

Coquitlam

For Committee

October 19, 2021

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To: City Manager

From: General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture & Facilities

Subject: **Coquitlam Crunch Improvement and Expansion Update**

For: **Council-in-Committee**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive the report of the General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture & Facilities dated October 19, 2021 and entitled "Coquitlam Crunch Improvement and Expansion Update" for information.

Report Purpose:

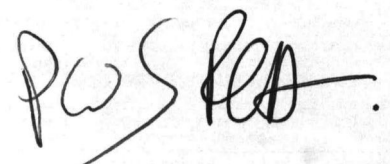
This report provides an update on the recent improvements made at the existing Coquitlam Crunch Trail (Phase 1) and highlights from the ongoing planning work on the South Extension (Phase 3), including an overview of the public engagement process, technical studies and the preliminary parking lot design.

Strategic Goal:

This project supports the following City Strategic Goals: *safe and complete neighbourhoods, healthy community and active citizens, and sustainable services, environment and infrastructure*. The project is identified as a "B" Priority in the 2021 Business Plan.

Background:

The Coquitlam Crunch Trail is a very popular local and regional recreational trail system that typically sees more than 52,000 visitors during peak months. 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 connects the Eagle Ridge and Westwood Plateau neighbourhoods. Approved by Council in early 2018, the "Coquitlam Crunch Trail and Expansion Plan (2018 -2023)" is a \$7M multi-year plan envisioning significant improvements including several new washrooms, paved parking lots, viewing areas, outdoor exercise equipment, safer pedestrian street crossings, signage and other amenities.



On October 26, 2020, Committee received a report entitled “Coquitlam Crunch Trail Expansion” outlining timelines for public engagement and planning for the Phase 3 Coquitlam Crunch Trail Improvements (South Extension). Due to the dramatic increase in popularity of this outdoor amenity since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Phase 3 was prioritized to address safety and capacity issues on the existing trail, and Phase 2 improvements, which include viewing decks and exercise equipment at the existing trail, were deferred. This work is part of an ongoing multi-step plan to expand the popular Coquitlam Trail’s capacity to reduce congestion during peak times, offer new experiences and to better serve residents of Central and Southwest Coquitlam. **Attachment 1** provides an overview map of the Crunch Trail network and phases.

Phase 4 - Crunch Trail Extension to Eagle Mountain Park

This phase of the expansion plan includes parking lot at the north end of the Crunch off Eagle Mountain Drive, a washroom, trail/multi-use pathway connecting to Eagle Mountain Park and paving of the access road to Eagle Mountain Park. As identified in the September 20, 2021 report to Council entitled “FortisBC Eagle Mountain Woodfibre Gas Pipeline Project – Agreements Between the City of Coquitlam and FortisBC” from the Engineering and Public Works (EPW) department, an agreement with FortisBC includes a \$3M community benefit contribution towards the Coquitlam Crunch Trail improvements. This contribution will assist with funding planned upgrades, primarily the Phase 4 extension to Eagle Mountain Park, though the City has the flexibility to use the funds for any improvements outlined in the Coquitlam Crunch Trail and Expansion Plan.

Discussion/Analysis:

Since the October 2020 Council-in-Committee report, staff have completed improvements to help address residents’ concerns on the existing trail near Lansdowne Drive and have also completed public engagement and undertaken a number of technical studies for Phase 3.

Phase 1 – Improvements

The latest improvements that opened over the 2021 September Labour Day weekend included:

- Paving the Lansdowne Drive parking lot and more than doubling capacity to 60 parking stalls to reduce on-street parking demand;
- Installing a grant-funded digital sign to provide real-time stall counts to reduce idling and in-and-out traffic;

- Construction of a new paved pathway on the west side of the parking lot access road;
- Installation of new gravel trails to connect the parking lot to the existing Crunch trail; and
- Additional trail improvements south of the parking lot now providing a more direct paved connection for pedestrians to the recently-built crosswalk at Guildford Way.

Occurring simultaneously during the Phase 1 Improvements, FortisBC conducted routine maintenance digs at various portions along the Crunch resulting in temporary trail detours. Disruptions were kept to a minimum and all detours and disturbances have been restored.

Phase 3 – Public Engagement

The first round of public engagement began February 19, 2021 and closed on March 21, 2021. It included a Virtual Information Session with over 20 neighbours, and an Online Survey that drew over 1,500 responses. The results, summarized in **Attachment 2**, indicate that the main preferences for the future trail include easy access, parking, safe street crossings and well-maintained trails. Staff are sensitive to the need to provide sufficient off-street parking in carefully considered locations to ensure privacy for the neighbourhood. Staff are also sensitive to ensuring that environmental protection and enhancements are included in the project. Staff continue to receive and consider ongoing community feedback while concurrently working with consultants to develop preliminary design options that seek to balance community preferences and concerns. A second round of public engagement is expected to take place early in 2022.

Phase 3 – Preliminary Design

There are several complex issues to consider in trail planning for Phase 3, including sections of steep terrain that make trail and parking access as well as egress a challenge. There are also riparian areas, trees, and wildlife to be considered. The location of major utilities and the potential for indigenous heritage sites are also considerations. The initial design phase timeline is extended by several months to allow adequate time to investigate these issues.

Staff retained ISL Engineering to complete preliminary trail and supporting amenity designs, including exploring all possible locations for off-street parking. Due to recently identified archaeological sites in the vicinity, an

Archaeological Overview Assessment (“AOA”) was completed to explore the possibility of heritage sites within the project area that may require further investigation. The findings show a low potential for undetected archaeological sites and confirms that no further archaeological investigations are recommended. Environmental studies, including a tree survey and watercourse assessments, inform the parking lot siting and ensure minimal environmental impact. Additional environmental studies are required for the trail alignment design, expected in late Fall 2021. **Attachment 3** illustrates preliminary parking lot and trailhead locations.

The primary trailhead location will take advantage of the existing Charles Best Secondary School joint-use agreement, which provides an opportunity for the public to access the existing 159 parking stalls and washroom facilities at the Charles Best Field, and is a primary access point to the south trailhead proposed at Mariner Way. A second parking lot to be newly built at the proposed north trailhead near Dewdney Trunk Road and Pier Drive is also a priority given the link between the future Scott Creek Trail network and the Crunch (**Attachment 4**).

Consultants are focusing on the preliminary parking lot design because this portion of the work must address challenging site constraints. The proposed parking lot is located away from residential streets on City parkland along the south side of Dewdney Trunk Road (3101 Pier Dr). The preliminary design (**Attachment 5**) provides a paved lot and single access road with thirty (30) stalls, of which two (2) will be accessible. West bound traffic will be able to turn left into the lot from Dewdney Trunk. EPW has future plans for road improvements along Dewdney Trunk Road that include a 3m wide multi-use path (“MUP”) on the south side of the roadway. As part of this parking lot construction project, a paved MUP will be constructed from the Crunch trail head to the parking lot. The MUP will be designated and built to ensure integration with future MUP connections and road improvements on Dewdney Trunk. Two (2) single stall accessible washrooms and bicycle racks are proposed to be located within close proximity to the MUP and the parking lot. The parking lot will be at a considerably lower elevation from the Pier Drive residences and screened by tree plantings on top of a retaining wall. The design utilizes an efficiently small footprint and avoids encroaching into the BC Hydro corridor and nearby Stream Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA).

At this time staff continue to work with the consultants to ensure the proposed parking lot locations, trail alignment and amenity designs are provided in a way that best meet the needs of users and neighbours, while balancing a number of site constraints and anticipating future infrastructure connections, including:

- Environmental setbacks to watercourses;
- Steep grades;
- Proximity and buffering to neighbours;
- BC Hydro infrastructure and existing underground utilities;
- Limited parking lot and trail access options due to safety concerns with sight lines on Pier Drive and Dewdney Trunk Road; and
- Future transportation infrastructure upgrades (e.g., future MUP extension along Dewdney Trunk Road).

Metro Vancouver has identified the strategic significance of this and other sections of the Crunch corridor as part of their Regional Greenway Network that supports active transportation access to regional parks and amenities. Phase 3 of the Crunch Trail ties in well with other future transportation connections including the Falcon Drive overpass and the MUP connection from Mariner Way to Lougheed Highway/ Colony Farm Regional Park.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to work with the consultants to develop the preliminary trail design and associated amenities with the aim of providing these plans for public feedback in the new year. A summary of key project dates is outlined below:

Approx. Date	Phase 3 Project Milestone
Jan./Feb. 2022	Second round of public engagement
April 2022	Return to Council with final design and budget
August 2022	Construction start
December 2022	Project completion

Financial Implications:


The projected costs for Phase 3 improvements are currently estimated to be \$3.1M, which is within the approved budget envelope of \$3.4M. The future funding from Fortis BC through the agreement associated with the Eagle Mountain Woodfibre Gas Pipeline Project will be a total of \$3M made in installments associated with project milestones. The preliminary annual

operating and asset replacement cost estimates for the Phase 3 improvements are between \$100-\$140K and \$80-90K respectively.

The final operating budget implication will be confirmed following detailed design and will be included as part of the annual budget process. This cost analysis is ongoing and these estimates will be updated and shared with Council as a part of a future Council report.

Conclusion:

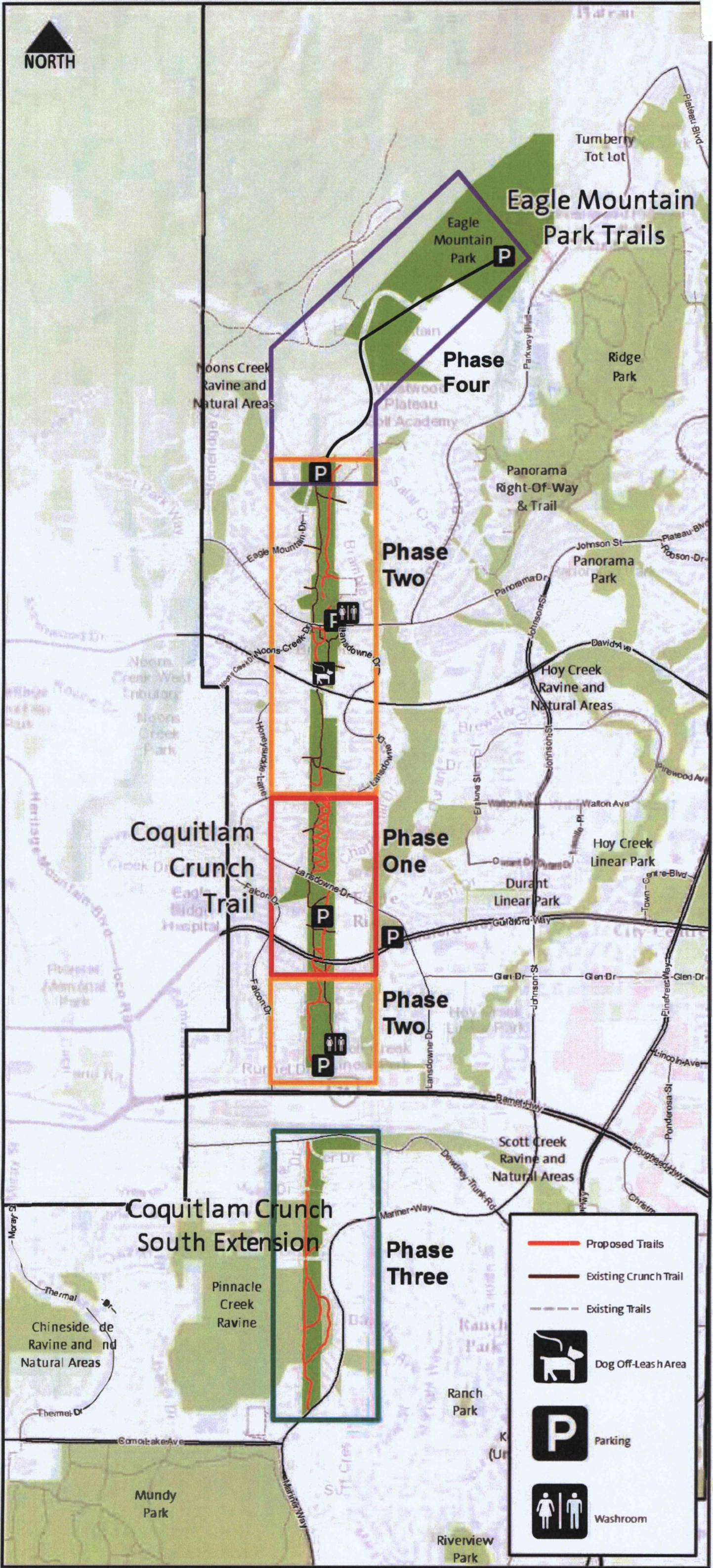
The preliminary parking lot and trailhead design and location for Phase 3 deliver on the vision in the Crunch Trail Expansion Plan while also responding to resident concerns raised during public engagement and minimizing environmental impacts. The final trail and parking lot design and budget will be shared with Council by Spring 2022 following the second round of public engagement scheduled for early 2022.


Lanny Englund

Attachments:

- 1 – Overview of Coquitlam Crunch Trail Network (CEDMS #: 4223714)
- 2 – Public Engagement Summary (CEDMS #: 4223704)
- 3 – Proposed Extents of Coquitlam Crunch Phase 3 Extension (CEDMS #: 4147300)
- 4 – Trail Master Plan – Scott Creek Connection (CEDMS #: 4223712)
- 5 – Preliminary Parking Lot Design Plan and Section (CEDMS #: 4221360)

This report was prepared by John Musil, Park Planner 2 and reviewed by Jonathon Jackson, Park Planning and Design Acting Manager; Tiina Mack, Manager, Recreation and Culture Facility Planning; Ted Uhrich, Project Manager Strategic and Capital Projects; Dragana Mitic, Manager Transportation; Gorana Cabral, Manager Financial Planning.



CRUNCH PHASE 3 SOUTH EXPANSION

What We Heard

The City engaged with Coquitlam residents and neighbours to the proposed trail extension in early 2021 to obtain feedback on plans for the extension of the Crunch, planned from south of the Barnet Highway from Dewdney Trunk, up the slope to Mariner Way and connecting to Mundy Park.

Stakeholders engaged with the City in a variety of ways.

Aware

Let's Talk
Coquitlam

4.2k
visited the project page at
letstalkcoquitlam.ca

Informed

131
subscribers to the
project newsletter



176
downloads
of related
documents

Engaged



1,534 respondents
to the community survey

28 inquiries
to staff via email
or phone



25 people participated
in a virtual open house

Who we heard from:

84% of respondents
were Coquitlam residents

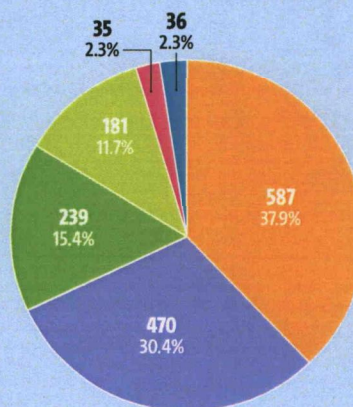
Of those who were not from
Coquitlam:

50% from Port Moody

27% from Port Coquitlam

13% from other communities
in the Lower Mainland

We sought feedback on how people currently use the Crunch.



