

## Seattle Olmsted 50 Trail – Section 2

**S1** 9.4km, 159m

**S2 10.3km, 110m**

**S3** 10.7km, 228m

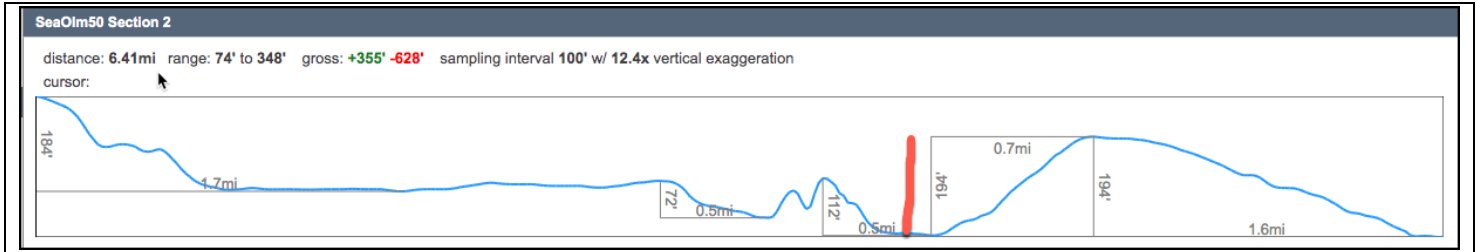
**S4** 9.7km, 178m

**S5** 10.8km, 139m

### Woodland Park Zoo to UW Montlake Triangle/Husky Stadium

Walking distance: 10.3 km (6.4 miles)

Elevation gain: 110 m (362 ft)



**Section 2** of the Seattle Olmsted 50 trail begins at the west entrance to the Woodland Park Zoo, served by two Metro Bus routes.

You can split Section 2 into two shorter walks. Section 2 North runs from the Zoo to Ravenna Park Playfield 5.4 km, (4 mi) and Section 2 South finishes at Montlake Triangle, far end of University of Washington Rainier Vista (3.8 km, 2.4 mi).

For public transit options, public bathrooms and treats see directions, last page.

### Section 2 North

*Walking distance: 6.4 km (4 miles)*

*Elevation gain: 49 m (161 ft)*

***Walkers are responsible for their own safety on Seattle Olmsted routes.***

**Note:** Stroller friendly options for the standard route are offered along the way.

- From the west entrance to the Zoo turn right to follow N 59<sup>th</sup> Street fence line path to just above Aurora Avenue N.
- Turn right (south) continuing along the Zoo fence to the first pedestrian crossing above Aurora Avenue N.
- Cross back into **Woodland Park<sup>1</sup>** and turn left towards the Rest Rooms
- Turn right at the park road curving downhill (or on the path beside it).
- You soon have choices to cross West Greenlake Way N. Walk right around **Green Lake Aqua Theater**, site of

extravagant Aqua Follies in 50s, 60s. Later Led Zeppelin / The Grateful Dead.

- Turn right onto the Green Lake Trail to **Green Lake Park<sup>2</sup>/Evans Pool**.

*We are on the traditional land of the **Coast Salish** peoples who live here and steward these lands and waters as they have for time immemorial.*

- Walking clockwise around the building, turn east along the splendid promenade to reach a busy 5-way intersection and cross to Greg's Greenlake Cycle on **NE Ravenna Boulevard<sup>2</sup>**.
- Continue southeast admiring the Green Lake then-and-now **sidewalk inlay** to the I-5 underpass, taking note of the **Sheila Kline (2007) art** installation on the support columns. Looking north, but barely visible, is a cold war nuclear attack shelter tucked into the earth, now locked shut.
- Continue down NE Ravenna Boulevard to turn left along Brooklyn Avenue N. Across the way is **Cowen Park Grocery & Cafe**, a neighborhood convenience store.
- Enter **Cowen Park<sup>2</sup>** at NE 61<sup>st</sup> Street. The current park was built atop 100,000 yards of I-5 construction debris in 1960.
- The gravel path leads through play fields to a play area where there are (perhaps) unlocked bathrooms and an inviting Zip line.

- Take the gravel path down into Ravenna Ravine and head east to pass under the arched 1936 Art Deco **Cowen Park Bridge** – on the Historic Register. Hurrah again to WPA.
- You're now following Ravenna Creek, daylighted from a large pipe. The park is under the care of neighborhood volunteers and Seattle City Parks.
- Keeping your left shoulder to the creek, you'll soon spot the 1913 **Ravenna Park Bridge**, high above and now a pedestrian way.
- Take the boardwalk diverging right to cross the creek by a huge glacial grandoiorite erratic deposited by the **Puget Lobe** ~ 18,000 years ago. The ice was some 1km (~3000 ft) thick over Seattle. Green Lake once drained to Lake Washington but a southbound 1911 sewer pipe diverted the flow. The creek is now fed by local seepage and drainage.

