

Port Orchard's Bay Street Pedestrian Pathway Project Moves One Step Closer to Fruition

City Completes Environmental Re-Evaluation Process and Resumes Right-of-Way Phase

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PORT ORCHARD, WA – The City of Port Orchard has completed a nearly year-long comprehensive federal and state environmental re-evaluation process related to the Bay Street Pedestrian Pathway Project – a project that has been in the works since 2005 – and has received approval to resume negotiations for acquisitions of over-water properties and near-water rights-of-way as needed to accommodate the construction of the project.

The multi-modal pathway, designed for both pedestrians and cyclists, will run from the Kitsap Transit center in downtown Port Orchard to the Annapolis Pier when complete and will serve as a featured section of the envisioned Mosquito Fleet Trail, connecting Kingston to Southworth. The community improvement project will give the public new access to the shoreline, open a link to Annapolis to benefit local businesses, and improve the aquatic environment through its sensitive design, according to Mayor Rob Putaansuu.

“The initial segments of the pathway constructed over the past three years, including Segment #3 along with Rockwell Park, have proven to be tremendously successful and well-received by the community,” he said. “The pathway extension to Annapolis will complement the current revival of that neighborhood and further promote the common vision to encourage healthy, active lifestyles.”

Based on public input during the environmental re-evaluation in 2019, the City received approval to change the plans to incorporate a curb and rail design, rather than the previously recommended Jersey Barriers, to improve the aesthetic of the 14-foot-wide, two-lane pathway, while remaining safe and functional.

“Trails and paths are well-known for bringing prosperity to communities,” Putaansuu said. “They’re among the top three amenities that new residents look for in a neighborhood, they typically enhance property values and it’s common for retail businesses to directly benefit from new and increased traffic. We’re confident that the Bay Street Pedestrian Pathway is going to be a win for all and a source of pride for the community.”

The continued acquisitions will be conducted by Tierra Right-of-Way Services, LLC, a third-party agency hired exclusively to manage the purchase agreements. Officials anticipate the acquisition phase will extend into 2021.

“The City is compassionate toward homeowners and businesses along the pathway who have followed this project for 15 years,” the Mayor said. “We are thankful for the majority of property owners who have already agreed to work with us for the betterment of the community. By working together, we will create a pathway that will be our crown jewel.”

Officials estimate that once the property acquisitions are complete, the project will be advertised, and construction will likely begin in 2022. Further details regarding the pathway are available through the City [website](#).

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