

# Riverfront Park - Loop Trail Changes

by Charles Hickenbottom

Major changes are underway this summer at Riverfront Park in Wenatchee. The changes pertinent to the Loop Trail between Ninth St and the First St will be covered here. Chelan County PUD will alter the trail in several ways to increase safety and enjoyment. Intersections will be marked more prominently, a section of the trail with an up and down grade will be leveled out, some sections will be widened, and some sections will be divided into trails side by side for wheels and feet. An image from the PUD website (below), portrays how wheels and feet will share the trail when construction is completed.



From the PUD website (below) are approximate dates for different parts of the project. For this summer (June to October, 2024), Loop Trail improvements will occur in the Train Depot area near First St. Changes both north and south of Fifth St are scheduled for Sept to October, 2024.

## Construction Dates

### Train Depot Area Timing

- Trail Improvements:  
June 2024 – Oct. 2024
- Bathroom Construction:  
July 2024 to Sept. 2024
- Playground Construction:  
Dec. 2024 – May 2025

### Fifth Street Area Improvements

- Pavilion Construction:  
July 2024 to Sept. 2024
- Splash Pad:  
Aug. 2024 – May 2025
- Trail Improvements 5th Street to North:  
Sept. 2024 to Oct. 2024
- Trail Improvements 5th Street to South:  
Sept. 2024 – Oct. 2024

## Apple Capital Loop Trail Improvements:

- Trails will split in several areas to allow separate “safe spaces” for various recreation, such as pedestrians and non-motorized bikes/vehicles. Other areas will see widened trails. These improvements will enhance trail use and safety in congested areas.

Screenshots from the PUD website

- Part of the trail behind Riverside 9 apartments will be leveled and widened for speed control and safety. Access to the river in this location will also be improved.



Early June, 2024  
Artwork near the Riverfront Crossing junction is removed to be placed in storage (left). Artwork will be returned to Riverfront Park when the project is finished, but perhaps some pieces will be placed in new places.

Early June, 2024  
Trees are marked for removal (right). Just north of the Riverwalk Crossing junction, the Loop Trail will be moved closer to the Columbia River near where the construction workers can be seen in the background.





Early June, 2024

For several months various detours will be in place (right). As work progresses the location of detours will change.



Late June, 2024

A big trench is carefully shaped near the Riverwalk Crossing junction (left). This will be a new location for the Loop Trail. In this section there will be separate lanes for wheels and feet.



Early July, 2024

The large trench near the junction of the Riverwalk Crossing (right) is shaped and ready for footings to be placed.



Mid July, 2024

Footings have now been placed into the deep trench near the junction of the Riverwalk Crossing (right and below).



Late July, 2024

Alongside the Riverside 9 Apartments, this section of the Loop Trail (right) with an up and down grade will be leveled to make it safer. Construction in this area is scheduled for Fall, 2024.











8-7-2024 The new configuration isn't finished, but is in place (above) where the Riverwalk Crossing joins the Loop Trail. This is a much more direct route compared to the previous configuration that required a couple of extra turns.

