

DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE

Description: **Washington Park Arboretum - Pacific Pathways Project:** Seattle Parks and Recreation is proposing to construct a gravel pathway from the existing Azalea Way, Arboretum Loop Trail and parking area to the Pacific Connections Garden and the historic Lookout Gazebo. The pathway has been designed for all ages and abilities and will be constructed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This new path will weave through existing plant collections and will feature new plantings along and between the routes. The first phase of the pathway project will construct the bottom 1/3 of the accessible path to the existing Gazebo and may include stairs if additional funding is available. Base scope for the project includes, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, demolition, site grading, retaining wall, storm drainage, walkways and irrigation. The overall project includes the removal of thirty-five (35) trees and approximately 972 cu.yds of cut and 1790 cu.yds of fill resulting in net 818 cu.yds of fill over the life of the project, likely to be constructed in three phases as funding becomes available. The first phase of the project that is proposed to be constructed in 2027 includes the removal of ten (10) trees and approximately 52 cu.yds of cut and 870 cu.yds of fill resulting in net 818 cu.yds of fill. Trees removed will be replaced on site at ratio(s) consistent with City regulations.

Proponent: **Seattle Parks and Recreation**

Location: **Washington Park Arboretum, 2300 Arboretum Drive East, Seattle, WA 98112**

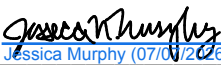
Lead agency: **Seattle Parks and Recreation**

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

- ☐ There is no comment period for this DNS.
- ☒ This DNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the date of publication (**July 9, 2026**).

Written comments must be submitted by **July 23, 2026**.

Responsible official: Jessica Murphy
Position/title: Director of Operations, Planning & Capital Development Division, Seattle Parks and Recreation
e-mail: jessica.murphy@seattle.gov
Address: 300 Elliott Avenue West, Suite 100, Seattle, WA 98119

Date: **07/07/2026** Signature: 
[Jessica Murphy \(07/07/2026 05:52:11 PDT\)](#)

Please contact: David Graves, Strategic Advisor, Seattle Parks and Recreation if you have questions or written comments related to this determination.

Phone: (206) 684-7048; **e-mail:** david.graves@seattle.gov.

You may appeal this determination to **Office of the Hearing Examiner** at **PO Box 94729, Seattle, WA 98124-4729** or 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 4000, Seattle, WA 98104 no later than **5:00 pm** on **July 30, 2026** by **Appeal Letter** and **\$120.00 fee**. You should be prepared to make specific factual objection(s). Contact the Seattle Examiner to read or ask about the procedures for SEPA appeals.

City of Seattle

ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF
SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

Proposal Name: **Washington Park Arboretum - Pacific Pathways Project**

Address of Proposal: **Washington Park Arboretum, 2300 Arboretum Drive East, Seattle, WA 98112**

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Seattle Parks and Recreation is proposing to construct a gravel pathway from the existing Azalea Way, Arboretum Loop Trail and parking area to the Pacific Connections Garden and the historic Lookout Gazebo. The pathway has been designed for all ages and abilities and will be constructed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This new path will weave through existing plant collections and will feature new plantings along and between the routes. The first phase of the pathway project will construct the bottom 1/3 of the accessible path to the existing Gazebo and may include stairs if additional funding is available. Base scope for the project includes, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, demolition, site grading, retaining wall, storm drainage, walkways and irrigation. The overall project includes the removal of thirty-five (35) trees and approximately 972 cu.yds of cut and 1790 cu.yds of fill resulting in net 818 cu.yds of fill over the life of the project, likely to be constructed in three phases as funding becomes available. The first phase of the project that is proposed to be constructed in 2027 includes the removal of ten (10) trees and approximately 52 cu.yds of cut and 870 cu.yds of fill resulting in net 818 cu.yds of fill. Trees removed will be replaced on site at ratio(s) consistent with City regulations.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

BACKGROUND DATA

The Washington Park Arboretum is a public park managed jointly by Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) and the University of Washington (UW). It is Washington's official State Arboretum and contains internationally recognized woody plant collections on 230 acres. SPR manages the day-to-day operations and capital improvements, and UW manages the collection trees and plants. These plant resources require improved conditions and special care to thrive. Barrier-free access to public spaces needs to be updated to meet legal requirements. Visitor services, security, and educational and community programs are essential to the Arboretum's public service mission.

