

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING SUMMARY

April 23, 2026 | 10 AM – 12 PM

Zoom Meeting

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present: Jessica Forsythe, Redmond Councilmember (Co-Chair); Claire Sumadiwirya, Bellevue Councilmember; John Taylor, King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks Director; Jay Arnold, Kirkland Councilmember; Ryan McIrvine, Renton Councilmember; Tom Teigen, Snohomish County Executive Office Administrative Services Executive Director; Michelle Evans, Woodinville Councilmember; Savanna Steele, Sound Transit; Matt Larson, Puget Sound Energy

Welcome and Introductions

RAC Co-Chair and Councilmember Jessica Forsythe called the meeting to order at 10:04 am and welcomed all in attendance to the second RAC meeting of 2026.

Public Comment

No public comment was registered. Interested parties should send comments to eastrail@kingcounty.gov. Joe Inslee will compile any additional comments received.

Approval of January 30, 2026 RAC meeting summary

Matt Larson moved to approve the January 30 meeting summary; Councilmember Evans seconded.

Members unanimously approved the January 30 meeting summary as drafted.

2026 RAC Memorandum of Understanding (Consensus Item)

David St. John of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks reviewed the current and proposed RAC MOU removing Eastside Greenway Alliance (EGA) as a member, pursuant to EGA's amicable request to the RAC. Slides and draft MOU were included in the meeting packet.

Discussion & Next Steps

- RAC members unanimously approved the new 2026 MOU. RAC entities will now need to follow their own specific process to execute the MOU under their respective appropriate authority. Staff will compile signatures and share the MOU once fully executed.

Report from the Eastrail Visioning Session (Information and Discussion Item)

Katherine Hollis of Eastrail Partners (EP) summarized the March 26, 2026 Eastrail Vision 2035 visioning session, which included workshopping a shared vision statement, drafting an Eastrail Vision 2035 document, and discussing a proposed case study project on inclusive storytelling.

- Identified communications as a need, including unified wayfinding and shared signage. Eastrail as a transportation facility was another major theme as it was planned in conjunction with Sound Transit's 2 Line and other rapid ride stations. More work is needed to create a living document to guide work over the next decade.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members appreciated the collaborative exercise and want to continue using this model to gather input. Members also requested that the theme of shared management (rather than just coordination) be highlighted more in the document based on discussions at the session.
- Next steps include identifying RAC members and staff to work with EP to refine themes, gather

community input, and present the updated Vision 2035 document at the July or October RAC meeting.

Sound Transit's Enterprise Initiative Project (Information Item)

Savanna Steele of Sound Transit provided updates on their system expansion and current Enterprise Initiative project.

- Crosslake Connection is now open, completing ST2 projects. They have broken ground on Stride BRT lines which will connect directly to Eastrail and are not impacted by the Enterprise Initiative. The 4 Line is in pre-planning now and will connect south Kirkland to Issaquah through Bellevue via light rail with a targeted 2044 delivery for revenue service.
- The Enterprise Initiative is intended to address the ST3 portfolio funding gap of \$34.5B, which is a ~25% increase above fall 2024 long-range financial plan. Sound Transit is working to find cost savings. With updated projections and financing improvements, ST has increased financial capacity by \$4B. However, historic inflation has caused construction costs to increase 71.5%.
- Sound Transit's Board developed principles to guide staff in exploring options to address the funding gap, including:
 - Advancing regional connectivity
 - Prioritizing completing regional spine (Everett to Tacoma)
 - Supporting future growth to maintain and grow ridership, align investments with current land use and future growth, and engender future support
 - Prioritizing passenger experience
 - Protecting public investments with fiscal integrity and stewarding public resources
- Board is working on an updated system plan to be adopted by end of Q2 2026, which Savanna will share. They are also conducting public engagement via [digital survey](#) and subarea town halls.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members commented that focusing on subarea equity should be a priority in the Enterprise Initiative and updated system plan.

Consideration of New Service Agreements with Eastrail Partners (Consensus Item)

David St. John and Katherine Hollis discussed the current approach to service agreements with EP (which end this year) and reviewed the proposal for a new round of service agreements to reach consensus on new scope items. Slides were included in the meeting packet.

- RAC entities currently agree on a main scope, determine the total funding amount needed, and member contributions to reach that amount.
- There is a 10-year 2025-2034 MOA among six RAC member entities to provide a biannual structure for funding, as well as individual two-year contracts between nine RAC member entities and EP for agreed-upon scope items.
- Proposed scope for 27-28 is similar to the previous agreement in terms of themes and funding amount, though funding request has increased by 3.5% (CPI) to **\$207,000**.
- Scope of work focuses on:
 - **Coalition building for trail funding:** continuing collaboration with King County and jurisdictions to maintain momentum through community outreach and partnerships, as well as increasing focus in Snohomish County by relationship-building with legislators, business community, etc.
 - **Trail activation and community engagement:** continuing Trail Ambassadors, summer concert series, amplifying opportunities for trail users and community members to provide

input on Eastrail planning and other partnership events like Bike Everywhere Day, Bellevue 5K, ongoing work with Eastside for All, Move Redmond, MTS Greenway, etc.

- **Shared communications:** communications between RAC entities, EP, and users as well as website, newsletter, social media, and signage and wayfinding implementation.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members asked if individual respective contributions would commensurately increase by 3.5%; staff will provide follow up, including working within the Principals' Staff Team.
- Railbanking in Snohomish County has removed a major barrier to trail progress and they are already working to build relationships, however, they are also dealing with budget deficits. Snohomish County is the second highest funder after King County and will be having more conversations about budget implications, especially since trail buildout there will take another decade. EP and other RAC members are available to support related Snohomish County conversations and answer questions if helpful.

Discussion & Next Steps

- Members agreed on the scope elements presented; staff will work with EP to refine and review potential funding formula modifications to adjust funding levels if needed.

RAC "Heads Up" and Housekeeping (Information Item)

David St. John shared brief housekeeping updates:

- **RAC Co-Chairs:** current Co-Chair terms expire in October this year. Current Co-Chairs can opt to remain in their positions; other members who want to be considered should notify current Co-Chairs before the July meeting. Co-Chair/Redmond Councilmember Forsythe will be stepping down, and Woodinville Councilmember Evans is interested in being considered for a 2026-2028 Co-Chair term.
- **July RAC meeting:** July 31 RAC meeting will likely be in Renton, exact location will be determined in the next month.
- **Federal updates:** no new activity on railbanking legislation or news about RAISE/BUILD grants. King County is proceeding with the I-90 Steel Bridge project and monitoring railbanking legislation, as well as the transportation bill development process to be aware of potential opportunities or challenges for Eastrail.
- **Wilburton Trestle tour:** please RSVP by EOD Monday, April 27 to David if you plan to attend the tour on May 8 as there are space/equipment limitations and they expect to reach capacity.

Progress and Success Updates (Information Item)

Woodinville – will have a soft opening for initial Eastrail segment in August. City has also purchased two parcels for a potential community center and pool and are expanding activation of that Eastrail area. Woodinville staff walked the trail with Rep. Suzan DelBene and her team to showcase how the trail will connect Woodinville to other communities and outdoor experiences.

Redmond – looking forward to World Cup activities, hoping people use the trail to get to games and visit Redmond throughout the summer.

Kirkland – signal crossing from the Cross-Kirkland Corridor to Eastrail at 132nd will open this afternoon. There will be a larger celebration event in the future.

Renton – doing an activation station at the May Creek Trail for Bike Everywhere Month.

The meeting recording is available here: [2026 Meetings - King County](#).

Next Steps and Adjournment

The next RAC meeting will be July 31 in person, likely in Renton. The meeting adjourned at 11:42 am.