



Bellingham Parks & Recreation

Greenways: Planning, Funding, Building, & Maintaining Trails

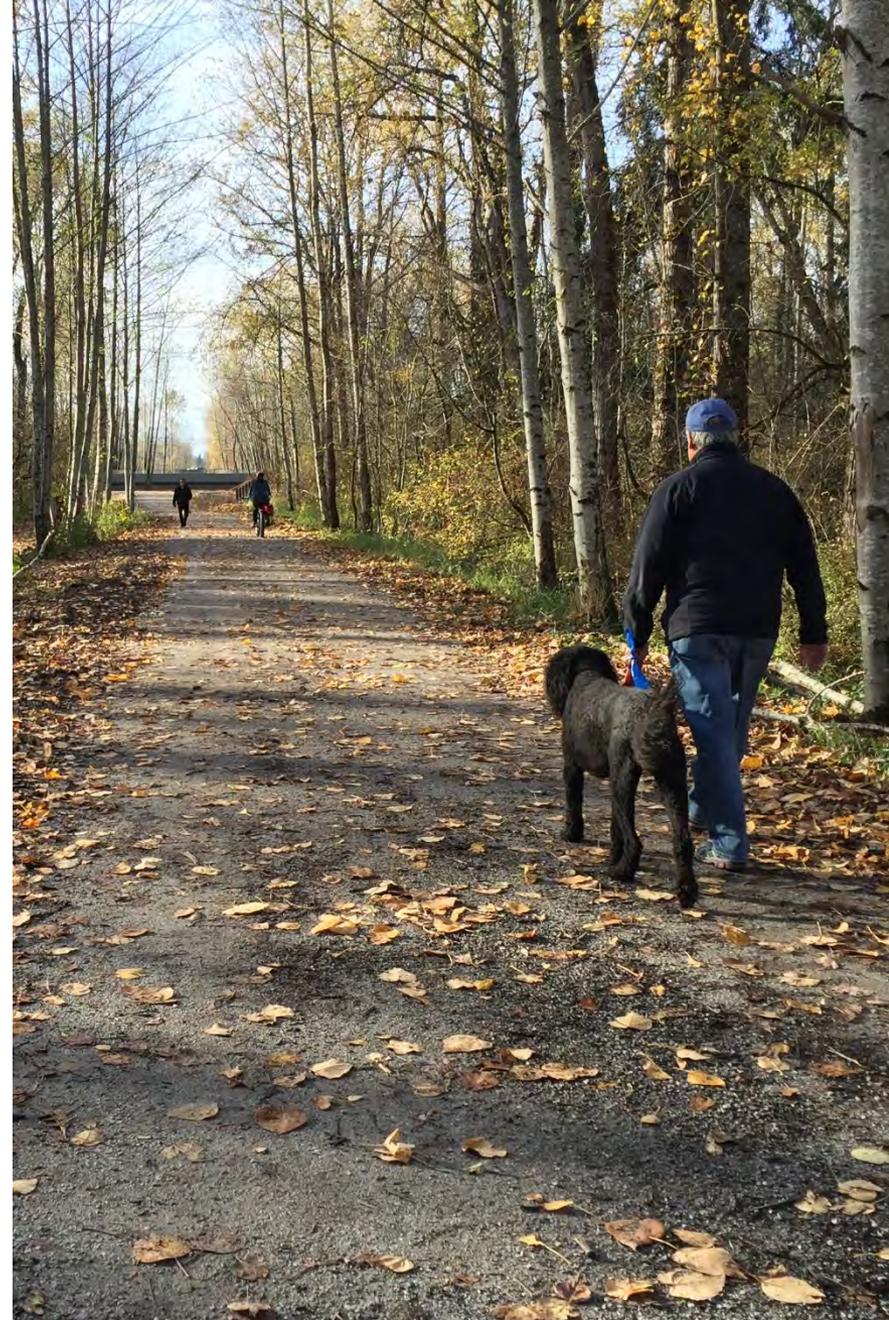
Washington State Transportation Commission

