

SECTION 8: EQUESTRIAN SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

Urban equestrians face unique challenges in their use of the City's transportation system. Paved surfaces are not ideal for equestrians because they provide poor traction for horses and can be hard on their joints. In addition, horses can be frightened by other users of the transportation system such as motorists and bicyclists.

To accommodate the needs of the equestrian community, it is important that care be given to the design and construction of equestrian facilities. These should incorporate the following considerations:

Shared equestrian and pedestrian use of a path can generally be safely managed. Where possible, some separation of equestrians from bicyclists and motorists is desirable.

Equestrian paths should not be paved. Rather, paths should be constructed with a specially designed, stabilized granolithic mix to provide appropriate footing and to retain their integrity in Puget Sound's wet climate.

Clearances should be designed with the use by horse and rider in mind. Paths should be wide enough to support two-way equestrian travel and have enough vertical clearance for a horse and rider.

Figure 48 Bridle Trails State Park is an important resource for equestrians.



EXISTING FACILITIES

Bridle Trails State Park is a regional hub for equestrian activities and the key equestrian facility available to Kirkland residents. It has been owned by the State since the 1880's and has been a popular riding area for equestrians since the 1930's. In the 1960's, citizens successfully petitioned the State to make it a State Park.

The park encompasses 481 acres of forested land and includes 28 miles of equestrian/pedestrian trails as well as horse show arenas and spectator stands. It is a mark of how significant this facility is that, in 2002, users established the Bridle Trails Park Foundation. This 501(c) 3 non-profit organization acts in partnership with the State to fund operating costs for the park.

Kirkland's Land Use Code establishes most of the area around the park as Low Density Residential. Much of it is zoned to allow one unit per acre, while some zoning allows 1 -3 units per acre. This reduced density helps preserve the option for owning horses in the areas surrounding the park.

To take advantage of the equestrian opportunities presented by the park, a series of equestrian trails and access routes exist in the surrounding neighborhoods. These generally use easements

or street rights-of-way to provide access to the park trail system. They also allow access to the Bridlecrest trail which goes east through Redmond, connecting Bridle Trails State Park with Marymoor Park.

PROPOSED FACILITIES

Additional multi-use trails are proposed for the streets on the west and north boundaries of the park. These trails need to be designed and constructed to accommodate the special needs of equestrians as described earlier in this section.

Map 22 shows the system of existing and proposed equestrian routes in the areas surrounding Bridle Trails State Park. Table 19 describes equestrian projects.

Map 22 Existing and proposed equestrian routes

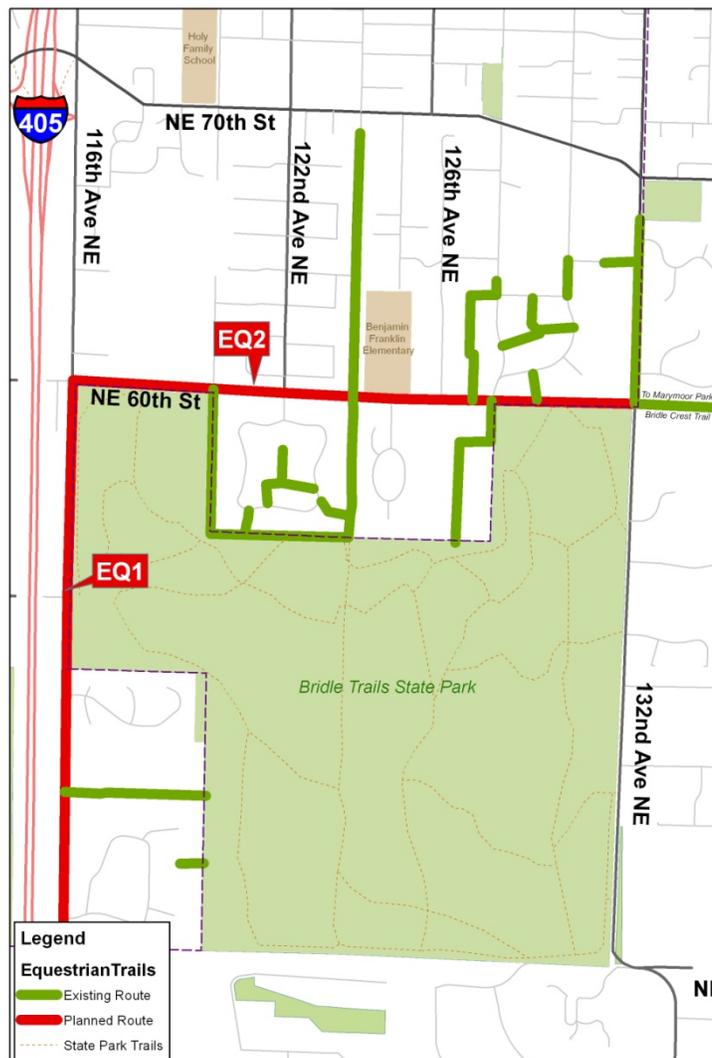


Table 19 Equestrian projects

Number	Street	From	To	Project
<i>EQ1</i>	116 th Avenue NE (east side)	NE 60 th St	South City Limit	Project is under design
<i>EQ2</i>	NE 60 th St (south side)	116 th Avenue NE	132 Avenue NE	Future Project

ACTION ITEMS

The following Action Items are necessary to implement and manage the equestrian element facilities described above:

- Complete design of the 116th Avenue NE facility (2009).
- Finalize equestrian path design standards for inclusion in City's Pre-Approved Plans (2010).
- Secure funding for the construction of the 116th Avenue NE facility (ongoing).
- Seek funding for the design and construction of the NE 60th Street facility (ongoing).
- Preserve and maintain access through the existing equestrian easements around Bridle Trails State Park (ongoing).

SECTION 9: WATER TRAILS

The Washington Water Trails Association (WWTA) is a volunteer, non-profit organization that promotes the use of small, human- and wind-powered, beachable watercraft. The WWTA has established what is referred to as the Washington State Water Trails Recreation Program. This program includes a number of marine and inland water trails, or blueways, in western Washington. The water trails consist of secure access points and rest stops and also often include natural and cultural waterside attractions. The Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail, shown in Map , is a series of lakes and rivers extending from Issaquah to Elliot Bay with nearly a dozen launch, landing, and rest sites along Kirkland's shoreline. Kirkland's Parks and Community Services Department was one of many public agencies that cooperated with the WWTA in creating the Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail. This partnership should be continued so that this unique non-motorized transportation facility is preserved.

Map 23 The Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail

