

Mayne Island Regional Trail Phase 1 Development

Project Newsletter #1 - February 2022



The Capital Regional District is developing the initial phase of the Mayne Island Regional Trail – a 2.3 km, 2-way, gravel surfaced trail between the Village Bay ferry terminal and Naylor Road in Miners Bay.

CRD

The Starting Point

The idea of regional trails on the Gulf Islands was outlined in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. A strategic action indicated that, in partnership with other public agencies, local government and private landowners, CRD would initiate planning for the regional trails system on Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands.

Regional trails in the Gulf Islands were raised again through the Experience the Gulf Islands Initiative in 2015. It was noted that trails were needed to connect the islands and provide opportunities for climate-friendly public access. In 2015, the CRD made a commitment to develop the Mayne Island Regional Trail first, recognizing it as a demonstration project that would be evaluated and provide learning opportunities for other Gulf Island trails.

In 2017, the Gulf Islands Regional Trails Plan, identified conceptual routes for CRD regional trails in the Gulf Islands and confirmed that the first project would be an initial section of the Mayne Island Regional Trail. The plan was approved by the CRD Board in early 2018. Work on the Mayne Island trail design was undertaken over the next few years and in June 2020, the CRD was successful in getting an Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant to assist with the project."



Mount Parke Regional Park, Mayne Island

The Trail Classification

The Mayne Island Regional Trail is classified as a "Bike and Pedestrian Trail". These trails provide opportunities cycling, walking and running for both recreation and for active transportation. Regional trails are for non-motorized use, although motor-assist bicycles that meet the ICBC provincial standards are permitted.



Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail, Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park

Route Planning & Design

The planning and design stage of this project has been on-going for a number of years. Initially, in 2014-2015, a consultant was hired by the CRD to work with island groups to identify routes of interest for potential future trails on each of the southern Gulf Islands. Over 100 kilometers of possible trails were identified.

In 2017, the CRD initiated the development of the Gulf Islands Regional Trails Plan, which used the earlier work as a starting point to clarify and consider potential routes for a regional trail on each island. The regional trail would act as a main trail route generally linking the ferry terminal to key destinations such as regional, provincial or national parks and/or commercial hubs.

Other local trails could be linked to the regional trails to expand the overall network and connect to additional areas of interest on each island.

Five public open houses—one on each island—were held in March 2017 to provide project background, regional context, vision information, proposed regional trail route options for each island, and potential prioritization criteria for future development of the trails. Displays were also posted on the project website. Comment forms were available at the open houses and online. First Nations engagement was also undertaken, through presentations and meetings. Responses from the initial engagement was used to inform the development of the draft trails plan.

A second round of engagement with government agencies, First Nations and the public was held between July and October 2017 to gauge level of support for the Draft Gulf Islands Regional Trails Plan. Engagement on the Mayne Island Regional Trail design was also undertaken at that time. Input on the trail design informed the process as it progressed to final design.



St. John Point Regional Park, Mayne Island

The long term full Mayne Island Regional Trail route will connect the Village Bay ferry terminal to Miners Bay village and to Mount Parke Regional Park. Phase 1 is the initial 2.3 kilometers between the ferry terminal and Naylor Road (Miners Bay). Phase 2 is not anticipated for many years - after initial sections are complete on each of the other Gulf Islands.

In the planning and design stage of this project, the CRD assessed the environmental, archaeological and geotechnical situation to identify if any significant resources or challenges existed that needed to be addressed before or during construction.

In the environmental assessment, consideration is given to aspects such as the vegetation, invasive species, wildlife/habitat, and erosion and environmental protection measures are identified to minimize potential for disturbance. Initially, approximately 70-80 mature trees were expected to be removed for trail development. Through route/design changes and working with an arborist, this has been minimized to 44.



Calypso Trail, Mill Hill Regional Park



Mount Parke Regional Park, Mayne Island

Other actions being taken to reduce potential impacts include working with the Mayne Island Conservancy Society on a pre-construction native plant removal opportunity, minimizing the spread of invasive species during construction through specific control measures, minimizing impact to wildlife by clearing the route outside of the migratory bird window and amphibian breeding period, retaining shelter habitat for wildlife such as wildlife trees and downed logs, and requiring specific erosion control measures such as fencing/straw wattles downslope of construction, installing rock or sandbag check dams in existing ditches and minimizing soil exposure by planning.

Protection of archaeological resources is also a key consideration and CRD works with registered archaeologists to assess potential for resources and potential for impact. Archaeological information is kept confidential to help ensure protection of cultural heritage resources. No areas with potential for subsurface cultural deposits will be impacted by the proposed regional trail route and the risk of unrecorded archaeological resources is considered to be low along the trail route. No further archaeological work was recommended by the archaeologist. If any unanticipated archaeological resources are encountered during construction, work will stop and required provincial processes will be followed.

Geotechnical assessment is undertaken using desktop and on-site visual reviews to identify the soil and rock situation along the route and determine geo-technically challenging areas to assist in trail design and construction. In general, the native soils and bedrock seen and anticipated throughout the proposed trail route are considered suitable to support an appropriately designed trail structure. Based on grading, slopes and/or retaining walls will be necessary in several areas.

Cuts and fills will be balanced to the greatest degree possible, ensuring that engineered fill is clean, free draining material of quality, strong parent material. The geotechnical engineer provided specific technical information regarding cuts, fill, retaining walls, subgrade preparation, and site soils that will be used in the final design work and construction.

Since 2020, the CRD and H.Y. Engineering have been finalizing the design drawings to meet tender-ready requirements. This included finalizing the trees to be removed, identifying hydro-related changes, and addressing topographic challenges. The CRD has also had discussions with First Nations, BC Ferries, the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee, adjacent landowners, the Mayne Island Conservancy, and local park and trail organizations about specific aspects of the project.

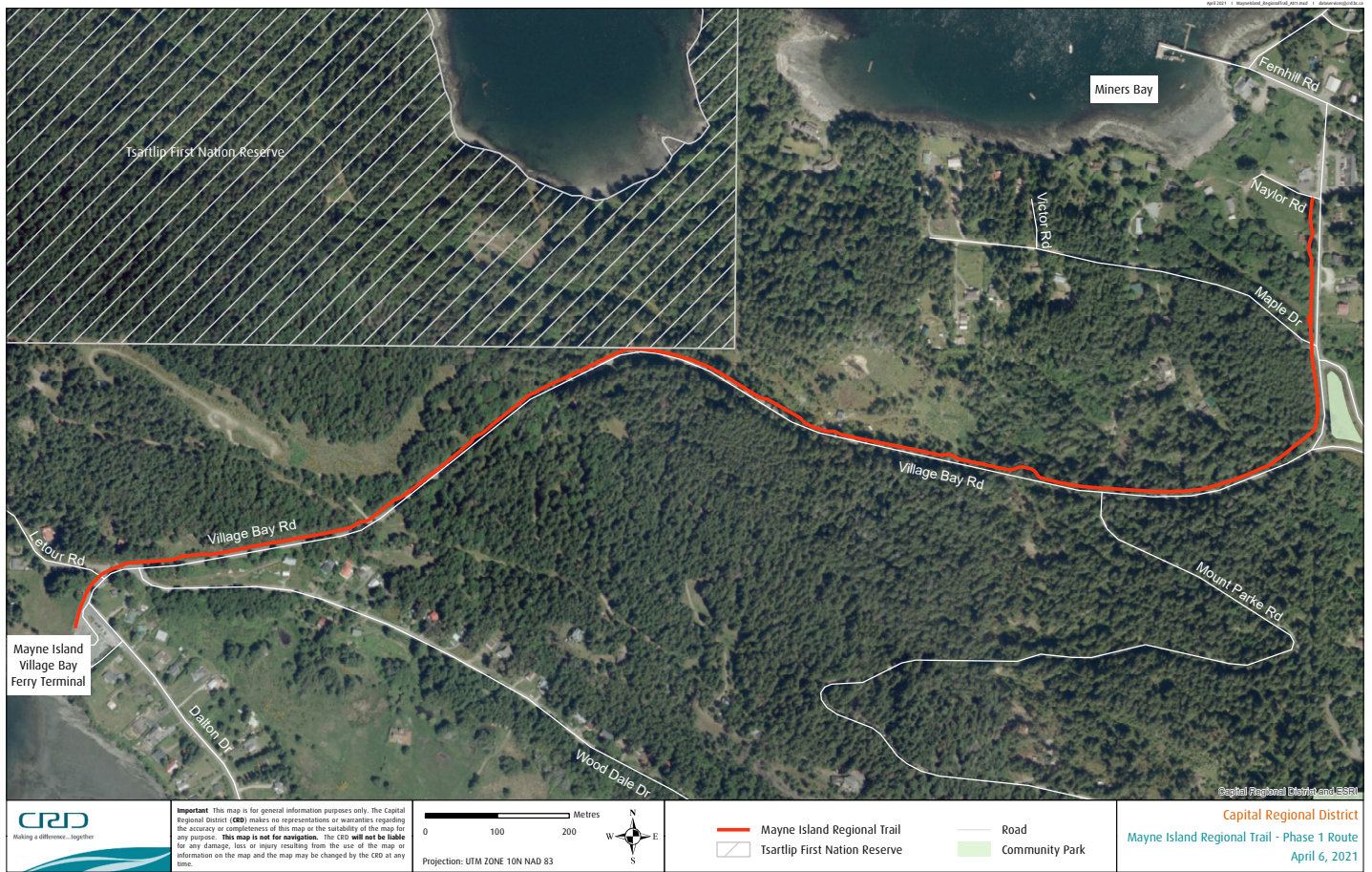
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Project Webpage

For more information and to stay up to date, visit the project webpage.

<https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/capital-projects/mayne-island-regional-trail>