

Community Meetings and Public Open Houses

Comments and Summary

Overview:

In June of 2015, King County launched public outreach for the Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Trail Master Plan. The project team sought input on trail design concepts, gathered feedback on how the public envisioned using the trail, and answered questions attendees had about the master planning process.



South Segment Fall Open House participants tour stations and provide feedback

The project team used this input, along with technical information, to develop proposed alignment alternatives for the Eastside Rail Corridor Regional Trail.



North Segment Fall Open House Meeting participants tour stations and provide feedback



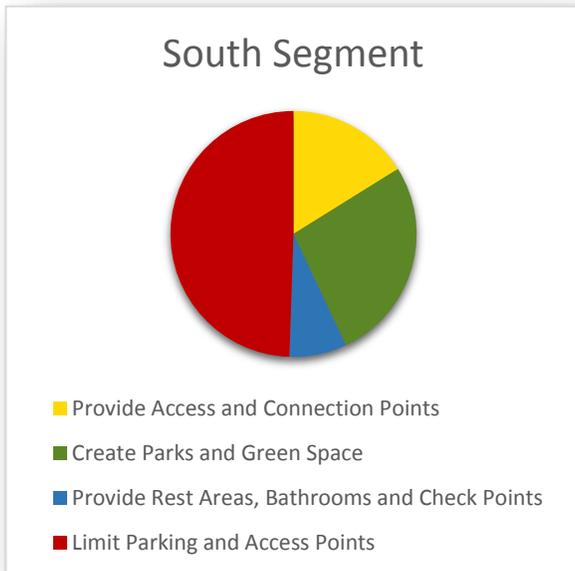
In October, the project team went out to the public again to gather input on the alignment alternatives. The project team sought input from attendees on what amenities they would like to see incorporated in the trail, and points along the trail where access is not desired. Each workshop presented segment maps with on-rail and off-rail designs, and asked attendees to share their perspective on the trail development alternatives.

Summary:

Comments on regional trail were generally positive

Throughout the outreach and information gathering process, comments on the regional trail were generally positive and highlighted the opportunities the trail would create.

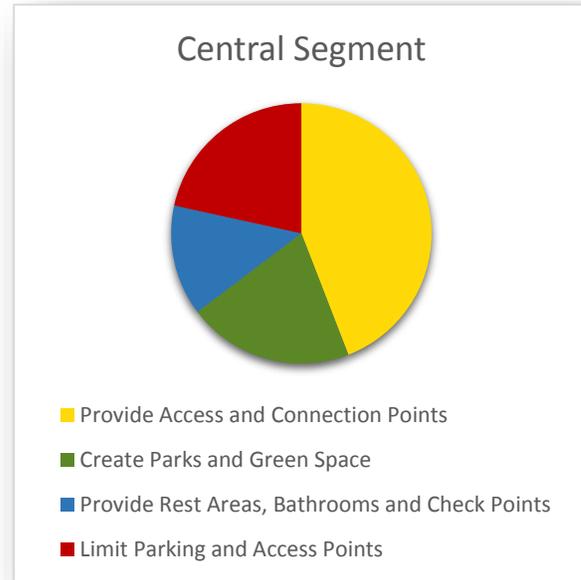
Adding connections and access, ensuring and maintaining parking, supporting safety measures, providing amenities, and protecting the built and natural environment were common themes. Each open house also gathered unique feedback from stakeholders in specific segments of the corridor.



In the North Segment, participants asked the project team to limit trail connections and access points and to take into account business operations along the Redmond Spur.

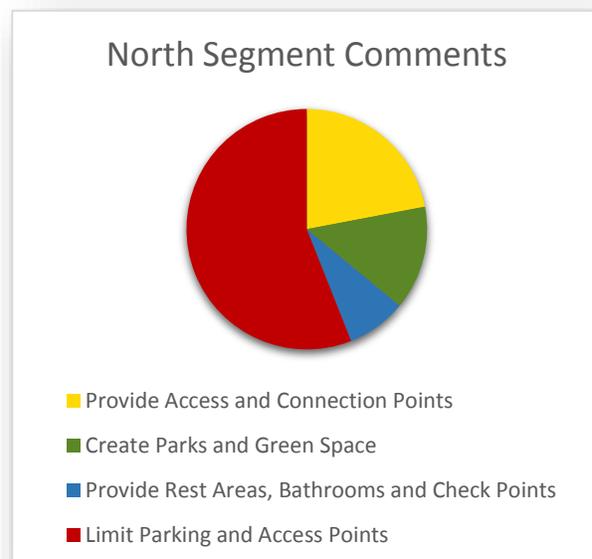
Participants favored on-rail alternative 5 to 1

Overall, participant comments favored the on-railbed alternatives 5 to 1, but opinions varied by each location. In the Central and South Segments, more participants were eager to build the trail on the railbed, while in the North Segment, opinions were mixed and several participants discussed opportunities for rail and trail to coexist.

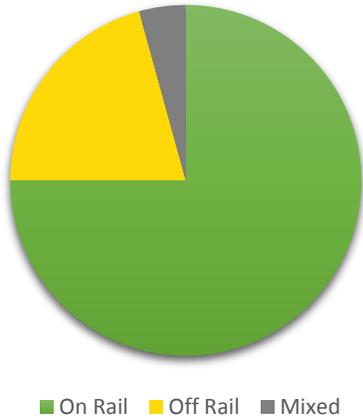


In the Central Segment, participants expressed a desire for trail connections and accessibility. They cited areas for connections and access to trails, parks, economic centers, and other points of interest along the trail.

In the South Segment, participants wanted fewer connections and access points. They were also less inclined to suggest rest areas and check points along the trail, highlighting neighborhood safety and privacy as a key factor.



On-rail vs. Off-rail Input



For a breakdown of alternatives feedback by segment, see Appendix A

Combined, the six in-person public events and online open house welcomed a total of 191 individual participants and gathered 678 comments. The information received during the June Scoping meetings helped the team develop initial trail concepts for the public to review, and further defined trail planning principles. The Fall Open Houses provided clarity regarding stakeholder priorities and preferences, and informed development of the Regional Trail Master Plan.



Central Segment June Scoping meeting participants complete comment forms online.

Next Steps

In February, the project team will release the Draft Trail Master Plan and Draft EIS. There will be 30 days of public comment and the preferred alternative will be announced in the summer of 2016. The King County Council will then hear comments and will approve the Master Plan in the fall.



South Segment June Scoping Meeting participants map route on regional trails map

“This trail will become a feature that defines the Eastside, much as the Space Needle defines Seattle.”

Central Segment Open House Comment

Overall Feedback and Input

Connections and Access

- Develop an interim trail for immediate use.
- Connect to other regional trails, local trails, parks, transit, and other modes of transportation.
- Promote economic development through connections and access to local businesses.
- Provide appropriate and plentiful access points and parking.

Parking, Safety, and Amenities

- Consider above-grade crossings at busy intersections.
- Limit access to trail and amenities in neighborhoods to ensure resident privacy and safety.
- Minimize impacts to parking in neighborhoods.
- Create wayfinding signage.
- Provide amenities such as water fountains and bathrooms nearby parking and trail access areas.
- Ensure there is ample lighting, landscaping, bathrooms, rest areas, water fountains, and waste bins to create a comfortable trail user experience.

The Built and Natural Environment

- Protect the environment and natural habitats by maintaining trees and vegetation for existing wildlife.
- Consider compatibility of adjacent land uses when accommodating potential multiple uses in the corridor.
- Limit the potential for increase noise from trail usage, especially where the trail is in close proximity to homes and neighboring communities.
- Plant natural sound barriers, such as trees or hedges, to block noise from I-405.
- Provide green space on both sides of trail.
- Maintain views.



Central Segment Fall Open House participant adds comment to alignment map



Central Segment Fall Open House participant adds comment to alignment map



North Segment June Scoping Meeting participants map routes on regional trails map

Input by Segment

In addition to the common themes mentioned above, each event gathered unique feedback from stakeholders in specific segments of the corridor.

North Segment

- Maintain possibility for light rail and freight use.
- Provide connections to other regional trails.
- Build a paved trail rather than a gravel one.

Central Segment

- Keep trail natural, park-like.
- Limit the number of trees removed.
- Connect seamlessly with the Cross-Kirkland Corridor.
- Provide connections to regional trails.
- Preserve and protect adjacent wetlands and wildlife habitat.
- Consider connections to the adjacent neighborhoods and commercial zones for access purposes when light rail comes.
- Maintain established viewpoints along the corridor.

South Segment

- If rail is built, the trail should be located to the east to maintain views.
- Help prevent an increase of crime along Pleasure Point and Ripley Lanes through lighting and limited access to trail.
- Preserve and protect adjacent wetlands and wildlife habitat.
- Provide amenities along the trail.
- Incorporate safety measures to limit speed and improve line-of-sight issues.
- Provide historical signage to educate users about the region.
- Limit amenities near homes.

June Open House Details:

Woodinville Open House

Thursday, June 18, 2015
Carol Edwards Center
6 – 8 p.m.

Renton Open House

Tuesday, June 23, 2015
Talbot Hill Elementary
6 – 8 p.m.

Bellevue Open House

Thursday, June 25, 2015
Bellevue City Hall
6 – 8 p.m.

Feedback Gathered:

- 134 public comment forms and letters
- 7 agency comment letters
- 112 comments on trail design concepts
- 9 comments on how project team characterized trail segments
- 19 comments on trail design principles
- 21 comments on the EIS scoping
- 13 general feedback responses



Central Segment June Scoping Meeting participants tour stations and provide feedback

October Open House Details:

Bellevue – Central Segment

Monday, October 12, 2015
Cherry Crest Elementary
6 – 8 p.m.

Renton – South Segment

Tuesday, October 13, 2015
Renton High School
5 – 7 p.m.

Woodinville – North Segment

Wednesday, October 14, 2015
21 Acres
5 – 7 p.m.

Online Open House

October 12, 2015 - November 12, 2015
www.eastsiderailcorridor.org

Feedback Gathered:

- 119 comments on trail design concepts for on-railbed alternatives
- 80 comments on trail design for off-railbed alternatives

Appendix A: Alternatives Feedback by Segment

