

HERITAGE CONNECTIVITY TRAILS

Concept Plan



Confederate Tribes and
Bands of the Yakama Nation

July 2021



**Confederated Tribes and Bands
Of the Yakama Nation**

Established by the
Treaty of June 9, 1855

RESOLUTION

T-105-21

WHEREAS, the Yakama Nation is a federally recognized Nation pursuant to the Treaty of 1855 (12 Stat. 951), and

WHEREAS, the Yakama Tribal Council is the governing body of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation by the authority delegated by the Resolution of February 1944 and Resolution T-38-56, and

WHEREAS, the Yakama Tribal Council has the duty and responsibility according to the Resolutions T-38-56 and T-10-61 to protect and preserve the Treaty Rights of the Yakama Nation, and

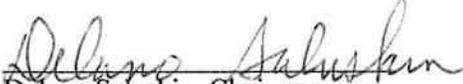
WHEREAS, the Yakama Nation Tribal Council recognizes that Native Americans are disproportionately represented in traffic injuries and fatalities throughout the state and nation, and has committed to improving traffic and pedestrian safety through the formation of the Tribal Traffic Safety Committee, as authorized by resolution T-067-17, for the purpose of developing strategies to eliminate traffic related injuries and fatalities on Yakama Nation lands and achieving Target Zero, and

WHEREAS, a Draft Concept Plan for the Heritage Connectivity Trails project through the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Program grant received by the DNR Engineering program has been developed with participation by the numerous partners involved with the grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Yakama Tribal Council meeting in Regular Session at Yakama Nation Legends Casino Hotel Event Center, with a quorum being present, approves the Heritage Connectivity Trails Concept Plan as presented.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Yakama Nation does not waive, alter, or otherwise diminish our Sovereign Immunity, whether expressed or implied, by virtue of this resolution for any and all administrative or legal action, which may arise directly or indirectly from the same, nor does the Yakama Nation waive, alter, or otherwise diminish our rights, privileges, remedies or services guaranteed by the Treaty of 1855.

DONE AND DATED on this 8th day of July, 2021 by the Yakama Nation Tribal Council by a vote of 9 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions.


Delano Saluskin, Chairman
Yakama Tribal Council

ATTEST:


Athena Sanchey, Executive Secretary
Yakama Tribal Council

Cc: file
RILCa#075-2021-5

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Heritage Connectivity Trails planning team gratefully acknowledges the contributions and guidance provided by the Heritage Connectivity Trails Committee and Tribal Traffic Safety Committee. These two groups have been responsive in providing necessary information throughout this process, and without their generous support this plan would lack the on-the-ground perspective and accurate safety data that formed the basis of this plan. A complete list of membership can be found in the appendix section of this document.

The planning team would also like to thank the Community of the Southern Valley for their contributions to this trails plan.

Without great support from the Yakama Nation Tribal Council and the Yakama Nation General Council, it would not have been possible to write this proposal of the Heritage Connectivity Trails plan.

HCT Planning Team

HollyAnna Littlebull, Yakama Nation - DNR Engineering

Alex Stone, NPS-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

Alan Adolf, YVCOG

Julie Fonseca de Borges, NPS-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

Quinn Kelly, NPS-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

Summer Derrey, WSDOT



The Heritage Connectivity Trails Concept Plan was developed with technical assistance from the National Park Service- Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. NPS-RTCA staff are dedicated to improving equitable access to outdoor recreation and conserving special places in communities across the country.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Heritage Connectivity Trails (HCT) project evolved from a clear need to eliminate serious injury and fatal collisions between pedestrians and motor vehicles as indicated in Washington State's Target Zero: Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Native Americans are disproportionately represented in serious injury and fatal traffic collisions in Washington State, with the Yakama Nation experiencing the highest rate in the state. This situation is not unique to the state; data shows that Native Americans/Alaskan Native's pedestrian fatality rate across the country is four-and-a-half times the national average.

Though safety is the key component in developing this plan, it is also important to note that the HCT is a direct response to the community's concerns both surrounding pedestrian safety and broader transportation connectivity throughout the region. Building a trail system that connects communities, enhances mobility, and improves safety for all people to get to and from key destinations is critical to their health and economic needs. A second tier goal is to encourage healthier lifestyles in general and promote cultural education by installing informational kiosks at key sites throughout the region. It is necessary to consider all opportunities for individuals with limited transportation resources or abilities.

This Heritage Connectivity Trails project is a multi-agency cooperative effort. There are representatives from the Yakama Nation along with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC), Yakima County, Yakima Health District, Eastern Washington University (EWU), Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) and

many of the local cities and organizations that recognize the need for improving pedestrian safety, multi-modal transportation opportunities, connecting communities and broadening the regional trail system. A clear goal for the HCT is to connect existing various partner plans, policies and projects (see Appendix A) to create a seamless experience for the future users of the HCT network.

SAFETY

The HCT is a monumental effort to provide safe, active transportation where many tribal members are without a motor vehicle for transportation and rely on walking to their destination. Pedestrian and bicyclist comfort levels are very low as most of the reservation roads are in the rural setting without pedestrian or bike facilities and many have narrow shoulders that expose them to motor vehicle traffic. Providing pathways that separate pedestrians from motor vehicles is a key feature to improving traffic safety.

CONNECTIVITY

It is important that mobility is improved through connectivity and multi-modal transportation. This trail network will connect local communities and tribal housing sites, as well as provide better access to Yakama Nation's Pahto Public Passage Transit system. Transit stops will



Map source: Yakama Nation Fish & Wildlife

be placed along this trail for local residents that rely on the transit system to get to and from work, health appointments, social services, entertainment, or visits with family and friends.

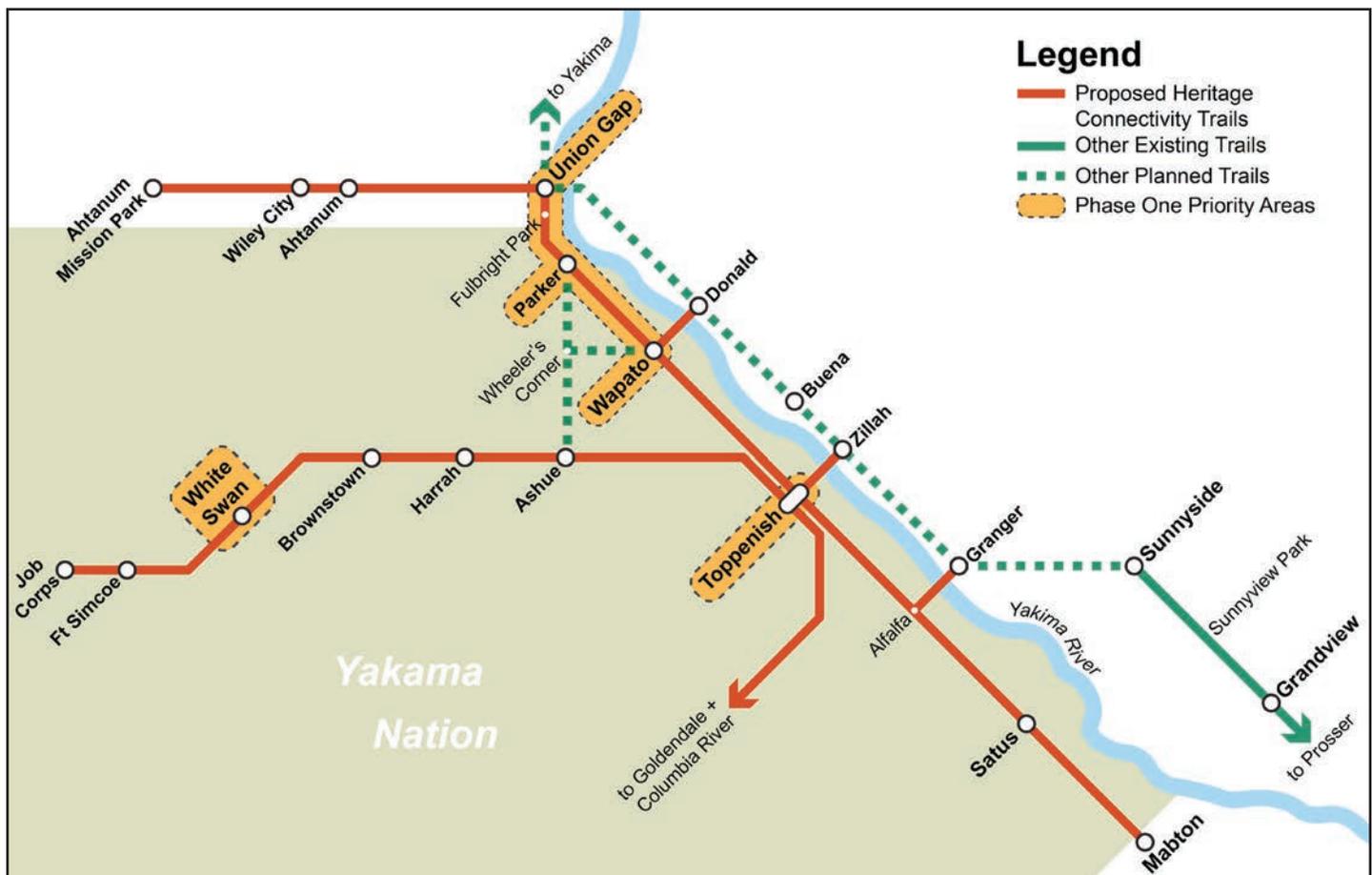
OPPORTUNITY

Not only will this trail connect tribal residents to one another, it will provide access to culturally significant sites and cultural activities. This also includes an opportunity for exercise to improve physical health and accessing existing trails. Further there is opportunity for leveraging economic benefits through tourism and education on local culture, history and natural resources.

PROJECT

This trail will be constructed in segments as funding allows. The first segment will connect the Yakima Greenway to the reservation through Union Gap utilizing either the US 97, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad or Track Road corridors to the City of Wapato. The second segment will continue to the City of Toppenish.

The third segment will connect the towns of Harrah and White Swan either through the short line railroad and/or Fort Road corridor, then continue to Fort Simcoe State Park. Other connections are proposed along US 97 south of Toppenish to Goldendale, along SR 22 to Mabton, along SR 223 to Granger, and connections are proposed between Wapato and Donald, Toppenish and Buena and Toppenish and Zillah.



Source: NPS/ Quinn Kelly

INTRODUCTION & VISION

Project Purpose

Like many other areas in central Washington, the Yakama Reservation has a transportation system that prioritizes automobiles over other users, which contributes to cultural and spatial fragmentation. Despite the Yakama people's long tradition of walking and deep cultural ties to the landscape, political and economic marginalization has

resulted in a significant lack of investment for pedestrian, equestrian, cyclist and micro-transit¹ safety infrastructure in the region.

¹ Microtransit is defined as a type of small scale transportation option that is responsive to on-demand public transit customer needs that can be linked to a fixed route(s) and schedule(s). American Public Transportation Association, accessed June 21, 2021

The purpose of the HCT effort is to provide safe routes for active transportation, create opportunities for exercise, connect communities throughout the southern valley, link existing area trails, leverage economic benefits through tourism, and provide opportunities for education on local culture, history and natural resources. The trail plan will connect residents of the southern Yakima Valley to one another, to jobs and services, and to culturally significant sites. This project evolved from a clear need for safety and mobility improvements based on public surveys, community discussions, and traffic safety data (see Appendix B).

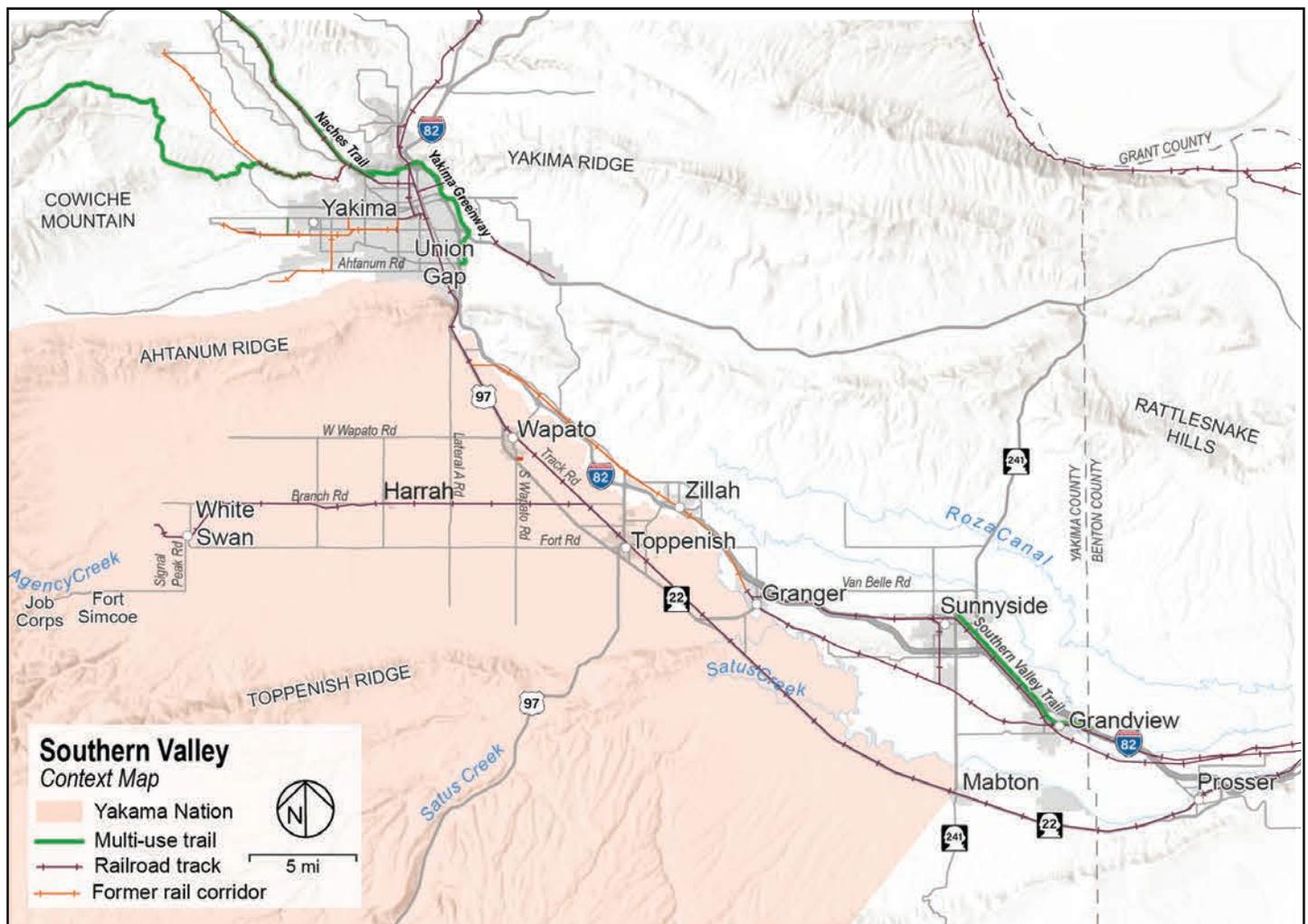
Regional Context

Trails (or lack thereof) in Yakima County are generally situated in three geographical zones (northern, central, and southeastern Yakima County). The northern area is bisected from the rest of the county by the Ahtanum and Rattlesnake Hill ridges north of Union Gap. The southeastern region includes the cities of Sunnyside and Grandview, and the City of Prosser (located in neighboring Benton County). The central area comprises the open area

lands of the Yakama Nation at the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains and the farmlands and communities located along SR 97, Interstate 82, and Yakima River south of the Ahtanum and Rattlesnake Ridges.

In the northern half of the county, the Yakima Greenway (running nearly 20 miles along the Yakima and Naches Rivers between the City of Union Gap and Town of Naches) is the connecting foundation of several other trails surrounding the greater Yakima Metropolitan Area. These include the William O. Douglas, Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, and City of Yakima Powerhouse trails as well as the “Moxee” trail and right of way currently in the planning phase running along SR 24. The Southeastern region has the “Southern Valley Trail”, which runs parallel to the active short-line rail corridor connecting Sunnyside, Grandview and Prosser.

In between, the central region is currently devoid of dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities with the exception of municipal sidewalk systems. While there are no “city-connecting” trails currently within the central region, the cities of Wapato and Toppenish do have



Map of Southern Valley showing major roads, railroads, geographic features, and existing trails. Source: NPS/ Quinn Kelly

existing sidewalk systems that can serve as linchpins to future intercity trails/paths, especially with the state and local jurisdictions converting to a “complete streets” philosophy of road building and maintenance. Local, county and state transportation planners will coordinate with utilities and other landowners to build a multi-modal network of on-street facilities, dedicated paths and public transit. This network will ultimately connect the Greenway system in the north, Southern Valley Trail in the southeast and important destinations throughout the valley.

Ultimately, such a trail network could connect the peoples of Yakima County to Mount Rainier to the northwest, the John Wayne Trail to the northeast, to the Columbia River at the Tri-Cities to the east, and the Yakama Nation, Fort Simcoe and the agricultural resources of the southwestern Yakima Valley.

Existing Plans

This plan draws on the collective knowledge of relevant existing plans that overlap with the project area, including those created by the Yakama Nation, Yakima County, YVCOG, WSDOT and local municipalities. For a detailed list of these documents, see Appendix A.

Vision & Goals

Safety is at the core of this planning effort. It is the highest priority of concern based on pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries of Native Americans in all of Washington State.

An important goal of the effort is to improve overall health of Yakama Reservation residents and surrounding areas.

An emphasis is also placed on increasing Cultural Connections, between people and places, and the histories of the area.



Phase One Goals

- Improve safety of pedestrians traveling in and through tribal lands in high incident/fatality zones throughout the area
- Connect existing and planned local and regional trails to develop a comprehensive multi-modal transportation network through a coordinated partnership effort

Phase Two Goals

- Improve safety of pedestrians traveling through an interconnected network of multi-modal routes that link community members to essential destinations throughout the entire Yakima Valley.
- Promoting and encouraging healthy living styles.
- Encourage tourism, economic development, and effective transportation alternatives by improving regional safety for bi-pedal transportation
- Emphasize cultural practices to connect tribal members with ancestral traditions
- Feature local history to honor the cultural diversity of the region

This concept plan primarily addresses Phase One of the overall vision, focusing on near-term safety and mobility improvements, but also also begins to envision how the HCT Phase 2 goals will address other objectives around health, economic development, culture, and tourism.

Project Timeline

We are currently in the conceptual planning phase of the HCT. This project is dependent on community support and input. Estimates on cost and timeline for construction of trail segments will be determined after the planning stage is completed. Multiple opportunities are available for members of the public to express opinions about the trail effort as well as volunteer and be a part of HCT committees through the Tribal Traffic Safety Committee and Yakama Nation’s Department of Natural Resources-Engineering Program.

The conceptual planning stage is divided into two distinct efforts: Safety and Cultural Heritage. The first part of the effort is focused on designing a concept trail plan that focuses on pedestrian safety and regional connectivity among south Yakima Valley communities. This first aspect of the effort is expected to be completed summer of 2021. The second aspect of the trail plan focuses on sharing the region’s cultural histories to promote recreation and tourism.

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Phase One

*Targeted Safety Improvements:
Wapato, Toppenish & White Swan*

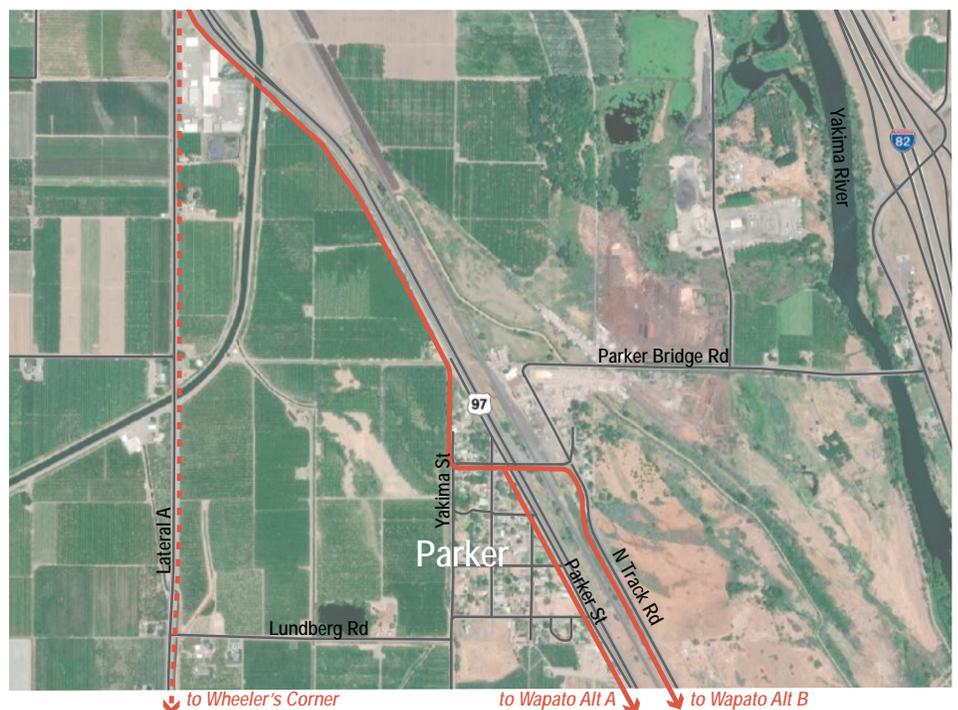
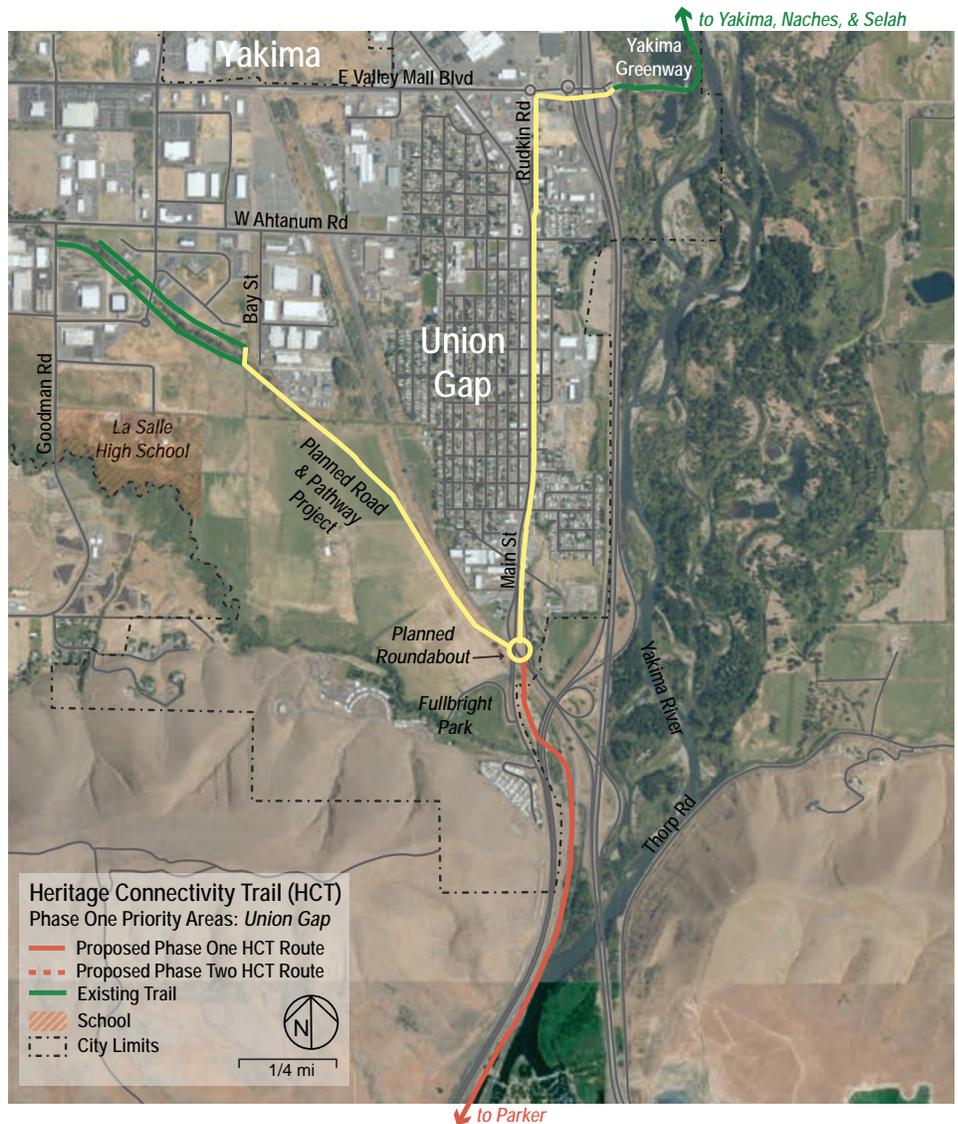
An early priority for the Heritage Connectivity Trails is the implementation of targeted measures to improve traffic safety within the communities of Wapato, Toppenish and White Swan. These improvements would focus on areas where high numbers of injuries and fatalities have occurred, as well as critical connections to bus stops, schools and community facilities. They would also lay the groundwork for the larger HCT network to eventually connect through these areas (see following maps).

Connecting south from the existing Yakima Greenway through Union Gap and into the southern Yakima Valley is another top priority for the HCT. This connection will lay the groundwork for regional connectivity by linking the area to current and future trails running through Yakima and beyond. The HCT may run south through Union Gap along the newly revitalized Main Street corridor, through Fulbright Park, and then south along the historic route of US-97. It would also connect northwest to trails along Wide Hollow Creek via Union Gap's planned Regional Beltway connector.

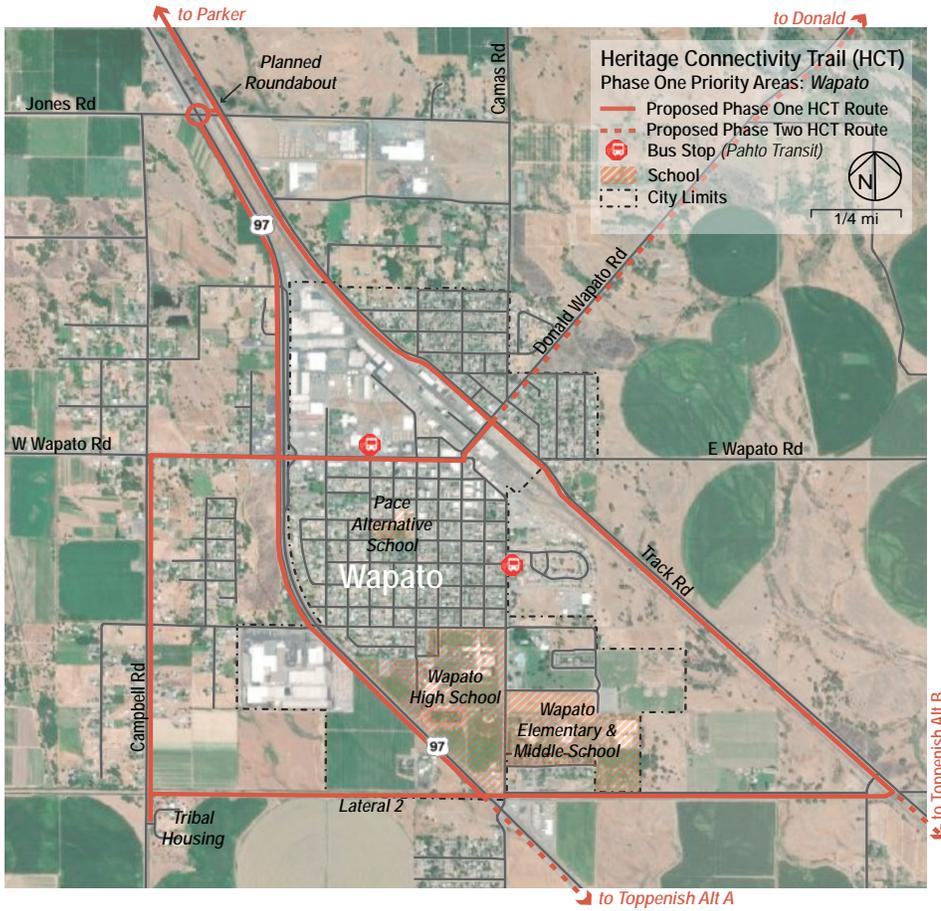
Passing south through the gap, the HCT would tee into the proposed WSDOT roundabout at US-97 and Lateral A before continuing south into Parker. From there, it may cross over to follow Track Rd and the BNSF railway or continue south along the west side of US-97. In Phase Two another trail would run south from the proposed roundabout along Lateral A Road.

Wapato

Coming into Wapato, the HCT would run along US-97 and Track



Phase One: Proposed Map 1 - Union Gap (top) & Map 2- Parker (below)



Rd, providing two north-south connections through the city. Other connector trails will run east-west along West Wapato Road and the Lateral 2 Canal as well as north-south along Campbell Road. Future connections would continue northeast along Donald-Wapato Road to Donald. Heading south from Wapato, the HCT could either follow US-97 or Track Road.

Toppenish

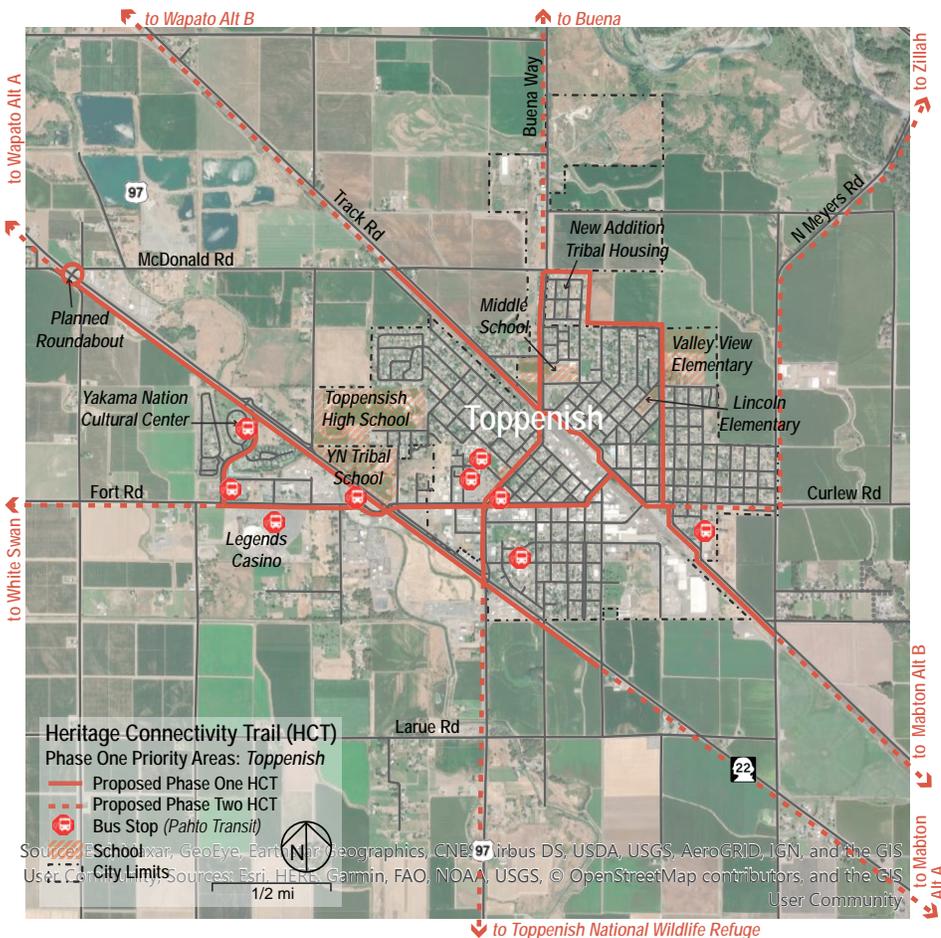
In Toppenish, the HCT would connect the downtown area to schools, bus stops, cultural centers, housing and services, providing safe routes throughout the city. Additional Phase Two trails would connect back northwest to Union Gap, north to Buena, northeast to Zillah, southeast to Mabton, south to the Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge (and the Columbia River beyond) and west to White Swan.

White Swan

In White Swan, a trail would connect the community center, rodeo grounds, skate park, and the middle/high school campus with the Pahto Public Passage Transit bus stop at the Cougar Den. Phase Two trails would connect east to Toppenish, and southwest to Fort Simcoe and Job Corps.

Phase Two

Focus continues to be on improving safety throughout the region while emphasizing health benefits of pedestrian and bicyclist use of the trails network as the region continues to grow. Phase Two also documents regional stories that highlight the cultural histories of southern Yakima Valley.



