

North Bellingham Trail Plan

BELLINGHAM PARKS & RECREATION



CITY OF BELLINGHAM

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North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

Vision Statement

Bellingham's northern neighborhoods and surrounding areas enjoy an interconnected system of accessible multi-use trails and greenways that offer diverse, healthy outdoor experiences within a rich variety of landscapes and natural habitats.

1.1 Plan Overview and Background

In 2005, residents of the Cordata area invited City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation staff to a meeting to discuss the lack of parks and trails in their neighborhood. Realizing a need to develop a trail and greenway plan for the area, the Design and Development Division of the Parks and Recreation Department led a group of volunteer citizens in applying for a grant of Technical Assistance from the National Park Service. The Grant was awarded in October 2005, and a steering committee formed and met throughout 2006 to formulate the plan.

Because of the rapid growth in this part of the city, it was important for citizens, landowners and local agencies to work together to identify potential trail routes and resource protection opportunities before it was too late. While trails developed on the north side will serve all of Bellingham, residents of the north neighborhoods have the greatest need and will recognize the greatest benefit from the plan. The Steering Committee was made up of residents, developers, and agency representatives.

Prior activity for trail and greenway planning in this area includes the 2002 update of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, the update of the Whatcom County Open Space Plan, and the Cordata Parks and Trails Committee draft plan, a citizen generated plan for the Cordata development area. All were considered during the development of the North Bellingham Trail Plan.

It is anticipated that a plan with such widespread citizen input and support, will lead to the ability to identify funding, seek land dedications and purchases, and provide eligibility for various grant programs. Bellingham has a successful track record of funding and constructing trails and greenways and protecting unique and scenic properties that have been identified in a community process.

The current service level for trails in Bellingham is approximately one half mile of multi-use trail per 1000 people. With an expected population increase of 40,000 people over the next 20 years, an additional 20 linear miles of trails is needed.

14,000 additional people are expected to move to north Bellingham, bringing the total population of that area to 31,500. Since there are few existing trails, approximately 15 miles of the needed 20 should be located in north Bellingham.

Because Bellingham is growing so quickly but does not yet have a specific plan for trails and greenways in the north area, it is urgent that we adopt a plan as soon as possible. Many first time home buyers with children as well as retirees, move into more affordable housing with limited yard or play space. Trails provide a safe way for children to walk and bicycle to schools and playgrounds. They also as promote a healthy, active outdoor lifestyle for all citizens. Trails have consistently been the number one recreational amenity desired in surveys and focus groups.

Connectivity between new trails and greenways to existing and planned city and county trails, such as the Coast Millennium Trail and the Bay to Baker Trail, will help preserve and protect some of our natural resources, maintain the beauty of the area and greatly enhance the outdoor experience of all Whatcom County residents and visitors, now and for future generations.

There was broad support for developing this plan. In addition to a large participation by citizens in the planning process, the following agencies and organizations participated: Cordata Guide Meridian Neighborhood Association, Whatcom County Parks Department and Park Board, Whatcom Council of Governments, Whatcom County Health Department, Whatcom Physical Activity Coalition, the Port of Bellingham, City Parks and Recreation Department, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Greenway Advisory Committee, and Bellingham Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee. A cross section of Bellingham residents from the following neighborhoods served on the steering committee: Birchwood, Cornwall Park, King Mountain, Mount Baker, Alabama Hill, Puget, Samish, and others.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Greenway Advisory Committee have both endorsed this plan and recommend its approval.

The City dedicated staff time and in-kind costs necessary to coordinate the local involvement, including mailings, mapping, surveys, printing, arranging for and providing meeting space. All other agencies and groups have committed staff or representative participation.

1.2 Plan objectives

The Steering Committee developed the following objectives for this plan.

- Integrate parks in greenways & trails planning
- Create an interconnected system of trails
- Provide trails that are close to home and connect neighborhoods/communities
- Coordinate with school district plans, other programs, agencies and city departments (Public Works, Planning)
- Connect to Bay to Baker Trail and Nooksack River Dike Trail
- Implement approved trails (in developments)
- Negotiate trails with retail developers (ie: Wal-Mart)
- Require trails with rezones and annexations
- Provide grade separate crossings of I-5
- Provide a trail overpass at Guide Meridian
- Meet needs of all users
- On-street bike lanes and sidewalks should connect with off road system
- Design trails to fit adjacent land uses and users (i.e.: paved trails near senior housing)
- Provide education opportunities
- Trails should be generally flat and meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards
- Consider if and where lighting is needed
- Involve residents & neighborhoods in planning and design
- Consider closing streets on weekends/special days for bike/walking
- Look at utility corridors for shared use w/trails
- Implement low impact development standards where feasible, i.e.: pervious vs. impervious surfaces to decrease run-off
- Trail and greenway corridors for Wildlife/insect migration
- Provide trail connections between NW soccer fields, parks, schools, businesses & services
- Coordinate w/Washington State Dept. of Transportation on future road projects
- Avoid conflicts between users (walkers, bikes, horses, dogs)
- Track and respond to conflicts & complaints

1.3 National Park Service Grant of Technical Assistance

The mission of the National Park Service is "... to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (National Park Service Organic Act, 1916).

The Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a grant of technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service to support development of the North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan.

The technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program focused on the planning and development of a master plan for a greenway and trails in North Bellingham and adjacent Whatcom County. The assistance included a public involvement component and citizens were encouraged to participate. Residents of the Cordata area assisted with the grant application.

RTCA's technical assistance was represented by the time and resources that their staff invested in the North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan. Alexandra Stone, Community Planner with the National Park Service was assigned to the project.

The assistance was initially provided during the 2006 federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2006. However, due to the broad-based, community driven nature of the project, Michael Linde, coordinator of the program for the National Park Service awarded a second year of technical assistance in fiscal year 2006-2007.

Specifically, the NPS project manager provided:

- Assistance with meeting planning and preparation, including agenda setting
- Resource materials to develop visioning, goals and objectives
- Help with how to define criteria for route selection
- Assistance with identifying collaborative partnerships
- Name recognition; people were attracted by the prospect of working with a prestigious organization
- Mentoring and peer review
- Timely assistance; a citizens group had formed around the need for trails in this area and helped with the grant application in the summer of 2005; Greenway levy passed in March of 2006 with \$12.1 million for land acquisition in North Bellingham
- Review and comment on trail planning documents
- Help identify and provide advice for key decision points

2. Planning Process

2.1 Public Involvement

The North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan was guided by a steering committee made up of citizens, agencies, elected officials and board and commission members who met monthly during the first part of 2006.

2.1.1 Steering Committee

Citizen Members

Cyndy Anderson
Ralph Black, Alliance Properties
Analiene Burns, wetland biologist
Joan Casey
J Kaye Faulkner
Julie Guy
Matt Hargleroad
Roger Hutchison
Mauri Ingram, Trillium Corporation
Rebekah Keene, Whatcom Independent Mtn Pedalers
Alison Kutz-Troutman
Linda Langey
Neal Langley
Adrienne Lederer
Rob Lowe
John McGarrity
Ted Mischaikov, Larrabee Springs
Edwina Norton
David Ruble
Bob Sanders
Jim Zander

Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

Louise Bjornson, Bellingham City Council
Jane Blume, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Tom Chisholm, Greenway Advisory Committee
Dan Taylor, Whatcom County Parks Commission

Agencies

Ellen Barton, Whatcom Council of Governments
Chris Comeau, Bellingham Public Works
Kimberly Brown, Bellingham Public Works
Pat Carman, Bellingham Planning Department
Lynne Givler, Whatcom County Parks
Carol Williams, Port of Bellingham
Nicole Willis, Whatcom County Health Department
Alexandra Stone, National Park Service
Leslie Bryson, Bellingham Parks and Recreation

2.1.2 Subcommittees

The majority of work on this plan was done by the steering committee members themselves, who volunteered substantial time on the following work groups.

Visioning Work Group

Cyndy Anderson
Jane Blume
Pat Carman
Adrienne Lederer
Edie Norton

Existing Resources Inventory Work Group

Jack Weiss
Sue Taylor
Joan Casey
Ralph Black
Analiese Burns
Jim Zander
Ted Mischaikov

Criteria for Route Selection Work Group

Julie Guy
J. Kaye Faulkner
Roger Hutchison
David Ruble
Allison Kutz-Troutman
Linda Langey
Mauri Ingram

Research and Plan Preparation

Cyndy Anderson
Edie Norton
Bob Sanders
Jim Zander

2.1.3 Meetings and Workshop

Beginning in March 2006, five public steering committee meetings were held, followed by a general public meeting and open house on December 6, 2006 at Shuksan Middle school with approximately 50 people in attendance. The plan was presented during public meetings to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Greenway Advisory Committee and City Council. The Bellingham Planning Commission held a public hearing on March 6 2008 and and City Council held public hearing on October 6, 2008. Whatcom County has referenced the plan in their Park Master Plan, which was recently adopted.

Project Timeline

March 15 – Worksession Discuss process, roles and responsibilities, vision, goals and establish work groups. Review study area, current inventory and identify opportunities.

April 19 - Worksession. - Report of work groups, form outreach subcommittee, Finalize Steering Committee membership
Report to community leaders.
Complete collection of resource material
Criteria for route selection work group meeting – draft guidelines and priorities
Vision and Goals Group- meet as needed, work on objectives

May 17 - Worksession - review resource material, review guidelines for route selection, work group reports

June 21 – Workshop; 6 pm Design workshop/Pizza Party
Draft plan for public comment
Plan Presentation to Greenway Advisory Committee

July – No Meeting, Staff maps route selection, Draft plan outline
Field assessment of routes

August – No meeting, outreach as needed, work groups meet

September 20 – Worksession, review draft plan, review route selections
Plan for Open House
Partner agency review – mail plan map with letter
review and provide comments

December 6 – Public Open House, Shuksan Middle School
December 13 – Park and Recreation Advisory Board Approval of Draft Plan
December/January – Revise Plan
January 2007 –GAC discussion recommendation
January - Council presentation
January –June compile final plan information, route descriptions
November 2007 – request comp plan amendment in 2008
March 6, 2008 – Planning Commission Public Hearing
October 6, 2008 – City Council Public Hearing

2.2 Agency Participation

Local agencies were initially invited to write letters of support for the National Park Service Grant and later to participate on the Steering Committee.

The following agencies participated in the preparation of this plan.

- Whatcom Co. Parks and Recreation
- Whatcom Co. Health Department
- Bellingham Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
- Bellingham Public Works Department
- Bellingham Planning Department
- Guide Meridian Neighborhood
- Mt. Baker Neighborhood
- Cornwall Neighborhood
- Birchwood Neighborhood
- Bellingham Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Bellingham Greenway Advisory Committee
- Port of Bellingham
- Alliance Properties
- Larrabee Springs Development
- Trillium Corp.
- Whatcom Council of Governments
- Whatcom Independent Mountain Pedalers
- Birchwood Presbyterian Church

3. Vision, Goals and Objectives

The Steering Committee adopted the following vision statement, goals and objectives for the Plan.

