

Re: [YESAB 2022-0183 Schwatka Lake plane/boat launch and parking upgrades](#)

Connecting Downtown's core loop trails: Bypass section of Miles Canyon Road February 20, 2023

Cities on significant rivers often have walking trails alongside them. Here, on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, people followed trails on both sides of the Yukon River, from Marsh Lake to Lake Laberge.

Downtown's core trail network is an important part of city recreation, both for locals and visitors. There's many improvements needed. The Yukon River Loop Trail, one of the city's top historical, cultural, natural trail loops, has long needed this bypass along the dam. Bill Parry, who sometimes uses this route in training, shared this with me.

Walking, running or biking to Miles Canyon and going along the Miles Canyon Road beside Yukon Energy's spillway canal is sometimes an iffy experience. Cars, trucks, trailers and buses are often encountered. This upgrade suggests that traffic here will also grow, making safety on this section more concerning.

Now is a perfect time to fix this. A safer route is to extend the Yukon River Trail north through the woods beside the railway tracks, coming out opposite the LNG plant. This easy alternative already exists at the LNG end. The ground is generally level through open forest and extending the initial trail would not be difficult. It could use the 1899 telegraph route as it gets closer to the existing trail marathon route. This would be dealt with in any Heritage, First Nation steps that would be required.

The result: less extra traffic in the new parking lot, more natural-surface trail, more options for Robert Service Campground occupants, and way safer for all trail users — trail marathoners, locals, visitors, and their dogs. This would be a small step in restoring this old First Nation route, past the city limits, and out to Marsh Lake.



Peter Long

Important Downtown trail loops



Some needed network improvements

1. Build a pedestrian bridge from VRC to hospital.
2. Connect Long Lake and Hospital Ridge trails with a focus on hospital respite.
3. Fix Downtown's major trail switchback at Dept of Ed and Hospital Road.
4. Connect Yukon River Trail along river to Range Point and Whistle Bend.
5. Connect Lower Escarpment Trail via Spook Creek to Waterfront Trail.
6. Connect Airport Trail to City complex; build Alaska Highway underpass.
7. Move airport perimeter fence above Drury Street and other trouble spots.
8. Connect Lower Escarpment Trail to Waterfront and Millennium trails.
9. Build Airport Toe Trail down escarpment, connecting to Millennium Trail.
10. Connect Yukon River Trail thru the woods by Yukon Energy, bypassing road.
11. Brush out section of Hepburn Tramway through wood by Schwatka Lake.