SPR, the Arboretum Foundation and the University of Washington are working in partnership to construct a gravel pathway from the existing Azalea Way, Arboretum Loop Trail and Birch Lot parking area to the Pacific Connections Garden and the historic lookout gazebo. The pathway has been designed for all ages and abilities and will be constructed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This new path will weave through existing plant collections and will feature new plantings along and between the routes. The first phase of the pathway project will construct the bottom 1/3 of the accessible path to the existing Gazebo and may include stairs if

additional funding is available. Base cope for the project includes, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, demolition, site grading, retaining wall, storm drainage, walkways and irrigation.

The Washington Park Arboretum (WPA) contains identified Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) as indicated on the City's GIS database – Riparian Corridor and Wetland ECAs associated with Arboretum Creek and its tributaries; Liquefaction Prone and Peat Settlement Prone ECAs associated with soils underlying the Arboretum, particularly the north-south running Arboretum Creek corridor; Fish and Wildlife Habitat ECA associated with the relatively undeveloped and forested nature of the Arboretum and the known presence of priority species such as Bald eagles; and Steep Slope ECAs associated with the hillside areas throughout the Arboretum. Given the large size of the Arboretum, not all identified ECAs are present on the project site. Only the Riparian Corridor, Wetland, Steep Slope and Peat Settlement ECAs and/or their buffers are present on or adjacent to the project site.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

Seattle SPR is proposing to construct a gravel pathway from the existing Azalea Way pathway to the Pacific Connections Garden and the historic lookout gazebo. The pathway will be constructed in three phases, as budget becomes available. The first phase of the pathway project will construct the bottom 1/3 of the accessible path to the existing Gazebo and may include stairs if additional funding is available. Base cope for the project includes:

- Clearing and grubbing of the pathway corridor
- Ten (10) trees will be removed; Twenty-nine (29) trees will be planted within the pathway corridor.
- Site grading for the pathway
- Retaining wall construction to support the pathway and/or the upslope hillside adjacent to the pathway
- Storm drainage improvements to capture runoff - Rainwater runoff from the new gravel trail is the only source of runoff for the project. The project will utilize Compost-Amended Vegetated Swales (CAVFS) to distribute runoff to the landscape areas adjacent to the trail. Rockery walls will include footing drains which will collect groundwater surcharge and direct it to the existing storm piped drainage system.
- Installation of a five-foot wide gravel pathway
- Installation of irrigation to support the plantings associated with the new pathway.

The project has been designed to enhance the public's use and enjoyment of the Washington Park Arboretum by providing an accessible connection between Azalea Way and the upper areas of the Pacific Connections garden that does not currently exist today. The trail was designed to protect the existing trees to the maximum extent possible given the requirements of the ADA and the need to limit the trail grades and cross slopes. Most of the trail construction will occur in what is now mowed lawn. Disturbed areas will be planted with trees, shrubs and ground covers. Work involves typical construction methods and equipment. Existing trees not identified for removal will be protected in place pursuant to a tree and vegetation plan consistent with SMC Sec. 25.09.070. Disturbed areas will be restored. The project will implement a temporary erosion and sediment control plan consistent with the requirements of the City's Codes.

Expected construction activities include machine excavation and grading, excavation for trail and retaining wall construction and installation of the gravel pathway and landscaping. All applicable BMP's for construction site management will be implemented during construction.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

Initial disclosure of potential impacts from this project was made in the applicant's environmental checklist, dated March 20, 2026. The basis for this analysis and decision is formed from information in the checklist, project plans, the lead agency's familiarity with the site and experience with review of similar projects.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 23.05.665) discusses the relationship between the City's code/policies and environmental review. The Overview Policy states, in part, "[w]here City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact; it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation". The Policies also discuss in SMC 23.05.665 D1-7, that in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to deny or mitigate a project based on adverse environmental impacts. This may be specified otherwise in the policies for specific elements of the environment found in SMC 25.05.675. In consideration of these policies, a more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts is appropriate.

Short Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by construction activities; potential soil erosion and disturbance to subsurface soils during site work; increased noise and traffic from construction equipment and personnel.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Erosion will be prevented by implementation of a required Temporary Erosion Control and Sedimentation Plan. Best Management Practices, such as mulching and seeding will be implemented at the site to minimize erosion during construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures and life safety issues. The Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the city. Compliance with these codes and/or ordinances will lessen the environmental impacts of the proposed project.

The impacts associated with the construction are expected to be minor and of relatively short duration. Compliance with the above applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. However, impacts from construction traffic and construction noise on the park users, access/impacts to the arboretum during construction and the proposed tree removal warrant further discussion.

Construction Traffic

The site is close to an arterial street which provides convenient truck access consistent with the requirements of the Street Use Ordinance. As noted above, materials will need to be excavated, removed and/or imported and graded across the site. There will be limited construction traffic beyond materials, equipment and construction workers entering and leaving the site. The site is

adjacent to Lake Washington Boulevard East, a collector arterial, which provides direct access to East Madison Street, a minor arterial. Given the proximity of City arterials, construction access and materials hauling can be accommodated consistent with City requirements and with little or no impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. As such, traffic impacts associated with the project construction are not anticipated to be significant and thus no conditioning is necessary or warranted.

Noise

Construction activities will likely be confined to weekdays. Hours of construction are limited by the Seattle Noise Ordinance, SMC ch. 25.08, to 7:00 a.m. and ten 10:00 p.m. on weekdays (SMC 25.08.425). The reality of the local construction industry is that contractors typically work from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.; the likelihood that any construction activities will occur up to 10 p.m. is slight. The Noise Ordinance also regulates the loudness (dB) of construction activities, measured fifty (50) feet from the subject activity or device. The City has dedicated noise inspectors to monitor construction activities and respond to construction complaints. Compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance will prevent any significant adverse short-term noise impacts and thus no further conditioning is necessary or warranted.

Recreation

The arboretum is generally a quiet and tranquil place for passive recreation. Construction activities may disturb arboretum visitors during the early heavy construction activities. Potential visitors to the arboretum will be alerted to the construction activities so they can choose areas of the arboretum beyond the project site that will likely be only minimally impacted by the construction noise. Construction equipment and workers will have to cross the multi-use trail that follows Lake Washington Boulevard on the east side of the boulevard. Trail users will also be alerted to any trail closures and users will be rerouted around the project site as needed. During construction, areas of the arboretum further from the construction site will retain their quieter ambiance. No construction is anticipated on weekends when the arboretum sees more visitors so other than potential access and parking challenges during construction, visitors on weekends will not experience any disruption due to noise. Since there are other recreational resources in the neighborhood, no significant adverse temporary recreation impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Compliance with applicable codes, ordinances and regulations will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation.

Long Term Impacts

Recreation

Once construction is completed, access between the multi-use trail/Azalea Way and the upper areas of the Pacific Connections Garden will be improved. Visitors with mobility issues and parents with children in strollers will be afforded better access to the upper areas of the Pacific Connections Garden and the arboretum will return to its tranquil setting with better access. No significant long-term adverse recreation impacts are anticipated, and no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Trees

Tree removal and replacement is governed by the City's Tree Ordinance (SMC Chapter 25.11 - Tree Protection). Consistent with the requirements of SMC Ch. 25.11, a total of thirty-five (35) trees will be removed over the course of the project, and 105 trees will be planted in and around the arboretum. In the first phase of the project, ten (10) trees will be removed and (29) twenty-nine trees will be planted. The arboretum is unique in that most of the trees within the arboretum are owned by the University of Washington, are not necessarily native to the Pacific Northwest and managed and considered as part of UW's collection. Replacement trees will also be part of UW's collection and not necessarily native to the Pacific Northwest but native to the Pacific Rim consistent with vision for the Pacific Connections Garden which contains species from around the Pacific Rim with climates similar to Seattle. The goal of Seattle's Tree Protection Code is the preservation of tree canopy. Planting the replacement trees at predominantly a 3:1 ratio will begin to compensate for the loss of the existing trees. Compliance with the Code requirements provides mitigation for the proposed tree loss and no further mitigation is necessary.

Traffic

Once construction is completed, the site will continue to serve the immediate neighborhood and visitors from beyond the immediate community. The project is not anticipated to increase visitors, just provide better access for those people who do visit the arboretum. No significant adverse traffic impacts associated with the trail construction are anticipated and thus no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Upon completion of the project, no long term adverse environmental impacts are anticipated and thus no conditioning is necessary or warranted.

