

2025 Transportation Growth Management Grant Application

Instructions

Be sure to download and review the [2025 Application Packet](#) before filling out this grant application.

You can save your progress and revisit this form at any time by clicking the "Save" button at the bottom of the page.

Applications must be received by July 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. (PDT)

Applicant information

Instructions: Complete this information for the applicant. Provide both a designated contact and an authorized representative (if different than the designated contact) for your entity.

Response instructions are on page 9 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Primary applicant jurisdiction

Mailing address

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Zip Code

Website

Contact person name

First

Last

Contact person title

Associate Planner

Contact phone

(541) 766-3559

Contact email

James.Wright@bentoncountyor.gov

Name of person empowered to sign the agreement with ODOT, if different from the applicant contact

Gary

First

Stockhoff

Last

Title of above named person

Public Works Director and Interim Community Development Director

Phone

(541) 766-6010

Email

Gary.Stockhoff@Bentoncountyor.gov

List co-applicants (if a joint project)

List co-applicants (if a joint project)

Providing match?

Upload your resolution or meeting minutes from the governing body of applying jurisdiction(s) here:

R2025-022 Authorizing CD to apply to the Oregon Transport and Growth ProgramSIGNED.pdf

PDFs only. Max 2mb per file.

Project information

Response instructions are on page 10 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Project title

Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan

Project area: Using either of the two fields below, attach a map of the project area or describe the area your project is located in.

Option 1: Project area map

PDFs only, 1 file maximum, 2mb file size limit.

Option 2: Project area description

County-wide, including incorporated cities.

ODOT region (1-5)

Region 2

Refer to the region map if you are unsure of your region.

[ODOT Region Map](#)

Type of grant

Category 1: Transportation System Planning

Summary description of project

Benton County proposes a Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan to address two urgent needs: safe, connected active transportation routes and reliable evacuation paths in high-risk wildfire areas. Many rural communities face limited access, aging infrastructure, and increased vulnerability due to climate change. This plan integrates transportation, land use, and emergency planning into a single effort, leveraging GIS data and public input to identify and prioritize dual-purpose corridors for everyday use and disaster response.

Describe the purpose of your project and how the expected outcomes will address a transportation problem, need, opportunity, or issue. (Maximum characters: 750)

Project cost table

Response instructions are on page 11 of the 2025 Application Packet.

TGM funds requested for the work identified in Criterion 3	Consultant \$220,000.00	Local reimbursement 	Total TGM funds requested \$220,000.00
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Local match	Minimum Match (Calculated) \$25,179.98 <i>Approximately 11.5% of requested funds</i>
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Match to be provided	Labor, supplies and services during project \$25,179.98	Payment when Intergovernmental Agreement is signed
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Total Match to be Provided
\$25,179.98

Award criteria

Criterion 1: Proposed project addresses a need and supports TGM objectives (up to 40 points)

The application demonstrates the proposed project clearly and effectively addresses a local or regional

transportation or transportation-related land use issue, problem, need, or opportunity and will achieve one or more of the TGM Objectives.

Response instructions are on page 13 of the 2025 Application Packet.

What is the transportation or transportation-related land use issue, problem, need, or opportunity the proposed project will address?

Benton County faces a convergence of urgent challenges:

- A lack of connected, safe trails that provide equitable access system to schools, parks, and essential destinations for people walking and biking
- Growing wildfire threats that endanger rural communities with limited road networks and outdated evacuation infrastructure

These overlapping issues are amplified by aging infrastructure, constrained rural road access, and climate change's increasing impact. Many existing routes are incomplete, informal, or ill-suited for multimodal travel—leaving neighborhoods, recreation areas, and schools especially vulnerable in both daily mobility and emergencies. Residents with limited mobility or no access to vehicles are disproportionately affected.

