# Coal Creek Sewer Upgrade

*This story was made with Esri's Story Map Journal.*
*Read the interactive version on the web at http://arcg.is/eP9O5.*

## A King County sewer upgrade project is coming to your area!

King County's Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) is designing an upgrade to a pipe that carries sewage from Bellevue's Coal Creek area toward South Treatment Plant in Renton. WTD needs to provide more capacity for your growing area.  Read on to learn more about the project, what it means to you, how to get involved, and how you can stay up to date.


King County's Coal Creek Sewer now runs along the waterway in the Coal Creek Natural Area.

# Where is the Coal Creek Sewer?


I-405 FWY
COAL CREEK PKWY SE
Coal Creek
FACTORIA BLVD SE
Coal Creek Natural Area
Newport Creek
119TH AVE SE
130TH AVE SE
132ND AVE SE
Lake Heights Park
125TH AVE SE
Coal Creek
SE 52ND ST
Coal Creek Natural Area
COAL CREEK PKWY SE
FOREST DR SE


WTD's Coal Creek sewer pipe is part of a regional wastewater treatment system. The existing pipe is about 2.5 miles long, and the north section mostly follows the banks of Coal Creek between Newcastle and I-405. This important pipe provides service to areas of Bellevue and Newcastle.

This project will focus on the north section of pipe, shown in **solid red in the map at right.**

If you walk the trails at the Coal Creek Natural Area, you may have seen some of the maintenance holes associated with the sewer line.


Sewer maintenance hole along the trail in the Coal Creek Natural area.

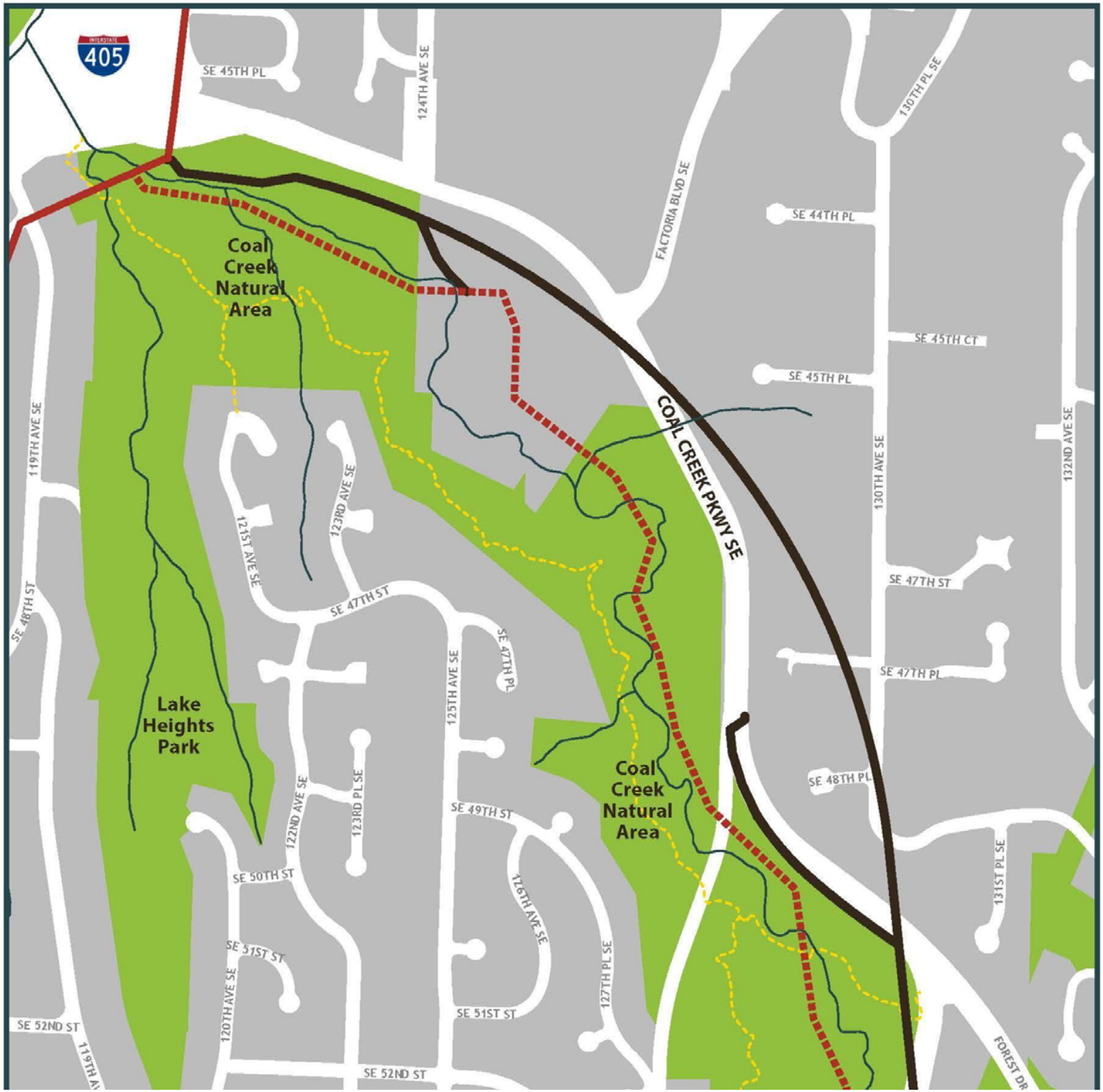
# Supporting the community, protecting the creek

King County keeps an eye on over 400 miles of pipe in our system. We watch for signs that we need to upgrade or replace pipes. The north section of the Coal Creek sewer pipe is running out of capacity. Sewage flows from the south section into the north section, so if the north pipe runs out of room, overflows could occur.

This project gives us an opportunity to protect the pipe and creek. The north section of the Coal Creek sewer runs along the banks of Coal Creek, where flooding has eroded the bank several times. Erosion can expose the pipe and create risk for sewer overflows into the creek. The proposed path for the new pipe moves much of the active pipe out of the creek area.

After a large flood, WTD carried out extensive bank repairs to protect the sewer pipe.

# What will we build?


405
SE 45TH PL
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Coal Creek Natural Area
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COAL CREEK PKWY SE
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121ST AVE SE
130TH AVE SE
132ND AVE SE
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SE 47TH PL
125TH AVE SE
Lake Heights Park
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123RD PL SE
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Coal Creek Natural Area
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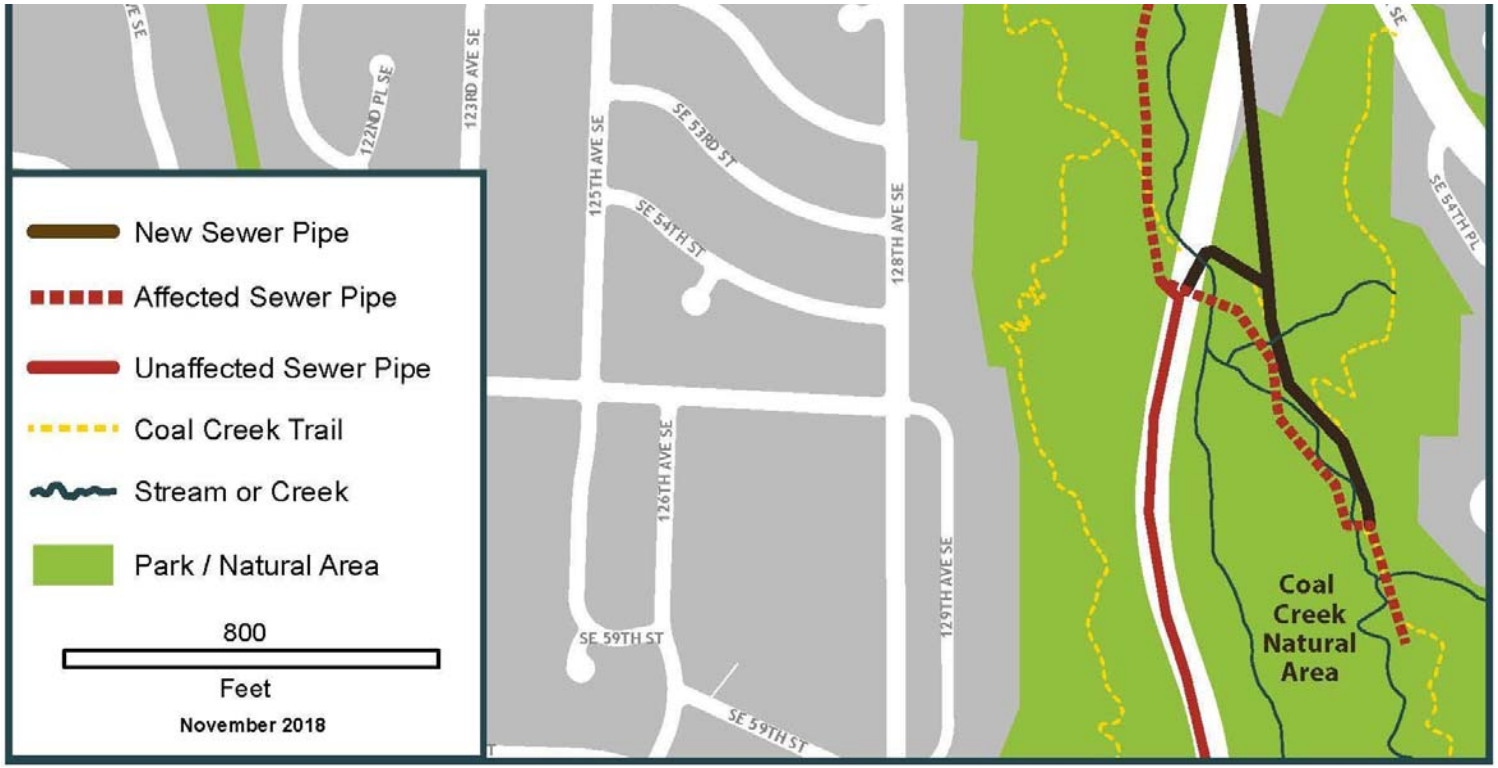