DECISION

This decision was made after the responsible official, on behalf of the lead agency, reviewed a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and final decision on application of SEPA's substantive authority and mitigation provisions. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- ☒ Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).
- ☐ Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. AN EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

Signature: _____

David Graves, AICP, Strategic Advisor
Planning & Capital Development Branch
Seattle Parks and Recreation

Date: July 6, 2026

SEPA¹ Environmental Checklist

Purpose of checklist

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization, or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. **You may use “not applicable” or “does not apply” only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown.** You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to **all parts of your proposal**, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for lead agencies

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B, plus the Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions (Part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in “Part B: Environmental Elements” that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Checklist-guidance>

A. Background

[Find help answering background questions²](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Pathways Phase I

2. Name of applicant:

Seattle Parks and Recreation

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Janice Liang, 206-507-3058, 300 Elliott Ave W, Seattle, WA 98119

4. Date checklist prepared:

3/20/26

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Seattle Parks and Recreation

6. Proposed timing of schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Construction starting Q1 2027

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Yes, future development will include additional Phase 2 and 3 of accessibility improvements connecting to the Pacific Connection Gardens.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Steep slope near project site

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

No

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

SDCI grading permit

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

SPR, the Arboretum Foundation and the University of Washington Botanic Gardens, are working in partnership to construct a gravel pathway from the existing Azalea Way,

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background>

Arboretum Loop Trail and parking area to the Pacific Connections Garden and the historic lookout Gazebo. The pathway has been designed for all ages and abilities and will be constructed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This new path will weave through existing plant collections and will feature new plantings along and between the routes. The first phase of the pathway project will construct the bottom 1/3 of the accessible path to the existing Gazebo and may include stairs if additional funding is available. Base cope for the project includes, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, demolition, site grading, retaining wall, storm drainage, walkways and irrigation.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

The Project's proposed APE encompasses each of the Phase 1, 2, and 3 areas located on portions of King County tax parcels 2125049044 and 320430PUBL. The APE is within Sections 21 and 28 of Township 25 North, Range 04 East, of the Seattle North, WA 7.5' quadrangle within the south end of the Washington Park Arboretum, near the intersection of the Arboretum Loop Trail, Azalea Way, and East Lake Washington Boulevard (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The total Project acreage is approximately 4.63 acres of which Phase 1 comprises approximately 1.99 acres, Phase 2 comprises approximately 1.60 acres, and Phase 3 comprises approximately 1.04 acres.

The only portion of the Project APE that will include ground disturbance at this time is the Phase 1 area (Figure 3). Phase 2 and 3 areas are included in the APE as they will be included in the literature review, but no ground disturbance is currently planned for these areas as part of this Project. Additional planned (ground-disturbing) work in the Phase 2 and 3 areas will occur under a different project. Please refer to the project plan set for site plan, vicinity map and topographic map.

B.Environmental Elements

1. Earth

[Find help answering earth questions](#)³

a. General description of the site:

The project site is a slopped vegetated area with a mix of trees and lawn areas located in the south portion of the Washington Park Arboretum. A bike and pedestrian path and some walking trails run adjacent and through the site.

Circle or highlight one: Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

Steepest slopes are approximately 3:1.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them, and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

The project geotechnical report states that, “the entire Washington Park Arboretum parcel has been classified by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) as being a Category II Peat Settlement Prone Environmentally Critical Area (ECA).”

The report notes the findings of exploratory borings, “As shown on the exploration logs, soils encountered at the site consisted of existing fill soils underlain by mass wasting deposits, Vashon ice-contact deposits, Vashon advance outwash, and pre-Fraser non-glacial fine-grained sediments.”

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

No indications of unstable soils are present. There are designated steep slope areas within the arboretum, near the project site, but none within the project work area.

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

- Purpose: installation of an accessible crushed rock gravel pathway into existing hillside at the Washington Park Arboretum. Areas adjacent to pathway will be amended for planting.