June 16, 2020

Gina Austin, Project Engineer

Overview

- About Bellingham
- Greenways Program
- Planning
- Challenges & opportunities
- Design & sustainability
- Case Study
 - Squalicum Creek Trail



Squalicum Creek Trail

About Bellingham



Source: choosewhatcom.com

About Bellingham Parks

- Over 80 miles of trails
- Over 3,500 acres of park land
- 65+ employees
- \$10M operating budget
- \$10M capital budget



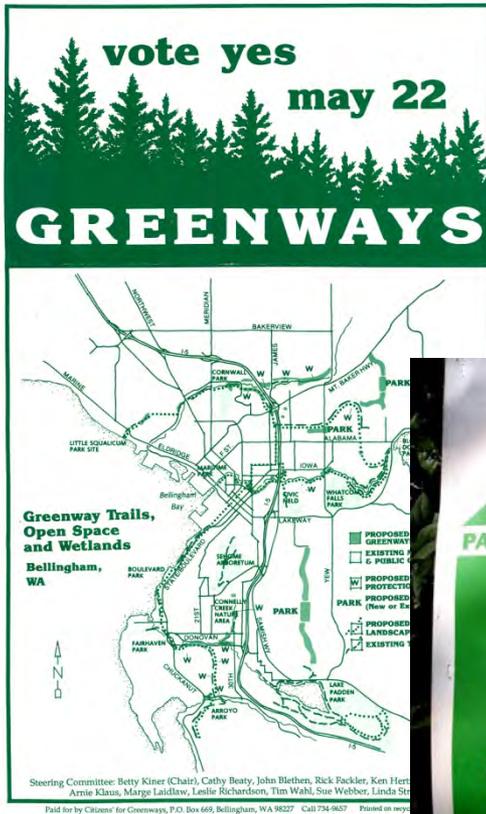
About Bellingham

Year	1984	1995	2008	2019
Acres of Land	1,768	2,282	2,417	3,500+
Miles of Trail		28.7	64.7	81.2



Growth in the north: Trail to Cordata School

Greenways Program: 4 property tax levies since 1990



for Greenway Program Land Acquisitions

October 2011 Update

Prepared by

City of Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department and
Advisory Committee for the Bellingham City Council
City of Bellingham, Washington



2019-2023 Greenways Program

City of Bellingham, Washington

Prepared by:

City of Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department and Greenways
Advisory Committee (GAC), for the Bellingham City Council

Greenways Program

Connecting ridge tops, shoreline & stream corridors, & old rail lines for a linear system of parks, forests & open spaces – for people & wildlife.

- Over 100 million in funding for land acquisition, development, and maintenance
- Leveraging grants and donations
- Last levy 25% for capital maintenance (\$1.25 m/yr)
- Citizen board for strategic guidance
- 40 acres of riparian trail corridors



Bellingham's Trails

- Multi-modal
- Accessible limestone, 6-10 ft wide
- Connections with bike and ped master plans
- Utilize railroad grades
- Purchase, easements, developer-built for Park Impact Fee credit
- Future goals – finish connections, improve perception of safety, riparian habitat improvement