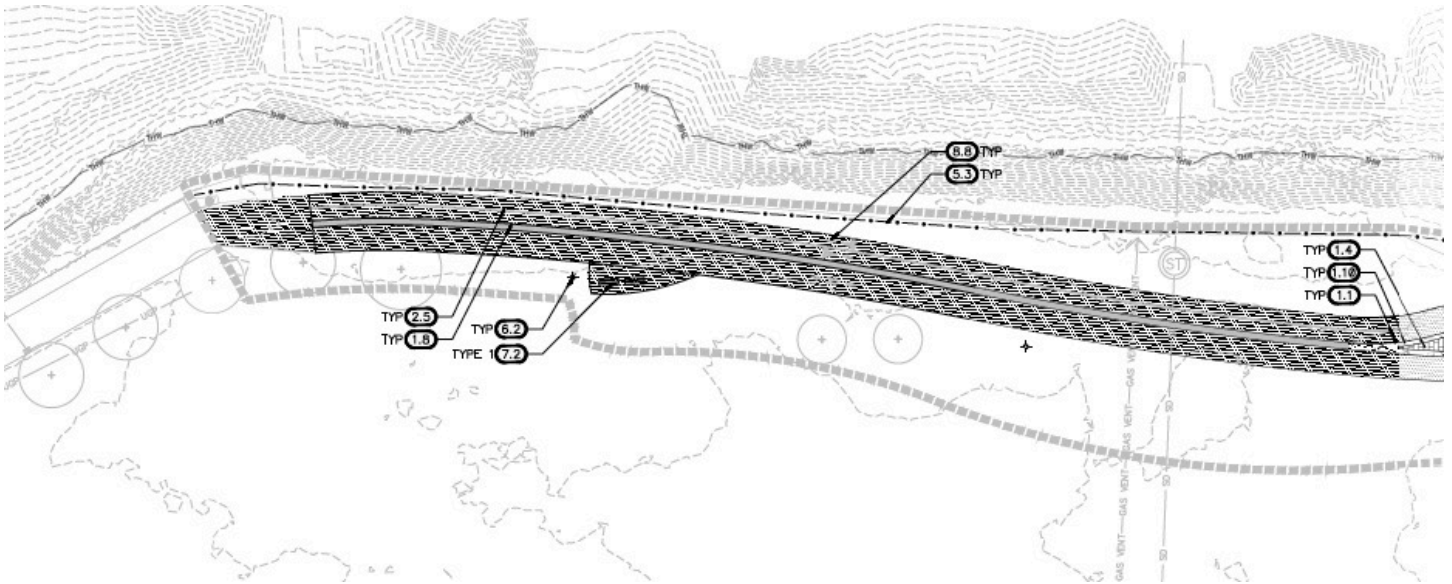


8-7-2024 (above) a long opening alongside the Loop Trail is evident, just north of the kiddie railroad. Stake labels in the ground said "Trail."

8-10-2024 (right) two working days later, the entire opening has been covered up. PUD staff acknowledged this is preliminary work and the Loop Trail will be placed here in the near future.





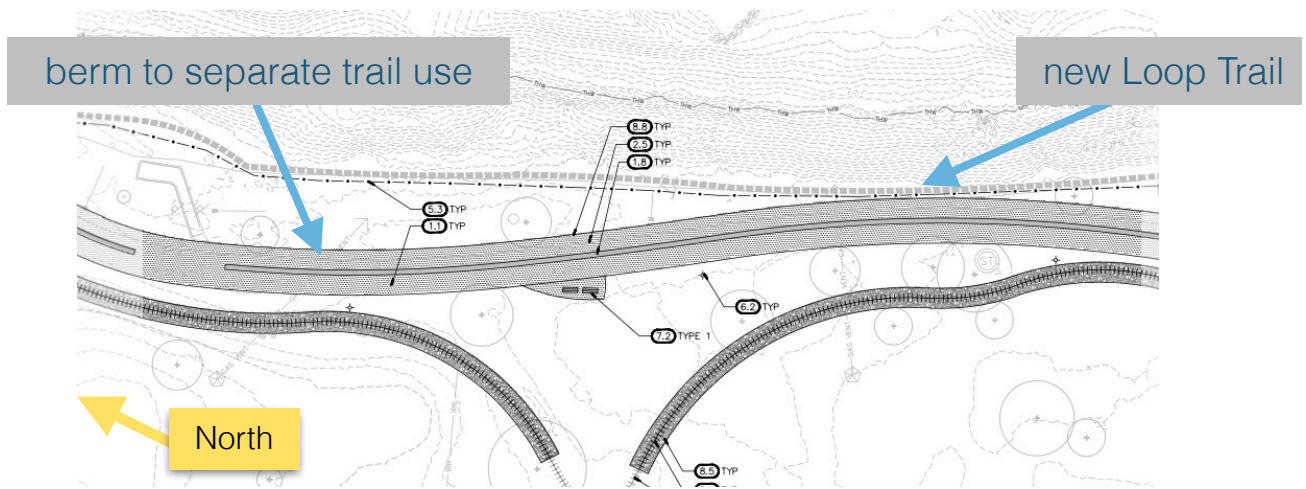


The PUD drawing for the portion of the Loop Trail just north of the railroad tracks (above) shows that the trail will be widened to include a walking portion and wheels portion side by side.

