



# Creating Connections

**Recommendations on the Eastside Rail Corridor From the Regional Advisory Council**



October 2013

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The legislation that established the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) described several expectations for the group's work, including

- Coordinate planning and development activities to the extent possible to ensure effective use of the southern portion of the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) and the Redmond Spur.
- Oversee the partner planning process including implementing and coordinating the trail, high-capacity transit, and utility uses in the ERC.
- Coordinating with affected cities around local planning and development.
- Address both near-term and long-term recommendations.
- Recommend any needed changes to the county's countywide planning policies.
- Reach out to a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

This report provides a summary of the RAC's work to accomplish those objectives, and identifies actions necessary to continue this collaborative approach among the owners. The report begins by describing the RAC's vision for the corridor, the history of the ERC, and the process used by the RAC to develop these recommendations.

In the subsequent chapters the report

- Details the **current conditions** in the corridor, broken into five planning segments. It describes current uses adjacent to the corridor, the major constraints that will need to be resolved (pinch points, steep slopes, narrow trestles, etc.), opportunities for connections (trails, high-capacity transit, parks, utility corridors, etc.), and any significant plans of neighboring communities that could impact the corridor.
- Presents several **Principles** developed by the RAC to guide more detailed recommendations.
- Makes recommendations divided into several sections:
  - Creation of a **regional legacy** for future generations, outlining plans to promote the corridor as a regional spine for mobility and economic development, be developed to capture local culture, history, and scenic values, and reflect the values of public health, public safety, equity and social justice, and sustainability.
  - Suggested **regional policy framework** for future decision making about the corridor.
  - Proposed **transportation and high-capacity transit solutions**.
  - Potential **shared corridor guidelines**, which provide guidance on possible planning and development standards that the owners may want to create and use in common.
  - **Approaches to constraints and opportunities** offering guidance to address some of the challenges and possibilities in the corridor.
  - **Creating community support**, which will be essential for planning and developing the ERC. Plans created for the corridor must reflect community values.

In conclusion, the report describes the RAC's suggested **next steps** to continue this important work.



## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR

October 2013

Dear Friend:

Our region was built around connections.

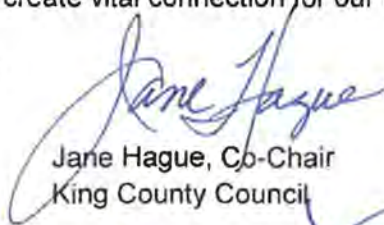
From the trading paths of Native American tribes to the sea routes, from Puget Sound to Asia, from the railroad lines that stitched the Pacific Northwest to other parts of our continent to the utility lines that brought power from the region's rivers to cities and factories, we have long relied on connections to obtain what we need and to market what we produce, whether that be salmon or timber, airplanes or software.

In the 21st century, those connections are more important than ever. King County is thriving and growing, and our continued success depends on our ability to help people and goods move quickly and easily around the region.

That's why the Eastside Rail Corridor is so important. This former rail line stretches from Renton to Woodinville and Redmond, connecting communities up and down the east side of Lake Washington, and offering opportunities to connect to trails and transportation systems from Vancouver to Vancouver, and beyond.

On behalf of the owners of the Eastside Rail Corridor, we are delighted to present these recommendations from the first phase of a regional planning effort for what will become a multiuse corridor offering connections for trails, high-capacity transit, rails and utilities for generations to come. We hope you will work with us as we continue the work of developing this corridor to create vital connection for our region.

Sincerely,



Jane Hague, Co-Chair  
King County Council



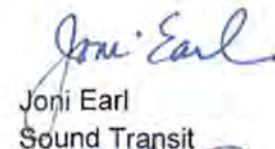
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**THE VISION: A CORRIDOR FOR THE AGES.** The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) provides a rare and unique opportunity to develop a major north-south corridor for multiple, important purposes: mobility, utility infrastructure, and recreation.

Development of the ERC will help shape our region for decades. It will provide uses and connections that will link jobs and housing, serve growing communities, offer amenities to business and residents, and support the protection of King County's natural resources—the protected forest land and open space to the east.

The corridor offers exciting near-term possibilities, as well as the chance to be part of something even bigger and grander. Planned carefully, the ERC will become a "Corridor for the Ages," stretching from Vancouver to Vancouver, and beyond.

Realizing this potential will take time, effort and shared regional resources. The Regional Advisory Council has begun that work. The purpose of this preliminary report is to outline the start of a shared planning process that will make the ERC a truly regional legacy.

**THE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL PLANNING PROCESS.** The ERC is part of the Woodinville Subdivision, a 42-mile rail corridor that stretches north-south from Renton to Snohomish, passing through Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland, Woodinville, Redmond and portions of unincorporated King County.

In 2009 the Port of Seattle purchased the corridor from Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad. As part of that transaction, the area of the ERC south of Woodinville (south of the "wye" at milepost 23.8) was "railbanked" under the federal National Trails Act. Between 2010 and 2013 ownership interests were purchased from the Port by the City of Redmond, Puget Sound Energy, the City of Kirkland, Sound Transit, and King County. These five entities are now the owners of the corridor between Renton and Woodinville. Per federal law, future development of the corridor will need to be consistent with railbanking requirements.

The Regional Advisory Council (RAC) is composed of representatives of the five owners. Each of the owners has its own statutory obligations, internal processes and procedures, and priorities set by separate governing bodies. Recognizing that these disparate interests, timeframes and requirements could lead to uncoordinated planning, the RAC was created to establish a framework for a collaborative, regional planning process for the ERC, with the goal of accommodating multiple uses in the corridor.

The RAC met regularly during 2013 to study conditions, constraints and opportunities along the corridor, learn about adjacent development and plans of nearby jurisdictions, review lessons from similar multiuse corridors around the country, and hear from interested members of the community.

**PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS.** This report presents the RAC's preliminary recommendations for the next steps in a collaborative process for planning, developing and using the ERC. The RAC developed a set of high-level guiding principles to provide a



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framework for the more detailed recommendations. The following list summarizes the recommendations, with a reference to the appropriate guiding principles.

Recommendation	Principle
<b>1. Develop a Shared Regional Policy Framework</b>	
1A. Identify policies for <i>VISION 2040</i> that support ERC development.	Partnership
1B. Identify policies for <i>Transportation 2040</i> that support ERC development.	Partnership
1C. Incorporate policies on the regional significance of the ERC in the <i>Countywide Planning Policies</i> .	Partnership
1D. Incorporate policies on the regional significance of the ERC in the <i>King County Comprehensive Plan</i> .	Partnership
<b>2. Develop a Federal Agenda</b>	
2A. Engage federal officials and seek federal assistance to study optimum crossing and connections at <i>I-405/I-90 interchange</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
2B. Engage federal officials and seek federal assistance to study optimum crossings and connections at <i>SR-520/I-405 interchange</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
2C. Re-establish the corridor's rail connection across I-405 at the former <i>Wilburton Tunnel Crossing</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
2D. <i>Pursue resources</i> to help with the development of the corridor.	Partnership
<b>3. Develop a State Agenda</b>	
3A. Develop a plan for the reconnection of pedestrian and bicycle access across I-405 at the former <i>Wilburton Tunnel Crossing</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
3B. Explore opportunities to address trail, high-capacity transit and utility improvements in the <i>parallel I-405 and ERC rights-of-way</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
3C. Seek support to construct improvements to the <i>SR-520/SR-202 interchange</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
<b>4. Develop a Long-Term Regional Approach for Planning Together</b>	
4A. Four of the owners review, discuss and comment on Sound Transit's <i>ERC high-capacity transit corridor study, the development of the Long-Range Plan, and the High-Capacity Transit System Plan</i> .	Connectivity & Mobility
4B. <i>Coordinate owner and adjacent jurisdiction planning</i> and actions to foster implementation of the multiuse vision, and enhance or create mobility connections.	Collaboration
4C. Discuss Sound Transit's <i>Operation and Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF)</i> , determine if owners want to provide comments, and work together to ensure public access and multiple uses consistent with owners' ERC vision.	Collaboration
4D. Conduct all planning for the corridor <b>consistent with the federal Rails to Trails Act requirements</b> .	Collaboration



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Recommendation	Principle
<b>5. Develop the Corridor's Regional Legacy</b>	
5A. <b>Mobility and Transportation</b> Connections. Connect the Redmond Spur and the Main Line ERC. Complete the connection between the ERC and the Lake to Sound Trail, and the Lake Washington Loop Trail.	Connectivity & Mobility
5B. <b>Economic Opportunities.</b> Support economic growth in numerous ways, including addressing the potential timing and location of possible excursion service. Create zoning and development regulations to integrate ERC into communities. Provide opportunities in this multiuse corridor for energy and utility infrastructure to support future growth and development.	Economic Opportunity
5C. <b>Cultural Opportunities.</b> Adopt design principles that articulate the importance of including art and cultural displays in the ERC's development. Work with local residents to identify art, cultural and design features.	Heritage
5D. <b>Natural Areas.</b> Protect important natural areas within and in close proximity to the corridor. Plan improvements to integrate interactions between ERC users and the natural environment.	Heritage
5E. <b>Scenic Vistas.</b> Identify points along the corridor where scenic vistas can be maximized.	Heritage
5F. <b>Historic Legacy.</b> Identify historic locations and incorporate into the design and development of the corridor.	Heritage
5G. <b>Public Health.</b> Create seamless trail and transit connections; address crossings at major highway interchanges; consider appropriate locations for development of near-term trail development.	Connectivity & Mobility
5H. <b>Public Safety.</b> Develop strategies for safe crossings at major highway intersections; create principles and common standards for how arterial and local road crossings will be addressed.	Connectivity & Mobility
5I. <b>Equity.</b> Use strategic public investments to enhance corridor use for all King County residents, including completion of the connection to the Lake to Sound Trail.	Connectivity & Mobility; Economic Opportunity
5J. <b>Sustainability.</b> Continue the collaborative RAC planning process—continuing to work together toward a common vision.	Collaboration
<b>6. Begin Identification of Shared Corridor Guidelines</b>	
6A. Work together, and with adjacent jurisdictions, to adopt <b>consistent policies, regulations and incentives</b> to facilitate development of the corridor that is well integrated into communities.	Collaboration; Economic Opportunity
6B. Work together to strengthen the <b>connections between the ERC and transit services</b> (e.g., the South Kirkland Park and Ride).	Connectivity & Mobility
6C. Establish a framework for effective channels of communication among the owners' respective <b>maintenance and management</b> staffs.	Collaboration

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Recommendation	Principle
<b>7. Provide Initial Guidance on Constraints and Opportunities</b>	
7A. Plan for construction in the <b>Bellevue Area</b> . Plan for use of the corridor during construction of East Link light rail and the NE 4th Street crossing.	Continuity
7B. <b>Pinch points and topographic constraints</b> . Support development of uniform setbacks along the ERC. Develop a baseline of natural and built features that constrain development.	Continuity
<b>8. Enlist Community Support</b>	
8A. <b>Naming and branding</b> . Develop a strategy to brand the corridor that honors the work Redmond, Kirkland and Sound Transit have already done.	Continuity
8B. <b>Funders Collaborative</b> . Establish a funders collaborative to support phased development of the ERC.	Collaboration
8C. <b>Stakeholder Jurisdictions</b> . Continue to work closely with state, regional and local nonowner jurisdictions in the next phase of collaborative planning.	Partnership; Collaboration
8D. <b>State and Federal Representatives</b> . Reach out to state and federal officials to inform them about the first phase of the RAC's work and the unified vision.	Partnership; Collaboration
8E. <b>General Public and Interest Groups</b> . Engage the general public and a diverse range of interest groups in planning for the corridor.	Partnership; Collaboration

**NEXT STEPS.** The owners are committed to the continuation of a collaborative planning process begun by the RAC. After this report is approved by the RAC and forwarded to the County Executive, the owners will work together to create (by December 1, 2013) a scope, work plan and schedule for their next phase of work (RAC 2.0). The purpose of the owners' next round of collaborative planning will be to

- Serve as the keepers of the long-term vision; proposing policies, focusing on changes needed to regional and local planning documents
- Implement the report recommendations as the next step in the collaborative development of the corridor within the established authorities of each of the owners
- Advocate with state and federal legislative delegations
- Enlist community and business support in the corridor's development
- Consider options and strategies for an ongoing forum for collaborative, coordinated decision making and implementation
- Collaborate at a technical staff level on specific planning and development issues.

The membership of RAC 2.0 may need to be broadened to realize these goals.



## VISION AND HISTORY: A MULTIUSE, MULTIPHASED CORRIDOR

### A CORRIDOR FOR THE AGES

Our Puget Sound region is blessed with dramatic topography, majestic natural features, and large, picturesque water bodies. While adding immensely to the beauty and quality of life in our region, those same features also create challenges when developing transportation, recreation and utility connections. The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) provides a rare and unique chance to develop a major north-south corridor for a variety of important purposes: mobility, utility infrastructure, and recreation.

Planning for the future use of the corridor is big, important work—it will directly impact the quality of life for our residents and our regional economy. The preservation of this corridor in public ownership offers an unparalleled opportunity, consistent with the federal Rails-to-Trails Act, to serve this quickly growing region with trail, high-capacity transit and utility connections. It will allow our region to connect our transit and trail networks in exciting new ways, and enable utilities to support new regional growth. The owners agree on a common vision for the corridor.

#### **Our Vision: A Corridor for the Ages**

Development of the corridor will enhance the mobility of our region by creating a critical north-south transportation corridor that will allow for multimodal connections, including high-capacity transit (e.g., heavy rail, light rail, or other forms of fixed guideway transportation) and nonmotorized trail use. The corridor will help us integrate the pieces of our larger transportation networks. The corridor will enable key utility improvements to help meet the demands of a growing population. The corridor will expand the recreation network, creating equitable access for all residents, and benefiting generations of Puget Sound residents.

Our shared vision for the corridor is bold and far-sighted. It will help shape the development of this unique corridor, which has the ability to provide uses and connections that will promote jobs/housing linkages, serve growing communities, offer amenities to business and residents, and support the protection of King County's natural resources—the protected forest land and open space to the east.

We should start to plan for the time when the regional discussion about the ERC will be part of something even bigger and grander. We should be working now to truly make the ERC a "Corridor for the Ages."

In the years to come the conversation in our region will be about how to enhance high-capacity transit service and finish trail and nonautomobile connections from Vancouver to Vancouver, and possibly through Oregon and California. The Regional Advisory Council (RAC) believes the corridor will eventually become part of statewide and West Coast rail and trail systems.

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As our region grows, demand for electricity and other utilities grows. The PSRC VISION 2040 estimates an additional 1.3 million people and 1.0 million jobs between 2010 and 2040. Improved and expanded electric, gas and other utility infrastructure will be critical to preparing for that growth. The ERC offers an important opportunity to locate needed utility infrastructure to ensure energy and utility reliability for Eastside residents and businesses.

As we begin work on planning and development of the corridor, we must be mindful of this larger, longer-term, grand vision. Doing so will help us avoid planning in silos, and having to re-do investments over time due to a lack of foresight.

These connections will not be made immediately. They will take time, effort and shared regional resources. This Regional Advisory Council planning process is merely one step in what will be a multiphased process. The RAC will envision and then plan for the development of multiple uses along the ERC, as well as connections to the larger multimodal and trail networks. Planning will be carried out carefully to allow for multiple uses and so as not to preclude future opportunities.



## Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) and Regional Trails Snohomish/King/Pierce County Area 9/21/12

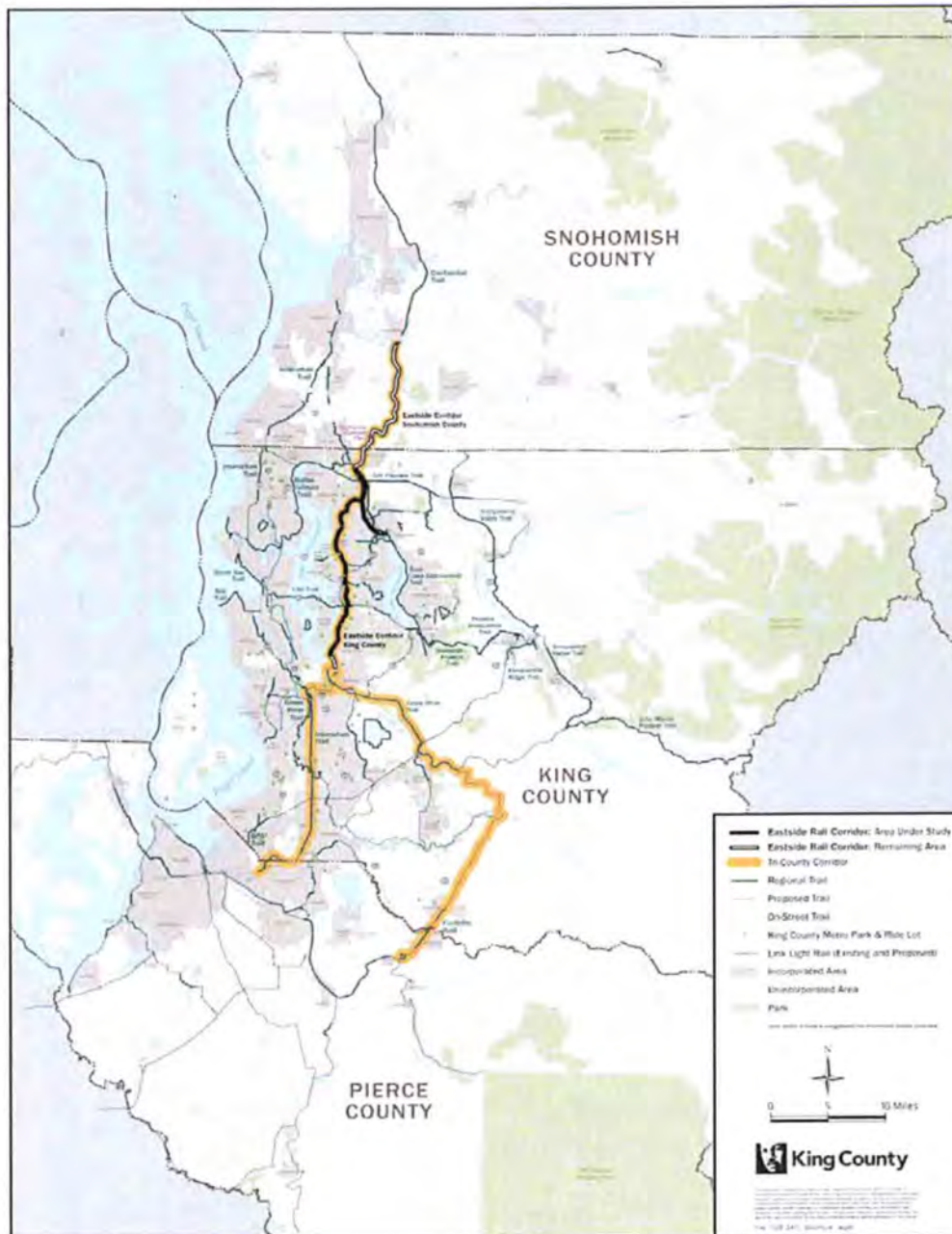


Exhibit 1. ERC Map

### RECENT HISTORY OF THE ERC

The ERC is part of the Woodinville Subdivision, a 42-mile rail corridor. The portion known as the Main Line extends from Renton to Snohomish, passing through Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland,



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Woodinville, and portions of unincorporated King County. A spur off the Main Line, called the Redmond Spur, extends 7-plus miles from Woodinville to Redmond.

In 2003, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) announced its intent to divest itself of the corridor, and asked if there were interest in preserving it for public use.

Between 2003 and 2009, a number of jurisdictions worked together on a **multiuse principle** for the ERC, agreeing that it would best serve the region by including a combination of trail, high-capacity transit, rail and utility uses. In December 2009, King County, the Port of Seattle, Sound Transit, the City of



**Exhibit 2. Eastside Rail Corridor example**

Redmond, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and the Cascade Water Alliance signed a nonbinding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which outlined a multiparty approach to protect multiple uses on the ERC and to determine the ownership interests along it.

As part of that transaction, the area of the ERC south of Woodinville (south of the “wye” at milepost 23.8) was “railbanked” under the federal National Trails Act.<sup>1</sup> King County became the Interim Trail User for railbanking purposes, and acquired BNSF’s right to reactivate freight rail over the railbanked portions of the corridor. The County purchased a public multipurpose easement over the railbanked portions of the ERC from the Port and received a right of first refusal to acquire the corridor from the Port. For more information on railbanking, please see Appendix 5.

Following its acquisition of the ERC, the Port began negotiations with the regional partners to allocate ownership interests. The partners purchased ownership interests as follows:

- The City of Redmond purchased 3.9 miles of the Redmond Spur within Redmond city limits (Spur mileposts 3.4 through 7.3) in June 2010.
- PSE acquired a utility easement in December 2010 over all parts of the corridor owned by the Port on both the Main Line and the Redmond Spur (though not on the portion of the Spur owned by the City of Redmond).

<sup>1</sup> Also known as the Rails to Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. §1247(d)

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- Sound Transit completed transactions in April 2012 to
  - Acquire fee ownership on a 1.1-mile segment of the Main Line in Bellevue (from mileposts 12.4 to 13.5), which will be used as the location for the East Link light rail Hospital Station
  - Acquire a high-capacity transportation easement over all other portions of the Main Line south of Woodinville (mileposts 5.0 to 23.8) and from milepost 0.0 to 3.4 on the Redmond Spur
  - Acquire light rail and high-capacity transportation easements from the City of Redmond for mileposts 3.4 to 7.3 of the Redmond Spur.
- The City of Kirkland in April 2012 acquired fee ownership of 5.75 miles between mileposts 14.8 to 20.3 on the Main Line largely within the Kirkland city limits.
- King County in February 2013 acquired approximately 15.6 miles of the ERC south of Woodinville (the areas not already purchased by Redmond, Kirkland, or Sound Transit) and acquired a trail easement from the Port over an additional 3.9 miles from Woodinville north to the Brightwater treatment plant in the non-railbanked, active freight use area. King County also transferred its Interim Trail User status within the Redmond-owned portion of the ERC to the City of Redmond in return for a trail covenant and wastewater easements.

Following King County's purchase, the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC convened a Regional Advisory Council (RAC).

## FORMATION AND ROLE OF THE RAC

### *Formation, Charge and Membership*

The Metropolitan King County Council formed the Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Council (RAC) in December 2012 (Motion 13801, see Appendix 1). The charge to the RAC was to *"address near-term and long-term recommendations, including any needed changes to the county's countywide planning policies, and present them to the King County Executive."* The Council motion set the membership of the RAC as executive-level representatives from each owner and easement holder: King County, Sound Transit, Redmond, Kirkland, and PSE. See Appendix 2 for a full list of RAC members and alternates.

**Technical Staff Working Group.** To assist the RAC with their charge, a Technical Staff Working Group was formed. The group met in the weeks before and after the scheduled RAC meetings, with some extra meetings to prepare for the technical workshops and public open house. See Appendix 6 for a list of the Technical Staff Working Group members.

### *The RAC's Process*

The RAC met approximately every three weeks from February through September 2013. In the first several meetings, the members agreed on a Charter for the RAC (See Appendix 3) and on



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ground rules for the meetings. RAC members were provided with a background notebook, which included previous studies of the corridor by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and Sound Transit. (See Appendix 12.) The meeting agenda and materials were sent to RAC members in advance of each meeting and posted on the ERC RAC website, which was accessible to the public. See Appendix 4 for an outline of RAC meeting agendas. Each meeting was open to the public and included an opportunity for public comment.

**Comparisons with other multiuse corridors.** The RAC directed the staff team to research other multiuse corridors, across the United States and abroad. The members were interested in understanding whether other regions had been successful in creating corridors with a combination of trail, rail and utility uses, and if so, how they had achieved their goals. Fifteen corridors were identified for review. A detailed summary of these corridors is included in Appendix 8. In addition, representatives from several of these corridors were invited to the RAC to make presentations and engage in discussion with RAC members. (See Appendix 10.)

**Corridor tours.** Outside of the meetings, RAC members were invited to go on a "High Rail" tour of the corridor, conducted by Sound Transit. The tours enabled participants to see the condition of the corridor, topography, the adjacent neighborhoods, and the potential connections and pinch points that will need to be addressed. Staff also created a videotaped tour. (See the link on [www.kingcounty.gov/erc](http://www.kingcounty.gov/erc))

**Technical workshops.** Three full-day workshops were organized to delve into the opportunities and challenges in the different parts of the corridor, and to involve the neighboring jurisdictions and agencies doing planning that affects the corridor. The results of those workshops are described in the segment profiles. See Appendix 7.

### ***Communications and Public Outreach***

King County hosted a RAC webpage ([www.kingcounty.gov/erc](http://www.kingcounty.gov/erc)), which included the list of members, schedule, meeting materials, a sign-up for email updates and a comment form. RAC meetings were announced using the email list and the web site.

**Public comment opportunities.** The RAC meetings were open to the public and included time for public comment. In addition, the staff compiled comments submitted on the website and provided them verbatim to the RAC at each meeting. From February through the end of August 2013, a total of 45 public comments were submitted on the website. See Appendix 11. The public also was invited to comment on a preliminary and final draft version of this report, which were posted on the website. The last section of Appendix 11 provides the five sets of comments submitted about the draft report.

**Open house.** A public open house was held on July 31 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at the Bellevue City Hall. The date was set to be able to report on the results of the technical workshops, and gather public comments before the RAC developed its final report. The open house included multiple opportunities for the public to ask questions and comment. Technical staff were stationed near displays and maps to answer questions. Attendees could write comments on the maps, or use written comment forms. There was also an opportunity to videotape comments.



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More than 100 people attended the open house. Thirty-eight (38) written comments were submitted, and nine (9) videotaped comments were received. See Appendix 11. Nearly three-quarters of the written comments received (28) were from residents of either Renton (12) or Kirkland (16).

The large majority (29) of those who provided written comments expressed strong support for trail development in the corridor. Many of those stated their desire to see the owners create an interim trail so people could begin using the corridor. Nearly 40 percent of the written comments (15) said they were opposed to any rail use in the corridor, primarily because of its proximity to residential neighborhoods. Seven (7) individuals expressed support for the multiuse concept (trail, high-capacity transit and utilities). Three (3) individuals stated they supported use of the corridor for rail (commuter, freight and excursion service).

## CONDITIONS, CONSTRAINTS, OPPORTUNITIES

### PLANNING SEGMENTS

The goal for the ERC is that it will be a multiuse corridor that would be able to accommodate trail, high-capacity transit, and utility use, as well as freight use if the railbanked portion of the corridor is ever reactivated for freight. To begin planning for the ERC's multiple uses, the RAC divided the corridor into five planning segments. These segments are:

- **Segment 1: North King County – Main Line/Redmond Spur in County ownership**
- **Segment 2: Kirkland ownership**
- **Segment 3: Redmond ownership**
- **Segment 4: Bellevue/Sound Transit – Main Line in King County and Sound Transit ownership through Bellevue**
- **Segment 5: South of I-90 – King County ownership south of I-90 to Milepost 5.0**

**Accommodating multiple uses.** Accommodating multiple uses can most easily be done in areas where the corridor is flat and a full 100 feet wide. In those areas, multiple uses could be accommodated in a variety of ways.

A paved 12-foot trail would typically require an “envelope” of approximately 26 feet to allow for safety clearances on each side. Light rail transit would typically require envelopes of 18 to 32 feet, depending on the configuration of the tracks and whether the trains are running at grade or are elevated. Commuter rail would typically require an envelope of approximately 30 feet for a single track. Electric utility facilities would typically require envelopes of 20 to 30 feet depending on the size and type of the structure. Gas, fiber optic, and wastewater facilities located below ground have required clearances of up to 20 feet or more, and also have prohibitions about what types of uses can be placed atop them.



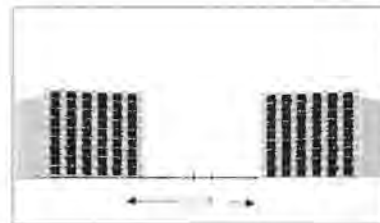
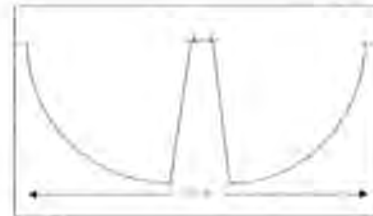
Exhibit 3. ERC Project Planning Segments



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Given these typical planning envelopes for different types of uses, multiple uses could be accommodated into an area of the corridor that is flat and 100 feet wide. Unfortunately, the corridor is not 100 feet wide and flat along all of its length. In many areas, it is constrained, as illustrated below.

- **Street Crossings.** At street crossings, care must be taken to ensure the safe intersection of multiple uses, including vehicles on the street. At some crossings, grade separation of the corridor may be desired. Accommodating multiple uses will require analysis.
- **Steep Slopes.** In some areas of the ERC, particularly near Lake Washington, the corridor slopes steeply down to the rail bed, and then down steeply from there. Alternatives analysis will be required to determine how multiple uses could be accommodated.
- **Bridges and Trestles.** The ERC has a number of bridges and trestles that span steep slopes, creeks, wetlands, arterials, local access roads and highways. These structures are typically 15 feet or less in width. Alternatives analysis will be required to determine how multiple uses could be accommodated.
- **Pinch Points.** In some areas, the corridor right-of-way is narrow and there are residential or commercial structures very close to the rail bed. Alternatives analysis will be required in these areas to determine how multiple uses could be accommodated.



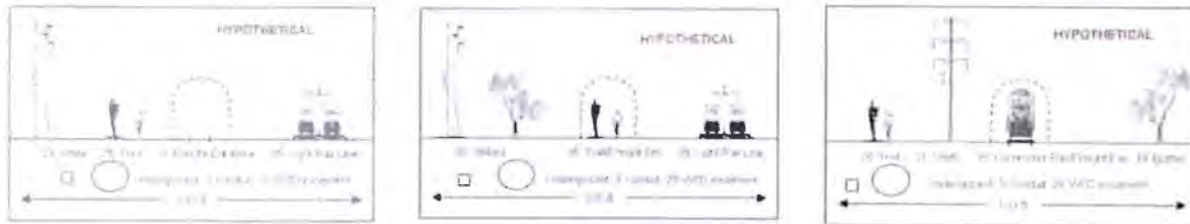
**Exhibit 4. Corridor Constraints**

*Please note that these drawings are not to scale. They are purely hypothetical approximations of potential conditions. The envelopes used are high-level and theoretical and do not include culverts, stream crossings, exact utility locations, or other constraints. Detailed design and engineering analysis will be needed during the master planning process to develop alternatives analysis.*

As the drawings above show, accommodating multiple uses along the corridor will be challenging and will require creative collaboration among the corridor owners. In addition, there are a number of areas where there are encroachments or unauthorized uses in the corridor. These include such uses as parking for vehicles or trailers, plantings, and auxiliary structures. The owners will need to address these encroachments.

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

As a hypothetical reference point, the exhibit below shows several possible, *hypothetical* illustrations of potential ways that multiple uses might be accommodated in 100 feet of right-of-way. *They are meant to be merely illustrative.*



**Exhibit 5. Hypothetical, Illustrative Placement of Uses on 100 Feet of Flat Corridor**

Please note that these drawings are not to scale. They are purely hypothetical approximations of potential conditions. The envelopes used are high-level and theoretical and do not include culverts, stream crossings, exact utility locations, or other constraints. They may or may not be viable. Detailed design and engineering analysis will be needed during the master planning process.

### SEGMENT 1 SUMMARY: NORTH KING COUNTY AREA

**Segment 1** is located on both the Main Line and the Redmond Spur of the ERC. On the Main Line, it stretches from milepost 20.3 to 23.8. On the Redmond Spur, it stretches from milepost 0.0 to 3.4. Segment 1 is located north of Redmond and runs through the cities of Kirkland and Woodinville, as well as unincorporated King County. (See Appendix 7 for complete profiles for all five segments.)

This segment of the corridor is railbanked. King County is the owner and Interim Trail User of this segment. Sound Transit holds a high-capacity transit easement in this segment and PSE holds a utility easement on, above, and below ground.

Segment 1's topography varies between the Main Line and the spur. The Main Line is located on a wooded slope, while the Redmond Spur is located on the edge of the Sammamish Valley. The right-of-way on the Redmond Spur is as narrow as 30 feet in many places.

This segment passes through rural, residential, industrial and commercial areas, as well as the Woodinville winery district and Central Business District. It is located near a number of parks and trails, including Totem Lake Park, Sammamish Valley Park, Wilmot Gateway Park, Sammamish River Trail, Tolt Pipeline Trail and Little Bear Creek Linear Park.



**Exhibit 6. ERC Segment 1**



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

The City of Woodinville has several planned projects nearby, including two proposed street widening projects (located north of Segment 1 in the area that remains in active freight use). PSE and King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) have utilities in the segment. In addition, the Olympic Pipe Line parallels a portion of this segment. PSE is currently planning the location for a new Sammamish–Juanita 115 kV transmission line.

Analysis of Segment 1 has highlighted a number of opportunities and constraints:

Opportunities	Constraints
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a continuous trail connection between Kirkland and Redmond</li> <li>2. Create trail connection between the ERC Main Line, Redmond Spur, and Sammamish River Trail</li> <li>3. Maximize economic development opportunities for the Woodinville Winery District</li> <li>4. Coordinate with Woodinville planning for future development and growth</li> <li>5. Connections to Snohomish County</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Sloped topography on ERC Main Line north of NE 124th St.</li> <li>B. Narrow right-of-way on Redmond Spur</li> <li>C. Connections to the north in the non-railbanked portion of the corridor</li> </ol>

### **SEGMENT 2 SUMMARY: CITY OF KIRKLAND OWNERSHIP**

**Segment 2** is located on the Main Line of the corridor between mileposts 14.8 and 20.3. It runs through the city of Kirkland and under I-405. The southernmost portion of the segment is located in the City of Bellevue.

This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County is the Interim Trail User. Kirkland owns this segment. King County holds a multipurpose easement; Sound Transit holds a high-capacity transit easement; and PSE holds a utility easement. There is also a wastewater easement for the existing Eastside Interceptor.

The topography is generally flat, but includes cuts and fills. The corridor is narrow in places and the rail bed abuts commercial structures in several areas. Surrounding land uses include parks, schools, residential, commercial and industrial. There are currently 11,000 employees within 2,000 feet on either side of the segment.



Exhibit 7. ERC Segment 2



CREATING CONNECTIONS

Segment 2 is located near a number of parks and trails, including: Watershed Park, Yarrow Bay Wetlands, Carillon Woods, Houghton Beach Park, Terrace Park, Everest Park, Cotton Hill Park, Crestwoods Park, Totem Lake Park, Lake Washington Loop, 520 Trail, Redmond Central Connector, and several street connections between Redmond and Lake Washington. Both PSE and WTD have utilities in Segment 2.

The City of Kirkland refers to Segment 2 as the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC). The CKC Master Plan is underway and is scheduled to be completed in May 2014. The outcome of the project will be a Master Plan that describes a preferred trail alignment and “zone” plans at several key nodes. The City of Kirkland supports development of transit on the corridor. In the meantime, design work is progressing for an interim gravel trail.

Analysis of Segment 2 has highlighted a number of opportunities and constraints:

Opportunities	Constraints
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land use: Ensure that development adjacent to ERC considers impacts and benefits</li> <li>2. Transit: Provide a transit link on the corridor through Kirkland to Totem Lake</li> <li>3. Create trail connections between Kirkland and Redmond</li> </ol>	<p>A. Several road crossings may require grade separation</p>

**SEGMENT 3 SUMMARY: CITY OF REDMOND OWNERSHIP**

Segment 3 is located on the Redmond Spur. It stretches from milepost 3.4 to 7.3. Segment 3 runs through the City of Redmond and crosses the Sammamish River and several city streets.

This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and Redmond is the owner and Interim Trail User. King County holds a wastewater easement and Sound Transit holds a transit easement.

The topography of Segment 3 is relatively flat with some drainage ditches and steep slopes. There is one crossing of the Sammamish River and three creek crossings. The corridor is very narrow in many places. Segment 3 is located near a number of parks and trails, including: the new Redmond Downtown Park, Anderson Park, Redmond Town Center Open Space, Bear Creek Park, O’Leary Park, The Heron Rookery, Luke McRedmond Landing, Dudley Carter Park, Sammamish Valley



Exhibit 8. ERC Segment 3



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

Park, Marymoor Park, Sammamish River Trail, East Sammamish River Trail, 520 Trail, East Lake Sammamish Trail, Redmond PSE Trail, and Bear Creek Trail.

Segment 3 crosses nine city streets and ends just to the west of the SR-520 interchange at Redmond Way/ SR 202. It is anticipated that the Downtown Redmond portion of this segment will be traversed by the future development of the East Link light rail line, with the Downtown Redmond Station located on the corridor. The City has extended two roads across the railroad corridor since acquisition, and has plans to extend a third street. PSE, WTD, and many other franchise utilities have subsurface and overhead utilities in this segment.

Redmond has named this segment the Redmond Central Connector. The master plan for this segment includes trail design concepts that incorporate the future development of East Link light rail and Downtown Redmond Station, an art plan, and design standard recommendations to create a pedestrian friendly environment that brings activity to the downtown urban center. The master plan was adopted by Redmond City Council in 2011 and construction is underway between mileposts 7.3 and 6.3. Analysis of Segment 3 has highlighted a number of opportunities and constraints:

Opportunities	Constraints
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve multimodal transportation connections across and through corridor</li> <li>2. Enhance economic and community vitality opportunities</li> <li>3. Create a connection between downtown Kirkland and downtown Redmond</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Improve the ERC crossing of SR-520 at Redmond Way/ SR-202 to connect to the East Lake Sammamish Trail</li> </ol>

### ***SEGMENT 4 SUMMARY: BELLEVUE/SOUND TRANSIT***

**Segment 4** is located on the Main Line from milepost 10.0 to 14.8. Segment 4 runs through Bellevue and crosses over or under highways I-90, I-405, and SR-520.

This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County has been designated the Interim Trail User. King County owns from Mileposts 10.0 to 12.4 and 13.5 to 14.8, and Sound Transit from Mileposts 12.4 to 13.5. The County and Sound Transit each hold easements in the other's ownership area. PSE holds a utility easement.

Segment 4's topography includes: the I-90 crossing; the Wilburton Trestle; I-405 crossings, including the area at the former Wilburton Tunnel that was removed; a number of current and planned street crossings in downtown Bellevue; the Sound Transit East Link Hospital Station (funded and in design); the potential Sound Transit Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) sites (in environmental review); the undercrossing of the I-405/SR-520 interchange; and a slope between the ERC and South Kirkland Park & Ride.

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

Surrounding land uses vary from open space to residential to commercial. Due to the upcoming construction of East Link light rail, redevelopment of the Wilburton and Bel-Red areas, and planned roadway infrastructure improvements, there is significant change anticipated for the northern portion of this segment (milepost 12.2 to milepost 14.8).

Segment 4 is located near a number of parks and trails, including: Mercer Slough Nature Park, Kelsey Creek Park, Bellevue Botanical Garden, Bridle Trails State Park, Lake Washington Loop Trail, Coal Creek Trail, Mountain to Sound Greenway Trail, Mercer Slough Trail, Lake to Lake trail system, and 520 Trail. Both PSE and WTD have utilities in the segment.



Exhibit 9. ERC Segment 4

Analysis of Segment 4 has highlighted a number of opportunities and constraints:

Opportunities	Constraints
1. Mercer Slough connections	A. Narrow bridge crossing at I-90
2. BelRed/Spring District redevelopment	B. Henry Bock Road Trestle (aka. SE 32 <sup>nd</sup> St Trestle) and pinch point
3. Sound Transit OMSF alternatives	C. Wilburton Tunnel and I-405 undercrossing
4. I-405/SR-520 Interchange, a crossroads with regional significance	D. Wilburton Trestle is not currently useable for trail or rail use
5. South Kirkland Park & Ride	E. Downtown Bellevue road crossings at NE 4 <sup>th</sup> , NE 6 <sup>th</sup> and NE 8 <sup>th</sup> Streets
	F. Sound Transit East Link and Hospital Station
	G. Narrow bridge undercrossing at Northup Way



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

**SEGMENT 5 SUMMARY: SOUTH OF I-90**

**Segment 5** is the southernmost railbanked portion of the ERC. It stretches from milepost 5.0 to 10.0. Segment 5 is located between the east shore of Lake Washington and I-405. Segment 5 passes through the City of Renton, unincorporated King County and the City of Bellevue. The City of Newcastle is located adjacent to the corridor, separated from it by I-405.

This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County is the owner and Interim Trail User. Sound Transit holds a high-capacity transit easement and PSE holds a utility easement. South of Segment 5, the corridor is owned by BNSF and is in active freight use.

Segment 5 is located along the shore of Lake Washington. In many areas the corridor right-of-way slopes down from I-405 or Lake Washington Boulevard to the rail bed and then down toward the lake shore. The corridor is very narrow in many places. The rail bed closely abuts residential properties in a number of areas.



Exhibit 10. ERC Segment 5

In Renton, the area adjacent to the corridor is primarily single family residential, with several areas of mixed office and commercial use. There is a small area of residential uses in unincorporated King County along the shore of Lake Washington. In Bellevue, in the area south of I-90 that comprises Segment 5, the corridor abuts single family residential.

Segment 5 is located near a number of parks and trails, including: Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park, Kenndale Beach Park, Newcastle Beach Park, Enatai Beach Park, Coal Creek Park, Mercer Slough Nature Park, Lake-to-Sound Trail, Sam Chastain Waterfront Trail, May Creek Trail, Lake Washington Loop Trail, Coal Creek Trail, and Mountain to Sound Greenway Trail.

Future transportation connections in Segment 5 will be affected by several ongoing planning processes, including the I-405 Corridor project and Sound Transit high-capacity corridor studies (Sound Transit 3 [ST3] planning). Both PSE and WTD have utilities in the Segment 5 area of the corridor.

Analysis of Segment 5 has highlighted a number of opportunities and constraints:

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Constraints</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Create connections to the south that can connect South King County, East King County, and Pierce County</li><li>2. Connection to existing Gene Coulon Park Trail</li><li>3. Connections to the east to Newcastle and unincorporated King County</li><li>4. Connections to parks, trails, and destinations</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Rail route south of milepost 5</li><li>B. Corridor topography and width</li><li>C. Small trestles with narrow widths at several locations (e.g., Ripley Lane)</li><li>D. Coordination with surrounding communities and landowners</li><li>E. Connections to the north past the I-90 crossing and into Bellevue</li></ol>



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

## RAC GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The RAC developed principles that are broad, high-level statements that reflect the values and directions the members have agreed to in this first collaborative planning effort. These principles provide the framework for the more detailed recommendations that follow in this report. The principles were developed based on conversations at RAC meetings, and the discussions that occurred at the three planning workshops.

The corridor is an incredible public asset that will benefit future generations—in some ways that we can predict today, and other ways that will emerge over time. The RAC's vision for the corridor is to create a multiuse corridor for rail, trail and utility use (consistent with rail banking requirements) that links the communities along the corridor, as well as those beyond. The corridor owners will seek to preserve the long-term vision and benefits even though investments in the corridor will be incremental and take place over several decades.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES SUPPORTING THE VISION

**Partnership:** Development of the corridor will build on existing partnerships and foster new partnerships that support the multiple-use vision for the corridor.

**FOCUS: Grow the partnership between the owners, and other public, private and not-for-profit organizations.** The continued planning for the corridor will respect the ownership rights and the existing agreements among the five owners in the corridor, and recognize and administer voter approved measures. The long-term vision for the corridor can be enhanced and realized sooner by engaging more partnerships.

**FOCUS: Create state and federal partnerships.** The phased development of the corridor will require engagement with state and federal leaders regarding policy and capital funding issues. The owners should develop a collaborative strategy for working with state and federal governments to address the opportunities and constraints throughout the corridor and major policy issues.

**Collaboration:** Development of the corridor will be based upon a collaborative approach for identifying and taking action to address opportunities and challenges to achieve the long-term vision for the corridor and the multiple-use goals.

**FOCUS: Continue collaborative process.** The RAC process has demonstrated the value in working collaboratively among the owners, adjacent jurisdictions, and other stakeholders. As more detailed plans are developed for the corridor, it will be important for this collaborative work to continue to achieve the vision for the ERC. This is particularly important for owners as regional and local transportation, recreation, utility and land use plans are developed that will affect the corridor.

**FOCUS: Engage the public's imagination.** Public interest in the current and future use of the corridor is broad and diverse. Continued planning for the corridor should include engagement of those diverse parties to insure that the plans developed reflect the public's values for the corridor.



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

**Connectivity and Mobility:** Development of the corridor will encourage and enable connections across the region, including neighboring counties and beyond. It will provide access to/from neighborhoods and communities adjacent and in close proximity to the corridor, as well as those at a greater distance that can benefit from the development of the ERC.

**FOCUS: Develop regional connections to the north and to the south.** There are opportunities to connect this 42-mile-long corridor to important transportation, employment centers, trail and/or utility systems, and to other counties. Making these connections will also ensure the ERC is accessible to more people who live, work, commute and play in this region.

**FOCUS: Strengthen local and east-west connections along the corridor.** The corridor should be integrated into adjacent communities in ways that strengthen connections to employment centers for commuters, to parks and recreation, regional and local trail systems, transportation systems (including East Link light rail), utility systems, and local neighborhoods and attractions.

**Continuity:** Development of the corridor will cultivate a common public identity for the corridor that enables an integrated corridor experience across ownerships.

**FOCUS: Establish a common identity while also building upon unique attributes (community and environmental features) along the corridor.** The owners should consider opportunities for a regional identity for the entire corridor. This should be considered as part of the effort to build strong public support for the future development and use of the corridor. The owners will also want to respect the work that Kirkland and Redmond have done to create brand identities for their portions of the corridor. The owners will seek to make the experience for users seamless from one segment to another through coordination of plans for the corridor (e.g., through use of common design standards, signage or other means).

**Economic Opportunity:** Development of the corridor will enable the owners and neighboring communities to foster and realize economic benefits from proximity to and use of the corridor.

**FOCUS: Maximize economic development opportunities.** The corridor will encourage and enable economic growth and development in a variety of ways. Owners and adjacent jurisdictions should consider zoning and land use policies that result in site plans and building designs that embrace the corridor. The corridor should provide access to/from local businesses and commercial centers.

**Heritage:** Development of the corridor will embrace the history and setting of the corridor.

**FOCUS: Maximize natural features, scenic vistas and historic locations.** The corridor provides a remarkable historic and natural legacy. As plans are developed owners should take advantage of the natural settings and viewshed opportunities along the corridor, and promote the history of the corridor and the communities it passes through.



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

After six months of meetings the RAC developed recommendations for advancing the multiuse vision for the ERC. The recommendations are grouped into eight broad categories, with more detailed recommendations in each category. At the conclusion of the recommendations the RAC suggests several next steps for the owners' continued work.

### 1. DEVELOP A SHARED REGIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CORRIDOR

In order to achieve the bold vision for the ERC, it is critical that a shared regional policy framework be developed. Such a policy framework must help the region understand just how valuable the corridor is, and help the region "aim high." A shared regional policy framework will help avoid planning in silos. It will also help the owners make wise near-term investment decisions without missing the larger opportunities consistent with the long-term vision for the ERC, or causing the need for unnecessary reinvestment or "do-overs." A shared regional policy framework will help the ERC be seen as part of a multicounty network of transportation, recreation and utility systems, integral to the well-being and prosperity of the region—not as a single, isolated corridor. Finally, a shared regional policy framework will also help prioritize the development of the corridor in local and regional capital plans, and for local, regional, state and federal funding.

The following documents shall be prioritized for policy additions or refinements that embody the RAC vision for the corridor. RAC members will need to work together to reach consensus on proposed policies (see Next Steps at the conclusion of the report). There may also be other policy documents to be considered, or forums the RAC should address.

#### A. VISION 2040 Policies

The PSRC adopts long-range land use policies to guide the future development of the four-county central Puget Sound Region: King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. The policies were adopted in 2008. They establish a vision for how and where regional growth should occur. Between 2010 and 2040, the region is expected to grow by approximately 1.3 million people and support 1 million new jobs.

VISION 2040 describes policies to guide regional growth and development, actions to implement those policies, and suggested measures to track progress. The policies attempt to create an integrated framework for addressing land use, economic development, transportation, public facilities and environmental issues.

**Recommendation 1A:** The RAC recommends that owners identify specific policies in VISION 2040 to demonstrate that successful development of a multiuse ERC implements important multicounty goals.



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

***B. Transportation 2040 Policies***

Transportation 2040 is a 30-year action plan for the central Puget Sound region. The influx of new people and jobs during the next 37 years is expected to increase travel demand in the region by 40 percent. Transportation 2040 describes a long-term template for how the region should invest in transportation to support anticipated growth and improve mobility and transportation services.

The PSRC is currently updating Transportation 2040 to reflect changes in the region since 2010. The update is scheduled to be adopted in May 2014, with a draft plan released in January 2014. There will be a 45-day public comment period after the draft plan is released.

***Recommendation 1B:*** The RAC recommends that

- ERC owners participate in the update of Transportation 2040 to ensure that the RAC's vision for the ERC is compatible with the policies and priorities in Transportation 2040.
- The owners focus initially on the eight existing projects in the Transportation 2040 project list that relate to the ERC (five are King County projects, one is Kirkland, one is Redmond, and one is Snohomish County). The owners should determine whether the descriptions of these projects should change (particularly the King County projects) as a result of the RAC process.
- The region's transportation policy framework be revised to include the development of bicycle and pedestrian plans (where they do not already exist) as a critical element of improving the region's mobility network.
- The ERC be used to strengthen connectivity between transportation modes in the region.

***C. Countywide Planning Policies***

The Countywide Planning Policies address growth management issues in King County. The policies provide a countywide vision and serve as a framework for each jurisdiction to develop its own comprehensive plan, which must be consistent with the overall vision for the future of King County. Changes to the Countywide Planning Policies must be approved by the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC), which typically meets twice per year. An interjurisdictional technical team meets monthly to review possible revisions.

***Recommendation 1C:*** The RAC recommends that King County incorporate policies on the regional significance of the corridor and its multipurpose uses into the Countywide Planning Policies. Any Regional Advisory Council recommendations about Countywide Planning Policies related to the ERC must be reviewed and approved by the RAC. RAC jurisdictions who are also members of the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) agree to keep the RAC informed of any other Countywide Planning Policies proposed by the GMPC that might affect the corridor so that RAC members have the opportunity to review and comment. (See Next Steps regarding RAC 2.0.)



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

**D. King County Comprehensive Plan**

The comprehensive plan is the guiding policy document for all land use and development regulations in unincorporated King County, and for regional services, including transit, sewers, parks, trails and open space, throughout the county. The King County Council adopted the current plan in December 2012. A complete policy review of the plan is conducted every four years. The plan can be amended annually with technical updates that do not reflect major changes in policy direction.

**Recommendation 1D:** The RAC recommends that the King County Council incorporate policies on the regional significance of the corridor and its multipurpose uses into the King County Comprehensive Plan.

## 2. DEVELOP A FEDERAL AGENDA TO ADDRESS KEY TRANSPORTATION AND HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT ISSUES

To create a corridor for the ages will require partnerships at all levels of government, as well as with local businesses, foundations and community groups. The federal government has a role to play in helping the owners create connections within our region, as well as supporting the potential connections that could stretch well beyond.

The ERC intersects with three of the state's most heavily used and congested highways: Interstate 90, Interstate 405 and State Route 520. These highway intersections create challenges for establishing crossings for the multiple uses envisioned for the corridor. But they also create opportunities to develop linkages that can fill missing gaps, or strengthen the network of trails, high-capacity transit or utility connections across the region. At several locations these highways and the ERC converge to create regionally significant intersections. These are places where a comprehensive strategy is needed in the near term to maximize the use of the corridor, and to safely and efficiently accommodate a variety of transportation modes and utility connections. The RAC recommends that the owners develop a collaborative partnership with federal officials to improve mobility and create regional connections at these crucial locations.

The owners should work together on developing a federal agenda to support their work on the ERC. The collaborative process should include discussion about timing, who will take the lead on advocacy, whether ERC issues may compete with other priority issues for one or more of the



Exhibit 11. I-90 Bridge



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

owners, and communication about the agreed upon federal agenda topics. It is anticipated that owners may have different annual federal advocacy priorities.

### **A. I-405/I-90 Interchange**

This interchange, where high volumes of north-south and east-west regional travel converge, has the potential to provide connections to enhance mobility and access for area residents. Existing transit service uses the I-90 and I-405 corridors to link east King County cities with one another, and provide a link to downtown Seattle. Sound Transit will be exploring the potential to extend light rail east to Eastgate and Issaquah. The regional trail system converges on this intersection, with the I-90 trail running from downtown Seattle to the Mercer Slough, and the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail running from I-90 to the Cascades (with a connection gap between I-90 and Eastgate). The corridor also parallels the Lake Washington Trail and the Mercer Slough Trail.

There are several challenges in connecting the ERC with these transportation opportunities at this location. First, the corridor crosses I-90 on a 15-foot-wide railroad bridge that does not provide sufficient space for multiple uses. Second, the ERC crosses above the highway and the trails, creating a challenge to overcoming the grade differential.

**Recommendation 2A:** The RAC recommends that the owners

- Work together to engage the region's federal officials in discussions about the opportunity to enhance pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility by successfully integrating the ERC into this key regional connection point.
- Seek federal assistance to study this interchange for the purpose of identifying optimum crossings and connections. This study may require innovative approaches to creating connections through the maze of highway lanes, on and off ramps, and grade changes. (See Appendix 9 for a summary of initial research by the RAC regarding innovative approaches to crossings and trail connections.)

### **B. SR-520/I-405 Interchange**

This is another regionally significant north-south and east-west interchange that carries high volumes of travel and is a nexus for high-capacity transit, trail and utility uses. This interchange is strategically located between two growing residential and job centers, Bellevue and Kirkland, and part of a transportation corridor that connects downtown Redmond and the Microsoft



Exhibit 12. ERC passing under I-405 at the Interchange with SR-520



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

campus with the University of Washington and downtown Seattle. As the region grows, this interchange will continue to be a vital crossroads for moving people and commerce.

The replacement of the SR-520 floating bridge will include a bicycle and pedestrian path that will connect with regional trails on either side of Lake Washington and could connect with the ERC, which passes underneath the intersection of these two highways. The path on the bridge will create new mobility options in a corridor that is forecast to have substantial business and residential growth. Improvements to this interchange have been identified in the I-405 Master Plan, but are currently unfunded. There is an opportunity to integrate the ERC into the redesign of this interchange.

**Recommendation 2B:** The RAC recommends that the owners

- Work together to engage the region's federal officials in discussions about the opportunity to enhance pedestrian, bicycle and transit mobility by successfully integrating the ERC into this key regional connection point.
- Seek federal assistance to study this interchange with the purpose of identifying optimum crossings and connections. This study may require innovative approaches to creating connections through the maze of highway lanes, on and off ramps, and grade changes. (See Appendix 9 for a summary of initial research by the RAC regarding innovative approaches to crossings and trail connections.)

### **C. Re-establish Rail Connection at Wilburton Tunnel Crossing**

Re-establishing the corridor's connection across I-405 is essential for integrating the ERC into the region's trail and high-capacity transit systems. This connection is important for enhancing regional mobility. See Recommendation 3A, below, regarding the State Agenda for a more complete explanation of this issue.

**Recommendation 2C:** In addition to working with state officials (since I-405 is a state highway), the RAC recommends working with federal officials to secure support for re-establishing the rail connection across the highway. (See also recommendation 3A.)

### **D. Regional Policies as Part of Federal Agenda**

Development of the corridor for trail, high-capacity transit, and utilities will be costly. In order to compete well for state and federal dollars, the region must refine key policy documents to reflect the new opportunity the corridor provides (as described in Recommendation 1 above). Consistency with these key planning documents is often a prerequisite or important criterion in being eligible and/or prioritized for federal and state funding sources. Much of the federal transportation funding that comes to our region comes through the PSRC process. Ensuring that PSRC's regional vision and plan, VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040, accurately reflect the opportunity the corridor provides is essential to ensure that funding requests and grant applications are competitive.

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

**Recommendation 2D:** The RAC recommends that the region vigorously pursue state and federal resources to help with the development of the corridor, consistent with the Regional Policy Framework outlined in Recommendations Section 1 above.

### 3. DEVELOP A STATE AGENDA TO ADDRESS KEY TRANSPORTATION AND HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT ISSUES

The State of Washington will be an important partner in realizing the vision for the Eastside Rail Corridor. The state and the ERC owners share a goal of enhancing mobility for residents and businesses by creating a variety of transportation choices. The adopted 20-year Washington Transportation Plan states

*Because we cannot build our way out of congestion given the financial cost and the land constraints, we must find alternative ways to accommodate growth. The state, cities, counties, tribes, ports, and transit agencies must coordinate and work as partners to innovatively and strategically invest in improvements that will make the system more efficient and more effective. (Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), The Washington Transportation Plan 2007 – 2026, p.iii)*

Collaboration with the State provides an excellent opportunity to find innovative ways to make the state's major highway corridors and the ERC more efficient and safer, with connectivity between different modes of transportation. As with the federal agenda, it is intended that the owners have a discussion about how to collaborate on an annual state agenda.

#### A. Wilburton Tunnel Crossing

In 2009, WSDOT completed the I-405 South Bellevue widening project. That project included demolition of an overpass used by the rail corridor to cross the highway (known as the Wilburton Tunnel). Re-establishing this connection will be essential to providing a continuous link between the communities south of I-90 and urban centers in Bellevue, Kirkland and Redmond.



Exhibit 13. Wilburton Tunnel Crossing

In an October 2006 Letter of Understanding (LOU), WSDOT agreed to “construct, or reimburse King County for the cost of constructing a pedestrian/bicycle crossing at the current location of the Wilburton Tunnel that meets the prevailing specifications for King County's Regional Trails...”



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**Recommendation 3A:** The RAC recommends that owners

- Work with WSDOT to develop a plan for the construction and reconnection of pedestrian and bicycle access on the ERC as it crosses I-405. The plan should include a schedule for when the reconnection will occur, a funding strategy, and identification of an interim trail route that could be used before the project can be completed. During the RAC workshops staff identified the potential use of Lake Washington Boulevard SE as an interim trail, as it runs parallel to the ERC.
- Work with WSDOT to develop a plan for a connection over I-405 that could accommodate other transportation and utility uses.

**B. I-405 Right-of-Way Trail/Transit Opportunities**

More than a decade ago WSDOT, working with cities, counties, federal agencies, transit agencies and community groups, created a master plan for the I-405 corridor. The 2002 master plan recommends adding up to two new lanes in each direction of I-405, a corridor-wide bus rapid transit (BRT) and increased local transit service. While WSDOT has initiated work on selected widening and safety projects, there is currently no funding or adopted schedule for the addition of two new lanes.

In many parts of the corridor, the ERC runs parallel to I-405. In particular, in the southern-most segment (between Renton and I-90), the corridor right-of-way and I-405 right-of-way are adjacent. In addition, this segment has many pinch points and road crossings. There are numerous locations where the ERC crosses narrow trestles, or has steep slopes on either side of the tracks, making it challenging to plan for multiple uses along the corridor. The adjacency of the rights-of-way suggests taking a comprehensive approach to developing a plan for the ERC in the southern segment.

During the RAC workshops it was suggested that planning for the ERC should include consideration of how to accommodate multiple uses within a broader public right-of-way. Because neither the widening of I-405 nor the BRT projects have been funded, this is a good time to consider how to take advantage of the close proximity of these two public rights-of-way. When the Sound Transit Board of Directors considers the update to the Long-Range Plan there is an opportunity to address how these two parallel corridors could be used for high-capacity transit and accommodate the multiple-use vision for the ERC.

**Recommendation 3B:** The RAC recommends that owners work with state officials to explore opportunities to address trail, high-capacity transit and utility improvements in the parallel public rights-of-way in the I-405 corridor and the ERC.

**C. SR-520 Interchange in Redmond**

In Redmond, the spur portion of the ERC crosses SR-520 at Redmond Way and SR-202. This is an important crossing because it connects the Redmond Spur (and the future site of the Downtown Redmond East Link light rail station) with the regional East Lake Sammamish Trail and the SR-520 Trail.

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WSDOT has identified an improvement for this interchange (the East Lake Sammamish Parkway Regional Trail Connection at SR-520/SR-202) in their SR-520 Multimodal Corridor Planning Study Recommendations (April 2013). The project would construct a missing segment of trail system through a very busy and unsafe interchange. However, no funding has been identified, and the "year of need" (year when project funding would be needed) is identified as 2022. The East Lake Sammamish Trail is already developed to a point just south of the SR-520/SR-202 interchange. The City of Redmond will complete the Redmond Central Connector Trail in 2014, which will terminate just north of that interchange, well ahead of the 2022 "year of need" projection.

This is a key intersection in the regional trail system. Improvement of this interchange will enhance mobility and safety for residents between Issaquah, Sammamish, Redmond, Bellevue, Kirkland and Seattle. Those communities will be connected via a regional trail system that includes the already developed East Lake Sammamish Trail, the SR-520 trail between Seattle and Redmond (once the bicycle and pedestrian paths are completed on the SR-520 Bridge in 2015), and the Redmond Central Connector (2013). Improvements must also accommodate Sound Transit's future needs for extending light rail to Redmond.

**Recommendation 3C:** The RAC recommends that the owners work with state officials, and coordinate with Sound Transit, to seek support for construction of improvements to the SR-520/SR-202 interchange. Because the Redmond Central Connector and SR-520 trails will be completed within the next two years, the owners should work with the state to move the "year of need" to as early as 2014.

## 4. DEVELOP A LONG-TERM REGIONAL APPROACH FOR PLANNING TOGETHER

Decisions about the future use and development of the ERC will take place over time in a very dynamic environment. The corridor's owners, adjacent jurisdictions and other partners will conduct planning studies, establish policies, make decisions, and develop projects that will have an effect on the future of the ERC. The owners should work to coordinate planning activities when appropriate, have discussions about how the ERC can be incorporated into the various planning initiatives, and be engaged in those processes and policy discussions to ensure that future opportunities for creating multiple uses in the corridor are encouraged or not foreclosed.

A useful reminder of the importance of long-range, integrated planning is the example of the historic Interurban Rail Transit service. By 1912 the electric railway ran on a separated right-of-way connecting Tacoma, Seattle and Everett. As highways came to dominate regional transportation, the Interurban service was discontinued, and the right-of-way was used for other purposes, including trail and utilities. Today we are developing a new right-of-way to create a high-capacity transit connection between Tacoma, Seattle and Everett.

### **A. Sound Transit High-Capacity Transit Corridor Studies and Long-Range Plan Update**

When voters in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties approved Sound Transit 2 (ST2) to continue building the region's high-capacity transit (HCT) system, funding was included in that ballot measure for Sound Transit to conduct planning for potential future expansion of the



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system. The Sound Transit Board has recently authorized its staff to begin high-capacity corridor planning studies focused on eight corridors, including the ERC.

The results of these corridor studies will be used to update the 2005 Sound Transit Long-Range Plan. The Long-Range Plan represents Sound Transit's goals, policies, and strategies to guide the development of the HCT system. The Long-Range Plan presents a comprehensive assessment of the region's needs and a 30- to 50-year vision for meeting those needs. The Regional High-Capacity System Plan is more detailed and identifies projects to be funded and implemented during the next implementation phase. In 1996, Sound Move was the first regional high-capacity transit system plan approved, followed by ST2 in 2008.

The corridor studies will inform decisions made in the Long-Range Plan update regarding potential projects, including modes, and representative alignments.

The Sound Transit Board's authorization of the corridor studies and direction regarding the update to the Long-Range Plan will keep open the option of going to the voters for an ST3 package of investments in 2016. The corridor studies are scheduled to be completed by the end of the second quarter in 2014. The Long-Range Plan update is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2014. A potential package of ST3 projects could be developed by mid-2016, based on direction from the Board.

Sound Transit's high-capacity transit corridor study of the ERC, and the Long-Range Plan, may consider multiple modes of passenger transportation (e.g., heavy rail, light rail, Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs) as appropriate, and will include analysis of connections at the south end of the corridor (to south King County communities), and to the north, with a station in Woodinville. Sound Transit will not analyze service that could be operated between Woodinville and Snohomish, which is outside of the Sound Transit district. The exploration of potential connections at either end of the ERC is important to create mobility options between residential communities to the north and south, and the job centers in Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland.

**Recommendation 4A:** The RAC recommends that four of the corridor owners (Redmond, Kirkland, PSE and King County) work with Sound Transit to review, discuss and comment on the ERC study, the development of the Long-Range Plan, and the Regional High-Capacity System Plan. The owners have expressed interest in ensuring that the corridor study and the Long-Range Plan update encompass the entirety of the public right-of-way in the corridor, including the ERC and the I-405 corridor.

### ***B. Multiuse Planning Considerations***

The ERC represents an unparalleled opportunity to enhance and create mobility connections by linking cities, transit systems, parks, trails, and residential and commercial centers. The corridor serves multiple regional growth centers, with potential to link downtown Bellevue and Kirkland-Totem Lake with connections to Redmond-Overlake, downtown Redmond, and downtown Renton. As mentioned earlier, the ERC has potential to eventually connect directly with the I-90/Mountains to Sound Trail, Bellevue's Lake to Lake Greenway Trail, the Lake to Sound Trail, the Interurban Trail, the SR-520 Trail, the Redmond Spur Trail, the Tolt Pipeline Trail,

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Snohomish County's Centennial Trail, and the most popular regional trail corridor, the Burke-Gilman/Sammamish River Trail. These connections were envisioned by the first trails plans more than a generation ago.

The RAC workshops identified a number of examples of current planning or development activities that will have an effect on the future use of the ERC. These activities have been initiated by corridor owners, and adjacent jurisdictions. For instance, the City of Renton is planning for residential and commercial development adjacent to the corridor in the Port Quendall area. The City of Bellevue is planning extensions of two major downtown arterials that will cross the ERC (NE 4<sup>th</sup> St. and NE 6<sup>th</sup> St.), and is working with private developers and Sound Transit on redevelopment plans for the Bel-Red Corridor and Spring District, which are expected to generate 10,000 jobs and 5,000 housing units in close proximity to the ERC in the next 20 years.

In Kirkland, the city is developing a master plan for the portion of the corridor they own, and working with Google on a facility expansion that will span the corridor. They are also developing a master plan for the park at Totem Lake, which is expected to grow as an urban center. PSE is currently planning a new utility line in a portion of the corridor that spans King County and Kirkland ownership. PSE has stated they will be planning future utility enhancements as growth occurs in adjacent communities.

King County will be developing a master plan for the portion of the corridor they own. That work will begin in 2014 and will be completed in two to three years. In 2014 the focus of the work will be completion of a baseline corridor analysis that will document site conditions and features along the corridor that will shape future planning and design. The work in 2014 will also assess the feasibility of connecting the ERC to the regional transportation network, including the regional trails system, transit services, rail stations, park and ride lots, ferry terminals and airports, as well as the best ways to make trail connections at major crossings and gaps along the corridor.

Redmond is in the process of implementing a number of plans that will affect the corridor, including the Central Connector Master Plan, Downtown East-West Corridor Study, the Downtown Cultural Corridor Plan, the Downtown Zoning Code and the Sammamish Valley Park Master Plan. As mentioned above, Sound Transit is beginning planning for a possible ST3 ballot measure. Undoubtedly, other plans and projects will surface in the coming months and years.

Coordination among owners, and with adjacent jurisdictions and developers, will be crucial to creating and preserving multiuse opportunities in the corridor. Several agreements between

### *The Effect of Incremental Decision Making:*

At the close of the RAC workshop for Segment 3 (from I-90 to the Bellevue/Kirkland boundary) one of the participants made an insightful comment. He said that up until this point, owners and adjacent jurisdictions have made a series of individual decisions that, in isolation, make perfect sense. However, he suggested that with each incremental decision it gets increasingly difficult to accomplish the multipurpose vision articulated by the RAC.



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some of the owners have been adopted to address coordinated planning. An agreement between King County and PSE (the Reciprocal Coordination and Cooperation Covenant Agreement) establishes the framework within which the County and PSE will coordinate trail and utility planning in the portions of the corridor where the County has ownership. King County and Redmond reached an agreement stipulating that the city will develop a public trail consistent with railbanking requirements, assume interim trail sponsor duties, and agree to additional wastewater easements to allow the County to meet its current and future wastewater facility needs. Sound Transit's easements as well as King County's easement in the Sound Transit-owned portion of the ERC include processes to coordinate the dual uses of high-capacity transit and a recreational trail. However, not all owners have adopted agreements, and currently any coordination agreements with adjacent jurisdictions are developed on a case-by-case basis (i.e., the agreement between the City of Bellevue and King County, and between Bellevue and Sound Transit, regarding the extension of NE 4<sup>th</sup> Street).

**Recommendation 4B:** The RAC recommends that in the coming months and years

- The owners coordinate their planning and actions to foster implementation of the multiuse vision and preserve or enhance opportunities now, and in the future, for high-capacity transit, trail and utility uses in the corridor.
- Where owners have created coordination agreements between one another, work on planning and development activities will be done consistent with the agreements already in place. However, where partnership/coordination agreements do not exist, there is an open question about how the owners will resolve any outstanding conflicts when interests diverge. In the next phase of the collaborative planning process (see the Next Steps section of this report) the owners should determine if additional partnership agreements are needed, how the owners will work with adjacent jurisdictions, and with or without new agreements, how integrated planning across multiple jurisdictions will be achieved.
- The owners recognize the ERC's unique potential to enhance mobility and transportation in the region by providing a nonmotorized spine connecting regional trails and parks, bus and rail networks, schools, and residential and commercial centers. Owners should acknowledge the importance of developing an ERC trail, consistent with the corridor's long-term multiuse goals. Planning and design for such a trail will be done in full consultation with other owners, adjacent cities and communities, and the public.

### **C. Sound Transit Operation and Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) Siting**

Sound Transit is expanding the regional Link light rail system. Construction is underway to expand light rail to Husky Stadium and Northgate in Seattle, and from Sea-Tac Airport to South 200<sup>th</sup>. In addition, design work is underway for the expansion to Mercer Island, Bellevue and Overlake near the Microsoft campus. Planning is underway for the extensions north to Lynnwood and south to Federal Way. The expansion of the system will require that Sound Transit purchase additional light rail vehicles for the extended service. The current light rail

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maintenance facility, located in the SODO neighborhood in Seattle, is not big enough to manage the increased volume of light rail vehicles. Sound Transit has indicated that they will need a new maintenance facility opened by 2020 to meet their light rail expansion schedules.

As a result, Sound Transit is in the midst of an environmental review process examining four potential locations for the OMSF. One of the potential alternatives is located in Lynnwood, another is in Bellevue adjacent to SR-520 near NE 20<sup>th</sup> Street. The other two alternatives are in Bellevue adjacent to the ERC, north of NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street and east of I-405. One of the alternatives would be located entirely on the east side of the ERC, while the other alternative would span the corridor with facilities on both sides. The Lynnwood alternative would increase the anticipated light rail train storage space on the ERC in Bellevue (beyond the current plans for East Link). The draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the four alternatives will be available by mid-2014, which will begin the public comment period. After the public comment period, the Sound Transit Board is expected to identify a preferred alternative in the third quarter of 2014. When the preferred alternative is identified, work on the final EIS and preliminary engineering will begin. The final EIS and preliminary engineering is expected to take 10 to 12 months and result in a federal Record of Decision in late 2015.

Sound Transit provided a briefing for the RAC that included a description of the alternatives. Planning for the three alternatives that would affect the ERC assume that the multiple uses anticipated by the owners will be incorporated. The multiuse vision for the corridor must balance the needs of future trail, high-capacity transit, and utility development. Finding the right balance will take continuous collaboration among the owners as projects on or near the corridor are planned. The OMSF environmental review process provides an opportunity for the other RAC owners to work with Sound Transit regarding the three alternatives that would affect the ERC.

**Recommendation 4C:** The RAC recommends that

- The owners discuss the alternatives during their next phase of work (see Next Steps) and determine if they want to provide any comments on the Sound Transit OMSF EIS.
- In the event one of the three alternatives (Lynnwood or the two adjacent to the ERC) is selected as the preferred alternative, the RAC will work with Sound Transit to develop plans that ensure public access and multiple uses, is consistent with the owner's vision for the ERC.

### ***D. Develop the Corridor Consistent with Federal Railbanking Requirements***

The acquisition of the ERC by the five owners is subject to the federal Rails-to-Trails Act (See Appendix 5 for a description). The Act allows divested rail corridors to be "railbanked." This means that the corridors can be used for trails and other compatible uses for an indefinite, but "interim," period of time. The property may in appropriate circumstances be restored to active freight service by a bona fide interstate freight rail operator. The requirements of the Act are implemented by the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB), the agency responsible for regulating interstate freight rail service.



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The Act requires that owners of a railbanked corridor continue to maintain sufficient real property interests to allow for potential future reactivation and to not sever a railbanked corridor from the interstate freight rail system.

**Recommendation 4D:** The RAC recommends that the owners conduct all planning for the corridor consistent with the requirements of the federal Rails-to-Trails Act.

## 5. THE CORRIDOR'S REGIONAL LEGACY

The RAC members agree that the ERC is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. It must be planned with an appreciation for the regional legacy it will create. Our region has a long history of civic projects and decisions that endure for the benefit and use of future generations: cleaning up Lake Washington, protecting hundreds of thousands of acres of working forest land, acquiring development rights for farmland, and acquiring the Burke Gilman Trail and the East Lake Sammamish Trail. We have also been an international leader in innovation and strategic thinking: building airplanes to enhance worldwide mobility, changing the world's use of computers and retail experiences, becoming a renowned center for bio-tech research and higher education, and creating a new style of music. The purchase and development of the ERC has the potential to create a similar legacy, benefiting area residents for the next century and beyond. The first step in creating that legacy has been achieved by securing the corridor in public ownership. But during the RAC process, members identified a number of areas in which more must be done to ensure the ERC becomes a regional legacy for future generations.

### A. *Mobility and Transportation Connections*

The PSRC forecasts that between 2010 and 2040, the population in King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties will increase by 1.3 million. During that same time it is anticipated that 1 million new jobs will be created. Enhancing mobility for area residents and businesses as the region continues to grow will be essential to maintaining a vibrant economy and protecting our region's quality of life.

The development of the ERC is an unprecedented opportunity to create a new north-south transportation spine in fast-growing east King County. The multiuse vision for the corridor can become a cornerstone in the region's effort to create mobility options as the region grows. With careful planning and public support, the corridor can provide mobility via high-capacity transit, bicycle, and walking, and connect to other transportation systems, including bus, rail, trail, ferry and airports. It can be used for commuting to work or for recreational purposes.

The corridor should become an integral part of the regional trail system. It can be a centerpiece in the decade's long effort to create a seamless trail connection around Lake Washington, and it can establish a north-south connection to the Mountain to Sound Greenway. (For further description of potential regional trail connections in King County see Recommendation 4B.) The corridor could also connect with the Centennial Trail in Snohomish County.

An issue that will need to be addressed as planning for the corridor continues is trail head parking. Several cities said during the workshops that parking at parks adjacent to the ERC is

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already at capacity in summer months. Trail head parking will also be needed for the ERC to be used to support community events and activities.

The corridor should also be used to strengthen connections with the region's transit system. Residents in the cities along the ERC could use the corridor to improve mobility between their cities, to/from Seattle, or between communities to the south or north of the corridor. Since the corridor crosses I-90, SR-520 and I-405, there are multiple opportunities to connect the corridor with the region's bus service. In addition to implementing East Link light rail in a portion of the corridor in Bellevue, Sound Transit, as described in Recommendation 4A, is also studying the potential to add high-capacity transit service to the corridor, and how that service could connect with communities in south King County and Pierce County.

**Recommendation 5A:** The RAC recommends the owners

- Continue to work with Kirkland, Redmond and King County, who have begun discussions about how to connect the Redmond Spur with the ERC Main Line to create a more direct connection between downtown Redmond and Kirkland. Owners should support actions needed to make that linkage.
- Work with the City of Renton to develop and finalize connections at the south end of the corridor with the Lake to Sound Trail and the Lake Washington Loop Trail.
- Work with Woodinville and Snohomish County to develop connections north to Snohomish County.
- Work together, and with adjacent jurisdictions, to address the need for trail head parking to accommodate users of the future trail on the corridor.

(See also recommendations for developing connections at the I-405/I-90 Interchange, the I-405/SR-520 Interchange, and the Sound Transit high-capacity transit studies and Long-Range Plan.)

### ***B. Economic Opportunities***

The corridor can be developed to support economic growth in a number of ways. For example, the ERC can become a regional asset that helps attract residents and businesses that view the corridor as a transportation and/or recreation amenity for their employees. During the RAC's deliberations members learned that Google is planning to expand their offices in Kirkland to span the ERC. The company's decision to expand at their current location was influenced in part by the proximity to the corridor and its future use by their employees. In addition, local jurisdictions want to attract residents to their urban centers to access transit opportunities, urban amenities, and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

The ERC will also provide a direct link between several important regional economic hubs. At the south end of the corridor Renton is a major job center (45,000 jobs in 2009), and is strategically located between south King County communities and the employment centers in east King County. Bellevue currently employs 140,000 individuals and is planning for considerable job growth in downtown and the Bel-Red Corridor. Kirkland (31,000 jobs in 2012) and Redmond (nearly 80,000 jobs in 2011) are also employment centers and planning for



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additional growth. Connecting these job centers via high-capacity transit or trail connections will enhance mobility for employees. The corridor also provides an opportunity for PSE and King County to make the necessary utility improvements to support the anticipated economic growth.

RAC members also discussed the potential for excursion rail service on parts of the corridor. The Spirit of Washington dinner train had operated on the Main Line between Renton and Woodinville, but ceased operation in 2007. Several members of the RAC suggested that excursion rail could support the fast growing winery and distillery district in Woodinville. There are existing agreements for the operation of excursion rail service on the northern 2.5 miles of the Redmond Spur and north of Woodinville on the Main Line.

**Recommendation 5B:** The RAC recommends that

- The next phase of collaboration among the owners should address the potential timing and location of possible excursion service in the corridor.
- ERC owners work together to create zoning and development regulations that encourage private development to utilize this corridor as an amenity for area residents, customers and employees. (See also Recommendation 6A on Developing Consistent Policies.)
- Provide opportunities in this multiuse corridor for energy and utility infrastructure to support future growth and development.

### C. Cultural Opportunities

The corridor should celebrate the culture, art and values of the communities it passes through. This will help create a sense of ownership, pride and support for the corridor. RAC members were very impressed with Redmond's development of their portion of the corridor, the Redmond Central Connector. It has been designed as a signature public destination, incorporating art, recreation and cultural activities. Redmond's master planning process began with the creation of design

#### LESSONS LEARNED:

##### *The Corridor as "Front Door" – Redmond*

Historically, freight rail lines have served as a community's back door, meeting the needs of shippers but not providing amenities for other users. As a result, buildings along rail corridors typically face away from the corridor, with only loading docks leading out to the rail corridor.

In Redmond, though, that is changing. In 2010, the City of Redmond purchased 3.9 miles of the Redmond Spur on the Eastside Rail Corridor. The **Redmond Central Connector** will include trails, light rail, utilities, new road connections, and connections to existing local parks and trails.

To facilitate this change, Redmond enacted new zoning regulations for properties along the corridor, which require a 14-foot setback for buildings; active, engaging spaces that face the corridor; and high-quality materials that respond to the design of the corridor. These changes have already been implemented in a number of new developments and are helping to make the Redmond Central Connector the city's new front door.

For more information, visit [www.redmond.gov](http://www.redmond.gov) (type "Redmond Central Connector" in the search bar).



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principles—guiding statements that suggest a vision for how art, culture, commerce, community connections and history will be woven into the development of the corridor. The Redmond Central Connector has tried to incorporate design features or art work that reflect the identity of the neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor.

At various points the ERC is located near public parks and open spaces that could be used for community events and activities (e.g., Gene Coulon Park, Newcastle Park, Mercer Slough Nature Park, Bellevue Botanical Garden, Totem Lake Park, Downtown Redmond Park, and Marymoor Park, to name a few). The corridor could be used as a link between these parks and nearby residential communities.

**Recommendation 5C:** As King County and Kirkland develop master plans for their portions of the corridor, and Sound Transit develops art plans for the design of the East Link Hospital Station, design principles should be adopted that articulate the importance of including art and cultural displays in the corridor's development. Redmond can provide insight and assistance in identifying how to successfully incorporate art and culture into the design of the corridor. In addition, owners should work with local residents to help identify art, signage and design features that will reflect community identities. Local representatives can also help plan ways in which the corridor can support local cultural activities and celebrations. This will help create local community excitement about the corridor.

### **D. Natural Areas**

Along the ERC there are several places where the corridor intersects or passes in close proximity to natural features including streams, wetlands and forested areas. These areas include stream channels and associated riparian areas that support several salmonid species, including chinook, coho, sockeye, steelhead, and cutthroat, and other native species dependent on these habitats. Two of these salmonid species—chinook and steelhead—are listed species under the Endangered Species Act and are the focus of community-based recovery efforts by the Cedar/Lake Washington Salmon Recovery Council. The streams include May Creek in Renton; Kelsey and Coal Creek in Bellevue; and Yarrow, Forbes, and Juanita creeks in Kirkland. They also include large wetland areas, for example around Totem Lake and Mercer Slough, and areas along the margins of the rail bed that contain large trees, all of which provide habitat for a range of native species and can contribute to the management of stormwater and water quality.

In addition to providing important habitat features for wildlife and contributing to natural processes that support community values and needs, these areas present opportunities for users of the ERC to interact directly with the natural environment. They hold the potential to add to the richness of user experiences (e.g., seeing salmon returning to spawn in the fall), and providing the corridor user a reminder of the natural heritage of the region in the midst of an urban area.

**Recommendation 5D:** The RAC recommends that owners protect important natural areas within and in close proximity to the corridor. In planning the overall user experience



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for the ERC, owners should integrate interactions between corridor users and the natural environment, especially in areas with unique and compelling natural features. Design of the places along the corridor where users will visit these features should provide appropriate protection of these natural areas while providing visitors with a satisfying and enjoyable experience.

### ***E. Scenic Vistas***

For those who have walked the ERC or taken the High Rail tour, some of the vistas from the corridor are breathtaking. From selected vantage points on the corridor, there are sweeping views of Lake Washington, downtown Bellevue, mountains and foothills, the Sammamish River Valley, and interesting local territorial scenes. In addition, in some locations along the corridor travel takes place in a ribbon of green—a refreshing natural greenbelt in an urban or suburban landscape.

As the corridor develops, it will be important to take advantage of the places along the ERC where there are scenic vistas. They will become part of the magic of the Eastside Rail Corridor. In some cases, where there is a natural existing view, the owners may want to consider creating viewpoints for users to admire the vistas. In other areas, the owners may want to use signage to enhance the user's experience.

***Recommendation 5E:*** The owners developing corridor plans should identify the various points along the corridor where scenic vistas can be maximized. The owners will need to work together to plan future developments in a manner that is sensitive to outlook points and vistas. For example, location and design of utilities, fencing, landscaping and trail location could have an impact on iconic scenic vistas.

### ***F. Historic Legacy***

The Eastside Rail Corridor presents an opportunity to reflect and celebrate a rich and diverse local history of east King County. The corridor reflects the history of nonindigenous settlement and development of the communities along the eastern shores of Lake Washington. The corridor also sits on land that was used by Native American tribes before modern-day settlement blossomed.

The Eastside Rail Corridor was built approximately 100 years ago. It was originally referred to as part of the Lake Washington Belt Line. The new rail line provided transportation services to the communities sprouting along the eastern shores of Lake Washington. The Belt Line traversed the Wilburton Trestle, built in 1904. The Redmond spur was built in 1889 and was part of the Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern Railway.

Before the rail line was established, according to a description of Coast Salish Villages of Puget Sound, there were several Native American settlements along the path of the ERC. The settlements were often tied to locations where food was abundant, such as the confluence of the Cedar and Black Rivers in Renton, on the Lake Washington shoreline north and south of May Creek in Renton, the mouth and headwaters of the Mercer Slough in Bellevue, Yarrow Bay, and near the current location of downtown Kirkland.

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**Recommendation 5F:** The RAC recommends that the owners identify historic locations along the corridor as part of their work to develop their master plans. The identification of these sites could be incorporated in the design and development of the ERC. This work should include reaching out to tribal communities and local historic societies to help identify historic locations. The owners should also consider working with HistoryLink, an online historic encyclopedia, to create a narrative history of the ERC.

### **G. Public Health**

In recent years, there have been numerous studies that cite the importance of physical activity to human health. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, these studies have shown that regular physical activity: improves the likelihood of living a longer and healthier life; reduces the chances of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some types of cancer; promotes weight loss; reduces depression; and improves sleep. The guidelines note that such aerobic activities as brisk walking, running and bicycling are the most beneficial (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/default.aspx>).

Development of the Eastside Rail Corridor will enhance the opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling and other physical activities that will have public health benefits. As described earlier in this report, there are numerous opportunities to link the ERC with other trails. By connecting the corridor with the regional trail system and local trails, the expanded network of trails will reach more communities and provide residents with exciting options for exercise and recreation.

Anticipated new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air quality standards for ozone may place King County at some risk of violating the federal standards. Additional high-capacity transit, bicycle and pedestrian commuting in the ERC that could reduce automobile usage in the I-405 corridor would be beneficial in improving air quality and reducing the risk of violation.

**Recommendation 5G:** There are a number of actions the owners can take to develop the ERC in ways that will promote public health. As mentioned earlier, the RAC recommends that owners work together to create seamless trail connections between the regional and local trail system, and work with federal and state partners to create plans for ERC trail crossings at major regional highway intersections and through neighborhoods.

Regarding high-capacity transit use and enhancement of transit connections in the corridor, see Recommendation 4A.

There are places in the corridor where near-term trail development can be accomplished without precluding future uses. Trail development (temporary or permanent) will enhance the public health benefits of the ERC.

### **H. Public Safety**

An important objective of the ERC will be to enhance the public safety for those using regional transportation and trail systems. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including use of



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Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and smart engineering design principles focused on pedestrians.

The creation of a grade-separated transportation corridor would eliminate conflicts for walkers and bicyclists who may now share roadways with automobiles. A grade-separated high-capacity transit system would provide safe and convenient multi-modal transportation connections and an alternative for residents and workers who travel in the heavily congested I-405 corridor.

Development of a multiuse corridor with trail and high-capacity transit connections, that embraces art, cultural opportunities, historic legacies and scenic vistas, will create a lively, well used corridor, with vibrant, active spaces. RAC members learned that other multiuse trails around the country generate heavy use throughout the year. For example, in Portland's Springwater Corridor, where a trail and freight rail share the corridor, it is estimated that 1 million people per year use the trail. In Hennepin County, Minnesota, it is anticipated that 29,000 bike commuters will use the trail daily when it is completed. Other corridors have used lighting, access points to neighborhoods, visibility of the trail, user separation, safety warning signage, access for emergency personnel, and other strategies to enhance public safety. The expected use of the trail on the ERC will act as a strong deterrent to crime and threats to public safety.

**Recommendation 5H:** The RAC recommends that owners work together to address several public safety issues in the corridor:

- Work with federal and state partners to create strategies for safe, efficient crossings at the busy intersections with major highway interchanges (e.g., I-405 and SR-520, I-90 and I-405, SR-520 and SR-202).
- Create common principles and standards for how arterial and local road crossings

### LESSONS LEARNED:

#### *Be Smart About Safety – Minneapolis/St. Paul*

How do you keep walkers, joggers, bikers and commuters safe on a multiuse rail/trail corridor? On the Central Corridor between Minneapolis and St. Paul—where light rail trains will begin running in 2014—a new **Green Line Quiz Bowl** YouTube video offers simple solutions to keep multiple uses on the corridor operating safely.

The quiz bowl covers everything from rules of the road, crossing light rail tracks, safety in station areas, and even why *not* to use the light rail guideway for biking and skateboard stunts! Because there will be a variety of uses along this relatively narrow corridor, nearby residents and business are learning to "be smart about safety."

In addition, the pathway component of the Central Corridor, like trails and parks around the county, is being designed using the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles for safety. These include

- Visible sightlines so people can see what is happening around them
- Access control to easily show where to walk and not walk
- Territorial markers to show the difference between public and private spaces
- Good maintenance to show pride of place.

For more information:  
[www.centralcorridor.org/safety](http://www.centralcorridor.org/safety)



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will be addressed, and when grade separation should be used. Some of these road crossings are small, such as those that connect several dozen homes to Lake Washington Boulevard in Renton, while other crossings are quite large and busy, such as NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Bellevue.

- Work with individual cities to develop capital and funding plans for planned local road crossings (such as the NE 6<sup>th</sup> St. crossing in Bellevue).
- Work with one another and with adjacent jurisdictions to address road and utility crossings when high-capacity transit service is provided on the corridor.
- Consider general trail safety standards, including access points, lighting, vegetation management, width of trail, adjacent surfaces, and congestion management, etc.

### *I. Equity*

The owners of the ERC share a responsibility to ensure that all residents of King County have full and equal access to the future development of the corridor. As a public asset, the corridor should be used and enjoyed by the diverse populations that live in our region. The RAC's vision for the ERC as a multiuse, multimodal transportation corridor would enable everyone to have safe, efficient, affordable, convenient and reliable mobility options.

King County has defined equity and social justice to mean a "fair distribution of public goods, institutional resources and life opportunities for all people." Several members of the RAC have suggested that the ERC should provide direct transportation connections between the communities with affordable housing in south King County and the job centers in east King County. RAC members did not reach agreement on this principle and will require further discussion in the next phase of the collaborative planning process.

The Sound Transit High-Capacity Transit Corridor studies and Long-Range Plan update will explore the potential for providing high-capacity transit between south and east King County communities. The owners' role in that work is described earlier in this report.

Planning for the corridor, both at the conceptual master planning stage, and the design development stage, must involve diverse populations. Outreach to diverse population groups will help ensure that communities of color, low-income communities, and people with limited English proficiency are engaged in discussions about how the ERC can benefit their communities. Planning for art and cultural opportunities in and along the corridor should reflect the values and histories of the diverse populations throughout the county.



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**Recommendation 5I:** The RAC recommends that

- Strategic public investments in the ERC must enhance use for all King County residents, furthering equity and social justice.
- King County and the City of Renton continue their work to develop a connection between the ERC and the Lake to Sound Trail, which would link the communities of Renton, Tukwila, Burien, Normandy Park and Des Moines to the corridor.

### J. Sustainability

There are several ways in which the development of the ERC should be sustainable. Development of the corridor by five owners, in five different jurisdictions, with many overlapping federal, state and local public and private interests, demands that planning for the corridor incorporate the interdependencies and policy goals of the many partners. The creation of these partnerships will ensure that development of the corridor will be done efficiently and will be sustainable over time.

Development must also be financially sustainable. Financial resources are limited. Investments should be made to maximize resources. The owners should work to avoid costly improvements that are removed or demolished later. Redmond's approach to planning the Redmond Central Connector was helpful for RAC members. One of the lessons learned in Redmond was to start the planning work from the bottom up, starting with the various underground utility easements and development envelopes. City officials decided to place their trail on top of those easements, since the trail is the least expensive use to move if/when that is needed. City officials said the underground utilities are the most difficult to plan for and construct, and the rail is the most costly.

The ERC must also be environmentally sustainable. The corridor must be developed to be sensitive to and take advantage of the various environmental features

### LESSONS LEARNED:

#### *SMART Governance – Multi-jurisdiction Cooperation*

Like the ERC, the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) corridor spans many jurisdictions. SMART is a voter-approved, 70-mile passenger rail and bicycle-pedestrian pathway project in northern California. To develop a collaborative multi-jurisdictional approach to this multiuse corridor, in 1998, local leaders created a two-county SMART Commission to guide the design and implementation of the project.

After 18 months of study, the Commission voted in favor of forming a new commuter rail transit agency that would manage the corridor's passenger rail service and pathway. In 2003, through AB 2224, the California State Legislature created the SMART District, which is governed by a 12-member Board that includes representatives from each county, local cities, and a local transportation district. SMART also has a Citizens Oversight Committee, and coordinates closely with the freight operator, North Coast Railroad Authority.

SMART leaders note that a successful regional governance model must reflect the corridor's needs, must be sustainable, and must have authority to act. SMART's experience is consistent with some other multiuse, multi-jurisdiction corridors the RAC used as case studies.

For more information:  
[www.sonomamarintrain.org](http://www.sonomamarintrain.org)



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and assets adjacent to the corridor: lakes, creeks, steep slopes, wetlands, rivers, etc. The ERC provides an opportunity to showcase those environmental features and build support for their protection and enhancement. The owners should also consider using environmental best practices when constructing improvements on the corridor.

**Recommendation 5J:** The RAC recommends that the owners should continue the collaborative planning process begun in this RAC process. The best way to ensure sustainable development of the corridor over time is to continue to work together toward a common vision. Full development of multiple uses in the corridor will take decades. Development will occur in stages. Different uses and different geographic segments will be developed at different times. It is essential that as owners make interim or phased investments that they do so in a manner that does not foreclose options to achieve the multiuse vision.

## 6. BEGIN IDENTIFICATION OF SHARED CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

One of the RAC Principles for future development of the ERC (described in the first section of this report) is "Continuity." The Principle states that "the owners will seek to make the experience for corridor users seamless<sup>2</sup> from one segment to another...." To achieve this goal, considerable coordination of planning activities and creation of guidelines will be required among the owners.

In other multiuse corridors researched by the RAC, ownership interests are typically held by one governmental agency. Because ownership interests in the ERC are held by five owners, it will take intentional effort on the part of the owners to establish a consistent user experience along the corridor. With predictable turnover in staff and elected officials over time, it is important for the owners to agree in the initial stages of planning where and how they want to use these guidelines to support the vision for the corridor.

During the RAC process several topics were identified for development of joint guidelines and collaborative planning.

### ***A. Develop Consistent Policies, Regulations and Incentives to Use the Corridor as the "Front Door"***

Historically, commercial and residential development along the ERC, like most other rail corridors around the country, turned its back on the corridor. Most development on the corridor has located parking, loading docks, fencing, dumpsters, or service entrances facing the ERC. The creation of a multiuse corridor is an opportunity to rethink how the ERC interacts with the design and function of developments adjacent to the corridor. Creating a high-quality regional corridor will foster new development alongside the ERC which will help define the user's experience.

<sup>2</sup> Use of the term "seamless" means creation of a corridor that has some common design features, but also reflects the unique character of the communities and neighborhoods it passes through.



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During the City of Redmond's presentation to the RAC about the planning and development of the Redmond Central Connector, city officials described the changes they made to their zoning code to form a new model for how the corridor should be integrated into the redevelopment of their downtown core. Redmond amended their zoning code to establish a 14-foot setback for new buildings, required that buildings adjacent to the corridor create active, engaging spaces (preferably retail), and required the use of high-quality building materials. These changes will help create an active, lively space for users of the Central Connector.

RAC members also discussed the importance of grade separation at some locations to create a seamless experience for users. See Recommendation 5G.

**Recommendation 6A:** The RAC recommends that owners work together to determine where they would like to create the type of requirements and incentives that encourage private development to utilize the corridor as an attractive amenity for all users, including residents, customers and employees (similar to what Redmond has adopted). This will require collaboration with adjacent jurisdictions who adopt local zoning regulations and building codes. The owners can also share best practices information with one another (from Redmond and other locations) about the different type of zoning, regulatory and incentive based practices that have worked at other locations.

### ***B. Transit Connections***

Because the ERC connects five eastside cities, intersects with the area's two busiest east-west highways, and has the potential to connect with cities to the south and north of the corridor, planning should explore the various ways in which the corridor can connect with and enhance transit service in King County. Even before high-capacity transit is developed on the ERC, the corridor could be used to increase access for those who use the region's transit services. The corridor can provide access to park and ride lots, bus stops could be planned near the corridor, access points between the corridor and major bus routes could be planned. The ERC should be part of the region's strategy to improve mobility by enhancing transit connections.

**Recommendation 6B:** The RAC recommends that owners work together to support projects that strengthen the connection between the ERC and transit services, such as the proposed improvements to the South Kirkland Park and Ride, the East Link crossing of SR-520 at Redmond Way, downtown Bellevue, the East Link light rail station at Overlake Hospital, and connections to park and ride lots at Eastgate, South Bellevue, and other locations. The recently approved King County Parks Levy includes funds to connect trails to park and ride lots. As the corridor is developed, the owners should work with the area's transit providers to identify possible connection points.

### ***C. Corridor Management and Maintenance***

Vegetation grew, trestles aged, and surface and ground water found new pathways in the years after BNSF ceased operation in the ERC. Today, the original rails and ties remain in some areas, and not others. Yesterday's seedlings are today trees that, if left alone, would convert the

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corridor to forest. Noxious weeds have begun to sprout and thrive. Culverts and drainage ditches require inspection, cleaning and long-term maintenance planning.

The ERC owners share the goal of working together to ensure the success of a multipurpose corridor. They have different maintenance and management obligations, depending upon ownership agreements and expectations of ratepayers, residents and users. Near-term focus, too, varies with each owner. Trail construction is underway in Redmond's segment, and rail removal is underway in Kirkland. Sound Transit is completing design work on its one-mile segment in Bellevue, which will become a major construction site in the ERC between 2015 and 2020 as the East Link Hospital station takes shape. PSE is planning a new transmission line in the corridor within the City of Kirkland. King County Parks crews are working on vegetation control, drainage repair, and making the corridor safer for people who are discovering the 15.6 mile county-owned segment. Ongoing maintenance and management cooperation among the owners is critical as each pursues parallel but differing objectives in the corridor.

**Recommendation 6C:** The RAC recommends the owners establish a framework for effective channels of communication among their respective maintenance/management staffs. Staff will be encouraged to explore opportunities for collaboration, such as shared use of specialized equipment, sharing of information on environmental issues, planned maintenance activities, strategies to address noxious weeds, and opportunities for sponsorship and volunteer programs within the corridor. The owners should explore approaches for streamlining permit processes related to recurrent maintenance activities.

## 7. PROVIDE INITIAL GUIDANCE ON CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The ERC offers both constraints and opportunities that will affect its role as a multiuse corridor.

Constraints include pinch points, in which the corridor right-of-way is limited, in some cases as narrow as 30 feet; street crossings, at which uses along the corridor must be safely coordinated with crossing traffic; steep topography, in areas in which the corridor is sloped or is located either above or below adjacent development; and bridges and trestles, which are used in numerous areas along the corridor to cross highways, streets, steep areas and sensitive areas. Planning around these constraints will require careful regional coordination. In some areas, some uses may need to be located adjacent to but not on the corridor.

The ERC also includes many opportunities to enhance its value to surrounding communities as a regional connector. These opportunities include the potential for connections to nearby trails and to the regional trail network; and to provide connections and easy access to and from local parks, transit hubs, park and rides, and commercial districts, and other centers of activity. In many cases, the availability of adjacent public right-of-way or a nearby trail or park could help address constraints on the corridor by developing the corridor as part of a seamless regional system. Planning for connection points and envisioning how the corridor could complement existing parks, trails, high-capacity transit facilities, and commercial and residential centers will require careful consideration.



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**A. Plan for Construction in the Bellevue Area**

Development of the multiuse vision has already begun in some areas of the corridor. As mentioned earlier, Redmond has completed master planning and has begun construction of the first phase of the Redmond Central Connector. The City of Kirkland has received voter approval for the near-term development of a gravel trail and longer-term planning for a paved trail on the Kirkland-owned portion of the corridor (called the Cross Kirkland Connector); master planning has begun and an interim trail will be completed in 2014.

In Bellevue, several projects on the corridor are currently under development and will begin construction within the next several years. Each of these projects will affect the corridor, and plans will be needed to coordinate corridor planning and use with construction activities.

- Sound Transit will be constructing its East Link light rail line, as well as the Hospital Station on the corridor in downtown Bellevue near NE 8th Street. Some portions of the corridor in Sound Transit's ownership area will need to be closed during station and track construction, which is anticipated to occur between 2015 and 2020.
- The City of Bellevue is planning to begin construction in late 2013 on an extension of NE 4th Street, which will cross the corridor. This would be accomplished by removing the rails, lowering the rail bed, and then developing an overcrossing on the corridor. The street extension is anticipated to result in a temporary closure of the corridor in this area.

The corridor owners will need to plan collaboratively and to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions, particularly the City of Bellevue, to identify and plan for construction-related impacts to the corridor, such as temporary closures.

**LESSONS LEARNED:***Expanding the Corridor with Public Right-of-Way – Sonoma Marin*

The Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) corridor will be a 70-mile, multiuse freight, passenger rail and trail connection along Highway 101 north of San Francisco. The corridor has significant constraints that make including multiple uses challenging, including 59 railroad trestle bridges, two tunnels that are each longer than 1,000 feet, and 73 on-grade road crossings.

Instead of letting these constraints stand in the way of a continuous, multiuse corridor, the SMART team got creative and is planning for a virtual expansion of the corridor in key pinch points. Along 17 miles of the corridor, where there is simply not room for the pathway and the rail line, the pathway will temporarily move off the corridor and take advantage of street right-of-way. A series of bike lane improvements and pedestrian amenities on existing streets in these areas will create a continuous travel corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists.

For more information:  
[www.sonomamarintrain.org](http://www.sonomamarintrain.org)



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**Recommendation 7A:** The RAC recommends that owners work with Sound Transit and the City of Bellevue to develop a plan for the use of the corridor during construction of the NE 4th Street crossing and the East Link light rail and Hospital Station. The plan should include potential detours for corridor users during the construction period, as well as longer-term plans for how multiple uses will be accommodated in the areas of these projects.

### **B. Pinch Points and Topographic Constraints**

The ERC enjoys the gentle longitudinal grade that is typical of railroad corridors in general. More than 75 percent of the corridor is 90 to 100 feet wide. While these characteristics present great opportunities, side slopes and pinch points—often in conjunction with adjacent existing development—will present design and construction challenges as the corridor develops. For example, in Renton and Bellevue south of I-90, the corridor is generally 100 feet wide, but the westerly side is dominated by adjacent residences and access roads with steep side slopes or roadways bordering on the east. In the northern segment of the corridor between Woodinville and Kirkland/Redmond, the main line of the ERC is generally 100 feet wide but located on a steep wooded hillside. The Redmond Spur, which parallels the main line, is generally flat and easily accessible, but the right-of-way width narrows to 30 feet for much of the area, including in the winery district.

**Recommendation 7B:** The RAC recommends that

- The owners maximize available space in the corridor by supporting development approaches that conserve and facilitate shared use of space. The owners should support revisions to local codes to support development of uniform setbacks along the ERC.
- King County, in its trail master planning process, develop a baseline inventory of natural and built features necessary to thoroughly analyze space constraints in the corridor. This inventory should incorporate input developed by Sound Transit as part of its HCT Corridor Analysis and also should include identification of public or undeveloped land adjacent to the corridor in areas where potential connections, access points and additional acquisition may be desirable.

## **8. ENLIST COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Representatives from the other multiuse corridors studied by the RAC indicated that development of public support was an essential ingredient for success. In Portland, Hennepin County, Minnesota, and Sonoma/Marin counties, community support was needed for a variety of purposes: passage of state and local legislation; engagement in planning activities; advocating with federal, state and local officials; assistance in programming activities and uses; volunteer activities (including maintenance); and support for funding proposals. In each case, at certain critical points, public support was needed to overcome a major challenge.

The development of the ERC will require the same broad base of public support. The owners will need to cultivate interest and support from local communities that value the connections



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within their jurisdictions, and from regional groups that support the value of the corridor to the broader region. The ultimate goal should be for the public to feel a sense of pride and ownership for the corridor, and to be invested in the decisions about the ways the corridor can benefit both current residents and future generations.

#### **A. Naming and Branding**

One of the strategies to foster public support is to create a strong brand identity for the corridor. Branding helps build public awareness. An effective brand can make it easier to identify with a public asset, consider future possibilities, or celebrate a space and encourage public use.

Some of the individual owners of the ERC have already had success developing public support for their segments of the corridor and have used a brand identity to help build that support. In 2012, Kirkland residents approved a permanent property tax parks levy that will provide funding for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the corridor, and construction of an interim trail. Additionally, individuals, neighborhood groups and companies have volunteered for the city's adopt-a-trail program and are committed to maintaining the 5.75 miles of the corridor owned by the city. Kirkland has branded its segment as the Cross Kirkland Corridor.

Redmond has developed strong public involvement that has supported local and federal funding requests, and engaged in the creation of a master plan for the corridor. The city has branded its portion of the corridor the Redmond Central Connector. Both Kirkland and Redmond have used the brand identity to build community support for the planning and development of the corridor.

In addition, Sound Transit has developed a brand identity for the East Link light rail line. Approximately one mile of East Link, which will run from Seattle to Overlake, will be constructed on the ERC.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED:**

##### *The Corridor as Regional Spine – Monterey Bay*

The 31-mile long Coastal Rail Trail in Santa Cruz, California, is being planned as a multiuse corridor with freight and future passenger rail service alongside a bike and pedestrian pathway on the Pacific Coast.

As planned, this corridor will be a significant amenity for the local community. But, it will do much more. Instead of standing alone, the Coastal Rail Trail will serve as the "spine" of a much larger regional trail network, called the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network, which will be a 50-mile, two-county pedestrian and bicycle pathway.

To create this "braided" regional network of trail and rail, local governments and corridor owners came together to create the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network. By planning regionally, the trail network will provide easy access to 88 parks, 42 schools, and more than half of the county's population who live within one mile of the corridor.

For more information:

[www.sccrtc.org](http://www.sccrtc.org) (click on the Quick Link for "MBSST / Rail Trail").



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**Recommendation 8A:** The RAC recommends that owners develop a strategy for branding the entire corridor. The brand identity should be done in a way that is sensitive to and honors the work already completed by Redmond, Kirkland, and Sound Transit (as mentioned in the RAC's Principles (see above), and recognizes the larger, grand vision of an eventual statewide and west coast rail and trail network. The goal of the brand should be to create an identity for the corridor that is easily recognizable, and establishes the ERC as a regionally significant corridor that will connect communities and enhance mobility.

### **B. Funders Collaborative**

Development of the ERC will take time and will require many and varied fund sources—both private and public. The philanthropic community can play a very important role in building public support for the ERC, and in advocating for the long-term vision for the corridor.

Once again, the RAC members learned from the experience of other jurisdictions about different models for creating a funders group. In Hennepin County, Minnesota, a number of foundations have come together to form the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. It is a group of local and national funders working together to “unlock the transformative potential of the new light rail line.” The collaborative expects to raise \$20 million over 10 years, and thus far has raised \$5 million for corridor-wide strategies. The funders are focusing their actions on four topics: (1) ensuring housing options along the corridor for residents at all income levels; (2) creating vibrant transit-oriented places; (3) stimulating new local development and creating a strong local economy; and (4) ensuring effective coordination and collaboration among the different stakeholders.

In our region, the nonprofit King County Parks Foundation has recently been created. The foundation was set up to secure private donations to connect green spaces and trails, support new acquisitions of land and easements, and generally increase recreational opportunities across King County parks and trails. The foundation has identified

### **LESSONS LEARNED:**

#### *Private Investments Leverage Public Light Rail Funding – Minneapolis/St. Paul*

The new light rail transit line along the Central Corridor between Saint Paul and Minneapolis will make travel easier and faster. But the Central Corridor will do much more than that thanks to a group of local business leaders called the **Central Corridor Funders Collaborative**.

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative has focused on the people and places closest to the light rail line to ensure that those living and working there now will benefit from the new investment in the corridor. The Collaborative has outlined a 10-year effort, which members have committed to support through a \$20 million fund they are raising to channel investment into the area in

- Access to affordable housing, for people living near the corridor
- Support for existing businesses, both during and after construction
- Development of shopping, employment, university campuses, and transit hubs
- Communication and collaboration to connect the many groups along the corridor.

For more information:  
[www.funderscollaborative.org](http://www.funderscollaborative.org)



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the ERC as a legacy project and is seeking donors to support corridor implementation.

**Recommendation 8B:** The RAC recommends that the owners

- Work together to establish a funders collaborative composed of local and regional business, civic, community and philanthropic leaders to support the phased development and the long-term vision for the ERC. Creation of such a collaborative can build on two significant assets: (1) capitalize on the once-in-a-generation nature of this opportunity to capture the imagination of the local and regional leaders; and (2) take advantage of the solid base of public funding support that has already been achieved (i.e., successful voter approved funding initiatives adopted in Kirkland, King County and in the Sound Transit region, and the public funding made available by Redmond to acquire, plan and develop the corridor).
- Stay united around a common vision and agree on a collaborative approach to development of the corridor, in order to attract and maintain a funders group. The corridor will have more appeal to funders as a new regional mobility and economic strategy, than as a collection of contiguous local trails.

### C. Stakeholder Jurisdictions

In this initial RAC process, the five owners have worked diligently to collaborate with nonowner jurisdictions. Each of the cities that are adjacent to the corridor (Renton, Newcastle, Bellevue and Woodinville), WSDOT, and the PSRC were involved in this first collaborative process. Staffs from the stakeholder jurisdictions were invited to weekly meetings of the Technical Staff Work Group, and to participate in the three all-day technical workshops examining the constraints and opportunities along the corridor. Each of the adjacent cities was invited to make presentations to the RAC about their interests in the ERC, and any municipal or private plans that could affect the corridor. The stakeholder jurisdictions expressed considerable interest in staying engaged with the owners as planning for the corridor moves forward.

Collaboration with the adjacent jurisdictions will continue to be important because they each create zoning, land use, transportation and recreation plans, and policies that will impact the use and development of the corridor. Numerous examples were cited during the workshops. For example, Renton would like to discuss how the planned development at Port Quendall could intersect with the corridor. Newcastle would like to discuss how their residents (and a new elementary school) on the east side of I-405 can get access to the corridor. Bellevue would like to discuss how to create a grade-separated trail crossing at NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Woodinville would like to discuss how the ERC can support the winery and distillery district.

**Recommendation 8C:** The RAC recommends that ERC owners continue to work closely with state, regional and local nonowner jurisdictions as the next phase of collaborative planning develops. (See Next Steps.) King County will engage these jurisdictions in the corridor master planning work they will begin in 2014.

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### ***D. State and Federal Representatives***

There are several reasons the owners will need to work with state and federal representatives. First, because the long-term vision for the ERC includes connections with transportation systems that reach beyond King County, perhaps beyond state boundaries, engagement with state and federal partners will be needed to accomplish that larger vision. For example, the potential connection of the ERC with the Centennial Trail in Snohomish County would create a north-south corridor from south King County to Skagit County. This could be a building block for a corridor that could someday reach from the Columbia River to the Canadian border.

Second, as mentioned earlier, the ERC intersects with a number of highway interchanges. Finding safe, efficient crossings for trails and high-capacity transit may require assistance from federal and state officials to affect policies or secure funding support. The owners need to cultivate relationships, help officials understand the possibilities for enhancing mobility, and be ready as opportunities arise.

State and federal funding will be needed to accomplish both of these objectives.

***Recommendation 8D:*** The RAC recommends that

- The owners reach out to state and federal officials to inform them about the first phase of the RAC's work, share the unified vision for the ERC, and begin to describe some of the opportunities and challenges in developing the corridor. As mentioned in Recommendations 2A and 2B, the owners will work with federal officials to secure funding support for planning to address the constraints at two of the largest and busiest highway interchanges in the region: I-90/I-405, and SR-520/I-405. The owners should begin by briefing the members of the Congressional delegation, the Governor and state legislators, and federal and state transportation officials.
- To the extent the vision for connecting the ERC to corridors beyond Washington state boundaries captures the imagination of state officials, the owners may work with state or regional officials in other western states.

### ***E. The General Public and Interest Groups***

One of the conclusions from this first phase of collaborative planning is that there are many individuals and interest groups who have a very strong interest in the planning and development of the ERC. Members of the public who attended the RAC meetings represented a sample of those who have a keen interest in the corridor: advocates representing regional trails, bicycle groups, passenger high-capacity transit, excursion rail, freight rail, environmental and conservation interests, neighboring residential communities, transportation planners, and commercial development interests. The continued involvement of these interest groups will be essential to building a strong base of public support for the future planning, development and funding of improvements in the corridor. An email distribution list and a web site were created for the RAC process that can serve as an outreach tool to keep groups and individuals engaged as the work moves forward.



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**Recommendation 8E:** The RAC recommends that owners continue to reach out to the general public and the variety of groups who have expressed interest in the ERC. By engaging the public and a broad range of interest groups, the future plans for the corridor will reflect the region's values, helping to ensure the necessary public support for its phased development. The owners conducting corridor planning should create inclusive public processes. Additionally, the owners' next collaborative planning process (see Next Steps) should include opportunities for the public and interest groups to engage with the owners.

## NEXT STEPS

### TRANSITION TO RAC 2.0

As a result of their initial work together, the owners are committed to the continuation of a collaborative planning process begun by the RAC. Owners see the value of working together to create plans and develop projects that will promote the long-term vision for the corridor, and collaborating on issues that could impact the corridor and affect one another's ownership interests.

Before launching the next phase of the RAC's work (RAC 2.0), the owners want to take the time to develop a scope, work plan, roles and schedule for that work. The role of the RAC and the supporting staff team must be clearly articulated and defined, and the expectations regarding the commitment of resources to RAC 2.0 must be described. The owners recommend that they work together in a transition period, and that by December 1, 2013, they create the scope, work plan, roles and schedule for RAC 2.0. There are issues that may require the owners' collaboration prior to the start-up of RAC 2.0, depending on when agreement on the scope, work plan, roles and schedule can be reached (see Issues of Urgency later in this section).

### PURPOSE OF RAC 2.0

Although the more detailed work plan will be defined in the upcoming transition period, the owners agree that the purpose of the next phase of collaborative planning (RAC 2.0) should be to deepen the discussion about the ways in which the ERC long-term vision will be implemented. The owners agree to work together to create transportation and utility connections in and across the corridor.

The purpose of RAC 2.0 should be to

- **Serve as the keepers of the long-term vision**, proposing policies, focusing on changes needed to regional and local planning documents, such as PSRC VISION 2040, that will ensure the corridor is eligible for funding.
- **Implement the report recommendations** as the next step in the collaborative development of the corridor within the established authorities of each of the owners.
- **Advocate with state and federal legislative delegations** for support for corridor development and connections, particularly at key highway interchanges.
- **Enlist community and business support** in the corridor's development and nearby economic opportunities.
- **Consider options and strategies for an ongoing forum for collaborative, coordinated decision making and implementation** that could be used by the owners in the years ahead.
- **Collaborate at a technical staff level** on specific planning and development issues, including upcoming capital projects, Sound Transit's corridor planning efforts, and corridor-wide development standards.



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

The membership of RAC 2.0 may need to be broadened to realize these goals. During the transition period the owners will need to decide on membership for the RAC and the technical staff team.

## ISSUES OF URGENCY

As the RAC considers a work plan, they have identified several issues that have some urgency, which the owners could pursue in the next phase of work. These issues could become the focus of work during RAC 2.0. Some may require collaborative work prior to the formal start of RAC 2.0. The urgency may be the result of other schedules or deadlines, the relative priority of an action, or the lead time needed to accomplish a recommendation.

- **Advocacy for the Larger Vision for the ERC.** RAC 2.0 should affirm the long-term vision and engage in discussions with regional, state and west coast leaders about an ERC vision that is part of a much larger system of trail and high-capacity transit connections. Owners can sound the call for a vision that stretches well beyond the county's boundaries.
- **Work with Federal Officials.** The owners should begin to lay the foundation for future federal and state support by meeting with federal officials to inform them about the results from the RAC's work, and plans for the corridor.
- **Engage with State Officials.** The owners will need to create a collaborative relationship with the state as a partner in re-establishing the corridor connection across I-405, and beginning to plan for how the ERC can be integrated into the interchanges at I-405/I-90, SR-520/I-405 and SR-520/SR-202.
- **Work with PSRC on Revising the Transportation 2040 Plan.** The owners must make sure that the region's transportation plan reflects the RAC's vision for the ERC, and that projects included in that plan are consistent with that vision. This is an important step toward securing future federal and state funding.
- **Brand Identity.** Building public, philanthropic and government support for improvements in the corridor will require an identity for the ERC that captures imaginations and creates an image of what's possible. As suggested in Recommendation 8A, the owners should work together to create a brand identity for the corridor as a whole, while respecting the identities that have already been created by individual owners.
- **Collaborate on Policies, Regulations and Incentives to Use Corridor as "Front Door."** The owners have been impressed with the work Redmond has done to ensure that new buildings adjacent to the ERC create an active, engaging presence facing the corridor. New development along the corridor will continue and the owners could begin working together to create local policies or regulations that will enhance the user experience in the ERC.
- **Funders Collaborative.** The creation of an effective funders collaborative will take time. The owners should begin exploratory conversations with potential funders about building a support structure for the ERC.

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

- **Collaboration on Parallel Planning and Capital Project Activities.** In the coming year several planning processes will be underway that will have an effect on the future of the ERC. Kirkland will continue its work to develop a corridor master plan. Sound Transit will complete the high-capacity corridor studies and an update of its Long-Range Plan. The County will begin its corridor master plan process. PSE will complete its planning for a new utility line in Kirkland and Redmond. The owners will need to collaborate on the timing and sequencing of decisions that may result from these plans, and on coordinating the various planning processes. The owners should explore opportunities to conduct joint corridor planning efforts when feasible. In addition, owners will need to work together to coordinate planning for capital projects that will affect the corridor, including collaboration on funding opportunities.

## GUIDANCE FROM CASE STUDIES

The research on other multiuse corridors has been extremely helpful. Much can be learned from the experience of others who have navigated through the maze of competing interests, passionate advocates, regulatory requirements, and regional policies. Throughout this report, sidebar boxes include some of the lessons learned from the study of other multiuse corridors. In addition, Appendix 10 summarizes lessons learned from the presentations by representatives of two corridors. This research on other corridors should continue in RAC 2.0.

## CONCLUSION

The Eastside Rail Corridor is a corridor of regional significance. It can create connections within and beyond the Puget Sound region—from Vancouver to Vancouver and beyond. It will enhance mobility, provide much-needed green space, support economic development, allow for utilities to support growth, connect our transportation and trail networks, and help strengthen the ties within neighborhoods and between communities. Preserving the corridor in public ownership and planning for multiple uses along its length will be our generation's legacy to the future. The members of the RAC and their staff have taken this responsibility very seriously and will continue to do so as work continues to shape and develop the corridor.



## CREATING CONNECTIONS

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Regional Advisory Council was composed of the following representatives of the corridor owners:

**Co-Chairs:** *Dow Constantine* (King County Executive); *Jane Hague* (King County Councilmember)

**Members:** *Joni Earl* (CEO, Sound Transit); *Kathy Lambert* (King County Councilmember); *John Marchione* (Mayor, City of Redmond); *Joan McBride* (Mayor, City of Kirkland); *David Namura* (Manager of Local Government and Public Policy, Puget Sound Energy); *Larry Phillips* (King County Councilmember)

**Alternates:** *Nathaniel Caminos* (Senior Local Government Affairs Coordinator, Puget Sound Energy); *Ric Ilgenfritz* (Executive Director, Planning, Environment and Project Development, Sound Transit); *Craig Larsen* (Parks and Recreation Director, City of Redmond); *Kurt Triplett* (City Manager, City of Kirkland); *Christie True* (Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, King County); *Leah Zoppi* (Legislative Aide, District 4, King County)

\*\*\*

The Regional Advisory Council members extend sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to the RAC's discussions. The information, expertise and advice you provided has been invaluable in helping us reach the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

### Technical Work Group

*City of Bellevue:* Nancy LaCombe; *City of Kirkland:* Pam Bissonnette, David Godfrey; *City of Redmond:* Carolyn Hope; *City of Renton:* Doug Jacobson; *City of Woodinville:* Alexandra Sheeks; *King County Council staff:* Mary Bourguignon, Alejandra Calderon, Rebecha Cusack, Christine Jensen, Kimberly Nuber, Leah Zoppi; *King County Executive Dept. staff:* Bob Burns, David Hull, Paige Myers, Tim O'Leary, David St. John, Linda J. Sullivan, Chris Townsend; *King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office staff:* Andrew Marcuse, Pete Ramels; *Puget Sound Energy:* Jennifer Altschuler, Carol Jaeger; *Puget Sound Regional Council:* Alex Krieg; *Sound Transit:* Trinity Parker, Andrea Tull, Jordan Wagner

### Presenters from Neighboring Jurisdictions

*City of Bellevue:* Dave Berg, Mayor Conrad Lee; *City of Renton:* Doug Jacobson; *City of Woodinville:* Richard Leahy; *Snohomish County:* Peter Camp, Steve Thomsen

### Presenters from Other U.S. Multiuse Corridors

*Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART), California:* Bill Gamlen (presentation to King County Council's Committee of the Whole); *Springwater Corridor Trail, Portland, Oregon:* Mel Huie; *Southwest Light Rail, Hennepin County, Minnesota:* Katie Walker

### Staff Participants in Workshops

*Technical Work Group* (see list above); *City of Bellevue:* Leslie Betlach, Steve Costa, Dan DeWald, Paul Inghram, Ron Kessack, Emil King, Glenn Kost, Franz Loewenherz, Kevin McDonald, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker; *City of Kirkland:* David Godfrey; *City of Newcastle:* Mark Rigos; *City of Renton:* Vanessa Dolbee, Jim Seitz, Gregg Zimmerman; *King County:* Kevin Brown, Tom Goff, Nick Halverson, Don Harig, Alan Painter, Katy Terry, Bill Vadino; *Puget Sound Energy:* Charles Cox, Bill Foster, Wayne Harris; *Snohomish County:* Peter Camp, Brian Goodnight; *Sound Transit:* David Beal, Don Billen; *Washington State Department of Transportation:* Bill James

### Consultant Team

*Cedar River Group:* John Howell, Rhonda Peterson

**CREATING CONNECTIONS**

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CREATING CONNECTIONS

**APPENDIX**

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**APPENDIX 1:**  
**RAC Authorizing Legislation**



# KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Signature Report

December 11, 2012

### Motion 13801

**Proposed No.** 2012-0452.2

**Sponsors** Hague, Phillips, Ferguson,  
Patterson, Dunn and von Reichbauer

1           A MOTION establishing the Eastside Rail Corridor as a  
2           corridor of regional significance and declaring the  
3           criticality of the regional ownership partnership by  
4           establishing the Eastside Rail Corridor regional advisory  
5           council to immediately initiate a regional planning process.

6           WHEREAS, the Eastside Rail Corridor ("the ERC") is a forty-two-mile corridor  
7           that extends from Renton to Snohomish and from Woodinville to Redmond, and

8           WHEREAS, the ERC creates a direct contiguous land use and transportation  
9           connection through the communities of Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond,  
10          Woodinville, Snohomish county and King County, and

11          WHEREAS, the first time acquisition of the ERC was studied was by the Puget  
12          Sound Regional Council, leading to the original vision of potential uses. In May 2007,  
13          the Puget Sound Regional Council completed a technical study of the ERC identifying  
14          desirable potential uses and examining their general impacts, the comparative costs of  
15          such potential uses and the legal or institutional issues associated with preserving or  
16          acquiring the ERC. Based on this study, the BNSF corridor advisory committee  
17          recommended, for the ERC portion south of Woodinville, that, among other uses, an  
18          interim regional multipurpose trail be developed, and



19 WHEREAS, the region, through the Puget Sound Regional Council has  
20 established land use and transportation plans to guide the integrated and managed growth  
21 of the Puget Sound region, and

22 WHEREAS, the ERC is centrally located within the Puget Sound planning area,  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, these regional planning efforts have established, through Vision  
25 2040, regional goals for the economy, housing, transportation, public services,  
26 development patterns and the environment, and

27 WHEREAS, the ERC provides an opportunity to connect jobs, housing and  
28 transportation across multiple communities, and

29 WHEREAS, King County has established policy emphasizing the critical  
30 importance of transportation dual-usage, transit and nonmotorized trail usage, to link the  
31 centers and cities of the Puget Sound region, and

32 WHEREAS, development of the ERC has the potential to meet future public  
33 transportation needs by providing regional livability connections to South, East and North  
34 King County through a series of biking, walking and hiking trails, and

35 WHEREAS, the ERC could also provide for a regional trail system that could  
36 extend into Snohomish and Skagit counties to the north, and Pierce county to the south,  
37 and

38 WHEREAS, the ERC is a regional utility corridor for the transmission of natural  
39 gas, electricity (and related facilities), water and wastewater, and

40 WHEREAS, King County has experience with other joint use corridors such as  
41 the Interurban Trail and the Tolt Corridor, and

42 WHEREAS, the ERC provides a trans-generational opportunity to support  
43 walkable, compact and connected communities through publically owned lands, and

44 WHEREAS, through dual-usage and trail sponsorship, King County has an  
45 opportunity to enhance and protect the environment through reduced greenhouse gas  
46 emissions and to improve public health through increased opportunities to bike and walk,  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, the ERC provides a regional opportunity to connect historically  
49 disadvantaged and geographically disparate communities and centers, and

50 WHEREAS, the ERC is now under public ownership, and

51 WHEREAS, King County is the interim trail sponsor, and

52 WHEREAS, King County is entering into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with  
53 the Port of Seattle for 15.6 miles of fee ownership in the southern portion of the ERC  
54 south of Woodinville and 3.6 miles of trail easement within the northern portion of the  
55 ERC north of Woodinville, contingent upon future financing, a Reciprocal Coordination  
56 and Cooperation Covenant Agreement with Puget Sound Energy, an Intergovernmental  
57 Land Transfer Agreement with the city of Redmond and a prospective Intergovernmental  
58 Land Transfer Agreement with the city of Kirkland, and

59 WHEREAS, Puget Sound Energy has purchased a utilities easement the length of  
60 the ERC, and

61 WHEREAS, Sound Transit has purchased 1.1 miles of fee ownership in Bellevue  
62 and a transit easement over the southern portion of the ERC, and

63 WHEREAS, the cities of Redmond and Kirkland have purchased in fee those  
64 portions of the ERC within their respective municipal boundaries, and



65           WHEREAS, Puget Sound Energy, Sound Transit, Redmond and King County  
66   were all a party to the November 5, 2009, Memorandum of Understanding, wherein dual  
67   usage was a guiding principle, and

68           WHEREAS, the city of Kirkland is in agreement with that guiding principle for  
69   the use of its property rights, and

70           WHEREAS, King County's dual usage policy identifies the critical importance of  
71   a comprehensive regional planning process, and

72           WHEREAS, this motion advances the goals of the county's Strategic Plan by  
73   encouraging vibrant, prosperous and sustainable communities and safeguarding and  
74   enhancing King County's natural resources environment, and

75           WHEREAS this motion further advances the goals of the county's Equity and  
76   Social Justice Initiative by supporting ongoing public access for all people to the ERC as  
77   a safe, clean and quality outdoor space and facility that will serve the interests of the  
78   citizens of the region, and

79           WHEREAS this legislation advances the adopted King County Comprehensive  
80   Plan by furthering economic development, housing, natural resources, utilities and  
81   transportation modalities, and

82           WHEREAS, the eastside of King County is the second largest economic engine in  
83   the state, and

84           WHEREAS, the most affordable housing is located in southern King County, and

85           WHEREAS, the economic recession has caused all levels of government to look  
86   toward creative financial partnerships, and

87 WHEREAS, the taxpayers of King County are the same taxpayers who support  
88 Sound Transit, and

89 WHEREAS, interim use of the ERC is subject to freight reactivation, and

90 WHEREAS, the high capacity transportation, regional trail and county  
91 wastewater facilities that are to be located in the ERC will be of significant public benefit  
92 and constitute essential public facilities. As essential public facilities, these  
93 transportation, trail and wastewater uses are subject to the requirements of the Growth  
94 Management Act, and

95 WHEREAS, the ERC will be a dual use transportation corridor, which is a  
96 corridor that will provide for the co-location of motorized public transportation facilities  
97 and regional trail facilities;

98 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

99 A. Due to its regional role in connecting and supporting vibrant, livable and  
100 healthy communities for all, the ERC is hereby designated a corridor of regional  
101 significance.

102 B. The high capacity transportation, regional trail and county wastewater  
103 facilities that are to be located in the ERC will be of significant public benefit and  
104 constitute essential public facilities. As essential public facilities, these transportation,  
105 trail and wastewater uses are subject to the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

106 C. The Eastside Rail Corridor regional advisory council ("ERCRCAC") is hereby  
107 established as a collaborative group to carry out a regional planning process to  
108 "coordinate planning and development activities to the extent possible to ensure effective  
109 use of the southern portion of the ERC and the Redmond Spur" as previously discussed in



110 that certain November 5, 2009, memorandum of understanding. The ERCRAC's regional  
111 planning process and guiding principles shall work to implement the regional dual use  
112 objectives consistent with any existing easements, covenants and other property interests  
113 of record that are applicable to the ERC.

114 D. The executive shall transmit by January 16, 2013, for council confirmation by  
115 motion, advisory council membership with the following executive-level representation:

- 116 1. Three King County councilmembers;
- 117 2. King County executive or the executive's designee;
- 118 3. One representative from the city of Redmond;
- 119 4. One representative from the city of Kirkland;
- 120 5. One representative from Puget Sound Energy; and
- 121 6. One representative from Sound Transit.

122 E. The King County executive and county councilmember representing the  
123 majority of the cities directly impacted by ERC development shall serve as co-chairs and  
124 shall convene the first meeting of the advisory council in February 2013.

125 F. A technical staff team shall be established by the advisory council to support  
126 the work of the advisory council.

127 G. A third-party facilitator who is not an employee of King County shall be hired  
128 by the county to lead the work of the advisory council based on the guidance of the co-  
129 chairs of the advisory council and the support of the interagency, technical-staff working  
130 group.

131 H. The goal of the advisory council is to oversee the partner planning process  
132 including implementing and coordinating the rail, trail and utility uses in the ERC,

---

133 coordinating with affected cities around local planning and development with the  
134 regional uses and overseeing the work of a technical staff work group.

135 I. Consistent with that goal, the advisory council will develop a charter and work  
136 plan with policy options identified for discussion by March 29, 2013. As part of their due  
137 diligence, the advisory council should review and consider previous studies of the ERC.  
138 The advisory council shall address both near-term and long-term recommendations  
139 including any needed changes to the county's countywide planning policies and present  
140 them to the King County executive by July 31, 2013.

141 J. The advisory council shall reach out to a broad-spectrum of stakeholders,  
142 including but not limited to representatives of regional partners, local governments in the  
143 ERC, community organizations, business owners, adjacent landowners, rail/trail  
144 advocates, public health agencies and citizens who are interested in the ERC's  
145 development.



146 K. The King County executive shall transmit these recommendations by motion  
147 to the council by August 30, 2013.

148

Motion 13801 was introduced on 11/26/2012 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 12/10/2012, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,  
Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn and Mr. McDermott  
No: 0  
Excused: 1 - Mr. Ferguson

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None

**APPENDIX 2:**  
**Regional Advisory Council Members and Alternates**



### Regional Advisory Council Members and Alternates

Corridor Owner	RAC Member	Alternate
King County	Dow Constantine, King County Executive and RAC Co-Chair	Christie True, Director, Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks
King County	Jane Hague, King County Councilmember and RAC Co-Chair	
King County	Kathy Lambert, King County Councilmember	
King County	Larry Phillips, King County Councilmember	Leah Zoppi, Legislative Aide, District 4
Puget Sound Energy	David Namura, Manager of Local Government and Public Policy	Nathaniel Caminos, Senior Local Government Affairs Coordinator
Sound Transit	Joni Earl, CEO	Ric Ilgenfritz, Executive Director, Planning, Environment, and Project Development
City of Kirkland	Joan McBride, Mayor	Kurt Triplett, City Manager
City of Redmond	John Marchione, Mayor	Craig Larsen, Parks and Recreation Director

**APPENDIX 3:**  
**Regional Advisory Council Charter**



## APPROVED CHARTER FOR ERC REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The members of the Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Council (RAC) recognize that the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) is a corridor of regional significance and affirm the importance of a cooperative regional planning process for the ERC. The regional planning process will respect the ownership rights of the five owners in the corridor (who are represented on the RAC) and the current agreements among and between the owners in the southern<sup>1</sup>, railbanked portion of the corridor. This planning process must emphasize the critical importance of supporting multi usage of the ERC. The RAC will consider a variety of potential uses to link the communities, centers and cities of the Puget Sound region: for instance public transit (such as heavy rail, light rail, and other forms of fixed guideway<sup>2</sup> transportation), non-motorized<sup>3</sup> trail use for pedestrians and bikes, public utility connections, and private uses, such as utility connections and excursion rail, where appropriate. The planning process will consider the needs and potential uses for both the corridor as a whole, and for the different geographic segments of the corridor.

Historically, the forty-two mile corridor (referred to as the Lake Washington Belt Line a century ago) provided transportation services to the new communities along the eastern shores of Lake Washington. Redmond's line (today referred to as the Redmond spur) was built in 1889 and was part of the Seattle Lake Shore & Eastern Railway. In modern times, the ERC was known as the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) rail corridor. BNSF declared its intent to divest itself of the corridor in 2003. The current owners (King County, Kirkland, Puget Sound Energy, Redmond, and Sound Transit) acquired ownership rights in the corridor in stages, between 2009 – 2013. Freight rail service is still operational in the northern portion of the corridor, which extends from milepost 23.8 to 38.25. The northern portion is owned by the Port of Seattle.

The members of the ERC Regional Advisory Council also affirm that:

- The ERC provides contiguous public ownership of the southern, railbanked portion of the corridor. This ownership creates an opportunity for direct and contiguous land use and multi-modal transportation connection to the communities of Renton, Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, Woodinville, Snohomish County, and King County;
- The ERC provides an opportunity to connect jobs, housing and transportation across multiple communities and within communities;
- The ERC has the potential to meet future mobility needs by providing regional connections to South, East and North King County through high capacity transit, other transit, biking, walking, and hiking trails, that will enhance livability in those communities;

<sup>1</sup> From mileposts 5.0 to 23.8 of the Main line of the corridor and from mileposts 0.0 to 7.3 of the Redmond Spur.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Transit Administration defines fixed guideway transportation systems as: "A public transportation system facility using and occupying a separate right-of-way (ROW) or rail for the exclusive use of public transportation and other high occupancy vehicles (HOV), or a fixed catenary (overhead wires) system useable by other forms of transportation. Examples include: rail, ferry, street cars, and buses operating in exclusive right-of-way."

<sup>3</sup> Non-motorized uses include motorized mobility devices such as electric wheel chairs

- The ERC could also provide for a regional trail system that could extend into Snohomish and Skagit counties to the north and Pierce County to the south;
- The ERC is a regional utility corridor that is crucial for needed utility services, including natural gas, electricity, water, and wastewater;
- The ERC provides a multi-generational opportunity to support walkable, compact, and connected communities;
- The ERC can be used to enhance and protect the environment, as well as to improve public health through increased opportunities to bike and walk;
- The ERC provides a regional opportunity to connect historically disadvantaged and geographically disparate communities and centers;
- The ERC's southern portion was "railbanked" for possible resumption of interstate freight service under the federal National Trails Act, and is subject to the legal obligations imposed by it; and
- The ERC will become a model for how a regional process can recognize and respect the plans and work of all owners of the corridor, and integrate them into the larger regional context.

The members of the Regional Advisory Council affirm in partnership their intention to conduct and complete a cooperative partner planning process that will include:

- a) recommendations on a long-term vision for the use of the ERC that allows flexibility for future multiple uses;
- b) making recommendations for coordinating the multiple uses in the ERC, including identification of work the owners will do together to resolve issues or take advantage of opportunities;
- c) coordinating uses with non-owner cities encompassing the ERC around local planning and development;
- d) recommendations on how the owners will continue to work together beyond the Regional Advisory Council process to plan, address potential conflicts, and make decisions about the future use of the ERC;
- e) engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to representatives of regional partners, local governments in the ERC, community organizations, business owners, adjacent landowners, rail/trail advocates, public health agencies, and citizens who are interested in the ERC's development; and
- f) operating in an open and transparent manner.

The members of the Regional Advisory Council affirm that they will develop recommendations for the ERC that recognize the evolving uses of the corridor over time, the multiple needs, current and future planning efforts, and varying ownership rights, and decisions or policies that the owners have adopted. In planning cooperatively, the RAC will respect the purchased rights of all owners, and strive to make recommendations that do not preclude the realization of those rights and values over time.



The Regional Advisory Council will also consider recommendations for potential changes in the Countywide Planning Policies<sup>4</sup> by July 31, 2013 (or a date mutually agreed upon).

<sup>4</sup> The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are a series of policies that address growth management issues in King County. The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) brings together elected officials from King County and the cities and jurisdictions within it to develop the CPPs.

**APPENDIX 4:**  
**Regional Advisory Council Meetings**



## Regional Advisory Council Meetings

Meeting Date	Location	Major Topics Discussed
2/20/13	Seattle – Selig Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charge to RAC</li> <li>• Ground Rules</li> <li>• Overview of ERC and ownership</li> </ul>
3/13/13	Seattle – Selig Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redmond presentation: Redmond Central Connector</li> <li>• Draft RAC Charter</li> <li>• Stakeholder Engagement</li> </ul>
4/4/13	Kirkland City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirkland presentation : Cross Kirkland Corridor</li> <li>• Draft RAC Charter</li> <li>• Proposed RAC Work Plan</li> </ul>
4/24/13	Sound Transit Offices, Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound Transit Presentation</li> <li>• City of Bellevue Presentation</li> </ul>
5/15/13	Redmond City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Woodinville Presentation</li> <li>• Research on Other Multi-Use Corridors</li> </ul>
6/5/13	Puget Sound Energy Offices, Bellevue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSE presentation</li> <li>• City of Renton Presentation</li> <li>• Case Study: Springwater Corridor, Portland, Oregon (Mel Huie, Regional Trails Coordinator, Portland Metro Parks)</li> <li>• Sound Transit presentation: Rail 101</li> </ul>
6/26/13	Bellevue City Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Study: Southwest Light Rail, Minneapolis (Katie Walker, Southwest Light Rail Coordinator, Hennepin County)</li> <li>• Snohomish County Presentation</li> </ul>
7/24/13	Brightwater Education and Community Center, Woodinville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King County Presentation</li> <li>• Report on Three Technical Workshops</li> <li>• Review of draft RAC Final Report outline</li> </ul>
9/4/13	County Council Chambers, Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Draft Final Report</li> <li>• Summary of open house</li> </ul>
9/25/13	County Council Chambers, Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm Final Report</li> <li>• Discussion of next steps</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX 5:**  
**Description of Railbanking**



## Railbanking and the ERC

The ERC is part of a 42-mile rail corridor called the Woodinville Subdivision that was owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Company and that extends from Renton to Snohomish, passing through Newcastle, Bellevue, Kirkland, Woodinville, and portions of unincorporated King County, with a spur that extends 7-plus miles from Woodinville to Redmond.

In 2003, BNSF announced its intent to divest itself of the Corridor. In 2009, the Port of Seattle purchased BNSF's interests in the ERC from milepost 5.0 on the Main Line in Renton to milepost 38.4 in Snohomish County, as well as the Redmond Spur from milepost 0.0 in Woodinville to milepost 7.3 in Redmond.

As part of that transaction, the area of the ERC south of Woodinville (south of the "wye" at milepost 23.8) was "railbanked" under the federal National Trails Act.<sup>1</sup> King County became the Interim Trail User for railbanking purposes, and acquired BNSF's right to reactivate freight rail over the railbanked portions of the Corridor.<sup>2</sup> During 2012, through Ordinance 17502, King County approved the relinquishment of its Interim Trail User status to the City of Redmond in the area owned by Redmond (the Redmond Spur from mileposts 3.4 to 7.3).

Under the federal Rails-to-Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. 1247(d), "railbanking" preserves disused portions of interstate rail lines by allowing them to be used for trails and other compatible uses for an indefinite but interim period. The basic premise of the Act is that railbanked property may be restored to active service ("reactivated") in appropriate circumstances by a bona fide interstate freight rail operator.

The Act is implemented by the STB, the federal agency charged with regulating interstate freight rail service. While reactivation appears to be relatively rare, the STB's regulations are quite specific that the designated Interim Trail User (here, King County and the City of Redmond) must acknowledge at the outset that "interim trail use is subject to possible future reconstruction and reactivation of the right-of-way for rail service." 49 C.F.R. §1152.29(a)(3).

A core duty of an interim trail user is to ensure that sufficient real property interest remains in a railbanked corridor to allow the restoration of freight rail service, and that the corridor not be severed from the interstate freight rail system. In this case, the various additional uses contemplated for the railbanked segments of the Woodinville Subdivision—trail use, local mass transit, utilities, excursion trains, etc.—all of which are compatible with preserving the corridor for future freight use.

<sup>1</sup> Also known as the Rails to Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. §1247(d)

<sup>2</sup> As the Interim Trail User, the County is subject to legal obligations imposed by Section 8(d) Rails-to-Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) and 49 C.F.R § 1152.29, as implemented through the Notices of Interim Trail Use (NITUs) for the various parts of the Corridor issued by the Surface Transportation Board (STB), and also the Trail Use Agreement entered into between BNSF and the County, and the STB-required Statement of Willingness to Accept Financial Responsibility. Pursuant to the Rails to Trails Act, all interim uses of railbanked corridors are subject to reactivation of potential interstate freight rail service.

All uses of a railbanked right of way are "interim" in nature and subject to being foreclosed by restoration of interstate freight rail service. An STB-approved rail service provider seeking to restore rail service would need to petition the STB to vacate the trail use notice or certificate (NITU or CITU), and would need to acquire the necessary property interests.

In the initial Port-County-BNSF transaction, the County acquired BNSF's "reactivation right." The reactivation right is the abandoning railroad's right to unilaterally reinstitute federally regulated rail service over a railbanked line, at such time as the railroad may choose. Reactivation rights came into being with the Act, which created the "railbanking" framework and made it possible for a rail line to be preserved for future reactivation.

While the reactivation rights of an abandoning railroad are superior to those of any other railroad that may wish to operate over the line in the future, the abandoning railroad's reactivation right is not an exclusive one: other bona fide entities may petition the STB for permission to operate over (and thus reactivate) a railbanked line.

If a bona fide third party requests authority to reactivate all or a portion of the corridor, and if the STB authorizes the reactivation, then subject to receiving appropriate compensation for any property interests that King County (and others) may relinquish, the County and other interest holders would need to accommodate the reactivation.



**APPENDIX 6:**  
**Technical Work Group Members**

## Technical Staff Working Group Members

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
<b>Owner Jurisdictions</b>			
Mary Bourguignon	King County Council	Andrew Marcuse	KC Prosecuting Attys Ofc
Rebecha Cusack	King County Council	Pete Ramels	KC Prosecuting Attys Ofc
Christine Jensen	King County Council	Pam Bissonnette	City of Kirkland
Kimberly Nuber	King County Council	Carolyn Hope	City of Redmond
Leah Zoppi	King County Council	Craig Larsen	City of Redmond
Bob Burns	KC DNRP	Jennifer Altschuler	Puget Sound Energy
David St. John	KC DNRP	Nathaniel Caminos	Puget Sound Energy
Linda J. Sullivan	KC DNRP	Carol Jaeger	Puget Sound Energy
Kevin Brown	KC DNRP - Parks Div	Ric Ilgenfritz	Sound Transit
David Hull	KC DOT - Metro Transit	Trinity Parker	Sound Transit
Chris Townsend	KC FMD	Andrea Tull	Sound Transit
<b>Partner Jurisdictions</b>			
Nancy LaCombe	City of Bellevue	Alexandra Sheeks	City of Woodinville
Doug Jacobson	City of Renton	Alex Krieg	Puget Sound Regional Council
<b>Facilitator</b>			
John Howell	Cedar River Group		



**APPENDIX 7:**  
**Segment Profiles**

## E A S T S I D E R A I L C O R R I D O R

**Segment 1: North King County****SEGMENT PROFILE**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) includes representatives of the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC: King County, Redmond, Kirkland, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy. The RAC has organized a cooperative planning effort to support the multiple use vision for the corridor.

To begin that effort, the RAC has divided the corridor into five planning segments. Technical staff has organized planning workshops for the three segments encompassing ownership by King County and Sound Transit to gather information about current and planned conditions. For the segments owned by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland, the RAC will coordinate with those cities' existing planning processes. The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather and begin synthesis of information that will support development of recommendations by the RAC to meet their charter.

For Segment 1, technical staff organized a site visit on July 11, 2013; and a full-day planning workshop at the Brightwater Education and Community Center on July 12, 2013. Staff from King County, Woodinville, Kirkland, Redmond, Snohomich County, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) reviewed current conditions, future plans, and typical dynamic envelopes needed for rail, trail, and utility facilities.





## SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

**Segment 1** is located on both the Main Line and the Redmond Spur of the ERC. On the Main Line, it stretches from Milepost 20.3 (at the west edge of 132nd Avenue NE, which is the northern edge of the City of Kirkland's ownership) north to Milepost 23.8 (at the wye junction with the Redmond Spur). On the Redmond Spur, it stretches from Milepost 0.0 (in the vicinity of the wye junction with the Main Line) south to Milepost 3.4 (at NE 124th Street, which is the northern edge of the City of Redmond's ownership).

Segment 1 runs through the cities of Kirkland and Woodinville, as well as unincorporated King County.

**Ownership.** This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County has been designated the Interim Trail Sponsor. King County owns this segment, having acquired a combination of fee simple and railroad easement interests in 2013 from the Port of Seattle, which acquired BNSF's underlying ownership rights in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

Sound Transit holds a high capacity transit easement in this segment and Puget Sound Energy holds a utility easement on, above, and below ground.

South of Segment 1 on the Main Line, the corridor is owned by the City of Kirkland; south of Segment 1 on the Redmond Spur, the corridor is owned by the City of Redmond. North of Segment 1, the corridor is owned by the Port of Seattle. The corridor north of Segment 1 is not railbanked and is in active freight use. King County owns a trail easement north of Segment 1, from Mileposts 23.8 to 27.4 (Brightwater).



<sup>1</sup> Due to railbanking, the corridor ownership remains intact, whether BNSF's original ownership rights – which were acquired at the turn of the 20th century – were fee simple ownership or railroad easement interests.



**Surrounding jurisdictions.** Segment 1 is located north of Redmond. It passes through the cities of Kirkland and Woodinville, as well as unincorporated King County. It is located east of highways I-405 and SR-522, and west of the Sammamish River.

**Corridor topography and condition.** Segment 1's topography varies significantly between the Main Line and the spur. The Main Line is located on a wooded slope, with steep grade changes between the rail bed and surrounding neighborhoods. The Redmond Spur, on the other hand, is located in a mostly flat area on the edge of the Sammamish Valley, and is therefore more accessible to adjacent uses.

The right-of-way on the Redmond Spur is very narrow in many places along this segment, narrowing to 30 feet for much of its length. The narrow right-of-way will make accommodating multiple uses challenging.

The railbanked portion of the corridor has not been maintained in several years. The Main Line, which travels through a wooded area, is heavily overgrown in many areas. The Redmond Spur, which travels through an open area, is less overgrown but will need ongoing maintenance and weeding. There are also a number of culvert maintenance issues in this segment, which will need to be addressed.

## **CURRENT USES AND FUTURE PLANS**

**Surrounding Land Use.** This segment of the corridor passes through residential, industrial, commercial, and rural areas, as well as the Woodinville winery district and Central Business District.

- At the southern end of this segment, the County's ownership begins while still within the City of Kirkland. As the County-owned Main Line portion moves east, it comes within 300 feet of the Redmond spur portion of the corridor owned by the City of Redmond. Staff from Kirkland, Redmond and King County are working together to develop a safe east/west bike/pedestrian connection between the Main Line and Redmond Spur in the vicinity of Willows Road and NE 124th Street to provide a link between the Redmond and Kirkland downtowns.

Staff from the three jurisdictions are also beginning discussions about creating clear north/south linkages between the County-owned and Redmond- and Kirkland-owned segments of the corridor in this area.

- Moving north, the Main Line travels up and into a wooded area. These topographic changes will complicate connections to Kirkland's Kingsgate neighborhood, which is located to the west. The Redmond Spur continues flat along the edge of the rural Sammamish Valley. The Main Line and Redmond Spur are located close to each other throughout this segment, and roughly parallel to the Sammamish River and Sammamish River Trail.



- At NE 145th Street, the Main Line and Redmond Spur pass on either side of the Chateau Ste. Michelle winery. The Main Line is located above the winery in a wooded area, but there is a paved path to a former stop of the Spirit of Washington Dinner Train.
- The corridor then passes adjacent to the Columbia Winery and the other wineries, breweries, and distilleries in the Woodinville Winery District. The Redmond Spur is located closer to most of these facilities. There are a number of driveway crossings in this area. As noted above, the Redmond Spur, although flat, is only 30 feet wide in this area.
- The City of Woodinville owns property between the Main Line and the Olympic Pipe Line (which is located to the west of the corridor). This property is in the city's parks plan as a new park that would offer connections to the corridor.
- The two lines then come together in a wye that is located within the Woodinville Commercial Business District, an area that is planned for future growth and redevelopment. The wye marks the end of the railbanked area of the corridor; north of the wye, the corridor is owned by the Port of Seattle and remains in active freight use. The corridor is 100 feet wide in this area. The Sammamish River Trail crosses under the corridor just north of the wye after passing adjacent to Wilmot Gateway Park and its paved trails. Connections between the corridor and the Sammamish River Trail could be made in this area. The City of Woodinville has plans for two road widening projects just north of the wye, and is working with the Port of Seattle to secure needed easements.

**Recreation and trails.** Segment 1 is located near a number of local parks and open spaces, including:

- Totem Lake Park (Kirkland)
- Sammamish Valley Park (Redmond)
- Wilmot Gateway Park (Woodinville)
- Planned park west of Main Line in Woodinville just south of wye

Segment 1 is also located near a number of north/south and east/west trails, including:

- Sammamish River Trail
- Tolt Pipeline Trail
- Little Bear Creek Linear Park (planned, Woodinville)

These potential connections, if developed, could offer many opportunities for corridor users, including the possibility to connect to downtown Kirkland and Redmond, the Burke-Gilman Trail to the north of Lake Washington and the University of Washington-Bothell, and north to Snohomish County and the Centennial Trail.

In some areas the Redmond Spur offers views of the Sammamish Valley agricultural area.

**Transportation and rail uses.** Segment 1 of the ERC travels parallel and to the east of I-405. The corridor north of the wye travels parallel and to the east of SR-522. Most of the public transportation in the area is centered around I-405 and SR-522, through there are trail connections via the Sammamish River Trail to the UW-Bothell campus.

As noted above, the corridor north of the wye (north of Segment 1) is not railbanked and is in active freight use. A freight operation uses that area of the corridor several days a week.

Several planning initiatives may affect the corridor in this area:

- **City of Woodinville street crossings and widening.** In preparation for anticipated growth, the City of Woodinville would like to complete two street widening projects, both on SR-202, that would affect the corridor north of the wye (note that both of these projects are located north of Segment 1, in the area of the corridor owned by the Port of Seattle and not in an area covered by the RAC's planning process):
  - A widening of the Sammamish River Bridge on SR-202 that will require easements from the Port of Seattle as well as from King County (because the end of the King County-owned Redmond Spur, in an area that is used for freight turn-around operations, will be affected). This project is fully funded and 90% designed. Environmental Review is complete.
  - The lengthening of a trestle to accommodate widening of SR-202 where the corridor crosses over SR-202. The City of Woodinville has suggested that the trestle could be widened when it is rebuilt in the event that the Port wishes to install double tracks in this area of the corridor or to accommodate a future trail (King County owns a trail easement in this area of the corridor). This project is not yet funded and no design work has been completed.

In addition, the City of Woodinville plans to create several new street connections as part of the Woodin Creek Village development, a mixed use residential and commercial development that will be located approximately ¼ mile south of the corridor in the city's central business district. That development is planning to create 800 new housing units, as well as commercial and retail space.

- **Sound Transit ST3 Planning.** Sound Transit's ST3 planning process will affect planning for this segment of the corridor, as Sound Transit evaluates the feasibility of passenger rail on the ERC between Woodinville and Renton. The City of Woodinville has identified a location for a potential platform for passenger rail. However, this location is north of the wye in the area designated for active



freight. Sound Transit's high capacity transit easement extends north only to the wye and therefore does not cover the area Woodinville has identified as a potential platform.

**Utilities.** Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) have utilities in the Segment 1 area of the corridor. In addition, the Olympic Pipe Line parallels a portion of this segment. Utility issues include:

- **PSE electric lines.** PSE has several electric transmission and distribution crossings of the corridor. In addition, there is a Seattle City Light transmission line that crosses the corridor at the northern end of the Kirkland segment. Puget Sound Energy is currently planning the location for a new Sammamish–Juanita 115 kV transmission line. The preferred final route would be located along the northern portion of the Kirkland-owned rail corridor, near Willows Road in the Redmond-owned area of the Redmond Spur (where PSE does not currently hold an easement) and along the southern part of the Main Line in this segment between Willows Road and 132nd Ave NE. PSE and King County staff are working together to plan for pole locations with respect to the Planned Trail Area designated by King County as part of the Regional Coordination and Cooperation Covenant Agreement (RCCCA).
- **PSE gas lines.** PSE has numerous gas crossings of the corridor. As with electric lines, future placement of gas crossings will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.
- **King County Wastewater.** King County's Eastside Interceptor (ESI) is not located within the corridor in Segment 1, but other County wastewater pipelines are. The York Force Main runs through the portion of the corridor located in Kirkland, then becomes the North Creek Force main east of Willows Road, traveling north through much of the corridor to the wye. These force mains are part of a 25-foot wastewater easement, to which King County staff will need ongoing access for maintenance. There are no major trunk lines along the Main Line north of NE 124th Street, although this could be a potential alignment for reclaimed water lines in the future.
- **Olympic Pipe Line.** The Olympic Pipe Line, which is operated by BP Pipelines, runs parallel to the corridor in this segment. See earlier comment about describing where this is.

## **NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF**

The initial analysis and planning work in this segment have identified several next steps for staff. These tasks include:

- **Reach out to adjacent communities, businesses, and property owners regarding permitting and maintenance.** King County staff will continue to

reach out to corridor neighbors about its work evaluating and renewing crossing and special use permits on the corridor now that King County has assumed ownership; and about the maintenance work King County has begun to clear invasive and hazardous vegetation, clean culverts, and address graffiti problems.

- **Coordinate with Sound Transit on ST3 planning.** Staff will work with Sound Transit as it begins the corridor studies that are part of ST3.
- **Study pinch points and analyze alternatives for multiple use scenarios.** Staff from King County, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy have developed high-level dynamic “envelope” estimates for the typical clearances that are generally needed around and between different types of rail, trail, and utility facilities. As part of the County’s master planning effort, which will follow this phase of the RAC’s work, the master planning team will conduct a detailed evaluation of pinch points along the corridor and analyze alternatives for multiple uses in those areas. In particular, PSE, City of Kirkland, and King County staff are working together to plan for pole locations for the Sammamish-Juanita transmission line with respect to the Planned Trail Area designated by King County as part of the Regional Coordination and Cooperation Covenant Agreement (RCCCA).

## **ISSUES FOR RAC CONSIDERATION**

Analysis of Segment 1 has highlighted a number of segment-specific opportunities and constraints the RAC may wish to consider as planning for the corridor continues.

1. **Kirkland-Redmond connections.** Staff from Kirkland, Redmond, and King County have identified a potential east-west connection between the Main Line and the Redmond Spur along Willows Road just north of NE 124th Street. RAC members may wish to study this potential connection as a way to provide safe bike and pedestrian connections between the Redmond and Kirkland downtowns.

In addition, staff have begun discussions about the need for clear north-south connections between the Kirkland- and County-owned portions of the Main Line and the Redmond- and County-owned portions of the Redmond Spur in this area.

2. **Trail coordination.** This area of the corridor has the potential for a number of parallel trails, as the Main Line, Redmond Spur, and Sammamish River Trail are all located within approximately ½ mile of each other. Identifying the different characteristics of each corridor, as well as future needs for capacity, will be crucial to ensure the needs of regional trail users and to coordinate with other uses.



3. **Economic development opportunities.** The corridor travels through the Woodinville Winery District, an area that offers significant opportunities for tourism and economic development. Coordinated planning will be crucial to maximize the economic development opportunities of this area, while preserving the unique attributes that make the winery district so special.
4. **Woodinville coordination.** The Woodinville Central Business District is located adjacent to the corridor, stretching across both the north end of Segment 1 and the south end of the active freight use area of the corridor. Woodinville is planning for significant growth, which it hopes to coordinate with opportunities along the corridor as well as with connections to the Sammamish River Trail and the proposed Little Bear Creek Linear Park.
5. **Connections to the north.** North of Segment 1, the corridor remains in active freight use. The Port of Seattle owns this area of the corridor, and King County owns a trail easement. Coordinating trail development with active freight use and fostering connections to and through Snohomish County (which is hoping to purchase trail easements of the corridor within Snohomish County) will be crucial to fulfill the long-term vision for the corridor. Studying transit and rail connections in this area will also be important: Sound Transit's high capacity transit easement ends at the north end of Segment 1, and the area of Snohomish County in the corridor is not in Sound Transit's service area, both of which will challenge planning for future passenger rail uses in this area.

## **SUMMARY**

The site visit and planning workshop for Segment 1 have highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for the multiple usage of the Eastside Rail Corridor in this area. Additional study, work, and outreach on these issues will help the RAC understand segment development potential and interconnectivity and plan how to achieve its multi-purpose vision for this segment and for the entire Eastside Rail Corridor.

Similar planning studies for the other segments of the corridor with King County and Sound Transit ownership, and collaboration with Kirkland and Redmond on their local planning efforts, will allow the RAC to identify a common set of issues and policies for the Eastside Rail Corridor and recommend next steps for planning for the corridor's multi use development, as well as for long-term connections through and beyond the central Puget Sound region.

## E A S T S I D E R A I L C O R R I D O R

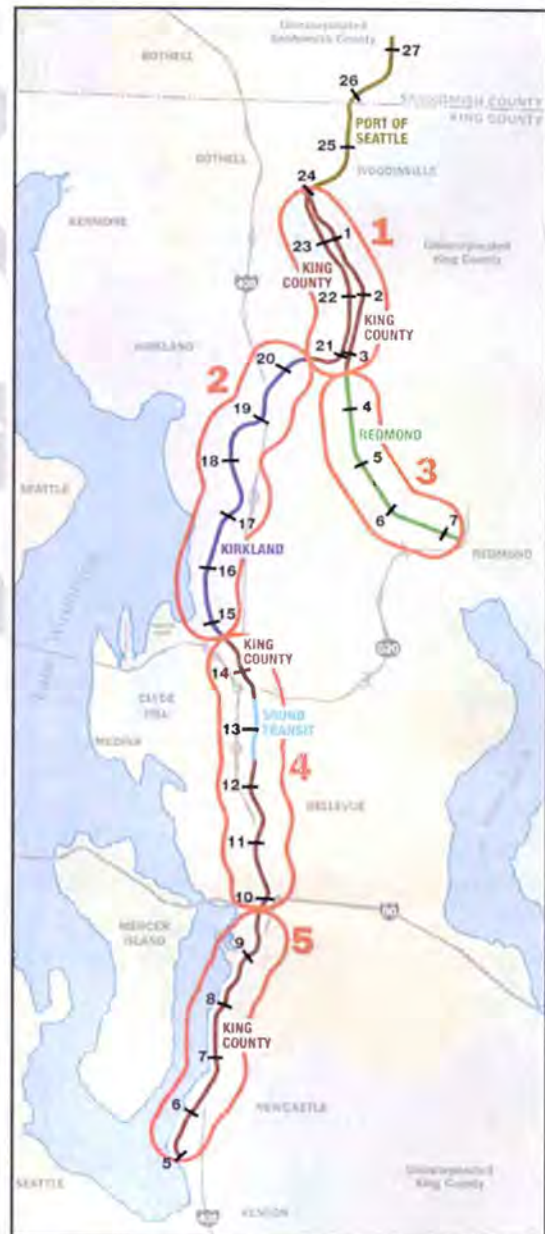
**Segment 2: Kirkland****SEGMENT PROFILE**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) includes representatives of the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC: King County, Redmond, Kirkland, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy. The RAC has organized a cooperative planning effort to support the multiple use vision for the corridor.

To begin that effort, the RAC has divided the corridor into five planning segments. Technical staff has organized planning workshops for the three segments encompassing ownership by King County and Sound Transit to gather information about current and planned conditions.

For the segments owned by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland, the RAC will coordinate with those cities' existing planning processes. The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather and begin synthesis of information that will support development of recommendations by the RAC to meet their charter.

For Segment 2, staff from the City of Kirkland has compiled this segment profile to provide detailed information about current conditions, future plans, and the master planning process underway for the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC), the name for the portion of the Eastside Rail Corridor in Kirkland's ownership.





## SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

**Segment 2** is located on the Main Line of the ERC. It stretches between approximately Milepost 14.8 (west edge of 108th Avenue NE right-of-way in the City of Bellevue) to Milepost 20.3 (west edge of 132nd Avenue NE). Segment 2 runs through the city of Kirkland and crosses under highway I-405. The southernmost approximately 600 feet of the segment is located in the City of Bellevue. The City of Kirkland refers to Segment 2 as the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC).

**Ownership.** This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County has been designated the Interim Trail Sponsor. Kirkland owns this segment, having acquired it in 2012 from the Port of Seattle, which acquired BNSF's underlying ownership rights in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

King County holds a multipurpose easement, Sound Transit holds a high capacity transit easement and Puget Sound Energy holds a utility easement throughout the entire segment. There is also a wastewater easement below ground to accommodate the existing Eastside Interceptor, which runs along, under, or adjacent to the corridor through most of its length.

North and south of Segment 2, the corridor is owned by King County.

**Surrounding jurisdictions.** With the exception of the southernmost 600+ feet in Bellevue, Segment 2 is located in the city of Kirkland. However, Segment 2 does not include all of the Main Line in Kirkland. There is approximately 1.5 miles of Main Line in Kirkland that is owned by King County. A portion of the Redmond Spur, also owned by King County, parallels the Main Line and is located on the eastern border of Kirkland,



<sup>1</sup> Due to railbanking, the corridor ownership remains intact, whether BNSF's original ownership rights – which were acquired at the turn of the 20th century – were fee simple ownership or railroad easement interests.



although there is a difference in elevation of approximately 60 feet with a horizontal separation of 350 feet.

**Corridor topography and condition.** The topography of Segment 2 is varied with cuts and fills of various steepness and depth. The corridor is generally flat and is nominally 100 feet wide.

The corridor is narrow in places along this segment, particularly on its two bridges, but also in several areas where BNSF sold the right-of-way surrounding the rail bed. As a result, the rail bed closely abuts commercial structures in several areas.

The City of Kirkland has maintained the segment since it secured ownership in April, 2012. This has consisted mainly of weed control, removal of trash and graffiti control. The two overpasses have also been improved to increase pedestrian safety. Ditch maintenance to improve and manage surface water is currently being planned. The City sponsors an "Adopt a Corridor" program and 23 quarter-mile segments, comprising the entire Cross Kirkland Corridor, have been adopted.

Much of the active rail crossing equipment previously located at street grade crossings has been surplused to other railroads via the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission.

## **CURRENT USES AND FUTURE PLANS**

**Surrounding Land Use.** Surrounding land uses vary from parks and schools to residential to commercial/industrial. Currently, there are 11,000 employees within 2000 feet of the segment.

- At the southern edge of this segment of the corridor, the South Kirkland Park & Ride is being redeveloped with a parking structure and housing. Kirkland recently received a \$1.3 million state grant to provide access between the Park & Ride and the corridor.
- The crossing at 108th Avenue NE in Bellevue is just north of a connection to the SR 520 trail under construction. The east end of the new trail is planned to terminate at 108th Avenue NE. Plans for taking the trail east and connecting to the existing SR 520 trail are being considered by the City of Bellevue and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
- Also adjacent to the south end of the segment is the Yarrow Bay Business District.
- The corridor passes between residential neighborhoods to a crossing at NE 52nd Street. Broad views of Lake Washington are available in this area. There are numerous potential street connections down steep grades to the lake. The Carillon Point office/commercial/hotel site is on Lake Washington in this area.



- A trestle carries the corridor as it passes over NE 68th Street. There is no formal method of reaching the street from the overpass, but informal access has been made to the street in order to access the adjacent Houghton business area.
- Lakeview School is adjacent to the corridor just north of NE 68th Street. Because of elevation differences, there is no direct connection at this time.
- A wide flat area of the corridor begins several hundred feet north of the NE 68th Trestle. This area has some industrial use remaining and is adjacent to the Google buildings on the east side of the corridor. On the west side of the corridor is the site of the second set of Google buildings scheduled for opening in 2015. Other commercial and industrial land uses surround the corridor until the grade crossing at 6th Street South.
- North of a sheltered section of corridor adjacent to Everest Park, a concrete bridge carries the corridor over Kirkland Way at the site of the former Kirkland depot. Connections to Downtown Kirkland may be made here or at 6th Street S.
- North of a crossing under Central Way and a grade crossing at NE 87th Street, the corridor is adjacent to other industrial land uses including the City of Kirkland Public Works yard.
- 112th Avenue NE is a low volume street that makes an at-grade crossing with the corridor adjacent to Peter Kirk Elementary School. The corridor is in a cut north of this location as it passes below Crestwoods Park. Kirkland Middle School is adjacent to the Park.
- The Par Mac light industrial area is between NE 116th Street on the north and NE 108th Avenue NE on the south. A number of recreational uses (tennis, badminton, trampoline, fitness clubs etc.) currently occupy former warehouse space.
- The WSDOT completed construction of a new interchange at NE 116th Street in early 2013. A component of the project reconstructed a bridge that carries NE 116th Street over the corridor. A busy at-grade crossing at 120th Avenue NE is north of this location and south of a structure supporting I-405 as it passes over the corridor.
- Light industrial land use occupies the area between the I-405 and NE intersection of NE 124th Street and 124th Avenue NE. The corridor crosses this busy intersection at an angle. Street connections continue to the Totem Lake Mall site and Evergreen Hospital.
- North of NE 124th Street the corridor travels between Totem Lake (the body of water/park) and car retailing and services. An office park is on the north side of

the corridor as it turns to the east before the NE 128th Lane NE at-grade crossing. The segment ends at the 132nd Avenue NE at-grade crossing.

**Recreation and trails.** Segment 2 is located near a number of local parks and open spaces, including:

- Watershed Park
- Yarrow Bay Wetlands
- Carillon Woods
- Houghton Beach Park
- Terrace Park
- Everest Park
- Cotton Hill Park
- Crestwoods Park
- Totem Lake Park

Several other parks are within a ½ mile of the corridor:

Segment 2 is also located near a number of trails or potential connections:

- Lake Washington Loop Bicycle route
- 520 Trail
- Redmond Central Connector
- NE 60th Street connection between Redmond and Lake Washington
- NE 100th Street connection between Redmond and Lake Washington

### **Other issues**

#### *Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) Master Plan*

The CKC Master Plan is being developed by a team led by the Berger Partnership. The budget for the project is \$360,000 and work is scheduled to be completed in May 2014. The outcome of the project will be a Master Plan that describes a preferred trail alignment and several “zone” plans at several key nodes. A planning level cost estimate and implementation plan will also be completed.

The Master Plan process is being advanced on the segment of the corridor that includes the Google site in order to provide guidance for the team developing the Google campus.

Next tasks include developing goals and vision for the project along with design guidelines and principles. Conceptual alternatives will be developed in late fall.

The City of Kirkland supports development of transit on the corridor. Current planning is assuming a 40-foot envelope within the corridor in which Sound Transit or other transit



operator could run, generally along the east side of the segment. This will get further developed as part of the master planning effort.

#### *Surface Transportation Board Action*

On April 2, 2013, Ballard Terminal Railroad Co. (Ballard) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to reactivate the portion of the Eastside Rail Corridor from Woodinville to Bellevue for freight service. The petition was filed just as the City was preparing to enter into the contract for rail salvage with the low bidder on the project.

Ballard initially sought an injunction in federal court. On May 3, 2013, the federal court dismissed the case for lack of jurisdiction and ruled that the injunction request should be directed to the STB. On May 7, 2013, Ballard filed its motion for an injunction to prevent rail removal with the STB. The City indicated that it would not salvage rails while Ballard's injunction request is pending before the STB.

The City conducted discovery in May and then filed a comprehensive response to Ballard's motion on June 4, 2013. In that response, the City requested that the STB rule on the injunction before August 1, 2013, so that the City could take advantage of the favorable bid it received from its rail salvage contractor, remove the rails, and efficiently conduct other CKC maintenance in dry weather. On June 25, 2013, Ballard filed a reply to the City's response, in which Ballard asserted that the STB should defer ruling on the injunction request until all briefing on the merits of Ballard's petition has been filed. On July 10, 2013, the City filed a motion to expedite the STB's decision on the injunction request in order to obtain a ruling on the injunction by August 1 so the City can complete salvage work during the 2013 construction season. The STB has suspended the briefing schedule on the merits of the petition while it addresses some preliminary procedural matters. Once briefing has been completed, the STB is not expected to rule on the merits of the reactivation petition until January 2014 at the earliest.

At this point, it is not clear when the STB will rule on the pending injunction request. Even if the STB rules favorably prior to August 1, 2013, there will likely be impacts on the City's current schedules for rail salvage, maintenance activities, and installation of the interim trail.

#### *Rail Removal*

Design work for removal of the existing rails and equipment was completed and bids were received on March 15, 2013. A&K Railroad Materials Inc., of Salk Lake City, UT., was the low bidder.

Subsequent to receiving bids, the City was notified that Ballard (see discussion above: CKC Legal Challenge Update) had filed a petition to prevent the City from removing the rails.

As a result, the contract with A&K Materials was awarded and then suspended with the cooperation of the contractor while these legal issues were addressed. The City is currently awaiting a response from the STB before proceeding with any removal.

### *Interim Trail*

Design work is progressing on-schedule for the proposed interim gravel trail. Interim Trail Design documents are expected to be at 60% in late July.

The consultant is continuing to prepare the needed environmental and cultural resources documentation. As a result of past legal actions and the current request to the STB to reactivate freight rail service on the corridor, critical-path components of the overall project schedule are being affected such that each day the project is delayed results in a schedule delay of the same magnitude. Staff is working with the consultant to mitigate these impacts and develop strategies to regain schedule time.

**Utilities.** Both Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) have utilities in the Segment 2 area of the corridor. These include:

- **PSE electric lines.** PSE is planning a new 115kv line that will be installed on a portion of the segment from the northern limit to 120th Avenue NE. High tension lines cross the corridor near Totem Lake.
- **PSE gas lines.** PSE has numerous gas crossings of the corridor. As with electric lines, future placement of gas crossings will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.
- **King County Wastewater Eastside Interceptor (ESI).** The ESI is a trunk line to the Renton Treatment Plant that was constructed during the 1960s. It travels along the alignment of the ERC in Segment 2 within a 20-foot underground easement. The location of the ESI will affect the placement of other underground utility facilities, as well as construction of above-ground structures and road crossings, both because new construction cannot result in more than ¼" of settlement of the ESI and because King County staff will need ongoing access to the ESI for maintenance. The ESI may need to be expanded in the future.

In 2012, King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) began a project to upgrade the Kirkland Pump Station and associated force main. The force main intersects the corridor. WTD obtained a permit from the City of Kirkland that allowed approximately 150 feet of rails to be pulled up for access to the force main during the project. King County is now required to develop a trail in that area and to arrange with Kirkland for salvage of the rails. Currently, the rails are still located on the site, though they have been pulled up for completion of the project. Consistent with the railbanked status of the corridor, the force main upgrade was designed and constructed to withstand freight-rail loads.



## **NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF**

As described above, Kirkland staff is working on maintenance, rail removal, interim trail construction and master planning of the corridor.

Kirkland staff is also working with staff from King County and Redmond to consider connections between segment 1 and segment 3 via, in part, City of Kirkland Streets.

## **ISSUES FOR RAC CONSIDERATION**

The RAC may wish to consider the following items as planning for the corridor continues:

- 1. Grade separation.** The City of Kirkland is considering grade separated crossings at several locations such as the difficult NE 124th Street/124th Avenue NE intersection. This may be a location for an iconic bridge crossing.
- 2. Connection between Cross Kirkland Corridor and Redmond Central Connector.** Because of the elevation difference between the Main Line and the Redmond Spur, this connection will be challenging.
- 3. Land Use.** While sections of Segment 2 feel secluded, areas such as Totem Lake, Par Mac, Houghton and Yarrow Bay will benefit from and contribute to making the corridor a "place" not just a transportation or recreation facility. It is important that land use on other segments also consider the corridor as they develop.
- 4. Transit.** Sound Transit will be studying the corridor through its ST3 planning process. The City of Kirkland is vitally interested in providing a transit link to Totem Lake.

## **SUMMARY**

Segment 2 through Kirkland has the potential not only to be part of a regional transportation system but to provide a heavily used transportation link within Kirkland.

Passing by numerous, parks, schools, places of employment and dense housing it feels both secluded and connecting. Views of Lake Washington are spectacular and there is direct access to former industrial areas ready to redevelop.

Kirkland's rail removal, interim trail and master planning projects are first steps to realizing a vision for a corridor of stunning quality for Kirkland and the region.

## E A S T S I D E R A I L C O R R I D O R

## Segment 3: Redmond

### SEGMENT PROFILE

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) includes representatives of the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC: King County, Redmond, Kirkland, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy. The RAC has organized a cooperative planning effort to support the multiple use vision for the corridor.

To begin that effort, the RAC has divided the corridor into five planning segments. Technical staff has organized planning workshops for the three segments encompassing ownership by King County and Sound Transit to gather information about current and planned conditions. For the segments owned by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland, the RAC will coordinate with those cities' existing planning processes. The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather and begin synthesis of information that will support development of recommendations by the RAC to meet their charter.

For Segment 3, Redmond summarized the planning processes that have occurred in the past and provided context for land use and existing agreements. Staff members from Redmond, King County, and Sound Transit were involved in the planning typical envelopes needed for rail, trail, and utility facilities.





## SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

**Segment 3** is located on the Redmond Spur of the ERC. It stretches from approximately Milepost 3.4 (just south of NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street at the Kirkland - Redmond border) to Milepost 7.3 (at the west side of Bear Creek and SR 520 Interchange at Redmond Way). Segment 3 runs through the City of Redmond and crosses over the Sammamish River and several city streets.

**Ownership.** This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and Redmond has been designated the Interim Trail Sponsor. Redmond owns this segment from Mileposts 3.4 to 7.3, having acquired a combination of fee simple and railroad easement interests in 2010 from the Port of Seattle, which acquired BNSF's underlying ownership rights in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

King County holds a utility easement and Sound Transit holds a transit easement throughout this segment. King County holds a 10 foot wide wastewater utility easement on the east/north edge of the segment. Sound Transit's East Link light rail will traverse in the Downtown portion of this segment of the ERC, from approximately MP 7.3 to 6.5, and end at the Downtown terminus station between Leary Way and 161<sup>st</sup> Ave NE. Sound Transit also has secured rights to extend some sort of transit service north on the remainder of the corridor. A detailed map of Segment 3 showing pinch points and easements is provided in Attachment A.

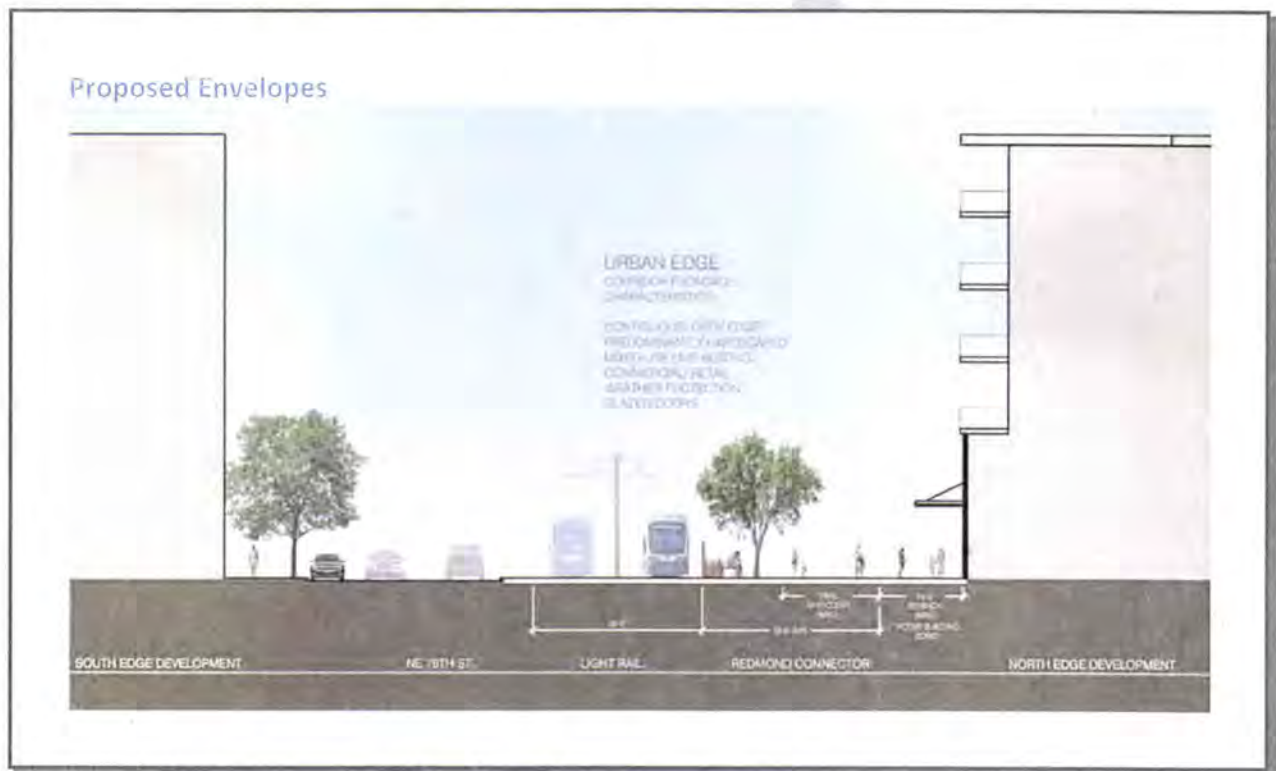
The City of Redmond planned for the acquisition and development of the ERC in Redmond since 1997. Over the next 13 years, the City adopted a number of plans and many policies that supported the acquisition and specific development goals for the ERC in Redmond.

<sup>1</sup> Due to railbanking, the corridor ownership remains intact, whether BNSF's original ownership rights – which were acquired at the turn of the 20th century – were fee simple ownership or railroad easement interests.



As soon as Redmond acquired the property in June 2010, it named Segment 3 the Redmond Central Connector and began a master planning process for it. The first step of this process was to determine how to fit all the uses proposed for this segment into a corridor that is 50 feet wide or less in places. The proposed uses include:

- A regional trail built by Redmond to county trail standards
- A regional stormwater trunkline built by Redmond



- Three new road extensions across the corridor
- Sound Transit's East Link and a future transit system north of it, and
- King County wastewater facilities.

The City of Redmond worked with King County and Sound Transit to develop envelopes for the various uses of the corridor. This work is summarized in the Infrastructure Alignment Plan, an appendix to the Redmond Central Connector Master Plan.

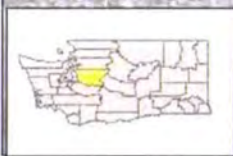
In addition, the master plan included significant public involvement and stakeholder input. The final master plan includes trail design concepts that incorporate the future development of East Link, an art plan, design standard recommendations, and cost estimates for all of Segment 3. The following exhibit shows some of the concepts for the station area in Downtown, which strive to create a pedestrian friendly environment that brings activity to the Downtown urban center.





The Redmond Central Connector plan was adopted by Redmond City Council in 2011 and design for the first mile of the Redmond Central Connector began immediately thereafter. The first mile, milepost 7.3 to 6.3 is under construction and expected to open in 2013. The second phase of 1.3 miles is in design and expected to be under construction in 2014. The third and last phase of the project is currently unfunded, but the City is coordinating with Kirkland and King County on a plan to develop that segment in a timely manner with the improvements to the north.

### Phasing of Development of the Redmond Central Connector



### Site Location Map Redmond Central Connector Phase II Project No 12-1429



1:30,748

#### Legend

-  RCC Phase 1
-  RCC Phase 2
-  RCC Phase 3
-  Regional Trails
-  Future Eastside Trail Corridor



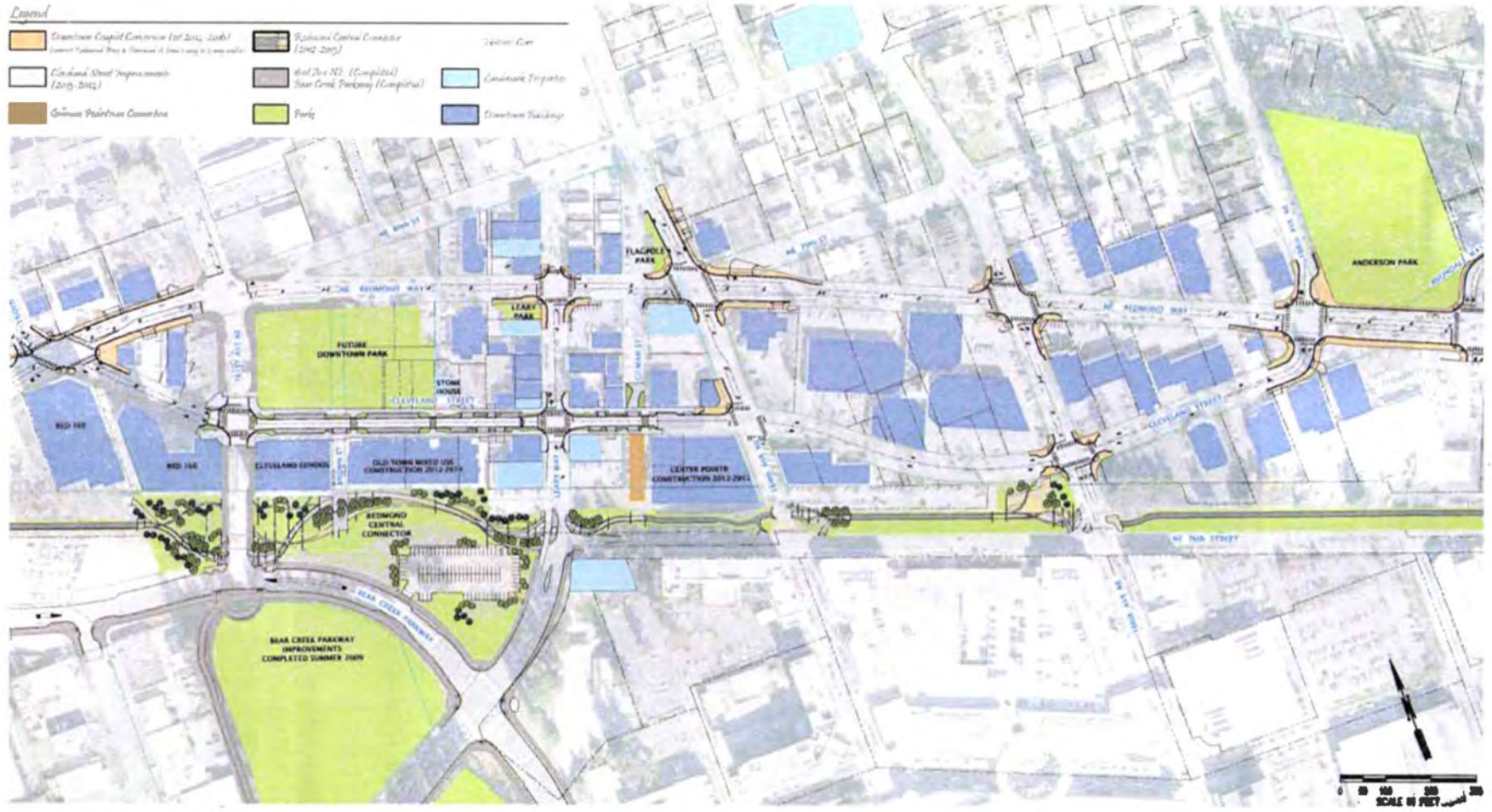
In 2012 and 2013, respectively, the City of Redmond finalized easement agreements with Sound Transit and King County for transit and utility construction in the future. The easements are shown on a map in Attachment A.

To date, the following capital improvements have been made along the ERC in Segment 3:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
2010	City completed 161 <sup>st</sup> Ave NE Extension across ERC
2011	City removed tracks and installed regional Stormwater Trunk Line in Downtown
2012	City removed tracks and signals on north corridor
2012-2013	City completed 164 <sup>th</sup> Ave NE Extension across ERC
2012-2013	City constructing first mile of Redmond Central Connector in Downtown
2013-2014	City designing second phase of construction of RCC, 1.3 miles north of Downtown with plans to construct in 2014

The locations of these improvements are shown on the following exhibit.

### Completed and Proposed Capital Projects along Segment 3 in Downtown Redmond



Cleveland Streetscape & Downtown Couplet Conversion

July 2013



**Surrounding jurisdictions.** Segment 3 is bounded to the north by Kirkland and King County. Kirkland's boundary extends to Willows Road and NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street and King County's boundary extends from Willows Road south to the southern edge of the first agricultural parcel, now owned by Full Circle Farms. However, Redmond owns the rail corridor through the Full Circle Farms Parcel to NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street. The remainder of the segment is within the City of Redmond's jurisdiction. However, the parcel to the east of MP 7.3 is owned by King County, and is part of the former BNSF Railroad Corridor, which eventually could connect to the East Lake Sammamish Trail, which begins at the south side of SR 520 at Redmond Way.

**Corridor topography and condition.** Segment 3's topography is relatively flat with some drainage ditches alongside the track bed. There are steep slopes along the bend in the corridor, where the corridor begins to parallel Willows Road. There is one crossing of the Sammamish River and three creek crossings (Peters, Willows, and an intermittent stream near the crossing at NE 170<sup>th</sup> Ave). The corridor ranges from less than 50 feet wide to 100 feet wide. The corridor is very narrow in many places along this segment, particularly on its bridges and trestles, but also in several areas where BNSF sold the right-of-way surrounding the rail bed. Some of the physical challenges within Segment 3 include:

- The Sammamish River Bridge Crossing requires physical improvements even for a trail and is too narrow for dual use;
- There are two metal trestle bridges crossing city streets, that are less than 50 feet wide;
- The Sammamish River is a water of the state and triggers Shoreline Management Act regulations;
- Stream culvert replacements required under corridor;
- Need a direct connection between Redmond and Kirkland;
- Need a direct connection between MP 7.3 and the Eastlake Sammamish Trail;
- A number of current and planned road crossings and private driveways;
- Coordination of current and future infrastructure projects by multiple jurisdictions within Segment 3.

The railbanked portion of the corridor has not been maintained in several years. Both the rail bed and surrounding right-of-way are overgrown in many areas, and trees have encroached on the corridor in several areas. There is a significant amount of graffiti on the Redmond Way trestle.

## CURRENT USES AND FUTURE PLANS

This segment of the ERC is located primarily within the City of Redmond, with one parcel of land in King County. Surrounding land uses vary from agricultural, urban recreation, manufacturing, commercial, and mixed use residential. The entire corridor is an abandoned rail corridor that is railbanked. The entire corridor will eventually include a regional trail and potentially include a wastewater line, Sound Transit facilities, and other city utilities.

The regional trail and transit opportunities within Segment 3 are of critical importance to the City. At the east end, the Downtown urban center will add 4,350 residents and 2,200 jobs by 2030 and at the northwest end, the Willows/ Sammamish Valley business district will add 2,350 jobs by 2030. Redmond is actively seeking ways to attract new businesses and residents to Redmond and to retain them for the long run through the development of high quality recreational facilities. In Downtown, many new mixed use developments will line the Redmond Central Connector and by 2030 light rail will run along the trail and serve Downtown. Already, new types of urban commercial development are spreading beyond Downtown to the Willows/ Sammamish Valley neighborhood including a brewery, restaurants, private gyms, and a university.

The following is a description of the current land uses and physical descriptions of the areas along Segment 3.

- At the northern end of the segment, there is a large parcel that is zoned agricultural use in King County. The rail bed is relatively flat here, the rails are still in place on this parcel, but have been removed throughout the rest of the segment.
- Moving south, the next parcel is zoned urban recreation by the City of Redmond and is a proposed City park. The rail bed is flat, but there is a steep slope and partial retaining wall along Willows Road.
- South of NE 116<sup>th</sup> Street is also zoned urban recreation and is the location of the Willows Run Golf Course. The rail corridor is relatively flat along this property.
- South of the golf course to approximately NE 87<sup>th</sup> Street, is a manufacturing zone, where there are many private driveways crossing the corridor. The corridor is relatively flat in this area. The manufacturing zone extends to approximately Redmond Way, where the corridor bends southeast and there are steep slopes to the west and rolling



View from the Sammamish River Trestle



Mixed use residential developments abutting the Downtown section of the ERC.



slopes to the east and drainage on the west side of the track bed.

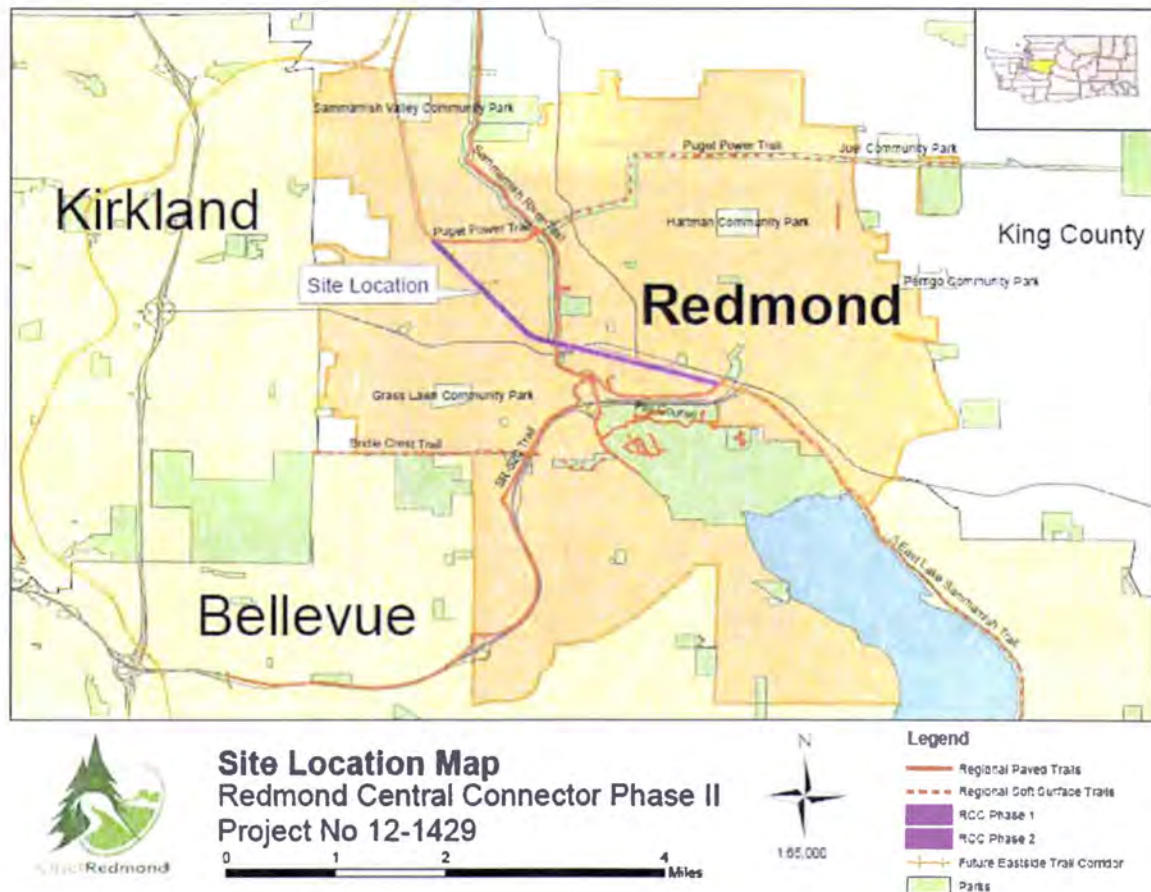
- Between the 154<sup>th</sup> Ave NE trestle and just west of the Redmond Way trestle is a more natural area, with a large parcel of land owned by King County along the Sammamish River with a regional trail on either side of the river. There are steep slopes from the rail bed to the river trails.
- From the east side of the Sammamish River, the area is zoned mixed use and is part of the PSRC designated Downtown Redmond urban center. A rail bed abutment extends from the river for approximately 800 feet. The remainder of the rail corridor is flat in this area. The last few hundred feet of the corridor is surrounded by wetlands and ends at the Bear Creek Trail.

**Recreation and trails.** Segment 3 is located near a number of local parks and open spaces, including:

- Downtown Park
- Anderson Park
- Redmond Town Center Open Space
- Bear Creek Park
- O'Leary Park
- The Heron Rookery
- Luke McRedmond Landing
- Dudley Carter Park
- Sammamish Valley Park
- King County's Marymoor Park

Segment 3 connects directly or indirectly to a number of regional trails, including:

- Sammamish River Trail
- East Sammamish River Trail
- 520 Trail
- East Lake Sammamish Trail
- Redmond PSE Trail
- Bear Creek Trail



These park and trail connections, as shown in the map above, will offer many opportunities for corridor users, including the enhanced ability to connect to Downtown Redmond and to our Redmond's third largest employment center and a college along the northern portion of the segment. Connections could also provide significant benefit for bike and pedestrian commuters, particularly to the Willows business district and DigiPen Institute of Technology.

The northern portion of Segment 3 is in a City designated view corridor of the river valley, which has agricultural uses and territorial views. The rail corridor crosses over the Sammamish River, the portion that has been restored to a more natural river meander and native vegetation along the banks, making this a prime viewing spot for fish, birds, and small mammals.

**Transportation and rail uses.** Segment 3 of the ERC crosses nine city streets and ends just to the west of the SR 520 interchange at Redmond Way/ SR 202. In addition, the Downtown segment will be traversed by the East Link light rail line, with the Downtown Redmond Station located on the corridor. Future transit service may extend north in the future. Connections in Segment 3 will be affected by several ongoing planning processes:



- **Redmond road crossings.** The City of Redmond has constructed two new road extensions across the rail corridor since acquisition and has one more in planning, which would extend Avondale Way across the corridor to NE 76 Street. In addition, a number of mid-block connections are planned in Downtown to improve pedestrian circulation and connection to the Redmond Central Connector.
- **Sound Transit East Link.** Sound Transit will soon begin construction on East Link light rail, which will traverse a portion of this segment of the corridor and include the Downtown Redmond station on the corridor. To address a significant pinch point approaching the station area, Redmond purchased additional property to widen the corridor to accommodate trail and transit standards. In addition, the City is working on another real estate transaction to preserve sufficient space within the corridor for potential tail tracks. Construction activities may require corridor users to detour to alternate routes in this area.
- **Sound Transit OMSF site.** Sound Transit is planning to develop a 25-acre Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) to serve its north and east light rail lines. One of the four alternatives for the OMSF are located on or adjacent to this segment of the corridor.
- **Sound Transit ST3 Planning.** In addition to East Link light rail and OMSF planning, Sound Transit's ST3 planning process will affect planning for this segment of the corridor, as Sound Transit evaluates the feasibility of commuter rail between Overlake and Downtown Redmond.
- **SR 520 Corridor Study.** An ongoing WSDOT study includes evaluation of a trail crossing the SR 520 interchange at Redmond Way and SR 202 in order to connect the Redmond Central Connector to the East Lake Sammamish Trail.

**Utilities.** Puget Sound Energy (PSE), King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD), and many other franchise utilities have subsurface and overhead utilities in the Segment 3 area of the corridor. These include:

- **PSE electric lines.** PSE has several electric transmission crossings of the corridor. These facilities are typically located above ground. PSE is studying the need for additional transmission lines in the corridor area, particularly in the Willows Road area, where anticipated growth could require additional utility facilities. PSE also has smaller distribution lines along the corridor. In general, these types of lower voltage distribution lines are located underground.
- **PSE gas lines.** PSE has numerous gas crossings of the corridor. As with electric lines, future placement of gas crossings will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.

- **King County Wastewater Eastside Interceptor (ESI).** The county has existing wastewater facilities within Segment 3 and has plans to add new facilities in the future. The existing facilities are between 170<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and the Bear Creek Trail and another facility crosses the corridor near the Redmond Way Trestle. New facilities could be constructed in the future along an easement the length of the corridor secured by the county within Segment 3.

### **NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF**

The initial analysis and planning work in this segment have identified several next steps for staff. These tasks include:

- **Reach out to adjacent property owners regarding permitting.** Redmond staff will continue to reach out to corridor neighbors about its work evaluating and renewing crossing and special use permits on the corridor now that Redmond has assumed ownership and developed a process to permit uses along the corridor.
- **Coordinate with Sound Transit on East Link Planning and OMSF planning and siting.** Staff will continue to work with Sound Transit as it evaluates extending and funding East Link to Redmond and considers alternative locations and configurations for the OMSF.
- **Study pinch points and analyze alternatives for multiple use scenarios.** Redmond is continuing work to resolve pinch points along the corridor that may inhibit Sound Transit's plans to build light rail in Redmond.



## ISSUES FOR RAC CONSIDERATION

Analysis of Segment 3 has highlighted a number of segment-specific opportunities and constraints the RAC may wish to consider as planning for the corridor continues.

1. **SR 520 Crossing to Connect RCC to East Lake Sammamish Trail.** The ERC crosses SR 520 at Redmond Way/ SR 202 to connect to the East Lake Sammamish Trail and eventually to Sound Transit's SE Redmond Station. This intersection is very large and busy, making it unsafe for bicyclists and pedestrians. The solution will likely require development of new structures for a trail or East Link and a trail.



2. **Redmond-Kirkland Connection.** As the Redmond Spur heads north across NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street, it veers to the east and heads towards Woodinville. Redmond and Kirkland both desire a direct connection from the NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street crossing to the Main Line, diagonally across the street and up the hill to the northwest, just a few hundred feet away. Kirkland, Redmond, and King County will continue to collaborate on opportunities to create this connection, which would link two urban centers, Downtown Redmond and Totem Lake.



## SUMMARY

The planning process for Segment 3 highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for accommodating many uses of the Eastside Rail Corridor in this area. Additional study, work, and outreach on the issues identified here will help the RAC understand segment development potential and interconnectivity and plan how to achieve its multi-purpose vision for this segment and for the entire Eastside Rail Corridor.

Similar planning studies for the other segments of the corridor with King County and Sound Transit ownership, and collaboration with Kirkland on its local planning effort, will allow the RAC to identify a common set of issues and policies for the Eastside Rail Corridor and recommend next steps for planning for the corridor's multi use development, as well as for long-term connections through and beyond the central Puget Sound region.



## E A S T S I D E R A I L C O R R I D O R

**Segment 4: Bellevue/Sound Transit****SEGMENT PROFILE**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) includes representatives of the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC: King County, Redmond, Kirkland, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy. The RAC has organized a cooperative planning effort to support the multiple use vision for the corridor.

To begin that effort, the RAC has divided the corridor into five planning segments. Technical staff has organized planning workshops for the three segments encompassing ownership by King County and Sound Transit to gather information about current and planned conditions. For the segments owned by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland, the RAC will coordinate with those cities' existing planning processes. The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather and begin synthesis of information that will support development of recommendations by the RAC to meet their charter.

For Segment 4, technical staff organized a site visit on June 26, 2013; and a full-day planning workshop at Bellevue City Hall on June 28, 2013. Staff from King County, Bellevue, Kirkland, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) reviewed current conditions, future plans, and typical dynamic envelopes needed for rail, trail, and utility facilities.





## SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

**Segment 4** is located on the Main Line of the ERC. It stretches from approximately Milepost 10.0 (just south of where the ERC crosses over I-90) to Milepost 14.8 (at the southern end of Kirkland's ownership area). Segment 4 runs through the city of Bellevue and crosses over or under highways I-90, I-405, and SR-520.

**Ownership.** This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County has been designated the Interim Trail Sponsor. King County owns the portions of this segment from Mileposts 10.0 to 12.4 and from 13.5 to 14.8, having acquired a combination of fee simple and railroad easement interests in 2013 from the Port of Seattle, which acquired BNSF's underlying ownership rights in 2009.<sup>1</sup> Sound Transit owns the portions of this segment from Mileposts 12.4 to 13.5.

King County holds a multipurpose easement in Sound Transit's ownership area and Sound Transit holds a high capacity transit easement in King County's ownership area. In addition, Puget Sound Energy holds a utility easement throughout the entire segment.

South of Segment 4, the corridor is owned by King County. North of Segment 4, the corridor is owned by the City of Kirkland.

**Surrounding jurisdictions.** Segment 4 passes through the city of Bellevue. It is separated from downtown Bellevue by I-405. Sound Transit's East Link light rail will traverse a portion of this segment of the ERC, with the East Link Hospital Station planned for Sound Transit's ownership area. A Sound Transit Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) could be located on or adjacent to this segment of the corridor.



<sup>1</sup> Due to railbanking, the corridor ownership remains intact, whether BNSF's original ownership rights – which were acquired at the turn of the 20th century – were fee simple ownership or railroad easement interests.



**Corridor topography and condition.** Segment 4's topography is varied and challenging. Although the corridor is flat and up to 100 feet wide in the central portion of this segment, the majority of the corridor in this segment is narrow and steep and offers challenges to multiple uses. These challenges include:

- The I-90 crossing on a 15-foot-wide iron bridge;
- A smaller trestle and 35-foot-right-of-way pinch point just north of I-90;
- The Wilburton Trestle, which traverses the Kelsey Creek and wetlands area;
- The over- and under-crossing of I-405, which includes a segment at the former Wilburton Tunnel that was removed when I-405 was widened;
- A number of current and planned street crossings in downtown Bellevue;
- The East Link Hospital Station (funded and in design) and potential OMSF sites (in environmental review);
- The undercrossing of the I-405/SR-520 interchange and Northup Way; and
- A steep slope between the ERC and South Kirkland Park & Ride.

The corridor is very narrow in many places along this segment, particularly on its bridges and trestles, but also in several areas where BNSF sold the right-of-way surrounding the rail bed. As a result, the rail bed closely abuts commercial structures in several areas.

The railbanked portion of the corridor has not been maintained in several years. Both the rail bed and surrounding right-of-way are overgrown in many areas, and trees have encroached on the corridor in several areas, including at the I-90 crossing. There is a significant amount of graffiti on the I-90 crossing, as well as on several of the other bridges, trestles, and retaining walls in the segment.

## **CURRENT USES AND FUTURE PLANS**

**Surrounding Land Use.** This segment of the ERC is located entirely within the city of Bellevue. Surrounding land uses vary from open space to residential to commercial. Due to the upcoming construction of East Link light rail and City of Bellevue plans, there is significant change anticipated for surrounding land uses along this segment.

- At the southern end of this segment of the ERC, the corridor crosses I-90 on a 15-foot wide bridge. Immediately north, the corridor enters a pinch point with a short trestle and 35-foot wide right-of-way at Henry Bock Road. There is a commercial building immediately adjacent to the rail bed at this pinch point.
- North of the I-90 crossing, the corridor passes adjacent to Mercer Slough Nature Park, which is on the west; and the Mockingbird Hill residential neighborhood, which is located to the east. Due to steep slopes, there is limited access from this neighborhood to the corridor.
- The ERC then crosses I-405 with both an overcrossing and an undercrossing. An overcrossing of the southbound lanes in the area of the former Wilburton Tunnel

was removed for I-405 widening. WSDOT has committed to fund the restoration of a pedestrian/bicycle crossing in this area. An undercrossing of the northbound lanes still exists, but is narrow and height-limited (approximately 30 feet wide and 20 feet high), and may pose a constraint for multiple uses in this area.

- The corridor then passes adjacent to the Wilburton neighborhood, as it crosses the Kelsey Creek and wetlands area on the Wilburton Trestle. The trestle, first built in 1904, extends 95 feet above ground. It is listed on the Washington Heritage Register (listed on March 13, 1981) and is eligible for National historic register designation. Prior to its use, the structure will need to be evaluated for structural integrity.<sup>2</sup> Access to the surrounding neighborhood is constrained by steep slopes.
- The corridor then passes adjacent to downtown Bellevue, separated from the downtown by I-405. An at-grade crossing currently exists at NE 8th Street, a busy arterial. The city is planning crossings of the corridor at NE 4th and NE 6th Streets, which currently do not extend east of the corridor. Grade separation of trail facilities is planned at the NE 4th crossing; however, with the main non-motorized connection to downtown planned at NE 6th, an at-grade crossing is currently contemplated.
- Just north of NE 8th Street, Sound Transit is designing a segment of the East Link light rail line and the Hospital Station. Due to a pinch point on the corridor in this area, Sound Transit will be purchasing additional property to provide space for the station and light rail tracks. Coordinating multiple uses in the station area will be challenging. North of the Hospital Station area, Sound Transit will construct a short rail spur for train storage, and may potentially locate its OMSF either adjacent to or straddling the corridor.
- North of the East Link Hospital Station, the City of Bellevue is planning for an increase of 10,000 jobs and 5,000 housing units over the next 15 years in the BelRed area, which includes the 36-acre Spring District.
- The City of Bellevue is working with WSDOT to create an interim connection along Northup Way between the existing 520 Trail and new segment being constructed as part of the bridge project. The design includes a pedestrian bridge

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<sup>2</sup> As part of the *Sound Transit 2 Planning BNSF Eastside Corridor Commuter Rail Feasibility Study*, which was completed by Sound Transit and PSRC in December 2008, it was noted that due to the condition of the existing timber trestle structure and the limited data and evaluation conducted for the feasibility study, it was assumed that the existing trestle bridge would be converted to use as a pedestrian/bicycle bridge (after performing evaluations for necessary repairs to provide a safe operation). The feasibility study assumed that rail traffic would be rerouted to a new parallel structure. The type of the new structure would be determined during a design phase. For the purposes of developing an order-of-magnitude cost estimate for the new structure, the feasibility study assumed a trestle type steel structure similar to the existing trestle. The feasibility study can be accessed at:  
[http://www.psrc.org/assets/406/BNSF Commuter Rail Study Tech Memo 2 FINAL 2008-12-31.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/406/BNSF%20Commuter%20Rail%20Study%20Tech%20Memo%20FINAL%202008-12-31.pdf).



over the corridor on the north side and parallel to the existing Northrup Way bridge.

- At the southern edge of this segment of the corridor, the South Kirkland Park & Ride is being redeveloped with a parking structure and housing. Kirkland recently received a \$1.3 million state grant to provide access between the Park & Ride and the corridor.

**Recreation and trails.** Segment 4 is located near a number of local parks and open spaces, including:

- Mercer Slough Nature Park
- Kelsey Creek Park
- Bellevue Botanical Garden
- Bridle Trails State Park

Segment 4 is also located near a number of north/south and east/west trails, including:

- Lake Washington Loop Trail
- Coal Creek Trail through the Coal Creek Natural Area
- Mountain to Sound Greenway along I-90
- Mercer Slough Trail
- Lake to Lake trail system
- 520 Trail

These potential connections, if developed, could offer many opportunities for corridor users, including the possibility to connect to downtown Bellevue, planned development in the BelRed area, regional parks, and the regional trails system, as well as to help mitigate for the corridor's many pinch points in this segment. Connections could also provide significant benefit for bike and pedestrian commuters, particularly at the 520/405 interchange.

In some areas the corridor itself offers or could offer compelling views of downtown Bellevue and the surrounding area.

**Transportation and rail uses.** Segment 4 of the ERC crosses I-90, I-405, SR-520, and several downtown Bellevue streets. In addition, it will be traversed by the East Link light rail line, with the East Link Hospital Station located on the corridor. Future transportation connections in Segment 4 will be affected by several ongoing planning processes:

- **I-90 and Eastgate Park & Ride.** Roadway conditions along I-90 are not anticipated to change in the near future. The corridor crosses I-90 on a narrow bridge, which will pose challenges for multiple uses. Planning will be crucial to ensure connections across I-90 address a "missing link" in the Mountains to Sound Greenway in this area, connect to the I-90 and Mercer Slough trails, and



create connections to facilitate potential redevelopment at the Eastgate Park & Ride.

- **I-405 Corridor Project.** In 2002, the State of Washington, in partnership with local communities, adopted the I-405 Corridor Plan, a \$10 billion, long-term plan to improve the I-405 corridor.

Projects in the plan include adding up to two new lanes in each direction, developing a bus rapid transit (BRT) line with stations along I-405, developing an express lane system, and making local improvements and connections. To date, \$1.7 billion has been spent on I-405 corridor improvements, including the widening project that led to the dismantling of the Wilburton Tunnel. WSDOT has pledged to fund the restoration of this connection via a new pedestrian/bicycle crossing.

The adopted I-405 Master Plan included a proposal for a BRT system that would operate with stops every two to three miles along I-405 and would use the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) priority lanes, new HOV direct access ramps, and new in-line transit stations to maximize speed and reliability. Funding has not been secured to implement the entire plan. WSDOT is now adding an additional lane north and southbound on I-405 between NE 6th and SR 522 and plans express toll lanes to fund the improvements and future I-405 improvements.

- **Bellevue street crossings of the ERC.** The City of Bellevue is planning three new crossings of the corridor in the downtown area, in addition to the existing crossing:
  - A NE 4th Street crossing of the corridor, which is fully funded, would be accomplished by removing the rails, lowering the rail bed, and then developing an overcrossing on the corridor.
  - A NE 6th Street crossing of the corridor, which is not yet funded, and which would be planned for pedestrian, transit, and HOV users, which would be at grade. This crossing will need to be developed in a manner that allows future development of the corridor for high capacity transit.
  - An overcrossing of the corridor by a future roadway denoted as NE 15th Street, which is not currently funded.
  - The current at-grade crossing of the corridor at NE 8th Street will need planning to coordinate with the East Link Hospital Station and to provide a safe corridor crossing.
- **Sound Transit East Link.** Sound Transit will soon begin construction on East Link light rail, which will traverse a segment of the corridor and include the Hospital Station. To address a 30-foot pinch point in the station area, Sound



Transit plans to purchase additional property for the station. Other uses would need to negotiate easements with Sound Transit to use this station area property. Planning for multiple uses at the station area will be complicated by the fact that Sturtevant Creek runs through the corridor at the station area. Most of the corridor in Sound Transit's ownership area will need to be closed during station and track construction, which is anticipated to occur from approximately 2015 through 2020. If an interim trail is implemented during this time period, construction activities will require corridor users to detour to alternate routes in this area.

- **Sound Transit OMSF site.** Sound Transit is planning to develop a 25-acre Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF) to serve its north and east light rail lines. Two of the four alternatives for the OMSF are located on or adjacent to this segment of the corridor.
- **Sound Transit ST3 Planning.** In addition to East Link light rail and OMSF planning, Sound Transit's ST3 planning process will affect planning for this segment of the corridor, as Sound Transit evaluates the feasibility of commuter rail on the ERC between Woodinville and north Renton, a connection to South King County, and high capacity transit on the Bellevue to Issaquah corridor, the Redmond/Kirkland/U-District corridor and bus rapid transit (BRT) on the I-405 corridor.
- **WSDOT Northup Way and SR-520 redevelopment.** As part of the widening of SR-520, WSDOT will be constructing a new segment of the 520 Trail, which will extend from the South Kirkland Park & Ride to Medina, the new 520 bridge, and the University of Washington. There will be a gap between the new and existing 520 Trail segments, which could be addressed by using the corridor, which crosses underneath Northup Way in this area. The undercrossing of Northup Way is constrained by a 35-foot clearance.

**Utilities.** Both Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) have utilities in the Segment 4 area of the corridor. These include:

- **PSE electric lines.** PSE has several electric transmission crossings of the corridor. These larger facilities (150-230kV) are typically located above ground. PSE is studying the need for additional transmission lines in the corridor area, particularly in the BelRed and Sound Transit areas, where anticipated growth could require additional utility facilities. PSE also has smaller distribution lines along the corridor. In general, these types of lower voltage distribution lines are located underground. Placement of future electric facilities will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside, and would need to be coordinated with Sound Transit's East Link facilities, as well as with the numerous elevated highway and interchange structures in this segment.

- **PSE gas lines.** PSE has numerous gas crossings of the corridor. As with electric lines, future placement of gas crossings will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.
- **King County Wastewater Eastside Interceptor (ESI).** The ESI is a trunk line to the Renton Treatment Plant that was constructed during the 1960s. It travels along the alignment of the ERC in Segment 4 within a 20-foot underground easement. The location of the ESI will affect the placement of other underground utility facilities, as well as construction of above-ground structures and road crossings, both because new construction cannot result in more than ¼" of settlement of the ESI and because King County staff will need ongoing access to the ESI for maintenance. The ESI may need to be expanded in the future.

### **NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF**

The initial analysis and planning work in this segment have identified several next steps for staff. These tasks include:

- **Reach out to adjacent communities regarding permitting and maintenance.** King County staff will continue to reach out to corridor neighbors about its work evaluating and renewing crossing and special use permits on the corridor now that King County has assumed ownership; and about the maintenance work King County has begun to clear invasive and hazardous vegetation, clean culverts, and address graffiti problems.
- **Coordinate with Sound Transit on OMSF planning and siting.** Staff will continue to work with Sound Transit as it evaluates alternative locations and configurations for the OMSF.
- **Study pinch points and analyze alternatives for multiple use scenarios.** Staff from King County, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy have developed high-level dynamic "envelope" estimates for the typical clearances that are generally needed around and between different types of rail, trail, and utility facilities. As part of the master planning effort, which will follow this phase of the RAC's work, the master planning team will conduct a detailed evaluation of pinch points along the corridor and analyze alternatives for multiple uses in those areas. One immediate concern is the ERC's desired ultimate width for the Northup Way bridge abutments, which the City of Bellevue requires for an adjacent pedestrian bridge design that will be completed in 2013.



## ISSUES FOR RAC CONSIDERATION

Analysis of Segment 4 has highlighted a number of segment-specific opportunities and constraints the RAC may wish to consider as planning for the corridor continues.

1. **I-90 Crossing.** The ERC crosses I-90 on a narrow iron bridge. Coordinating multiple uses on this crossing will be challenging, and may require either development of new structures and/or connections off the corridor. Maintenance of the corridor in this area will need to address the bridge's structural stability, as well as graffiti and tree encroachment.



This area also offers significant opportunities with the possibility that the ERC could help connect with the I-90 Trail, address a missing link in the Mountains to Sound Greenway, and provide trail and transit connections to facilitate redevelopment of the Eastgate/Factoria area.

2. **Mercer Slough.** The master plan for the 320-acre Mercer Slough Nature Park anticipates a connection to the ERC near the park's Environmental Education Center. There is an existing trail easement that extends to the ERC in this area, as well as property owned by Puget Sound Energy, either of which could facilitate connections to the Mercer Slough, ERC, I-90 Trail, Mountains to Sound Greenway, and the bike lanes on 118th Avenue SE that form part of the Lake Washington Loop Trail.
3. **Henry Bock Road Trestle.** The ERC crosses Henry Bock Road on a single-rail, unfenced trestle. The corridor is only 35 feet wide in this area, with a commercial building directly adjacent to the rail bed. The narrow width of the corridor, the narrow trestle, the steep topography, and the narrow width of the roadway beneath the trestle will make coordinating multiple uses in this area challenging.
4. **Wilburton Tunnel and I-405 Undercrossing.** As noted above, the ERC crossed the I-405 southbound lanes atop the Wilburton Tunnel, which was removed as part of the I-405 widening project. WSDOT has committed to restore this connection, and planning for a crossing that will facilitate multiple uses will be crucial. The corridor then crosses underneath the northbound lanes of I-405 in this area. The height and width of this undercrossing could pose challenges for multi-use development of the corridor.



- 5. Wilburton Trestle.** The Wilburton Trestle crosses the Kelsey Creek and wetlands area on a single-track, unfenced wooden trestle that is approximately 95 feet above the ground. The trestle is historically significant. It is listed on the State Heritage Register and is eligible for the Federal historic register. Past studies have indicated that it may not be structurally sound for future rail use. Planning for multiple uses in this area and addressing the significant topographic differences between the trestle and surrounding neighborhood will be challenges.



The Wilburton Trestle could offer opportunities for corridor development, however, by providing an iconic facility with significant view potential.

- 6. Downtown Bellevue road crossings.** Plans for a new overcrossing at NE 4th Street, an at-grade crossing at NE 6th Street, and changes to the existing at-grade crossing at NE 8th Street will offer significant opportunities to forge connections to downtown Bellevue and the East Link Hospital Station but will also present challenges to multi-use of the corridor at these intersections. In the near term, construction of the NE 4th Street crossing, which is fully funded, and which will begin construction later this year, will require removal of the rails and is anticipated to result in a temporary closure of the corridor in this area.
- 7. Sound Transit East Link and Hospital Station.** The corridor narrows to 30 feet at NE 8th Street at the planned Hospital Station. It will be challenging to coordinate additional uses with the planned station and light rail tracks, the existing Eastside Interceptor, and Sturtevant Creek, which traverses this area. PSE and Sound Transit will need to coordinate placement of any needed utility facilities in this area. Some portions of the corridor in Sound Transit's ownership area will need to be closed during station and track construction, which is anticipated to occur between 2015 and 2020.

There are significant opportunities here, too, however, as the corridor could facilitate connections to and from the light rail station.

- 8. Sound Transit OMSF Alternatives.** Sound Transit is currently studying four alternatives for a 25-acre Operations & Maintenance Satellite Facility (OMSF). Two of these alternatives would be adjacent to the corridor in this area and one of the alternatives would straddle the corridor. Each alternative would require some use of the corridor right-of-way for tracks to transport train cars to and from the OMSF (or, if the OMSF is located off the corridor, for overnight storage of up to 32 trains). RAC members may wish to comment on OMSF alternatives during the Draft EIS comment period.



- 9. BelRed/Spring District Redevelopment.** The City of Bellevue anticipates an additional 10,000 jobs and 5,000 housing units in the BelRed area by 2030. This growth will be facilitated in part by East Link light rail, which will feature stations at 120th Avenue NE and 130th Avenue NE. Planned redevelopment in this area will include development of a "green street" and ERC/East Link overcrossing on NE 15th Street to connect to NE 12th Street. As part of this area-wide redevelopment, a 36-acre former Safeway distribution warehouse in the BelRed neighborhood will be developed into the Spring District under a 15-year master plan.

This planned redevelopment could pose a number of challenges for multi-use of the corridor, including for PSE, which may need new transmission lines in this area. However, if the redevelopment is coordinated with ERC development, it could foster trail and transit connections, including to the planned soft-surface West Tributary Trail to 120th Avenue NE.

- 10. Northup Way/I-405/SR-520 Interchange.** The widening of SR-520, redevelopment of the 124th Avenue interchange, and improvements to Northup Way could all pose challenges for multi-use development of the ERC, which crosses underneath Northup Way and the 405/520 interchange. Development in this area could bring many opportunities as well, however, by potentially filling a missing link in the SR-520 Trail. Facilitating trail and transit connections at this significant Eastside highway interchange will be particularly important over the long term, as this interchange is a major regional crossroads that provides crucial access to jobs and housing in all four directions.

- 11. South Kirkland Park & Ride.** The South Kirkland Park & Ride, which spans the Bellevue/Kirkland border adjacent to the corridor, is currently being redeveloped with a parking garage. The corridor could provide trail and transit connections to the Park & Ride. However, the trail is located atop a very steep slope approximately 75 feet above the Park & Ride. In addition, the corridor makes an at-grade crossing of 108th Avenue NE immediately adjacent to the Park & Ride at an area with limited sightlines. These factors could make developing connections challenging.

## SUMMARY

The site visit and planning workshop for Segment 4 have highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for the multiple usage of the Eastside Rail Corridor in this area. Additional study, work, and outreach on these issues will help the RAC understand segment development potential and interconnectivity and plan how to achieve its multi-purpose vision for this segment and for the entire Eastside Rail Corridor.

Similar planning studies for the other segments of the corridor with King County and Sound Transit ownership, and collaboration with Kirkland and Redmond on their local planning efforts, will allow the RAC to identify a common set of issues and policies for

**the Eastside Rail Corridor and recommend next steps for planning for the corridor's multi use development, as well as for long-term connections through and beyond the central Puget Sound region.**

DRAFT



## E A S T S I D E R A I L C O R R I D O R

**Segment 5: Renton to I-90****SEGMENT PROFILE**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) includes representatives of the owners of the railbanked portion of the ERC: King County, Redmond, Kirkland, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy. The RAC has organized a cooperative planning effort to support the multiple use vision for the corridor.

To facilitate that effort, the RAC has divided the corridor into five planning segments. Technical staff has organized planning workshops for the three segments encompassing ownership by King County and Sound Transit to gather information about current and planned conditions. For the segments owned by the cities of Redmond and Kirkland, the RAC will coordinate with those cities' existing planning processes. The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather and begin synthesis of information that will support development of recommendations by the RAC to meet their charter.

For Segment 5, technical staff organized a site visit on May 30, 2013; and a full-day planning workshop at the City of Renton Public Works Department on May 31, 2013. Staff from King County, Renton, Bellevue, Newcastle, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Energy, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) presented on current conditions and future plans.





## SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

**Segment 5** is the southernmost railbanked portion of the ERC. It stretches from Milepost 5.0, just north of Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park in Renton, north to approximately Milepost 10.0 just south of where the ERC crosses over I-90. Segment 5 is located between the east shore of Lake Washington and I-405.

**Ownership.** This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County has been designated the Interim Trail Sponsor. King County is also the owner of this segment, having acquired a combination of fee simple and railroad easement interests in 2013 from the Port of Seattle, which acquired BNSF's underlying ownership rights in 2009.<sup>1</sup> In addition to King County's ownership, Sound Transit holds a high capacity transit easement in Segment 5 and Puget Sound Energy holds a utility easement.

South of Segment 5, the corridor is owned by BNSF. The area from Milepost 5.0 south to Black River Junction remains in active freight service, providing "head and tail" (turnaround) operations to serve Boeing's Renton facility.

**Surrounding jurisdictions.** Segment 5 passes through the cities of Renton and Bellevue. The city of Newcastle is located adjacent to the corridor, separated from it by I-405. A portion of unincorporated King County is also located adjacent to this segment of the corridor, along the shore of Lake Washington just north of the Virginia Mason Athletic Center (Seahawks training facility).

**Corridor topography and condition.** Segment 5 is located along the shore of Lake Washington. Although the rail bed itself is flat, the land at its margins slopes steeply down from east to west, meaning that in many areas the corridor right-of-way slopes down from I-405 or Lake Washington Boulevard to the rail bed and then down toward the lake shore. This configuration leads to the need for a drainage swale on the uphill side of the rail bed over many portions of its length within

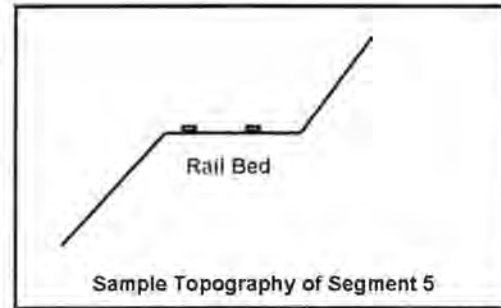


<sup>1</sup> Due to railbanking, the corridor ownership remains intact, whether BNSF's original ownership rights – which were acquired at the turn of the 20th century – were fee simple ownership or railroad easement interests.



this segment. There are also several trestles in this segment, including trestles spanning May Creek, Ripley Lane, and Coal Creek.

The corridor is very narrow in many places along this segment, in some cases as narrow as 30 feet. The rail bed closely abuts residential properties in a number of areas.



The railbanked portion of the corridor has not been maintained in several years. Both the rail bed and surrounding right-of-way are overgrown and many drainage culverts are blocked. The margins of the corridor contain trees that have been tagged for removal as hazard trees (e.g., aging cottonwood trees).

## CURRENT USES AND FUTURE PLANS

**Surrounding Land Use.** In Renton (Mileposts 5.0 through 7.0) the area adjacent to the corridor is primarily single family residential, with several areas of mixed office and commercial use.

- From Coulon Park to Port Quendall, surrounding land uses are single family residential, with several small neighborhood commercial nodes. This pattern is not anticipated to change.
- Near the Port Quendall Superfund site, the Barbee Mill development offers 113 homes and townhomes, and the planned Quendall Terminals development will eventually provide 660 residential units as well as 20,000+ square feet of retail. An EPA Record of Decision on the cleanup effort for the site is expected in 2014.
- The Virginia Mason Athletic Center (Seahawks training facility) is fully developed and not anticipated to change.
- Across Lake Washington Boulevard from the corridor at the I-405 interchange, the proposed Hawk's Landing Hotel would redevelop formerly industrial land.

Newcastle, as noted above, does not directly abut the corridor, but is separated from it by I-405. Most of the density in Newcastle is centered around the Coal Creek Parkway, approximately 1.5 miles from the corridor. A new school will be constructed in 2016 in Newcastle just east of I-405. Gaining access to the corridor across I-405 is an interest for Newcastle.

There is a small area of unincorporated King County along the shore of Lake Washington just north of the Virginia Mason Athletic Center (Seahawks training facility) that is adjacent to the corridor. Another small area of unincorporated King County is located between Renton and Bellevue, across I-405 from the corridor just east of Newcastle. Both of these areas are part of the West King County Community Service

Area. King County staff will work with the residents of unincorporated King County who live directly adjacent to the corridor on maintenance and permitting issues; and with all nearby unincorporated area residents on corridor planning and development.

In Bellevue,<sup>2</sup> in the area south of I-90 that comprises Segment 5, the corridor abuts single family residential, including the Newport Shores development between the corridor and Lake Washington. The corridor also passes adjacent to Newcastle Beach Park and the Mercer Slough Nature Park.

**Recreation and trails.** Segment 5 is located near a number of local parks and open spaces, including:

- Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park
- Kenndale Beach Park
- Newcastle Beach Park
- Enatai Beach Park
- Coal Creek Park
- Mercer Slough Nature Park

Segment 5 is also located near a number of north/south and east/west trails, including:

- Lake-to-Sound Trail in South King County, with connections to the Cedar River Trail and regional trail network
- Sam Chastain Waterfront Trail in Renton south of Lake Washington
- May Creek Trail (eventually proposed to be developed into the May Creek Greenway to Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park)
- Lake Washington Loop Trail (several sections of this trail, totaling approximately 1.25 miles, are located in I-405 right-of-way directly adjacent to the ERC, and portions to the south are located in the Lake Washington Boulevard right-of-way)
- Several unimproved public right-of-way links that could provide for pedestrian crossings of I-405
- Coal Creek Trail through the Coal Creek Natural Area
- Mountain to Sound Greenway along I-90

These potential connections could offer many opportunities, including the possibility to help mitigate the corridor's narrow width in this segment and provide access points or activity nodes along the corridor. But they also present some challenges of their own. For example, Newcastle Beach Park could provide amenities such as restrooms for ERC users, but it suffers from parking shortages during the summer months and therefore might not be able to accommodate additional corridor users seeking parking. As another example, the segments of the Lake Washington Loop Trail located within the I-405 right-of-way may need to be relocated for I-405 widening.

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<sup>2</sup> Bellevue abuts Mileposts 7.0-14.8 of the ERC. In Segment 5 (south of I-90) Bellevue abuts Mileposts 7.0-10.0.



In some areas the corridor itself offers or could offer compelling views of Lake Washington and areas to the west.

**Transportation and rail uses.** As noted above, the rail line south of Segment 5 (from Milepost 5.0 to Black River Junction) is still owned by BNSF and is in active freight use. North of Milepost 5.0, in the area of Segment 5, the corridor has been railbanked. Future transportation connections in Segment 5 will be affected by several ongoing planning processes:

- **I-405 Corridor Project.** In 2002, the State of Washington, in partnership with local communities, adopted the I-405 Corridor Plan, a \$10 billion, long-term plan to improve the I-405 corridor.

Projects in the plan include adding up to two new lanes in each direction, developing a bus rapid transit (BRT) line with stations along I-405, developing an express lane system, and making local improvements and connections. To date, \$1.7 billion has been spent on I-405 corridor improvements, including the widening project that led to the dismantling of the Wilburton Tunnel.

The adopted plan included a proposal for a BRT system that would operate with stops every two to three miles along I-405 and would use the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) priority lanes, new HOV direct access ramps, and new in-line transit stations to maximize speed and reliability.

Future projects will include improvements to the I-405/167 interchange, which will begin construction in 2015; and corridor widening between Renton to Bellevue, which will begin preliminary engineering in July, 2013. The Renton to Bellevue I-405 widening is anticipated to affect approximately 1.25 miles of the Lake Washington Loop Trail, currently located on I-405 right-of-way.

- **Sound Transit ST3 planning.** Sound Transit either currently operates or is planning to construct several different rail and transit services to the north, south, and east of Segment 5. North of Segment 5, Sound Transit's planned East Link light rail line will intersect the ERC in Bellevue. South of Segment 5, Sound Transit operates Sounder commuter rail service from Lakewood, continuing north to downtown Seattle. East of Segment 5, Sound Transit operates several express bus routes (#560 and #566).

Both Segment 5 of the ERC and the I-405 corridor will be included in the corridor studies Sound Transit will be conducting later this year as part of its ST3 long-range planning effort. The Sound Transit Board has identified eight corridors that have the potential for high capacity transit. These corridors include:

- Transit service on the Renton to Bellevue portion of the ERC (Segment 5), and

- A review of the I-405 Corridor Plan's proposed BRT service along I-405 (east of the ERC).

These corridor studies will lead to a long-range plan update in 2014 and then to a new regional high capacity transit system plan, which will be prepared during 2015 and 2016. At the workshop, staff from the City of Renton noted Renton's ongoing support for the BRT proposal that had originally been adopted as part of the I-405 Corridor Plan. Renton staff noted that to the City of Renton, BRT on I-405 would be preferred to rail transit along the ERC within this segment.

**Utilities.** Both Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) have utilities in the Segment 5 area of the corridor. These include:

- **PSE electric lines.** PSE has several electric transmission crossings of the corridor. These larger facilities (150-230kV) are typically located above ground. PSE is studying the need for additional transmission lines in the corridor area. PSE also has smaller distribution lines along the corridor. In general, these types of lower voltage distribution lines are located underground. Placement of future electric facilities will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.
- **PSE gas lines.** PSE has numerous gas crossings of the corridor. As with electric lines, future placement of gas crossings will depend on the needs of residents and businesses in the Eastside.
- **King County Wastewater Eastside Interceptor (ESI).** The ESI is a trunk line to the Renton Treatment Plant that was constructed during the 1960s. It travels along the alignment of the ERC in Segment 5, with several smaller tributaries and siphons. In that area, its width varies between seven and eight feet, and its depth varies from at grade to 20-30 feet deep. The location of the ESI will affect the placement of other underground utility facilities, as well as the treatment of the surface. No additional wastewater projects are planned at this time in Segment 5, though occasional ESI maintenance projects of varying magnitude are likely, such as the project that will repair the lining of the ESI near the Seahawks training facility.

## **NEXT STEPS FOR STAFF**

The initial analysis and planning work have identified several next steps for staff. These tasks include:

- **Compile additional information on unincorporated King County communities near the corridor.** Additional information will be gathered on existing land uses, future plans, access issues, and constraints for the areas of unincorporated King County on and near Segment 5 of the corridor.



- **Develop “envelope” estimates for different multiple use scenarios.** Staff from King County, Sound Transit, and Puget Sound Energy have begun working to identify the needed space for and separation between different types of uses, including trail, rail transit (light and heavy rail), electric utility facilities (distribution and transmission), gas utility facilities, and wastewater utility facilities. Staff will work to develop sample “envelopes” showing the total space needed for different combinations of uses.
- **Coordinate maintenance plans.** At the workshop, the director of the King County Parks Division noted that King County has assumed maintenance duties along the corridor. PSE staff noted that PSE is also engaged in active maintenance of utility facilities along the corridor. PSE sometimes conducts its maintenance using high-rail vehicles that can travel along the rail lines; King County staff noted that the County does not own any high-rail vehicles and will find maintenance along existing rail lines to be more challenging with existing equipment. Relevant staff will need to develop coordinated maintenance plans.
- **Reach out to adjacent communities regarding permitting and maintenance.** King County staff will continue to reach out to corridor neighbors about its work evaluating and renewing crossing and special use permits on the corridor now that King County has assumed ownership; and about the maintenance work King County will be undertaking to clear invasive and hazardous vegetation and clean culverts. Because of the corridor’s narrow width and proximity to residential uses in Segment 5, this outreach will be particularly crucial here.

## ISSUES FOR RAC CONSIDERATION

Analysis of Segment 5 has highlighted a number of segment-specific issues the RAC may wish to consider as planning for the corridor continues. This analysis will be aided by detailed information provided by local jurisdictions, PSE, and Sound Transit, as well as by reviewing case studies of similar corridors around the country.

1. **Connections to the south.** Trail connections to South King County will be accomplished through the Lake-to-Sound Trail, which is proposed for funding in the countywide parks levy that has been submitted to the voters for an August, 2013 vote.

Transit connections to South King County will be more challenging, as the rail line between Milepost 5.0 and Black River Junction remains in active freight use. Transit connections – both along the corridor and for BRT on I-405 – will be studied by Sound Transit as part of ST3, and WSDOT will continue with its plans for widening I-405 (pending funding from this legislative session). If funding is available the widening would occur by 2017.

2. **Connections to the north.** Connections to the north will be challenging until the Wilburton Tunnel link is restored. The crossing over I-90 is narrow, posing

potential space constraints for multiple uses at that crossing. In addition, continued connection of the adjacent Lake Washington Loop Trail (which runs parallel to the corridor in portions of this segment) will be affected by the plans for I-405 widening. WSDOT staff identified the potential need to address the relocation of portions of the Lake Washington Loop Trail when I-405 is widened. WSDOT staff has been engaged in planning activities and these connection issues have been identified for further study.

3. **Connections to the east.** The I-405 right-of-way poses a connection challenge for residents of Newcastle and unincorporated King County east of the corridor. Planning creative ways to link to existing connections across I-405 or to create new connections will be essential to provide access to the corridor.
4. **Corridor topography and width.** The corridor in Segment 5 is narrow in places, steeply sloped from east to west, and very near existing homes and buildings in many places. These conditions will make placing multiple uses within the corridor right-of-way challenging in some locations. Ongoing coordination among King County, PSE, Sound Transit, and local communities will be essential to identify creative solutions in constrained areas.
5. **Connections to parks, trails, and destinations.** The corridor in Segment 5 passes near a number of local parks, trails, and destinations, including Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park, Kennydale Beach Park, Newcastle Beach Park, a number of east-west trails, including the Mountain to Sound Greenway and May Creek Trail, and portions of the Lake Washington Loop Trail.

There are many opportunities to connect to these destinations, and to connect to existing and planned developments and activity centers along the corridor. Work will continue with local partners to identify appropriate connections, with careful planning for trailheads, parking, and access points.

6. **Coordination with surrounding communities and landowners.** Given the narrow right-of-way and challenging topography, continued coordination among RAC partners and with surrounding communities and landowners will be essential.

## SUMMARY

The site visit and planning workshop for Segment 5 have highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for the multiple usage of the Eastside Rail Corridor in this area. Additional study, work, and outreach on these issues will help the RAC understand segment development potential and interconnectivity and plan how to achieve its multi-purpose vision for this segment and for the entire Eastside Rail Corridor.

Similar planning studies for the other segments of the corridor with King County and Sound Transit ownership, and collaboration with Kirkland and Redmond on their local







planning efforts, will allow the RAC to identify a common set of issues and policies for the Eastside Rail Corridor and recommend next steps for the corridor's multi use development, as well as for long-term connections through and beyond the central Puget Sound region.



**APPENDIX 8:**  
**Comparison of Multiuse Corridors**



## COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS





	Eastside Rail Corridor King County, WA	Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit SMART, CA
<b>Location</b>		
<b>Corridor Thumbnail</b>		
<b>Length of multi-use segment</b>	<p><b>26.1 miles railbanked</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Railbanked area extends from Renton to Woodinville with spur to Redmond</li> <li>• Railbanked area is part of larger, multi-county rail corridor</li> </ul>	<p><b>70 miles total, mostly along Hwy 101</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38 miles (North Santa Rosa to San Rafael) under construction</li> <li>• 32 miles on the north and south ends of the corridor to be constructed when funding available</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	Regional planning underway	Under construction
<b>Types of uses</b>	<p>Policy direction is for multiple uses, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rail transit:</b> portions of railbanked area will be used for East Link light rail (20 hours/day service)</li> <li>• <b>Recreational trail:</b> including biking, hiking</li> <li>• <b>Utility uses</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Passenger trains</b> (commuter rail) on standard gauge tracks offering rush hour service + limited mid-day and weekend trips (70 miles, 14 stations)</li> <li>• <b>Bike/pedestrian trail</b> (70 miles)</li> <li>• <b>Freight</b> (42 miles, shared easement with passenger trains)</li> </ul>
<b>Relevance to ERC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long, multi-use corridor</li> <li>• Highly constrained due to topography</li> <li>• Freight to share rails with commuter rail service</li> <li>• Significant community engagement through two ballot measures</li> </ul>	

# COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS



	Eastside Rail Corridor King County, WA	Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit SMART, CA
<b>Physical description and constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North/south corridor through major suburban downtowns and employment centers</li> <li>• Mostly 100 feet wide, but many pinch points, where corridor is 30 feet wide or less</li> <li>• Several bridges and trestles, including the Wilburton Trestle(975 feet), missing link in area of former Wilburton Tunnel</li> <li>• Approximately 60 on-grade road crossings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open agricultural land, wineries, wetlands, residential, industrial</li> <li>• 59 existing railroad trestle bridges and three major bridges</li> <li>• Two tunnels &gt; 1,000 feet each</li> <li>• Mostly 60-80 feet wide, but up to 150 feet wide, and as low as 30 feet: on approximately 17 miles, trail must be moved off corridor</li> <li>• Corridor is single-tracked, so commuter rail headway will be limited to 30 min.</li> <li>• 73 on-grade public road crossings</li> </ul>
<b>Owners &amp; Operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King County</li> <li>• Sound Transit</li> <li>• City of Kirkland</li> <li>• City of Redmond</li> <li>• Puget Sound Energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART)</b> will construct and operate passenger trains and trail</li> <li>• <b>North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA)</b> owns a freight easement and will operate freight</li> </ul>
<b>Map Thumbnails</b>		
<b>Cost and funding sources</b>	<p>Development costs to be determined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/4 cent voter-approved sales tax for 20 years (2009-2029) will raise \$845M for construction and operations</li> <li>• Construction cost estimate \$590M (including \$91M for trail)</li> </ul>



## COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS





	Springwater Corridor Portland, OR	Hiawatha LRT (Blue Line) & SW LRT (Green Line) – Minneapolis, MN
Location		
Corridor Thumbnail		
Length of multi-use segment	<p><b>21.5 miles from Portland to Boring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16.5 mile Springwater Corridor along Johnson Creek</li> <li>• 4 mile Springwater on Willamette Corridor on Willamette River</li> <li>• 1.0 mile Sellwood Gap</li> </ul>	<p><b>Blue Line 6 miles, SW (Green Line) to be 15 miles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails parallel both lines</li> <li>• Light rail lines connect Target Field stadium, downtown Minneapolis, airport, and Mall of America to suburbs and job growth areas</li> </ul>
Status	Developed in phases since 1990 Sellwood Gap area under construction	Blue Line in operation since 2004 SW (Green Line) planned to open 2018
Types of uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bike/pedestrian trail</b> (eventually 21.5 miles)</li> <li>• <b>Equestrian trail</b> (16.5 miles)</li> <li>• <b>Utility uses:</b> two overhead electric transmission lines (21.5 miles)</li> <li>• <b>Freight</b> (app 5 miles, in Sellwood Gap and Springwater on the Willamette areas)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Light rail:</b> Part of regional light rail system (20 hours/day service)</li> <li>• <b>Recreational trail:</b> bicyclists, walkers, joggers</li> <li>• <b>Freight</b> will either be co-located or relocated in SW LRT. Analysis currently underway.</li> </ul>
Relevance to ERC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail easement in Sellwood Gap area was purchased from a railroad</li> <li>• Rails and utility lines may be moved in Sellwood Gap area</li> <li>• Many constrained areas</li> <li>• Corridor part of regional trail system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light rail service will operate 20 hours/day, similar to Sound Transit</li> <li>• Collaborative planning approach being used</li> <li>• SW corridor was used for interim trails between 1990s and present</li> </ul>

# COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS



	Springwater Corridor Portland, OR	Hiawatha LRT (Blue Line) & SW LRT (Green Line) – Minneapolis, MN
<b>Physical description and constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttes, wildlife habitat, and riparian zones</li> <li>• Eleven trestles (10 creek crossings)</li> <li>• Ranges from 30 to 200 feet wide; 100 feet wide in most areas</li> <li>• Rail use has ceased in all but Sellwood Gap and Springwater on the Willamette areas</li> <li>• Six major and 28 minor public road crossings, plus many private drives</li> <li>• Springwater Corridor is part of 40-Mile Loop regional trail system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Blue Line:</b> connects to Minneapolis Midtown Greenway and eventually, to the Southwest Light Rail Transitway</li> <li>• <b>SW (Green Line):</b> passes through downtown Minneapolis, warehouse districts, suburbs and job centers</li> <li>• SW corridor is 100-120 feet wide but with two pinch points to as narrow as 48 feet</li> <li>• Some areas of corridor are below grade, many bridges, limited ability to excavate to make wider ROW</li> </ul>
<b>Owners &amp; Operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>City of Portland</b> owner, manager, developer, Interim Trail Sponsor</li> <li>• <b>Metro</b> purchased Sellwood Gap and Springwater on the Willamette easement from <b>Oregon Pacific RR</b></li> <li>• <b>Portland General Electric</b> has overhead utility easement (Private)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority</b> originally purchased rail lines</li> <li>• <b>Metro Transit</b> owns light rail line</li> <li>• <b>Twin City and Western RR</b> is short line railroad active in SW corridor</li> </ul>
<b>Map Thumbnails</b>		
<b>Cost and funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most of corridor was developed in 1990s and early 2000s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Blue Line:</b> \$715 million, with \$334 million from federal government</li> <li>• <b>SW (Green Line):</b> \$865M-\$1.4B (estimate in 2015 dollars)</li> </ul>



## COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS





	Santa Cruz Coastal Rail Trail	West Rail Line (RTD FasTracks) Denver, CO
<b>Location</b>		
<b>Corridor Thumbnail</b>		
<b>Length of multi-use segment</b>	<p><b>31 mile corridor in Santa Cruz County</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A subsection of both the California Coastal Trail and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail</li> <li>• Between Davenport and Watsonville</li> </ul>	<p><b>12.1 miles total, Denver to Golden</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of a 122-mile light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit system</li> <li>• "Ride West" includes 4 miles of bike/pedestrian paths, plus bike lanes on streets and widened sidewalks</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	Master plan completed 2012	Opened April 2013
<b>Types of uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight and excursion train service</li> <li>• Bike/pedestrian trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Light rail trains</b> serving 12 stations, with 20 at-grade crossings, 10 light rail bridges, two light rail tunnels (12.1 miles, 12 stations)</li> <li>• <b>Bike/pedestrian trail</b> (4 miles, plus bike lanes on adjacent streets)</li> <li>• <b>Utilities</b> (to serve stations, adjoining communities)</li> </ul>
<b>Relevance to ERC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corridor intended for multiple uses, including freight and excursion rail</li> <li>• Pinch points are common; many areas with limited space for multiple uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light rail line with adjacent trail</li> <li>• Part of regional transit system</li> <li>• Serves city center and suburban area</li> </ul>

# COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS



	Santa Cruz Coastal Rail Trail	West Rail Line (RTD FasTracks) Denver, CO
<b>Physical description and constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environments vary from wild and scenic coastal bluffs to agricultural lands to urban recreational boardwalk and commercial zones.</li> <li>• Many pinch points with limited space for shared use. Right-of-way often significantly less than 100 feet (corridor on average 50-60 feet wide).</li> <li>• 37 bridges and trestles</li> <li>• Numerous environmentally sensitive habitat areas, i.e., wetlands, pine forests, dune habitats and fish-bearing streams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land uses are residential, commercial, industrial, major stadium. Connects Denver city center to Golden.</li> <li>• 20 at-grade crossings</li> <li>• 16 bridges (3 for pedestrians) and 3 tunnels (1 for pedestrians)</li> <li>• Terrain is rolling, with a number of creek and gulches (ephemeral water bodies)</li> <li>• Rail line is single-tracked in 3-mile pinch point area (and to cut costs)</li> </ul>
<b>Owners &amp; Operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)</b> is owner</li> <li>• <b>Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway</b> is short-line operator.</li> <li>• <b>Monterey County Transportation Agency</b> is responsible for Monterey County portion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regional Transportation District</b> purchased right-of-way in the 1980s and operates the system</li> </ul>
<b>Map Thumbnails</b>	 <p>The map shows the Santa Cruz Coastal Rail Trail route (indicated by a red line) starting from the coast near Davenport and extending inland through Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Scotts Valley. It highlights various landmarks like Big Basin, Lighthouse Point, and several bridges. A legend identifies features like the trail route, major streams, and ownership types.</p>	 <p>The map shows the West Rail Line route in Denver, Colorado, starting from the city center and extending westward to Golden. It illustrates the line's path through urban areas, including major crossings and stations.</p>
<b>Cost and funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission purchased Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line RR from Union Pacific for \$14.2 million.</li> <li>• Estimated cost of trail development \$88 million, excluding allied costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4/10 cent voter-approved sales tax in 2004</li> <li>• West Line construction cost: \$700 million</li> </ul>



## COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS

	Capital MetroRail Red Line Austin, TX	Lackawanna Cutoff New Jersey Transit
<b>Location</b>		
<b>Corridor Thumbnail</b>		
<b>Length of multi-use segment</b>	<p><b>32 miles from Austin to Leander</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses existing, active freight tracks</li> <li>• Connects downtown Austin with northern suburbs</li> <li>• Connected to larger regional trail and transit network, but limited trail on corridor</li> </ul>	<p><b>133 miles from Midtown, NJ to Scranton, PA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single track commuter rail</li> <li>• Some parts of corridor already have active commuter service; 88 miles of new rail construction</li> <li>• No trail component</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	Opened in March 2010	7.3 miles to open in 2014 (Port Morris, NJ to Andover, NJ)
<b>Types of uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diesel multiple unit trains (DMUs)</b> (32 miles, 9 stations)</li> <li>• <b>Bike/pedestrian trail</b> (0.9 miles under construction, remainder is not on corridor – existing bike network)</li> <li>• <b>Freight</b> (still in operation along the corridor)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Commuter rail</b> (goal is for 133 miles) rush hour service with 45-minute headway</li> <li>• <b>Freight</b> (active freight service in PA portion, approx. 60 miles)</li> </ul>
<b>Relevance to ERC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combines passenger rail and freight</li> <li>• Pinch points along corridor have made trail development difficult and expensive</li> <li>• Multiple votes needed to gain funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of passenger rail on abandoned freight line</li> <li>• <b>NOTE: No trail component to this project</b></li> </ul>

# COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS

	Capital MetroRail Red Line Austin, TX	Lackawanna Cutoff New Jersey Transit
<b>Physical description and constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corridor stretches from urban center through suburban area</li> <li>Single-tracked except in four areas with passing sidings (totaling 3.6 miles)</li> <li>Capital Metro contracts with private freight operator to transport freight through the corridor</li> <li>Corridor width is as narrow as 50 feet in places, includes 42 bridges within the 32-mile passenger corridor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant topographic challenges (Delaware Water Gap, Pocono Mountains) addressed with multiple bridges and trestles</li> <li>The corridor is generally composed of rural land, low-density residential development and farmland, with one urban center (Scranton) and several small towns</li> </ul>
<b>Owners &amp; Operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority</b> and City of Austin purchased 162 miles of right-of-way in 1986 (currently used for freight)</li> <li><b>City of Austin</b> will own the new bike trail. (City is also planning an electric in-city urban rail system)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>State of New Jersey (New Jersey Transit)</b> acquired corridor in 2001. It was abandoned by Conrail in 1983.</li> <li>Partners include Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, PA Dep't of Transportation (PennDOT), the Counties of Morris, Sussex and Warren in NJ, and the Counties of Monroe and Lackawanna in PA</li> </ul>
<b>Map Thumbnails</b>		
<b>Cost and funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1% sales tax ratified in 2004 for Red Line</li> <li>Red Line construction cost: \$100 million</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$37 million for 7.3 miles (funded through state and federal funds)</li> <li>Estimated \$551 million for full project (not yet funded)</li> </ul>



# COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS

## Redmond Central Connector Redmond, WA (ERC Redmond Spur)

**Location**



**Corridor Thumbnail**



**Length of multi-use segment**

**3.9 miles within City of Redmond, WA**

- Part of Redmond Spur of Eastside Rail Corridor
- Planned to be terminus station of Sound Transit East Link
- Trail along length

**Status**

Master plan completed  
Interim trail in Downtown to open 2013


**Types of uses**

- **Bike/pedestrian trail** on entire length within Redmond, part of 12-acre linear park in Downtown area
- **Wastewater utilities** below ground (though no easement for Puget Sound Energy in this segment)
- **Light rail** (when funded) will be terminus station for East Link

**Relevance to ERC**

- Part of ERC
- Will have trail and light rail, plus wastewater below ground
- Attention to adjacent land uses

## COMPARISON OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS

<b>Redmond Central Connector Redmond, WA (ERC Redmond Spur)</b>	
<b>Physical description and constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This part of Redmond Spur travels through rural area, along golf course, and into Downtown Redmond</li> <li>• Pinch point near proposed light rail station addressed by city purchasing property and using street right-of-way</li> <li>• Numerous street crossings that will be addressed with paving treatment</li> <li>• Trestle over Sammamish River</li> <li>• Connects multiple trails</li> </ul>
<b>Owners &amp; Operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>City of Redmond</b> purchased from the Port of Seattle in 2010</li> <li>• <b>Sound Transit</b> has transit easements on segment</li> <li>• <b>King County</b> has asked Surface Transportation Board to allow Redmond to be Interim Trail Sponsor for railbanking</li> </ul>
<b>Map Thumbnails</b>	
<b>Cost and funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10 million for purchase</li> <li>• \$3.9 million for Phase I (interim trail, art, crossings for "Downtown Mile")</li> </ul>



**APPENDIX 9:**  
**Constraints, Crossings and Connections: Creative Examples from Other  
Corridors**



# EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR

Constraints, Crossings, & Connections:

Creative Examples from Other Corridors

May 15, 2013





# CONSTRAINT: PINCH POINT

Double Decker Configuration allows Multiple Uses



Arkansas River Bridge – Tulsa, OK

# CONSTRAINT: PINCH POINT

Double Decker: Trail under Rail for Wetlands Crossing



Nordhavn – Copenhagen, Denmark  
*(Planned, not yet constructed)*



# CONSTRAINT: STEEP SLOPE

Automated “bike lift” helps bicyclists up steep slope



Bicycle Lift – Trondheim, Norway

# CONSTRAINT: STEEP SLOPE

Bridge crossing on trail + gondola



Gibbs Street Bridge & Portland Aerial Tram – Portland, OR



# CROSSING: ROUNDABOUT

Elevated bike/ped roundabout separates from traffic



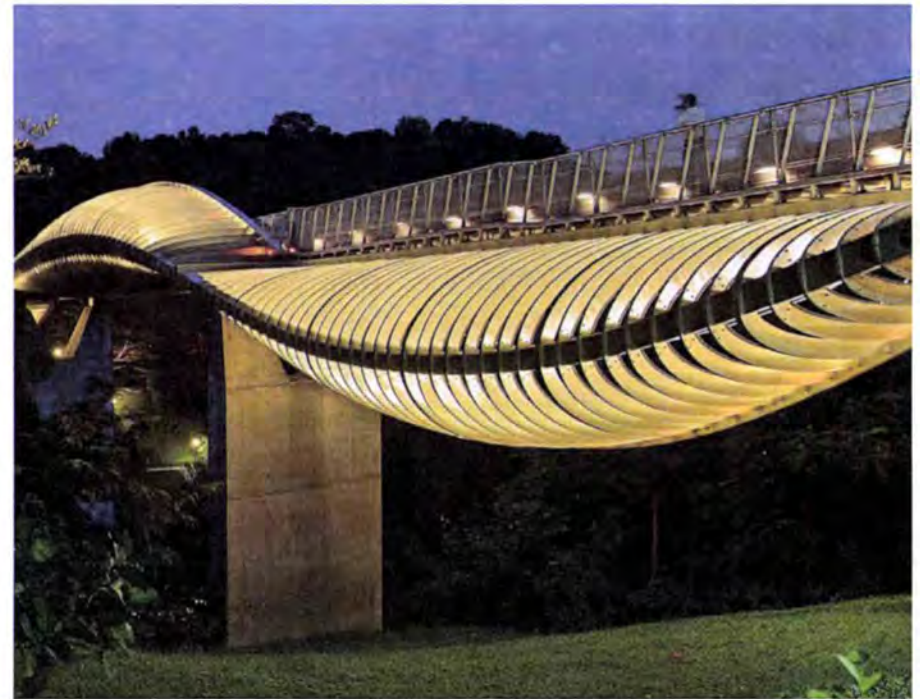
Hovenring – Eindhoven, Netherlands

# CROSSING: BRIDGES

Bridges cross traffic, natural areas



Millennium Bridge – Chicago, IL



Henderson Wave Bridge – Singapore



# CROSSING: BRIDGES

Trails under and over rail, traffic



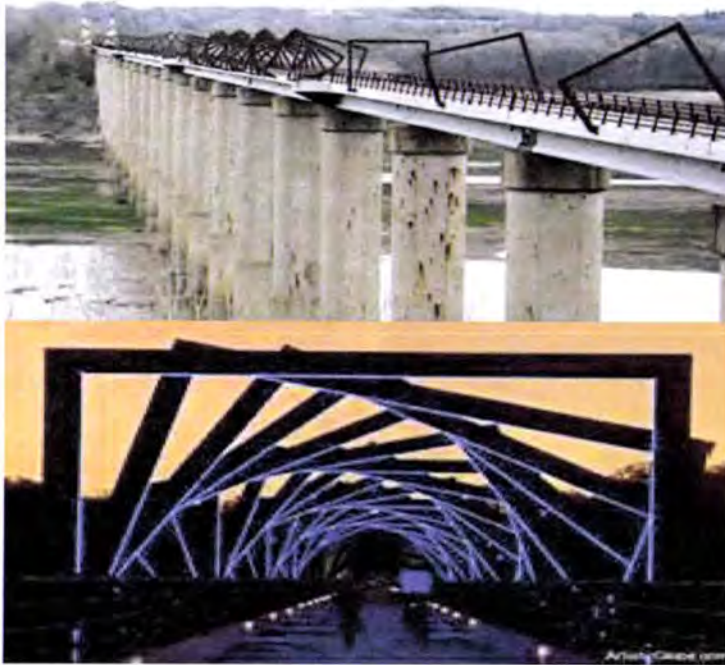
Clear Creek Trail – Jefferson County, CO



Cross-Florida Greenway – I-75, Florida

# CROSSING: TRESTLE RE-USE

Rail trestles adapted for trails (note utilities)



High Trestle Trail – Madrid, IA



Santa Fe Trestle – Santa Fe, NM



# CONNECTIONS: RAIL & TRAIL

Green rail and trail provides in-city connections



VAG Tram System and Trail – Freiburg, Germany

# CONNECTIONS: RAIL & TRAIL

Connections between modes: from bike to rail



S-Train, Copenhagen Central Station – Copenhagen, Denmark



**APPENDIX 10:**  
**Lessons Learned from Other Jurisdictions:**  
**Portland, OR, Hennepin County, MN,**  
**Sonoma and Marin counties, CA**

## Lessons Learned from Other Jurisdictions

### **Springwater Corridor Trail (Portland to Boring, Oregon)**

*Presentation by Mel Huei, Regional Trails Coordinator*

*June 5, 2013 RAC Meeting*

#### **The Things to Do:**

- Involve the public: neighbors, adjacent property owners, government partners, elected officials, railroad companies, trail advocates, local businesses dependent on train service, transit agencies, and "Railroad Buffs"
- Feasibility study for trail coordinated with other plans, including local/regional transportation and freight movement plans
- Opportunities and constraints study
- Knowledge of rail banking law/regulations
- Work closely with STB, State and local transportation departments
- Acquisition from willing seller: ROW, easements, fee, donations, rail-banking
- Master Plan, if acquisition successful
- Management/Restoration/Maintenance Plan
- Cost estimates/List funding sources
- Years of fundraising from Federal, State, Regional and Local Grant Sources
- Potential bond measure
- Intergovernmental agreements with partners

Full presentation available at:

[www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-06-05.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-06-05.aspx)

### **Southwest LRT (Minneapolis, Minnesota)**

*Presentation by Katie Walker, Southwest LRT Community Works Manager*

*June 26, 2013 RAC Meeting*

#### **Challenges & Lessons Learned:**

- Establish a long-term shared vision for the corridor
- Cooperation of all stakeholders
- Balance between preservation of corridor & interim use
- Establish clear policies/procedures for management of corridor
- Encroachments
- Potential 4(f) (relates to ability to use parkland for transportation)
- Freight Rail
- Politics
- Need shared vision & determination
- Champions
- Adoption of the LUMP (Land Use Management Plan) critical for preservation and communications
- Transparent & active engagement in decision making process
- Continued communications with public and elected officials to clarify use
- View the corridor as an opportunity – laying conduit, trail use, etc...

Full presentation available at:

[www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-06-26.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-06-26.aspx)



**Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART)  
(Cloverdale in Sonoma County to Larkspur in Marin County)**

*Presentation by Bill Gamlen, Chief Engineer, SMART*

*July 31, 2013, to Metropolitan King County Council Committee of the Whole*

**GOVERNANCE**

**Regional governing body created by state law** (2003). The 12-member Board is made up of

- Two county supervisors from Marin County
- Two county supervisors from Sonoma County
- Three city council members from cities in Marin County
- Three city council members from cities in Sonoma County
- Two representatives from the Golden Gate Bridge District (transit provider)

SMART also has a Citizens Oversight Committee.

**FUNDING**

**Voter approval of 20-year, 0.25% sales tax.** SMART had to submit the measure twice before it passed, since it needed a two-thirds majority. First vote in 2006 earned just under the two-thirds approval (65.3%); second vote in 2008 received more than two-thirds approval (69.3%).

**Multiple funding sources.** More than 10 different funding partners, including state, federal, and local and regional funds.

**MULTIUSE CORRIDOR**

**Bike and train synergy.** Bike/pedestrian pathway helps provide access to rail stations. Two-car trains can accommodate up to 24 bicycles. Train + bike enables a longer trip than for a bike alone.

**Coordination with freight services.** Freight has its own spurs and sidings, but the track is shared through use of "passing sidings" (double track segments) at five "meets" (passing points). SMART will dispatch both passenger and freight service.

**Pinch points, steep slopes, trestles.** Because of pinch points and other challenges in the right-of-way to accommodate both rail and trail, approximately 17 miles of the pedestrian/bike trail will be located off the actual corridor.

Presentation materials available at:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-07-31-COW.aspx>

## **APPENDIX 11:**

### **Public Comments**

- **Comments Posted on Project Website and Provided at RAC Meetings**
- **Summary of July 31, 2013, Open House Comment Cards**
- **Transcript of July 31, 2013 Open House Video Comments**
- **Comments on Draft Final Report and Recommendations**



# Public Comments

EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 16-20, 2013

## Gary Greenberg

### INTERESTS

Bicycling

### CONTACT

g.greenberg@comcast.net

### COMMENT

I believe that we need to move forward TODAY to provide for the best use for the most people...and that would be a trail. Let's be honest here...IF rail is an issue, it's not going to be for many, many years down the road (maybe not even in our lifetime). The tracks are old and would need to be upgraded anyhow, so let's create an interim trail NOW and move forward in allowing our community to enjoy the asset that ALL OF US have just purchased. I support Kirkland's plan to allow for an immediate interim trail. Again..the best use for the most people...NOW. Thanks!

## Brian Staples

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections

### CONTACT

brians@eastsidetrailadvocates.org

### COMMENT

What will be the limits placed on public comment for Wednesday's meeting? Specifically, how many minutes?

Thanks - Brian Staples

[www.eastsidetrailadvocates.org](http://www.eastsidetrailadvocates.org)

## Arthur Valla

### INTERESTS

Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC

### CONTACT

artvalla@gmail.com

### COMMENT

Does anybody really believe that we will NOT need a north-south high speed transportation system on the Eastside within 25 years? 50 years?

There are a substantial number of King County residents that believe we need that system today!

<<<Cont'd>>>

<<Cont'd>>

Bicycle and hiking trails are nice. Wonderful things. But should they come at the expense of future transit systems?

During the last few decades, thousands of miles of rail have been "rail banked" in the United States. Many of those miles have had the rails pulled up and pavement laid to turn them into bicycle trails. Only about 10 miles have been reconverted to transit rail use. Once the rails come out, they never go back in. Can you imagine any politician suggesting tearing out the Burke-Gillman for a round-the-lake rail? Not in our life times.

In the next 15-20 years, we will have 1,000,000 new people moving into King County. Like the last 1,000,000 people that moved here, they will head for the outer edges of the urban growth boundary. Right now there are mega housing developments being built in Issaquah and Black Diamond. The permits are already in place. If we allow this to continue, we will become Orange County, North. Just like L.A., we will have spraul right up to the foothills

Is that what we want?

We have a unique opportunity with the Eastside BNSF rail corridor. We can use it to guide close-in higher density development. We can preserve its rail capability, and put in place zoning ordinances to encourage maximum rail transit usage. We can offer incentives in density, land exchange, height requirements, even parking dispensation to make this corridor the developer preferred passage, thus shaping where growth will occur.

I strongly encourage you to take the following steps:

1. Insist that any new name for this corridor include the term "rail". Don't let the NIMBYs in adjacent communities re-brand it. Tear out the Kirkland Corridor signs today and replace them with RAIL signs.
  2. Make sure that ALL King County maps, signage, and official documents designate this corridor as a RAIL corridor.
  3. Deny any permits to remove rails unless plans are pre-approved for re-installation of the rails at some future date. That means that any trail development must be "rail compatible". Any underpass or overpass must be capable of having future use as part of a rail system. No bicycle or pedestrian only modifications on the rail bed.
  4. Only in extreme circumstances should the rail bed be used for trail. When possible, all trail development must be done off the rail bed.
  5. Adjacent lands should be secured for future park-and-ride lots. If there is one shortcoming evident with the current ST Link Light Rail, it is the foolish idea that parking would not be needed. That has proven to be a mistake of monstrous proportions - and will take monstrous public investment to fix. Let's not make that mistake again.
-



**Greg Kulseth**

**INTERESTS**

Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC,  
Regional trail and transit connections

**CONTACT**

gtkulseth@comcast.net

**COMMENT**

Please make rail transit the top usage priority for the entire ERC, not trails. We need as many rail transit options we can get in the growing eastside to move large numbers of people around the region. Trails are fine, but if it comes down to one or the other, rails should always win over trails.

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 21-March 12, 2013

### Taylor Southwick

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Transit, Connections

#### CONTACT

twsouthwick@outlook.com

#### COMMENT

It seems really great to have a trail AND rail options. I live in Covington and work in Redmond and would love these as an option.

### Dick Burkhardt

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Rail, Transit, Hiking, Connections

#### CONTACT

dickburkhardt@comcast.net

#### COMMENT

This entire corridor needs to be preserved both for rail and a regional trail. As oil prices escalate, we'll need this corridor both for freight and passenger service, in addition to bicycle commuting. Keep the rails through Kirkland and build a new crossing over 405, then upgrade the tracks.

### Shawn Etchevers

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking

#### CONTACT

setchev@comcast.net

#### COMMENT

The ability to provide commuter rail service on the Eastside Corridor is now firmly secured by law forever. Hence, the option of providing rail transportation will remain there until it makes economic sense to do so. But, this is not the case today, as it has been proven by two, thorough, extensive, and independent studies; as well as by more than 5-6 years of public debate. Furthermore, it is not expected to make economic sense for, at least, another 20 or 30 more years. This being the case, obstructing pedestrian use of the Kirkland corridor, which Kirkland citizens bought, and for which they also approved additional taxes to make it usable, is wrong and unacceptable. The argument that 'if the rails are removed, they will never come back' is purposely misleading and arrogant. It assumes that today's Kirkland citizens cannot be allowed to benefit from what they have already paid for, and future generations will not be able to make rational decisions about what is more important for Kirkland and the greater Eastside community. The hubris of the obstructionists with respect to how to spend tax money and what is best for Kirkland right now must stop. Let us move forward and allow Kirklanders to benefit, during the next one or two generations, from what they have already paid for; as the Kirkland and Redmond City Councils have wisely decided to do! The corridor will still be there to be used in whatever manner is considered most sensible when there is money to do it.



## Mayor Karen Guzak

### INTERESTS

Rail

### CONTACT

guzak@ci.snohomish.wa.us

### COMMENT

As the Mayor of the City of Snohomish, I feel strongly that this Advisory Committee needs more owners at the table - especially in Snohomish county. The City of Snohomish owns about a mile of this corridor, including three blocks of track just north of the Snohomish River. This corridor is a regional resource, not just a King County endeavor. Expand the committee, and we will be there, along with representative from Snohomish County.

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## Ann Stanton

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Rail, Transit, Hiking, Connections

### CONTACT

stanton@ci.snohomish.wa.us

### COMMENT

1. Would you please make available online the PowerPoint presentation given at the 3/8/203 ETP meeting? 2. Perhaps it would make sense to post the executed version of the BNSF purchase and sale agreement instead of the unsigned version posted currently. 3. As a resident of northeast King County and an employee in Snohomish County, I seek better transportation choices. The combination of East Link and the ERC show promise of being the solution for our area's growing mobility problems and I-405's capacity limits. 4. Mobility affects most of the big challenges we face as a society: carbon emission/climate change, economic competitiveness, air quality, health (breathable air, obesity linked to lack of transportation choices), and property values (affordable homes for our work force) Thank you for your attention to this regional opportunity.

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## Brian Staples

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Transit, Hiking, Connections

### CONTACT

brians@eastsidetrailadvocates.org

### COMMENT

At the last meeting it was decided that public comment was an important aspect of these committee meetings. It was also decided the public comment would be limited to 3 minutes. In the upcoming agenda there is 15 minutes for public comment. In the last meeting there were around 20 speakers so public comments were limited to 2 minutes. Please respect anyone who makes public comment not to arbitrarily change the time limit at the last minute. I'm curious if the committee will address the two previous studies completed by the PSRC and Sound Transit. The first PSRC study looked pretty closely at all the implications of rails and trails separately and together. It did a pretty good job at a first pass of what will be involved in getting both on the corridor together. The second study completed by Sound Transit did a pretty good job looking at ridership numbers for the corridor. Will this committee incorporate those studies into its final product or will it supercede or supplement them? I think it might be most efficient to use those studies as a basis for moving forward. There's a ton of good work there. I guess my comment is, considering the name of this committee and the location of the corridor, it would be great to have meetings on the Eastside - it might give greater weight of importance and urgency to the stakeholders. This would lead to a better outcome.

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## Brian Staples (Comment 2)

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Transit, Hiking, Connections

### CONTACT

brians@eastsidetrailadvocates.org

### COMMENT

It's been my experience in public meetings like this that it is very difficult for a person who doesn't have much public speaking experience to get up and give testimony (unlike public officials who do it on a regular basis). Some members of the audience compensate for this by taking time to prepare their testimony down to the second. While I understand there were no maximum time limits set, it might be good to guarantee a minimum time - something like 2 minutes. It might help people (like me prepare better and be more effective communicators).

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## Douglas Engle

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Adjoining land uses, Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections, Permits to cross or other special use of the property

### CONTACT

DEngle76@comcast.net

### COMMENT

Denying the existence of freight use on the corridor is simply unrealistic. There isn't much freight, but such use has many public benefits that need to be explored. How come the railroad, also an owner of the corridor, is never included in any conversations about its use? Has anyone explored the use of the railroad to construct a trail more quickly at lower cost? Is a public private partnership possible for transit use in the near term?

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## Mark Miller

### INTERESTS

### CONTACT

metrokc@miller.us

### COMMENT

Thank you for the six (6) day advance notice of the 2nd ERC meeting vs the 1 day notice on February 19th. I do not understand why the meeting is being held again in downtown Seattle when ERC is physically on the Eastside of Lake Washington between Bellevue and Snohomish, WA. In addition I am concerned about the behavior of Kirkland City Manager Kurt Triplet and his plans to remove the rails from Kirkland. Has he received permission from the Federal and State regulatory agencies? I was physically on the Amtrak 27 Empire Builder west of Stanley, ND (8 hours behind schedule due to Genesys engine failure outside St Paul-Minneapolis, MN) and both Yahoo and Blackberry email accounts were down. I am particularly concerned that Kirkland City Manager Kurt Triplet has not received Federal Railroad Administration approval to remove the tracks, and taxpayers of King County et al will be on the hook for another losing lawsuit such as Yousoufian v. Office of Ron Sims 2009 No. 57112-5-1 and just this year's February 20, 2013 decision against Seattle Councilmember Mike O'Brien for \$500,000 to settle the yellow pages lawsuit.

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**Nancy Edgers****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, hiking

**CONTACT**

r.edgers@comcast.net

**COMMENT**

I am really happy to see the City of Kirkland standing up for what the majority of our community would like to see happen with the rail line, which at this point is to start with a safe trail everyone to use. I do not have opposition to some sort of train, but if they do utilize this area some someday for connection to light rail I have a vision of a small connector train like they have in Portland in the downtown corridor that runs up to the Pearl district. It is similar to the SLUT in Seattle. This would keep Kirkland quaint and at the same time give a connection to the the larger light rail approach. I visualize stops along the way to get off and on with maybe coffee shops/restaurants etc. a long the way. This could be a revenue source for Kirkland and also help move people from Woodenville/Snohomish to Bellevue. I also think that this could be wonderful way to help with the wine industry. I personally live just above this rail line in Kirkland, so it is really going to impact our city if the large light rail moves through here, which I am totally against. Lets look at some alternatives like I stated above in the planning for future use of this area. I do hope that we can have our trail first, as that is what the original plan was intended for from the very beginning when Ron Simms spear headed this project!

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 13-April 2, 2013

### Dick Burkhart

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Rail, Transit, Hiking, Connections

#### CONTACT

dickburkhart@comcast.net

#### COMMENT

Hello, I am Dick Burkhart, a long time volunteer with the Sierra Club on transportation issues for Washington State, and before that with the Cascade Bicycle Club. I love bicycle trails, but I've become very disturbed by this rip-out-the-rails mentality. This is because I've become a student of the rise and fall of civilizations, especially of the critical roles of ecosystems and resources. As a Ph.D. mathematician and former Boeing engineer, the numbers look pretty grim to me.

The fabulous wealth of modern civilization has been built upon cheap fossil fuel and those days are rapidly disappearing. Already cheap oil is gone, having peaked in 2005, never to return. Thus global economic growth has already slowed dramatically and I see it transitioning to long term contraction in the 2020s, just as the costs of climate change are becoming ever more serious. So what happens when gas at the pump hits \$10 a gallon and good jobs are hard to come by? The global economy downsizes and relocalizes, but it's a different economy. Trucking and driving costs have gone through the roof. Suddenly we are clamoring for electrified trains, for both freight and people. The Eastside Rail Corridor becomes a very valuable resource.

We need to start planning now for a corridor from Renton to Snohomish with freight tracks, commuter or light rail tracks, utilities, plus a nice bike trail. Before any more tracks are ripped out, I'd like to see preliminary engineering of what such a corridor would look like, mile by mile, how best to sequence the development, and ball park cost estimates, especially for choke points, such as bridges. Almost certainly the bike path would follow one edge of the corridor, as it already does for a stretch I've often ridden south of I-90, so let's keep the current rail bed for trains now, not generations hence.

I find the absence of major stakeholders, such as railroad interests, on the Advisory Council to be astonishing. The Excursion Train, of course, and local freight, but what if the main north/south tracks through Seattle becomes overloaded? Then the Eastside Corridor could be critical as a bypass or alternate route.

Note: As the railbanking Interim Use Manager, King County has the "full responsibility for management" of the corridor rights-of-way. Therefore the ERC Proposed Charter language "The regional planning process will respect the individual ownership of the corridor by members of the RAC" is misleading, as customary ownership rights are limited by King County's responsibility to manage the corridor for interim use. And certainly viable commercial train usage on existing tracks should have first priority, if "railbanking" is to be more than a slogan.



**Eldon Jacobson****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Rail, Adjoining land use

**CONTACT**

eldon@reachone.com

**COMMENT**

I support bicycling and continued railroad use of the corridor. My preference is that any bike trail be build adjacent to the railroad track, but separated from the railroad track by a brown, green, or black coated galvanized chain link fence.

All the jurisdictions in the corridor should plan on building grade separations between the corridor and all the at-grade crossings.

I am also concerned about adjacent property owners who either inadvertently or purposely expand their property onto the publically owned right of way without obtaining the proper permission. This needs to be managed in a courteous but firm manner so as not to negatively impact any future use of the corridor.

I prefer that there be no new driveway crossings allowed in the corridor, and that plans be made to remove or relocate any existing driveways that cross the corridor.

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**Stephanie Weber****INTERESTS**

Rail, Transit, Connections, Adjoining land uses

**CONTACT**

StephanieMSWeber@aol.com

**COMMENT**

I have been a resident of Kirkland for nearly 25 years. I live in Juanita across I-405 from Cross Kirkland Corridor's north end. I ride King County Metro's #255 buses when traveling to Seattle and often use the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride near the Kirkland Rail Corridor's south end. I would like to add my voice to those who do not want to see this important rail link between the north and south end of Kirkland removed at this time.

I support a multimodal corridor on the Eastside, which should include commuter rail. The Kirkland rail section is vital for future commuter rail connectivity along the Eastside and in the region. Rails are harder to replace when they are removed. This corridor can become an important future transportation link and a green alternative to I-405.

I think that the city of Kirkland is missing a real economic opportunity if the rails are now removed in the Cross Kirkland Corridor. I support the vision of the TRailways Alliance and the elected officials from Snohomish and Woodinville to preserve the rails on the Eastside Rail Corridor for future use along the corridor in King and Snohomish counties.

Rails and trails have been shown to coexist in other places and Kirkland residents like me will use the rail for commuting and the trail for bicycling and walking. A good example of this shared use is the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART Transit) now being built in San Francisco's North Bay. More information about this commuter rail and multi-use trail project can be found at: [www.main.sonomamarintrain.org](http://www.main.sonomamarintrain.org).

Eastside Community Rail sent a proposal to Kirkland for a trail beside the tracks that is wider than the current trail. The existing rail can then be used to remove spoils from some of Bellevue's projects such as East Link. The public will appreciate less congestion on I-405 with reduced carbon emissions and Eastside residents will appreciate forward-thinking by Kirkland. The city can become greener by preserving and using its rails and rail bed for freight and excursion trains now and commuter rail with a

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<<Continued>>

recreational trail beside it in the future.

The Bounty of Washington Tasting Train is an inspirational marketing idea for our local food and beverages. It will draw tourists and locals to ride the tasting train and try local products, wine, and beer that are produced in Kirkland, nearby in Woodinville and Snohomish, and from around our state. This train would provide a good interim use of the rails in Kirkland and it could help stimulate the Kirkland economy in general and especially in Totem Lake.

The Tasting Train could reinvigorate the Totem Lake area by drawing more businesses and perhaps inspiring Trader Joe's store to expand and attract additional businesses in Totem Lake Mall. A Trader Joe's store in Portland's Hollywood neighborhood was built a block north of Portland's MAX light rail transit line and it includes murals of the neighborhood. Shoppers can drive to the store or use light rail to access it easily. Why not support commuter rail use near Totem Lake to encourage economic development?

A future commuter rail stop near Totem Lake could also service the new Slater 116 mixed use apartments and retail development currently being built at the south end of Totem Lake off 124th Avenue NE and NE 116th Street. An ad on Slater's website promotes Washington Wine Country 20 minutes away. Let's bring wine country closer to this development by supporting the tasting train with a stop nearby in Totem Lake. Why not consider future developments such as this one a transit-oriented development, not merely a development near the tracks?

Google announced this week that it is doubling the size of its Kirkland campus and hiring 1,000 additional employees by 2015. Now is the time to preserve the tracks and add a trail for future commuter use. Increased traffic on 6th Street S where Google is located will create congestion on NE 68th Street and 108th Avenue NE and in the surrounding neighborhood in Kirkland. The growth of Google in Kirkland will encourage more growth in businesses and traffic in this area. These traffic impacts can be mitigated by use of rail and trail with a station planned at the Google campus since the rail corridor currently passes through it.

A greener Kirkland will encourage economic and transit-oriented development near the Eastside Rail Corridor. Commuter rail and trail can provide seamless connections with existing bus transit. Why not retain Kirkland's tracks for future commuter rail and use them now for freight and tasting trains to help the Eastside economy get back on track?

I hope that Kirkland will wait for completion of the King County Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Council's report to move forward. I urge you to support the vision of Snohomish and Woodinville to keep the Eastside Rail Corridor intact and to delay removal of Kirkland's tracks within the corridor. Green multimodal transportation should move forward on the Eastside.

I believe in the quote in Cross Kirkland Corridor's Vision Statement of 2011 - - "Planning or implementing one mode must not foreclose future corridor use by another mode". Please do not foreclose commuter rail in the future from Woodinville through Kirkland, south to Bellevue, and along the entire Eastside in both Snohomish and King counties.

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**Georgine Foster****INTERESTS****CONTACT**

georginef@msn.com

**COMMENT**

I'd like to offer but one, of many, reasons why I believe that the City of Kirkland is correctly forging ahead with development of a Trail in the Cross Kirkland Corridor.....it was the "top priority" recommendation of the Urban Land Institute, a nonpartisan organization that is long recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development of sustainable thriving communities worldwide. Our City Council sought an objective opinion about Totem Lake and how Kirkland might help spur development there.

In a report entitled Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel Recommendations to the City of Kirkland on Totem Lake, on page 13, ULI most strongly recommends the development in the BNSF Corridor of a "trail (that) has the potential to brand Kirkland as progressive on transportation....there is obvious value in developing the corridor as a bicycle and pedestrian trail, even as it retains its potential for future regional rail transit...." On page 4: "leverag(ing) open space assets and trail potential...deserves top priority".

[www.kirklandwa.gov/assets/cmo/cmo+pdfs/uli+tech+assist+recommendation+report.pdf](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/assets/cmo/cmo+pdfs/uli+tech+assist+recommendation+report.pdf)

Totem Lake is Kirkland's designated Urban Growth Area (as required and recognized by the State and King County under the Growth Management Act). The City is actively pursuing codes and regulations that encourage re-development in the area, and promote a more integrated, vital and sustainable neighborhood that will responsibly help fulfill Kirkland's designated share of the anticipated growth in the region. The ULI's recommendation to develop a Trail in the CKC suggests one very important project that will facilitate meeting those GMA goals.

Kirkland citizens support the City of Kirkland (with the purchase of the 5.75 mile segment of the Corridor within our city and passage of the permanent Parks Funding Levy) moving forward with an interim Trail, while yet planning for high capacity transit in the future when the Corridor can be designed AND engineered to 21st century transit standards.

**Kirk McEwan****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Regional trail and transit connections

**CONTACT**

kirkmcewan@hotmail.com

**COMMENT**

I understand that due to rail banking, this corridor will always be available for future rail options, and that at the moment there are no approved plans to use this for any type of rail service. Although, apparently there is a private group that would like to profit from public dollars to use this line. My vote is to make it a trail as quickly and cost effectively as possible (Like Kirkland is doing) and when Sound Transit has a plan that is approved by the voters, then we can make adjustments for rail.

**Patricia Brown****INTERESTS**

Adjoining land uses

**CONTACT**

gregerbrown@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

As a property owner adjoining the ERC, I want to make sure that King County involves All of us in their future plans for the LEAST impact possible. Thanks.

---

**Elya Baches****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, hiking

**CONTACT**

baches@comcast.net

**COMMENT**

I live on Greenwich Crest and I am curious if a trail will be built along the ERC from I-90 south. The western portion of my property is against the ERC and it would be nice to have a way to get to the trail system without having to cross a very busy intersection to get there.

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**Scott Kaseburg****INTERESTS**

Adjoining land uses

**CONTACT**

kaseburg@comcast.net

**COMMENT**

You/we have a monumental task & opportunity in front of us. As an adjoin property owner, I appreciate that you've been designated as a contact. In reviewing the Pinch Points document <http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/~media/operations/erc-advisory-council/meetings/2013-02-20/G1ERCAtlasNov2012.ashx> I am curious as to what the analysis actually shows at Map points 8 & 9 . . . these maps are missing from the posting, but I expect they are available. Can someone send them to me?

These are shown as no constraint, which is surprising to me. The terrain and roadway and home encroachments along the north part of Pleasure Point LN SE, Bellevue will make this area very challenging, especially for dual use. There is a steep bank with only a narrow track bed at the top. As I've heard, Department of Transportation already plans to relocate the roadway between the corridor and Hwy. 405 when 405 eventually gets expanded, unfortunately towards the corridor which will further constrain options for a level 100' bed.

Residents along Pleasure Point can't be denied property access and 40 foot high retaining wall will be unreasonable. Clearly, all engineering solutions aren't going to get hammered out at this stage, but I would think there would be increased support if these kind of situations have a well thought-out solution and the adjoining owners can see it and provide input. Maybe spinning these off to neighborhood meetings where the options with pro/cons are discussed? Again, please send the Maps 8 & 9.

*<<NOTE: Staff contacted commenter to respond that only pinch point area maps were included in this particular handout. Maps 8 and 9 are not identified as pinch points and therefore are not in this handout, but will be part of the larger planning process.>>*

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**Julian von Will****INTERESTS**

Adjoining land uses

**CONTACT**

vonwill@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

I live alongside the corridor, 4240 and 4248. I think its smart to have public transportation and a bike trail but I think its difficult to have both without extensive shoring work. Please inform neighbors alongside corridor from Coal Creek to I90 to not cut or trim the trees supporting the bank. There is serious possibility for landslide. Thank you.

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**Lisa McConnell****INTERESTS****CONTACT**

Kirby994@frontier.com

**COMMENT**

I attended Sound Transit's Open House last Thursday. It became very apparent to me that there is a time sensitive issue to be dealt with by the partners in the ERCRAC right now. Sound Transit is entering its final phase of design work for the Hospital Station section of East Link. The City of Bellevue has extensive plans and designs for pedestrian and bicycle access to the Bel-Red Corridor and Spring District. I think now is the time for King County to enter the discussions, particularly around the Hospital Station but also northward on the Corridor to the South Kirkland Park and Ride about its trail intentions and desires. The Corridor from Hospital Station to the South Kirkland Park and Ride offers a unique opportunity for non-motorized access from the under construction TOD at South Kirkland to the upcoming development and urban center that will be Bel-Red. At significantly less cost than trying to put sidewalks and bike paths on 116th and Northup. Also significantly less (to none) distruption to traffic flow on neighborhood or arterial streets.

But the time to do this is NOW, when we are still in design phase. Trying to shoehorn it in "after the fact" will cost us money and will not get us the optimum use of this Corridor for pedestrians, bicycles, transit/rail, autos, businesses, or residents.

Also to be considered at this time is PSE's role on the Corridor here. In the news now is the ever increasing useage of electric vehicle charging stations. Will/can PSE install more truck lines under a trail now to handle the capacity for more EV charging stations that might occur at Hospital Station, Spring District, Bellevue Maintenance Center, and the South Kirkland Park and Ride? All of these occur directly adjacent to the Corridor. Not to mention the possibility in the future for an electric system for light rail on the line. We can all take some good advice from Redmond Mayor John Marchione and build our Corridor from the (under)ground up.

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 3-22, 2013

### Lisa McConnell

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Regional trail and transit connections

#### CONTACT

kirby994@frontier.com

#### COMMENT

As I mentioned at the last ERCRAC meeting, Bellevue is holding an Expo at their City Hall on April 24th on many of the projects underway in Bellevue. They will be taking public comments, so this may be a good place to gather public input about some of the projects including; East Link, other trail projects(Mountains to Sound), and various transportation projects (motorized and non-motorized). Sound Transit and WSDOT representatives will be there. Here's the link to the page <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/spring-forward-expo.htm> and the link to the flyer/pdf [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/Spring\\_Expo\\_Flyer.pdf](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/Spring_Expo_Flyer.pdf) I hope input from Bellevue might help ERCRAC move forward.

### Georgine Foster

#### INTERESTS

#### CONTACT

georginef@msn.com

#### COMMENT

It is quite interesting that Kirkland has no Regional Trail yet all other surrounding cities do.....and with a population of 80,000.

Maybe some of the "help with the assumption of debt" that the County promised (which necessitates Kirkland build a fire station (but with the opportunity to build on land leased from the county) but which we would not even have had to build had the Kirkland City Council not been "persuaded" into "deciding" the vote for the electorate to take on the annexation areas...which thereby "helped" KC's bottom line to the detriment of Kirkland's).....could help facilitate a regional trail in Kirkland.



**Stephanie Weber****INTERESTS**

Adjoining land uses,Rail use on the ERC,Public transit on the ERC,Regional trail and transit connections

**CONTACT**

StephanieMSWeber@aol.com

**COMMENT**

Thank you for allowing me to address you on Thursday, April 4th at your meeting in Kirkland. I am a resident of Kirkland, have a M.S. in Intermodal Transportation Systems, and spoke as a Director of All Aboard Washington. I ride King County Metro Transit's #255 buses when traveling through Kirkland and to Seattle and I use the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride. I addressed the recent announcement by King County Metro Transit that it may be forced to cut bus routes and reduce bus trips in Kirkland next year. I support having the city of Kirkland keep their rails in place to provide future commuter rail and to add connectivity with buses in Kirkland.

With the forecasted future cuts in KC Metro Transit's bus service to the Puget Sound in the fall of 2014 it is more important to preserve these rails through Kirkland now. KC Metro says it may have to remove 65 bus routes and reduce 86 additional bus routes, unless the state legislature allows the county to collect new taxes. Some of these routes and trips are in Kirkland. Shouldn't the city of Kirkland leave their rails in place to be rehabilitated and used for commuter rail in Kirkland sooner rather than later?

The announcement by Google several weeks ago that it is doubling the size of its Kirkland campus and hiring 1,000 additional employees by 2015 is great news for Kirkland's economy. It also provides a great opportunity to preserve the tracks and add a trail for future commuter use. The growth of Google in Kirkland will add more growth in businesses and traffic in Kirkland. Shouldn't Google and the city of Kirkland be encouraged to create a public-private partnership now to preserve the rails and add trails to the rail corridor for future commuters?

Neighborhood traffic impacts can be mitigated by use of rail and trail with a station planned at the Google campus since the rail corridor currently passes through the middle of the campus. The station can connect both sides of the campus and provide better access to it. Commuter rail with a trail beside it can provide seamless connections with bus transit.

We must try to save KC Metro Transit service now and secure additional funding for it, but we must also try to save rail for future commuter rail service. The importance of commuter rail as a viable option for connections to remaining transit service in Kirkland must be maintained if bus service is decreased and routes are lost.

I urge the King County Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Council to support the vision of Woodinville and Snohomish to keep the Eastside Rail Corridor intact and to support the upgrade of Kirkland's tracks for future use along the corridor in King and Snohomish counties.

**Karyn Hanson****INTERESTS**

Rail use

**CONTACT**

karynhanson@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

I would love to see the rails used for trains! Bounty of Washington: Tasting Train would be a perfect attraction for locals and tourist. A great addition to what the Eastside has to offer. We can have Rails and Trails! Thank you for your attention to this!

**Jeff Felbeck****INTERESTS**

Bicycling

**CONTACT**

jfelbeck@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

Although my primary interest regarding the ERC is bicycling, I did find this article about urban gondolas to be very intriguing: <http://www.wired.com/autopia/2012/11/austin-gondola/>

As a skier, the feasibility of this seems surprisingly obvious. If you're not a skier, it's important to understand that gondolas can load/unload at a very gentle speed, but then travel at a relatively high speed. This is enabled by simple yet ingenious mechanism.

As with ski resorts (such as Whistler) which operate in the Summer, gondolas could be equipped with external quick-loading (yet very safe) bike racks. Door openings are more than wide enough to accommodate strollers and wheelchairs.

As a homeowner who lives adjacent to the Kirkland section of the corridor, I would be fine with gondolas - but not with light rail. Gondolas are quiet and aesthetically pleasing from every standpoint. For your consideration. Many thanks.

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**Jackie Kiter****INTERESTS**

Rail use

**CONTACT**

jackiekiter@hotmail.com

**COMMENT**

The highest greater good for environment and increasing population transit needs...KEEP THE RAIL...do not let Kirkland usurp what needs to happen for an entire area.

---

**Jennifer Matthews****INTERESTS**

Rail use

**CONTACT**

jenn@jmmatthews.com

**COMMENT**

Rather than tear-up the tracks for a walking/cycling trail, why not develop the Woodinville portion into a tourist attraction railway that caters to the winery visitors?

---

**Robin Moore****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, hiking

**CONTACT**

1.rkmoore@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

Thrilled to hear this rail corridor could be utilized for hiking & biking. A sound barrier where it runs along 405 next to Ripley Ln (near Seahawks VMAC) and to the North would make an enormous improvement to the existing parallel paved path & future rail trail. Currently underutilized because proximity to and noise from 405 are extreme. Thank you!

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# Public Comments

EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 23-May 10, 2013

## Randy & Lisa Ritualo

### INTERESTS

Permit to cross property

### CONTACT

rlritualo@msn.com

### COMMENT

Permission to cut brush located on ERC to street level along the bike path along Lake Washington BLVD between 29th and 31st street. The property is partially maintained by the City of Renton. No tree removal is being requested. Brush cutting of black berries, maple & alder starts. Permission was previously granted by Burlington Northern on request. <<Note: Staff has forwarded this request to King County Facilities Management Division, which is currently in the process of transferring over permits from BNSF>>

## F And

### INTERESTS

Public transit

### CONTACT

anacortesf@aol.com

### COMMENT

What are the reasonable options being considered?

# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

May 13-June 3, 2013

### Tom Radley

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Regional trail and transit connections

#### CONTACT

tomradley@msn.com

#### COMMENT

I am an avid cyclist and very interested in seeing this trail completed. I would like to volunteer to help. I live in Redmond and am retired.

### Adam Farr

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling

#### CONTACT

adam.farr@pse.com

#### COMMENT

I am excited to be able to go from the Centennial trail connect right to this trail and then the Burke Gilman Trail all the way to Seattle!

### Josh Maciejewski

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling

#### CONTACT

josh.maciejewski@pse.com

#### COMMENT

Is there an expected completion date for the project? I'm an avid cyclist and look forward to the completion.

Is there any way that I may volunteer to help with the project?

### Anthony Bufort

#### INTERESTS

Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections

#### CONTACT

ajbufort@yahoo.com

#### COMMENT

Please, please, PLEASE do your very best to make sure this valuable acquisition is utilized toward maximum possible benefit for MASS TRANSIT! A rail link to Bellevue and beyond from Renton would be too wonderful for words. With some of the most congested and problematic traffic in the state, the Renton area really needs relief that other transit plans have not provided for. And might I add that this article by our mayor, Dennis Law, is right on point: <continued>



<http://www.rentonreporter.com/opinion/209735711.html>

PLEASE make Renton-Bellevue rail connection part of the "Connecting Washington" package!!

You might want to highlight that message as well during the meeting. :)

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 4-July 22, 2013

### Gary Young

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling

#### CONTACT

letyoung2@gmail.com

#### COMMENT

I support removal of the tracks and install an assfaulted Bicycle/Walking path.

### Marvin & Mary Mitchell

#### INTERESTS

Hiking, Rail use on the ERC

#### CONTACT

mmitchell@hotmail.com

#### COMMENT

We live along Lake Washington Boulevard in Renton. Access to our neighborhood Barbee Mill currently crosses the old rail lines. We are very concerned about a transit train using this corridor as we were always told this would be a bike and walking trail only. Addition of a rail line within this close proximity to Lake Washington would be a disruption to that ecosystem. As well, a rail line will negatively impact the enjoyment of our property as well as the value. The noise and light level is something that is not acceptable to us. We hope that before any rail decisions are made impacting our property that the property owners along this corridor are consulted for their feedback. What are the specific plans and timelines associated to this piece of the corridor from the Seahawks practice center south toward Renton Boeing plant?

### William Damm

#### INTERESTS

Hiking

#### CONTACT

billdamm@msn.com

#### COMMENT

The ERC is a good trail for walking (with pets too)that is away from vehicle and bicycle traffic, however brush is overgrowing the tracks that will soon render the way impassable in places. Some minor maintainance to trim and some application of treatment to inhibit brush growth would be appreciated to keep the way passable. Also in several spots trees have fallen accross the tracks that could be cleared with some minor chain saw cutting. Thank you for considering my suggestion. Bill Damm



**Brian Gaines****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Adjoining land uses, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections, Permits to cross or other special use of the property

**CONTACT**

brian.gaines57@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

Before you commit to any rail, you must give this mixed use a try: BELLEVUE TO WOODINVILLE 2 lanes of mixed use foot & motorized/non-motorized wheeled traffic.

Lane 1: AM/PM EXPRESS ONE WAY ONLY, for electronically permitted, higher energy efficient AUTOMOBILES/MOTORIZED BIKES, with limited on/off ramps; south bound in AM commuting hours and northbound in PM commuting hours. Bus only access between the am and pm hours, express busses ONLY during commuting hours. Max 40 mph speed limit.

Lane 2 CONSISTING of 3 smaller lanes for; foot traffic, north bound non-motorized wheeled traffic, and south bound non-motorized wheeled traffic. Always open, no restrictions on hours of use.

Storm water mitigation:

provide drainage swales or underground storage pipes, between the 2 lanes, these also to act as a safety buffer between the 2 lanes. Also make use of as much pervious concrete as possible for both lanes.

Keep in mind that many road bikes tires do not ride well on anything but smooth concrete or asphalt.

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**Rob Tobeck****INTERESTS**

Hiking

**CONTACT**

rob@griffinmaclean.com

**COMMENT**

I propose that the ERC be converted to use as a trail for walking, jogging, bicycling, and other forms of recreation. I currently live in the Kennydale Hill area and what we have now is a dangerous situation with people trying to walk, jog, bike, and drive along Lake Washington Blvd. I am surprised there aren't more accidents along that stretch and feel it is a matter of time before something serious occurs. I feel a trail would greatly enhance the quality of life for residents.

I am originally from Pinellas County, Florida and I can remember when that county formed the Pinellas Trail from an old rail corridor. This trail extends almost the entire length of the county and over the past 25 years it has been used for biking, hiking, jogging, and other forms of recreation. It has really enhanced the quality of life for local residents and I can't imagine going back home and not being able to enjoy the recreation that the trail has to offer.

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**Sonya Tobeck****INTERESTS**

Hiking, Bicycling

**CONTACT**

stobeck61@hotmail.com

**COMMENT**

I believe this would be an excellent use for biking walking and jogging trail. Keep pedestrians safe from car traffic on a ready busy lake wa blvd.

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**Connie Ballou**

**INTERESTS**

**CONTACT**

connieballou@hotmail.com

**COMMENT**

I want to be sure.

Is this the rails to trails agenda? This is not clearly that.

Thankis. <<Staff responded with more information about the RAC process>>

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

July 23-September 4, 2013

### Nick Ambrose

**INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Hiking

**CONTACT**

limeyx@gmail.com

**COMMENT**

I would love to see good public use of the rail corridor but we live right by it and I am extremely concerned about noise and other pollution if trains are allowed to run on it again.

Please consider this in any usage plans.

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### Kirk Wills

**INTERESTS**

Public transit, connections

**CONTACT**

Kirkw1@msn.com

**COMMENT**

Look to the future, I strongly believe this should be under the direct control of King County and Sound Transit. We will need this for mass transit 15-20 years from now. We have a lot of catching up to do, compared to other countries. Pay now, or pay later. Sound Transit is doing a great job, track and being laid and the system is working, lets look at a 15-20 year plan. Thanks for you service.

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### Gerald Lakin

**INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Hiking

**CONTACT**

glakin@msn.com

**COMMENT**

First of all, the idea of putting commuter transit rail on the ERC is not feasible. Running 60 mph light rail along the ERC would require new rail infrastructure, dealing with 40-some rail crossings between Bellevue and Renton and undergoing significant noise mitigation. There is no way a bike/pedestrian trail could coexist along side high speed rail on ERC. Current plans for commuter rail between Bellevue and Renton is on pylons down the center of I405, connecting with the various 'fly-overs', park & ride lots, and buses from the HOV lanes. So a bike and pedestrian corridor is the only viable option for ERC. Let's join the City of Redmond and get going with a trails only solution.

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## Christopher Burke

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Rail use on the ERC

### CONTACT

chrisburke99@gmail.com

### COMMENT

I want to make sure your group is aware of the potential for rail-with-trail on this corridor. Personally I am all for a trail for the entire length; such a facility would be a tremendous addition to the regional trail network. However I know some interests claim to want to restore rail service to the corridor. Whatever the merits of individual proposals for trains, it should be clear that trains and trails can coexist happily.

The RTC published a report on 61 rail-with-trails in 2000. They are threatening to release an update with many more rails-with-trails included but I have not seen it yet. Here is the link to their 2000 report:

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/Rails-with-Trails%20Report%20reprint\\_1-06\\_lr.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/Rails-with-Trails%20Report%20reprint_1-06_lr.pdf)

Anyway, just in case you hadn't heard of this report, here it is.

## Lonnie Lindell

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Adjoining land uses, Regional trail and transit connections

### CONTACT

llindell@live.com

### COMMENT

I am a Bellevue citizen who owns property adjacent to the ERC. I support a trail and linear park on the ERC. I encourage the trail to be located on the crown of the existing geography and support immediate removal of the existing rails to allow for recreational purposes in the near term. I encourage appropriate grade separation between different modes of use and encourage screening and appropriate setbacks from incompatible single family residential uses. Locating the trail on the existing crown will allow the least expensive trail development and will not require expensive retaining walls at some of the narrow pinch points that have challenging elevation changes. This is similar to the City of Redmond's planning effort to align a trail even if subsequent planning efforts would make the trail incompatible with any approved rail purposes. In any scenario, (other than East Link and areas in Bellevue that Sound Transit owns fee simple) we are decades away from light rail or other rail within the ERC so even if a pedestrian trail was later relocated to make way for other modes of transportation, it is still good policy to develop the trail in the most cost effective manner. Plans should involve coordination with all adjacent property owners and should include a proposal to resolve the private property ownership fee and easement issues along the ERC. Based upon documentation in King County's site, it would appear it is assumed that the entire corridor is within public control and ownership. However, this is not correct as Burlington Northern Railroad previously conveyed fee simple and easements to adjacent property owners. All plans should include recommendations regarding corridor crossings across the ERC to access waterfront properties. My home located at 4601 Lake WA Blvd SE, Bellevue, WA only has one point of access and this is over the ERC. Any development of the ERC should protect sensitive areas, maintain water quality in adjacent streams and waterways, maintain wildlife corridors within the ERC and comply in all respects with NEPA and SEPA. I support shared use of the ERC for utilities. Thank you for allowing me to submit these comments.



**Mike Young****INTERESTS**

Bicycling

**CONTACT**

juliamike@comcast.net

**COMMENT**

Julia & I live next to the ERC at 5031 Lakehurst Ln SE. We support Londi Lindell's comments, recommendations, and positions. Mike Young

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**Stuart Robinson****INTERESTS**

Bicycling

**CONTACT**

me@stuartr.id.au

**COMMENT**

I'd love to see a paved bike trail like the Burke-Gilman or the Sammamish River trails along the ERC. It would be especially good as a continuous, safe, off-road connection between the 520 trail and the I-90 trail, and I would prioritize this segment. I would also hope that the beautiful trestle bridge over SE 8th St could be maintained and incorporated into the trail.

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**Tim Riley****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Hiking, Adjoining land uses, Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC

**CONTACT**

tim@rileybusiness.com

**COMMENT**

I live at 3607 Lake Washington Blvd N in Renton. The rail line is less than 40 feet from my young sons bedroom. I am very concerned about rail being expanded in this quiet neighborhood where many people live. I know that it would destroy our current home that we love. The only access to the very popular Kennydale Beach Park is to walk over the railroad tracks - are you going to build a pedestrian overpass for that? It seems to make sense to run the rail through this part of Renton closer to 405 or right down the middle of 405.

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**Adam Isaacson****INTERESTS**

Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections

**CONTACT**

isaacson\_5@hotmail.com

**COMMENT**

The greater Seattle-Bellevue area is in desperate need of mass transit options beyond what is already on the table (buses, light rail, private automobiles). The ERC is prime for a commuter/transit rail corridor as it is already graded for rail travel and has rails in place. It would be a great way for people to commute up and down the Eastside to and from Boeing Renton, downtown Bellevue, Google in Kirkland, connections to I-90 and SR520. The positive commuting impacts would far outweigh the negative impacts any NIMBY's might bring forward. Let's do something that is good for everyone and not just protective of the property value or peace and quiet of the relative few who live along this corridor. This region needs something big and bold to help our transportation system. Using an existing rail corridor for commuter rail or light rail is a no-brainer to me.

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## Heidi Schor

### INTERESTS

Public transit on the ERC

### CONTACT

hs@heidischor.com

### COMMENT

It cannot be overstated that having such a corridor is essential to maximize for future rail public transit. I am disheartened by the self serving complaints from neighbors that don't want rail in their backyard. Public transit always affects someone, and homes that border the corridor are valued accordingly, and were purchased with the knowledge that they border a railroad. Many of us payed higher prices for our land to not have a railway in our backyard, or to be near a highway in our case, and to now treat those properties as higher value, more sensitive is ludicrous. We have a golden opportunity to develop this for mass transit. The east side is far behind in providing a fast reliable alternative to more highways and more pollution. Let's look to our children's future and get building.

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## Scott Cookman

### INTERESTS

Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC,  
Regional trail and transit connections

### CONTACT

cookman.wa@gmail.com

### COMMENT

As a regular commuter of the SR 169 corridor, I have known of a great opportunity to streamline the transportation plan. I recently heard about the reutilization of the unused rail corridor from Renton to Bellevue for a Light Rail project to reduce the I-405 congestion. The report stated that it would accommodate the light rail and bicycle traffic, and I believe the same can be done for the bottle neck congestion that SR 169 has due to its restricted expansion caused by the Cedar River and hillsides.

When I arrived in Maple Valley in 2007, I noticed that the coal rail lines had been converted to a bicycle and walking path. I immediately thought about returning the graded rail line to a combination light rail and bicycle traffic. The easiest way to implement this is to take in account what King County Transit bus schedule has come up with; the buses only run during commuter traffic periods.

A rail system could be easily put in place as the rail bed has already been established to include bridges and that it does not interfere with SR 169 itself. The initial tracks can be put in place and run diesel electric hybrid cars like those used by Oregon's Tri Met WES <http://www.trimet.org/wes/index.htm>, and the one in Massachusetts' MBTA [http://www.mbta.com/about\\_the\\_mbta/news\\_events/?id=21092](http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/news_events/?id=21092). This same type of system can also be used on the Renton to Bellevue project as well. It would not add additional pollution as it would replace the existing bus routes providing the same service.

Please consider this a viable option for rapid implementation that can be used as a interim solution until the overhead lines can be put in place for a electric light rail.

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**Tom Thramer****INTERESTS**

Bicycling

**CONTACT**

Tthramer@brwncald.com

**COMMENT**

When the rail property was acquired it was told to the public that it would be used as a trail, not for transit.

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**Bob Knosp****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Hiking

**CONTACT**

&lt;&lt;not provided&gt;&gt;

**COMMENT**

I see you cleared out the section between NE 145th and NE 128, making it easier to hike. Does this mean that progress on converting it to a trail is forthcoming?

Are you looking for any volunteer help in realizing this plan?

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**Kathy Cox****INTERESTS**

Rail Use on the ERC

**CONTACT**

kathy@marketingphilharmonic.com

**COMMENT**

"Let'er Boom: Celebrating 125 Years of Trains Then and Now, Sept. 15th"

WOODINVILLE and SNOHOMISH, Wash. - The Woodinville Heritage Society and the City of Snohomish presents a celebration in honor of the first passenger service 125 years ago from Seattle to Snohomish via Woodinville on Sunday, September 15th. The Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad ran its first train on September 19th, 1888 from Seattle to Woodinville and Snohomish.

The free two day event ties Woodinville and Snohomish together just as the rails tied them together 125 years ago. The trains put Woodinville and Snohomish on the map and made them into thriving cities. Today, the Eastside Rail Corridor still connects Woodinville and Snohomish with greater potential to come. This event celebrates 125 years of trains through speeders, speakers, train presentations, a BNSF family mini-train ride for children, garden scale model railcars, historical costumes, music, and other exhibits.

The Sunday celebration will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Woodinville along the railroad tracks across from the Woodinville Post Office on Woodinville Snohomish Road and in Snohomish at Harvey Airfield and the City of Snohomish information center.

"We are excited to be celebrating how rail positively impacted our cities and how rails and trails can make the Upper Eastside residents lives even better", said Eastside TRailway Alliance co-chairs, Karen Guzak, Mayor of Snohomish and Les Rubstello, City of Woodinville Council member.

"The entire Upper Eastside has many attributes that attract visitors and this is a start on the valley working together to showcase our benefits", said Woodinville Wine Country executive director, Sandra Lee.

The current operator, Eastside Freight, will run a special VIP caboose from Woodinville to Snohomish at noon. The VIPs on the trip will include the co-chairs of the Eastside TRailway alliance, Washington legislator's rail caucus leader, Rep. Luis Moscoso, and other government officials. The Pacific Railcar Operators will also be running speeders on the rail before and after the VIP Train Tour. Speeders are historical motorized vehicles which railroads formerly used to transport crews for track inspection and maintenance. Now private owners will run their speeders for entertainment. Music performances will

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enhance the celebration of the start and end of the Woodinville to Snohomish trip. The Barking Frog mobile kitchen will be on hand in Woodinville to start off the day.

Today, freight service continues under the auspices of Eastside Community Rail and their operator, Eastside Freight from Woodinville to Snohomish. The Eastside TRailway Alliance formed in January 2013 with the Snohomish Mayor and a Woodinville City Council member as co-chairs with the purpose of promoting multi-usage of the Eastside Rail Corridor.

A Saturday symposium of speakers such as Alfred Runte and Paul Dorpat, a musical interlude and lunch will provide a historical perspective of the corridor along with an Eastside TRailway Alliance meeting. Doors open: 9 a.m., AngelArmsWorks, 230 Avenue B, Snohomish. This is also a free event but registration is required via [bagnew@discovery.org](mailto:bagnew@discovery.org).

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# Public Comments

## EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

September 5-25, 2013

### Luci Abbrederis

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking

#### CONTACT

Not provided

#### COMMENT

Thank you for all your work on this project and for having all of our best interests in mind.

### Marvin Weiss

#### INTERESTS

#### CONTACT

marvinweiss@hotmail.com

#### COMMENT

Why is it that the Sept. 25's Council meeting is held in downtown Seattle, but all of the citizens and local governments most affected are located on the Eastside or south end of Lake Washington? Is there not a large enough facility on the Eastside for such meetings? <Note: Staff responded to note that RAC meetings have been held throughout the region, including several adjacent to the corridor.>

### Geoff Hazel

#### INTERESTS

Bicycling

#### CONTACT

geoffhazel@gmail.com

#### COMMENT

There are many areas on the southern region of the ERC that are affected by narrow constrictions and : I reviewed the draft document and I'm impressed with how thoroughly it treats all the intersecting interests and issues regarding the trail. I look forward to being able to ride a bicycle from Renton all the way up to Woodinville on this route once it is finally complete. Even recognizing all the issues with multi-use, could we agree that the easiest and least costly thing to start with is a bike trail, and then expand from there? Let's keep 2040 in mind but not wait 25 years to build something -- a bike trail could be in place much sooner. MUCH sooner.

**David McCray****INTERESTS**

Bicycling, Adjoining land uses, Rail use on the ERC, Public transit on the ERC, Regional trail and transit connections

**CONTACT**

order1@mccray.ws

**COMMENT**

There are many areas on the southern region of the ERC that are affected by narrow constrictions and are parallel to I-405. Some areas of the ERC are isolated from existing transportation corridors. I believe any consideration of rail use / public transit should be accomplished in a shared use with I-405. I would happily give up HOV lanes to have efficient rail transit throughout the metropolitan area. Public transit along existing established transportation corridors would provide access to already existing park and ride facilities and connections to spur routes for bus and other transportation. As a driver on the freeway, watching efficient trains passing by rapidly in the currently existing HOV lanes would serve as good advertisement and encouragement for use of mass transit. What do we want to promote, car pooling or mass transit? I think for the long term, mass transit is a lot more practical and environmentally friendly. Why not take advantage of already existing facilities and infrastructure to allow for a quicker and less costly implementation of mass transit? Perhaps there will be reluctance to convert the existing HOV lanes to mass transit lanes. In that case it still seems like it would be more practical to expand the freeway system with mass transit lane(s) that share the same corridor than to develop an entirely separate corridor. Thanks for your consideration and help in shaping the future of public transportation.

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# Public Comments

EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

September 25- October 22, 2013

## Shawn Etchevers

### INTERESTS

Bicycling, Hiking, Connections

### CONTACT

setchev@comcast.net

### COMMENT

It is fine to have an interim agreement about all the potential uses of the ERC. But, it is clearly tilted towards eventual use of rail transportation with the intent to 'solve', or meaningfully ameliorate the transportation problems in King and surrounding counties. This tells me that the members of the RAC are principally focused on a narrow slice of a big range of things that need to happen in the region to solve the traffic problem.

Leaving aside the huge cost and limited flexibility of rail service, 2 or 3 of these North-South rail lines will never solve the traffic problem until: A. A clear, rational, long-term consolidation of high-density residential, commercial, and industrial areas is firmly defined. Then, those areas need to be well connected with frequent buses, fast light-rail, or a subway. B. These 'few' high-density areas, particularly the commercial ones, need to offer at least all the most common services that people need to use daily and weekly.

The 'random' growth of urban areas, basically determined by businesses in the construction field, worked great in the 50's. But, as people move to urban areas and density increases, that model no longer works. Cars should not be allowed in central areas. It is irrational to expect to improve the movement of people by creating more and wider roads for cars, in and around an ant hill. The main reason why we 'have to' use the car in the urban area is because there is no reasonable alternative to do all the things we need to do outside the house every day.

There are many examples of solutions that have been or are being tried in other countries around the world, which should be considered and improved upon. Additionally, RAC should tap the ideas of the large hi-tech talent pool in Puget Sound. These people have very rich and varied experience with high-density urban centers in other countries. They, and the companies they work for, also have the skills to dream up and model many potential solutions to our transportation center. All we need to do is provide them with the required technical and demographic data to do the job, plus an incentive to share their view on the subject.

But, in the quest for a more efficient flow of people in our regional urban area (Everett to Tacoma), one cannot ignore the quality of life issues both in the high-density and low-density (family) residential areas. Large, quiet, and green spaces that invite many people to gather and mingle within the urban center - without the need to use a car to get to it - should be expanded. They should not be reduced, or their quality for human enjoyment diminished. The ERC should be developed to be the equivalent of our Central Park. We should not continue to carve out our residential areas with additional transportation, without even trying to solve the root of the problem, which is a poor, long-term urban plan.

Let us be more creative and more efficient in the use of our existing infrastructure. Meanwhile, we could start charging fees or prohibiting the use of single-passenger cars in certain roads/streets, at certain hours, and on certain days. Of course, alternative solutions, like frequent-transportation for example, must be offered as an alternative to the affected users. Variations of this should be experimented in different parts, and for limited areas in the Puget Sound region.

## Nancy Main

### INTERESTS

### CONTACT

neisner@comcast.net

### COMMENT

I'm concerned: presently there are boats and boat trailers parked and stored on land adjacent to the rail line. I pay for storage for my boat and trailer. Don't understand why this free storage is permitted. It's also unsightly as one walks the roads bordering the rail lines. There are two locations in Bellevue this is happening: Pleasure Point Lane and 106th SE in Bellevue and Hazelwood Lane and 106th SE. There are five boat trailers at the first site, and two boats and two trailers at the second site. Thanks for listening, and hopefully this area can be cleaned up. Looking forward to the development of this great corridor. Nancy :)

<<NOTE: Staff referred Ms. Main to the DNRP staff who are maintaining the corridor.>>

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## Anthony Ambrose

### INTERESTS

### CONTACT

Bicycling, Hiking

anthony@anthonyambrose.net

### COMMENT

As a Kirkland resident, i am very interested in when the ERC will be paved for bicycle use. i took a walk on the newly opened section, and it was beautiful. It will be a great trail for walking and cycling!

<<NOTE: Staff forwarded this to the City of Kirkland.>>

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## Karen Guzak

### INTERESTS

### CONTACT

Public transit on the ERC

guzak@ci.snohomish.wa.us

### COMMENT

I sound like a "SQUEAKY WHEEL" but you need to include the approximately 15 miles of corridor that go through Snohomish County to the City of Snohomish. Our city is an owner of a portion of the corridor....all of 3 blocks. But we are shaking you all to WAKE UP to the potential to connect all of the eastside to Snohomish and to Everett. This could create a commuter loop which will connect with the west side lines of Sound Transit and could serve the whole region.

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## **Cynthia Welti**

### **INTERESTS**

### **CONTACT**

Cynthia.Welti@mtsgreenway.org

### **COMMENT**

I just perused this report and was blown back by it! It has so much content so clearly laid out together with invocative vision, with just the right level of detail. It will make a great reference for all of us for Regional Trails. Indeed I saved the link for us at the Greenway to refer to.

I really hadn't expected such a large group with such a large task to pull together something this terrific this fast.

Congratulations on what must have taken a large portion of your time this year.

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## Eastside Rail Corridor

### July 31, 2013 Open House Comment Card Responses

The following provides a summary of the 38 written comments from the open house. The summary groups the responses by comment form question (columns) and by zip code (rows). The largest number of comments came from Kirkland (16 from area codes 98033 and 98034), and Renton (12 from area codes 98056 and 98058).

What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
<b>98004 (no. of responses – 1) – Bellevue, north of I-90, west of I-405</b>		
To have an interim solution, a trail, as close to nature as possible	Let's have a non-expensive trail to be used by people	When should we expect Kirkland trail to be available to pedestrians?
<b>98006 (no. of responses - 3) – Bellevue, south of I-90</b>		
Trail for now, rail (maybe) in the distant future	If you wait until there is money to design a multi-use corridor, we will all be dead before we get to use it. Pull up the tracks, spread some gravel and let us use it now. When the money comes, changing the trail to accommodate rail won't be a significant expense.	Why does a very small group of pro-rail folks who all want rail so they can make money off of taxpayers have such a grasp on our officials?
Love the idea of multiple uses for the corridor. I picture lots of pedestrian and bike use like on the Burke Gilman and Sammamish River trails.	In planning the corridor, it is vital to also consider access to the trail. For example, how would one bike there from the Somerset or Cougar Mountain areas? No access = no use!	I would encourage Bellevue to re-think what it means to have a bike route. For example, the idea of a family riding along the Coal Creek Blvd "bike route" is utterly ridiculous!
Walking/biking trail	Trail is great! But, privacy for nearby residents (wall, hedge). Absolutely no light rail in segment 5, where it is <u>WAY</u> too tight!	Also concerned about crime increasing, with more access from a trail.



What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
<b>98033 (no. of responses – 15) Kirkland</b>		
Multi-use trail	Rails should be removed to allow trail	
Get a trail on the corridor. A sightseeing train would be awful for the corridor.	Get a trail sooner not later. Use the parks levy money sooner.	I have a problem reconciling the County's position as a parks/trail provider asking for a parks levy but then asking for more money as a transit provider.
Trail for bikes and pedestrians = healthy exercise. Social justice for all. Separate autos from bikes and pedestrian safely	Transit in future when ridership numbers warrant. Separated safely from trail	
Preserve it. But develop it ASAP for pedestrian and non-motorized transportation. The long term value of this green connector will increase as years go by (50-100 yrs). There is no other option for such a trail on the Eastside. Trains do have other options. Think quality of life, not just transportation without considering the impact on urban quality of life.	Plan active events on it, for people to 'discover' its potential.	Define future high density areas for all to see. Plan development and street-car connection on existing streets, and make city-centers completely pedestrian (except for service/emergency vehicles, which could run at night.)
Bicycling and walking (separate where possible)	Bicycle commuting (not just recreation) is a legitimate and important form of transportation. Please treat it as such and keep bicycles in mind.	
Bike trail that doubles as a safer way to travel and a better way to exercise on bike/foot close to home		Will any housing properties need to be expropriated if the pedestrian/commuter combo is chosen?

What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
A trail for walking/running. It would really beautify the areas, and the value of the surrounding homes.	I think that having a running train in the middle of neighborhood is environmentally incorrect. Furthermore, I understand that the outside interest does not have the capital to repair those rails ready to be used.	
A way to connect all of Kirkland for pedestrians and bikes, and strollers, who need to get away from cars and find peace and exercise in our beautiful corridor.	Make it beautiful and accessible so Kirkland retains its reputation as a great place to live. And keep our children's parks, schools, and small urban centers safe and serene.	
Rail (freight, excursion and transit) and trail	Fools to ignore the RR	
Definitely not as a rail - we want a trail for bicycle, hiking, and running/walking.	I think that the rails should be removed immediately. They are in a very bad condition, so to not delay any future use, they should be removed.	
Absolutely <u>not</u> rail. Must be converted to a trail for bicycle, hiking and running/walking.	Currently railway is in poor condition. Cost for rehabilitation would not be cost effective and extremely unsafe for residents in Kirkland.	Outside interests should not be permitted to delay Kirkland from exercising its rights to convert our section to our desired applications.
Strip park passable with light rail; heavy use 7 days a week, commuting by rail, walking, bike, skates. Park use for walking/jogging.	Eventually connect to Burke-Gilman and Logboom Trails	
Multi-use pedestrian and bicycle	The City of Kirkland has developed an excellent master plan which should be supported.	I do not believe that trains are reasonable in this section of the corridor.



What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
Hiking and biking - dog walking. Improved walkway	Remove rail - make trail part of community	What would rail be used for if left?
Trail with good separation from transit - remove existing rails/ballast and allow Kirkland to have an interim trail while ridership and monies are found and developed!!	For transit - ballast of 12" is standard for Sound Transit to mitigate for noise and vibration. We need at least this much in residential areas, maybe less in industrial.	Trail allows all people to participate in a healthy exercise at <u>NO</u> cost. No special membership. Social Justice!!!!
<b>98034 (no. of responses – 1) – Kirkland - Inglewood-Finn Hill area, north of downtown Kirkland</b>		
Who and how will people get to use it? How wide? Will it have grass for horses and pavement with separate bike and peds?	When and where to follow reports? Will there be rest stops and water fountains? Are there stop signs at non-spots?	What about signs and rules? What are options of biking, ped and trails, and trains?
<b>98052 (no. of responses – 1) - Redmond</b>		
Freight rail to serve industry shared by commuter rail, with trail alongside	It is a rail corridor, first and foremost, and historic at that. Other uses are secondary.	Why can't the ERC RAC accept that multiple use of the corridors is now the norm, not exclusive trails?
<b>98056 (no. of responses – 11) – Renton -primarily east of I-405</b>		
Plan for light rail along 405 South. Trail along current BN Line on Lake Washington Blvd. for bikes and walkers.	Proximity of rail (current track) to homes as a safety concern. As a negative impact on waterfront property values.	
Outdoor walkers/bikers	No light rail or rail!	Please stay in contact!
Trail and bike	No rail - if you want rail, then locate it on I-405	
We live along Lake Washington on one side and railroad tracks Renton segment 5. Would like to see walking and bike trail going south into the Coulon Park.	A trail would take the bike and walking off of Lake Washington Blvd which has been an area where cars collide with walkers and bikes.	Concerned about recent spraying along segment 5 which is browning foliage and creating fire hazard

What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
Trail I-90 to Renton, easement is not suitable for light rail in this segment	Yes	
Sec 5 - running, walking and bike trail	I would like to see a system much like the system in Atlanta, GA	
Eventually I would love light rail, but not on the tracks. The tracks should be a walking trail!!	Too many houses/intersections to neighborhoods for light rail. Trail will be FABULOUS, AMAZING.	
Mass transit, rail and trail to alleviate gridlock on I-405 from Southcenter to I-90	Small scale rail/trolley respecting homeowners and commuters in my lifetime.	Where are the politicians brave enough to raise the necessary tax revenue?
Trail ok - light rail no	A light rail would be disasterous to our property values and to our peace and joy in our home	
Trails, PSE use, not light rail	Great concerns about light rail on this corridor - speed and sound for neighbors	
Not rail. Would love a multi-use trail. Key is connecting to other trails like 90 and 520 bike trails.	See (answer 1)	
<b>98058 (no. of responses – 1) – Renton – Maple Heights/Lake Desire area; west of Hwy 169</b>		
Multi-purpose, to include some type of mass transit. Not sure what's possible - trolley, bus rapid transit.	Please don't view this as another Burke-Gilman trail. I don't see this as a public benefit if it is only pedestrian/bicycle.	
<b>98072 (no. of responses – 1) – Woodinville/Cottage Lake</b>		
Trail in hear term. Land use policies and corridor management strategies that preserve the corridor for other future uses.	I understand that the Port owns the corridor from the Sammamish River north and that it is active freight. However, the County's terminus	



What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
	makes no sense from a transportation planning perspective and should be extended to downtown Woodinville.	
<b>98133 (no. of responses – 1) – Shoreline – immediately west of I-5</b>		
Bike-trail-no rail. 21st Century Master (plan?) like that at NASA AMES (old Moffett Field) Mt. View, California	Any rail or bus system will actually make more congestion. 21st Century has equivalent of 3 freeway lanes and can be constructed without travel on existing freeway	Why do we allow Sound Transit to spend up to \$129 Billion for increased congestion - 21st Century Master is completely green and profitable. Please let me give a presentation.
<b>98177 (no. of responses – 1) – Shoreline – fronting Puget Sound</b>		
A commuter/freight rail line servicing our growing communities from Snohomish to Renton.	Avoid at all costs turning segments of the "rail corridor" into another pedestrian/bike trail that we don't need. Pedestrian/bike trails will (not?) provide mass transit service to our growing eastside communities	
<b>No zip code provided (no. of responses – 2)</b>		
It should not be used as a rail. It should be a trail for walking, running, bicycling and hiking.	The outside interest does not have funding to rehabilitate the rails. Furthermore, they have no right to intercede.	
Bike/Pedestrian trail	Pedestrians use trails for many purposes – exercise, social activity, appreciation of nature. Their activity is at a slower pace than that of bicyclists (speed being characteristic of bicycle activity), often wondering from one side of a trail to the other with little attention to other traffic. Safety should be the first	

What is your vision for the future use of the corridor	Do you have any general comments or ideas about the corridor	Do you have any additional questions
	management objective. Signage is the least expensive method of communicating the trail manager's expectations (examples of Clallam County signage provided)	

**Those who wish to be added to emailing list: 26 people**



## Transcript of July 31, 2013 ERC Open House Video Comments

### **COMMENT 1: Christine – Renton Kenndale area**

I'm new to here. I have two small dogs that my husband and I walk every day and we have no park in our neighborhood to take them to because they're not allowed in the park down the street. So the only place we have to walk is on Lake Washington Boulevard, which is extremely dangerous: there's cars, there's bikes, there's a big bike trail that just dumps out on to Lake Washington Boulevard, and you have guys going by on ten-speeds really fast, so it's dangerous. My hope is that you take the trail and take the rails out and make it a trail so that it's safe for everybody in the community. To run light rail through a residential neighborhood at ground level, I don't think is the answer for anyone in this community. That's just my thoughts.

### **COMMENT 2: Jerry – South of I-90/West of 405**

The train tracks that were in existence before we moved there are still there. They have not been removed even though they're not currently being used. They're used as a walking path, even though you couldn't ride a bicycle on them, and I resent the idea that taking them out is going to be an improvement. If we want to create a path you can leave the tracks intact and pave over and then leave the rail bed there for future use. I'm afraid that if we take out the tracks they'll never go back in and as a consequence we'll look back on this twenty years later and say why did we do that, when we should incorporate all the existing rail to utilize for mass transit. It can be incorporated into the Sound Transit system, as well as going further south all the way down to the airport. So I think it's very short-sighted to look at removing train tracks and just leaving it as a trail without any idea of what you're going to do with it down the road. Thank you.

### **COMMENT 3: Gary Young – Mountainview Avenue**

I live just five houses to the south of the track. We've been there 25 years. Our property abuts the rail. Our concern with a rail system would be the noise and the safety aspects of that. Our preference would be to make it a combination walking and bicycle trail. We note that currently there's a bicycle trail right on the edge of Mountainview Avenue – or, not Mountainview Avenue but Lake Washington Boulevard that parallels the tracks. And there have been several serious accidents there in just recent months, so it would be an opportunity to get the bicycle traffic off that fast-moving highway there. Also, it would, I would hope that the trail would go into the Coulon Park there, so that walkers and bicyclists could access the park that way instead of on the busy highway there. One concern that we have presently is they put big stones along the railroad track there that kind of restricts the parking, but they're good looking stones and I suppose it's better than an ugly fence maybe. But I wondered what they had in mind when they put those stones there. Thank you.

### **COMMENT 4: Lisa – Barbee Mill, Renton, Kenndale neighborhood**

I'm happy to hear that we're looking at both mass transit along the 405 corridor but also keeping the rail area more for multi-use trail. And we know it's going to cost a lot of money, so you've got a lot of volunteer labor there, use us, come to us, we've got a lot of good associations. We're happy to help move things along as quickly as possible so that we can make it a more enjoyable area and useful and safe for everybody.

**COMMENT 5: Paul Siegmund – Barbee Mill corridor, Renton**

I live right about smack in the middle of Segment 5 and I'd like to ask you to have the County get a move on in turning this into a trail. It would be useful. I was one of the witnesses to the almost tragic accident of a jogger getting hit pretty much 100 yards south of us while out for a walk along Lake Washington Boulevard. I would commute regularly except that I don't like that bike trail. I work on the other side of Renton. The trail is useful. I run along it right now, usually hopping on the ties, but it's useful.

But I would implore everybody to work as fast as possible to remove the ties, remove the rails, bring 50 to 100 loads of pea gravel in to smooth out the ballast a little bit, because mostly it is good shape. It wouldn't take a lot of time or effort or cost to turn it into a perfectly useful pedestrian trail, all the way from Coal Creek or wherever it ends now down to Coulon Park. And that way the mildly dangerous segment of Lake Washington Boulevard that recreational users are trying to stick with now in a three-foot-wide space on two margins becomes an eight-to-ten-foot-wide space reasonably well paved – you run a roller over it, it would be good enough – you could take mountain bikers, runners, joggers, dogs, what have you, along that.

I think you'd find people would take care of maintenance as we do now. We go running along there, we bring machetes occasionally. We're well-meaning neighbors, we'll take care of it so the County won't have much maintenance costs. But right now it's really not useful, except to a few dozen people who are hardy enough to go down there. But we'd get more. C'mon, bring it on. Do what Kirkland is getting ready to do now that their suit is out of the way.

But I really would like to see it used as a pedestrian-friendly, bicycle-friendly recreational trail. Get people off the road. It's useless as a train track now, as you see, it's pretty well worn out, too many grade crossings and really no hope of expanding it for heavier rail, plus the rail doesn't really go anywhere except to downtown Renton and we've got – with our feet, we'll have plenty of good ways to get there. Thanks! Oh, yes, giving people an ability or at least a perceived capability to get off the road – humans that is – would be fine. Let drivers and bicyclists who need the faster corridor with the skinny tires, let them have the bike trails, oh, sorry, the bike paths along Lake Washington Boulevard. Everybody else who wants to walk or use a mountain bike or a stroller or what have you doesn't really need to be on Lake Washington Boulevard. Let them get off onto the widened trail – eight, ten feet, whatever you have down there, it's plenty.

And really, with minimal effort you could make a six-foot-wide right-of-way out of what's now the rails and, again, it's in good shape, you've got that one bridge, but I think even it's in decent shape. So, ideas how to do it? It's easy. On any given Sunday there's probably over 2,000 people out for a walk or a jog along Lake Washington Boulevard in the margins who really don't need to be there but they haven't got another choice so they've got the foliage, fast-moving traffic, people marginally paying attention while they drive, the hills and the limited sight distances, and nobody doing 25 miles an hour unless there's an enforcement action going on. We like that – the police keep up the emphasis patrols. But yeah, if people don't need to be on Lake Washington Boulevard, they'll rapidly get off. Bring 'em on! How can I help? Thanks.



**COMMENT 6: Kirk – Bellevue**

I'd just say that I think that we need to keep it simple. The County's already spent a ton of money in the past studying this corridor and I gather there's some more studies going on, but we need to... There's a handful of pro-rail people out there that I think are all fiscally motivated, and they want to keep the rail so that they can make money off the taxpayers. There's a lot of people out there who support rail who probably aren't familiar with the project either, but based on the studies I don't think that rail makes sense currently – it may in the future. In the meantime, with the current rails in place, we're wasting an asset that could be enjoyed by many. If we just pulled up the rails and had gravel in there, it would be a great walking path. People would probably ride their mountain bikes on it. Let's make it easily accessible now and when the money comes and we can make it into light rail or something like that, great. The law supports that, you know. It's not like if we pull the tracks up it can't ever be rail again. It's happening someplace back East and we should use it now while we can. Making it a trail isn't going to prevent anything in the future. Keep it simple, make it happen, thanks.

**COMMENT 7: John – Shoreline**

I come to the Eastside Transit Authority's meetings every month to see what's going on. The thing that I really have a distaste for is what we're doing with rails and buses in this whole state. There's got to be a better solution. Sound Transit was tasked with looking at new forms of transportation, in the forms of things like Pathfinder, which went for \$1 million a mile in 1996. And now you'd have to spend \$25 million a year just for advertising! I don't think government should be advertising. So, what the heck can we do? First of all, I'd replace the buses with something like a cab like the Airporter system. And let them see how they can handle it. They'd take probably up to ten times as many people to work as, say, the bus system does now, if you're looking at the 358. I'm an old bicycle guy, I rode five miles to work (10 miles a day) for nine years. It was right near the Burke Gilman Trail. I just dreamed about using that trail for bikers and walkers, as well as the modern 21<sup>st</sup> century system. The one I know about is magnetic levitation that NASA made at the old Moffett Field in California. And those people love us. Thank you very much.

**COMMENT 8: Charity – Redmond**

I'm really excited to see some more transit and pedestrian-oriented development taking place in the corridor. I'd like to see a lot more thought going to connecting urban villages and developing spaces that people want to walk in rather than drive to. That would be a really great thing to see.

**COMMENT 9: Kristin – Kirkland**

I swam in the Bellevue Aquatic Center a lot because I have a problem with my feet. Swimming and biking agree with me more than walking. So, if the Kirkland Corridor goes near then I can bike more, I can do errands maybe even too, and that would be much better. And I'm wondering how wide the Kirkland Corridor will be – is it standard for two-way traffic? Is it multi-use – also welcoming skateboards, roller blades, and horses? Those are my questions. Thank you.

## **Public Comments on Draft Report and Recommendations**



## Comments on ERC Draft Report

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Creating Connections. We at Eastside TRailways appreciate all of the work that went into this report. We are excited about the future of the Eastside Rail Corridor and about working with the members of the ERCRAC to make that future a reality.

Our main comment on the report is that it virtually ignores the northern segment of the Corridor from Milepost 27 up to the City of Snohomish. While the report calls the ERC a Corridor for the Ages, and that it might someday be a part of a Vancouver to Vancouver trail system, almost the only mention of the 14 miles in Snohomish County is that Segment 1 connects "to the north in the non-railbanked portion of the corridor".

Recommendation 5A mentions that Woodinville and Snohomish County are doing something in the northern segment. It seems appropriate to acknowledge that Snohomish County is pursuing the trail easement for the segment, and when constructed, would connect the existing 25-mile long Centennial Trail to the ERC.

Section 5B mentions that an agreement exists for operating an excursion train in the northern segment. It would be more accurate to state that the holder of the freight easement in the northern segment is desirous to bring back an excursion train, running from the City of Snohomish to Woodinville. Private and public entities are working together to garner funds to upgrade the tracks in this section to allow limited passenger service.

Finally, one minor correction to the description of Segment 1. The fourth paragraph states that Segment 1 passes through Woodinville's CBD, while it actually ends across the river from it.

Thank you again for all of the effort into beginning the future of the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Les Rubstello  
Woodinville

Karen Guzak  
Snohomish

Co-Chairs of Eastside TRailways Alliance

**Comments on ERC Preliminary Report  
September 3, 2013**

**Brian Staples**

[brians@eastsidetrailadvocates.org](mailto:brians@eastsidetrailadvocates.org)

MyInterest: Bicycling, Hiking, Adjoining land uses, Regional trail and transit connections, Permits to cross or other special use of the property

In regards to the draft report...

Page 2, bullet point 2, "Oversee the partner planning process including implementing."

> The use of Oversee usually implies some type of official oversight. My impression is that this committee is more of a central repository for developmental concepts regarding the corridor with the possible goal of awareness and possible unification.

Page 6, Recommendation 3, Develop a State Agenda, 3A - "Develop a plan for reconnection of pedestrian and bicycle access across I-405 at the former Wilburton Tunnel Crossing." and others under Connectivity and Mobility.

> In various places in the draft, there are references to connections to the corridor. It would be nice to have the connections enumerated all in one place (possibly an appendix). That way, we can make sure we're not missing any. To that end, I wasn't sure the draft mentioned a connection to the 520 trail in Kirkland/Bellevue (around Northrup or 108th) as a goal. The draft does mention connecting the Redmond spur to the 520 trail in Redmond but does not mention connecting the corridor to the 520 trail in Kirkland.

Page 6, Recommendation 4, Develop a Long-Term Regional Approach for Planning Together, 4A "Work with Sound Transit to monitor and comment on the ERC high capacity transit corridor study."

> The corridor has been subject to two studies in the last 10 years. The most recent study produced ridership numbers for the corridor. Is the committee proposing another study of the corridor?

Page 7, Recommendation 5, Develop the corridor's Regional Legacy, 5B "Economic Opportunities. Address the potential timing and location of possible excursion service."

> The draft seems to focus on resumption of some type of excursion service on the corridor (ala the Dinner Train). The council shouldn't limit excursion service to trains but also include promoting bicycle excursions services.

Page 8, Recommendation 8, Enlist Community Support, 8A "Naming and Branding. Develop a strategy to brand the corridor that honors the work."

> If you want the widest spread community support, please stop insisting the corridor be named either for rail, trail, or bicycle. Follow Kirkland's and Redmond's lead and name/brand the corridor in some transportation mode neutral manner.



Page 8, Recommendation 8, Enlist Community Support, 8B "Funders Collaborative"

> Define exactly what a Funder's Collaborative is.

Page 9, Vision and History: A Multiuse, Multiphased Corridor, Our Vision: "Development of the corridor will enhance the mobility of our region by creating a critical north-south high-capacity transit and trail transportation corridor that has the potential to connect to larger, rail and trail networks..."

> The draft recommendations call for the council to "monitor and comment on the ERC high capacity corridor study." How can the vision include a call for high capacity transit when the study hasn't been completed? I would suggest reorienting the vision to be more strategic (possibly a statement about density, economic development, sustainability, and livability).

Page 9, "wall of green - the protected forest land and open space to the east."

> This is great!

Page 9, last paragraph, "Doing so will help us avoid planning in silos, and."

> "Planning in silos" is used twice in the draft. This jargon particular to the planning process and should probably not be used in the public document. Better to say exactly what you mean. (See page 25 also.)

Page 13 - Corridor tours - "Staff also created a videotaped tour."

> If you're going to mention this, you should put it up on the website and include a pointer to it.

Page 13 - "Technical workshops. Three full-day workshops were organized."

> Again, the products from these workshops should be put up on the website with clear pointers from this document. (When were these?)

Page 18 - Segment 2 Summary: City of Kirkland Ownership "This segment of the corridor is railbanked, and King County is the Interim Trail User. Kirkland owns this segment.

> Question - will King County transfer the Interim Trail User rights to Kirkland? When?

Page 18 - Segment 2 Summary: City of Kirkland Ownership "The topography is generally flat, but includes cuts and fills."

> This seems to suggest that the topography is differentiated from segment 4 - i.e. "Segment 4's topography is varied and challenging." It is unclear how the council arrived at this conclusion. I've walked a good portion of the corridor and segment 3's topography is similar to segment 4's.

Page 24 - Continuity "The owners should consider opportunities for a regional identity for the entire corridor. This should be considered as part of the effort to build strong public support for the future development and use of the corridor."

> As suggested earlier, a more transportation mode neutral naming/branding than Eastside Rail Corridor would go further to building a regional identity.

Page 37 - Excursion service RAC members also discussed the potential for excursion rail service on parts of the corridor.

> RAC members shouldn't limit themselves to looking at excursion rail service only, but also look at bicycle excursion service. Many wine producing regions in the world offer both rail and bicycle tours.

Page 38 - Recommendation 5C "An issue will need to be addressed as planning for the corridor continues is trail head parking."

> It's great to see the draft mention this. My guess is that as the trail becomes more popular, this is going to be a bigger and bigger issue. It would be great if the council begin to inventory possible trail head parking areas.

Pages 41 and 42 - Public Safety - "The expected use of the trail on the ERC will act as a strong deterrent to crime and threats to public safety."

> While this is true, the draft should include more specific language concerning safety and security issues on the corridor. Specifically, make sure emergency vehicles have clear access points and develop a plan for who has policing responsibilities in the corridor.

Page 49 - Recommendation 7C "Planning and design for such a trail will be done in full consultation with the owners, adjacent cities and communities, and the public and should specifically address linkages to cities, parks, activity centers and trail, as well as connectivity throughout the length of the corridor."

> This is great. As long as you're addressing linkages, schools should also be added. In Kirkland, the corridor is adjacent or near to five schools.

Page 50 - Naming and Branding, "Kirkland has branded its segment as the Cross Kirkland Connector."

> This is a typo - should be ".the Cross Kirkland Corridor."

Page 54 - RAC 2.0, "The membership of RAC 2.0 may need to be broadened to realize these goals."

> Maybe a two or three tiered membership structure might be appropriate?

The draft looks good overall. You could add clearer suggestions for any type of limitations on power easements - in particular, as they deal with views and high-voltage transmission cables.

In the meetings there were discussion about the rules of interactions between members of the council. I don't think those thoughts have been codified anywhere in this document. It might be good to mention them somewhere.

Thanks



**Comments on ERC Preliminary Report  
Received September 4, 2013**

**From:** Paul R Siegmund [<mailto:paulrsiegmund@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 03, 2013 5:28 PM

**To:** Eastside Rail Corridor

**Subject:** ERC RAC Draft Report, comments

I applaud most of the work that the RAC has commissioned, that is I completely agree with the intent to us banked rail rights of way for recreational trails open to runners, walkers, and cyclists. I note that in the north end Redmond is essentially finished with their conversion, Kirkland is ready to go, north Bellevue may have some residual issues with connections to an actual plan for Sound Transit to traverse the corridor on its way from downtown to Overlake; the rest of Bellevue south of NE 8th has no discernible need for railroad tracks, and those tracks end in the residential neighborhoods south of Willburton.

I write from Renton, the region you call Segment 5.

You need to do two things to foster the progress of your RAC 2.0:

1: Accept that accommodating trains and tracks within the concept of a mixed-use corridor in the unusually narrow south end is a dumb idea. It is not viable for reasons of safety for other uses, heavy reconstruction that would be needed along the environmentally sensitive lake shore or within the parks and residential areas that line the entire length of the segment. There is no demand for trains now and there is no reason other than psychological fascination with trains to believe that there ever will be in the single-family residential Renton/Newcastle/South Bellevue corridor, therefore there is no reasonably foreseeable need to design to accommodate for them. Doing nothing of value for society in hopes that a train might run some day would be an waste of a valuable geographic resource.

2: Get moving on a recreational corridor that would be immediately useful, and could accommodate adjacent (or underground) utility co-uses in its narrow confines with ease.

But forget about the trains. They are not coming. You are wasting time and effort by talking about them. You can comply with the railbanking law by maintaining a wonderful ribbon of trail in the suburban/urban eastside that could one day be restored to rail use if, for some future reason, trains ever need to run again. That is all you legally need. This is what the railbanking law is for.

Further, I have three specific comments about the Recommendations section of the draft:

Regarding Recommendations 5A,

*"Continue to work with Kirkland, Redmond and King County, who have begun discussions about how to connect the Redmond Spur with the ERC Main Line to create a more direct connection between downtown Redmond and Kirkland. Owners should support actions needed to make that linkage."*

Of course you know that the Ballard Terminal/Woodinville Subdivision scheme dies another death, hopefully its last, about 1 August when the federal STB dismissed their claim and allowed Kirkland to proceed with rail salvage and trail conversion. I trust that the ERC recognizes this



legal step as evidence of the economic, geographic and social un-viability of use of the ERC as a transit or freight corridor.

*"Work with the City of Renton to develop and finalize connections at the south end of the corridor with the Lake to Sound Trail and the Lake Washington Loop Trail."*

Absolutely! Get moving. This proposal is spot-on with very positive benefits for recreational safety in the south end (where Lake Washington Blvd is not particularly safe or well suited for the heavy walking, running and cycling traffic that is routinely sees, and Coulon Park's 1-mile trail is forbidden to cycling.)

Recommendation 5B,

*"...address the potential timing and location of possible excursion service in the corridor."*

The corridor is far too valuable a piece of property to be kept functional, at the exclusion of recreational uses, for a toy excursion trail that used to run once a day and failed financially while trying to do that. What are you thinking? Is there some expected magic that would resurrect public interest in the Dinner Train now that the line is only half as long? Where will the winery passengers come from---how far north? Canada? Maybe, but they can go to Kelowna without clearing Customs. Grow up.

Get moving, please. You can stop wasting time, build something that a large number of people can and will use immediately, and the proceeds from salvaging the steel rails will pay most of the cost of doing it.

Major, densely populated cities in Europe and the northeastern USA grew up around their passenger rail systems and still enjoy some notable utility from having the systems available to them. The jury is clearly out, and will be for many decades, on whether Seattle will ever see benefits exceeding costs from Sound Transit even as it is, by far, the most densely populated area in the Northwest. That said, its extension to Bellevue and Redmond (themselves the second and third densest places, therefore generating some point-to-point origin/destination traffic within walking distance of the stations) MAY see benefits of the presence of trains.

However outside of those dense and constrained areas the potential advantages of trains become their exact Achilles heels. They are of little use in single-family or lesser-density areas because they can only move on their tracks, they cannot redirect to accommodate unplanned growth, they cannot climb hills, they still require fleets of buses at both ends in order to collect and disperse feeder traffic among people who, owing to low density, are or need to be far from stations, and they are expensive to build. Our suburban populations grew during and immediately following the decay of the local timber, quarry and coal industries. When residential areas were being built, freight trains were still operating and nobody wanted to live near the tracks as their home values would be degraded. That set the development pattern for the area. As a result now most people live far from where the trains once operated even as a couple of corridors were maintained for use--but those uses were the Dinner Train, very occasional loads of construction equipment and soon, in Kirkland, the last trains will be ones that back up while removing the old rails. Boeing seems to have no difficulties bringing B737 fuselages through Seattle in lieu of Bellevue. The need for trains, and their tracks, has departed from the residential areas along Lake Washington.



Since transit cannot function without buses, even if trains are presumed to be available, just use buses. One kind of infrastructure is cheaper than two. And if one is more expensive to acquire or it is less flexible, then it needs to be the one to die. Buses are cheaper, they are flexible, and they are scalable.

Stop wasting time trying to accommodate trains in the far north and the far south ends of the ERC. They are useless and unnecessary. They are expensive, and their rights of way are useless for other beneficial purposes while the option of trains is maintained.

Thank you for expediting!

Paul R Siegmund  
Kennydale/Renton, WA



Post Office Box 90012 • Bellevue, Washington • 98009 9012

September 11, 2013

The Honorable Dow Constantine, King County Executive, Co-Chair  
 The Honorable Jane Hague, King County Council Member Co-Chair  
 Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Advisory Council  
 King County Chinook Building  
 401 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 800  
 Seattle, WA 98104

RE: City of Bellevue Comments to the Preliminary Draft Report of the Regional Advisory Council

Dear Executive Constantine and Councilmember Hague:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Preliminary Draft Report of the Regional Advisory Council. We have enclosed staff comments on the report. Going forward, our success will be largely dictated by our shared commitment to be formal partners with you in the next round of planning and early implementation phases.

The City of Bellevue has long supported regional efforts to preserve and develop the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) for multiple public uses and public benefit. This significant north-south corridor runs through the heart of Bellevue and adjacent to our downtown. Many City policies, plans and studies have been put in place to preserve and protect this corridor for regional transportation, emphasizing a long term vision of the corridor.

The City has developed plans for this corridor because many regional trail connections for this segment of the rail corridor run through Bellevue—Mountains to Sound Greenway, Mercer Slough, Coal Creek, Lake to Lake and SR 520 Regional trails. Several regionally significant parks are adjacent to the corridor in Bellevue including Newcastle Beach Park, Mercer Slough Nature Park, Kelsey Creek Park, and the Bellevue Botanical Garden.

In addition, Bellevue's interests lie in not only improving multimodal connectivity, but in helping reduce congestion and maintaining public safety where corridor improvements will eventually overlap. Many of the challenging constraints are within the Bellevue segment, including:

- freeway crossings of I-90, I-405 and SR 520;
- the Wilburton crossing that was removed with the expansion of I-405;
- the historical Wilburton trestle;
- downtown street crossings at SE 5<sup>th</sup>, SE 1<sup>st</sup>, NE 4<sup>th</sup>, NE 6<sup>th</sup> and NE 8<sup>th</sup>;
- the potential Sound Transit maintenance and operations facility now under review;



Creating Connections - Appendix

The Honorable Dow Constantine, King County Executive, Co-Chair

The Honorable Jane Hague, King County Council Member Co-Chair

City of Bellevue Comments to Preliminary Draft Report of the Regional Advisory Council

September 11, 2013

Page 2

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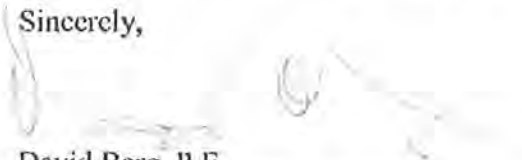
- Northup Way undercrossing; and,
- the South Kirkland Park and Ride.

Careful planning and coordination for these constrained areas is required for grade separation, special design considerations that integrate multiple uses, integration and coordination with potential future highway expansions, planning for optimal public access points, retaining and optimizing the historical Wilburton Trestle, and ensuring quality connections.

Bellevue firmly believes that in order to achieve the vision of successfully creating a *Corridor for the Ages* it is paramount that the owners strengthen the regional partnerships with the agencies adjacent to the corridor. Bellevue strongly supports expansion of the governance structure of the ERC Regional Advisory Council to include Bellevue and other key stakeholder jurisdictions. Bellevue City Council approved an Interest Statement for the corridor on July 22, 2013. This interest statement was provided to the ERC planning team immediately following its adoption, and is also attached. One of the hallmarks of the statement and the ultimate success of this effort is the importance of strengthening regional partnerships to realize the vision and coordinate funding for the corridor.

The City would like to express its appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the ERC Regional Advisory Council (RAC) technical staff working group. Valuable information-sharing, collaboration and partnerships have been strengthened from the City's participation. Bellevue looks forward to continued, and strengthened, participation in the governance that will plan and create a corridor with a regional legacy.

Sincerely,



David Berg, P.E.  
Director, Transportation Department

cc: Bellevue City Council  
Brad Miyake  
Joyce Nichols

Enclosures:

- Bellevue City Council Revised Interest Statement
- Bellevue Comments to the ERC Preliminary Draft Report



## BELLEVUE INTEREST STATEMENT FOR THE EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR

*Adopted July 22, 2013 by Bellevue City Council*

The City of Bellevue supports regional efforts to develop the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) for public use and benefit. The City has long supported preservation of this important public right-of-way for multiple public uses. This approach is consistent with regional organizations, local governments, and owners of the corridor. The development of the ERC within King County offers a significant step toward providing important north/south connectivity between local communities from Renton to Woodinville and points along this major public corridor. Over time, this connection provides a rare and unique opportunity to create a variety of benefits and uses for the public. The Bellevue City Council supports the following principles for future corridor design and implementation processes within the King County segment of the corridor:

1. **Governance Structure and Implementation Plan.** Following on the work of the 2013 ERC Regional Advisory Council, Bellevue strongly supports the establishment of a standing regional governing body, including a seat for Bellevue, to provide oversight of the planning, development and implementation steps among affected jurisdictions and parties. This body should be responsible for developing an interim and long-term conceptual plan for the corridor. Examples of the range of work should include the following priority objectives:
  - **Advance the work of the ERC Advisory Council.** Refine the vision developed by the ERC.
  - **Plan for the future.** Develop a roadmap for the design, management and implementation activities in the corridor vision.
  - **Develop a phased, well-integrated plan.** Ensure affected local intersections and state highway interchanges along the corridor are carefully analyzed, planned and phased, especially where there are overlapping or competing interests for uses of the ERC right-of-way in highly constrained locations.
  - **Balance continuity and local interests.** Ensure all efforts address continuity of design incorporating the diverse interests of communities along the corridor.
  - **Be strategic and transparent.** Develop the corridor in a highly collaborative, open and transparent manner that achieves multiple objectives and efficiencies in design, funding, construction and ongoing maintenance of the corridor.
  - **Engage the public.** Design and conduct a comprehensive public outreach program that ensures stakeholder involvement throughout the process.
  
2. **Develop a Complementary, Comprehensive and Sustainable Financial Plan.** The regional governing body and affected parties should work closely to secure financial support from a range of sources including state, federal and private organizations for capital and operating improvements. Specifically, the financial plan should:
  - Prioritize key investments along the corridor.
  - Provide guidance concerning specific funding alternatives.
  - Use innovative financing mechanisms.
  - Ensure that value engineering, cost containment and other mechanisms are used to optimize funding.



- 3. Implement Multiple Uses.** Development of this corridor is an important component for the Eastside's increasingly multimodal transportation network as the Eastside, Bellevue and the region continue to grow. In addition to implementing a trail supporting pedestrian and bicycle uses and passenger rail uses, there are opportunities to achieve multiple policy objectives and efficiencies given the proximity of public utility uses within, under and adjacent to the corridor. As multiple uses are planned, consideration must be given to mitigating noise, mobility, visual and other impacts to residents and businesses along the corridor, improved mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as investigating national and regional best practices and case studies for multimodal uses of the corridor that add capacity to the transportation system.
- 4. City Implementation Challenges.** Bellevue has a number of key interests related to phasing and implementation intended to improve multimodal connectivity, help reduce congestion and maintain public safety where the corridor and other improvements overlap, including the following:

  - **Grade Separation.** The City has a number of intersections (NE 4th, NE 6th and NE 8<sup>th</sup> streets) that cross the corridor right-of-way. Of particular concern is the highly constrained area at NE 8th that will require careful planning and design and where grade separation must be explored.
  - **Sound Transit Projects.** The City and Sound Transit are working to deliver the East Link light rail project. Within the project envelope, there are a number of areas that will require special design consideration. For example, if the International Paper site is ultimately chosen for Sound Transit's East Link project operations and maintenance satellite facility, it must be carefully vetted and well integrated into the Region's vision for the Eastside Rail Corridor. Similarly, special care should be given to the multiple uses near the new East Link Hospital Station on NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - **State Highways.** WSDOT's future highway expansion also overlaps with the corridor in downtown Bellevue. The corridor design process must be fully integrated with affected state improvements, including all areas of over- and undercrossing at I-405 and I-90 (including the crossing that was removed as part of the recent I-405 widening project due north of I-90).
  - **Public Access.** Planning efforts must ensure optimal public access points along the corridor.
  - **Wilburton Trestle.** The Wilburton Trestle is an iconic structure and, to the greatest extent possible, should be optimized for public use.
  - **Regional Trail and Other Major Destinations.** The implementation plan should ensure quality connections to major destinations in Bellevue such as the Mountains to Sound Greenway, Mercer Slough, Coal Creek Park, Newcastle Beach Park, 520 Trail, Bel-Red redevelopment area, and Downtown Bellevue.
- 5. Ensure Planning Consistency and Innovation.** Relevant regional and local transportation plans, including those developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council (VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040), Sound Transit (ST2 and related Long Range Plan and ST3). ST3, a new effort just getting underway, will provide a new list of high capacity transit improvements for a possible 2016 ballot measure. City Comprehensive Plans and other local improvement plans will require updates to reflect current ERC planning and corridor analysis.

## City of Bellevue Comments to ERC Draft Report

September 10, 2014

Number	Page #	Comment
1	Exec Summary	Recommendation 6B is important, but the description in the Executive Summary and in the text is too limiting. There are many opportunities for connecting the trail to transit services throughout the corridor, but text focuses attention on the South Kirkland Park and Ride and the terminus of SR 520 in Redmond. It would be best to eliminate the specific reference to the South Kirkland P&R in the Executive Summary as unneeded specificity. References to specific opportunity areas could be added in the text to include Newcastle along I-405, proximity to Eastgate P&R and South Bellevue East Link Light Rail Station via MTS Greenway/I-90 Trail, Downtown Bellevue, BelRed/130th East Link Light Rail Station and locations in Kirkland and Woodinville.
2	Gen	All the recommendations tend to begin the same way, "The RAC recommends the owners do this or do that." The fact that each of these is a RAC recommendation is a given and ends up being unnecessarily repetitive. Repeating that phrase over and over also works against the principles of partnership and collaboration. As a non-owner entity, the recommendations don't ask any non-owner organization to do anything.
3	Gen and 54	Can this document be stronger in calling for expanded collaboration in RAC 2.0? Instead of "membership... may need to be broadened to realize these goals" [p. 54], the RAC should recognize that membership must be broadened to achieve the goals of regional policy adoption, state and federal advocacy, community and business support, and technical staff collaboration. From a Bellevue point of view, all of these need the City of Bellevue to be participating for optimum chance of success.
4	Title	Consider changing the title of the report from <i>Creating Connections</i> , to <i>A Corridor for the Ages</i> .
5	20-21	<del>Due to the upcoming construction of East Link light rail and City of Bellevue plans, there is significant change anticipated for surrounding land uses along this segment.</del> <b>Due to upcoming construction of East Link light rail, redevelopment of the Wilburton and Bel-Red area, and planned roadway infrastructure improvements, there is significant change anticipated for the northern portion of this segment (MP 12.2 to MP 14.8).</b>
6	21	Bulleted item: Downtown Bellevue road crossings at NE 4th, <del>and</del> NE 6th and NE 8th Streets.
7	21	Bulleted items - seems these could be better addressed in some sort of table, or at the very least expanding on the potential issue/opportunity. Example: what is the potential issue/opportunity at South Kirkland PnR? Spring District? Is the intent to note the potential users? Conflicts with access? I understand not wanting to re-write the segment profiles in this section, but a little more information would be beneficial.



## City of Bellevue Comments to ERC Draft Report

September 10, 2014

11	25-53	Understand this is a draft and final formatting has not been completed, but each recommendation should stand out better than it currently does (bold text?). Is it possible to have a separate table that includes all the recommendations.
8	30	The section on the Wilburton tunnel includes a picture of the trestle out of context. It's not clear if the picture should be of the I-405 crossing or if the section was intended to also discuss the trestle. The picture makes one believe that there should be more on the trestle included (somewhere) in the report, recognizing its historic and iconic value and the views from it.
9	30	<i>A. Wilburton Tunnel Crossing</i> - Recommendation 3A: The RAC recommends that owners · Work with WSDOT to develop a plan for the <b>reconstruction and</b> reconnection of pedestrian and bicycle access, <b>and a wildlife corridor</b> on the ERC as it crosses I-405. <b>(Expand the language to include working with WSDOT on planning for the reconstruction/reconnection of the crossing to include pedestrian, bicycle and a wildlife corridor.</b>
12	34-35	While the City and Sound Transit are working to deliver the East Link Light rail project, there are a number of areas within the project envelope that require special design considerations. One such area is the potential use of the International Paper site adjacent to the ERC. Should this site, through the current environmental process, be selected for the OMSF, careful consideration must be given to integrate this facility into the surrounding landscape, coordinate the variety of planned short term and long term uses, and provide an exceptional experience for all users.
10	36	Section A, mobility and transportation connection – The Mountains to Sound Greenway should be discussed at length in this section as it would be one of the key regional connections.
13	38-39	Cultural or historic legacy sections – Need to discuss the value of the Wilburton trestle in one of these sections as it is perhaps the most memorable, iconic aspect of the entire corridor. Also need to acknowledge the use of the rail corridor during the WWII Japanese Internment. Development of the corridor provides an important opportunity to recognize this historic connection.

## City of Bellevue Comments to ERC Draft Report

September 10, 2014

14	49	<p><i>C. Connections to Trails, High-Capacity Transit, Parks, Activity Centers - The ERC represents an unparalleled opportunity to link cities, transit systems, parks, trails and activity centers. The corridor serves multiple regional growth centers, with potential to link downtown Bellevue and Kirkland-Totem Lake with connections to Redmond-Overlake, downtown Redmond, and downtown Renton. As mentioned earlier, the ERC has potential to eventually connect directly with the I-90/Mountains to Sound Trail, Bellevue's Lake to Lake Greenway Trail, the Lake to Sound Trail, the SR-520 Trail, the Redmond Spur Trail, the Tolt Pipeline Trail, Snohomish County's Centennial Trail, and the most popular regional trail corridor, the Burke-Gilman/Sammamish River Trail. These connections were envisioned by the first trails plans more than a generation ago.</i></p>
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**Comments on ERC Updated Report  
September 23, 2013**

**Name:** BobForgrave  
bob@forgrave.net

**MyInterest:** Bicycling, Hiking, Adjoining land uses, Regional trail and transit connections

Thanks for an updated draft report and the considerable time taken to create it. I think it is an accurate representation of the political struggles over this corridor that have taken us from King County to federal courts in DC.

Basically, this document consists of 67 pages of general text about working collaboratively, woven together with implicit and explicit endorsement of rail projects, whether or not they are geographically viable or desired by the community. Here are four supporting facts that back up this severe assessment:

- 1) After a summary up front that states that "plans for the corridor must reflect community values", there is no more mention of values, neighborhoods, walking kids to school, etc...just an advocacy section about branding and convincing the public. Translation: We're selling, not listening. All aboard!
- 2) Persistent references to Eastside RAIL Corridor (ERC) naming make it very clear that imminent return of rail on this corridor is a foregone conclusion that goes far beyond railbanking, regardless of any possible better locations for North-South high-speed transit.
- 3) Diagrams show how rail and trail can be squeezed into non-pinch points on the corridor, but not for the parallel I-405 corridor that has none of the sharp bends that limit traffic to 25 MPH. I-405 as an option is touched on later, but the lack of equal representation reinforces Point #2 above.
- 3) Lack of reference to the massive costs of leveling slopes to achieve a 100-ft-wide footprint for side-by-side rail and trail reinforce that rail is coming at any cost--and based on recent lawsuits, privately run rail at public expense.
- 4) While many of the recommendations are innocuously general, 2C and 4A get to the crux of the issue--rebuilding rail infrastructure on the corridor, because rail is being strongly advocated by the RAC.

Put all these together, and the true function of RAC becomes clear. This is not a true Regional Advisory Council (RAC), but a Rail Advocacy Council (RAC) using public officials to lobby for private rail at public expense. There is zero focus on community values, and I'm ashamed of the tax dollars that have gone into this political football.

**APPENDIX 12:**  
**Prior Studies Reviewed**



**Previous Studies Reviewed  
For  
Eastside Rail Corridor**

2007 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) – Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Corridor Preservation Study

[http://www.psrc.org/assets/3176/07-20\\_BNSFfinalreport.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/3176/07-20_BNSFfinalreport.pdf)

2009 PSRC and Sound Transit BNSF Eastside Commuter Rail Feasibility Study, Phase I

[http://www.psrc.org/assets/405/BNSF\\_Commuter\\_Rail\\_Study\\_Tech\\_Memo\\_1\\_FINAL\\_DRAFT\\_2008-09-17.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/405/BNSF_Commuter_Rail_Study_Tech_Memo_1_FINAL_DRAFT_2008-09-17.pdf)

2009 PSRC and Sound Transit BNSF Eastside Commuter Rail Feasibility Study Phase II

[http://www.psrc.org/assets/406/BNSF\\_Commuter\\_Rail\\_Study\\_Tech\\_Memo\\_2\\_FINAL\\_2008-12-31.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/406/BNSF_Commuter_Rail_Study_Tech_Memo_2_FINAL_2008-12-31.pdf)