



City of Bellevue East Link Light Rail Parks & Open Space Mitigation Fact Sheet

May 2016

What is East Link?

The [East Link Light Rail](#) project is a 14-mile extension of Sound Transit's regional mass light rail transit system. Ten East Link stations will serve Seattle, Mercer Island, South Bellevue, downtown Bellevue, Bel Red (Bellevue) and the Overlake area in Redmond. Six of the stations are located within Bellevue city limits.

The City of Bellevue and Sound Transit agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ensuring that the two agencies will coordinate and collaborate during the design, permitting, and construction of East Link and the Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility. This collaboration is to ensure that traffic impacts are minimized, neighborhoods and businesses are accessible and informed and business needs and community concerns are addressed.



How are East Link construction impacts to city parks being mitigated?

The East Link alignment is designed next to Mercer Slough Nature Park and Surrey Downs Park. Both city parks will be impacted and there are mitigation plans in place to offset those impacts.

Mercer Slough Nature Park Mitigation

Enhancements and mitigation to Mercer Slough Nature Park include over six acres of wetland and wetland buffer restoration within the park and planting more than 2,800 trees to offset the 691 being removed for the project. Additionally, six acres were added to the park through acquisition of private property just south of the Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center. Following construction of East Link, a new building and expanded parking area will be opened near the Winters House providing park restrooms, u-pick blueberry and seasonal farm-fresh produce sales. These will be connected to 700 linear feet of new boardwalk trail.



During construction, much of the park will remain open for public use, including the Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center and trails throughout the park. Sweyolocken Boat Launch will also remain open with the exception of short periodic closures. The facilities that will close during construction are limited to those located on Bellevue Way, north of the South Bellevue Park & Ride. These include the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm and Winters House and their associated parking areas. South of the Park & Ride, a new temporary parking area will be constructed for park users to access the trail system.

Surrey Downs Park

When the East Link alignment was finalized, it was necessary to [update the City's Surrey Downs Park Master Plan](#) because of the loss of access to Surrey Downs Park from 112th Avenue SE. Through a public involvement process, the revised vision for the park is more neighborhood-focused and will include open grass areas, playgrounds, and picnic shelters including a pedestrian "overlook" integrated into the trail system.

Council adopted the Surrey Downs Park plan Update in November 2015. The Surrey Downs Park improvements will start once Sound Transit completes its 112th Avenue SE frontage improvements. Sound Transit expects to start construction along the park in spring 2018.

Noise studies were conducted by Sound Transit and sound mitigation was included in the 112th Avenue SE park frontage improvements. Separately, the Parks Department will work with adjacent property owners to construct perimeter fencing along the parks boundary with neighbors.

From 112th, park access and vehicle access into the neighborhood at SE 1st Place and SE 4th Street will no longer be available. The new park entrance and parking lot will be off of SE 4th with street access from 108th Avenue SE and 100th Avenue SE.

BelRed Safeway Site

The City purchased property in the BelRed area in 2008 to be developed, in part, as a park; 1.5 acres of it is currently being used for the West Tributary wetland mitigation site for East Link. This mitigation includes creation of a new wetland habitat for a variety of flora and fauna species, improved tree canopy, and enhanced streams and fish passageways. In the future, it will integrate into the City's plans to restore the West Tributary stream, which is currently located in a pipe under the property.



For information about the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan, go to bellevuewa.gov and search the title name

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