

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

April 30, 2020 – 1:00 – 3 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Chair); Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor, City of Kirkland (Vice Chair); Vicky Clarke, Eastside Greenway Alliance; Randy Corman, Renton Councilmember; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember; Kathy Lambert, King County Councilmember; Luke Lamon, Government and Community Relations Officer - Eastside, Sound Transit; John Stokes, Bellevue Councilmember; Les Rubstello, Woodinville Councilmember; and Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Claudia Balducci called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., welcomed all in attendance to the first fully remote RAC meeting, and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of January 31, 2020, meeting summary

Vice Chair Jay Arnold moved to approve the January 31, 2020 meeting summary. Councilmember Corman seconded. There being no objections, the summary was approved.

Information Sharing Regarding Coronavirus Impacts on Eastrail Activities

Chair Balducci acknowledged the challenging circumstances presented by COVID-19 and invited members and staff to provide updates about impacts to their agencies and organizations.

- King County has closed parks for several weeks though the regional trails system has been open to essential activity. Trail use is up on the Eastrail from one year ago, though they are encouraging social distancing and will continue to do so as parks begin to open.
- The Cross-Kirkland Corridor is fully open for use; trail users are generally complying with social distancing guidelines.
- Redmond has canceled summer activities, including those on trails. RCC segment 3, the last 1.4 mile segment of this trail in design phase is not affected at this time.
- Renton has been working with King County to draft a letter of understanding related to a trail segment to extend the Eastrail south and connect to the Cedar River Trail and Lake to Sound Trail.
- Approximately 80 percent of Sound Transit construction is shut down; 20 percent is essential and continuing. They are moving forward with design for the downtown Redmond Link extension, including trail relocation. With relaxations for construction in the Governor's stay at home order, they are preparing to resume.
- Councilmember Lambert noted that there have been complaints about excessive speed and related accidents and injuries on trails. She requested staff follow up with data about incidents and whether there is a plan for enforcement to ensure safety on trails.
- Construction on an extension of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail on the south side of I-90 in Factoria is currently underway.

Fiber Optic Project Implementation Leadership and Roles

Darryl Hunt, King County Information Technology, and David St. John, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, provided an update on the Eastrail fiber optic project to install fiber optic lines along 28 miles of the Eastrail and presented a project team structure. The project involves installation of four conduits, one for public use and the other three for use by property owners along the trail as a revenue stream.

- The resolution passed by the RAC at the January meeting supported convening a meeting to identify a project lead entity and develop a project implementation plan. King County is working with owners, non-owners, and easement owners, including Snohomish County, Sound Transit, PSE, and RAC member cities, to coordinate on the project, gain consensus on participation roles, lead agencies, and governance frameworks. Project staff have also been communicating with King County project managers for Eastrail projects to ensure the projects are coordinated.
- Early feasibility studies included a needs analysis for future fiber in the corridor including broadband, smart cities, and other use options.
- A proposed project team structure for the RFP phase of the project places fee owners of Eastrail property (King County, Kirkland, Redmond, Snohomish County, Sound Transit, and Woodinville) in the lead decision-making role for scope decisions and approvals.
 - As easement owners PSE and Sound Transit and would need to concur with project decisions that affect their easement property interests. In the ongoing governance of the fiber project, non-owners will be able to contribute funding to the fiber project.
 - Funding contributions will allow non-owners to join the trail owners in project decision-making. The funding framework for fiber project planning through operation will be determined after the RFP process concludes, with funding and related decision-making roles being clarified based in part on the RFP process outcomes.
 - Input from other stakeholders including non-owners and public and private entities that want to access fiber will be important to developing a project scope of work and guiding oversight and decision-making throughout the project, to help ensure the project meets the desired outcomes. King County will be the project lead and coordinate between stakeholders.
- King County, with consultant support from CTC, will be developing an RFP for release in Q4 for project delivery approaches. An initial project management team structure needs to be in place to move forward on schedule, activities, models, and RFP language. They will be seeking subject matter expert representatives from different agencies.
- There was consensus among RAC members about the proposed project team and stakeholder structure, noting that there may need to be an adjustment to the scope oversight approval process to align with quarterly RAC meetings. Daily administration and implementation would not require RAC consensus.
- Several RAC member cities are interested in coordinating on potential extensions and additions to the base project and want to ensure they have adequate time for decision-making related to committing funding. King County staff will send a decision tree with more details about timeline and coordination needs to RAC member cities by the end of next week.
- Staff will present a more detailed project scope for the RFP with models being advanced and potential project extensions at the July RAC meeting.

