



## **2021 Lodging Tax Grant Report**

PROJECT NAME: Bainbridge Island Trails Maps and STO Trail Planning  
501(c)(3) Organization, Tax ID # 91-1855049  
Date of Incorporation: 1998  
UBI # 601-799385

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### **Summary of Project Activities:**

The 2021 program had two components:

#### **1. Trails maps updating, printing and distribution (in partnership with Bainbridge Island Metro Park & Recreation District):**

The Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation updated, printed and distributed new maps of the Bainbridge Island public trails system for the benefit of island visitors. These maps guide visitors to the many hiking and biking opportunities around the island and enhance their stay on the island. Maps were distributed to the following tourist-facing organizations; Chamber of Commerce, Visit Bainbridge, Visit Bainbridge, Bainbridge Library, COBI City Hall, Windermere, Sotheby's, Marshall Suites, Quality Inn, Eagle Harbor, Winslow Ferry Terminal, and Pleasant Beach Village. Maps were printed and distributed throughout the year to keep distribution points stocked.

#### **2. STO trail planning (partnership with City of Bainbridge Island):**

The Sound To Olympics Winslow Connector greets visitors at the Winslow Ferry Terminal, the first stretch of the STO Corridor envisioned to stretch across the island and the Kitsap Peninsula. In 2021, the Foundation supported the planning and administration of the next segment on the west side of the highway north of High School Road, specifically the Sakai Pond Connector from High School Road. BIPF funded "organic land clearing" by a hired goat herd, in advance of trail construction by a City contractor. BIPF hosted a successful "Trail Mixer" grand opening in November, an event featured through the City's own outreach channels. The Friends of the STO Trail fund also supported annual upkeep and enhancements along the STO greenway.

BIPF continued planning on proposed trail easement acquisitions to connect High School Road with Madison Avenue across from the fire hall. Planning and negotiating these trail easement acquisitions requires considerable Parks Foundation staff time and resources, which the LTAC grant would support. Construction of the next STO segment will follow in subsequent years, per the transportation and trail plans of COBI and the Park District, respectively.

**Project Objectives and Results:**

LTAC funding in 2021 allowed the Parks Foundation, in partnership with the Park District and City, to plan further expansion of this system through the Sound To Olympics Trail, while promoting existing trails with printing and distribution of trail maps through such venues as the Chamber of Commerce, local lodging establishments, the Ferry Terminal and other outlets.

Trails maps: Approximately 4,000 new trails maps were printed and distributed and points continue to be kept stocked throughout the year for island visitors. These full-color maps show access points, trail routes, nearby amenities and points of interest, and other pertinent guide information.

STO extension planning: The Sakai Pond Connector was planned and completed and is the second Bainbridge Island leg of the Sound To Olympics Trail, a regional non-motorized trail that will link the Winslow ferry terminal with the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas. The short paved connector runs from the intersection north to Sakai Park, where it links up with trails in the park's wooded lower bowl. Those trails lead through the park, around scenic Sakai Pond and up to Madison Avenue and the school campus. The Parks Foundation facilitated planning now underway on the STO's next leg, from Sakai Park north to Madison Avenue. The STO is being built in segments, to run north along the highway and eventually reach the Agate Passage Bridge. The City and Parks Foundation are collaborated on the design and planning of a landscaped plaza at the High School/305 trailhead, with a goal of construction in fall 2022.

**Partnerships:**

We partnered with the Bainbridge Island Metro Park & Recreation District and the City of Bainbridge Island on this project. Trails maps developed by the Park District were updated, printed, and distributed through local venues. An extension of the Sound To Olympics Trail was planned in partnership with the City of Bainbridge Island's Planning and Public Works staff, Friends of the STO, and the Bainbridge Island Metro Park & Recreation District. Because the Sakai Pond Connector segment of the STO was a successful project that brought together the Parks Foundation, COBI, and BIMPRD, it strengthened the value of the Interlocal agreement between the City of Bainbridge Island and Bainbridge island metropolitan park and recreation district for shared services, which galvanized excitement and resolve to collaborate on the next portion of the STO.

**Budget:**

The Parks Foundation was awarded \$10,000 from the LTAC fund – \$5,000 for trails map design, printing and distribution, and \$5,000 for Parks Foundation staff & me planning the STO extension, negotiating trail easements, surveys and other pre-development costs in partnership with COBI Public Works.

The Parks Foundation budgeted nearly \$60,000 in 2021 for its comprehensive trails program including our Summer Trails Crew, a seasonal jobs program that provides islandwide trails maintenance and construction. LTAC/COBI support for this specific Trails Maps & STO Planning program was matched many times over by the Parks Foundation's regular support for trails system enhancements island-wide.

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>2021 LTAC Budget Report: Bainbridge Island Trails Maps and STO Planning</b>			
2				
3				
4	<b>Trails Map Project</b>			
5	<b>Income</b>			
6	COBI LTAC Grant		\$ 5,000.00	
7		TOTAL	\$ 5,000.00	
8	<b>Expenses</b>			
9	Fusion Creative Works	Map Printing	\$ 3,840.43	
10	USPS	Stamps for Map Distribution	\$ 181.75	
11	BIPF	Employee Hours	\$ 1,010.39	
12		TOTAL	\$ 5,032.57	
13				
14				
15	<b>STO Trail Project</b>			
16	<b>Income</b>			
17	COBI LTAC Grant		\$ 5,000.00	
18		TOTAL	\$ 5,000.00	
19	<b>Expenses</b>			
20	BIPF	Employee hours on STO Planning and Administration	\$ 5,357.31	
21	Rent-a-Ruminant Goat	Clearing of vegetation for Sakai Pond Connector	\$ 6,071.30	
22	Sound Reporgraphics	Banners for Goats at Sakai	\$ 376.22	
23	Bart Berg Landscaping	Clearing of vegetation for Sakai Pond Connector	\$ 2,899.98	
24	Sound Reproraphics	Project signs	\$ 185.18	
25		TOTAL	\$ 14,889.99	
26				
27		<b>Total Project Income from LTAC</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	
28		<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 19,889.99</b>	

## **Attendance and Methodologies**

While it's difficult to give precise figures on the number of visitors who come to Bainbridge Island specifically to enjoy trails or who use our trails while here for general vacation stays, online travel guides give some insight in to their use by and popularity with visitors.

In four words: Visitors love our trails.

This year, all nine Bainbridge Island trails ranked on the comprehensive [www.alltrails.com](http://www.alltrails.com) site earn 4 or 5-star ratings from visitors. Fort Ward Park and the Grand Forest, both of which feature extensive trail systems and link to adjacent trails and parks, currently rank in the top 5 most recommended destinations on the popular Trip Advisor site.

Quantifiable impact on overnight accommodations are difficult estimate. Long-term impacts are residual, i.e. an island visitor has positive experience on island trails during their visit, posts positive reviews like those cited in the link above, and returns later for another stay, or recommends Bainbridge Island trails and parks to family or friends visiting from outside the area.

We believe the Bainbridge Island public trails network has a positive economic impact, as hikers come for the trails and then stay on the island and experience local shops and restaurants. Assuming even 250 visitors stayed overnight on the island and had a positive experience on Bainbridge trails in 2021, this had the potential for 500 meals or purchases at local restaurants and shops. Positive reviews continue to be posted to online tourism forums, and we continue to promote the trails system, this impact on tourism will increase.

Bainbridge parks and trails are open year-round, and hiking is a year-round outdoor activity. We believe many if not most visitors will enjoy one of the islands many public parks during their stay. This almost necessarily entails experiencing a trail, as any visit to the Grand Forest, for instance, or Gazzam Lake or Fort Ward Park will include walking on trails as part of the visit.