

Route 2 Assessment

Londonderry Drive > Parkland > Londonderry Drive & Road > Walnut Ridge Park > Parkland > Vernon Avenue South

Overview

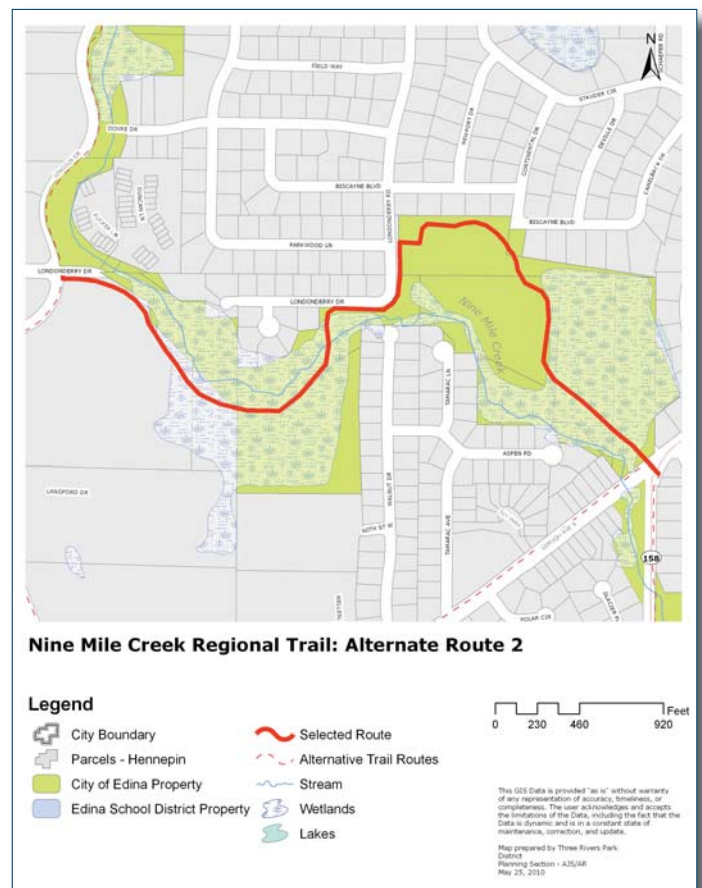
Route 2 begins at the intersection of Lincoln and Londonderry Drives and heads east on the south side of Londonderry Drive. An easement from United Health Care is anticipated. The rest of the route is located within parkland or road right-of-way. The route proposes a boardwalk through the wetland along the south side of the creek. Approximately two-thirds of the way across the wetland, the route crosses the creek and utilizes the upland along the south side of Londonderry Drive and east side of Londonderry Road. At Walnut Ridge Park the route heads east and utilizes the existing trail on the north and east side of the park. Upon reaching the southeast corner of the Walnut Ridge Park play fields the route is proposed to head east to Vernon Avenue over a wetland while utilizing a boardwalk. Route 2 ends at Vernon Avenue.



A boardwalk is proposed to cross the wetland in the photo to the left. The photo on the right shows the proposed trail location along the road edge of Londonderry Drive near Walnut Ridge Park.

Economic Assessment

Preliminary Construction Estimate:
\$2,400,000



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Social Assessment

<p>Adjacent Residential Yards</p> <p>Different areas of residential property offer varying levels of privacy and access which may be altered by the trail.</p> <table> <tr> <td><i>Number of residential front yards</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Number of residential side yards</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Number of residential back yards</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">61</td> </tr> </table>	<i>Number of residential front yards</i>	0	<i>Number of residential side yards</i>	4	<i>Number of residential back yards</i>	61	<p>Proximity of Adjacent Homes</p> <p>Homes closer to the proposed trail have greater opportunity for potential trail related impacts (visual, noise, privacy).</p> <table> <tr> <td><i>Average distance from house to trail</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">310'</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Average distance from house to property line</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">50'</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Number of houses < 25 feet</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </table>	<i>Average distance from house to trail</i>	310'	<i>Average distance from house to property line</i>	50'	<i>Number of houses < 25 feet</i>	0
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Technical Assessment

<p>Space Requirements</p> <p>If adequate right-of-way is not available, additional easements or street redesign may be required.</p> <p><i>Proposed street redesign: N/A</i></p>	<p>Driveway Crossings</p> <p>Each driveway crossing will result in encounters between trail users and motorists. Each encounter creates an opportunity for an incident.</p> <table> <tr> <td><i>Single family driveway crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Multi-family driveway crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Low turnover commercial crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>High turnover commercial crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Total driveway crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </table>	<i>Single family driveway crossings</i>	0	<i>Multi-family driveway crossings</i>	0	<i>Low turnover commercial crossings</i>	0	<i>High turnover commercial crossings</i>	0	<i>Total driveway crossings</i>	0
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<p>Road Crossings</p> <p>Each road crossing will result in encounters between trail users and motorists. Each encounter creates an opportunity for an incident.</p> <table> <tr> <td><i>Number of road crossings</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Speed limit of roads</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 at 30 mph or less</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Average annual daily traffic</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 at 5,000 - 6,999 vehicles/day</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Functional Class</i></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 collector road</td> </tr> </table>	<i>Number of road crossings</i>	1	<i>Speed limit of roads</i>	1 at 30 mph or less	<i>Average annual daily traffic</i>	1 at 5,000 - 6,999 vehicles/day	<i>Functional Class</i>	1 collector road			
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CAT Design Recommendations

Route 2 recommendations include locating the trail in a manner that maximizes distance from homes, avoids vistas of adjacent homes, and avoids locations which overlook adjacent homes. In addition, it is recommended to continue to review safety, use, and parking within Walnut Ridge Park during the design phase.

Additional CAT Member Narrative

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the CAT Member Narrative are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of Three Rivers Park District.

"As CAT representative for Segment 2, I have been asked to provide my comments on the Nine Mile Creek CAT Analysis. Neighborhood Representatives were asked to evaluate and analyze data related to the study.

It is difficult to provide comments on the complete document since Three Rivers Park District (3RPD) withheld the two most significant portions of the study (the Executive Summary and Conclusions) from all Neighborhood Representatives. Our inclusion in the above portions of the document could have improved the quality of the output.

Today, much of the 9 Mile Creek Corridor is effectively a narrow ribbon of a nature preserve. Given that we have so few undeveloped natural acres within Edina, it is critical that any development plans are made with care and with a view to the future. We also want to have some oversight regarding the projects upon which we choose to incur government spending. These tax dollars should be spent efficiently and consistently with the priorities facing our community.

The CAT Analysis is flawed for the following reasons:

- 1. Conclusions from 2006 Needs Assessment are misinterpreted*
- 2. Agreed upon processes were not followed*
- 3. Cost (and other data) promised for delivery was not delivered*
- 4. Analysis fails to address concerns of residents in Segment 2*

2006 Needs Assessment

- As background, this assessment was used as the justification for planning the regional trail.*
- The 2006 analysis states that biking and walking trails are the most important needs for the community. While technically true, the 2nd most important need identified was preserving outdoors and nature. The difference in the reported level of needs is statistically insignificant between these two options.*

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Additional CAT Member Narrative, cont'd

- *This ranking is complicated by the fact that biking and walking trails were combined into one need. I would argue that the needs of bikers and walkers are not the same (recreational vs. commuter). So, if bikers' needs and walkers' needs were tabulated separately in the 2006 analysis; then outdoors and nature would be the dominant need.*
 - o *This change would impact how a regional trail would be considered.*
- *The 2006 (survey) assessment fails to ask people how much they would be willing to spend on the proposed amenities. Inclusion of cost criteria is a serious short coming of the assessment and may have changed the outcome.*
- *The bikers I surveyed are not pleased with any of the options offered. They believe that a street based solution would be faster and more efficient.*
- *In any event, bikers and walkers on the same trail pose safety risks.*

3RPD failed to follow processes that it established

- *3RPD added a new proposed segment (5F) after establishing rules that no new routes were to be considered. Review of alternative routes could add to the quality of the analysis and perhaps make the project more cost effective.*
- *3RPD is attempting to hold public hearings on both the CAT Analysis and the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) concurrently. The EAW is several months late. The original schedule called for review of the EAW prior to a review of the CAT Analysis.*
 - o *To prepare the CAT Analysis (this document), 3RPD had CAT members force rank pro and cons of proposed trail attributes prior to release of EAW. Therefore, the CAT was not able to incorporate insights from the (final) EAW into our thoughts on this analysis.*
 - o *Wording within Social and Technical Analysis was vague (and pro-development) which reduced the value of the force rankings completed by each team member.*
 - o *3RPD committed to offering the alternative of the status quo on each for each trail segment. This was not included in the documents presented to the CAT.*
 - o *It is, therefore, premature to be issuing the CAT Analysis*

