Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative Coalition Meeting Notes

MEETING NOTES
Date: March 28, 2023
1:00 PM-2:30 PM
Zoom

Participants: Bree Boyce (Hopelink,), Scott Emmons (Kirkland Senior Council), Gazel Tan (Bellevue Network on Aging), John Larson-Friend (City of Issaquah), Anny Smith (City of Kirkland), June Palon (Kirkland Senior Council), Adam Halpern (Jewish Family Services), Dean Syndor (RARET), Diana Austin (DSHS), Julio Perez (NKCMC), Mandy Wes (Disability Empowerment Center), Michael Leach (Move Redmond), Roz Novikova (Hopelink), Phirun Lach (Sound Generations), LouAnn Ballew (Community Member and Redmond Senior Advisory Council), Guillermo Rivera (Eastside for All), Maritza Lauriano (Move Redmond), Pran Wahi (Indian American Community Services), Charlie Hockett (Sound Transit), Christy Stangland (City of Bellevue), Hannah Kimball (Bellevue Network on Aging), Karen Hartman (Kirkland Senior Council), Betsy Maxwell (Peter Kirk – Kirkland Parks), Thomas Valdriz (City of Issaquah), Beckye Frye (City of Redmond), Alaric Bien (City of Redmond), Sandy Phan (Hopelink), Prem Subedi (Community Member)

Staff Support: Tracie Jones, Bree Boyce

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements

- Agenda
  - Welcome & Introductions
  - Announcements
  - Eastside Mobility for All Pilot Project Update
  - Light Rail Extension Project
  - Redmond Light Rail Accessibility project
  - Roundtable Discussion and Next Steps
  - Next Steps and Close

- Announcements
  - IACS - Pran Wahi
    - IACS has a new contract with the City of Sammamish to operate Senior Programming that includes all Sammamish residents (not just the IACS community). It is a three-year contract. The city has provided us with meeting space at the Beaver Lake Lodge. The first event took place last week. We’re now learning what people want to do and about their interests. We’ll have programming three times each week.
    - Next year, IACS hopes to start programs with the Kent Center.
  - Bellevue Network on Aging – Hannah Kimball
    - Not much to report from BNOA, however Hannah has been working on the Pea Patch
    - Pea Patch helps provide fresh vegetables for organizations such as Hopelink
  - Move Redmond – Michael Leach

Please contact Heather Clark at HClark@hopelink.org or 425-625-6784 with any corrections or additions to these notes.
- We have upcoming member events, including bike repair class in May. Registration will open on May 1, 2023.
  - Eastside for All - Guillermo Rivera
    - Eastside for All Starting new project, working with 5 Eastside cities on middle housing. We’re actively prepping for working with these cities; comp plans, and considering universal design.
    - Hannah Kimball - Please also keep seniors and their specific mobility limitations in mind.

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**Eastside Mobility for All Pilot Project Update**
Phirun Lach, Sound Generations Director of Transportation
phirunl@soundgenerations.org

**Rides and Smiles Pilot Progress**
- Current metrics as of March 15, 2023: 117 new riders, 680 rides, 8,442 miles driven, and 0 declined rider requests.
- Due to loss of drivers, we’re unable to fully support second shuttle service. As a result, we need to hire more drivers.
  - Wages are an issue, with other companies doubling what we pay drivers.
  - Supplement services with Yellow Cab and Lyft. All requests have been satisfied, no denial.
- Community request: Consider forwarding our job posting throughout community; Currently applying for grants, would appreciate forwarding any ridership stories for applications and funders.

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**East Link Update**
Charlie Hockett, Senior Community Engagement Specialist at Sound Transit
Charlie.Hockett1@soundtransit.org or (206) 553-3736

**Sound Transit #101:**
- 40% of State population lives within the King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties service areas.
- Sound Transit 3, ST3, was a ballot measure during the November 2016 elections in Seattle, Washington, proposing an expansion of the regional public transit system. The measure was proposed by Sound Transit, which was established by a similar initiative (Sound Move) passed in 1996 and expanded by the Sound Transit 2 vote in 2008, who have operated regional transit systems in the Seattle metropolitan area since 1999.

**Light Rail Link Current Services**
- 1-Line - includes 19 stations, from Northgate to Angle.
- 2-Line - 2024/25 completion timeline for Northgate to Redmond, including 9 existing stations and +10 new stations.
- T-Line - includes 6 stations Tacoma to Theater District.

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Sound Transit Heavy Commute Trains rely on regular train tracks; Sound Transit Express busses are long term connectors (Everett, Dupont, Issaquah) running along highways.

Updates:
- Stations still under construction: Hilltop Tacoma, Eastlink, Lynnwood, Federal Way, and Downtown Redmond.
- New Stations: Judkins Park Station, Mercer Island Station, South Bellevue Station and Garage, East Main Station, Bellevue Downtown Station, Wilburton Station, Spring District/120th Station, Bel-Red/130th Station, Overlake Village Station.
- Downtown Redmond Link Extension. Marymoor Village Station and parking garage
- East Lake Sammamish Trail will connect with Bear Creek and Redmond Trails in Downtown Redmond Station, with the #2line.

Main Sound Transit Construction Challenges:
- COVID
- Supply chain
- Staffing shortages
- 4-month concrete delivery strike

Top Risks to Impede Eastlink Completion Schedule
- Concrete plinths
- Tracks sitting on plinths.
- Precast blocks and nylon rail fastener bolt inserts on the I-90- floating bridge.

Ways to Improve Processes
- Sufficient staffing to observe construction progress.
- Focused training to ensure understanding.
- Use construction mock-ups to show finish projects.
- Quality control by using 3rd party experts and quality checks.

