

## ***EASTSIDE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL***

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### **MEETING SUMMARY**

January 31, 2022 | 1 – 3 PM

Zoom Meeting

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

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm, welcomed all in attendance to the first RAC meeting of 2022, and reviewed the agenda. New RAC members Ryan McIrvine and Sarah Perry introduced themselves. Members watched a video produced by Eastrail Partners: [Eastrail – For Everyone, Every Day](#).

#### **Approval of October 18, 2021 RAC meeting summary**

Councilmember Forsythe moved to approve the October 18 meeting summary and Councilmember Stokes seconded. There being no objections, the summary was approved as written.

#### **RAC and Principal's Staff Team 2022 Work Plan**

David St. John of King County DNRP summarized and invited feedback on the RAC 2022 work plan which was included in the meeting packet.

- Setting the work plan is a core RAC function as the coordinating body for Eastrail development. Previous examples of work plan items include reconnecting the corridor across I-405 at the former Wilburton Tunnel Crossing, rebranding the corridor, and providing opportunities for energy and utility infrastructure to support future growth and development (e.g., fiber project).
- Collaborative focus areas for the 2022 work plan include the following (not in order of priority):
  1. Engage federal and state leaders to support priority projects
  2. Communicate about major capital project progress/milestones
  3. Explore/advance development and implementation of an Eastrail Strategic/Coordinated Communications Plan
  4. Activate open segments
  5. Implement the Trail use Information System Plan
  6. Develop and implement wayfinding measures to support trail use
  7. Advance co-creation efforts to connect to and involve the diverse Eastrail community
  8. Develop and implement an arts coordination strategy
  9. Explore opportunities to coordinate trail/corridor operations and maintenance activities
  10. Coordinate and provide input to the Eastrail fiber optic project
  11. Welcome elected, community, and business leadership to visit key locations in the corridor
  12. Plan/coordinate/implement quarterly RAC meetings

### *Questions/Comments*

- Councilmember Stokes expressed interest in #8 as the Council Liaison with the Bellevue Arts Commission.
- Councilmember Forsythe expressed interest in #8 as well in addition to #6.
- Councilmember Balducci asked which element would be an appropriate place for the RAC to provide input on trail design elements (e.g., lighting design/installation for multi-season trail use).

### **Federal and State Engagement for Eastrail Trail Support**

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners provided updates on federal and state funding opportunities.

#### *Federal Opportunities*

- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act:
  - Transportation Alternatives Program (largest source of federal funding for bike trails and lanes) was increased by 70%.
  - Federal funding through PSRC (though on a longer timeframe, i.e., 2025 and beyond).
  - RAISE grant program (formerly TIGER and BUILD) was increased by 70%. They are seeing more multi-modal projects funded through RAISE with faster timeframes and higher funding amounts than most opportunities available through PSRC.

#### *State Opportunities*

- \$29M in investments for Eastrail in proposed state new revenue transportation package:
  - \$6M to approach acquisition of corridor into Gene Coulon Park in Renton.
  - \$18M for I-90 Steel Bridge and adjacent trail segments in Bellevue. This is one of the last major gaps that remains completely unfunded.
  - \$5M for SR202 expansion and improvement of the SR202 trestle in Woodinville.
- Unclear yet whether this package will be passed during the short session but optimistic.
- Eastrail Partners suggests the following talking points for interactions with state/federal legislators:
  - Eastrail is sustainable transportation infrastructure for our region and will:
    - Improve equity through access to transit options and greenspace
    - Reduce carbon emissions by making walking, biking, and accessing transit easier for everyone
    - Produce positive health outcomes for all populations
    - Boost economic growth by connecting communities to economic centers

#### *Questions/Comments from RAC*

- Eastrail also provides joy!
- Entering a PSRC funding round this year (for funding in 2025); staff are working on grant submissions and thinking about future funding opportunities and projects to pursue.
- PSRC funding caps can limit which trails are viable candidates; construction costs have increased but funding caps have remained stagnant. Eastrail Partners or individual RAC jurisdictions may want to submit this issue in the public comment period for the regional transportation plan.

### **Major Capital Project Look Ahead for 2022**

Joe Inslee of King County Parks and principal staff team members shared updates about major capital projects. Slides were included in the meeting packet and interested parties can email

[eastrail@kingcounty.gov](mailto:eastrail@kingcounty.gov) with any questions about timing updates.

- *Eastlake Sammamish Trail – North Extension*: will connect Eastlake Sammamish with Redmond Central Connector (RCC) and is being constructed in collaboration with Sound Transit through the

downtown Redmond Link Extension (DRLE) project. Final design wrapped up last year and some elements are under construction with opening slated for 2024.

- *RCC Phase III*: 1.6-mile segment that will extend the RCC north to NE 124<sup>th</sup> as the third and final phase the RCC. Design is starting in 2022 (RFP is out now) with a 2024 target date for construction in coordination with PSE on a transmission line project. Lighting is planned on RCC II and will be included on RCC III.
- *Kirkland-Woodinville connection*: along with RCC III, 2.5-mile segment will connect large existing trail segments between Kirkland and Woodinville. King County project is an interim trail and is a part of four different projects to create this connection. Interim trail is currently in construction with an estimated opening of Q3 2022. It will include a crossing at SR202 that serves trail and connects to wineries, and the Willows Connector with a crossing at 132<sup>nd</sup> and Slater.
- *Totem Lake Connector*: bike and ped bridge connecting two ends of Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) currently severed by one of Kirkland's most complicated intersections. It was slated to be completed in October 2022, but concrete strikes are beginning to impact timeline.
- *Northup Connector*: Eastrail Partners is managing construction and will turn over to King County. Project will include construction of a trail ramp to connect Eastrail to the 520 Trail Corridor at Northup Way. REI and Meta (formerly Facebook) contributed \$1 million each and King County contributed the remaining amount, moving construction up from 2026 to 2023.
- *Eastrail to Spring Boulevard Connector*: new project this year will connect north-south Eastrail to east-west NE 12<sup>th</sup> St/Spring Blvd path. Still seeking funding but will complete design this year and hope to begin construction in 2023 or 2024. Grade-accessible connection to Spring District was part of negotiations with Sound Transit.
- *NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Crossing*: WILL provide critical connection to Wilburton light rail station and include a Japanese American agriculture heritage commemoration installation. King County has awarded the project and will start after strike, construction is estimated in 2022-2023 and should open at the same time as the light rail station.
- *Wilburton Trestle*: in permitting phase and anticipating going to bid for construction in Q3 2022 with opening slated for 2024. Crossing will also have 24-hour lighting.
- *South Bellevue acquisitions*: the section of Eastrail that includes the Wilburton Trestle and 118<sup>th</sup> Ave SE up to the other side of trestle is currently inaccessible. King County and City of Bellevue have completed two acquisitions that will help gain access to the trail and potentially provide parking from 118<sup>th</sup>, access to Mercer Slough Nature Park restrooms, and maintenance equipment storage.
- *Lake Lanes I-405 expansion*: WSDOT/King County partnership opened 2.5 miles of paved trail in November 2021. Segment has full six-foot gravel shoulder on one side and solar lights. The second part is the new I-405 crossing which is currently under construction and will be completed in mid-2023 (won't be open to the public until trestle project is finished). Project designers are considering light pollution and impacts to wildlife and neighbors and are using directional lighting to illuminate trail surface and minimize light spillage. Staff will be monitoring how pilot solar lights function after being installed.

### **RAC Membership and Operations**

Deputy Mayor Arnold and Councilmember Balducci shared a proposal to modify language in the original RAC MOU, which was shared with members by email. The MOU currently states that the RAC Chair must

be a King County representative and the Vice Chair must be a representative from an owner jurisdiction; this distinction no longer seems necessary.

Councilmember Stokes moved to change Section 3: RAC Leadership language in the MOU to say: *“The RAC will have two co-chairs; one co-chair will be an elected official from the King County RAC membership and the other co-chair will be an elected official from another Eastrail owner jurisdiction.”* Councilmember Forsythe seconded, and all members were in favor. There were none opposed and no abstentions. The motion to modify RAC Leadership MOU language was accepted. Staff will share a final version of the updated MOU with membership for signature before the next RAC meeting.

### **Progress and Success Updates**

Sound Transit – last week the Sound Transit Board moved forward on the NE 85<sup>th</sup> BRT station which is one of four BRT stations that will connect to Eastrail.

Redmond – Redmond Lights, a collaboration between Redmond Parks Dept. and Arts Commission, added light and art installations to a public space along the RCC.

Renton – hoping the \$6M for Coulon Park extension moves forward in the legislature. Renton also has a capital request in the transportation budget to extend across May Creek and connect to a city-owned parcel so that the May Creek Trail can connect to Issaquah Alps.

Bellevue – the Grand Connection initiative which would connect the Meydenbauer Park to Eastrail is helping raise Eastrail’s profile through those conversations. Bellevue’s trail connection to Renton is also very exciting for demonstrating the potential of Eastrail.

King County – Darryl Hunt from King County IT provided fiber project updates. Per guidance from the King County Council, the public owner model has been added back into the solicitation process which will provide broader range of options to understand costs and benefits of each of the models and how the project can proceed. The solicitation is also now a Request for Information (RFI) on all three models (public, private, and public/private) rather than a Request for Proposals (RFP). The RFI was distributed to Eastrail owner parties on Jan. 24 to provide feedback. An RFI analysis report will be submitted to owner parties for a 30-day review, and final report submission will be Aug. 15. Darryl will provide additional updates at the April RAC meeting.

### **Public comment**

- Peter Bartnick asked if Sound Transit had retained rail options for the Eastrail, especially in segments of Kirkland along the CKC that go out to Woodinville and Lake Stevens as those areas are rapidly developing and future rail use could be beneficial. Staff will follow up to provide information.

The meeting recording [is available here](#). 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 date of the next RAC meeting has not been set but will occur in April. Staff will send out meeting information soon.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm.