

Technical Report 6

Parks, Trails and Open Spaces

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Introduction

Clark County possesses a rich cultural and environmental heritage. It is a beautiful place that provides opportunities to experience this beauty through outdoor activities. Well developed parks and trails along with open spaces encourage everyone to enjoy the area. The popularity of outdoor recreational activities continues to grow in our region. Clark County's weather is reasonably mild and most facilities can be utilized year round.

As population growth expands the urban landscape, new recreational facilities and preservation of natural areas will continue to play an important role in enhancing the livability and health of the community. The Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan will concentrate new economic growth and population. This Technical Report focuses on existing conditions in the area and opportunities to enhance the livability of the area through parks, trails and open spaces.

Parks

Clark County owns approximately 7,335 acres of park and open space lands. Urban parks and recreational facilities throughout the City of Vancouver and the unincorporated areas of Clark County are operated by the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department through a City of Vancouver and Clark County interlocal agreement. These lands are divided into two categories: urban and regional facilities. Urban facilities include neighborhood parks, community parks, trails, and urban open space. Regional facilities include regional parks, conservation and greenway systems, trails and special facilities. Acquisition of facilities is primarily funded by impact fees. Funding for development of parks and trails comes from a combination of funding sources, including impact fees, real estate excise tax, grants and donations. Additional funding is provided by the Greater Clark Parks District (a metropolitan parks district) which has taxing authority of \$6.25 per \$1,000 of assessed value for park maintenance of 35 specified park properties.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents. These parks are designed primarily for non-organized recreation and are located within walking distance of most users. The parks are generally 5 acres in size and serve residents within a ½-mile radius. These parks do not provide parking or restrooms.

Community Parks

Community parks provide a focal point for a broad range of users. Usually 20-100 acres in size, community parks are used by all segments of the population and generally serve residents up to a 3-mile radius. These parks provide for more active uses, such as organized sports, specialty features (i.e. skate parks) and loop trail systems. Community parks typically have support facilities such as parking, picnic shelters/tables and restrooms.

Regional Parks

Regional parks are recreational areas that serve residents from throughout Clark County and beyond. Regional parks are usually larger than 50 acres and provide diverse recreational opportunities. Because of their large size and broad service area, regional parks typically require more support facilities. Regional parks typically highlight a specific site feature, such as woodlands, waterfront beach, river systems, etc.



Natural areas and Open Spaces

Natural areas and open spaces are primarily undeveloped spaces which are managed for their natural value and low-impact recreational use. Natural areas range in size from one acre to thousands of acres and may include wetlands, wildlife habitats, or stream corridors.

The following table is an inventory of recreational facilities within the Highway 99 planning area. The facilities are located within the Vancouver-Clark Parks Recreation Department Park Impact Districts 8 and 10.

Table 1 | Recreational Facilities Inventory

<i>Name</i>	<i>Undeveloped Acreage</i>	<i>Developed Acreage</i>	<i>Total Acreage</i>
Neighborhood Parks			
Gaiser Middle School Park		5.00	5.00
Sarah J. Anderson Elementary	7.70		7.70
Tenny Creek Park		8.25	8.25
Tenny Creek School Site	5.00		5.00
Greyhawk NH Park		5.00	5.00
Community Parks			
Hazel Dell		20.00	20.00
Open Space/Natural Area			
Salmon Creek Greenway	20.18		20.18
Sherwood Meadows UOS	0.17		0.17
Sherwood North	3.39		3.39
Sherwood Ridge	14.50		14.50
Regional Park/Trails & Greenways			
Salmon Creek / Kline Line Park	123.00	35.00	158.00
Salmon Creek Greenway	430.20	5.80	436.00
Burnt Bridge Creek Greenway	158.50	7.50	166.00
Total Inventory	762.64		849.19

Source: Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plans, Recreation, & Open Space Plan, May 2007

The 2006 Vancouver-Clark Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan adopted May 2007, identified current and future recreational needs and developed a financing strategy for implementation of future capital and non-capital projects. Within the Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan, the Plan is forecasting the need for property acquisition for three additional neighborhood parks and one community park. Urban park development funds have been identified for the three neighborhood parks.

Table 2 | Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan Funded 6-Year Park Acquisition and Development Projects

Future Park Acquisitions	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2006)
South of 99 th Street – East of 25 th Avenue	PIF-A	\$720,326
North of 78 th Street - West of St. Johns	PIF-A	\$678,976
South of 68 th Street – East of 17 th Avenue	PIF-A	\$659,200
Community Park or Hazel Dell Expansion	PIF-A	\$4,926,915
Urban Park Development		
North of 78 th Street - West of St. Johns	PIF-D, REET-U	\$537,324
South of 68 th Street – East of 17 th Avenue	PIF-D, REET-U	\$537,324
Lalonde Park	PIF-D, REET-U	\$763,848

Trails and Greenways

Trails are defined as any path, route, way, right-of-way, or corridor posted, signed, or designed for non-motorized travel or passage by the general public. There are five types of trail classification: regional and multi-use, local, rustic, semi-private, and bike/pedestrian paths which are located on city, county or state road right-of-ways.

Greenways are corridors that follow linear features such as streams, railroad right-of way, or power lines and often contain trails.



The vision for the pedestrian and bicycle trail network is connectivity. The system should provide enticing and safe conversion of short car trips into desirable walking or bike trips. The Trail and Bikeway Systems Plan is intended to guide the development and design of an interconnected trail and bikeway system. This system should maximize functional mobility while providing recreational opportunities.

Trails and bikeway systems bring enormous benefits to all residents by increasing transportation choices for walking and biking as well as improving environmental conditions, economic benefit and the overall health of the community. For example, a 2004 study of bike/pedestrian trails in Lincoln, Nebraska concluded that for every dollar spent on trails nearly three dollars of public health benefit are produced. Another example can be found along the

Columbia riverfront. This 4-mile trail, which cost about \$1 million per mile, has resulted in a private sector investment of \$350 million dollars and is still attracting new investors.

The 2006 Trail and Bikeway System Plan guide the development and design of an interconnected trails and bikeway system within Clark County. The 2006 Vancouver-Clark

Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan identifies implementation strategies including: project priorities; financing strategies; existing funding sources; project costs; optional funding sources to meet projected shortfall; maintenance costs; staffing needs; maintenance and operations funding sources; and partnerships. The Parks Comprehensive plan identifies both a trail development project and a trail acquisition project within the Highway 99 Sub-Area that are included in the six-year capital facilities plan and one trail that has been identified only for planning purposes at this time.

The trail development project identified in the plan is to construct 10 miles of a trail next to the County-owned Chelatchie Railroad right-of-way from the Ellen Davis Trail to NE 199th Street. Subsequent to the Parks Comprehensive Plan adoption, planning efforts have identified segments of trail to develop in the 33 mile County owned railroad corridor. The segment between Highway 99 and Minnehaha Street at St. James was identified. The Parks Comprehensive Plan identifies the 10 mile stretch of trail for this project as needing seven million dollars with Regional Real Estate Excise Tax identified to be used for funding. The updated construction estimate for the 1.6 mile trail segment of the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad with Trail from Highway 99 to Minnehaha at St. James is described in detail in Appendix A.

The trail acquisition project identified in the plan is the Lalonde Creek Trail and Greenway which is an extension of the Salmon Creek Greenway Trail. The Parks Comprehensive Plan identifies \$388,067 to be allocated for land acquisition with the Greater Clark Parks District to be used for funding. Table 3 below shows the projected estimated cost as shown in the 2006 Vancouver-Clark Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

The Parks Comprehensive Plan also identifies the North/South Powerline Trail, of which there is a four mile segment that is within the Highway 99 Sub-Area. This trail segment is described in detail in Appendix B.

Finally, this plan proposes Heritage Trails, which is a trail type unique to this plan that utilizes both public right-of-way and sidewalks. (See Technical Report 7 Heritage Trail Concept)

Table 3 | Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan Funded 6-Year Trail and Greenway Projects

Project Name	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2006)
Chelatchie Prairie Trail	REET-R	\$7,000,000
Lalonde Creek Trail	GCPD	\$388,067

Portland Metro Regional Trails: The vision for a regional system of trails and greenways

From the quiet beauty of Forest Park’s earthen Wildwood Trail to the noisy elegance of the Eastbank Esplanade, regional trails are like we are – they come in all shapes and sizes. Different trails are designed to suit different needs. Some, like the I-205 Corridor Trail, are best for bike commuters and people on the go. Others take you into a more natural setting where you might stroll beneath circling red-tailed hawks or float past great blue herons standing regally along the riverbank.

