

4.17 Parkland and Open Space

4.17.1 Introduction to Resources and Regulatory Requirements

The study area is situated close to many recreational facilities in communities in Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond that vary in size, type, and function. Recreational facilities are discussed in this Draft EIS because of their importance to the quality of life of these communities. Federal and local regulations specifically protect parklands. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (23 United State Code 138) prohibits the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) from approving a project or program that uses land from a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site, except if (23CFR 774):

- (a) The Administration determines that:
 - (1) There is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative to the use of land from the property; and
 - (2) The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use; or
- (b) The Administration determines that the use of the property, including any measure(s) to minimize harm (such as any avoidance, minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures) committed to by the applicant will have a *de minimis* impact on the property.
- (c) If the analysis concludes that there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative, then the Administration may approve only the alternative that causes the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose.

In addition, when federal funds granted through Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act (administered through the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board on behalf of the National Park Service) have been used to acquire or develop recreational facilities in the study area, all practical alternatives to the project element that would affect that facility must be evaluated or, if no practical alternative exists, replacement lands of equal value must be identified. Appendix D provides more detail on the East Link Project Section 4(f)/6(f) evaluation.

Seattle has adopted a similar test for their parklands under Seattle Ordinance 118477, enacted in February

1997. Land or a facility owned by the city may not be sold, transferred, or changed from park use to another use unless the city receives in exchange land or a facility of equivalent or better size, value, location and usefulness.

4.17.2 Affected Environment

The parkland and open space resources evaluated may include one or more of the following: public parks, greenbelts and other undeveloped open spaces, pedestrian and bicycle trails, playfields, and school district play areas that are available for public use during nonschool hours. Except for school district sites, the facilities in the study area are generally owned or maintained by the parks and recreation departments of Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, Redmond, or King County. WSDOT also owns property used for both transportation and recreational purposes in the project vicinity.

The study area for parks and other recreational facilities consists of the facilities situated as follows:

- Within 250 feet (approximately one city block) of alternative routes, maintenance facilities, and staging areas (typically, direct impacts occur within this distance)
- Within one-quarter mile (approximately 1,320 feet) of stations (typically, indirect or proximity impacts occur within this distance – see Section 4.17.3 for a description of types of impacts)

Appendix F4.17 provides an inventory and exhibits that show the location of the 38 park and recreational facilities identified in the study area, including existing and proposed facilities. This inventory groups resources by segment and details each resource's size, type, facilities, ownership, whether or not the facility is considered to be a significant resource under Section 4(f), and whether the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) or the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) were used in the acquisition or development of the listed recreational resource. Appendix F4.17 lists notable facilities and planned park development within each segment and includes maps showing the location of each developed park and recreational facility.

The following subsections briefly describe the recreational facilities located closest to the project alternatives. None of the park or open space facilities within the study area contains uses that are dependent on quiet surroundings.

4.17.2.1 Segment A

A total of 12 park and open space facilities are situated near and over Segment A from Seattle to Bellevue. All but two of these parks, the South Day Street Park and Gallagher Hill Open Space, are part of the larger network of Interstate 90 (I-90) parks along lids and overpasses. These parks also include the Outdoor Sculpture Gallery located adjacent to the City of Mercer Island's city center. In addition, a bike and pedestrian trail parallels the north side of the I-90 freeway. Although recreationists use this trail, the primary purpose of the shared-use path is transportation (see further discussion in Transportation Chapter 3, Section 3.7 Non-motorized Facilities).

4.17.2.2 Segment B

There are currently a total of five park and open space facilities in Segment B. The most notable of these is Mercer Slough Nature Park, located between Bellevue Way SE and 118th Avenue SE directly north of I-90. Mercer Slough Nature Park is a community park of roughly 320 acres that is characterized by wetland systems, the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm, a new Environmental Education Center under construction on the east side of the park, and various trails including the I-90 to Swaylochen Trail, among others. The historic Frederick Winters House is located in the park. The I-90 Trail, continued from Segment A, is located within the park just north of the westbound lanes of I-90. The Bellevue Way Greenbelt is located at the "Y" intersection of Bellevue SE and 112th Avenue SE; its primary function is to serve as a landscaping strip along the road.

One proposed facility, the BNSF right-of-way, is anticipated to be developed in Segment B. The BNSF Railroad corridor, between City of Renton and Snohomish County with a spur into Downtown Redmond, is being acquired by the Port of Seattle through the federal rail-banking process. Rail-banking preserves abandoned rail corridors for future rail uses and allows trails as interim uses. King County is pursuing an easement with the Port for a pedestrian/bicycle trail. The Port and the County will conduct public outreach regarding the dual use of the corridor for rail and as a trail. In 2008, the Washington State Legislature (State House Bill [SHB] 3224) directed Sound Transit and the Puget Sound Regional Council to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of a commuter rail service in the same BNSF Eastside rail corridor.

4.17.2.3 Segment C

Six park and open space facilities currently exist in Segment C, and two more are proposed – a buffer park along Main Street and a trail along the BNSF right-of-way. Those closest to the alternatives are briefly described here.

To the south, Surrey Downs Park contains two small athletic fields and the potential to expand on the site of the King County District Courthouse. The City of Bellevue has prepared a proposed Master Plan for developing Surrey Downs Park and is expected to adopt the Master Plan in December 2008. A levy to approve funding to implement the Master Plan was approved by Bellevue voters in fall 2008. Proposed improvements to the park include new baseball fields, picnic areas, open space, a community garden, parking, and possibly a recreational building.

The Pocket Parks are located at the four corners of the intersection of NE 2nd Place and 110th Avenue NE. Bellevue proposes to expand these parks under Bellevue's Downtown Implementation Plan (City of Bellevue, 2004); however, no property has been purchased or plans developed specific to this expansion.

A new linear park in this segment is proposed under Bellevue's Downtown Implementation Plan, along the south side of Main Street between 110th Avenue SE and 112th Avenue SE. The purpose of this park would be to provide a visual buffer area between the single-family residential areas south of Main Street (Surrey Downs) and the high-density residential and commercial uses north of Main Street. No property has been purchased or plans developed specific to the proposed park. Similar to Segment B, the BNSF right-of-way east of I-405 is being considered for dual use as a rail corridor and multipurpose recreational trail in Segment C.

McCormick Park is located along NE 12th Street on the north side of the street at the north end of the segment boundary. The park, which extends from 107th Avenue NE to 112th Avenue NE, is a neighborhood park with trails and picnic benches that provides a buffer between the established single-family residences to the north (Northtowne Neighborhood) and high-density residential and commercial uses to the south.

4.17.2.4 Segment D

Highland Park and Community Center is the only park located in Segment D. Similar to Segments B and C, the BNSF right-of-way is being considered for dual

use as a rail corridor and multipurpose recreational trail in Segment D.

4.17.2.5 Segment E

A total of 14 parks and recreational facilities are located in Segment E, including a number of trails. And, as in Segments B, C, and D the BNSF right-of-way is being considered for dual use as a rail corridor and multipurpose recreational trail. The most prominent facilities, (e.g., Marymoor Park, Town Center Open Space, and Sammamish River Trail) occur in the downtown area of Redmond and adjacent to State Route (SR) 520. The Town Center Open Space was conditionally dedicated for the development of the adjacent Town Center retail area, to preserve and enhance the area surrounding Bear Creek, and to provide public access to the area. Although this facility is considered open space under the City of Redmond's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (City of Redmond, 2004), it is privately owned and restricted from recreational use outside of passive observation. However, the Town Center Open Space has been identified for potential City acquisition as part of a proposed widening of SR 520. Future uses could include: Bear Creek and Bear Creek Trail relocation, habitat enhancement a new trail linkage to Marymoor Park. Slough House Park is west of Leary Way and is scheduled for master planning and development by the City of Redmond in 2010. Also, Edge Skate Park is located adjacent to the Redmond Transit Center, providing a unique recreational opportunity for skateboarders. The Bridle Crest Trail is also located in this segment and provides a connection between Bridle Trails State Park and Marymoor Park, via NE 60th Street traveling over SR 520. Also, like the I-90 trail in Segment A, a trail parallels SR 520 on the north side and the primary purpose of the path is transportation. Similar to Segments B, C, and D, the BNSF right-of-way is being acquired by the Port of Seattle. While King County is pursuing an easement with the Port for a pedestrian/bicycle trail, it will also conduct public outreach regarding the dual use of the corridor for rail and as a trail. Along Segment E, the King County and City of Redmond plan eventually to connect the former railway to the East Lake Sammamish Trail to the east. The Redmond Trail Network Plan identifies the BNSF right-of-way for future trail use. The City of Redmond has also expressed an interest in acquiring a portion of the BNSF corridor that parallels NE Redmond Way within its city limits.

