

To: Julie Sosnovske, Council Creek Regional Trail Project Manager, Washington County

From: Alta Planning + Design

Date: September 8, 2022

Re: Council Creek Regional Trail: Vision and Goals

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to present a guiding framework for design of Washington County's Council Creek Regional Trail. The following sections address:

- Draft project vision statement
- Draft project goals
- Key design decisions needed

Vision and Goals

Vision Statement

The vision of the Council Creek Regional Trail (CCRT) project is to create an active mobility corridor that feels safe, serves and welcomes a broad population, and is integrated with other planned projects. The CCRT will be a six-mile long, ecologically sustainable, off-street multiuse pathway that connects the downtown cores of Forest Grove, Cornelius, and Hillsboro. It will be designed for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike, and roll for recreation and transportation.

Project Goals

Ensure Equitable Trail Access: Partner with culturally-specific community-based organizations to create a trail that celebrates the diversity of the surrounding community, and improves access to opportunity and recreation for low-income communities and communities of color; ensuring that underrepresented community members feel welcome on the trail.

This goal emphasizes the need for a safe and efficient transportation system with a range of mode choices for all users regardless of age, physical ability, income, or geography. The project corridor is home to many people who are members of groups that are historically disadvantaged with respect to transportation, including low-income persons, children, older persons, alternately-abled persons, racial and ethnic minorities, and those with limited English proficiency.

Create a Safe and Enjoyable User Experience: Create a trail corridor that is safe for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike, and roll. The trail should feel fun, easy to use, comfortable, and welcoming to people of all backgrounds and should include design elements that reflect the multicultural character of the community.

Safety is a common goal across all planning and policy guidance throughout Washington County. Safety and security for people walking, bicycling, rolling and riding horses will be an essential cornerstone of the Council Creek Trail. A safe environment should be built and maintained for everyone living, working, and recreating in and near the trail corridor. In addition to the perception of safety and security, comfort relates to the users' physical and psychological experience of walking, riding, and rolling within a low-stress and aesthetically appealing environment.

Increase Mobility and Access: Create a trail that provides a viable alternative to driving and increases nonmotorized access from local neighborhoods to employment and commercial centers, community services, transit, natural and cultural resources, and other amenities.

The CCRT will establish a regional bicycle corridor and connections with existing and planned local facilities to facilitate safe active travel between urban and rural communities. Increase access to nature and the regional off-street trail system.

Protect and Enhance Environmental and Cultural Resources: Create a trail that protects sensitive lands and habitats while celebrating the cultural and biological diversity of the surrounding community. This includes acknowledging and honoring the histories of Native peoples in and around Washington County, which rests on land that was first inhabited by the Atfalati-Kalapuyans, also known as the Tualatin Band of Kalapuyans, who flourished here for thousands of years. Today their descendants are tribal members of Grand Ronde and Siletz tribes, carrying on the traditions and cultures of their ancestors.

The planning, design, implementation, and maintenance of the CCRT will improve the unique local environmental and cultural resources. It will protect and enhance the topography, wetlands, and historic and cultural amenities along the corridor by utilizing native plantings, modern stormwater treatments, and fish-friendly culverts.

Key Decisions

During the design phase of the project, decisions will need to be made on several key aspects. Some decisions will involve defining the scope of improvements, others will define the design approach, and others will prioritize funding and implementation.

Higher priority decisions: affect alignment, scope of improvement, and cost.

1. Verify trail user groups
2. Future Transit
 - a. Determine the potential of future transit within the corridor.
 - Alignment with the TV Highway HOPE grant project and Metro HCT update.
 - b. Determine how accommodating future transit will affect the trail project's ability to cost-effectively meet its goals (such as comfort, access, and safety).
 - Identify how much space future transit would take in the corridor.
3. Structures
 - b. Decide whether the CCRT project will reuse/rebuild existing structures, or replace them.
 - c. If it is decided that the trail alignment will accommodate future transit, consider if any new or replacement structure should be designed to serve only the trail, or also future transit.
 - Identify the cost implications for this, and how would it affect completion of the trail project.

4. Trail ownership and maintenance assumptions and agreements.

Medium priority decisions: affect design approach and cost.

1. Trail width
 - a. Identify appropriate width to allow for comfortable separation of fast-moving cyclists and slower-moving pedestrians.
2. Street crossings
 - a. Consider how trail users will need to cross streets of varying levels of traffic and complexity. The project will need to make decisions about the level of investment to make in street crossings. Note that some preliminary analysis has been conducted in preparation for 2025-27 RFFA grant application.
3. Trailheads and access points
 - a. Identify locations for trailheads and access points to the trail.

Lower priority decisions: affect funding and implementation.

1. Investment prioritization
 - a. Determine how to prioritize investments along the trail, including in the connections, trailheads, need for lighting, and enhanced crossing improvements.
2. Amenities
 - a. Identify the types and quantities of amenities (e.g., illumination, art, landscaping) that would achieve the project's aesthetic goals.
3. Trail connections
 - a. Decide where and how the trail connects to adjacent neighborhoods and developments.