Priority One

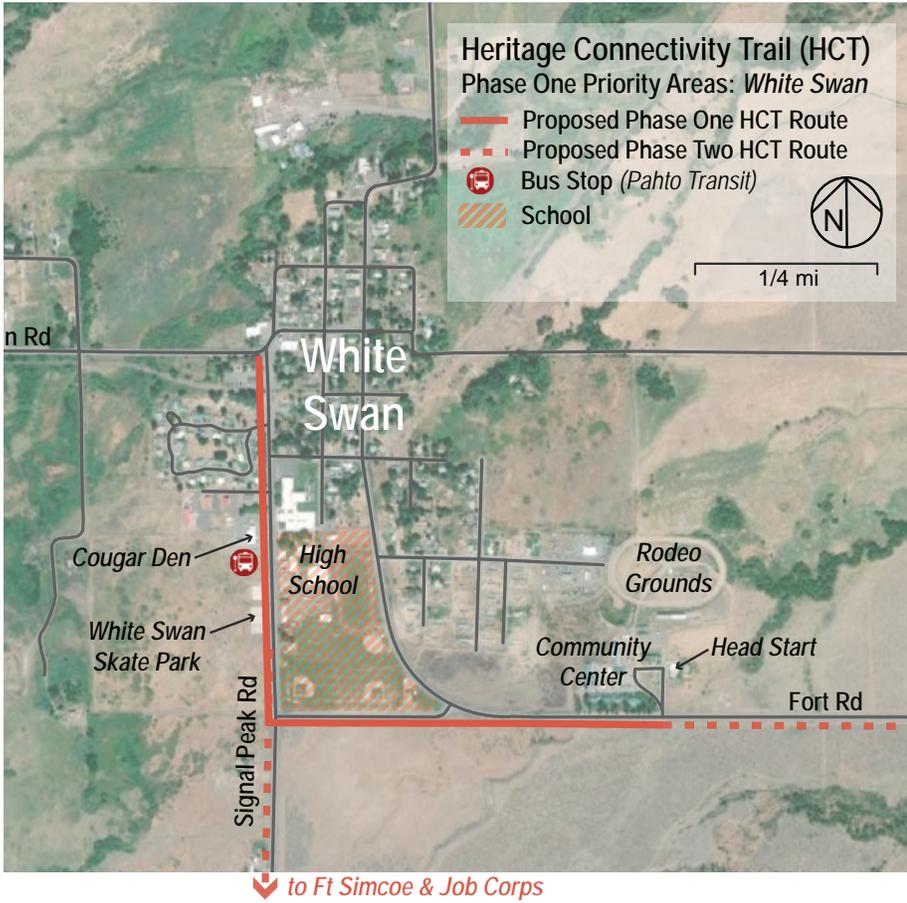
Toppenish to Wapato

From Toppenish to Wapato, the HCT may follow right-of-way along Track Rd, the BNSF railway, WIP canals and/or US-97.

Phase One: Proposed Map 3 - Wapato (top) & Map 4- Toppenish (below)

Phase One: Proposed Map 5 - White Swan (next page)

Source: NPS/ Quinn Kelly



Toppenish to White Swan

From Toppenish to White Swan, the HCT could either follow Fort Road or run further north along Branch Road and the Yakima Central Railroad.

Priority Two

Toppenish to Zillah

From Toppenish, the HCT could run northeast along N Meyers Road, crossing the Yakima River and I-82 before continuing east into Zillah.

Other areas of interest:

- Toppenish to Mabton
- White Swan to Ft Simcoe / Job Corps
- Wapato to Donald
- Toppenish to Pumhouse Rd

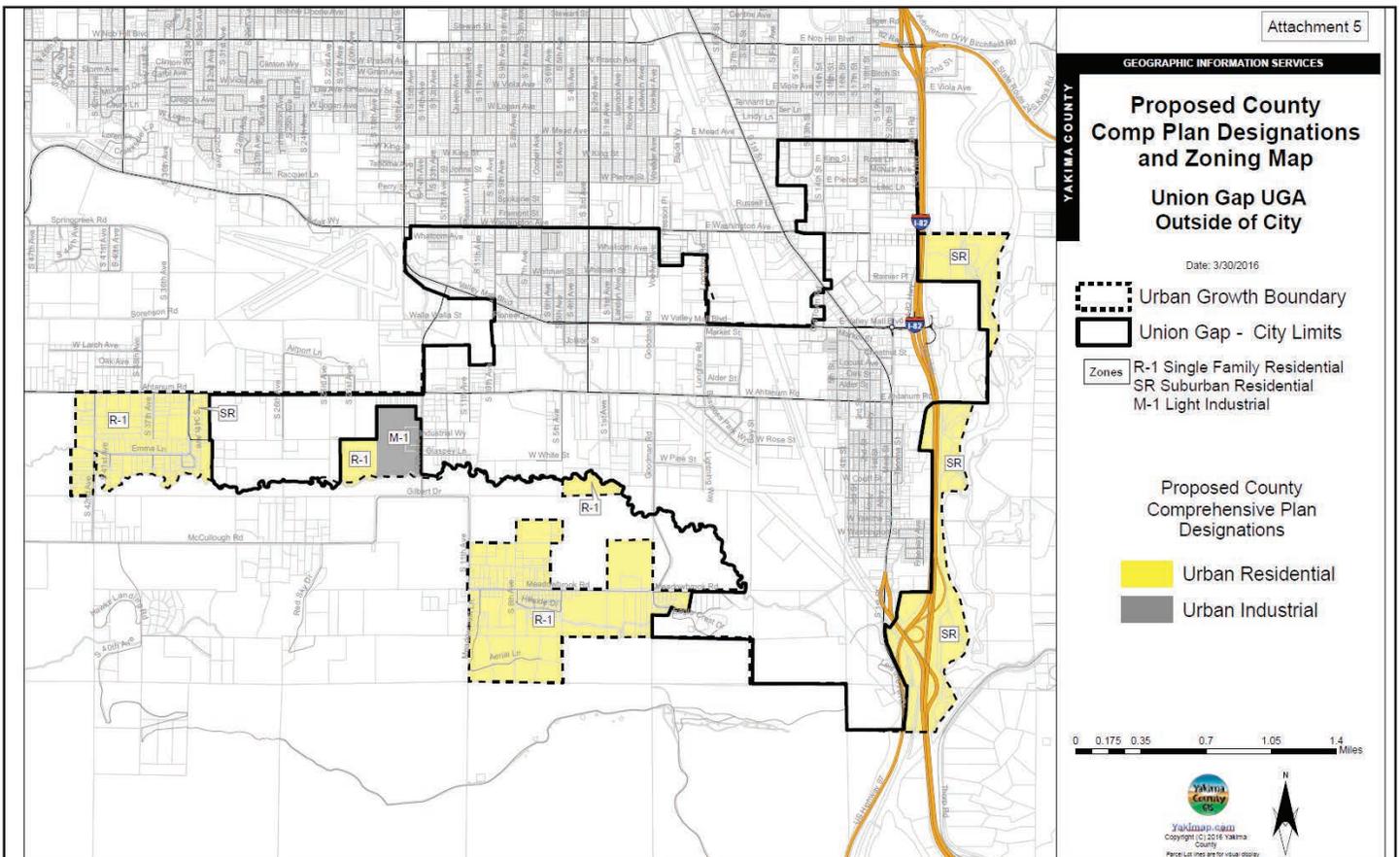
Priority Three

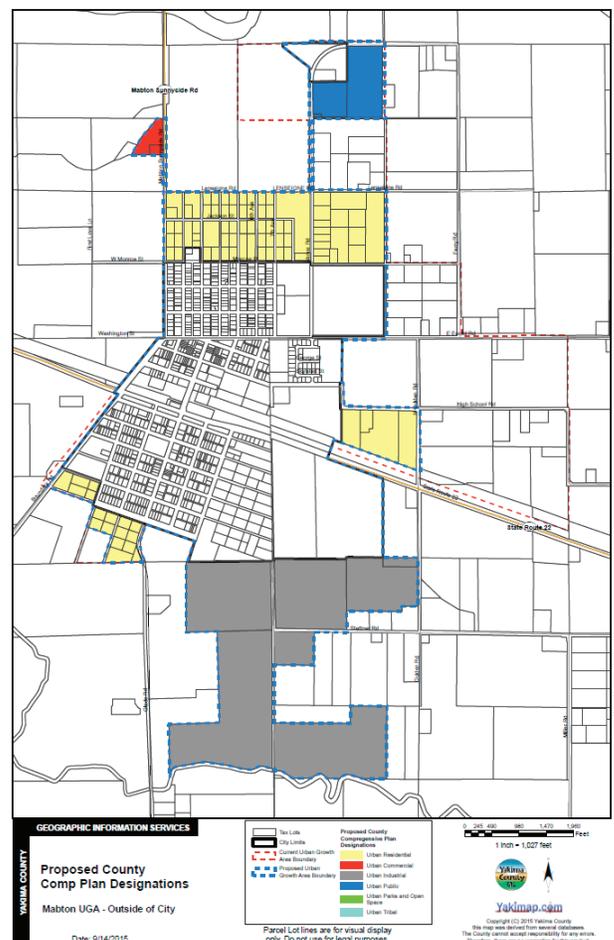
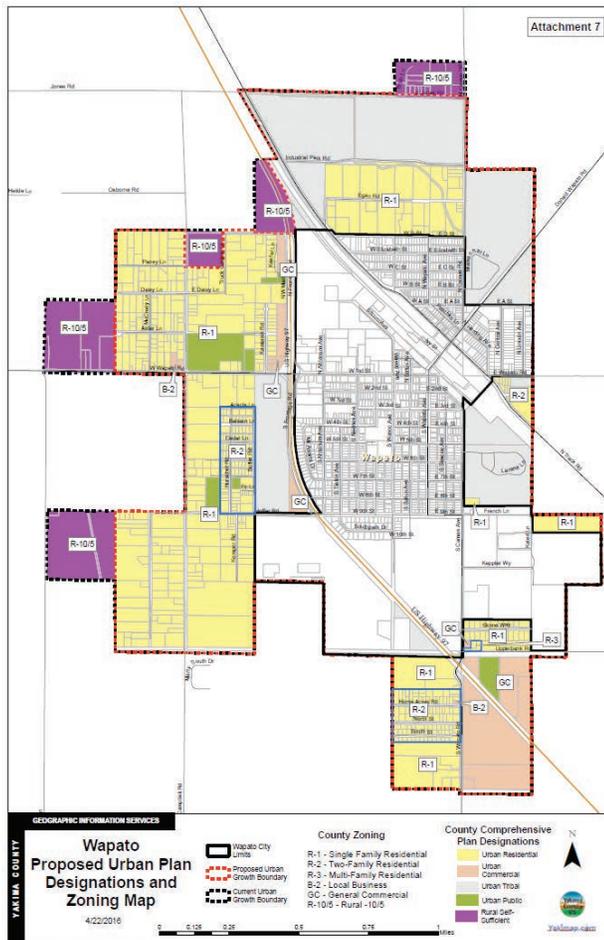
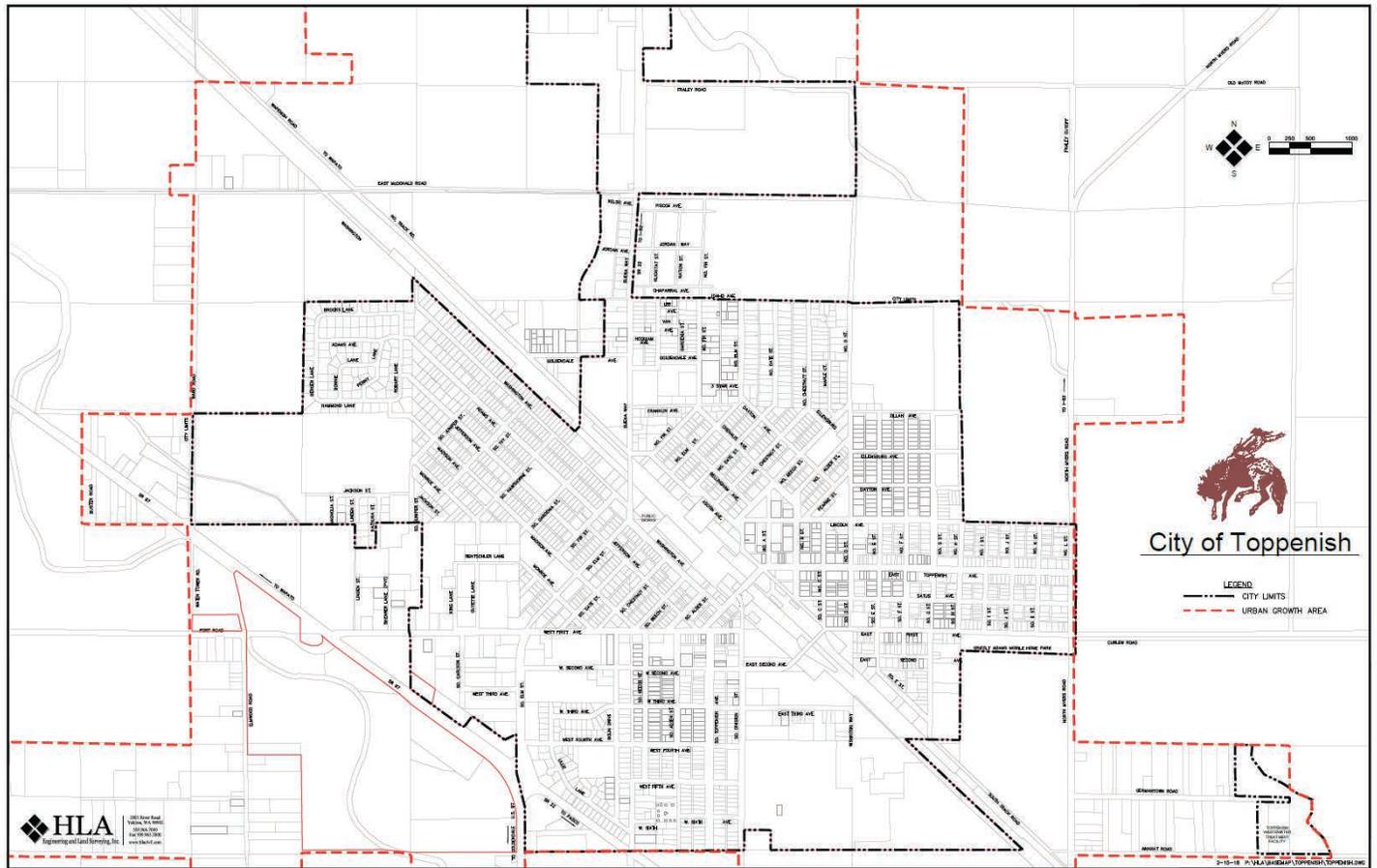
Areas of interest:

- Alfalfa to Granger
- Pumhouse Rd to Reservation Border / Goldendale / Columbia River Villages
- Union Gap to Ahtanum Mission

Regional Area Growth Maps
This Page: Union Gap (below)

Following Page: Toppenish (top); Wapato (bottom left); Mabton (bottom right)





SHARING OUR HERITAGE WITH STORIES

A series of interconnect trails across the landscape provides more than one opportunity to connect the communities of this region. It is the intent of the second phase of this plan is to highlight histories along the trails that have shaped the character and values of the people who call southern Yakima Valley home.

Pahto

Mt Adams

Heritage Connectivity Trail
 Collaborated Trails of the Yakama Nation

The story of Pahto

On a clear day, you can see Pahto, a nearly 10,000-foot, snow-capped peak located 50 miles west of Toppenish. For the Yakama, Pahto, also known as Mt Adams, is one of the five sisters, or sacred mountains. In Yakama lore, Pahto felt jealous of Washim, or Simcoe Mountain, because she was the first to greet the sun each morning. Pahto decided to chop off Washim's head, leaving her with a flat-topped top. To punish this aggressive act, the creator put an eagle over Pahto. In spite of Pahto's mis-deeds, the mountain still provides clear spring water and plentiful sources of food.

A century long fight

When the Yakama negotiated the treaty of 1855, tribal elders made sure to include Mount Adams within the reservation boundaries. However, when the treaty was ratified in 1859, the United States government made a surveying error that left Mount Adams outside of the reservation boundaries. The tribe immediately began working to remedy this error, but it took generations of advocacy to win back the mountain. The mountain wasn't returned to the Yakama until 1972, when President Nixon resolved the century-long dispute with an executive order that returned 21,000 acres of forests to the Yakama Nation.

Source: Alysa Landry, Indian Country Today, May 26, 2017

Second language

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Second language

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Source: Alysa Landry, Indian Country Today, May 26, 2017

President Nixon officially returning Mt Adams to the Yakama Tribe
(Indian Country Today)

Southwest portion of the original 1855 treaty map
(IndianCountryToday.com)

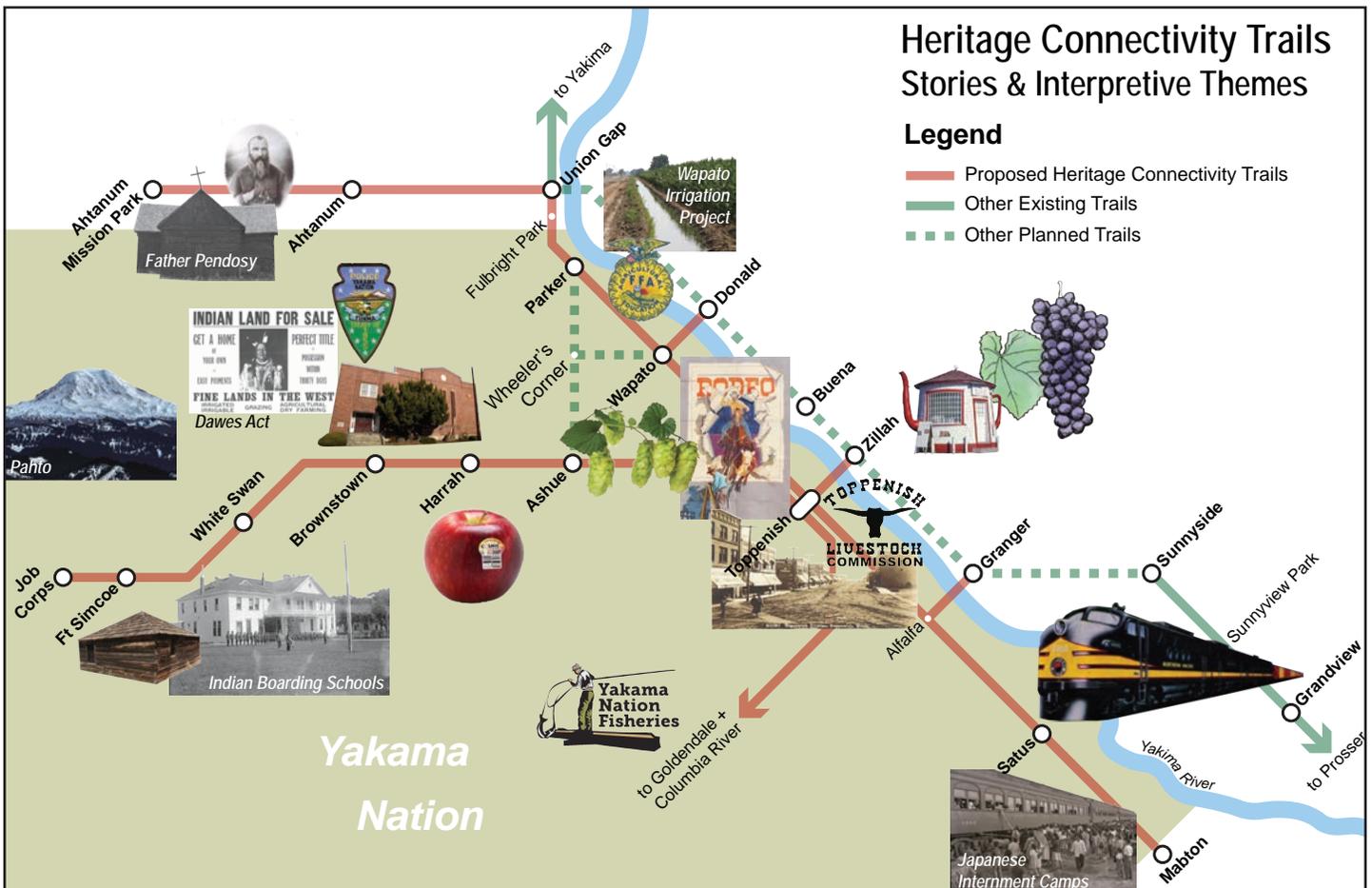
For more information on the Heritage Connectivity Trail, scan this QR code.
How to scan a QR code? Open your Camera app and point it steadily for 2-3 seconds towards the QR Code you want to scan. Whenever scanning is enabled, a notification will appear. If nothing happens, you may have to go to your Settings app and enable QR Code scanning.

Mount Adams from High Rock Lookout
Photo: Instagram/stevepatterson

Sample of an interpretive wayside featuring a narrative of Pahto/Mt. Adams (top)

Potential story map following the proposed HCT network map (bottom)

Source: NPS/ Quinn Kelly (both images)



INVENTORY + NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Existing Infrastructure

Throughout the central and southern Yakima Valley, there are many county roadways that lack sidewalks, lighting and roadway shoulders. In some areas, roadway guardrail pinch points push pedestrians to the road and areas of thick vegetation obstruct walkways. The Heritage Connectivity Trails will work to address these gaps and to build on existing assets.

Multi-use paths

To the northwest, the Yakima Greenway runs north from Union Gap along the Yakima River. On the north side of Yakima, the Greenway splits, with one trail continuing north into Selah and one traveling northwest along US-12 to Naches.

To the southeast, the Lower Yakima Valley Pathway runs southeast from Sunnyside along the Yakima Valley Highway. Starting in Grandview, it follows Wine Country Rd, sometimes as a separated path and sometimes as on-street bike lanes, continuing through Prosser and ending among wineries at the intersection with WA-22.

Sidewalks

Many streets in the Southern Valley lack safe walking facilities. Based on a 2013 sidewalk inventory, a percent of streets lacking sidewalks across several towns follows in the table in the next column (note: Toppenish was not included in the original 2013 inventory but was assessed in a subsequent survey). While this data does not reflect recent sidewalk projects, it does paint an approximate picture of walking conditions in these towns. For example, 62% of Wapato streets include some sort of sidewalk compared with only 5% in Harrah.

Bike routes

Currently, there are no officially designated bike routes or lanes within the Yakama Nation. Future planning efforts

focus on incorporating “complete streets” policies and guidance.

	Street Segments	Street Segments Without a Sidewalk	% of Segments Without a Sidewalk
Wapato	534	201	38%
Mabton	395	265	67%
Harrah	101	96	95%
Zillah	755	422	56%
Toppenish	458	183	60%

Future and Unpaved trails

Future plans for a separated path within the City of Union Gap start at Fullbright Park and travel along the Union Gap Beltway project northwest to near the intersection of Ahtanum and Goodwin roads is expected to be completed within the next few years. Northwest of Yakima, another network of trails continues through the shrub-steppe of Cowiche Canyon. Other informal trails exist where people have sought safer and more convenient routes to walk, bike or even ride their horses to get where they need to go. The Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge, four miles south of Toppenish, also has a small network of walking trails.

