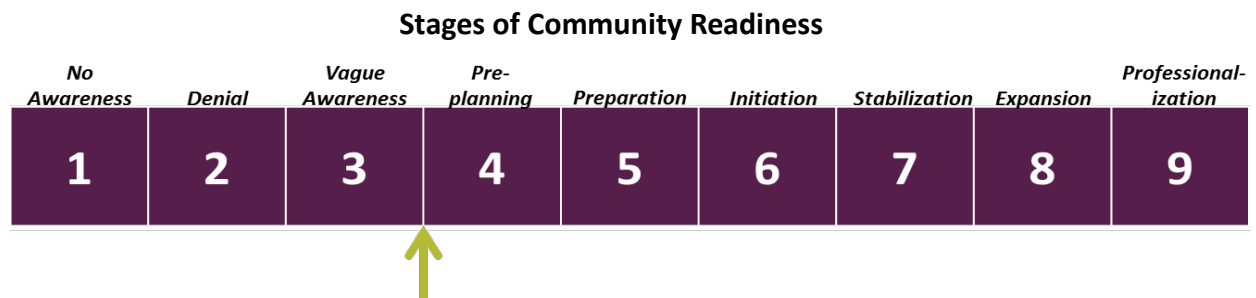
A HEAL MAPPS™ team (n=12) comprised of Fruitland community members with an interest in creating a healthier community volunteered and were first trained to individually photograph and map the Fruitland community features that they experienced as either supporting or hindering their ability to eat healthy and be physically active most every day. Collectively, over 105 photographs were taken and mapped along 11 routes that represented the community's active (i.e. walking, bicycling, skateboarding, etc.) and motor vehicle transportation system. The 'MAPPers' covered approximately 60 linear miles of roadway included within the 2.25 square miles of the city of Fruitland as well as the adjoining communities of Payette, ID and Ontario, OR, including environmental features in the surrounding unincorporated areas as well as the aforementioned adjoining towns (see Figure 1).¹ The HEAL MAPPS™ team reconvened to discuss the photographs and maps during a focus group meeting. The most relevant 39 photographs, based on group consensus, were included in a presentation to provoke a larger community conversation. Fruitland residents and stakeholders (n >23) attended and participated in a community dinner and discussion held at the Fruitland Olde School Community Center on January 12, 2015. The community conversation was facilitated by University of Idaho (UI) Extension liaison, Joey Peutz, who was trained by OSU's GROW HKC team to conduct the HEAL MAPPS™ program. Following the community dinner, photographs were displayed, participants were polled as to whether the displayed feature made eating healthy or being physically active easier or harder for themselves or others in the community, and discussed their thoughts and feelings that led to their ratings. The dialogue was scribed verbatim by two UI faculty members who were also trained on the HEAL MAPPS™ program. Child care was generously provided by Malheur County, Oregon State University Extension Agent Barbara Brody and YA4-H youth.

¹ The 'mappers' individually determined the community boundaries as within the city and unincorporated land approximately served by the Fruitland school district.

Community Readiness

Communities differ in many ways including their readiness to take action on an issue and implement relevant solutions. The level of community readiness is a major factor in determining whether a particular program can be effectively implemented and supported by a community. Assessing the level of readiness for obesity prevention efforts is thereby a critical component of obesity prevention program planning and evaluation.

The Community Readiness Assessment Model is a tool we used to gain an understanding of the Fruitland community's resources and readiness for obesity prevention efforts. The assessment is divided into six dimensions that influence a community's readiness to take action. The six dimensions are: community knowledge about the issue; community efforts; community knowledge of the efforts; local leadership; community climate; and local resources related to the issue. Open ended questions representing each dimension were asked during the Fruitland Community Conversation to provoke dialogue. Participants responded to questions, sharing their perceptions of the Fruitland community's conditions and preparedness for changing the context for weight health. Discussion transcripts were coded by two independent evaluators into dimension categories. Evaluators independently assigned a numerical score for each dimension based on the content coded into each category and according to a nine-point anchored rating scale (see graph below). Overall scores representing the average of all dimensions and between evaluators were calculated to represent the community's overall stage of readiness. Fruitland's overall stage of readiness to implement environmental and policy strategies to prevent obesity falls somewhere between stage **3** and **4** ($M = 3.70$) as indicated by the arrow on the Stages of Readiness graph.



Indicators of Community Readiness: According to participants, having few places to purchase or eat healthy foods emerged as a major barrier to healthy eating in Fruitland. Fruitland has no grocery store in town, and very few dining establishments that offer healthy options. Although the Fruitland area has farmland and orchards, the local produce does not seem to be readily available to the community at large. Fruitland schools participate in the farm-to-school program; however, the recent loss of a fresh fruits and veggies program and the fruit and

veggie bar, coupled with the overall lack of access to fresh produce, were negative impacts on the community readiness score. Fruitland's lack of walking and biking supports - sidewalks, crosswalks, and other traffic calming features - emerged as a significant barrier to being physically active, as did winter weather. The lack of a centralized place to get information about healthy eating and physical activities was also cited as a barrier to both eating healthy and being physically active.