- Using stairs as outdoor workout
- Exercise close to home
- Walking the trails
- I do not use the Crunch
- Socializing with others
- Other

How visitors get to the existing Crunch trail*



Drive (5-10 min) 40%
Drive (10-20 min) 20%
Drive (more than 20 min) 3%



Walking/cycling (5-10 min) 14%
Walking/cycling (10-20 min) 8%
Walking/cycling (more than 20 min) 3%

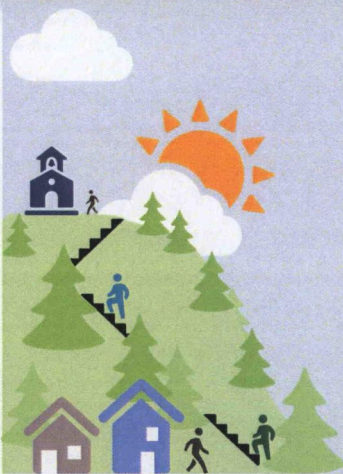


Public transportation 1%

Other 1%

* 10% of respondents to this question indicated they do not visit the current Crunch trail.

CRUNCH PHASE 3 SOUTH EXPANSION



Top reasons visitors will use the new South Extension

1. Ease of access/proximity to home
2. Stairs for outdoor recreation/fitness
3. Well maintained trails
4. Connectivity to other destinations (schools, parks)
5. Parking



What We Heard

How often are you likely to use the new South Extension?

More than 3 days per week **3%**

25% 1-2 days per week

More than once a month but less than once per week **26%**

13% Less than once per month

Never **13%**

Neighbour Engagement

We engaged with residents who live near the proposed South Extension to hear their concerns and feedback.



561 survey respondents identified as neighbours to the proposed South Extension

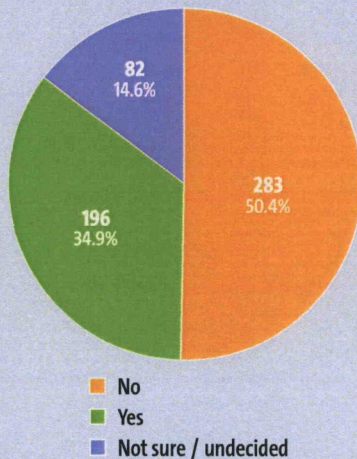


22 residents attended a special virtual open house for neighbours



28 neighbours contacted staff via emails and phone calls

We asked neighbours if they have concerns about the proposed Extension:



Top things the City should consider for the South Extension:



Parking



Safe road crossing measures



Traffic mitigation



Washroom location



Signs and wayfinding

What Neighbours Had to Say

The following are quotes from respondents to the survey who identified as neighbours to the proposed Crunch South Extension.

Thanks for making Coquitlam great for trails parks and facilities.

Have concerns over increased traffic and lack of parking as Como Lake and Mariner are main arterial routes.

I'm still worried about wildlife, for them and for my safety.

I think the south extension will be a great addition and love that the City of Coquitlam is extending it. I hope you take into account concerns from people who live in the area and build it into the design.

Just a big thank you! Love the idea! Would be great if it was also bicycle friendly.

Concerns identified	How we are addressing concerns
Parking	30 new off-street paved parking stalls plus parking at Charles Best Secondary School through joint-use agreement.
Traffic	Locating parking lot access away from residential streets. Providing bike racks and multi-use pathway (MUP) connection to support alternate modes of transport.
Wildlife	Design influenced by environmental reports; low-impact design will be sensitive to wildlife. Enhance with new planting and invasive species removal.
Waste management	Bear Smart waste bins will be provided at the new parking lot and trail heads subject to BC Hydro approvals.

PROPOSED EXTENTS OF COQUITLAM CRUNCH TRAIL PHASE 3 EXTENSION



LEGEND

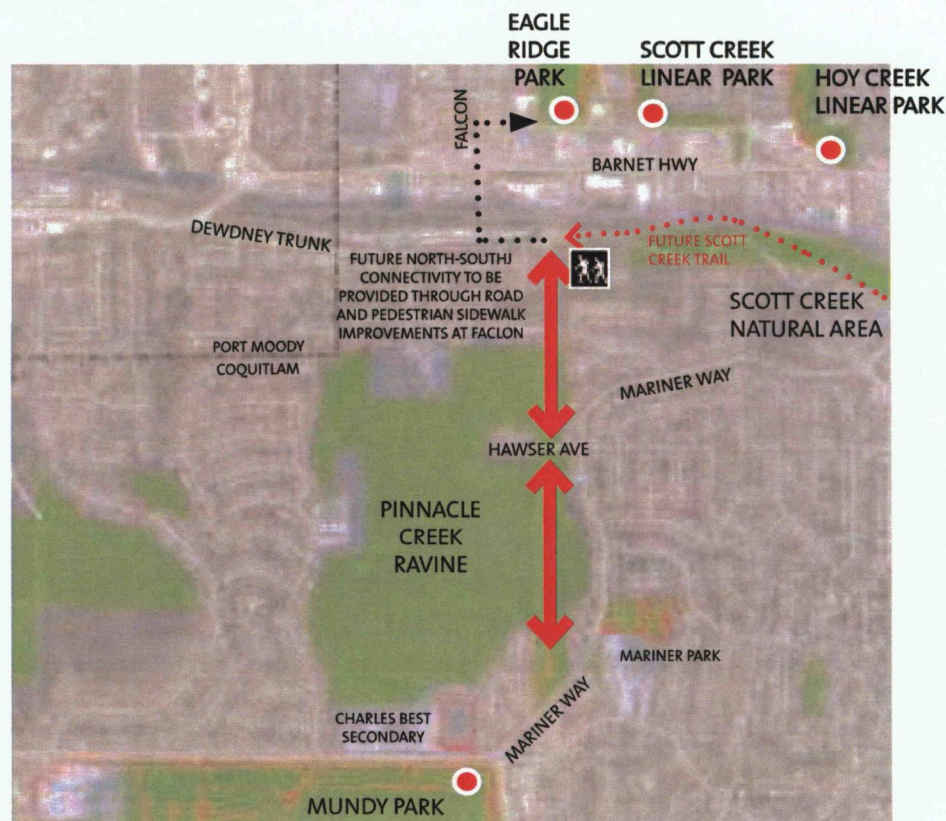
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|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| ★ Proposed Trail Head | --- Proposed Project Extent | --- Proposed MUP | ■ Park |
| P Existing Parking Lot | — Existing Trail | — Existing Shared Bikeway | ■ Public School |
| P Proposed Parking Lot | — Existing Greenway | --- Proposed Shared Bikeway | ■ Sports Field |
| | — Existing MUP | | --- City Boundary |

Figure 3

9. Coquitlam Greenlinks Trail

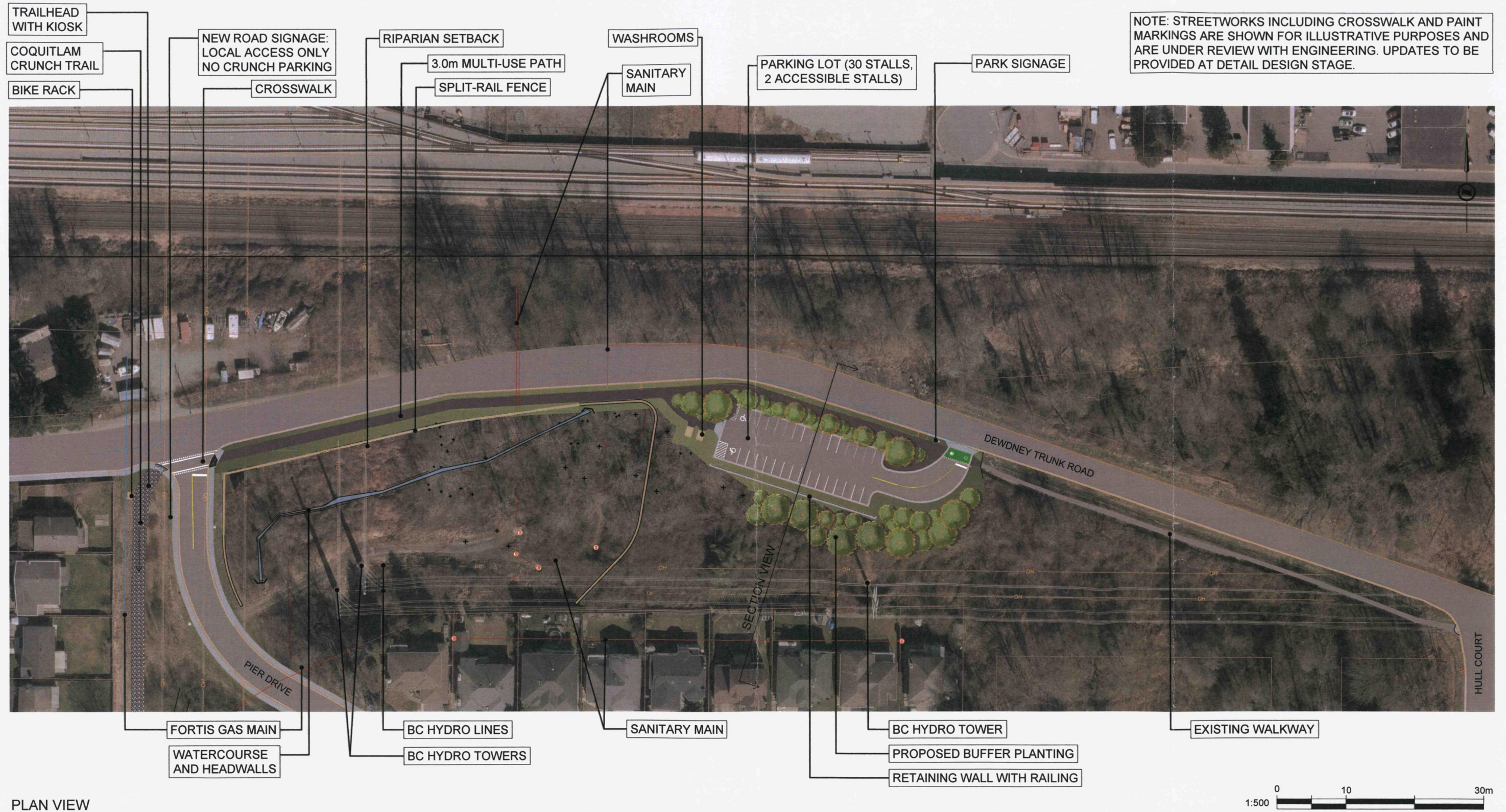
The goal of this connection is to provide a trail linkage between Mundy Park and the Eagle Ridge routed through existing hydro right of way and parkland. This trail is identified in the Metro Vancouver Northeast Sector Recreational Greenway Plan as an important north-south regional route that connects the Fraser River to Eagle Mountain and the Burrard Inlet. This trail will also provide an important link to the Scott Creek Trail System. The Off-Road Cycling Strategy also identifies this area as having value and opportunities for the development of an off-road cycling gravity trail.

