

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

October 17, 2024 | 2 – 4 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Jay Arnold, Kirkland Deputy Mayor (Co-Chair); John Stokes, Bellevue Councilmember; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council Vice President; Ryan McIrvine, Renton Councilmember; Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember; John Taylor, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks Director; Michelle Evans, Woodinville Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Director; Matt Larsen, Puget Sound Energy; Ariel Taylor (alternate for Don Billen, Sound Transit)

Welcome and Introductions

Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm, welcomed all in attendance to the final RAC meeting of 2024, and reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment

Ali Abdulla asked if there were any specific youth-related agenda topics. There were none.

Approval of July 18, 2024 RAC meeting summary

Council Vice President Forsythe moved to approve the July 18 meeting summary and Councilmember Evans seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the July 18 meeting summary.**

RAC Co-Chair Positions for 2024-2026 Term (Decision Item)

David St. John from King County reviewed the responsibilities of RAC co-chairs for the upcoming 2024-2026 term. **Councilmember Balducci and Council Vice President Forsythe were nominated and unanimously confirmed as co-chairs for the term.**

Eastrail Leadership Assembly Planning (Information/Discussion Item)

Curt Warber of King County provided an update on the Eastrail Leadership Assembly planning efforts. The event will take place in January or February 2025 at the GIX or at the Meydenbauer Center. A consultant team (Jamie Strausz-Clark of 3Si with PRR and OTAK) will support planning and facilitation. Jamie Strausz-Clark led a discussion about goals and vision for the event to support planning.

- What will make RAC members feel that the event was successful?
 - Reignited feeling of inspiration and what is possible to accomplish.
 - New ideas for trail activation to invite new community groups/members that may not normally use or even know about Eastrail.
 - Celebration of real progress and tangible outcomes to date.
 - Capitalizing on and building momentum to connect with new partners, especially elected officials from Snohomish County.
 - Identifying other funding opportunities to realize the full Eastrail vision.
- What is one thought or feeling that you want every event attendee to walk away with?
 - How cool is this project?!
 - Be inspired and ready to continue working hard to realize the full Eastrail vision.
 - This event was fun.

“Code of Conduct” Concept Development (Information/Direction Item)

David St. John and Joe Inslee of King County provided an update on the development of an Eastrail “code of conduct” and requested RAC input and staff commitment to support a dedicated project team. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- As trail connections and use increase, a code of conduct would support the goal of welcoming a diverse community of users to enjoy the corridor, set expectations of how trail users should interact with the space and other users, build a sense of ownership and participation among users for helping create an enjoyable and welcoming space, and set realistic expectations about the use of regulations and enforcement to manage trail use behavior.
- This will likely be a communications-focused (rather than regulatory) approach with a messaging campaign and materials as final products to provide guidance and promote a positive user experience.
- Project team request and timeline:
 - Anticipate project running January through October 2025, though could be expedited depending on work plan and staff availability.
 - Project manager: up to 1-2 days per week for project duration
 - Project team members: up to 1-3 days per month on average for project duration
 - Parks and/or Transportation staffer from each trail owning entity and neighboring jurisdiction
 - 2-3 communications and community engagement subject matter experts, and additional staff with specific expertise on an as-needed basis
- Staff team will finalize commitments and work plan at the January RAC meeting.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members generally supported moving forward with concept development, however some members cautioned against a punitive tone, preferring an approach that encourages cooperation and safety without sounding overly restrictive.
- There was interest in multiple messaging channels (e.g., Trail Ambassadors) with opportunities to pilot messaging next summer.

2025/2026 RAC/Eastrail Partners Interlocal Agreement Update (Information/Consensus Item)

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners and David St. John shared updates on the Eastrail Partners funding and scope of work for 2025-2026, as well as the RAC/Eastrail Partners Interlocal Agreement (ILA). Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- RAC approved a \$200,000 funding agreement and scope of work presented at the April and July meetings to support shared communications and community collaborations, as well as coalition building and advocacy for trail funding and construction needs.
- Staff are also developing an ILA; parties to the ILA would include RAC member counties, cities, and Eastrail Partners. PSE and Sound Transit will have separate agreements (though scope and funding commitments will be the same). Suggested ILA term is 2025-2034, and current funding commitments would extend through the next biennium. ILA will provide 78% of the funding and PSE/Sound Transit will provide the remaining 22%. Funding commitments will be subject to appropriation. ILA will include a commitment to evaluate its effectiveness every two years and consider subsequent new funding allocations to Eastrail Partners. New commitments would be secured by amending the ILA biannually.
- Staff will incorporate feedback into the draft ILA and circulate to each party for legal review and

continue to iterate. ILA will require City and County Council approval from RAC entities next year.

Discussion & Next Steps

- **There was consensus support for both the funding agreement and ILA with members noting the importance of responsible spending of public funds.** Snohomish County noted receiving questions from some of their elected officials about their contribution despite not yet being connected to Eastrail.

Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)

Sound Transit – planning two eastside Link light rail openings in 2025, Downtown Redmond (late spring) and I-90 Bridge (second half of the year).

Kirkland – date is being finalized for Google Lights at Feriton Spur Park.

Redmond – construction on RCCIII will begin in December with planned opening in summer 2025.

Redmond Lights runs December 7 through January 6.

Renton – staff continue to work on connecting the Renton terminus to other south King County trails.

Renton Holiday Lights opening night will be December 6 at Coulon Park.

King County – Wilburton Trestle is under construction with plans to open summer 2026. I-90 Steel Bridge design and engineering contracts are being negotiated with NTP expected in early 2025. Central Wilburton segment between NE 8th St. and the Wilburton Trestle is in design with construction expected to start summer 2025. King County is also conducting outreach and engagement related to regional trail hours as they explore potential trail hours expansion. They have already received over 1,200 public survey responses.

Snohomish County – now fully railbanked and looking forward to connecting Snohomish to Woodinville Eastrail segments.

The meeting recording is available here: [2024 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 next RAC meeting will be sometime in January. Staff are determining the schedule for 2025 RAC meetings based on co-chair availability and will send out dates and registration information soon. The meeting adjourned at 3:54 pm.