Could part of EL open sooner?
- East Link construction affects multiple areas, in different ways, and at different points of progress.
- East Link Starter Line service could potentially start from Bellevue to Redmond Technology.
- Federal way is currently too soon to identify.
- East Link and Downtown Redmond, spring 2025.
- Lynnwood, fall or winter 2024.
- East Link Starter Line, spring 2024.
- Decision on Starter Line expected in Fall of 2023 at ST Board Meeting

Our next steps
- Continuously monitor for new, existing, and possible risks.
- Refine projects timeframes and project updates.
- Actively engage partners.
- Staying on top of hiring challenges.
- Update the board quarterly.

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How to get involved.

- **Sign-up for Sound Transit alerts.**
- Follow Sound Transit on social media.
- Reach out to Sound Transit staff (Charlie Hockett – Community Engagement Specialist: Charlie.Hockett@soundtransit.org).
- Help amplify Sound Transit’s messaging as transit champion in your community.

**Partner Discussions:**

**Alaric Bien:** If the Starter Line is not approved by the Sound Transit Board in October, will it impact Lynwood’s opening?

Charlie Hockett: Not drastically, but there could be changes. We’ve sent out pamphlets, time tested the lines, run simulations, everything to prepare. Potentially there could be impact, but there are a lot of variables.

**Alaric Bien:** With Redmond being at the end of the line, is there an increased chance that those experiencing homelessness will end up in Redmond overnight?

Charlie Hockett: It’s a concern we’ve heard, and across the nation. ST is enacting measures to increase rider experience and satisfaction (frequent cleaning, staff, coordinating and contracting with security and back-up security). I have not noticed an increase in homeless populations because there’s transit. Transit is a catalyst to bring about positive change. Tens of thousands of current ST ridership reference positive experiences. Julie Timm, the new ST CEO would specifically like to focus on improving air quality surrounding ST and enhancing user experience. Positives build upon other positives. I’d like to give a special shout-out to the City of Redmond’s Community Homeless Team.

**Prem Subedi:** Sound transit seems to build a lot of parking, but car dependency remains a big issue. Moving forward, will ST still build parking rather than encouraging TOD and expanding bus service to everyone?

Charlie Hockett: I’d argue that, while we do build parking garages in certain areas, light rail expansion is a positive factor in addressing car dependency. Especially for folks who do not live with convenient transit connections to light rail. I’d also point to Sound Transit’s TOD efforts across the region and our focus on affordable housing with TOD. https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/creating-vibrant-stations/transit-oriented-development

**Mandy Wes:** I am looking up ADA compliance information. Are engineers considering such things as door size, time when the door is open before it shuts, etc. I really think there needs to be a flap that goes between the train platform and the train for the ability to smoothly allow everyone to get on/off the train/bus/subway. How/Where can I advocate for this?

Charlie Hockett: I’ve seen these on Rails in Japan. It’s a very valid concern being raised. Down the Rainier Valley corridor there are similar safety concerns. The Federal government provides funding to raise safety awareness in the Rainier Valley. We should think about how to improve safety. It’s a great point for me to bring to the attention of the Sound Transit Board and share among members. These elected officials make system wide decisions on how projects are planned, and the money spent. It’s a great point of personal advocacy. Reach out to your local elected officials.

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Move Redmond’s light rail video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC8e9siSu6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC8e9siSu6E)

**Redmond Light Rail Accessibility Project**
Beckye Frey - Principal Planner, Long Range Planning at City of Redmond
Beckye Frey, bfrey@redmond.gov

Redmond 2050
- Community Vision is only updated once every 10 years, impacting decisions for decades.
- Deciding how our city and neighborhoods will feel in the future.
- Themes: Equity and inclusion, sustainability, and resiliency, with special focus on equity in the built environment.
- Updates to policies related to housing, jobs, how we get around our city, infrastructure services, parks, and other places to play.
- Identifies projects that the City of Redmond will construct next as we transition from a suburb to a city.

Accessibility project
- **Goal**: Comfortable and safe access to and from the stations for all ages and abilities.
- **Review**: Public realm design, which includes streets and sidewalks, lighting, seating, wayfinding, etc…
- **Need**: Direct input from community members with disabilities on what works /doesn’t and what they want/need.
- **Result**: Recommendations on design standard updates, with potential city-wide impact.

Events activities
- Online walk and roll tours with community members with different types and levels of disabilities.
- Focus groups.
- Shareholder interviews.
- Drafts/present recommendations.

Concerns:
- Recent construction inconsistent – some great news/some issues and challenges
- Need for better wayfinding.
- Curb cuts and sidewalks are issues.
- Construction Fencing
- Better lighting and more frequent poles for pedestrian scale
- More frequent seating/resting.
- More mid-block connections
- More weather protection

How to get involved
- [Sign up for Redmond 2050 emails.](mailto:Sign up for Redmond 2050 emails)
- Participate in focus groups.

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The City of Redmond wants to go above and beyond ADA requirements and raise the bar. Affordable housing in and around light rail is one of Redmond’s biggest priorities. Many areas are being upzoned, creating more pedestrian friendly standards. A lot of work we’re doing. These ideas to go together as part of the Redmond 2025 plan.

Partner Discussions:
Mandy Wes: Aside from structural issues, ableism is a big problem. I will chat about this more in a focus group, or more relevant group.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

NEXT STEPS & COMMITMENTS

NEXT EERC MEETING
Tuesday, May 30, 2023, @1:00-2:30 PM, via Zoom.

EASTSIDE EASY RIDER COLLABORATIVE CONTACT:

Heather Clark, Eastside Mobility Coordinator
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425-943-6771

Bree Boyce, Program Manager of Coalitions
bboyce@hopelink.org
425-943-6751

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the Mobility Management Team at mobility@hopelink.org or by calling (425) 943-6760.

Title VI Notice to Public

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