

**CITY OF STEVENSON, WASHINGTON**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

**AGENDA TITLE:** Integrated Shoreline Public Access and Trails Plan – Charrette findings  
**DEPARTMENT:** Community Development  
**PRESENTED BY:** Alex Capron, AICP, Senior Planner - DCG/Watershed

**PROJECT UPDATE**

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> public involvement meeting for the Stevenson Integrated Shoreline Public Access and Trails Plan, the City conducted an in-person design charrette on April 19<sup>th</sup>, from 5-7:30pm at the Stevenson Community Library. The intent of this meeting was to help prioritize five shoreline projects from a total of nine possible shoreline access projects, as well as take feedback and priorities within certain individual projects. The meeting was well attended, with approximately 25 participants arriving throughout the evening (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 - April 19 2023 Proposed Projects Charrette

These nine projects were developed from an array of sources, including GIS analysis, existing long-range planning documents, community input from the first open house and a follow-up

stakeholder meeting between the City and upper Rock Creek property owners in February 2023. Projects (1-9) are summarized below:

1. Invest in online presence to make shoreline recreational opportunities more accessible.
2. SW Rock Creek Drive pedestrian improvements to enhance connection between waterfront and Rock Cove shorelines
3. Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront west end between Rock Cove and waterfront
4. Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront east end (adjacent to Kanaka Creek)
5. Create public access to lower Rock Creek
6. Create public pedestrian access to Rock Creek lower falls
7. Create public pedestrian access to Rock Creek upper falls
8. Rock Cove shoreline trail easement and stream enhancement (abutting mouth of Foster Creek)
9. Explore partnership with Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center for shoreline access

Further, a 2<sup>nd</sup> stakeholder meeting took place at the County Fairgrounds with County staff just before the charrette to better understand County future potential fairground projects in shoreline jurisdiction, and how this planning process can help facilitate and align with that effort. Shoreline restoration - including invasive species, non-native tree removal and native white oak and shoreline plantings were discussed, in-tandem with a formalized non-motorized boat launch near the Hegewald Center as near-term County projects discussed during this stakeholder meeting.

## **CHARRETTE RESULTS**

For the charrette itself, respondents had the opportunity to impact the nine initial identified projects in two meaningful ways:

1. Money exercise. Each attendee was given five \$1,000 bills to allocate to one, five or several projects between the nine. One participant also dedicated their \$5K to a separate restoration project not included amongst the nine. Results are summarized below:
  - Project 7 (Rock Creek path via County land to Rock Creek Falls): \$21K
  - Project 2 (SW Rock Creek Dr pedestrian improvements: enhancing connection between waterfront and Rock Cove shorelines): \$19K
  - Project 3 (Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront west end): \$12K
  - Project 4 (Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront east end): \$11K
  - Project 9 (Explore partnership with Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center for shoreline access): \$10K

Other projects were also “funded” as part of this exercise and will be included in the



report, but may have less of a focus regarding refined cost estimates and design analysis. These include project #6 (\$8K, pedestrian access to lower Rock Creek Falls), participant-offered project to fund aquatic invasive species management (\$5K), project #8 (\$4K, Rock Cove shoreline trail easement and stream enhancement), project #5 (\$4K, create public access to lower Rock Creek and creek bank enhancement), and project #1 (invest in online presence for shoreline public access amenities).

2. Dot stickers. All participants were able to help influence a particular alternative and show favored alternatives within several different projects. For example, Project #2 contained three different alternatives the City can consider when pursuing grant funding (see Figure 2 below).

**2 SW Rock Creek Drive pedestrian improvements: enhance connection between waterfront & Rock Cove shorelines**

**Objective Analysis:**  
There is a gap in shoreline access opportunities between the waterfront and Rock Cove, as well as a break in a potential continuous shoreline trail. There are physical challenges and ownership constraints to making an immediate connection along the shoreline. SW Rock Creek Drive contains a pedestrian pathway connecting the two shoreline access areas. Currently this key corridor includes crosswalks and a continuous sidewalk on one side of the street with different degrees of pedestrian-vehicle separation.

**Alignment with Long-Range Planning:**  
Multiple planning documents commissioned and adopted by the city have identified SW Rock Creek Drive as the primary route to connect pedestrians and cyclists between the waterfront, Rock Cove, and beyond, namely the 1991 Stevenson, Washington Pedestrian and Bicycle Links, Walker & Macy and 2012 Stevenson Wayfinding Master Plan by Rock Cove Design. Signage and street improvements have been recommended. As a result of these master planning recommendations, sidewalks on both sides of the street have been proposed previously.

**Community Support:**  
Multiple residents expressed the desire to have a continuous shoreline trail along the Columbia River, Rock Cove and beyond. More specifically, many comments addressed the gap between the Waterfront Trail and Rock Cove Trail, two primary shoreline destinations in the city. Related to this consensus was a desire to strengthen neighborhood connections to the shoreline. An enhanced and protected pathway would contribute to a strengthened connection between two prominent trails.

**Existing Conditions**  
Aerial map showing SW Rock Creek Drive, Mill Pond Trail, and surrounding areas. Legend includes: SW Rock Creek Drive with 60-ft ROW, SW Rock Creek Drive Trail Segment, Existing Continuous Sidewalk (North side of SW Rock Creek Drive Only), Existing Striping for On-Street Parking, Existing Fire Hydrant, End of Sidewalk on South Side of SW Rock Creek Drive, Existing City Standard Decorative Lamp Post, Existing Crosswalk, and Begin Mill Pond Trail.

**Enhancement Options**  
Satisfies Shoreline Public Access and Trail Plan Goal: Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines (RCW 90.58.020(5))

**a** Improve Wayfinding: Add on-the-ground wayfinding to clarify the connection between the waterfront and Rock Cove. The City of Stevenson Wayfinding Master Plan has guidelines for the installation of pavement markers. Markers could use the plan's Artisan Medallion graphics created for each area. Markers or paint can be added to the existing sidewalk.

**b** Improve Pedestrian Experience: Add sidewalk to south side of SW Rock Creek Drive, maintain parked car lanes on both sides, and add landscape strip to one side of the street only. This option can be combined with wayfinding improvements.

**c** Protected Multi-Use Trail: Add multi-use paved trail to one side of SW Rock Creek Drive with a wide landscape buffer. This option has the most emphasis on pedestrian safety and allows for heavy use including bicyclists. A sidewalk and parked car lane remain on the opposite side of the street.

**\* NOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE STREET OPTION**

*Handwritten notes:*  
- NO MORE SIDEWALK KEEP CAR LANE TRAIL FAVOR DUAL CHARACTER  
- PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE CRAVE PARK  
- Orange way finding Dan Ayneba already in place

Figure 2 - April 19 2023 Proposed Projects Charrette – Project #2 dot exercise

Here, participants prefer options #1 (enacting City Wayfinding Plan between City park property at intersection of SW Rock Creek Dr and Highway 14 to the Mill Pond Trail entrance) and #2 (placing sidewalk on north end of street between each destination).

Project #9 also gained significant interest with this dot exercise (see Figure 3).



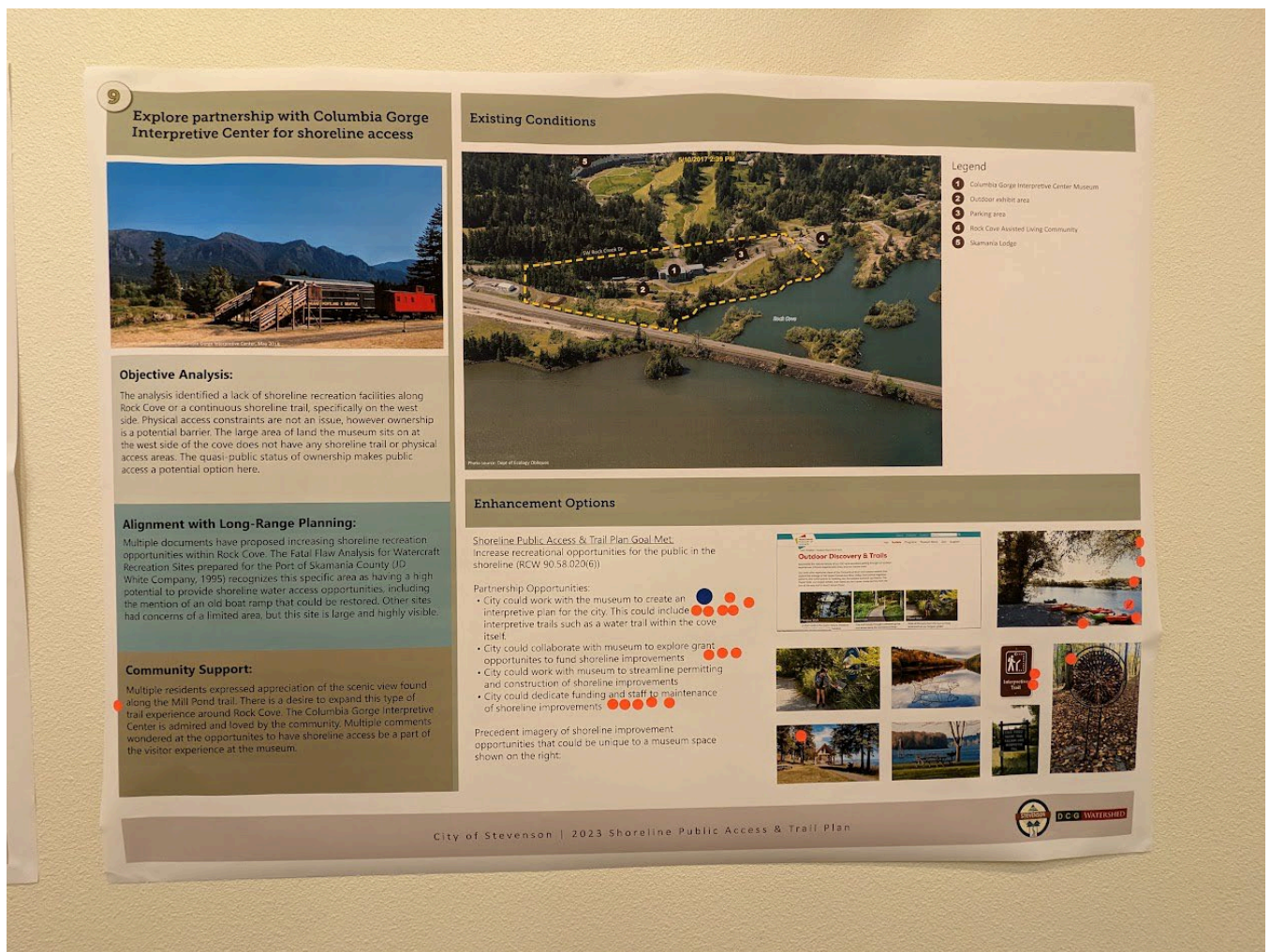


Figure 3 - April 19 2023 Proposed Projects Charrette – Project #9 dot exercise

Here, participants placed a heavy emphasis on providing an interpretive trail as a collaborative effort between City and Museum, exploring grant opportunities for non-motorized water access improvements.

## NEXT STEPS

Following this charrette and initial findings found within, the City and consultant will finalize the plan, including project background, goals and objectives, project analysis methodology potential funding sources, permitting implications, and a project description and matrix for all nine projects (plus the County fairgrounds and participant-volunteered project), at a high level. A special focus on more refined design concepts and initial cost estimates will be conducted for the five prioritized projects identified during the charrette. With the Ecology grant expiring June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023, the vast majority of this remaining report work will occur this month, May 2023.

A presentation to City Council as part of their June meeting will allow council members and the public to view the completed plan, overall project timeline and accomplishments, as well as next steps towards implementation via grant funding. Councilmember Wyatt, Mayor Anderson, (along with Planning Commissioner Ray) have been involved as the project steering committee from the start to ensure a smooth transition towards plan adoption. This plan may also identify

future possible SMP amendments -as necessary- to better align with these proposed projects, to be brought before Ecology (as well as City officials) for consideration after the June 30<sup>th</sup> grant deadline.

