

# leafline trails coalition

## Connecting Trails, Connecting Communities

Charter Document  
Adopted by the Leadership Group – May 27, 2020  
Updated with new logo - August 19, 2020

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### I. Mission Statement

Connecting the trails network across the Central Puget Sound region to improve health, community, quality of life, mobility, and access for all.

### II. Vision Statement

The Leafline Trails Coalition works to realize a connected trails network – the Leafline – that provides equitable access, improved health, enhanced mobility, economic benefits, and recreational opportunities to thriving communities across Snohomish, Kitsap, King and Pierce counties in the Central Puget Sound region. The Coalition catalyzes the collective impact of diverse representatives from governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, health organizations, community groups, businesses, trail users, and advocates who partner to grow and promote the regional trails network.

Equity and transparency are central to success and are achieved by establishing shared priorities and plans with the region's communities. Best practices and data collected by the Coalition are used to systematically fill network gaps and to ensure an intuitive user experience. Public and private funding and resources are being channeled to build new and maintain existing trails and to promote the network.

More people use the network because they understand the power of trails, feel safe, have quality experiences, enjoy great views, and have access to nature. Everyone can use the trails to connect.

### III. Short Vision

This short version of the vision statement can be used in power point presentations and other formats where brevity is a benefit:

The Leafline is an interconnected, intuitive, well-traveled, and treasured trails network spanning the Central Puget Sound region, providing equitable access, health benefits and recreational opportunities for all.

### IV. Core Values

- **Bold** - Develop a bold and ambitious vision for a connected and accessible trails network.



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- **Collaborative** - Build strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with and across communities.
- **Equitable** - Prioritize equity and inclusivity for the coalition and trails network.
- **Transparent** - Communicate clearly and openly with stakeholders and the public.
- **Innovative** - Encourage new and creative ideas for achieving the goals of the Coalition.
- **Results-Oriented** - Set measurable and achievable goals for the Coalition and trails network.

## V. Membership

### a. Coalition Members

**Goal:** Coalition Members are non-governmental organizations and individuals and are responsible for promoting the goals of the Leafline Trails Coalition, most importantly by working to complete a comprehensive trails network in the Central Puget Sound region. They do this by participating in Coalition meetings and activities, and keeping the Coalition informed about issues in the trails community.

#### Coalition Member Duties and Responsibilities

1. Support the Mission and Vision.
2. Help advance the work of the Coalition through advocacy and education.
3. Make a contribution that is meaningful to you / your organization (financial, volunteer hours, in-kind resources).
4. Take the initiative and provide leadership in support of Coalition priorities.
5. Support and influence the work of the Coalition by being an engaged participant. Serve on committees and work groups as needed. Attend Coalition meetings and activities and come prepared by reading material distributed prior to meetings. If you cannot attend meetings, answer Coalition surveys in a timely manner. Fulfill commitments within the agreed-upon deadlines.
6. Maintain knowledge of current programs of the Coalition and share information.
7. Share resources and talents with the organization, including expertise, and contacts for potential in-kind contributions.

#### Benefits of Coalition Membership

Members of the Coalition will have the opportunity to:

- Join with other trail builders and enthusiasts to advocate for a shared vision of a regional trails network in the Central Puget Sound region with a unified voice.
- Participate in a “learning community” – attend special events and meetings, share messaging, lessons learned, innovative ideas, best practices, and data for regional trails.
- Develop working relationships with a growing coalition of diverse supporters of an accessible, interconnected and equitable regional trails network.
- Be part of the process to identify and collaborate on priority trail connections. Work together to leverage funding and resources.
- Educate and engage the public and decision-makers on the benefits of a world-class regional trails network in the Central Puget Sound region.



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### Process for Becoming a Member of the Leafline Trails Coalition

- We want the Leafline Trails Coalition to include a broad-based and diverse membership, therefore we want it to be fairly easy to join the Coalition.
- Both individuals and organizations are welcome to join; no financial contribution is required to become a member.
- To join, individuals and organizations will sign a pledge that states that they will support the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the Coalition and understand the Duties and Responsibilities of membership.
- As the Coalition framework evolves, we may consider different levels of membership for financial contributors and rules for voting for both individual and organizational members.

### Process for Terminating Membership

Participating Members may terminate their participation in the Coalition upon written notice to the Leadership Group or Chair of the Leadership Group, or may be removed by a majority vote of the Leadership Group.

### b. Public Partners

**Goal:** Leafline Trails Coalition Public Partners are state and local government agencies that support the concept of a regional trails network and play a major role in building and managing the trails. As Public Partners, they are responsible for advising the Coalition and its Leadership Group, helping to ensure effective programs leading to the completion of a comprehensive trails network in the Central Puget Sound region. They do this by participating in Coalition meetings and activities, and keeping the Leadership Group and working groups informed about issues in their communities. Public Partners can participate as members of the Leadership Group and Working Groups, but will not participate in advocacy efforts and will recuse themselves from any decision in which there is a conflict of interest (ex: advocacy work as it relates to voter-approved funding).

