



MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Commission

From: Victoria Kovacs, AICP Transportation Planner – Public Works
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Date: May 24, 2024

Subject: JUANITA PUBLIC PATHWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission receive a briefing on the completed feasibility study of the Juanita Public Pathway, which will be shared with the City Council at their meeting on July 2, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

For many years members of the Juanita Neighborhood Association and other advocates have proposed the idea of the "Juanita Public Pathway," a public walking and bicycling path from the Brickyard Park & Ride in the City of Bothell to the Cross Kirkland Corridor at NE 116th St in a wooded setting of public parks and opens spaces, generally following the Juanita Creek Corridor. Renewed community interest was expressed in this idea at the start of the Juanita neighborhood plan update process in 2022.

To evaluate this neighborhood-led proposal, City Council allocated \$20,000 of School Zone Safety Camera revenues for a consultant feasibility study of the Juanita Public Pathway (JPP), authorized through the budget process at the end of 2022. In the fall of 2023, the City hired consultant Toole Design to conduct the feasibility study. The purpose of the study was to examine the path alignment proposed by the Juanita Neighborhood Association (JNA) by identifying high level opportunities and constraints, and rough order of magnitude costs. The proposed pathway was also mapped alongside the planned protected bike lanes and neighborhood greenways from the Active Transportation Plan to identify if there are parallel on-street routes.

STUDY METHODOLOGY:

The study divides the pathway into six segments between major streets and landmarks for ease of analysis. Each segment maps the proposed pathway alignment from the JNA, as well as the planned bicycle facilities from the Active Transportation Plan, see Figure 1. For purposes of evaluating the JPP, it was assumed the pathway would function as a transportation corridor: accessible, paved, and at least 10ft wide with 2ft shoulders following WSDOT design standards for shared use paths.