The Coal Creek Sewer Upgrade Project team identified a pipe path that moves much of the active sewer pipe out of the natural area. Most of the pipe would be installed underground, using tunneling. This reduces community impacts on the surface. To view work areas, click on the **highlighted text** below.

The **south end of the pipe path** **(link available only in online story)** will include construction staging at the Natural Area trailhead will support tunneling and replacing a section of pipe along the trail. The pipe spur in Coal Creek Parkway will have some traffic impacts.

While most of the pipe will be installed underground, **one section in the central area** **(link available only in online story)** is close enough to the road to have traffic impacts.

The **north part of the work area** **(link available only in online story)** includes a section that will be installed by digging a trench, putting in a pipe, and filling over the pipe. This section is near residences and Coal Creek.

Most of the pipe will be installed underground by tunneling. The **central portion** **(link available only in online story)**will be about 150 feet below the surface.The entry pit will be located at the Natural Area trailhead. The exit pit, where the tunnel machine comes out, will be located on Bellevue Parks property at the north end.

# How will work affect the area?

While the team is working to reduce construction effects, the project will impact part of the Natural Area and Coal Creek Parkway. Some short sections of pipe will be built using open trenching, which involves cutting through the surface. We will be working closely with the City of Bellevue, our project

neighbors, and the wider community throughout design and construction. King County's teams keep people up to date as plans develop, and look for ways to reduce impacts.

Coal Creek Parkway is a heavily used roadway.

# What is the schedule?


This project has years to go before construction, which is expected to begin in 2021. The Coal Creek Sewer Upgrade Project is early in design, allowing the community a lot of time to learn about the project and get to know the project team. You will have a range of opportunities to meet the project team and to give input along the way.


Continue reading to learn about how King County's project teams work with communities.

# Our team will work with you.

King County's project teams work to meet our project communities where they are at, every step of the way. Our priority is to keep people up to date and to address questions and concerns. We have a lot of ways to work with your community, and we welcome your suggestions for how best to meet your needs:

- Project Web page
- Newsletter and email updates
- Community meetings and briefings
- Fairs, festivals, events
- Online meetings
- One-on-one meetings
- Notice of activities
- 24/7 hotline during construction

You will have opportunities to attend meetings and site visits, keep up on the Web, and meet with us in person.

# Why build a sewer alongside a creek?

As you are learning about this project, you are probably wondering why engineers would design a sewer pipe to run through a natural area by a creek. It starts with a simple concept: water flows downhill, powered by gravity.

The Coal Creek sewer pipe was built in sections in the 1960s-70s, about half a century ago. In the past, engineers designed systems to use gravity as much as possible. The pipes collected sewage from uphill and carried it down to low points, where surface water also naturally gathers: wetlands, creek beds, and tidelands.This approach saved equipment and energy that would be required to move sewage uphill.

You can watch gravity at work on Coal Creek flows as they cascade downhill.

# Today is a new day

King County's regional wastewater system has come a long way. Before the system was built, much of the region's wastewater was discharged into local waters untreated. After over 50 years of wastewater treatment, Lake Washington is one of the cleanest urban lakes in the world.

Today, when King County needs to build or upgrade the wastewater system, we avoid building in natural areas whenever possible. Moving much of the active Coal Creek sewer pipe away from the creek is one way we protect our cherished and sensitive environment.

School children on low tide tours learn about marine life that wastewater treatment helps to protect.

# Learn more

Since the Coal Creek Sewer Upgrade Project is in early design, with construction expected to start in 2021, we have a lot of time to work together. Here's how you can learn more and contact us about the project.

- **Visit the project** Web page

- **Contact Monica Van der Vieren** at monica.vandervieren@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-550

**For Alternate formats, please call 206-447-8621/TTY Relay: 711**