

## ***EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL***

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### **MEETING SUMMARY**

January 31, 2020 – 10:00 AM

Sound Transit – First Floor Conference Room

705 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

Seattle, WA 98104

**Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present:** Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Chair); Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor, City of Kirkland (Vice-chair); Susan Boundy-Sanders, Woodinville Councilmember; Vicky Clarke, Eastside Greenway Alliance; Randy Corman, Renton Councilmember; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember; Luke Lamon, Government and Community Relations Officer - Eastside, Sound Transit; John Stokes, Bellevue Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Parks Operations and Community Partnerships Manager, Snohomish County; and Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Claudia Balducci called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m., welcomed all in attendance and asked the RAC members to introduce themselves.

#### **Approval of October 17, 2019, meeting summary**

Councilmember Corman moved approval of the October 17, 2019, meeting summary. There being no objections, the summary was approved.

#### **Fiber Optic Project Return on Investment Analysis Final Report and RAC Resolution**

Darryl Hunt, King County Information Technology, summarized the background of the consultant, CTC Technology and Energy. The objective of the report was to provide a return on investment analysis to help guide investment decisions for fiber construction in the Eastrail. It also includes a projected cost avoidance savings. While sufficient revenue is projected to cover operating costs and some for capital expenses, steady revenue can only be reliably projected through a formal procurement process with the private sector or through marketing of the asset once fiber construction is complete.

Joanne Hovis, President, CTC Technology and Energy, addressed how they went about developing a sense of what the private market would be interested in and how much they would be willing to invest. She noted that the incremental cost of putting in more fiber is relatively low, it is the labor that can be costly. It was difficult to get concrete data regarding pricing and market commitments, because companies are reluctant to share that information. A range of different scenarios was developed to depict potential outcomes. Fiber is a long-term asset that can remain viable for decades, particularly when it is encased in conduit. It is anticipated that interest will continue for the long run.

The first bullet under the “Finding: Value to county & city users” section of the presentation materials which reads in part “...avoided cost of \$3,600,000/yr” was clarified to reflect \$3,600,000 as a 20-year right-of-use value that would apply if the County and its affiliates opted for a 20-year access lease. For ongoing one-year leases based on regional pricing, the savings would be about \$443,000-\$886,000.

Chair Balducci reviewed the contents of the fiber optic resolution. Discussion ensued regarding ownership of the fiber network, the tunnel and the right-of-way; conduit specifications; percentage of the estimate that is for conduit versus fiber; potential impacts to trail users; options for the delivery method and who will be in control of decisions. By approving the resolution, the RAC would be giving its support to move forward with the convening of a meeting within 60 days to identify a project lead entity and initiate development of a formal project implementation plan.

**Action:** Councilmember Stokes moved approval of the resolution of the Eastrail Advisory Council regarding the proposed fiber optic project in the Eastrail. The motion was seconded. There being no objections, the motion was approved by consensus.

### **RAC Work Plan for 2020/21/22**

David St. John, Government Relations Administrator, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, provided introductory remarks. Joe Inslee, Communications Specialist, Business Development & Partnerships, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, presented the proposed RAC work plan for 2020-2022. Included in the work plan are projects for consideration, anticipated timelines and potential costs, to include cost shares. A wayfinding plan, event and community engagement and underserved communities engagement are the primary cost sharing items for 2021 and 2022. Conversation covered making sure each entity's sign shop is capable of producing the wayfinding signs, ensuring good collaboration with links to other trail systems, providing more detail on what the wayfinding plan encompasses and adding a line item that tracks the progress of the fiber project. The freight easement on the Woodinville section is unsettled, so as yet there are no plans to tear up the rails and discussions regarding development of trails have not taken place.

### **Eastrail Partners Status**

Taldi Harrison, Eastrail Partners Board, introduced Katherine Hollis, Eastrail Partners new Executive Director, who addressed the RAC. Completion of the final service agreement will be a big priority over the next couple of weeks - members were reminded they only need to return the executed page. Near term goals will be filling out the full board of directors to include board members that are reflective of the communities that the corridor passes through, working to develop and implement the financial and operating plans, and looking at where we need to go and what type of sponsorships and partnerships need to be developed moving forward. Suggestions from RAC members on potential board members are encouraged prior to the next meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. It was suggested that a look be taken at current projects in each city to assess whether those projects might benefit from private investment.

### **Capital Project Dashboard Update 1:22:00**

Joe Inslee, reviewed the dashboard listing a summary of projects that are on the radar. He noted that work has started on the I-405 expansion, work on the Totem Lake Connector will begin offsite this year, and numerous other projects will start during the 2021-2023 time frame. Of particular importance is ensuring RAC members are fully apprised so they can respond to constituents. A new interactive map providing information on trail activity was unveiled. The hope is to have the map available for use this spring.

## **Member Progress and Success Updates**

Snohomish County – Recently completed a three-year wayfinding project on river systems, have recently been to Washington DC District Court on Surface Transportation Board (STB) issues, working closely with the City of Woodinville on an approach that works for all to have active rail, and hope to hear back on STB lawsuits by April.

Redmond – Sound Transit Redmond Link Extension is underway and Redmond Lights took place in December with about 16,000 people showing up on the trail.

Renton – Interim trail is becoming increasingly popular - interest in when it will be completed, and happy that connectivity issues with Coulon Park are being addressed.

Kirkland – Council will be approving bids in April on the Totem Lake Connector Bridge with an anticipated completion in February 2022.

Eastside Greenway Alliance - In the process of bringing the Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association (GRTMA) on board, recent meetings in Olympia asking legislators to keep Eastrail on their radar, and an upcoming trip to Washington DC for lobby day will allow the opportunity to bring up Eastrail.

Bellevue – Progress is being made on the Factoria project, continue to work with WSDOT on the I-405 crossing, exploring alignment options for the Spring Boulevard Connector with King County, and had some pop-up events over the summer to increase trail awareness.

Sound Transit – Downtown Redmond project is underway and should ramp up this summer - working with the GRTMA to get information out, OMF East project is in the home stretch – light rail vehicles will start being delivered in 2020, and groundbreaking for the Bellevue to Renton project is expected soon.

King County – Introduction of new King County Parks Director – Warren Jimenez. Solicited request for proposals for excursion service on the rails remaining on King County’s northern portion – no proposals were received so removal of the rails will proceed allowing for 2.5 miles of interim trail that will provide for connection of the Cross Kirkland Corridor to the Sammamish River Trail and the future Redmond Central Connector Phase III Trail. Along with a new bridge over the gap on I-405 there will be 2.5 miles of paved trail south of I-90 - hope to have it open by spring 2021. The NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street crossing is still in the design phase, thanks to Councilmember Balducci and City of Bellevue for working on incorporating recognition of the Japanese-American community and their history and heritage, and a lot of effort continues to wrap up on the branding work.

### **Public comment**

There was no one present wishing to provide public comment:

### **Next steps and adjournment**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 m.