

# **Eastside Rail Corridor**

## **Dual Use Plan**

**February 1, 2013**



Prepared by King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
in response to King County Council Ordinance 17500  
passed on December 10, 2012

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## **Introduction**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to significantly and strategically enhance and expand our regional transportation system, including both rail and trail uses, strategically strengthen our regional recreation system and sustain the long-term and efficient delivery of utility services over a wide stretch of suburban King County. The region has been working collaboratively for nearly a decade to bring the ERC into public ownership, with a vision of dual transportation and recreation use. King County has been a leader in those efforts. Starting in late 2009 the current owners began acquiring their respective property interests in the ERC. These efforts culminated in the fall of 2012 when the King County Executive transmitted a proposal to the King County Council to purchase over 15 miles of the ERC, and in December 2012, the King County Council passed several pieces of legislation that secured King County's ownership interest in the ERC. The Council's actions significantly advance the protection and development of the ERC as the dual use regional asset envisioned in the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between the Port of Seattle, King County, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Energy, the City of Redmond, and the Cascade Water Alliance.

As a result of the adopted legislation, closing is anticipated by mid-February 2013. Upon closing King County will take fee ownership of 15.6 miles and 3.6 miles of additional easement ownership of the ERC. These acquisitions will make King County the largest landowner in the ERC.

This legislation set forth a structure and process for guiding and coordinating the development and use of the ERC. It included the designation of the ERC as a corridor of regional significance and an essential public facility, ensuring that it is appropriately integrated into future regional planning considerations and processes. It established the ERC Regional Advisory Council (RAC) as a collaborative group tasked to initiate a regional planning process that will result in both near-term and long-term recommendations for achieving the regional dual use objectives for the ERC. These recommendations will be provided to the King County Executive who will transmit them to the King County Council for consideration and approval. The RAC will meet during the first half of 2013.

This legislation also called for the Executive to develop and transmit to Council a dual use plan that addresses key activities by King County to secure its property interests, coordinate with other major owners in the ERC, and support the achievement of the dual use vision. This document constitutes the requested dual use plan. It is structured to respond directly to the eight topics identified in Ordinance 17500, which called for the plan. Each of the eight topics is

called out in its own section of this report. Each topic section includes the text from the legislation pertaining to each topic, which is then followed by information that addresses that topic.

### **Topic A: Near term plan for signage**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A proposal to erect signs at at least 15 major crossing points within King County Ownership areas of the ERC during 2013, along with a proposed design for the signs that will alert the public to the County's ownership and to the dual usage planned for the ERC."*

King County Parks has identified 25 crossing points within the portions of the ERC in County ownership that are appropriate for signage alerting the public to the County's ownership of the ERC and the dual use that is planned for it. Signage will be installed at appropriate locations on both sides of each crossing, unless installation is deemed impractical due to environmental or other site-specific conditions. Signs will be oriented such that they may be easily seen by the public from the street right-of-way. Signage will include identification of the ERC, description of the ERC as a dual use corridor for both rail and regional trail purposes, access rules, and King County Parks logo and contact information. All signage will be installed by June 30, 2013 at a cost of \$125 per sign and a total cost of approximately \$3,125.

Attached please find the following:

Figure 1: Map of sign locations with draft language

### **Topic B: Signage and wayfinding plan**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A proposal for the planning process by which a comprehensive signage and wayfinding plan will be developed during the regional planning process for the ERC."*

A wayfinding system consists of comprehensive signing and/or pavement markings to guide path or street users to their destinations along preferred routes. Signs are placed at decision points along the path or street, typically at intersections of two or more paths or bikeways and at other key locations leading to and along the path or bicycle route.

The benefits of wayfinding include

- Familiarizing users with the path, trail, or bicycle route network;
- Identifying the best routes to destinations;
- Overcoming a "barrier of entry" for infrequent path, trail, or bicycle network users;

- Signage that includes mileage to destinations helps context distances that users will experience as they use the path;
- Where paths intersect streets or where bicycle routes are on streets wayfinding can help indicate to motorists that they are driving with bicycles and pedestrians present and should use caution; and
- Passively marketing path and bicycle networks by providing unique and consistent imagery or branding throughout the system.

A wayfinding and overall signage strategy will be developed as part of the ERC Trail Master Plan process. It is anticipated that the Trail Master Plan Process will commence in the fall of 2013, after completion of the RAC process and subsequent Council approval of its recommendations, and conclude in approximately early to mid-2015. Once started the Trail Master Plan process will take approximately 18 – 24 months to conclude.

The Trail Master Plan process in this timeframe is the appropriate time and process for developing a signage and wayfinding strategy. First, it allows the RAC to develop recommendations which, after consideration and approval by the County, will inform the development of a Trail Master Plan. Second, it is during the Trail Master Plan that the detailed engineering work will occur to establish the exact location of the trail, trail connections, trail crossings and trail support facilities such as restrooms, viewpoints, parking, and trail access points, all of which are critical elements to be included in a signage and wayfinding plan.

Early on in the Trail Master Plan process, preferred methods of signage and wayfinding will be identified, based on input and a review of existing wayfinding signage programs. These will include, but not be limited to, wayfinding systems provided in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), City of Seattle and Eastside Cities' wayfinding programs, and other examples. The preferred wayfinding strategy will guide the development and implementation of ERC wayfinding during the subsequent ERC trail master planning process and trail construction.

Path Identification, regulatory, and other signage will be consistent with King County's existing regional trails signage program along with sources such as MUTCD and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.

Figure 2 includes examples of wayfinding signs.

**Topic C: Rail and trail connectivity**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A proposal for the process by which rail and trail interconnectivity will be achieved."*

King County has identified three areas of focus which will be critical to ensuring connectivity of both rail and trail moving forward. They include the following:

1. Identification of multi-county connections with our partners in both Pierce and Snohomish Counties
2. Identification of transit centers, commuter rail, and transportation hubs for the purpose of making connections
3. Identification of regional trail hubs – where multiple trails come together

Maps highlighting each of these are included as attached documents:

Figure 3: Tri-County Connections

Figure 4: Transit Connections

Figure 5A: ERC Northern Hub

Figure 5B: ERC Southern Hub

The RAC planning process established by Council will be used to receive input on rail and trail connectivity areas, which will lead to final recommendations to the Executive and Council by the RAC on how to best achieve rail and trail interconnectivity. The regional planning process will identify preferred interconnectivity between future trail and rail facilities and suggest examples of beneficial interconnections. The process will review future plans for light rail, commuter rail, trail, and other transportation facilities and consider opportunities to enhance mobility via interconnections between these travel modes. Specific attention will be given to trail location, light rail and transit centers, and possible commuter rail stations within and surrounding the ERC. Recommendations will be developed with the goal of enhancing connectivity and mobility between travel modes and ensuring that each mode enhances the user experience of other modes.

**Topic D: Coordination with Sound Transit regarding the trail location**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A proposal to coordinate with Sound Transit so that the trail location will not make potential high capacity transit development cost-prohibitive, including consideration of whether the trail should be kept off the crown."*

We will rely upon the following three processes to coordinate with Sound Transit:

1. The RAC planning process, including the work of the Staff Group that will support the RAC
2. The approved Sound Transit easement language that identifies a coordination process
3. The Trail Master Plan process, which will include Sound Transit as a stakeholder

Sound Transit will participate in the RAC along with King County and other partner agencies. It is anticipated that the RAC will make near- and long-term recommendations which, subsequent to County approval, will provide basis for more detailed trail planning that will establish the location of the trail in proximity to the optimal location for future high capacity transit infrastructure. A technical Staff Group will be formed to help support the work of the RAC. As envisioned the Staff Group will have a representative from each of the ownership partners, including Sound Transit.

The agreement through which Sound Transit acquired its easement from the Port of Seattle identifies the process through which King County and Sound Transit will ultimately coordinate their respective activities for development and use of the ERC. In regard to the trail location, the easement language calls for King County to provide Sound Transit with a description of the trail area and available plans and specifications for the trail. Sound Transit has up to sixty (60) days to review the materials and respond to King County with identification of impacts to Sound Transit.

The Trail Master Planning process will be led by King County Parks and will commence in late 2013 in conjunction with the conclusion of the County's approval of the RAC recommendations. Sound Transit's participation will be an important component of the trail planning process. The trail planning process will, to the extent possible, synchronize with the next phase of high capacity transit planning (ST3) by Sound Transit which is scheduled to begin in 2013. This will ensure that both King County and Sound Transit can plan in parallel for future improvements within the ERC.

There are several issues of importance on which King County will need to work closely with Sound Transit as trail planning moves forward that will protect the interests of Sound Transit. For example, there are several locations along the ERC where pinch points or width will result in challenges for dual use. Additionally, the topography is quite varied and challenging in certain areas. While the width and relatively flat terrain in northern sections lends itself more to dual use, steep slopes in the south end will require substantial earth work to attain dual use. Addressing these issues early in the planning process is a priority of King County.

### **Topic E: Potential amendments to policy and regulatory documents**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A description of potential amendments to planning documents, code provisions, regulations or other relevant documents that could be adopted in order to protect the status of the ERC as a dual use transportation corridor, and to require that planning for the ERC is coordinated so that motorized public transportation and public regional trail facilities can be developed and used in an efficient manner that minimizes the overall cost to the public. Consideration should be given, without limitation, to amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies, the King County Comprehensive Plan, and the King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trail and Natural Areas, and the King County Code."*

There are several options for amendments or additions to existing planning documents, code provisions, regulations, or other relevant documents that will advance coordinated planning and development of the ERC in support of the dual use vision. During the Council's consideration of the Executive-proposed legislation Council staff prepared an invaluable summary of viable options for such amendments or additions. These options include:

- Countywide Planning Policies
- King County Comprehensive Plan
- King County Code
- King County Strategic Plan
- King County Equity and Social Justice Initiative
- Parks Levy Plan
- Sound Transit plans (via Councilmembers who are members of the Sound Transit board)

We concur with the recommendation to explore these options further to meet the objectives of this direction. We suggest the addition of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Multicounty Planning Policies in their Vision 2040 and King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) as additional options for new policy direction in support of achieving the dual vision for the ERC. Amendments to the Vision 2040 document in support of the dual vision for the ERC would encourage and help ensure coordinated, timely, and cost-effective planning for connections

between the ERC and other transportation routes, and would provide a strong basis for competitive requests for federal and state funding in support of ERC development. Amendments to the SCAP could encourage the development of quantitative data used to gauge and assess the contribution of various ERC uses to the reduction of greenhouse gases released in the region.

The following is a summary of the options. This summary incorporates the information developed by Council staff and includes new information regarding the Multicounty Planning Policies option.

## **KING COUNTY**

### **Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)**

The CPPs are the overarching planning document in King County. They are a powerful tool because the comprehensive plan of the County and each city within the County is required to be consistent with the CPPs. The county is currently in the process of finalizing a new version of the CPPs, which was adopted in December 2012.

<b>Potential Amendments</b>	<b>Timeline for Amendment</b>	<b>Process for Amendments</b>
<p><b>Transportation:</b> could potentially develop a new policy or consider potential amendments to Policies T-5, T-6, T-14, T-15 or T-21<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Public Facilities and Services:</b> could potentially develop a new policy or consider potential amendments to Policy PF-20</p>	<p>2013</p> <p><i>The CPPs can be amended at any time, but the amendment process typically involves attempting to reach regional consensus. The GMPC meets quarterly.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only the GMPC may propose amendments<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• GMPC recommends amendments to the King County Council; proposed revisions by the King County Council that are substantive may be sent to the GMPC for review</li> <li>• King County Council vote ratifies CPP amendment</li> <li>• Then each city and town must ratify the amendment<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Based on proposed CPPs (December 3, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Except for amendments to the Urban Growth Area that may also be proposed by King County in accordance with policies DP-15 and DP-16.