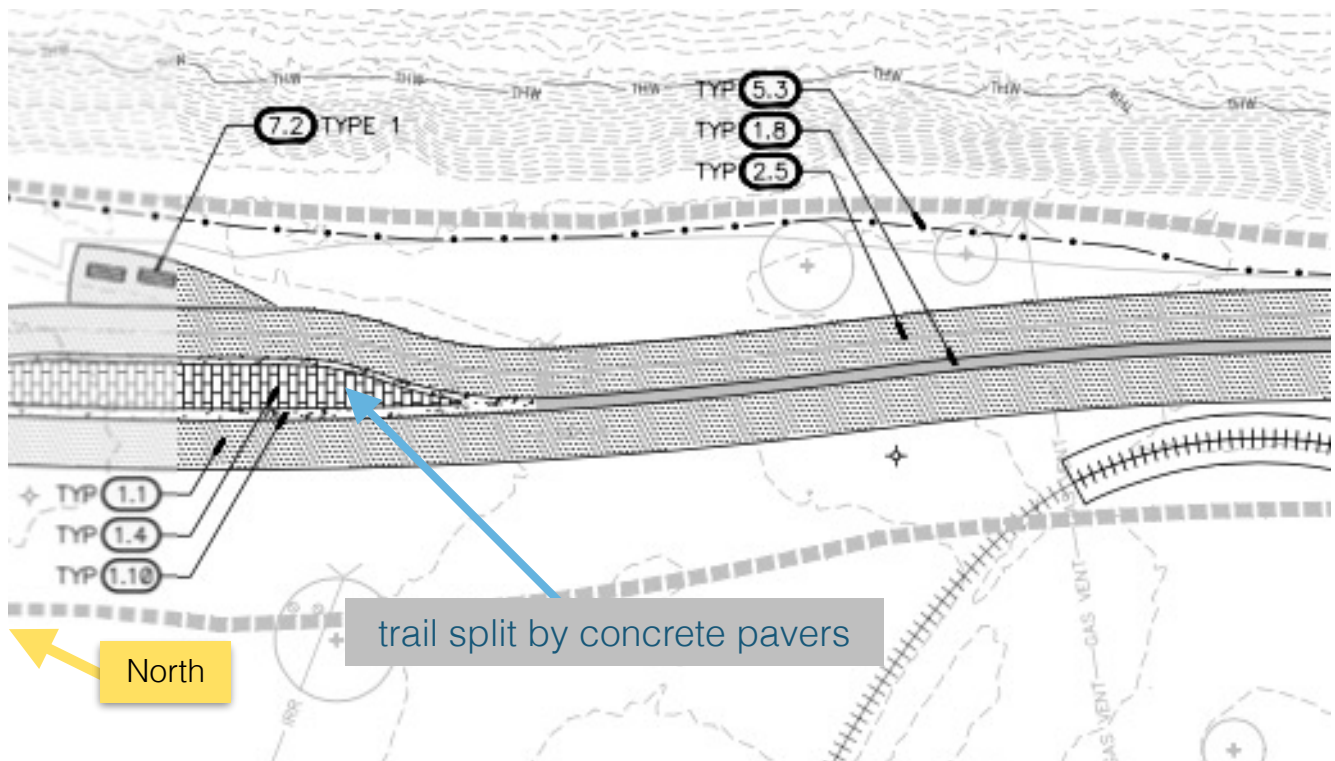


8-7-2024 The new configuration for the Loop Trail isn't finished, but is in place (above and right) just north of the Riverfront Crossing junction. Two temporary fences on the river side of the trail will eventually be replaced by a sturdy fence along the edge of the bluff.



