

# Transportation Alternatives Program 2021 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](mailto: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: Evergreen Highway Pathway

Project Location and Limits: SE Evergreen Highway - SE Chelsea Avenue to SE Image Road

Project Length (miles): 1.1

Agency: City of Vancouver

Contact Person: Jennifer Campos

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Certified Acceptance Agency: City of Vancouver

## 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	06/01/2014	\$0	\$280,000	\$280,000
Right of Way	03/01/2020	\$0	\$350,000	\$350,000
Construction	06/01/2023	\$500,000	\$1,841,500	\$2,341,500
Totals	n/a	\$500,000	\$2,471,500	\$2,971,500
<b>Overall Match Ratio:</b>				83.17%

## Project Type

Check all that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bike/Pedestrian facilities              | <input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Historic preservation of transportation facilities |   |

## Project Information

### 1. Project Description:

When Evergreen Highway, or North Bank Highway as it was originally known, was completed in 1920, Clark County was clearly very different than it is today. The original vision for Evergreen Highway saw it reaching all the way to Yakima County to become a major east-west highway across Washington. Because of this vision for the highway, it was built like many of the roads in Clark County during that time with no facilities provided for people walking and biking.

Its function as a highway was replaced in 1954 when SR-14 was opened and today the highway serves primarily residential neighborhoods as well as some recreation use and at times significant cut-through traffic. It is the main artery for the large residential areas along the corridor and provides local connectivity to regional roadways and the transit system. The area's poor street network and barriers (access control highway SR-14 and Columbia River frontage) do not allow for alternative off-street routes to transit, shopping opportunities, and other local destinations.

SE Evergreen Highway currently has no space to accommodate walkers, bicyclists, or persons with disabilities between SE Chelsea Avenue and SE Image Road. The roadway consists of two 10 foot travel lanes, shoulders that are a combination of property owner improved driveways/parking spaces, gravel or no-shoulder, and the surface water drainage is primarily conveyed in an open ditch system. SE Evergreen Highway has also seen a significant increase in traffic in the last fifteen years due to motorists using it as an alternative to SR-14 due to the increased congestion that corridor is experiencing.

This project will help to fill a missing gap in the system between SE Chelsea Avenue/Riverside Drive which has sidewalks and a section of pathway that has been already built between SE 100th Court to Columbia Springs. The pathway will be built of pervious concrete, it will be 10 feet wide, and in most cases will be attached to the roadway.

## Project Information

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

This area of Vancouver has a very limited transportation system due to the physical barrier of the Columbia River and SR-14. SE Evergreen Highway provides the only connection to the City's larger transportation system and is currently a substandard transportation facility. The roadway has only two 10 foot travel lanes and no waling or biking facilities. Driving a vehicle is really the only safe option for residents so construction of the pathway will provide an immediate increase in transportation options for residents in the area. It will allow residents to now walk and bicycle along the corridor as well as provide a new connection to the regional transit system.

A goal of the 2020 Lewis and Clark Regional Trail Concept Plan, which this project would be a part of, envisions a non-motorized trail for bikes and pedestrians that provides a safe mode of transportation for people traveling between towns, businesses, services, and schools; while showcasing the abundant natural resources, history and culture of the region. The trail will reflect the diversity of the Northwest that includes the natural tranquility of two federal wildlife refuges, urban vitality, friendly locations, small town charm, waterways, forested areas and beautiful viewpoints. It will connect to the Bi-State regional trail system that reaches into the state of Oregon and will connect to the Columbia River Gorge loop trail, also known as Towns to Trails at the southwest border.

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):

Building the pathway along SE Evergreen Highway will create new regional connections and significantly improve transportation choices for residents in the area. The pathway will be an important segment of the Lewis and Clark Regional Trail and will also make a direct link to Wintler Park, the Waterfront Trail, and the Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center. Along with these direct links, the pathway will also help residents reach work locations, commercial establishments, and other recreational opportunities. This will be done through the following modes:

### Transit:

C-TRAN provides service along SE Evergreen Highway to SE Andresen Road with the #32, and access to it is just under 8 tenths of a mile away from the project terminus. A transit stop at this distance is still within a walkable range and would also provide a good bicycle to transit connection as all C-TRAN buses are equipped with bicycle racks. The pathway will allow for a large expansion of residents to be able to access transit, allowing them to have better connections to other areas of the City.

### Bicycle:

Construction of the pathway would create a separated bicycle facility that will connect residents to the I-205 bicycle path, which is a significant commuting route into Portland. It will provide residents access up SE Ellsworth Road into the City's major east/west bicycle corridor along McGillivray/SE 10th/St. Helens/MacArthur/McLoughlin. It will also provide residents access into downtown Vancouver through Evergreen Boulevard and the Waterfront Trail.

### Walking:

Currently residents in the area have very limited choices as to where they can walk safely. SE Evergreen Highway has only two 10 foot travel lanes and limited shoulder areas. The shoulder areas are either drainage ditches, landscaping, or have topography issues that prevent people from walking. The pathway will provide residents a safe, accessible, and comfortable place to walk.

## 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):

In 2016 Vancouver City Council adopted the Evergreen Corridor Management Strategy which provides guidance, direction, and documentation for future decisions and actions related to corridor improvements, operations, and maintenance for the purpose of improving safety and enhancing conditions for all residents whether they are walking, riding their bike, or driving. The strategy considered past planning efforts including neighborhood action plans, City and regional plans. Completing a continuous pathway along the entire length of the Evergreen Corridor was identified through the project public process as residents' highest priority.

The Lewis and Clark Regional Trail Concept Plan developed in 2020 illustrates the development of a 50+ mile regional trail that would connect the towns of La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Camas and Washougal. This trail is aimed at supporting economic development, enhancing alternative transportation and providing a healthy outdoor recreation opportunity for residents and visitors alike. The project was in direct response to Clark County's Recreation and Open Space Plan adopted by the Clark County in 2015. Developing the plan included an online survey which attracted nearly 1,500 respondents. More than 87% of respondents indicated they had hiked or walked in the past year, and 53% selected walking and hiking trails as their top recreational priority.

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

As noted above, currently SE Evergreen Highway only has two 10 foot travel lanes and no facilities for people walking and biking. Because no facilities currently exist along with the high travel speeds on the corridor, it creates an unsafe and inaccessible place for many residents in the area. The project will build a safe facility for all residents to use. The facility will be ADA compliant allowing for access where there currently is none, and creating a critical connection through the area.

The project is also bordered by two low/moderate census block groups that will now have access to a mile long facility, and eventually the Lewis and Clark Regional Trail system. Low to moderate income block groups are defined as 51% of the residents living within a block group that have incomes below 80% of the area median income. The project will allow residents to access the City's much broader transportation network, creating new connections to employment, commercial, and recreational areas.

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

While there are no affordable housing complexes within 1/2 mile of the project, there are two low/moderate census block groups within a 1/2 mile of the project that will be served by the pathway. Residents in these block groups will be able to use the pathway if they are traveling east/west along Evergreen and it provides them access to much broader transportation options as mentioned above.

## 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):

There are no facilities for people walking or biking so if someone wants to travel by foot or bike along the corridor. They are forced to either use the travel lane or try to walk along the gravel, grass, or ditch areas along the roadway. An increase in driver traffic along the corridor, particularly during morning periods, due to congestion on SR-14 make crossing the road difficult due to a steady stream of drivers and making traveling along the corridor even more hazardous.

A traffic study completed as part of the Evergreen Corridor Management Strategy showed that westbound driver volumes are highest in the AM peak period (5:00 AM to 8:00 AM), and eastbound volumes are highest in the PM peak period (4:00 PM to 6:00 PM). However, the AM peak for westbound traffic was much more significant, particularly at three locations east of the Ellsworth Road connection to SR 14. Accounting for both directions, these locations feature around 600 vehicles in the AM peak hour compared to around 200 vehicles for the PM peak.

Posted speeds have been reduced on the corridor along with installation of a series of speed tables, but because the speed tables are spaced so far apart, driver speeds on the corridor have remained high.

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

This project will directly address pedestrian and bicycle safety by creating a separated facility away from the roadway. It will provide a facility that pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities can safely use away from passing motor vehicles.

9. Readiness:

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

Please explain:

Right of way acquisition has started using City's street funds and anticipated to be completed by the end of 2021 or early 2022.

## 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 public process for improvements along SE Evergreen Highway started over 30 years ago with most of the initial work beginning in 1991. At that time a group of citizens formed the Friends for Evergreen Highway and submitted a proposal for a pedestrian and bicycle trail along Evergreen Highway. The group had come together two years before that time to address the need for safe and adequate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists along the roadway.

After their formation, the Friends for Evergreen Highway completed a plan through a community lead public process. The purpose of this plan was to finalize the trail location and decide where the trail should be located. Through this public process the decision was made to focus on a trail that was primarily along Evergreen Highway with waterfront loops along the river.

