



Agenda
Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Regular Meeting
January 26, 2026 | 3:00 PM

City Hall, 10220 270th Street NW
Stanwood, WA 98292

This meeting will be conducted in person at Stanwood City Hall with an option for participants to join by telephone or online as well.

- 1. Call to Order**
 - 2. Roll Call**
 - 3. New Business**
 - a. Introductions
 - b. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
 - c. Port Susan Trail Route and Wayfinding
 - d. PTAC Roles, Responsibilities, and Communication Process
 - e. Proposed Change to PTAC Meeting Frequency
 - f. Church Creek Park Covered Area
 - 4. Committee Member Comments**
 - 5. Adjourn**
-

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City of Stanwood Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Staff Report

Item Number: 3.a.
Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: Introductions
Contact Person: Alan Lytton, City Engineer
Attachments: None

ISSUE

BACKGROUND

With several new members joining PTAC, a quick round of introductions will help the committee connect and better understand the interests and perspectives each member brings to parks and trails in the community.

DISCUSSION / INTRODUCTIONS

Since we have a full agenda, we'll keep introductions brief. Committee members are encouraged to share a quick snapshot, including:

- Your name
- A little about your background or connection to the community
- What you're most interested in when it comes to parks and trails, such as:
 - Trails or trail connections
 - Sports fields or athletic facilities
 - Playgrounds or play areas
 - Open space or natural areas
 - Accessibility or inclusive design
 - Programming or community use
 - Other interests you'd like to mention



City of Stanwood Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Staff Report

Item Number: 3.b.
Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: Election of Chair and Vice Chair
Contact Person: Alan Lytton, City Engineer
Attachments: None

ISSUE

BACKGROUND

The Chair and Vice Chair serve leadership roles within PTAC and help support efficient, organized meetings and coordination with City staff.

Chair Responsibilities include:

- Presiding over PTAC meetings
- Facilitating discussion and ensuring meetings remain orderly and on topic
- Working with staff to help guide meeting agendas

Vice Chair Responsibilities include:

- Assisting the Chair as needed
- Presiding over meetings in the absence of the Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair are selected from among current PTAC members.

TERM

The Chair and Vice Chair serve a **one-year term**, beginning upon election. Members may be re-elected to these positions.

DISCUSSION

The election of Chair and Vice Chair will occur during the meeting and will include the following steps:

- **Nominations:**

Committee members may nominate themselves or other committee members for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair.

- **Vote:**

After nominations are closed, the committee will vote to select a Chair and Vice Chair. The outcome of each vote (majority, unanimous, or split) will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

ACTION REQUESTED

PTAC is requested to elect a Chair and Vice Chair.



**CITY OF STANWOOD
PARK AND TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

ITEM NUMBER: 2026-41
DATE: January 26, 2026
SUBJECT: Port Susan Trail Route and Wayfinding
CONTACT PERSON: Patricia Love, Community Development Director
ATTACHMENTS: 1. Port Susan Trail Map

PURPOSE

The purpose of this agenda item is for Committee review of the Port Susan Trail Route and Historic Points of Interest Map project.

BACKGROUND

The City completed Phase 2 of the Port Susan Trail in 2025, delivering a 10-foot-wide multi-use trail that has quickly become a popular walking route for the community. Since its completion, the trail has experienced consistent use, with community members frequently inquiring about the timing of the next phase of implementation.

The original long-term alignment of the Port Susan Trail was envisioned to follow State Route 532, continue north through agricultural fields beneath the PUD power transmission lines, connect along Lovers Road, and loop back to the Park and Ride lot off Florence Road. This alignment was intended to provide an off-street, continuous trail corridor.

Due to concerns expressed by adjacent farmers regarding public access near active agricultural fields, the original trail alignment is no longer feasible and requires reconsideration. As a result, the previously planned route is no longer considered viable.

In response, the City is proposing a revised alignment through the downtown area that utilizes existing sidewalk infrastructure. This approach maintains pedestrian connectivity, improves access to local businesses and services, and allows the trail system to continue expanding in a cost-effective and implementable manner.

ANALYSIS

As part of the 2026 Work Plan, staff proposes to update the alignment of the Port Susan Trail within the downtown area by utilizing the existing sidewalk infrastructure, allowing

the City to extend the trail system without the need for new right-of-way acquisition or significant capital construction.

Using existing sidewalks provides a cost-effective and timely approach while maintaining pedestrian connectivity and accessibility. This alignment also enhances integration with downtown destinations, including historic sites, local businesses, and Heritage Park.

To clearly define the trail route, staff proposes the installation of pedestrian wayfinding markers along the alignment. In addition, historic interpretive signage would be placed at key buildings and locations to highlight the community's history and cultural resources. This approach transforms the trail into both a recreational and educational asset, strengthening community identity and encouraging downtown visitation.

Port Susan Trail Map:

The proposed Port Susan Trail realignment includes a double-loop trail system designed to improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the downtown area and adjacent destinations. The alignment consists of the following segments:

- Lower Loop: Approximately three miles in length, connecting Main Street (270th and 271st Streets) with the existing Port Susan Trail.

- Upper Loop: Provides a connection to and through Heritage Park, enhancing access to recreational and cultural amenities. The full upper loop is about a mile and a half.

- Future Connection: A planned extension located behind the County Store, continuing along the train station, and connecting to the Park and Ride lot on Florence Road to support future trail expansion.

Other locations highlighted on the map include public parking lots, historic points of interest, and potential trail extensions.



Wayfinding Signage and Markers:

To clearly identify the Port Susan Trail and support visitors and pedestrians in navigating the designated route, staff are exploring a coordinated system of wayfinding signage and thematic trail markers. Visual examples under consideration include milepost decals, snow goose footprint markers to subtly guide users along the path, painted directional arrows, and other complementary design elements that help define the trail corridor.

Together, these elements would establish a cohesive and recognizable trail identity, serving both functional and aesthetic purposes. The proposed wayfinding features are intended to improve navigation, reinforce the continuity of the trail, and enhance the overall user experience. This approach is consistent with the City’s ongoing beautification efforts and builds upon Stanwood’s established community branding, creating a welcoming, distinctive, and memorable trail environment for residents and visitors alike.

Decals and Markers: Shown below are example concepts for decals and/or markers designed to assist users in following the Port Susan Trail route. These markers would be installed throughout the trail corridor.



Milepost Signage and Directional Arrows: Staff are also exploring the use of painted or decal milepost markers and directional arrows along the trail to enhance navigation and further establish a cohesive identity for the trail.

Interpretive Signs:

Staff also proposes the installation of historic interpretive signs at key locations along the Port Susan Trail route. These signs would highlight the area’s historical significance and providing educational opportunities for trail users. Interpretive signage may include

information on local history, early settlement, or tribal heritage. Staff will work with the Historical Society on specific locations and details.

The interpretive signs are intended to encourage exploration, foster a sense of place, and strengthen community connection to Stanwood's history. This effort supports the City's goals for historic preservation, public education, and trail enhancement, while complementing broader city beautification goals.

Examples of Interpretive Signage:



RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff Recommendation:

Staff is seeking the Park and Trails Advisory Committee comments and ideas on the proposed Port Susan Trail alignment and associated beautification efforts, including trail markers and interpretive signs. Committee input will help ensure the trail alignment and enhancements reflects the City's vision and community character.

PROPOSED MOTION

None; Discussion Item



City of Stanwood Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Staff Report

Item Number: 3.d.
Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: PTAC Roles, Responsibilities, and Communication Process
Contact Person: Alan Lytton, City Engineer
Attachments: None

ISSUE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this staff report is to clearly define the role, responsibilities, and authority of the Parks and Trails Advisory Committee (PTAC), including how committee input is formally communicated to the Mayor and City Council, and how budget and decision-making processes work within the City of Stanwood.

BACKGROUND

The Parks and Trails Advisory Committee (PTAC) was established by the City Council through Resolution 2019-14 as a permanent advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on matters related to parks and trails planning, development, use, and maintenance.

As PTAC continues its work, staff has identified the need to clarify the committee's advisory role, how collective recommendations are established, how committee input is transmitted to elected officials, and why City timelines require meeting minutes to be forwarded without delay.

This clarification is intended to ensure transparency, consistency, and a shared understanding between PTAC, staff, and elected officials.

PTAC ROLE AND AUTHORITY (ADVISORY ONLY)

PTAC serves solely in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council.

PTAC responsibilities include:

- Providing a communication link between the City and the Stanwood/Camano community on parks and trails issues
- Advising the City on implementation of parks and trails plans

- Reviewing and making recommendations regarding park and trail facilities, including land acquisition, development, programming, and capital improvement needs
- Advising the City on park-related grant opportunities
- Making recommendations on parks-related policies and code amendments

PTAC does not have authority to:

- Approve projects or programs
- Direct staff work
- Commit City funds
- Establish City policy
- Authorize purchases, construction, or expenditures

All final decisions related to parks, trails, budgets, policies, and capital projects are made by the Mayor and City Council in accordance with City Council rules, adopted budgets, and applicable law.

PTAC recommendations are important and valued; however, they are not binding, and a recommendation does not guarantee implementation.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS, ACTION MINUTES, AND COMMUNICATION TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

To ensure PTAC feedback is clearly, consistently, and timely communicated, the City will follow a structured documentation and reporting process.

Mayor’s Direction on Action Minutes

The Mayor has directed all City departments to prepare action-oriented meeting minutes. These minutes provide a brief, high-level summary of:

- Topics discussed
- Committee feedback or recommendations
- Any identified next steps

Action minutes are not verbatim transcripts. Their purpose is to allow the Mayor and City Council to quickly understand committee input without reviewing full recordings or extended discussion notes.

PTAC COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION PROCESS

1. Discussion During the PTAC Meeting and Determining Committee Agreement

- All comments, concerns, and recommendations must be discussed during a public PTAC meeting.
- To determine whether a recommendation reflects the collective position of the committee, PTAC may use a vote.
- When a vote is taken, the outcome will be noted as majority, unanimous,

or split agreement.

- Individual viewpoints may be noted but must be clearly distinguished from committee-supported recommendations.

2. Committee Comments Reflected in Meeting Minutes

- Any vote taken on an agenda item will be documented directly under that specific agenda item in the meeting minutes, noting whether the committee's position was reached by majority, unanimous, or split agreement.
- In addition to votes, committee comments, discussion points, and recommendations that PTAC wishes the Mayor and City Council to be aware of will be summarized under a separate "Committee Comments" section of the meeting minutes.
- To maintain a clear and accurate understanding of PTAC input, these Committee Comment summaries will be finalized through the written follow-up process described in Item 3 below.
- This structure documents committee agreement on agenda items and consolidates PTAC feedback for clear review by the Mayor and City Council.

3. Post-Meeting Email Request for Comments and Recommendations

- Following each PTAC meeting, Amanda Slattery will send an email to PTAC members requesting any additional comments or recommendations they would like the Mayor and City Council to be aware of related to **that meeting's agenda items**.
- Committee members must submit their written comments and recommendations within one (1) week of the email being sent.
- These written submissions are used to clarify committee intent, capture recommendations that may not be fully reflected in a recorded vote, and ensure PTAC feedback is accurately summarized under the Committee Comments section of the meeting minutes.
- This process reduces misinterpretation and helps ensure the Mayor and City Council receive a clear and consistent understanding of PTAC's input.
- Comments should be brief and focused to support quick review by the Mayor and City Council.

4. Transmittal of Meeting Minutes to City Council and PTAC Review Process

- PTAC meeting minutes will not be brought back to a subsequent PTAC meeting for approval prior to being sent to the Mayor and City Council.
- Waiting for PTAC approval created too long of a gap between when meetings occurred and when elected officials received committee input.
- Meeting minutes will be transmitted to the Mayor and City Council at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting following the PTAC meeting.
- The transmitted minutes will be included in the next PTAC meeting packet for informational review.

- If PTAC members have comments or concerns regarding what was sent to Council, those concerns may be discussed at the next PTAC meeting and noted in the subsequent PTAC meeting minutes and forwarded to the Mayor and City Council.

CLARIFICATION ON DECISIONS AND OUTCOMES

PTAC recommendations inform staff analysis, provide community perspective, and help identify priorities and concerns. However, PTAC does not make final decisions. The Mayor and City Council consider available funding, adopted plans and priorities, legal and policy requirements, citywide impacts, staff capacity, and timing. Council may approve, modify, delay, request additional information, or decline to move forward with a recommendation.

HOW PARKS AND TRAILS FUNDING WORKS

PTAC does not control or allocate City funds.

All City expenditures must be authorized through an adopted annual budget approved by City Council. Parks and trails projects are funded through specific funds, grants, or the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Even when PTAC supports a project, it cannot proceed unless funding has been approved by City Council.

PTAC plays a critical role in identifying needs and priorities, but funding decisions remain the responsibility of City Council.

SUMMARY

The Parks and Trails Advisory Committee:

- Serves in an advisory role only
- Provides community insight and recommendations
- Does not make final decisions or authorize spending

PTAC input is communicated through public discussion, documented committee agreement, timely written follow-up, and prompt transmittal of action minutes to the Mayor and City Council. This process ensures transparency, accuracy, and timely communication.



City of Stanwood Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Staff Report

Item Number: 3.e.
Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: Proposed Change to PTAC Meeting Frequency
Contact Person: Alan Lytton, City Engineer
Attachments: None

ISSUE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the Parks and Trails Advisory Committee (PTAC) consider moving from a monthly meeting schedule to a **quarterly** meeting schedule.

BACKGROUND

PTAC currently meets on a monthly basis. While this schedule has been helpful during periods of active planning and project development, staff has identified that a quarterly meeting schedule may be more effective at this time.

