

2021 Transportation Growth Management Grant Application

Instructions

Be sure to download and review the [2021 Application Packet](#) and [2021 Application Instructions](#) 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 30, 2021 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.

Primary applicant jurisdiction

City of Elgin

Mailing address

790 S 8th Avenue, Elgin, Oregon 97827

Website

<https://cityofelginor.org/>

Contact person name

Gregg Kleiner

Contact person title

Project Coordinator, Joseph Branch Trail Consortium

Contact phone

(541) 740-9654

Contact email

gregg@josephbranchtrail.org

Would you like to receive TGM news and updates?

I am already subscribed

Authorized representative name, if different from the applicant contact

Brock Eckstein

Authorized representative title

City Administrator, City of Elgin

Phone
(541) 437-2253

Email
cityadm@cityofelginor.org

List other participating local jurisdictions (if any)

Participating local jurisdiction	Providing match?
Wallowa Union Railroad Authority	Yes
Joseph Branch Trail Consortium	Yes

Project name and location

Project title

Elgin-to-Lookingglass Joseph Branch Trail-With-Rail Refinement 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

Elgin-to-Lookingglass_MAP Overview.jpg.pdf

Option 2: Project area description

The proposed trail-with-rail will follow the existing WURA railroad right-of-way along the Grande Rhonde river for 13 miles, starting at the TGM-funded train depot in the City of Elgin and running out to the community of Lookingglass in Union County.

ODOT region (1-5)

Region 5

[ODOT Region Map](#)

Type of grant

Category 1: Transportation System Planning

Summary description of project

This project will develop a refinement plan for the inaugural 13-mile Elgin-to-Lookingglass segment of a longer, proposed 63-mile Trail-With-Rail that will run alongside an existing railroad between Elgin and Joseph in NE Oregon, connecting rural communities in Union and Wallowa counties by providing multimodal transportation options for these underserved communities. The inaugural segment will start at the TGM-funded Train Depot in Elgin and run 13 miles out of town to Lookingglass. The outcome will be a detailed trail refinement plan that addresses alignment, safety, general design, road crossings, connections to other transportation options, materials, adjacent landowner concerns, etc. and positions the project for streamlined design, engineering and leveraging future funding for the full trail, which will provide an alternative transportation route to Oregon Route 82 and bring economic benefits and access to healthy physical activity to residents and visitors, while reducing GHG emissions.

Project cost table

TGM funds requested	Consultant \$130,000.00	Local reimbursement \$0.00	Total TGM funds requested \$130,000.00
Local match			Minimum Match (Calculated) \$17,727.27
Match to be provided	Labor, supplies and services during project \$17,800.00	Payment when Intergovernmental Agreement is signed \$0.00	

Certifications

Certifications

This application was prepared by the following UNCOMPENSATED consultant (indicate below):

Consultant name (first and last)

Gregg Kleiner

Consultant company

Joseph Branch Trail Consortium

Certifications checkbox

By checking this box, I certify that my organization listed above supports the proposed project, has the legal authority to pledge matching funds, and has the legal authority to apply for Transportation and Growth Management funds. I further certify that matching funds are available or will be available for the proposed project.

Eligibility requirements

Applications are reviewed on a pass/fail basis on each of the following three requirements.

Applications found to not meet each of these requirements will not be scored against the award criteria and will not be awarded a grant.

1. Clear transportation relationship

A proposed project must have a clear transportation relationship and produce transportation benefits. A

project must entail analysis, evaluation and selection of alternatives, development of implementation actions, and public involvement that results in a long range transportation plan, land use plan, or other product that addresses a transportation problem, need, opportunity, or issue of local or regional importance.

Certification: Clear transportation relationship

By checking this box, I certify that the project meets this eligibility criterion.

2. Adoption of products to meet project objectives

A proposed project must include preparation of an adoption-ready product or products that lead to a local policy decision and that directly address the project objectives, such as a transportation system plan, comprehensive plan amendment, land use plan, code amendment, implementation program, or intergovernmental agreement. Projects are expected to include adoption hearings (or equivalent) by the governing body or to prepare products which will be adopted as part of a larger project.

Certification: Adoption of products to meet project objectives

By checking this box, I certify that the project meets this eligibility criterion.

