

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

October 20, 2022 | 10 AM – 12 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Jay Arnold, Kirkland Deputy Mayor (Co-Chair), Sarah Perry, King County Councilmember (Co-Chair); John Stokes, Bellevue Councilmember; Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember; Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council President; Luke Lamon, Sound Transit; Les Rubstello, Woodinville Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County

Welcome and Introductions

Deputy Mayor Arnold called the meeting to order at 10:03 am, welcomed all in attendance to the final RAC meeting of 2022, and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of July 12, 2022 RAC meeting summary

Councilmember Forsythe moved to approve the July 12 meeting summary and Councilmember Perry seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the July 12 meeting summary.**

Fiber Optic Project RFI Results and Next Steps

Director True expressed appreciation for Darryl Hunt of King County Dept. of Information Technology (KC IT) and other Principal Staff Team members for hard work and collaboration on the fiber project concept over many years. Director True conveyed Executive Constantine's decision to not continue support for the proposed fiber project at this time. Darryl Hunt shared results of the RFI process as well as more details about King County's decision. The transmittal letter conveying the Executive's position to the King County Council and key findings from the RFI process were included in the meeting packet.

- The focus on exploring the potential for installing fiber in the Eastrail began in 2016 based on owners and other stakeholders' visions to transform Eastrail into a multi-use corridor. King County Council approved a workplan to understand the feasibility of fiber and other opportunities. King County issued an RFI in May 2022 to explore potential installation of fiber optics infrastructures within the Eastrail Corridor; it was advertised to over 30 vendors and private companies and shared with Fiber Broadband Association network.
- Responses included two telecom firms, one consultant, and one private service provider. Information received on business models did not meet solicitation's minimum requirements: there was no interest in a completely privately or publicly funded project. Three responses expressed an interest in a public-private model with varying levels of public ownership and another vendor suggested more engagement before providing recommendations on a business model. Responses indicated revenue generation from leasing excess conduit was unknown, and did not immediately deliver broadband in any areas adjacent to Eastrail, including to affordable housing.
- Preservation of public ownership control and sovereignty varied by responses, and business priorities detailed in RFI do not appear to be fully achievable, which together make it problematic to select a business model and move forward. King County Executive transmitted a letter to the King County Council to not support continuation of the project.

Discussion

- Members echoed recognition and appreciation for Darryl and other staff’s work on this process and agreed that while current market conditions make this infeasible without a new dedicated funding source, there may be future opportunities to revisit this idea and project.
- Members were interested in further discussing a “dig once” policy for trail development to be prepared for future demands and opportunities; Redmond already has a standard for laying conduit when building trails. While more details and discussion are needed given unknown and potential impacts on things like Parks Levies that fund trails, there could be options to achieve the intent of such a policy that also preserves flexibility.
- RAC co-chairs will continue to keep this as a discussion topic in future agenda planning.

Arts Coordination Planning

Jeff Aken from the Redmond Parks and Recreation Department and Colin Petkus of Eastrail Partners shared updates on the arts coordination framework.

- RAC provided direction to develop guiding principles rather than a master plan to complement and amplify existing arts processes within jurisdictions. Principal Staff Team met with arts specialists from Bellevue, Renton, Redmond, and Kirkland to understand jurisdictional processes and review current city principles and other examples, then drafted current principles (included in the meeting packet). RAC will approve the final framework and principles at the next meeting.
- Eastrail Arts Principles goals:
 - Create a more unified user experience
 - Create a meaningful way for communities to be involved in Eastrail planning
 - Support arts coordinators and commissions to collaborate and incorporate trail-adjacent work
 - Help synthesize exciting public arts plans and programs from member entities and provide guidelines and strategies to expand the current vision for arts and cultural initiatives along the corridor
- Draft Principles include aspirational language rather than prescriptive recommendations and include:
 - **Equity:** rooted in equitable practices and removing bias
 - **Inclusion & belonging:** represent and reflect diverse communities and reduce barriers to access and involvement
 - **Context & interconnection:** engage with natural environment
 - **Collaboration:** intentional, proactive, complimentary collaboration
 - **Unique while cohesive:** entities engage own processes but find consistencies where possible
 - **Not just visual art:** visual arts (sculpture), gateways, wayfinding, placemaking, infrastructure, temporary and mobile installations
 - **Make the mandatory extraordinary:** (i.e., make the required inspired) for infrastructure like benches, bridge light fixtures, fences, signage and wayfinding, and include artists on design teams for capital projects

Discussion

- Members appreciated having clear guidelines without being too prescriptive and noted that the principle to include an artist on design teams shouldn’t be too narrowly defined.
- Members recommended sharing with 4Culture as well as jurisdictional arts commissions to begin operationalizing.

RAC 2023-2024 Shared Funding Proposal and Cost Allocation Update

David St. John of King County DNRP provided updates on proposed cost share items and draft jurisdictional contributions for the 2023-2024 biennial budget (included in the meeting packet) and solicited RAC member feedback on deliverables scopes and cost allocations to move forward. Total estimated cost for the biennium is **~\$320,000**.

- RAC previously agreed to three broad categories of deliverables, including:
 - **Co-creation and equity:** creation of community-informed and co-led planning and programming, furthering an Eastrail that is welcoming for all. Anticipated uses include further solidifying long-term relationship with CBOs, neighborhood groups, and other community members to inform programming, identify and build opportunities for communities to co-plan Eastrail efforts, implementation of community-informed education for trail use practices, and implementation of shared Eastrail communications informed by community partnerships and RAC entities.
 - Anticipated total cost: \$150,000 (~\$75,000 per year)
 - Plan to contract directly with Eastrail Partners to lead this work.
 - **RAC-convened event:** two-day event in Q2 2024 involving visits to Eastrail locations highlighting activities supporting achievement of multipurpose vision for corridor as well as assembly at a venue to participate in sessions. Sessions would highlight success and progress advanced by RAC and community partnerships, learn from perspectives of national leaders to inform future work, recognize and thank contributors from the community, and build strategy and support for tackling major near- and long-term corridor development challenges.
 - Anticipated total cost: ~\$50-80,000
 - **Eastrail trail use information management system** (already underway): implementation of the plan approved by the RAC in Oct. 2021 to collect data and measure impacts of connecting new trail segments, including installation and operation and maintenance of counters, as well as developing user interface.
 - Anticipated total cost: \$90,000 (allocations finalized)

Discussion

- All members were in agreement that the scope and budget allocations were acceptable and staff can move forward with scope refinements and planning.

Federal & State Engagement

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners shared updates on federal and state engagement.

- Eastrail Partners held a celebration in Woodinville in August to celebrate the legislature's success in creating Move Ahead Washington funding and the \$29M coming to Eastrail projects. Move Ahead Washington funding for Bellevue and Renton projects will come through WSDOT's Active Transportation Program; WSDOT is still working on project prioritization. Funding for Woodinville's SR 202 bridge crossing in the corridor will come through the state's transportation capital program
- Representative DelBene included RCCIII and SR 202 trestle in community project funding requests for the federal House budget.
- Comprehensive Plan updates are underway in many jurisdictions; including Eastrail in Plan updates is an opportunity to highlight the multiple benefits of Eastrail and its ability to serve as a framework for trail-oriented development.
- Eastrail Partners will work with RAC staff to draft a letter from RAC Co-chairs detailing shovel-ready projects that should be prioritized for Move Ahead Washington funding in the next biennium and distribute to RAC members. They will also begin developing shared messaging and

legislative agendas for 2023 legislative session around the need for and collective benefits of Eastrail projects.

Progress and Success Updates

Kirkland – first four spans of Totem Lake Connector bridge are in place, on track to open in first half of 2023. They are now looking at other safe crossing opportunities, including installing a hawk signal at 132nd and Slater crossing which will be part of Kirkland’s legislative agenda as a new state capital project.

Redmond – RCCIII will be at 30% design in November, also finalized PSE easement for Sammamish-Juanita transmission line where they will construct trail in 2024. There will be a groundbreaking for RCCIII on Thursday, Nov. 3 from 10:30 to noon. [Redmond Lights](#) will be Dec. 1 – Jan. 4, including evening celebrations on Dec. 2, 9, and 16 in Downtown Park from 6 – 9 pm and Winter Market on Dec. 3.

Snohomish County – continue to work on corridor development matters in the current freight area, including with Woodinville but are now at odds with State Transportation Board and working with attorneys to protect their property rights and ability to continue adding to trail system. The [Washington Trails Conference](#) will be held Oct. 27 – 29 in Everett. They are also discussing a potential trails bond and/or levy with trails advocacy groups.

King County – making progress on NE 8th bridge which is scheduled to open next year and have also installed a bridge across Bear Creek which connects East Lake Sammamish Trail to the Redmond Central Connector/Eastrail and will open in 2024. Making progress developing wayfinding design standards and will deploy some of them soon.

Woodinville – Washington State Supreme Court decision finally awarded corridor control to Woodinville after seven years. Held a design competition on the trail bridge over Highway 202 at the entrance of Woodinville and are now beginning design for this future landmark structure.

Public comment

No public comment was registered.

The meeting recording is available here: [2022 Meetings - King County](#). Interested parties should send comments to eastrail@kingcounty.gov. Joe Inslee will compile any additional comments received.

Next steps and adjournment

The date of the next RAC meeting is January 26 at 10 am. Staff will send out meeting information soon. The meeting adjourned at 11:46 am.