

NORTH BONNEVILLE HERITAGE TRAILS PLAN

USING THE PAST TO DEVELOP OUR FUTURE

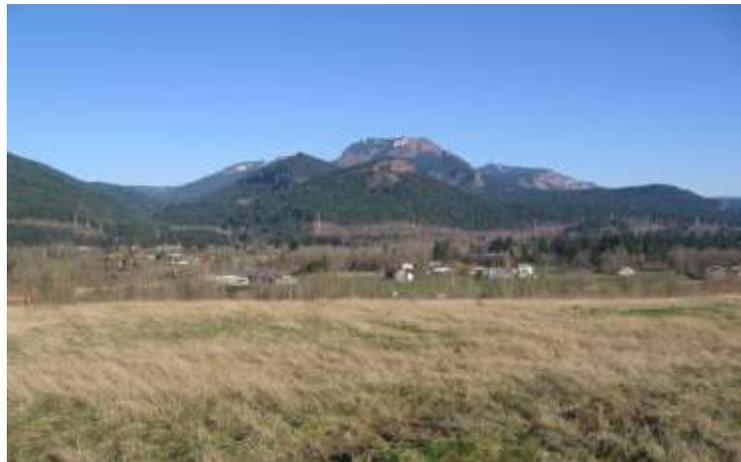


North Bonneville Heritage Trails Plan

Using the past to develop our future

Mission Statement

To begin a process that will unite our city's trails, history, and environment in order to create a central identity for the city of North Bonneville.



Project Overview

The Heritage Trails Plan will serve as a tool in preparations to create an interpretive experience for users of portions of North Bonneville's city pathway system. The basis of this project will be to create four separate Heritage Trails, each coinciding with a geographical feature in this area. Each Heritage Trail will begin at a common originating point in the downtown and branch out through the community. In addition, trails will ultimately be fitted with signs, maps, distance markers, and other features that will serve to provide users with an educational and enlightening experience to this area.

The plan will focus on a phased implementation process. In other words, the plan will not be geared toward getting all components of the Heritage Trails online all at once. Rather, initial strategies will be put into place that will focus on getting key components to the trails completed for the purpose of building community recognition and support for the plan. Once this is complete, the focus will shift towards building on that momentum to achieve completion of the four interpretive trails.

When complete, the North Bonneville Heritage Trails will serve to assist a number of city goals including sparking development in our downtown area, preserving the city's small town character and natural setting, attracting visitors and creating city identity. However, it is the future unknown potential that may be the greatest attribute of a completed interpretive trail system.

Purpose of Project

Four primary areas are analyzed that show the resources available and a need for this project to be embarked upon.

Location

The city of North Bonneville's location is unique in many ways providing both advantages and disadvantages to the city. Steep mountainous terrain that rises several thousand feet lies immediately to the north. To the south flows the Columbia River and additional mountains beyond that. Furthermore, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area surrounds the city. These neighboring features are nothing short of spectacular. However, they do present challenges for a city trying to plan its future. Relating to planning, the fact is North Bonneville has limited lands to work with. This is creating an environment in which the city must look at other means besides simply physical growth to ensure long-term stability.

A project such as the Heritage Trails will lead North Bonneville towards a sustainable future. The trails will give a long awaited distinctiveness and stability to the city, which will serve to inspire citizen feedback, support, and investment towards our community's future. These happen to be the same ambitious goals that are the foundation for the city's Outlook/Visioning Project and the Comprehensive Plan.

Most infrastructure in place

The community currently has over 10 miles of paved, level trails that connect the majority of town together. Based on this, it can be estimated that 80% of this project's infrastructure is already in place. In addition, with only a couple of exceptions (Army Corp of Engineers property), the trails are all located on city owned land. There will be no need for further land acquisition in order to facilitate the trail project.

Preservation

North Bonneville and its surrounding area have a history and environment that distinguishes it from most other communities. Our locale can make connections ranging from being a major Native American gathering place to the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Oregon Trail pioneers passing through centuries ago. Furthermore, the city's park setting combined with the surrounding natural areas allow for many rare species of plants and animals to reside here. The Heritage Trails present a unique opportunity to not only enhance these wonderful attributes, but more importantly to preserve them for the benefit of the city's future. By enlightening those who live here as well as those that visit to our history and environment, the North Bonneville Heritage Trails will serve as a means that will guide us towards the goal of preserving what sets the city apart.