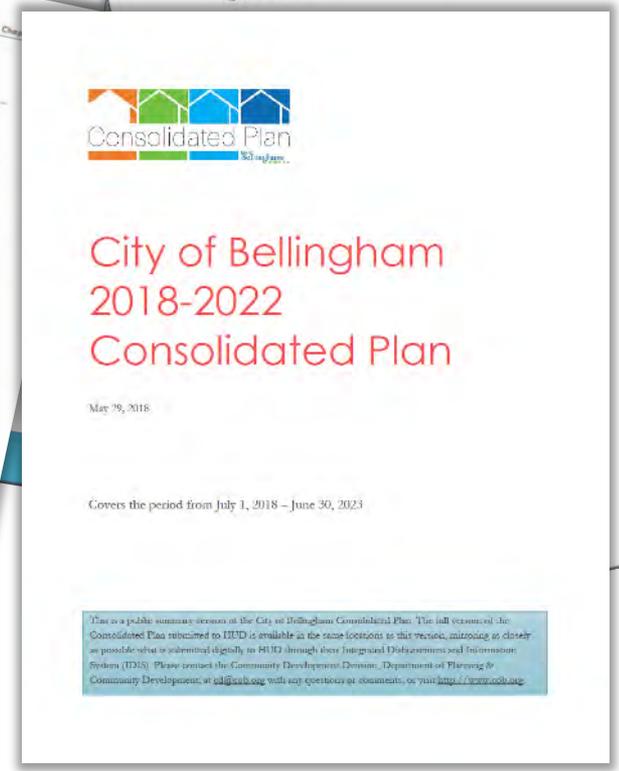
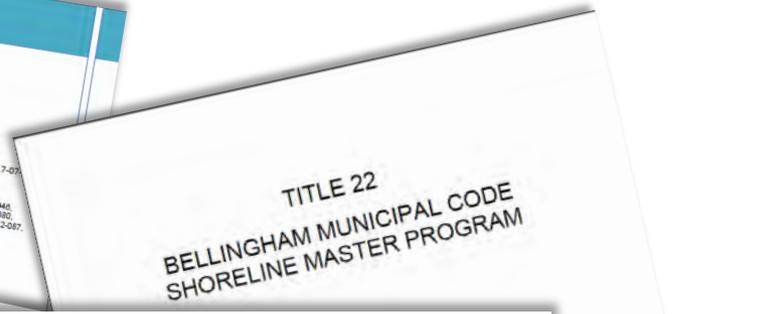
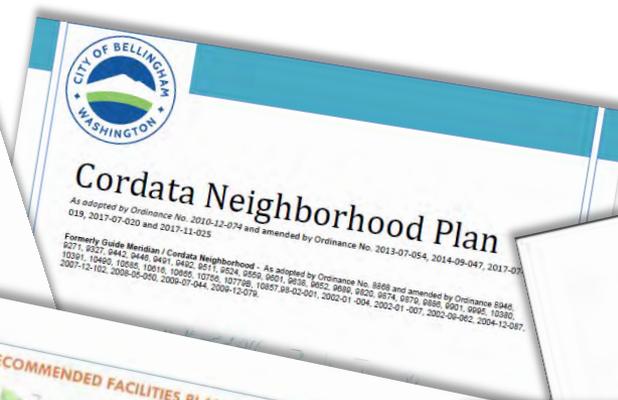
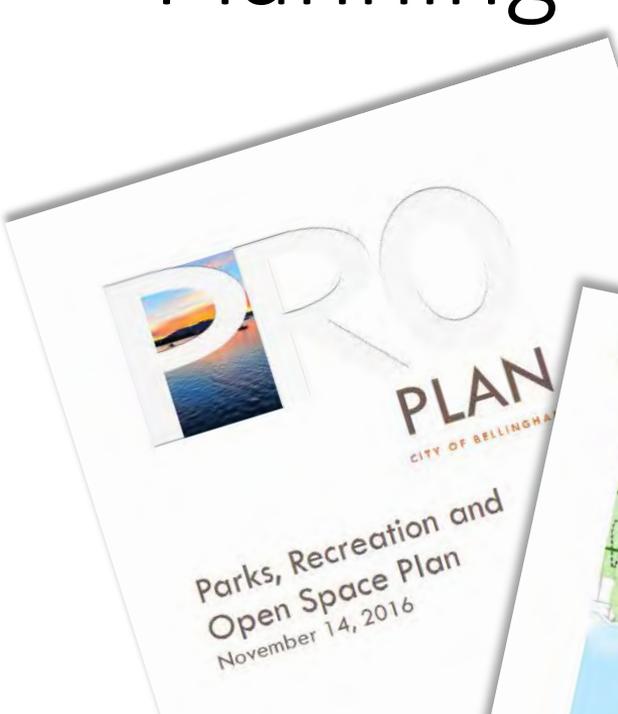