The walking program at school, Fruitland's parks and playgrounds, the Old School Community Center, area gyms and dance studios, as well as some active transportation supports (tunnel under 95, crosswalks and sidewalks in some parts of town) emerged as supports for being physically active, and worked to positively impact the community readiness score. Despite participant reports that fresh fruits and veggies availability is limited in Fruitland, the Produce Barn, area farms and orchards, as well as the community's interest in creating a community garden and being able to purchase locally grown produce emerged as supports for healthy eating. The Eat Smart Idaho and free summer lunch programs also emerged as supports of healthy eating and impacted the readiness score positively.

Based on the Fruitland community conversation and resulting readiness scores, the Community Readiness Model strategies recommended to move Fruitland forward in readiness to address the issue of community weight health include,

- 1) increasing efforts, including informational campaigns, to raise awareness that the community can do something about the problem;
- 2) using HEAL MAPPS™ results, based on resident input and identified barriers, to provide suggestions to decision-makers on where and how efforts should be focused;
- 3) gathering additional existing information about modifiable factors that influence childhood obesity, specifically availability, accessibility, and affordability of healthy, local food and physical activity resources in order to plan improvement strategies;
- 4) raising local and regional awareness that efforts to address the problem of childhood obesity are happening in Fruitland, and;
- 5) initiating a plan to evaluate the ongoing activities and successes of your efforts.

For example, partner with healthy community stakeholders and present HEAL MAPPS™ information at local community events and to unrelated groups; launch a media campaign - post flyers, posters, and billboards and sponsor a community picnic or fun-run to kick off the effort. Conduct a thorough audit of the community food and physical activity resource system, considering conditions that effect accessibility and affordability for under-resourced individuals and families. Present information on the issue – the role of the rural community environment in making weight healthy choices easy for all children and families. Work with public, private, and academic partners, like UI Extension, to gather and share specific and general information with

additional community groups, via newspaper articles and editorials, social media, publications, websites and presentations; establish a weight health tracking system and conduct height-weight assessments of students in school; conduct public forums to develop strategies from the grassroots level; utilize key leaders and influential people to speak to groups and participate in local radio and television. Begin to plan for evaluation of your efforts.

Build and communicate Fruitland's capacity to change, adopt a motto – ***Our Community can GROW Healthy Kids.***

For more information about the Community Readiness Model, stages of community readiness and stage-based strategies to increase community readiness to address health issues visit: <http://www.colostate.edu/Dept/TEC/article3.htm>.

Summary of Results based on Fruitland Community Conversation

Physical Activity (26 References)

Supports – 16 references

Active Transport

- Sidewalks
- Tunnel under highway
- Crosswalks, crossing signals
- Bike path
- Walking Program at the Elementary School

Outdoor PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Tennis Courts
 - Lights for night activity
- Sports fields
- Tracks
- Parks and Playgrounds
- City is developing a comprehensive plan to expand parks and trails
- Payette county Recreation District
 - Summer youth activities

Indoor PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Community Center
 - Classes
- Gyms/Exercise centers
- Dance Studios

Other

- St. Alphonso's Clinic
 - Free to School Students

Barriers –10 references

Community Climate

- No (or little) motivation to walk or ride bikes
- Community member engagement
 - Need for volunteer coaches

Active Transport

- Bike paths and sidewalks are not consistent or connected or are lacking in some areas
- Lack of traffic calming features in some areas
- Speed limit seen as too high in town

Outdoor PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Private Pools Not open or available to all in the community
- Weather is cold/Icy/Snowy in the winter
- Everything is spread out in the community so not always easy to get to some things

Indoor PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Gyms and Dance Studios cost Money
- Dangerous to drive in and out of the parking lots of some of these establishments

Healthy Eating (20 references)

Supports –10 references

Programs/Organizations

- Eat Smart Idaho
 - SNAP Oriented education, Cooking Skills
- Farm to School
- Free Summer Lunch

Community Climate

- Strong community support for local agriculture
 - Desire to increase communication with area farmers
- Supportive of a future community garden
- Support for keeping money spent local
 - Buying local produce from local stores

Local Businesses

- Honey Store
 - Owner does education outreach at schools
 - Sell honey, whole wheat bread, other healthy foods
 - Sell local food products
- Bountiful baskets, Produce Barn , Local Orchards and Farms
 - Fresh fruits and Veggies
- Some local restaurants serve healthier options
- Natural Health Store

Barriers –10 references

Access to fruits and vegetables or other healthy food options

- Even though Fruitland is surround by farmland/orchards, access to produce is limited to a few places
- No Grocery store
- No healthy snack options or water at some PHYSICAL ACTIVITY resources
- Seasonal Dictates on produce availability at some establishments

Local Businesses

- Lack of establishments that sell healthy food options
- Hard or dangerous to access those establishments that might offer healthier options
 - No walking or biking supports/dangerous traffic
 - Limited hours of operation

Education

- Lack of education opportunities for community members on how to eat healthy, prepare or cook from scratch healthy meals
- Lack of education in schools on healthy eating/portion size/nutrition

Resident-Informed Recommendations for Community Change

The following recommendations emerged from the data generated during the **Fruitland** community conversation and represent those of the **Fruitland** community members who shared their ideas during the facilitated discussion of the photographed community features. These recommendations do not represent those of the GROW Healthy Kids and Communities project members or Oregon State University.

- Covered tennis courts for when weather is bad
- Community would like better access to locally grown produce
- A Grocery store in Fruitland would make it easier to eat healthy
- Increasing education both in the community and in schools for nutrition, portion size, healthy eating, cooking classes
- Business could offer “fun food” promotions
- Increasing interaction/communication between local growers and families in need of healthy food options
- Increase usage of and class offerings at the Old School Community Center
- Community members are interested in building a greenhouse and a community garden
- Because the resources are spread out, there is interest in having Physical Activity resources proximal to Healthy food choices.
- Local business should offer trail or free classes to get the word out about their business
- Fruitland needs a centralized way to disseminate information about activities and events
- Interest in connecting local growers or sellers of fresh produce with the schools
- Increase Community engagement via volunteering time.

Figures 1 through 3 represent the routes navigated by local residents as they mapped the physical features of the Fruitland community using participatory photographic survey methods.

Figure 1. Represents all routes generated by the Fruitland community mappers.

