Overview

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

6 Million people live within 90 miles

Source: chooseswhatcom.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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1984</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres of Land</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>2,282</td>
<td>2,417</td>
<td>3,500+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles of Trail</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Greenways Program: 4 property tax levies since 1990
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
Trail Counters

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

Go to [www.cob.org](http://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
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
Example:
South Bay Trail
built in 1995
250,000 trip per year
Stable & firm
No rolling shoulders

Trail Design & Sustainability

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
Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail

- $2.5 million (2016)
- Length: 1.5 miles
- Width: 8 feet
- 4,500 plants installed
- 1.29 acres enhanced
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
Case study: Squalicum Creek Trail

- Flood control berm
- Fish passage improvements
- New arterial street
- Bridge replacement
- New Trail
- Intersection improvements
- Creek reroute
- Original Creek

Original Creek

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

Squalicum Creek Trail: Engaging the public - photo log