



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides   



**Burke-Gilman  
Trail**  
*Washington*



# Burke-Gilman Trail

Washington

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Spanning just over 19 miles between Seattle and Bothell, the Burke-Gilman Trail is as much a thoroughfare for commuting to work and the University of Washington as it is a staple for social recreation and fitness. Built in the 1970s, the trail was among the first rail-trails in the country and helped inspire dozens of similar projects around the nation.

## About the Route

Trail users can start their journey along the Burke-Gilman Trail at Puget Sound at the Golden Gardens Park entrance, on the east side of Seaview Avenue NW. Reach the NW 60th Street Viewpoint by traversing the waterfront and marina for just over a mile. Signs direct trail users to cross Seaview Avenue and head 0.7 miles to

the Ballard Locks. The sidewalk along Seaview Avenue, now NW 54th Street, connects to NW Market Street in downtown Ballard.

To reach the 1-mile on-road portion of the missing trail link, turn right at Shilshole Avenue NW. Turn left onto NW Vernon Place, and then turn right onto Ballard Avenue NW. A right onto 17th Avenue NW returns trail users to Shilshole Avenue, where the road is painted for cyclists and becomes NW 45th Street after crossing under the Ballard Bridge. Return to the sidewalk and trail at 11th Avenue NW and 45th.

Leaving Puget Sound, trail users will find themselves in a park beside the Fremont Canal that connects the sound to Lake Union. Past the steps waits Fremont, a great area for food, gelato, a glimpse of the famous Fremont Rocket, a Vladimir Lenin statue, and an infamous troll statue. This brings trail users to Lake Union, 5 miles from Golden Gardens Park. The trail turns right onto N. Northlake Way at N. 34th Street, guiding trail users to the historic waterfront of a former coal gasification plant, [Gas Works Park](#), where kite flying is popular. Next stop: University of Washington, but not before the orange Wall of Death (an art installation representing a motorcycle velodrome).

Circling around the U District (so named for the University of Washington) and retail area at mile 7 will put trail users on a secluded path of maples, dogwoods, and occasional firs. The route then passes above the waterfront Magnuson Park at NE 70th Street, a former naval station next to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration. At mile 13, a bridge crosses Sand Point Way NE. To the right lies Seattle's largest freshwater swimming beach, Matthews Beach Park.

Lakeside homes on tiny streets line the trail beyond. The city of Lake Forest Park welcomes trail users at mile 16, where the route passes a serpent fountain and a mural as it parallels Bothell Way NE/State Route 522. Two lakefront parks provide a respite from this 3-mile commercial district. At Ballinger



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**States:** Washington

**Counties:** King

Length: 19.7 miles

**Trail end points:** Golden Gardens Park, 8498

Seaview Pl NW (Seattle) to Blythe Park, 16950

W Riverside Dr. (Bothell)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Concrete

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible

## Parking & Trail Access

The Burke-Gilman Trail runs between Golden Gardens Park, 8498 Seaview Pl NW (Seattle), and Blythe Park, 16950 W Riverside Dr. (Bothell), with parking available at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

- Carl S. English Jr. Botanical Garden, 3015 NW 54th St. (Seattle)
- Gas Works Park, 2101 N Northlake Way (Seattle)
- Matthews Beach Park, 5100 NE 93rd St. (Seattle)

Parking is available at a number of locations along the trail. Please see [TrailLink Map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



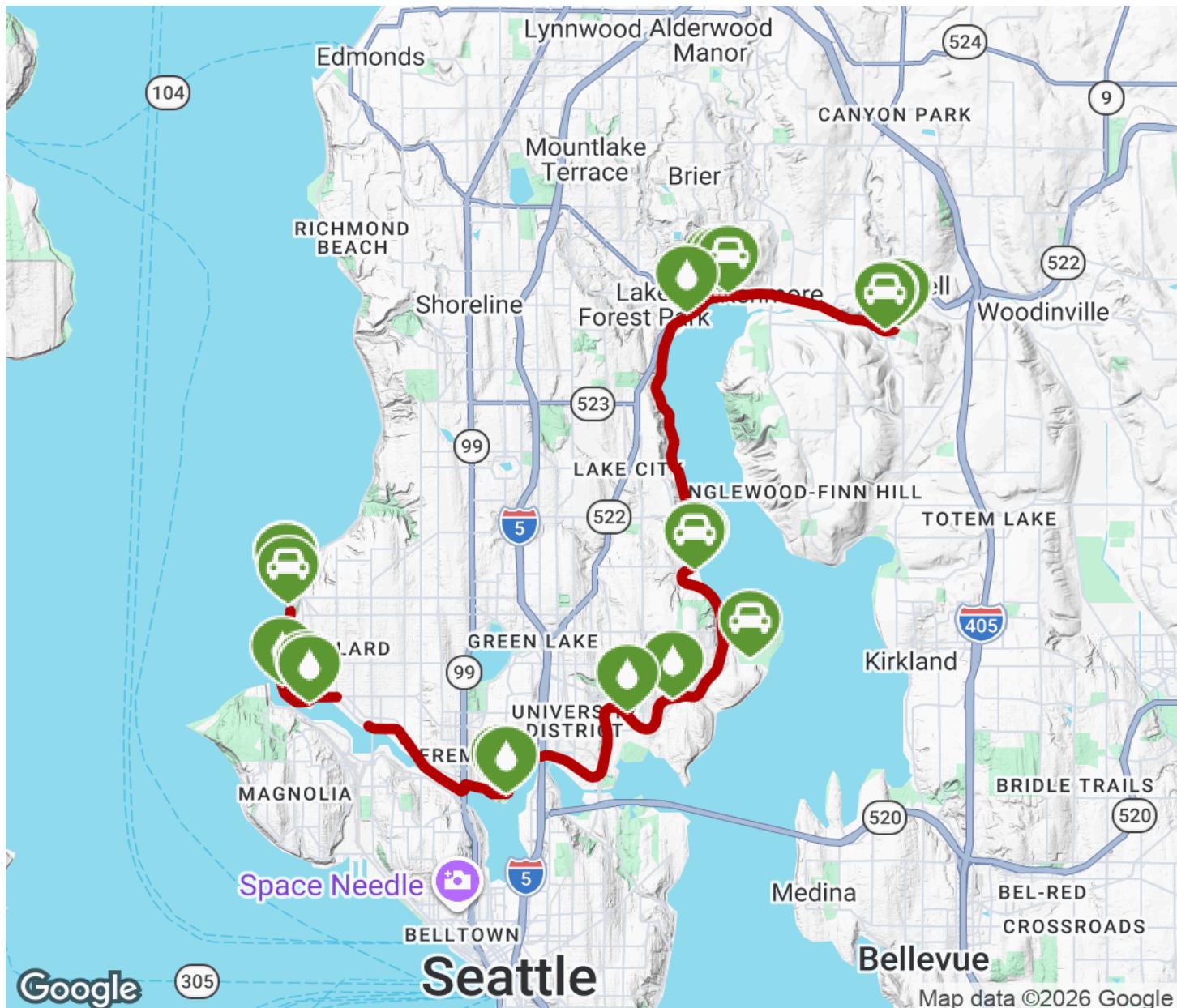
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# Burke-Gilman Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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