

# EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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## MEETING SUMMARY

January 26, 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; Christie True, Director, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Matt Perry, Puget Sound Energy; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council President; Don Billen, Sound Transit; Les Rubstello, Woodinville Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County

### Welcome and Introductions

Councilmember Perry called the meeting to order at 10:01 am, welcomed all in attendance to the first RAC meeting of 2023, and reviewed the agenda.

### Approval of October 20, 2022 RAC meeting summary

Councilmember Forsythe moved to approve the October 20 meeting summary and Councilmember Stokes seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the October 20 meeting summary.**

### RAC/PST Work Plan 2023 Priorities Updates

David St. John of King County DNRP provided updates on the RAC's and Principal Staff Team's proposed 2023 work plan (included in the meeting packet). Activities are separate from work that RAC members will be doing individually (e.g., building projects), and priorities include:

- federal and state engagement
- operationalizing the Arts Coordination Guiding Principles
- implementing the 2021 Eastrail Trail Use Information System Plan
- communicating about major capital project progress/milestones
- continuing co-creation efforts to connect to and involve the diverse Eastrail community
- activating open segments
- planning/coordinating/implementing quarterly RAC meetings and twice-monthly PST meetings
- supporting development and implementation of wayfinding measures to support trail use

New proposed scopes of work include:

- developing and implementing a coordinated strategic communications framework for Eastrail
- advancing planning for the 2024 RAC-sponsored Eastrail event
- developing and/or compiling demographic information describing Eastrail communities
- sharing information about key cross-cutting corridor management issues at RAC meetings

### Discussion

- Members agreed that the work plan was aligned with the goals of the RAC as well as those of individual RAC members and were in consensus that staff should move forward with it.

### Arts Coordination Guiding Principles and Activation Approach

Jeff Aken from the Redmond Parks Department and Colin Petkus of Eastrail Partners shared updates on the Arts Coordination Guiding Principles (included in the meeting packet) after incorporating feedback from the October RAC meeting.

- Main changes included wording and syntax updates. The Principles include **equity, inclusion and belonging, context and interconnection, collaboration, cohesion, more than visual art, and making the mandatory extraordinary.**
- Next steps following approval include building awareness through sharing the Principles with city Arts Commissions and posting to the Eastrail.org website, as well as piloting a community arts project. Eastrail Partners has applied for grant funding in coordination with Eastside for All to support a pilot project.

#### *Discussion*

- Members expressed appreciation for staff efforts and were in consensus that staff should move forward with the revised Arts Coordination Guiding Principles.

#### **2023 Major Capital Projects and Events Look Ahead**

PST members shared updates on major capital projects slated for 2023 (included in the meeting packet).

- *Redmond Central Connector to East Lake Sammamish Trail:* in construction in collaboration with Sound Transit as part of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension Project, estimated to open in late 2024 in conjunction with the light rail station.
- *Redmond Central Connector Phase III:* in construction (groundbreaking in November 2022), expected to open in 2025.
- *Kirkland to Woodinville Trail:* completed in fall 2022 connecting across NE 145<sup>th</sup> in Woodinville to the Sammamish River Trail. Only 2.5 miles but connects hundreds of miles of existing trails and will serve as a model for trail aesthetics. Also plan to add a major new art installation.
- *Woodinville 202 Trestle:* in final design, secured \$7.5M from the State to replace existing trestle and working to secure additional funding for Eastrail planning in Woodinville through a RAISE grant application.
- *Slater/132nd HAWK Signal Crossing:* in final design, construction is estimated to begin in 2024.
- *Totem Lake Connector:* in construction and will be a bike/ped bridge connecting the two ends of the Cross-Kirkland Corridor, ribbon cutting will occur in June.
- *Northup Connector:* in final design, will construct a trail ramp connecting Eastrail to 520 Trail Corridor at Northup Way. Opening could be as soon as fall 2024 but could be delayed; construction season is very limited due to constraints from adjacent wetlands.
- *Eastrail to Spring Boulevard Connector:* 60% design, will connect north-south Eastrail to east-west NE 12<sup>th</sup>/Spring Blvd to provide an efficient route to the Spring District and downtown. Construction is estimated to begin in 2024.
- *Eastrail NE 8<sup>th</sup> St. Crossing:* in construction and will provide a connection to the Wilburton light rail station and include Japanese American Agricultural Heritage art commemoration integrated into the design. Expected to be completed in 2023.
- *Wilburton Trestle:* in final design to replace existing trestle, construction planned to begin this year and be completed in 2025. Will be opening for bids soon.
- *I-405 Bridge:* in construction, will reconnect segments that were disconnected when I-405 was widened and open in conjunction with the Wilburton Trestle.

