City *of* Tigard | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Tigard Trail System

[UPDATE ▪ DECEMBER 21, 2010]

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What happened around greenway trails in 2010? How are we doing in connecting the trail system?

The City of Tigard continues to plan and develop a high quality trail network. This report updates what the city has been working on with regard to trails during 2010. It also provides an overview of activities anticipated in the coming few years. Although no new trail segments were built in 2010, a lot happened around trails during the year.

The trail development process involves many steps: acquisition of right-of-way, engineering design, land use and environmental permitting, and construction. Although no construction took place in 2010, progress was made in the other phases of trail development. Most importantly, in 2010 the city acquired access for the long-awaited Woodard Park to Grant Avenue Fanno Creek Trail segment and is well on its way toward acquiring access for the "Tigard Street Trail." Both were breakthrough developments and major steps forward in completing the trail system.

With the stories of these two segments as highlights, this annual report covers a range of trail-related topics: **Trail Planning Activities** highlights progress in implementing the Neighborhood Trails Plan, development of the Greenway Trail System Master Plan and startup of the Westside Trail Master Plan; **Other Activities of Note** focuses on the Fanno Creek Trail Tour, the Tigard Street Trail, the 2010 Trail Count/Survey, Safety and Security, the Intertwine, and Active Transportation and The Crescent Connection; **Grant Funding Activities** discusses the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Readiness Fund for Non-highway Projects and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Recreational Trail Grant program.

These topics underscore the challenges and opportunities the city faces in improving the trail network. The main challenge is completing the various phases involved in the development of each trail segment and finding the funding needed to carry them out. As the city builds more trail infrastructure and creates a better connected community, more people will walk and use bikes for commuting and recreation. These are important contributions to community livability.

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TIGARD

TRAIL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Neighborhood Trail Plan

The Neighborhood Trails Plan was completed in 2009 and focuses on short cuts that reduce out-of-direction travel. The assumption is that reducing trip length will cause people to substitute walking and biking for longer driving trips, like going to the library or visiting a friend. The plan proposes some 43 trail improvements throughout the city. A few of these are feeder trails that connect to greenway trails, but most connect to streets or sidewalks. Many segments of the proposed neighborhood trail network are existing dirt trails located in the public right-of-way and already serve as pedestrian routes. Implementing the proposed improvements will make these all-weather and more functional parts of the neighborhood trail network.

The city nominated twelve of these short trails in the 2010–11 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), but, because of funding constraints, none have been or will be, implemented during this cycle. All of these high priority segments pass through unimproved public right-of-ways where the street network is discontinuous. None of these proposed neighborhood trail alignments cross private property. These same trails will be renominated in the next CIP cycle, but lack of potential funding continues to be a problem and these projects are not good candidates for most grant programs.

Greenway Trail System Master Plan

The 2009 Tigard Parks Master Plan identifies a network of seven greenway trails within the city. Four of these (Fanno Creek Trail, Washington Square Loop Trail, Tualatin River Trail, and the Westside Trail) are portions of regional-level trails, or trails that extend through several jurisdictions. Three are community-level trails (Summer Creek, Pathfinder-Genesis, Krueger) that serve local needs and link to regional trails. At present, there are numerous gaps in this seven-trail network and undefined alignments for filling those gaps.

The city's first-ever Greenway Trail System Master Plan (GTSMP), the preparation of which began in July, is at about the midpoint of its development and focuses on practical options for filling those gaps. The work scope is organized around a long list of trail-specific questions. The answers will provide a better picture of alignments, costs and community priorities.

Financed by a $100,000 ODOT grant, the trails master plan is being prepared by a three firm consultant team. They include Kittelson & Associates, Alta + Design, and Mason, Bruce & Girard, who, respectively, are transportation, trail, and environmental consultants. Their work is overseen by a combined citizen and technical advisory committee, which provides ongoing input. All of the reports and documents produced so far are available on a project web page, **www.tigardgreenwaytrails.com**.

Based on a review of the trail master planning literature, it can be said that the Tigard GTSMP is one of the most comprehensive studies of its kind. This is because it includes three components, not all of which typically are included in trail system master planning efforts.

One is including an environmental consultant on the project team. The role of this consultant, Mason, Bruce & Girard, is to ensure the trail segments under consideration are routed and designed to be sensitive to the natural environment. As part of trail planning activities, the environmental consultant will assess the potential environmental impact of the various alignments under consideration for filling trail gaps. The consultant also will look at environmental permitting and regulations. This information will help the advisory committee make better informed decisions about alignments and potential improvements to existing trails, such as trail widening and lighting.