<sup>3</sup> Amendments must be ratified within 90 days of King County Council approval and require affirmation by the county and cities and towns representing at least 70 percent of the county population and 30 percent of those jurisdictions. Ratification is either by an affirmative vote of the city's or town's council or by no action being taken within the ratification period.

### King County Comprehensive Plan – Technical Amendment

Although the Comprehensive Plan can be updated only every four years (see below), King County policies and regulations do allow some types of amendments to be adopted on an annual basis.<sup>4</sup> These annual amendments are generally limited to technical, factual and other non-substantive changes.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
<p><b>Public Facilities: F-229(a)</b> This policy, which currently provides that the county's essential public facilities policies cover facilities that meet the GMA definition of essential public facilities, could be amended to include more detail about specific facilities that are within the scope of the GMA definition, such as the high capacity transit, regional trail and wastewater uses planned for the ERC.<sup>5</sup></p>	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council or Executive could propose an amendment</li> <li>• Council committee (TrEE or successor) would review/revise potential amendment and coordinate public outreach</li> <li>• Council would adopt amendment</li> </ul>

### King County Comprehensive Plan – Update and/or Amendment

King County policies and regulations limit most types of amendments to a four-year update process.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
<p>Council could consider potential amendments to the following chapters:  <b>Ch 6:</b> Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources  <b>Ch 7:</b> Transportation  <b>Ch 8:</b> Services, Facilities and Utilities</p>	<p>2013-2015  <i>During 2013-2015, the Council could consider amendments, but could not adopt them until 2016.</i></p> <p>2016  <i>An updated Comprehensive Plan will be considered and adopted.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive will propose a comprehensive set of changes and updates</li> <li>• Council committee (TrEE or successor) will review/revise update, add amendments as desired and coordinate public outreach</li> <li>• Council will adopt updated Comprehensive Plan</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> K.C.C. ch. 20.18

<sup>5</sup> The county has some discretion in determining whether a particular amendment is permissible during the annual update process. However, a decision to apply the annual amendment process broadly (or narrowly) in one context would create some precedent for other contexts.

## King County Code

The County can adopt amendments to the King County Code at any time.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
<p>The County could consider potential amendments or additions to the following:</p> <p><b>Title 7: Parks and Recreation</b> – potential amendments to Ch. 7.12, Rules for use of Facilities or 7.26, Land Dedications, or potential new chapter for trail planning on a corridor of regional significance</p> <p><b>Title 18: Environmental Sustainability Program</b> – potential new chapter to address dual use</p> <p><b>Title 26: Agricultural and Open Space Lands</b> – potential amendments to Ch. 26.12, Conservation Futures</p> <p><b>Title 28: Metropolitan Functions</b> – potential amendments to Ch. 28.86, Wastewater Treatment and 28.94, Public Transit</p>	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council or Executive could propose an amendment</li> <li>• Council committee (TrEE or successor) would review/revise potential amendment and coordinate public outreach</li> <li>• Council would adopt amendment</li> </ul>

## King County Strategic Plan

The King County Strategic Plan will be updated through a joint Executive/Council process during 2013.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
<p>The County could consider potential amendments or additions to the following:</p> <p><b>Economic Growth and Built Environment</b> – potential new strategy in Objective area #2 to cover transportation and dual use in corridor</p>	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council and Executive will begin planning process during second quarter of 2013 (following PMAT)</li> <li>• Council and Executive will coordinate public outreach during third quarter of 2013</li> <li>• Council will adopt new KCSP</li> </ul>

### King County Equity & Social Justice Initiative (ESJI)

The Equity and Social Justice Initiative was launched in 2008, with annual reports in each subsequent year to track progress and outline new areas for action. The 2013 annual report could include information on the equity and social justice aspects of the ERC and its dual use nature.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
The County could add information and/or goals to the ESJI 2012 annual report to address trail and/or transportation connections, economic development, and/or the implications of the ERC for underserved communities.	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council could propose areas for action in ESJI</li> <li>• Executive will release ESJI annual report during third quarter of 2013</li> <li>• Council could review and request additions or amendments to annual report</li> </ul>

### Parks Levy Plan

Both the parks operating and expansion levies expire in 2013. A 2012 citizens' Levy Task Force recently released recommendations for levy renewal, which included funding for the ERC and Lake-to-Sound Trail. The Executive will formally release a proposal to Council during early 2013.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
The Council could ensure that the ERC is adequately funded in the park levy proposal and that the funding is organized so as to support the dual use nature of the corridor.	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive will release proposal for park levy expansion during first quarter of 2013</li> <li>• Council committee (TrEE or successor) will review/revise proposal</li> <li>• Council will vote whether and when to place park levy proposals on ballot</li> </ul>

### 2012 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan

King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) was adopted by the King County Council in December, 2012. The overarching goals of the plan are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. One of the five goal areas of the plan is focused on Transportation and Land Use. The dual use vision of the ERC strongly aligns with the following Transportation and Land Use components of the SCAP:

Goal S.1: King County will reduce the need for driving and provide and encourage the use of sustainable transportation choices such as public transit, alternative technology vehicles, ridesharing, walking and bicycling.

Objective S.1.1: Provide and increase transportation choices; Strategy A: Provide and expand public transit service

Objective S.1.3: Promote and invest in community design that reduces the need to drive and enables walking, bicycling and public transit use; Strategy C: Maintain and expand the Regional Trails System

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
The ERC dual use design strongly aligns with key objectives of the SCAP to increase transportation choices and expand regional trails. Amendments to the SCAP could help quantify potential climate change and greenhouse gas emissions reduction benefits of different corridor uses.	<i>King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan will be updated by June 2015, with work leading up to the update focused in 2014.</i>	The 2015 SCAP update will be drafted by the King County Executive and staff, to be adopted by the King County Council.

## **SOUND TRANSIT**

In their capacity as members of the Sound Transit board, King County Councilmembers could ensure that the dual use nature of the ERC is realized through Sound Transit's plans.

### **Sound Transit – Light rail planning studies**

The ST2 package includes funding for planning studies of identified future light rail corridors. The studies most related to the ERC are South Bellevue to Issaquah in the I-90 Corridor, Redmond to Kirkland to the University District in the SR 520 Corridor, and Burien to Renton.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
At a workshop in fall 2012, the board asked Sound Transit to prepare a budget amendment that would allow these studies to get underway in 2013, which is several years sooner than originally planned.	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ST board members (or their staff) could meet with ST staff to determine how to incorporate transit use of the ERC into these planning studies and whether any modifications or amendments need to be made to the studies to better fit the vision of dual use in the</li> </ul>

		ERC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendments to the studies would require board approval.</li> </ul>
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### Sound Transit – Long range plan

Long range plan: Sound Transit’s long range plan contains both a map and text describing the agency’s long-range policies and visions.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
Prior to adopting the next system expansion plan, the Sound Transit Board is required by statute to update their long range plan.	2014-2019  <i>It is not yet determined when this update will occur, but the possible timeframe is any time between 2014 and 2019.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board members can further their intent to provide high capacity transit in the ERC with text and map amendments in the next long range plan update.</li> </ul>

### Sound Transit – ST3

When the ST board goes out for voter-approval for the next phase of projects, Sound Transit board members can include funding for High Capacity Transit (HCT) in the ERC.

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
Light rail to Redmond is currently identified by the board as the next priority phase for expansion. This expansion would use the Redmond spur of the ERC.	2016-2020  <i>Board members have discussed a 2016 or 2020 ballot measure, with the 2020 timeframe seeming more likely.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More planning work and analysis would be needed to determine whether further HCT expansion in the ERC is feasible in ST3.</li> </ul>

## PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL

### Vision 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies

Vision 2040 was adopted by the PSRC General Assembly on April 24, 2008. The elements of the Vision 2040 Regional Growth Strategy, including transportation, environment, development patterns, housing, and public services intersect to varying degrees with the dual use vision for the ERC. The potential amendments suggested below could be augmented through additional analysis of relevant Vision 2040 goals, policies, and actions