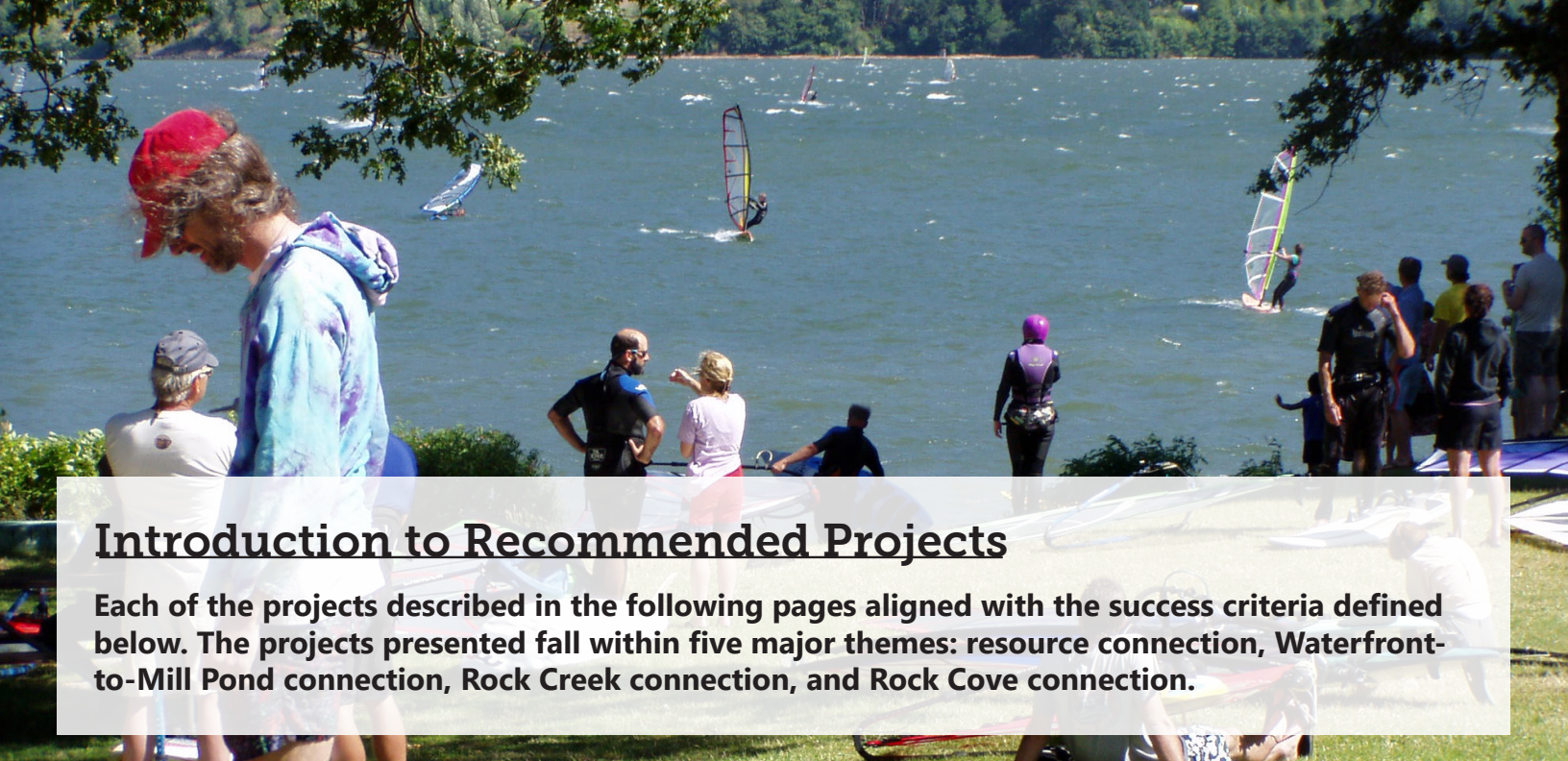
## **ATTACHMENTS**

Presentation boards for nine potential shoreline public access trails: [https://dcgwatershed-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/p/acapron/EVHAhxxWoCNOh9fCSh0MVplBsJWzM\\_gRlfvCrK\\_4Y13Y9g?e=uO3KOj](https://dcgwatershed-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/p/acapron/EVHAhxxWoCNOh9fCSh0MVplBsJWzM_gRlfvCrK_4Y13Y9g?e=uO3KOj)

## **SCHEDULE**

- Project Kick-off (October 2023)
- Public Engagement Plan (January 2023)
- Public Meeting #1 Open House (February 2023)
- Planning Commission Meeting - April 10th, 2023
- Public Meeting #2 Charrette April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- **Planning Commission Meeting – May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023**
- City Council Meeting – June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Ecology grant closes – June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023





## **Introduction to Recommended Projects**

Each of the projects described in the following pages aligned with the success criteria defined below. The projects presented fall within five major themes: resource connection, Waterfront-to-Mill Pond connection, Rock Creek connection, and Rock Cove connection.

### **Success Criteria for Shoreline Access & Trail Enhancement Projects**

#### **Objective Analysis:**

A digital geospatial analysis was conducted to examine connectivity and natural, physical, and experiential factors within the shoreline jurisdiction. Factors were scored according to different criteria indicating suitability for incorporation into the city's trails network. Features representing obstacles or barriers to trail use or construction, such as steep slopes or major roadways, were scored as low suitability. And features representing benefits or value to trail use or construction, such as scenic or experiential character or close connectivity to existing trails, were scored highly. The result is an objective scoring identifying priority links and nodes for trail development.

#### **Alignment with Long-Range Planning:**

The City of Stevenson has many long-range planning documents that guide the city's growth, development, and management of critical resources. Several plans, such as the SMP and Downtown Plan, are authored by the city; while other documents are contributed by key stakeholders, such as the Port. Together, these documents represent substantial investment and long-term study into the community's specific needs and issues. As part of the trail plan, a review of applicable planning documents was performed to identify past and present recommendations relevant to shoreline trail and recreation planning.

#### **Community Support:**

Community support is demonstrated by data collected through the public outreach and engagement process. Specific activities conducted to support the shoreline recreational planning effort included a promotional campaign and direct outreach to stakeholders representing a wide array of interest. Visitors, residents, property and business owners, as well as interested agencies and organizations were invited to participate in informational sessions about the planning effort and feedback exercises, such as surveys and workshops. Feedback was compiled and analyzed to identify key recommendations yielded from community input.



# Legend

- Primary routes related to shoreline access
- Primary downtown pedestrian network
- Existing shoreline trails and amenities
- Existing pedestiran experience on or along shoreline on sidewalk
- Missing pedestrian connection
- Informal seasonal trail along creek
- Future desired trail
- Neighborhood flow into downtown

**ROCK CREEK CONNECTION:**

**WATERFRONT CONNECTION:**

**ROCK COVE CONNECTION:**

**RESOURCE CONNECTION:**

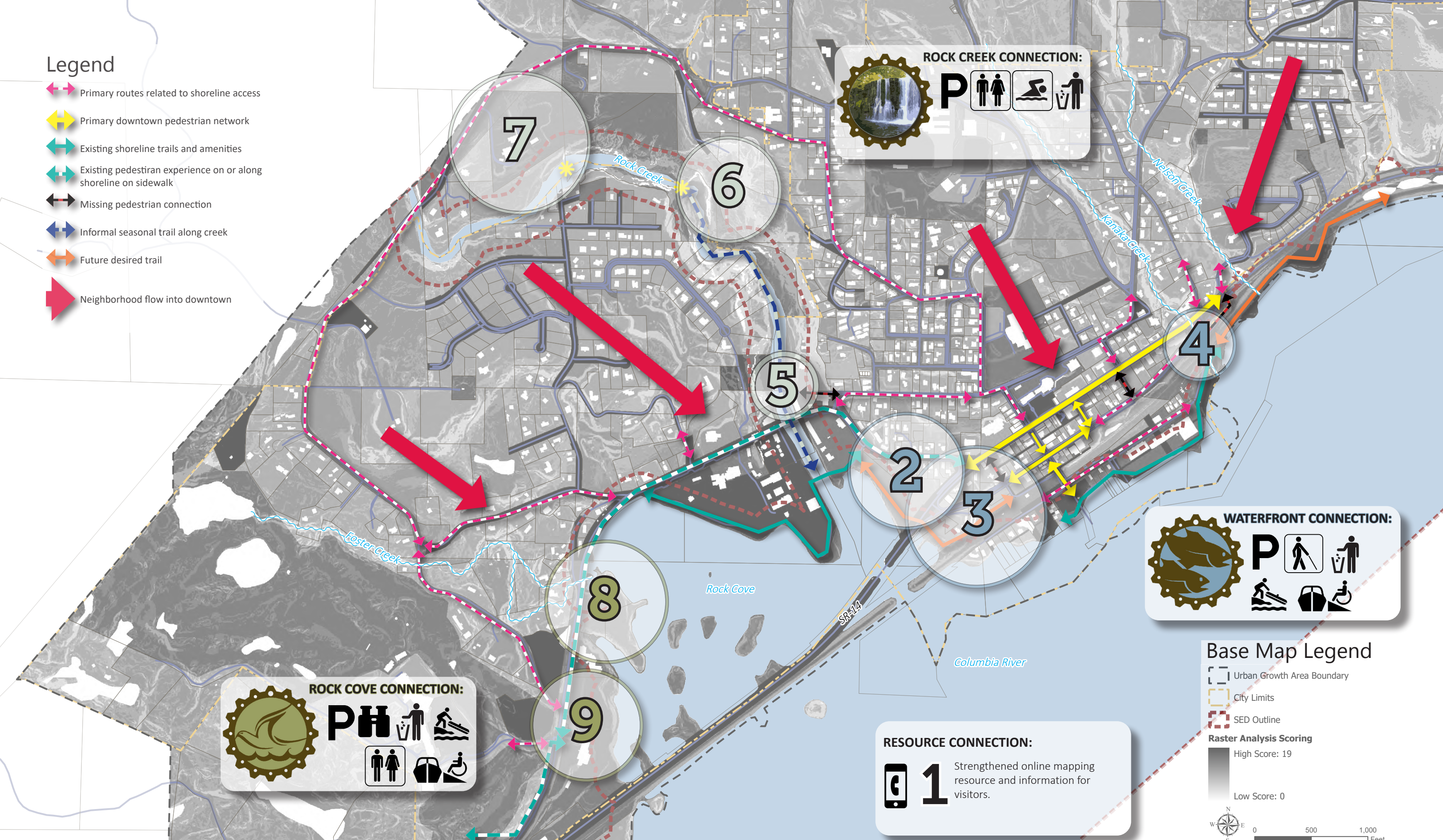
**1** Strengthened online mapping resource and information for visitors.

**Base Map Legend**

- Urban Growth Area Boundary
- City Limits
- SED Outline

**Raster Analysis Scoring**

High Score: 19  
Low Score: 0





# 1 Invest in online presence to make shoreline recreational opportunities more accessible



## Objective Analysis:

The recreational opportunities analysis revealed a gap that can limit public shoreline access. Specifically, it revealed the lack of a single resource for verified and up-to-date information on recreational opportunities and amenities. While information is published separately across many sources, including recreational opportunity providers and informal user forums, information was found to be incomplete, conflicting, or incorrect.

## Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

A review of planning documents yielded many project ideas and recommendations as well as planning tools for processes or incentives to move plans forward. Many of the projects included outreach and utilized online surveys and communication. No previous plan however has addressed the opportunity to make information about existing opportunities more accessible online. The current city parks website includes only city-owned and maintained parks.

## Community Support:

Members of the community have expressed frustration over visitors acting on incorrect information they found online. Public trespass through private property to access Rock creek is an example. Regardless of signage on site, visitors are led on by online descriptions. Neighbors would like to redirect trespassers, but currently have no resource to direct them to. Other public comments included support of a webpage that included amenities, as well as rules and regulations.

## Existing Conditions

### Visit Stevenson

On the banks of the scenic Columbia River, the city of Stevenson is your launch pad to the Washington side of the Gorge. Just 45 minutes from Portland or Vancouver, and three and a half hours from Seattle, Stevenson is perfect to visit for the day, the weekend or an extended vacation.



A stroll along the Rock Cove pathway or the Columbia River waterfront is a great way to take in our surroundings. Downtown Stevenson is home to unique shops, art galleries, and restaurants. Not to mention our award-winning local brewpub.

Just up the hill from downtown is the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center Museum. Venture back in time. View the cataclysmic formation of the Gorge and artifacts from Native American tribes and early settlers in the area.

Stevenson is in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. And there's even more to discover in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest to the north. Explore the eastern entrance to Mount St. Helens or the spectacular Lewis River Valley.

In Stevenson, there's something for everyone. Head off on your favorite outdoor activity, or try something new. Perhaps just sit at Bob's Beach and watch the colorful sails of windsurfers and kiteboarders as they harness the powerful winds of the Columbia Gorge. Heck, while you're at it, break out the laptop and harness the power of Stevenson's free Wi-Fi.

Community

- Jobs in the City
- Library
- Schools
- Start a Business
- Utilities
- Visit Stevenson
- Driving Directions
- History
- Interpretive Center Museum
- Local Weather
- Public Art
- Public Transportation