VISION STATEMENT

Bellingham's northern neighborhoods and surrounding areas enjoy an interconnected system of accessible multi-use trails and greenways that offer diverse, healthy outdoor experiences within a rich variety of landscapes and natural habitats.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1 Connect and unify the community with greenway corridors

Objectives

- Expand existing trail systems into growing neighborhoods
- Promote links to neighboring communities

Goal 2 Expand transportation options

Objectives

- Connect trails with transit stops, bike routes, and sidewalks
- Interconnect neighborhoods, schools, employment, and commerce centers with trails

Goal 3 Provide opportunities for outdoor and local history education

Objectives

- Create an outdoor classroom for local schools
- Utilize interpretive materials to highlight features such as native flora and historic points of interest

Goal 4 Encourage outdoor recreation for all ages and ability levels

Objectives

- Provide trails that comply with the American Disabilities Act
- Offer close, easy access to trails (within 10 minute walk from neighborhoods)

Goal 5 Promote healthy physical and mental well-being

Objectives

- Where appropriate, permit multiple uses of trails - walking, running, bicycling, horseback riding
- Provide adequate opportunity for rest and contemplation
- Site trails to preserve unique scenic bay, mountain and regional views

Goal 6 Develop trail standards for trail amenities

Objectives

- Locate trails to take advantage of access to restrooms and drinking water
- Provide site furnishings such as benches, bike racks, dog waste stations, trash containers
- Utilize native vegetation in planted areas
- Develop and post rules and regulations for trail use
- Provide directional and mileage signage

Goal 7 Preserve functioning natural habitats and corridors

Objective

- Develop trails and greenway corridors that protect natural resources, including plant and animal habitats

Goal 8 Provide a safe environment

Objectives

- Provide lighting in high-use areas and where appropriate
- Provide safe parking areas
- Avoid blind corners on trails
- Provide for natural surveillance
- Provide safety education for trail users
- Provide safe crossings of roads, including grade separated crossings of major corridors such as I-5 and Guide Meridian

Goal 9 Facilitate community involvement and stewardship

Objectives

- Develop a volunteer work party program
- Develop an Adopt-a-trail program
- Develop inter-local management agreements
- Encourage participation in community trail events
- Expand on existing relationships with schools, business and non-profit organizations

4. Trail and Greenway Plan: Map and Route Narrative

4.1 Existing Resource Inventory

An inventory of existing resources was compiled by the steering committee. In general, information was provided via maps which were available at the June workshop to aide in selecting appropriate trail routes.

Significant resources in the area include the watershed areas of the Nooksack River and Squalicum Creek which are both salmon bearing streams, Bear Creek and Silver Creek, significant wetland and other critical areas, King and Queen Mountain, views of Mt. Baker, the Canadian Coastal Range, Bellingham Bay and the San Juan Islands.

Much of the area was formerly open farm and ranch land, but includes a number of wooded parcels and significant wetlands. There are many creeks and drainages which might serve as logical trail routes. Protection of critical areas, wooded backdrops, view corridors and steep slopes will form the open space anchors for greenway trail corridors.

List of Available Resources

- Aerial photos
- Wetland delineations
- Critical Areas Ordinance – City/County
- Stream corridors
- Utility corridors
- Property Ownership
- Land Use
- Zoning
- Private trails
- Existing public trails
- Railroad ROW
- Street ROW
- Historic Routes
- Development proposals
- Whatcom Co. Trail Plan
- Planned Trail routes
- School sites
- Parks – existing and proposed
- Other public ownership
- Wildlife habitat plan
- DFW Habitat map of importance
- DNR property disposition
- Destinations: Commercial, Recreation
- Water bodies – Toad Lake
- Open space
- Park Plan maps
- Developed road corridors and condition (shoulders, sidewalks, bike lanes)
- Topography
- Development Master Plans
 - Larabee Springs

King Mtn
Cordata
Neighborhood Plans
Bike routes
Social trails
Unique vegetation
Whatcom Co. Natural Heritage Task Force
Dept. of Transportation Plans
City/County transportation plans
Shoreline Master Plan

4.2 Criteria for Trail Route Selection

Proposed trails will connect to existing community parks such as Tennant Lake and Hovander Homestead Parks, Little Squalicum Park, Squalicum Creek Park, Cornwall Park, and to the proposed Bay to Baker and Coast Millennium Trails. Other trail destinations in the area include Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, two proposed elementary schools, employment centers at Bellis Fair Mall and the Guide Meridian commercial area, Bellingham International Airport, medical facilities, industrial parks, as well as existing and proposed residential neighborhoods.

Proposed trail routes should:

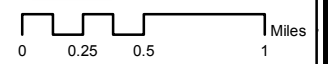
- Contribute to a variety of experiences in a mix of trail environments
- Allow for adequate buffering from adjacent uses and require minimal impact to existing topography
- Facilitate connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, parks, trails, and commercial/service areas in Bellingham and adjacent Whatcom County
- Minimize street crossings and on-street routes
- Capitalize on opportunities to utilize public land, rights of way, available utility corridors and/or other accessible properties
- Preserve stream and wildlife corridors, as well as vegetated backdrops

City of Bellingham and North Master Planning Future Trails Map with Environmental Features

October 2008

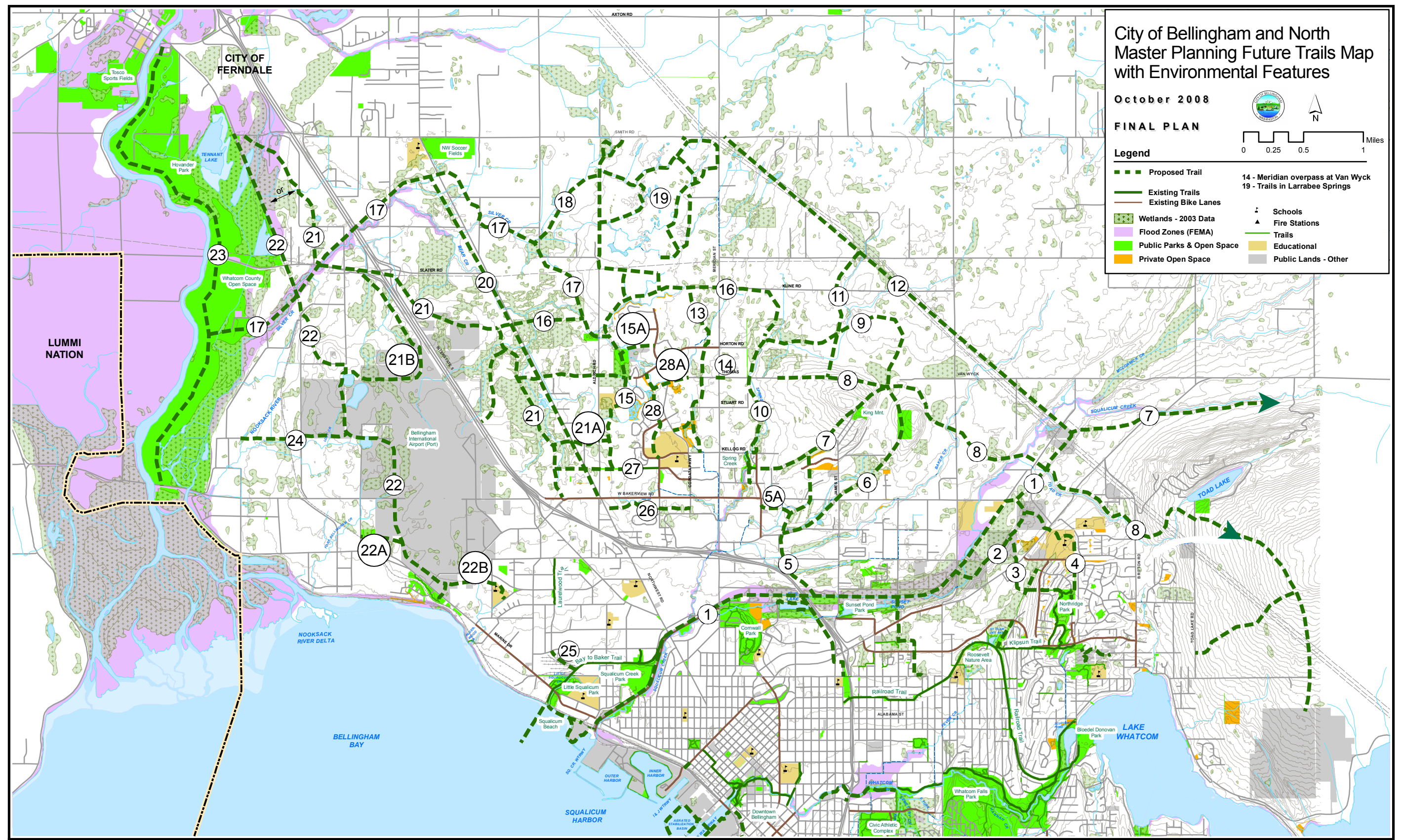


FINAL PLAN



Legend

- - - Proposed Trail
- Existing Trails
- Existing Bike Lanes
- Wetlands - 2003 Data
- Flood Zones (FEMA)
- Public Parks & Open Space
- Private Open Space
- 14 - Meridian overpass at Van Wyck
- 19 - Trails in Larrabee Springs
- Schools
- ▲ Fire Stations
- Trails
- Educational
- Public Lands - Other



North Bellingham Trail Plan
Route Descriptions

| Map No. | Trail Name | Route Description | Length |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Bay to Baker Trail | Multi-purpose trail from Roeder Avenue to City Limits on railroad right of way | 5.18 |
| 2 | Dewey Valley Loop | Loop trail off main Bay to Baker Trail through wooded hillside on DNR property | 0.87 |
| 3 | Railroad Trail Connector | Connection from Railroad Trail to Bay to Baker Trail through subdivision open space areas | 1.03 |
| 4 | Bay to Baker - Northridge Link | Multipurpose connector from bay to Baker Trail (1) to northern Northridge Park | 1.44 |
| 5 | Bay to Baker - King Mountain Link | Connector from bay to Baker Trail north to Kellogg Road and King Mountain | 1.42 |
| 5A | Deemer Trail | Neighborhood connector to Deemer Road | 0.27 |
| 6 | Queen Mountain Trail | Connector from (Trail 5) to King Mountain Trail Hub | 1.77 |
| 7 | Spring Creek to King Mountain Trail | Connector from Spring Creek Trail (10) to King Mountain Trail Hub | 3.01 |
| 8 | King Mountain East-West Trail | East-West Trail connecting Cordata Trails by way of Guide Meridian Overpass (14), crossing Spring Creek Trail (10), going over King Mountain to Bay to Baker Trail (1), and eastward to Squalicum Mountain | 4.33 |
| 9 | North King Mountain Trail | From Spring Creek Trail (10) east to King Mountain Trial Hub | 1.76 |
| 10 | Spring Creek Trail | From Bakerview north to North Bear Creek Trail (16) | 1.35 |
| 11 | Upper Spring Creek Trail | From King Mountain Trail (8) north to Power Line Trail (12) | 1.13 |
| 12 | Power Line Trail | From Smith Road, southeast to Bay to Baker Trail (1) and eastward along upper Squalicum Creek | 3.80 |
| 13 | Cordata East Trail | From WCC north to North Bear Creek Trail (16) at Klein Road | 1.71 |
| 14 | Meridian Overpass | Bike/Ped Overpass from Meridian av Van Wyk/Thomas Roads | 0.10 |
| 15 | West Cordata Trail | From Division Street Trail (27) north to North Bear Creek Trail (16) near Aldrich Road, through proposed Aldrich Elementary School property | 1.29 |
| 15A | West Cordata Trail Link | From Cordata Park through County property to Cordata Parkway | 0.30 |
| 16 | North Bear Creek Trail | From Bear Creek Trail (21) east to Spring Creek Trail (10) | 2.75 |
| 17 | Old Silver Creek Trail | East-west connector from Cordata area west to Dike Trail (23), passing through NW Soccer Fields and crossing under I-5 | 4.67 |
| 18 | Silver Springs Trail | From Silver Creek Trail (17) to Silver Springs at Smith Road | 0.82 |
| 19 | Larabee Springs Trails | As per Larabee Springs Master Plan, tying Silver Springs Trail (18) to Power Line Trail (12) and North Bear Creek Trail (16) | 6.36 |
| 20 | Northwest Road Trail | Bike/Ped trail or sidewalks & bike lanes from I-5 north to Old Silver Creek Trail (17) at NW Soccer Fields | 3.03 |

North Bellingham Trail Plan
Route Descriptions

| | | | |
|-----|--|--|------|
| 21 | Bear Creek Trail | From Bakerview Road north to Coast Millennium Trail (22) under I-5 at Slater Road, to Hovander Park in Ferndale | 4.66 |
| 21A | Cordata to Brear Creek Trail | From west Cordata Trail to Bear Creek Trail | 0.50 |
| 21B | Bear Creek to Coast Millennium Trail | From Slater Road through north Airport property to Lost Lake area | 1.72 |
| 22 | Coast Millennium Trail | From Marine Drive south of Bellingham Airport north to Hovander Park in Ferndale | 4.76 |
| 22A | West Extension of Coast Millennium Trail | From Coast Millennium Trail (22) west to Wynn Road | 0.36 |
| 22B | East Extension of Coast Millennium Trail | From Coast Millennium Trail (22) east to Alderwood School | 0.61 |
| 23 | Nooksack Dike Trail | (see County Trail Plan) | 4.40 |
| 24 | Marietta to Coast Millennium Trail | Extension of Coast Millennium Trail (22) to to west at Skagit Street | 0.90 |
| 25 | Laurelwood Trail | Extension south to Bay to Baker Trail (1) near Little Squalicum Park | 0.26 |
| 26 | Belleau Woods Trail | From Northwest Road Trail (20) to Cordata Parkway/Bellis Fair Mall | 0.74 |
| 27 | Division Street Trail | From Eliza Street west to Northwest Road Trail (20) | 0.59 |
| 28 | Cordata Pond Trail | From Kellogg Road north to Horton Road | 0.77 |
| 28A | Cordata to Meridian Trail | Connector trail from Cordata Pond Trail (28) east to Meridian Overpass and on to King Mountain East-West Trail (8) | 0.31 |
| | | Total Trail Miles | |

Appendix



BELLINGHAM PARKS AND RECREATION, 3424 Meridian Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
TELEPHONE (360) 676-6985 TTY (360) 738-7366 FAX (360) 647-6367

August 1, 2005

Michael Linde, Leader, Partnership Programs
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: NPS Technical Assistance Grant Proposal for Bellingham, Washington

1. Project Title and Description

- Project Name: North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan.
- Location: The north part of the City of Bellingham, Washington and adjacent unincorporated Whatcom County
- Responsible Agency: City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department
- The project will develop a more specific trail and greenway plan than currently exists in the City's park element of the comprehensive plan. Because of the rapid growth in this part of the city, it is important that citizens, landowners and local agencies work together to identify potential trail routes and resource protection opportunities before it is too late. The proposed schedule is to begin the process in early 2006 and have a completed and adopted plan in 9-12 months. The City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, Port of Bellingham, and Association of Bellingham Neighborhoods, have all committed to being involved in the project.
- Trails developed on the north side will serve all of Bellingham, but particularly residents of the surrounding area who currently have very few opportunities available within walking distance.
- Prior activity for trail and greenway planning in this area includes the 2004 update of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, the current update of the Whatcom County Open Space Plan, and the Cordata Parks and Trails Committee draft plan.

2. Resource Importance

Significant resources in the area include the watershed areas of the Nooksack River and Squalicum Creek which are both salmon bearing streams, significant wetland and other critical areas, King Mtn. (554 ft.) and Queen Mtn. (433 ft.), views of Mt. Baker, the Canadian Coastal Range, Bellingham Bay and the San Juan Islands.

Trails developed in the area might connect to existing community parks such as Tennant Lake and Hovander Homestead Parks, Little Squalicum Park, Squalicum Creek Park, Cornwall Park, and to the proposed Bay to Baker and Coast Millennium Trails. Other trail destinations in the area include Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, two proposed elementary schools, employment centers at Bellis Fair Mall and

the Guide Meridian commercial area, Bellingham International Airport, medical facilities, industrial parks, as well as existing and proposed residential neighborhoods.