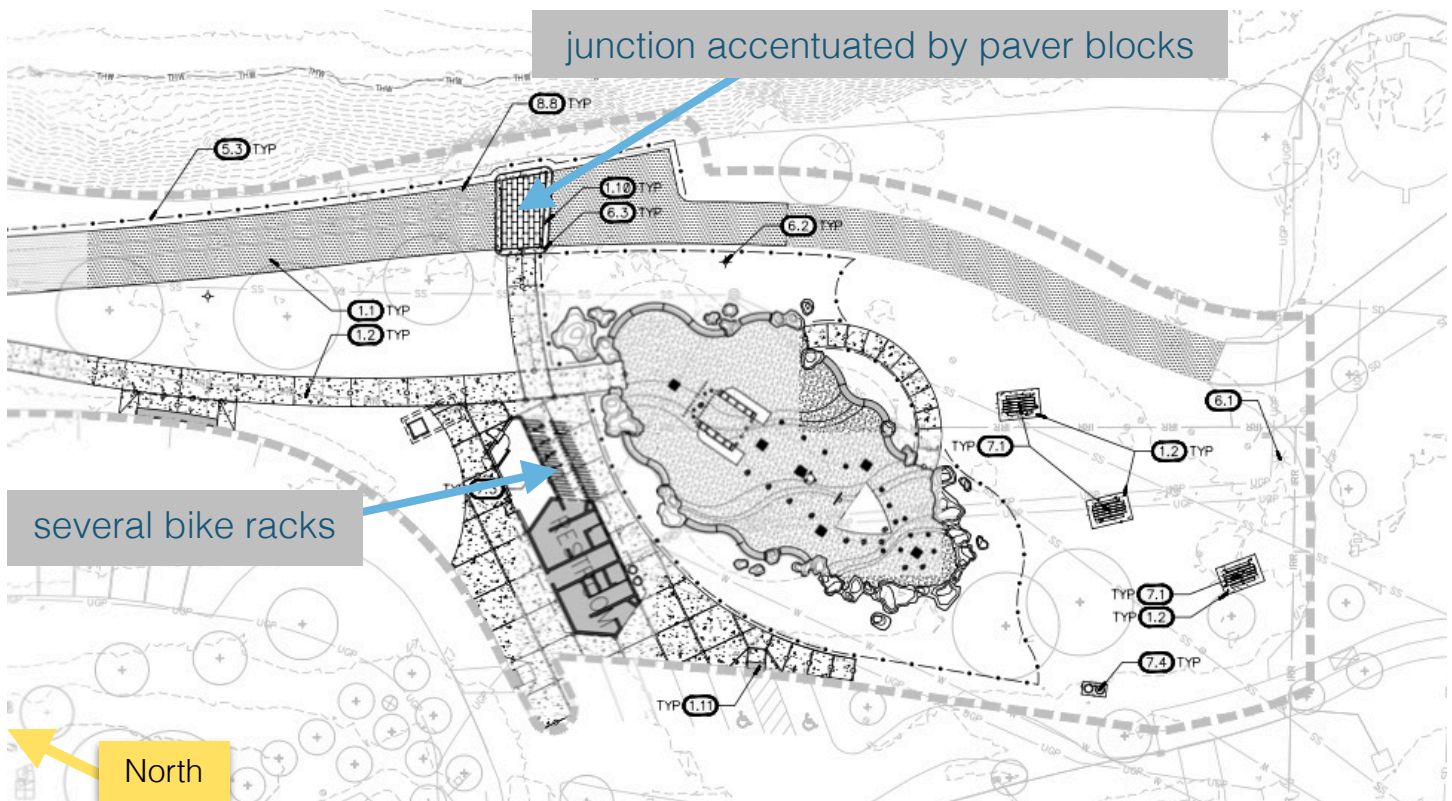


The drawing (above) is for the terrain a bit north of the Loop Trail - Riverwalk Crossing junction, alongside the miniature railroad. The Loop Trail "center line" is actually a small berm designed to separate wheels from feet.