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-earth>

- Type: a mix of cut and fill. Fill materials will be structural fill overlaid with crushed rock gravel paving. Compost amendment will be incorporated in areas of planting adjacent to paths.
- The project will consist of 3 phases of roughly equal volume.
 - o Phase 1 will include the below approximate amounts of cut and fill.
 - Cut volume: approximately 51.1 cy
 - Fill volume: 869.7 cy
 - o Estimated cut and fill for phases 2 and 3 are assumed to be more or less balanced.
 - Total phase 2 and 3 cut volume: 920.8 cy
 - Total phase 2 and 3 fill volume: 920.8 cy
- Total cut and fill calculation:
 - o Total cut: 971.9 cy
 - o Total fill: 1790.5

f. Could erosion occur because of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

There is potential for erosion during construction and plant establishment due to existing site conditions. Erosion control measures will be employed during construction and plant establishment to minimize risk.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

Impervious surfaces will consist of only crushed rock gravel pathways. Total impervious area for project is estimated to be approximately 21,500 square feet. Total project area is approximately 156,000 square feet.

Total percentage of impervious is estimated to be approximately 14%.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any.

Erosion and sediment conveyance will be minimized through standard temporary erosion and sediment control measures, including limiting disturbance to the smallest practical area, staging work to minimize exposed soil, protecting stockpiles if any, and stabilizing disturbed areas as work progresses. Drainage will be managed to avoid concentrating runoff on the trail alignment

2. Air

[Find help answering air questions](#)⁴

- a. **What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

During construction, the project would generate minor, temporary air emissions from construction equipment, such as diesel or gasoline exhaust and small amounts of dust from grading, gravel placement, and site disturbance. These emissions are expected to be limited, localized, and short term. Quantities are typically not calculated for projects of this scale and would be negligible overall. After completion, the trail would not create ongoing air emissions beyond normal occasional maintenance activity, such as light vehicle use or hand tools during upkeep

- b. **Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

No off-site emissions are expected.

- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**

Standard dust-control and emissions-reduction practices should be used during construction, including limiting soil disturbance to the smallest practical area, wetting disturbed surfaces as needed, covering or quickly stabilizing exposed soils, and avoiding unnecessary idling of equipment. Equipment should be well maintained and operated efficiently to reduce exhaust, and construction sequencing will minimize the time that bare ground is exposed. Once the trail is complete, routine maintenance should be limited to periodic spot repairs and light grooming, which would keep air impacts minimal

3. Water

[Find help answering water questions](#)⁵

- a. **Surface:**

[Find help answering surface water questions](#)⁶

1. **Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-Air>

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water>

⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Surface-water>

There is a small pond that discharges to Arboretum Creek located approximately 200 feet north of the project limit of work. Arboretum Creek also lies approximately 75 feet from the project's western limit.

- 2. Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

No work will be required within 200 feet of either water body. All work will occur beyond pre-existing developed conditions. Both are buffered by pre-existing developed areas including existing trails and landscaped areas.

- 3. Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

None.

- 4. Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No.

- 5. Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

No

- 6. Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

No

b. Ground:

[Find help answering ground water questions⁷](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Groundwater)

- 1. Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No

- 2. Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

None

⁷ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Groundwater>

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater):

- 1. Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

The new gravel trail is the only source of impervious surfaces being proposed, runoff quantities are anticipated to be minimal.

Rainwater runoff from the new gravel trail is the only source of runoff for the project. The project will utilize Compost-Amended Vegetated Swales (CAVFS) to distribute runoff to the landscape areas adjacent to the trail.

Rockery walls will include footing drains which will collect groundwater surcharge and direct it to the existing storm piped drainage system.

- 2. Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

No

- 3. Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.**

The project will not alter the existing drainage patterns of the site.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:**

- a. CAVFS and footing drains are included.
- b. Temporary erosion control measures will be employed during construction.

4. Plants

[Find help answering plants questions](#)

- a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:**

- ☒ **deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other**
- ☒ **evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other**
- ☒ **shrubs**
- ☒ **grass**
- ☐ **pasture**
- ☐ **crop or grain**
- ☐ **orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops.**
- ☐ **wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other**
- ☐ **water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other**
- ☐ **other types of vegetation**

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

The majority of existing vegetation to be removed is lawn, with a select number of existing trees to be removed as required to route the new pathways.

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

No threatened or endangered native plants are known within the project limits. There are represented plant species within the WPA that are endangered within their native ranges.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.

Project is located within the existing Washington Park Arboretum. New trees and shrubs will be planted by arboretum staff.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

English Ivy, Himalayan blackberry, English Holly and other invasive species typically found in the Seattle area are present in the WPA; none are present on the project site.