Much of the area was formerly open farm and ranch land, but includes a number of wooded parcels and significant wetlands. There are many creeks and drainages which might serve as logical trail routes. Protection of critical areas, wooded backdrops, view corridors and steep slopes will form the open space anchors for greenway trail corridors.

3. Anticipated Results

It is anticipated that a completed plan with widespread citizen input and support will be adopted by the affected local agencies, leading to the ability to identify funding, seek dedications and purchase when necessary, and provide eligibility for various grant funds. Bellingham has a successful track record of funding and constructing trails and greenways and protecting unique and scenic properties that have been identified in a community process.

The current service level for trails in Bellingham is approximately one half mile of multi-use trail per 1000 people. With an expected population increase of 40,000 people over the next 20 years, an additional 20 linear miles of trails is needed. 14,000 additional people are expected to move to north Bellingham, bringing the total population of that area to 31,500. Since there are few existing trails, approximately 15 miles of the needed 20 should be located in north Bellingham.

Because Bellingham is growing so quickly but does not yet have a specific plan for trails and greenways in the north area, it is urgent that we develop a plan right away. Rising housing costs mean many first time home buyers with children as well as retirees, move into more affordable housing with limited yard or play space. Trails will provide a safe way for children and youth to walk and ride their bikes to school and playgrounds, as well as promote a healthy, active outdoor lifestyle for citizens. Trails have consistently been the number one recreational amenity desired by citizens in surveys and focus groups.

Moreover, connectivity between new trails and greenways in this area to city and county trails that have already been planned and partially constructed, such as the Coast Millennium Trail and the Bay to Baker Trail, will help preserve and protect some of our natural resources, maintain the beauty of the area and greatly enhance the outdoor experience of all Whatcom County residents and visitors, now and for future generations.

4. Support Anticipated

We anticipate broad support for developing this plan. To date, the following individuals and organizations have expressed their interest and support: Mayor Mark Asmundson, City Parks and Recreation Department, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Greenway Advisory Committee, Bellingham Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Cordata Neighborhood Association, Whatcom County Parks Department and Park Board, Whatcom Council of Governments, Whatcom County Health Department, Whatcom Physical Activity Coalition, and the Port of Bellingham.

The City will dedicate staff time and in-kind costs necessary to coordinate the local involvement, including mailings, mapping, surveys, printing, arranging for and providing meeting space. All other agencies and groups have committed staff or representative member participation.

5. Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program Role

We are seeking assistance with creating a community and project vision for this area of Bellingham through development of a planning process, facilitation of public meetings, developing a strategic plan, identifying and analyzing resources. Because Bellingham and Whatcom County have a strong tradition of environmental resource preservation and active outdoor recreation, we believe an NPS grant will attract great interest throughout the area. We anticipate a completed plan would be adopted and implemented by the affected local agencies.

6. Contact Information

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E-mail lbryson@cob.org

Edwina Norton and Julianna Guy, Co-Chairs
Guide Meridian/Cordata Parks Committee

Tom Barrett, Chair
Trail Subcommittee, Parks and Recreation Board

Tom Chisholm, Chair
Greenway Advisory Committee



RTCA: Community Assistance Arm of the National Park Service

Accepting Applications through August 1

Who We Are:

A program to share expertise of the National Park Service across America

The National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) works with community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribes or tribal governments, and local, state, and federal government agencies to achieve locally-defined goals for natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation.

Projects include natural area preservation, rivers conservation and development of recreational trails and greenways in urban, suburban and rural settings. RTCA carries out the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across America.

A network of 70 community-based planning professionals delivers the RTCA Program nationwide, helping communities to help themselves achieve on-the-ground success. Through RTCA, the National Park Service offers conservation assistance to communities in every state.



Northwest Discovery Water Trail: ID, WA, OR. A year-long celebration of dedication events is launching the Northwest Discovery Water Trail, a 367-mile water route through three states. Here, at Hat Rock State Park, The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation present peace medals to the Water Trail Steering Committee at a "Trace the Trail" Lewis & Clark Bicentennial event. RTCA is helping with public outreach and development of a trail management plan. Photo: Sarah Krueger.

We measure our success by our ability to help our local partners make their rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces a vital, life-enhancing part of their communities. With well under one percent of the National Park Service budget, RTCA each year helps create over 1,400 miles of trail, protect more than 700 miles of waterways, and preserve some 63,700 acres of open space.

What We Do:

Help move your ideas into action

By invitation, RTCA works collaboratively to assist your natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects. While RTCA is not a grant program, we offer staff assistance in conceptual and master planning, organizational development, project coordination, facilitation, and public involvement, tailoring our assistance to meet the needs of our partners.

Whether you are a group of committed citizens launching a new project, a team of local government agencies aiming for a multi-jurisdictional effort, or a public/private committee with a community vision, RTCA can help you catalyze ideas into actions. Working side-by-side with grassroots groups and local governments throughout the country, the National Park Service is helping to create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenway and open spaces. We invite you to discover more about how RTCA can help your community achieve its own goals.

Other National Park Service Assistance Programs

The National Park Service can also assist community-based conservation and recreation projects through the following programs:

- **Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP):** The CCSP provides matching fund amounts to facilitate joint projects of National Park Service units, other NPS programs, and their partners. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/ccsp/
- **Hydropower Recreation Assistance:** Provides technical assistance on recreation access and facilities, instream flows for recreation, and riparian corridor protection to all participants in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) hydropower licensing and relicensing proceedings. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/hydro/
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** Provides 50% matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants are administered through the states and are contingent on annual appropriation. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/lwcf/
- **Federal Lands to Parks:** Helps state and local agencies acquire, at no cost, surplus federal land and facilities for parks and recreation. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/flp/
- **Cultural Resources:** The NPS administers a number of very successful federal historic preservation funding programs. Information about grants, tax credits and other forms of assistance can be found by visiting www.cr.nps.gov/helpyou.htm



City of Bellingham Press Release

October 25, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bellingham Parks & Recreation awarded grant to support development of trails and greenway in North Bellingham

Media Contact: Leslie Bryson, Design/Development Manager
Department: Parks & Recreation
Address: 3424 Meridian Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone: (360)676-6985 8am-5pm Mon-Fri
Email: lbryson@cob.org
URL: www.cob.org/press/

Bellingham, Washington – The Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department has been awarded with a grant of technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service. The grant will support development of the North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan.

The technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program will be focused on the planning and development of a master plan for a greenway and trails in North Bellingham and adjacent Whatcom County. The assistance will include a public involvement component and citizens will be encouraged to participate. Residents of the Cordata area assisted with the grant application.

RTCA's technical assistance is represented by the time and resources that their staff will invest in the North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan. A Community Planner with the National Park Service has been assigned to the project.

The assistance will be provided during the 2006 federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2006. However, due to the broad-based, community driven nature of the project, Michael Linde, coordinator of the program for the National Park Service stated that Bellingham Parks & Recreation may be eligible for a second year of technical assistance in 2007 if more time is deemed necessary by RTCA.

For more information, or to sign up for meeting notices, call the Parks and Recreation Department at 67606985.

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City of Bellingham Press Release

February 23, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City Seeks Citizen Participation in North Bellingham Greenway and Trails Plan

Media Contact: Leslie Bryson, Design/Development Manager
Department: Parks & Recreation
Address: 3424 Meridian Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone: (360)676-6985 8am-5pm Mon-Fri
Email: lbryson@cob.org
URL: www.cob.org/press/

Bellingham, Washington – The Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department has announced the kick off of the North Bellingham Greenway and Trails plan. Design and Development Manager, Leslie Bryson, said the City is looking for citizens who are interested in helping create a vision for a system of greenways and trails in the Guide Meridian, Cordata, and King Mountain areas. A steering committee will form to meet monthly beginning in March. It is anticipated the plan will be complete by the end of the year.

The City learned in October that it had been awarded with a grant of technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service. Alex Stone, Community Planner with the Seattle office of the National Park Service will assist the City and citizens with the plan development which will focus on the planning and development of a master plan for greenways and trails in North Bellingham and adjacent Whatcom County. Residents of the Cordata area assisted with the grant application.

For more information or to volunteer for the steering committee, contact Bryson at 676-6985 or by e-mail at lbryson@cob.org

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TODAY IN NEIGHBORS

Shaya Greathouse and Genevieve Karkabe-Olson are all-state academic all-stars at Whatcom Community College, **C3**

Also, events listed in Whatcom County Almanac

A3

Thursday

March 16, 2006

OUTDOORS

Northsiders favor trails-parks links

KATIE N. JOHANNES
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Integrating parks into a trail system, connections to schools and developing links to a countywide system were among the priorities suggested by the public in a north Bellingham greenway planning meeting Wednesday night.

It was the first in a series of monthly work sessions that are intended to identify a trail and green-corridor system on a conceptual level. A preliminary

timeline projects a completed plan in November.

The planning process will be guided by Alexandra Stone, a community planner from the National Parks Service's Seattle office. Her services were awarded to Bellingham through a competitive grant applied for by the city Parks and Recreation Department.

Stone said Bellingham won the grant in part because the application showed broad support from community and government leaders, and because

officials and other agencies voiced a readiness to commit time and resources to further the Parks Service contribution.

About 25 people showed up to the meeting Wednesday. A number of people were disappointed that the planning process provided through the grant didn't address the need for neighborhood parks near housing developments.

"My key concern is that children in the Cordata area ... have no place to play," said Neal Langley, a 66-year-old resi-

dent.

Leslie Bryson, design development manager for the city Parks and Recreation Department, said the city and neighborhood groups were addressing that problem in different ways, including plans to allocate real estate excise taxes and impact fees to developing future parks.

Other items on the priority list included safe crossings over or under Interstate 5 and Guide Meridian, and ensuring that different kinds of trail

WHAT'S NEXT

April 2: Tentative date of the next North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan meeting.

users — hikers, bikers, roller bladers — wouldn't conflict with each other.

Reach Katie N. Johannes at katie.johannes@bellinghamherald.com or call 756-2805.

OPINION

The Bellingham Herald TheBellinghamHerald.com

OUR VIEW

Here's a chance to join planning for city parks

Now that city officials are pursuing more funding for city parks and trails through a new Greenway levy, it's time for residents of Bellingham's park-short north side to jump into the planning process for future trails.

It's still unclear whether voters will approve the levy for new greenways during the May 16 special election. The City Council just recently decided to ask voters to approve a levy that would raise \$44 million in the course of 10 years.

But the work to begin planning for a better trail system in Bellingham's fast-growing areas north of Bellis Fair shopping mall has already begun.

About 25 people showed up to the first meeting earlier this month. We encourage even more people to take part.

It's obvious that the northern parts of Bellingham are extremely deficient in

terms of parks and trails. People who live around the Cordata area, or along Bakerview, Aldrich and Northwest roads, have few parks or trails to use. If they want to enjoy what is a great part of the quality of life in Bellingham, great parks, they have to get in their cars and drive somewhere.

The work going on now will help determine how and where to build trails and how to connect them to whatever parks might be built in the future.

