

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

October 29, 2020 | 1 – 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; Kathy Lambert, King County Councilmember; Reagan Dunn, King County Councilmember; Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember; Randy Corman, Renton Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Director, Snohomish County Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism; Don Billen, Sound Transit; Les Rubstello, Woodinville Councilmember.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Claudia Balducci called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm, welcomed all in attendance to the third remote RAC meeting, and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of July 17, 2020, meeting summary

Councilmember Forsythe moved to approve the July 17, 2020 meeting summary. Councilmember Lambert seconded. There being no objections, the summary was approved.

Federal and State Engagement Planning

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners provided updates on federal and state advocacy for the Eastrail and thanked all those who participated with the August engagement event for federal delegation staffers.

Federal

- There have been good follow-up discussions with Congressman Smith and Congresswoman DelBene's offices, as well as Senators Murray and Cantwell.
- There will be more updates after the election and planning for further engagement.

State

- Eastrail Partners has been working with RAC staff and others on priorities in Olympia. The engagement approach will focus on the transportation budget which has a longer time horizon than operational or capital budgets. State outreach will focus on four projects (will share written materials about these projects):
 - Southern terminus extension in Renton at Gene Coulon Park and Southport
 - I-90 steel bridge connection between southern and central/northern trail segments
 - Wilburton segment in Bellevue (between Wilburton Trestle and NE 8th St. crossing)
 - SR-202 crossing in Woodinville
- **Members would like to set up a call following the election to discuss potential engagement opportunities and strategies. Members would also like to develop a joint statement of support for members to include Eastrail as a priority in their own state legislative agendas.**
- Katherine Hollis will follow up with RAC councilmembers to help make introductions to their councils and highlight Eastrail Partners' efforts.
- Last month REI and Facebook announced investments of \$1 million each to toward Eastrail capital projects. Stephen Uy from Facebook announces these funds will be put towards the

Northup Way Connector project. Councilmember Balducci has also proposed redirecting existing available grant funding to Eastrail investment, which will fully fund this project (pending budget approval).

Fiber Optic RFP Development

Darryl Hunt, King County Information Technology, and David St. John, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks shared updates on fiber development in the Eastrail. King County has completed a feasibility study, developed project cost estimates, conducted an ROI analysis, and is now working on the business, technical, and legal requirements for an RFP.

- The RFP was scheduled for release by the end of the year but due to the need for owner attorneys to develop and fully vet additional legal language, this release will be delayed. There are many considerations around legal language, existing ownership rights hierarchy, and structure of agreement between owners and the vendor. Owners must agree before talking to vendors, so these issues must be addressed in advance.
- The King County Council is developing a budget proviso to allow for a policy decision around ownership models that support maximizing this asset for advancing digital equity. The County does not yet have a municipal broadband policy.
- The project team does not yet have an anticipated date when the language will be ready for the RFP. Darryl will follow up with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and provide updates to the RAC as soon as possible. In the meantime, King County will finish business and technical terms and conditions. Fiber is already being included in projects that are in late design or early construction, and there are ways to access conduit for maintenance and upgrades. The team will continue evaluating project dependencies and how this could impact the overall project and construction timeline.

2021-2022 Biennium Budgeting for Eastrail

David St. John, King County DNRP, introduced an update on budget processes relative to Eastrail priorities. Vice Chair Arnold asked for updates from members about their ability to contribute to cost-share items in the work plan.

- Redmond will likely still only be able to contribute in-kind staff time. They are hiring a new diversity, equity, and inclusion staff person who may be able to help with some elements of the work plan.
- Renton is including a modest line item in their budget to participate in Eastrail work plan projects, with the potential for mid-year adjustments.
- Woodinville will likely be able to only contribute staff time at this time.
- Kirkland is only adding additional funding to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives or COVID-related human services response in their budget and will not likely be able to contribute toward cost-shares beyond staff time. There might be more flexibility if some of the cost-share items can be shifted out to 2022.

