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Edmonds to finish Interurban Trail

The last link of the old railway line will extend the trail all the way from Everett to Seattle.

By Bill Sheets
Herald Writer

Hank Landau knows about the dangers of riding a bicycle in traffic.

The Woodway resident was hit by a sport utility vehicle while riding in New Jersey a couple years ago. He suffered 15 broken bones and required 700 stitches.

"It's dangerous out there," he said.

Landau, 63, is out riding his bike again. And he's glad Edmonds will no longer be the missing link in the Interurban Trail.

The city is the only municipality between Everett and Seattle that has yet to revamp its portion of the early 20th-century trolley line into a pathway for walkers, joggers and bicyclists.

Right-of-way issues have held up the project. Now, the city is close to resolving those questions, officials said.

The city is working to finish its surveys of property lines and is gathering information on deeds. It's had meetings with Lake Ballinger residents and has some grant money lined up for the project.

Part of the city's 1.1-mile portion of the former trolley path, a block west of Lake Ballinger, has been paved over by city streets. The other part sits as an unused dirt alleyway owned by Snohomish County PUD. The route appears to include portions of private property, for which owners would have to be compensated.

The city hopes to do the work in 2007. With trail improvements complete in other cities and on Snohomish County land, the route would link Everett and Seattle as it did in the days of the Interurban trolley in the early 20th century.

"We'd really like to get it completed. It's an important piece," McIntosh said.

Cost estimates for Edmonds' portion range from \$700,000 to \$950,000, depending on how much property has to be acquired. The city has a \$250,000 grant in hand and is seeking more money, parks director Brian McIntosh said.

Mountlake Terrace's portion of the trail ends north of 228th Street SW at 73rd Place W. Shoreline's part of the trail, recently built, ends at Highway 104 across from 76th Avenue W. Edmonds' portion would link those two trails.

Two sections, the PUD alleyway on the north end and a short stretch in the middle, will be paved 12 feet wide for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Bike lanes 5 feet wide are planned for both sides of 76th Avenue W. Sections along 74th and 75th avenues will be shared use, with warning signs and other safety improvements.

Included in the plans are a Lake Ballinger Station, which would include a transit shelter, bike lockers, bike route kiosks and displays on the history of the Interurban line. A trail entrance on 76th Avenue with landscaped medians also is planned.

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Michael V. Martina / The Herald

A portion of unpaved access road near 76th Avenue W. in Edmonds will be turned into a stretch of the Interurban Trail. It is one of two sections of the trail through the city that will complete the path from Everett to Seattle.



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