3. Support of local officials

A proposed project must clearly demonstrate that local officials, both the primary applicant and any co-applicants, understand the purpose of the grant application and support the project objectives. A resolution of support, meeting minutes, or authorized letter from the governing body of all applicants (e.g. City Council, Board of Commissioners, or Transit Board) must be submitted with the application to meet this requirement.

Upload your resolution, minutes or authorized letter from governing body of applying jurisdiction(s) here:

ODOT Elgin Letter.pdf

Award criteria

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

The 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 8 of the 2021 Application Instructions.

Explain how your proposed project addresses a need and supports TGM objectives

This project addresses the following needs for: 1) more dedicated, non-motorized, and safer transportation options in Northeast Oregon; 2) economic stimulus for rural, agricultural communities; 3) access to healthy, outdoor activity that improves the physical and mental health of rural residents; and 4) transportation

alternatives that help reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

The state of Oregon, as well as Union and Wallowa counties, have laid out in their transportation plans that seek to "increase the use of alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycling, and public transportation) through improved access, safety, and service." However, there is a severe lack of dedicated, non-motorized transportation options in NE Oregon. Union and Wallowa Counties are mainly connected by a single highway, Oregon Route 82, a 2-lane, 55-mph roadway stretching 70.74 miles from La Grande to Joseph. The highway has several hazards to both motorized and non-motorized travelers due to topography and challenging weather conditions. Cyclists and pedestrians are forced to navigate narrow shoulders with many blind corners and heavy traffic during the peak tourism months.

Most of Oregon Route 82 has a total lane width of 24 feet. As of the 2018 Oregon State Highway Crash table, there were 80, 56, 62, 86, and 68 crashes in the years of 2014-2018, or an average of approximately 70 crashes/year. The highway in its total length had an AADT of 197,900 as of the 2019 data.

Because the project would bring visitors to Union County, the City of Elgin and other nearby rural communities would benefit from increased tourism that generates revenue for local businesses and results in a stronger, more diversified, and connected community.

This project will also provide easy access to outdoor, physical activity options for local residents of Elgin, a city with a population of 1,710, a median age 1.3 times higher than the state average (37% of residents are over age 60), a median income of \$34,750, and both per-capita and per-household income that are 75% of the state average. The City of Elgin is also listed as a high priority UGB for Body Weight Index. The initial trail segment will offer safe, outdoor activity options for all ages, so that healthy exercise is more easily accessible to local residents and school students. Because the trail segment will be relatively level, it will enable use by a wide range of users, including elders and people with disabilities.

Use of the trail by school students, residents, and tourists (who will park and then use the trail) will reduce vehicle use on city streets and Oregon Route 82.

Specifically, the project supports the following TGM objectives:

1.1: The initial segment of the trail-with-rail will offer safe and alternative transportation options in a rural part of the state by enabling bicycling, walking, hiking, and horseback riding located away from busier streets and highways. The segment will start at the TGM-funded Elgin Train Depot and run out of town for 13 miles, eventually becoming part of the proposed 63-mile trail-with-rail between Elgin and Joseph. It will offer an alternative to Oregon Route 82 while connecting the rural communities along the way.

1.3: The City of Elgin has few sidewalks, so this trail will offer an easily accessible, safe option for individuals of all abilities to both access the town and explore natural areas outside of town. And because the trail follows an existing railroad bed, and the initial 1.5 miles will be ADA-compliant, the trail will be virtually flat and accessible for all people regardless of ability.

1.4: The City of Elgin straddles busy Oregon Route 82, but this trail that starts downtown will offer an easily accessible option away from the highway for both local residents and visitors to get outside, enjoy healthy exercise, and experience nature, while helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

2.3 The initial trail segment will serve as a community gathering place that is safe, central, and offers an easy way to engage in healthy physical, outdoor activity and access to natural areas along the Grande Ronde River. Local school students will use the trail in various ways, including for sports training. Interpretive signage at the trailhead and along the trail will convey cultural and historical information. When connected to the longer, proposed trail-with-rail, the 63-mile transportation corridor will connect rural communities in a unique way that reduces vehicle congestion.

5.1: Initial trail segment will serve as a catalyst for establishing the full 63-mile Trail-With-Rail, and inspire people to explore natural areas. Research shows that exposing people to nature increases support of environmental stewardship, and because all transportation options on the trail are non-motorized, the asset will reduce GHG emissions and help inform users about alternative transportation modes.

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 federal regulations, state requirements or regional plans
- make amendments to local plans or regulations necessitated by changes that were not anticipated in previous plans, including growth or lack of growth, changes in land-use patterns or changes in available funding
- 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 10 of the 2021 Application Instructions.

Explain how your proposed project is timely and urgent

This Trail-With-Rail project has been in the planning stages for more a decade. A complete, 48-page Project Concept Plan was completed in 2015, and an updated, 28-page Elgin-to-Lookingglass Concept Plan was released in October, 2020. In 2021, the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium (JBTC) was recommended for a \$117,000 ODOT Community Paths grant, but that funding was rescinded because JBTC is a nonprofit and not a government entity, an oversight that several other recommended groups also made when applying.

JBTC has applied for an Oregon State Parks Recreational Trails Project (RTP) grant to construct the trailhead across from the TGM-funded Elgin Train Depot and build a .5 mile, ADA-compliant trail running from the trailhead out of town. The City of Elgin is a big supporter of this project and anxious to get the trailhead and first segment established, which will bring positive economic impacts to the community.

Earlier this year, the JBTC hired its first project coordinator, who is tasked with meeting with adjacent landowners, government officials, and other impacted parties to build and maintain relationships with the project and to address concerns.

Having a TGM grant at this time will help take the project right up to the threshold of final engineering, design, and construction. The timing of a TGM grant will also help facilitate communications at the county and community level, and with adjacent landowners, which is key to making the trail a success. A TGM grant at this time would also be instrumental in helping leverage future funding for final engineering, design, and construction of this initial segment.

Because the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority owns the 100-foot-wide railway corridor (it is currently open to public use), this avoids land use issues and helps to accelerate the project in multiple ways.

Due to the COVID pandemic and wide promotion by Travel Oregon, NE Oregon is seeing unprecedented

numbers of visitors from across Oregon and out of state. This influx is stretching the capacity of existing transportation options, as well as lodging options, affordable housing for locals, trailhead parking, and the availability of local workers.

The influx of visitors and tourists to Northeast Oregon is impacting Oregon Route 82, the main highway between Union and Wallowa counties, especially during the high-travel tourism window of April through October. Many of these tourists drive through Elgin without stopping or spending any money. Having the western terminus of this initial trail segment start inside the city limits will benefit local residents in multiple ways.

A non-motorized trail like this fits well with both Governor Brown's and President Biden's emphasis on reducing greenhouse gas emissions to address the climate crisis. The proposed trailhead in Elgin will have an EV/eBike charging station, which will be the only charging station between La Grande and Enterprise, a distance of 65 miles.

So the timing of TGM funding will catalyze this project and ultimately bring a range of economic, health, transportation, and community benefits to the City of Elgin and the surrounding region, Union County, and the state of Oregon.

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 11 of the 2021 Application Instructions.

Explain how your proposed project approach supports policy decision

A 48-page Project Concept Plan for the larger trail-with-rail, as well as a revised, 28-page Elgin-to-Lookingglass Concept Plan provide a lot of background information about the project, which will streamline development of a TGM-funded refinement plan.

Union County, the City of Elgin, and the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA) have the goal of implementing alternative transportation modes in their communities, and this initial trail segment is another step toward that end. The City of Elgin is in support of the project, with the City Council issuing a resolution with unanimous consent in 2015, as well as the attached resolution dated 2021. Because the trail path will lie entirely within the 100-foot-wide WURA railroad corridor, and WURA has allowed public access to the entire corridor for this recreational purpose, there will be minimal policy issues to address.

Two 2015 surveys asked residents of the community about their support of a non-motorized trail in this initial proposed segment. A general public survey showed 87.8% of respondents actively support the trail with only 5.1% opposing and the remaining 7.1% having no opinion. A follow-up random voter survey also showed an overwhelming 78% of respondents supporting the segment and the opposition and no opinion respondents each having 11% of the remaining responses. An updated concept plan finished in October 2020 concluded that the survey data was recent enough that the results would not have materially changed in the intervening years.

TASK 1 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The project team (the City of Elgin staff, WURA, Joseph Branch Trail Consortium, TGM staff, and consultant) will hold a project kickoff meeting at the TGM-funded Elgin Train Depot to review the scope of work, schedule, budget, and clarify roles and responsibilities. The kickoff meeting will include a site tour of

the trailhead and trail route along the tracks. Throughout the process, the project team will hold regular project management meetings.

TASK 2 - COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultant will prepare a community engagement plan that identifies adjacent landowners and others, including historically underrepresented groups, and describes the tools and activities best suited to inform and engage each group. Consultant will implement the community engagement plan, with support from JBTC, which includes these specific pieces:

- Outreach and communications to adjacent landowners and other stakeholders
- A series of community meetings to inform and answer questions
- Work with Eastern Oregon University faculty, staff, and students to participate in the outreach and engagement process
- Invite schools and interested local residents to engage with the project

TASK 3 - EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Consultant will prepare an existing conditions report that includes:

- Address any current land ownership issues along the railroad right-of-way
- Review of Project Concept Plan(s) and assessment of prior planning efforts
- Develop a land inventory of the trail area and identify possible issues

TASK 4 - PREPARATION OF PROPOSED TRAIL-WITH-RAIL REFINEMENT PLAN

The refinement plan will include:

- Vision statement
- Safety assessment and plans for communicating safety issues to trail users
- General trail design, alignment, and connection to other transportation options
- Identification of potential future issues and next steps
- Develop 2-3 cross sections and note any required road modifications
- Scope types of materials needed
- Develop approximate cost estimates and next steps

TASK 5 - ADOPTION

Consultant will prepare draft ordinances, comprehensive plan amendments, and notices for Elgin City Council hearings. Consultant will prepare for and participate in at least one of these hearings. Consultant will produce a final refinement plan, incorporating comments from the hearings, and this refinement plan will become a stand-alone addendum to the City Transportation Plan, when voted on by City of Elgin city council.

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 13 of the 2021 Application Instructions.

Upload letters of support from stakeholders here

Merged Letters of Support_ODOT_TGM_Grant.pdf

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 14 of the 2021 Application Instructions.

Explain how proposed project sponsor is ready and capable

City of Elgin staff will help facilitate this project, in close coordination with the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium (JBTC) project coordinator and the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA). The City of Elgin and WURA are both supportive of this project, as noted in the Elgin City Council resolution and the WURA letter of support. The JBTC project coordinator will work to facilitate the process to reduce staff time of the City of Elgin staff.

The JBTC has worked closely in the past with the La Grande engineering firm Anderson Perry on various aspects of the project planning, and with Eastern Oregon State University faculty, staff, and students on community outreach and the updated edition of the Lookingglass-to-Elgin Concept Plan. So those relationships will be invaluable in helping with various aspects of this TGM-funded project.

Previously, City of Elgin received a TGM grant for the 5A-07 Elgin-WURA Passenger Facilities Plan, which resulted in construction of the new Elgin Train Depot, which is directly across the street from the trailhead and near the initial trail section. Past TGM grants have funded three other rail or rails-to-trails projects: 2A-01 Albany Refinement Plan, 2E-14 Port of Tillamook Bay Salmonberry Trail Local Adoption, and 2D-18 Yamhill County Yamhelas Westsider Trail Master Plan.

This project will complement existing outdoor recreation facilities in Union County, including Mt. Emily Recreation Area, Bird Track Interpretive Trail, and the Riverside Greenway Trailhead.

If applicable, list local jurisdiction'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
5A-07	Elgin-WURRA Passenger Facilities Plan	Completed

