

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY
April 17, 2024 | 3 – 5 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; John Taylor, Director of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council Vice-President; Ryan McIrvine, Renton Councilmember; Jared Hill (alternate for Woodinville Councilmember Michelle Evans); Sharon Swan (alternate for Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Director Tom Teigen); Matt Larsen, Puget Sound Energy; Don Billen, Sound Transit; Vicky Clarke, Eastside Greenway Alliance/Cascade Bicycle Club

Welcome and Introductions

Councilmember Sarah Perry called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm, welcomed all in attendance to the second RAC meeting of 2024, and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of January 25, 2024 RAC meeting summary

Councilmember Jessica Forsythe moved to approve the January 25 meeting summary and Deputy Mayor Arnold seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the January 25 meeting summary.**

Public Comment

- No public comment was registered.

King County Parks Levy Renewal Planning (Information and Discussion Item)

Warren Jimenez, Director of King County Parks & Recreation Division, provided updates on King County Parks Levy renewal planning and community engagement. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- The Parks Levy is a voter-approved property tax that provides funding for regional and city parks, trails, and open spaces. Current 2020-2025 levy totals ~\$845M and provides ~80% of King County Parks' operating budget. It supports caring for the existing system (39%), increasing access to parks, trails, and open space (24%), building and maintaining the regional trail network (20%), and growing and connecting regional open space (15%).
- Planning for the next six-year levy and working to gather input from Tribes, members of the public, and jurisdictions. King County has a Levy Community Advisory Committee and will be summarizing feedback and drafting a levy proposal in the summer for Executive Constantine to present to King County Council in early 2025 for inclusion on the August 2025 ballot.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members expressed interest in the levy and related planning work prioritizing accessibility for wheelchair users and anyone with mobility issues. King County has design standards to support trails accessibility (though they sometimes need to be phased due to funding constraints) and is also reviewing access issues (both for facilities and overall connectivity) across the system.
- King County is looking at opportunities to build off existing investments; this will be part of internal criteria when reviewing the trails system, and they will also continue to look for partnership opportunities to deliver on broader system goals.

- King County will report back on priorities that emerge through the community engagement process.

Micromobility Devices: Considerations for Eastrail (Information and Consensus Item)

Barb Chamberlain, Director WSDOT Active Transportation Division, gave a presentation on considerations for micromobility devices (cycles, scooters, boards, and skates) and their use on Eastrail. While not a policy-making body, the RAC wants to coordinate on emerging issues such as this and understand how jurisdictions are adapting to and handling these devices. Slides were included in the meeting packet, along with micromobility device code language from RAC member jurisdictions.

- Trail use takes place in a larger context of community, societal, and biological systems. Equity, safety, and accessibility are essential for transportation, and traffic safety culture, system design, human factors, maintenance, and other elements all impact safe trail use.
- Micromobility devices can facilitate transportation independence for multiple demographic groups and support transit access, multimodal connectivity, land use planning.
- Good data on micromobility device safety data is lacking. We mostly have “anecdotal” because traffic safety crash data is only recorded when a police report is filed. Mobility device mass and speed are major variables in safety outcomes.
- Device user behavior is difficult to regulate and enforce, and there is a need to separate technology from behavior (e.g., research shows that the assumption that e-bike riders travel at higher speeds is mostly unfounded).
- There is little consistency in regulatory frameworks across jurisdictions. Enforcement, especially of user behavior, is difficult.
- Education and equity are key to support trail safety with regard to micromobility devices. Education is most effective when someone is new and receives actionable information, and signage needs to be meaningful, accessible, and consistent across the trail. Trail standards should also be the same for all types of transportation, modes, and devices, and consider the needs and device uses of users with disabilities.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Washington’s framework for e-bike standards is spreading to other states.
- King County Council is considering legislation to set specific operating hours (rather than current dawn to dusk rules) since Eastrail is effectively not available for commuting in the winter months. Members are interested in learning more about creative options for lighting to support safety that minimize adverse environmental impacts. Members also want to consider trail hours that support multimodal transit access and align with light rail and bus service hours.
- There could be issues if there are differences in standards between King County’s other trails and Eastrail. The group agreed that more discussion is needed to determine overall goals and implications of policy choices for jurisdictions along the corridor, especially as King County considers code changes. Consistency in regulation (hours of operation, speed, user code of conduct, etc.), signage, and messaging across Eastrail is critical. Members want to continue discussing and coordinating on this topic.

Update on Implementation of 2024 RAC Activities (Information and Discussion Item)

David St. John of King County Parks reviewed progress on 2024 RAC activities. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- **Videos:** Bellevue will cover most of the hard costs, King County will fund project management,

and Eastrail Partners will manage the project. Bellevue is in final negotiations with a videographer. They will capture footage of the ST2 line opening celebration and community events over the summer. Expect to complete videos in the fall.

- **Tours:** will be mostly left up to individual RAC members to design and lead tours as desired.
- **Celebration/activation event:** considering events over the summer including in alignment with a related task in the current, 2023-2024 service agreement with Eastrail Partners .
- **Leadership summit:** will require consultant support, King County will fund consulting costs and is working on a procurement strategy now. Additional cpsts may be identified as part of further scoping with the planning team and consultant; these costs are anticipated to be covered by additional RAC entities. Plan to finalize event scope and budget by early June, send a save the date by end of June, secure remaining resource commitments by end of July, and hold the summit in September.

Eastrail Partners Service Agreement (Information Item)

Nate Caminos, Eastrail Partners Board Secretary, summarized Eastrail Partners' 2025-2026 Service Agreement proposal for \$200,000 (\$50,000 increase from previous Service Agreement) to support community co-creation, shared communications, and private sector support and engagement.

Federal and State Funding Update (Information Item)

David St. John provided updates on federal and state funding.

Federal

- Snohomish County's Reconnecting Communities grant application was not selected.
- Submitted two RAISE grants in February for Woodinville segment planning and King County's I-90 steel bridge construction, expect to hear back in the summer.

State

- Woodinville, Kirkland, and Bellevue were successful in securing state funding timing flexibility for projects funded through Move Ahead WA.

Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)

Bellevue – receiving positive feedback from the community about Eastrail development and integration.

Sound Transit – ST2 Line opens 4/27 between south Bellevue and Redmond Technology Center, all eight stations will have activation celebrations and ribbon cutting will happen at Bellevue Downtown station at 10 am, trains will start to roll at 11 am.

Redmond – Redmond Technology Center bridge opening will be 4/22 at 10:30 am.

Renton – installed speed cushions along Lake Washington Blvd. which is helping to reduce speeds. Also working on Park Ave. extension this summer. Thanks to Sound Transit for funding a HAWK signal on Lake Washington Blvd. which will open in 2026.

PSE – interested in continuing the Eastrail lighting conversation as they have an easement along the corridor.

Woodinville – closing out the Golden Spike removal project and continuing to work with King County on sightline issues on the Sammamish River Trail/Eastrail connection.

Eastside Greenway Alliance – will be at the Wilburton Station for ST2 opening, are also engaging on the King County Parks Levy, additional funding opportunities for Eastrail projects, and the No on I-2117 campaign which would repeal the Climate Commitment Act (which includes Eastrail funding).

Snohomish County – was not successful in their Reconnecting Communities grant but appreciate RAC member letters of support and continue to work on their portion of the corridor.

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 July 18, 2024. Staff will send out the schedule for 2024 quarterly meetings soon, as well as meeting registration information in advance. The meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.