

SW KING COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

May 2024

**A plan for Regional Connectivity
to and from Federal Way**



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City of Algona

City of Auburn

City of Des Moines

City of Edgewood

City of Fife

City of Kent

City of Milton

City of Pacific

City of Tacoma

Information contained in this document is for planning purposes and should not be used for final design of any project. All results, recommendations, concept drawings, cost opinions, and commentary contained herein are based on limited data and information and on existing conditions that are subject to change. Further analysis and engineering design are necessary prior to implementing any of the recommendations contained herein.

Land Acknowledgment

The project team recognizes that the land we are planning trails on is the traditional homelands of the Puyallup and Muckleshoot Tribes. The Puyallup and Muckleshoot people have stewarded these lands for time immemorial and continue to do so today. As we envision new routes for people on these lands to connect with each other, we give thanks, remembrance, and acknowledgment to the people who have traversed here for generations.

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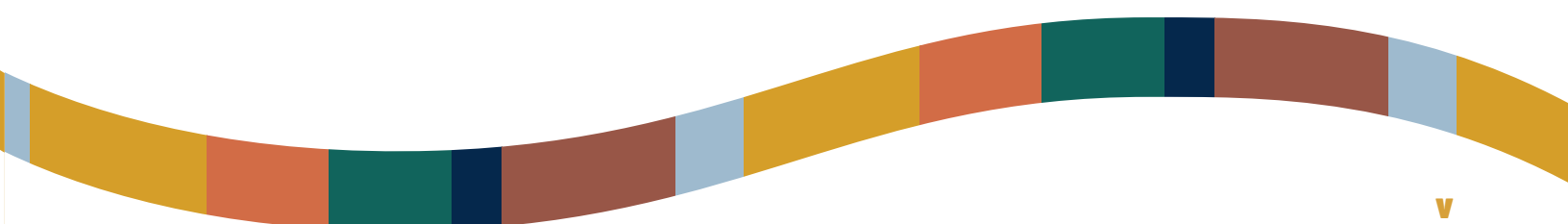
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction



Why a trails plan?

Since its incorporation as a city in 1990, Federal Way has fostered quality commercial and residential growth, and enhanced the quality of life for its residents with infrastructure improvements, diverse recreational opportunities and high-quality parks. The City's 2024 [Comprehensive Plan](#) Update includes plans for a vibrant City Center, with mixed-use commercial and residential development in the downtown business area and access to public transportation.

At the same time, regional trail and active transportation plans for King County, and the cities of Federal Way, Des Moines, Auburn, and Kent show a large gap in both the local and regional trail system. Today, the City of Federal Way lacks comprehensive multimodal connectivity both within and beyond the city boundaries. There are no trail connections between Federal Way and southwest King County to the north, eastern King County, or Pierce County to the south. To address this gap, the City applied for and was awarded funding through Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in 2022 to conduct a planning level study for a trail network in Southwest King County to help address the identified gaps and needs and develop concept designs for priority corridors.

Other local and regional transportation planning efforts, described below, are already in motion. These efforts have the potential to dramatically enhance multimodal connectivity within and beyond the border of Federal Way.

Trail plans address both the recreation and transportation potential of shared-use paths and trails, building off parks and on-road active transportation facilities to enhance a community's connectivity for a variety of purposes.

Multi-use trails can be key components of a transportation network within a community, expanding access to jobs and services to those without access to a vehicle, especially for short trips. The Southwest King County Trails Plan is intended to complement the transportation planning initiatives, described on the following page, that are currently underway.

More than half of all trips in the US are within a 20-minute bike ride, and a quarter are within a 20-minute walk.

*-Rails-to-Trails Conservancy,
Benefits of Trails*

THE BENEFITS OF TRAILS

Trails are truly multifunctional infrastructure that provide many community benefits. The SW King County Trails Plan aims to provide many of the following benefits to Federal Way and communities nearby.

TRAILS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCLUSIVE RECREATION.

Whether as standalone facilities or within or connected to parks, they allow people of all ages and abilities to walk or ride a bike or a mobility device in a setting separated from motor vehicle traffic. Inclusive design and management practices can make trails accessible to all.¹

TRAILS SUPPORT COMMUNITY RESILIENCE.

By providing opportunities for people to recreate together outside, trail can improve both physical and mental health outcomes and provide social connection, as demonstrated by the increased use of trails during the pandemic.²

TRAILS CAN HELP PRESERVE OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL LANDSCAPES,

as demonstrated by the Hylebos Trail.

TRAILS CAN BE SITED ALONG UTILITY CORRIDORS,

as demonstrated by the BPA Trail.

TRAILS CAN BE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND PRIDE.

TRAILS PROVIDE ALTERNATIVES TO DRIVING.

When trails are connected to community destinations like employment centers, schools, parks, and shopping, community members can opt to travel by bike or by foot on facilities that are more comfortable and on-street bikeways. Many community destinations are within bikeable distance from neighborhoods.



TRAILS CAN CLOSE FIRST- AND LAST-MILE GAPS in the on-street biking and walking network as well as transit network by linking active transportation and systems and facilities together.

TRAILS ARE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE.

Trails can manage stormwater, protect stream corridors, be designed to withstand climate-changed induced damage, and to provide climate-responsive community benefits like shade.³

TRAILS CAN SUPPORT A CITY'S ECONOMY.

Trails offer a speed of travel that supports discovery, and can thus boost spending at local businesses, like ice cream and coffee shops. Visitors traveling by bike appreciate the ability to patronize goods and services in support of their journeys as well.⁴ And in terms of permanent benefits, homes values adjacent to trails are known to have higher property values.⁵

¹ Why Trails Matter: Trails are Inclusive. American Trails. <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/trails-are-inclusive#:~:text=Trails%2C%20if%20designed%20well%2C%20can,%2C%20gender%2C%20and%20economic%20identities.>

² The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Changing Landscape of Trails. Trail Research Hub. <https://www.trailresearchhub.com/post/the-covid-19-pandemic-and-the-changing-landscape-of-trails>

³ Trails as Resilient Infrastructure Guidebook. FHWA. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/publications/trails-resilient-infrastructure-guidebook.pdf

⁴ Economic, Environmental, and Social Benefits of Recreational Trails in Washington State. Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. <https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/HikingBikingStudy.pdf>

⁵ Trails and Greenways: The Basics. National Association of Realtors. <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways#:~:text=The%20good%20news%20is%20that,crime%20in%20their%20surrounding%20areas>

REGIONAL TRAILS PLANNING

A regional trail is one that crosses municipal boundaries, and supports healthy, thriving communities in multiple jurisdictions. The [Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Trail Nation program](#) is supporting the development of 150 trail networks in all 50 states. Among these is the [Leafline Trails Coalition](#), which was formed in 2018 with the vision of creating an interconnected network of shared-use paths across the Central Puget Sound. The Leafline is looking to connect over 450 miles of existing trails within the Puget Sound region. This effort provides an opportunity for this Plan to capitalize on regional momentum and shared resources of the coalition.

TRANSIT EXPANSION PLANS

Sound Transit's [Federal Way Link Extension](#) is scheduled to open and serve the Federal Way community beginning in 2026 with a station in downtown Federal Way. The [Tacoma Dome Extension](#), scheduled to open in 2035, will add an additional station to the south. With anticipated growth within the designated urban growth centers, the City recognizes that it is imperative to provide a multimodal approach to accommodating travel to and through the area.

2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update is a 20-year plan for how the City will plan for and accommodate growth over the next two decades. The plan establishes the vision for what Federal Way will be by 2044 and contains the necessary goals and policies to guide the implementation of that vision. The Southwest King County Trails Plan will be referenced in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Recognizing these three planning opportunities, the City of Federal Way is poised to create multimodal connections to neighboring cities within both King and Pierce Counties, to improve health, community, quality of life, mobility, and access for all.

Intended Plan Audience and Purpose

The SW King County Trails Plan is intended as a resource for City staff and other partner agencies who develop and manage trails.

The Plan serves the following purposes:

- Creates a vision for a trail network for transportation and recreation purposes
- Identifies key connections to the regional trail and transit network to support new transit facilities and future growth
- Evaluates and prioritizes trail projects for development
- Identifies costs, funding needs, and other considerations related to implementation, operations, and maintenance of the trail network

Ultimately, this Plan identifies a set of recommended routes that:

- Are realistic, given available funding and resources
- Balance longer-term/transformational improvements with short-term gap closures
- Have support from the community and key partners

Plan Process and Organization

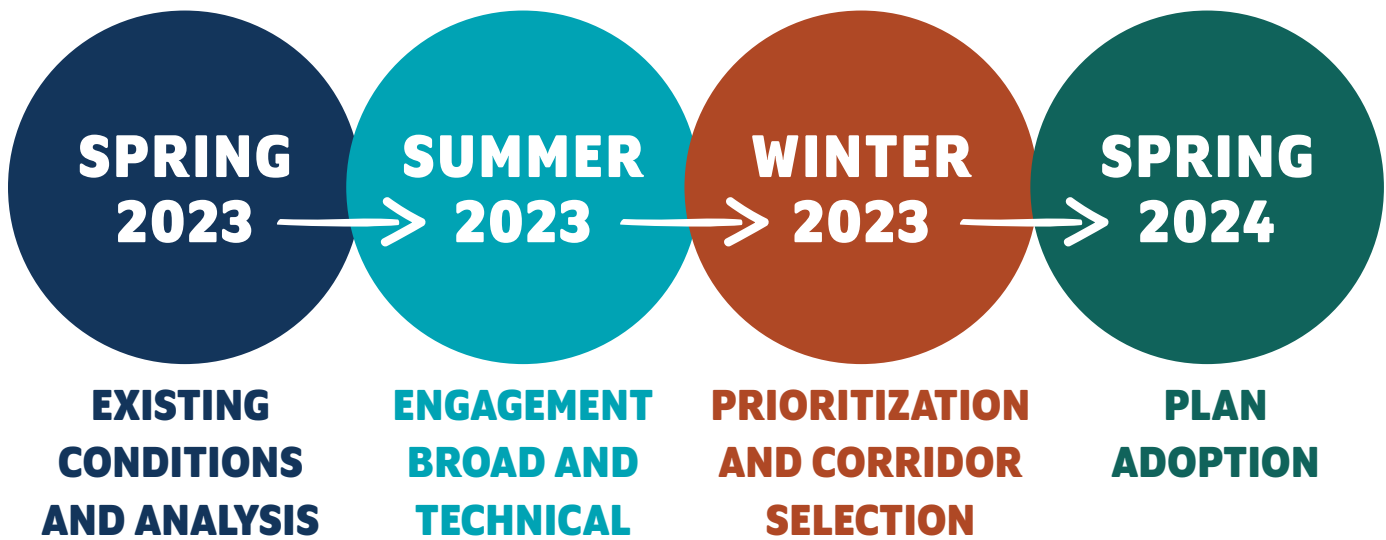


Figure 1: Project Timeline

This Plan was managed by the City's Public Works Department and was developed over approximately 18 months. It builds off the City's [Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](#) (2012), [Greenway Plan Program](#), and [Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan](#) (2019), as well as active transportation and trail plans from surrounding jurisdictions. The Plan focuses on trail facilities that can be used for both transportation and recreation purposes, linking Federal Way neighborhoods, transit, and regional trails. The project timeline and the major tasks undertaken is shown in Figure 1.

This Plan is organized in seven chapters, with the Vision and Goals following this introduction and finishing with implementation strategies. The plan recommendations, prioritized projects and concept plans for key corridors were informed by community engagement and input.

- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. Vision and Goals
- Chapter 3. Existing Conditions
- Chapter 4. Community Engagement
- Chapter 5. Network Recommendations/System Plan
- Chapter 6. Strategic Projects
- Chapter 7. Implementation Strategies
- Appendices

Chapter 3 discusses the existing bicycle and pedestrian network, identifying gaps and key destinations. Chapter 4 examines the voices heard through community engagement for this Plan.

The Plan recommends fourteen routes that form the vision trails network. Chapter 5 discusses the network and the feasibility for each route in detail. Three out of the fourteen routes are further examined in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 outlines a strategy for how to fund and implement the vision trails network.

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CHAPTER 2

Vision and Goals



The Plan's Vision and Goals informed development of the network recommendations and are intended to guide the planning, funding, and implementation of future trails.

The Vision and Goals were based on the following factors:

Desire for connectivity

- The City of Federal Way is planning for a future where residents will be able to travel by foot and bike between neighborhoods, light rail stations, schools, parks, shopping, and neighboring cities.

Existing conditions

- The existing conditions analysis revealed that many potential corridors that could provide connectivity may not be feasible due to both built and natural environment barriers.
- The project team thus looked to provide biking and walking facilities within street rights-of-way that provide a high comfort trail-like experience separated from high speed, high volume vehicular traffic.

Community input

- Early engagement on the project revealed a strong community desire for regional connectivity.

Regional planning efforts

- The Leafline Coalition's gap analysis and map vision work.

Vision Statement

Create a trail-based, high comfort active transportation network that connects important community destinations and transit within Federal Way and provides key multimodal links to Federal Way's southwest King County and Pierce County neighbors.

WHAT DOES HIGH COMFORT MEAN?

The SW King County Trails Plan recommends biking and walking facilities, primarily within street rights-of-way, that provide a high comfort, trail-like experience separated from high-speed, high-volume vehicular traffic.

High-comfort active transportation facilities are biking and walking facilities that feel safe and comfortable to the average Federal Way resident. The recognition of stress and comfort as part of the walking and biking experience is rooted in active transportation research.

In 2006, the bicycle coordinator for Portland, Oregon, Roger Geller, developed a typology¹ that categorizes cyclists into four types based on their attitudes towards bicycling (see Figure 2). This typology summarizes people’s comfort level with bicycling. It is a tool that provides an organizing principal to understand the type of infrastructure that makes people feel safe while bicycling. Geller’s paper was reviewed by academic research,² which verified that over 50% of the general public is not comfortable biking on streets without separation from travel lanes.

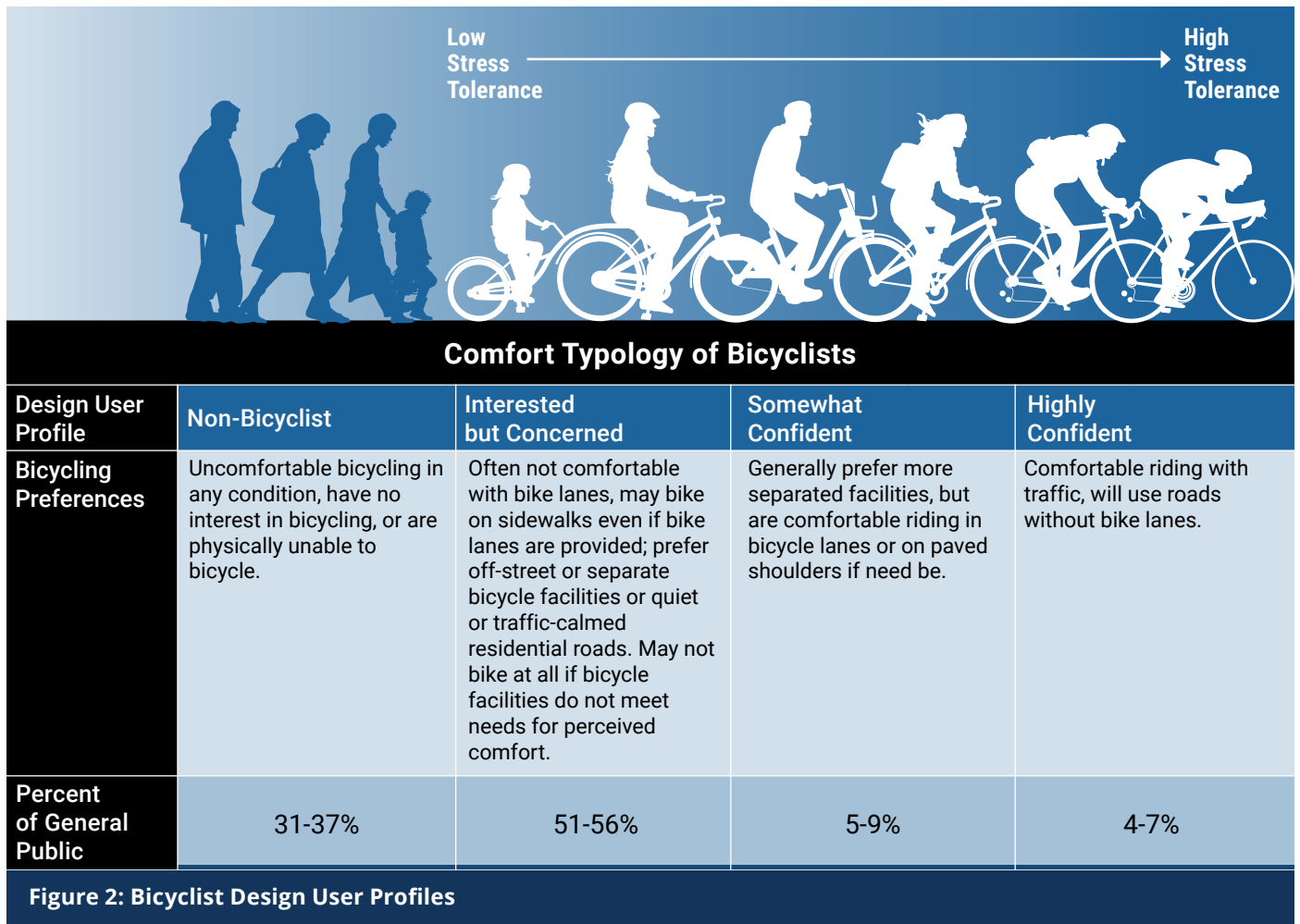


Figure 2: Bicyclist Design User Profiles
 Data Source: Dill, Jennifer and McNeil, Nathan, “Revisiting the Four Types of Cyclists: Findings from a National Survey,” Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board, 2587: 90-99, 2016

1 “Four Types of Cyclists” report by Roger Geller for the Portland Office of Transportation <https://www.portland.gov/transportation/walking-biking-transit-safety/documents/four-types-cyclists/download>

2 Jennifer Dill and Nathan McNeil published two reports in 2013 and 2016 that verified Geller’s paper <https://jenniferdill.net/types-of-cyclists/>

The Low-Stress Bicycling and Network and Connectivity study (2012), conducted by the Mineta Institute,³ posits that bicyclists experience stress in relation to the roadway characteristics of the street they're biking on. The study developed four Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) categories based on the number of vehicle lanes, and the speed and volumes of vehicle traffic on a street. Streets where walking and biking facilities have fewer lanes, lower speeds and vehicle volumes have lower LTS scores (1 and 2), whereas busier streets have higher LTS scores (3 and 4).

The typology of bicyclists works in conjunction with the LTS model. The higher the level of traffic stress and the less separation from travel lanes, the more unappealing these facilities are for the general public. The takeaway from these studies is that biking infrastructure needs to support the “interested but concerned” typology of people with high-comfort biking facilities. Higher comfort facilities encourage more people to choose bicycling as a mode of transportation. Providing separation from high-speed, high-volume vehicular traffic boosts safety and comfort for all people walking and biking, no matter their confidence level.



WHY FOCUS ON A HIGH COMFORT NETWORK?

Biking and walking facilities like shared-use paths can provide an all ages and abilities, family-friendly experience that invite more people to bike and walk both for transportation and meeting everyday needs. However, given environmental, land ownership, and other constraints it is not always feasible to develop off-street shared-use paths. Reallocation of roadway rights-of-way and street space can be a more cost-effective and expedient way to enhance connectivity for people walking and biking in Federal Way.

Combining both off- and on-street facilities to provide a continuous trail-like experience has precedent in built examples. For example, the Interurban Trail North (see Figure 3) includes a mix of off- and on-street facilities to connect multiple cities between King and Snohomish Counties. In addition, this approach aligns with the Leafline Coalition’s Criteria for Network Inclusion and Map Vision which includes “key on-street connections” as a way to achieve longer-range trail connectivity.

The Leafline Coalition acknowledges that achieving connectivity with on-street facilities by themselves may not be accessible to all ages and abilities. They include a provision allowing for the combination of off- and on-street facilities to achieve a fully connected network: “Key on-street or neighborhood connections – such as permanent greenways, shared-use paths, or cycle tracks [protected bike lanes] with adjacent walking facilities – that are LTS 1 and connect between existing trails may be included.”

³ The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) is a research think-tank based at San Jose State University. It provides research and education about the safety, efficiency, accessibility, and convenience of the transportation system in the U.S.

WHAT TYPES OF FACILITIES ARE RECOMMENDED IN THIS PLAN?

- The walking and biking facilities recommended in this plan prioritize the highest level of comfort possible. The following facility types are used in order of preference:
- Shared-use paths within separated rights-of-way, as the first choice of facility type. Shared-use paths are the ultimate high comfort/low stress walking and biking facility.
- Sidepaths, shared-use paths within roadway rights-of-way, similarly provide high comfort, but within a road right-of-way
- Wide sidewalks, ideally with planting strip and or a parallel parking to provide a buffer from vehicle lanes
- High-comfort on-street bikeways like protected bike lanes and neighborhood greenways which, when properly designed, can provide low stress routes for biking and walking

POTENTIAL TRAIL USERS

Trails serve the entire community. The SW King County Trails Plan envisions trails designed to maximize access and use of the facility for everyone. This not only means ensuring ease of physical access for people using wheelchairs or strollers by meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards. It also means considering potential user behavior and perceptions to choose routes and facility types that will appeal to a wide range of users. Most people (51 to 56 percent of the total population, based on a national survey of the 50 largest metros) are interested in cycling, but are concerned about specific facility types and conditions (see Figure 2). They prefer to use separated facilities that make them feel protected. For this reason, separated facilities with comfortable buffers will be used wherever possible. Intersections will be designed to maximize visibility, offer safe places to wait, and slow vehicle traffic. By designing for the most vulnerable or concerned users, it creates an experience that is safe and attractive for as many people as possible.

Leafline Coalition Proposed Prioritization Framework

The following metrics were used to help “determine how Leafline should pursue and advocate for the complete of trails to fill network gaps.”

- **Connectivity:** Will the link fill a critical gap in the overall network that unlocks additional access?
- **Access:** Does the link serve key destinations (i.e., community centers, commercial centers, natural areas, transit, and schools)?
- **Equity:** Does the link connect to underserved communities?

PLAN GOALS

Given the project's regional connectivity focus, the Plan goals were developed to align with the Leafline Coalition's Prioritization Framework metrics (see callout box on page 16). These criteria provide a useful framework to ensure that the proposed SW King County Trails Plan creates transportation, recreation, social, and economic benefits for the entire community.



Figure 4: Plan Goals

CHAPTER 3

Federal Way Trail Network Today



This chapter focuses on trails and active transportation as it exists currently in Federal Way and its neighboring communities. Barriers and opportunities for a more connected network are discussed in detail.

Existing Trails and Active Transportation Network

Owing to its coastal bluff geography and topography, as well as physical barriers like development patterns and major transportation corridors, Federal Way is separated from Southwest King County, Pierce County, and neighboring jurisdictions. In addition, much of the city is built out. Areas that aren't built out, like creeks or waterways, are challenging corridors for shared-use path trail development due to environmental, regulatory, and cost constraints. In combination, these factors limit the potential for developing off-street shared-use path corridors.

These barriers are reflected in the regional trails network (see Figure 5). The Interurban Trail South (14.7 miles long), links Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Algona, and Pacific, connects to other regional trails, and is less than three miles from Federal Way city limits as the crow flies but closer to five miles via the street network. Despite planned gap closures of the Interurban Trail in Milton/Edgewood close to the Federal Way city limits, connections to King County's regional trails network remains challenging for Federal Way.

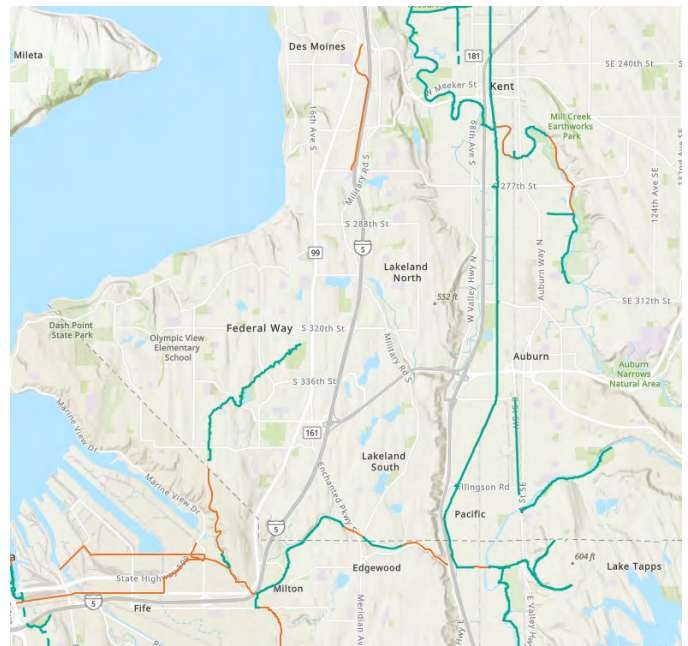
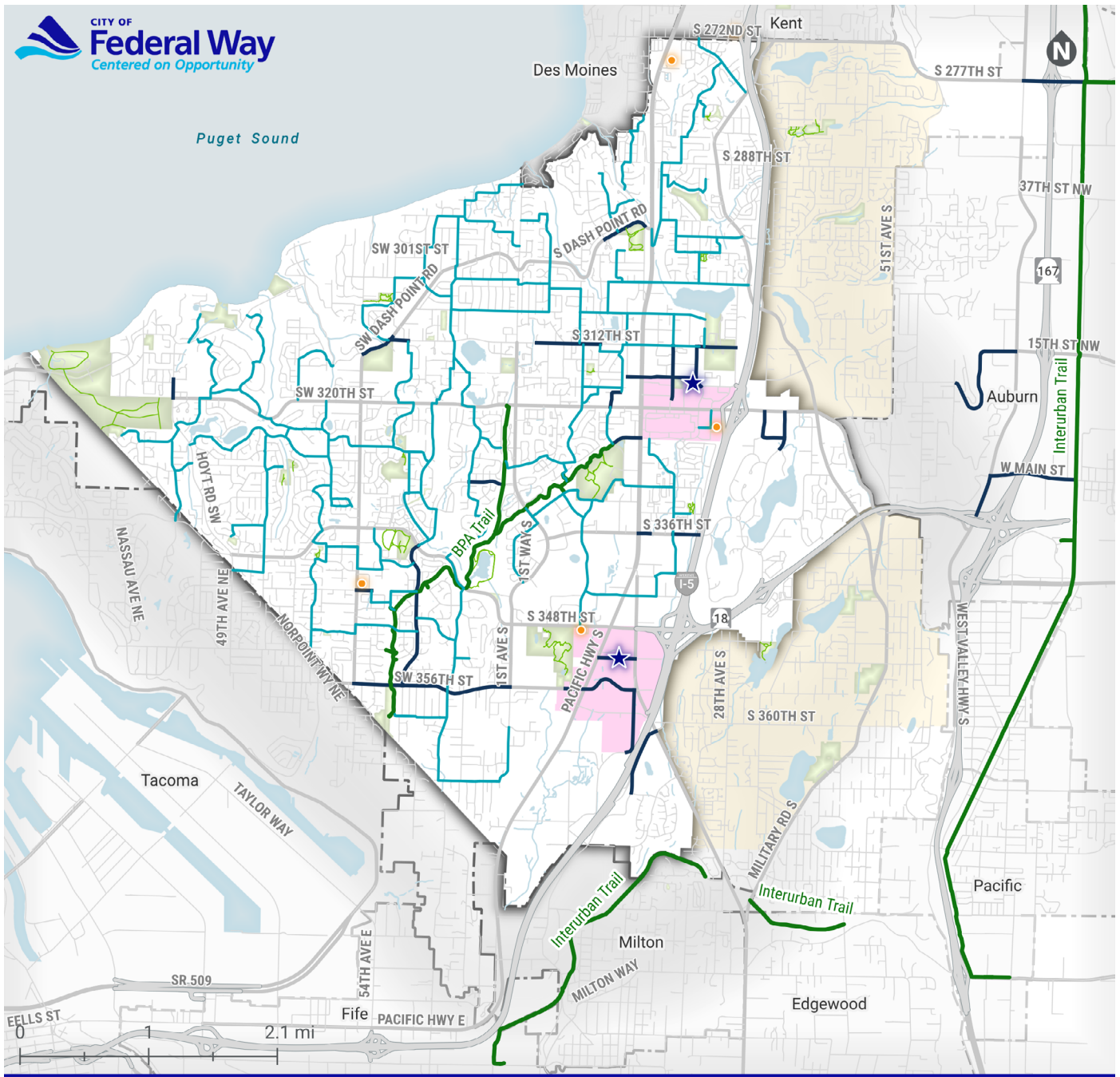


Figure 5: Detail of King County's Regional Trails map

A network of greenways and sidewalks, along with limited bike lanes, provide on-street bicycle and walking connectivity within the city (see Figure 6). Greenways are mostly residential or other low-speed or low-volume roads shared lane markings and guide signs indicating a bicycle route.

Federal Way also has approximately 14 miles of existing trails within the city, including the centrally located 3.6 mile long BPA Trail. Many of the City's trails are within parks and open space and thus provide more recreational than transportation benefits.



Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- Shared Use Path
- Bike Lane
- Greenway
- Park Trails

- Lake
- Park
- Regional Growth Center
- Potential Annexation Area
- Park and Ride
- ★ Future Link Light Rail Station Area
- City Limit

22.05.2024

TOOLE
DESIGN

Geographic and mapping information presented in this document is for informational purposes only, and is not suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Mapping products presented herein are based on information collected at the time of preparation. Toole Design Group, LLC makes no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of the underlying source data used in this analysis, or recommendations and conclusions derived therefrom.

Figure 6: Existing Conditions in Federal Way, SW King and Pierce Counties

Table 1: Existing Bike Lanes and Trails

Facility	Length
Bike Lanes	9.5 miles
Greenways	52 miles
Shared Use Paths	14 miles
Park Trails	6 miles

Barriers in Detail

This section discusses some of the barriers that present connectivity challenges for cyclists and pedestrians in Federal Way. These barriers were important to acknowledge to provide a realistic sense of feasible trail projects and to frame conversations with agency partners during this planning process. Table 2 summarizes these barriers, and they are described in more detail below.

Table 2: Types of barriers to connectivity

Built Environment Barriers	Physical Environment Barriers
Highways (I-5, SR 167, SR 99)	Streams and wetlands to the north and east
Wide, high-volume arterials (e.g., S 320 th St)	Steep bluff on the eastern border of the city
Automobile-oriented street network with limited excess right-of-way	Hilly terrain throughout the city

BUILT ENVIRONMENT BARRIERS

Federal Way has several state highways that hinder bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 167 (SR 167) are two limited access north-south corridors that bar access to the Interurban Trail on the east. Most of the east-west roads that cross I-5 and SR 167 carry high traffic volumes and cannot accommodate safe and comfortable bike or pedestrian facilities within the existing right-of-way. Bridges over I-5 and SR 167 would require widening to accommodate bicycle or pedestrian facilities, which can be a cost prohibitive option.

In addition to I-5 and SR 167, wide, high-volume, six-lane arterials within Federal Way, like S 320th Street and Pacific Highway (SR 99, also called Pac Highway), also hinder potential trail connectivity. Any potential trail that intersects with these wide, high speeds roadways would need to include safe, comfortable, accessible crossings.

Federal Way's street network consists of wide, multi-lane, high-volume roads (i.e., arterials) that support motor vehicle traffic flow to commercial development and I-5, SR 99 and SR 167. Residential areas are served by short, winding streets, many of which do not connect. Almost all of the available road right-of-way consists of travel lanes to accommodate automobiles. There are very few routes with enough space within the right-of-way to accommodate shared-use paths.

Lower-volume, smaller roads through residential areas have potential as greenways. Many of these routes have already been identified and have shared lane markings on the roadway to indicate so (see Figure 6).

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT BARRIERS

The City has many stream corridors, and previous plans have proposed trails along these linear open spaces. These corridors are constrained by critical areas regulations aimed to protect streams and stream buffers, wetlands, erosion hazards, or steep slopes. Soft-surface walking/hiking trails may be allowable in some of these corridors, but shared-use paths that meet accessibility requirements (wide paved trails with gentle slopes) are likely very challenging to permit and construct.

The hilly topography of Federal Way creates its own challenges. Shared-use paths must be accessible, with maximum grades of 5% (for more detail, see Chapter 5). Many potential routes in Federal Way exceed 5%

Facilities constructed within roadway rights-of-way are an exception to accessibility requirements. A facility built within the right-of-way just has to match the grade of the roadway.

Gaps in the Trail Network

Gaps in a trail network can take different forms. They may be as short as a few hundred feet or several miles. The perception of gaps in a trail network is very real for trail users. If the lack of a pathway prevents people from accessing their desired destinations, they sense there is a gap in the transportation or recreation network as a whole. There are three large gaps identified around Federal Way.

FEDERAL WAY TO DES MOINES

There is no on-road biking facility or shared-use path between Federal Way and Des Moines. However, there is a bike lane on 16th Ave S beginning at the City of Des Moines city limits, and trail facilities further to the north that connect people to the Angle Lake Link Light Rail Station, which is one stop away from SeaTac Airport.

FEDERAL WAY TO THE INTERURBAN TRAIL/AUBURN

The Interurban Trail is a popular regional trail that goes right through Auburn, Federal Way's neighbor to the east. Currently, there is no bike or pedestrian access to the Interurban Trail.

FEDERAL WAY TO TACOMA

The border with Tacoma on Federal Way's south/southeast side is almost entirely residential. There is no on-road biking facility or shared-use path allowing people to travel between neighborhoods on either side of the city limits.

Destinations to Connect with Trails

There are a number of activity centers and destinations in Federal Way that community members would benefit from having trail connections to.

FUTURE LIGHT RAIL

Sound Transit's [Federal Way Link Extension](#) is scheduled to open and serve the Federal Way community beginning in 2026 with a station in downtown Federal Way at 23rd Ave S and S 316th St. The location is not far from the Commons at Federal Way mall and the commercial activity along S 320th St. The [Tacoma Dome Extension](#), scheduled to open in 2035, will add an additional station to the south. One of this Plan's main objectives is to provide trail connection to Light Rail transit for communities beyond Federal Way.

INTERURBAN TRAIL

The Interurban Trail is a 14-mile long paved trail that runs north-south along the historic Interurban Rail Line. It provides access to the Southcenter area, Renton Junction, Downtown Kent, Emerald Downs, and the communities of Algona and Pacific. On the north end, the trail connects to the Green River Trail, providing access to destinations in the Green River Valley. On the south end, there are two more segments of the Interurban Trail that add five miles of east-west connectivity between a newly constructed trailhead in Fife, and Edgewood. The gaps on this leg will be completed by Edgewood and Milton.

LOCAL DESTINATIONS WITHIN FEDERAL WAY

Federal Way has several high-quality green spaces like Celebration Park, Panther Lake, Steel Lake Park, and the BPA Trail itself. There are a variety of shopping and restaurant destinations in Federal Way's three Special Planning Areas. These designations are centered on the commercial downtown area on S 320th St, on SW Campus Drive and 21st Ave SW, and on S 348th St and Pacific Highway (SR 99) to Enchanted Pkwy (SR 161). Federal Way also has family-friendly outdoor destinations that

draw people from around the region including Dash Point State Park, Wild Waves Theme Park, and Redondo Beach Boardwalk.

Equity

Historically in the United States, trail facilities and the benefits they bring have not been equitably distributed. Low-income neighborhoods, Communities of Color, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, older adults and people with limited English proficiency are among those who have been negatively impacted by underinvestment in transportation and recreational infrastructure. This disparity is a result of discriminatory laws, housing policies, and infrastructure investment designed to segregate People of Color and low-income people. As a result, such neighborhoods experienced exclusion, disinvestment, physical barriers to connectivity, and, in many cases, destruction. The separation extends to outdoor green spaces and trails.

Federal Way is a racially diverse community. In 2022, the largest racial demographic was Hispanic or Latino at 25%; followed by 15% Asian; and 11% Black or African American, according to the American Community Survey from the U.S. Census. Recognizing historic inequities, the SW King County Trails Plan incorporates equity as a criterion for prioritization, further described in Chapter 5.

Summary of Constraints and Opportunities

The potential for enhancing multimodal connectivity in Federal Way is constrained by a number of physical, environmental, and built environment barriers and challenges. Despite these challenges there are also opportunities to meet the project goals of connectivity, access, and equity. Constraints and opportunities are summarized below.

CONSTRAINTS

- Within Federal Way, creating direct, connected routes within a roadway network that relies on a limited number of arterials for overall connectivity
- Creating accessible trails on steep slopes to the south and to the east
- Numerous stream/wetland corridors, overlapping with tribal resource lands (i.e., Hylebos Creek)
- Reliance on jurisdictional cooperation to make connections beyond the city limits.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Build off existing planned projects and assets (shared-use paths, greenways, and transit)
- Boost connectivity through high comfort on-street facilities such as wide sidewalks/sidepaths, greenways, and crossing improvements (or separated bike lanes) to create a “trail-like” experience where shared-use paths are not feasible
- Prioritize connectivity in underserved areas
- Prioritize connections to regional trails, specifically the Interurban via Fife/Milton
- Create of a mix short-term, more feasible projects within the city, along with several visionary projects that extend beyond the city limits

Summary of Plan Review

This Plan builds on past planning efforts like Federal Way's *Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan 2019*, and the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2012*. The PROS Plan provides the most relevant guidance regarding trails. Community engagement conducted for this plan revealed a strong desire for trails that are connected to the active transportation network. The community also expressed interest in linking parks, open spaces, and schools via trail.

The *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* recommends a 16-mile “connector trail” network to link destinations that are not easily accessible on the street network. Many of these trails are isolated segments, without solid connections to the bike/ped network. These proposed trail segments were also assessed for the SW King County Trails Plan.

In all, there were eighteen different state, regional, county and local plans that were reviewed for this trail planning effort. Appendix B. Plan and Policy Review Memo contains the full list of reports that were reviewed, along with a summary of each. Among the plans reviewed, there was a notable lack of recommendations for trail connectivity between Federal Way and neighboring jurisdictions.

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CHAPTER 4

Community Engagement



Overview

Community engagement for the Plan provided the project team with insights that supported recommendations. Through the strategies outlined in this section, and in partnership with agency staff, the project team engaged with community members to better understand walking and bicycling issues and opportunities in Federal Way. Input gained from this engagement supported planning efforts for a trail network that fills in key first- and last-mile connections to transit, makes regional connections, and increases the quality of life for Federal Way residents.

Engagement Activities

This section details outreach activities conducted during this Plan, including a visioning survey, pop-up tabling at community events, stakeholder interviews, and a steering committee. Materials produced for these events can be found in Appendix C. Community Engagement Materials.

VISIONING SURVEY

The project team issued a trail visioning survey with three open-ended questions for community members to respond to. The survey was opened in January 2023, and was posted on www.engagefw.com as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update engagement process. The survey period remained open until January 2024 to give community members ample chance to provide input. During this period, nearly 60 people submitted write-in responses to the questions below.

What is your vision for expanding and improving Federal Way’s trail network?

Survey takers expressed desire for a trails network that is safe and accessible, interconnected with a variety of routes, and is connected to destinations like parks, shopping centers, schools, and libraries.

What are the most important destinations or connections both within and beyond Federal Way?

Survey respondents named access to transit, Federal Way Shopping Center, Interurban Trail, parks and Tacoma as most important.

What are the top 3 biggest challenges to expanding and improving the trail network in Federal Way?

Lack of safety, both personal safety and physical safety, was the top challenge respondents named. Land acquisition (e.g., right-of-way between properties, interjurisdictional cooperation) was the second biggest challenge named by respondents.

“Connecting residents to schools, libraries, public transportation, grocery stores, parks with safe, accessible, attractive walkways and trails. Make it easy to leave the car at home!”

-Survey Taker

What is your vision for expanding and improving Federal Way's trail network?

Top desires from survey takers

- 1 Safe/accessibility
- 2 Interconnected Trails
- 3 Connection to Destinations
- 4 Multimodal support
- 5 Connecting to neighboring communities
- 6 Connection to natural areas
- 7 Connection to transit

What are the most important destinations or connections both within and beyond Federal Way?

Top desires from survey takers

- 1 Neighboring Cities
- 2 Downtown Federal Way
- 3 Interurban
- 4 Parks
- 5 BPA Trail
- 6 Shopping
- 7 Dash Point State Park

What are the top 3 biggest challenges to expanding and improving Federal Way's trail network?

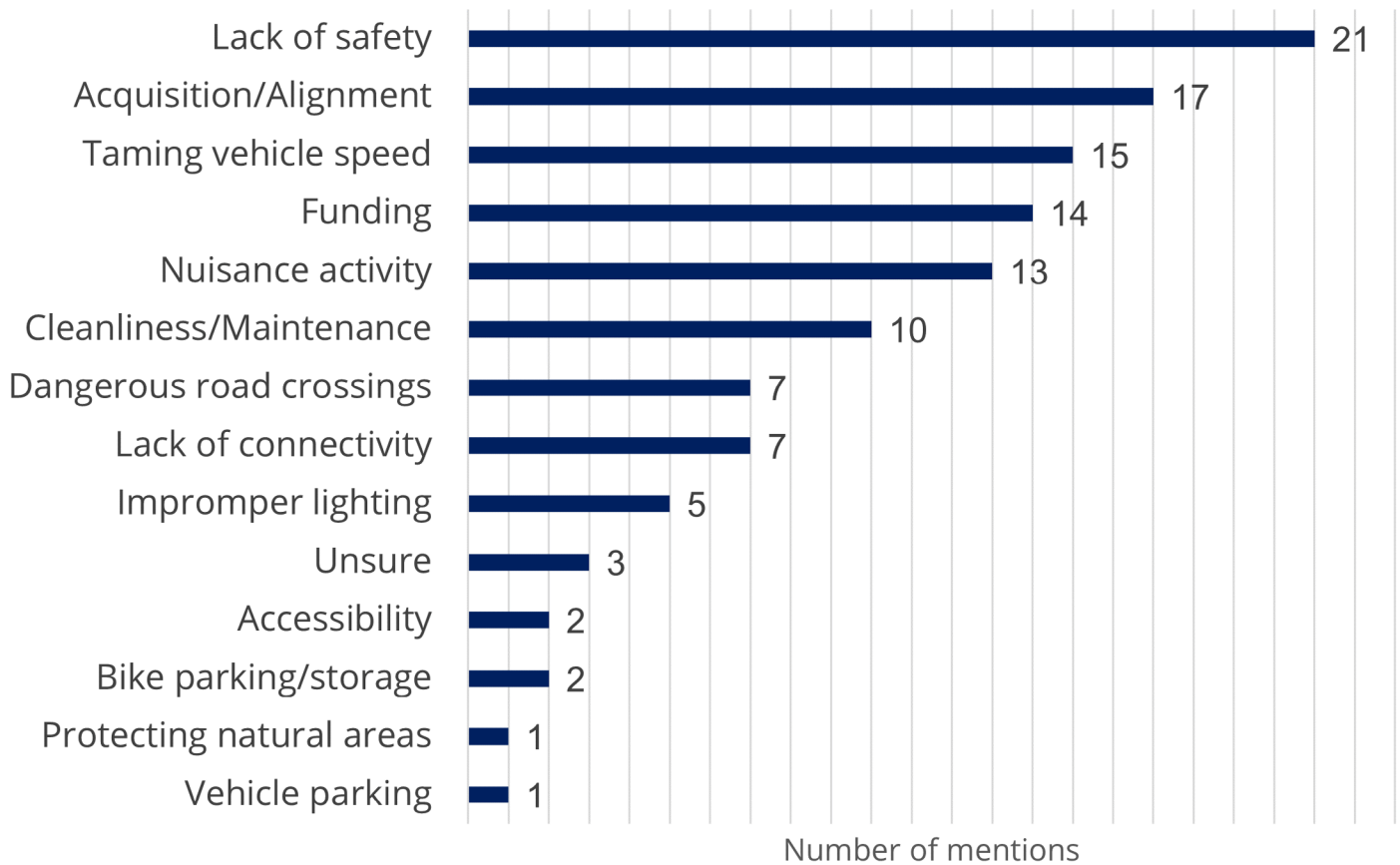




Figure 7: Comprehensive Plan Open House

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OPEN HOUSES AND POP-UPS

The project was featured during two open houses for the Comprehensive Plan Update, in the fall of 2023 and winter of 2024.

The project team tabled at a booth in the Federal Way Farmers Market on July 15th, 2023. Subsequently, the team went to the Panther Lake Trailhead on August 5th, 2023 with a table and booth to talk to trail users about their experiences and desires for trails in Federal Way.

Almost all people the project team spoke with expressed support for the plan. An increase in the number of routes was almost uniformly expressed among community members. A few community members mentioned barriers for people who use a mobility device, including disabled people or older adults.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee was convened to advise the project team on the development of the plan. The project team and Public Works and Planning staff developed a list of recommended organizations and individuals to include on the committee; the invitation

was shared broadly amongst many contacts. The committee included representatives from trail advocacy groups, businesses, organizations with an interest in the trail, and other community members.

The steering committee provided guidance to the project team regarding Federal Way's diverse cultural and natural resources. They helped identify other key stakeholders and the best ways to reach them so they are incorporated into the engagement process. Materials produced for these meetings can be found in Appendix D. Steering Committee Meeting Materials.

Takeaways from Engagement

Overall, feedback from community members is supportive of this planning effort. Many community members expressed a desire to be able to walk and bike more freely and safely than they are currently able to. A desire for an alternative to the car was expressed multiple times. Community members also explicitly mentioned how they would like to see trails that are accessible for people of all ages and abilities, including people who use wheeled mobility devices.

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CHAPTER 5

System

Recommendations



The following section presents the trail system recommendations for the SW King County Trails Plan and describes how the recommended routes were selected and prioritized.

Trail System Development Objectives

A set of objectives were identified to guide the development of the trail system and ensure that trail recommendations aligned with the City's priorities and Plan goals. The objectives were applied to the map of Federal Way to determine potential routes for the trail network.

Table 3: System Development Goals and Objectives

PLAN GOALS	SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	
<p>Connectivity</p> <p><i>Focus on key longer multimodal connections that provide cross-city connectivity to regional trails, transit, and major destinations</i></p>	<p>Key internal connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend existing north-south routes (e.g., BPA or 16th Ave Trail) • Add at least one east-west route to provide cross-city connectivity
	<p>Regional connectivity opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to existing trails and pedestrian and bicycle destinations beyond city limits like transit and urban centers, major trails, and recreational destinations
<p>Access</p> <p><i>Create shorter connections between important destinations</i></p>	<p>Key internal connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and local civic destinations like libraries, community centers, and shopping
	<p>Regional connectivity opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if some neighborhoods would benefit from connections to neighboring jurisdictions and work with partners to identify feasible routes
<p>Equity</p> <p><i>Ensure recommendations and implementation prioritize connectivity links for underserved areas and populations</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps to address access to opportunity, safe routes to school, healthy food, and recreation, through project opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize recommendations that increase accessibility to opportunity and critical needs, environmental health, and livability

Regional Connections

The project team held a series of conversations with representatives from neighboring jurisdictions to discuss potential regional connections. A map of the proposed routes was shared with agency staff to better understand the feasibility of the proposals, any challenges they may have, and any opportunities to align with planned facilities and projects beyond Federal Way's boundaries. Conversations with stakeholders also helped to address the gaps identified in the existing conditions assessment. Table 4 shows the various agencies that the project team met with. Agency members also included staff involved in the Leafline Coalition.

Table 4: Stakeholder Agencies Engaged

AGENCY	DEPARTMENT
Algona	Public Works
Pacific	Community Development
Edgewood	Public Works
Milton	Planning
King County	Regional Trails, Roads, Long-Range Planning
Pierce County	Parks Planning, Regional Trails
WSDOT	Planning, Active Transportation, Multimodal Planning, Local Agency/Developer Services
Auburn	Transportation Planning; Parks, Arts, and Recreation
Port of Seattle	Environmental Projects, Transportation Access Program
Des Moines	Engineering
Kent	Long Range Planning, Park Planning and Development
Fife	Community Development
Tacoma	Active Transportation Planning
Port of Tacoma	Government Affairs
Puyallup Tribe	Planning and Land Use

Local officials offered their perspective on which roadways would be the best candidates for trail facilities. They provided more details about routes that may affect critical wetland areas or culturally sensitive areas. They also provided the most current information on their own plans for bike and trail connections. Notes from these meetings can be found in Appendix E. Partner Agency Interviews.

Each agency’s existing trails and active transportation network plans were reviewed and discussed in relation to potential trail connections between Federal Way, Pierce, and Southwest King County. The team met with multiple King County and WSDOT staff to discuss opportunities and constraints. From these conversations, the following key connections were identified and explored.

Table 5: Regional Connection Opportunities

CONNECTION	OPPORTUNITIES	FINAL RECOMMENDATION
<p>North <i>to Des Moines</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th Ave S has existing bike lanes on the south end and planned extensions north • The City of Des Moines has plans for a trail along S 240th St to connect Barnes Creek Trail to Kent/Des Moines light rail station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include 16th Ave as a recommended corridor for connecting to Des Moines.
<p>East <i>to the Interurban Trail in Auburn, through potential annexation areas in unincorporated King County</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several routes were explored, both with City of Auburn and King County staff. Each of the potential connections had major design or implementation challenges, including topography, the need to cross over or under SR 167 using existing infrastructure, ease of connection with the Interurban Trail, critical areas issues, or underlying jurisdictional purview* (unincorporated King County). Several of these routes have existing bike lanes and sidewalks. The routes considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bingaman Creek Trail to S 277th St • S 272nd St (Federal Way) / S 277th St (Auburn) • Extension of trail along BPA corridor east of I-5 • S 288th St to 51st Ave S to S 296th St to 64th Ave S to 65th Ave S to 37th St NW • S 321st St to 51st Ave S to S 316th St to Terrace Dr to 15th St NW • W Valley Highway to W Main St 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of these routes were deemed infeasible • City of Auburn may consider improving W Valley Highway to create a link to the existing bike lanes on W Main St • The BPA trail is recommended as a long-term/visionary connection
<p>Southeast <i>to the southern segment of the Interurban Trail, in Fife, Milton, Edgewood</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several potential connections to the Interurban Trail were discussed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hylebos Trail Extension (identified in Leafline Coalition Maps) • Weyerhaeuser Way and 28th Ave S as alternative to Pac Hwy to connect to Interurban Trail (suggested by Edgewood) • Fife and Port of Tacoma – these agencies urged looking at locations other than NE Tacoma/Fife Heights, like the Pac Hwy, Meridian, or I-5 corridors because traffic patterns are expected to change once the Tacoma Link opens and the SR 167 Completion Project is implemented.⁴ • Puyallup Tribe –when developing network routes consider impacts to historical cultural sites, fisheries and waterways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include Weyerhaeuser Way as a recommended corridor • City of Federal Way can continue this corridor south on 28th Ave S once this area of unincorporated King County is annexed
<p>South <i>to Tacoma</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 356th St, Norpoint Way, 29th St NE, to SR 161 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include SW 356th St as a recommended corridor to connect with Tacoma’s planned facilities

*This refers to the unincorporated areas of King County, Lakeland North and Lakeland South. Though there is a recognition among King County of the value that improved multimodal connectivity would bring to these areas, King County is not able to support these recommendations due to lack of funding. Should the City of Federal Way obtain funding and decide to implement any of these corridors, additional study and community engagement is needed.

4 Puget Sound Gateway Project, SR 167 Completion Project. WSDOT.
<https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-167-completion-project>

Trail System Vision

The project team identified fourteen routes that align with the project Vision and Goals. The map in Figure 10 shows the proposed routes after considering input from the City of Federal Way staff, steering committee members, and planners from neighboring jurisdictions. These routes represent the most feasible options when balancing the Plan's goals and vision with constraints of topography and right-of-way.

The proposed routes were organized into two categories: key internal connections and regional connectivity opportunities.

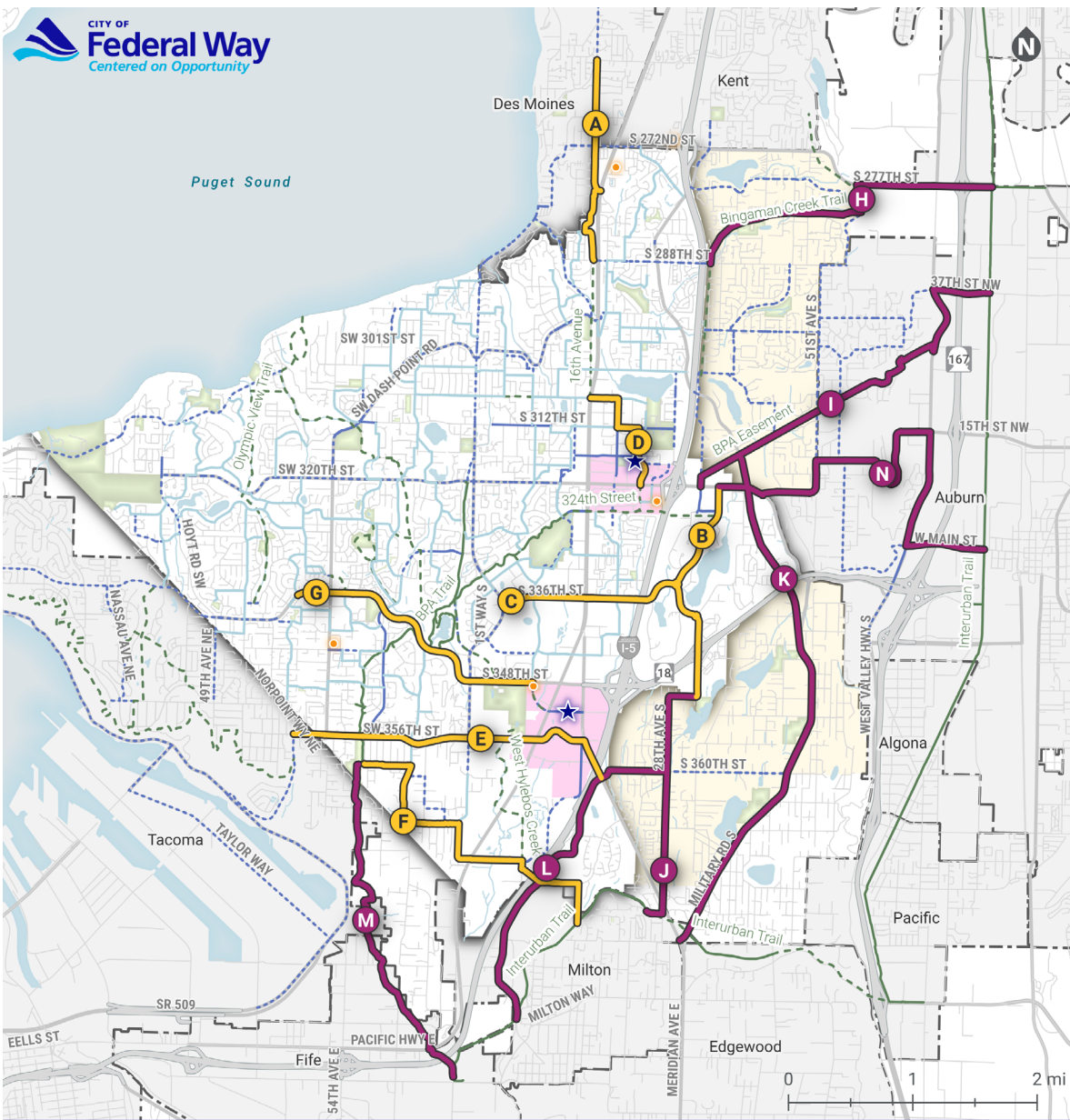
KEY INTERNAL CONNECTIONS

These are practical, feasible projects within the City of Federal Way that meet the project goals of access, connectivity, and equity, and connect to a density of destinations. They build off existing and planned multimodal infrastructure: the BPA trail, the Pacific Highway Non-Motorized Corridor (along 16th Ave S), and Federal Way and Tacoma Dome Link stations.

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

These are visionary projects that start at the city limits and would boost regional multimodal connectivity between Federal Way and southwest King and Pierce Counties. These projects require partnering with neighboring jurisdictions to fund and implement; primarily King County, Auburn, Milton, and Edgewood. At the time, this plan was being completed, a number of these jurisdictions were updating their Comprehensive, PROS and Transportation plans, and the vision is for these regional opportunities to be integrated into their planning.

The projects are described in more detail below.



Key Internal Connection

- A. 16th Avenue S
- B. Weyerhaeuser Way S
- C. S 336th Street
- D. Federal Way Transit Center Access
- E. SW 356th Street
- F. Interurban Access via 375th St Bridge
- G. SW Campus Drive

Regional Connectivity Opportunity

- H. Bingaman Creek Trail
- I. North BPA Easement
- J. 28th Avenue S
- K. Military Road
- L. Interurban Access via Milton Rd-5th Ave
- M. South BPA/Leafline Hylebos Trail Extension
- N. S 316th Street-Terrace Drive

Greenway

Existing Shared Use Path

Planned Shared Use Path

Existing Bike Lane

Planned Bike Lane

City Limit

Future Link Light Rail Station Area

Park and Ride

Lake

Park

Regional Growth Center

Potential Annexation Area*

** Planned routes through Potential Annexation areas would be built by the City of Federal Way if annexed*

22.05.2024

TOOLE
DESIGN

Geographic and mapping information presented in this document is for informational purposes only, and is not suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Mapping products presented herein are based on information collected at the time of preparation. Toole Design Group, LLC makes no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of the underlying source data used in this analysis, or recommendations and conclusions derived therefrom.

Figure 8: SW King County Trails Vision Network

Key Internal Connections

A. 16th Avenue S

From 16th Avenue S at S 288th St northward to S 272nd St.

This route fills in a gap between Federal Way's plans on 16th Ave south of 288th St and Des Moines' planned bike lane along 16th Ave. This route will provide access to SeaTac Airport and the future Kent-Des Moines Link Light Rail Station.

B. Weyerhaeuser Way S

From Weyerhaeuser Way S at S 320th St southward to S 349th St.

Weyerhaeuser is a lower volume road with adequate right-of-way to accommodate a shared-use path. It also connects to the proposed facility on 336th St.

C. S 336th Street

From S 336th St at Weyerhaeuser Way S westward to 1st Way S.

The segment of existing bike lanes and wide sidewalk on 336th can be upgraded to provide a more continuous and comfortable trail-like experience. This route provides access to the 1st Ave S and Celebration Park. City plans to eliminate bike lanes on 1st Way S and provide trail from S 336th St to BPA Trail.

D. Federal Way Transit Center Access

From 23rd Ave S at S 320th St northward to S 312th St to 20th Ave S to S 308th to 16th Ave S

This route connects the southern end of the 16th Avenue trail to the future Federal Way Link Light Rail station. Existing greenways can be enhanced to provide a higher level of comfort. It will provide access to transit and shopping destinations in Downtown Federal Way along S 320th St. Note that this project is funded and being developed separately.

E. S/SW 356th Street

From Enchanted Pkwy S at S 360th St/Milton Rd S northwestward to S/SW 356th St to 29th St NE at Tacoma border to Norpoint Way NE

This east-west route connects Federal Way to communities in neighboring Tacoma, where a future bike lane is planned on Norpoint Way NE. This route has potential to connect many destinations for recreation, entertainment, and shopping. The BPA Trail, Julia's Gulch, and Hylebos Blueberry Farm Park are three open spaces along 356th Street. The route also provides an access point for the future Federal Way South Link Light Rail station, and a crossing of I-5.

F. Interurban Access via S 375th St Bridge

From SW 360th St at 15th Ave SW eastward to 8th Ave SW into 9th Ave SW to SW 368th St to 1st Ave SW to S 373rd St (new construction) to 9th Ave S to S 375th St (over I-5) into S 376th St to Hylebos Creek (new construction)

While the route would provide a low-volume crossing of I-5 on S 375th Street, and provide access to the Interurban Trail, it has many challenges. It will require new construction and property acquisition through wooded areas. It also passes through critical wetland areas, and areas that are culturally sensitive to the Puyallup Tribe.

G. SW Campus Drive

From SW 336th St at 26th Pl SW eastward into SW Campus Dr into S 348th St to 9th Ave S

Campus Drive connects many destinations for shopping and recreation, including Panther Lake, the KC Aquatics Center, and the BPA Trail. The existing wide sidewalk is already 10 feet wide in some segments and can be enhanced with wayfinding to make this a shared-use path suitable for multimodal transportation.

Regional Connectivity Opportunities

H. Bingaman Creek Trail

New construction from I-5 at S 288th St northeastward through Bingaman Pond Natural Area to 55th Ave S to S 277th St to Interurban Trail

This route connects to the Interurban Trail via an existing bike lane on S 277th St that crosses over SR 167. It would require new construction through Bingaman Pond Natural Area, a critical wetland, and through a narrow right-of-way along I-5 north of S 288th St.

I. North BPA Easement

From 32nd Ave S at S 320th St northeastward through BPA easement into 24th St NW into U St NW to utility trail in BPA easement to W Valley Hwy to 37th St NW to Interurban Trail

This route would provide access to the Interurban Trail and a crossing over SR 167 via 37th St NW. This path may be the least challenging from an engineering perspective because the land is already cleared in a direct line. However, it would require extensive acquisition/easements as most of the corridor is privately owned.

J. 28th Avenue

From S 349th St at Weyerhaeuser Way S westward to 28th Ave S to S 380th St to Interurban Trail

28th Ave provides access to the southern leg of the Interurban Trail in Milton and Edgewood. Steep topography in this area will make trail access challenging. A trail outside of the right-of-way will need to have less than a 5% grade to be ADA-compliant for mobility devices. The width is too narrow to construct a sidepath within the right-of-way.

K. Military Road

From Military Rd at BPA Easement southward to SR 161

Military Rd provides access to three well-used parks and open spaces. It is a major north-south alternative to I-5 and SR 167 for vehicle traffic, thus

traffic volume and speeds tend to be high. The right-of-way is also constricted by steep topography along stretches of Military Rd, so a shared-use path would require new construction to dig out of a cliff face. While there is a planned resurfacing for Military Road from SR 18 to S 320th St, it would be difficult to construct trail facilities in some segments due to the topography challenges.

L. Interurban Access via Milton Rd-5th Ave

From S 360th St at 28th Ave S westward into 20th Ave S into Milton Rd S into S 372nd St into 5th Ave to Porter Way to Interurban Trail

Milton Rd and 5th Ave provide a direct connection to the southern portion of the Interurban Trail and connects Federal Way to its neighbors in Milton.

M. South BPA

New construction from trailhead in Madrona Park at SW 360th St southward through BPA easement to Hylebos Creek along creek bed to Wapato Way to Interurban Trailhead.

This is the ideal connection between the BPA Trail and the Interurban Trail. However, it is the most challenging route because it involves new construction through a wetland area along Hylebos Creek. It also involves a significant amount of property acquisition in Fife Heights, which is an unincorporated area of Pierce County. In addition, this route is also entirely within the Puyallup Tribe reservation, and would require jurisdictional coordination.

N. 316th Street-Terrace Drive

From S 320th St at Weyerhaeuser Way S eastward into Peasley Canyon Rd S to S 321st St into 51st Ave S to S 316th St into Terrace Dr into 15th St NW to West Valley Hwy N to W Main St to Interurban Trail

Terrace Dr and W Main St have existing bike infrastructure that could be used to complete a route from Federal Way. It would connect Downtown Federal Way to the Interurban Trail, providing a crossing over SR 167.

Routes Considered and Not Carried Forward

S 288TH STREET

Originally, the project team considered a route along S 288th St from 16th Ave S eastward to 55th Ave S. This stretch has an existing bike lane from 34th Ave to 48th Ave and the planned bike lane west of I-5. The route was appealing because these facilities could be amalgamated into the trails network. However, there is no direct path to continue east of 55th Ave S to get users through steep topography in Auburn and access the Interurban Trail. This route was dropped in favor of routes with more potential to navigate the hilly topography.

JULIA'S GULCH CONNECTION

A route was considered to connect planned facilities on Norpoint Way to the south end of the BPA Trail. The route went along faint desire lines through a wooded area in a residential neighborhood of Northeast Tacoma. Ultimately, the route did not have a lot of momentum during stakeholder interviews. Additionally, neither the City of Tacoma nor Pierce County included this connection on their future plans. As a result, consideration was discontinued.

Projects within Unincorporated King County

There are five routes that go through East Federal Way, a currently unincorporated area of King County. East Federal Way has been designated by the City of Federal Way as a potential annexation area (PAA). Though the timeline is undetermined, the City would extend its borders to serve this community through the annexation process. The proposed routes through the PAA (H, I, K, J, L) would be built by Federal Way when the annexation process is complete.

Project Prioritization: Evaluation Criteria

The full completion of the SW King County Trails Plan is a long-term goal. Project prioritization is a multifactor effort that attempts to account for the fact that given limited resources, recommendations will need to be implemented over time. A prioritized project list based on an objective and transparent set of criteria will help the City program its funding for projects.

All proposed trail routes underwent a prioritization schema and were given points based on the following criteria.

Connectivity. Proposed routes that connect to regional trails, to transit, or to destinations like parks, shopping, and schools have a good measure of connectivity and receive the highest number of possible points.

User Experience. If a proposed route is off-street, it receives one point for being a more comfortable option than an on-street route, which receives zero points.

Equity. The project used [PSRC's Opportunity Index Mapping Tool](#) to assess the amount of opportunity that exists in neighborhoods today. Census tracts are given an opportunity score (Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, Very High) which combines measures of five key elements of neighborhood opportunity and positive life outcomes: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment. Proposed routes that serve an area with a Very Low opportunity index score are given the highest possible points.

Feasibility. Southwest King County is an area with many critical areas and wetlands. Trail projects through such areas require special permitting. In addition, there are historically significant cultural sites for Indigenous tribes in the area, like burial grounds or former settlements. Any construction project through such an area has

potential to unearth artifacts or human remains and should be avoided if possible. Proposed routes that avoid critical areas and culturally significant areas are given one point for being simpler and thereby more feasible. A proposal with potential to negatively impact such an area is given zero points.

Implementation. One challenge to implementation is the constructability of a project. Due to the varying topography of the region, some proposed routes are more complex to implement than others. They may require the construction of additional structures like retaining walls or drainage mechanisms. A proposed route with a high level of constructability is relatively simple. It may be on flatter terrain and not require additional construction. Such routes receive the highest amount of points possible. Another challenge to implementation is **jurisdictional** coordination. Many proposals cross over municipal or county boundaries and would require **close coordination** to implement. Proposals that already have support of the neighboring jurisdiction are given one point.

Table 6 shows the scoring rubric and methodology for prioritizing the projects.

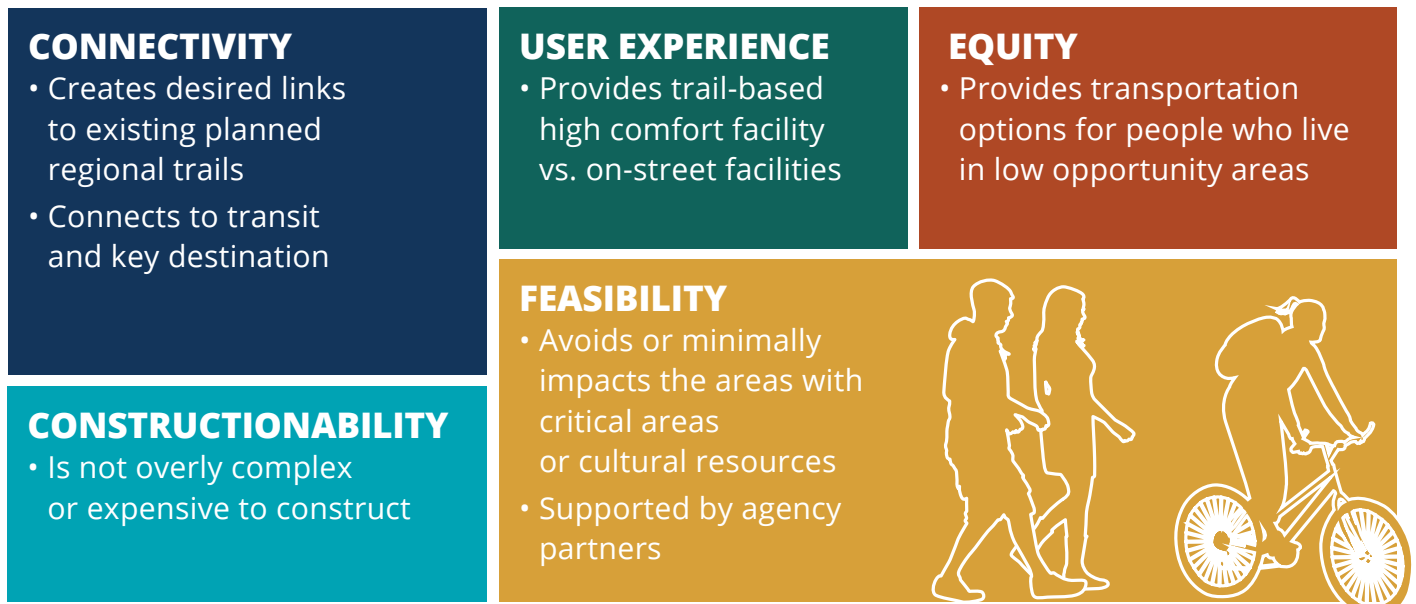


Figure 9: Prioritization Criteria

Table 6: Prioritization Scoring Rubric

Criteria		Measure	Points
CONNECTIVITY	<i>Regional Connectivity Opportunity</i>	Does the proposal create desired links to existing or planned regional trails in King County (e.g., Interurban, 16th Ave, Leafline)?	Connects to a regional trail 2 points Connects to a multimodal facility 1 point No regional connection 0 points
	<i>Key Local Connection</i>	Does the proposal connect to existing park-and-rides or and/or future light rail stations?	Connects to both light rail and park-and-ride 2 points Connects to either light rail or park and ride 1 point Connects to neither 0 points
		How well does the proposal link to services and other key destinations like parks and schools?	Five or more destinations along the route 2 points One to four destinations along the route 1 point No destinations along the route 0 points
USER EXPERIENCE	<i>Off-street vs On-Street</i>	Does the proposal provide an off-street trail-like experience, and/or one that feels physically comfortable for both people walking and biking?	Off-street 1 point On-street 0 points
EQUITY	<i>Access for Marginalized Communities</i>	Does the proposal provide transportation or recreation options for people who live in areas with an Opportunity Index Score of Low or Very Low?	Very Low 2 points Low 1 point Medium, High, Very High 0 points
FEASIBILITY	<i>Critical Areas</i>	Does the proposal avoid and/or minimize impact to critical areas that would require special permitting?	Avoids critical areas 1 point Potentially impacts critical areas 0 points
	<i>Cultural Resources</i>	Does the proposal negatively impact areas of cultural importance to Indigenous tribes?	Avoids negatively impacting important sites 1 point Potentially impacts culturally significant areas 0 points
IMPLEMENTATION	<i>Constructability</i>	Does the proposed route have a high degree of constructability related to complexity, additional structures, e.g., walls, drainage, etc.?	High constructability 2 points Medium constructability 1 point Low constructability 0 points
	<i>Supported by agency partners</i>	Does the proposed route have support from neighboring jurisdictions and/or can be included in upcoming transportation planning documents?	Supported by neighboring jurisdictions 1 point Not supported 0 points

Prioritized Project List

Table 7 shows each route in order of prioritization score. This ranking should not be viewed as a mandate to complete projects in this particular order, but rather a measure of which projects best meet the overall goals of the Plan. The order in which projects are built will depend on many factors, including budget/cost, local funds and state/federal grant funding availability, coordination with neighboring jurisdiction, and other implementation opportunities. Full details for each corridor can be found in Appendix F. Detailed Project List.

Table 7: List of Proposed Routes by Prioritization Score

Score	Proposed Route	
12	D. Federal Way Transit Center Access	Key Internal Connection
9	A. 16 th Avenue	Key Internal Connection
9	G. SW Campus Drive	Key Internal Connection
9	K. Military Road	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
8	J. 28 th Avenue	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
7	E. 356 th Street	Key Internal Connection
7	L. Interurban Trail Access via Milton Rd-5 th Ave	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
6	C. 336 th Street	Key Internal Connection
6	I. North BPA Easement	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
6	N. 316 th Street - Terrace Dr	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
5	B. Weyerhaeuser Way	Key Internal Connection
5	M. South BPA / Hylebos Trail Extension	Regional Connectivity Opportunity
5	F. Interurban Trail Access via 375 th St Bridge	Key Internal Connection
5	H. Bingaman Creek Trail	Regional Connectivity Opportunity

Recommended Facility Types

The Plan builds on paths, existing sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways in Federal Way and neighboring cities. The Plan recommends shared-use paths or sidepaths on all proposed routes. Two exceptions where wide sidewalks are proposed instead are routes G. SW Campus Drive, and N. 316th Street-Terrace Drive.

Side paths and shared-use paths are defined in the adjacent text box. The facilities are also called non-motorized paths by the City of Federal Way.

Shared-use paths are considered the most comfortable facility for biking and walking. They are required to be accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

Design Standards

This Plan assumes design of shared-use paths will conform to the guidance in the WSDOT Design Manual, Chapter 1515 Shared-Use Paths, and the [WSDOT's Active Transportation Programs Design Guide](#). Suggested safety countermeasures, landscaping, and amenities are provided below.

TRAIL CROSS SECTION

WSDOT's Design Manual indicates the cross-section of shared-use paths as 12 ft wide (10 ft minimum), with 2 ft shoulders on each side, for a total cross-section width 16 ft. Other key design requirements are a "firm, stable, slip-resistant pavement" and running slopes that do not exceed 5%. The City of Federal Way's Standard Plans for Non-Motorized Paths (see Figure 12) indicate a 20 ft right of way, with a 12 ft path and 4 ft planted buffers on either side. The City's detailed standard indicates concrete as the preferred material, with asphalt as an alternative.

Shared-use paths are two-way transportation facilities used by pedestrians and bicyclists within independent rights-of-way. Shared-use paths have minimal crossing conflicts with drivers. In some cases, shared-use paths also accommodate equestrian use, typically by providing a second natural surface path that parallels the main pathway.

Sidepaths are transportation facilities used by pedestrians and bicyclists within roadway rights-of-way, and adjacent to travel lanes. A buffer, open space, or barrier physically separates the facility from travel lanes. Sidepaths can offer comfortable facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists especially along high-speed, high-volume roads or where right-of-way constraints limit the ability to provide active transportation facilities on both sides of a roadway. When constructing a sidepath on only one side of the street, provide a greater density of crossing opportunities, especially at key destinations. Driveway crossings for drivers entering and exiting business adjacent to the roadway require careful consideration for sidepath design.

WSDOT Active Transportation Design Guide (2023)

SAFETY COUNTERMEASURES

Similar to other trails in a built urban environment, recommended projects in the SW King County Trails Plan will intersect with multiple streets. Each trail crossing presents unique challenges. While no two street crossings are the same, the overall goal is the same: to elevate the presence and priority of trail users, increase the measured and perceived safety of the intersections, and allow the trail to be accessed by all users regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel.

Context specific safety countermeasures, consistent with state and federal guidelines and best practices, should be used according to roadway characteristics, conversations with stakeholders, and community feedback. Countermeasures include:

- Trail crossing signs
- Realigned and repainted crosswalks
- Pruning/cutting back vegetation to ensure open sight lines
- Curb ramps
- Curb extensions
- Raised crosswalks
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)
- Traffic signals
- Streetlights

These safety countermeasures can be combined to provide safe, accessible crossings that rise to the level of need. They should be employed at each trail crossing to realize the stated goals of the project.

LANDSCAPING

Sustainable landscape design practices should be used to create a natural and sustainable trail character. These practices include the following:

- Shade trees and native plantings requiring minimal irrigation and can cool the area. Plantings in swales or on slopes can serve as multifunctional green infrastructure: detaining stormwater runoff or reducing erosion of the trail surface, providing habitat resources for local wildlife, and beautifying the corridor for the community.

- Reducing trail runoff and erosion not only benefits trail users but also mitigates impacts of the trail on adjacent ecosystems.
- Native groundcover plants can also reduce the need for mowing along the trail. Attractive plantings with colorful flowers or fall foliage can make trail crossings and access points inviting and celebratory.
- Removing invasive species is critical to ensure that native plantings can flourish.

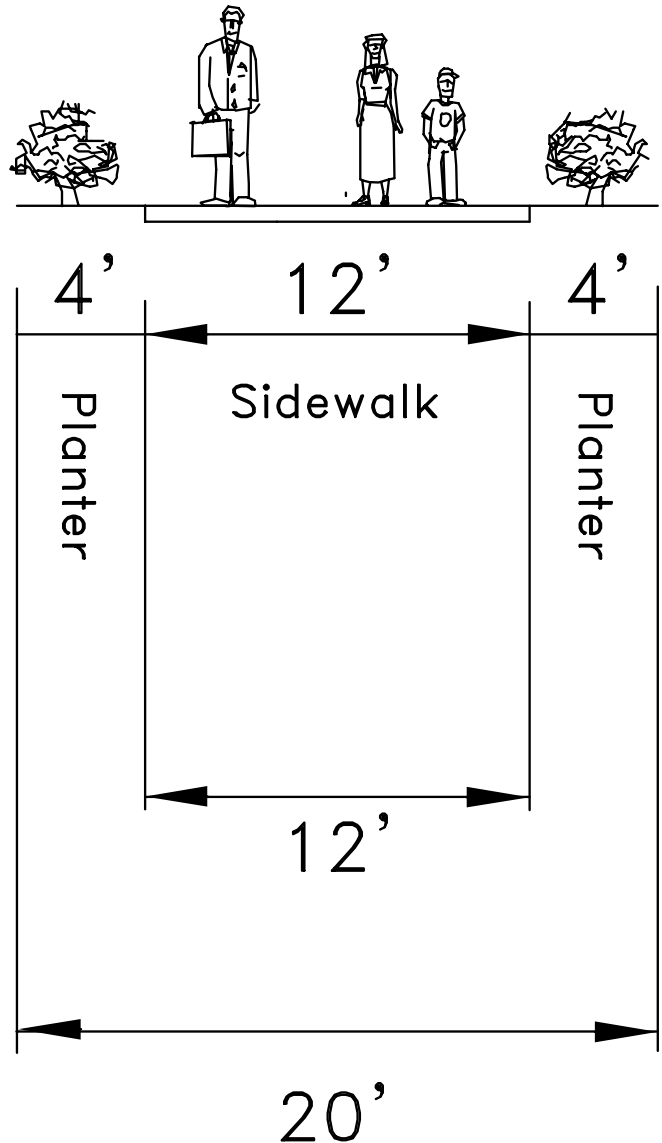


Figure 10: City of Federal Way Path Cross-Section

TRAIL AMENITIES

Wayfinding signage and other amenities should be included to improve the comfort and convenience and overall experience of trail users. Recommended amenities include:

- Wayfinding signage, especially at the transition between facilities
- Information kiosks
- Trash receptacles
- Bike racks at high visibility, high use locations
- Benches and seating, especially along urban trails, to support younger and older trail users
- Shade trees, especially between in the vegetated buffer between sidepaths and vehicle lanes
- Water fountains at select locations, such as at the start or end of well-used trails like the BPA

These features should be consolidated as much as possible in amenity nodes at select intersections where more space is available. These nodes can be described as “gateways” or prominent entranceways to trails, reflecting local character.

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CHAPTER 6

Strategic Projects



Three corridors were selected by City staff as strategic projects for early implementation. These projects were identified from the prioritized list as ones that were feasible to implement in the short-term, can build on existing or planned multimodal facilities, or have identified funding opportunities. Conceptual designs and opinions of costs were developed for these three projects and can be found in Appendix H. Strategic Project Concept Designs and Cost Opinions.

Corridors

CORRIDOR A: 16th AVENUE S

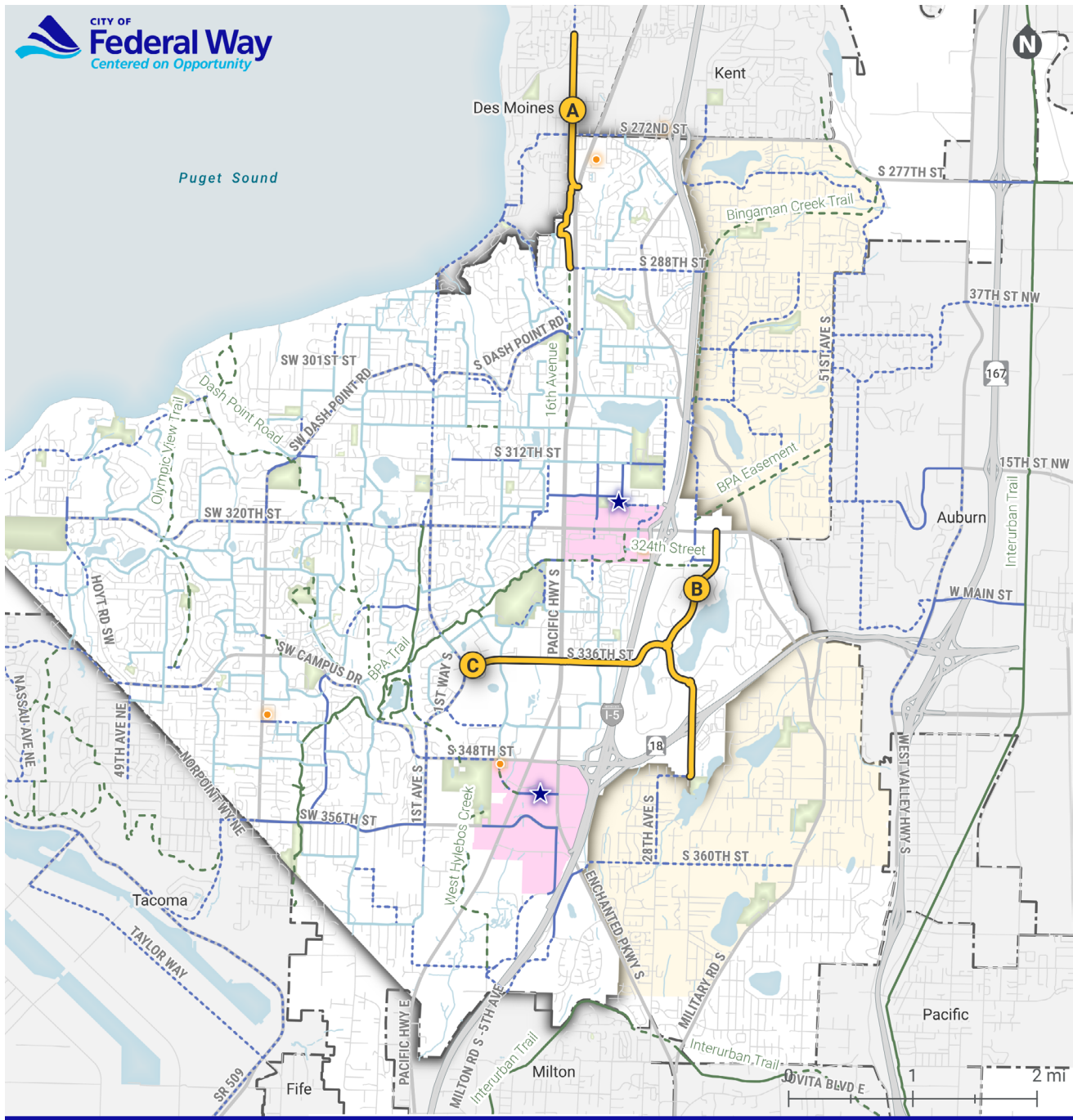
This project leverages the Pac Highway Non-Motorized Corridor project, a planned sidepath along 16th Ave S from S 288th St to S 308th St (designed and construction funding secured) continuing that path northward to the border with Des Moines at 272nd St. The project will enable connections between Des Moines to the north and Federal Way High School and City Center to the south. The City has identified a potential funding source for this project and plans to pursue grant funding in the near term.

CORRIDOR B: WEYERHAEUSER WAY S

Of all the eastern and southern corridors with potential to indirectly connect to the Interurban Trail, Weyerhaeuser Way S was the most feasible option. The corridor can accommodate a shared-use path, with gentle grades, and fewer design constraints. It will also connect to the planned City Center Access project on S 324th, which will create a new east-west connection and crossing of I-5. This project also connects to the proposed project on S 336th St (Corridor C) enabling a second east-west connection to existing and planned multimodal facilities.

CORRIDOR C: S 336th ST

The 336th St S project would provide an east-west connection between BPA Trail (via 1st Way S) to the west and the proposed Weyerhaeuser Way S project (Corridor B) to the east, thereby leveraging planned infrastructure. This project would improve multimodal connectivity under I-5, something that is lacking today. The corridor alignment also passes alongside Sound Transit's Link Operating and Maintenance Facility South (OMFS), and thus comes with a partnership opportunity for funding and implementation.



Strategic Project

- A. 16th Avenue S
- B. Weyerhaeuser Way S
- C. S 336th Street

Future Link Light Rail Station Area

- Park and Ride

Lake

Park

Regional Growth Center

Potential Annexation Area*

Existing Shared Use Path

Planned Shared Use Path

Existing Bike Lane

Planned Bike Lane

Greenway

City Limit

*Planned routes through Potential Annexation areas would be built by the City of Federal Way if annexed

24.05.2024

TOOLE
DESIGN

Geographic and mapping information presented in this document is for informational purposes only, and is not suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Mapping products presented herein are based on information collected at the time of preparation. Toole Design Group, LLC makes no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of the underlying source data used in this analysis, or recommendations and conclusions derived therefrom.

Figure 11: Strategic Projects Overview Map

Project Details

The following project pages describe these projects in greater detail.

Legend

			
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION	BIKEWAY CONNECTION	GREENWAY CONNECTION	MULTIMODAL CONNECTION

16TH AVE S SIDEPATH

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will extend the existing 16th Ave Path, which meets at S 288th St, to the northern city limits at S 272nd St.

This sidepath will link Federal Way and Des Moines and provide an alternative to biking on SR 99

CONNECTIVITY, ACCESS, AND EQUITY BENEFITS

- Links Federal Way with Des Moines. North-south connections between SeaTac and Federal Way are a priority for Port of Seattle
- Provides a comfortable multimodal alternative to biking and walking along SR 99
- Connects to schools and transit
- Leverages the City's investment in the future segment of 16th Ave S trail
- Medium to high equity need

PROJECT EXTENTS	S 288th St to S 272nd St
JURISDICTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Federal Way • City of Des Moines
PROJECT LENGTH	1.15 miles
EXISTING CROSS-SECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor arterial, local street • 2 lanes, some sections with center turn lanes, some with shoulders, some with parking
PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION	Sidepath and greenway
LOCAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	Future sidepath and multi-use path from S 308th to S 288th St
REGIONAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	Bikeways on 16th Ave S in Des Moines
TRANSIT CONNECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit lines near, but not directly along, corridor; bus stops along Pac Hwy within a quarter mile • Provides multimodal connection to Federal Way Downtown Link Station once connected by other planned trails
KEY DESTINATIONS SERVED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Way City Center • Des Moines downtown • Sacajawea Middle School, Federal Way High School • Sacajawea Park
DEMOGRAPHICS SERVED	Census tracts within project area score low to medium on PSRC Opportunity Index
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$7.6 million
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	WA DOT Safe Routes to School Program (Sacajawea Middle School; Federal Way High School) Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) PSRC Countywide Non-Motorized Program

PROJECT DETAILS

16th Ave S from S 272nd to Pacific Highway: Sidepath

- Remove existing path/c-curb; 10-12 ft wide sidepath (shared use path) along west side of street
- Vegetated buffer between trail and street where space allows
- At S 279th St, path switchbacks down to 15th Ave S

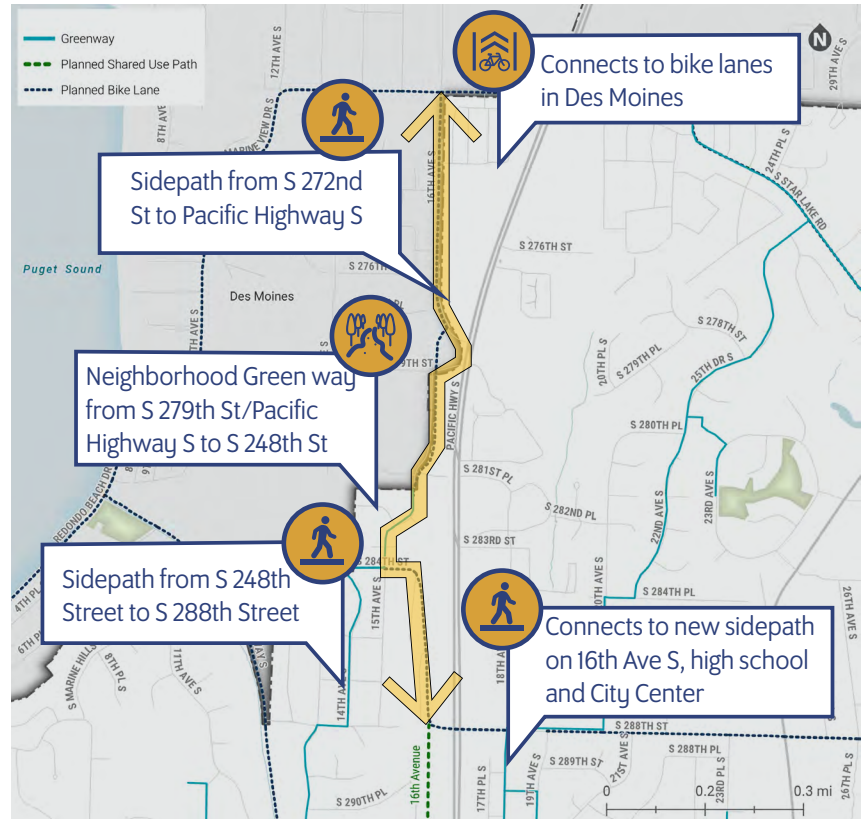
15th Ave S from S. 279th/ Pacific Highway to S 284th: Greenway

- Existing sidewalks, with pavement markings, signs to indicate bike priority

16th Ave S from S 284th to S288th: Sidepath

- 12 ft wide sidepath along north side of S 284th St
- 10 ft wide sidepath along east side of 16th Ave S, with retaining wall
- 12 ft wide sidepath along west side as street approaches S 288th
- Connects with future 14 ft sidepath along west side of 16th Ave S south of S 288th St and buffered bike lanes on S 288th St

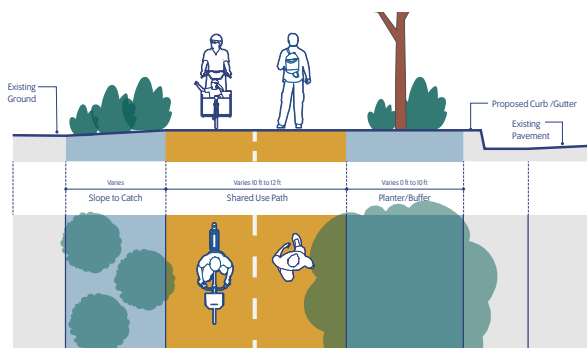
PROJECT CORRIDOR



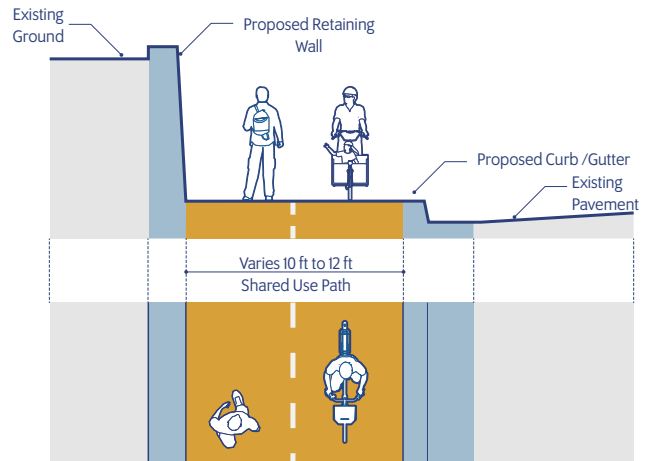
Additional Design Considerations

- The segment from S 288th St to S 284th St is a potential erosion hazard area. Two parcels on the southwest corner of 16th Ave S and S 272nd St are mapped as potential critical areas
- Alignment traverses two parcels properties zoned BC; development may trigger zoning use process review

TYPICAL CROSS-SECTIONS



16th Ave S shared use path typical section (15th Ave S to S 272nd St) NOT TO SCALE



16th Ave S shared use path typical section (S 288th St to S 15th Ave S) NOT TO SCALE

WEYERHAEUSER WAY S SIDEPATH

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will convert existing bike lanes and shoulders on Weyerhaeuser Way to a sidepath along the full length of the corridor.

CONNECTIVITY, ACCESS, AND EQUITY BENEFITS

This sidepath will improve multimodal connectivity along the east side of Federal Way and will connect to the planned City Center Access project and extension of BPA Trail.

- Creates a viable future connection to Interurban Trail, via unincorporated King County, Milton and Edgewood
- Builds on existing and planned connection to Federal Way Downtown Link Station
- Serves a high equity need area

PROJECT EXTENTS	S 320th St S to 349th St
JURISDICTION	City of Federal Way
PROJECT LENGTH	2.07 miles
EXISTING CROSS-SECTION	Minor arterial and major collector, 2-4 lanes
PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION	Sidepath
LOCAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing bike lanes on S 323rd St and 32nd Ave S • Planned S 324th St connections
REGIONAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	Potential connection to Milton/Edgewater Interurban Trail via S 349th St, 28th Ave S, S 360th St and Military Rd S
TRANSIT CONNECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit line on corridor south of S 336th St • Provides multimodal connection to Federal Way Downtown Link Station once connected by other planned trails • Transit services on S 320th St, planned for upgrade to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
KEY DESTINATIONS SERVED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodbridge Corporate Park • East Campus Corporate Park • Weyerhaeuser Wood Product Lab • Pacific Bonsai Museum • Federal Way City Center • Lakeland Elementary School • Sequoyah Middle School
DEMOGRAPHICS SERVED	Census tracts within project area score very low on PSRC Opportunity Index
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$6.8 million
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Program • WSDOT Safe Routes to School Program • Surface Transportation Block Grant • Transportation Alternatives Program • PSRC County-wide Non-motorized Program

PROJECT DETAILS

S 320th to S 336th St: Sidepath on east side

- Replace bike lanes and sidewalk or shoulder with 12 ft wide sidepaths along east side
- Vegetated buffer between path and street, width varies

S 336th St to S 349th St: Sidepath on west side

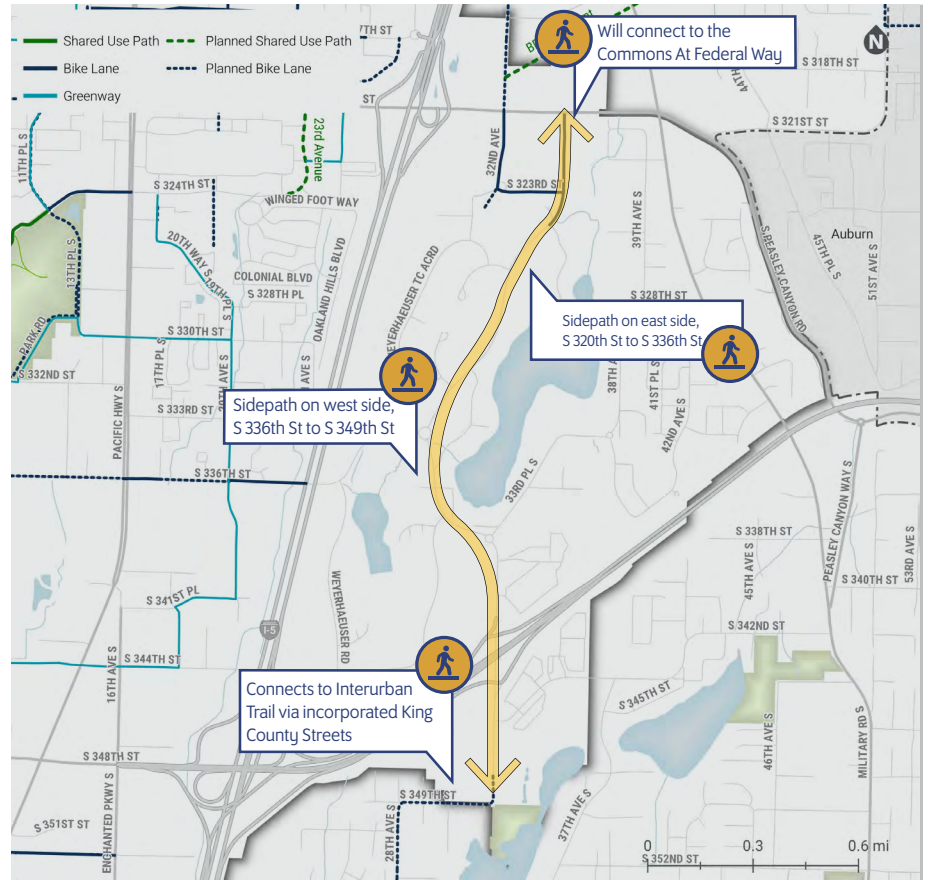
- Path to cross from east to west, south of roundabout
- 12 ft wide sidepath along west side of street replaces existing 8 ft sidewalk between Loop Rd at SR 18
- Path narrows near wetland and streams
- Vegetated buffer between path and street, width varies

SR 18 Crossing: Wide sidewalk/sidepath on west side of bridge

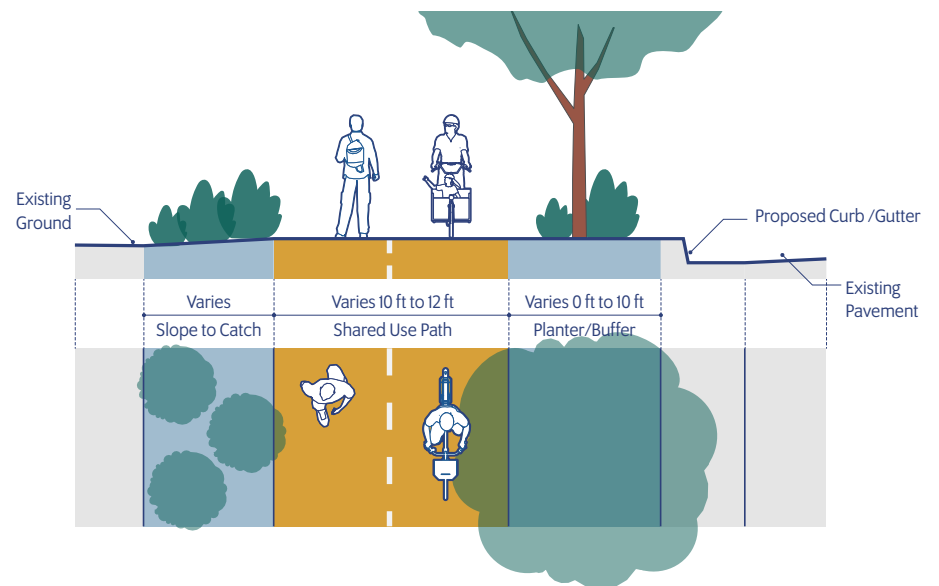
Additional Design Considerations

- Potential wetland near the southwest corner of Weyerhaeuser Way S and Westbound SR 18 off-ramp intersection. Stream crossings at Weyerhaeuser Way just north of S 336th Pl. just south of S 336th St.

PROJECT CORRIDOR



TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION



S 336TH ST SIDEPATH

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will create a sidepath along S 336th St between the BPA Trail and Weyerhaeuser Way S.

CONNECTIVITY, ACCESS, AND EQUITY BENEFITS

- This project will create a continuous east-west multimodal connection, linking the BPA trail and the planned Weyerhaeuser Way Sidepath
- With the potential connectivity to the Interurban Trail via the Weyerhaeuser Way project, the S 336th sidepath would link the western part of the city with a route that connect to the Interurban Trail to the south
- Serves a high equity need area

PROJECT EXTENTS	BPA Trail to Weyerhaeuser Way S
JURISDICTION	City of Federal Way
PROJECT LENGTH	1.9 miles
EXISTING CROSS-SECTION	Minor arterial, 2-4 lanes with center turn lane and intermittent sidewalks
PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION	Sidepath
LOCAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BPA Trail • Intersecting greenways on 9th Ave S and 20th Ave S • Planned sidepath on Weyerhaeuser Way S
REGIONAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS	Potential connection to Milton/Edgewater Interurban Trail via Weyerhaeuser Way S
TRANSIT CONNECTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit line on corridor • Provides multimodal connection to Federal Way Downtown Link Station once connected by other planned trails
KEY DESTINATIONS SERVED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multifamily and senior housing • Shopping and services
DEMOGRAPHICS SERVED	Census tracts within project area score low and very low on PSRC Opportunity Index
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Transit South Operating and Maintenance Facility South • WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Program • Highway Safety Improvement Program • Transportation Improvement Board (Urban Arterial Program or Active Transportation Program) • PSRC County-wide Non-motorized Program

PROJECT DETAILS

BPA Trail to 1st Way S

- Existing sidewalks, bike lanes to be added

1st Way S to I-5

- 12 ft wide sidepath along south side of street
- Vegetated buffer between trail and street; width varies

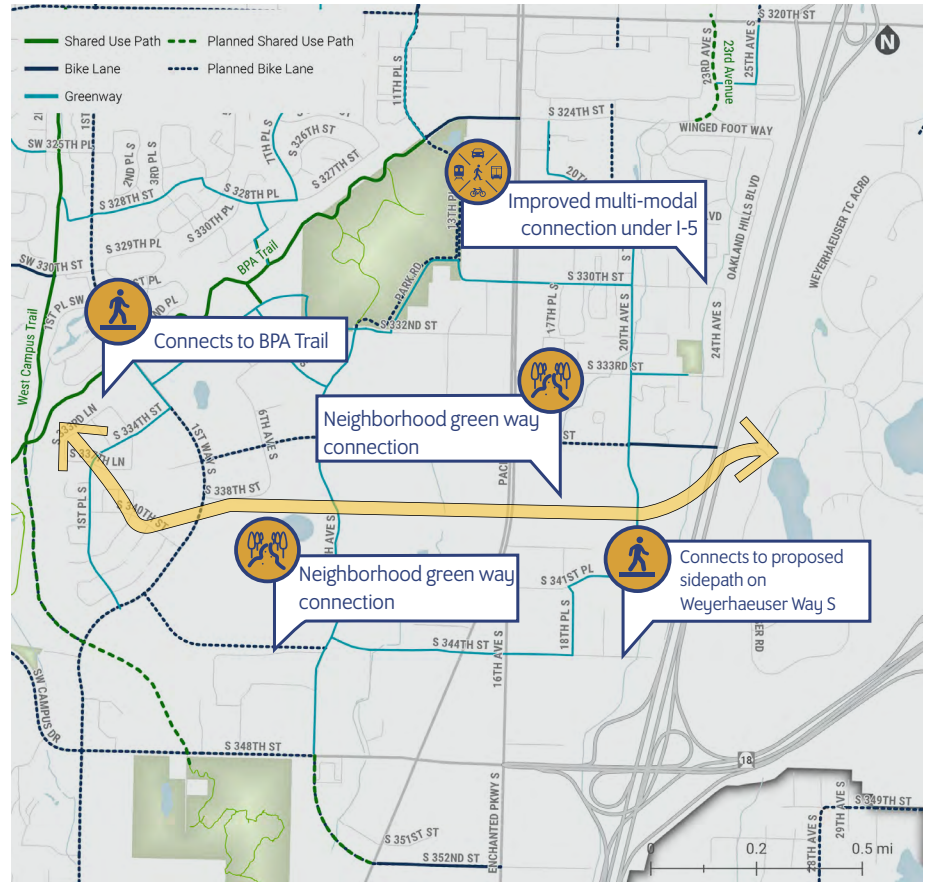
I-5 to Weyerhaeuser Way S

- 12 ft wide sidepath along south side of street
- Vegetated buffer between trail and street; width varies

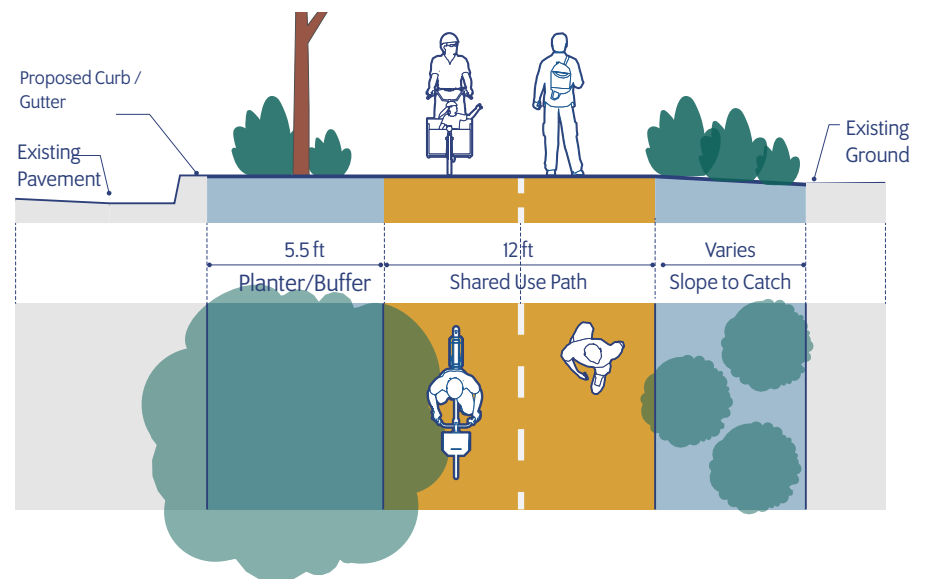
Additional Design Considerations

- Three potential stream crossings: east of 13th Pl S, east of 18th Ave S, west of I-5, and west of Weyerhaeuser Way S.