Required forms

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

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

Today's date

7/26/2021

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

Rachael Levasseur

Planning Section Web Coordinator

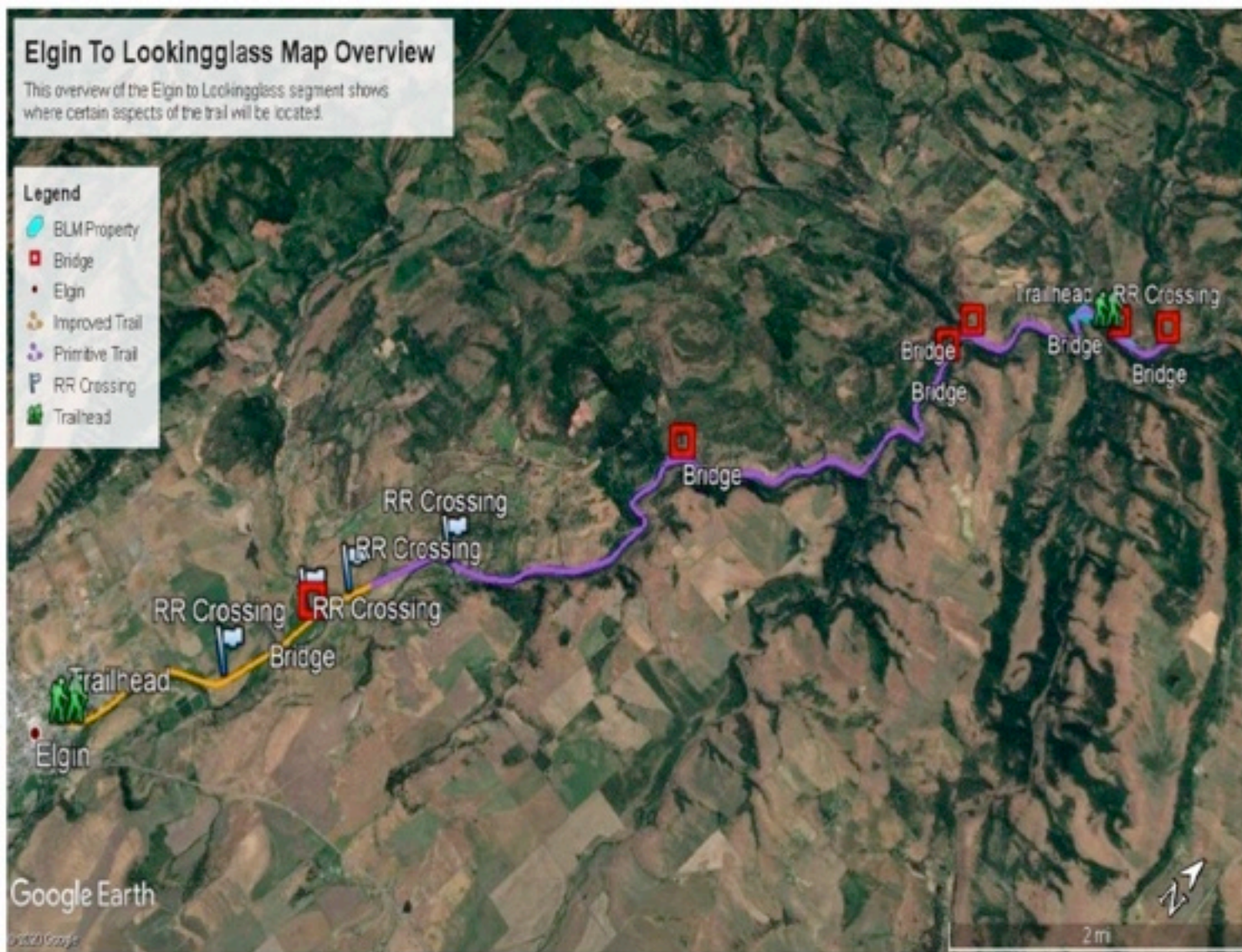
Rachael.LEVASSEUR@odot.state.or.us

Elgin To Lookingglass Map Overview

This overview of the Elgin to Lookingglass segment shows where certain aspects of the trail will be located.

Legend

- BLM Property
- Bridge
- Elgin
- Improved Trail
- Primitive Trail
- RR Crossing
- Trailhead





City of Elgin

PO Box 128 – 790 S. 8th Ave - Elgin OR 97827

*Voice: (541)437-2253 Fax: (541)437-0131
cityadm@cityofelginor.org*

July 29, 2021

SUBJECT: City of Elgin Letter of Support for ODOT TGM Grant

To Whom it May Concern,

The City of Elgin is in full support of this ODOT TGM grant application. The City is excited to be the governmental entity serving as the grant applicant and understands the overall purpose of the project. Our city staff, collaborating closely with JBTC and WURA, are prepared to lead and assist as needed to ensure the project is a success, because the potential economic and health impacts from this trail for our city, community, and region will be momentous. This TGM funding is an important early step in moving that trail toward becoming reality. We are prepared to work closely with ODOT and project consultants to ensure the end result of a refinement plan comes to fruition and lays the groundwork for next steps.