2020 Eastrail Delegation and Legislator Outreach Planning

Katherine Hollis, Eastrail Partners Executive Director, and Warren Jimenez, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks gave a presentation on advocacy related to federal infrastructure funding. Federal coronavirus relief so far has focused on employment and health but will

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eventually shift to infrastructure and economic development which could benefit trail construction. Possible mechanisms for federal funding for Eastrail infrastructure include:

- Infrastructure stimulus package
- FAST Act (transportation bill) expires in September and will either need to be reauthorized on its own or as part of a larger transportation package.
- New programs/innovation funding for trails, linking urban and rural communities, etc.
- Carbon reduction/climate change legislation linking trails and transit support to climate mitigation outcomes

Eastrail Partners is working with legislators to inform them of which projects in their districts are ready to implement and are community priorities, including the NE 8th Street Bridge, the Wilburton Trestle, and the Totem Lake Connector Bridge. Eastrail Partners is also working with other organizations regionally and nationally to develop a more comprehensive project list and advocate for inclusion of trails in federal stimulus funding. Katherine Hollis will share bills that could align with Eastrail projects and funding needs.

King County is working to plan an August event to increase awareness and excitement for connecting, constructing, and completing the Eastrail. The event would bring together private sector partners, community-based organizations, elected officials, and community members to highlight the benefits of trails and demonstrate how the Eastrail connects to the larger regional trails network. Planning an event like this will require some reconfiguring and creativity due to COVID-19, however all members were excited about moving forward with planning the event. King County will convene a smaller planning group of staff and work with Eastrail Partners to select a date.

Status of RAC 2020-2022 Work Plan Priorities

Joe Inslee gave a presentation on the Eastrail Regional Advisory Council 2020-2022 work plan. The 2020 work plan does not include a RAC cost share, although the 2021-2022 work plan will include cost shares.

- In 2020, staff are working to support the RAC, improve the capital project dashboard, coordinate on grants, and engage with congressional and state legislators. They are also working to expand data through user counts and are collaborating on an arts plan.
- Potential 2021-2022 cost share items include wayfinding and underrepresented community engagement. King County is leading development of an RFP for wayfinding for the Eastrail, and RAC staff are in close communication to ensure regional wayfinding is cohesive and allows local jurisdictions to nest under a larger branding effort. The RAC is also looking for leadership for underrepresented community engagement. Contact Joe if your agency is interested.
- Bellevue, Kirkland, King County, Redmond, and Renton are interested in a cost share but all acknowledged that challenging budget realities may impact cost share levels. Staff will present more details about cost share levels and potential funding scenarios in advance for consideration and discussion at the next meeting. There might need to be a phased approach for some work plan items due to budget realities.

Member Progress and Success Updates

Redmond – Redmond Link extension construction is underway; some portions will be intermittently closed for testing. Trails and parks are open, but they are encouraging social distancing. Redmond Lights took place in December with about 16,000 people showing up on the trail.

Kirkland – The section of the Cross-Kirkland Corridor between 116th and 124th is currently closed with a detour along 116th. There is construction near Totem Lake to replace a retaining wall and prepare for work on the Totem Lake Connector.

Bellevue – Bellevue is partnering with Sound Transit on a TOD site in the Spring District. They are also continuing to work with WSDOT on the Mountains to Sounds trail extension in the Factoria area. They are exploring alignment options for the Eastrail to Spring Boulevard Connector.

King County – I-405 expansion work will be starting soon which will cause some trail closures. Design for the NE 8th Street crossing project, coordinated with Sound Transit, is nearly complete; the project will go out to bid next year. The Leafline Regional Trails Coalition is working across the four-county region (King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kistap) and includes many state, local, nonprofit, and private partners. There will be a presentation about the Leafline Coalition and how the RAC can connect with and leverage their efforts at a future meeting.

Cascade Bicycle Club – They are working with Eastrail Partners on legislative advocacy to be able to complement and leverage their work and not duplicate efforts. Cascade has received several comments from Redmond and Bellevue residents about bikes on trails and sidewalks. They have clear guidance for their members but are working to develop effective messaging on this issue and will provide to this group to share with constituents.

Public comment

No members of the public were present to provide comment. The meeting recording is available here: <https://kingcounty.gov/council/issues/erc/2020-meetings.aspx>. Interested parties should send comments to eastrail@kingcounty.gov. Joe Inslee will compile any comments received and provide to RAC and staff.

Next steps and adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2020 10:00 -12:00.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.