

# **EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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## MEETING SUMMARY

October 19, 2023 | 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; Michael Ingram (alternate for Councilmember Stokes during second half of meeting); Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council President; Ryan McIrvin, Renton Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County; Matt Larsen, Puget Sound Energy; Ariel Taylor (alternate for Don Billen), Sound Transit; Michelle Evans, Woodinville Councilmember

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold called the meeting to order at 10:03 am, welcomed all in attendance to the final RAC meeting of 2023, and reviewed the agenda.

### **Approval of July 27, 2023 RAC meeting summary**

Councilmember Sarah Perry moved to approve the July 27 meeting summary and Councilmember Jessica Forsythe seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the July 27 meeting summary.**

### **Eastrail North and South Connections Vision and Actions (Information Item)**

Emily Griffith from Snohomish County, Jared Hill from City of Woodinville, Cailin Hunsaker from City of Renton, and Curt Warber from King County Parks provided updates on the north and south connections to Eastrail as part of achieving the overall Eastrail Vision. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

#### *North Corridor Connections*

- 12-mile rail-to-trail Centennial Trail South extension will connect Eastrail to the Centennial Trail and provide 42 miles of continuous shared-use trail throughout Snohomish County. Snohomish County is currently working to resolve property issues, waiting to hear back about a \$7.2M Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) grant, and planning to hire a consultant to restart the planning and design process.
- In early September Woodinville held a Golden Spike Removal ceremony attended by Rep. Suzan DelBene and other elected officials to celebrate a railbanking decision and received \$2.5M in Community Partnership Funds for the Eastrail Crossing and SR202 Trestle widening project. They are also working with King County to plan for connecting the Sammamish River Trail to Eastrail and have selected a design for the new SR 202 pedestrian bridge replacement.
- King County is working with Woodinville to plan for the best connection between the Eastrail Eastrail Spur, and Woodinville's Eastrail segment. Woodinville's and Snohomish County segment development are opportunities for the City and Counties to collaborate on a future vision for the County-owned trail.

#### *South Corridor Connections*

- Renton is currently working on several trail connections; King County is negotiating with BNSF to secure property rights to the last mile of trail and extend Eastrail further south near Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park. The Park Avenue North extension project is expected to be completed in March 2024. Phase 3 of the Lake Washington Loop Trail project from Logan Ave S to Rainier Ave S

was completed in October 2022; Phase 4 extending the route west is underway with expected completion in Q2 2025. The Renton Connector will provide a route through downtown Renton connecting the Lake to Sound Trail and the Cedar River Trail, and work is underway to fill gaps along South 7<sup>th</sup> St. on the Lake to Sound Trail.

#### *Discussion & Next Steps*

- Members noted the complexities of completing these remaining connections in jurisdictions at the north and south ends of Eastrail which also host critical infrastructure corridors.
- Staff also noted that the connection at the end of Eastrail in Redmond will be completed in conjunction with the Redmond Link light rail extension in spring 2025.

#### **2024 RAC Event Scoping (Discussion and Direction Item)**

Deputy Mayor Arnold shared a proposal developed by RAC Co-chairs and staff for the 2024 event in the RAC workplan (included in the meeting packet). The proposal includes holding the event sometime between May and September 2024, and event activities do not have to occur at the same time.

- Proposed activities include:
  - Part 1: Site visits to highlight key projects
  - Part 2: RAC-convened assembly
  - Part 3: Public celebration and activation of Eastrail
  - Part 4: Video documenting the collaborative efforts of RAC

#### *Discussion & Next Steps*

- Members expressed excitement about the proposal and requested more information about additional budget requests from RAC members. The total estimated budget from the original concept and discussion in October 2022 was between \$30-80,000.
- Staff will work to further refine activity scopes and associated resource needs and estimates and share at the January RAC meeting.

#### **Cross-cutting Issues Look Ahead (Discussion and Direction Item)**

Deputy Mayor Arnold and David St. John of King County Parks provided updates on cross-cutting issues on the Eastrail (list included in the meeting packet) and solicited input from RAC members on priorities to inform future RAC meeting planning. Members shared the following priorities:

- E-bikes and e-scooters, safety and speed concerns
- Lighting on the trail and light pollution
- Trail etiquette and user education
- General user safety
- Open/closed hours to support commuting options
- Art development along the trail
- Pollinator pathways integration with trail design
- Bathrooms along the trail (including responsibility for building and maintaining them)
- Consistency on trails across jurisdictions (design, rules, etc.)

#### **Federal and State Engagement (Information Item)**

Colin Petkus of Eastrail Partners provided updates on federal and state engagement.

#### *Federal*

- In partnership with King County, Eastrail Partners hosted staff from Reps. DelBene, Smith, and Senator Murray's offices on the I-90 Steel Bridge section highlighting the importance of that connection.

- There are two active Eastrail grant proposals for federal funding: Reconnecting Communities to Neighborhoods grant (Snohomish County) and the Safe Streets for All grant (King County and Bellevue) for central Bellevue bike/ped improvements.
- Anticipate notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for RAISE grants in the next month or two.

#### *State*

- Have not discussed Eastrail priorities or supplemental budget requests in upcoming legislative session.
- Bellevue, Woodinville, and King County have challenges related to timing of Move Ahead WA appropriated funds and will be working to resolve this session.

#### *Discussion & Next Steps*

- Staff and Co-chairs will continue discussions with Eastrail Partners about how to advocate for increased funding flexibility in the 2024 legislative session.
- RAC members authorized Co-chairs to transmit a letter if needed before the January RAC meeting in support of accelerating already appropriated funds.

### **Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)**

Eastrail Partners – continuing to work with Eastside for All on cross-cultural arts project, developed a temporary art installation for Welcoming Week in September, and will be pursuing permanent cross-cultural art installations in the future. Also working on an inclusive call for artists template to share with government partners for public art.

Renton – Coulon Park improvements are complete and reopened with full access.

Bellevue – applied for a \$2.5M PSRC Transportation Alternatives Program grant in July to connect Eastrail to the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail. Bellevue and other staff met with staff from the office of Rep. DelBene as part of Bellevue is now in her district.

Kirkland – held a ribbon cutting ceremony at Kirkland Rotary Pavilion Station on Eastrail at Kirkland Way which preserves track and signal art and includes historical information about its significance as a gathering location for Japanese Americans interned during World War II.

Redmond – on track for Redmond Central Connector III, at 90% design. [Redmond Lights](#) begins December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

King County – NE 8<sup>th</sup> bridge project construction is mostly complete, however public opening will be delayed until May 2024 due to supply chain issues. Permitting is underway for gravel trail between NE 6<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. I-405 Bridge work continues, expect it will open at the same time as the Wilburton Trestle. Wilburton Trestle is going to bid next month. Northup Trail connection is also under construction. East Lake Sammamish Trail is now open.

Woodinville – held Golden Spike Removal ceremony and rail tie removal is nearly complete.

Snohomish County – thanked RAC members for grant proposal letters of support. Currently moving through final Transportation Safety Board process and expect a decision in spring or early summer next year. Had a ribbon cutting and received national recognition for [Meadowdale Beach park project](#) in partnership with BNSF at the 2023 National Recreation and Parks Association Conference, as well as PSRC's Vision 2050 Award for Innovation and Conservation in Parks.

Sound Transit – on track to open initial segments of the 2 Line next spring. Sound Transit Board will be adopting 2024 Service Plan next week which includes necessary work to open the 2 Line. Held I-405 bus rapid transit groundbreaking ceremony in Kirkland. Anticipate opening Redmond Technology Center Garage by the end of the month.

Puget Sound Energy – Richards Creek Substation was completed and transmission line is now energized; they are working on a few remaining permits in Bellevue to complete the corridor.

#### **Public Comment**

- Randy Haagens, a resident of south Bellevue, requested having a map and/or signage for safe detours so users could ride the entire Eastrail.
- Chris Kettering, a resident of Kirkland, suggested volunteer opportunities related to Eastrail, as well as utilizing map technology to improve trail usability and help users understand how to navigate between the different trails, potentially partnering with Google Maps or Apple Maps.

The meeting recording is available here: [2023 Meetings - King County](#). Interested parties should send comments to [eastrail@kingcounty.gov](mailto:eastrail@kingcounty.gov). Joe Inslee will compile any additional comments received.

#### **Next Steps and Adjournment**

The next RAC meeting will be in January 2024. Staff will send out the schedule for 2024 quarterly meetings soon, as well as meeting registration information in advance. The meeting adjourned at 11:52 am.