4.17.3 Environmental Impacts

Types of potential impacts on parks or open spaces as a result of project operation or construction can be categorized as direct operational impacts, indirect (proximity) operational impacts, or construction impacts, defined as follows:

- **Direct Operational Impacts.** Direct impacts during operation could include permanent acquisition of all or a portion of park or open space property to accommodate additional right-of-way for project improvements, relocation of trails, or improved access to parks from stations located near park resources.
- **Indirect (Proximity) Operational Impacts.** Indirect impacts during operation could include changed or reduced access that could affect park usage, changes in the nature of surrounding land uses, increased noise and/or vibration, visual intrusion, or a general increase in the level of activity near stations that could substantially diminish or affect the continued availability, integrity, usage, or value of the specific park or recreational facility and could degrade the overall recreational experience.
- **Construction Impacts.** These impacts could include use of staging areas within or near recreational facilities, noise or air pollution, detours that change access to or from the park, or visual clutter.

Potential impacts were identified for both operation and construction phases of the East Link Project based on the definitions above and the current use of the park and/or open space resource. If a recreational facility or alternative is not mentioned, no impacts would occur for that facility or alternative. Appendix F4.17 provides a full list of park facilities in the study area. Proximity impacts are based on the findings of other environmental elements, such as Chapter 3, Transportation Impacts, and sections 4.2, Land Use; 4.5, Visual and Aesthetic Resources; 4.6, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases; and 4.7, Noise and Vibration.

4.17.3.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not directly or indirectly affect any park or open space resources in the study area. Some parkland development may not occur under the No Build Alternative because land would not be made available from property acquisitions for project improvements.

4.17.3.2 Impacts During Operation

No noise impacts would occur at park and/or open space facilities in any of the five project segments. Detailed noise analysis is provided in Section 4.7 Noise and Vibration.

Segment A

Three of the 12 parks identified in Segment A would be permanently affected by the I-90 Alternative (A1), as listed in Table 4.17-1 and shown in Exhibit 4.17-1. The I-90 Alternative (A1) station entrance for the Rainier Station at 23rd Avenue South would affect a narrow planting strip of Benvenuto Park where the park parallels 23rd Avenue South. Also, the Mercer Island Station access and pedestrian plazas (i.e., ticket vending, elevator, escalator, and stairs) would either impact two planting areas and sidewalks in the Park on the Lid, owned by WSDOT, at 77th Avenue SE and 80th Avenue SE overcrossings or, if the pedestrian bridge option is selected, the access area would impact Mercer Island’s Outdoor Sculpture Gallery and 80th Avenue SE. Roughly 0.2 acre of property acquisition would be required to accommodate the pedestrian bridge option and pedestrian plaza. This would allow a more direct connection to the City of Mercer Island’s downtown core. This option would reduce the impact area to the Park on the Lid to about 0.06 acre.

Visitors would benefit from increased access to Benvenuto Viewpoint from the Rainier Station and to the Park on the Lid or Outdoor Sculpture Garden from the Mercer Island Station.

TABLE 4.17-1
Impacts on Parks and Open Spaces in Segment A

Park Name		Permanent Impact Area
Seattle, Benvenuto Viewpoint; Part of the I-90 Lid		0.06
Mercer Island, Park on the Lid	Without pedestrian bridge	0.1
	With pedestrian bridge	0.05
Mercer Island, Outdoor Sculpture Gallery	Without pedestrian bridge	0
	With pedestrian bridge	0.2

Segment B

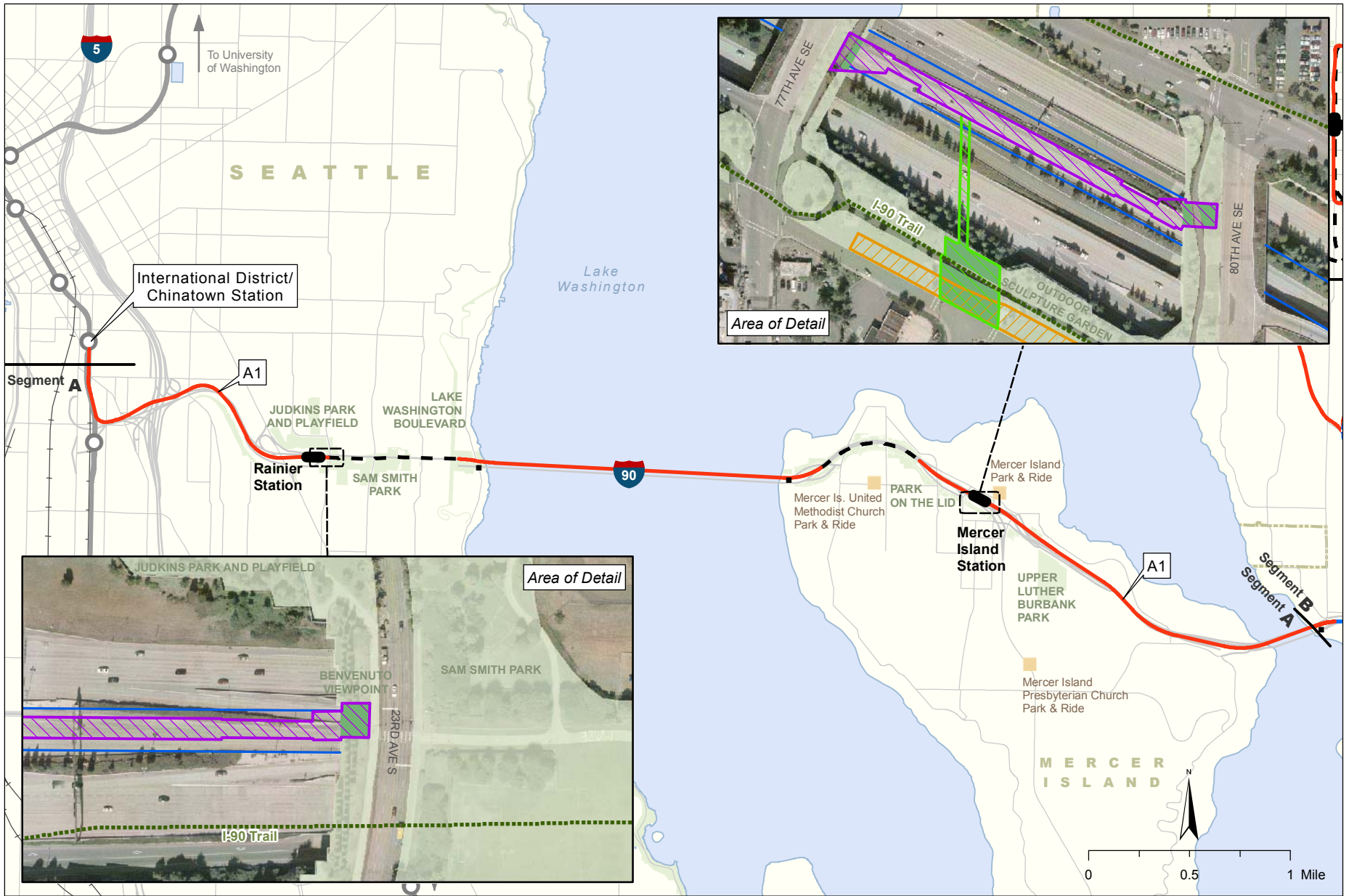
Two of the four parks identified in Segment B would be permanently affected by the alternatives. The impacts are identified in Table 4.17-2 and discussed in more detail below.

Bellevue Way Alternative (B1), 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A), 112th SE Elevated Alternative (B2E), and 112th SE Bypass Alternative (B3). These alternatives would provide enhanced accessibility to the Mercer Slough Nature Park. They also would acquire long, narrow, and intermittent portions of this park’s western boundary and result in some shrub and tree removal. B2A would require the most acquisition and B1 the least. Exhibit 4.17-2 shows the areas of impact on 112th Avenue SE. Alternatives B2A, B2E, and B3 would require relocation of a portion of the Heritage Farm Trail just east of its current location, between the South Bellevue Park-and-Ride Lot and the Frederick Winters House. Access to the Swaylochen Boat Ramp from 113th Avenue SE would be improved under the Bellevue Way Alternative (B1) because a signal would be installed at this intersection where none exists today. B2A, B2E, and B3 would be elevated at this location, so no access impacts would occur on the boat ramp, the I-90 Trail, or other Mercer Slough Nature Park trails. The elevated structure would create some additional shading.

In instances where an elevated portion of an alternative is located in a park, the areas below the elevated section could still be available for recreational purposes, except for the area required for the piers to support the structure. The elevated guideway would likely require an easement or right of use as opposed to acquisition. The easement would allow the project on the property and give rights for Sound Transit to access the elevated structure, as needed, while allowing the continued use of the land as a park.

Vegetation removal along Bellevue Way SE and/or the placement of piers for the elevated portions of the alternatives along the west side of Mercer Slough Nature Park would be seen and noticed by some park users but would not interfere with the use of the facility.

B1 would require the complete acquisition of the Bellevue Way Greenbelt, while B2A and B3 would only require a partial acquisition to accommodate the reconfigured Bellevue Way SE/112th Ave NE intersection. The SE 8th Station for the 112th SE At-Grade (B2A) and 112th SE Elevated (B2E) alternatives would also provide enhanced access to the Surrey Downs Park (this park is in Segment C).



Source: Data from City of Seattle (2002), King County (2006), and Sound Transit (2007).













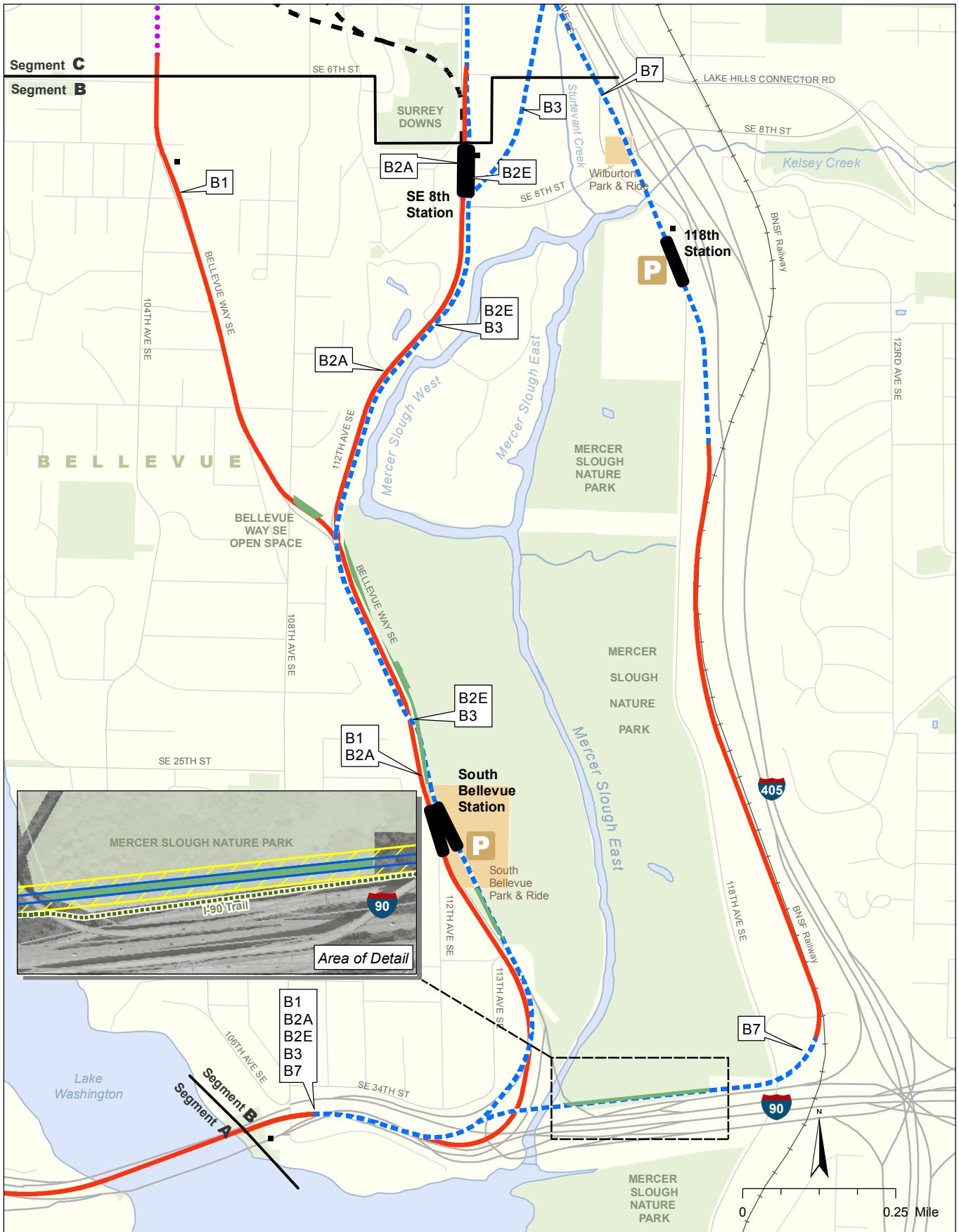
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|--|--|--|
|  Affected Park Area |  Trail |  At-Grade Route |
|  Station Area |  Traction Power Substation |  Elevated Route |
|  Mercer Island Pedestrian Bridge Option |  Proposed Station |  Retained-Cut Route |
|  Mercer Island Property |  Central Link Alignment and Station |  Tunnel Route |

Exhibit 4.17-1 Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way Segment A
East Link Project



Source: Data from City of Bellevue (2005) and King County (2006).

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way | At-Grade Route | Traction Power Substation |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Elevated Route | Proposed Station |
| Staging Area | Retained-Cut Route | New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot |
| | Tunnel Route | |

Exhibit 4.17-2 Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way and Staging Areas Segment B East Link Project

BNSF Alternative (B7). The 118th Station would provide new access to the east side of Mercer Slough Nature Park and the newly constructed Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center. The elevated light rail structure would also be located along the south side of Mercer Slough Nature Park north of I-90 and the I-90 Trail (see Exhibit 4.17-2). An easement or right of use would be needed to accommodate the elevated light rail structure. The area under the elevated structure would be revegetated and returned to park use, allowing access under the guideway and use of the I-90 trail as it currently exists. The view from the park and trail would not be substantially affected by the new structure because the existing I-90 structure already dominates the views in this area. Some existing views to the north from the I-90 Trail could be partially screened or opened up by the cleared or lower vegetation under the elevated structure. The elevated structure would also create additional shading in the park.

TABLE 4.17-2
Impacts on Parks and Open Spaces in Segment B

Park Name	Impact Area: Surface/Elevated (acres)				
	B1, Bellevue Way	B2A, 112th SE At-Grade	B2E, 112th SE Elevated	B3, 112th SE Bypass	B7, BNSF
Mercer Slough Nature Park	0.4/0	1.4/0.3	0.3/0.4	1.2/0.4	0.1/0.9
Bellevue Way Greenbelt	0.4 (full acquisition)	0.1/0	None	0.1/0	None

Segment C

Three of the eight existing and proposed parks and open space facilities identified in Segment C would be permanently affected by the alternatives. The locations of affected parks are shown in Exhibit 4.17-3, listed in Table 4.17-3 and discussed in more detail below. Enlarged illustrations of the park impact areas follow in Exhibits 4.17-4 (Surrey Downs Park), 4.17-5 (Pocket Parks), and 4.17-6 (McCormick Park).

106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T). There would be no adverse impacts from connections from Segment B to C2T, except for the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) connector, which would tunnel under Surrey Down Park, requiring a subsurface easement. However, no portion of the project or tunnel would be visible on the park surface after construction. This connector would require roadway widening that would affect about 0.03 acre of the eastern edge of the park on the landscape strip between 112th Avenue SE

and the park’s existing parking lot, as illustrated in Exhibit 4.17-4. This would not affect active recreational areas of the park.

Construction impacts to Surrey Downs Park from the connection with the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) are discussed under the construction impacts section. The B2A connection would have a net benefit to Surrey Downs Park by removing the King County District Courthouse, if it is not already removed at the time East Link is constructed, and would help facilitate implementation of the City of Bellevue’s proposed Surrey Downs Master Plan to redevelop the park facility. Sound Transit would also coordinate with the City of Bellevue on Master Plan development if this alternative is selected.

Other connectors may help facilitate Bellevue’s ability to develop a proposed park along the south side of Main Street between 110th Ave NE and 112th Ave NE. After construction of the alternative is complete, land acquired for the staging area along the south side of Main Street could be used to facilitate development of the proposed park, except for the area needed for the guideway when connecting from B2E.

108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T). This alternative would have the same impacts for the connection options to Segment B as 106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T). Connection via the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) to C3T would include a tunnel under Surrey Downs Park with no surface impacts in the park, acquisition of 0.03 acre of the landscape strip

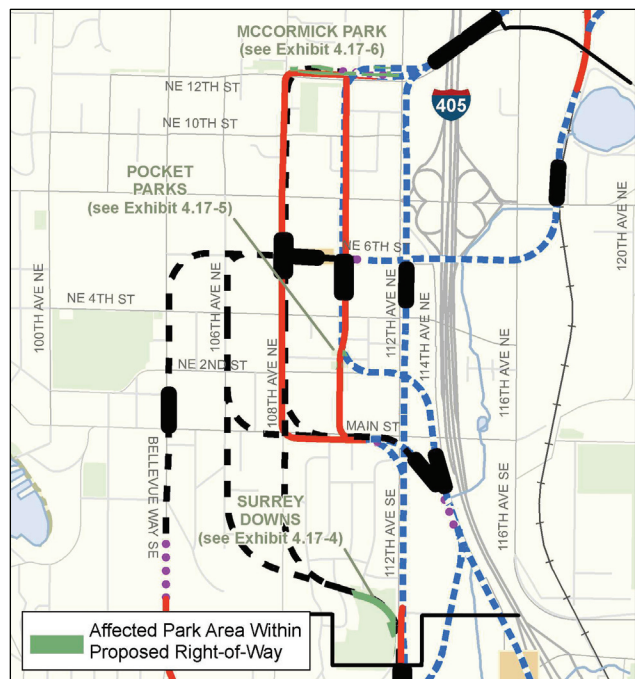


EXHIBIT 4.17-3
Locations of Affected Parks in Segment C

on the southeast edge of the park as shown in Exhibit 4.17-4, possible removal of the District Courthouse supporting implementation of the proposed park Master Plan, and coordination with the City of Bellevue on Master Plan development if this alternative is selected. This alternative would also offer the same potential benefit of providing opportunities for the proposed park south of Main Street when connecting from the 112th SE Elevated (B2E), 112th SE Bypass (B3), or BNSF (B7) alternatives.

Under the 108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T), the eastern portion of McCormick Park would include the tunnel portal and the rising guideway transitioning to an elevated structure. This transition would require a retaining wall (gradual in height and roughly 550 feet long), to support the light rail structure as it transitions from a tunnel to aboveground profile. This structure would alter access from NE 12th Street into the park. In addition, the structure would result in different user experience than exists today. The permanent structure would remove 0.6 acre from park use. The tunnel would extend west of the portal under the park, requiring a subsurface easement but could be used as a park on the surface.

Once construction of the facility is complete, the area used for construction staging (Exhibit 4.17-6) and the area above the tunnel from roughly 108th to 110th avenues NE would be used to recreate and expand the parkland, resulting in an overall increase of the park size by almost 1 acre. This alternative would have the greatest net gain of parkland. See Section 4.17.3.3, Impacts During Construction, for more details. The new park vegetation would take several years to mature, and until the vegetation is reestablished, a temporary change in visual quality for park users would occur, as well as a temporary reduction in the ability of the park to function as a buffer from adjacent uses.

Couplet Alternative (C4A). Only the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) connection to C4A would have impacts to Surrey Downs Park. It would require roadway widening, which would remove about 0.4 acre of Surrey Downs Park in the landscape strip between 112th Avenue SE and the park’s existing parking lot, as illustrated in Exhibit 4.17-4. This would

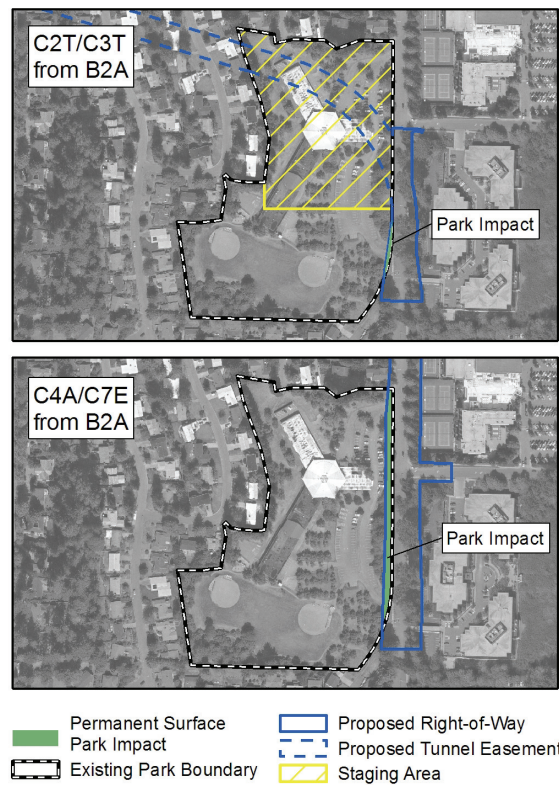


EXHIBIT 4.17-4
Surrey Downs Park Proposed Right-of-Way and Staging Areas in Segment C