**Option:** *Stroller rollers may wish to stay on the main trail to avoid stairs and steep path.*

- Pass the **erratic** on your left on the boardwalk, following the path under the bridge up to the rim where you'll find a small meadow and picnic shelter.
- Turn right for the upper bathroom block and pass to its left.
- Turn right again past the drinking fountain to strike 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. It was closed to traffic in 1965 when the traffic bridge, now on the historic register, failed to meet vehicle safety standards.
- Cross the bridge marveling at your treetop view far down to the creek below. Wow, the Norway Spruce.
- Turn right at NE 61<sup>st</sup> Street and proceed to the street end where you'll find the approach to a **wood planked pedestrian bridge** over a Ravenna Creek tributary.
- Cross and continue up the rise to find yet another wood planked bridge over a second tributary. These side bridges carry walkers and sewage lines across the gaps.
- Cross half way, then turn back to the first wood planked bridge to find the

well-graded path on the left down to the creek and the **Ravenna Park<sup>1</sup> Sulfur Spring**. Yes, there was a 25-cents pay-to-enter attraction until 1911 when the city took ownership.

- Proceed left down the main trail along the creek pausing at a kiosk detailing the efforts to daylight the stream. After some **poetry delights** take a break when you get to the playfields at NE 54<sup>th</sup> Street.

You have completed Section 1 North. Return to near Zoo via Bus #79, #44. Public bathrooms and a cafe are a short way ahead up Ravenna Boulevard.

## Section 2 South

*Walking distance: 3.8 km (2.4 miles)  
Elevation gain: 59 m (194 ft)*

**Note:** The final Section 2 elevation gain ahead is up a gentle grade to "**Greek Row**", the Olmsted north approach to the University of Washington main campus. South is stroller accessible and a treat for kids of all ages.

- Continue right (west) towards Ravenna Avenue NE but stay on the park trail, turning right (north) through the forest, then left (east) to another park bathroom.
- Walk past a sand box, then right (north) following the path to a hard left up NE **Ravenna Boulevard<sup>2</sup>**. Safer crossing at 21<sup>st</sup> Ave NE.

*That's "**Candy Cane Lane**" looping right onto Park Lane off NE Ravenna Boulevard. A fiesta of lights and yard decor bring cheer during the winter holiday season.*

- **Seven Market and Cafe** on the left hand sidewalk is a local gathering spot with a sidewalk bench and ~10 cafe seats. Fresh beans from their roaster, several drinks, and near Zero Waste!
- Continue following NE Ravenna Boulevard to the traffic circle.
- Turn left (south) onto 17<sup>th</sup> Ave N (**University Boulevard<sup>2</sup>**) to admire the double chestnut trees canopy. **Greek Row** commences at NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Continue, noting the evidence of last night's bacchanalia in those columned boarding houses.
- At busy E 45<sup>th</sup> Street, cross into the UW campus past the entrance kiosks, tributes to those fallen.
- On your right is the **Burke Museum of Natural History & Culture** with nationally ranked collections, particularly strong with tribal collections and collaborations. At left is Jacobson Observatory and nearby is **Intellectual House** with a stunning longhouse style great room and academic support for indigenous students.
- Pass by Paccar Hall (business at left) until UW's oldest building, Denny Hall (1895, Classics +), appears on your left. Circle counter clockwise (south), to the grand entrance, then right down the King Lane NE stairs through the Denny Yard into **The Quad**, Seattle's favorite place to view cherry blossoms.
- Wander, if you will, then turn southwest towards an obelisk to exit down the steps into **Red Square**. **Suzzallo Library** endures as the main attraction. Most visitors climb up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor reading room where under a 65-foot high ceiling you may "combine Hogwarts and silence." Toilets, too.



*Photo Peter Hendrickson*

- From Red Square take the south stairs towards **Drumheller Fountain** and, weather permitting, stunning views of distant Mt Rainier. In summer 1909, a world's fair, the **Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition**<sup>2</sup>, took place here on grounds of what is now the University of Washington. **Rainier Vista**<sup>2</sup> is another Olmsted landscaping legacy.

