

Appendix D

History of the “Missing Link”

History Burke-Gilman Trail Extension

1989

- City Council approves Burke-Gilman Trail Agreement between City and Burlington Northern Railroad that gives City right to acquire the railroad rights-of-way on both sides of the Ship Canal if and when they are no longer needed for rail purposes by Burlington Northern.

1990 - 1995

- Seattle Engineering Department uses Open Space Bond Issue funds to acquire property and extend the Burke Gilman Trail from Gas Works Park to 8th Avenue NW.
- Letter from Seattle Engineering (5027-94) goes to Ballard area business owners saying that “It has been, and will continue to be, City policy not to encourage rail abandonment so that the City can build trails.” It goes on to say “the Engineering Department does not believe a trail on the south side of Shilshole is either safe or compatible with business activity in that area.”

1994

- City Council adopts Comprehensive Plan. Included is a map showing a planned extension of the Burke-Gilman Trail along the railroad right-of-way to Shilshole.

1996

- City Council holds public hearing on route extension. 400 people attend. 94 testify in favor of extending trail in railroad right-of-way. 6 testify against trail extension in railroad right-of-way.
- City Council passes Res. 29474 – Guiding principals for extending the Burke-Gilman Trail
 - a) Reiterates City Council support for railbanking the “Ballard Line”
 - b) Calls for building the trail, next to the rail line, from 8th Ave NW to 11th Ave NW; and from the Government Locks to NW 67th St.
 - c) Identifies the preferred alternative for the “Missing Link” as follows: build a multi-use path along east side of 11th Ave NW between NW 45th St. & NW Leary Way; and bike lanes along NW Leary Way.

Engineering Department and Office for Economic Development to present the preferred alternative (Leary alignment) to adjacent businesses and report back to council on how to implement. SED and OED: Businesses and bicyclists ultimately did not support Leary Way alignment.

- City Council appropriates \$1,280,000 to design and extend the trail (as described above) and authorizes the Engineering Department to appraise, negotiate for and acquire property from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company.

1997

- BNSF discontinues rail service and announces that it intends to abandon the line.
- Ballard Terminal Railroad (short line railroad) is created by local businessmen to provide needed rail service to area business
- Agreements worked out with Ballard Terminal Railroad, BNSF, the City and Sea Lion Railroad to preserve the line in City ownership while continuing rail service to area business. General Counsel for the Surface Transportation Board gives oral concurrence to the legal approach contemplated in the agreements worked out with the above mentioned parties.

- City Council passes Ordinance 118734 – Ballard Terminal Railroad Franchise Agreement. Franchise gives the BTRC the right, privilege and authority to locate, lay down, construct, maintain, own, and operate standard gauge railway tracks in, upon, along and across the railroad right-of-way.

1998

- State DOT Loan given to Ballard Terminal Railroad to rehabilitate tracks. Work begins. Freight service starts later in the year.
- Railbanking - Papers are filed with the Surface Transportation Board to railbank the corridor (petition for exemption). The petition proposed that the corridor would go to the City, and that the Ballard Terminal Railroad would continue to provide freight service

1999

- City Railbanks rail corridor from 8th Ave NW to NW 76th Street using federal ISTEA-CEMAQ and local funds.

2000

- City purchases, from Burlington Northern Sante Fe, property on the east side of Seaview Ave., NW, from NW 67th Street to Golden Gardens Park. Parks 1989 Open Space Funds are used to pay for the purchase.

2001

- South Ballard Transportation Corridor Study completed; some recommendations not finalized until completion of the missing link study. Purpose – Multi-modal, holistic analysis of transportation issues in and through South Ballard. Identifies missing link alternatives but does not provide a recommendation.
- City Council adopts Resolution 30408 on 10-22-01, which directs SDOT to as follows:
 - a) SDOT is directed to lead a project work team to evaluate up to three bicycle/pedestrian routes to complete the Burke-Gilman trail between 11th NW and the Locks including the publicly owned railbanked right of way.
 - b) The full technical analysis process will commence with the completion of a project workplan – including budget and guiding principles – for conducting the analysis.
 - c) In conjunction with the design work, the project work team will conduct outreach to include residential, business and bike/trail advocacy groups with regard to access, safety and other relevant issues.
 - d) The project work team is directed to determine where acquisition of land may be necessary and undertaken to ensure construction of a well-designed and safe multi-use route of travel for non-motorized modes of transportation.

Also in this resolution: “Resolution 29474, adopted in 1996 and stating Burke-Gilman Trail development guiding principles, is superceded by this resolution (Resolution 30408) to the extent they are inconsistent, particularly Section 5 of that resolution dealing with construction of a multi-use trail along the east side of 11th Avenue NW and the installation of bike lanes on each side of NW Leary Way.”

2002

- SDOT completes technical study as directed in Resolution 30408