



Transportation Alternatives Program 2023 Application

Instructions

Complete application in the space provided. Applicants are limited to application form and 5 pages of attachments. Submit completed application and attachments electronically to dale.robins@rtc.wa.gov. You will receive an e-mail confirmation within one business day of submittal. If you do not receive confirmation or have questions about the application contact Dale Robins at 564-397-5212.

General Information

Project Title: White Salmon Bluff Pedestrian Connector Corridor Trail

Project Location and Limits: City of White Salmon, WA

Project Length (miles): 0.3

Agency: City of White Salmon

Contact Person: Troy Rayburn

Telephone: 509 493 1133 X 202 Email: administrator@ci.white-salmon.wa.us

Certified Acceptance Agency: Klickitat County Public Works

Project Screening Criteria

Check all that apply.

- Project is consistent with the RTP
- Project contains at least one eligible Transportation Alternatives Category
- Project is directly related to the surface transportation system (except trails)
- Project does not supplement the construction of an existing project
- Project is open to public access

Cost Summary

Project Phase	Start Date	TAP Funds	Other Funds	Total Cost
Design	07/01/2023	\$85,745	0	\$85,745
Right of Way	01/01/2024	0	0	0
Construction	07/01/2024	0	\$965,988	\$965,988
Totals	n/a	\$85,745	\$965,988	\$1,051,733
Overall Match Ratio:				91.85%

Project Type

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bike/Pedestrian facilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vegetation management practices |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safe routes for non-drivers | <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abandoned railroad corridors for trails | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental mitigation activity |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreational Trails Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Control of outdoor advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Routes to School Program |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic preservation of transportation facilities | |

Project Information

1. Project Description:

The White Salmon Bluff Connector Trail will revive a storied piece of local history, reconnect the community to its local waterfront, promote active lifestyles, and draw tourists into the commercial core of White Salmon. The trail will develop a direct pedestrian connection from near the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge landing directly to the city center of White Salmon via stairs and a pathway loop trail. From the late 1800s to the mid 1900s, a wooden stairway linked the two Washington communities of Bingen and White Salmon; this loop trail will return a set of stairs to the same general location as the original stairway, bringing back a historic resource and contributing to a sense of identity and pride for the City of White Salmon and region in general.

The updated design will incorporate viewing platforms and safe pedestrian crossings at Dock Grade Road and Highway 14. This project will have significant impacts for the community in a variety of ways:

>Multi-modal transportation access will significantly increase in White Salmon by providing a direct pedestrian route to the waterfront, to public transportation options at the bridge, and to Oregon once the Bridge replacement project is completed. . The trail will also increase pedestrian access to connect travelers from downtown White Salmon with the Amtrak station in downtown Bingen.

>The trail will support economic and community development goals, and is identified as an economic development priority in the City of White Salmon's Comprehensive Plan. By increasing connectivity between White Salmon's downtown business core to the waterfront, there will be positive impacts on our businesses through increased opportunity for tourism and maximizing access for pedestrian travelers across the new Hood River-White Salmon Bridge, once completed. The project also aligns with a goal of the Friends of the Columbia Gorge's Towns to Trails project to increase pedestrian connectivity between all communities within the Gorge.

>In addition to the transportation, community, and economic benefits of the proposed White Salmon Bluff Trail, the project would also allow the City improved access to the hillside to address overgrowth and hillside vegetation that pose a wildfire threat. The increased access would also allow the City to consider strategies that would co-locate conduit that can be used and accessed as backup to pressurize the water delivery system to address firefighting needs in that area of the community.

There is significant community support for the project as shown in the attached letters of support and from the Strid Family who will dedicate/deed over the land for the connector trail easement.

Funding assistance is now needed to move from conceptual design to a finalized design by completing engineering & surveying, permitting, soil testing & geotechnical work, exploring strategies to ensure ADA accessibility, and developing full construction cost estimates. This would occur with engagement from community and regional partners.

Project Information

2. Describe how the project will improve the public travel experience, and travel options, including the benefit to the community:

Once constructed, this connector trail will enhance multi-modal transportation options via a pedestrian route from the base of the new Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge site to the City of White Salmon where none currently exists.

When the new bridge is constructed, it will include pedestrian and bicycle access, both of which the current bridge lacks. This direct route will provide a safe pedestrian travel experience option that includes overlooks for enjoying the views of the Columbia River and Mount Hood. Aligning the timing of this project with the completion of the new bridge will also fully maximize transit and active transportation services, allowing them to be designed and implemented concurrently to optimize the connectivity benefits of each mode. The cross-project combination of bicycle routes, quality sidewalks, this trail pathway, protected intersections and safe street crossings will effectively expand the reach of transit, providing a critical first/last mile connection to allow people to complete trips without needing a car.