Why is it important to have an environmental consultant on the team? The Tigard greenway area overlaps with the 100-year flood plain of the Tualatin River and its tributaries. This area contains the city's major streams along with most of its wetlands and wildlife habitat. Established city policies and community values require all development activities, including trails, to avoid or minimize disturbance to these sensitive areas. This is where the expertise of the environmental consultant comes into play.

A second uncommon feature of the GTSMP project is its outreach to underrepresented populations. In the past, the City of Tigard, Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD) and, based on the literature, many other public entities have not effectively involved these populations in their parks and trail master planning activities. In some cases, this was not from lack of trying. But whatever was tried, it mostly didn't work.

As part of the development of the GTSMP, the city has formulated a well-thought outreach plan to involve its Latino community which is, by far, the city's largest minority group and currently makes up about 15 percent of its population and 50 percent of countywide population growth. The main feature of this outreach effort is a bilingual open house to be held in the community room of a predominately Latino-occupied apartment

complex (Bonita Villa) on January 13th. This will follow a community-wide open house scheduled to be held in the Library Community Room.

A great deal of time and effort will be devoted to promoting the bilingual event among the city's Latino community, a Spanish-speaking manager and tenant of the apartments, owned and managed by Washington County Housing Services, will help with event promotion and organization, as will the St. Anthony's Hispanic Outreach Minister. A very successful bicycle repair and helmet giveaway event was held at the same complex two summers ago, with many bikes serviced and repaired and 92 helmets fitted and given away. Based on this experience, the goal and expectation of the trails open house is a large turnout with major input from the Latino community, many of whom appear to be weekend trail users. A further expectation is that the bilingual open house will lead to the identification and further involvement in the master plan process of Latino individuals with an interest in trails.

The third somewhat singular feature of the trails master plan process is a city-conducted survey of people living within a quarter mile, or walking distance, of three community-level trails: Summer Creek, Krueger and Pathfinder-Genesis. Partial or no segments of these trails have been completed or scheduled for construction. Some 1,500 of the 5,000 residents who are, or would be, served by these trails were sent trail-specific survey questionnaires. The purpose was to determine the level of neighborhood interest in, and support for, trail improvements. The data collected on neighborhood attitudes and preferences will be used to help set priorities for completing these trails.

Although not scientific, the results of the completed surveys are useful in terms of providing a snapshot of community attitudes and priorities. One overall indicator is that 62 percent (Krueger Creek), 68 percent (Summer Creek), and 75 percent (Pathfinder-Genesis) of respondents residing in the quarter mile area around each trail favor completing or filling gaps in their respective community trail. On average, eight of ten respondents said their families were likely to use the trail if improved or extended. Trail opponents cited cost, loss of privacy, crime and nuisances, maintenance concerns, unsafe street crossings between trail segments, lack of parking and disturbance to wildlife habitat as reasons for their opposition.

Westside Trail Master Plan

Tigard is one of three local match contributors to the $300,000, Metro-sponsored Westside Trail Master Plan project. Only one mile of the 16 mile trail is located inside Tigard, and the city's contribution to the cost of the master planning activities is $5,000. Tigard staff will have a seat on the steering committee and will be actively involved in this long-delayed study.

By early December 2010, Metro plans to send a draft project work scope for comments. The salient features of the scope will include property research, public outreach and delineating alignments for infilling trail gaps and extending the trail, formerly known as the Powerline Trail. According to Metro, start-up of the long-delayed study is a few more months away.

Completion of the Westside Trail segment between the THPRD Nature Center and Barrows Road (i.e. Tigard city limits) is scheduled for 2013. Funding for the existing trail's northern and southern extension is provided by the district's 2008 voter-approved bond measure. The future completion the Tigard portion of the trail and its interconnection with the six-mile long THPRD portion will provide an important pedestrian and cycling amenity for Bull Mountain residents.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF NOTE

Fanno Creek Trail Tour

In April, staff conducted a morning bike tour of the Fanno Creek Trail for about thirty Metro staff. The tour was part of a new Metro initiative to visit some of the projects funded by the agency. The Metro tour of Fanno Creek Trail was the only agency tour undertaken in 2010 and included a city-sponsored pizza and salad lunch catered by Cafe Allegro and held in the public works auditorium.

Metro and Clean Water Services provided some of the guest speakers at stops along the way. The city's guest speakers included Steve Martin, Mike McCarthy, Sean Farrelly, Kim McMillan, and Duane Roberts.