Respectfully,

Brock Eckstein
City of Elgin Administrator
790 S 8th Ave
PO Box 128
Elgin, OR 97827
(541) 437-2253
cityadm@cityofelginor.org

ATTACHMENT: Original Resolution of Support for Entire Project



WALLOWA UNION RAILROAD AUTHORITY

26 January 2021

Jacob Losby
Board of Directors
Joseph Branch Trail Consortium

Dear Jacob,

The Board of Directors for the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority have given their permission for the JBT Consortium to pursue grant opportunities for a trail on the Wallowa Union Railroad line.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Roberts".

Susan Roberts
Co-Chair Wallowa Union Railroad Authority



City of Elgin

PO Box 128 – 790 S. 8th Ave - Elgin OR 97827

*Voice: (541)437-2253 Fax: (541)437-0131
cityadm@cityofelginor.org*

Date: March 30, 2021

The City of Elgin in Union County, Oregon, supports the collaborative effort by the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium to develop a Pocket Park/Trailhead on city-owned land near the Elgin train station as well as the first segment of the Joseph Branch Rail-With-Trail.

We recognize the City of Elgin will benefit from the Pocket Park/Trailhead and trail segment, both directly and indirectly. The project will benefit to our merchants and citizens with economic, recreational, and physical health opportunities, all of which improves our quality of life in our community.

We hereby support this project.

Respectfully,

Hilary Wilhelm
Public Safety Director

CITY OF ELGIN, OREGON RESOLUTION 1354 (2015)

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT ENDORSING THE PLAN OF RAILS WITH TRAILS BY THE ELGIN CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS: The Elgin City Council consider bicycle and pedestrian transportation to be of utmost importance to the region by providing the region with recreation and transportation opportunities as well as the possibilities of economic and community development; and

WHEREAS: The Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA) gained ownership of the rail line in 2001 and retired all substantial debt in 2013; and

WHEREAS: The Friends of the Joseph Branch, a 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2002, operates the Eagle Cap Excursion train from the new Elgin depot, finished in 2013, to the Minam crossing. In 2013 a group of citizens approached the WURA board of directors to encourage consideration of building a multi-use recreational trail on the railroad's right of way. The WURA board of directors and a citizen group approached the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission (OPRC) in April 2013 to request the support of the agency in determining the feasibility of an Elgin to Joseph 63 mile rail-with-trail project; and

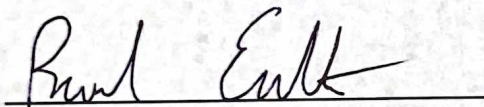
WHEREAS: The Elgin City Council feel that it is in the best interest of the citizens of Elgin to endorse said project;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Elgin City Council hereby endorses Rails With Trails, and will provide technical assistance when available and needed for the duration of the project.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 28th day of April, 2015.

With 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions, 0 Absent

Signed;



Brock Eckstein, Recorder/Administrator

Council Votes as Follows:

Allan Duffy, Mayor **AYE**

Michelle Miles, Councilor **AYE**

Rocky Burgess, Councilor **AYE**

Kathy Warren, Councilor **AYE**

Teresa Shaffer, Councilor **AYE**

Jeremy Richards, Councilor **AYE**

Brent Linville, Councilor **AYE**

ELGIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PO BOX 1001

ELGIN, OR 97827

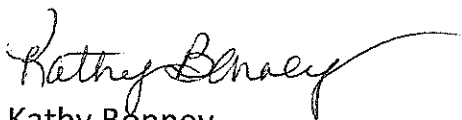
March 30, 2021

The Chamber of Commerce in the City of Elgin in Union County, Oregon fully supports the collaborative effort by the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium, the City of Elgin and Eastern Oregon University to develop a Pocket Park/Trailhead on city-owned land near the Elgin Train Station as well as the first segment of the Joseph Branch Rail-With-Trail that will start in downtown Elgin.