#### **Federal & State Engagement**

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

##### *Federal*

- \$3.6M for two Eastrail projects were included in WA Congressional District 1 community partnerships funds (\$1.1M for RCC Phase III and \$2.5M for SR202 Trestle in Woodinville).

- RAISE Program is the most likely place for Eastrail funding. There is a grant pool for planning and one for construction.

### *State*

- RAC Co-chairs sent letters to key legislators highlighting appreciation for Move Ahead WA funds for Eastrail projects as well as the need to sequence project funding for implementation.
- Eastrail Partners' 2023 state legislative priorities include:
  - King County's need for \$10M of Move Ahead WA funds for Bellevue projects throughout the biennium (Wilburton Trestle and I-90 steel bridge project)
  - Funding for southern corridor acquisitions over this and next biennium
  - Funding for SR202 Trestle in this biennium
  - Kirkland's capital request for a HAWK signal at 132<sup>nd</sup> PI NE/Slate Ave NE and Eastrail
  - SB 5452/HB 1135 to authorize impact fee revenues for use for bike/ped projects (not just traditional street projects)

### *Discussion*

- Members discussed concern about funding deferral for the I-90 steel bridge project to the 2027-2029 biennium and the need for additional funding beyond state contributions, as well as the need for strategic coordination and funding/project prioritization.
- Members also noted that SB 5452/HB 1135 was getting some pushback in the legislature so RAC advocacy could be helpful.
- Deputy Mayor Arnold moved for the RAC to authorize co-chairs to advocate in Olympia via testimony and written comments on Eastrail Partners' legislative agenda items as appropriate, and Councilmember Forsythe seconded. **Members unanimously voted to authorize RAC co-chairs to advocate in Olympia via testimony and written comments on Eastrail Partners' legislative agenda items as appropriate.**

### **Progress and Success Updates**

Bellevue – waiting for announcement of the outcome of an application submitted to the US DOT's [Safe Streets and Roads for All](#) grant program which includes funding for crossings at SE 5<sup>th</sup> and SE 1<sup>st</sup> Streets near the Wilburton Trestle and paving the trail segment between.

Kirkland – several councilmembers recently toured the Eastrail-adjacent [Friends of Youth](#) facility which provides behavioral health, case management, and other services and could be a potential trail/community resource connection opportunity.

Redmond – Redmond Lights in December was a success with approximately 6,000 visitors. RCC Phase III groundbreaking occurred in November as mentioned above.

Sound Transit – Sound Transit Board of Directors will be discussing an action item at their upcoming meeting that, if approved, would authorize additional preparation for a light rail starter line between south Bellevue and Redmond Technology Center starting next spring, followed by a full East Link system across Lake Washington to downtown Redmond in 2025.

Snohomish County – continuing to work through legal issues related to securing railroad rights access and ownership.

King County – key updates were included above in the capital projects update. Staff are looking into potentially scheduling the July RAC meeting in person, including a possible site visit.

Puget Sound Energy – planning to begin construction on the Sammamish Juanita transmission line project this summer which will intersect with Eastrail and be a model for future projects to build transmission capacity while maximizing community co-benefits.

Woodinville – pursuing \$5M RAISE grant to support Woodinville 202 Trestle project and speed up construction by ~10 years to create an at-grade linear park running through downtown.

#### **Public comment**

- Fred Felleman, Port of Seattle Commissioner, commented that he is delighted to see all the progress on Eastrail and is looking forward to more. He noted that while the Port can rarely directly support projects on the Eastside, the Port was able to make a timely investment to secure the railroad right-of-way, and thus ultimately allow it to be available for Eastrail development.
- Daniel Renn, member of the Wilburton Community Association, commented that he is eager for the opening of the Wilburton Trestle, hopefully in 2025, as well as the I-405 Bridge.
- Judy Jesiolwski, Bellevue resident, commented that she is excited to bike these new trail connections and thanked RAC members for their work.

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 date of the next RAC meeting is April 28. Staff will send out meeting registration information soon. The meeting adjourned at 11:46 am.