Canals

The Wapato Irrigation Project (WIP) is working with Yakama DNR Engineering to map serious injury and fatality traffic collision data throughout the irrigation district. This partnership is exploring possibilities to pipe existing irrigation canals that are adjacent to or in close proximity to schools and residential communities that pose hazards



Naches Greenway crossing the Naches River alongside US-12 with shaded bench. Photo: Summer Derrey



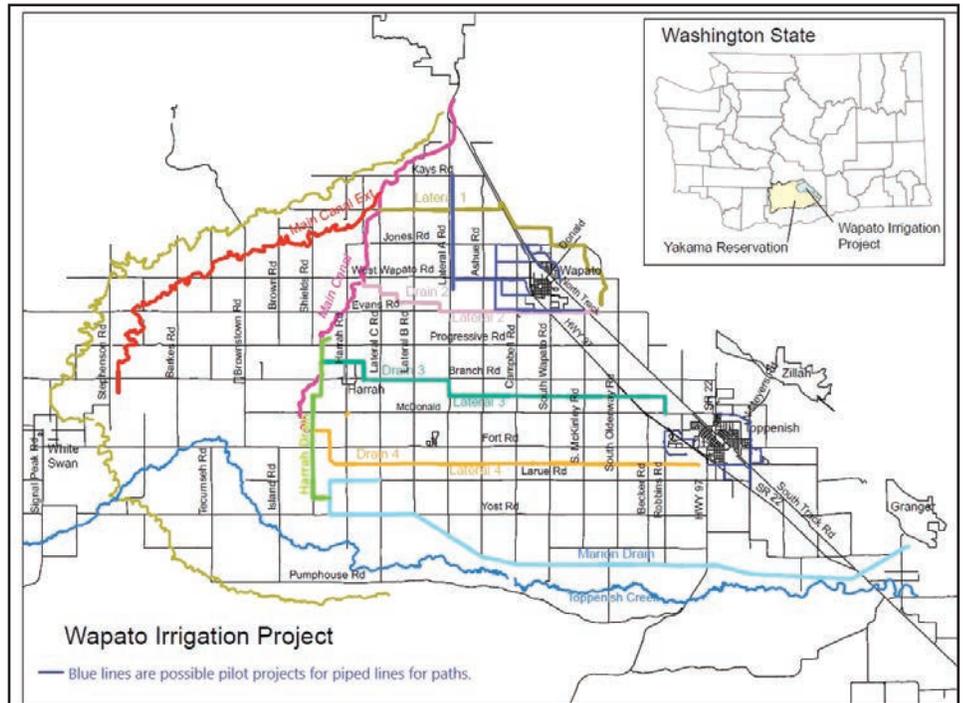
Looking south along the BNSF Railway at Jones Rd, north of Wapato, a potential HCT route. Photo: HollyAnna Littlebull

for pedestrians/cyclists. These piped canals could also provide potential routes for the HCT.

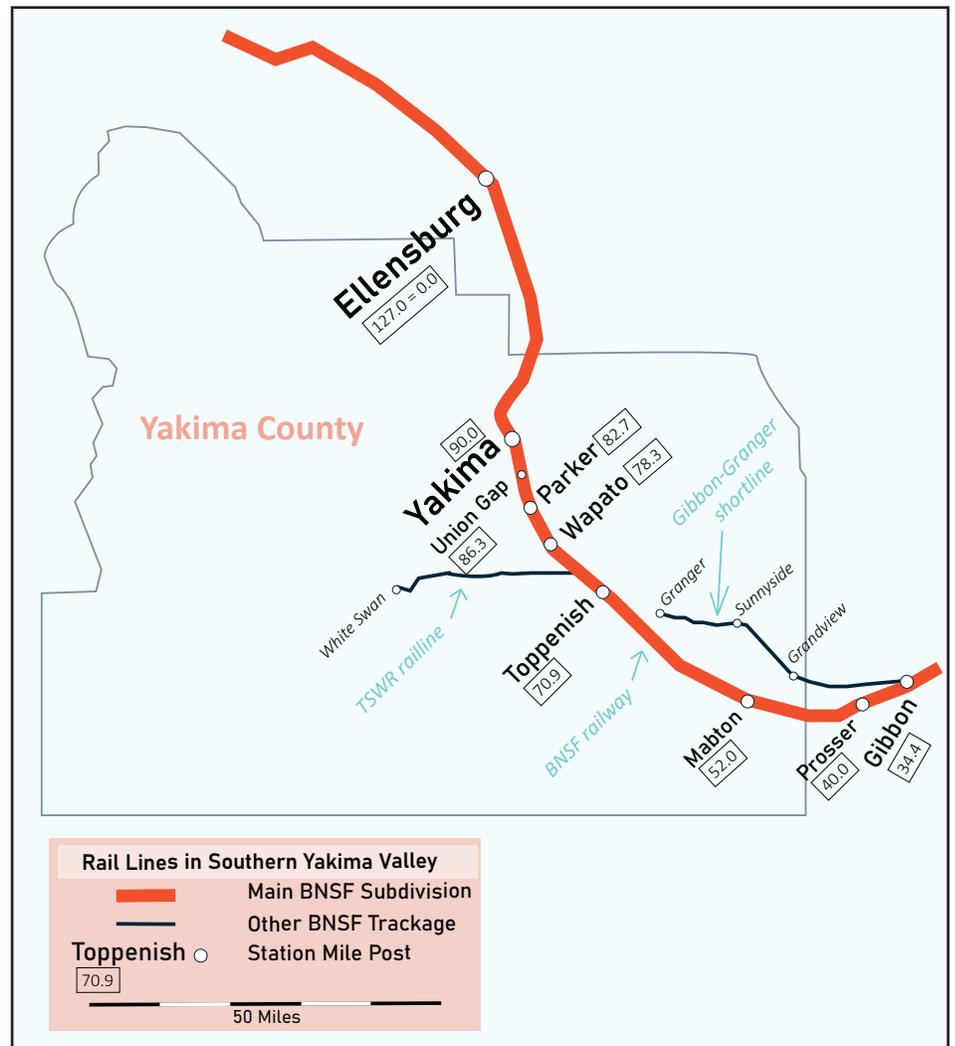
Railroads

Three railroad lines run through the project area. These corridors could provide potential right-of-way for the Heritage Connectivity Trails with proper permissions and safety precautions.

- The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway runs southeast from Union Gap to Mabton, passing through the center of Parker, Wapato, and Toppenish. Track Road runs parallel to the BNSF from Parker to the Marion Drain, where it merges with WA-22, which continues to follow the BNSF to Mabton and beyond.
- On the other side of the Yakima River and I-82, the Gibbon-Granger shortline runs from Prosser to Granger parallel to the BNSF main rail line. The Gibbon-Granger passes through Grandview, accessing Sunnyside, Outlook and Granger. The two BNSF rail bridges still exist over I-82; there may be an opportunity to partner with the current owners to develop a trail that would connect the cities of Zillah and Granger to create a loop to Toppenish.
- Two miles northwest of Toppenish, the Toppenish, Simcoe and Western Railroad (TSWR) is operated by the Yakima Central Railroad (YCR). This short-line splits off from the BNSF main line at East Branch Road and runs west to White Swan. It follows this path for 17 miles before turning southwest to run through White Swan before terminating near Wesley Road. A new middle school is being built in Harrah, which would increase use of this route segment by area students and families with school-aged students.



Map of Wapato Irrigation Project canals (WIP / Yakama Nation Engineering, 2019)



Data Source: BNSF Railroad
Illustration Source: NPS/ Julie Fonseca de Borges

Accessibility

In order to avoid walking along high-trafficked county and highway roads, which lack wide shoulders or sidewalks, pedestrians and bicyclists opt instead for the safer canal road. In some locations, the canal road is the only access to residential areas for all forms of transportation. It is to be noted that canal roads are not free from danger. Pedestrians and bicyclists often encounter uneven ground, weeds that choke pathways and wildlife (rattlesnakes, bears, cougars and dogs) along WIP roads.

A joint effort between the Yakama Nation, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and WIP is identifying ready solutions for a safer pedestrian and bicyclist experience by piping key canals to designate them as walkways between

West Wapato and Highway 97. This 5+-mile potential project along Lateral A provides additional benefits to area residents by eliminating associate safety issues (youth drowning, vehicular accidents ending in the canal and refuse dumping) as well as conserving water resources (prevent evaporation, help ensure water cleanliness).

Permission from WIP as well as fencing to delineate private property is needed along the proposed trail before pedestrians and cyclists can use the piped canals as a reliable, safe route option.

Jurisdiction

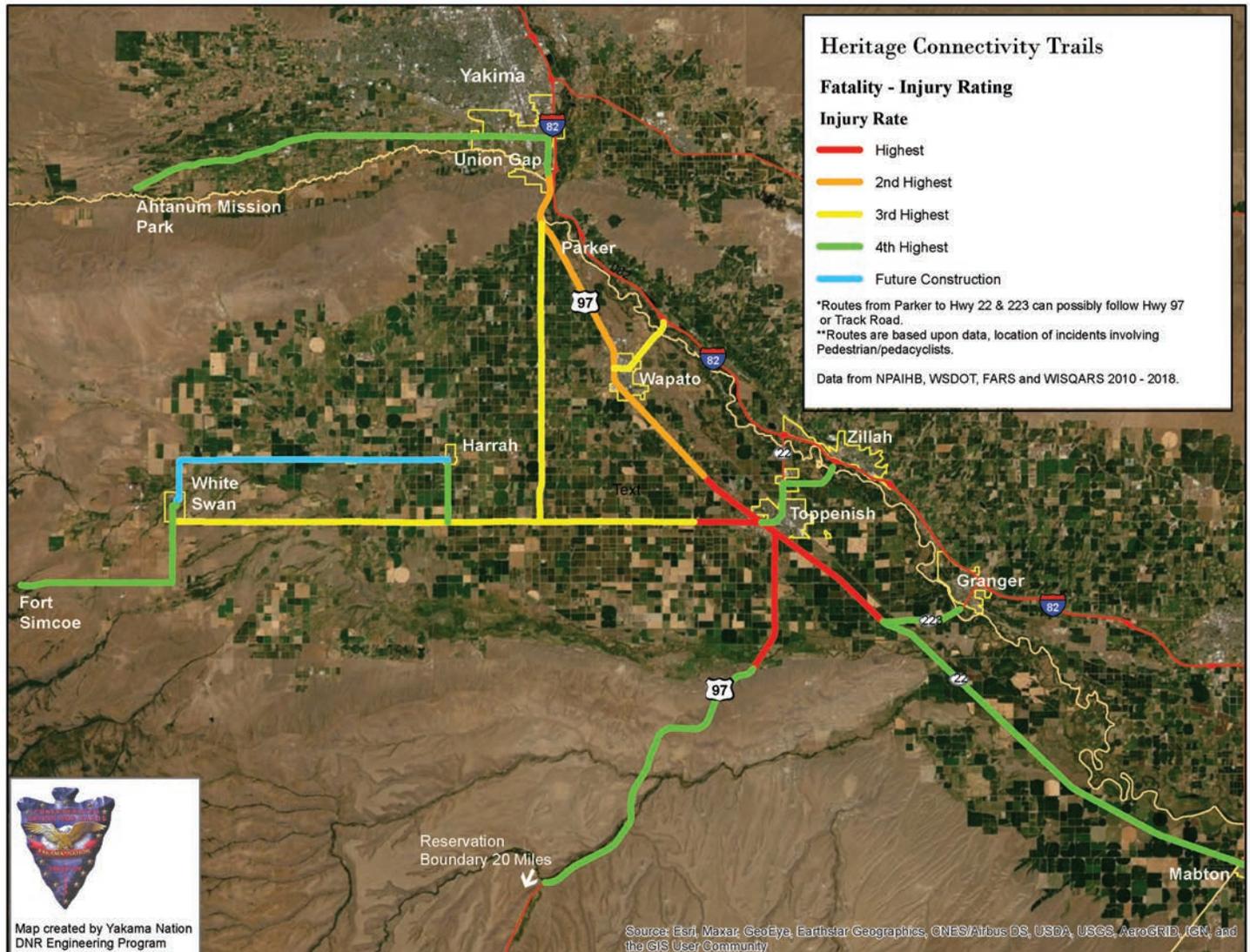
The Yakama Nation does not have jurisdiction over all of the roadways within its boundaries. Implementing the Heritage Connectivity Trails, both

inside and outside of existing right-of-way, will require coordination with a variety of local, state, and federal partners.

