BURKE-GILMAN TRAIL MISSING LINK
Frequently Asked Questions

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Seattle Department of Transportation

What is the Missing Link, and where is it located?

The Missing Link is a 1.4-mile section of the Burke-Gilman Trail between the Ballard Locks and the Ballard Fred Meyer that is not yet complete. The Burke-Gilman Trail currently ends at 30th Ave NW at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks and begins again at the intersection of 11th Ave NW and NW 45th Street at the Ballard Fred Meyer. The Missing Link will connect these 2 existing portions of the Burke Gilman trail and create a complete, multimodal corridor along the following route (from west to east):

- South side of NW 54th St to NW Market St
- South side of NW Market St to Shilshole
- South side of Shilshole Ave NW to NW 45th St
- South side of NW 45th St, connecting to the existing trail at 11th Ave NW

Why is constructing the Missing Link corridor a Seattle priority?

The Burke-Gilman Trail is one of Seattle's most popular multi-use trails. This vibrant, 20-mile regional trail is heavily used by cyclists and pedestrians for commuting and recreating. It serves as a major transportation corridor and it connects multiple neighborhoods between Bothell and Golden Gardens Park. The Burke-Gilman Trail also connects to other

regional trails such as the Sammamish River Trail, the Interurban Trail, and the Magnolia Connector.

The City has been working with the community to complete the Burke-Gilman Trail for many years. The Missing Link has been included in the City's Comprehensive Plan since the early 1990s and is identified as one of the City's top-rated trail priorities in the 2014 Bicycle Master Plan.

Construction of the Missing Link will create a predictable multimodal corridor in Seattle's Ballard neighborhood and a complete regional trail that enhances safety for all users. It will provide needed infrastructure updates to Shilshole Ave NW and NW 45th St and fulfill the City's commitment to the community.

How will design of the Missing Link corridor along the preferred alignment ensure safety of all users?

Safety is the guiding principle for design of the Missing Link corridor. The design will incorporate many safety features that will help to make driving, walking, and biking along the corridor more organized and predictable for all users.

During the environmental review and design process, SDOT consulted with local stakeholders and convened a Design Advisory Committee (DAC) to ensure that the needs and safety of all trail users are considered. In addition, SDOT contracted an expert Independent Design Advisor to work with the DAC and project design team to provide creative strategies that have been implemented on other multi-use corridors.

One of the creative strategies to improve the safety of the corridor is the proposed of motion-activated flashing LED warning signs. This solution emerged through conversations with the public, businesses and stakeholders, and DAC members, and it is supported by the project's Independent Design Advisor. These signs will be placed at key driveways to alert trail users of approaching vehicles.

How did community input influence the location of the Missing Link preferred alternative?

Throughout the environmental review process, SDOT sought input from the community through several open houses and public comment periods. Over 4,400 comments were received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, with 77% noting a preference for locating the Missing Link along the south side of Shilshole Ave NW. In contrast, there were a number of substantive comments expressing concerns over placing the trail in front of the industrial and water-dependent businesses along that corridor.

To aid in selecting the Preferred Alternative, SDOT consulted with representatives from adjacent businesses, freight, bicycle and pedestrian groups, and the public to provide input and feedback on potential route alternatives.

Why does the preferred alignment for the Missing Link follow Shilshole Ave NW instead of Ballard Ave NW or NW Leary Way?

Locating the Missing Link on the south side of Shilshole Ave NW makes sense when compared to Ballard Ave NW or NW Leary Way because Shilshole Ave NW:

- Crosses the fewest number of intersections, which have the greatest potential for conflict.
- Has less truck traffic, both at peak hours and daily, than NW Leary Way.
- Is the flattest examined alternative, which helps to ensure improved sight-lines and safety for all corridor users.
- Is the shortest, quickest route between existing trail portions, which means that trail users would likely continue to use Shilshole Ave NW even if the trail were constructed elsewhere.

In addition, the analysis included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement demonstrated that locating the trail on NW Leary Way would result in greater traffic impacts, resulting in larger mobility challenges to transit and freight. Future city projects may also bring transit and multimodal improvements to NW Leary Way.

Why does the preferred alignment for the Missing Link travel along NW Market Street instead of along NW 54th St?

During the Environmental Impact Statement process, it became clear that siting the trail on NW 54th St would exacerbate a pinch point between vehicles needing to access properties south of the roadway, the Ballard Terminal Railroad tracks, and business access garages that open immediately into the public right-of-way. This would require barriers or fences on either side of the trail to prevent motor vehicles from driving along the trail. In contrast, the alignment on NW Market St provides a more comfortable trail user experience, provides access to new developments on NW Market St, and provides easier access for trail users travelling from the north.

How will the Missing Link design ensure safe conditions for trail users and trucks at busy, industrial driveways along Shilshole Ave NW?

Conversations with stakeholders and business owners during the design of the Missing Link Corridor helped to identify safety features that enhance predictability for drivers and trail users at the busiest industrial driveways. Some of these safety features were developed specifically for the Shilshole Ave NW portion of the Missing Link Corridor. The comprehensive safety improvements incorporated into the final design include:

- A raised trail to provide better visibility
- A narrowed trail at driveways to help slow trail users
- The use of a buffer zone to offset the trail and improve visibility

- Improved sight lines for drivers and trail users
- On-pavement markings for trail users (including the word "SLOW" and speed lines)
- Green pavement markings where trails cross driveways
- LED warning signs at the highest volume driveway crossings

The LED warning signs will be crossing-activated, alerting trail users when a truck is approaching a high-traffic driveway. To ensure predictability, the trail will not include stop controls for trail users at driveway crossings. This strategy reflects SDOT standard practice, as stop controlling vehicles at driveways has been proven safer than stop-controlling sidewalk or trail users,

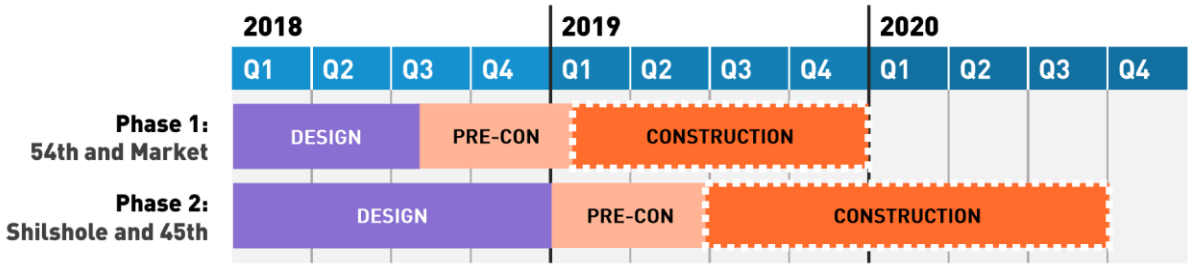
All of the safety measures outlined above will help trail users and trucks be more aware of driveway crossings and more visible to each other.

What is the timeline for completing the design of the Missing Link?

Design of the Missing Link began in May 2017, following the identification of a preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Final design for the entire corridor is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2018.

When is construction on the Missing Link intended to begin and when will it be completed?

Construction is expected to occur in two phases. The first phase, which includes improvements on NW 54th St and NW Market St, is expected to begin construction in early 2019 and be completed by the end of 2019. The second phase, which includes improvements on Shilshole Ave NW and NW 45th St, is expected to begin construction in mid-2019 and be completed by the end of Q3 2020.



How many parking spaces are anticipated to be affected by the preferred alignment?

Construction of the Missing Link is anticipated to change parking along the 1.4-mile corridor by removing approximately 236 parking spaces. This means the corridor design was able to retain 60% of the parking that exists on the corridor today. SDOT worked with the community throughout design to identify opportunities to retain the maximum number of parking stalls possible.

The majority of the lost parking spaces will be in the unregulated areas along Shilshole Ave NW where vehicles double- and triple-park. Currently, illegally parked vehicles along Shilshole Ave NW present a hazard to cars, trucks, pedestrians, and bikes by limiting sight lines. Parking and infrastructure improvements along the roadway will work to increase visibility, corridor predictability, and safety for all users.

What is the anticipated construction cost for the Missing Link?

The Ballard community has requested a Missing Link corridor that includes improvements for all users. Throughout the design process, we've talked with stakeholders and adjacent property owners to learn more about community priorities. The design incorporates many new features beyond the trail improvements to help create a complete, safe, and predictable corridor.

Design and construction of the project is anticipated to cost approximately $26.4 million, based on the final version of design. This cost includes additional corridor improvements, including expedited street paving on NW Market St (originally part of the Market St RapidRide project), new traffic signals on Shilshole, updated Metro trolley infrastructure, improved pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks, a new access road, utility and railroad improvements, and new stormwater infrastructure. Funding for the additional scope elements come from a variety of partnerships and programs.

What is Seattle Public Utilities Ship Canal Water Quality Project? How is it connected to the Missing Link?

Seattle Public Utilities' Ship Canal Water Quality Project will build a storage tunnel to reduce polluted water overflows into the Ship Canal from Ballard, Fremont, Wallingford, and north Queen Anne. The 2.7-mile tunnel will temporarily hold more than 15 million gallons of stormwater and sewage during heavy rains. When the storm passes, flows will be sent to King County's West Point Wastewater Treatment Plant.

SPU and SDOT teams have been closely coordinating in order to reduce impacts to the community.

For more information, visit seattle.gov/util/shipcanalproject

Still have questions or want to learn more?

- Visit the project website: seattle.gov/transportation/BGT_MissingLink.htm
- Call the project team: (206) 256-5264
- Email the project team: BGT_MissingLink@seattle.gov