

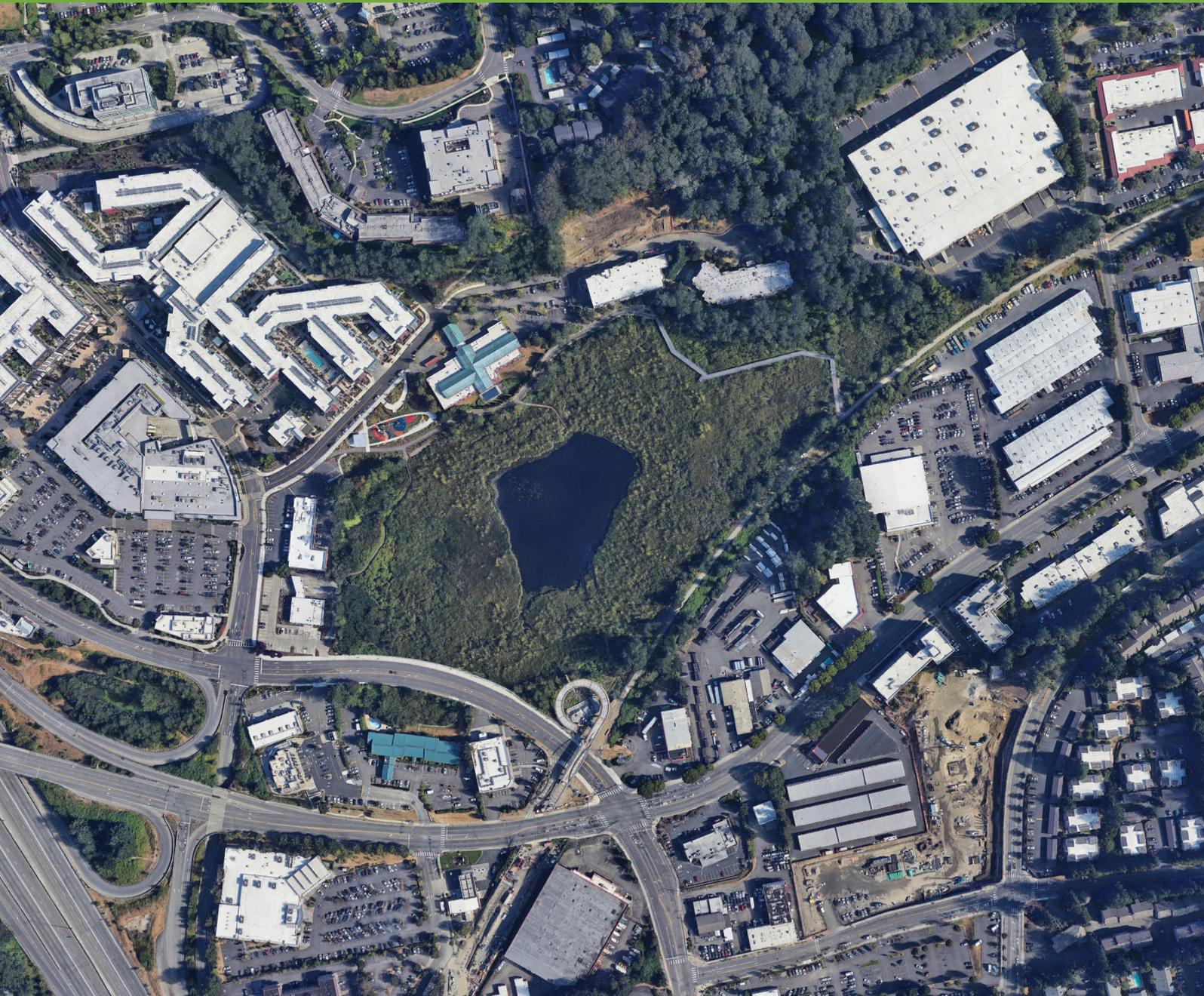
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14 | 3:00-4:30 PM

TOTEM LAKE

TOTEM LAKE PARK

WALKING TOUR

"Once, the little retail center off Highway 405 in north Kirkland was home to a dark '70s era mall with mostly empty storefronts. Now the Village at Totem Lake is an Eastside destination."



Totem Lake Area

- **Built in the 1970's, the Totem Lake shopping area** was comprised of two strip malls and other small retail shops that slowly became an ineffective commercial hub.
- Old timers used to call this area **"Mud Lake"**. Its official name was Lake Wittenmyer before the City renamed it Totem Lake.
- The site used to have a restaurant called the Cowboy's Steak House which became **"Yuppie Pawn Shop."**
- Prior to 1970, the area **supported agriculture** for fruit orchards, vegetables, and a farm that produced cucumbers for pickles.

Vision for Totem Lake Urban Center

- **A public/private partnership project** consisting of 366,707 sq. ft. of commercial space and 851 dwelling units realizing the vision for the Totem Lake Urban Center: **transformation of a defunct 1970s mall into a sustainable, transit-oriented mixed-use village.**
- The Totem Lake Plan was **adopted in 2002** from which the project evolved in partnership with Center Cal Properties.
- The project consisted of approximately **\$557 million private investment and \$15 million of public investment.** An additional **\$34 million was invested by the City for infrastructure improvements** that support the Village at Totem Lake and other Urban Center growth.
- The City partnered with the developer to **reconstruct the 120th Ave NE** to make the street **more pedestrian friendly** to help activate the development as a gathering area for residents and the public.
- The site posed **significant engineering challenges** due to soils and proximity to Totem Lake which City Staff and the Developers Consultants were able to overcome with creative design solutions.
- **2013-2014 – CKC Master Plan adopted.** Integral to planning the Village and the Totem Lake Connector.
- **2018 – Totem Lake Urban Center Enhancement and Multi-modal Transportation Network Plan was completed.**
- **GIS story map** was created to illustrate how the Village at Totem Lake implements the City's Comprehensive Plan: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=4a5022f379bd4d319169ae4cea4e1374>
- **2021 – Village at Totem Lake won the Governor's 2020-2021 Smart Communities Awards:** Smart Partnerships for Joint Public Project Implementing Comprehensive Plan.
- **July 2021 – Totem Lake Park opened.**
- **July 2023 – Totem Lake Connector opened** and provides a crucial connection to the Cross Kirkland Corridor and Totem Lake Park.
- **2023 – Totem Lake Park wins WASLA Award of Honor**

Park As Ecological Centerpiece for a Re-envisioned Neighborhood

- Totem Lake Park is a **17-acre park** providing **both recreation and escape** as the centerpiece of a revitalized, energized, and growing neighborhood. The design draws its character from the adjacent ecology, expanding the limits of Totem Lake by extending its ecological edges into the newly acquired and developed uplands.
- **Wonderfully bright playground** structures and surfacing contrast with the adjacent tapestry of green wetlands. The accessible playground, the **active heart of the park**, is ringed by complementary active program and experiences, including a wetland overlook, custom restroom and support structure, and a **unique 48-foot-long community table** that fosters social interaction.
- **An accessible wetland boardwalk** enhanced with art connects to the Cross Kirkland Corridor, a multi-use regional trail that unifies Kirkland's neighborhoods.

Design Process

- Totem Lake Park began with a **master plan process coupled with a larger planning effort** to revitalize the Totem Lake neighborhood, one of Kirkland's densest neighborhoods. Working with the Totem Lake Business District, Kirkland Planners, and the Parks Department, the landscape architect **studied adjacent parcels** surrounding Totem Lake (owned by the King Conservation District and maintained by Kirkland Parks) that could support a future neighborhood park.
- Along with redeveloping the **adjacent Cross Kirkland Corridor** as a regional trail, the park would **catalyze the neighborhood** and provide recreational opportunities in an area with limited access to open space. The result of the **decade-long project** was the successful purchase of a 2.5-acre parcel redeveloped into an upland neighborhood park with a 900-foot-long boardwalk that connects to the regional trail.

The Boardwalk

- Located amongst the high-functioning wetlands, the boardwalk was **designed to allow native vegetation to regenerate below the structure** and not become a barrier to wildlife. The saturated peat soils at the boardwalk site presented uncertainty, as the geotechnical investigators and **surveyors were unable to walk more than a few feet beyond the edge of the wetland without sinking**. This limited the ability to perform geotechnical borings along the boardwalk's alignment and limited recording certain topographical information such as locations of significant trees, downed wood, and existing water/land elevations. **Directed, high-resolution, aerial drone photography and mapping** overcame this challenge to **complete the base mapping** of surface information.

The Boardwalk, *continued*

- **Performing borings as far out into the peat wetland as possible** helped ameliorate the risk that the **length of driven piles** in the inaccessible areas **could vary from the expected approximate 30' length**. To account for the possibility that a shorter depth of bearing soil was encountered or, conversely, more piles than estimated might be required, the landscape architect **developed a suite of Unit Price Bid Items** to supplement the Lump Sum CSI type bid format of the project. These allowed for the **price of piles to be adjusted based on the total length installed** and for the project to remain a Lump Sum CSI type bid project as envisioned.
- **Builder testing developed means and methods to ensure that the boardwalk was constructible**. The project worked with two different boardwalk contractors during design, one of which employed a progressive construction method **utilizing a spider crane** positioned on a completed section while working on the next, and the other contractor who **utilized buoyant platforms on the squishy surface** instead of on the boardwalk. Limit of work was adjusted to accommodate each method and simply required the winning bidder to submit a work plan prior to construction.
- Once constructibility was determined, **the client requested to widen the boardwalk to accommodate more people**. A portion of this exploration included developing a cost per widened foot metric to inform decisions regarding the balance of budget and desired capacity/width. This effort helped the client arrive at a 10' width up from the original plan of 6'. The team implemented this change between 30% and 60% design with adaptations including **revising Critical Areas mitigation strategies** and **changing from a wood-based to a steel-based structural system**.

1% for Public Art

- The City of Kirkland dedicates **1% of a capital project's total cost specifically for public art**.
- Kirkland **maintains a diverse public art collection that values and honors artistic endeavor** and the creative process, recognizes the role of public art in a welcoming and inclusive community, invites interaction, fosters civic identity and community pride.
- The **Kirkland Cultural Arts Commission (KCAC)** is responsible for helping the City Council implement the Public Art Vision in Kirkland. The KCAC is a **volunteer advisory board** that works to help arts, culture and heritage grow and thrive in the City of Kirkland.
- Integrated **public artwork entitled "Trace"** was developed in collaboration with **artist Jill Anholt** and features wildlife species of the site as abstract, indecipherable forms that come into focus as park users traverse the boardwalk.
- Each **art element appears as a whimsical sculptural form** on its own; however, careful observation from vantage points along the boardwalk allows the viewer to experience sequential art elements coalescing into recognizable sequential **art elements coalescing into recognizable outlines** of a beaver, bird, and fish, all animals that occupy the Totem Lake wetland.

Budget

- Construction cost: **\$6.25M** (Budget \$8.6M)
- Contractor: Wyser Construction

Timeline

- **Park Master Plan** began March, 2013
- **Design** began November, 2015 and completed January, 2020
- **Construction** started May, 2020 and completed August, 2021

Permitting

- SEPA, Sensitive Area Review, HPA, Ecology Construction Stormwater General Permit, Demo, 2x Building Permits (restroom & boardwalk), Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, LSM (Clearing & Grading), PSE Power, NUD Water/Sewer, 4x Public Works (water, sewer, electric, gas)

Construction

- **Peat soils** required the restroom and playground to be **pile supported**.
- **Special permit approval** required to widen boardwalk to 10' (code only allowed 5')
- Covid started after contract bidding which **affected material costs and labor efficiencies**.
- Constructing a **boardwalk on top of floating vegetation** islands is possible!
- Existing **degraded wood boardwalk** resulted in revising the storm ponds and trail, and removal of creosote pilings.
- Added **rockery** near wetland and upland property **to protect slopes**.
- **Beaver activity impacted lake levels** placing the existing boardwalk under water at times.







Aerials from 2002 and 2023