The County currently lacks a cohesive, multimodal network that supports everyday transportation and serves as reliable evacuation infrastructure. Addressing these needs separately would dilute resources and slow progress. Instead, this project proposes a Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan – a visionary approach to identify, prioritize, and design corridors that:

1. Enable safe, low-stress active transportation year-round
2. Double as critical evacuation routes during wildfire events
3. Protect sensitive ecosystems while improving community resilience

The plan will leverage GIS data, robust community engagement, and policy analysis to deliver a clear blueprint for future investments. By integrating transportation, land use, and emergency planning into a single process, Benton County can maximize public investment, achieve multiple community goals, and set a precedent for rural resilience planning statewide.

Maximum characters: 3,000 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

What are the proposed Project Objectives? How will the Project Objectives achieve one or more of the TGM Objectives?

Project Objectives and Alignment with TGM Goals

Create a unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan that brings together technical analysis (GIS and wildfire risk modeling) with local knowledge gathered through stakeholder engagement. The goal is to better coordinate land use and transportation planning to improve safety, connectivity, and community resilience.

Identify and prioritize key corridors that are important for both everyday travel and emergency evacuation. These dual-purpose routes will help guide future transportation investments that support active transportation and emergency preparedness.

Evaluate existing infrastructure and policy gaps, especially those that limit accessibility, connectivity, or safety. This will help local decision-makers better align transportation improvements with land use planning and climate resilience goals.

Develop a list of high-priority projects that includes planning-level cost estimates. This list will help Benton County pursue implementation funding and guide investments that support compact, walkable development and safe travel options for all users.

Recommend zoning and land use updates that protect key routes and improve long-term support for trails, bike routes, and emergency access. These changes will help ensure transportation systems and land use decisions are working together.

Keep equity at the center of the planning process by focusing on rural areas and populations that face barriers to mobility. This ensures the plan addresses the needs of those most at risk and least served by current systems.

Position Benton County for future funding by producing a well-supported, implementation-ready plan that addresses wildfire safety, climate adaptation, and active transportation infrastructure. The plan will help the County compete for grants at the state and federal level.

Maximum characters: 3,000 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

Criterion 2: Proposed project is timely and urgent (up to 25 points)

The application demonstrates timeliness and urgency. The project is needed now to:

- address pressing local transportation and land use issues
- make amendments to local plans or regulations necessitated by changes in local conditions or in federal regulations, state requirements, or regional plans
- build on, complement or take a necessary step toward completing or implementing other high priority community initiatives, including Governor's Regional Solutions Team priority
- resolve transportation or land use-related issues affecting the project readiness of local, regional or state transportation projects for which funding is expected to be obligated within the near future

Response instructions are on page 15 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Why is it important to do the proposed project in this grant cycle?

Benton County's communities are increasingly vulnerable to wildfires. Rural areas with constrained road networks and informal evacuation routes are at particular risk of being cut off during an emergency. Without proactive planning, future wildfire events could result in preventable loss of life and property. At the same time, residents are calling for safer, more walkable connections to schools, parks, and neighborhoods—particularly in areas lacking sidewalks, bike facilities, or public transit. These everyday transportation needs and emergency evacuation needs are deeply intertwined: building safe, accessible routes now strengthens our daily and creates a lifeline during disasters.

This grant cycle offers a critical window of opportunity:

1. Oregon is prioritizing wildfire preparedness and climate resilience
2. New State and Federal funding streams are opening for active transportation and hazard mitigation
3. Development pressure is increasing in high-risk areas, yet the County lacks the tools to guide growth responsibly and preserve access

Aligning this planning effort with concurrent initiatives – such as updates to the Transportation System Plan (TSP), implementation of Oregon's Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rules, and local Safe Routes to School effort – will maximize efficiency and momentum. Acting now ensures Benton County is well-positioned to protect its most vulnerable communities while advancing resilience.

Maximum characters: 2,500 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

What local actions are needed to move the proposed project forward? Have these actions been taken and if so, when? If those efforts are underway, when will they be completed?

Preliminary steps are already in motion:

- County staff have begun coordinating with emergency services, parks and transportation departments to identify gaps.
- A cross-departmental technical Advisory Committee is being formed to guide the project.
- GIS mapping of wildfire risk zones is complete.

Next phases including robust public engagement, evacuation modeling, and corridor prioritization – is dependent on securing this grant to move from early coordination to a comprehensive, actionable plan.

Maximum characters: 1000 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

How does the proposed project relate to other planning efforts, developments, or initiatives? Which of those are completed, underway, or waiting on the completion of this project?

This project builds directly on several key planning efforts that are already guiding Benton County's approach to safety, resilience, and sustainable land use:

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2023) – This project operationalizes the CWPP by translating its goals into site-specific evacuation strategies and trail access improvements.

Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (adopted 2016) – The proposed work advances this plan's objectives by addressing infrastructure vulnerabilities and planning for climate-adaptive emergency response.

Natural Areas and Parks Comprehensive Plan (2012) – The project supports long-standing goals for equitable trail access and connectivity, particularly in rural and fire-prone areas.

It also plays a pivotal role in informing and shaping upcoming updates to the Transportation System Plan (TSP), ensuring that evacuation planning, trail networks, and active transportation infrastructure are fully integrated into the County's long-range transportation strategy.

Maximum characters: 1000 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

Criterion 3: Proposed project approach supports policy decision (up to 20 points)

The application demonstrates a clear approach to achieving the expected outcome and includes consideration for adoption. Where substantial coordination with other local, regional, and state planning efforts will need to occur, the mechanisms and responsibilities for the coordination are clear.

Response instructions are on page 16 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Tasks and deliverables table

What are your proposed tasks and deliverables

Task 1. Project Launch and Partner Coordination

Project Launch and Partner Coordination

Deliverable: Kickoff meeting summary and finalized project scope

Responsibility: Benton County Planning Division (project manager), with participation from Emergency Management, Natural Areas & Parks, and external team

Decisions: Confirm project timeline, partner roles, and stakeholder list

Timeline: Month 1

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Map Existing Conditions and Wildfire Risk Zones

Deliverable: GIS base maps and layered analysis of trail conditions, access limitations, and evacuation risks

Responsibility: GIS consultant and County GIS staff

Decisions: Define data sources and key metrics

Timeline: Months 1–3

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Community Engagement

Deliverable: Community engagement summary report

Responsibility: Consultant team with support from County staff and stakeholder advisory committee

Decisions: Identify priorities, equity concerns, and local knowledge of trail and evacuation challenges

Timeline: Months 2–6 (ongoing)

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Trail Gap Analysis and Corridor Identification

Deliverable: Draft dual-purpose corridor map

Responsibility: Consultant team and Parks Department

Decisions: Identify high-need connections and trail network gaps

Timeline: Months 3–5

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Evacuation Modeling and Infrastructure Assessment

Deliverable: Scenario analysis report

Responsibility: Consultant team with input from Emergency Services and Transportation Planning

Decisions: Evaluate infrastructure capacity and evacuation performance

Timeline: Months 4–6

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Corridor Prioritization

Deliverable: Prioritized capital improvement list and evaluation framework

Responsibility: Consultant and County staff in collaboration with advisory committee

Decisions: Select top projects based on risk, equity, feasibility, and community benefit

Timeline: Months 5–7

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Draft and Refine the Unified Plan

Deliverables: Draft Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan, draft policy/code recommendations, planning-level cost estimates

Responsibility: Consultant team, reviewed by County Planning, Parks, and Emergency Management

Decisions: Recommend changes to policies, zoning, and capital priorities

Timeline: Months 6–8

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

Finalize and Present the Plan for Adoption

Deliverables: Final Plan, adoption resolution, presentation materials

Responsibility: Benton County Planning Division (lead), with consultant support

Decisions: Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners adoption

Timeline: Months 8–12

For each project task, describe the major deliverables and who is responsible for its preparation, decisions to be made, and expected timeline. Clearly identify which local plans or regulations the final document(s) will create, amend or update and which entity or entities will need to take action to adopt them.

How will the project approach support investment decisions that align with Oregon's Transportation Plan and Transportation Planning Rules?

This project will guide strategic investment decisions that align with the Oregon Transportation Plan and Transportation Planning Rules by connecting land use, evacuation planning, and active transportation. It identifies dual-purpose corridors that serve everyday travel and emergency access, helping prioritize infrastructure that supports safety, resilience, and multimodal access. The final plan will include cost estimates and policy recommendations to guide capital improvements, support zoning updates, and inform Benton County's upcoming Transportation System Plan update. By focusing on rural areas and equity, the project ensures future investments meet both local needs and statewide goals. Adoption of the plan by the County will ensure its recommendations carry weight in future funding and planning decisions.

Maximum characters: 1000 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

If adoption hearings will be held as part of a larger project, when will that be and as part of what project? (optional)

Adoption hearings are planned for late 2026, coinciding with broader updates to the County's Transportation System Plan and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Maximum characters: 500 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

Criterion 4: Proposed project has community support (up to 5 points)

The application demonstrates that there is local support for project objectives, a commitment to participate, and a desire to implement the expected outcome.

Response instructions are on page 17 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Upload letters of support here

GLT LOS_Benton County TGM Application_2025.pdf

Starker Forest_Benton County TGM Letter of Support.pdf

County Grant Support Letter - Corvallis Parks & Recreation.pdf

Fire Department Letter of Support Benton CD.pdf

PDFs only. Max 2 mb per file.

Criterion 5: Proposed project sponsor is ready and capable (up to 10 points)

The application demonstrates that the local government is ready and able to begin the project within the TGM timetable and that there is local commitment and capability to manage and complete the project. The application demonstrates, if applicable, successful performance on previous TGM projects.

Response instructions are on page 18 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Describe the experience and availability of key staff

James Wright, Associate Planner – Benton County Community Development

James will serve as project lead and point of contact. He has experience in land use planning. He is committed to supporting all phases of the project, including coordination, stakeholder engagement, and plan development.

Jesse Ott, Director – Natural Areas, Parks, and Events

Jesse brings expertise in trail systems, park planning, and land management. He will advise on trail connectivity and corridor needs and is available to participate in technical review and public engagement.

Petra Schuetz, Planning Official – Benton County Community Development

Petra will oversee consistency with local plans, zoning, and policy. She brings years of leadership in comprehensive planning and will guide policy alignment and the adoption process.

Gary Stockhoff, Director – Community Development and Public Works

Gary offers extensive experience in public infrastructure and transportation systems. He will support coordination across departments and help align the plan with capital improvement priorities.

All staff are available and committed to the project's success.

Maximum characters: 1500 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

Explain how the applicant has the capacity to scope the proposed project during the next 15 months and manage it to completion within 3 years

Benton County has the staff and institutional capacity to scope the project within 15 months and complete it within the 3-year timeline. The project will be managed by Associate Planner James Wright, who has managed multi-agency coordination efforts and is supported by a strong team of experienced supervisors and technical staff. Oversight will be provided by the Planning Official and the Public Works Director, both of whom have managed complex, grant-funded projects. The County has successfully delivered multiple long-range plans in recent years and has internal GIS, parks, and emergency management staff who will contribute to project scoping and implementation. Benton County is prepared to begin coordination and scoping immediately upon award and is fully committed to delivering the final product within the required timeline.

Maximum characters: 1500 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

If applicable, list applicant's TGM projects within last 10 years and their status

If applicable, list local jurisdiction's TGM projects within last 10 years and their status

TGM File Code	Project Title	Status
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

300 character limit.

Bonus points: Housing (up to 10 points)

Response instructions are on page 19 of the 2025 Application Packet.

How will the adoption of the final document(s) address barriers to a broad range of housing types and affordability or work to link the location of future workforce housing to walkable/bikeable areas with good transit?

The adopted plan will support more diverse and affordable housing by identifying infrastructure, access, and policy barriers that limit development in areas with existing or potential walkable and bikeable connections. Many rural areas in Benton County have land available for workforce or middle housing but lack safe evacuation routes or non-motorized access, creating real or perceived barriers to residential development. By prioritizing dual-purpose corridors that improve both emergency access and multimodal connectivity, the plan will help make more land viable for future housing while reduc

Maximum characters: 500 | (Text box automatically expands. Click and drag right-hand corner of text box to manually expand it.)

Required forms

Title VI: Racial & Ethnic Impact Statement form
Racial-Ethnic-Impact-Statement.pdf

[Download the Racial & Ethnic Impact Statement form here](#)

PDFs only. Max 2 mb per file.

Certifications

Response instructions are on page 20 of the 2025 Application Packet.

Eligibility criteria

- ☒ This application demonstrates a clear transportation relationship
- ☒ This application demonstrates adoption of products to meet project objectives
- ☒ This application demonstrates the support of local officials

Preparation of application

- ☒ This application was prepared by staff of the primary applicant or staff of one of the involved jurisdictions
 - ☐ This application was prepared by the following COMPENSATED consultant (indicate below)
 - ☐ This application was prepared by the following UNCOMPENSATED consultant (indicate below)
-

Would you like to receive TGM news and updates?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ I am already subscribed

Clicking "Yes" authorizes us to add your email to our e-newsletter mailing list. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Today's date

7/30/2025

If you encounter any issues with the submittal process, please contact:

Rachael Levasseur
Planning Section Web Coordinator
Rachael.LEVASSEUR@odot.oregon.gov

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE STATE OF OREGON, FOR THE COUNTY OF BENTON**

**In the Matter of Authorizing the)
Benton County Community Development)
Department to apply to the)
Oregon Transportation and Growth)
Management Program for Unified Trails)
and Wildfire Evacuation Plan Funding)**

RESOLUTION NO. R2025-022

WHEREAS, the Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan proposed project clearly and effectively addresses a local transportation-related land use need and opportunity and will achieve one or more of the Transportation and Growth Management Program objectives; and

Benton County can locally match the funding to fulfill its 11.5% share of the obligation related to the grant application, including eligible in-kind contributions, should the grant be awarded; and

Benton County is currently proposing to develop a Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan to address two urgent, overlapping needs: improving safe, connected routes for everyday travel and planning reliable evacuation corridors in high-risk wildfire areas. By combining trail development with emergency access planning, the County aims to maximize public investment, enhance rural resilience, and set a regional example for coordinated land use and transportation planning and;

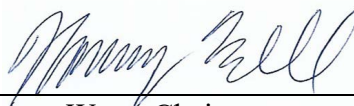
As wildfire seasons intensify and development expands in high-risk areas, Benton County faces a critical need for safe, connected routes that serve both everyday travel and emergency evacuations. This grant offers a timely opportunity to integrate trail planning with wildfire readiness, align with state priorities, and lay the groundwork for safer, more resilient rural communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Benton County Board of Commissioners supports the submittal of a grant application to the Transportation Management Program, managed by the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Department of Land Conservation and Development, for development of the Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan; and
2. Hereby authorizes the Community Development Department to apply for approximately \$220,000 for planning assistance.

Adopted this 22nd day of July, 2025.

**BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**



Nancy Wyse, Chair



Pat Malone, Vice Chair



Gabe Shepherd, Commissioner



Parks and Recreation Department

1310 SW Avery Park Drive
Corvallis OR 97333
541-766-6918
FAX: 541-754-1701

ATTN:

David Helton

Lead Grant Manager/ TGM Regional Lead

Oregon Department of Transportation

2080 Laura Street, Springfield, OR 97477

RE: Letter of Support for Benton County's Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan

On behalf of Corvallis Parks & Recreation, I am pleased to express our strong support for Benton County's application to the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program to fund the development of a **Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan**.

A coordinated, countywide trails plan presents an exciting opportunity to thoughtfully connect the region's unique landscapes and communities. Corvallis is home to several existing and planned trails that extend beyond city limits, making regional coordination essential to the success of our broader trail network goals.

A unified planning effort will help streamline future trail development, clarify processes, and support more strategic acquisition and implementation efforts across jurisdictions. We've experienced firsthand how the absence of a shared guiding framework can create challenges during the development process. With the creation of this plan, we're confident that both the County and its partners will be better equipped to pursue trail projects efficiently and collaboratively.

We are enthusiastic about the County's vision and commitment to creating a safe, connected, and resilient trail system, and we look forward to being active partners in this important work.

We urge your full consideration of Benton County's application. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meredith Petit".

Meredith Petit

Parks & Recreation Director

Meredith.Petit@corvallisoregon.gov

541- 754-1703



Fire Department

400 NW Harrison Blvd
Corvallis, OR 97330

(541) 766-6961

Fax (541) 766-6938

Email: fire@corvallisoregon.gov

To whom it may concern,

July 28, 2025

On behalf of the Corvallis Fire Department, I am writing in support of Benton County's application to the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program to fund the development of a Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan under specific circumstances outlined below.

This project is timely and critically needed, as it addresses the challenge in our region for reliable evacuation infrastructure. By including evacuation in their transportation planning effort, the County is taking a strategic and forward-thinking approach to regional safety and resilience.

Although both the city and county have operational evacuation plans, this effort will enhance those existing frameworks by identifying key corridors that can serve both daily transportation needs and critical emergency access, particularly in rural and underserved areas where options are often limited. It will also strengthen regional coordination between agencies, bolster community resilience, and position the County for future funding opportunities for construction and implementation.

However, it is important to note that the Fire Department's support for this project is contingent upon the active participation of key partners, including the Benton County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM), and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF).

Additionally, the success of this plan depends on the cooperation of gate owners within the targeted areas, as these properties may need to be used as evacuation routes. We will only fully support this work if we can ensure that these stakeholders are on board with the plan and its implementation.

We encourage your full consideration of this application and strongly support Benton County's efforts to plan for a safer, more connected, and more resilient future, with the caveat that all necessary partners and stakeholders are fully aligned.

Sincerely,

Ben Janes

Fire Chief: **"One team, one mission."**

Corvallis Fire Department
400 NW Harrison BLVD
Corvallis, OR 97330
(541)766-6931

Courage, Honor, Commitment and Teamwork



July 20, 2025

ATTN: David Helton
Lead Grant Manager/ TGM Regional Lead
Oregon Department of Transportation
2080 Laura Street, Springfield, OR 97477

RE: Letter of Support for Benton County's Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan

TGM Review Team,

I am writing on behalf of Greenbelt Land Trust to express our strong support for Benton County's application to the Transportation and Growth Management Grant to fund the development of a **Unified Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan**.

Our community is facing a critical need to establish a comprehensive, unified trail and bicycle systems plan that can provide a roadmap for prioritizing trail connections, expanding equitable access to the outdoors, and aligning trail partners towards unified goals. We also face a timely and much-needed effort to clear and reliable evacuation infrastructure in wildfire-prone areas of our communities.

Greenbelt Land Trust is a central stakeholder in the planning, development and maintenance of area trail systems. In order for the Land Trust to plan for future land acquisitions and infrastructure needs that support public access, it is imperative that these projects be reflected in regional trail plans and adopted within County land use code. Additionally, the Land Trust has properties that are critical to serving evacuation corridors for high-risk portions of Benton County. An emergency access and evacuation plan is an imperative for the resilience and safety of our communities and landowners.

Greenbelt Land Trust is a committed and engaged partner with Benton County and the development of this Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan. We fully support the goals of this project and believe it will improve resilience, community connections, and safety for generations to come.