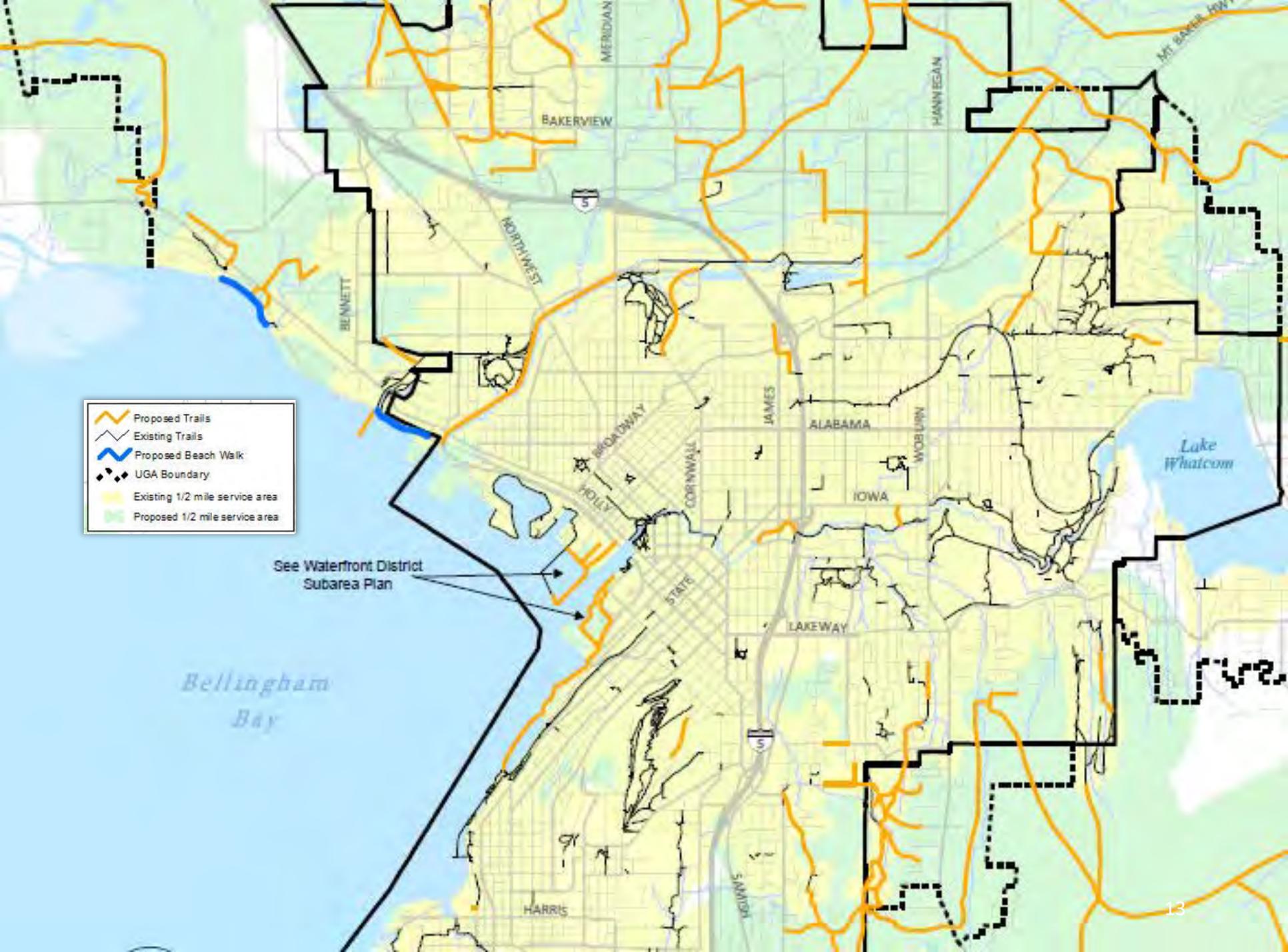






Planning





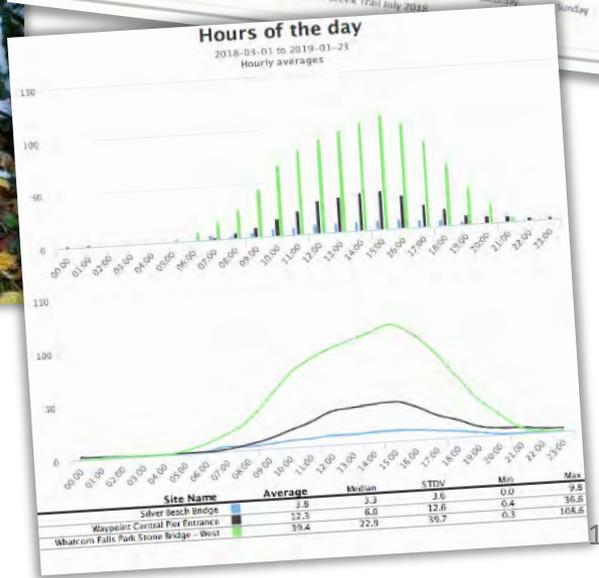
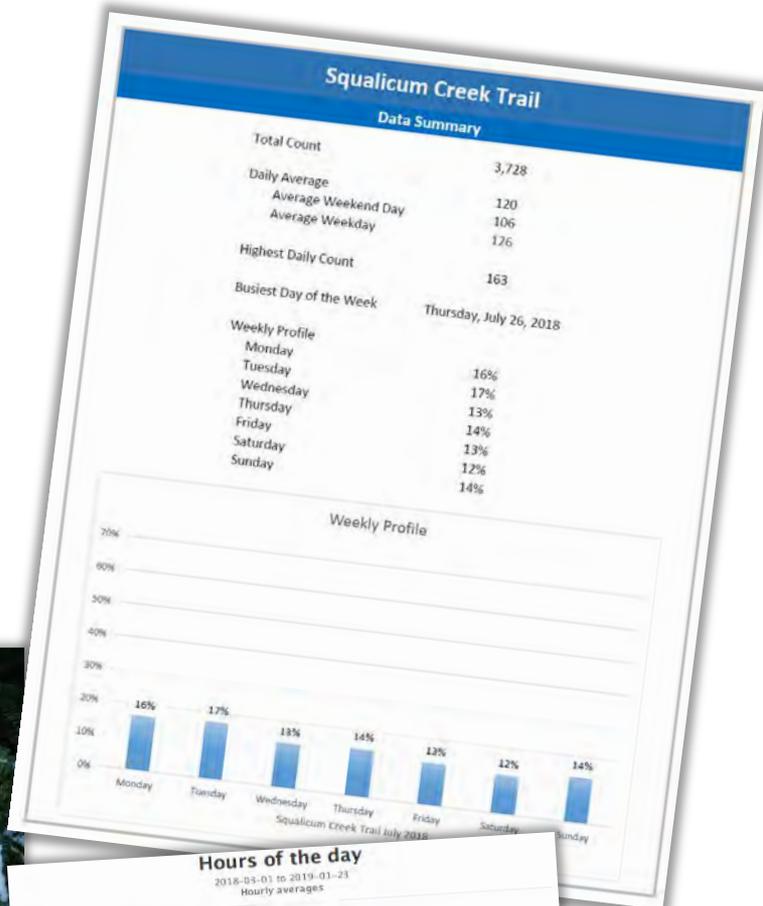
- Proposed Trails
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Beach Walk
- UGA Boundary
- Existing 1/2 mile service area
- Proposed 1/2 mile service area

See Waterfront District Subarea Plan

Bellingham Bay

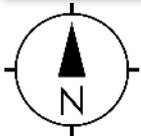
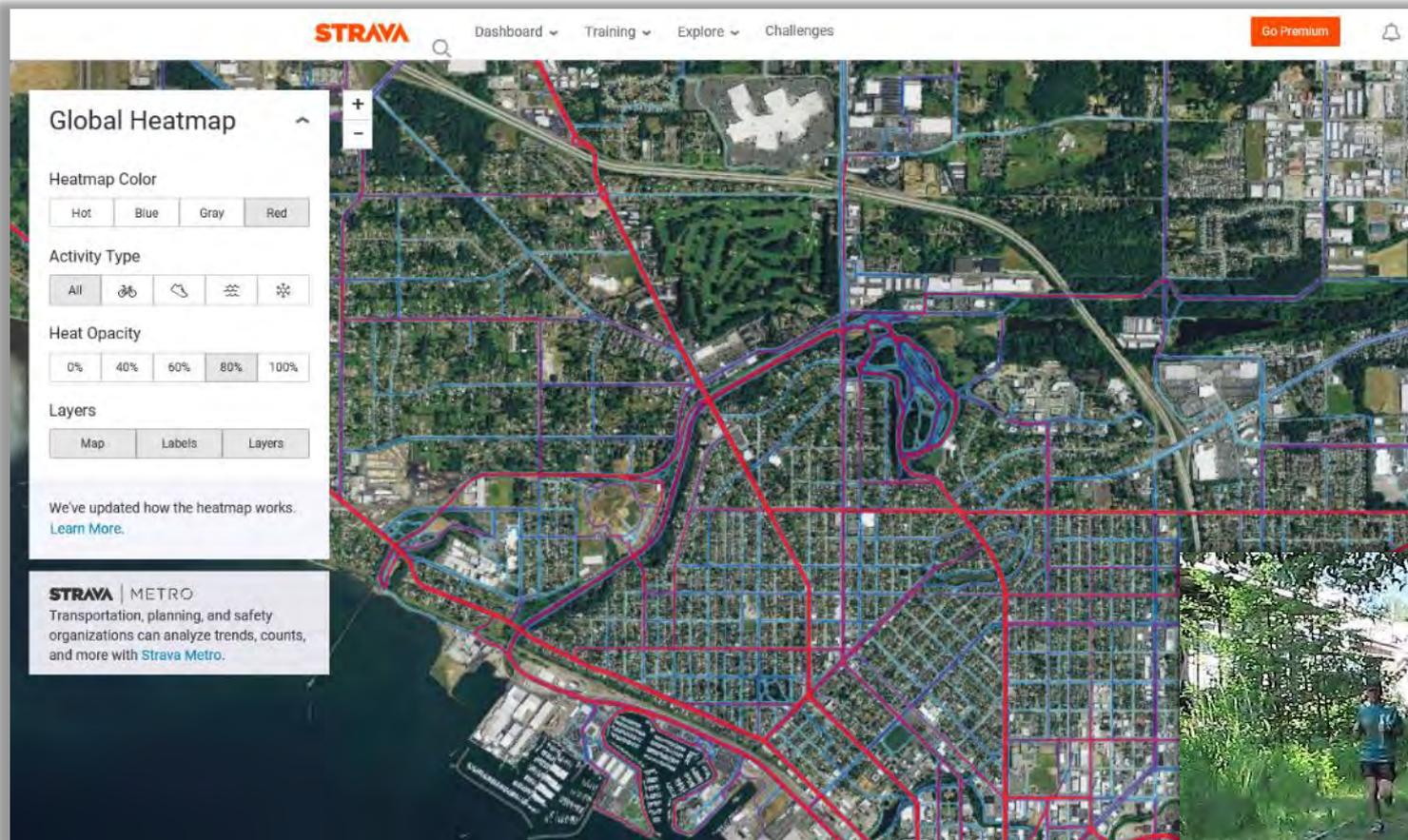
Trail Counters

- Monthly
 - Waterfront trail 61,000+
 - Other trails 2,500 to 6,000+



Go to www.cob.org and search "user counts"

Apps for planning



Source: <https://www.strava.com/heatmap#7.00/-120.90000/38.36000/hot/all>

Challenges & opportunities

- Recreation
- Habitat
- Transportation
- Development



Development



Recreation



Habitat



Transportation

Challenges & opportunities

- Balancing interests
- Which takes precedence?
 - Trails
 - Habitat
 - Transportation
- Can you vest a project in a critical area?
- Does one project need to take on the expenses of another?