Potential Amendments	Timeline for Amendment	Process for Amendments
<p>At the policy amendment level the General Assembly could further incorporate the use of the dual use corridor to meet multiple PSRC Vision 2040 goals and increase emphasis on securing funding to meet the dual use goal. At the action revision or addition level in the Regional Transportation section, the Executive Board could call for engagement with the ERC Regional Advisory Council and actions to support and help implement the recommendations from the ERC Regional Advisory Council, and integrate their recommendations into plans and policies related to the transportation, environmental, economic growth, and other outcomes of the dual use vision for the ERC.</p>	<p><i>Substantive amendments to VISION 2040 will be made — as needed — in advance of the regular schedule for major updates to local comprehensive plans, as required by the Growth Management Act.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendments to multicounty planning policies require formal action by the Regional Council’s General Assembly. However, revisions, changes, or additions to actions or measures may be made by the Executive Board.</li> </ul>

**Topic F: Connections to the Regional Trail system**

*From Ordinance 17500: “A proposal for how the process will address connections between the ERC and the regional trail system, including but not limited to the Lake to Sound Trail.”*

**ECR and Identified Trail Connections**

The ERC intersects or potentially links several important existing and future regional trails. Along its alignment from Renton to Woodinville, the ERC may provide connectivity to

- Lake to Sound Trail
- Cedar River Trail
- Mountains to Sound (I-90) Trail
- Lake to Lake Trail
- SR-520 Trail
- Redmond Spur and Redmond Central Connector

- Tolt Pipeline Trail
- Sammamish River Trail.

Additional regional trail connections may also be possible as the regional trails network develops.

Lake-to-Sound Trail – the Lake-to-Sound Trail is a developing new regional trail alignment and route in south King County that includes connections to Lake Washington, Renton, Tukwila, SeaTac, Burien, Des Moines, and Puget Sound. A regional trail or other path extension between the ERC Trail and the Lake-to-Sound Trail via Renton near Gene Coulon Park and the Cedar River Trail will be developed to provide connectivity. This connection will be included in the project scopes for both the Lake to Sound Trail as well as ERC planning. King County has contributed over \$2 million to date for the Lake-to-Sound Trail project. The Parks Levy Task Force has recommended funding for both the Lake-to-Sound Trail and ERC Trail be included in a levy renewal.

Cedar River Trail – the Cedar River Trail is an existing and popular paved regional trail that runs between Renton at Lake Washington and Landsburg in southeast King County. As noted above, a regional trail or other path extension from the ERC Trail through Renton near Gene Coulon Park to meet the Cedar River Trail will be developed to enhance connectivity. That link would also facilitate a connection to the Lake to Sound Trail, which utilizes the Cedar River Trail near Lake Washington.

The Cedar River Trail connection will be made as the Lake to Sound Trail is built. Funding to complete the connection of the Lake to Sound Trail to the Cedar River Trail (and therefore linking the Cedar River Trail to the ERC) has been identified by the Parks Levy Task Force within the Lake to Sound project.

Mountains to Sound (I-90) Trail – the Mountains to Sound (I-90) Trail now runs as a paved path between Seattle and Bellevue at Factoria. The trail is also being planned to extend east through Bellevue to Issaquah along I-90. The ERC Trail would cross the Mountains to Sound Trail on a bridge at over I-90. A short trail link between the ERC and the Mountains to Sound Trail would provide important east-west connectivity between Seattle and Eastside cities served by the ERC Trail. A connection would be explored. The preferred approach to connecting the ERC to the Mountains to Sound (I-90) Trail will be detailed in a feasibility study during the ERC master planning process. The preferred connection would then be developed concurrent with the development of the ERC master planned trail. King County will work with WSDOT and the City

of Bellevue. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

Lake to Lake Trail – the Lake to Lake Trail is a local Bellevue trail and route that would intersect the ERC near Wilburton Hill. This trail exists as a paved, soft-surface, and on-road route. The connection could likely be made at grade and facilitate recreational opportunities in southeast Bellevue. A connection between the ERC Trail and the Lake to Lake Trail will be identified during ERC Trail master planning, and the connection would be improved when the ERC Trail is developed. Planning and implementation would require working with the City of Bellevue. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

SR-520 Trail – the SR-520 Trail is currently partially-developed as a paved trail along the north side of State Route 520 in Redmond and Bellevue. The trail is also being improved west of I-405 between Bellevue and Lake Washington as part of the improvements to SR-520. Future development also calls for the trail to be extended to Seattle over the new SR-520 Bridge to the University of Washington. The ERC Trail would cross SR-520 just east of this new trail development. Continued development of the SR-520 Trail at the intersection and possible interconnections would be likely in the future.