Contact Information

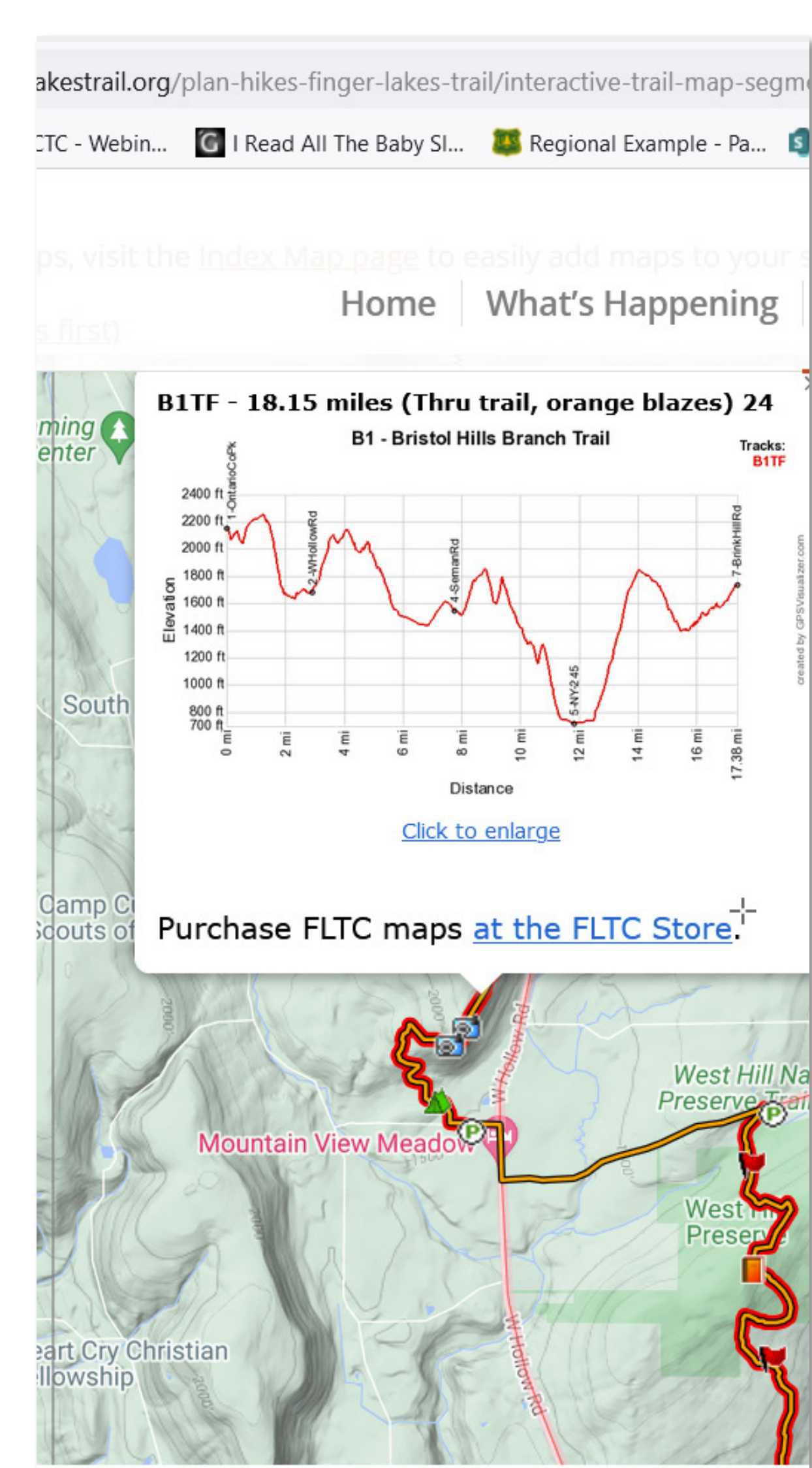
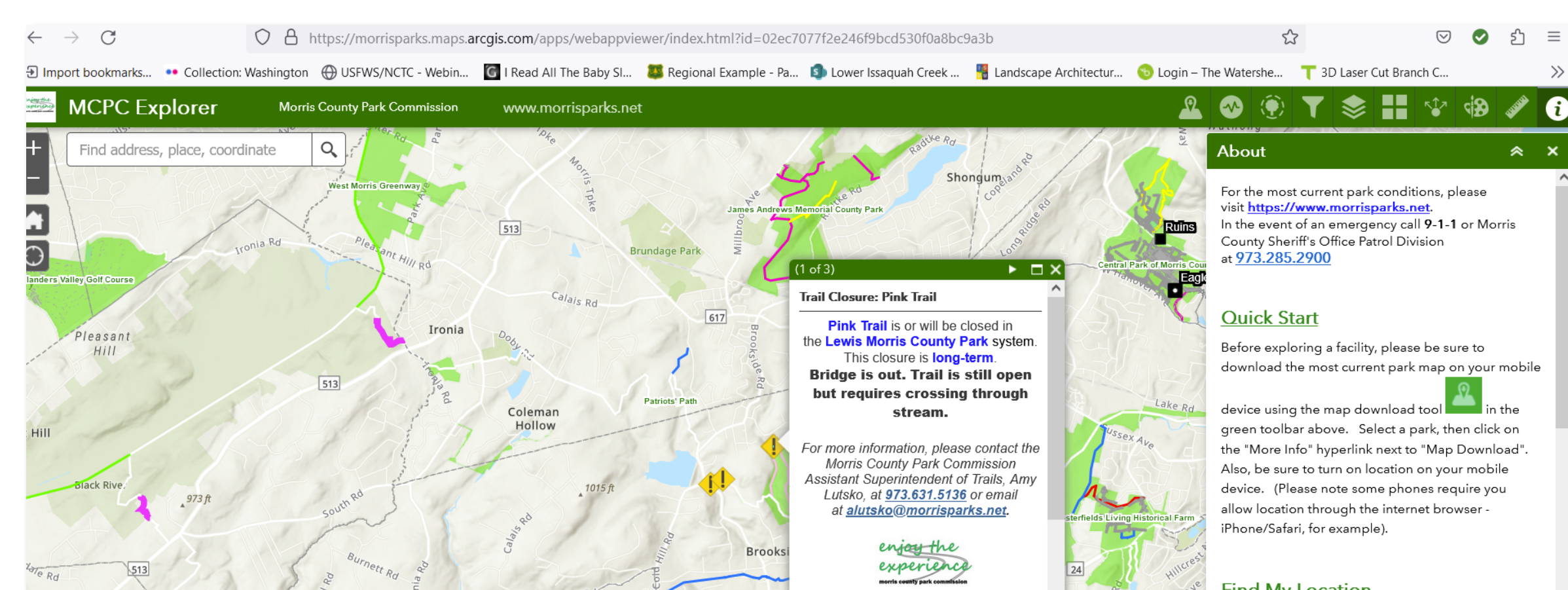
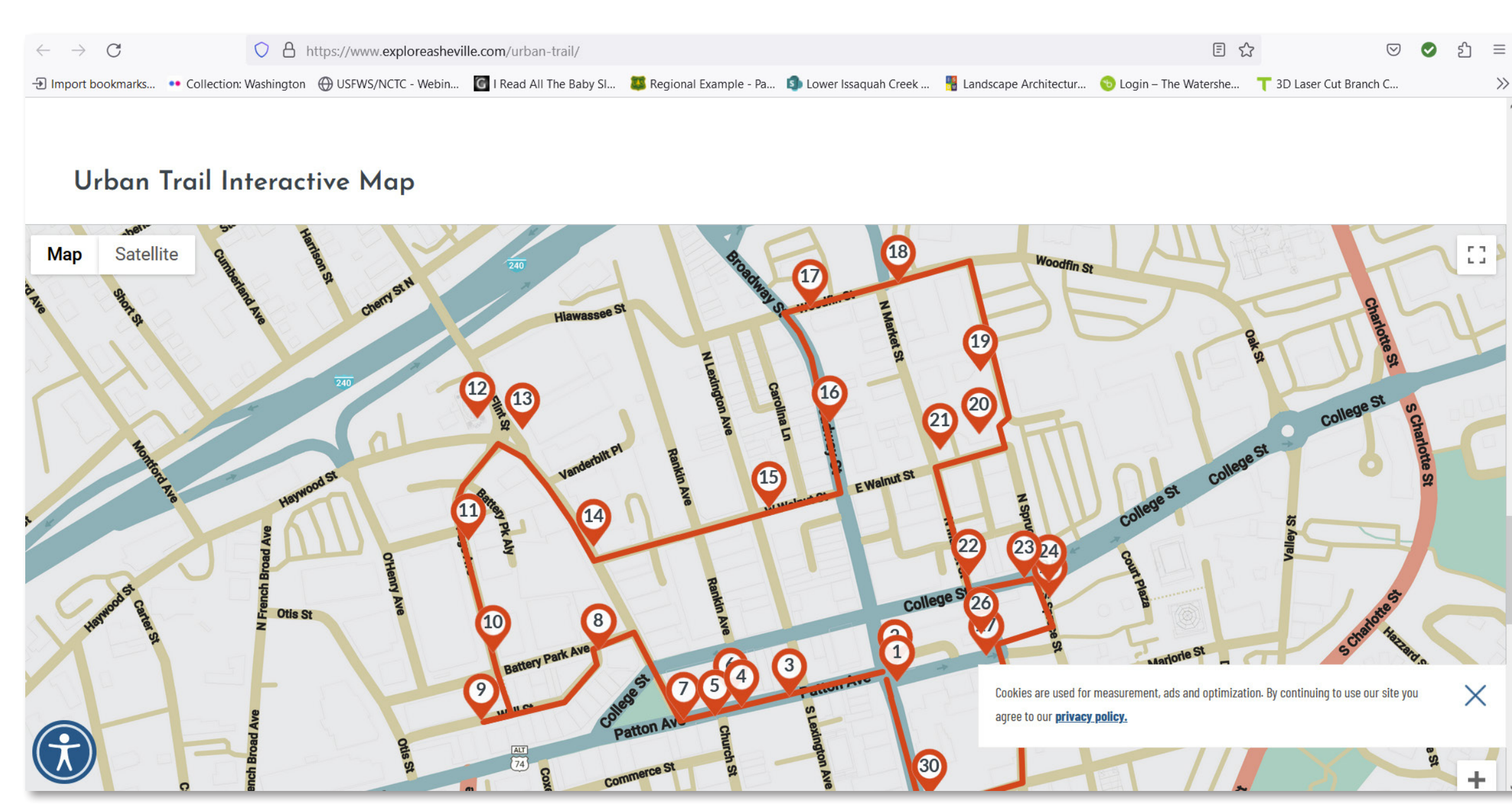
City Hall  
7121 E. Loop Road  
Stevenson, WA 98648  
Mailing Address

The city's current website provides visitor information under the 'Visit Stevenson' tab; however, it lacks any information about shoreline recreational use and amenities on the Columbia River, Rock Cove, and Rock Creek.



Residents and visitors increasingly rely on internet resources for information about recreational amenities and opportunities. Land managers, like agencies and municipalities, often provide reliable and current information. When an official source is absent or hard to find, second-hand information is shared through informal sources, like message boards and recreational user forums.

## Enhancement Options



The city could enhance its existing website by adding a button to 'Explore the shore' that leads users to shoreline recreation opportunities, events and activities, including non-city-owned public access options.

The website could provide information to direct and guide recreational visitors, such as by providing directions to public shoreline access points and parking, while directing visitors away from private, inaccessible, or sensitive areas. Content could be updated easily to feature seasonal or timely content, such as wildlife migration or invasive species alerts. Rules and regulations related to shoreline recreation could also be described.

Images on the left show various examples of interactive maps hosted by cities and non-profit organizations. These maps allow users to see not only the overall extent of and connections between recreation opportunities, but also to find out more detail about individual trails or amenities.





## 2 SW Rock Creek Drive pedestrian improvements: enhance connection between waterfront & Rock Cove shorelines



### Objective Analysis:

There is a gap in shoreline access opportunities between the waterfront and Rock Cove, as well as a break in a potential continuous shoreline trail. There are physical challenges and ownership constraints to making an immediate connection along the shoreline. SW Rock Creek Drive contains a pedestrian pathway connecting the two shoreline access areas. Currently this key corridor includes crosswalks and a continuous sidewalk on one side of the street with different degrees of pedestrian-vehicle separation.

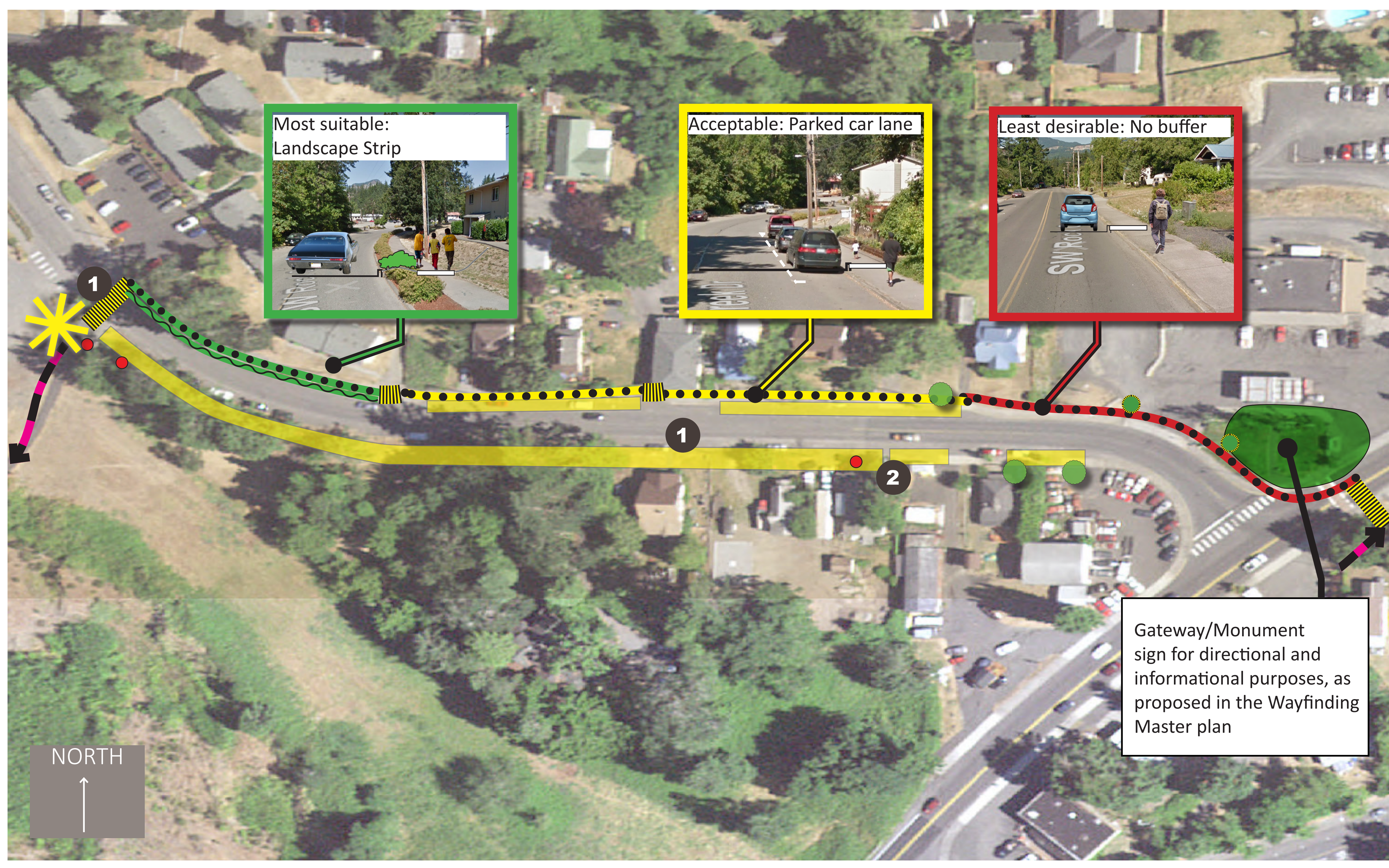
### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Multiple planning documents commissioned and adopted by the city have identified SW Rock Creek Drive as the primary route to connect pedestrians and cyclists between the waterfront, Rock Cove, and beyond, namely the 1991 Stevenson, Washington Pedestrian and Bicycle Links, Walker & Macy and 2012 Stevenson Wayfinding Master Plan by Rock Cove Design. Signage and street improvements have been recommended. As a result of these master planning recommendations, sidewalks on both sides of the street have been proposed previously.

### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed the desire to have a continuous shoreline trail along the Columbia River, Rock Cove and beyond. More specifically, many comments addressed the gap between the Waterfront Trail and Rock Cove Trail, two primary shoreline destinations in the city. Related to this consensus was a desire to strengthen neighborhood connections to the shoreline. An enhanced and protected pathway would contribute to a strengthened connection between two prominent trails.

## Existing Conditions



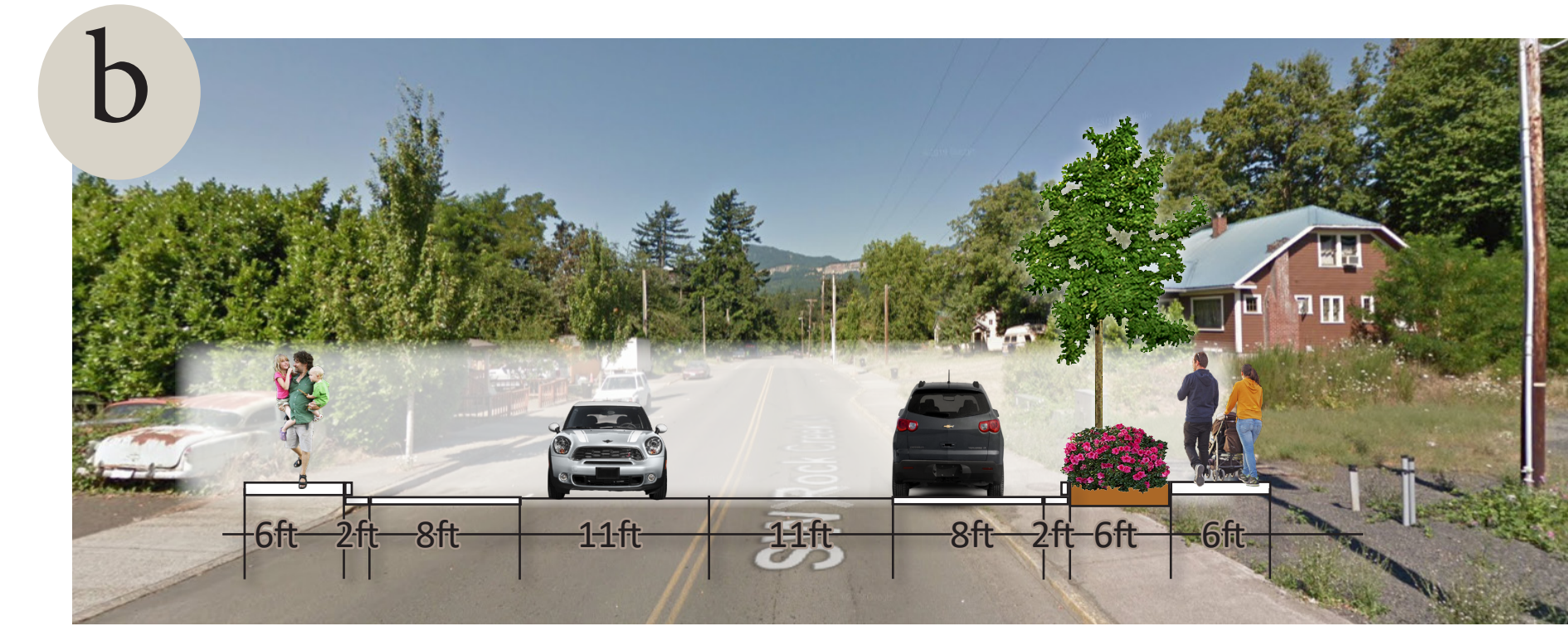
- Legend**
- 1 SW Rock Creek Drive with 60-ft ROW
  - Start of Rock Cove Trail Segment
  - Existing Continuous Sidewalk (North side of SW Rock Creek Drive Only)
  - Existing Striping for On-Street Parking
  - Existing Fire Hydrant
  - 2 End of Sidewalk on South Side of SW Rock Creek Drive
  - Rock Creek Drive
  - Existing City Standard Decorative Lamp Post
  - Existing Crosswalk
  - Begin Mill Pond Trail

## Enhancement Options

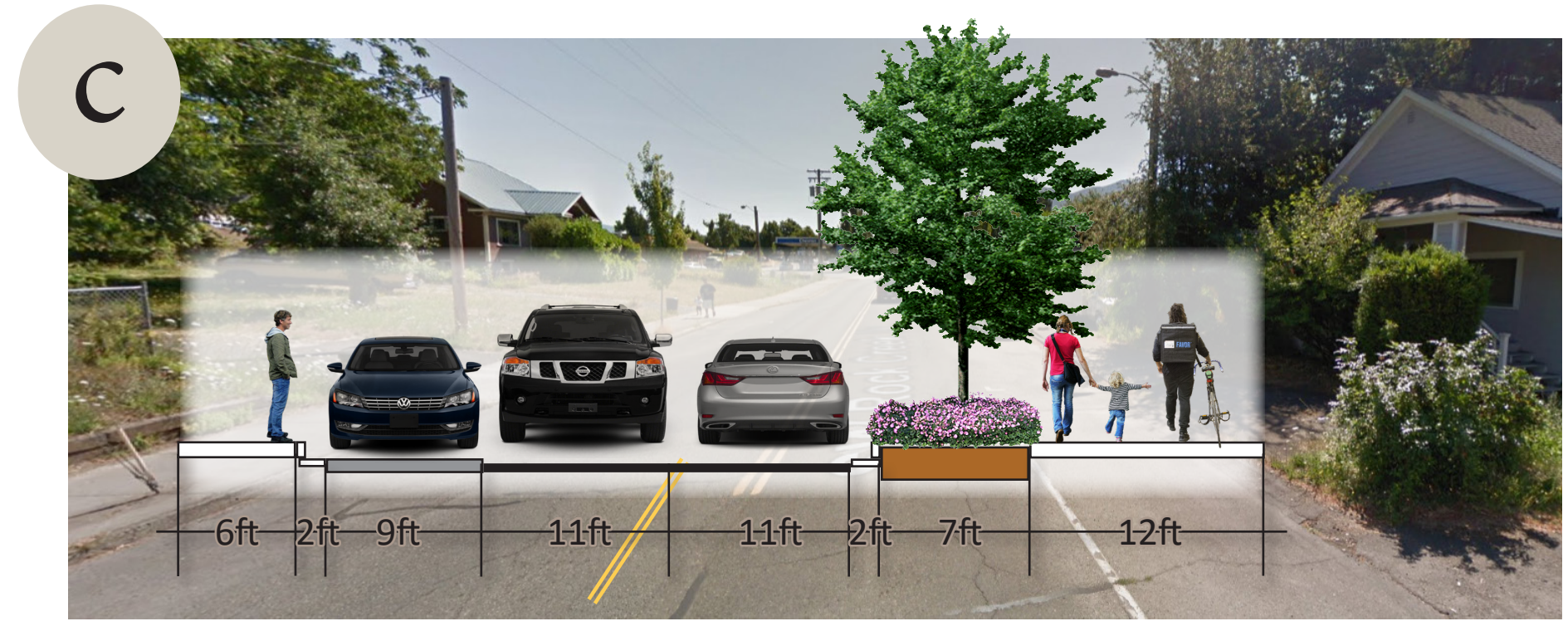
Satisfies Shoreline Public Access and Trail Plan Goal:  
Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines (RCW 90.58.020(5))



**Improve Wayfinding:** Add on-the-ground wayfinding to clarify the connection between the waterfront and Rock Cove. The City of Stevenson Wayfinding Master Plan has guidelines for the installation of pavement markers. Markers could use the plan's Artisan Medallion graphics created for each area. Markers or paint can be added to the existing sidewalk.



**Improve Pedestrian Experience:** Add sidewalk to south side of SW Rock Creek Drive, maintain parked car lanes on both sides, and add landscape strip to one side of the street only. This option can be combined with wayfinding improvements.



**Protected Multi-Use Trail:** Add multi-use paved trail to one side of SW Rock Creek Drive with a wide landscape buffer. This option has the most emphasis on pedestrian safety and allows for heavy use including bicyclists. A sidewalk and parked car lane remain on the opposite side of the street.





### Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront west end



#### Objective Analysis:

(An image showing current shoreline amenities and access on the west side of the waterfront, near the terminus of Russell Ave.) Private ownership and a lack of right-of-way parcels limits public shoreline access near the terminus of Russell Ave. Physical challenges of the site could be mitigated during design. The railroad and State Route 14 are significant barriers to a safe pedestrian crossing experience.

#### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Recent planning documents, including a vision for downtown, have focused on linking Rock Creek shorelines through downtown to the Columbia River waterfront. One concept included an extension of Rock Creek Drive south towards the waterfront. This connection would meet Comprehensive Plan Transportation & Circulation Goal 7.4 to “develop a plan for safe and convenient alternative forms of transportation, such as bikeways, walkways, and pathways.”

#### Community Support:

A continuous shoreline trail between the waterfront and Rock Cove is highly desired by the public. The current connection is through downtown, however many comments expressed support for a multi-modal trail and additional shoreline access opportunities in the area between the two existing trails.

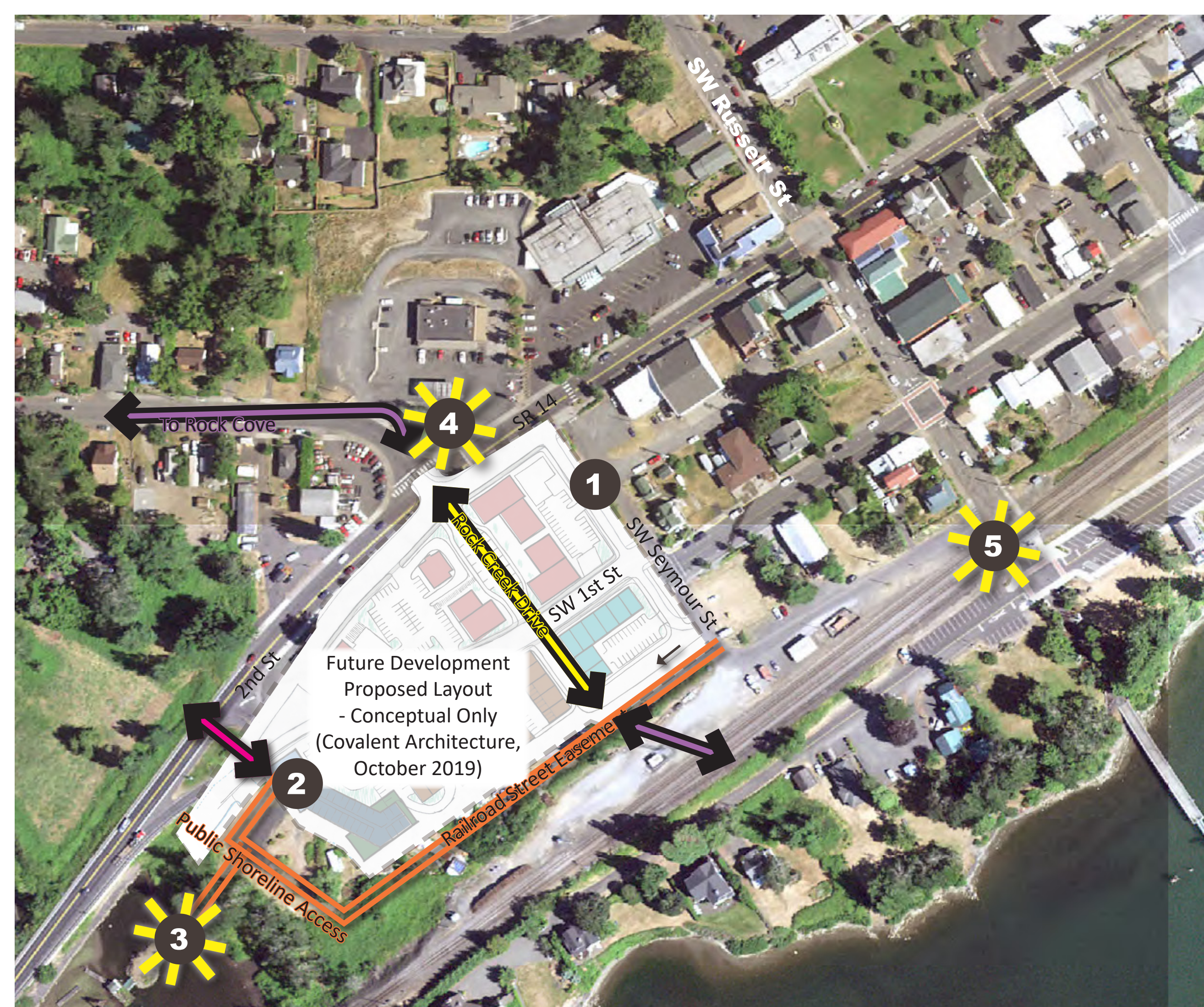
### Existing Conditions



#### Legend

- 1 Western end of waterfront public pedestrian access area
- Existing pedestrian connection to Rock Cove shoreline trail and amenities
- Gateway to Waterfront public shoreline access area
- Private land and gap in public shoreline access and amenities, and connection to Rock Cove shoreline trail