Community Support

As evidenced by the city survey conducted in the winter of 2005, the trail system is viewed as a very positive attribute to our community. Furthermore, the Heritage Trail system will both directly and indirectly have a positive affect on other issues that were commonly brought up in the survey such as: Attracting more business into the downtown area, providing more recreational opportunities, and general upkeep of the city. Positive reaction was also received toward the Heritage Trails at the inaugural block leader conference held in March of 2006.

Overview of Trail System

The Trail Names and Colors

As previously mentioned, each of the four trails will be given a specific name that relates to the geographical area in which the trail passes. In addition, a color will be assigned to each trail, which will serve two purposes: First, the colors will make trail identification easier on maps. Second, the colors will eventually be placed throughout the trails (on signs, markers, etc) for easy trail identification while walking it.

Trail Details

Each trail will originate at the downtown station and extend out to different parts of the city.

Hamilton Creek Trail

Color: Light blue

Estimated Length (loop): 1.25 miles

Terrain: Flat

Description:

The Hamilton Creek Trail will extend out to the west end of town leading over the Hamilton Creek Bridge and looping its way around the city's western neighborhoods. Beacon Rock Golf Course borders the area to the north and Hamilton Creek to the south. The trail also offers views of the Pierce Wildlife Refuge, which borders to the west. Interpretive features pointed out along this trail will include: views of Beacon Rock, Hamilton Mountain and Hamilton Creek. In addition, the trail will also include interpretive sites discussing the salmon runs in the area and the Wildlife Refuge and Oregon White Oak woodlands.

Strawberry Island Trail

Color: Red

Estimated Length (loop): 1.5 miles

Terrain: Flat and hilly

Description:

This trail will extend to the southern end of town past the ball fields and up onto Strawberry Island itself. It will then loop around and down to the east making its way over to the property known as "Parcel C". Finally, it will turn to the north and parallel Garrison Drive and then back through the city park to the downtown station. This trail will have the potential of becoming the crown jewel of the entire trail system for several reasons:

- 1) The trail passes through the beautiful mature oak savannah that currently resides in the city park and school lots.
- 2) The Strawberry Island portion of the trail is unrivaled in terms of view access to the surrounding area. A rare 360 view of the entire gorge is found at the high point including views of the Columbia River.
- 3) The trail will provide a convenient access route between the downtown area and the ball fields/Strawberry Island Trail Head.
- 4) Historical value of this trail is very high due to Lewis and Clark history on Strawberry Island.
- 5) The "Parcel C" portion of this trail also provides views and many wildflowers.
- 6) Interpretive features would be put into place that discusses each one of these highlights in detail.

While there are no current plans to link into the Pacific Crest Trail, the Heritage Trails Plan will provide an avenue towards a future connection to the PCT and thus meeting this goal in the future.

The Strawberry Island and Parcel C portions of the trail do contain uphill climbs and the trails are currently somewhat unimproved (especially when wet). Plans will need to be made to upgrade the trail condition itself in these areas as part of the effort to create an interpretive trail here.



Oaks along trail



Strawberry Island Trail viewpoint

Columbia Trail

Color: Dark Blue

Estimated Length (round trip): 2.5 miles

Terrain: Flat

Description:

The Columbia Trail will extend out to the east end of town passing by the city's eastern neighborhoods and through the Fort Cascades Historic Site. At the eastern limit the trail will offer views of the Bonneville Dam and access down to the Columbia River itself. Interpretive features pointed out along this trail will include, the history and events that took place at Fort Cascades (the Corp already has an interpretive trail for this), the Bonneville Dam, the movement of North Bonneville to its current location, and the Columbia River. A cooperative effort between the city and the Corp will be required to plan a specific Heritage Trail route through Fort Cascades. The Corp has expressed interest in linking the city trails with the Corp trails.

Greenleaf Trail

Color: Green

Estimated Length (round trip): 2 miles

Terrain: Flat

Description:

The Greenleaf Trail will serve to connect the north side of town into the Heritage Trail System. The trail will pass under State Highway 14 along Cascade Drive and then extend out to the northeast. It will make its way past the Pioneer Cemetery and Greenleaf Lake as it continues to its end point of the Bonneville Hot Springs Resort. This trail will prove to be a valuable asset as it not only connects the north side of town into the Heritage Trail System but in addition it will promote easy access to the heritage trails by visitors to the resort. Interpretive features along this trail will include the Pioneer Cemetery and its history, Greenleaf Lake, Native American history in the area, geologic features and obviously the resort itself.