The growing popularity of outdoor recreation activities, such as walking, running, cycling, skateboarding and wildlife observation, has increased the need for quality regional trails. Park and recreation providers, local cities and citizens have teamed up in an ambitious effort to establish a network of trails linking parks and greenspaces to local communities and other area attractions.

When originally conceived 100 years ago, Portland's trail system was going to be 40 miles long, circling the city and linking public parks. The metropolitan area has done a lot of growing since then. In 1992, a vision for a regional system of trails and greenways was described in the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan that expanded the concept to 25 cities and four counties within the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan region. Today, plans call for a 950-mile network of regional trails – including water trails and greenways. Approximately 30 percent of the land-based trails are complete.

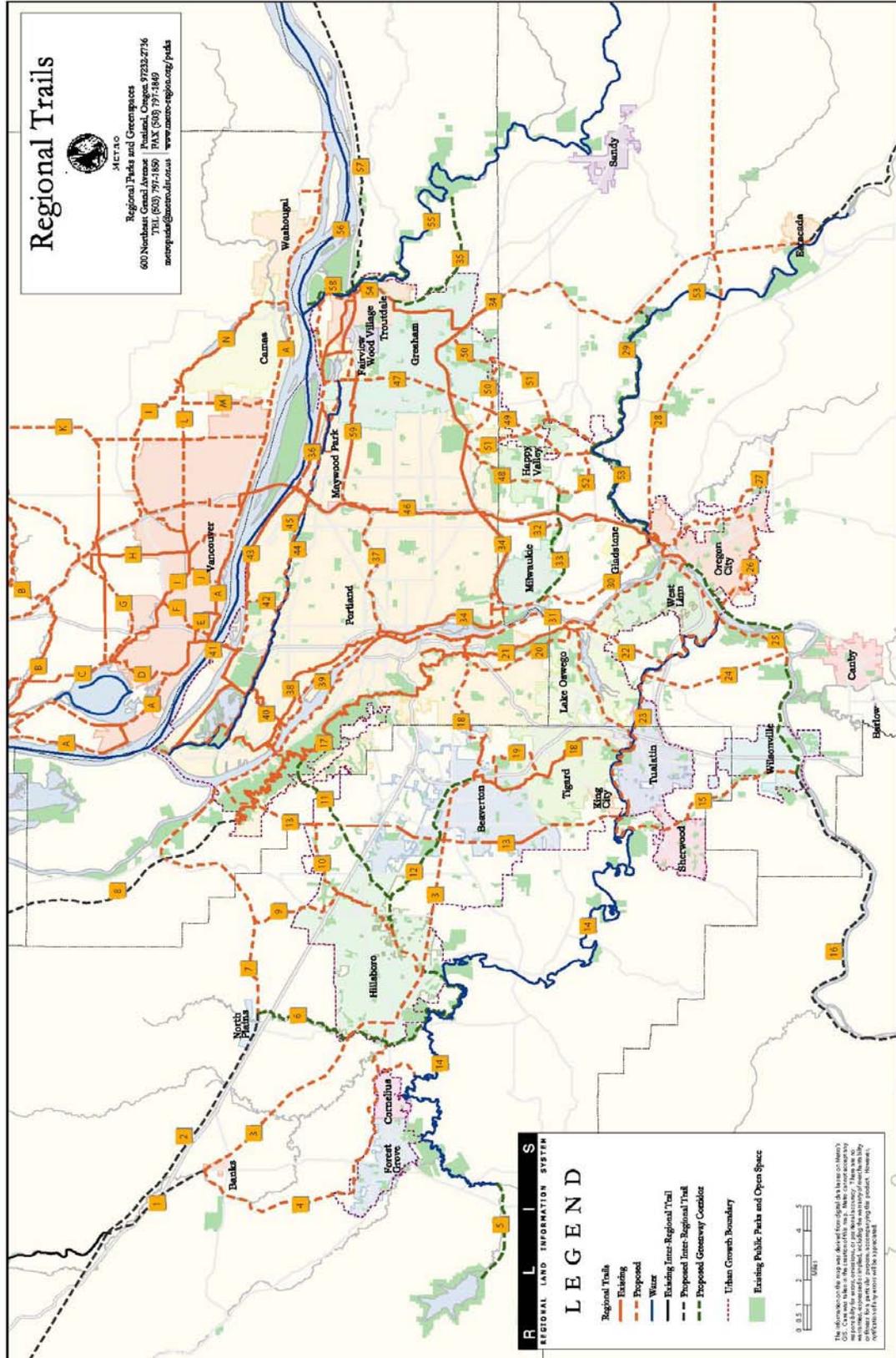
Regional trails provide excellent places for hikers, walkers, runners, cyclists – even moms with baby strollers – to exercise and experience nature. Our trails not only serve as independent community amenities, they also enhance existing recreational resources by linking neighborhoods and schools to parks, waterfronts, recreational centers and other parts of our daily lives.

What makes a trail regional?

Regional trails differ from local trails in certain ways. For example, regional trails typically are separated from road ways – either with curbs, plantings or other barriers. Separating the trails make them safer for recreational users and reduce conflicts with automobile traffic, which can make them quicker for commuters.

Regional trails are usually longer than neighborhood trails – crossing neighborhood lines and linking cities, counties and even states. They also form connections between parks, natural areas and other trails. Regional trails are destinations themselves, but also take us from the places we live to the places we learn, work, shop and play.

The Vancouver-Clark Parks Recreation Department and Metro are currently reviewing the regional parks inventory. At this time, it is anticipated that up to 20 segments identified from the approved 17 Clark County regional trails will be added to a regional network including the North/South Powerline Trail and the Chelatchie Rail Trail.



**APPENDIX A Chelatchie Prairie Railroad with Trail:
Highway 99 to Minnehaha at St. James Section.**

Chelatchie Prairie Railroad with Trail: Highway 99 to Minnehaha at St. James Section.

Project History

Clark County acquired the Chelatchie railroad right-of-way in 1985. It extends diagonally through the county for thirty-three miles from Burnt Bridge Creek at Lakeshore, terminating just a few miles from Yale Reservoir at the original site of the paper mill that used to operate in Chelatchie Prairie in the northeast corner of Clark County. Clark County acquired the right-of-way both for commercial transportation use and as a trail corridor. The rail is currently leased from Clark County and is actively being used for light-industrial rail commerce and passenger excursion trips.

This project is included in and consistent with the 2006 Clark County Regional Trail and Bikeway Systems Plan and the 2007-2012 Transportation Improvement Program.

The County owns 100% of the right-of-way with about 10% burdened with reversionary conditions. The County anticipates long-term growth and expansion of the light-industrial rail and passenger excursion activities. The County is responsible for maintaining the right-of-way, bridges and crossings. The operator is responsible for track maintenance.

