

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: Trail Corridor Update DEPARTMENT: Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services PRESENTED BY: Dick Deal, PRCS Director

ISSUE STATEMENT:

In May 2006 a bond issue to make several improvements and acquisitions in our park system was approved by voters with more than a 70% YES vote. \$2,500,000 was approved for hard and soft surface trail systems in our parks and in the community. This report is an update on the work that has taken place on Trail Corridors in the past year.

To assist with the evaluation of the current trail systems and develop a recommendation for the expenditure of bond issue trail corridor funds, the Park Board created a Trail Corridor Study Group. The City advertised in issues of Currents for citizens interested in serving on this study group and thirteen citizens responded. These thirteen citizens and three members of the Park Board formed the study group. Their work plan included the following:

- evaluate the existing trails in the large wooded parks in our system including Hamlin Park, South Woods, Boeing Creek Park, Shoreview Park, and Innis Arden Reserve M.
- recommendations to the Park Board of the preferred trail systems in each park
- identify the best routes linking the Interurban Trail and Burke-Gilman Trail
- evaluate the best public right-of-way routes for bicycles and pedestrians to get around Shoreline

The work described in this report was suggested by the Trail Corridor Study Group and recommended by the Park Board. Work on the hard surface connectors from the Interurban Trail to the Burke-Gilman Trail, and the best right-of-way routes around town will begin later this year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

In addition to the \$2,500,000 in bond issue funding, approximately \$600,000 will be received from King County over the next six years for trail connectors to the Interurban Trail. These funds are a result of a King County levy passed by voters in August 2007. In addition, we will continue to pursue grants for trails and non-motorized transportation links. The only expenditure to date has been to The Berger Partnership for landscape architecture assistance with trail layout and design and to cover a portion of the expense for the pedestrian light at 145th and the Interurban Trail. After Council review and approval of the soft surface trail routing as recommended by Park Board, staff will continue with detailed design and begin trail repair and construction.

RECOMMENDATION

No Action is necessary. Unless directed otherwise by Council, the staff will begin working on trail maintenance, and the continued development of a trail strategy for our park system and our community.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney _____

INTRODUCTION

Many of our forested parks have trail systems that were developed by use patterns over the years. In most cases they were not designed and constructed to trail standards and were developed over time. As a result, some trails are located in: 1) sensitive areas; 2) areas where erosion is a major problem; and 3) areas where the trail has had a negative impact on vegetation.

All trails have an impact on the environment where they are located. The challenge is to keep those impacts to a minimum while providing the desired trail experience. All trails should be conceived as low-impact recreational experiences. Our goal is the development of several miles of "sustainable" trails that will provide a wonderful opportunity for users to enjoy the natural environment in our community, and have as little impact as possible on the vegetation and wildlife.

We will design trails in our park system to retain their physical form over the years of use and natural forces acting on them. A well designed trail will require minimal maintenance, which will be a goal of our trail development strategy.

In addition to a well designed trail system, it will be important to have signage educating trail users on trail safety and proper use of the trail system. A signage system will be developed that is informational, durable, and has minimal visual impact on the trail experience.

Many people use our existing trail system for dog walking. Much of that use is off-leash which is contrary to current park regulations. Since 2006 the City has contracted with King County Animal control for additional services, focusing on managing the off-leash activity. It appears the number of dogs off-leash in our park system has been reduced by this strategy; however we will continue to educate off-leash dog walkers and issue tickets for repeat offenders.

BACKGROUND

The Trail Corridor Study Group (TCSG) met several times last year to assist staff and the Park Board in the development of this recommendation. The group consisted of citizens with a variety of interests in trails. All were active users of local and regional trail systems, and some had spent years in trail design and construction.

During 2007 the TCSG made several visits to the trails in local Shoreline parks. Many of the TCSG members have been regular users of our park trails for years and were able to offer valuable insight into current use patterns. In addition, the TCSG and parks staff toured other parks in the Seattle area to examine trail design techniques. Staff and TCSG members also spoke with trail maintenance staff from other cities to learn about signage and maintenance needs.

Hamlin Park Trail System (See Attachment "A")

There are several trails in Hamlin Park that are used regularly by the community. Most of the trails are not defined or built to any standard. In some cases the trails are in sensitive steep

slope areas and will need to be relocated or eliminated. Much of the work in Hamlin Park is maintenance work that will include creating a trail surface, structured stairs on steeper slopes, and re-establishing the landscaping along the trails. In several areas the trails have become several feet wide and much of the native vegetation alongside the trail has been destroyed. We are working with the Seattle Urban Nature (SUN) staff to develop test plots to determine the best way to re-vegetate these areas of Hamlin Park. SUN has planted several different native species and experimented with different planning strategies to determine the best way to re-vegetate areas of the park where plant materials have been displaced. A more detailed report on this plant work will be discussed when the Urban Forest Assessment recently completed by SUN is presented to the City Council in May.

Members of the TCSG attended the Fircrest open house public meetings in the fall of 2007 expressing interest in having a trail system through Fircrest that would link Hamlin Park and South Woods in the future. This is a very exciting opportunity that would link two large Shoreline park properties creating a trail system through nearly 100 acres of public park space.

South Woods Trail System (See Attachment "B")

There is currently a trail in South Woods that was created prior to the site becoming a public park. The existing trail needs to be evaluated to ensure it is in the proper location and designed correctly, and to determine if other trails need to be added. In addition, when the City acquired the park property from the previous owners, Shoreline School District and Shoreline Water District, the City accepted the responsibility for making frontage improvements along the south edge of the park fronting on 150th NE. The design for these improvements will address pedestrian safety, storm water infiltration, and storm water quality.

Boeing Creek Park / Shoreview Park Trail System (See Attachment "C")

The existing trail system in these two parks, which are adjacent to each other, are currently very well used by park visitors. In the majority of the park property the soil is very sandy and has limited stability. Poorly placed or designed trails in these parks suffer from erosion. In some places trails need to be abandoned and new trails created to reduce or eliminate this problem. Any new trails created will be located in areas that will be less susceptible to erosion and built to standards that will reduce erosion.

On April 28 the bid award for Boeing Creek Park and storm water improvements will be on the Council agenda. In addition to irrigation, landscape, and trail improvements in the vicinity of the storm pond in the northeast corner of the park at 175th and 3rd NW, there will be trail maintenance and design improvements to several hundred feet of trail south of the storm pond. This will be just the first phase of trail improvements for this trail system.

Several design strategies are being evaluated to cross the creek to access the trail systems on both sides of the creek. Currently trail users cross the creek on stepping stones or trees that have fallen across the creek over the years. We have been evaluating the placement of a bridge across the creek, but the loose, sandy soil creates design challenges. Additional work will be done on creek crossing opportunities and a full report will be made to the Council at a later date.

Innis Arden Reserve M Trail System (See Attachment "D")

Innis Arden Reserve M is a 23 acre public park that has no development or improvements. There are several Innis Arden reserves in west Shoreline that are private property. Innis Arden Reserve M is public property, but there is some confusion because of, "Innis Arden Reserve," in the park name.

There are several informal trails in the park that have been developed by park users over the years. The site has some steep slopes and some areas of the park are very wet. The development of a trail system will require reinforced steps on the steep slopes and boardwalks or other elevated trail strategies to allow water to flow freely through its natural course.

Parking for drive up park users will need to be created. There are areas of right-of-way adjacent to the park where a few parking stalls could be created.

Other Park Trails

As we continue to make improvements to parks in our system we evaluate the opportunities for hard and soft surface trails. Several parks are currently in planning and design phases and in some cases staff may be recommending to the Park Board that trail corridor funding be used to pay for some of the pedestrian trail improvements.

Trails are not only great for exercise, but parks with loop trails tend to have citizens in the park for more hours during the day resulting in less vandalism and other negative activity.

Links between Interurban Trail and Burke-Gilman Trail and Community Connectors

The TCSG did some preliminary work on the linkages between the Interurban Trail and Burke-Gilman Trail. The TCSG met with a representative from Lake Forest Park to discuss possible routing through that community. The group also toured several roads and right-of-way connections in Shoreline trying to find the safest routes for getting around town on existing streets. Further work on these connectors will be done when the City of Shoreline begins updating the non-motorized element of the Transportation Plan beginning in 2008.

Next Steps

The work of the TCSG identifying the best routes through our large wooded park sites is important to the long term viability of these parks. The amount of use on our park trails has increased in recent years and I anticipate a continued increase in the future. Having a well planned, well designed, and well constructed trail system will ensure the use of these important facilities for future generations.

With the Council's verbal approval this evening we will begin the detailed design of trails in South Woods, Shoreview, and Innis Arden Reserve M. These detailed designs will give us the necessary details to share with the community at public meetings. In addition, we will begin making maintenance improvements to the existing trails in Hamlin Park to reduce erosion and damage to the existing vegetation.

RECOMMENDATION

No Action is necessary. Unless directed otherwise by Council, the staff will begin working on trail maintenance, and the continued development of a trail strategy for our park system and our community.