### Enhancement Options



#### Legend

- Proposed Railroad Street Public Access easement to connect to shoreline
- Example of one concept plan for future development of the west end of the waterfront
- Recommended extension of SW Rock Creek Drive through to 1st Street and Railroad Street with future development
- Recommended location for public access to shoreline and /or shoreline recreational amenity
- Proposed public water access via easement
- Gateway Park and pedestrian access to Rock Cove shoreline trail
- Gateway to central Waterfront public shoreline access area
- Future consideration of public trail extension via easement under SR-14 and BNSF Railroad

Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met: Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))

#### Sequence of Effort:

- City coordinates with developers to understand opportunities for easement for public shoreline access
- City works with developers to streamline permitting and construction of shoreline improvements
- City dedicates funding and staff to maintenance of shoreline improvements



## Enhance pedestrian connections to waterfront east end



### Objective Analysis:

The analysis identified gap between public trails and amenities along the waterfront and the east end of the city. An existing railroad underpass provides an opportunity for connection across the railroad right-of-way, but it lacks pedestrian safety measures. Currently, the underpass consists of a gravel and asphalt road that is informally shared by both vehicles and pedestrians. The road ends at SR-14 where there are no sidewalks or crosswalks.

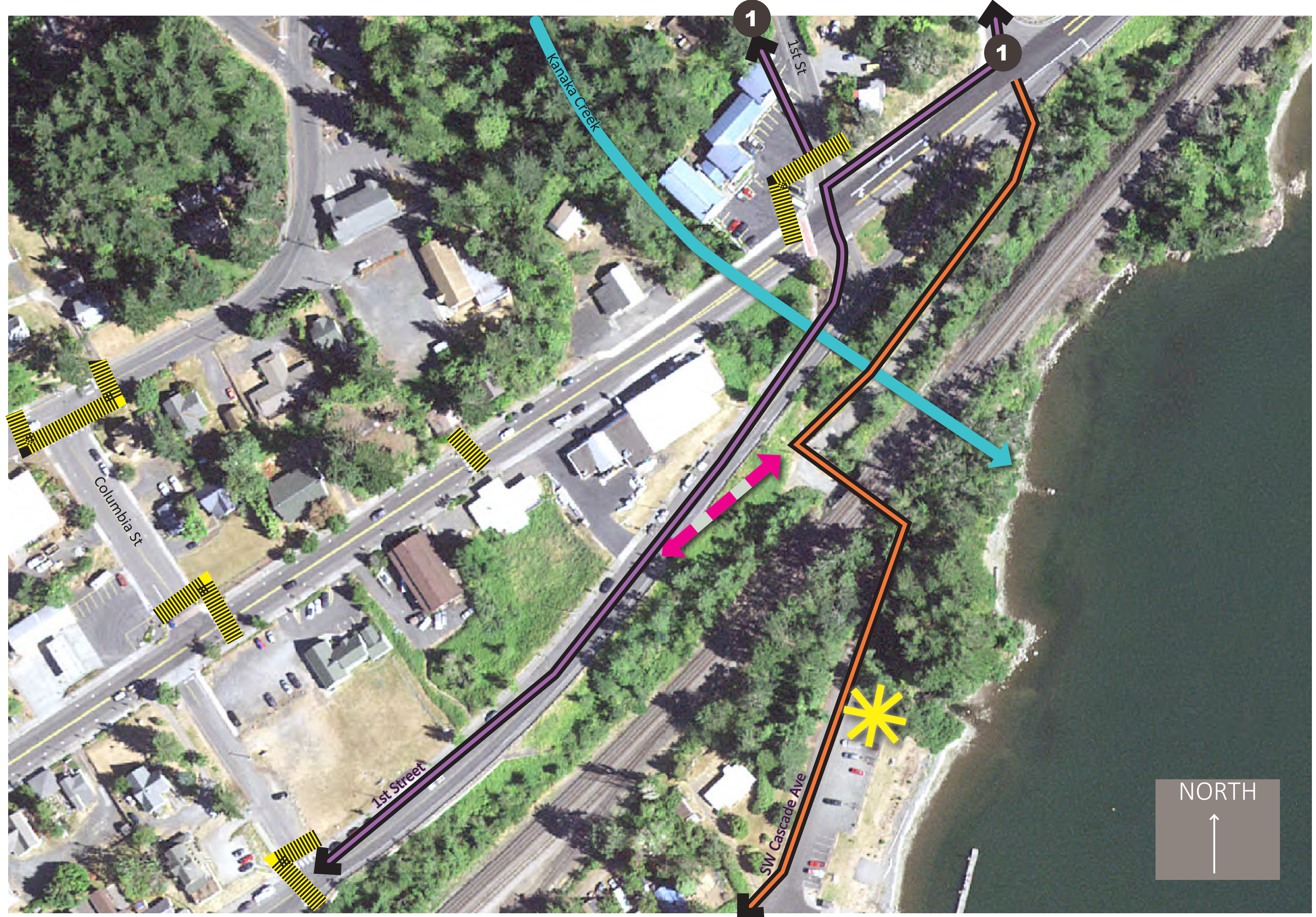
### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

In the past 30 years, many public planning documents have proposed improvements to connect to the east side of the waterfront. Multiple projects have recommended improvements to Columbia Street and 1st Street to enhance pedestrian safety and increase connectivity. A 75% design construction document set for 1st Street acknowledges an existing informal path connection to the underpass and shoreline. Further, the culvert at 1st Street and Kanaka Creek is a known fish barrier.

### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed the desire to have safer and improved access to the waterfront and waterfront trail from the east side of the city. Residents admitted they often crossed SR 14 outside of the crosswalk, climbing over guard rails to get to the shoreline. Beyond the large area of new housing already under development, demand for new homes and redevelopment of existing homes is expected to increase over time.