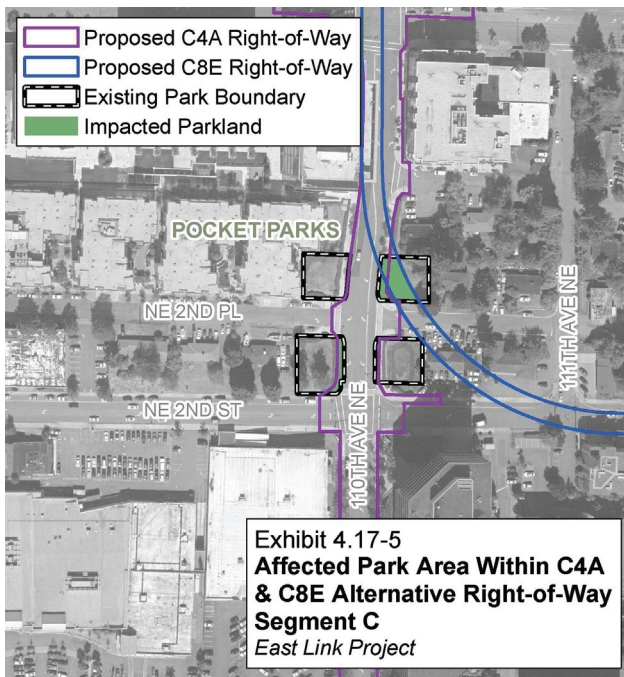
TABLE 4.17-3
Impacts on Parks and Open Spaces in Segment C

Park Name		Impact Area: Surface/Elevated (acres)					
		C1T, Bellevue Way Tunnel	C2T, 106th NE Tunnel	C3T, 108th NE Tunnel	C4A, Couplet	C7E, 112th NE Elevated	C8E, 110th NE Elevated
Surrey Downs, (only for connector from B2A)		None	0.03/0	0.03/0	0.4/0	0.4/0	None
Pocket Parks		None	None	None	0.1	None	0/0.1
McCormick Park	Impact Area	None	None	0.6/0	0.5/0.3	None	0/ 0.2
	New Park Land (Net Gain)	None	None	1.6 (1.0)	1.1 (0.2)	None	0.4 (0.1)

not affect active recreational areas of the park. Sound Transit would coordinate with the City of Bellevue on Master Plan development of Surrey Downs Park if this alternative is selected.

This alternative could also provide the benefit of the proposed Main Street Park, similar to the 106th NE Tunnel (C2T) and 108th NE Tunnel (C3T) alternatives.

C4A would require minor property acquisition of 0.04 acre in the Pocket Parks east and west of 110th Avenue NE for road widening to accommodate the light rail route (see Exhibit 4.17-5). Because the Pocket



Parks contain no recreational facilities and serve principally as open space, it is expected that these parks could continue to operate as it does currently.

At McCormick Park, impacts would be similar to those described under C3T, although C4A would be at-grade with a longer section of retained fill transitioning into an elevated structure over 112th Avenue NE, an impact of 0.5 acre. An additional 0.3 acre would be located beneath the elevated guideway, but there would not be a surface impact. Also similar to C3T, the area used for construction staging (see Exhibit 4.17-6) would be used to create new parkland once construction is finished, and the ultimate configuration of the park would increase in size by approximately one-quarter acre.

112th NE Elevated Alternative (C7E). Impacts to Surrey Downs Park would be the same as for the Couplet Alternative (C4A), and only the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) connector would have park impacts because it would require roadway widening, which would remove about 0.4 acre of Surrey Downs Park in the landscape strip between 112th Avenue SE and the park's existing parking lot, as illustrated in Exhibit 4.17-4. This would not affect active recreational areas of the park. Sound Transit would coordinate with the City of Bellevue on Master Plan development of Surrey Downs Park if this alternative is selected.

Although the elevated light rail structure would be seen from the eastern corner of McCormick Park, no impacts on the park or its users are expected.

110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E). C8E would pass over approximately 0.06 acre of the Pocket Park at the northeast corner of 110th Avenue NE and NE 2nd Place, resulting in shading of the Pocket Park, a visual intrusion, and requiring an easement. However, because this park contains no recreational facilities and serves principally as open space, it is expected that the park could continue to operate as it does currently (see Exhibit 4.17-5).

The elevated light rail structure of C8E would be seen from the Library Plaza, but because it would be located in the median of 110th Avenue NE, no direct impacts on the plaza would occur. In McCormick Park, the elevated light rail structure crosses NE 12th Street over the northern edge of the park between 111th Avenue NE and 112th Avenue NE, covering 0.2 acre. Because the light rail structure would be elevated approximately 30 feet above the park in this area, the structure would become a dominant and noticeable feature, which would affect the visual environment for some park users and create shade. However, park users could still move freely to and from other portions of the park under the light rail structure, so it would not impact access as the 108th NE Tunnel (C3T) and Couplet (C4A) would. As with the C3T and C4A alternatives, once construction is complete, the area used for construction staging (see Exhibit 4.17-6) would be used to create new parkland and the park would slightly increased in size. Similar to C3T and C4A, the new park vegetation would take several years to mature, and, until the vegetation is reestablished, a temporary change in visual quality for park users would occur as well as a temporary reduction in the ability of the park to function as a buffer from adjacent uses.

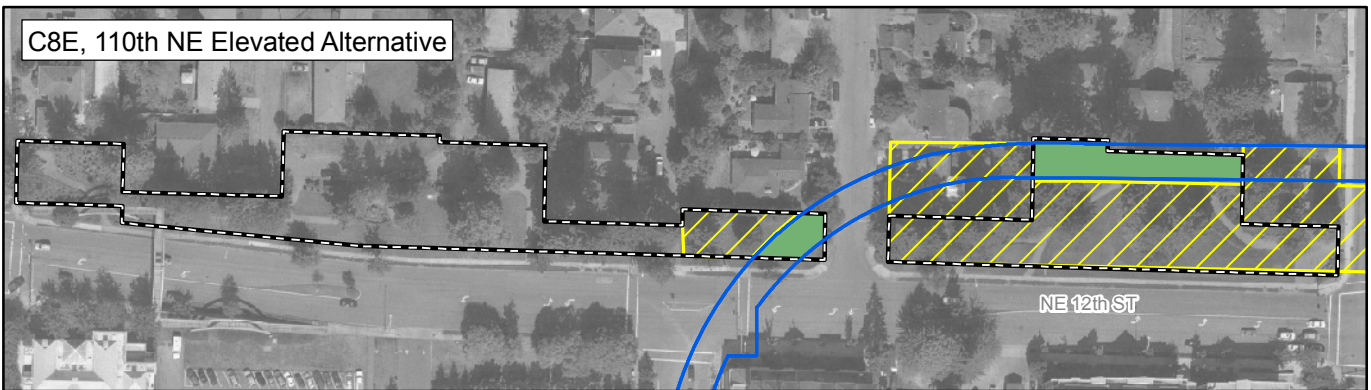
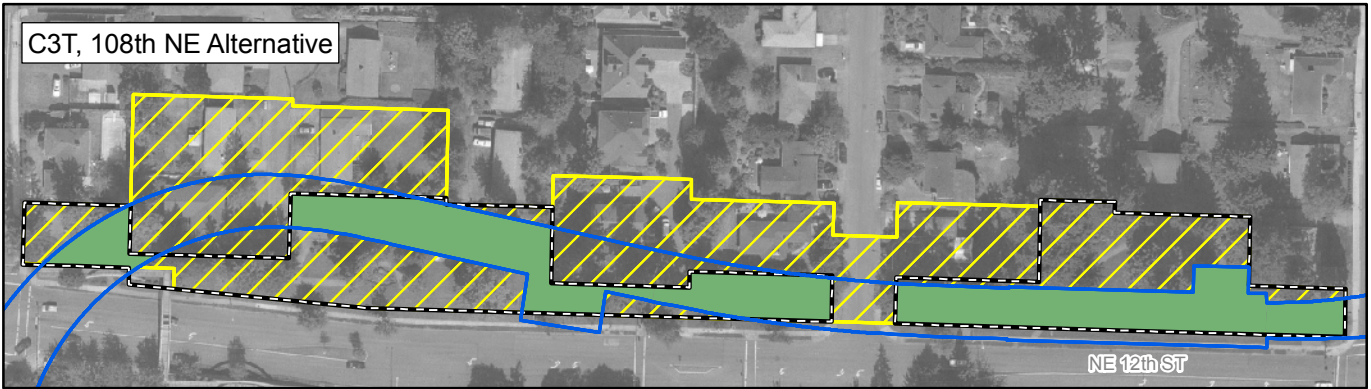
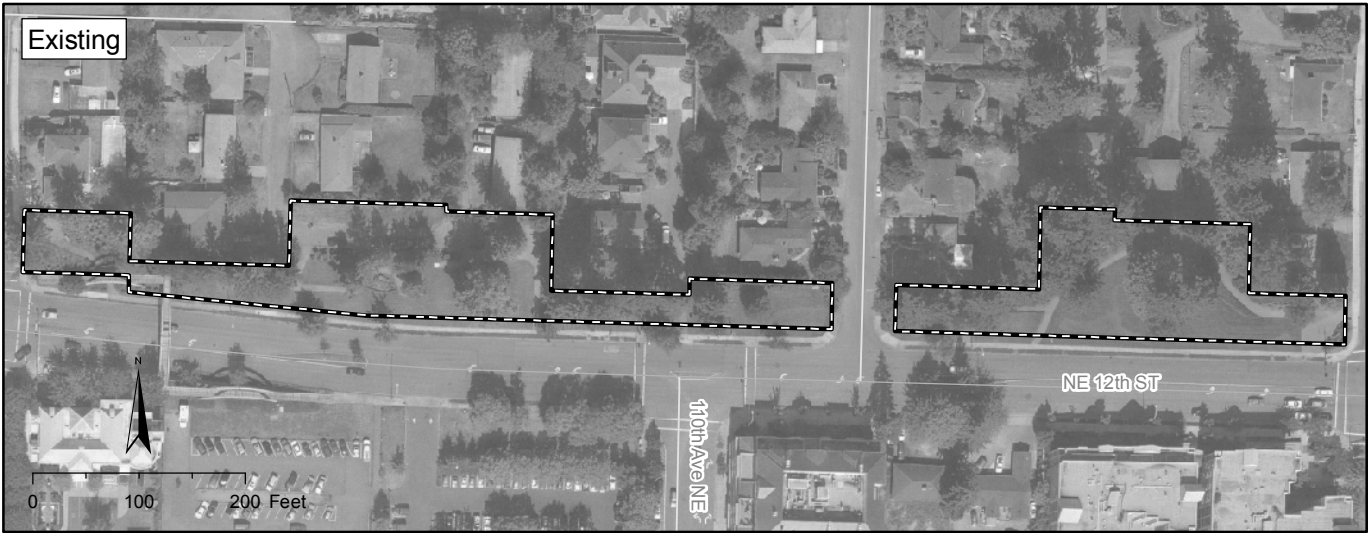
Segment D

