

Vision, Goals, and Policies

Trails provide a variety of benefits, including:

- Healthy communities
- Facilitating a physically active community
- Supporting efficient transportation
- Contributing to economic vitality (i.e. connecting for commutes, destinations, as well as draw for tourism).

Vision

The Thurston Region's trail network is accessible, expandable, and effectively maintained. The network provides safe and enjoyable recreation and active transportation for all users, connecting all Thurston County communities.

Goals & Policies

Goals and policies translate the region's vision into a more detailed framework for trail decision-making at all levels of government. **Twenty-eight policies** in the plan address the Thurston Region's **five goals** for trail planning and implementation:

- A Connected and Accessible Network
- A User-Friendly Network
- A Safe and Secure Experience
- A Collaborative Effort
- A Well-Maintained Network

A Connected and Accessible Network

The regional trails network is accessible and expandable, effectively connecting communities, destinations, and other transportation facilities.

1. Develop and maintain trails so that every community in Thurston County is connected to the regional trails network.
2. Connect existing and future schools, residential developments, senior living facilities, employment sites, parks, open spaces, and public and commercial services adjacent to and nearby to the regional trails network.
3. When feasible, purchase abandoned railroad rights-of-way (ROWS) to expand the regional trails network.

4. Connect the regional trails network to sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit services, park and ride lots, and other multimodal transportation facilities.
5. Connect the regional trails network to improve accessibility to neighborhoods with a higher proportion of households that are low-income, racially diverse, or have disabilities affecting mobility.
6. Build trails in an environmentally sensitive manner, protecting water resources and native fish and wildlife habitat while balancing the needs of the public for trail corridors that must traverse these critical areas.

A User-Friendly Network

The regional trails network functions well for different types of users.

1. Design trails and associated facilities on the regional network for users of all abilities and levels of experience. Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
2. Design trails and associated facilities in the regional network to support different forms of activity such as walking, running, bicycling, skating, and equestrian use where appropriate.
3. Design trail widths to accommodate future capacity demands.
4. Provide navigation and wayfinding signage at trailheads and on the regional trails network to help users identify their location, important destinations, junctions, and other connectors.
5. Guided by Washington state law, allow e-bikes on the regional trails network.
6. Provide a consistent user experience across the regional trails network, regardless of the managing trail agency.
7. Something about trail ambience/amenities

A Safe and Secure Experience

The regional trails network is safe and secure for all who use, operate, and maintain it.

1. Manage the speed of users on the regional trails network.
2. Mitigate existing hazards and avoid potential hazards on the regional trails network.
3. Use best practices in trail design to define useable spaces physically or symbolically to control access to property.
4. Develop and maintain the regional network so emergency personnel can readily respond to incidents on trails.
5. Minimize trail closures, provide safe alternate routes, and supply timely information to the public on any trail closures or detours on the regional network.

6. Where there are safety issues, consider how lighting at key locations can mitigate safety issues.

A Collaborative Effort

Trail managing agencies work collaboratively to build and maintain the regional network.

1. Support programs that encourage use of the regional trails network for recreation and transportation.
2. Foster regional collaboration among tribal, state, and local trail managers who maintain, plan, finance, and develop trail facilities.
3. Recognize the regional trails network as part of the transportation system.
4. Support compatible economic development opportunities associated with trail use such as tourism and business access.
5. Recognize that developing trails on the regional network typically includes four parts: conducting a trail feasibility study, performing preliminary engineering, acquiring right-of-way, and construction.
6. Engage trail users and the public in developing the regional trail network.

A Well-Maintained Network

The regional trails network is well-maintained in a cost-effective manner.

1. Maintain the regional trails network like a transportation asset in the same manner as roads and other transportation infrastructure. **DON'T IGNORE TRAIL MAINTENANCE.**
2. Enable stewardship opportunities for maintenance and promotion of the regional trails network.
3. Ensure trail resurfacing materials and repair work is compatible with all permissible trail modes of activity or travel.
4. Develop trails so that maintenance costs are minimized and the life cycle of the trail is extended.
5. Establish a year-round trail clearing schedule to account for seasonal needs.
6. Provide a single point of contact for trail users to report unsafe conditions.

DRAFT Thurston Regional Trails Plan Recommendations

Policy-Connected Recommendations

Section 1 articulates broader regional recommendations that apply to both the overall trail network and to specific segments of a single trail. These recommendations are linked to the goals identified in the plan.