CITY PROJECTS FUNDED BY METRO PROGRAMS

- Main Street Green Street Retrofit
- Bike Tigard Map
- Fanno Creek Trail easements
- Fowler Woods Greenspace
- Downtown Walking Map and Wayfinding System
- The Crescent Connection *(pending)*

The city rationale for organizing and conducting the tour was to provide Metro staff a firsthand look at Fanno Creek Trail and related accomplishments as well as other improvement needs, some of which may be the subject of future funding requests. It was also to generate inter-agency goodwill. Judging by the many favorable comments received, the tour appeared to be a big success.

Tigard Street Trail

The former loop rail line extending between Tiedeman and Main has been inactive for more than three years. Portland & Western Railroad (P&WRR) holds an exclusive freight easement over the corridor. The underlying land is owned by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). As noted in last year's progress report, city staff have been actively pursuing access to the right-of-way for trail use during most of that time.

This summer, the log jam was finally broken and the city is now well on its way toward obtaining control of the corridor. The impetus for this major step forward was an event held in August under the Pacific Highway viaduct that "brought together a wide variety of movers

and shakers to demonstrate support for the project." The breakthrough occurred when the key attendees, P&WRR President and General Manager, and the ODOT Rail Administrator, each agreed to help facilitate trail use within the former rail corridor.

In October, P&WRR prepared and filed with the federal Surface Transportation Board an application to formally abandon service within the loop segment. This is expected to be granted by December and is the first step needed to free-up the land for trail use. Simultaneous with the abandonment process, TriMet, at its own expense, removed the remaining railroad ties and smoothed out the holes created by the removal.

As detailed by the City Manager who, along with Mayor Dirksen, took part in negotiations with ODOT Rail and P&W RR following the event, "when the federal process is done, ODOT will start the process to surplus the property. They first offer it to state agencies, and expect no takers. They then offer it to local governments, and expect us to be the only taker. They will give us a list of approved appraisers, and we will select an appraiser from the list to do an appraisal. (There is no option to lease or get an easement.) We then buy the property." Although priorities for Tigard's recently-approved parks bond measure have not been finalized, these or other proceeds potentially could be used to finance the cost of acquiring the 4.2 acre corridor. So far, no estimate is available of what this cost might be. ODOT expects the state surplus process to take no longer than two months.

This exciting opportunity is expected to continue moving forward in 2011.

2010 Trail Count

Photo courtesy of: Carl Anderson

During the week of September 12, 2010, twenty-one volunteers helped conduct a five-day, two-hour-a-day manual trail count and user survey at three points along the greenway trail system. The data collection points were the Fanno Creek Trail at North Dakota, the Fanno Creek Trail at the Woodard pedestrian bridge behind the Library, and along the Tualatin River Trail near Cook Park. The count/survey was conducted as part of the third annual National Count/Survey Days. This was the city's second year to participate in the national event. Last year, at the request of the City of Tualatin, Tigard volunteers counted and surveyed Ki-A-Kuts pedestrian bridge users. This year, the City of Tualatin recruited its own volunteers to count and survey people crossing the bridge. Altogether, five Metro-area cities and two park districts took part in the national project.

Tigard's current-year volunteer pool included some volunteers who participated in last year's count. However, the majority were new individuals who were recruited through a number of different methods. The most effective of these was the placement of recruitment fliers in holders attached to bollards and signage poles located at various points along the Fanno and Tualatin River Trails. Each volunteer attended a one-hour training session. Trail mix (contributed by Community Development), flashing red clip-on lights (contributed by Police), and plastic water bottles (contributed by Public Works) were given out as volunteer thank you gifts. Parks maintenance crews dropped off and picked up folding chairs and supply boxes at counting stations daily.

The key findings of this year's trail count event are as follows: all three counting points recorded their highest number of users on the first day of the five-day count period: Fanno Creek Trail at North Dakota, 138; Fanno Creek Trail at Woodard Bridge, 38; and Tualatin River Trail near Cook Park, 217. Thereafter, the weather changed from warm and sunny to cold and wet and, with the exception of the Library trail segment, featuring its newly installed Woodard Bridge, overall user counts were significantly lower (-21 percent) than last year as measured at the same three data collection points. The same is true of the Ki-A-Kuts counts, conducted by Tualatin volunteers, and throughout the region. All participating jurisdictions and park districts experienced a fairly significant drop-off in trail use compared to last year.

