9.

Coquitlam

For Council

October 19, 2020
Our File: 12-6100-20/18-003/1
Doc #: 3845159.v1

To: City Manager
From: General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities

Subject: **Coquitlam Crunch Trail Expansion**

For: **Council**

Recommendation:

That Council:

1. Direct staff to initiate public engagement and planning for Phase 3 Crunch Trail Improvements as outlined in the Coquitlam Crunch Trail and Expansion Plan (2018-2023); and
2. Authorize the transfer of $2 million from the Blue Mountain Park Master Plan project and $500,000 from the Community Enhancement Blitz to fund the design and construction of Phase 3 Coquitlam Crunch Trail Improvements.

Report Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to advise Council of short-term actions the City is taking to address resident concerns and seek Council approval to initiate public engagement and planning for Phase 3 Coquitlam Crunch Trail Improvements and the transfer of capital funds from other approved capital projects to support the design and construction of these improvements.

Strategic Goal:

The Coquitlam Crunch Trail improvements presented in this report support the City's Corporate Strategic Goal of establishing *Healthy Communities and Active Citizens*. The Coquitlam Crunch Trail Improvements are a "C" Priority in the 2020 Business Plan.

Background:

The Coquitlam Crunch Trail is a significant recreational destination that has become synonymous with Coquitlam. The existing 2.2km linear trail travels along the BC Hydro right of way connecting Eagle Ridge Park in the South to the Westwood Plateau neighbourhood in Northwest Coquitlam gaining 240 metres of elevation. The City's Master Trail Plan envisions that the Coquitlam Crunch Trail would, in time, connect to Eagle Mountain in the north and to Mundy Park in the south and ultimately to the Fraser River.

POS Rec

Due to its immense popularity, the City initiated public consultation in 2017 on future improvements the public would like to experience on the Coquitlam Crunch. Following feedback from over 1,700 respondents, the Coquitlam Crunch Trail and Expansion Plan (2018-2023) (the Plan) was approved by Council on January 15, 2018 and staff were directed to commence detail design work on Phase 1 improvements. The Plan (Attachment 1) envisioned improvements to the Coquitlam Crunch in four distinct phases with enhanced elements to increase the capacity and enrich user experiences with a broader range of recreational opportunities along the corridor.

This year, as a result of COVID-19, indoor recreation and fitness facilities were closed which dramatically increased the user traffic at the Coquitlam Crunch trail. With such high demand for this outdoor recreational facility there have been localized parking and traffic issues highlighted by local residents. Multiple corporate priorities were implemented to increase the safety and usability, such as the addition of two new universal washroom stalls adjacent to the new pump house at Lansdowne Drive (south) to service the users of the trail and community garden. Engineering and Public Works implemented curb extensions along portions of Lansdowne Drive north and south where the roadway intersects the trail. These enhanced crossings were included as part of the Lansdowne Drive resurfacing improvements and have improved visibility and safety for both trail users and motorists at these main intersections. A new pedestrian crossing is currently being installed on Guildford Way and will be completed by November 2020. It will also encourage users to park at the Runnel Drive parking lot thereby dispersing parking away from nearby residences.

Discussion/Analysis:

On July 13, 2020, staff brought forward a report to Council-in-Committee entitled, "Coquitlam Crunch Trail Expansion Phase 1." This report spoke to the Guildford Way pedestrian crossing, the proposed Lansdowne Drive parking lot expansion and paving, and trail improvements like the viewing decks and outdoor exercise equipment. Concerns were raised regarding the safety of trail users and residents. Following this meeting these concerns were echoed by a number of residents in the neighbourhood including a delegation that came before Committee on September 14, 2020.

In light of these concerns, staff are proposing to postpone Phase 1 enhancements (viewing deck and exercise equipment) and Phase 2 improvements that would focus on the existing sections of the Crunch, and

instead initiate Phase 3 improvements. This approach will avoid exacerbating capacity and safety issues on the current Crunch alignment while the Phase 3 expansion focuses on increasing capacity and spreading users to the south of the Barnet Highway up to Mundy Park (Attachment 1 – pages 13-14, Figure 7).

Once Phase 3 improvements are completed and operating successfully, only then will staff return to completing Phase 1 enhancements and initiating Phase 2 improvements. Ultimately, the north and south sections of the Crunch Trail will be connected with the construction of the Falcon Street overpass as identified in the Strategic Transportation Plan.

Short Term Actions

Staff across departments, with input from the residents, have been working collaboratively to develop short-term actions to address current safety and capacity issues on the existing Crunch in the vicinity of Lansdowne Drive. Staff have already installed "no U-turns at driveways" signage based on community concerns about Crunch visitors making unsafe turns while looking for street parking. Staff plan to implement the following multi-pronged approach beginning this fall and into spring 2021.

Action	Timeline	Description
Street parking	Oct-Nov 2020	• Developing options to address concerns about parking too close or in front of driveways. • Options will be reviewed with local residents prior to implementation.
Strategic parking enforcement	Oct-Dec 2020	• Prioritized monitoring and enforcement by Bylaw Enforcement officers during higher use times. • Support from RCMP for traffic enforcement in addition to regular patrols.
Parking wayfinding signage	Nov-Dec 2020	• Install directional signage on Barnet Hwy, Runnel Drive, Guildford Way and Lansdowne Drive directing users to the designated City parking lots.
Public messaging	Oct-Dec 2020	• Direct Crunch users to the parking lot on Runnel Drive as the start of the trail. • Encourage respectful behaviour towards the residents in the area.

Action	Timeline	Description
Lansdowne parking lot expansion	Mar-May 2021	• Expand and pave parking which will double capacity. • Install electronic sign at entry to advise patrons of parking availability.

Phasing 3 Improvements

The Phase 3 expansion, as outlined in The Plan, is south of the Barnet Highway from Dewdney Trunk up the slope to the south to Mariner Way connecting to Mundy Park. It is anticipated this new section of the trail will be gravel with sections of stairs to mimic the existing trail and provide a similar fitness experience. Supporting amenities would include washrooms and a parking lot. Phase 3 will provide an exciting new fitness amenity to residents in Central and Southwest Coquitlam.

Staff will bring forward what they have learned from the incredible popularity of the Coquitlam Crunch Trail to the consultation and planning for the southern extension. Parking, washroom facilities and access considerations will be paramount in the planning and design to ensure better integration with the local neighbourhood.

Financial Implications:

The approved Capital Plan includes $2 million funding for the Coquitlam Crunch Trail Phase 1 improvements. These funds were provided through the Community Enhancement Blitz in 2018. If Council approves the proposed staff recommendations including delaying the Phase 1 enhancements, then $750,000 of the 2018 Community Enhancement Blitz funds would be available for the Phase 3 project. An additional $2.5 million has been identified for transfer into the Phase 3 improvements, which is made up of $2 million from the Blue Mountain Park Master Plan and $500,000 from the Community Enhancement Blitz washroom funding. The Blue Mountain Park Master Plan has been on hold while staff complete background work and finalize the physical scope of the project. The proposed transfer of funds will leave $2.8 million to complete the Blue Mountain Park Master Plan in 2021 and fund the first phase of improvements once the Plan is adopted. The $400,000 washroom funding from the Community Enhancement Blitz is available to fund the Crunch Phase 3 washroom as the Crunch Lansdowne washroom is complete and the Mundy Park Chilko washroom will be completed in 2021. The combined transfers would provide a total $3.25 million project funding envelope for the Coquitlam Crunch Trail Phase 3 improvements, which is consistent with the 2018 estimate of $3 million identified in the Plan.

Conclusion:

Staff are taking a number of short-term actions to help address safety and parking issues identified by local residents on the existing Crunch section in the vicinity of Lansdowne Drive, including installing 'No U-Turn' signs, adding wayfinding signage on Runnel Drive to encourage the usage of the parking lot, finalizing the construction of the Guildford Way pedestrian connection by this November and paving the expanded parking lot on Lansdowne Drive planned for Spring 2021. The City will continue to work with the community on additional options to address on-street parking concerns.

As a result of feedback from Council-in-Committee and the community, staff are now proposing to put the remaining components of the Phase 1 improvements on hold and initiate public consultation, planning and design of Phase 3 improvements on the south section of the Coquitlam Crunch Trail to distribute users to increase capacity and alleviate pressures on the existing northern extent of the Coquitlam Crunch. Should Council approve this direction and the associated capital funding transfers, staff will proceed this fall with public consultation and planning for the Phase 3 improvements.

Don Luymes

Attachments:

1. Coquitlam Crunch Trail and Expansion Plan (2018 -2023) (CEDMS #2832228)

This report was prepared by Lanny Englund, Manager Park Planning and Forestry and reviewed by Jaime Boan, General Manager Engineering and Public Works; Scott Groves, Director Strategic and Capital Projects; Stephanie James, Director Legal and Bylaw Enforcement; Gorana Cabral, Financial Planning Manager; and Kathleen Vincent, Manager Corporate Communications.