PROJECT CORRIDOR



TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION



CHAPTER 7

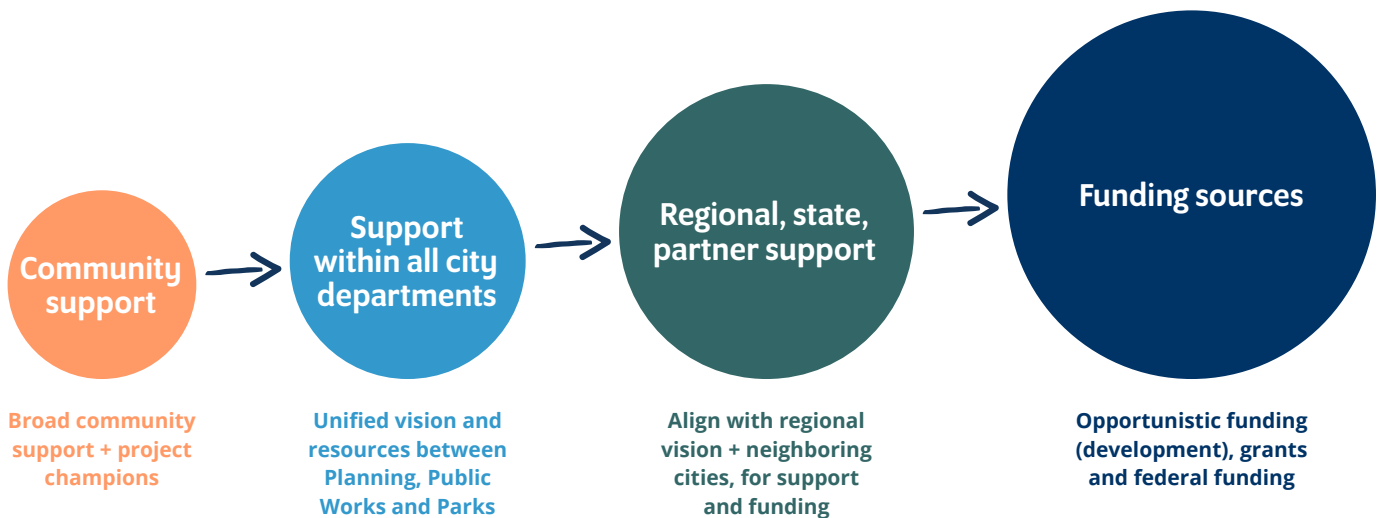
Implementation Strategies



The SW King County Trails Plan creates a vision for connectivity to the regional trail system and increases multimodal access and connectivity within Federal Way. As the projects identified in this plan are implemented and constructed, they will positively impact the quality of life for residents of Federal Way and neighboring communities in King and Pierce Counties. However, it will take considerable effort, collaboration, and funding to plan, design, and implement the projects identified in this Plan.

In addition, the incremental development of the trail recommendations will require a unified vision and resources between the City's Community Development, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works Departments as well as external partners, including King County, Pierce County, WSDOT, Sound Transit, the surrounding jurisdictions, and private developers or property owners.

How should the City make the SW King County Trails Plan a reality? This chapter discusses how to continue implementing the community's vision by examining the strategies, policies, and partnerships that will provide the framework for a successful project.



Development Strategies

Strategies for developing the trail system focus on creating foundational baselines to prepare for constructing and managing the system. Strategies include coordination of partner agencies to plan trails, as well as to use resources across departments to build trails. Developing good data management protocols in this stage will improve trail planning efficiency and provide a good benchmark for progress.

CONTINUE CONVERSATIONS FROM STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS WITH NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS

The relationships that were fostered around trails between the City's planning, parks, and engineering staff and Federal Way's neighbors should continue to be nurtured. All routes that are regional connectivity opportunities will require coordination with other municipal and county jurisdictions. Federal Way Public Works Department should follow-up annually with each participant of the stakeholder interviews to discuss updates.

MAINTAIN THE GIS TRAIL DATA INVENTORY

GIS data was compiled into a layer that can be used for future planning. The data can be used to understand existing characteristics of each route.

EDUCATE STAFF THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF FEDERAL WAY ABOUT THE TRAILS PLAN AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

City staff should be briefed on the trails plan so that the plan gains momentum and traction among Federal Way staff and departments. In particular, the departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Community Development should all have a unified understanding of the Plan. Public facing staff should be up to speed on this Plan so that messaging is coordinated.

UPDATE THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT'S DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS MANUAL WITH NEW CROSS-SECTIONS FOR TRAILS

To ensure that future trails are accessible for all ages and abilities, the City should update its [Development Standards Manual](#) with new cross-sections for trails. The manual provides guidelines and specifications for the construction of transportation and utility infrastructure in Federal Way. This manual should include design guidance for trails that meet the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) standards for all ages and abilities trails.

COORDINATE WITH UTILITIES TO DETERMINE WHICH TRAIL PROJECTS THEY MAY BE WILLING TO FUND ALONG THEIR CORRIDORS

Federal Way jointly manages the BPA Trail with the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). To extend the trail in the electric utility corridor, the City should approach BPA with a potential partnership for constructing a trail under the power lines. This has potential to reduce the financial burden of this project.

COORDINATE WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OR LOCAL JURISDICTIONS TO DETERMINE HOW TRAILS CAN BE ESTABLISHED WITH UTILITY REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT WORK

Public Works and utility projects are opportunities to add trails when roadways are retrofitted and repaired. Public Works should map and coordinate with planned CIP and repair projects.

Partnerships

Expansion of the regional trail network relies on partnerships between public and private organizations to create an efficient, interconnected system that serves residents. Expanding the regional trail system requires crossing jurisdictional boundaries.

There are many trail providers in the region. Multiple jurisdictions, organizations, and partners work together to collectively manage the existing regional trail network and plan for the future. King County Regional Trails and the Leafline Coalition are working toward connecting regional and local trails. Ideally, the visionary projects identified in this plan should be incorporated into the [Leafline Trails Network Map Vision](#).

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Trails and similar corridor enhancement projects are most successful when there is strong public agency leadership, a comprehensive framework plan, and community support, usually embodied in a citizen support organization. These organizations typically assist with a variety of tasks including advocacy, public outreach, funding and management, among others.

SUPPORT GROUP TYPES

Community support groups can take on many different forms and functions based on the size and complexity of the community and project(s) being supported. The most common are:

- Public agency supported advisory boards/committees
- Public agency supported non-profit organization/corporations
- Coalitions
- “Friends of” non-profit groups

Partnerships with community support groups also help with trail maintenance once it has been constructed.

Funding Opportunities

Multiuse trails serve as both active transportation and recreation infrastructure, so cobbling together

the finances needed to plan, design, construct, and maintain the network can be tricky. These projects often take many years to develop from concept to reality. Maintaining trail investments is equally challenging.

While the multifunctional nature of trails can broaden potential funding sources, funding is one of the biggest challenges of trail development. Compared to other transportation infrastructure programs, many trail owners have relatively small annual budgets with project maximums well below the actual cost of developing trails. Therefore, trail development is usually phased, requiring those agencies to manage multiple funding sources over years, and often making important trail connections one at a time.

Trail funding sources include local, regional, state, federal, and non-profit. Federal Way will need continued determination and creativity at all levels of government and partners to achieve the vision and goals of this Plan. Establishing regional priorities enables regions to work collaboratively toward a shared vision and seek funding together.

Multiple sources of funding can be combined to finance different aspects of the SW King County Trails Plan. Dedicated, recurring funding is the most reliable way to build and maintain a trail. Appendix G, Funding Source Table outlines such funding sources offered by regional, state, and federal agencies. In addition to these sources, the City should review alternative financing structures, such as taking out infrastructure bonds, or establishing development impact fees to determine the approach that best fits with its financial strategy and will result in a sustainable revenue source. Because these projects have both transportation and recreation benefits, funding sources from both domains may be considered.

Several projects proposed in this Plan are good candidates for federal and state funding sources. Grant programs are available for the design work needed to develop construction-ready plans and for the construction itself. Programs that fund signage and wayfinding are also available and should be considered concurrently with construction funding. Programs that provide tax incentives for private property owners to donate land or enter into trail maintenance agreements

with public agencies can also be pursued, especially where the trail would beautify or otherwise enhance the property. A land conservation trust or easement is one strategy used to engage with private property holders along public trails.

The funding sources included in this plan are current as of the plan's publication date. It is recommended that the City of Federal Way update this list as part of developing a funding plan as work begins on implementing each trail segment.

Positioning and Grant Eligibility

This trails plan will serve as a foundation for pursuing regional, state, and federal grant funding for active transportation improvements. In addition to pursuing grant funding, this trail plan positions the City and its partners for implementing an interconnected trails network in southwest King County. This plan aligns with federal, state, and local funding and eligibility requirements, described below.

FEDERAL DESIGN GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulates trail design and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Design Guidelines. The FHWA also publishes the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which provides consistency in standards for traffic control devices.

The US Department of Justice regulates trail design through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Guidelines, and the Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).

ADA guidelines require that facilities be accessible by individuals with disabilities. The guidelines outline minimum dimensions and standards for width, passing space, headroom, surface textures, slope, and other design considerations for all publicly accessible areas.

The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities provides design guidelines for bicycle transportation facilities and shared-use paths.

Compliance with AASHTO guidelines for improvements is required by most grantors.

These federal design guidelines provide a basis for good trail design that will be utilized as trail projects come to fruition.

STATE DESIGN GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), originally enacted in 1990, requires cities and counties to develop multimodal transportation options (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 36.70A.108), and to set aside land for recreational uses such as trails (in RCW 36.70A.160) as population and the need for housing increases.

Washington's Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) develops statewide recreation policy regarding recreational trails. The Washington State Recreation Plan is an element of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) program and was adopted by the National Parks Service (NPS) in 1991. Washington State Trails Plan recommendations include:

- **Improving Trail Equity:** Locate and build trails for underserved populations; connect more people to trails; provide trails where people like to use them; address safety.
- **Linking Trails with Transportation:** Ensure recreational trails complement and link with multimodal transportation systems to provide a seamless experience.
- **Creating Regional Partnerships** to facilitate a connected trail system across jurisdictions.

The RCO is an important source of statewide funding for trails and requires applicants to have completed a planning process before applying for grants.

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) provides guidelines and specifications for trails used for active transportation. This includes the *WSDOT Design Manual*, and the *Active Transportation Program Design Guide (2024)*.

WSDOT provides two primary publications related to federally funded transportation projects.

- *Local Agency Guidelines (LAG) Manual*: This manual identifies specific design standards related to bicycle and pedestrian facility installations.
- *Construction Manual and Standard Specifications for Road, Bridge and Municipal Construction*: This manual provides information and advice on public works project design and construction management.

Both documents are based on federal transportation guidelines. Consistency with WSDOT guidelines is also important for securing grant support for project development.

REGIONAL FUNDING

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) developed the *Regional Open Space Conservation Plan* in 2018. This Plan addresses regional trails as a type of open space:

“Regional trails are active transportation corridors that provide access to the region’s open spaces and connect communities and other important regional destinations. Often, trails are interconnected with rivers, floodplains, and farmlands.”

The PSRC Plan is designed to document information and work by multiple entities toward open space conservation and to guide collaborative efforts.

PSRC also is critical in that it helps communities secure federal funding for active transportation projects.

This Plan will not only position the City to pursue grant funding for implementation but will help the City to become better connected with the rest of the region through multimodal facilities for both recreational and transportation.

Technical Assistance

In addition to funding sources, federal agencies provide technical assistance to communities looking to advance local trail projects. For instance, the National Park Service offers the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RCTA). This program supports locally led conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the United States. While this program does not provide financial assistance, it does provide professional services and technical capacity to help local jurisdictions or land managers advance trail projects.

Additional Recommendations

Throughout the process of speaking with stakeholder groups and community members, and with the support of best practice research, additional recommendations were formed to develop a framework for implementing the recommendations within SW King County Trails Plan. These recommendations go beyond the realm of infrastructure to establish a forum for dialogue around trail improvements and connections moving forward. Key recommendations are provided below, to align with the short-, medium-, and long-term time frames.

TIME FRAME	STRATEGIES
<p>Short term (1-3 years)</p>	<p>STRATEGY 1 The City of Federal Way should identify funding sources and coordinate with potential project partners like Sound Transit to move the strategic projects forward.</p> <p>STRATEGY 2 The City of Federal Way should continue to be an active member of the Leafline Coalition and work to ensure that the plan’s proposals are carried forth into the regional planning vision.</p> <p>STRATEGY 3 At the time of this Plan production, neighboring cities are updating their Comprehensive Plans and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plans (e.g., Pierce County). City of Federal Way should coordinate with these agencies on the Plan’s vision and recommendations to ensure that their projects align and connect with those planning efforts.</p> <p>STRATEGY 4 ForeverGreen Trails has been active in building momentum through events, creating public-private partnerships and other activities that are moving the needle on several key projects. It would be useful for City staff to attend ForeverGreen meetings both to learn about what methods are successful for them but also to coordinate on connections to Pierce County.</p> <p>ONGOING STRATEGIES Schedule annual coordination meetings with King County, Leafline, Pierce County staff and staff of jurisdiction with nearby/connected trails to foster coordination across municipal boundaries and work to provide a consistent experience for trail users throughout the broader regional network. Consider mapping coordination as a key aspect of this coordination.</p> <p>Pursue grant funding and partnership for the strategic projects.</p>
<p>Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>STRATEGY 1 Update the SW King County Trails Plan in alignment with the City’s periodic Transportation Plan updates.</p> <p>STRATEGY 2 Revisit conversation around annexation of East Federal Way in unincorporated King County. Routes through unincorporated areas are key for regional connectivity.</p>
<p>Long-term (5-10 years)</p>	<p>Revisit transportation priorities to unlock opportunities for further reallocation of street rights-of-way to sustainable modes of travel</p>

Conclusion

The development of trails for transportation and recreation is a complex endeavor. In Federal Way, right-of-way, topography, critical areas, the urban fabric, and funding present challenges to feasible implementation of a fully connected trails network.

However, these challenges are possible to overcome. The vision of this trails plan, along with its goals, project development strategies, and the voices of community members, puts the City of Federal Way on the right path to create a trail-based, high comfort active transportation network for people of all ages and all abilities to enjoy. Persistent efforts to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and regional partners that share a vision for a regionally connected trail network and to creatively pursue a variety of local, regional, and federal funding sources will be critical to successful implementation of this Plan's recommendations.

SW KING COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