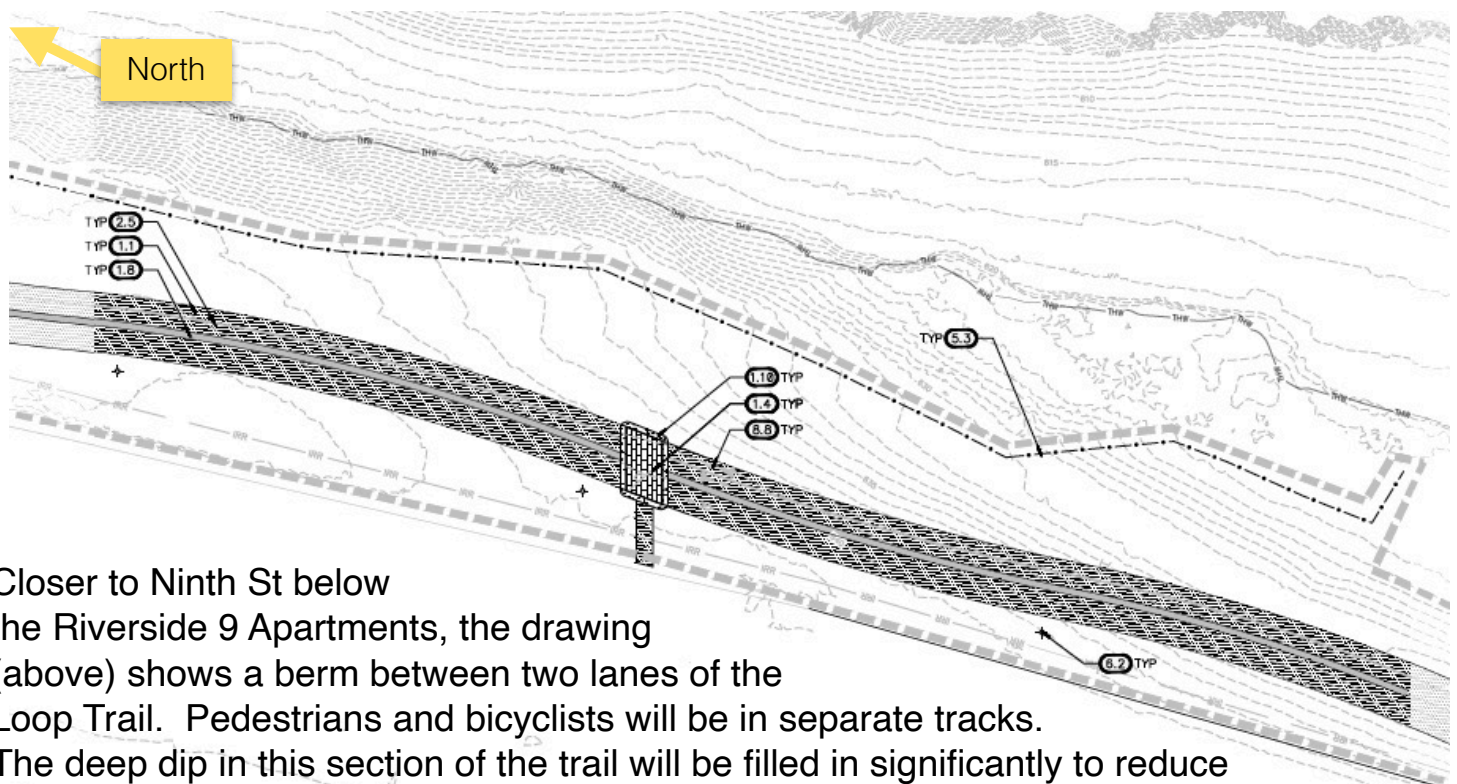


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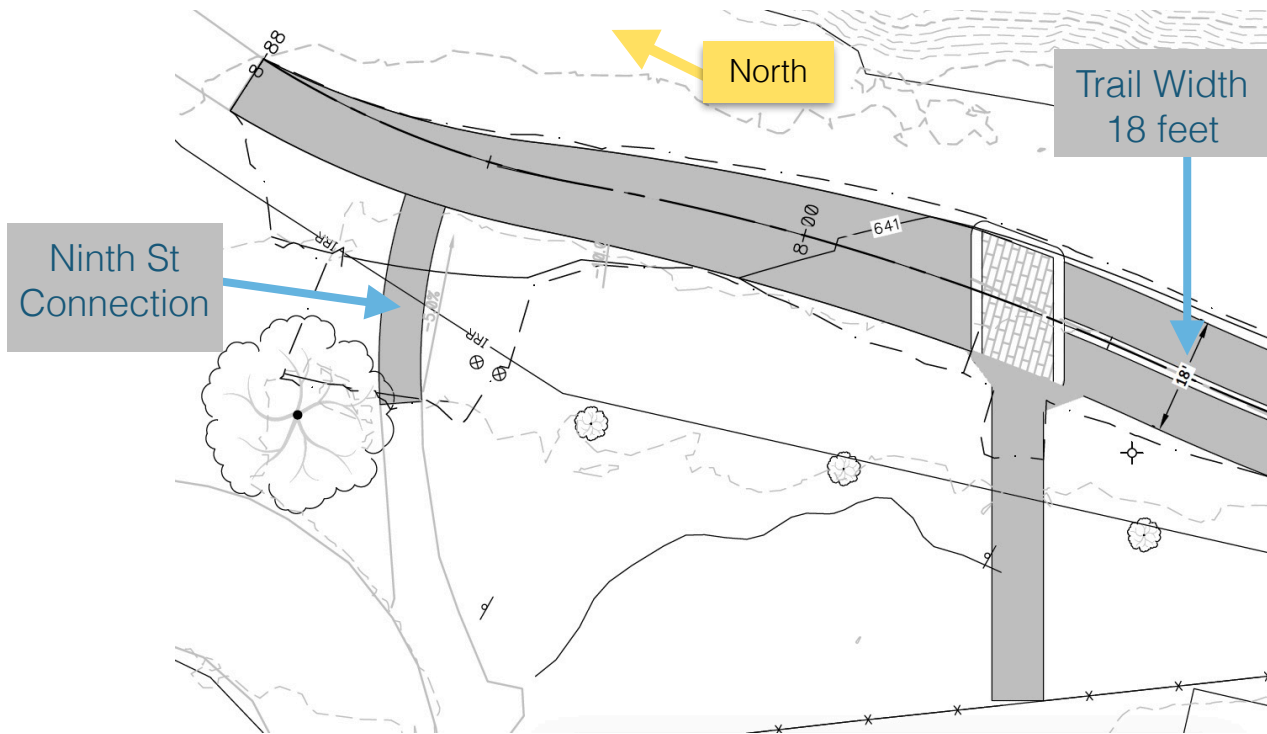


North of Fifth St (above), a new children's splash pad area will be constructed. Where the play area path meets the Loop Trail, a pad of paver blocks will draw attention to the junction to improve safety. Several bike racks are included nearby.