- Can you find the duckling exit ramp?
- Continue down the broad walkway looking for a path branching off to the left that leads into a copse of trees.
- **Sylvan Grove Theater** features a tribute to Lafayette (like George Washington, also a stranger to Seattle) and four, 24 ft Ionic columns salvaged in 1908 from UW's original downtown building--graduation photos here.
- Exit south to E Stevens Way NE for bus #45 back to Green Lake.
- Else turn left down Rainier Vista over NE Pacific Place to Montlake Triangle, a parking lid handy to bus stops.
- If you take the pedestrian overpass to **Husky Stadium**, you'll find the UW Light Rail Station for trips to Lynnwood (2024), Downtown or SeaTac Airport.
- If you're continuing to **Section 3**, on the sidewalk, go south down **Montlake Avenue**<sup>2</sup> for the Montlake Bridge.

### **Congratulations, you just completed Section 2 of the Seattle Olmsted 50!**

**Return to Zoo** NE Pacific St bus bays. Bus #44, #5 to west entrance on Phinney Avenue.

**Note:** *The Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks map display gives five park categories. Our superscripts show: 1)Pre-1903, 2)1903-09, 3)1909-13, 4)Post 1913, and 5)Unrealized*

**Seattle Olmsted Circuit** loops 120km (75 miles) via more easterly parks and boulevards (5 Sections, October 2023) connecting with more westerly Seattle Olmsted 70 (7 Sections, June 2024).

#### **Contact:**

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Seattle Urban Walk Committee

The Mountaineers, Founded 1906

**(Rev 22May2024/PH)**

**Navigation Tip:** *Staple, then fold these two sheets the long way. You can easily hold them in one hand to follow turn-by-turn. Some walkers keep a thumb on the bulleted text for their current position.*

# TRANSIT, TOILETS and TREATS

## King County Metro Transit Service Points

Public transport is available at several locations on Section 2 but these points offer the most options.

**Light Rail** schedule [Light Rail](#)

**State Ferry Schedule** [State Ferries](#)

**Metro Water Taxi** [Foot Ferry](#)

**Bus Routes** [Metro Bus Routes](#)

- **Woodland Park Zoo** (Phinney Ave North and North 59<sup>th</sup> St) Routes #5, #16 (Aurora Ramp & Fremont Ave N) #44
- **Green Lake** (NE Ravenna Boulevard NE & Woodland Ave NE) #45, #62
- Ravenna Park Playground (25<sup>th</sup> Ave NE & NE 55<sup>th</sup> St) #79, #372
- **UW Main Gate** (Memorial Way & NE 45<sup>th</sup> St) #31, #32
- **UW The Hub & Sylvan Grove** #45, #67, #372
- **UW Montlake Triangle** (Montlake Blvd) #44, 73, #255, #288 AND (NE Pacific St) #44, #48, #73, #167, #271
- Husky Station (Montlake Blvd) Light Rail, Tram Line #1

## Suggested Bathroom Stops

Free public bathroom access is very good on Section 2 during park and business hours. Stops are listed in order of travel from Woodland Park Zoo. Masks may be required in medical settings.

- Woodland Park Zoo West Entrance
- Woodland Park north end
- South end Green Lake
- Evans Pool, Green Lake Park
- Cowen Park
- Ravenna Park, upper and lower
- Seven Bakery and Cafe (customer)
- University of Washington libraries, Husky Union Building
- UW Medical Center

## Where to Buy Provisions

Section 2 and nearby have a rich mix of residential, parks and local cafes, bakeries, ice cream parlors, and pubs.

- You'll find at least 3 eateries near the 7-11 Market outside the Zoo.
- Green Lake Center is dense in eateries and a PCC Market is only two blocks east at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave and NE 71<sup>st</sup> ST.
- Cowen Grocery and Cafe is found near the Cowen Park entrance.
- Seven Market & Cafe is along NE Ravenna Boulevard.
- Husky Union Building (The "HUB") is 200m (600ft) from Red Square and The Quad.
- Find Plaza Cafe in the UW Medical Center, a simple hospital cafeteria.

## Other Items of Interest

- **Steward** for Section 2 is Seattle Urban Walk Leader Max Sarkowsky.
- **Woodland Park Zoo** attracts visitors from all over the world.
- **Green Lake** brings picnickers, volleyball players, swimmers and boaters.
- **Ravenna Park** is a cool retreat year round.
- **University of Washington** is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> best public university in the U.S. with more than 33,000 undergraduates.
- **Neighborhoods** near or on this route are Phinney Ridge, Green Lake, Roosevelt, Ravenna, University Heights, University District, University of Washington.
- For more complete Olmsted Parks information, consult **Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks**, partners in development of this trail. Local link is [FSOP](#). The national Olmsted Network is [National](#)
- **Seattle ranks** among the top 10 park systems in the country [Top Ten](#)