It would be developed as an urban nature trail with stairs in steeper portions (similar to the Coquitlam Crunch Trail). A proposed trailhead with parking at the corner of Pier Drive and Dewdney Trunk Road is also identified in the Metro Vancouver Northeast Sector Recreational Greenway Plan. Major highway and railway crossings for pedestrians will be accommodated through future road works and implementation of a bridge crossing at Falcon Drive to provide north-south pedestrian connectivity.

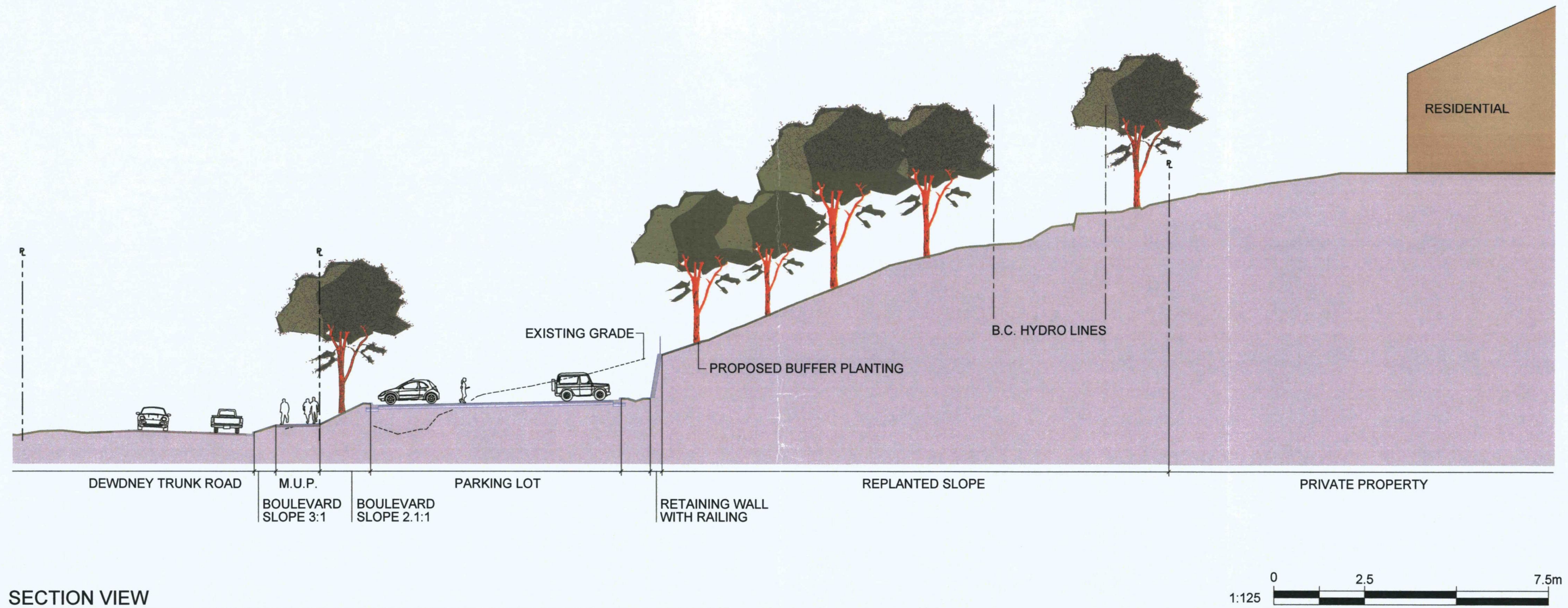


-  EXISTING TRAIL
-  FUTURE TRAIL CONNECTION PROJECT
-  KEY LOCATION WITHIN TRAIL SYSTEM
-  FUTURE TRAILHEAD
-  EXISTING SIDEWALK (PROVIDES CONNECTIVITY)
-  OTHER FUTURE TRAIL PROJECT





COQUITLAM CRUNCH PHASE 3 - PRELIMINARY PARKING LOT DESIGN



COQUITLAM CRUNCH PHASE 3 - PRELIMINARY PARKING LOT DESIGN