Trail Design & Sustainability

- Local aggregates
- Recycled plastic posts
- Reuse topsoil
- Grind trees for mulch
- Minimize clearing areas
- Plant natives
- Stormwater: plant trees, use dispersion



Topsoil stripping



Trail Design & Sustainability



*Example:
South Bay Trail
built in 1995
250,000 trip per year
Stable & firm
No rolling shoulders*

Limestone surfacing

Trail Design: Wayfinding

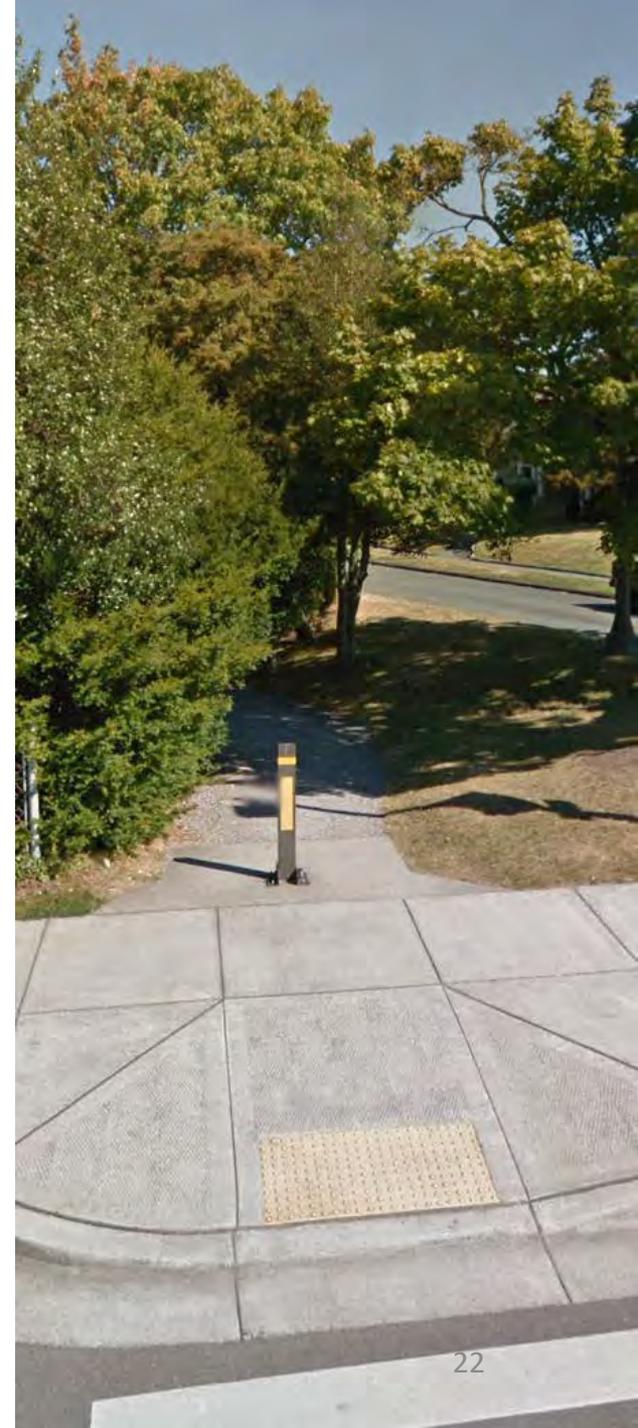


Trail Design: Signage



Trail Design: vehicle barriers

- Bollards, gates, fences, or any other barriers deter unauthorized access
- Layout that admits peds, bikes may not exclude single-track vehicles
- Bollards shouldn't be the default





Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail



Predeveloped condition along corridor, view east

Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail

- \$2.5 million (2016)
- Length: 1.5 miles
- Width: 8 feet
- 4,500 plants installed
- 1.29 acres enhanced



