



INFRASTRUCTURE SPOTLIGHT

Kay Wagner Historical Riverwalk

The Kay Wagner Historical Riverwalk is coming to life along the riverbank in downtown Winthrop, connecting the Susie Stephens Trail to the south and the SaTeekhWa Trail to the north. Once complete, it will offer a scenic, walkable route through town—celebrating local history while improving pedestrian safety and access.

The current phase includes two key segments. The upstream segment, known as the Chewuch Underpass, will pass beneath the Highway 20 bridge near the confluence of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers. Design and permitting for this segment are complete, and right-of-way acquisition is expected this fall. Construction is anticipated in 2026. The downstream segment will extend 950 feet from the Susie Stephens Trail to Confluence Park on Riverside Avenue. Conceptual plans are in place, and most easements have been donated—one remains to be finalized. One landowner plans to build the adjacent trail segment in 2026 as part of a private building project. The remaining portions could be completed by mid-2028, pending funding and review outcomes.

Environmental, geotechnical, and engineering assessments for the upstream segment are complete, including ESA, NEPA, Shoreline, HPA, and Critical Areas reviews. For the downstream segment, a Cultural Resource Report has been ordered, and the conceptual design was completed in 2023

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Preliminary survey and alignment work is underway, with geotechnical and hydraulic analysis scheduled for this fall. On-site agency consultations are also planned to address shoreline and bank stabilization needs.

Key findings include the need to align construction timing with endangered species protections and restore one section of riverbank to prevent further erosion. Habitat mitigation may also be required. The downstream segment will continue to evolve from the 2023 conceptual design as further assessments and permitting move forward.

Next steps include finalizing the remaining easement, expanding project branding and outreach, securing additional funding, and continuing to build partnerships. Design, permitting, and environmental review for the downstream segment will also progress in the coming months.

Thanks to the Economic Alliance's prioritization and Okanogan County's investment of \$100,000 in rural infrastructure funds, the project gained visibility and secured a \$2M grant from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

We plan to apply again through the prioritization process this year to help close a funding gap of up to \$1M

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