Cost and other promised data not delivered

- *This analysis fails to answer the question, "What are we getting in return for our tax dollars and how do we know citizens support this level of spending on this project"? The document does not identify total costs for the project.*

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Additional CAT Member Narrative, cont'd

- o Direct costs were estimated at approximately \$20 million (prior to financing expenses and without specific placement of each route). With assumed financing costs and very modest cost overruns, the total direct costs of this project become about \$35 million for a 7 mile trail. This makes the cost about \$950 per linear foot. It is also the equivalent of paying 140 teachers (\$50,000 each) for 5 years.*
- o I am not an expert in this area, but wetland mitigation expenses seem understated for a project of this nature. Review of the EAW would likely test this portion of the cost analysis.*
- *3RPD promised to provide estimates for indirect costs and incremental project costs. This data was not provided and could be a significant factor in the decision making process.*
 - o Understanding indirect and/or incremental costs (project contingency expenses, first responder, neighborhood patrols, additional staff requirements, accommodations to impacted residents, local design changes, reserves for future liability, etc.) to Edina and Hennepin County are critical to evaluating the merits of going forward with this project.*
 - o The concern is that citizens need to know what costs they will likely incur going forward, regardless of which agency is spending the dollars.*
- *Above costs exclude the proposed concurrent project by 9 Mile Creek Watershed Authority to re-route the creek and improve the quality of the creek bed. The financial impact of the combined projects will be significant and perhaps not necessary.*
 - o These projects (Bike Trail and Creek Re-routing) individually and collectively may increase risk and therefore need for financial reserves to both the city and the park district.*
- *The process failed to allow investigation of more cost effective ways to achieve the goal (east/west bike trail).*
- *3RPD promised to evaluate the net carbon footprint left by development of the trail. This was omitted from the final product.*

Concerns of segment 2 residents

- *The trail proposal involves permanently transferring over 13 net acres of city property (much of it considered wet lands) to 3RPD. It will forever change this natural corridor in a largely urban area. Have we thought through alternative uses of these high valued wetlands?*
- *Walnut Ridge Park is intended to be a "trail head" location where users will start/end their journey. The increased park usage will create safety, privacy, traffic and noise issues for residents.*
 - o Children's play area adjacent to a high speed bike lane. Young kids and a high speed bikes trail do not mix well.*

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Additional CAT Member Narrative, cont'd

- o Walkers on the paved ring will compete with bikers in the same space*
 - o Traffic and parking in neighborhoods may become an issue.*
- *Residents are concerned about the disruption and inconvenience that comes with a 3 to 4 year construction process (per 3RPD).*
 - o This process will involve heavy machinery and be very noisy during construction and will require property owners to allow workers access to private property. Quiet enjoyment of residents' property will be gone forever.*
 - o In the wetland areas, the trail will be elevated and consist of treated wood timbers.*
 - Traffic on these timbers will generate a lot of noise and be disruptive to the community. How will this be addressed?*
 - The elevated wood timbers in a flood plain are likely to catch debris and therefore increase the risk of flood damage to the structure and to adjacent area. How will this be addressed?*
- *Tree loss*
 - o A substantial number of trees will be destroyed to provide access for machinery and equipment to wetland areas.*
 - o Smaller number of trees to be lost within Walnut Ridge Park as proposed trail will widen the existing trail.*
 - o These trees absorb CO2 and are very effective sound barriers.*
- *Plant and Wildlife*
 - o This area is rich in wildlife.*
 - o A trail bisecting the wetlands may adversely affect threatened or endangered plants as well as habitat of threatened or endangered wildlife. It may risk dislodging animal life from their natural areas.*

Recommendation

Based on what I know about both the cost and the environmental impact of this plan; it needs significant work before it is ready to be objectively evaluated. Alternative routes need to be considered."

- Bob Lubar, Segment 2 Representative

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