Highland Park and Community Center is located near the NE 20th Alternative (D3), but no direct or proximity impacts are anticipated for this resource.

Segment E

The alternatives would affect 6 of the 15 parks and recreational facilities identified in Segment E. The impacts are listed in Table 4.17-4 and shown in Exhibit 4.17-7, and they are discussed in more detail below.

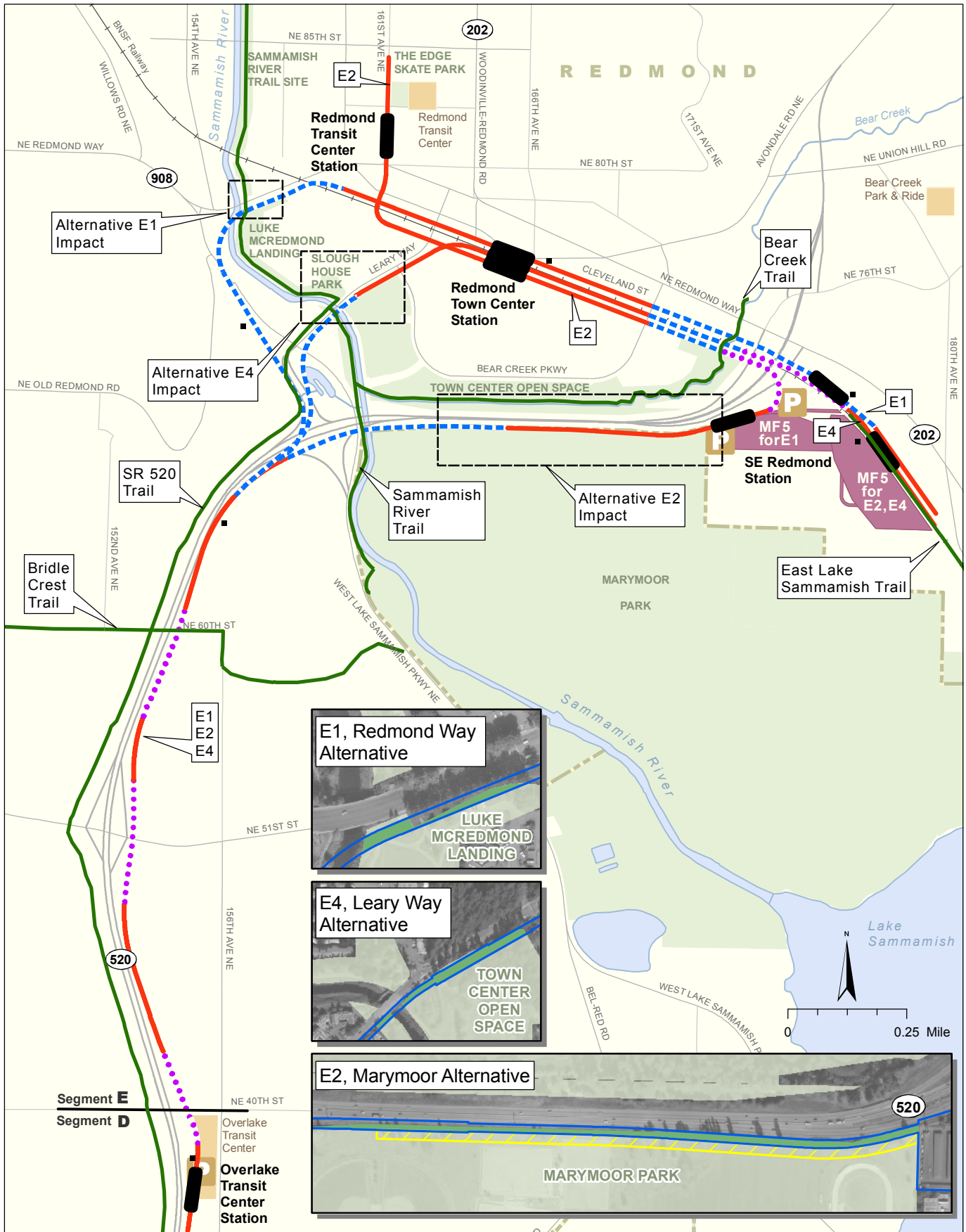
All Segment E alternatives would cross under the Bridle Crest Trail at NE 60th Street. The Bridle Crest Trail would not be affected, because the alternatives would be located under the NE 60th Street overpass, where the trail passes. Although equestrians are known to use this trail, given the existing noise levels



- Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way
- Proposed Right-of-Way Staging Area / Future Park Boundary
- Park Boundary

- Existing Park Boundary
- Traction Power Substation
- Proposed Station
- New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot

Exhibit 4.17-6 McCormick Park - Proposed Right-of-Way and Staging Areas Segment C
East Link Project



Source: Data from City of Redmond (2005) and King County (2006).

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Trail | Traction Power Substation | Proposed Station |
| Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way | At-Grade Route | Maintenance Facility and Access Track |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Elevated Route | New and/or Expanded Park-and-Ride Lot |
| Staging Area | Retained-Cut Route | |
| | Tunnel Route | |

Exhibit 4.17-7 Affected Park Area Within Proposed Right-of-Way and Staging Areas Segment E East Link Project

and presence of SR 520, no impacts would be expected during operation.

Redmond Way Alternative (E1). This alternative would result in direct impacts along the south side of Redmond Way, shifting the elevated light rail structure into Luke McRedmond Landing. This would require the removal of mature trees lining Redmond Way, and 0.1 acre of the park would be under the elevated structure. However, no recreational park facilities would be impacted. Because the light rail structure would be elevated approximately 30 feet above the park in this area, the structure would become a dominant and noticeable feature in the park, which would affect the visual experience for some park users, but the visual character of the park itself and transportation facilities adjacent to the park would not change. The elevated route would cross the Sammamish River Trail, resulting in minor shading of this trail. This trail already passes underneath three other overpasses in this area, including the SE Redmond Way overpass 30 feet away. It is also likely that one or more columns would be placed in the vicinity of the trail (on either the west or east side of the river).

The Redmond Way Alternative (E1) would also cross the Bear Creek Trail, resulting in some shading on the trail. Because the light rail structure would be elevated approximately 35 feet above the trail in this area, the structure would affect the visual environment for some trail users. It is also likely that one or more columns would be placed in the vicinity of the Bear Creek Trail. E1 would require minor realignment of the East Lake Sammamish Trail in the area along the BNSF right-of-way.

Overall, access among the various trails in the area would not be impacted by project operation. No impacts on Marymoor Park or the Town Center Open Space would occur under E1. This alternative would provide enhanced access to Marymoor Park via the Downtown and SE Redmond Stations.

Marymoor Alternative (E2). The SE Redmond Station offers closer access to Marymoor Park recreationists with E2 than it does with the Redmond Way (E1) and Leary Way (E4) alternatives, although access to the park could be obtained under those alternatives as well. E2 would acquire park property along the northern edge of Marymoor Park, south of SR 520, which would represent less than a 1 percent loss of park area. No recreational park facilities would be directly affected by operation of East Link; however, equestrian riders have been known to ride along the northern property boundary of the park, and an

unofficial equestrian route exists. This use would likely need to relocate because there may not be enough distance between the light rail and the soccer and ball fields to accommodate these users. Given the existing proximity to SR 520 and existing vegetation in this area, it is not likely that users would experience additional proximity impacts from the project.

E2 would cross the Sammamish River Trail, resulting in some shading. This trail currently passes underneath three other overpasses in this area, one of which, SR 520, would be located 80 feet away. In addition, Bear Creek Trail would be lowered in its existing location to go under the light rail guideway. It is also likely that one or more columns would be placed in the vicinity of both of these trails. No impacts on the Town Center Open Space, Luke McRedmond Landing, or the East Lake Sammamish Trail would occur from this alternative.

Leary Way Alternative (E4). This alternative would require right-of-way along the eastern side of Leary Way NE in the Town Center Open Space. This would require the removal of some mature trees along the edge of this open space. Trees would remain farther south into the open space, somewhat screening the light rail from users further south. Impacts on Bear Creek Trail and East Lake Sammamish Trail would be similar to those under the Redmond Way Alternative (E1), although E4 would cross over the Bear Creek Trail at half the height of E1. No impacts on Luke McRedmond Park or Marymoor Park would occur under this alternative. Slough House Park, to the north of Leary Way, would not be adversely affected by project alternatives (i.e., there would be no direct taking or proximity impacts).

TABLE 4.17-4
Impacts on Parks and Open Spaces in Segment E

Park Name	Impact Area: Surface/Elevated (acres)		
	E1, Redmond Way	E2, Marymoor	E4, Leary Way
Town Center Open Space	None	None	0.7/0.01
Luke McRedmond Landing	0/0.1	None	None
Marymoor Park	None	2.0/0	None
Sammamish River Trail	0.01/0.1	0.01/0.1	0.01/0.04
East Lake Sammamish Trail	Relocation of the trail	None	0.01/0.1
Bear Creek Trail	0.01/0.1	0.01/0.1	0.01/0.1

Maintenance Facilities

The SE Redmond Maintenance Facility (MF5) would be located adjacent to the East Lake Sammamish Trail. However, because the trail currently exists adjacent to large-scale light industrial development, no impacts are anticipated.

4.17.3.3 Impacts During Construction

Where alternatives are located adjacent to or on park property, park users may experience proximity effects including increased noise, dust, and temporary use and access restrictions. These effects are considered temporary, except for Section 6(f) parks (parks developed with the use of Land and Water Conservation Funds). Section 6(f) park lands are considered to be directly affected if construction prohibits normal use of the park for over 180 consecutive days (Land and Water Conservation Policy Manual, Section 675.9.3.A (5) (c)). This pertains only to one portion of the Mercer Slough Nature Park (see Appendix E Section 4(f)/6(f) Evaluation). Types of activities associated with construction staging are discussed in section 2.6 of Chapter 2.

Segment A

Benvenuto Viewpoint in Seattle and Park on the Lid, and possibly the Outdoor Sculpture Gallery, on Mercer Island would experience increased noise, dust, and temporary closures and detours around the parks as construction of the station entrances is completed. Construction would not inhibit normal use of the parks from other points of access. If the pedestrian bridge option is built, a portion of the Outdoor Sculpture Gallery would likely be closed and detours around the park would be provided during construction.

Segment B

For all alternatives except the BNSF Alternative (B7), reconstruction of Bellevue Way SE and the sidewalk adjacent to Mercer Slough Nature Park would result in increased noise, dust, and temporary access restrictions to western areas of the park, although detours would be provided to maintain access to trails in this area. It is not expected that construction would inhibit normal use of the park from other points of access. The Blueberry Farm, located inside the Mercer Slough Nature Park, would experience construction-related impacts under the 112th At-Grade (B2A), 112th Elevated (B2E), and 112th Bypass (B3) alternatives. A portion of the entrance to the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm would need to be reconstructed to accommodate either the light rail structure or the shifted roadway closer to the farm.

Portions of the Mercer Slough Nature Park could be used as a staging area for construction at a width that encroaches roughly 50 feet into the park, except for the location at the Frederick Winters House, where the proposed right-of-way would be widened to the west, holding the existing east right-of-way in its current location. Table 4.17-5 shows the approximate amount of construction area required for staging under each alternative in Mercer Slough Nature Park.

To construct the BNSF Alternative (B7), an approximately 100-foot-wide construction corridor along the north side of I-90 would be cleared and a temporary construction trestle would likely be built under the elevated guideway in Mercer Slough Nature Park. Although the park is close to an existing noise generator (I-90), temporary noise from East Link construction would be greater than noise typically experienced in this area. In addition, this portion of the park, the I-90 trail, as well as the canal on the west side of the park near the I-90 off-ramps, would likely be intermittently closed to public access during construction for safety considerations. Once construction is completed, the area along the light rail elevated guideway would be revegetated and returned to parklands and the trail would remain unaltered. Wetland vegetation outside of the guideway is expected to return to its current growth pattern within 10 years.

TABLE 4.17-5
Construction Area Required in Mercer Slough Nature Park

	Approximate Area (acres)				
	B1, Bellevue Way	B2A, 112th SE At-Grade	B2E, 112th SE Elevated	B3, 112th SE Bypass	B7, BNSF
Mercer Slough Nature Park	1.6	2.0	1.1	1.9	1.9

Segment C

Table 4.17-6 lists the area required for construction staging in parks in Segment C. The northern half of Surrey Downs Park where the King County District Courthouse is located would be used as staging to construct the tunnel portals for the 106th NE Tunnel Alternative (C2T) or the 108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T) if connecting from the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A) in Segment B (see appendix F4.17 for park location). The southern half of the park containing the existing park facilities would remain open during construction, although park users would experience proximity impacts from adjacent

construction, including noise and dust. Vehicle access would likely be limited to only one of the two current entrances. Pedestrian access to adjoining neighborhoods would be maintained at two of the three current locations. Parking would also be limited because half of the parking is located at the north end of the site, although much of that parking serves the King County District Courthouse. The removal of the District Courthouse would be a benefit to the park (as described in Section 4.17.3.2, Impacts During Operation). Depending on when Bellevue finalizes its plans to develop the Surrey Downs Park, construction staging at this location could delay implementation of the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan.