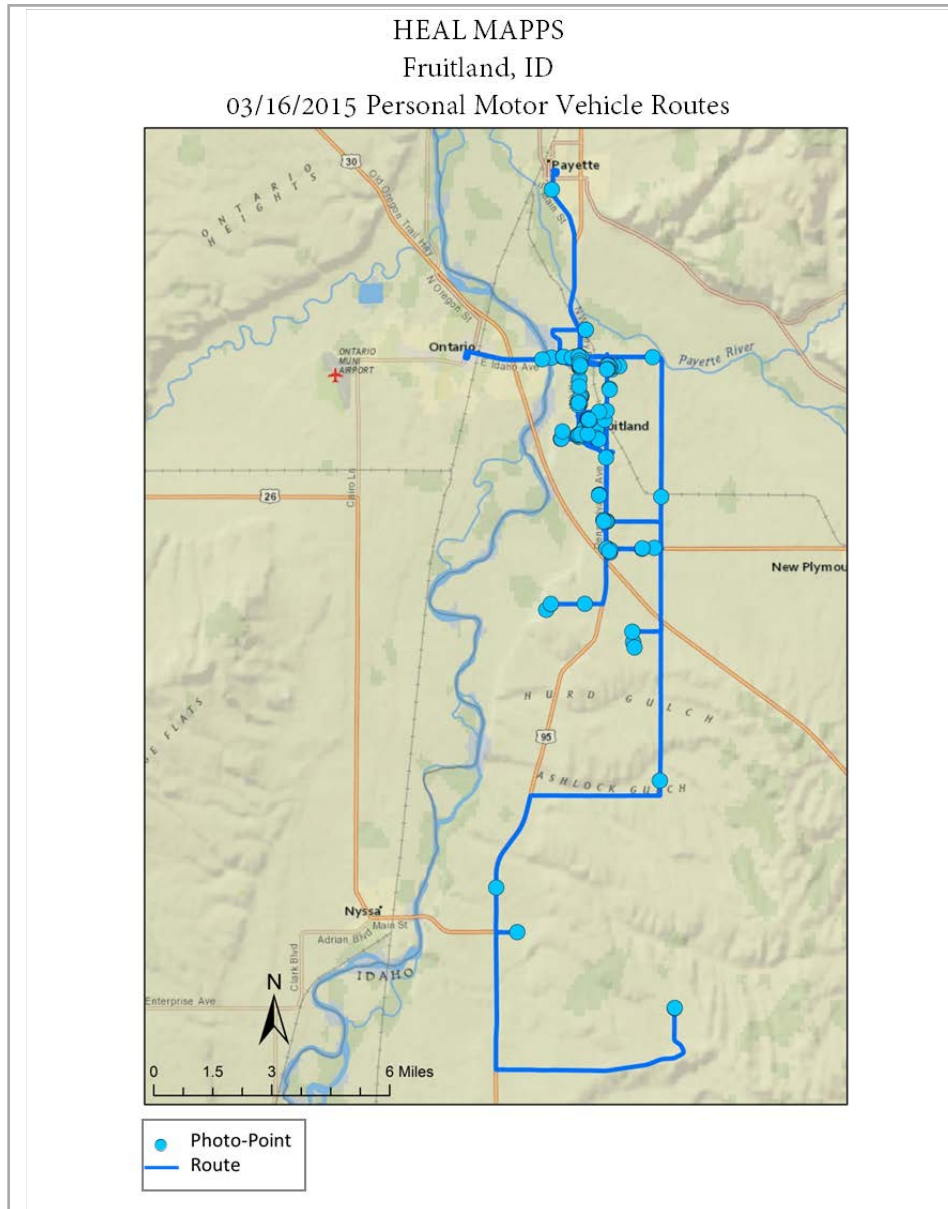


Figure 2. Represents an example of a route generated while using a personal motorized vehicle.

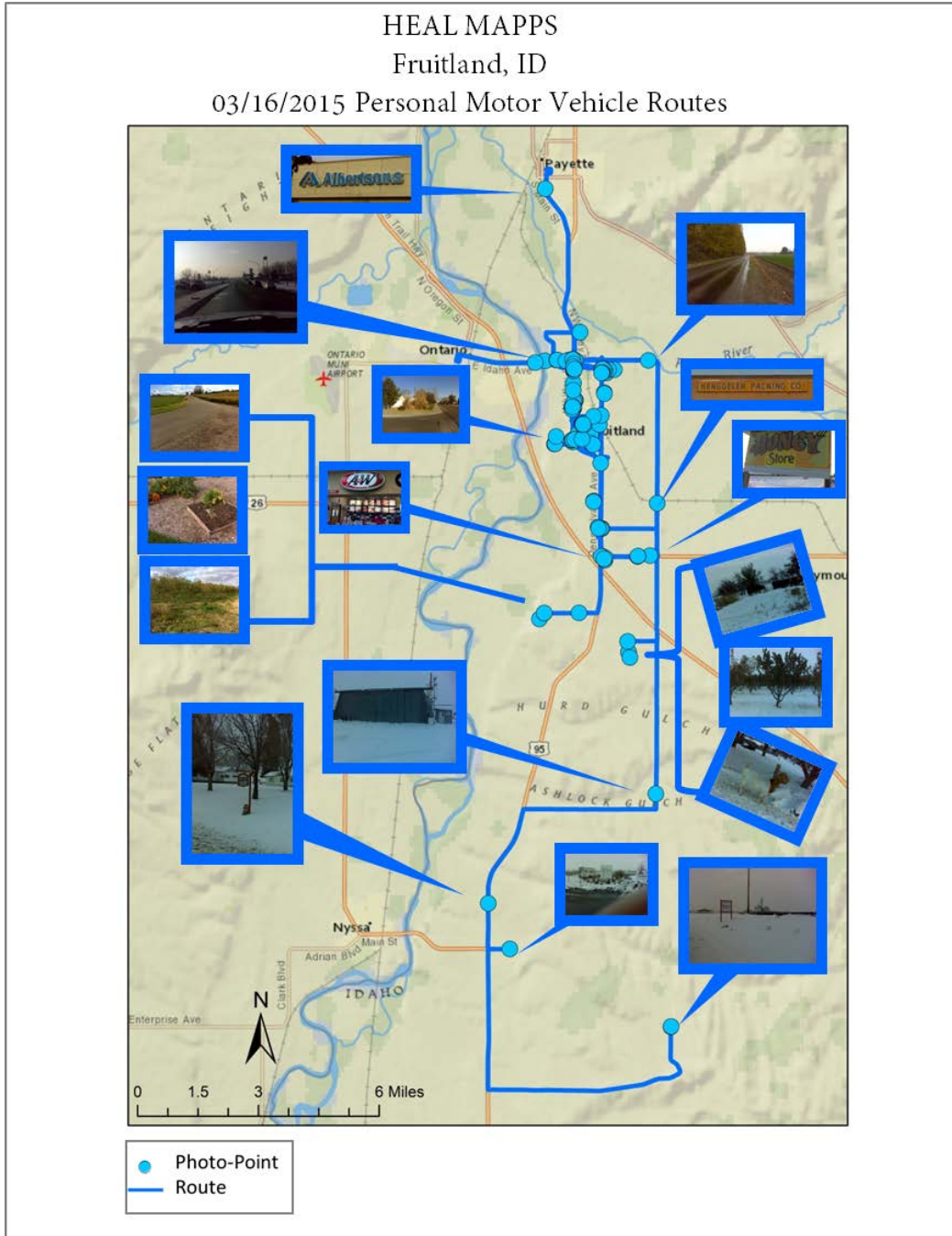


Figure 3. Represents a zoomed in version of the PMV routes map

