

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

January 24, 2025 | 10 AM – 12 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Co-Chair); Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Council Vice President (Co-Chair); Sarah Perry, King County Councilmember; Warren Jimenez (alternate for John Taylor), King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks; Penny Sweet (alternate for Jay Arnold) Kirkland; Ryan McIrvine, Renton Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County Conservation and Natural Resources Director; Michelle Evans, Woodinville Councilmember; Matt Larsen, Puget Sound Energy; Ariel Taylor, Sound Transit.

Welcome and Introductions

Councilmember Balducci called the meeting to order at 10:01 am, welcomed all in attendance to the first RAC meeting of 2025, and reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment

Joe Inslee will follow up with the individual who wished to provide comment.

Approval of October 17, 2024 RAC meeting summary

Council Vice President Forsythe moved to approve the October 17 meeting summary and Councilmember Evans seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the October 17 meeting summary.**

2025 Capital Project Look Ahead (Information Item)

Joe Inslee, David St. John, Kim Scrivner, Jared Hill, Mike Ingram, Curt Warber, Shannon Arms, and Ariel Taylor shared status updates on active capital projects and openings expected in 2025. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- Connecting Redmond Central Connector (Eastrail) to the East Lake Sammamish Trail: new trail segment will be completed in 2025, with an activation event being planned. This will be open for use before the 2 Line stations are open.
- RCCIII (Redmond): last paved section of Eastrail will open in 2025, expected completion in June.
- Centennial Trail South (Snohomish County): will begin conceptual design and feasibility to establish corridor alignment and a phasing and funding plan.
- 202 Trestle (Woodinville): finalizing conceptual 202 bridge design, expected to begin construction in the fall for late 2026 completion.
- Sammamish River Trail (Woodinville): hired a contractor to begin design.
- Slater/132nd HAWK Crossing (Kirkland): designed and seeking funding for a full crossing to be constructed in 2025, expected completion in the fall.
- Eastrail to Spring Blvd Connector (Bellevue): finished design, beginning construction this year.
- Grand Connection I-405 Crossing (Bellevue): in early design, expected completion in 2030.
- Central Wilburton segment (King County): in final design, expected summer 2026 opening with Wilburton Trestle.
- Wilburton Trestle (King County): in construction, expected completion in 2026.
- I-405 Bridge (WSDOT/King County): in construction, expected opening in 2026.

- I-90 Bridge Trail segment (King County): in early design, expected 2030 completion.
- I-90 Bridge segment – ESI8 sewer project (King County): temporarily diverting sewer line onto Eastrail to reline existing sewer line.
- ST2 light rail stations (Sound Transit): two more stations opening in Redmond. I-90 segment of East Link is on track to open in late 2025.

2025 RAC/PST Work Plan/Priorities (Discussion and Decision Item)

David St. John provided an update on the 2025 RAC and Principal Staff Team (PST) work plan (much of which carries forward work from 2024) and requested RAC member approval. Slides were included in the meeting packet. Elements include:

- A. Plan and implement the RAC-sponsored Eastrail video and leadership assembly event.
- B. Complete the new agreements between RAC entities and Eastrail Partners (EP) to support ongoing engagement by EP on priority actions.
- C. Engage federal and state leaders to support priority Eastrail projects.
- D. Coordinate efforts to address cross-cutting corridor management issues.
- E. Complete work plan to develop and implement the “Welcome to Eastrail” Community Guidelines.
- F. Coordinate communication about major capital project progress/milestones, community engagement opportunities, and activation events.
- G. Continue co-creation efforts to connect to and involve the diverse Eastrail community.
- H. Plan/coordinate/implement quarterly RAC meetings and twice-monthly PST meetings.
- Current list of cross-cutting issues is now included as an appendix to the annual work plan.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members were supportive of the work plan and approved moving forward. David St. John will finalize the document and circulate a final version to RAC members.
- There was discussion about concerns about federal funding awards. At this point, there have been no signs that awarded funding will not be disbursed, but members are interested in continuing to discuss necessary advocacy to maintain commitments. County DNRP will explore doing an assessment of the current circumstances around federal funding and, if that assessment is done, bring relevant information forward to inform further RAC awareness and potential supportive action.

Work Plan for “Welcome to Eastrail” Community Guidelines (Discussion and Direction Item)

Joe Inslee and Katherine Hollis provided an update on the “Welcome to Eastrail” Community Guidelines and solicited RAC direction. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- Goal is to set expectations for how trail users interact with the space and other users, welcome a diverse community of users, and create a consistent Eastrail experience.
- Planning to pursue two elements of this work plan item in 2025: consistent branded welcoming signage and messaging, and an Ambassador program that EP would lead/coordinate.
- Recommend starting with foundational elements of trail etiquette and then use learnings to develop welcoming and educational products later.
- Eastrail Partners will implement a pilot volunteer Eastrail Welcoming Ambassador program starting in the summer focused on providing information and welcoming (not enforcement).
- Ambassador concept would not include an enforcement role for Ambassadors.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members were supportive of consistent and cohesive messaging and excited by the Ambassador program and approved moving forward.
- Members noted that signage should be simple/minimal to reduce clutter and periodically changed so people continue to notice it. It should have accessible and inclusive visuals and non-English language translations as appropriate. Messaging could be tested with parks commissions.
- There were questions about the role of Ambassadors and potential enforcement mechanisms. Learnings will be used to inform future implementation. King County's Ranger program coming online this year could be another tool to address issues and complement the program.

Leadership Assembly Planning Check-in (Information Item)

Curt Warber shared updates on leadership assembly planning.

- Date is still TBD but planning for a Friday in May before Memorial Day (Thursday as a backup); will send a save the date out soon. RAC members should hold Fridays in May and be ready to encourage attendance to make the event as successful as possible.
- Leaning toward GIX in Bellevue, anticipating 100-150 attendees. Still need funding for venue rental, food, and potentially swag. Requests may come via PST.

RAC Housekeeping: New RAC/EP Agreement, Eastside Greenway Alliance, and In-person RAC Meeting (Information Item)

David St. John shared updates on the RAC/EP agreement, Eastside Greenway Alliance RAC membership, and a potential in-person summer RAC meeting.

- RAC/EP agreement: PST is continuing to draft but there are still some issues to resolve, including the type of agreement (interlocal agreement might not be an option, discussing alternatives). The goal is to have an agreement by the end of Q2 with approval by Q3 to facilitate funding.
- Eastside Greenway Alliance: EGA was added in 2017 to provide a community voice on the RAC; Vicky Clarke has been serving as the representative. However, this group doesn't substantively exist anymore so would like to relinquish its seat. The RAC will need to update the MOU which names members but would like to maintain the seat for an organization that serves as a user advocacy group. RAC members engage more on this at the April meeting, with the potential to approve revisions to the RAC MOU.
- July in-person RAC meeting: Sound Transit OMFE, Redmond Senior Community Center, or Kirkland Parks maintenance facility could serve as locations. Staff will discuss further the location options and what the place-based agenda could include.

Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)

Snohomish County – plan to celebrate railbanking. Looking for partnership and potential federal funding opportunities with private sector/utilities with intersections between infrastructure resilience projects and habitat restoration, recreation, and stewardship.

Woodinville – Council approved accepting federal funds, hiring a consultant for design and permitting for Eastrail section and seeing more community engagement. Exploring potential contract with Lime to support expanded regional micromobility since Bothell and Redmond have contracts.

Kirkland – celebrating Totem Lake Connector Bridge, looking forward to 132nd crossing.

Redmond – stay tuned for ribbon cuttings for RCCIII and Sound Transit station openings this summer.

Bellevue – adopted Comprehensive Plan update last year with new Wilburton policies, will adopt land use code revisions later this year to allow development to pursue Plan vision. Will also be seeking funding opportunities for Grand Connection crossing.

King County – several projects underway with planned openings in 2026. Planning for next Parks Levy, will have more updates soon.

The meeting recording is available here: [2025 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 April 24, 10 p.m. – 12 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.