Under the 108th NE Tunnel Alternative (C3T) and the Couplet Alternative (C4A), McCormick Park would be closed during construction from 108th Avenue NE to 112th Avenue NE. Under the 110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E), the park would be closed during construction from roughly 110th Avenue NE to 112th Avenue NE. Under each of these alternatives, pedestrians would be directed to the open portions of the park during construction. These areas would be restored following construction, and adjacent parcels acquired for construction staging would be used to create new parkland once the project is constructed, resulting in a net gain in parkland.

TABLE 4.17-6
Construction Area (acres) Required in Parks in Segment C

	Approximate Construction Area (acres)					
	C1T, Bellevue Way Tunnel	C2T, 106th NE Tunnel	C3T, 108th NE Tunnel	C4A, Couplet	C7E, 112th NE Elevated	C8E, 110th NE Elevated
Surrey Downs Park	None	6.0 ^a	6.0 ^a	None	None	None
McCormick Park	None	None	1.8	1.8	None	0.9

^a Impact occurs only when connected with the 112th SE At-Grade Alternative (B2A).

Segment D

No impacts on parks or open space would occur during construction.

Segment E

To construct the Marymoor Alternative (E2) south of SR 520, a temporary access road would likely be built in the northern portion of Marymoor Park. The total encroachment into the park (beyond what is described in the operational impacts section) would add approximately 15 to 50 feet for the length of the park along SR 520, measuring roughly 3 acres. The construction area has been sited to avoid impacts on

the soccer fields and velodrome. Although the park is close to an existing noise generator (SR 520), temporary noise from construction could be greater than noise typically experienced in this area.

Park users in Luke McRedmond Park and the Town Center Open Space could experience increased noise and dust during construction of E2. At Luke McRedmond Landing, some parking spaces could be temporarily removed to accommodate construction. In addition, proximity effects to users of the Edge Skate Park could occur, because construction of the alternative occurs directly adjacent to this facility.

For all Segment E alternatives, temporary trail closures, detours, or protective barriers would be implemented to maintain trail usage when construction would occur over the Lake Sammamish Trail and the Bear Creek Trail and under the Bridle Crest Trail. The East Lake Sammamish Trail would be realigned and reconstructed where it exists in the same corridor as the Redmond Way (E1) and Leary Way (E4) alternatives, also requiring closures and detours.

Maintenance Facilities

Because the East Lake Sammamish Trail would be reconstructed under the Redmond Way (E1) and Leary Way (E4) alternatives, no additional impacts are expected during construction of the maintenance facilities.

4.17.4 Potential Mitigation Measures

Sound Transit would restore disturbed park and open space to pre-project conditions after construction in cooperation with the resource owner and, when applicable, the RCO, which administers both LWCF and other state funds, and the National Park Service, when LWCF funds are involved. This would include landscaping, paths, and any built features of the park and trail resources. Other measures to mitigate affected parks and open space include providing replacement lands, park enhancement, and financial compensation, where appropriate. Mitigation for RCO-funded trails would include compensation for encroachment on air rights.

During construction, pedestrian access to parks and trails would be routed to the remaining open portions of the facilities. When necessary, a noise and visual barrier would be constructed between the park and construction staging area in Surrey Downs Park for the 106th NE Tunnel (C2T) and 108th NE Tunnel (C3T) alternatives, and in McCormick Park for the 110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E). In addition, dust

control measures would be used to minimize dust impacts during construction.

As part of the Section 4(f) process, Sound Transit has been consulting with the cities of Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond and with King County about potential impacts on parks under their jurisdiction and possible mitigation measures. These agencies have provided documentation of their

preliminary views regarding impacts and mitigation for parks, which are included in Appendix D.

Table 4.17-7 summarizes potential mitigation measures for each of the affected recreational resources. Not all mitigation measures would be necessary or implemented where multiple mitigation options are described in the table.

TABLE 4.17-7
Potential Mitigation for Identified Impacts

Facility Name	Jurisdiction	Potential Mitigation	Associated Alternatives
Segment A, Interstate 90			
Benvenuto Viewpoint	WSDOT, City of Seattle	Station entrance designed to be compatible with surrounding park	I-90 Alternative (A1)
Park on the Lid	WSDOT	Station entrance designed to be compatible with the surrounding park.	I-90 Alternative (A1)
Outdoor Sculpture Gallery	WSDOT, Mercer Island	Station entrance designed to be compatible with the surrounding park.	I-90 Alternative (A1)
Segment B, South Bellevue			
Mercer Slough Nature Park	City of Bellevue	One or more of the following measures would be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts consistent with requirement of Section 6(f), as applicable - Financial compensation - Restoration and potential enhancement of disturbed park area 	All Segment B Alternatives
Bellevue Way Greenbelt	City of Bellevue	Financial compensation	Bellevue Way Alternative (B1), 112th SE At-Grade (B2A), 112th SE Bypass (B3)
Segment C, Downtown Bellevue			
Surrey Downs Park	City of Bellevue	Financial compensation or acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts.	106th NE Tunnel (C2T), 108th NE Tunnel (C3T), Couplet (C4A), and 110th NE Elevated (C8E) alternatives connecting from 112th NE At-Grade Alternative (B2A)
		Noise and visual screening during construction for the adjacent park users (south side) Landscape restoration after construction, as agreed to with the City, but not park development Financial compensation for use of park during construction	106th NE Tunnel (C2T), 108th NE Tunnel (C3T), alternatives connecting from 112th NE At-Grade Alternative (B2A)
Pocket Parks	City of Bellevue	Financial compensation Restoration of disturbed park area Other visual and aesthetic mitigation measures discussed in Section 4.5.4.1	Couplet Alternative (C4A) and 110th NE Elevated Alternative (C8E)

TABLE 4.17-7
Potential Mitigation for Identified Impacts

Facility Name	Jurisdiction	Potential Mitigation	Associated Alternatives
McCormick Park	City of Bellevue	Acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts Financial compensation Restoration of disturbed area after construction	108th NE Tunnel (C3T), Couplet (C4A), and 110th NE Elevated (C8E) alternatives
Segment D, Bel/Red-Overlake	No parks affected	No impact and no mitigation required.	None
Segment E, Downtown Redmond			
Town Center Open Space	City of Redmond	Acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts. Financial compensation Restoration of disturbed park area.	Leary Way Alternative (E4)
Luke McRedmond Landing	City of Redmond	One or more of the following measurements would be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts - Financial compensation - Restoration of disturbed park area/replacement of trees removed 	Redmond Way Alternative (E1)
Marymoor Park	King County	Acquire replacement land for permanent use impacts consistent with requirements of Section 6(f), as applicable Financial compensation for the use of additional land outside the light rail right-of-way for construction Restoration of disturbed park area after construction	Marymoor Alternative (E2)
Bear Creek Trail	City of Redmond	One or more of the following measurements would be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial compensation - Rerouting of trail during construction and restoration of disturbed trail area after construction 	Redmond Way Alternative (E1), Marymoor Alternative, (E2), and Leary Way Alternative (E4)
Sammamish River Trail	King County	Acquire replacement recreation land consistent with requirements of Section 6(f), as applicable Financial compensation for additional land outside the light rail right-of-way needed for construction Rerouting of trail during construction and restoration of disturbed trail area after construction	Redmond Way Alternative (E1), Marymoor Alternative, (E2), and Leary Way Alternative (E4)
East Lake Sammamish Trail	King County	Financial compensation for the light rail use of the trail right-of-way. Rerouting of trail during construction and restoration of disturbed area after construction	Redmond Way Alternative (E1), and Leary Way Alternative (E4)