5. Animals

[Find help answering animal questions](#)⁸

a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Examples include:

- **Birds:** hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
- **Mammals:** deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
- **Fish:** bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Pacific Pond Turtle has been reported near the north end of the site. There are three Bald Eagle nests reported in the area.

Nearby in Lake Washington, ESA listed species include Puget Sound Chinook salmon, Puget Sound steelhead and Coastal Puget Sound bull trout that may use the downstream reach below the culvert on Arboretum Creek.

⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-5-Animals>

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The creek, wetlands and existing trees on and located adjacent to the project site provide valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife because of their vegetation and source of water. The nearby Union Bay provides habitat for wintering and migratory waterfowl. The Lake Washington system is a migratory corridor for anadromous salmon, trout and char.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any.

The project will be enhancing the existing vegetation with native and ornamental vegetation which will contribute to enhanced urban wildlife habitat in this area.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

Nutria are present in the nearby Duck/Union Bay

6. Energy and natural resources

[Find help answering energy and natural resource questions](#)⁹

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

The completed project is not expected to have any significant energy needs. The gravel trail will function as an outdoor passive-use improvement and will not include structures. Any energy use associated with the project would be limited to occasional maintenance activities, such as the use of small gasoline- or battery-powered hand tools or light-duty equipment, and would be temporary and minimal.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

No.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

Not applicable.

⁹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-6-Energy-natural-resou>

7. Environmental health

[Health Find help with answering environmental health questions](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-7-Environmental-health)¹⁰

- a. **Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur because of this proposal? If so, describe.**

No.

1. **Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.**

N/A

2. **Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.**

N/A

3. **Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.**

N/A

4. **Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

N/A

5. **Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any.**

N/A

b. Noise

1. **What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?**

No significant sources of noise exist nearby.

2. **What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site)?**

During construction, the project would generate short-term noise from light equipment, hand tools, gravel placement, and occasional vehicle movement associated with site work. Because this is a small trail project, noise levels would be temporary and localized rather than continuous, and no long-term operational noise is expected once the trail is complete. Noise would generally occur only during normal daytime construction hours, not at night.

¹⁰ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-7-Environmental-health>

3. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

- Limiting noisy work to daytime hours
- Using properly maintained equipment
- Staging construction to avoid unnecessary idling
- Keeping construction activity as short in duration as practical

After construction, no permanent noise control measures are expected because the completed gravel trail will not create meaningful ongoing noise.

8. Land and shoreline use

[Find help answering land and shoreline use questions](#)¹¹

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

Current use is public park space. Immediately adjacent areas are also park space. Nearest neighbor to the east is a private golf course. Nearest residential use lies to the west, approximately 425 feet away from nearest project work.

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses because of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

No.

1. Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how?

No

c. Describe any structures on the site.

There is an existing gazebo structure located near the project. There is also a covered shelter building. Neither are within the project work area.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

No.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Current zoning is Neighborhood Residential (NR).

¹¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-8-Land-shoreline-use>

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

City-Owned Open Space.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

Not applicable

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

WPA contains designated Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs). The project site includes designated Riparian Corridor and Wildlife Habitat ECAs as shown on SDCI's GIS map.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

None, this is not a residential or commercial project.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

None.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any.

N/A

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any.

N/A

m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

N/A

9. Housing

[Find help answering housing questions](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-9-Housing)¹²

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

N/A

¹² <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-9-Housing>

10. Aesthetics

[Find help answering aesthetics questions](#)¹³

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

N/A

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

N/A

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

N/A

11. Light and glare

[Find help answering light and glare questions](#)¹⁴

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

None

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

No.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

None

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

N/A

12. Recreation

[Find help answering recreation questions](#)

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Arboretum, park, sports fields, playgrounds.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

No

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

N/A, project will enhance recreational opportunities.

¹³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-10-Aesthetics>

¹⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-11-Light-glare>

13. Historic and cultural preservation

[Find help answering historic and cultural preservation questions](#)¹⁵

- a. **Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers? If so, specifically describe.**

Yes, the Lookout Gazebo dates from the 1930's. Azalea Way was designed in the 1920's by the Olmsted Brothers.

- b. **Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.**

Based on a preliminary review of DAHP's WISAARD database by SPR's cultural resources consultant, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), the APE does not contain any previously recorded archaeological sites, historic resources, cemeteries, or unrestricted traditional cultural places. One previous cultural resources assessment overlaps a small portion (< 5%) of the APE. This previous assessment, a cultural resources survey for the Arboretum Loop Trail project (Ostrander et al 2015), included a surface and subsurface survey in anticipation of a new 1.2-mile long trail; no archaeological resources were identified within the overlapping portion of current Project's APE.

While there are no previously recorded cultural resources within the Project's APE, the Arboretum, as a whole, contains several recorded resources, including the NRHP-listed Lake Washington Boulevard East (located approximately 150 feet west and south from the APE) and historic-era Washington Park Landfill archaeological site (45KI849; located over 0.1 mile south of the APE). In addition, although the Arboretum is not listed in the NRHP or recorded on a historic property inventory (HPI) form, its history, landscaping, and other elements have been extensively previously documented.

The APE is in an area classified in DAHP's Statewide Predicative Model as moderately low and low risk for containing archaeological sites.

- c. **Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.**

The cultural resources literature review will use a 1-mile study area in all directions from the APE. Fieldwork will consist of a surface and subsurface survey of areas planned for

¹⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-13-Historic-cultural-p>

ground disturbance during Phase 1. Subsurface survey is proposed throughout the Phase 1 area, with up to 11 hand-dug shovel probes advanced to 1 meter (3.3 feet), until intact glacial deposits are encountered, or impassable conditions are reached, whichever comes first. As noted, the Arboretum itself has not previously been recorded as a historic built environment resource. SPR will coordinate with DAHP to determine whether an HPI will be required. If DAHP requests an HPI for the Arboretum, one will be developed. All proposed cultural resources work will meet current DAHP standards (Washington State Guidelines for Cultural Resource Reporting, last updated December 19, 2025).

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.**

There are no previously recorded cultural resources within the Project's APE. The project includes a cultural resource survey that will occur prior to any ground disturbing activities. If artifacts and/or other cultural resources, the appropriate agencies and Tribes will be contact and the project will proceed accordingly based on the discovery and subsequent direction.

14. Transportation

[Find help with answering transportation questions](#)¹⁶

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

No vehicular access is planned for the project other than staff maintenance vehicles. Public vehicles will not be allowed.

Existing parking exists to the west off of E Lake Washington Boulevard. Project is also adjacent to the existing Arboretum Loop bike and pedestrian pathway.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

Nearest bus stop is on Madison Street, approximately .33 miles from the project site.

- c. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

No.

- d. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

¹⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-14-Transportation>

No.

- e. **How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?**

This project is not anticipated to increase vehicle trips.

- f. **Will the proposal interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.**

No.

- g. **Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:**

N/A

15. Public services

[Find help answering public service questions¹⁷](#)

- a. **Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

No

- b. **Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

N/A

16. Utilities

[Find help answering utilities questions¹⁸](#)

- a. **Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other:**

Existing water and electricity are available on site for irrigation

- b. **Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.**

Additional zones for irrigation are proposed for the project.

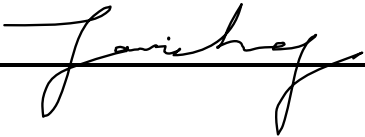
¹⁷ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-15-public-services>

¹⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-16-utilities>

C.Signature

[Find help about who should sign](#)¹⁹

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

X 

Type name of signee: Janice Liang

Position and agency/organization:

Senior Capital Projects Coordinator, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Date submitted: June 22, 2026

¹⁹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-C-Signature>



FOSTER ISLAND
(WASH. PARK)