Based on hand calculations, a few other highlights of the Tigard count/survey are that cyclists accounted for 29 percent of overall weekday trail use, and walkers accounted for 70 percent. At North Dakota, on the main stem of the Fanno Creek regional trail, the weekday mode share was 53 percent bikers and 47 percent pedestrians, with an almost identical modal split on the weekend.

Another key finding concerns trip purpose. This is measured in the survey questionnaire and is the first of 14 questions. According to these results, some 22 percent of all weekday trail use is for transportation (going to school, work, or shopping) and 78 percent recreation (walking or biking for pleasure or exercise). At the North Dakota collection point, transportation trips accounted for 36 percent of weekday trail use, with cyclists accounting for 100 percent of these trips. Among cyclists alone, 59 percent of those who completed the survey indicated they were making transportation trips. In contrast, no walkers who participated in the survey indicated they were using the trail as a transportation corridor.

This year, as last, Metro is collecting and tabulating the data collected by participating jurisdictions. The 2010 area-wide results are not available as yet. So, Tigard's current-year counts and survey results cannot be compared with those of other jurisdictions. However, printouts of last year's region-wide results are available and provide a basis for comparing trail use in Tigard with trail use in other parts of the region. Two points of comparison from 2009 are worth noting. Fanno Creek Trail use at North Dakota was only slightly lower than Fanno Creek Trail use at Hall Boulevard in Beaverton and about the same as the Springwater Trail counts at SE 85th Avenue in Portland. Further results and cross tabulations will be available after all the data from the count/survey is entered into the customized Metro database. The data entry is scheduled to take place by the end of the year and will provide a central source of information on trail use.

Safety and Security

> **"Wish we knew why the dead body was found on the trail."**
>
> [WRITTEN COMMENT FROM THE 2010 TRAIL USER SURVEY]

This incident occurred in August of this year, approximately one-eighth mile west of Hall Boulevard and behind the phone company storage yard. According to the police, the investigation of this particular case is ongoing, but all the evidence collected so far points to suicide.

While it is important to note that the body was found in the creek and not on the trail itself, this incident does raise the question, "Just how safe are the Tigard greenway trails?"

The short answer is that, according to police, parks maintenance staff, and trail users themselves, most people are safe when spending time on the Tigard trail network. In the twelve-month period ending September 2010, only one possible crime was reported along the trail system. This was the theft of a wallet in the Woodard Park section of the Fanno Creek Trail. The word "possible" is used because police incident records, which are tied to

street addresses, are unclear regarding the exact site of this particular crime, whether it was somewhere on the trail or in the park. At the same time, the alleged thief did flee on foot by way of the Katherine Street feeder trail. This is the one and only incident report associated with a city trail during the year-ago period.

According to all sources, the main security issue associated with city trails is transients hanging out along the Fanno Creek Trail in the downtown area. This has been a problem for several years. Many trail users, especially women, do not feel comfortable when approaching a transient or a group of transients. However, to put this problem into perspective, crimes associated with trails are rare, and the downtown trail has not become a "corridor of crime" as a result of this on-going problem or the recent incident of the body found floating in the creek. According to Jim Wolf, Police Department Public Information Officer, "in cases I have personally observed, the transients keep to themselves and trail users can pass freely with general safety." Elsewhere in the downtown area, ever since Labor Ready relocated to Beaverton earlier this year, transients no longer hang out along the trail where it crosses under Pacific Highway, as they once did.

According to Parks Supervisor Martin McKnight, whose duties include greenway trails upkeep, the trail network appears to be safe. Preserving a minimum three-foot vegetative setback from the edge of trail, and maintaining and adding street or junction signage helps by providing good reference points for trail users and police officers.

Lastly, results of this year's survey of 234 trail users confirm the picture painted by crime statistics and the observations of the Police and Parks Maintenance Departments. According to the survey, 94 percent of respondents who took park in this year's survey marked excellent or good in response to the question of how "safe" they feel on the trail system. In the case of these trail users, there was virtually no difference between the answers given by male and female respondents. Altogether, five pages of written responses were collected in response to the final, open-ended "comments" question on the trail user survey form. None of these mentioned crime as a concern. Several did mention trail crossings of city streets as a safety issue, however.