The next step in the public planning process began in 1993 when Clark County applied for and received \$96,000 in Enhancement funds through the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) to fund a study that would finalize the design for Evergreen Highway. The transition from the earlier plan to this plan eliminated the trail loops along the waterfront and only looked at pathway improvements along Evergreen Highway from SE Chelsea Avenue to SE 164th Avenue.

In 2006, the Friends for Evergreen Highway group joined with the Old Evergreen Neighborhood Association (OEHNA) and they continue to promote the need for this project in the community. In 2010 the OEHNA and the East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association both developed Neighborhood Action Plans that emphasized building a pathway along SE Evergreen Highway.

This was followed up by the adoption of the Evergreen Corridor Management Strategy in 2016 that included an extensive public outreach process with residents along the corridor. Completing a continuous pathway along the entire length of the Evergreen Corridor was identified through the project public process as residents' highest priority.

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

Overriding health data for Clark County that this project is aiming to address is: In Clark County, an estimated 32% of adults are obese (BMI 30) and 70.1% of adults are overweight or obese (BMI 25). In 2014, 13.2% of Clark County tenth graders were overweight and an additional 10.7% were obese. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of obesity and many obesity-related diseases. The project will provide direct opportunities for physical activity by providing safe and separated biking and walking facilities where currently none exist.

The Clark County Growing Healthier Report from April 2012 identified goals, objectives, and strategies to address eight different topic areas that focus on the connection between health and the built environment. One of the eight topic areas is how the relationship between transportation infrastructure and land use determines transportation choices, which in turn influence our ability to get exercise as part of daily life. Goal 2 under this topic states to build neighborhoods that support active transportation. Strategy item 2.2 under this goal is to build active transportation infrastructure in the Urban Growth Area. The project provides a new facility in an area of the City that is significantly underserved with active transportation facilities.

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

Numerous studies from around the country have shown the value of biking and walking facilities and how they can lead to changes like increased property values, reduced crime rates, and improved health of residents. The level of walking and bicycling in a community is considered to be an indicator of community livability which can lead to increased opportunities for economic development and overall quality of life. This project will work toward creating a more livable, active, and healthy community. It will do this by providing new transportation access and choices; providing regional links to recreational opportunities like the Waterfront Trail and Wintler Park; providing new opportunities for being physically active; and using a design that is environmentally friendly.

## Project Information

13. List all funding partners contributing to the project:

Funding Source	Amount
RTC - TAP Grant for design (2013 TAP Application)	\$100,000
City of Vancouver - Street Fund (Design & ROW)	\$530,000
City of Vancouver - Street Fund (local match for 2021 TAP grant application)	\$1,841,500

## Other Information

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

The planning for improvements along SE Evergreen Highway started over 30 years ago and this project is another step in the process to provide a trail or facility along the entire length of the corridor. The first plan for the corridor was completed in 1991 as part of the public process by the Friends for Evergreen Highway community group. The purpose of this plan was to finalize where the trail alignment should be: a trail exclusively along Evergreen Highway, a main trail on the highway with connections to existing access points along the river, a main trail on the highway with waterfront loops along the river, or trail along the riverfront exclusively, except where there were man-made or natural barriers. At that time it was decided to focus on the option of putting the main trail along the highway with waterfront loops along the river.

The next step in the planning process began in 1993 when Clark County applied for and received \$96,000 in Enhancement funds through the Regional Transportation Council to fund a study that would finalize the design for Evergreen Highway. The transition from the earlier plan to this plan eliminated the trail loops along the waterfront and only looked at improvements along SE Evergreen Highway from SE Chelsea Avenue to SE 164th Avenue. Clark County Parks and Recreation was the lead for the project and resulted in a final plan being completed in 1994.

An extensive public process occurred in the development of the plan which included a project advisory committee, 2 community meetings, and numerous workshops. The intent of the plan was to finalize a design and cross section for pedestrian and bicycle improvement. Once the plan in 1994 was completed that provided a preferred cross-section to move forward with, Clark County then started the design and construction elements of the project. In 1995 Clark County applied for and received \$250,000 in Enhancement funds through RTC to design Phase I and Phase II of the Evergreen Trail. Part of the funding was also used to start some right-of-way acquisition process.