Safety Conditions

Ninety percent of tribal members and others living in the Yakama Nation feel that pedestrian safety is their highest priority, according to a 2019 transportation survey conducted by the Tribal Traffic Safety Committee (TTSC). The Yakama Nation is leading efforts to support these concerns with support from dozens of project partners. The Yakama Nation DNR Engineering program developed an initial safety plan, which was approved in August 2019.

State data reflects the need for safety improvement. According to crash data from the Washington



Map of HCT Trails Plan by Traffic Fatality Rate (NPAIHB, WSDOT, FARS, & WISQARS, 2010-2018). Source: Yakama Nation DNR

State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), Yakama Nation has the highest pedestrian fatality in the state of Washington. In the past 10 years, there have been 350 injury collisions and 22 reported fatalities on US 97 between Union Gap and Satus Pass. This data reflects a national issue: the per-capita pedestrian fatality rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) is over four-and-a-half times the national average (Aguilar, 2020).

Integration with Transit

Pahto Public Passage is operated by Yakama Nation Tribal Transit, covering the cities of Toppenish, Wapato, Harrah and also the unincorporated towns of White Swan and Brownstown within the reservation boundaries. Beyond reservation, in the Nation's ceded territory, the community of Georgeville and the town of Goldendale are also served by this transit system.

Currently, Pahto Public Passage operates 22 bus stops within the Yakama Nation, which connects the essential living and working areas of the towns. As walking is still the most basic type of transportation for tribal residents, especially in the rural area, most riders travel to bus stops on foot. However, the lack of pedestrian facilities on roadways connecting the bus stops make these trips very dangerous. For instance, most roadways lack sidewalks or walkable shoulders requiring pedestrians to walk on the street with vehicles, which is especially true for White Swan where current efforts focus on implementing Safe Routes School plan for the Mount Adams School District (MASD). Many intersections lack pedestrian signals, crossings and even pavement markings. Most roadways lack sufficient street lighting making pedestrian visibility limited during the permeating, heavy fog that is common in the Yakama Nation.

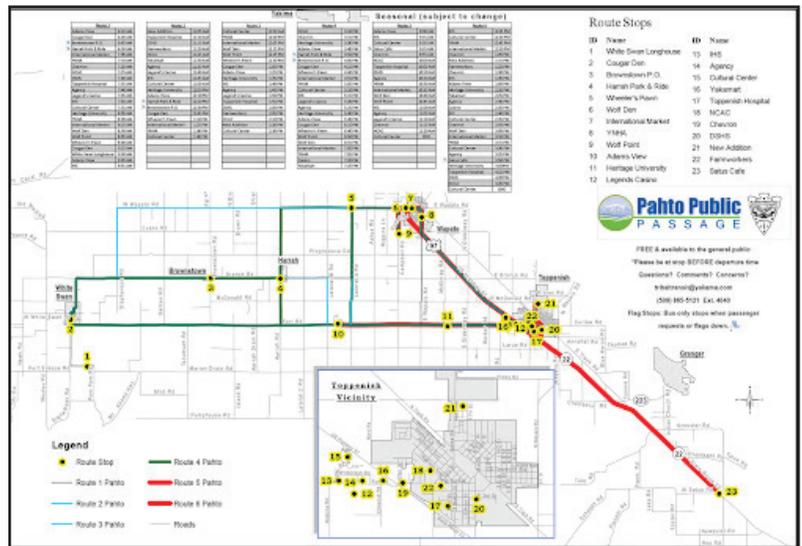
While transit buses are equipped with

bicycle racks, many bus stops lack the appropriate shelters and adequate room to load wheelchairs, etc. These issues create difficulties for riders, especially those with disabilities and other specific conditions, which results in low transit ridership.

In addition to the Pahto Public Passage service, the region is also supported by the People for People's "Community Connector", which provides daily service between Yakima and Prosser with stops in Wapato, Toppenish and Zillah. Commercial bus service is also provided by Fronteras Del Norte, with dedicated terminals in both Sunnyside and Yakima as well as a stop in Toppenish. Greyhound buses provide regional

service with a terminal in Kennewick and stops in Sunnyside and Yakima.

Increasing safe access to public and tribal transportation will make shared transit a viable option, potentially reduce the number of vehicles on the roadways, and create safe spaces for pedestrians to access transit. The Heritage Connectivity Trails coordinates with existing efforts to create safer walking and cycling routes to bus stops and also make use of bus stop locations as potential sites for cultural and educational installations.



Map of Pahto Transit routes and stops (2015)



Educational materials, featuring Bigfoot, promoting traffic safety on the Yakama Nation.

Illustration: HollyAnna Littlebull

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Yakama Nation DNR - Engineering staff, working on the behalf of the Tribal Traffic Safety Committee, has been and will continue to give presentations about the HCT locally, regionally and nationally. The team will continue regular consultation with local communities to ensure that the project meets their needs.

This project is led by a core planning team and an advisory committee, composed of various stakeholders and community members. In the future, specific subcommittees and work groups will assist in specific parts of the project such as grant development, right-of-way acquisition, route development and others.

The following list of entities have demonstrated or pledged support for all or parts of the HCT:

- Yakama Nation
- DRYVE and TRANS-action
- City of Toppenish
- City of Union Gap
- City of Wapato
- Coviche Canyon Conservancy
- Eastern Washington University
- Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
- Yakima Bikes and Walks!
- Single Track Alliance of Yakima (STAY)
- Yakima County
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Washington Traffic Safety Commission
- Yakima Greenway
- Yakima Health District
- Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

DESIGN & MAINTENANCE

For planning purposes, the Yakama Nation will work with partners to determine who will be responsible for route and trail maintenance. This concept plan does not attempt to answer more specific questions that will arise as the HCT comes closer to fruition. On-going conversations are needed to take this concept plan from idea to reality.

Accessibility

The Heritage Connectivity Trails will be ADA compliant, constructed with surfaces that are accessible for users with wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

Trail Amenities

Funding provided, the Heritage Connectivity Trails will include signage, benches and shade structures to improve user experience. These amenities will incorporate cultural elements such as tribal iconography and words in the Yakama language. Native plantings will also reflect the region's cultural heritage while minimizing maintenance needs.

CONCLUSION

Great challenges present great opportunity: studies have shown that due to the existing state of fragmentation and marginalization, the benefits of trails on native lands can be more significant than in other communities (Deyo et al., 2014). The Heritage Connectivity Trails plan offers a unique opportunity to improve quality of life by providing safe facilities for active transportation and exercise, connecting communities, and creating opportunities for cultural education and economic development.



Draft proposal for a painted sidewalk, bike lane, and native plant garden at a Pahto bus stop. NPS/ Quinn Kelly

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APPENDIX A: EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES, & PROJECTS

Entity	Plan	Relevant Policies & Projects
Yakama Nation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Traffic Safety Committee Charter • YN Safety Plan: Improve pedestrian safety throughout the tribal complex • WA Safety Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety Coordination Grant - First Mile, Last Mile Grant • US Department of Transportation Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDI, UW StarLab partnership • FHWA - Surface Transportation Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jackson Street Extension (co-lead with City of Toppenish) • YN/BIA/TTP/WIP Funded Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buster Road Reconstruction - Tribal School Linden Street Reconstruction Project - Extend Robbins Road from Fort Road to US 97 with bike lanes and sidewalks. - Harrah School Safety Project
Yakima County	Trails Plan (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local community organizations to develop an interconnected system of trails & open space • Spread costs for operation and maintenance to reduce reliance on county funds • Ensure that facilities are developed in an efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable manner • Improve facilities for ADA accessibility and user safety • Adopt and apply consistent design standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout Yakima County • Consider utility corridors for trail right-of-way
	Comprehensive Plan: Horizon 2040 (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan multi-use trails to connect schools to neighborhoods • Maintain Yakima County Trails Plan • Develop coordinated and interconnected system of trails and open space • Support efforts to provide amenities at trail-head locations to support safe, clean, and efficient trail use • Consider floodplains and irrigation canals to facilitate connectivity

Entity	Plan	Relevant Policies & Projects
Yakima County Public Services Department	6 Year Transportation Improvement Program (2021-2026)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahtanum Rd, 26th Ave to 90th Ave: Reconstruct to 3 lanes with bike/ped facilities • Fort Road, Teo Road to Robbins Road: Reconstruct to 5 lanes with bike lanes and sidewalks
Cities within Yakima County	Comprehensive Plans (2007-2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support planning multi-use trails that connect neighborhoods and serve local needs • Support efforts to develop a regional trail system through each city • Minimize conflicts between road and trail users
City of Toppenish	Parks & Recreation Plan (2020-2025) 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mural walk • FHWA - Surface Transportation Program • Jackson Street Extension (co-lead with Yakama Nation) • West First Street Project • Safe Routes to Schools
DRYVE (Driving Rural Yakima Valley's Economy) and Trans-Action		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual prioritization list for regionally significant projects seeking federal and state investment of state and local transportation projects of all modes • Private, non-profit 501c4 transportation advocacy organizations
Mount Adams School District		Safe Routes to Schools
Washington State Department of Transport. (WSDOT)	Transportation Plan 2035 (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, plan, and fund transportation infrastructure that supports tourism, including non-motorized trail networks • Promote bicycling and walking as viable transportation options and as a means to improve public health
	Draft Active Transportation Plan Part 1 (Dec 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envisions "A network that works as well for people walking or rolling as it does for people using motor vehicles" • "For the approximate cost of one Seattle-area freeway interchange, approximately 300 miles of trail could be constructed" • Planned & Funded Roundabouts • Highway 97 & McDonald Road (secured) • Highway 97 & Jones Road (secured) • Highway 97 & Lateral A (secured) • RAISE Grant project

Entity	Plan	Relevant Policies & Projects
Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG)	Yakima Valley Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan 2020-2045 (Adopted March 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-Range, multi-jurisdictional and multimodal transportation plan stating planned and secured (financially constrained) transportation projects throughout Yakima County. • 78.35% of plan’s public input survey respondents stated local elected officials should work on expanding pedestrian and bike systems throughout Yakima County • States regions goals and policies to improve facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel as part of capital roadway projects and maintenance programs
	Yakima Valley Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Improvement Program (M/RTIP) – 2021 – 2024 (Adopted Oct 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A four-year programming document derived from the more comprehensive six-year Transportation Improvement Program developed and adopted annually by local agencies. • Identify urban and rural projects from locally adopted TIPs that are ready for implementation in 2021 -2024 for which federal funding has been secured, are WSDOT projects, or are regionally significant regardless of the funding source • Demonstrate that projects programmed during 2021 -2024 will not cause or contribute to any new violation of federal air quality standards for carbon monoxide (CO), or particulate matter of 10 micrometers in diameter or less (PM10); • Demonstrate financial constraint • Demonstrate consistency with RCW 36.70A, Section 70 of the Washington State Growth Management Act requiring transportation planning be coordinated and consistent with local comprehensive plans
	2018 Human Services Transportation Plan (Note: To be updated Fall 2021/Winter 2022)	<p>A locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan, the result of efforts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain input representing public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public • Identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, veterans, youth, people with low-incomes and others. • Assess the existing transportation resources, needs and service gaps of Yakima County, Washington • Provide strategies for meeting identified local needs • Prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation • Maximize the utilization of resources while minimizing duplication of services • Ensure compliance with Federal transportation laws.