Attachment 1

COQUITLAM CRUNCH TRAIL AND EXPANSION PLAN 2018-2023

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THE COQUTILAM CRUNCH TRAIL EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2023

Introduction

The Coquitlam Crunch Trail is a very popular local and regional recreational trail system that is a 2.2 km long climb with 242 metres elevation change. It currently stretches from its base at Eagle Ridge Park upwards to just past Bramble Park along the BC Hydro right-of-way corridor in Northwest Coquitlam, and connecting Eagle Ridge and Westwood Plateau neighbourhoods (Figure 1). The trail sees approximately 7,000 visits per month during the low periods up to 52,000 visits per month during peak use periods in the spring and summer months. Doing "the Crunch" has become synonymous with Coquitlam, and this trail system has now become one of the most important recreational amenities in the City with limitless potential for people of all ages to enjoy.

Proposed new trail system extensions together with future amenity enhancements will take this trail system to another level, offering a much broader and comprehensive level of recreational offerings to residents, and becoming a regional destination amenity that forms a key part of the City's brand and supports tourism and economic development.

The most popular stretch of the trail is the steepest, connecting lower Lansdowne Drive to upper Lansdowne Drive, comprised of more than 400 timber stairs (Figure 1). It is this physical challenge combined with easy access and spectacular urban views that are making the Crunch Trail a popular local and regional outdoor recreational destination. The growing popularity and use has resulted in the need for a number of improvements to the trail and surrounding parkland, leading to identifying the construction of a second set of stairs as a priority item in the 2017 Business Plan and will continue to be a high City priority in 2018 and beyond.

Response to user surveys conducted in spring of 2017 was unprecedented, with 1,741 participants providing feedback that revealed top ranked requested improvements including washrooms, a variety of site furnishings and supportive features such as benches and drinking water fountains, and trail improvements. Based on this public feedback, staff have developed preliminary plans which prioritize proposed improvements for implementation over four phases, with a preliminary budget estimate of $7 million for phases 1-3. This Plan is the guiding document for future Crunch Trail enhancements.

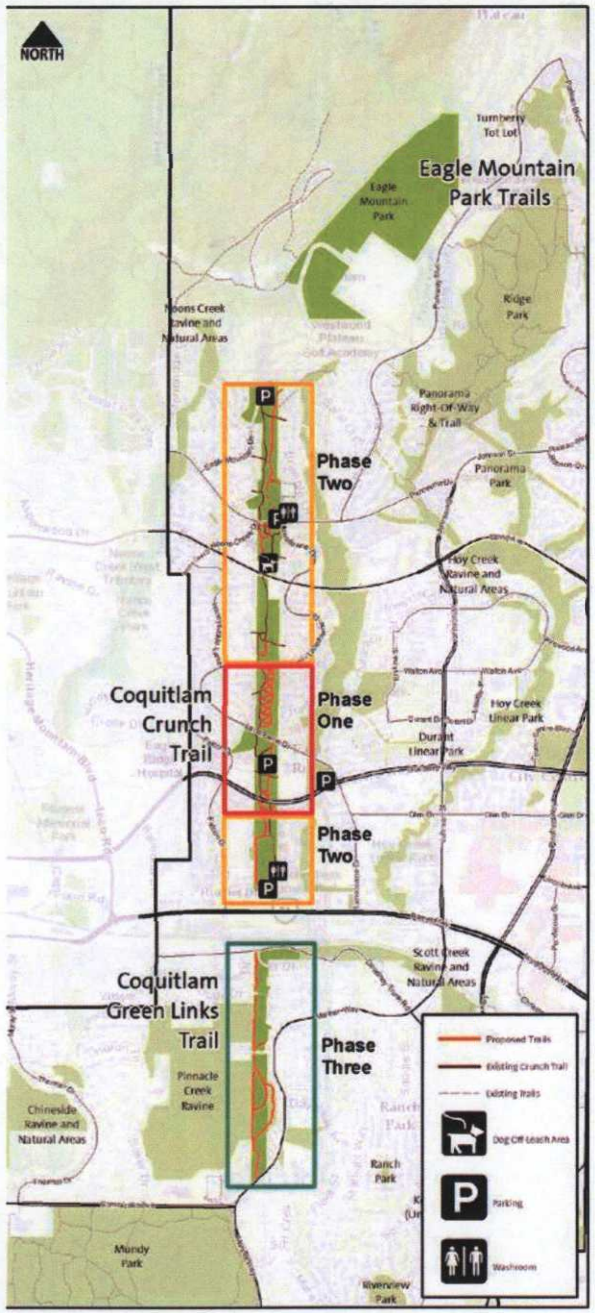
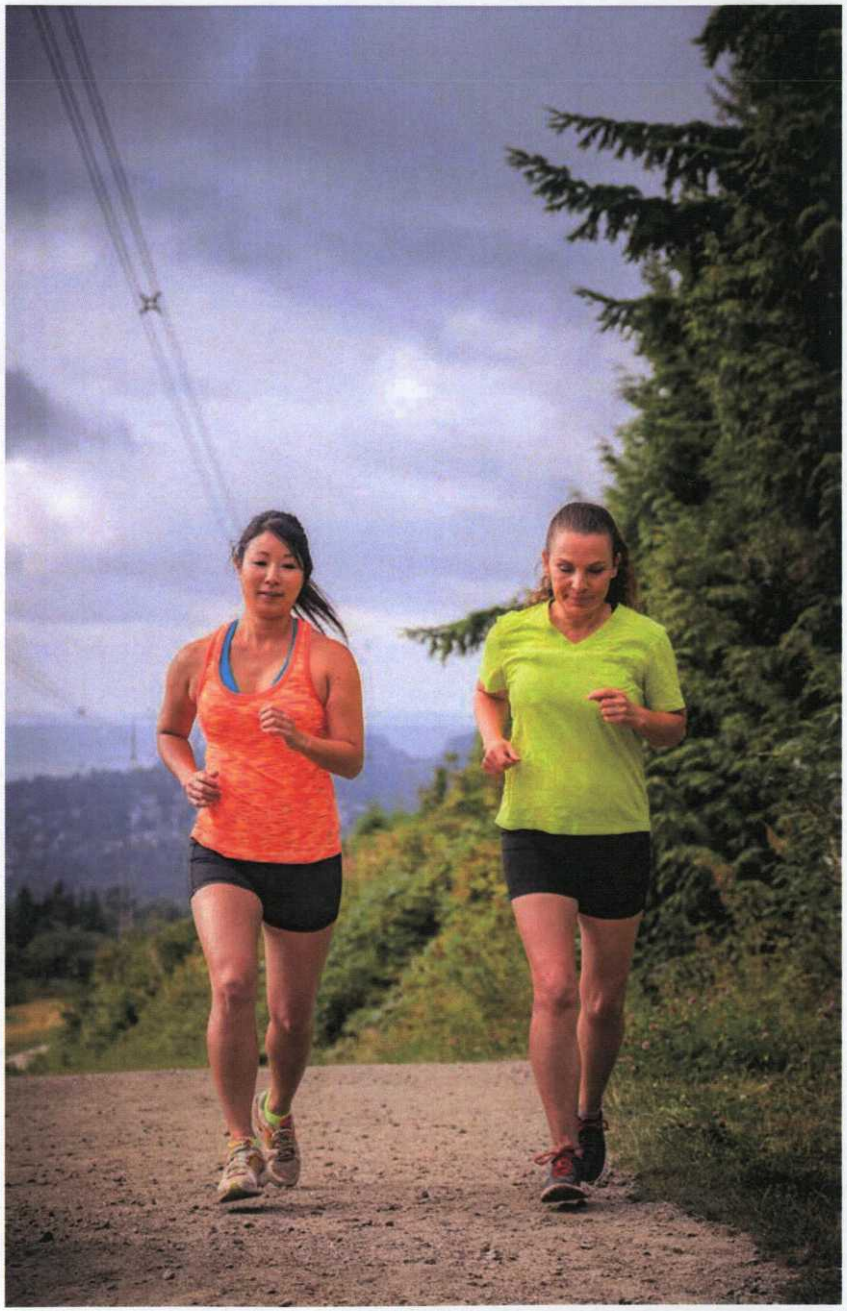
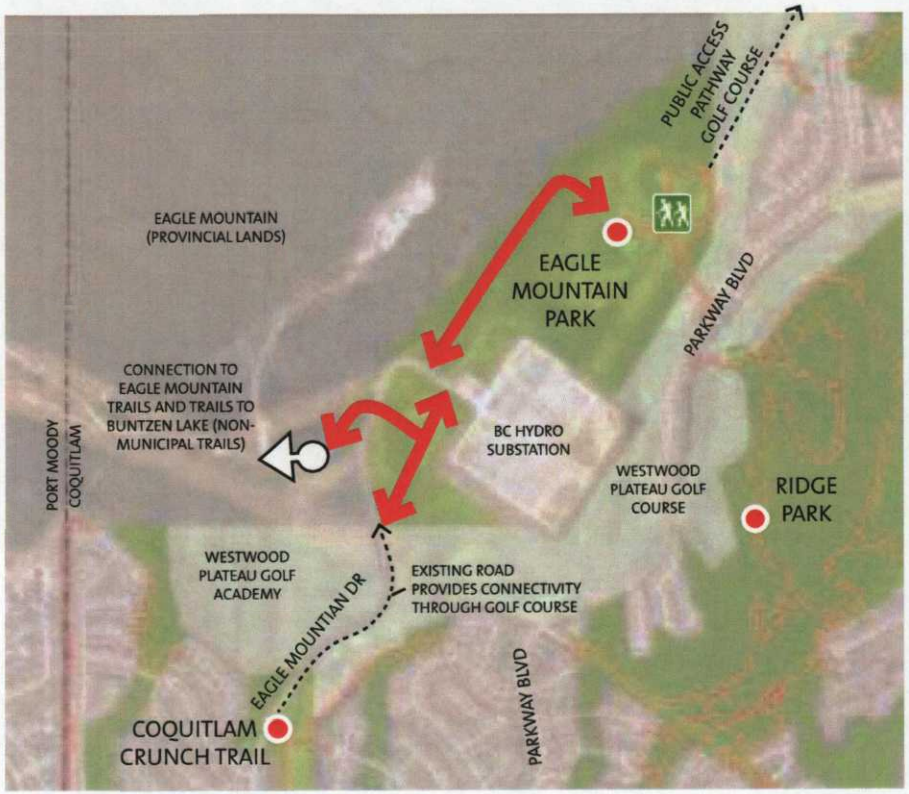