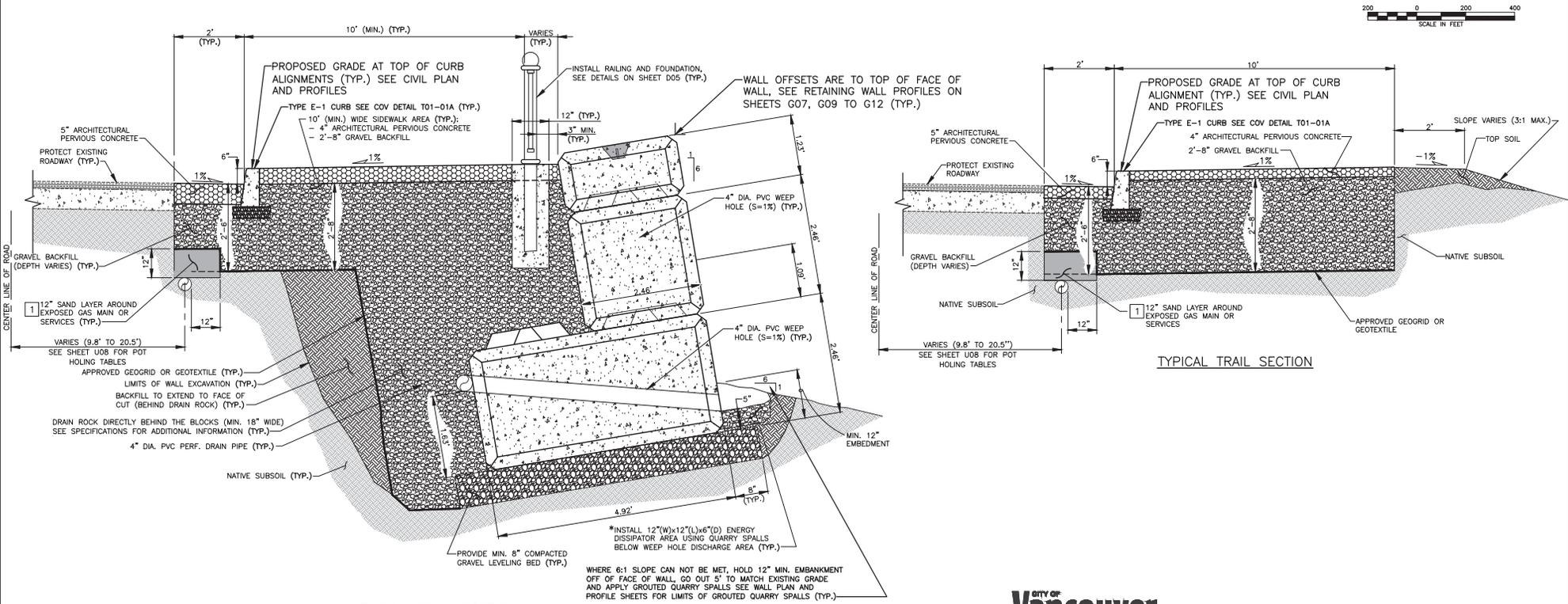
In 1996 Clark County submitted grants for both Phase I and Phase II construction, but only Phase II was funded due to its connection to the I-205 bicycle path. The total project cost was over \$1.3 million, and was a combination of \$200,000 in Enhancement funds, \$350,000 in Congestion and Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds, and \$549,000 of local match funds.

In 1997 the City of Vancouver completed a large annexation that brought Evergreen Highway under City jurisdiction, so the project funding was transferred over to the City of Vancouver to complete the project design and construction. Final construction of Phase II (Ellsworth Road to the Biddle Nature Preserver) was completed in 2001 and is the only piece of the trail that has been constructed.

In an attempt to keep the project moving forward, the City hired CH2M HILL in June of 2006 to update the 1996 cost estimate, review any new environmental requirements, and evaluate different options to reduce costs and stage the project. The cost estimate updates included right of way, easement, and condemnation costs, but no work was done to obtain the needed easements or environmental permits due to lack of project funding. The City applied for and received an Enhancement grant in 2010 for the section from SE Ellsworth Road to SE Image Road. Construction on the section from SE Ellsworth Road to SE 100th Court was completed in 2015.



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**TYPICAL TRAIL SECTION**  
 WALL HEIGHT VARIES:  
 ONE AND HALF BLOCK HEIGHT TO  
 FOUR AND HALF BLOCK HEIGHT



**EVERGREEN TRAIL**  
 SE CHELSEA AVE. TO SE IMAGE RD.