Trail Project Recommendations

Section 2 identifies the trail project recommendations sorted by project type: 1) New Trail Corridors; 2) Extensions to Existing Trails; 3) Trail System Enhancements; and 4) Maintenance and Preservation.

Section 1: Policy-Connected Recommendations

Connections to Plan Goals. Each recommendation is tied to one of the plan's five policy goals:

- Goal 1: A Connected and Accessible Network
- Goal 2: A User-Friendly Network
- Goal 3: A Safe and Secure Experience
- Goal 4: A Collaborative Effort
- Goal 5: A Well-Maintained Network

Timing. The recommendations will be implemented as the trail managing agencies prioritize and program projects for their jurisdiction, secure funding for projects and programs, and advance trail projects from feasibility study to design, right-of-way, and construction phases. The recommendations include three timelines as follows:

1. **Near-term:** Projects to be implemented within five years
2. **Long-term:** Projects to be implemented within five to 20 years.
3. **Ongoing:** Projects that require regular activity, monitoring, and evaluation.

Lead. The jurisdiction having authority to implement the recommendation. Trails are managed differently by the various trail managing agencies and jurisdictions. In some instances, trail responsibility lies within a public works department, in others the tasks fall to the parks department. By listing both the managing agencies and jurisdiction, the plan recommends that all appropriate departments within a jurisdiction or entity be involved in trail planning and management, since trails require support from transportation, recreation, enforcement, planning, and communications divisions.

Level of Effort. The level of effort is a high-level cost estimate to implement the recommendations.

- **Low:** Less than \$100,000 – planning projects and small construction projects such as the production and installation of milepost markers, signs, bollards, and the construction of short neighborhood pathway connections
- **Medium:** \$100,000 to \$500,000 – more complex planning and design and engineering phases, small trail re-paver projects, and more complex neighborhood connector projects
- **High:** Greater than \$500,000 – larger capital projects such as construction of new trail segments, new restrooms, bridges, culvert replacements, etc.

Partners. Successful implementation of the policy-based recommendations will occur through collaboration with a variety of partners including federal, state, and local governments as well as community stakeholders.

Goal 1: A Connected and Accessible Network

ID	Recommendation	Timing	Lead	Level of Effort	Partners
1.1	Commit to prioritizing and constructing the planned trails in the <i>Thurston Regional Trails Plan</i> .	Near- and Long-term	Trail Managing Agencies and Jurisdictions	High	TRPC, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), RCO, and other grant agencies
1.2	Conduct studies to evaluate the feasibility and cost estimates for conceptual and proposed trails that are in the <i>Thurston Regional Trails Plan</i> . Prioritize studies that will connect trails to areas that have barriers to transportation.	Near- and Long-Term	Trail Managing Agencies and Jurisdictions	Medium	TRPC and WSDOT
1.3	Actively pursue a variety of grant programs to fund trail network investments and programs.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies	Low	TRPC, WSDOT
1.4	As part of the development/design review process, require ADA accessible connections between commercial, residential, educational, and transportation project proposals, where applicable, to existing and future trails.	Ongoing	Planning, Public works, and Parks	Medium to High	Transit Providers, School Districts, Developers,
1.5	Use the Thurston Thrives Community Design Action Team's trail access assessment map tool as a baseline for evaluating and constructing pathway retrofits between existing development and trails to improve active transportation connectivity.*	Ongoing	Planning, Public works, and Parks	Low to Medium	Thurston Thrives Community Design Action Team, Community service organizations and volunteers
1.6	Plan for and implement projects for additional parking supply at existing or new trailheads to meet demand and to mitigate unsafe and nuisance parking conditions.	Near- and Long-term	Trail Managing Agencies	Medium to High	TRPC

* <https://trpc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=5b0a9df67e0d45efb19d81ee7a3628b3>

Goal 2: A User-Friendly Network

ID	Recommendation	Timing	Lead	Level of Effort	Partners & Role
2.1	Publish and maintain up-to-date online information about existing shared-use trails to include maps, areas of interest, parking locations, distance, and available amenities.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Low	TRPC – Modifications to Thurston County Bicycle Map
2.2	Plan for and widely publicize notices on pending trail maintenance and construction activity closures. Identify safe detour routes, wherever possible, to minimize disruptions to trail users.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies and Community Outreach Specialists	Low	Partnering Trail Managing Agencies, Intercity Transit, TRPC, and others for outreach
2.3	Where lacking, post trail rules, permitted uses, and manager contact information at trailheads and high use access points.	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Low	
2.4	Where lacking, install way finding signage and milepost markers to aid trail users with navigation.	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Low	Community service organizations and volunteers
2.5	Assess and map the existing inventory of trail supportive facilities. Plan for and install such facilities at trailheads and on trails where they are unavailable. This includes interpretive signs, viewing areas, seating, bicycle parking, equestrian uses, drinking water, restrooms, safety lighting, and other amenities, as appropriate and feasible.	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies	Medium	TRPC, community service organizations, and volunteers
2.6	Create an appealing brand for the trail network to promote its awareness and use among community members and visitors.	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Low	Experience Olympia and Beyond, South Thurston County communities, businesses, and the public

Goal 3: A Safe and Secure Experience

ID	Recommendation	Timing	Lead	Level of Effort	Partners
3.1	Conduct trail/street crossing studies and implement safety crossing improvements at hazardous locations with high volume, high speed, and limited site distance.	Near-term	Public Works	Low to High	Affected communities, stakeholders, trail users
3.2	Publish emergency contact information at all trailheads and popular trail access points. Maintain working website links for all QR coded signs.	Near term	Trail Managing Agencies	Low	
3.3	Create and maintain an assortment of visual trail safety communication toolkits that are readily available for distribution through trail partner and communications networks.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies, PIOs, Public Works, Parks, Police, TRPC, Intercity Transit	Low	News media, Schools, Colleges, CTR worksites, social service providers, senior communities, Healthy Kids Safe Streets Network
3.4	Develop and offer youth and adult bicycling skills workshops through community recreation programs and other established curriculums.	Near-Term and Ongoing	Intercity Transit Walk N Roll, Parks and Recreation Departments	Low	Bicycle Shops, Boys and Girls Club, School PE Programs, Safe Kids Thurston County
3.5	Establish, adopt, and publish a regional joint rule for the operation of electric-assisted bicycles and electric foot scooters on the trail network in conformance with RCW 46.61.710*. **	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies, Public Works Departments, Parks Departments, Law Enforcement	Low	
3.6	Establish, adopt, and publish a regional joint rule for an advisory posted speed limit throughout the trail network.**	Near-Term	Trail Managing Agencies, Public Works Departments, Parks Departments, Law Enforcement	Low	

*CFR 46.61.710: (Mopeds, EPAMDs, motorized foot scooters, personal delivery devices, electric-assisted bicycles, class 1 electric-assisted bicycles, class 2 electric-assisted bicycles, class 3 electric-assisted bicycles—General requirements and operation).

**Rules could be implemented in interim manner for a six month to one year period for evaluation and modification before final adoption.

Goal 4: A Collaborative Effort

ID	Recommendation	Timing	Lead	Level of Effort	Partners
4.1	Accept the Thurston Regional Trails Plan and incorporate its goals, policies, and recommendations into relevant plans and programs.	Near-term	Trail Managing Agencies	Low	Cities and County
4.2	Convene an annual trail planning meeting with regional, local, tribal, and state partners, including other governments, and stakeholders to advance the goals of the Regional Trails Plan.	Near-term and Ongoing	TRPC and Trail Managing Agencies	Low	Listed in recommendation
4.3	Establish a clearly defined “Trail Network / System” and explore joint management, maintenance, funding models, and update existing agreements or develop other agreements to support system needs.	Near-term and Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions and TRPC	High	
4.4	Resolve any liability or other legal issues with shared trail management and maintenance – either with the public or other entities. Seek legislative relief if necessary to overcome barriers.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies and Other Jurisdictions	Medium - High	Legal staff Legislators
4.5	Maintain communications and collaboration with trail managers in neighboring counties and state agencies about inter-county and cross-state trail opportunities and share data with the Washington State Recreation Conservation Office Statewide Trails Database.	Ongoing	TRPC, Trail Managing Agencies, WSDOT, RCO, and other Jurisdictions	Low - Medium	MPO/RTPO, transit and other providers in neighboring communities and counties.
4.6	Create inclusive processes with diverse stakeholder representation during all phases of planning, operations, and project selection to strive for a trail network that serves community members’ needs, regardless of their age, socioeconomic situation, or abilities.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies	Medium – High	Individual community members, members of groups, and consultation with equity committee members or staff.

Goal 5: A Well-Maintained Network

ID	Recommendation	Timing	Lead	Level of Effort	Partners
5.1	Assess the condition of trail pavement, bridges, tunnels, and other trail related facilities and develop asset management plans for long-term and cost-effective preservation strategies.	Near-term Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies	Medium - High	
5.2	Create stewardship opportunities for the public to participate in trail maintenance and enhancements through “adopt a trail” programs, clean-up events, scout programs, and military partnership programs.	Near-term Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies	High	Community Organizations and volunteers
5.3	Evaluate the effectiveness of establishing a funding set-aside of federal Surface Transportation Block Grant or Transportation Alternatives for funding trail network pavement preservation projects.*	Near-term	TRPC and Trail Managing Agencies	Low	Technical Advisory Committee, Transportation Policy Board
5.4	Explore joint agency agreements to increase efficiency of trail maintenance needs across the network such as sharing equipment and rotating scheduled responsibility for routine maintenance.	Ongoing	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Medium	
5.5	Include routine and emergency maintenance costs in new or expanded trail projects to make decisions based on full life cycle costs and identify a sustainable maintenance funding source.	Annual	Trail Managing Agencies Jurisdictions	Low - Medium	
5.6	Evaluate alternatives for the useability, maintenance, and alignment of the I-5 Bicycle Trail from the Chehalis Western Trail to Boulevard Road to resolve chronic maintenance and safety deficiencies.	Near-term	City of Olympia and WSDOT	Medium	City of Lacey, Thurston County, TRPC
5.7	Update the Thurston Regional Trails Plan every five years.	Near-Term	TRPC	Medium	Trail Managing Agencies and Stakeholders

*5.3 would be supported by fulfilling 5.1

Section2: Trail Project Recommendations

TRPC coordinated with trail managing agencies to gather and compile information about their near to long term trail projects (20+ year planning horizon). The projects included in this section will be included as the project recommendations in the Regional Trails Plan.

Project Types. Each trail project recommendation is shown, in the tables that follow, by the following project types:

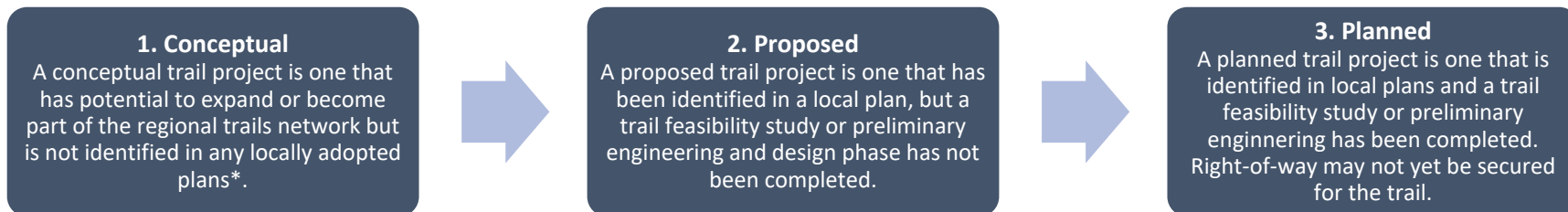
1. **New Trail Corridors** – Projects that expand the regional trail system with new corridors
2. **Extensions to Existing Trails** – Projects that extend existing corridors
3. **Trail System Enhancements** – Projects such as street crossing improvements, ADA accessibility improvements, new trailheads or trailhead improvements, etc.
4. **Maintenance and Preservation** – Projects such as pavement resurfacing or replacing facilities that are worn or have exceeded their lifecycle

Trail Planning Agency: The lead jurisdiction or trail managing agency that is responsible for implementing the project.

Project ID: An identifier is assigned to each major trail corridor in the trails plan (see Online Trail Map description below). For example, ID 3 is assigned to the Chehalis Western Trail (CWT). ID 3A refers to the 41st Avenue Trailhead construction project on the CWT. Reference TRPC’s online map to associate the Project IDs with the locations and their respective trails:

<https://trpc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=66469559cf744de7b9746a4537fcc484>

Project Status. The plan includes three descriptions to describe a project’s status, or the extent of planning activities or studies performed to advance it toward construction or implementation.



* **Note:** plans such as comprehensive, transportation, parks and recreation, bicycle and pedestrian plans, or standalone trail feasibility studies.

Table 1: New Trail Corridors

Project Name	Trail Planning Agency	Status	Project ID	Planning Horizon
Capitol Lake to Belmore Trail	Olympia, Thurston County, Tumwater, Department of Enterprise Services	Conceptual	2	20+ Years
Fir Tree Road Connector Trail	Thurston County	Conceptual		20+ years
Gate to Belmore Trail	Thurston County	Planned	6	0-20 years
Grand Mound-Tenino Connector Trail	Thurston County	Conceptual		20+ years
Grass Lake Trail	City of Olympia	Planned	7	0-20 years
Highway 101 Trail	City of Olympia	Conceptual	8	20+ years
Lacey-Yelm Connector Trail	Thurston County	Conceptual		20+ years
Power Line Trail	Thurston County	Conceptual	1C	20+ years
Rochester Grand Mound Trail	Thurston County	Proposed	1	20+ years
Tumwater to Downtown Olympia Union Pacific Line	City of Olympia, City of Tumwater Thurston County	Conceptual	5	20+ Years

Table 2: Extensions to Existing Trails

Project Name	Trail Planning Agency	Status	Project ID	Planning Horizon
I-5 Bicycle Trail				
Nisqually Cutoff Extension	WSDOT	Conceptual	9F	20+ years
Chehalis Western Trail				
Rainier Extension	Thurston County	Planned	3D	20+ years
Deschutes Valley Trail				
Neighborhood Connector	City of Tumwater	Planned	4C	20+ years
Pioneer Park Extension	City of Tumwater	Planned	4B	20+ years
Tumwater Valley Drive Extension	City of Tumwater	Planned	4A	0-20 years
Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail				
Bucoda Extension	Thurston County	Proposed	17C	20+ years
West Tenino Extension	City of Tenino	Proposed	13B	0-20 years
SR 510 Bike Path				
SR 510 Phase 2 Extension	WSDOT	Planned	12A	0-20 years
Karen Fraser Woodland Trail				
Phase 3 Lacey Extension	Thurston County	Conceptual	10F	0-20 years
Phase 4 Olympia Extension	City of Olympia	Planned	10C	20+ years
Yelm Prairie Line Trail				
Roy Extension	Pierce County	Proposed	16B	20+ years
Yelm Extension	City of Yelm	Proposed	16A	0-20 years
West Bay Trail				
5 th Street Extension	City of Olympia	Planned	15A	0-20 years
Heritage Park Connection	City of Olympia	Planned	15B	0-20 years
Schneider Hill Road Extension	City of Olympia	Proposed	15C	20+ years

Table 3: System Enhancements

Project Name	Trail Planning Agency	Status	Project ID	Planning Horizon
I-5 Bicycle Trail				
ADA improvements: Eastside St trail entrance	City of Olympia	Planned	9B	0-20 years
Street Crossing Improvement: Boulevard Road	City of Olympia	Planned	9D	0-20 years
Street Crossing Improvement: Eastside St	City of Olympia	Planned	9C	0-20 years
Street Crossing Improvement: Union Avenue	City of Olympia	Planned	9E	0-20 years
Karen Fraser Woodland Trail				
Street Crossing Improvement: Fones Road	City of Olympia	Planned	10A	0-20 years
Trailhead (New): Lacey Depot Park	City of Lacey	Planned	10D	0-20 years
Chehalis Western Trail				
Trailhead (New): 41 st Ave	Thurston County	Planned	3A	0-20 years
Trailhead (Addition): Fir Tree Road	Thurston County	Planned	3C	0-20 years
Restroom: 67 th Ave Trailhead	Thurston County	Planned	3B	0-20 years
Yelm-Tenino-Rainier Trail				
Street Crossing Improvement: SR 507	Thurston County	Proposed	17B	0-20 years
Yelm Prairie Line Trail				
Yelm Prairie Line Trail Overpass	City of Yelm	Proposed	16C	20+ years

Table 4: Maintenance and Preservation

Project Name	Trail Planning Agency	Status	Project ID	Planning Horizon
Chehalis Western Trail				
Trail Surface Rehabilitation Program	Thurston County	Planned	3E	0-20 years
Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail				
Wilkowski Park Restroom Replacement	Thurston County	Planned	17A	0-20 years

System Gaps - Conceptual

- I. Connecting the Rochester Grand Mound Trail and the Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail
- II. Connecting the conceptual East Olympia Trail and the Chehalis Western Trail
- III. Connecting the SR 510 Bike Path and the Karen Fraser Woodland Trail