

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

July 17, 2020 | 10 AM – 12 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Chair); Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor, City of Kirkland (Vice Chair); Susan Boundy-Sanders, Les Rubstello, Woodinville Councilmembers; Vicky Clarke, Eastside Greenway Alliance; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember; Don Billen, Sound Transit; John Stokes, Bellevue Councilmember; David Hoffman, Puget Sound Energy; Russ Bosanko for Tom Teigen, Parks Operations and Community Partnerships Manager, Snohomish County; Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Claudia Balducci called the meeting to order at 10:01 am, welcomed all in attendance to the second remote RAC meeting, and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of April 30, 2020, meeting summary

Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the April 30, 2020 meeting summary. Councilmember Forsythe seconded. There being no objections, the summary was approved.

Social Justice and Coronavirus Considerations for Eastrail Activities

Chair Balducci acknowledged current protests against racial injustice and invited members to think about how agencies and the RAC can work to dismantle oppressive power structures, eliminate bias, and ensure that trails are welcoming, safe (beyond infrastructure considerations), and inclusive spaces for all community members, especially Black people and other people of color.

- Several jurisdictions have released solidarity statements, held public meetings and listening sessions with community members and employees. Many are developing resolutions in support of Black Lives Matter and action plans to operationalize racial equity commitments.
- King County Council is reviewing a proposal to declare racism a public health crisis and action items to address it, and proposing changes to the County Charter to enable future changes via ordinance.
- Mask and social distancing requirements can increase potential for conflicts and disproportionate enforcement on trails.
- Staff will develop proactive messaging around how to access the Eastrail emphasizing that all are welcome and deserve to feel safe when recreating.

“Experience the Eastrail” Delegation Outreach Planning – August 2020

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners and Warren Jimenez of King County Parks shared progress on event planning to engage with federal delegation about the need for additional Eastrail investment.

- Event will be August 14, 10:30 – 11:30 am via Zoom (will be recorded).
- Councilmember Balducci will emcee. There will be an inspirational video showing the Eastrail vision and work to date followed by four live presentations from community members on key bridge crossing, then Q&A with congressional staffers. RAC members are encouraged to attend. Staff from Senators Murray and Cantwell and Representatives DelBene and Smith have RSVP'd.

Fiber Optic RFP Development

Darryl Hunt, King County Information Technology, and David St. John, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks, and Joanne Hovis, CTC, shared updates on the process and timeline to engage Eastrail owners to identify RFP goals and objectives for the fiber optic project.

- Engagement process will include consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including all trail owners as well as investors, permitting entities, and customers, to oversee the procurement strategy for the following: 1) engineering and design in alignment with existing trail goals, 2) construction, 3) long-term maintenance of asset, and 4) operations and brokerage of excess fiber optic capacity to promote broadband goals and realize revenue.
- Procurement process will solicit bids on these elements, potentially in different combinations, to maximize benefits, minimize risk, and leverage private sector capital. The process is underway and should be complete by the end of the year. Meeting dates for individual owner agency meetings were distributed in meeting materials.
- Input for RFP will need to be received by end of September and communication with potential proposers should come through the RFP manager to streamline communication and ensure everyone receives the same information.
- With extended remote working and learning, there is more urgency around increasing broadband connectivity and digital access equity. King County completed a full equity impact review of the project; staff will share this document with RAC members. Broadband is also a priority for federal delegation members and will be highlighted at the August 14 engagement event.
- Given budgetary constraints, agencies may be able to contribute less than originally thought and the project may rely more heavily on private sector investment. Once responses are received, staff will conduct a financial analysis on options and tradeoffs around public vs. private investment. Hopefully the RFP will show what the best options are, which will have implications for the funding formula.
- Some members are concerned that the proposed timeline for input doesn't align with municipal budget processes and would like to have estimates for public investment contributions sooner rather than later. Staff will provide high-level estimates that have been developed as part of existing funding models based on each jurisdiction's segment length.
- The RFP review process will have two phases, initial proposals will be scored and then proposers will be able to submit an updated best and final proposal to allow for additional internal coordination.

Status of RAC 2020-2022 Work Plan Priorities

Joe Inslee gave a presentation on the Eastrail Regional Advisory Council 2020-2022 work plan.

- In 2020, the following work plan items are on track:
 - RAC support
 - Capital project dashboard
 - Grant coordination
 - Congressional and Governor/State Legislature engagement
 - User counts data collaboration
- More coordination is happening to develop an arts plan. Redmond is coordinating a meeting to develop next steps.
- There are anticipated 2021-2022 cost share items, though this may change due to the shifting budget climate. Future work plan items include wayfinding project development (time sensitive as there are several miles of new trails), as well as event and community engagement and underrepresented community engagement. With potential cost share reductions, staff are trying to identify collaboration opportunities to maximize potential funding.

