

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 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 (on the west) and begins again at the intersection of 11th Ave NW and NW 45th Street (on the east). The Missing Link will connect these 2 existing portions of the Burke Gilman trail along the following route:

- South side of NW 54th St and NW Market St to 24th Ave NW
- 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 construction of the Missing Link a Seattle priority?

The Burke-Gilman Trail is one of Seattle's most popular multiuse trails. This vibrant, 20-mile regional trail is heavily used by cyclists and pedestrians for commuting and recreation. 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 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 complete trail and a predictable multimodal corridor that enhances safety for all users, fulfills the City's commitment to the community, and provides needed infrastructure updates to Shilshole Ave NW and NW 45th St.

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

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

The design process will build upon the community engagement incorporated into the environmental review process. SDOT will consult with local stakeholders through a Design

Advisory Committee (DAC) process to ensure that the needs and safety of all trail users are considered. In addition, SDOT has contracted an independent Expert Design Advisor to work with the project design team and provide creative strategies that have been implemented on similar multiuse corridors.

Burke-Gilman Trail Missing Link Preferred Alternative Route



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. Of the over 4,400 comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, 77% noted preference for locating the Missing Link along the south side of Shilshole Ave NW. However, 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 general 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 Leary Ave NW?

Nearly four out of five comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement preferred locating the Missing Link along the south side of Shilshole Ave NW. Locating the Missing

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

- Crosses the fewest number of intersections, which have the greatest potential for conflict.
- Shilshole Ave NW has less truck traffic, both at peak hour and daily, than Leary Way.
- A trail on Leary would result in greater traffic impacts, resulting in greater impacts to transit and freight.
- 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. Seattle’s RapidRide Expansion Program will bring dedicated lanes for high capacity transit on Leary Way by 2023.

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.

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

Design of the Missing Link began in May 2017, following identification of a preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Design of the Missing Link will occur throughout 2017 and it will incorporate input from nearby property owners, the DAC, and the public. The below graphic highlights design phase milestones:



Why is SDOT working to complete design of the Missing Link so quickly?

The Missing Link Project is a Seattle priority that has been in development for a very long time. Now that a preferred alignment has been identified, the City plans to complete the Missing Link to fulfill its commitment to the community and to be most efficient with taxpayer dollars.

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

Construction of the Missing Link is anticipated to change parking along NW Market St and Shilshole Ave NW by removing approximately 282 existing parking spaces, many of which are unregulated. SDOT's estimate of lost parking spaces is very conservative and it includes many unregulated double- and triple-parked vehicles along Shilshole Ave NW.

Currently, illegally parked vehicles along Shilshole Ave NW present a hazard to cars, trucks, pedestrians, and bikes by limiting sight lines. Infrastructure improvements along the roadway will provide increased predictability to keep all road and trail users safe.

What is the anticipated construction cost for the Missing Link?



The Burke-Gilman Trail Missing Link is anticipated to cost approximately \$15 million. Approximately \$2.5 million of this was spent to conduct the completed environmental review. Design and construction of the trail itself is anticipated to cost approximately \$12.5 million.

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

Construction on the Missing Link is anticipated to begin in spring 2018. The trail will be built in segments, and construction is anticipated to be completed in spring 2019. Additional details about the construction schedule should be available in early 2018.