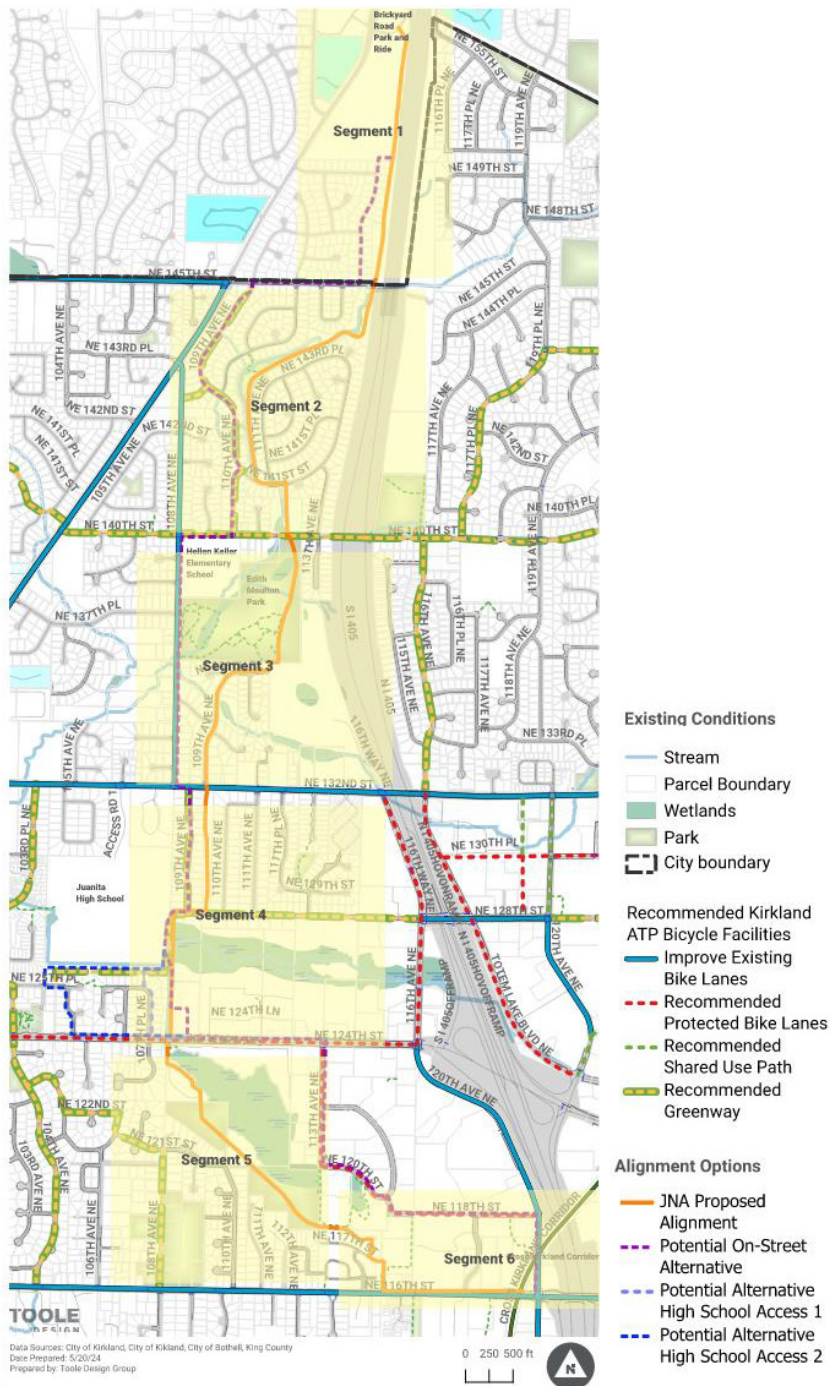


Figure 1 shows an overview of the JPP, the alignment was broken up into six segments from north to south for ease of analysis.

The JPP was analyzed via GIS analysis, and well as a walkshop with the JNA chair and City staff. Each segment of the JPP was evaluated with feasibility criteria related to user experience, directness, connectivity, and overall constructability to understand the opportunities and constraints of the pathway. Each criterion was given a high, medium, or low score for level of feasibility, and each segment had a rough order of magnitude cost from mileage and any identified major structures such a bridges or boardwalks. See full study in **Attachment A**.

STUDY FINDINGS:

Overall, the study found the Juanita Public Pathway would have a number of feasibility constraints given the proposed alignment traverses through environmentally critical areas, including streams, wetlands, and steep slopes, and several private properties. Additionally, the total rough opinion of cost is high, in the range of \$17.8 – \$19.6 million. Note this rough opinion of cost does not include a number of important items such as ROW acquisition, stormwater detention, lighting, year over year cost escalations, or maintenance which could ultimately double (or more) that cost.

Given the overall high cost and low feasibility of the Juanita Public Pathway, the study recommends pursuing the recommendations in the Active Transportation Plan for walking and bicycling connections on-street roughly parallel to the proposed Juanita Public Pathway and maintaining any existing pedestrian trails through parks and open spaces as soft-surface trails.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff evaluated the Juanita Public Pathway using the same project scoring criteria currently being used for development of the 20-year prioritized project list for the Transportation Strategic Plan (TSP) update. The criteria relate to the ten goals of the TSP, including Safety, Active Transportation, Public Transportation, Vehicle Network Management, Technology and Innovation, Maintenance, Equity, Sustainability, Link to Land Use, and Partnerships¹. Out of a possible 350 points, the Juanita Public Pathway scored 145 points, which would rank a medium priority relative to the other projects identified in the TSP. However, over 200 projects would be a higher priority than the JPP, and only 12 projects are being recommended for inclusion in the Capital Facilities Plan fiscally constrained list given the estimated costs of projects and revenues for the next twenty years². See Figure 2 for a distribution of the prioritization scores of the projects identified in the TSP.

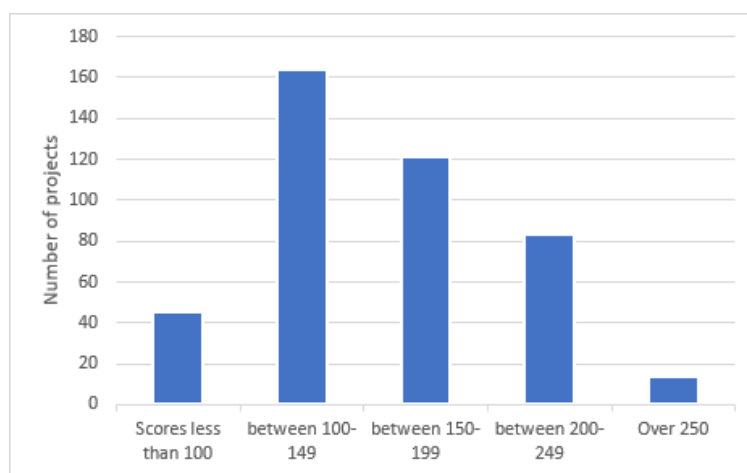


Figure 2. Distribution of prioritization score of projects identified in the Transportation Strategic Plan Update

NEXT STEPS:

Staff will present the feasibility study and Transportation Commission feedback to the City Council at their July 2nd meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Juanita Public Pathway Feasibility Study

¹ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/march-19-2024/3b_study-session.pdf

² https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/may-21-2024/3b_study-session.pdf