Project Description

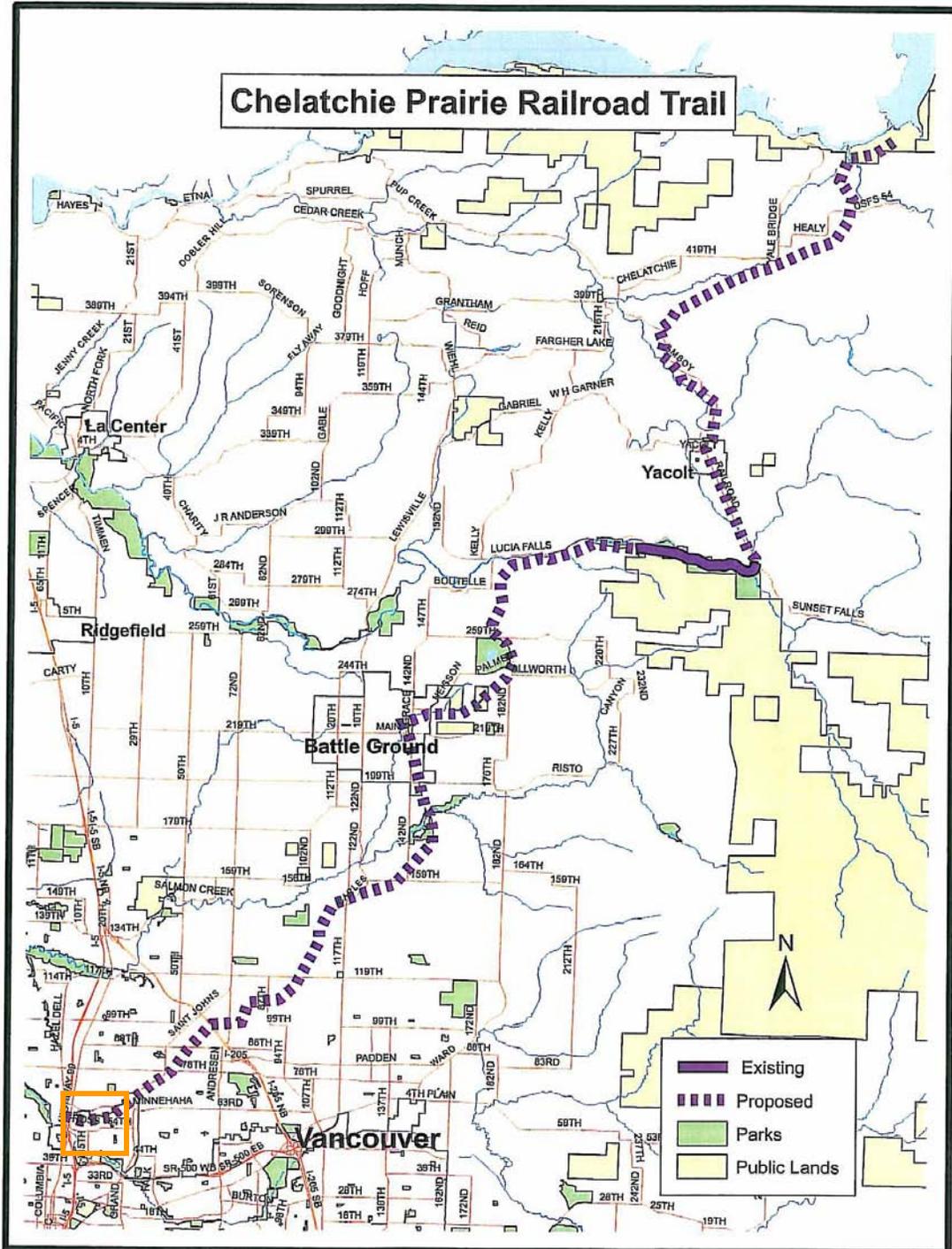
Design and construct a 1.6 mile segment of the Chelatchie Rail Trail from Highway 99 to Minnehaha at St. James. This is a segment of the 33 mile Chelatchie Rail Trail that will promote and expand multi-modal transportation opportunities, further advance Clark County's economic development and provide for diverse opportunities for a healthy community.

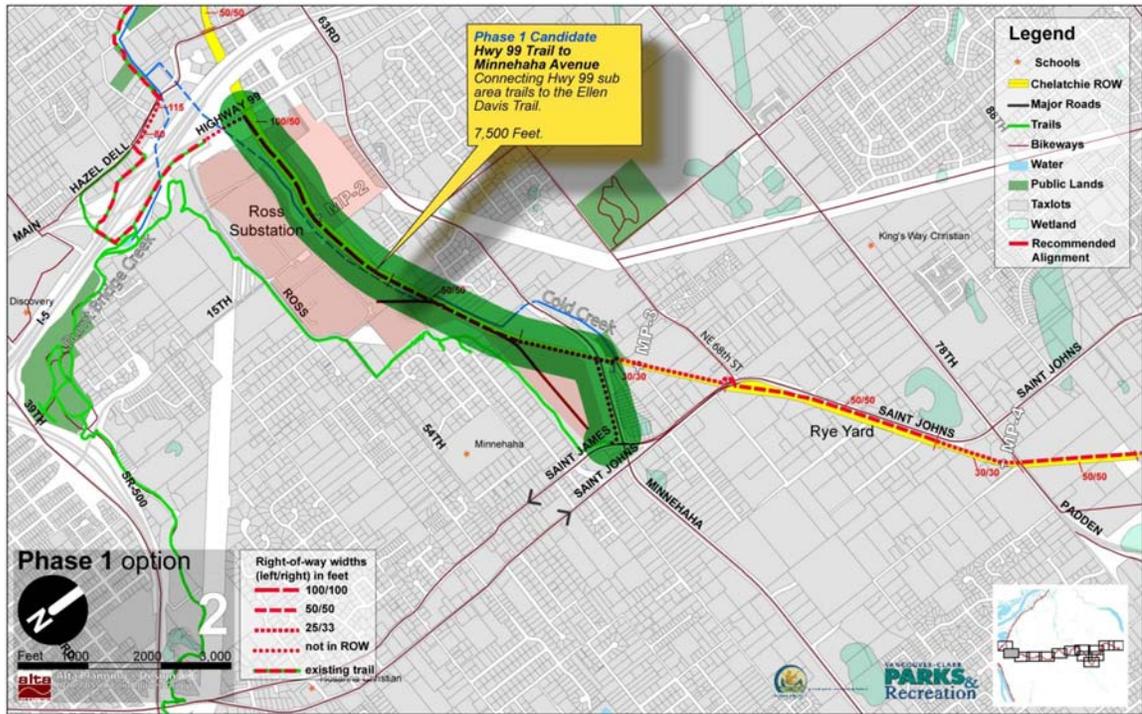
The rail/trail segment between Highway 99 and Minnehaha is expected to be a 12 wide asphalt trail with various elements incorporated for walking and biking. This segment will provide a significant connection between the Highway 99 sub-area and multiple regional trails. Additionally it will improve bike and pedestrian connectivity to the Highway 99 sub-area for multi-modal travel.