APPENDIX B: RESULTS OF SURVEY NUMBER ONE

1. What is your zip code?

Zip/City	Responses
98953/Zillah	4%
98952, 98933/White Swan	8%
98951/Wapato	30%
98948/Toppenish	23%
98944/Sunnyside	1%
98942/Selah	4%
98939/Parker	1%
98937/Naches	1%
98920/Brownstown	1%
98908, 98902, 98901/ Yakima	15%
98903/Union Gap	9%
98405/Tacoma	1%
98104/Seattle	1%
98031/Kent	1%

2. Do you think a trail system is needed within the Lower Valley on the Yakama Reservation?

Yes	90%
No	3%
Other/ Comment	7%
	Yes, but I'm unsure of the impact it would have on the natural ecosystem areas, would it be good for people who walk along the narrow roads?

3. What section of the trail would you use the most?

Segment 1: Union Gap to Parker	13.9%
Segment 2: Parker to Wapato	5.6%
Segment 3: Wapato to Toppenish	37.5%
Segment 4: Toppenish to White Swan to Fort Simcoe	13.9%
Other	29.2%
Comments	
All the above – 6 responses	
Lateral A, west Wapato	
Lateral A	
Sections 2 and 4	
Sections 2 and 3	
Sections 1 and 4	
Put more parks in too	

Mostly around Toppenish
Personally, I would like to see safe running/hiking trails along our waterways and ridges for people to enjoy.
Mostly to jog or ride a bike for recreational purposes
I would not use the trail
Toppenish to Zillah – 2 responses
Yakima to Union Gap

4. If there was a trail, what would you use it for?

Walking or running	27%
Cycling	19%
Skateboarding, roller skating or rollerblading	5%
Dog walking	10%
Horseback riding	4%
Environmental or historical education	9%
Observing nature	15%
BBQ/picnic	8%
Other/comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardens • To get where I have to go that day • I would not • Community events, races, awareness walks 	

5. What features would you like to see on the trail?

Please rank from 1 to 9 where 1 is the most important and 9 is the least important.

Feature	Average Score
Safety (rules, lighting, securing, fencing)	2.61
Restrooms, water stations, shade and benches	3.11
Trash cans and pet waste receptacles	3.72
Parks, playgrounds, picnic areas and parking	4.01
Handicap access	4.04
Maps and directional signs	4.1
Public transportation to/from	4.18
Educational programs	4.35
Natural Gardens	4.87

6. What other information would you like to share with the planning team?

I am glad that you are acting on this idea. With climate change coming at us fast, we need alternative ways of transportation. Thank you.
None at the moment
Lateral A and S Wapato and track road
Make park & rides, bus stops along trail with those bike racks on bus like Seattle has, cameras along trail for safety monitoring, have areas for food vendors to set up, food trucks, no overnight camping along trail.
Track road too
Lights on trail. All dogs on leash. No overnight camping. No drugs. No alcohol. Need bus stops along trail. Places to refill water bottles.
I think this is a great idea and would benefit the "bar" people
Safety, police checking on the trail. Drivers call in if they see something not right. Safety in numbers get a buddy to use trail
Water dispenser for all, disposal cups to get a drink of water if needed chiish wat'uy! Water first. Walk to be healthy. The reservation has large number for diabetes walk to prevent /or improve health. Nye
Good luck / Hope it works out / Get it done/ Love this! / Yay! Finally / Thank you
Native plants and medicinal uses
Locks for nighttime. No camping. Safety Patrols
With life so short, I would like to see trails and activity trails for our local population and any tourist to see our diverse agriculture and see our abundant wildlife that the Yakima valley has to offer and much more.
I am an avid runner and for those of us who participate in this activity there are very few trails for us to run safely.
I appreciate all that you do for the valley
This trail should connect to greenway to the Sunnyside trail.
My concerns are mostly pertaining to safety. Trails will be great to lessen pedestrian casualties but what if other crimes rise from people targeting the trail. Would it be possible to install emergency phone along the pathways like the phones in the Yakima Canyon?
I hope the City of Union Gap's street improvement plans will be designed to enable a separated pathway from the Yakima Greenway Trail (at Valley Mall Blvd.) to Fullbright Park and to these planned pathways south of Union Gap.

While the trail system is critical to the safe movement of individuals from one point to another, there needs to be accommodations (budget) for how Law Enforcement will patrol those areas.
Great idea! In addition to increasing pedestrian safety, it seems like a project that could make the entire reservation more active. It would be nice to have more options for exercising/family walks, etc.
Need sooner rather than later. Thank you for taking this project to the next level. People always say we need this and that but then don't do anything about being part of the solution. Thank you. I hate walking it's scary. But I have to.
This trail system is a great idea! Much needed, and I think it would be well used.
Worked in YN Public Safety June 4, 1971 to Dec 4, 2014 Saw first hand, Pedestrian vs vehicle, trains - and the pedestrian always suffered to worst injuries. Fatalities. I'd be very glad to see more safe walkways for our pedestrians, bicycle users, runners/joggers, school students, casino clients, homeless, along state routes and county roads, BIA Roads and Yakama nation roads. When deaths are reduced to zero should be our goal. Thank you, Ned Tillequots
It is very dangerous for people walking, especially at night. One reflector could help if they had it on them, but maybe free sticker reflectors or education so people use them at night.
Thank you for this work.I live by the river in Sunnyside, drive up to the RV camp in Toppenish for a safe place to walk. (Huge, fast manure trucks on the roads where I live). Doing something along Emerald Rd, where the river is so beautiful, would be good.

APPENDIX C: COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Tribal Traffic Safety Committee

Yakama Nation

Al Pinkham, *DNR ENG*

Angeline Phillips, *Probation*

Anita Mendoza, *Comprehensive Alcohol Program*

Aryn Mamazuka, *DNR ENG*

Dawn Depoe-Ike, *Ed Specialist, Tribal School*

Debra Byrd, *Diabetes*

Devra Lewis, *WS Health Clinic, Ambulance*

Doug Lindley, *DNR ENG*

Dwayne Valentine, *DNR ENG*

Elissa Wright, *Judge*

Elizabeth Nason, *Administrative Director*

Eric Johnson

HollyAnna Littlebull, *DNR ENG Traffic Safety*

James Shike, *Commissioner Tribal Police*

Janna Lewis-Clark, *Pahto Public Transit*

Jeff Chumley, *Lt. Tribal Police*

Joe Moses

Katherine Saluskin, *Behavioral Health*

Marty Heemsah, *Courts*

Merida Kipp, *Library Administrator*

Peter Plant

Portia Shields, *GIS/Data*

Richard Dills, *DNR ENG*

Ronna Washines, *Children's Court, Prosecutor*

Stacy McKay, *Grants & Contracts*

Stephen Selam, *Headstart Administration*

Tamara Saluskin, *Justice Services*

Tamara Strong, *TERO Director*

Tamera Gardee, *Diabetes*

Teddie Shike, *Tribal Admin.*

Terrance Eli, *Lt. Corrections*

Theresa Wallahee, *Homeland Security Planner*

Tino Alonso, *Insurance*

Vacant, *Economic Development*

Vacant, *Traffic Safety Officer*

Vernon Alvarez, *Chief of Rehabilitation*

Wayne Guckert, *EMT*

Yakama Nation Housing Authority

Phylistine Alexander

Wade Yallup

BNSF

Courtney Wallace

Johan Hellmen, *Regional Director of Public Affairs*

Quanah Spencer

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Wade DeCoteau, *Assistant Superintendent*

Wyeth Wallace, *Superintendent*

City of Toppenish

Lance Hoyt

Rocky Wallace

Department of Transportation

Paul Ticher

Green Acre Farms

Maria Nordberg

Indian Health Services

Marie Bastin

Regina Brown, *Indian Health Services MCH*

Shawn Blacksher

Job Corps

Victor Gardee

Single Track Alliance of Yakima

Will Hollingbery

University of Washington - StarLabs

Samuel Richard

Wei Sun

Yinhai Wang

Washington State Parks

Jason Both

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

Andrew Byrd, *SCR Project Engineer*

Beth Laduc, *Business Services Analyst*

Bob Hooker, *SCR Project Engineer*

Brian White, *SCR Regional Admin. Assist.*

Paul Gonseth, *SCR Region Planning Manager*

Shannon Lambert, *Project Development*

Summer Derrey, *WSDOT Communications*

Washington Traffic Safety Commission

Erika Mascorro

Yakima County

Jase Testerman

Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG)

Alan Adolf

Marcus Richards

HERITAGE CONNECTIVITY TRAILS COMMITTEE

Yakama Nation

Al Pinkham, DNR ENG
Debra Byrd, Diabetes Center
Gary Pierce, Land Enterprise
Kathy Batin, Grants & Contracts
Portia Shields, DNR Engineering GIS
Richard Dills, DNR Engineering
Stacy McKay, Grants & Contracts
Tamara Strong, TERO Director
Tamera Gardee, Diabetes Center
Tino Alonso, Insurance
Vernon Alvarez, Rehabilitation

City of Toppenish

Lance Hoyt
Rocky Wallace

City of Union Gap

Dennis Henne
Julie Schilling

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy

Celisa Hopkins
Cy Philbrick

Eastern Washington University

Margo Hill

Greenway Foundation

Kellie Connaghton

Inaba Produce Farms

Lon Inaba

Indian Health Service

Shawn Blackshear

Job Corps

Victor Gardee

Single Track Alliance of Yakima

Will Hollingbery

Yakima Bikes and Walks

Phil Hoge

Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board

Nicole Smith

UW Star Lab

Samuel Ricord
Wei Sun
Yinhai Wang

William O Douglas Trails Association

WSDOT

Summer Derry

Yakima County

Jase Testerman

Yakima County Health District

Jessica Van Doren

Lillian Bravo

YVCOG

Alan Adolf
Marcus Richards