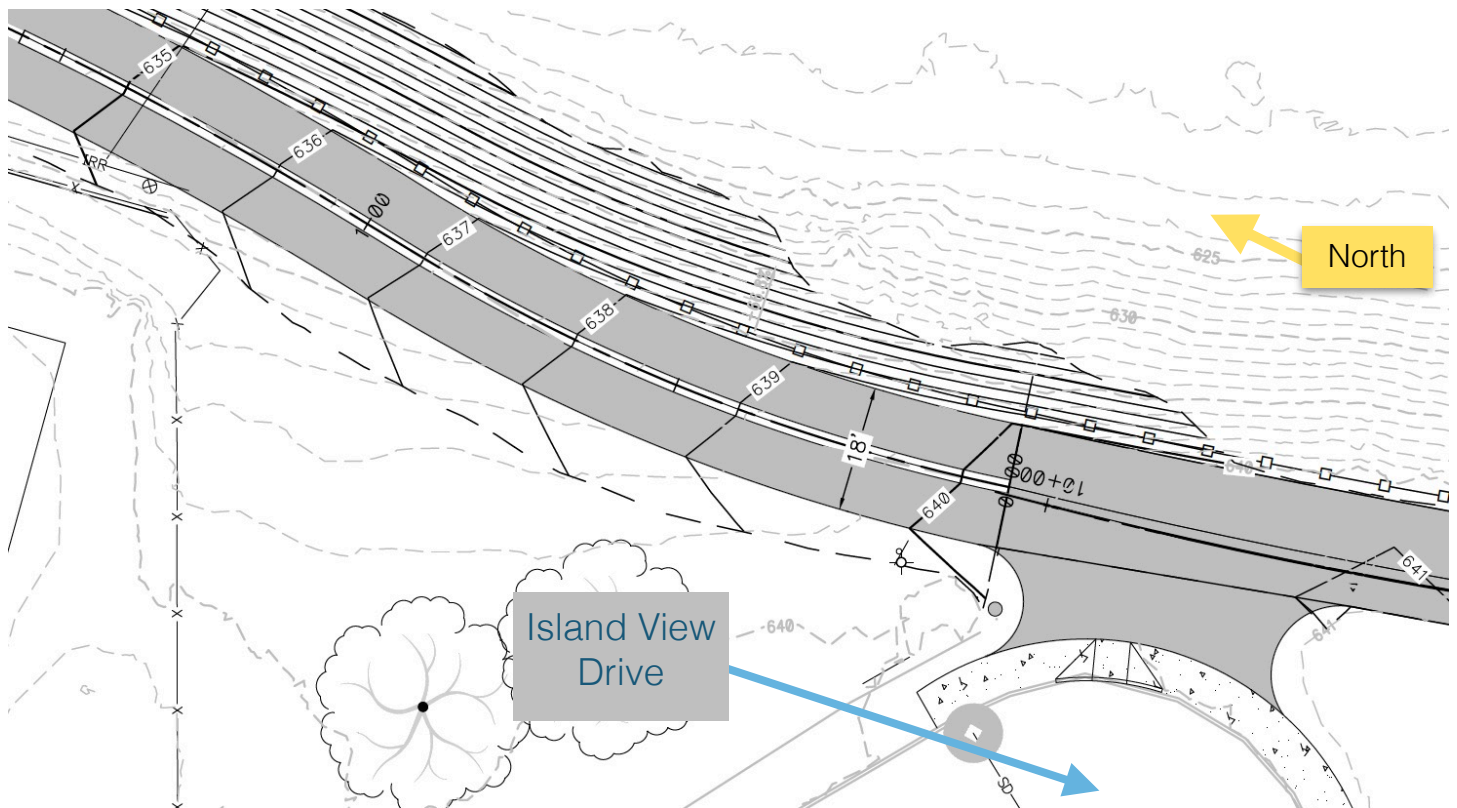


Closer to Ninth St below the Riverside 9 Apartments, the drawing (above) shows a berm between two lanes of the Loop Trail. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be in separate tracks. The deep dip in this section of the trail will be filled in significantly to reduce the up and down. The hope is to reduce the speed of bicyclists, who tend to go too fast on the downhill slope. This improvement will be especially valuable for all trail users when there is snow and ice to contend with.





A close-up drawing (above) portrays the new trail just south of Ninth St. Here at an elevation of 641 feet, the trail will begin a descent of only eight feet heading south. Also, the trail will widen to 18 feet in width with a berm to separate wheels and feet. 2000 cubic yards of dirt will be brought in as fill to completely regrade this section of the trail.



At Island View Dr (above) the trail is at an elevation of 641 feet. Heading north the new fill dirt will result in the trail dropping eight feet, resulting in a safer new trail when done.





Charles Hickenbottom is the author of Greater Wenatchee Bicycle Routes - A History Told Through Maps, Drawings, and Pictures. The book is available for purchase through the Wenatchee Valley Museum, with proceeds from sales donated to the museum. The book can be checked out from North Central Washington Libraries. Hickenbottom has served for 25 years on local bicycle advisory boards and committees. For two decades he commuted by bicycle to Lewis & Clark Elementary School from his home near Chase Park. Most of his errands and travel around town is done by bicycle. 8-17-2024