- RAC members provided current outlook for potential to support cost shares. Staff will evaluate potential for tiered or phased scenarios for cost share elements.
 - Redmond is open to committing staff time but cannot contribute in 2019-2020 budget, unlikely in 2021-2022 budget.
 - Kirkland is beginning budget discussions this summer but doesn't expect return to additional revenue until 2022.
 - Woodinville can participate in the short term, especially on wayfinding elements.
 - Outreach to underrepresented communities is a priority workplan item for Bellevue. Bellevue will review a potential budget contribution but cannot commit resources at this time.
 - King County will be prepared to scale, tier, and phase efforts as necessary and integrate where possible until more resources are available.

Member Progress and Success Updates

Redmond – Continuing to work on Redmond Central Connector design. Due to COVID-related budget constraints, they are looking for grant options and potential federal stimulus funds. They will begin linkage construction this summer, formalizing two access points (rapid flash beacons and crosswalk) and an ADA accessible path at the west end of downtown.

Woodinville – Partnering with King County on an at-grade crossing on Redmond Spur at Highway 202 crossing to increase pedestrian safety and provide future crossing for the spur when it is built out. Project is at 30% design; they want to begin construction by late next year.

Kirkland – Bids for the Totem Lake Connector Bridge project came in higher than expected, but they received a \$1.55 million grant from PSRC. Due to extra specs from federal funding requirements, they will rebid in August and hope to approve by end of year or early 2021. Kirkland is also working with King County on the crossing at 132nd.

Bellevue – Japanese American legacy project has ignited interest and energy in the community for the NE 8th Street Overcrossing. The Japanese American Growers Association shipped produce from the area where the bridge will cross NE 8th Street. As part of the crossing, near the new light rail station, there will be artistic and interpretive elements recognizing the historic and cultural legacy of this area. The design team worked with a Community Advisory Group to develop design concepts for the bridge and surrounding area to honor the history of the Japanese American farming community. Bellevue has identified \$40,000 to contribute to implementation; fundraising is still needed to support the remaining implementation costs. Bellevue additionally applied for PSRC funding to design a connection from the Eastrail to Spring Blvd. and was recommended for \$1.3M. The Mountains to Sound Greenway is also being extended and will be another important connection to the Eastrail.

King County – Created a PDF timeline and map showing connections and key projects in the next few years, as well as a GIS-based interactive Eastrail map which will show real-time status of trail projects. Maps are available here: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/parks-recreation/parks/trails/regional-trails/popular-trails/eastrail.aspx>

King County, Bellevue, and Sound Transit are partnering on a Wilburton area framework plan. King County is partnering with Sound Transit as the downtown Redmond Link section comes from Marymoor Park to the future station, providing important trail connections in Redmond. Design is beginning for the 132nd and 145th crossings. Kirkland has awarded the trail segment work along Willows at the north end

of the Cross Kirkland Corridor. These upcoming segments will allow users to go from the Spring District to 145th in Woodinville where users can then connect to the Sammamish Trail and on to Burke Gilman or to Redmond. King County continues to work in partnership with WSDOT on I-405 work south of I-90 to complete 2.5 new miles of trail.

Snohomish County – On the Centennial Trail, there is a failed culvert south of Arlington, as well as a sink hole. They have a quarter-mile section of trail blocked off without a safe detour and are working to replace the failed culvert and washout. They did a soft opening of the White Horse Trail from Arlington to Darrington. Except for the Oso slide area, the trail is hard-packed gravel. White Horse Trail will be a challenge as the Stillaguamish River has caused washouts. They are still in litigation with rail operators between Woodinville and Snohomish County.

Sound Transit – Construction has resumed after a pause on trail connections at the Operations and Maintenance Facility East. Work continues in downtown Redmond, and a ped/bike bridge at Overlake Village. They have scaled back service due to operator availability and revenue decreases. The Board will have to make challenging decisions about the pace of construction for ST3. Sound Transit is working to center equity in these discussions and decisions.

Renton – Working on plans for the Experience the Eastrail event and continuing to develop a relationship with BN for milepost 5 to South Court.

Eastside Greenway Alliance/Cascade Bicycle Club – Working with Eastrail Partners and others, including the Leafline Trails Coalition, on federal advocacy opportunities to highlight need for trails funding, especially in transportation bill reauthorization. The reauthorization passed in the House a month ago, though the Senate will be more challenging, and includes funding for trails.

PSE – Working on a transmission project—Sammamish Juanita project—which will run along the Redmond Central Connector phase 3 and the Cross Kirkland Corridor. They are currently working on easement language for rail corridor, have held public meetings and gathered public feedback, and are working to submit permit applications.

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.

Next steps and adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2020 from 1 – 3pm.
The meeting adjourned at 11:56 p.m.