



STAFF REPORT/RESOLUTION

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors

FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director

DATE: March 26, 2019 

SUBJECT: **TIP Amendment: Project Removal – Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails, Resolution 04-19-07**

AT A GLANCE - ACTION

The action requested is amendment of the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to remove both phases of the Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails project, reallocating \$225,000 to the 2019 Transportation Alternatives call for projects.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Battle Ground has been working for many years to develop the first phase of their trail project, within portions of the Chelatchie Prairie railroad right-of-way. At this time, the City of Battle Ground has been unable to reach an agreement for use of right-of-way within the Portland Vancouver Junction Railroad’s lease parameters. In addition, the City has reached the last year of delay for obligating construction funds and do not see a quick resolution to securing necessary agreements (See attached letter from City of Battle Ground).

PROPOSED TIP AMENDMENT

All regionally significant projects must be listed in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which in turn become a part of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). RTC’s policies require that projects with regional federal funding changes be approved by both the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) and RTC Board. The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) reviewed the Battle Ground proposed TIP amendments at their March 15, 2019 meeting and recommended RTC Board adoption. The proposed TIP amendments are described below:

Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails: The City of Battle Ground is proposing that the Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails project be removed from the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and that \$225,000 in federal Transportation Alternatives funds be reallocated to the 2019 Transportation Alternatives call for projects.

Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails, Phase 2: After discussion with the City of Battle Ground, it is proposed that the design for the phase 2 of the Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails project also be removed from the TIP. At this time, it does not seem practical to proceed with design given the outstanding use agreement negotiations. The \$147,000 in federal Transportation Alternatives funds would remain allocated to the project until March 2021. By which time the project must proceed or funds will be returned for the 2021 call for Transportation Alternatives projects.

The amendments are found to be consistent with all state and federal requirements. The removal of these projects will be incorporated into the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program following Board action.

POLICY IMPLICATION

This amendment is consistent with the policy and procedures of the Transportation Programming Guidebook. These amendments will allow the region to reallocate Transportation Alternatives funds to other regionally eligible projects that can proceed towards implementation. The City of Battle Ground would be eligible to reapply for construction funding after securing necessary agreements.

BUDGET IMPLICATION

Action on this amendment will provide an additional \$225,000 in Transportation Alternatives funds for the 2019 call for projects.

ACTION REQUESTED

Adoption of Resolution 04-19-07 “TIP Amendment: Project Removal – Chelatchie Prairie Rails with Trails.”

ADOPTED this 2nd day of April 2019, by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ATTEST:

Anne McEnery-Ogle
Chair of the Board

Matt Ransom
Executive Director

Attachment



City of Battle Ground

City Hall • Engineering Department

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February 28, 2019

Matt Ransom, Executive Director
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
PO Box 1366
Vancouver, WA 98666-1366

RE: Chelatchie Prairie Rails With Trails – TAP – Return Of Funds

Dear Matt:

Per Policy 5.8 of the Programming Guidebook, I am informing you that I believe this project cannot make the August obligation deadline for the construction (CN) phase.

In 2013, the City was awarded a TAP grant for Phase I of the Chelatchie Prairie Rails With Trails project. The award was \$50,000 for PE and \$225,000 for CN for a total award of \$275,000. The City obligated the PE phase on June 3, 2014 and has been working on the plans and environmental docs ever since. We received NEPA approval for the project on December 13, 2016. Our plans currently sit at 99% complete.

As you are likely aware, Clark County and PVJR (the railroad operator) are in a legal dispute over the Contract between the two entities. Because of all of this, the City has been banned from the RR ROW by PVJR. We have been working for many years to come up with a project that accommodates the trail and does not hinder RR operations. Unfortunately, we have not had any success in coming up with a design that works for PVJR.

Because of all of this, we are proposing to continue with design of the project as allowed by the legal process with the already obligated PE funds. However, we are proposing to return the CN funds, as we do not have any idea how long the legal process will take or what the outcome will be. As we have already exhausted all of our extensions we do not believe it is in the best interest of the regions obligation levels to try to continue to hold onto the CN funds.

The City of Battle Ground appreciated the opportunity to make this important project a reality and looks forward to a future time when we can reapply for CN funds after the legal dust has settled. Should you have any questions or need any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (360) 342-5072 or if you prefer email please try mark.herceg@cityofbg.org.

Sincerely,



Mark Herceg, PE
City Engineer