

**Clark County** is located in the southwestern part of the state of Washington covering a total area of 656 square miles. The Columbia River flows along the southern and western borders, while the Lewis River defines the northern border. Diverse populations of 471,000 individuals live within these boundaries, with a population increase of 45,637 and a positive growth rate of 10.7% over the numbers reported in 2010. Identified as one of the top five counties within the state, this growth rate is higher than the 8.7% reported for the State of Washington from 2010-2017 ([2017 Population Trends State of WA, Office of Financial Management](#)).

**The Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Trail** is envisioned to cover 33 miles in total. To date, 6 miles have been developed. This application seeks to complete another 2 miles reaching from the City of Battle Ground Community Center located at 912 E. Main St. to the 1.3 mile trail system in the Salmon Morgan Creek Wildlife area. This property adjoins the Cedars Golf Course providing for multiple destination points. A trailhead parking lot and restroom will be installed at Salmon Morgan Creek trail area to improve access.

The trail will primarily follow the railroad alignment as described within the 2008 [Rail with Trail Corridor Study](#). The trail will provide users of all abilities with access to a view of area wildlife, open fields, natural areas and contributing scenic values. The multi-use design offers a 10 foot wide trail surface pathway.

The project is in direct response to our [Recreation and Open Space Plan](#) adopted by the Clark County Councilors in 2015. Developing the plan included an online survey, which attracted nearly 1,500 respondents. More than 87% of respondents indicated they had hiked or walked in the past year, 53% selected walking and hiking trails as their top recreational priority. In addition, the County Councilors identified trail development as a top priority in the State of the County address on 3/20/2018.

The total cost of the project is \$6,750,000. Our funding request is \$500,000 (*3% of total*). This request is matched by the following funding resources: The City of Battle Ground is partnering in this endeavor with a \$1,250,000 investment to develop 2,100 feet (.4 miles) reaching from Main St. to Rasmussen; Clark County will invest \$2,500,000 in REET II Funds; another \$2,500,000 in State funding will provide for the Cedars Railroad Bridge Replacement, that includes pedestrian / bicycle access to complete the remaining 1.6 miles (*Match = 93% of total*).

Clark County owns the railroad corridor and right of way for this project segment. Project support is evidenced by partnerships with the City of Battle Ground, Cedars Golf Course and community input.

The starting point of this segment of trail connects to Fairgrounds Park – home of Battle Ground Little League, 4-H activities and an innovative skate and bike park. All activities align with the [State Plan](#) to get youth outside. The Battle Ground Community Center – home of the City Parks and Recreation Department is also located here providing for a way to connect visitors and residents to area parks and trails. The trail project aligns with all five state goals and priorities for outdoor recreation and conservation. The trail will grow the legacy of trails and connect people to conservation lands; improve access equity; get youth outside; respond to changing demographics and asserts recreation as a vital public service.

We are excited about this project that will improve livability; provide access to people of varying abilities; preserve the Chelatchie Prairie Rail corridor and further our goal to complete the 33 mile trail. Partnership with the City of Battle Ground will help to stretch funding dollars for both municipalities.

Thank you for your consideration of this project. Additional data is provided for you on the following page.

Bill Bjerke, Parks and Lands Division Manager, Clark County Public Works  
360-397-2285 ext. 1656 / [Bill.Bjerke@clarkwa.gov](mailto:Bill.Bjerke@clarkwa.gov)