2020-2022 Work Plan Items Update

Vicky Clarke gave a brief presentation on user count data collection for Eastrail. Data collection provides useful information on trail use and users. This data is helpful to make the case for investments in trails, can help inform trails management decisions, and help track how trail use changes over time.

- The trail count subcommittee began meeting in July and collaborated with other partners to conduct a volunteer-based trail user count over two different days in late September and early October in nine different locations looking at numbers, direction, and mode choice.

- They found that there were more recreational users than commuters. Future efforts could allow collection of more nuanced information through intercept surveys.
- The subcommittee is working on aggregating data and will present detailed results and recommendations around ongoing counts to the RAC in January. They will also discuss considerations around data privacy protections.

Cailín Hunsaker (Renton), provided an update on Eastrail equity and inclusion subcommittee activities.

- The RAC principle staff team have had several meetings since the July RAC meetins and are currently working to develop an approach that is based on establishing community relationships that build trust, understanding, and shared commitment. They are discussing ways to authentically and meaningfully engage communities, including by involving them in design and development processes from the beginning, allowing participants to shape decisions as well as decision-making frameworks, and compensating people for their time and expertise. They are discussing on-trail engagement opportunities such as creating gathering spaces, providing directional and trailhead signage, and installing kiosks with maps and mile markers.
- They are currently developing an inventory of community groups and will be scoping resources to support these efforts as a potential line item in the cost-share budget.

Jeff Aken (Redmond) provided an update on integrating art into the Eastrail.

- Staff from several member jurisdictions had a scoping meeting in August to discuss advancing integrated art along the corridor and how to tie this into current Art Plans that already exist. They discussed options for gathering spaces in wider areas of corridor, spots to integrate art in trailheads, opportunities for permanent as well as temporary art, and integrating art along the trails as part of community events.
- They will have a follow-up meeting this fall to begin looking at other Art Plans and provide a progress update in January.

Progress and Success Updates

Kirkland – The Totem Lake Connector Bridge (Totem Lake Blvd. and NE 124th St.) will span this busy intersection in Kirkland and connect two ends of the Cross Kirkland Corridor. The project will take two years to complete and construction will begin in January. The Willows Road project, which connects the northern end of the Eastrail to the future Redmond Central Connector and Sammamish River Trail, is now under construction and should open in 2021.

King County –

- There are 2.5 miles of trail currently under construction in partnership with WSDOT that will open in April 2021.
- King County is also nearing 100% design on the NE 8th St. Bridge in Bellevue to integrate it with the Wilburton Station. NE 8th design will be complete by Thanksgiving and the project will be ready to bid in the spring with construction starting in Q3 of 2021. The design incorporates structural elements needed for the Japanese America Heritage effort.
- The Wilburton Trestle project is once again in design and permitting and will be out for construction bid at the end of 2021, with construction planned for 2022.

- For the Kirkland to Woodinville Interim Trail, all rails in King County ownership north of Kirkland and Redmond will be removed starting in late winter and the Interim Trail will open to connect from the current Cross Kirkland Corridor to 145th in Woodinville.
- The Leafline Trails Coalition had a successful launch event in September (<https://leaflinetrails.org/>).
- King County is holding public meetings in November on land use guidance around private uses of King County Parks property. One meeting will focus on the East Lake Sammamish Trail, one will focus on the Eastrail, and then there will be a more general meeting to cover property over which King County has custody. Meeting dates and details will be available on the County website.

Sound Transit – Operations and Maintenance facility for light rail vehicles in Bellevue is nearing completion. Bridge Housing, a transit-oriented developer, was selected to develop 500 units of housing (280 affordable units) on the land that was being used during construction.

Public comment

- Terry Thomas from the Hawthorne community in Woodinville commented that this community is interested in connecting to the trail and requested guidance. RAC staff will follow up directly with Terry via email.

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.

Next steps and adjournment

The next meeting in 2021 has not yet been scheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 pm.