

Eastside Easy Rider COLLABORATIVE

Next Meeting: *Tuesday, May26th from 1:00 – 2:30pm* **[IN PERSON]**

Meeting Location: Together Center, 16305 NE 87th St Suite 110, Redmond, WA 98052

Snacks provided!

Meeting Notes

Date: March 31st 2026, 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Attendees / Presenters

1. Hannah Kimball (Bellevue Network on Aging)
2. Alaric Bien (City of Redmond)
3. Angel Reed
4. Angie Kitheka (CCSWW)
5. Antoinette Smith (Kirkland Human Services)
6. ENewman
7. Jamie Gruenberger (King County Metro)
8. Klarysa Melo
9. Kurt Ahrensfeld (Kirkland Senior Council)
10. Mandy Wes (Disability Empowerment Center)
11. Mary L'heureux (City of Redmond)_
12. Pran Wahi (ACRS)
13. Ramu Ayyaluru (Mini City Hall)
14. Saada Hilts (City of Bellevue)
15. Susan Prows
16. Karen Hartman (Kirkland Senior Council)
17. June Palon (Kirkland Senior Council)
18. Tommi

Staff Support: Grace Georgitsis, Nicole Ross, Ysabel Yu, Roz Novikova

Meeting Topics

- Updates on Fiscal Year 2026,
- Redmond RedLink
- City of Bellevue Human Services Needs Assessments,

- Choose Your Way Bellevue

Redlink Program Update (Konrad Hoernke)

- Service: Virtual stop microtransit (similar to Bellhop/Circuit) with block-to-block coverage.
- Metrics:
 - 881 passengers since March
 - 640 rides
 - 87% vehicle availability
 - 8.7-minute average wait time
- Service Area: Northern Redmond, Hopelink, downtown core, Education Hill
- User Platform:
 - Sign-up and ride request
 - Accessibility features
 - Pooled ride matching system
 - Real-time ETA (~4 minutes) and rider-driver communication
 - Ratings and reviews to maintain service quality
- Ongoing Improvements:
 - App verification (helping non-Gmail users)
 - Driver directions, ETAs, zone visibility
 - Addressing messaging/call issues in the app

Key Q&A / Concerns:

- Protocols for passengers and drivers
- Seniors' difficulty with app verification
- Revenue and profitability
- Software issues: messaging and calls

Choose Your Way Bellevue (Brad Brashears & Tommie Lorraine)

- Focus: Sustainable transportation and reducing single-occupancy trips
- Programs:
 - Rewards for logging sustainable trips (local gift cards, travel challenges)
 - Community transportation events, travel workshops, and custom commute plans
- Promotion: Emphasis on outreach to community members and organizations

Q&A / Notes:

- ORCA card recommended for seniors
- Existing ORCA cards remain valid
- Interest from Kirkland Senior Council and other community members

Bellevue Human Services Needs Update (Andrew Ndayambaje)

Demographics:

- Population: 155,000
- 60% people of color, 45% foreign-born

Themes / Barriers:

1. Cultural & linguistic barriers
2. Limited access to services
3. Workforce shortages
4. Stigma & mistrust

Impact Areas:

- Food insecurity, shelter/housing, childcare, medical/dental, behavioral health, financial assistance, safety from violence
- Federal funding cuts have reduced programs and impacted vulnerable populations

Childcare:

- Average infant care: \$3,400/month
- Only 21% of childcare demand met
- Programs: vouchers, direct funding

Behavioral Health:

- 30% of students feel sad/hopeless
- Therapy waitlists: ~6 months
- City programs: social workers, counseling, crisis care, prevention

Medical/Dental Care:

- 11% adults delay care due to cost
- 20% Medicaid adults no annual visit
- 32% low-income children untreated dental needs

Equity & Well-Being:

- Anti-discrimination services
- Support for marginalized groups and residents with disabilities
- Addressing hate crimes underreporting

Survey Data:

- 81% of service respondents report barriers to accessing services

Key Themes / Takeaways

- Microtransit programs (Redlink/Circuit) are operational and expanding but require tech support for seniors and verification issues.
- Sustainable transportation initiatives (Choose Your Way Bellevue) include rewards and community engagement.
- Human services needs in Bellevue remain high, with equity, accessibility, and systemic barriers central to planning.
- Collaboration between cities, transit programs, and community organizations is critical.

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