Greenbelt Land Trust strongly supports the TGM application by Benton County Community Development Department, for a safer, more connected and more resilient future.

Sincerely,

Jessica McDonald | Executive Director
Greenbelt Land Trust
jessica@greenbeltlandtrust.org | (541) 752.9609



STARKER
FORESTS, INC.

www.starkerforests.com 541-929-2477 (office)
7240 SW Philomath Blvd. | Corvallis, OR 97333
PO Box 809 | Corvallis, OR 97339

July 21, 2025

David Helton
Lead Grant Manager/TGM Regional Lead
ODOT
2080 Laura St.
Springfield, OR 97477

Re: Starker Forests, Inc.'s, support for Benton County Development of a Coordinated Trails and Wildfire Evacuation Plan

Dear Mr. Helton,

Starker Forests, Inc., is a family business that owns and manages forestland in Benton County. Our experiences with the Benton County Community Development Department have demonstrated that it is a well-run, professional organization. We have learned that the BCCD intends to build a forward-thinking plan to deal with pedestrian/bicycle routes and wildfire evacuation routes, especially in rural areas. We strongly support this important work.

As a forestland owner, we are keenly aware of the potential for wildfire and the important need to plan ahead for worst case scenarios. We cooperated with the Benton County Public Works Department to provide a road that is an emergency evacuation route for Pioneer Village, a rural subdivision. This kind of infrastructure is needed countywide, thus the need for planning now.

Our forestlands are used for recreation by many bicycle riders and walkers. Of course, it's important that walkers and bike riders can be safe everywhere, including traveling to our forests. As with evacuation routes, planning for safe trail use is a critically important effort.

Starker Forests, Inc., strongly supports Benton County's planning efforts to address safer trails and adequate evacuation routes. We encourage ODOT to fund this critical planning process.

Sincerely,

Marc Vomocil
Vice-President
Starker Forests, Inc.

RACIAL AND ETHNIC IMPACT STATEMENT

This form is used for informational purposes only and must be included with the grant application.

[Chapter 600 of the 2013 Oregon Laws](#) require applicants to include with each grant application a racial and ethnic impact statement. The statement provides information as to the disproportionate or unique impact the proposed policies or programs may have on minority persons¹ in the State of Oregon if the grant is awarded to a corporation or other legal entity other than natural persons.

1. ☒ The proposed grant project policies or programs could have a disproportionate or unique positive impact on the following minority persons:

Indicate all that apply:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women | <input type="checkbox"/> Asians or Pacific Islanders |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persons with Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African-Americans | <input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan Natives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanics | |

2. ☐ The proposed grant project policies or programs could have a disproportionate or unique negative impact on the following minority persons:

Indicate all that apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women | <input type="checkbox"/> Asians or Pacific Islanders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African-Americans | <input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan Natives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanics | |

3. ☐ The proposed grant project policies or programs will have no disproportionate or unique impact on minority persons.

If you checked numbers 1 or 2 above, please provide below the rationale for the existence of policies or programs having a disproportionate or unique impact on minority persons in this state. Further provide evidence of consultation with representative(s) of the affected minority persons.

Yes. The proposed plan is expected to have a disproportionately positive impact on persons with disabilities, particularly those living in rural or wildfire-prone areas. Many of these individuals face limited access to safe evacuation routes and to trail or transportation networks that meet ADA standards. By identifying and prioritizing corridors that improve accessible, non-motorized routes and emergency access, the plan will help close mobility and safety gaps. In addition, community engagement will be designed to include people with disabilities and advocacy groups to ensure that accessibility is a core consideration in project recommendations and future infrastructure investments.

☒ By checking this box, I hereby certify the information contained on this form is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: **7/31/2025**

Printed Name: **James Wright**

Title: **Associate Planner**

Agency Name: **Benton County**

¹ "Minority person" are defined in SB 463 (2013 Regular Session) as women, persons with disabilities (as defined in ORS 174.107), African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, or Pacific Islanders, American Indians and Alaskan Natives.