

Executive Summary

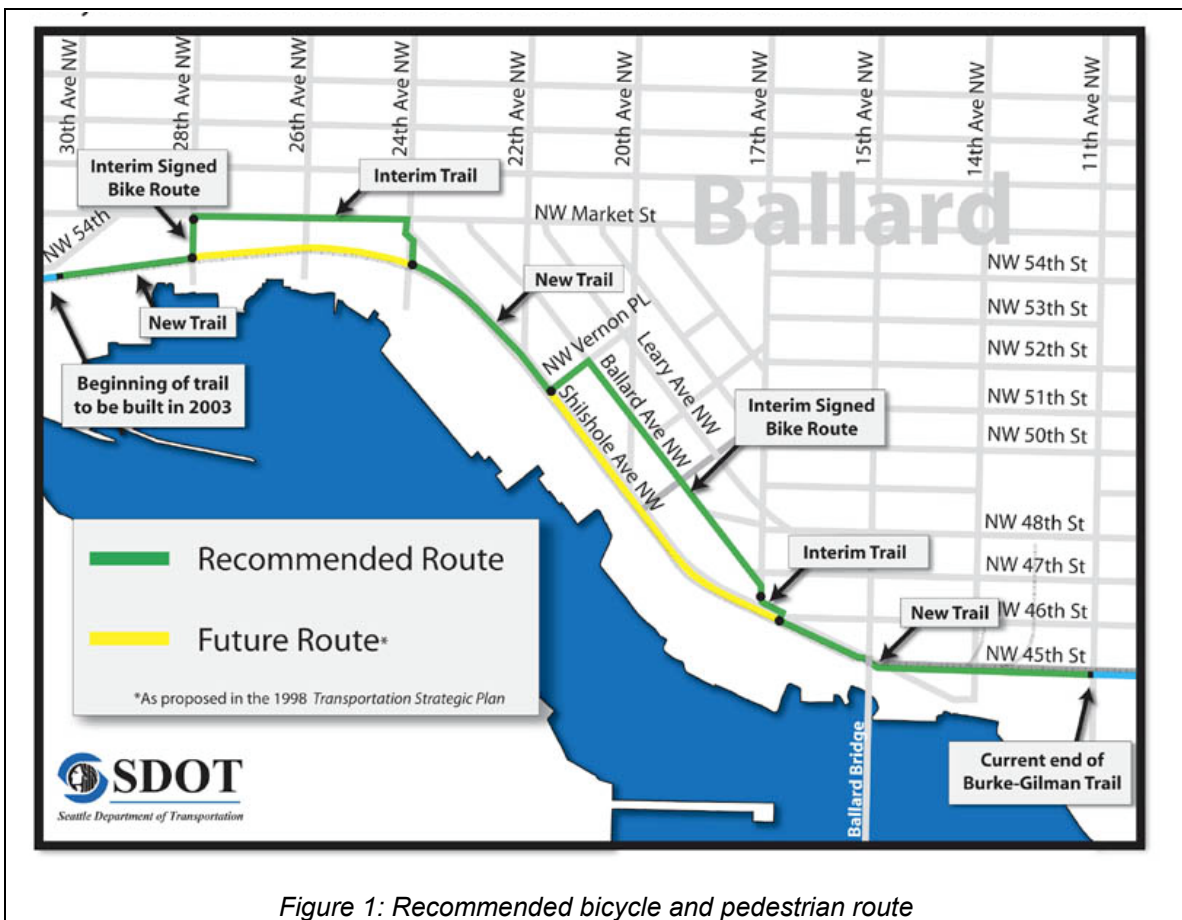
Resolution 30408

On October 22, 2001, the Seattle City Council adopted Resolution 30408, which directed the Seattle Department of Transportation (then SeaTran) to complete the following:

- Lead a project work team to evaluate up to three bicycle/pedestrian alternatives to complete the Burke-Gilman trail between 11th NW and the Locks, including the publicly owned railbanked right-of-way.
- Complete a project work plan - including budget and guiding principles that will initiate a full technical analysis.
- In conjunction with the design work, the project work team will conduct outreach to include residential, business and bike/trail advocacy groups with regard to access, safety and other relevant issues.
- The project work team is directed to determine where acquisition of land may be necessary and undertaken to ensure construction of a well-designed and safe multi-use route of travel for non-motorized modes of transportation.

Routes and Phasing

The analysis, as directed by Resolution 30408, has been completed and the plan for completing the Burke Gilman Trail missing link between 11th Avenue NW and the Locks is as follows (trail construction west of the Locks to start later this year):



- The City will seek funding, and then design and construct three sections of trail (**Estimated Cost = \$6.7 million**).
 - On the south side of NW 45th St from 11th Ave NW (the current terminus of the Burke-Gilman Trail) to 17th Ave NW
 - On the south side of Shilshole Ave NW between NW Vernon Pl. and 24th Ave NW
 - On the north side of the rail corridor from 28th Ave NW to 30th Ave NW (the Locks).
- Once the above trail sections are completed, trail users will be directed along interim routes (**Estimated Cost = \$0.7 million**), described east to west as follows:
 - At 17th Avenue NW, trail users will be directed northwest along Ballard Ave NW and then south on NW Vernon Pl. to Shilshole Ave NW using bike route signs
 - At 24th Ave NW and the rail corridor, a trail will be constructed that directs trail users one block north to NW Market St; along NW Market St
 - From 24th Ave NW to 28th Ave NW, an interim trail will be constructed which can later be used as a sidewalk; and then connect trail users back to the railroad corridor using a signed bike route along 28th Ave NW.

Note: *The schedule for construction is dependent on funding.*

Guiding Principles

The above recommendation is based on the following guiding principles that have guided trail development as for the past 15 years.

- The first priority when building transportation facilities is always safety.
- Safe and efficient customer and freight access to businesses must be maintained.
- Continued rail service, for freight purposes, by the private sector, must be encouraged and promoted.
- Multi-use trails should be constructed in rail corridors when they are no longer needed for rail purposes; and when it is determined that a “Rail-with-Trail” can be constructed that meets the above safety and access objectives.

Study Conclusions

Other significant findings and conclusions of the study just completed:

- Pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety is by far the greatest concern of businesses and property owners adjacent to proposed routes. This fact suggests that if safety concerns can be addressed, there will be greater community support for the route that is selected.
- From a strictly design point of view, a bicycle/pedestrian corridor can be designed to meet adopted design guidelines in each of the three route alternatives.
- All of the alternatives have design solutions that maintain access to adjacent businesses and allow for continued freight movement by rail.
- Each of the three alternatives studied has unique design challenges at specific locations that would require fairly costly treatments (for instance, installation of new signals; adjustment to roadway location; purchase of property, and so on).

- Length of route, the time it takes to bicycle each route, topography, and current bike patterns are all significant factors when determining where it is possible to route bicyclists successfully.
- Ballard is changing fairly rapidly with more than 25 projects within the study area at various stages of consideration and development. Where land use is changing, there are opportunities to resolve design challenges and make safety improvements for all modes of transportation.
- Historically, bicycle facilities in Seattle have been built in phases with temporary routes providing interim solutions. This approach has proven successful in the past and should be considered as a way to address difficult funding and design problems.

Additional Steps

- In cooperation with other appropriate City departments, including the Budget Office, seek funding (e.g. Federal Grants - other sources that may be available) for the following:
 - a) The design and construction of the trail as described above
 - b) The purchase, for public use, of a narrow strip of property (its exact width to be determined) on the north side the railroad tracks, east of 28th Avenue. NW; and other smaller pieces of property, as needed, to complete the design
- In locations where redevelopment is being considered near the rail corridor, SDOT and other appropriate City departments should begin to work immediately with the property owners to resolve design challenges and make safety improvements for all modes, so as to accommodate a future trail.
- The rail corridor is already in public ownership. Consistent with current City policy, the City should continue preservation of the corridor, in public ownership, for rail and trail use.
- Consistent with adopted City policies and plans; the long-term plan is to construct a multi-use trail along the entire railroad right-of-way once activity levels are deemed appropriate.