

WALKING AND BIKING TRAILS

\$40 million for building out the regional trails network, oregonmetro.gov/regional-trails-and-greenways-system

Walking and biking trails program description: Across greater Portland, a network of regional trails provide community members car-free routes to commute, bike, run and walk. Many of these trails have gaps where the trail is broken up or two or more trails don't easily connect, which means trail-goers have to use streets to complete their journeys.

The 2019 parks and nature bond includes funds (\$10 million) to fill in these gaps by purchasing properties and right of ways from willing sellers and \$20 million [in competitive grants](#) to local governments to plan, design and build regional trails. These trail grants, awarded in fall 2022, reflected community feedback collected through a public comment period and regional transportation priorities.

In addition, the priorities for trail gap acquisitions were informed by two community meetings for Black, Indigenous, and people of color to share their concerns, priorities and values on how Metro will invest in future trail projects. Participants shared [their insights](#) into what they want prioritized when we are buying new properties, things like safety, connections to work or access to nature.

Walking and biking trails milestones completed as of June 2024

- Real estate team completed 3 trail gap acquisitions and 8 overall trail real estate strategies.
- Real estate team has had 91 conversations with the region's park providers about potential trail gap acquisitions.
- In September 2022, Council approved [12 trail grant awards for \\$19.5 million](#) across the region from the Clackamas River Trail to the Gresham Fairview Trail to the Westside Trail to Marine Drive Trail, taking a huge step forward in advancing the region's goals for a more equitable and resilient transportation system.
- In fall 2022, Parks and Nature staff hosted a training for grant recipients on conducting cultural resource assessments for inadvertent discoveries during ground disturbing activities.

Walking and biking trails program milestones completed as of June 2024 (by the numbers)

Category	During 2023 through summer 2024
Number of trail grants awarded	12 (grant funding was awarded on a one-time basis)
Number of intergovernmental agreements finalized for trail grants	7 (out of 12)
Dollars for reimbursement requests made	\$227,430
Number of trail gaps acquired	3
Miles of trail gaps acquired	0.04 miles
Number of real estate strategies developed	Completed 8 trails real estate strategies; 6 are underway
Number of regional trail roundtables held	7

Looking ahead

The team has been working to finalize intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with the grant recipients for the 12 projects and has made significant progress in that goal. This is important as the finalization of the IGAs allows for grant recipients to formally submit more reimbursements for project costs. Overall, the team anticipates that the bulk of the project work funded by the bond trail grants will ramp up in the next three fiscal years (2024-2025, 2025-2026 and 2025-2027), though the timing of the projects will be driven primarily by the grant recipients themselves.

Relative to trail gap acquisition, the team continues to build the tools and capacity to pursue the acquisition of easements important to strengthening the regional trail network. In general, trail gap easements are less expensive than acquisition of land and can be more time consuming and complicated as they require a willing local agency to take ownership of the easement once Metro completes the acquisition. The team expects to expend an average of \$1 million on trail gap acquisition per fiscal year through 2031.

Markers to determine progress for walking and biking trails

- Number of trail gap easements completed
- Number of feet or trail miles protected with bond funds
- Number of executed intergovernmental agreements with park providers for trail projects out of 12 grant awards
- Number of trail projects at any given time progressing from one stage of project readiness to another
- Reporting from park providers on how they're advancing bond criteria through their trail projects (community engagement activities, COBID participation and other)

More resources on the walking and biking trails program activities

- [Summary of community engagement on priority factors for trail gap acquisition](#)
- [List of trail grant awards made in fall 2022](#)

Figure 1, map of walking and biking trail investments and awards as of June 2024