It's imperative that as many people as possible weigh in before final decisions are made.

The next work session for the North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan is tentatively scheduled for April 19. Call Leslie Bryson, design and development manager for the Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department for more details.

OUTDOORS

North greenways planning starts

KATIE N. JOHANNES
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

The public can help Bellingham plan future greenways in the north end of the city through a series of monthly work sessions.

Officials hope to have a plan prepared by October and adopted in November, according to a news release.

The first meeting is at 7 p.m. today in the Palm Room of Birchwood Presbyterian Church, 400 Meadowbrook Court.

For more information, call Leslie Bryson, city parks design and development manager, at 676-6985.

OUTDOORS

Trail meeting set for Wednesday

KATIE N. JOHANNES
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

The second North Bellingham Trail and Greenway Plan meeting is scheduled for Wednesday.

Work groups will report progress in the last few weeks on developing goals, identifying resources and current inventory and planning trail routes. Steering committee members also should be selected.

The meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the Palm Room of Birchwood Presbyterian Church, 400 Meadowbrook Court.

For more information, call Bellingham Parks and Recreation design and development manager Leslie Bryson at 676-6985.

Paula Sohal blends East and West at her clothing store in Fairhaven. C4

Also, events listed in Whatcom County Almanac

FOOTBALL

All teams honored

ANA LEI BELLINGHAM HERALD

Meridian and Cordata schools will playoff football this month with the public. The 2A state title assembly is scheduled at 6:30 p.m. today at 1201 Bradley. Men players will play town on fire

on defeated Con-A state championship community celebration scheduled at 6:30 p.m. in the high school gymnasium, 194 W.

which lost in game to St. John. All celebrate its the state final sports banquet on Dec. 21 in the community building. Lunum View

OUTDOORS

Trail plan for north area outlined

Citizen group comes up with proposal; final step is City Council approval

KATIE N. JOHANNES
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

If all the trails in a conceptual trail plan for northern Bellingham and Whatcom County were built, they would nearly double the 68 miles of existing trails in the city.

About 45 people gathered at Shuksan Middle School on Wednesday to look at maps of the proposed North Bellingham Area Trail and Greenway Plan.

Suggestions written on yellow sticky notes dotted a large map of the area: "I sure wish there was an alternative to Slater. It doesn't seem safe," and "Need safe pedestrian access on Alderwood."

The plan was the result of nearly nine months of work by a citizen group, under the direc-

tion of the Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department, with technical assistance from the National Park Service.

The plan would require builders to incorporate the trails into new developments, and they would be a condition of annexation, said Leslie Bryson, design development coordinator for the city Parks and Recreation Department.

That means the proposed 66-mile trail network is a long way from becoming a reality.

"In a lot of ways, this is a big vision," Bryson said. "Unless the area did get developed, I'm not sure we'll ever see all of these trails. But they're opportunities."

Some priorities of the planning process included:

MAP OF TRAILS

To see an updated map showing a proposed trail plan for north Bellingham and Whatcom County, see this story online at TheBellinghamHerald.com.

► Creating an east-west corridor across the northern part of the city, connecting the Cordata area to King Mountain and beyond.

► Creating pedestrian overpasses or underpasses to cross Interstate 5 and Meridian Street.

► Creating links to major planned trails such as the Bay to Baker Trail.

► Planning trails into the county so corridors will be considered as the city grows.

► Linking communities to schools, parks and each other.

The lack of trails in northern Bellingham initiated and drove the process. Cordata area residents complained to Bryson that they had no parks and trails.

The neighborhood has a short section of trail behind Whatcom Community College. Planning group member Edie Norton joked the neighborhood could celebrate the plan's completion with a 1K run.

Paul Sorensen, 66, who lives in the Cordata area, attended the meeting to see what was planned for his neighborhood.

"Long-range plans are all well and good, I guess," Sorensen said. "But things change. They get rezoned. ... It's not really what I need as a resident of the neighborhood."

He worries this will be just another one of many forgotten city studies.

"I need to see some action,"

COMMENT ONLINE

What trails on the north side would you like to see created? What areas are most in need? Give your views with this story online at TheBellinghamHerald.com.

he said. "I need to see a shovel turn some dirt."

The planning group will take the draft plan to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for approval on Dec. 13. It will go back to steering committee for refinement, incorporating public comments.

The group will write a document describing routes, trail lengths and some preliminary budget estimates. The last step is City Council approval.

Reach Katie N. Johannes at katie.johannes@bellinghamherald.com or call 756-2805.



BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the **BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL** will hold a public hearing on **OCTOBER 6, 2008, @ 7:00 PM**, or as soon thereafter as possible, in the **CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, Washington**, to take public comment on the following:

CONSIDERATION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTING A TRAIL PLAN FOR THE NORTH PART OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM AND ADJACENT AREAS OF UNINCORPORATED WHATCOM COUNTY.

For additional information, please contact Leslie Bryson at 778-7000 or by email at lbryson@cob.org.

Anyone wishing to comment on this topic is invited to attend; or if unable to attend, to send your comments, in writing to the Council Office, 210 Lottie Street, or email to citycouncil@cob.org, or fax to 778-8101, to be received prior to 10:00 a.m., OCTOBER 1, 2008, to be included in the agenda packet. Comment received after that time will be distributed to Council but not included in the published meeting materials.

For our citizens with special needs, City Council Chambers are fully accessible. Elevator access to the second floor is available at City Hall's west entrance. For special accommodations, please contact J. Lynne Walker at 778-8200 in advance of the meeting.

PUBLICATION DATE: **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2008.**

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