CROSS KIRKLAND CORRIDOR INTERIM TRAIL
KIRKLAND, WA

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE: In 2012, the City of Kirkland purchased 5.75 miles of the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) in order to create a non-motorized trail. The City conducted extensive outreach with its community to learn more about their priorities for the corridor. Their response emphasized two main points: get the corridor in public ownership, and make it accessible to the public as quickly as possible. In fact, many walkers were already traveling along the rails.

The City opened the Cross Kirkland Corridor Interim Trail in January 2015, representing the very first developed trail along the mainline of the ERC. The Interim Trail includes an 8-10’ width of compacted, crushed gravel. Fencing protects both travelers and ecologically sensitive areas. Rapid flashing beacons ease road crossings, and all at-grade crossings are ADA accessible.

PROGRAM TIME-FRAME: The plan for a trail along the corridor dates back to 1977, when the city’s first zoning plan recognized the ERC as an opportunity for a non-motorized trail. The 5.75 segment was purchased in 2012, when BNSF first opened up negotiations for selling the ERC. The Interim Trail was completed by January 2015, less than three years later.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: The public has been an active participant in all phases of the Interim Trail. The City Council adopted a Community Interest Statement in 2011 based on community feedback to the prospect of
public ownership of the 5.75-mile ERC segment. Thanks to a 2012 Community Parks Levy, the City conducted extensive outreach to engage the public in developing the Master Plan for the Cross Kirkland Corridor. The public also provided input on the design for the Interim Trail through neighborhood meetings, community planning days, online surveys, brown bag lunches, community walks along the trail, and open houses.

**COST AND FUNDING:** The total cost for the Interim Trail was approximately $6 million. These funds were raised through a combination of revenues from all sectors. A partnership with a rail salvage company allowed the City to remove the old railway and sell the materials for $60,000. State and federal grants totalled $3 million. Google and SRM Development, both major employers along the Cross Kirkland Corridor, have sponsored community events and made cash contributions that have totalled $3 million in funding for both the Interim and Final Trail.

**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:** The City of Kirkland purchased the trail segment during the “Great Recession,” a time when government budgets were lean and staff resources stretched. To overcome this obstacle, City leadership partnered with other public and private entities to leverage resources across the community. These partnerships accomplished $6 million worth of trail improvements and, ultimately, the completion of the Interim Trail.

**BENEFITS AND RESULTS:** While the City and community continue to envision the future of the Cross Kirkland Corridor, thousands of local and regional users enjoy the Interim Trail every day. Beyond the trail itself, many community leaders have emerged, and community partnerships have been forged, through the planning, design, and construction of the Interim Trail.

Community enthusiasm has also lead to projects along the trail that enhance its connectivity and public value. These projects include:

- **Feriton Spur,** a park adjacent to the Google campus offering a zip line, play area, volleyball and basketball courts, TRX workout structure, and picnic facilities. SRM Development and Google partnered with the City to construct this park.
- **A connecting staircase and foot bridge** at 116th Ave NE, a partnership between the City and the Highlands Neighborhood.
- **Volunteer-built steps** connecting the trail to two parks and a middle school at NE 100th St.
- **A walkway at 9th St** sponsored by SRM Development and connecting Lakeview Elementary School to the trail for safer student access.
- **A neighborhood school walking route** via steps at NE 68th St.
- **Steps connecting parks** along Lake Washington Blvd at NE 64th St, sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club.
- **A connection at NE 60th St,** where Central Houghton neighbors cleared invasive plants.
and City crews installed asphalt and fencing.

- A neighbor-sponsored connection at NE 55th St.
- A trail cleanup at NE 38th Pl thanks to one dedicated neighborhood volunteer.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**
Full project description, master plan, photos, and other information available online at http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Residents/Community/Cross_Kirkland_Corridor.htm