WASHINGTON
PARK AND
ARBORETUM

INTERLAKEN
PARK

PHASE 1

PHASE 2

PHASE 3

JAPANESE
GARDEN

Lake-Washington Boulevard East

East Madison Street

East Aloha Street

LAKE
WASHINGTON
BOULEVARD

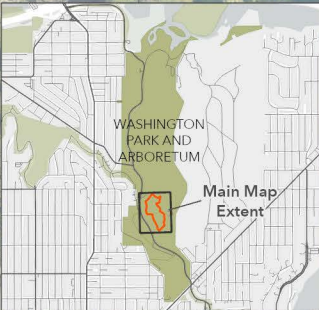
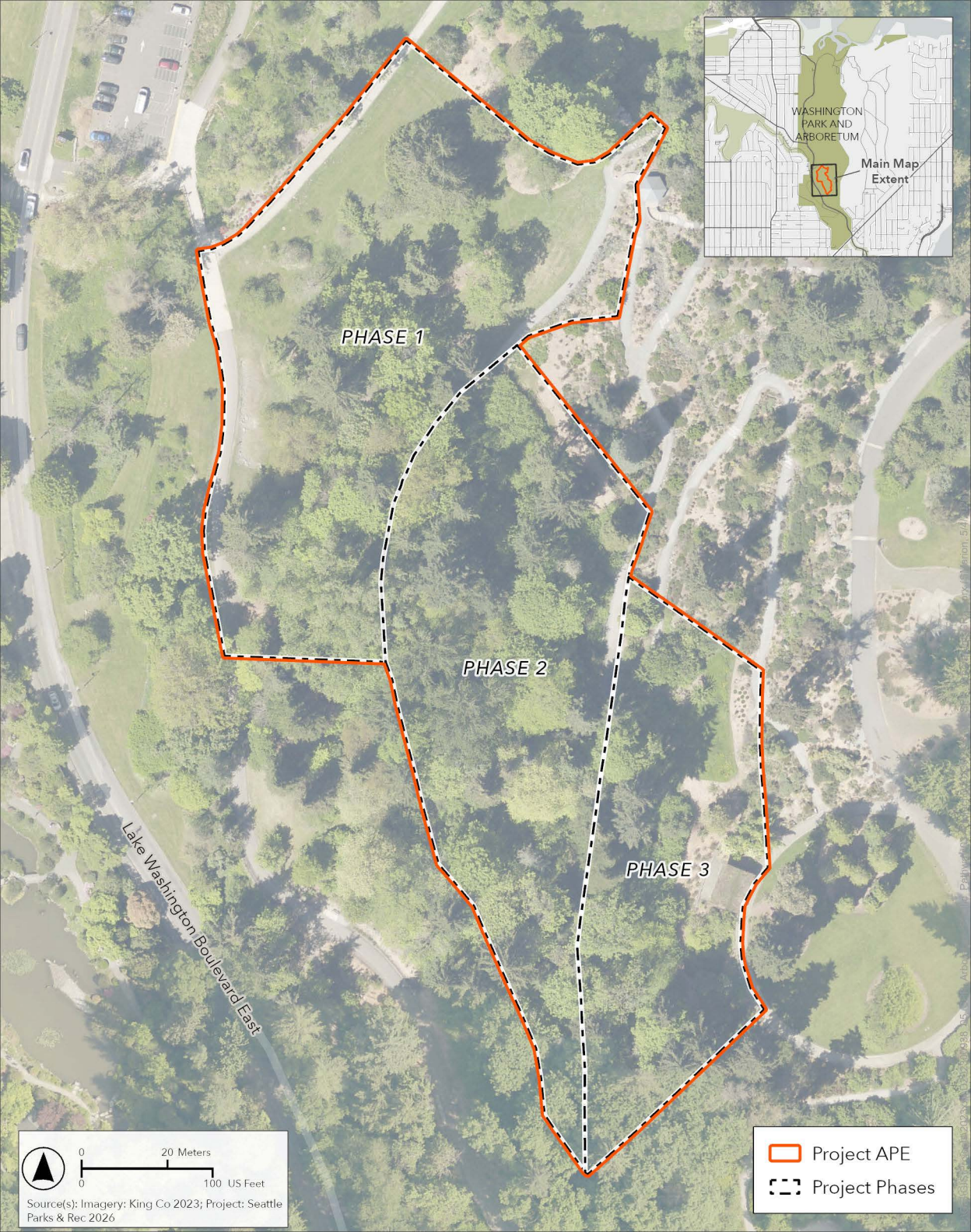


0 200 Meters
0 500 US Feet

Source(s): Imagery: King Co 2023; Project: Seattle
Parks & Rec 2026

 Project APE

 Project Phases



PHASE 1

PHASE 2

PHASE 3

Lake Washington Boulevard East



0 20 Meters
0 100 US Feet

Source(s): Imagery: King Co 2023; Project: Seattle Parks & Rec 2026

Project APE

Project Phases