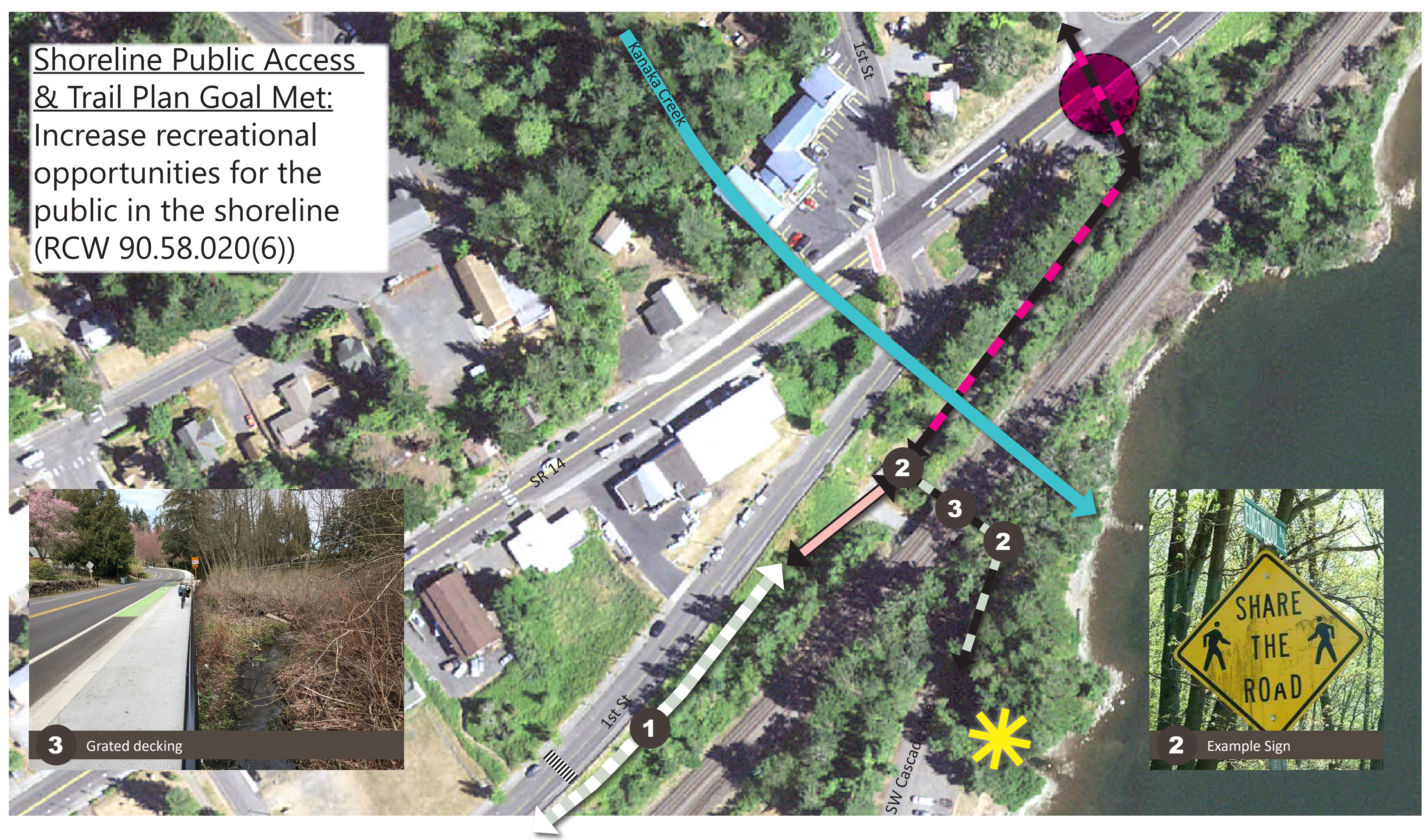
## Existing Conditions



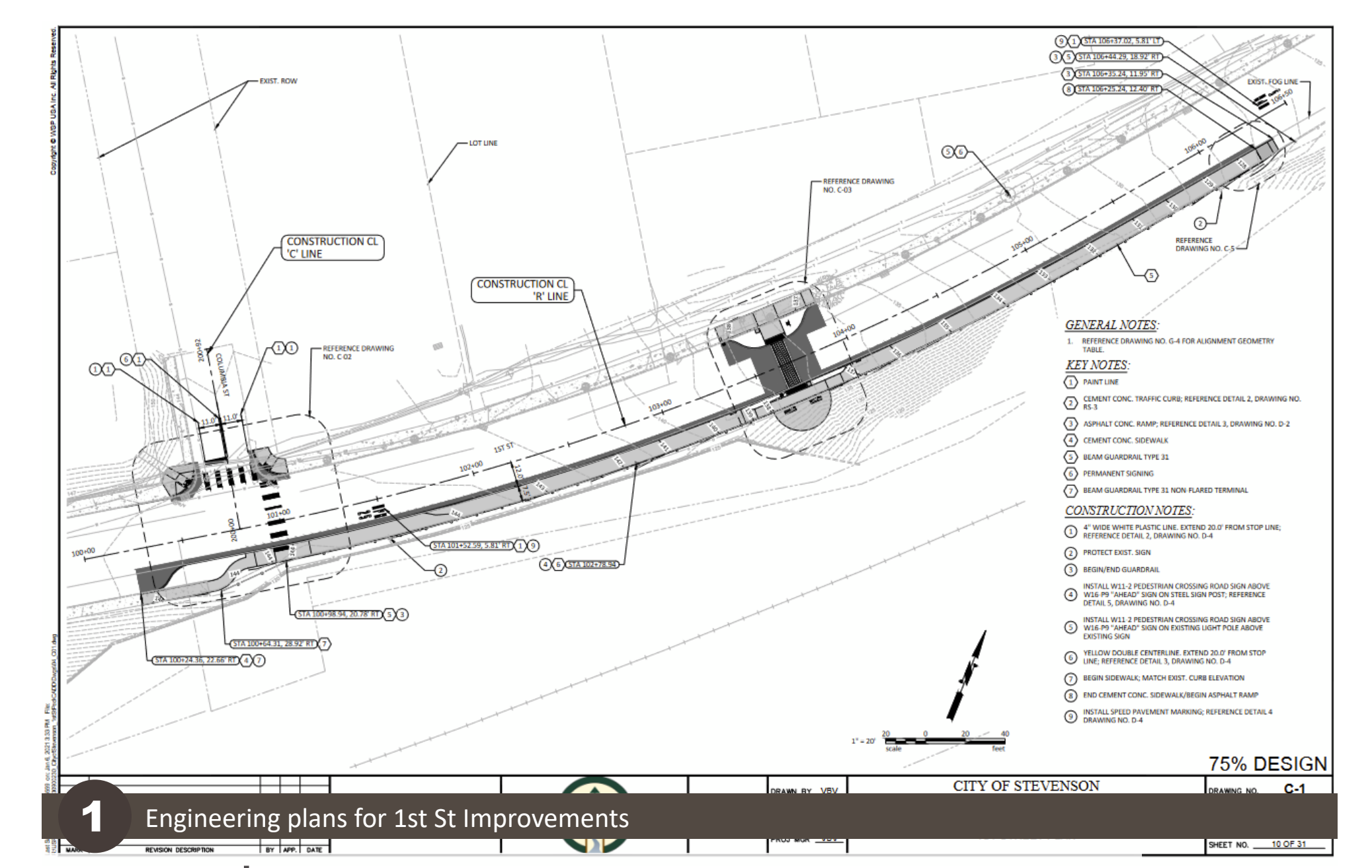
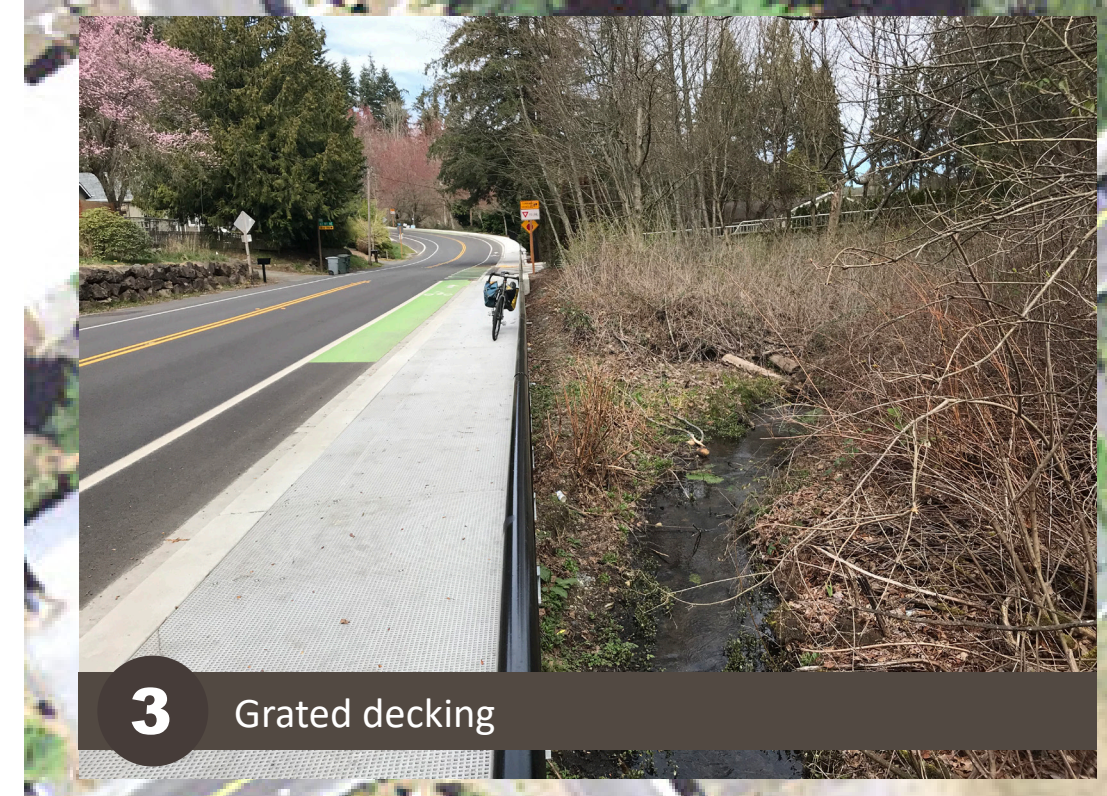
### Legend

- Eastern end of waterfront public pedestrian access area and Cascade Boat Launch
- Existing informal pedestrian connection via railroad underpass
- Informal dirt trail between asphalt road and 1st street guardrail
- Section of 1st St has sidewalk on north side only
- Existing crosswalks
- Two main roads connecting eastside neighborhoods to the shoreline

## Enhancement Options



**Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met:** Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))



### Legend

- Eastern end of waterfront public pedestrian access area and Cascade Boat Launch.
- Pedestrian improvements to Kanaka Creek Underpass. Add signage to warn drivers to 'share the road' with pedestrians. Also, future environmental study adding pedestrian improvements (see grated decking example #3) adjacent to existing roadway.
- Formalize dirt path into paved pedestrian connection to 1st street once sidewalks are constructed on the south side.
- Continue and implement existing 1st street improvements project, expanding scope to include trail connection, including grated decking trail adjacent to existing gravel roadway over Kanaka Creek.
- Commission study to create safe pedestrian crossing between SW Cascade Ave and Lutheran Church Rd across SR14.



# Create public access to lower Rock Creek



## Objective Analysis:

The analysis of shoreline jurisdiction within this reach found that the banks of the lower reach were physically less steep than the upper reach. An inventory of known recreational use found a gap in public areas to access lower Rock Creek and found recreational features to be lacking. In addition, the analysis identified an opportunity to provide public access on the small city-owned parcel adjacent to Rock Creek in the lower reach.

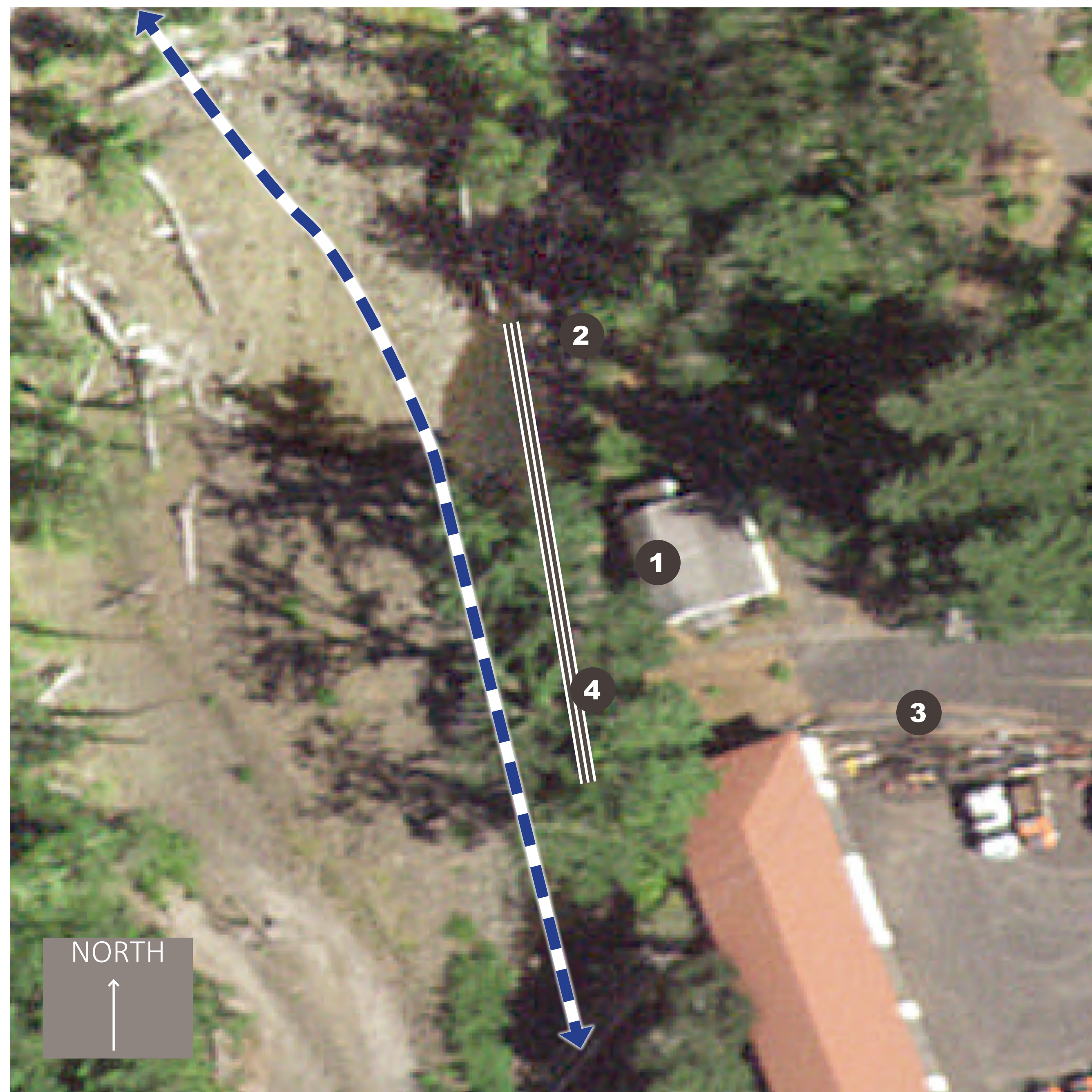
## Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Multiple planning documents commissioned and adopted by the city have discussed the need to access rock creek as well as the lack of safe public access and trespass concerns. The 2018 shoreline restoration plan identifies two separate projects in this parcel. The first is 'r.8 Vancouver avenue house removal' and the second is 'r.13 Vancouver avenue stormwater outfall replacement project'. The untreated stormwater outfall drains a large portion of the city's residential core. Further, the city may consider a future bridge project at this location as it assesses the rock creek drive bridge replacement (SMP Restoration Plan Project R.8).

## Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed the desire for access to Rock Creek to see the waterfalls. When asked how they get to the falls now, many described walking up the creek channel in the summer time at low water levels. The creek can be accessed at the mouth then sightseers continue walking along the west bank toward the first falls.. Residents stressed that the current situation fails to combat misleading information found online that promotes trespassing through private property. They want a formal public access point.

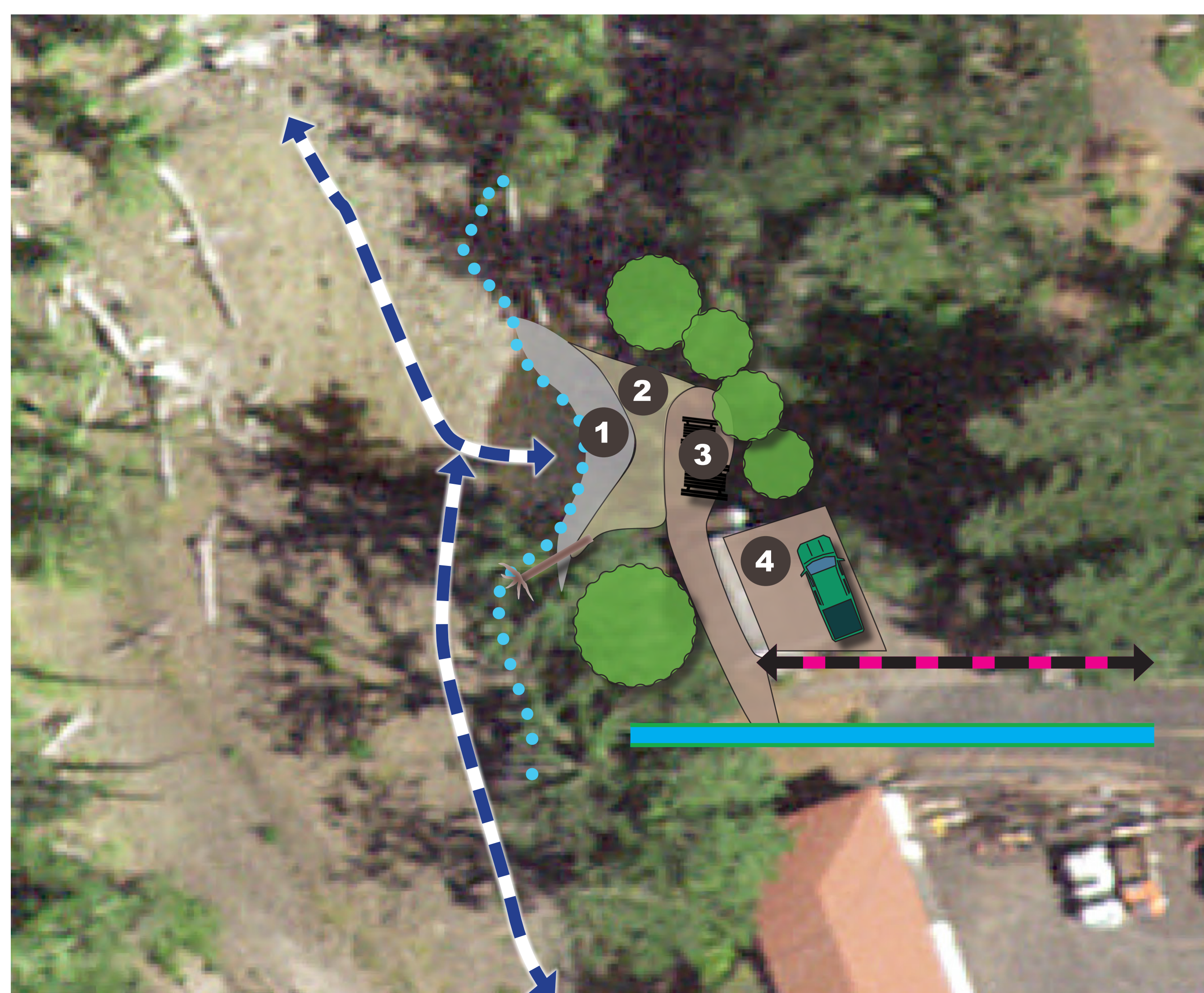
## Existing Conditions



### Legend

- 1 Existing city-owned parcel with abandoned residence  
Entire creekside of parcel is armored. This is the only section of armoring on the east bank of the entire creek.
- 2 Mostly open site apart from creekside trees  
Street end location adjacent to county parcel with no sidewalks on either side of this section
- 3 Untreated stormwater outfalls directly into creek.
- 4 Informal 'water trail'

## Enhancement Options



### Project meets/achieves the following Goals:

- Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines (RCW 90.58.020(5))
- Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))
- Alleviate trailhead congestion, trash accumulation, trespass, and other neighborhood impacts at informal and/or poorly planned shoreline access areas.



### Legend

- 1 Remove armoring and soften shoreline to allow ramped access down to creek
- 2 Beach/picnic area
- 3 Picnic tables over crushed rock pad
- 4 Crushed rock parking stalls for maintenance/ accessible parking
- Connect pedestrians to site from SW Rock
- Creek with sidewalks and wayfinding tools
- Roadside swale or other means to daylight and treat stormwater
- Informal 'water trail' leads to Lower Falls to the north and Rock Cove to the south



## Create public pedestrian access to Rock Creek lower falls



### Objective Analysis:

Public access to the upper reaches of Rock Creek is complicated by both significant physical barriers and lack of public land. The area is heavily encumbered with geohazards such as landslides and steep slopes. An inventory of use found a gap in public areas to access Rock Creek and found it lacking in recreational features. In addition, the Piper Landslide in 2006 dramatically changed the landscape adjacent to the falls making it undesirable for structures. The future development potential of this area is unclear.

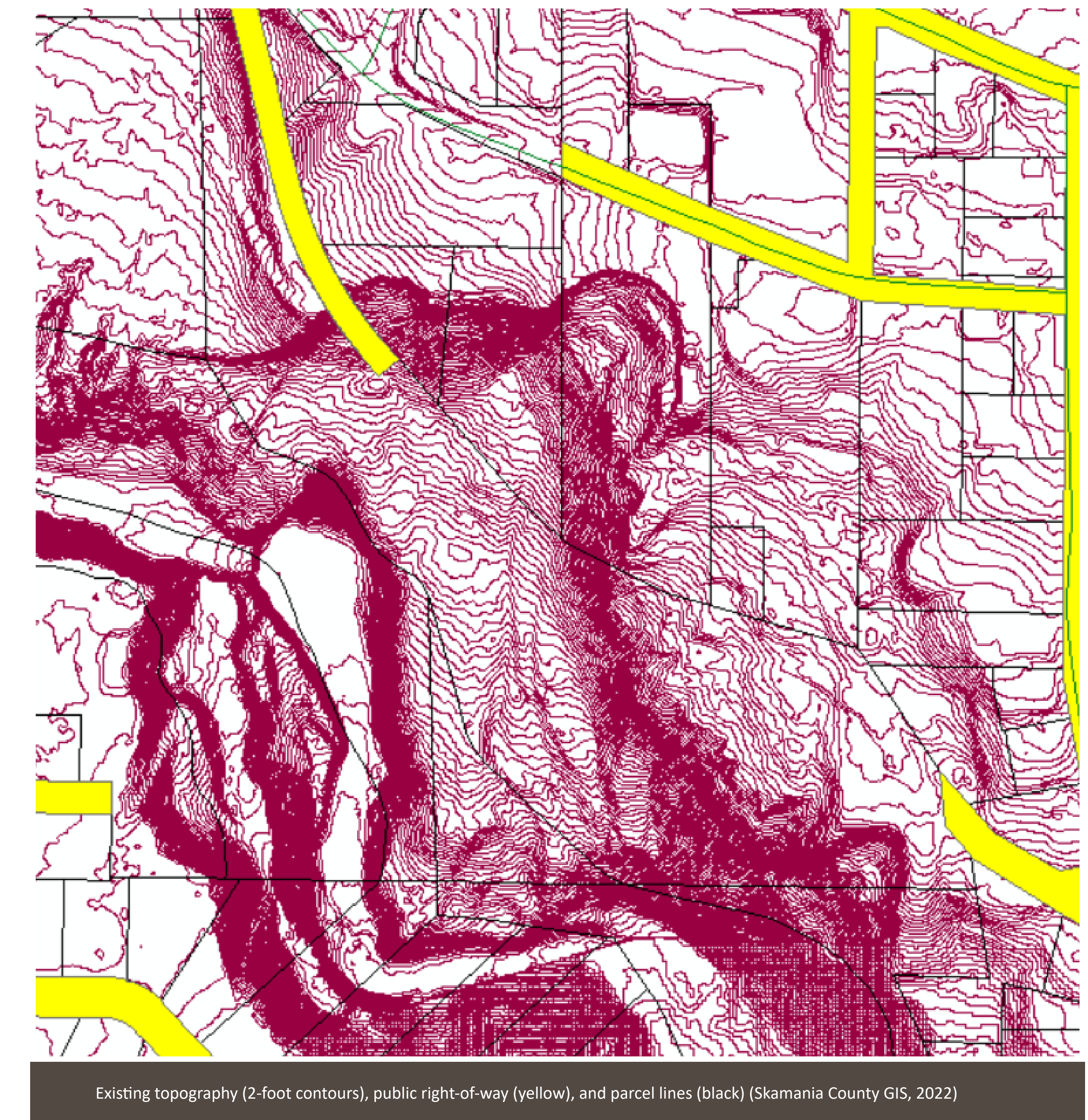
### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Multiple planning documents have discussed the need to access Rock Creek. The majority of the remediation proposed and implemented by WDNR and the Port of Skamania County in response to the landslide in this area focused on dredging, protecting existing bridges, and restoring shoreline along the Columbia River. No restoration has been proposed within the privately owned parcels of the slide area itself.

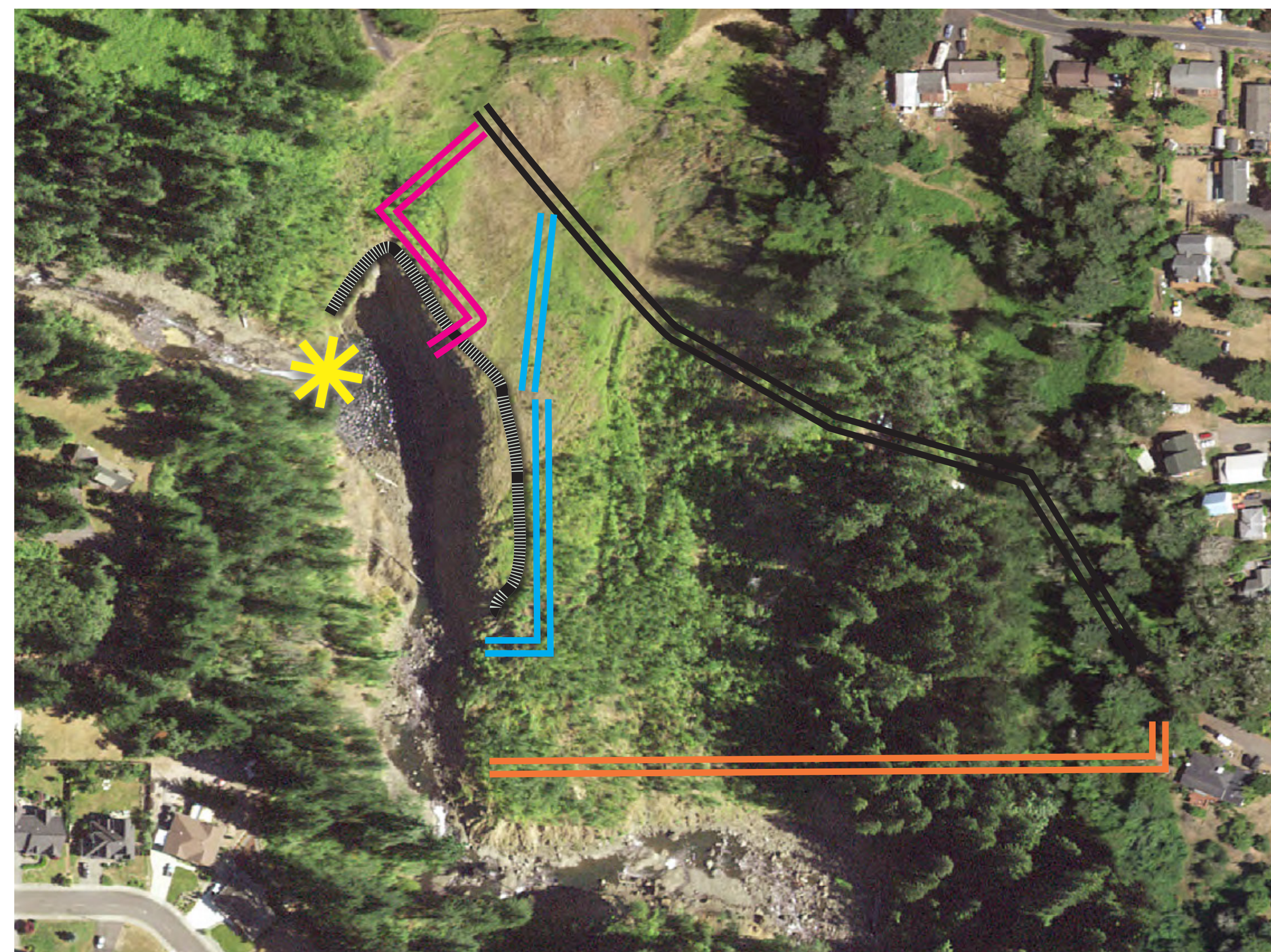
### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed the desire to have access to Rock Creek to see the waterfalls. When asked how the falls are accessed now, many described walking up the creek channel in the summer time or walking through county-owned land to the north. Residents also felt that abundant online information about the falls has undermined their desire to keep access informal and restricted to local residents.

## Existing Conditions



## Enhancement Options



### Legend

- Approximate location of lower falls
- Potential trail easement linking Piper Road with Cazare Ln
- Easement option 1
- Easement option 2
- Easement option 3
- Cliff

### Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met:

- Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines (RCW 90.58.020(5))
- Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))
- Alleviate trailhead congestion, trash accumulation, trespass, and other neighborhood impacts at informal and/or poorly planned shoreline access areas.
- Provide continuous public access (SMP 4.6)

### Sequence of Effort:

1. City coordinates with private landowners to understand opportunities for easement purchase
2. City pursues grants to fund studies and design plans to construct shoreline access trail and signage in addition to vegetation restoration within easement
3. City maintains trail and access area (trash removal, trail maintenance, disturbance calls).



## Create public pedestrian access to Rock Creek upper falls

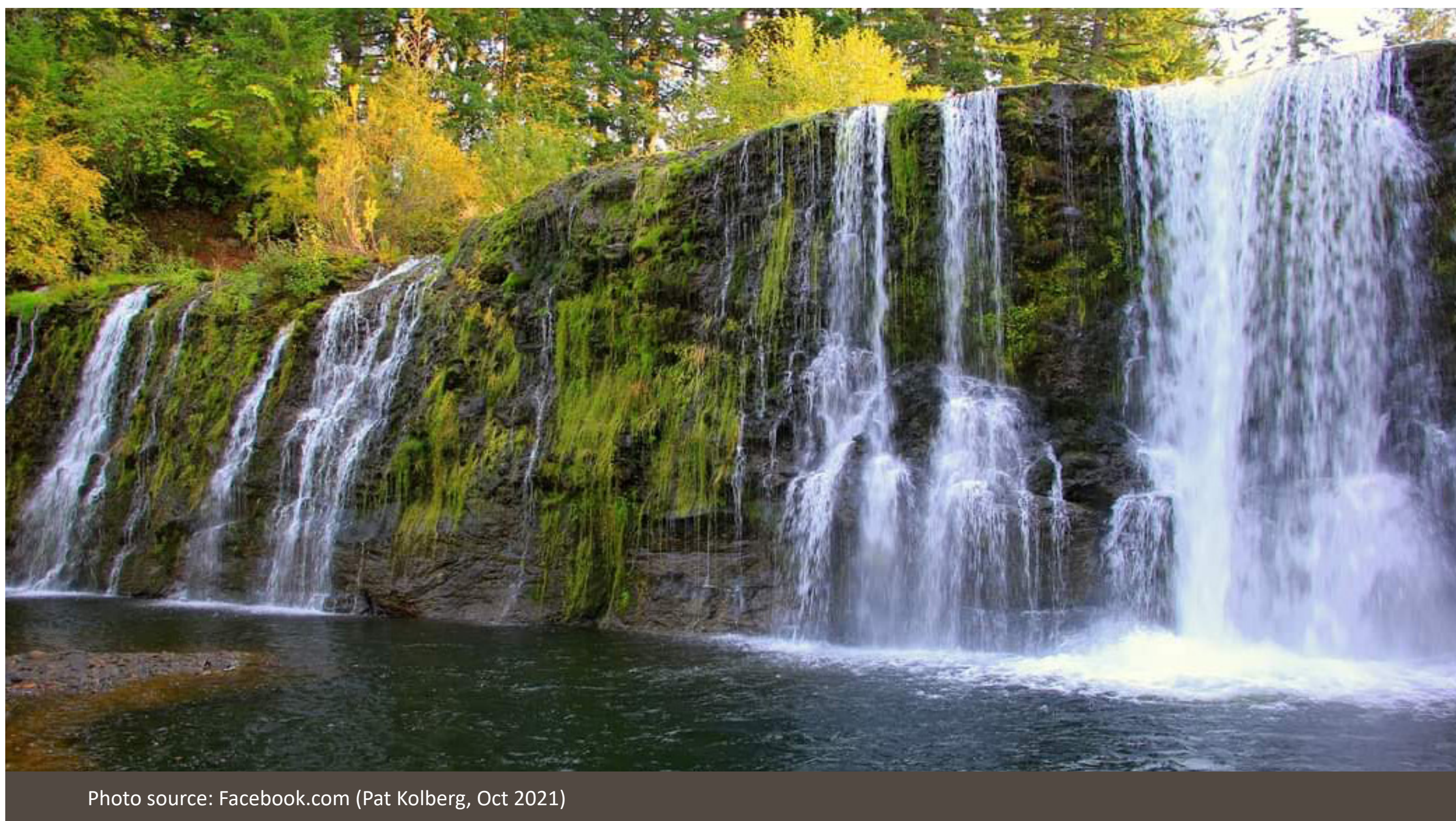


Photo source: Facebook.com (Pat Kolberg, Oct 2021)

### Objective Analysis:

The upper reaches of Rock Creek are difficult to access both physically as well as publically. A substantial portion of the creek is bordered by private property, however county-owned land is located north of the popular falls. In general the creek is bordered by steep banks, however sections of accessible slopes are present. There is overlap in these accessible areas with county-owned land within the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA).

### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

The SMP adopted by the City discusses the need to access Rock Creek with SMP Policy 4.6.2(1) that describes the objective to have continuous public pedestrian access along the shoreline (including the creek). It also addresses the need to consider private property rights, public safety, and navigational rights when providing public access (SMP Policy 4.6.2(4)).

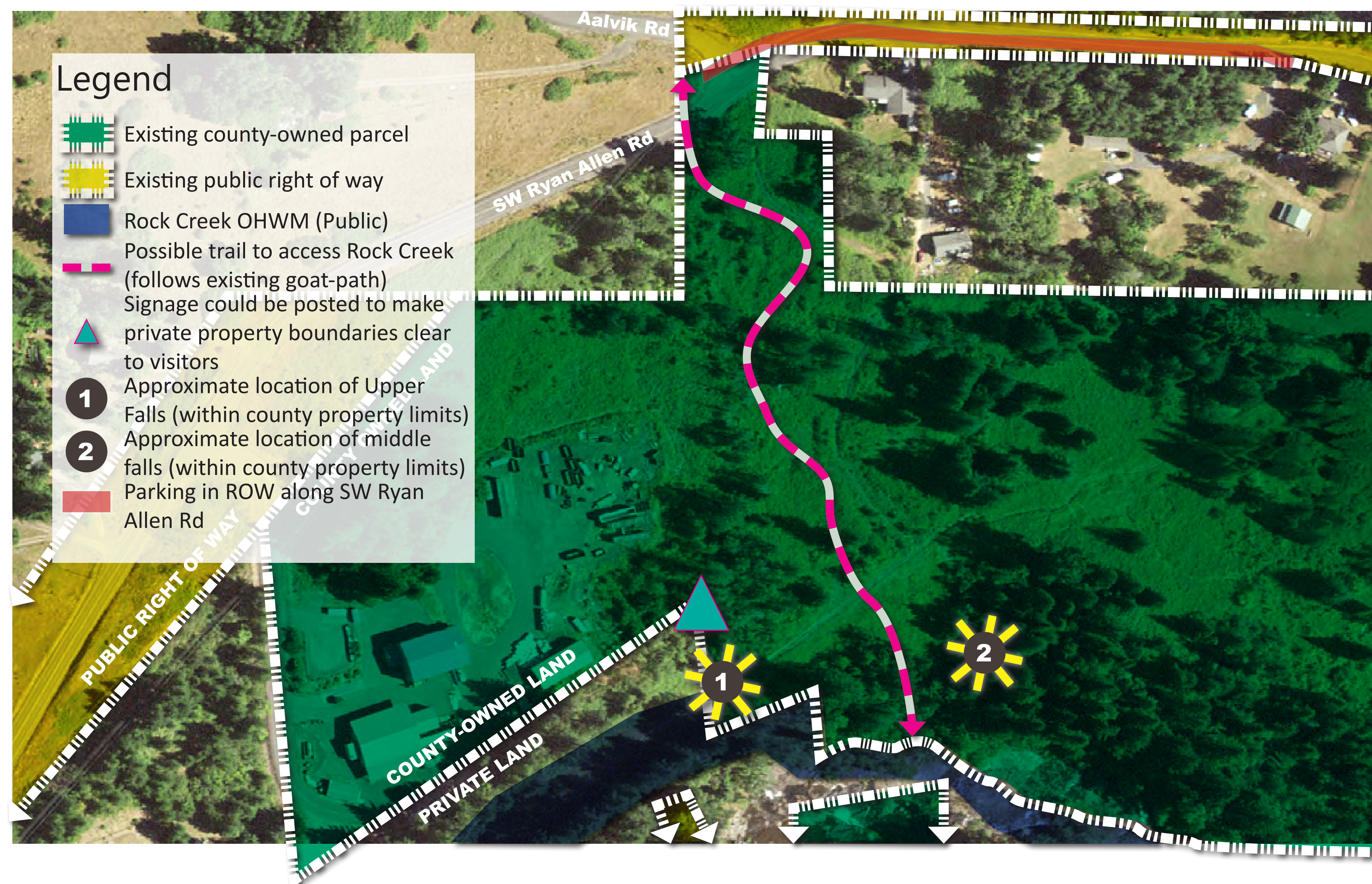
### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed the desire to have both physical and visual access to upper Rock Creek and the waterfalls. Clearly depicted, safe, and public access is desired in order to prevent private trespassing, and protect this treasured amenity for future generations. Formal access could prevent trampling, concentrate impacts, and allow for trash pick-up.

## Existing Conditions



## Enhancement Options



### Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met:

- Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines (RCW 90.58.020(5))
- Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))
- Alleviate trailhead congestion, trash accumulation, trespass, and other neighborhood impacts at informal and/or poorly planned shoreline access areas.

### Sequence of Opportunities:

1. City coordinates with County to understand opportunities for ownership or easement or collaboration on shared use.
2. City works with County to pursue grants for construction of shoreline access trail and signage through a developers agreement or other tool.
3. City collaborates with County to maintain trail and access area (trash removal, trail maintenance, disturbance calls).



## Rock Cove shoreline trail easement extension and enhancement



Photo source: Google Maps Streetview, July 2018

### Objective Analysis:

Around Rock Cove there is a trail and informal shoreline access on the eastern half of the cove only. The county owned fairgrounds have a shoreline trail that transitions onto the SW Rock Creek Drive sidewalk. This sidewalk serves as an extension of the Mill Pond Trail and runs adjacent to suitable vacant and under-utilized land on the shoreline, including the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center. It also passes Foster Creek which empties into Rock Cove via an outfall.

### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Multiple planning documents have proposed increasing shoreline recreation opportunities within Rock Cove. The Fatal Flaw Analysis for Watercraft Recreation Sites prepared for the Port of Skamania County (JD White Company, 1995) recognizes this specific area as having a high potential to provide shoreline water access opportunities, including the old Mill Site on the west side. Since this area was heavily impacted previously, less mature native vegetation is present.

### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed appreciation of the Mill Pond trail. There is a desire to expand this type of trail experience further around Rock Cove, as well as provide amenities similar to the Columbia River waterfront. More specifically, many comments discuss bird watching and the unique experience of kayaking or other non-motorized boating within the quiet of the cove as compared to the larger Columbia River. There is currently no official hand-carry launch or water access points on the cove.

## Existing Conditions



## Enhancement Options



**Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met:**  
Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))

### Sequence of Opportunities:

1. Starting with SMP Restoration Plan Project R.6 - Foster Creek Culvert Replacement project, city determines budget for shoreline enhancement options
2. City conducts public outreach to determine which enhancement options to prioritize
3. City constructs shoreline recreation facilities
4. City maintains shoreline access area(s)

### Legend

- Existing culvert and outlet for Foster Creek, a fish-bearing stream. Potential for restoration at the outlet into the cove.
- 1** Opportunity to build a formal hand-carry launch with amenities like a boat wash station to combat invasive aquatic vegetation
- 2** Site could provide some parking and picnic area for day-use.



**2** Water trailhead with boat wash station



### Explore partnership with Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center for shoreline access



Photo source: Googlemaps.com, Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, May 2018

#### Objective Analysis:

The analysis identified a lack of shoreline recreation facilities along Rock Cove or a continuous shoreline trail, specifically on the west side. Physical access constraints are not an issue, however ownership is a potential barrier. The large area of land the museum sits on at the west side of the cove does not have any shoreline trail or physical access areas. The quasi-public status of ownership makes public access a potential option here.

#### Alignment with Long-Range Planning:

Multiple documents have proposed increasing shoreline recreation opportunities within Rock Cove. The Fatal Flaw Analysis for Watercraft Recreation Sites prepared for the Port of Skamania County (JD White Company, 1995) recognizes this specific area as having a high potential to provide shoreline water access opportunities, including the mention of an old boat ramp that could be restored. Other sites had concerns of a limited area, but this site is large and highly visible.

#### Community Support:

Multiple residents expressed appreciation of the scenic view found along the Mill Pond trail. There is a desire to expand this type of trail experience around Rock Cove. The Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center is admired and loved by the community. Multiple comments wondered at the opportunities to have shoreline access be a part of the visitor experience at the museum.

### Existing Conditions

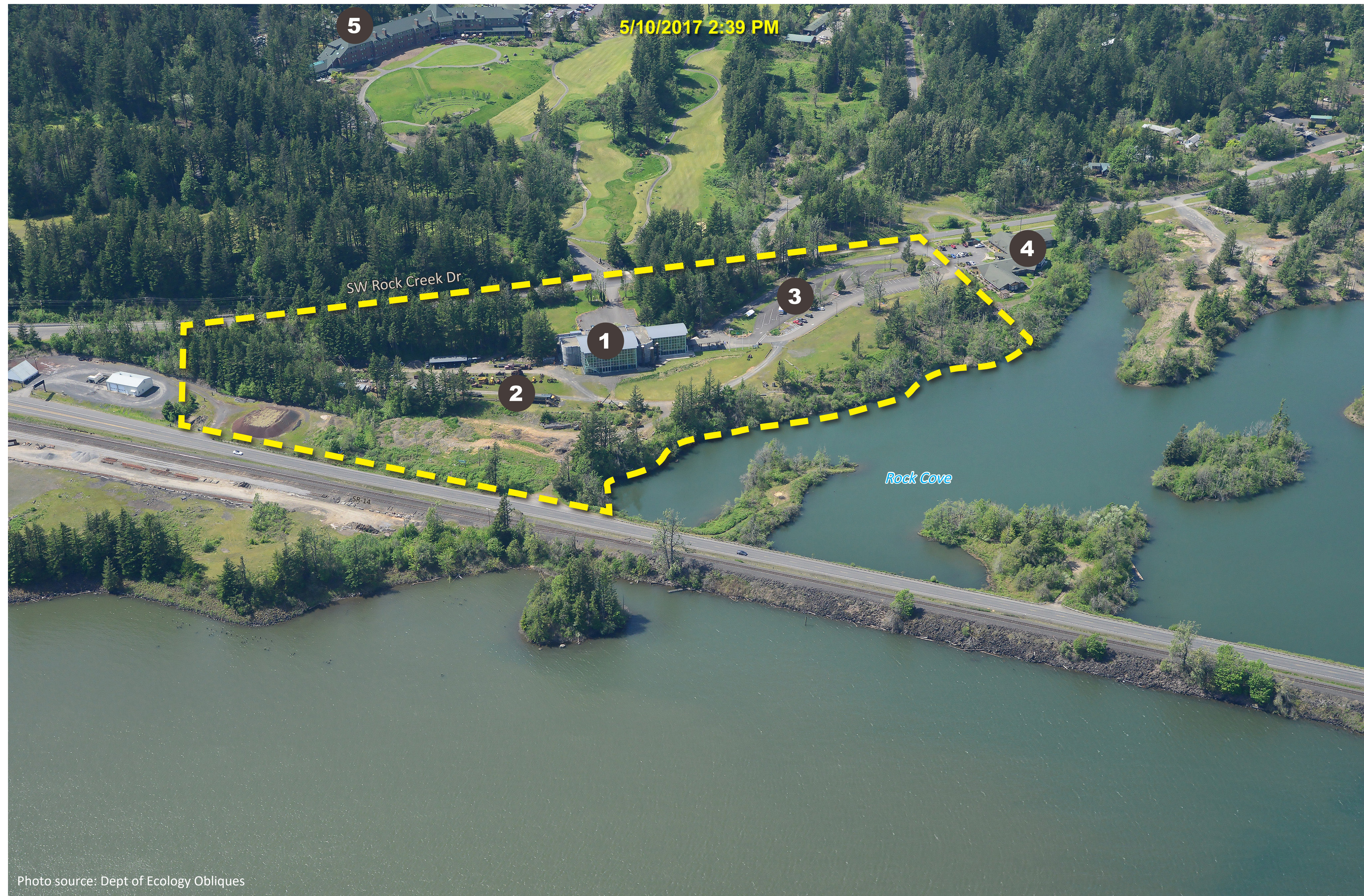


Photo source: Dept of Ecology Obliques

#### Legend

- 1 Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center Museum
- 2 Outdoor exhibit area
- 3 Parking area
- 4 Rock Cove Assisted Living Community
- 5 Skamania Lodge

### Enhancement Options

**Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan Goal Met:** Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline (RCW 90.58.020(6))

#### Partnership Opportunities:

- City could work with the museum to create an interpretive plan for the city. This could include interpretive trails such as a water trail within the cove itself.
- City could collaborate with museum to explore grant opportunities to fund shoreline improvements
- City could work with museum to streamline permitting and construction of shoreline improvements
- City could dedicate funding and staff to maintenance of shoreline improvements

Precedent imagery of shoreline improvement opportunities that could be unique to a museum space shown on the right:

