

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

January 30, 2026 | 10 AM – 12 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Co-Chair); Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember (Co-Chair); Ryan Walker (alternate for Bellevue Councilmember Claire Sumadiwirya); Sarah Perry, King County Councilmember; John Taylor, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks Director; Jay Arnold, Kirkland Councilmember; Ryan McIrvine, Renton Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County Conservation and Natural Resources Director; Michelle Evans, Woodinville Councilmember; Savanna Steele, Sound Transit

Welcome and Introductions

Councilmember Claudia Balducci called the meeting to order at 10:03 am, welcomed all in attendance to the first RAC meeting of 2026, and reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment

Renton resident Marlene Winter noted hazards to pedestrians on the street near the entrance to Gene Coulon Park and would like to see the last mile of trail completed. Staff will follow up via email with Marlene Winter regarding the status of the Coulon Park connection.

Jim Schnitzius requested a status update on the Wilburton Trestle.

Bellevue resident Anthony Bergin noted needed retrofits and upgrades to the I-90 steel bridge.

Approval of October 31, 2025 RAC meeting summary

Councilmember Forsythe moved to approve the October 31 meeting summary; Councilmember Evans seconded. **Members unanimously voted to approve the October 31 meeting summary as drafted.**

Major Capital, Celebration, and Activation Look Ahead (Information Item)

Joe Inslee, Emily Griffith, Jared Hill, Curt Warber, and Shannon Arms shared status updates on capital projects in 2026. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- Major 2025 accomplishments include the East Lake Sammamish Trail to Eastrail Bear Creek Bridge connection, the ST 2 Redmond Line opening, and RCCIII opening.
- Centennial Trail South (Snohomish County): kickoff and conceptual design/feasibility as well as development of phasing and funding plan and public outreach in 2026, early design in 2027.
- 133rd Ave NE Roundabout and tunnel (Woodinville): in construction, expected completion August 2026.
- SR 202 widening and trestle replacement (Woodinville): in final design, however costs have increased significantly. Woodinville requests letters of support from the RAC and member entities for their BUILD grant.
- Eastrail Multiuse Trail Plan (Woodinville): in planning phase to identify amenities, crossings, street profiles, pollinator habitat, vision, and artwork for the linear park along Eastrail.
- Cross-Kirkland Corridor Slater/132nd Crossing (Kirkland): in construction, expected completion spring 2026.

- Cross-Kirkland Corridor 6th St to I-405/85th interchange (Kirkland): in construction, expected completion summer 2026.
- Eastrail to Spring Blvd. Connector (Bellevue): in final design, plan to begin construction this year and open in 2027.
- Grand Connection (Bellevue): 30% design complete, preparing for final design, expected completion in 2031.
- Central Wilburton Segment (King County): in final design, have accelerated schedule to open with Wilburton Trestle in summer 2027.
- Wilburton Trestle (King County): in construction, expected completion summer 2027.
- I-90 Bridge Trail Segment (King County): 30% complete, preparing for final design and working through permitting and approvals, including RAISE grant requirements. Public engagement will begin this summer. Previously planned concurrent sewer relining project has been shelved.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Co-Chair Balducci requested updates on closure length and detours resulting from current wastewater pipe repair project and future culvert repair project in the Cross-Kirkland Corridor segment north of Bellevue.
- Members approved supporting Woodinville’s BUILD grant application; staff will work with RAC Co-Chairs to draft a letter of support.

Review and Approval of RAC/PST 2026 Work Plan (Consensus Item)

David St. John of King County Parks reviewed completed elements from the 2025 RAC/Principal Staff Team (PST) Work Plan and proposed 2026 Work Plan and requested RAC member approval. Potential additions for the 2026 Work Plan were informed by input from the June 2025 Future of Eastrail workshop and slides were included in the meeting packet. Existing elements include:

- Complete new agreements between RAC entities and Eastrail Partners (EP) to support ongoing engagement on priority actions – carry forward and revise to reflect new focus on evaluating need for 2027-2028 agreement with new funding, scope, and timeline.
- Engage federal and state leaders to support priority project – carry forward with flexibility in advancing specific actions.
- Coordinate efforts to address key cross-cutting corridor management issues – carry forward and update cross-cutting issues list.
- Complete work plan to develop and implement “Welcome to Eastrail” Community Guidelines – carry forward with remaining work folded into other items as appropriate as Community Guidelines and Eastrail Ambassador program were successfully implemented.
- Coordinate communication about major capital project progress/milestones, community engagement opportunities, and activation events – carry forward with clarification that this is supported significantly by EP under their service agreement.
- Continue co-creation efforts to connect to and involve the diverse Eastrail community – carry forward with clarification that this is primarily undertaken by EP under their service agreement.
- Plan/coordinate/implement quarterly RAC meetings and twice-monthly PST meetings – ongoing.

Potential 2026 Work Plan additions would happen with existing staff time commitments and do not have new associated cost-share funding requirements.

- Develop a brief update report on key completed actions and 5–10-year action priorities supporting achievement of the RAC vision for the corridor.
- Add point of emphasis for highlighting newly completed transit connections to Eastrail with 2 Line

to communication actions.

- Add point of emphasis for engaging community youth to activation and communication actions.
- Add point of emphasis for implementing coordinating wayfinding to cross-cutting issues list.
- Add point of emphasis for EP tabling and “Welcome to Eastrail” trailside signage to communication actions.
- Add point of emphasis for exploring implementation of amenities to open trail segments to the cross-cutting issues list.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members were supportive of the Work Plan and additions as presented. Staff will prepare and share the final approved Work Plan in the April meeting packet.
- Members appreciated the continued focus on welcoming elements and were interested in prioritizing exploring new funding sources given uncertainty and constraints with current federal, state, and local funding sources.

Review and Approval of Revisions to 2022 RAC Memorandum of Understanding (Consensus Item)

David St. John provided updates on the RAC MOU revision process to affirm Eastside Greenway Alliance (EGA) departure from RAC membership. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- Staff are drafting a letter of intent for RAC members to affirm membership revision as well as a 2026 MOU addressing the new RAC membership. A King County Council motion is required to approve the MOU and formalize the new RAC membership, followed by RAC member approval of the MOU and RAC resolution publicly acknowledging and thanking EGA for its contributions.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Staff will provide instructions and letter of intent for RAC members to send and draft an updated MOU for approval at the April RAC meeting. Members are supportive of staff making edits during this revision to streamline future updates.

Briefing on 2 Line Opening Planning and Celebration (Information Item)

Savannah Steele of Sound Transit shared updates on major capital projects.

- Stride Bus Operations & Maintenance facility groundbreaking in August 2025.
- Extended light rail service via the 2 Line to downtown Redmond and the 1 Line to downtown Federal Way last year.
- Cross-lake connection via the 2 Line from Lynnwood to Redmond with 26 stations over 34 miles, including stations at Mercer Island, Judkins Park, and Chinatown/International District where riders can transfer to the 1 Line.
- There will be a ribbon cutting and public celebrations at each station for the 2 Line opening on March 28th.

RAC Premier of the New Eastrail Video (Information Item)

Colin Petkus of Eastrail Partners premiered the [Eastrail video](#). They are planning to create additional shorter videos using other footage collected for the project. Members should publicize the video through social media and other channels.

RAC “Heads Up” and Housekeeping (Information Item)

David St. John shared brief housekeeping updates:

- Staff are working to schedule RAC meetings for the rest of the year. Members are interested in an in-person July meeting, possibly in Snohomish County or at the Wilburton Trestle (pending status). Members should send other location ideas to staff.

- A future RAC meeting agenda item will be EP service agreements including scope, funding implications, and potential adjustments to the cost-share model.
- Federal funding awarded to King County and Woodinville via RAISE/BUILD grants appears to be secure at this point, but staff continue to monitor, in addition to federal railbanking legislation and potential implications for Eastrail.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members agreed that since the RAC meets quarterly, Co-Chairs should work with staff to draft, circulate, and send letters to the federal delegation if there are any time-sensitive funding or legislation changes relevant to Eastrail without needing to wait for the subsequent meeting.

Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)

- Progress updates were covered in the capital projects agenda item.
- Councilmember Balducci invited members to join her on February 19th at the NE 8th St. bridge Japanese American Legacy Project installation for the EO 9066 annual day of remembrance.

The meeting recording is available here: [2026 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 in April, specific date TBD. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 am.