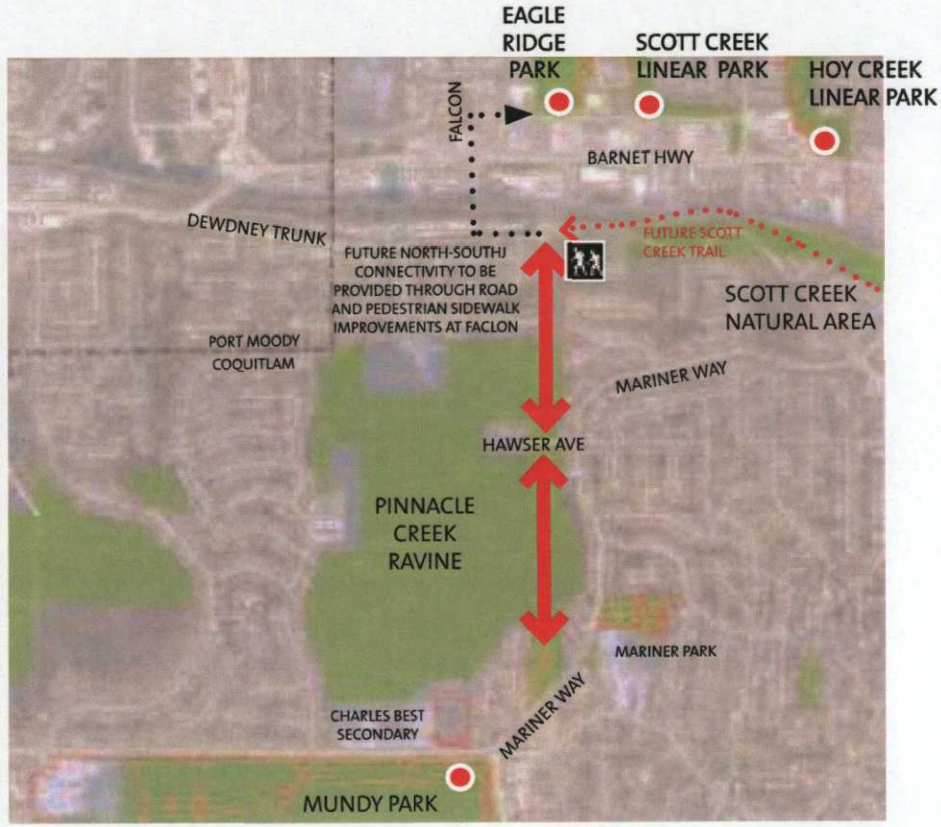
Figure 1
Coquitlam Crunch Context / Phasing Map



FUTURE CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPANSION

The proposed improvements and expansion to the Crunch Trail network is consistent with the City's Master Trail Plan which proposes a future trail route north along Eagle Mountain Drive to connect to the Eagle Mountain Park Trail connections ***(Figure 2)***. In the future, this may be an important regional connection completing links to existing trails to Buntzen Lake and Belcarra. To the south, future highway and rail crossing are planned to accommodate through-road and pedestrian sidewalk improvements at Falcon Drive (2012 Strategic Transportation Plan). This will allow the Crunch Trail system to connect south of Barnet Highway, also along the hydro utility corridor, on city-owned lands which are designated for a future Crunch Trail extension known as the "Greenlinks Extension" ***(Figure 2)***. This is a critical trail section that will connect to the existing Mundy Park Trail system and further south eventually to Colony Farm Regional Park. When completed this will be an important north-south regional trail and pedestrian route that connects the Fraser River to Eagle Mountain Park ***(Figure 3)***. The first phase shown in Figure 4 focuses on proposed priority improvements within the sections between Lansdowne Drive (north) to Guildford Way) based on public feedback. This section is top priority as it is most used and its steep topography provides for a most challenging and intensive recreational activity with some of the best views.





EXISTING TRAIL

FUTURE TRAIL CONNECTION PROJECT

KEY LOCATION WITHIN TRAIL SYSTEM

CONNECTION TO OTHER MAJOR TRAIL SYSTEM

EXISTING TRAILHEAD

EXISTING ROAD OR PUBLIC PATH (PROVIDES CONNECTIVITY)

EXISTING TRAIL

FUTURE TRAIL CONNECTION PROJECT

KEY LOCATION WITHIN TRAIL SYSTEM

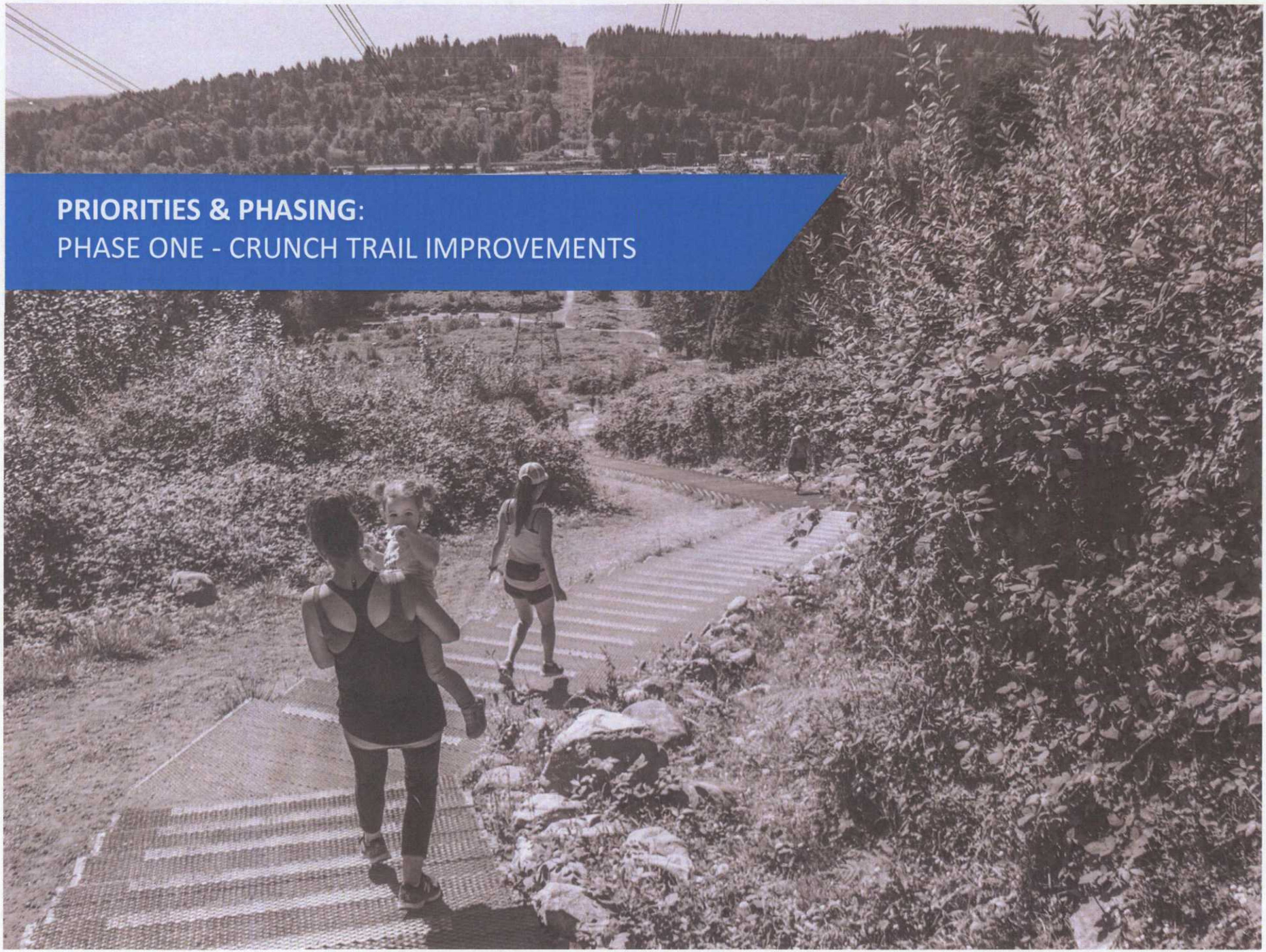
FUTURE TRAILHEAD

EXISTING SIDEWALK (PROVIDES CONNECTIVITY)

OTHER FUTURE TRAIL PROJECT

Figure 2
Excerpt from Master Trail Plan-
Coquitlam Greenlinks Trail **(Right)**

Figure 3
Excerpt from Master Trail Plan-
Eagle Mountain Park Trail Connection
(Left)



PRIORITIES & PHASING:
PHASE ONE - CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

PHASE 1 - CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

The preliminary estimate to complete phase one is $2.5 million. It includes the following:

1. Washroom Facilities - Lansdowne Drive (south) - A serviced washroom facility located to service the users of the trail, community gardens and stairs would be ideal. A few options will be investigated to seek the best location.

2. Paved Parking Lot - An expanded, paved 6o car parking lot is proposed to replace the existing 30 car gravel parking surface to better accommodate the visitors to the trail, community garden, and lacrosse box.

3. Paving of Access Driveway on Lansdowne Drive to Parking Lot - The paved entry road will replace the existing gravel road leading to the paved parking lot, complete with dedicated pedestrian pathways.

4. Reconfigured Community Garden - The increased footprint of a new parking area will require shifting and reconfiguration of the community garden area further north. This can be accomplished with minimal cost, as materials can be re-used. The community garden can be expanded as part of this reconfiguration to increase the number of plots beyond the current 26 plots to accommodate the growing wait list.

Figure 4a. Landsdowne Dr. (North) to Landsdowne Dr. (South)

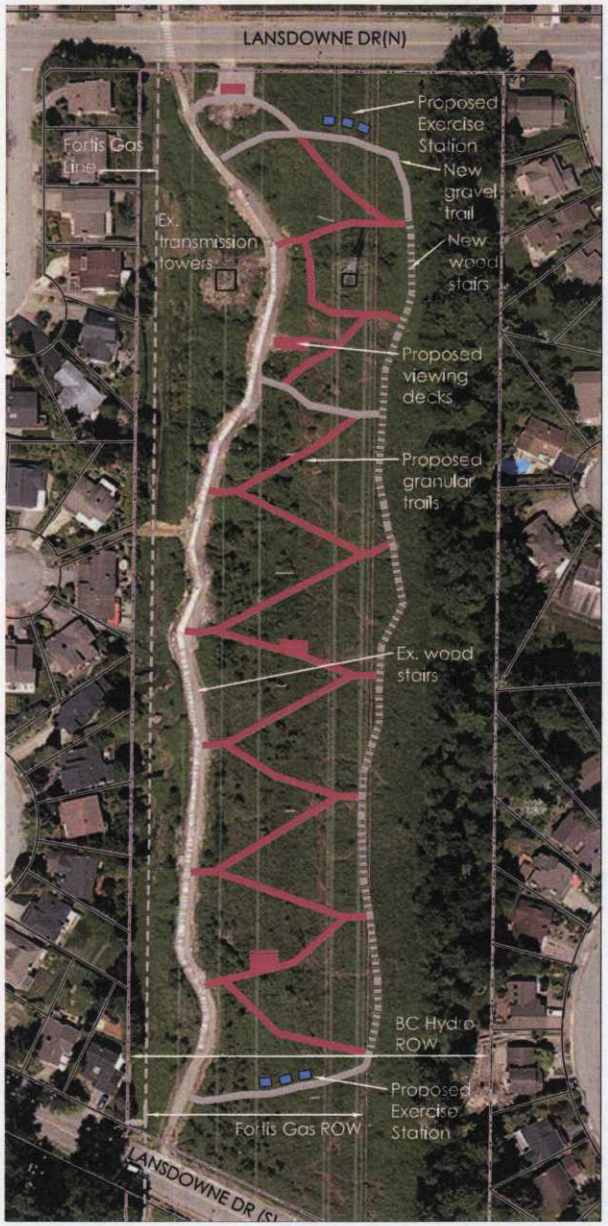
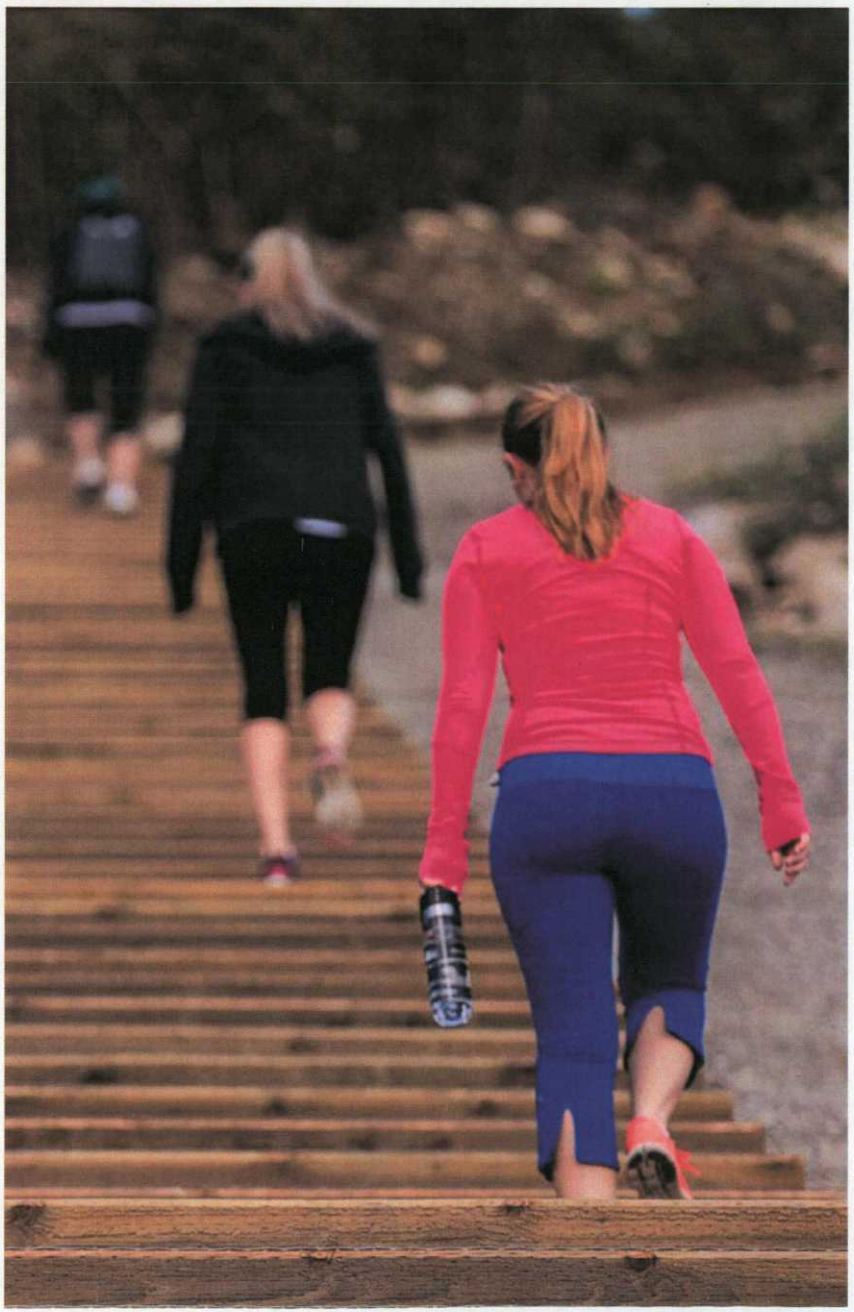


Figure 4b. Landsdowne Dr. (South) to Guildford Way



5. Pedestrian Crossing at Guildford Way - Parks, Recreation & Culture together with Engineering & Public Works will coordinate implementation of a new pedestrian activated crossing that will provide a safe and critical connection. Several trail sections in this location will be added to formalize informal routes and increasing circulation to and from the parking area, while others will be realigned or decommissioned to encourage use of safer routes in this busy part of the Crunch.

6. New Transverse Trails - To add an alternate way to maneuver up the steeply sloped popular stair section of the Crunch Trail, the addition of crisscrossing pathways between the twinned stair sections will offer a variety of options to use stairs, pathway or a combination of routes to make the most of their recreational and fitness experience. All new granular trail surfaces will now be constructed with a finer grade of granular material in place of larger granular trail surfacing to ensure stability and address the concern voiced by users about slippery surfaces.

7. Viewing Areas - The addition of viewing and sitting areas along the traverse trails will give users opportunities for resting, stretching, and exercise while enjoying the views from multiple vantage points along the stair section of the Crunch Trail. The viewing areas could accommodate five metre wide seating steps and up to 8 benches will be provided near the stair edge for quick rest stops.

8. Outdoor Exercise Equipment - Identified as a priority improvement, the addition of outdoor fitness apparatus to the popular stair section of the Crunch Trail will nicely complement the other amenities to enhance the overall fitness experience of the popular stair section. Working within BC Hydro right-of-way restrictions wood and/or aluminum stationary equipment may include: angled sit-up bench, push-up bar, balancing/jumping beams, pull-up/chin bar, and other exercise equipment.

9. Signage and Furnishings - A uniform and consistent system of trail signage will be developed to strengthen the City's branding, facilitate way-finding and orientation, and provide information to users. The addition of furnishings includes benches, drinking water source, trail markers, fencing and baffles are proposed to further enhance the function and experience of the trail network.

10. New 200m Trail Section - With the proposed pedestrian crossing, new trail sections are proposed to accommodate new travel patterns while others are decommissioned.

PRIORITIES & PHASING:
PHASE TWO - CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

PHASE TWO – CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

The second phase shown generally in concept in ***(Figure 5a,b,c,d.)*** focuses on trail improvements in the sections between Eagle Mountain Drive to Lansdowne Drive (north), and between Guildford Way to Runnel Drive. ***(Figure 6a,b.)*** The preliminary estimate to complete phase two is $1,500,000. Improvements would include:

Eagle Mountain Drive to Lansdowne Drive North; (Left Image)

1. 30 car paved parking;
2. Washroom;
3. Twinning trail sections;
4. Signage, trail markers, and information kiosks; and
5. Furnishings, drinking water.

Figure 5a

Figure 5b

Figure 5 (a, b)
Eagle Mountain Dr. (North) to Panorama Dr. (North)
(Images move North / South From Left to Right)

Figure 5c

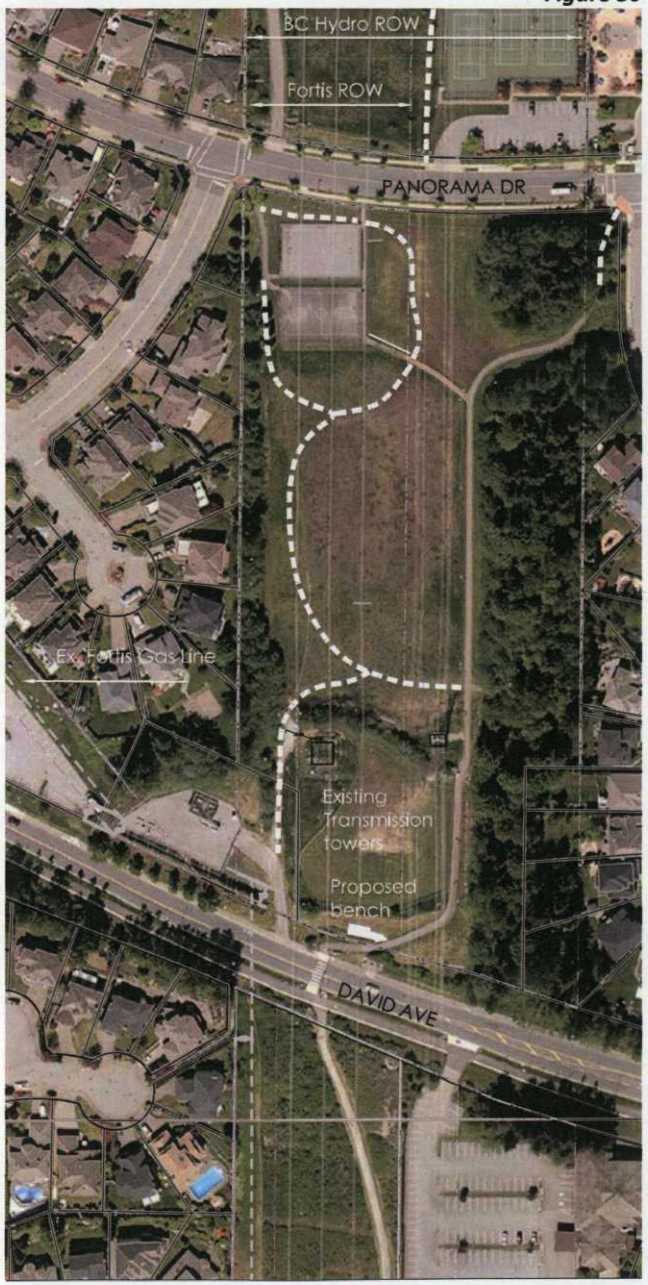


Figure 5d

Figure 5 (c, d)
Panorama Dr. to LandsdowneDr. (North)
(Images move North / South From Left to Right)

Figure 6 (a,b)
Guildford Way to Runnel Dr..
(Images move North / South From Left to Right)

Figure 6a

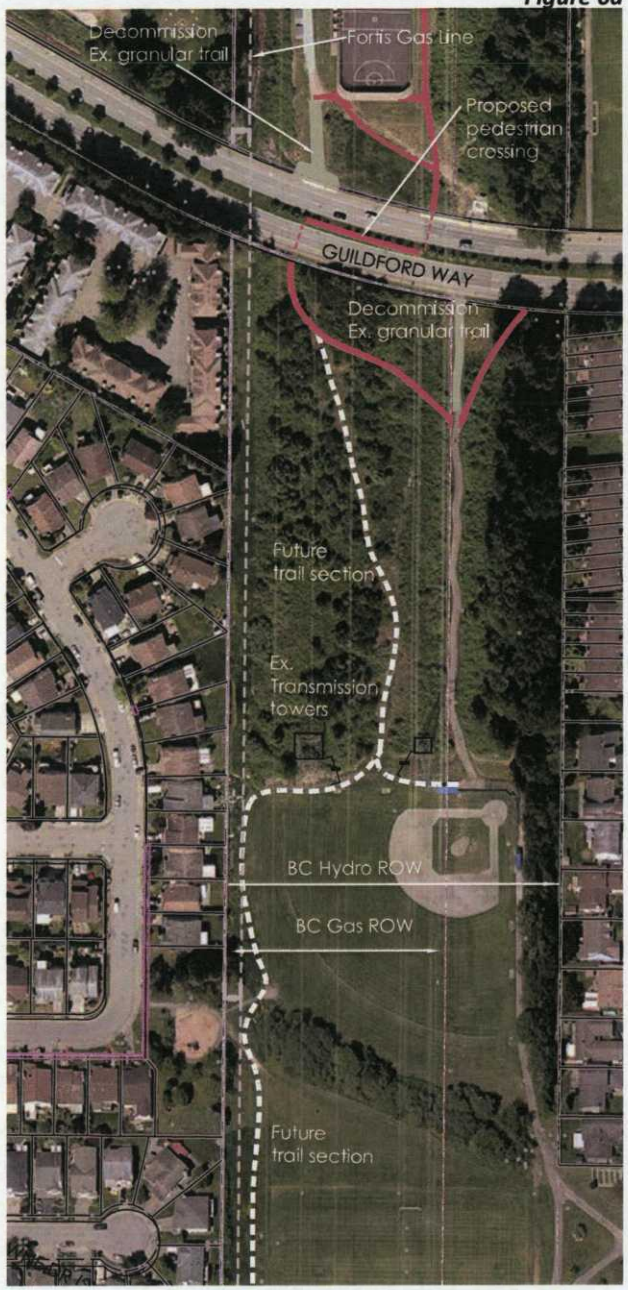
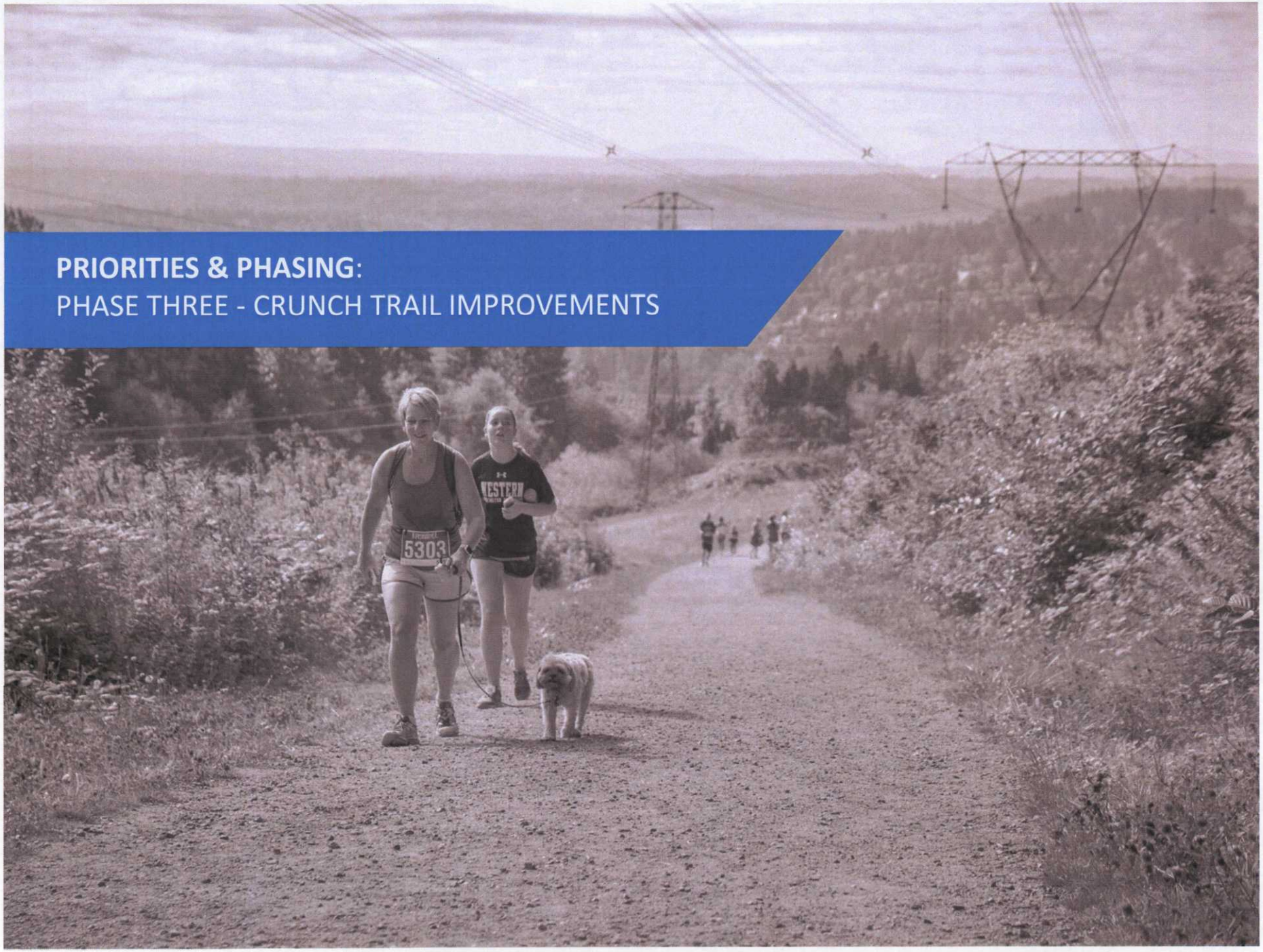


Figure 6b

PHASE TWO – CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Guildford Way to Runnel (Right Image):

1. Twinned trails to offer a looped circuit;
2. Signage, trail markers, and information kiosk;
3. Furnishings; and
4. Improve connection to existing play area.



PRIORITIES & PHASING:
PHASE THREE - CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

PHASE THREE – GREENLINKS CRUNCH TRAIL EXTENSION

(CRUNCH TRAIL SOUTH)

The proposed development of the Greenlinks extension section of the trail shown general in concept in ***(Figure 7a, b,c,d.)*** focuses on the development a new network of urban nature trails to include stairs in steeper sections much like the existing sections of the Crunch Trail stair section, from Dewdney Trunk Road to Mariner Way. The new trail network can be branded as an extension of the Crunch Trail (Crunch Trail South). The preliminary estimate to complete phase three is $3 million that would include:

1. 30 car paved parking at the trail head;
2. Washrooms;
3. Information kiosk;
4. Granular trail and wood stairs;
5. Look outs;
6. Signage, trail markers;
7. Access to drinking water; and
8. Furnishings.

Figure 7a

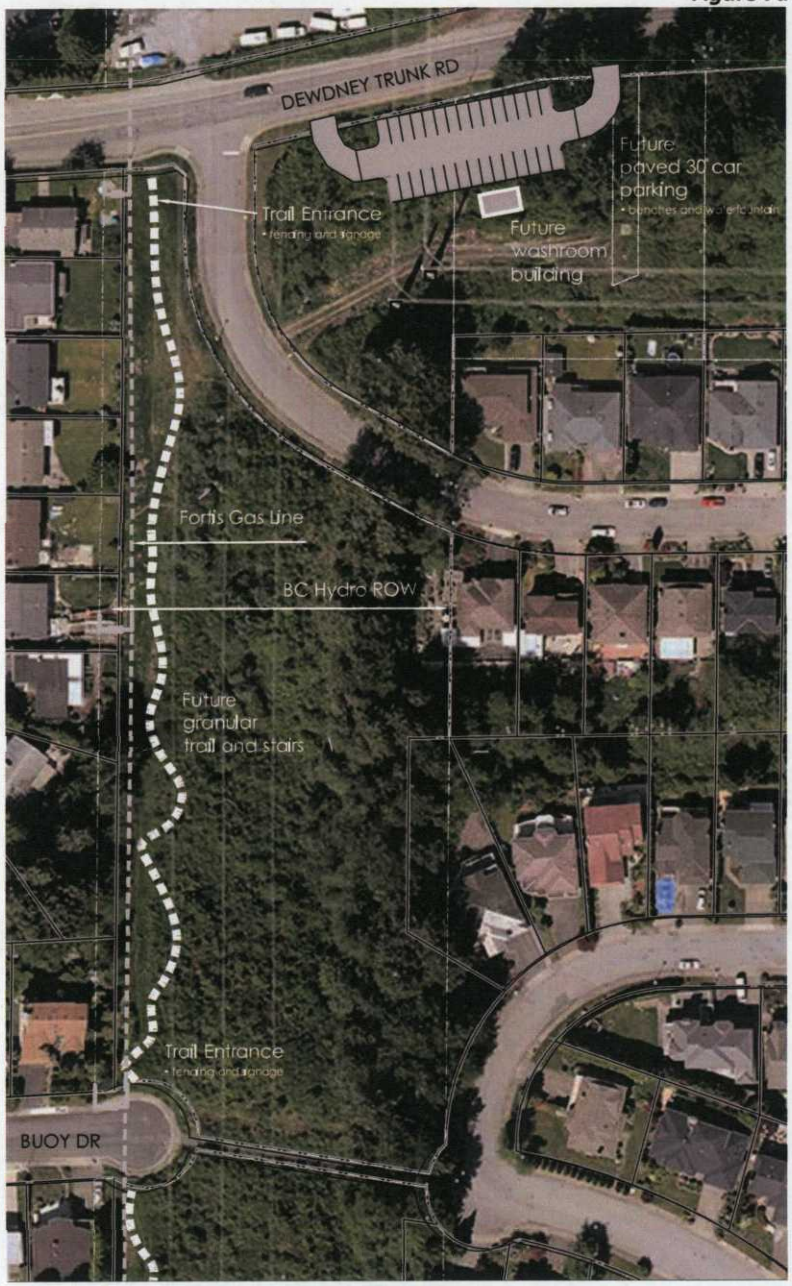


Figure 7b

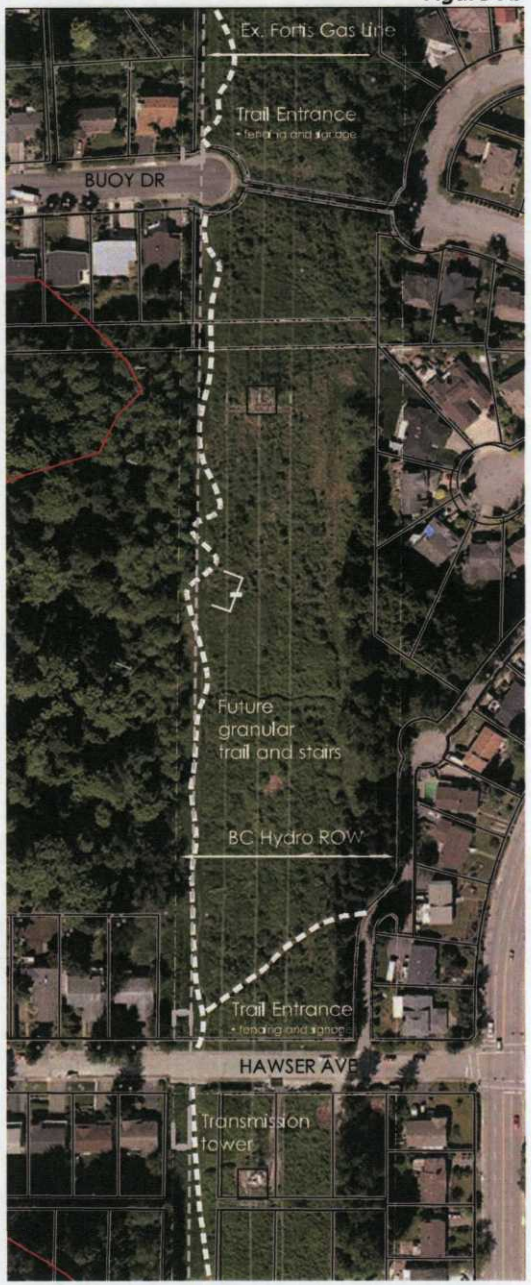


Figure 7c

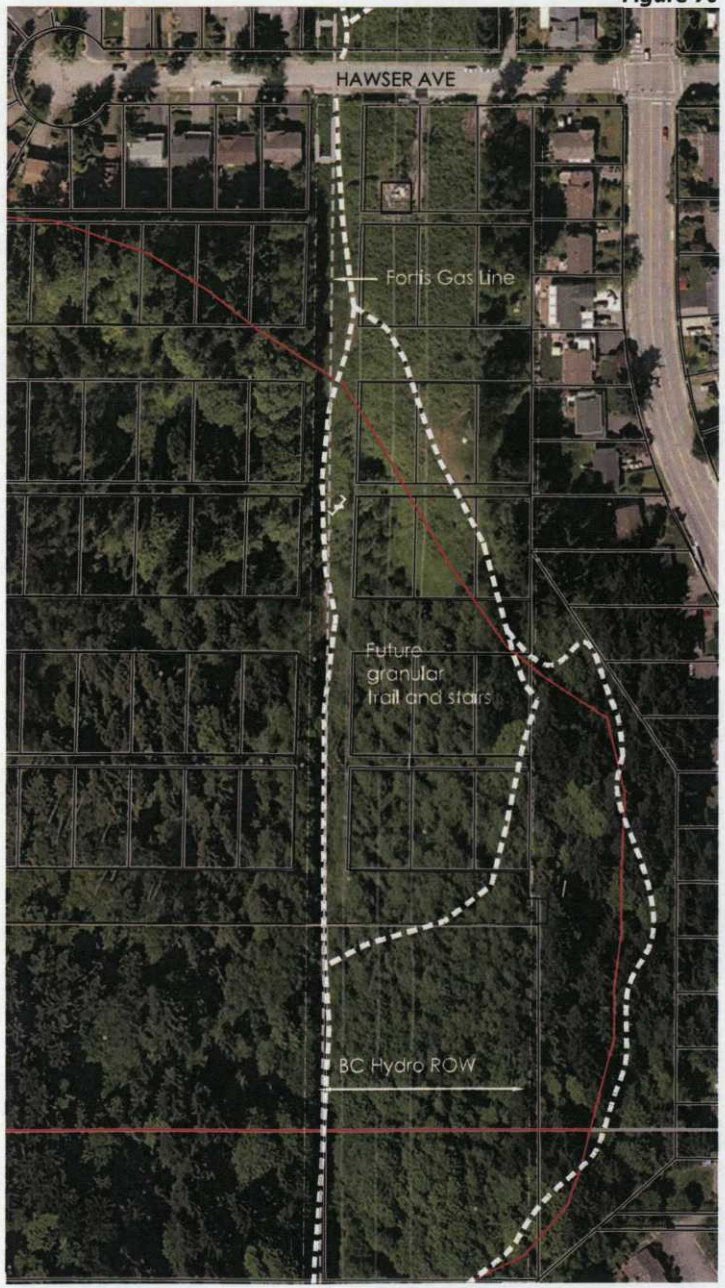
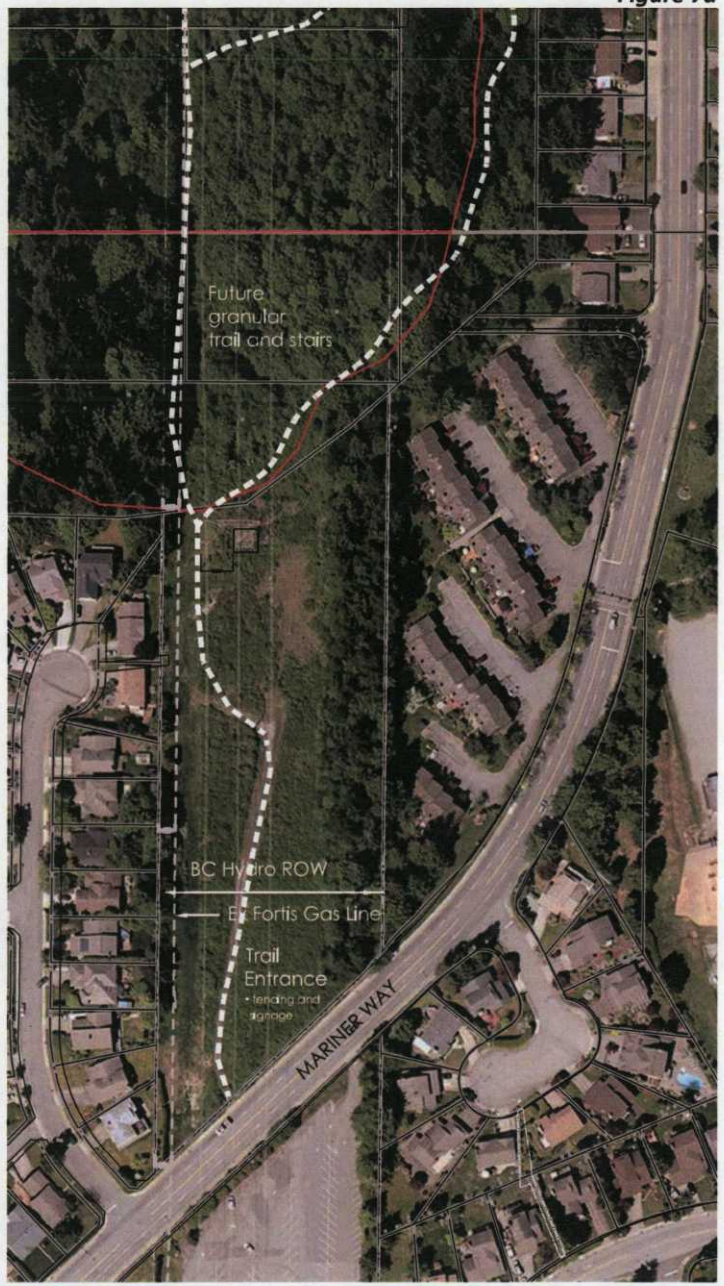


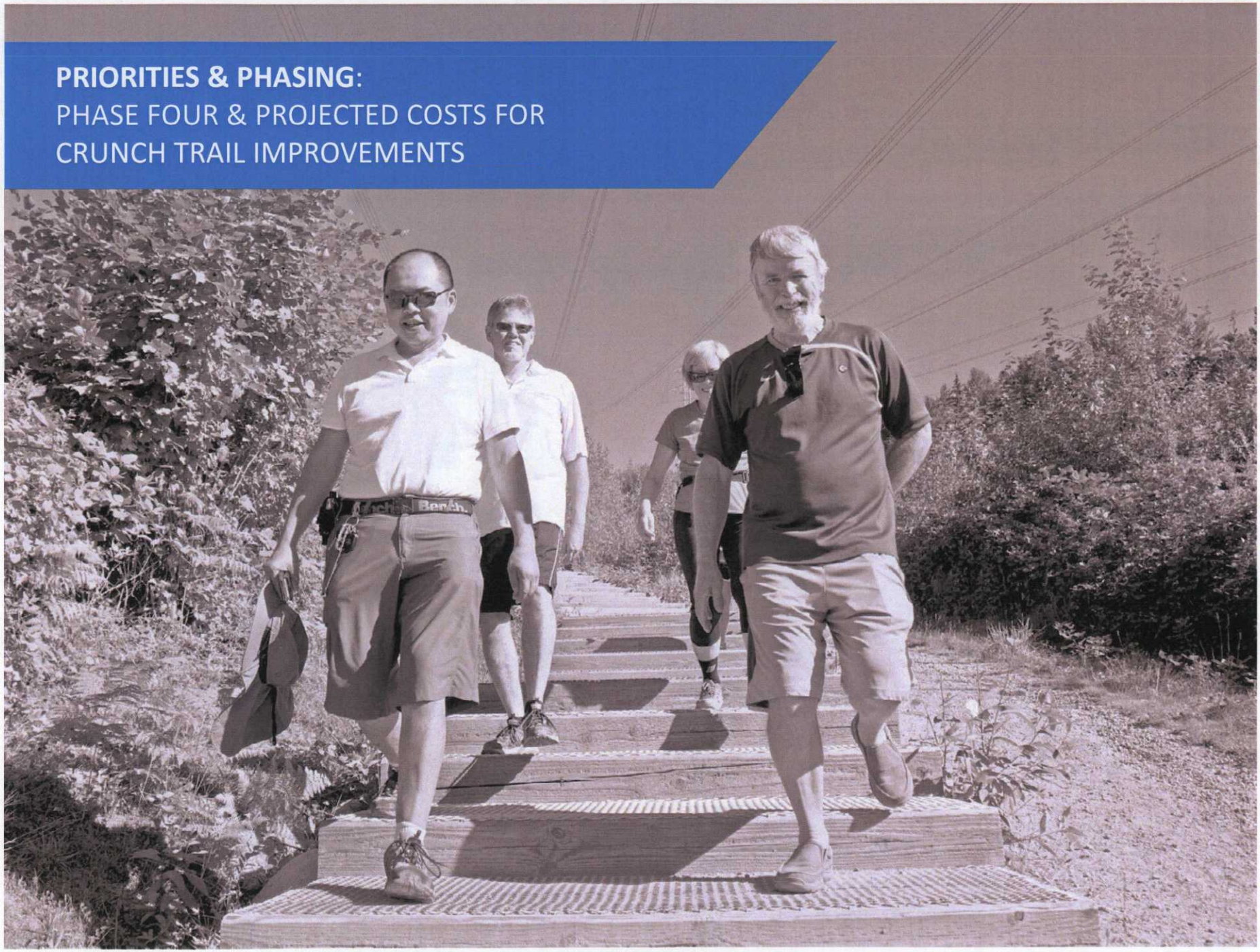
Figure 7d



As part of the Crunch Trail System, this section will likely draw users who will utilize the entire system as a whole. A safe pedestrian connection to the *Greenlinks Extension* will need to be considered between the existing trail and the new extension. However, it is important to note that even after these improvements and the improvements to the road network proposed in the Strategic Transportation Plan a significant detour to Falcon Drive is required to connect from the south end of the Crunch Trail at Runnel Drive to the Green Links Trail.

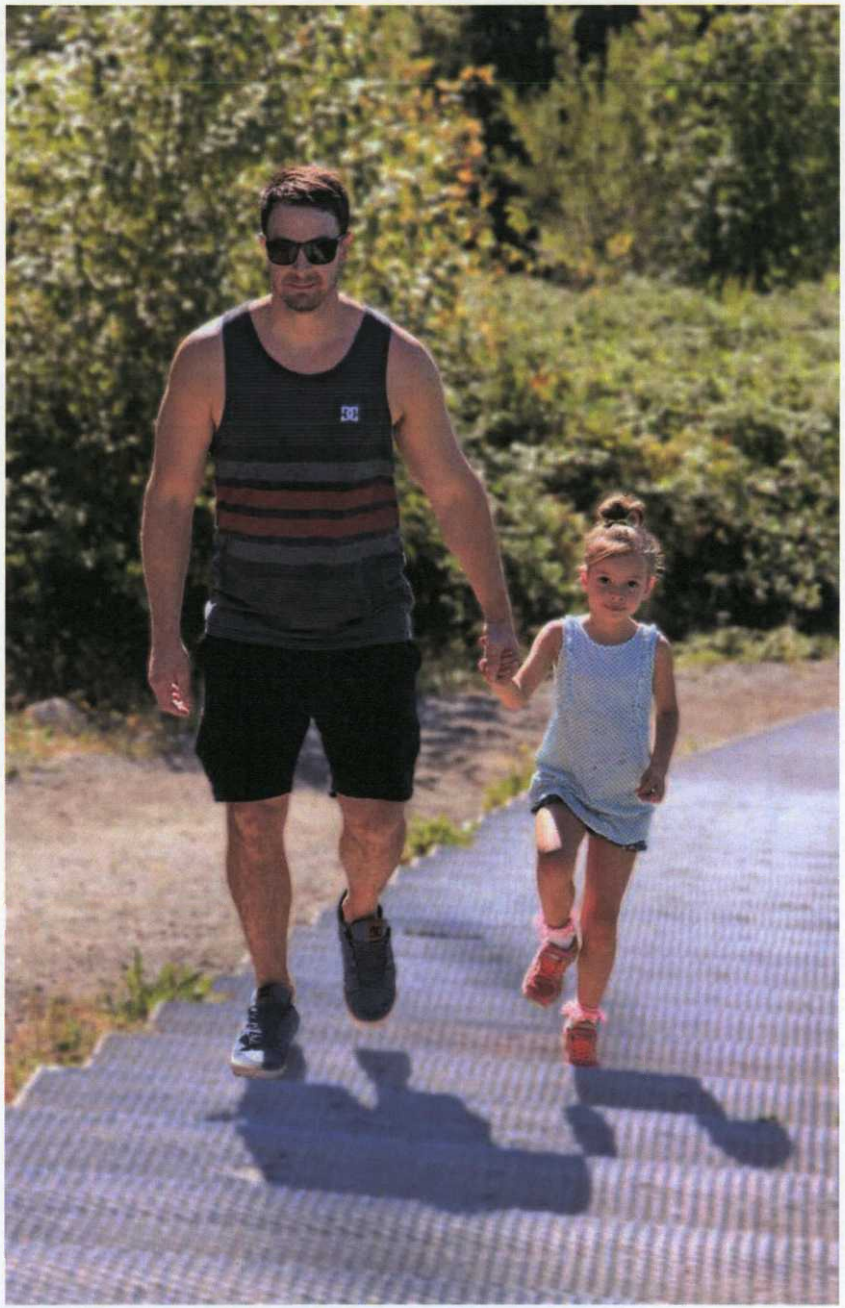
Figure 7 (a,b,c,d)
Dewdney Trunk Rd. to Mariner Way
(Images move North / South From Left to Right)

PRIORITIES & PHASING:
PHASE FOUR & PROJECTED COSTS FOR CRUNCH TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS



PHASE FOUR - EAGLE MOUNTAIN PARK TRAIL CONNECTION

A key link to connect the Crunch Trail north to Eagle Mountain Park requires the trail route to run alongside Eagle Mountain Drive. This planning work will be initiated when there is an opportunity to coordinate with future road improvement projects to achieve great efficiencies and cost effectiveness. Detail planning work is required in the future before realistic cost estimates can be provided for this phase.



PRIORITIES & PHASING:
PROJECTED COSTS & PROJECT TIMELINE

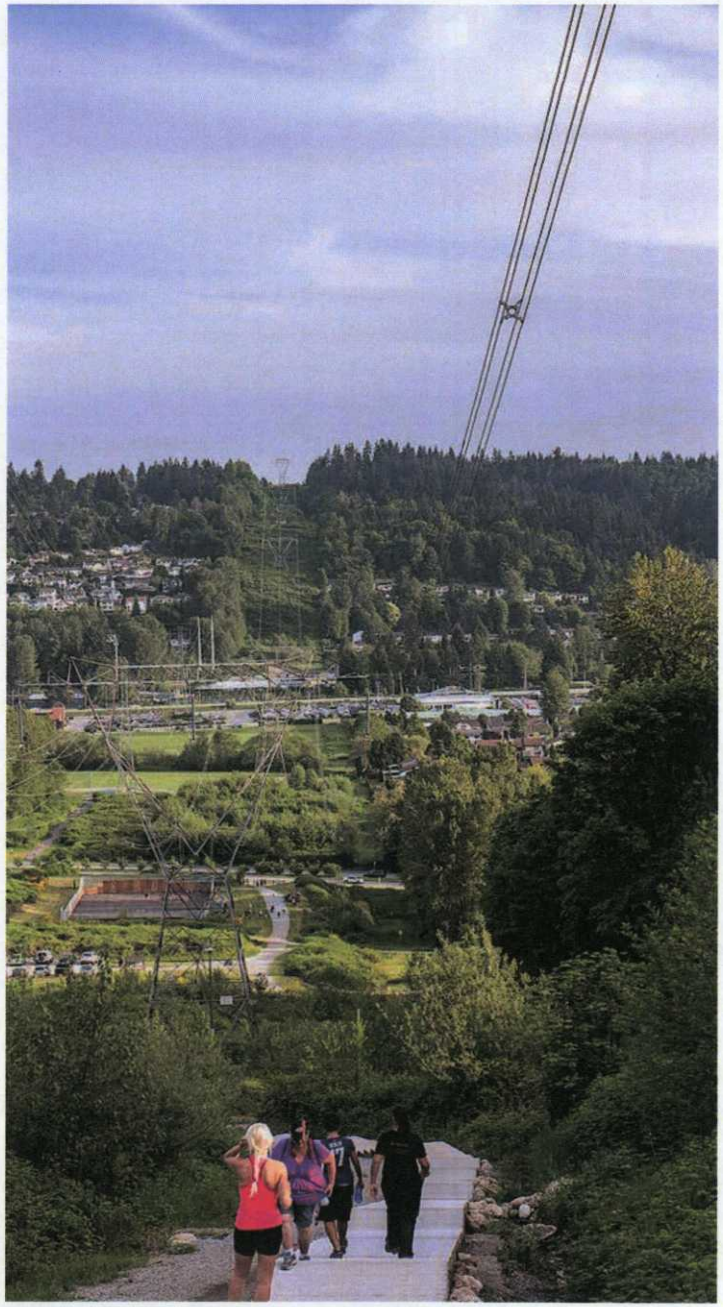
PROJECTED COSTS & PROJECT TIMELINE

Description	Anticipated Funding Request	Anticipated Year of Budget Request	Possible Construction
Phase One	$2,500,000	2018	2018/19
Phase Two	$1,500,000	2019	2020
Phase Three	$3,000,000	2020	2021/22
Phase Four	TBD	2022	2023
TOTAL	**$7,000,000**		

This Plan allows for flexibility in phasing. Each individual phase will come to Council for approval with detail design plans and both capital and operating budgets. Each phase of the Plan may be updated and amended at that point. No funding beyond Phase 1 improvements has been identified, although eligible projects and improvements will be added to the future Development Cost Charges (DCC) program.

The Crunch Trail system presents an exciting recreational opportunity for Coquitlam residents and visitors to the City. The expansion of this unique and valuable trail amenity, together with future supportive enhancements along the existing Crunch Trail can take this trail system to another level in the next few years, offering a much broader and comprehensive level of recreational offerings to residents, and becoming a regional destination amenity that forms a key part of the City's brand and supports tourism and economic development.
Improvements to the road network proposed in the Strategic Transportation Plan a significant detour to Falcon Drive is required to connect from the south end of the Crunch Trail at Runnel Drive to the Green Links Trail.

This Plan is the guiding document for future Crunch Trail Improvements.



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