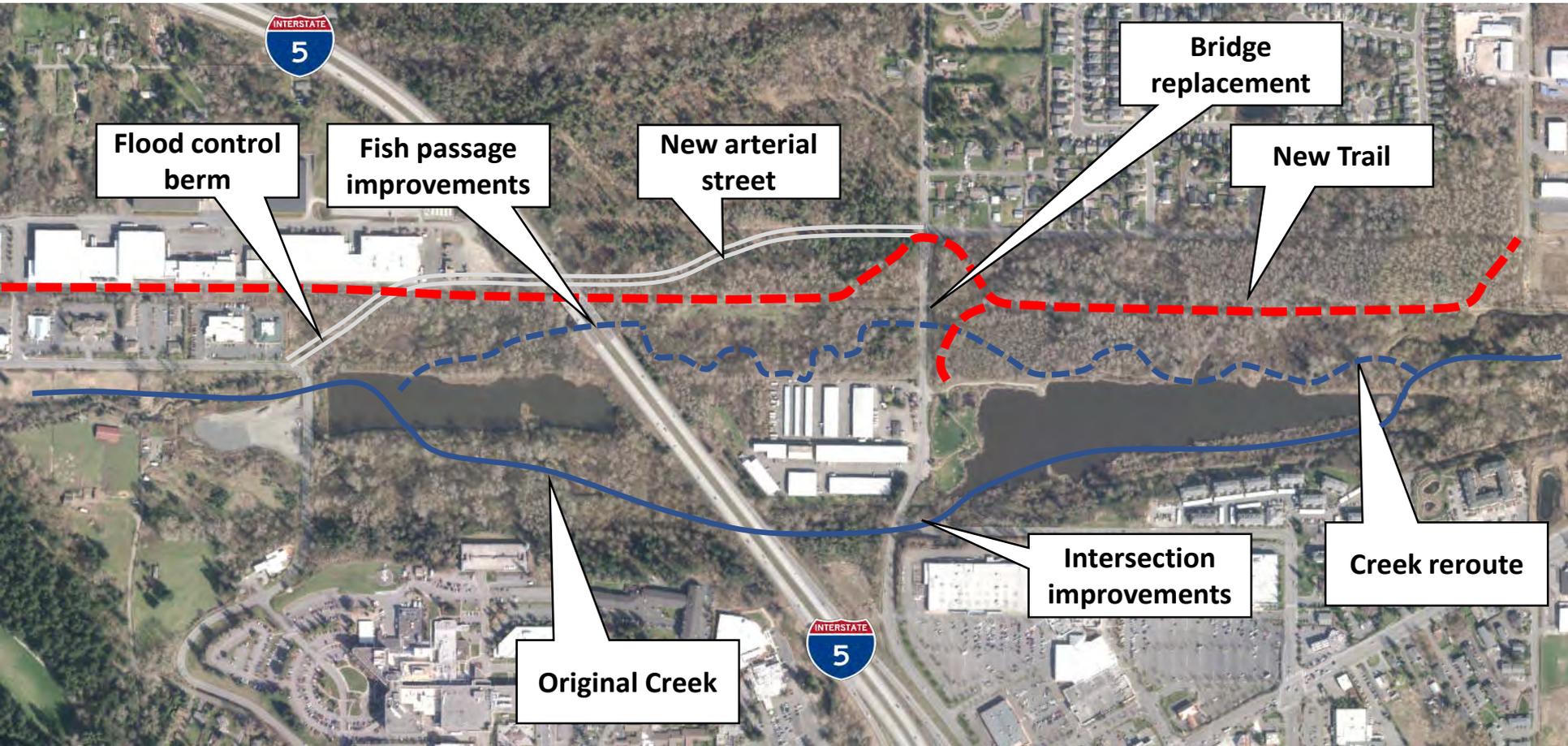
Irongate culvert over tributary

Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail

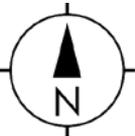
- Two flood control berms
- 3 culverts
- 1 bridge
- Floodplain
- Habitat corridor, fish passage
- State shoreline
- Impaired waterbody
- Future major arterial



New bridge at creek



Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail





Squalicum Creek Trail: Predeveloped condition at Interstate 5, view west



Squalicum Creek Trail: Crossing under Interstate 5

HABITAT PHOTOS

This section of Squalicum Creek was restored in 2015 to improve water quality and fish habitat. Snap a photo to help us track the creek's recovery:

1. Hold camera or phone horizontally against upright edge of bracket.
2. Take a photo of the view, without a filter.
3. Text or email your photo to habitat@cob.org.

Visit www.cob.org/habitatphotos to learn more about this project and view the annual time-lapse video.

*By sending your photo to the above email address, you agree to the City's Photo Use Agreement.

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Squalicum Creek Trail: Engaging the public - photo log



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