The community is a significant stakeholder in the development process and will be consulted through open houses and stakeholder meetings to provide input. These outreach efforts will supplement the five open houses that were held for the entire trail corridor alignment plan that had over 200 community members in attendance.

Figure 1 | Site Vicinity Map





Project Deliverables

Highway 99 to Minnehaha at St. James trail segment:

- Design and engineering construction plans
- Environmental and development permits
- Cost estimate
- Public and outreach plan
- Construct 1.6 miles of trail

Typical cross-section 66 foot ROW

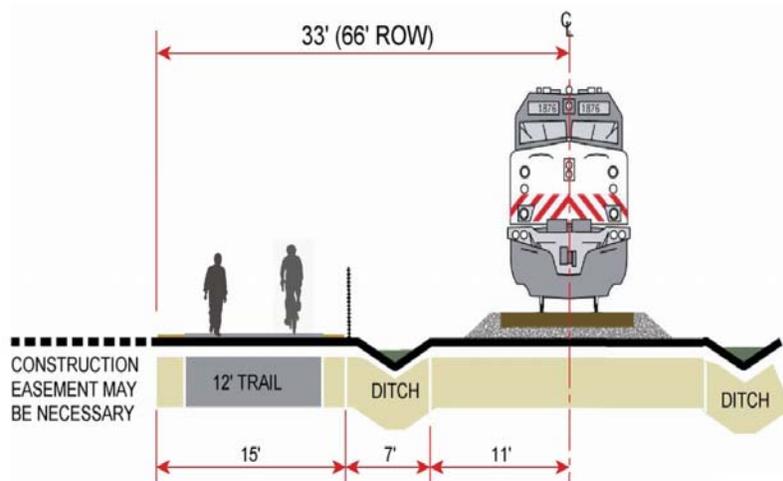


Figure 2 | Typical Section

Primary Technical / Administrative Issues

Corridor/Study Plan:

- Preservation of the railroad corridor
- Railroad operations
- Safety
- Reversionary rights
- Adjacent property owners
- Connectivity
- Transportation function
- Services diversity
- Sensitive Environmental & cultural areas
- Use
- Partner missions sometimes conflict
- Future Funding

County/Client Liability and Risk Areas

Partners may have conflicting missions/goals

Roles and Responsibilities

The project encompasses the responsibilities of Community Planning in oversight of the railroad; Public Works in oversight of transportation projects; and Parks in the oversight of trail development. The project will be administered as a Clark County Public Works project with Parks providing primary project management responsibilities. Additional oversight and reviewing responsibilities will be from Clark County Community Planning. As with any Clark County owned project ultimate oversight is provided by the Board of County Commissioners.

	COST ESTIMATE	TOTAL
Design and Permits	\$83,297	
Construction	\$638,938	\$722,235

Schedule (Summary):

	Begin	End
Planning	04/2/2007	06/30/2008
Design and Permits		
Construction		

Goal Statement

Deliver a 1.6 mile trail that successfully develops a premier multi-modal and rail transportation and trail corridor; ensures public safety; and realizes public acceptance within the identified budget and schedule.

APPENDIX B North/South Powerline Trail: Hazel Dell Reach

North/South Powerline Trail: Hazel Dell Reach

Project History

During the early stages of the Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) right-of-way utility line was established as the eastern border of the planning area. Initial conversations with BPA, Vancouver-Clark Parks, and Team 99 indicated that this bicycle and pedestrian corridor may contribute to the overall livability to the area.

The Power Line Trail Highway 99 sub-area segment is approximately 4 miles of proposed trail section within the planned North/South Power Line Trail as identified by the 2006 Clark County Trail and Bikeway Systems Plan. This reach extends northeast from the Chelatchie Prairie Rail Trail at 17th Avenue and continues northeast skirting the Hazel Dell Community Park before heading north to reach Interstate-205 within the Highway 99 Sub-Area Plan Boundary.

This segment is the southern portion of the proposed twenty mile North/South Power Line trail that continues north to and terminates at the North Fork of the Lewis River.

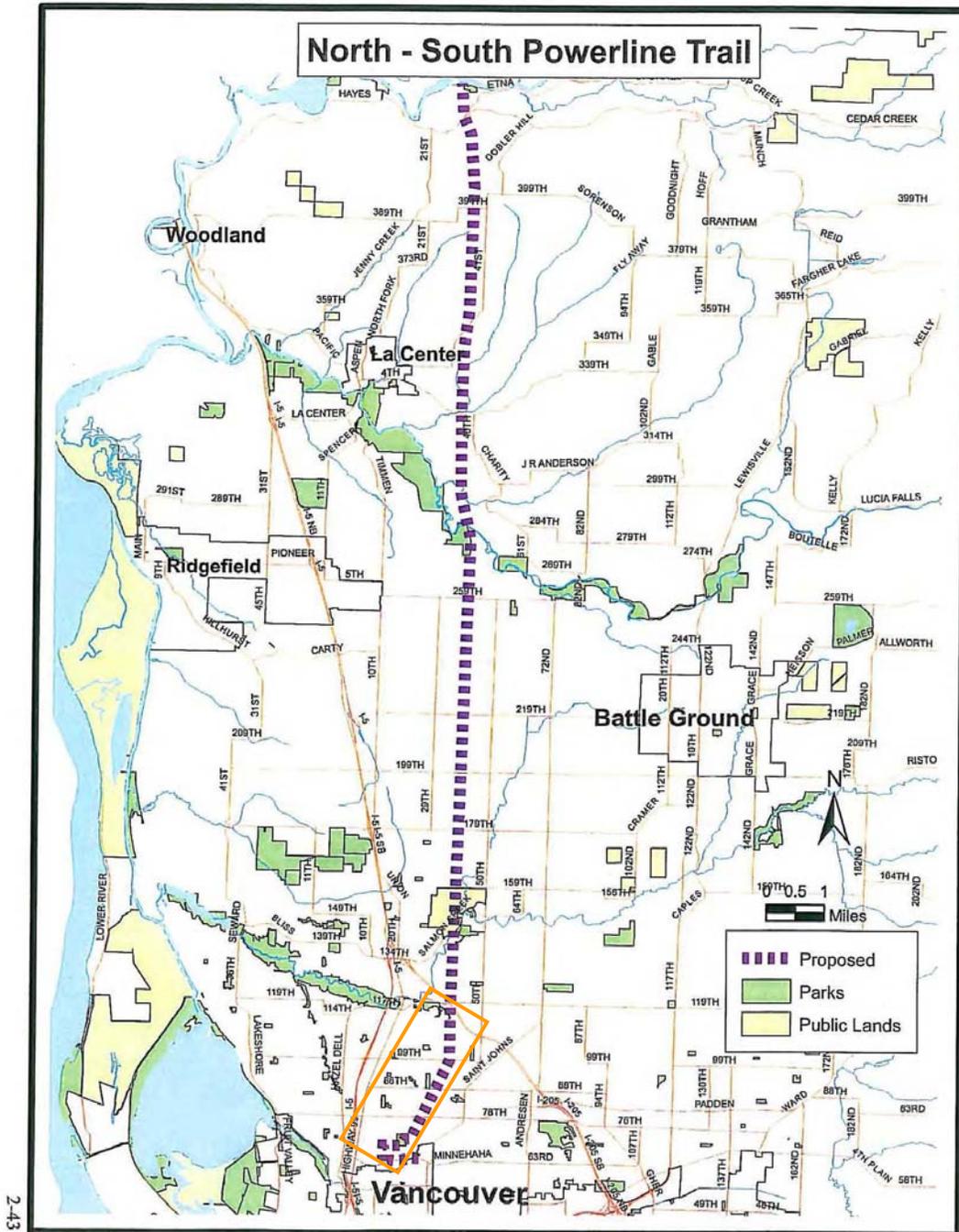
Project Description

This project will plan, design and construct a 4 mile segment of the Power Line Trail, Highway 99 Sub-Area segment from 17th Avenue and the Chelatchie Rail Trail to Sherwin Meadows Open Space. The trail is expected to be a 12 wide asphalt trail with various elements incorporated for walking and biking. This segment will provide a significant connection between the Highway 99 sub-area and multiple regional trails. Additionally it will improve bike and pedestrian connectivity throughout the Highway 99 sub-area for north south directional multi-modal travel opportunities.



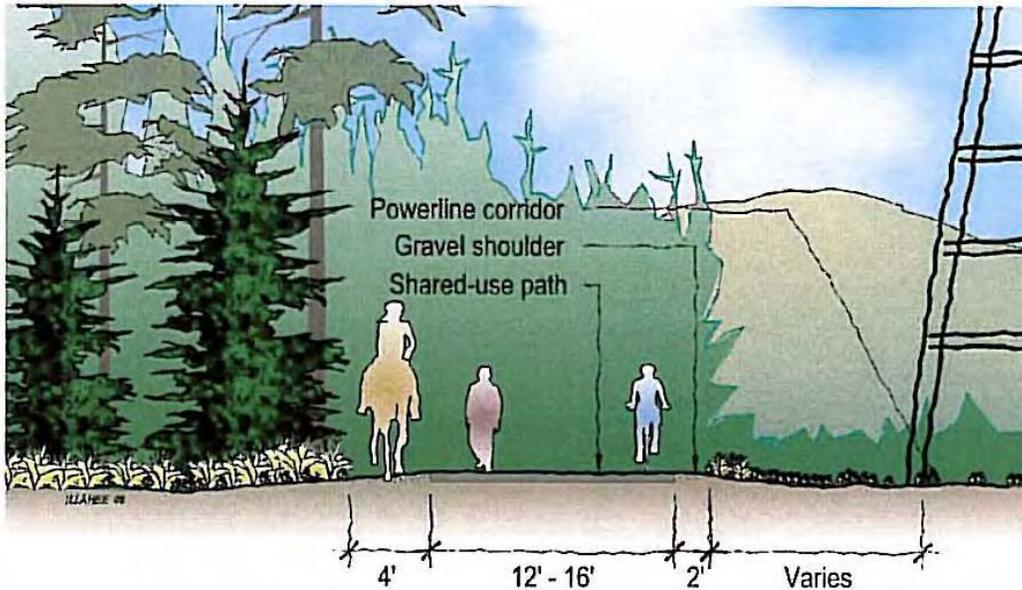
The community is a significant stakeholder in the development process and will be consulted through open houses and stakeholder meetings to provide input. These outreach efforts will supplement the open houses held for Highway 99 sub-area plan.

Figure 3 | Site Vicinity Map



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Figure 4 | Typical Section



Project Deliverables

Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Trail to Salmon Creek trail segment:

- Design and engineering construction plans
- Environmental and development permits
- Cost estimate
- Public and outreach plan
- Develop activity stations and future funding/timeline
- Construct 4-miles of trail

Primary Technical / Administrative Issues

- Safety
- Reversionary rights
- Adjacent property owners
- Connectivity
- Partner missions sometimes conflict
- Future Funding
- Bonneville Power Administration Utility Right-of-Way Operations

County/Client Liability and Risk Areas

Partners may have conflicting missions/goals

Roles and Responsibilities

The project encompasses the responsibilities of Public Works in oversight of transportation projects and Parks in the oversight of trail development. The project will be administered as a Clark County Public Works project with Parks providing primary project management responsibilities. Additional oversight and reviewing responsibilities will be from Clark County Community Planning. As with any Clark County owned project ultimate oversight is provided by the Board of County Commissioners.

	COST ESTIMATE	TOTAL
Design and Permits	\$191,363	
Construction	\$1,469,964	\$1,661,600

Schedule (Summary):

	Begin	End
Planning	07/21/2007	06/30/2009
Design and Permits		
Construction		

Goal Statement

Deliver a 4 mile trail that successfully develops a premier multi-modal transportation and trail corridor; ensures public safety; and realizes public acceptance within the identified budget and schedule.