The trail will also serve as a link to a proposed multi-use trail from White Salmon's Jewett Blvd./SR 141 down to the City of Bingen and back to the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge along SR 14, where pedestrians can access a park and ride, transit services, and the forthcoming Columbia River waterfront park. This increased access will also allow visitors interested in coming to White Salmon's downtown business district without a car for a meal, shopping, or an overnight stay the ability to do so; the increased access will have a positive impact on local businesses in White Salmon.

With significant efforts to increase pedestrian and cycling access through the Towns to Trails efforts and the Historic Highway 30 (OR) trail project moving forward, this connection will be even more vital for these users to access White Salmon without a vehicle.

3. Describe how the project provides a connection between modes, or improves transportation choices, or connects to land use services such as job locations, a civic center, library, grocery market, playground, retail center, medical office, school, and other. (Include modes and list of specific land uses connect within 1/2 mile of project):

This trail connector project is a link to various modes of transportation, employment opportunities, and a number of public and private services.

Land uses within 1/2 mile from the bottom of the trail: a Park and Ride, public parking, walking and biking opportunities along SR 14 to Bingen, riverfront access, the Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce, gas station, an RV park, North Shore Medical Clinic, one of our area's major employers, the Mt. Adams Fruit fruit packing facility. The City also plans to develop a riverfront park at the base of the trail in the future. These connections from White Salmon to services along SR 14 are critical to our community but this also increases access to services in White Salmon at the top of the trail for those in Bingen and eventually Hood River once the bridge includes multi-modal options.

Additionally, Bingen's downtown business district is about 1 mile from the bottom of the trail, a medium density housing development slated for construction within the next five years, and an Amtrak station roughly 1.25 miles away. Completing the trail will enhance access to Amtrak's vital service for the community while also allowing those using it increased transportation access options into White Salmon.

Land uses within 1/2 mile from the top of the trail: White Salmon's active downtown commercial core, city hall, a full range of health coverage medical clinics, Worksource Office, senior center, US post office, county service center, public library, grocery store, hardware store, pharmacy, hotels, restaurants, public park and playground, an elementary school, and roughly half of White Salmon's residential development. These are all potential users of the proposed trail.

The connection offered will also be beneficial to White Salmon residents needing to walk across the new Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge, and to tourists or others walking or biking across the bridge from Hood River, Oregon, to be able to reach the numerous services previously noted in downtown White Salmon. It would also be beneficial to connect the residential area to the future riverfront park, as access to and recreational opportunity along the riverfront are currently limited. Creating that access aligns with an identified policy objective in the existing Comprehensive Plan to "partner with WSDOT, Klickitat County, Bingen, and Port of Klickitat to develop a trail system connecting White Salmon with the Columbia River..."

Project Information

4. Describe how the project relates to an adopted plan such as the GMA plan, modal plan, neighborhood plan or other planning process. (Include name of Plan and attach a copy of page from plan that including project by name):

This connector project is included in the City of White Salmon's 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which can be referenced via the below link:

<https://bit.ly/WS-Park-Plan>

It is also referenced in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan as a policy aim to realize the adopted goal of "maintaining and improving access and multi-modal circulation between park and recreation facilities."

The connector project will also be included in the City of White Salmon's 2023 Transportation System Plan (TSP), currently in development with an anticipated Summer 2023 completion time frame. The TSP consultants, Nelson Nygaard, confirm that the trail will be listed / included in the City's TSP due to its connectivity among and between downtown White Salmon, the Columbia River waterfront area, the Park and Ride facility, the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge, and the City of Bingen.

The project is also identified in Klickitat County's countywide Infrastructure Project List, which is shared with MCEDD.

5. Describe to what extent the project will improve mobility for disadvantage populations, including elderly, disabled minority, and low income populations:

Within 1/2 mile of the top of the trail, the population is 15% minorities, 21% low income, 29% age 0 to 17 and 22% over the age of 64.

This connector trail will provide an alternative mode of transportation for low-income transit riders who utilize bus service or carpools from Hood River (OR), Lyle and Stevenson (WA) and other residential locations within the region to vehicle park and rides or bus stops within walking distance to employment centers in White Salmon.

The reverse is also true. Low-income residents in White Salmon can access transit service, meet a carpool ride, etc., by accessing the park and ride at the bottom of trail.

The connector trail will also provide access to other services and employment centers for disadvantaged and low-income populations such as WorkSource in downtown White Salmon, as well as the North Shore Medical Clinic and Mount Adams Fruit Company, both along SR 14.

6. List affordable house complex and number of housing units that are within 1/2 mile of project:

There are 545 total housing units within half a mile of the two trailheads for the White Salmon Bluff Trail.

Current Affordable housing complexes within 1/2 mile:

Beth-El Shalom Senior Apartments: 48 deed restricted apartments

White Salmon Seniors, operated by Columbia Cascade Housing Corp.: 6 units

In anticipation of the construction of the new Hood River-White Salmon bridge, there are also plans to develop transit-oriented development along the waterfront near the south end of the connector trail, which would first serve as worker housing for the project and then transition to long-term affordable housing.

Within the next five to seven years, construction of a medium density housing development already approved within Bingen city limits will bring an additional 92 units online, varying from apartments to townhomes, within one mile of the trailhead along SR 14.

Project Information

7. Identify the safety issues addressed by project (collision data, lack of adequate safe crossing or access, lack of separated facility, high speed or volume, other):

Currently, there is no pedestrian route that has complete sidewalks or a separated path that connects White Salmon and the Columbia River or Bingen. This connector project will provide a safe, separated pedestrian path that will avoid sharing right-of-way with high-volume traffic routes (9900 AADT at SR 14 and the Hood River Bridge, 3000 AADT at SR 141 and Main Street in White Salmon). As the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge replacement project is completed, this route will provide a safe way to access the multi-modal options to be incorporated into that project.

8. Describe how the project addresses the safety issues identified:

By providing a dedicated pedestrian route that is separated from vehicle traffic between White Salmon, the Columbia River, and Bingen this project will reduce potential conflict between pedestrians and the significant vehicle traffic on SR 141/ Jewett Boulevard. With an annual average daily traffic of over 3000 cars in downtown White Salmon and almost 10,000 at SR 14, these create significant safety concerns. These annual averages also take into account significant seasonal traffic during peak tourism season which creates additional traffic and safety concerns as pedestrians navigate conflicts without separated infrastructure. Without significant investment in pedestrian facilities along this much longer route, there is no way to increase safety for pedestrians seeking to access the area along the Columbia River and the services provided there.

Additionally, as this project moves into final design, safety will be a critical component of the design efforts. It will include clearly marked, safe crossings where the trail crosses existing roads like Dock Grade Road and use best practices to identify the most appropriate strategy for crossing SR 14 to connect to the Columbia River, the existing Park and Ride, and future options to cross the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge on foot.

9. Readiness:

- Design at 70% or higher
- Right of way acquisition complete or not needed
- Environmental permits approved

Please explain:

The project partners have completed some conceptual design with a firm that supports park and trail construction across the Pacific Northwest. This grant request would support creating 70% designs and plan for environmental and other necessary permits.

While most of the proposed route would be on City-owned property, the project partners have also approached the private property owner whose land is on the proposed trail route. The property owner is supportive of the project and willing to donate the easement to move things forward; a draft easement is being finalized between the property owner and city. The city purchased additional land along the bluff in 2021 from Klickitat County to secure the additional land needed for the anticipated loop trail route.

Project Information

10. Describe how the local community and other agencies have been involved in the planning process for the project.

List any opposition to the project and how it was overcome:

The trail connector concept has been discussed as a necessity for years by residents and is currently supported by:

- * The Mayor and White Salmon City Council
- * The Friends of the White Salmon Bluff
- * The underlying private property owners, the Strid Family
- * The City of Bingen, Washington
- * Community Partners
- * Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce
- * Friends of the Columbia Gorge
- * Port of Hood River
- * Mt. Adams Transportation Services

No opposition has been voiced to date. The grant would support a broader level of public discussion about the final alignment and design for the trail to ensure that any concerns are addressed in its design.

11. Describe how the project improves public health and increase physical activity:

Access to a trail within city limits that offers multi-use options will contribute positively to the metrics tracked in a range of the identified social determinants of health, including economic stability, health and health care, neighborhood and built environment, as well as social and community context. The connector trail will improve public health and increase physical activity by providing a safe pedestrian connector where none currently exists. The current lack of a safe route hinders pedestrian movement and completing this connection will make it easy for residents without vehicles or those wanting to walk to travel between the City of White Salmon, the City of Bingen, once the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge is completed, the City of Hood River.

The trail will also provide direct and safe access to the future riverfront park being developed by White Salmon where additional access to physical and recreational activities will be available this will also provide an additional recreational activities will be available this will also provide an additional recreational training outlet to our high school sports teams, athletic club, and gyms for cardiovascular workouts.

12. Describe how the project includes design elements that contribute to quality of life:

In addition to the health benefits that will increase the social determinants of health in our community, the enhanced physical connections to services and neighboring communities that this trail supports will have a positive impact on residents' quality of life by creating more social connection and increasing access to key services. In addition to these tangible benefits, the proposed design will incorporate viewing platforms that residents and visitors can stop at to rest, take pictures, or just relax to take in the incredible views of Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge. Including these areas into the project will enhance the quality of life for residents as well as the experience for visitors. The importance of recreation to the Gorge is reflected in a number of mandates and provisions of the National Scenic Area Act. Included in the first purpose of the Act is a directive to protect and enhance the recreation resources of the Columbia River Gorge. This trail directly aligns with the Gorge Management Plan Goal of "Providing a diversity of trail opportunities in a variety of settings that meet present and future needs and protect and enhance the natural, scenic and cultural resources of the Gorge, while supporting local economies."

Project Information

13. List all funding partners contributing to the project:

Funding Source	Amount
Toll Credits to match Design	0
Private Donations (Friends of the W.S. Bluff willing to raise funds as needed)	0
RTC TAP Grant	\$85,745

Other Information

You may use this space to provide any additional project information considered worth noting:

Additional trail benefits include improved access to maintain overgrowth and hillside vegetation for wildfire preparedness/ mitigation as well as introduction of more native plants.

Further planning and design is needed to identify the ADA component for development of the trail. With the difficulties of the steep terrain, it is anticipated that the ADA route would bypass the stair section, focusing on ensuring that the path going eastward from the SR 14 trailhead into White Salmon would provide for an ADA-accessible trail while protecting the unique characteristics of the surrounding natural environment. The benefit of envisioning a loop trail is that it will allow for accommodating a fully ADA-accessible route into town.

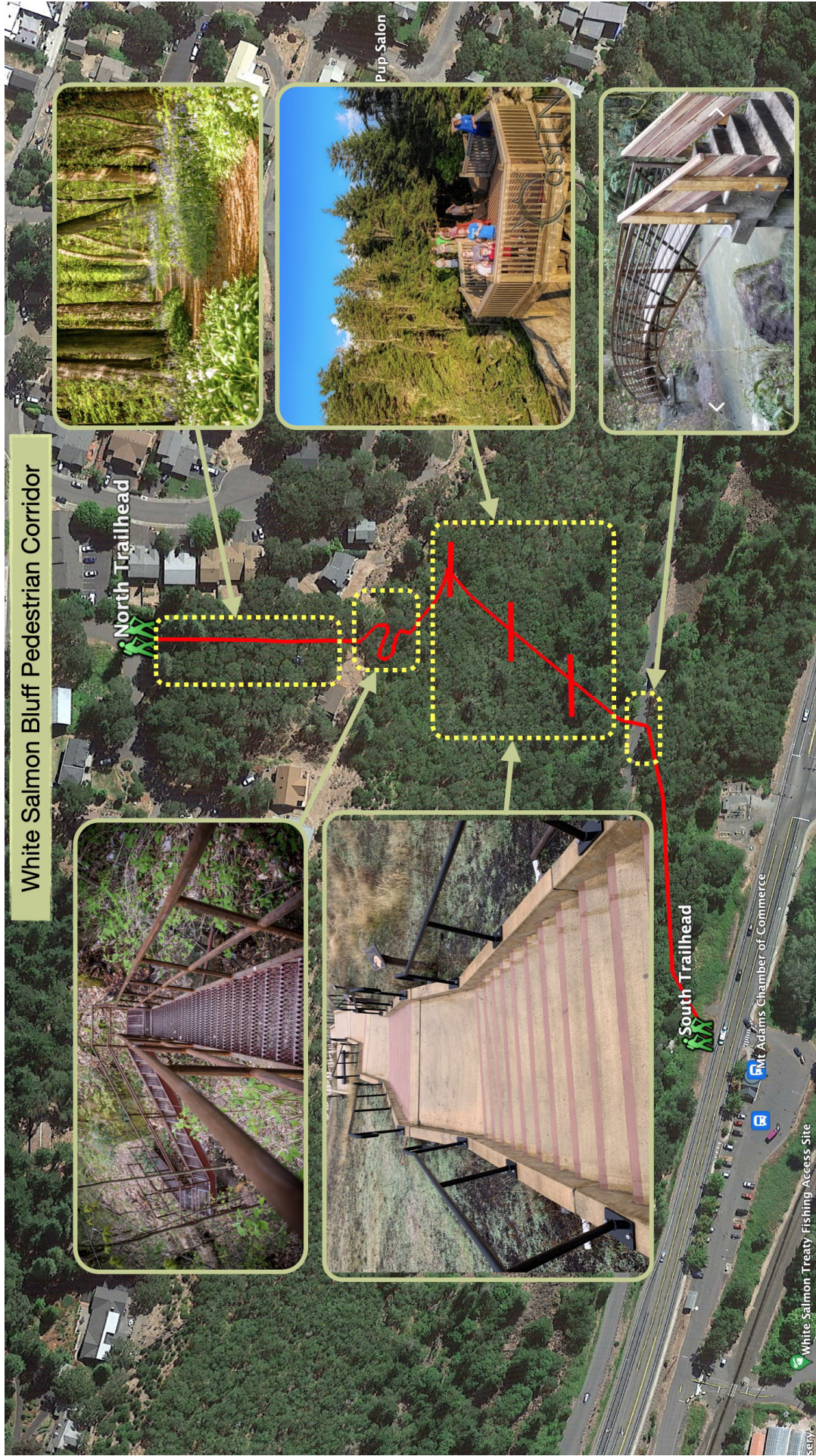
WS Bluff Pedestrian Connector Trail

Notes

1. South trailhead is located away from new bridge intersection for pedestrian safety reasons.
2. South trailhead is located close to park and ride for easy access for people driving/biking to trailhead.
3. Northern most viewing platform location selected to use existing ideal viewing area.
4. Drawing shows a proposed trail location
5. Trail from north viewing platform to Dock Grade Rd angled to follow fall line of bluff.



Potential Design Ideas



Historic Stair Photos



Bluff Steps From White Salmon
To The Hood River Bridge
652 Steps

"Bluff Steps from White Salmon to the Hood River Bridge. 652 Steps."

Photograph is part of an exhibit at the Gorge Heritage Museum, Bingen, Washington, visited in July 2014. The stairway had more than 600 steps, with the last remnants being destroyed in a bluff fire in the early 1950s.

Historic Stair Photos



The Bluff Stairway
365 wooden steps led from the dock on the Columbia River to White Salmon's townsite. Boat passengers used these steps or took the hotel jitneys to and from the boat landing. Ziegler home in right foreground.

© Lynn Topinka, 2014

"The Bluff Stairway.
365 wooden steps led from the dock on the Columbia River to White Salmon's townsite. Boat passengers used these steps or took the hotel jitneys to and from the boat landing. Ziegler home in right foreground."

Photograph is part of an exhibit at the Gorge Heritage Museum, Bingen, Washington, visited in July 2014. The stairway had more than 600 steps, with the last remnants being destroyed in a bluff fire in the early 1950s. The Ziegler home burned in 1962.

March 31, 2023

Board of Directors
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

Re: White Salmon Bluff Pedestrian Connector Corridor Trail Project

Dear Regional Transportation Council:

We are writing to express support for the City of White Salmon's funding request from the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council's Transportation Alternatives Grant Program for the White Salmon Bluff Pedestrian Connector Corridor Trail Project.

This project would fund the design and planning of an essential pedestrian corridor. It will link White Salmon on the bluff above the Columbia River and pedestrian opportunities along the waterfront, SR 14, the City of Bingen, and the City of Hood River once the new Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge is completed.

We envision the bluff's pedestrian corridor as an opportunity to revive a storied piece of local history, reconnect the community to its local waterfront, promote active and healthy lifestyles, draw tourists into the City of White Salmon's downtown commercial core, and directly address alternative transportation options for many people.

Support for the project can be seen in its inclusion in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and forth coming Transportation System Plan.

We fully support this high-priority community project. This is a project that will benefit transportation disadvantaged residents, residents of all ages, and the local business community by providing a safe pedestrian corridor.

Sincerely,

City of White Salmon, Washington

DocuSigned by:

AA76697324A04E4...
City of Bingen, Washington

DocuSigned by:

F287CAE656684B8...
Community Partners

DocuSigned by:

6E9D10DCCB694EB...
Friends of The Columbia Gorge

Friends of the White Salmon Bluff

DocuSigned by:

A5C88A9E8C68442...
Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce

DocuSigned by:

5412F61E1D974C5...
Mt. Adams Transportation Services

DocuSigned by:

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Port of Hood River