We recognize that Chamber member businesses, the City of Elgin and local residents will all benefit from the Pocket Park/Trailhead and trail segment. The impact of this endeavor will have both direct and indirect impact, including increased economic, recreational and physical health opportunities. All of this leading to an improved quality of life in our community here in the NE corner of our state.

We enthusiastically support this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Bonney", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kathy Bonney

Elgin Chamber of Commerce President



February 12, 2021

The Collins Foundation
1618 SW First Avenue, Suite 505
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Collins Foundation Grant Selection Committee:

I enthusiastically support the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium (JBTC) proposal to develop a detailed plan of the Elgin to Lookingglass section of the Joseph Branch Rail-with-Trail. Eastern Oregon University (EOU) has collaborated with the JBTC since the project's inception in 2014. Over the past six years, EOU faculty, staff, and students have worked with JBTC advisory members, state agency representatives, non-profit partners, businesses, and local citizens to develop multiple concept plans aimed at better understanding the demographics and needs of the local communities (more information can be found at <https://www.eou.edu/rails-with-trails/>). As the chair of EOU's new Sustainable Rural Systems (SRS) program, I am especially excited to help the JBTC implement the next phases of their project. Through coursework and internships, SRS students will have the opportunity to support JBTC efforts in all phases of the rail-with-trail project and EOU faculty and staff will continue to engage and assist with project efforts including survey development, stakeholder interviews, community engagement, and data analysis. Support from the Collins Foundation will help leverage prior work conducted by the JBTC and help ensure this collaborative partnership continues. This rail-with-trail project is especially important to the communities and citizens of eastern Oregon and will help bolster local businesses by providing equitable trail access to residents and tourists alike. A planning grant will help support an intern and a trails coordinator to ensure project objectives are met and will help bring this valuable trail to fruition.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will consider funding this important project.

Sincerely,

Shannon Donovan, Associate Professor and Program Chair, AICP, Ph.D.
Eastern Oregon University Sustainable Rural Systems Program
One University Blvd, La Grande, OR 97850
Phone: (541) 962-3594
Email: Sdonovan2@eou.edu



Eastern Oregon Visitors Association
PO Box 511 La Grande, OR 97850
541-970-4551
www.eova.com / www.visiteasternoregon.com

March 30, 2021

Oregon Tourism Commission
c/o Grants Review Committee
319 SW Washington St., Suite 700
Portland, OR 97204

To the Travel Oregon Grants Review Committee,

I'm pleased to write this letter in support of the project proposed by the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium for construction of the first mile of the Joseph Branch Trail and the Elgin Trailhead.

The Joseph Branch Trail has been in development for many years now, and EOVA is eager to see this regional asset developed to spur outdoor recreation tourism through hiking and cycling in this part of the region, and benefit multiple communities on the trail corridor. This project is an important first step. While this trailhead and trail segment can stand alone as a community enhancement for the City of Elgin, it will also be a catalyst for further development of the trail.

Flat, accessible, multi-use trails are few and far between in our region. We fully support the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium's work to create an approachable and visually stunning trail experience for users of all mobilities and skill-level. We also see this project as an excellent example of tourism infrastructure that creates a win-win by providing community benefit. Locals will be able to access the trail year-round, which we see as an important opportunity to further connect our communities with their natural surroundings and provide opportunities for positive interactions between tourists and residents. We fully support their request for funding and are excited to see this project advance.

Sincerely,

Alana Garner Carollo
Executive Director
541-970-4551 / execdirector@visiteasternoregon.com



Wallowa Mountains Bicycle Club

P.O. Box 166
Joseph, OR 97846

The Wallowa Mountains Bicycle Club is excited about the prospect of the 63 mile trail-with-rail between Elgin and Lostine. This project would be a terrific opportunity for bicyclists of all ages to get out and explore the beauty of this region. It also offers an alternative transportation route to the busy Highway 82 between Elgin and Joseph. The addition of an e-Bike charging station at the trailhead in Elgin would be a plus for bicyclists, as e-Bikes become popular. A bicycle repair station at the trailhead would also be a great benefit for bicyclists.

Trails encourage people to get outside, enjoy the outdoors, and engage in healthy activities. Our society needs this now more than ever. An ADA accessible trail segment, like the one proposed by the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium, is a great fit since it will tie directly into the proposed, longer 63-mile trail-with-rail, providing access to people of all abilities.

Northeast Oregon is experiencing significantly increased hiker and bicyclist traffic on the trails in this region. There is a growing need for more trails to mitigate the impacts of the increased use. More trails will disperse users in a good way. A trail out of Elgin will bring much-needed economic benefits to this rural community. With the trailhead located right in downtown Elgin, out-of-town bicyclists will help support local businesses.

This trailhead and initial trail segment will increase interest in, and leverage funding for, advancing the longer full trail-with-rail project. Interpretive signage will help users better understand the history of this area and also spell out best practices for using the trail. The pocket park/trailhead will also offer a community meeting place for locals, and the trail segment will provide a healthy, safe, and easily accessible place for local children and adults to ride bicycles in a beautiful outdoor setting very close to downtown.

The Board of Directors of the Wallowa Mountains Bicycle Club enthusiastically support this project!

Thank you,

Angela Mart
President
Wallowa Mountains Bicycle Club

February 15, 2021

The Collins Foundation
1618 SW First Avenue, Suite 505
Portland, OR 97201

The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD) would like to express our support for the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium proposal to conduct community-based planning for development of the first 13 miles of the Joseph Branch Community Trail. NEOEDD is an ORS 190 public entity established in 1985, with a mission to provide resources and facilitate quality decision making for the benefit of entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in Union, Wallowa and Baker counties.

NEOEDD has always recognized the 63-mile Joseph Branch rail corridor as a vital economic and community asset. Since Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA) acquired the railroad in 2002, NEOEDD has provided a variety of services, including rail with trail planning. We provided financial and in-kind support for the extensive 2015 Rail with Trail Concept Study and recently served in an advisory role for a 2020 update of the Study. The Joseph Branch Rail with Trail project is included in NEOEDD's 2018-2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as Vital Project 4a.1, under Goal 4: Improve, develop, and expand community assets.

The Joseph Branch Trail Consortium is a grassroots nonprofit dedicated to supporting development of a shared-use trail through community-based planning. They have made significant progress collaborating with partners and having key volunteers with the time and skill set needed to coordinate a project of this size. In the past year, several key volunteers have had to step down from hands-on roles, creating the need to contract for Project Coordinator services. A Project Coordinator will support the engagement of community members in detailed planning of the first 13-mile section of the trail from Elgin to Lookingglass. This planning will include: 1) determining specific trailhead infrastructure and amenities that will help provide better access to all trail users, 2) identifying the range of environmental education needs and opportunities the trail can address, and 3) weaving together historical narratives that will be showcased on trailside interpretive signage and in outreach materials.

Thank you for considering this worthwhile project for funding from The Collins Foundation.

Sincerely,



Lisa Dawson, Executive Director



Wallowa Mountains Hells Canyon Trails Association
401 NE First Street, Suite A
Enterprise, OR 97828
www.wmhcta.org

June 13, 2021

Oregon State Parks - Recreational Trails Program
Jodi Bellefeuille, Program Coordinator
725 Summer St. NE Suite C
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Jodi Bellefeuille:

After consideration of this proposal, the WMHCTA Board of Directors enthusiastically supports the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium's plan to construct a trailhead, pocket park, and ADA-compliant trail in Elgin, Oregon.

WMHCTA members, who volunteer their time to maintain and improve recreational trails in northeast Oregon, fully appreciate the impact of increased visitation, and recognize the need for additional trails to meet this demand.

We especially endorse the development of trails such as this project, which provide health benefits to users and economic benefits to local economies.

The WMHCTA Board of Directors fully supports this Joseph Branch Trail Consortium project and encourages full funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Bombaci', followed by a long horizontal line.

Rick Bombaci
Director, WMHCTA

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:

Women	Asians or Pacific Islanders
Persons with Disabilities	American Indians
African-Americans	Alaskan Natives
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:

Women	Asians or Pacific Islanders
Persons with Disabilities	American Indians
African-Americans	Alaskan Natives
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.

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:

Printed Name:

Title:

Agency Name:

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.