King County will undertake a feasibility study and joint development strategy with the Washington State Department of Transportation and the City of Bellevue to identify a preferred approach to connecting the future ERC Trail with a future segment of the SR-520 Trail. It is anticipated that WSDOT will be extending the SR-520 Trail to connect the east and west segments in the future, which will create an opportunity to intersect the ERC Trail. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

Redmond Spur and Redmond Central Connector – the Redmond segment of the BNSF route south of NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street in northwest Redmond is slated for regional trail development by Redmond. The spur will be developed as a paved path swinging southeast into downtown Redmond where it will become the Redmond Central Connector, an urban path and central park-like corridor. King County's segment of the ERC mainline east of Totem Lake in Kirkland is located approximately one-quarter mile from the Redmond Spur. An on-road connection from the ERC mainline along NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street will be an important link between Kirkland and Redmond.

Future connections are contingent on Redmond extending the Redmond Spur alignment north and west from downtown Redmond to NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street. Improvements between the mainline ERC Trail and the Redmond Spur will require a joint planning and development effort between Redmond, Kirkland, and King County. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

Tolt Pipeline Trail – this soft-surface trail along the Seattle Public Utilities’ Tolt Pipeline provide east-west recreational opportunities. The ERC would cross the trail, and a connection could likely be conveniently be made. Crossing of the ERC Trail with the Tolt Pipeline Trail would likely be at-grade and relatively simple. King County will work with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) to design and develop a connection between the ERC and the Tolt Pipeline Trail. A preferred approach and configuration will be identified as part of ERC Trail master planning, and the connection would be developed with the ERC Trail. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

Sammamish River Trail – this is one of King County’s most popular regional trails, and the path is used to make millions of bike/pedestrian trips annually. This would be an important connection and provide significant regional trail network opportunities. The ERC crosses the Sammamish River near SR-202 and a connection to the Sammamish River Trail would be made via adjacent parcels in Woodinville.

King County, WSDOT, and the City of Woodinville will work together to identify a preferred strategy to cross the Sammamish River and loop back to connect the ERC Trail with the Sammamish River Trail. A joint feasibility study will be necessary to identify the preferred approach that could be implemented with the development of the ERC Trail or at some point in the future. ERC Trail master planning or other related planning and development project would likely be the best point at which to undertake the feasibility review. Funding for planning and design for the ERC is included in the Parks Levy Task Force recommendation to the Executive.

## **Planning Method**

### Public Planning Process

The regional planning process could assess the potential future connections between the ERC Trail and the trails listed above. The process could verify the interconnectivity of the ERC with the regional trails network using the Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR) and other sources as well as observations of the existing facilities. If desired, the process could identify the opportunities and challenges to completing such connections at a general level. These observations and concepts could then be used during ERC Trail master planning.

## ERC Master Planning

Proposed interconnections between the ERC Trail and regional trails will be explored in more detail through feasibility studies during the master planning process as described above. The specific opportunities and constraints of each interconnection will be explored thoroughly and conceptual designs created. ERC Trail development will include specific connections as part of the ERC development process (e.g., connection with Mountains to Sound Trail or Tolt-Pipeline Trail). Where more complex or costly connections were identified, these would be programmed into the King County Parks regional trails capital development plan (Regional Trails Needs Report – RTNR) for future funding and development. The important link between the ERC Trail and the future Lake-to-Sound Trail will be identified as part of the multi-city planning process now underway for that trail.