### Public Partners Duties and Responsibilities

1. Support the Mission and Vision.
2. Help advance the work of the Coalition through education.
3. Make a contribution that is meaningful to your organization (financial, volunteer hours, in-kind resources).
4. Take initiative and provide leadership in support of Coalition priorities.
5. Support and influence the work of the Coalition by being an engaged participant. Serve on committees and work groups as needed. Attend Coalition meetings and activities and come prepared by reading material distributed prior to meetings. If you cannot attend meetings, answer Coalition surveys in a timely manner. Fulfill commitments within the agreed-upon deadlines.
6. Maintain knowledge of current programs of the Coalition and share information.
7. Share resources and talents with the organization, including expertise, and contacts for in-kind contributions.
8. Trail managers should share information about their projects and use this forum to improve coordination among participating agencies.

### Benefits of Public Partner Membership

Public Partners of the Coalition will have the opportunity to:

- Join with other trail builders and enthusiasts to support a shared vision of a regional trails network in the Central Puget Sound region with a unified voice.



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- Participate in a “learning community” - attend special events and meetings, share messaging, lessons learned, innovative ideas, best practices, data for regional trails.
- Develop working relationships with a growing coalition of diverse supporters of an accessible, interconnected and equitable regional trails network.
- Be part of the process to identify and collaborate on priority trail connections. Work together to leverage funding and resources.
- Educate and engage the public and decision-makers on the benefits of a world-class regional trails network in the Central Puget Sound region.

### Process for Becoming a Member of the Leafline Trails Coalition

- To join, Public Partners will sign a pledge that states that they will support the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the Coalition and understand the Duties and Responsibilities of membership. The Partner agency will determine who in their agency has the authority to sign this pledge.
- As the Coalition framework evolves, we may consider different levels of membership for financial contributors and rules for voting for both individual and organizational members.

### c. Champion Group

It is envisioned that the Champion Group will be comprised of elected officials from participating jurisdictions (state, county and city), and of thought leaders from business, public health, the state, conservation, transportation and community-based organizations. The purpose of the Champion Group is to endorse and support the work of the Coalition and celebrate an interconnected and accessible trails network for the Central Puget Sound region. It is anticipated that they will attend annual meetings to celebrate progress and show support. This group’s duties and responsibilities, as well as the process for joining, will be better defined in 2020.

### d. Working Groups

It is envisioned that the Coalition will have working groups to help further its mission and vision. Working groups will serve both the full Coalition and the Leadership Group. Some of these groups, such as the Charter Committee, will form to address a specific task and disband when this work is completed. Others are expected to be standing, on-going working groups with membership that changes as the work evolves.

Existing working groups that have met and are likely to be on-going include:

- Policy, Coordination & Stewardship – to address emerging policy issues (such as electric bicycle policy), improving the consistency and usability of trails across the network, coordinating on data collection and management, wayfinding, and other issues as needed.
- Engagement – to help tell the story of Leafline Trails, coordinate public outreach efforts to increase trail usage and access, and implement branding of the trails network, with the goal of increasing usership and user diversity.
- Gap Filling and Investment Strategy – to identify priority gaps in the network that the Coalition will work to close and an investment strategy to address those gaps.



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Further defining the purpose of these working groups, meeting frequency, and membership will be part of the 2020 work plan for the Leadership Group and Coalition.

### VI. Governance

#### Leadership Group

**Role of the Leadership Group:** The Leadership Group is the decision-making body for the Coalition. It is responsible for setting, tracking and implementing the goals and vision of the Leafline Trails Coalition, inviting new members to join and support the Coalition, fundraising for Coalition priorities, and keeping members up-to-date on the activities of the Coalition.

**Decision-Making Process** - The Leadership Group will strive for consensus. Decisions are made by a modified consensus process. That is, Members of the Leadership Group will strive for consensus on all issues, where consensus is defined as a decision that all Members agree is the “best solution” at the time and that no Member states that they cannot “live” with the decision. Decisions of the coalition do not obligate public funding.

To enhance inclusion, the Leadership Group will also make use of online polling to gather input, opinions and perspectives from Members unable to attend in-person meetings when an issue is discussed or a decision is at hand.

**Composition:** The Leafline Trails Coalition strives to be a broad-based, diverse membership that gets beyond the usual choir of trail advocates and to provide equitable access to the Leafline Trails network. It is desirable that the Leadership Group includes diverse community representatives and interests such as: people of color, geographic diversity, government agencies (state, county and city), non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, tribes, health advocates, business, land use experts, trail users, ADA experts/advocates, tourism/chambers of commerce, financial experts, etc. At minimum, the Leadership Group must include representatives from Snohomish, Kitsap, King and Pierce Counties and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

**Size of the Leadership Group:** In order to keep the group to a manageable size, it should have 15-20 members and include:

- 4-5 government representatives
- 3-5 corporations/ business organizations
- 3-5 non-profits/community groups
- 3-5 at large members

Members will serve staggered terms to insure both continuity from year to year and to allow for a rotation of membership, except for the government representatives who will be appointed by the government they represent and have no set time limit. In the first year, members will be recruited to 1-, 2- and 3-year terms. Starting in the second year, members will serve 2-year terms. Members wishing to serve longer than 2 years are allowed to renew



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once for a second term with the approval of the Nominating Committee and vote of the full Coalition. Members who leave their term early are expected to work with the Leadership Group and Coalition to fill their position.

**How Leadership Group Membership is Determined:** The Leafline Trails Coalition forms a Nominating Committee to annually recruit and nominate people to serve on the Leadership Group. To inform this process, the Committee annually polls the Coalition membership to determine who are interested in serving on the Leadership Group and assesses the make-up of the Leadership group to determine how well it is meeting the Coalition's goal of being broad-based and equitable. The Nominating Committee will propose a slate of members for the Leadership Group which will be voted on at an annual meeting of the Leafline Trails Coalition.

**Officers of the Leadership Group:** The officers of the Leadership Group shall be voted on by the members of the Leadership Group and include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

### **Duties of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer:**

- **Chair:** Responsible for leading the Leadership Group and Coalition Membership in practices of good governance. The Chair will be a visible representative and spokesperson for the Coalition in the community. The Chair will work closely with the staff for the Coalition in planning and presiding over Leadership Group meetings.
- **Vice Chair:** Generally offers support to the Chair and staff and substitute leadership when needed. The Vice Chair may take on special projects. The Vice Chair is expected to assume the role of Chair when the current Chair's term is up.
- **Secretary:** Responsible for ensuring accurate notes of Leadership Group meetings are kept.
- **Treasurer:** Responsible for overseeing the Coalition's financial operations and ensuring that Leadership Group members have the information they need to be effective fiscal stewards of the Coalition.

Note: at the discretion of the Leadership Group the roles of Secretary and Treasurer can be combined.

**Frequency of Leadership Group Meetings:** The Leadership Group will have bi-monthly meetings on odd months. Members are expected to attend meetings regularly and participate in-person or, if necessary, by teleconference. Members shall have no more than 3 absences per year. It is anticipated that Members will come prepared to meetings and do work between meetings.

## **VII. Coordinator/Staff**

The role of the Leafline Trails Coalition Manager is to provide coordination and support services for the Coalition's work. For example, the Staff role helps to convene and inspire the Coalition (including Leadership Group and working groups), tell the story of the Coalition, broaden Membership, and advance Coalition priorities. Funding for shared staffing—provided through a Memorandum of Understanding with Cascade Bicycle Club—supports the activities outlined in the Leafline Trails Coalition Manager job description and annual work plan. These details will be discussed and finalized by the Leadership Group.



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### VIII. Meetings

The Leadership Group will meet up to 6 times per year remotely or at a location determined by the Leadership Chair and Coalition staff. Determining the frequency and location of the Coalition Membership meetings, the Champion Group and the Working Groups will be part of the 2020 work plan.

### IX. Communication

- **Internal Communications** – Participating members agree to communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully, and to share any information relevant to the Coalition’s common issues among participating Members. Information shared is to be used for the implementation of this Charter and thus the shared benefit of the Coalition. Members agree to provide clear notice when they are sharing sensitive, confidential, and/or proprietary information that must be kept confidential. All members agree to refrain from disclosing confidential information without the consent of affected member(s).
- **External Communications** - The Coalition recognizes that effective external communications are critical to success, so individual participating organizations will respect the decisions made regarding the Coalition’s messaging and methods of communications. Developing messaging protocols regarding the use of the Leafline logo will developed as part of the 2020 work plan. Participating Members will follow approved messaging protocols – including the use of the Leafline logo - when communicating with organizations' member agencies, media, funders, and the public about the Coalition and its actions. Participating Members will give all participating Members and the Coalition credit for the Coalition’s accomplishments.

### X. Dispute Resolution

In the event of a dispute, the Members shall seek to resolve the dispute amicably, in good faith and through mediation with the Coalition Chair. Further development of a dispute resolution process will be part of the 2020 work plan.

### XI. Amending the Charter

This Charter can be amended as necessary by the Leadership Group and will be reviewed annually.