Approved By: City Manager _____ City Attorney _____

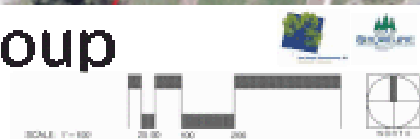
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment "A"	Hamlin Park
Attachment "B"	South Woods
Attachment "C"	Boeing Creek/Shoreview Parks
Attachment "D"	Innis Arden Reserve M

ATTACHMENT "A"



Trails and Corridors Group City of Shoreline Parks Hamlin Park



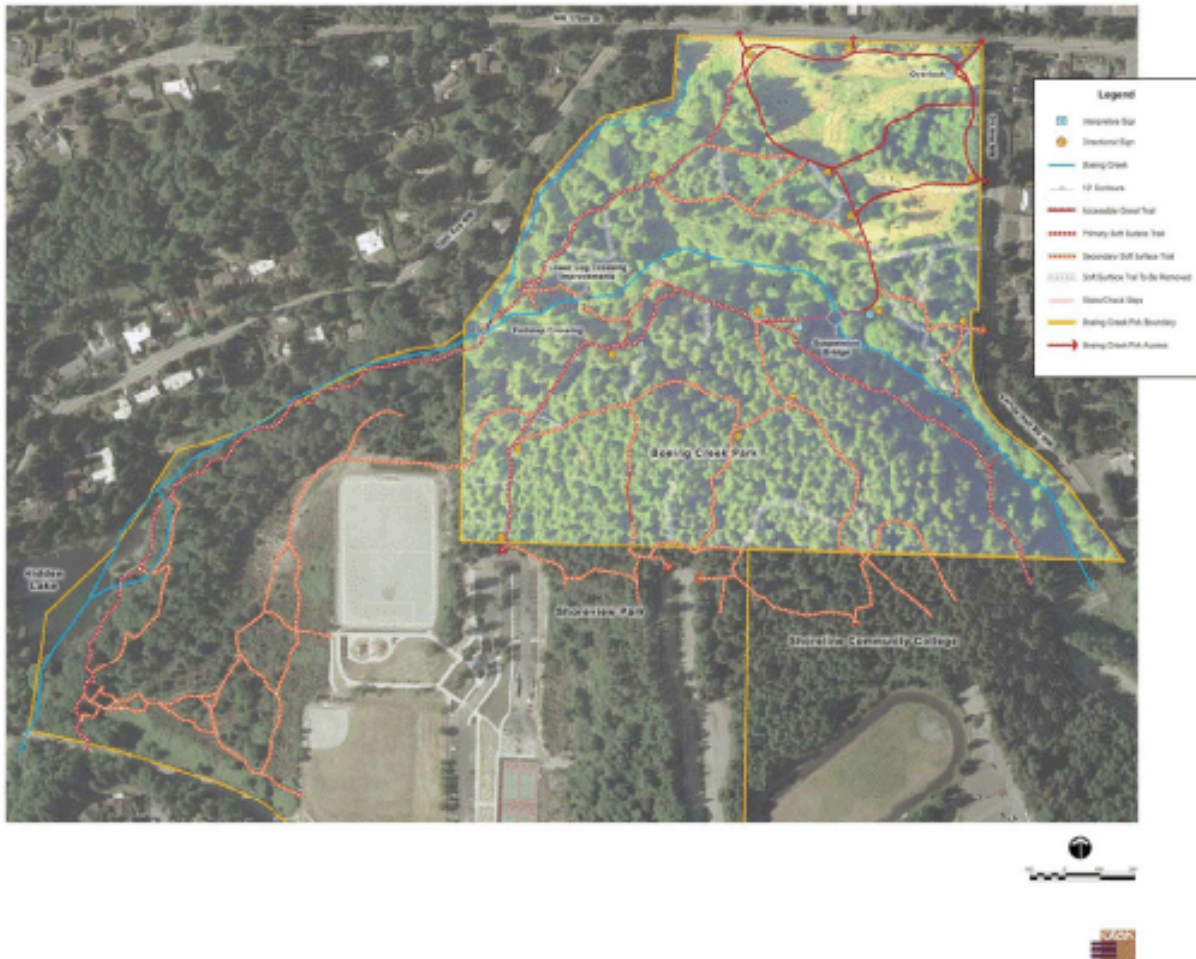
ATTACHMENT "B"



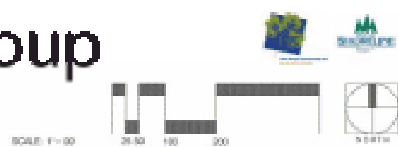
Trails and Corridors Group
City of Shoreline Parks
Southwoods Park



ATTACHMENT "C"



Trails and Corridors Group
City of Shoreline Parks
 Boeing Creek Park Improvements



ATTACHMENT "D"



Trails and Corridors Group
City of Shoreline Parks
Innis Arden Reserve