Trail Stations

Headquarters to the trails

The “trail stations” will be the originating points for the Heritage Trail System. There will be two stations in the plan. Each station will have adequate parking, signage, seating that will allow for a general gathering area to people wishing to start out on the trails. In addition, there will be signage placed that will provide maps and an explanation of the trails. Signs and other advertisements of the trail system will direct passersby and visitors to the stations.

Downtown Station:

The Downtown Station located on the southwest side of the Central Business District is in a strategic location to serve as a point where each trail connects. In addition, this area currently has an adequate parking area and is close to the entrance of town from State Highway 14. It is worth mentioning the close proximity to downtown businesses this spot provides as well. For these reasons, the Downtown Station will be the focal point of the trail system.

Strawberry Island Station:

The Strawberry Island Station will be located at the current Strawberry Island Trailhead parking area next to the city owned ball fields. Although not as central to the rest of the trail system like the Downtown Station, the Strawberry Island Station will serve to provide convenient access for those wishing to simply explore Strawberry Island. In addition, this area will provide a general parking and gathering area for those using the ball fields. The covered shelter and picnic areas also make this an advantageous station location.

Initial Upgrades to Strawberry Island and Downtown Station Goals:

The initial goals relating to Heritage Trail infrastructure will be centered on upgrading the future focal points to the trail system. This will allow for the recognition, and advertisement of the Heritage Trail system concept long before the actual plan is complete. This will help in obtaining support by various stakeholders in regards to getting future trail infrastructure into place. Two initial steps are listed below in order to achieve this initial goal:

- 1) Pave Strawberry Island Station parking area
The Strawberry Island parking lot is approximately 60' by 460' and provides access to the historic Strawberry Island Trailhead (over 3 miles of natural pathways) in addition to providing access to the city ball fields which are currently being upgraded themselves to serve more sporting events throughout the year.
- 2) Informational Heritage Trails Sign at Strawberry Island and Downtown Stations.
These two signs will serve as the anchor points to the official start of the Heritage Trails. The signs will include a map of the color-coded trails in addition to an informational section that will explain the Heritage Trail concept.

Outposts:

Centers for each trail

Eventually, each Heritage Trail will have its own interpretive center called "outposts" dedicated solely to the purpose of providing information for that specific route. Although not as built up as a station, an outpost will be located at a point slightly off the main trail. Signage at the outposts will include a description of the geographic point the trail was named after, and a map that will show features to be found along the trail. An outpost will average two to three signs.

Four Outposts:

Hamilton Creek Outpost

Located at the southwestern edge of town at Hamilton Creek.

Strawberry Island Outpost

Located at highpoint of Strawberry Island trail. (In cooperation with the Corp.)

Fort Cascades Outpost

Located at the far eastern side of town at the terminus of the Columbia Trail.

Greenleaf Trail Outpost

Located at the Bonneville Hot Springs Resort.

Markers

Features along the trail

Markers will serve to highlight points of interest along each trail. A marker will simply consist of one educational sign and will be located on the trail. A general system of symbols will be used for ease of distinguishing one feature from another.



Trail Marker Example

Trail Marker Symbols

A general system of symbols will be used for ease of distinguishing one feature from another. The symbols will be located on maps at the stations and outposts in addition to interpretive guidebooks that may be setup in the future. Below are possible examples of symbols that would be placed on maps to identify unique points along each main trail:



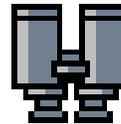
Pioneer History Marker



Lewis and Clark Marker



Native American Marker



Viewpoint Marker



Environment Marker

Distance Markers

Starting from the downtown station, each trail will have a marker denoting each tenth of a mile along the trail. Where possible, a distance marker may be collocated with an outpost or other signage along the trail. The distance markers will serve a number of purposes including, making it easy for people to know exactly where they are at on the trail, and knowing how far one has traveled along the trails. Distance markers will also be color coded for that specific trail to further aid in identifying which trail one is on.