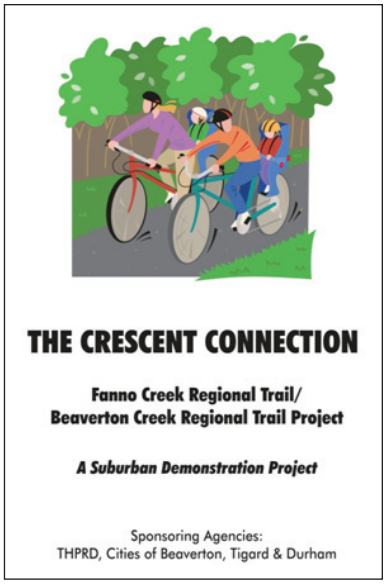
Intertwine

THE INTER TWINE

The Intertwine is the name given by Metro to the network of parks, trails and natural areas in the Portland-Vancouver area. The Intertwine Alliance is a broad coalition of public, private and nonprofit organizations, loosely defined, as "working to promote, protect and improve the Intertwine." The Alliance includes two membership levels. The highest is the core group. Last year, Tigard joined the Alliance at this level. Prerequisites include a seat on an advisory board and a chance to shape policy, plus the periodic featuring of the city park system on the Intertwine website (www.theintertwine.org). During the last two years, the city's annual $5,000 dues have been split between the Community Development and Public Works Departments. Steve Martin, Parks and Facilities Manager, is the city's core group representative and participates in its monthly meetings.

Active Transportation and The Crescent Connection

Last year Metro sent out a call for active transportation demonstration proposals. These were defined as big scale projects, involving multiple partners, that promote biking and waking for transportation. In response, Durham, Tigard, Beaverton and the Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District partnered on a $12 million joint project called The Crescent Connection, so-called because of the shape the component projects take when show on a map. The $4.7 million Tigard portion of the project involved closing all the gaps in the Fanno Creek Trail as well as developing the Tigard Street Trail.



Active transportation demonstration is not a grant program. Rather, Metro's intent is to identify projects that can be funded as part of special federal allocation requests. To accomplish this, Metro is working with the region's congressional delegation to steer federal dollars to some of its portfolio of projects. No funding has been received so far, but efforts are on-going and long-term.

During 2010, for the first time Metro staff, in response to federal direction to do so, developed a set of criteria to prioritize the active transportation project proposals. The criteria included leadership, technical feasibility, completion of the network and other factors. In October 2010, Metro staff presented a preliminary list. Significantly, The Crescent Connection ranked fourth of 31 projects rated. Whether this will someday lead to federal funding is difficult to predict and, of course, the current federal budget picture is not that encouraging. But at least Tigard has a foot in the door should Metro someday be successful in capturing federal dollars for active transportation projects.

GRANT FUNDING ACTIVITIES

ODOT Readiness Grant

In March, completion of the "Brown" segment of the Fanno Creek Trail took a step forward, then a step back. This segment crosses Fanno Creek and extends through the Brown property. It was purchased by Metro using regional share Greenspaces bond measure dollars for the purpose of building a trail. The trail route and the location and span of the bridge were to be determined as part of the design work.

The city prepared and submitted an ODOT Non-highway Project Readiness Funds project proposal, requesting $85,000 in grant dollars and pledging a $15,000 in-kind contribution. The grant program is intended to generate shovel-ready projects should another round of federal stimulus funding be authorized. The Tigard project proposal was intended to cover the cost of hiring an engineering consultant to design the trail segment and bridge.

The Tigard project proposal initially was picked for funding. But shortly after a five-member ODOT site visit, the grant award was withdrawn. The withdrawal was based on a determination that the city's $100,000 budget was far short of the funding needed to bring the project to construction-readiness. The lack of an established trail and bridge alignment, and the complexity of the federal environmental assessment process, were mentioned as factors in driving up the pre-construction costs to well in excess of the city's $100,000 estimate, and extending the pre-construction timeline beyond the January 2011 readiness date.

Keeping in mind the premium associated with federal funding, staff will now pursue other grant opportunities for the dollars needed to design and complete this segment.

OPRD Recreation Trail Grant

The city currently is in the process of applying for a grant to construct the Woodard Park/Grant Avenue segment of the Fanno Creek Trail. The funding source is the Recreation Trail Grant Program administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). Applications are due January 15, 2011. The trail segment will extend through three private properties, two of which were purchased by Metro using regional share greenspaces dollars. The acquisition of these two easements was one of the major developments in 2010. The project includes a pedestrian bridge, boardwalk and some 1,400 lineal feet of hard surface trail. Construction costs have not been estimated as yet; however, $127,000 in unused local share Greenspaces Bond Measure money is potentially available for the project match. The required match is 20 percent of overall project cost, but over-matches of up to 50 percent are awarded additional rating points.