

**East Lake Sammamish Trail Segment 2B  
Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SSDP2016-00415)**

This submission is to clarify my oral testimony on November 3:

I support approving King County's permit for Segment 2B of the ELST, per the County's application, and ask you to consider the reasons summarized here.

These reasons are based on extensive personal use of local public trails over the 45 years my wife and I have lived in King County, including thousands of miles of walking, jogging, and recreational cycling. These safety factors and perspectives are not merely theoretical, based on academic or legal research. They are practical, real-world observations based on encountering a variety of behaviors, patterns, accidents, injuries, and near-accidents, on many different public trails. I gained additional perspectives and observations from our previous home, adjacent to the Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle; our current home is immediately adjacent to the Eastside Rail Corridor, on which a public recreational trail is now being built (the right-of-way is 18 feet from our front door).

**A. MULTI-USE TRAILS:** A multi-use public trail like the ELST is valuable to a wide variety of Sammamish residents and other users because it accommodates so many activities (once paving is completed) - walking alone or with friends/family; jogging; outings with kids/grandkids who are being carried, or in strollers, or walking/running; walking dogs; skating and skateboarding; and cycling. (Since testifying on Friday, I've learned that the ELST is ADA accessible, so presumably some users will be able to enjoy the trail with the aid of wheelchairs or walkers as well.)

This variety of activities and users is a major benefit of the ELST as a community amenity. It is also a major safety and design challenge: the users are moving in opposite directions along the trail; they're moving at different speeds; they are passing each other; they are often focused on the scenery and companions (or cell phones); many stop from time to time; some human users (or their pets) move suddenly and/or unpredictably in potential conflict with other users; and the trail's many users are of widely diverse ages, physical abilities, experience, and judgment.

**B. SAFETY FACTORS:** Based on years of first-hand observations, several factors have the biggest impact on the safety of people using paved, non-motorized trails:

1. **Trail width** is the most significant factor for mixed use trails (more than for paths oriented more to a single use, such as horseback riding, walking, running, or cycling). Width provides the essential safety margin to enable the inconsistent (and potentially incompatible) uses to coexist; width provides the "wiggle room" for users to avoid collision and injury when other users (including children and pets) stray from their "imaginary lane," move suddenly/unpredictably, lose control, etc.
2. **Trail surface** - fairly smooth and free of hazards like cracks, tree roots, refuse, etc. (so users don't have to make abrupt changes of direction to avoid the hazards).
3. **Consistency:** The trail needs to be not only wide enough and smooth enough, it needs to be consistent. Even on roads, where car traffic moves in marked lanes, drivers (whose only job should be driving) collide and have trouble coping with changes in lane width. Uniform trail width is even more important on recreational trails, where users are naturally playing, admiring the Sammamish scenery, chatting with others, and are not focusing paving width.