The upcoming year is expected to be a slower period for new parks project development, with staff focus shifting toward implementation of projects, plans, and ideas that have already been discussed and approved.

DISCUSSION

Moving PTAC meetings to a quarterly schedule would allow staff additional time between meetings to:

- Focus on advancing parks and trails projects already underway
- Implement previously identified priorities and recommendations
- Develop more complete project updates and responses for PTAC review
- Bring more meaningful and substantive information to each meeting

This change would reduce the need for incremental updates and allow PTAC meetings to focus on clearer project milestones and outcomes.

Staff anticipates that a quarterly schedule would better align with the pace of parks

project implementation during the coming year, while still maintaining consistent communication with the committee.

PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

Staff recommends that PTAC meet **quarterly on the third Monday of the meeting month**, with the following proposed schedule:

- **January – Monday, January 26**
(Note: The third Monday in January is Martin Luther King Jr. Day; therefore, the meeting is proposed for the following Monday.)
- **April – Monday, April 20**
(No holidays conflict with this meeting date.)
- **July – Monday, July 20**
(No holidays conflict with this meeting date.)
- **October – Monday, October 19**
(No holidays conflict with this meeting date.)

FLEXIBILITY

If it is determined that a meeting is needed between regularly scheduled quarterly meetings to address a specific topic, **a special meeting will be scheduled with at least two (2) weeks' notice.**

ACTION REQUESTED

PTAC is requested to discuss and consider a change to a quarterly meeting schedule based on the proposed months and meeting dates outlined above.



City of Stanwood Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Staff Report

Item Number: 3.f.
Date: January 26, 2026
Subject: Church Creek Park Covered Area
Contact Person: Alan Lytton, City Engineer
Attachments: 1. Example Shelter

ISSUE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this staff report is to request guidance from the Parks & Trails Advisory Committee (PTAC) on the preferred design direction for replacement of the existing picnic shelter at Church Creek Park. PTAC is asked to provide input on whether the City should:

- Replace the shelter in kind (similar form, character, and architectural expression as the existing shelter), or
- Pursue the alternate shelter concept shown in the attached exhibit

PTAC's recommendation will be forwarded to the appropriate City Council committees for consideration. City Council will make the final decision. Following direction, staff will proceed with soliciting design services consistent with the preferred option.

BACKGROUND

The existing picnic shelter at Church Creek Park has served the community for many years and is a recognizable feature of the park. The structure is approaching a point where replacement is more cost-effective than continued maintenance and repair. As part of early scoping, staff evaluated two conceptual approaches:

- **In-Kind Replacement:** A shelter that maintains the existing architectural

character, footprint, and visual identity.

- **Alternate Shelter Concept:** A simpler structural system that provides increased covered area and improved functional space at a lower overall cost. Concept images for both options are included in the attachment for reference.

OPTION A – IN-KIND REPLACEMENT (EXISTING STYLE)

Description

Replacement of the picnic shelter with a structure that closely matches the existing shelter's appearance, roof form, materials, and overall character.

Potential Advantages

- Preserves the familiar and recognizable appearance of the existing shelter
- Maintains continuity with the park's established character
- May be preferred by community members who value tradition

Potential Disadvantages

- Higher construction cost due to custom detailing and roof framing
- Less efficient use of covered area relative to footprint
- Potentially higher long-term maintenance costs
- Limited flexibility for future modifications or expansion

OPTION B – ALTERNATE SHELTER CONCEPT

Description

Construction of a new picnic shelter based on the alternate concept shown in the attachment, emphasizing functional space, simplified structure, and cost efficiency.

Potential Advantages

- Lower overall project cost
- Increased covered area for public use
- More flexible and usable space for group activities and events
- Simpler structure may reduce construction time and maintenance needs
- Improved adaptability for accessibility, furnishings, and future upgrades

Potential Disadvantages

- Does not retain the existing shelter's iconic appearance

- Represents a visual change to the park
- Some community members may prefer the current look and feel

COST, SCHEDULE, AND FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Preliminary evaluation indicates the alternate shelter concept would be less expensive than an in-kind replacement. Final costs, schedule, and funding strategy will be determined during design and bidding.

PUBLIC BENEFIT CONSIDERATIONS

Both options maintain a covered gathering space at Church Creek Park. Key considerations include:

- Shelter capacity and comfort
- Long-term durability and maintenance needs
- Accessibility and functional usability
- Visual contribution to the park environment
- Responsible use of public funds

REQUESTED ACTION

Staff requests that the Parks & Trails Advisory Committee:

- Review the two conceptual options
- Discuss the relative advantages and disadvantages of each
- Provide a recommendation on which option should advance to the design phase

PTAC's recommendation will be forwarded to City Council committees for further review and final direction.