### **Topic G: Transportation connections with Sound Transit**

*From Ordinance 17500: “A proposal for how the process will address transportation connections in coordination with Sound Transit.”*

The ERC offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to strategically strengthen our regional transportation system. King County will need to rely upon and coordinate directly with Sound Transit through the Regional Advisory Committee, the Trail Master Planning process, and the trail area designation process outlined in the Sound Transit easement with the Port of Seattle to maximize the opportunity to address transportation connections. During these processes it will be important for the two agencies to work through critical issues presented within the ERC to include pinch points, topography, infrastructure placement and connectivity. In addition, the County will strongly take into consideration Sound Transit interests when identifying options for both the planned trail area and the final trail alignment area, as defined in the Puget Sound Energy Reciprocal Coordination and Cooperation Covenant Agreement.

King County will rely upon Sound Transit to take a lead role in identifying critical regional rail connections with the ERC and to participate in the planning, design and construction of a trail within the ERC to ensure rail/trail connectivity. Sound Transit will be included in regional discussions regarding the future of trails in King County.

Connectivity between trails and high capacity transit will be addressed beginning with the regional planning process and will continue during the more detailed, site-specific trail planning process which will commence in the summer of 2013. Trail planning will be synchronized, to the extent possible, with planning for the next phase of high capacity transit infrastructure (ST3).

**Topic H: Perfecting the planned trail area**

*From Ordinance 17500: "A proposal for how the planned trail area will be perfected under the reciprocal coordination and cooperation covenant agreement as called for by Ordinance (Proposed Ordinance 2012-0353)."*

Designation of the planned trail area (PTA) is part of the County's acquisition of the ERC from the Port of Seattle and of the property interests in the Reciprocal Coordination and Cooperation Covenant Agreement (RCCCA) from Puget Sound Energy. Designation of the PTA perfects a part of the County's property interests in the ERC and the RCCCA vis-à-vis Puget Sound Energy. Designation of the PTA is not a planning decision or a decision on the location of a trail. A decision on the location of the trail will be made through a future planning process. The PTA will be finalized by King County in early 2013.

A more detailed trail alignment area (TAA), upon which the County may build the long-term trail, will be developed after the RAC planning process has concluded and the County has considered and approved its recommendations, and in conjunction with the Trail Master Planning Process. The TAA will be subject to Council approval.

At this preliminary stage we believe it is critical that the PTA maximize preservation of dual use to every extent possible. There are limitations to fully protecting dual use with the 30' allowance for a PTA. As currently envisioned the intent of the PTA would be to preserve the middle of the ERC, maximize the opportunity for dual use, and create flexibility for an interim trail to reside on either the current rail bed or immediately adjacent to the current rail bed.

To inform considerations regarding the location of the PTA, King County Parks staff walked the ERC several times, collecting on-the-ground information that has been helpful as we move forward in the identification of a PTA. During these site visits it has become apparent that there are numerous challenges moving forward in identifying a cross section within the ERC that can accommodate the PTA. In perfecting the proposed PTA, King County Parks will take into consideration all of the challenges and constraints identified and balance these with the goal of protecting the current rail bed to ensure dual use and a future transportation option is viable.

Challenges include areas where the topography is very steep, areas where there are pinch points related to width, areas where bridges and or trestles may prohibit interim trail continuity, and over 60 road crossing areas. At the same time, there is opportunity to link both existing local and regional trails to the ERC making both local and regional connections. King

County Parks staff are currently looking at how best to make community connections to the ERC in an effort to promote use and mobility.

Given this, the steps to be taken to perfect the PTA will be as follows:

Visual inspection of the ERC	Completed
Evaluation of challenges impacting trail location	Ongoing
Steep slopes	
Pinch points	
Bridge/Trestle use and conditions	
Evaluation of 60 plus road crossings	
Connections to other trails	Ongoing
Community or local trails	
Existing/Proposed regional trails	
Preserving goal of dual use	Ongoing
Mapping	Ongoing

King County Parks will provide a PTA that limits and minimizes conflicts with the planning and development of the ERC for dual use.

Figure 1

**WELCOME TO THE EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR!**

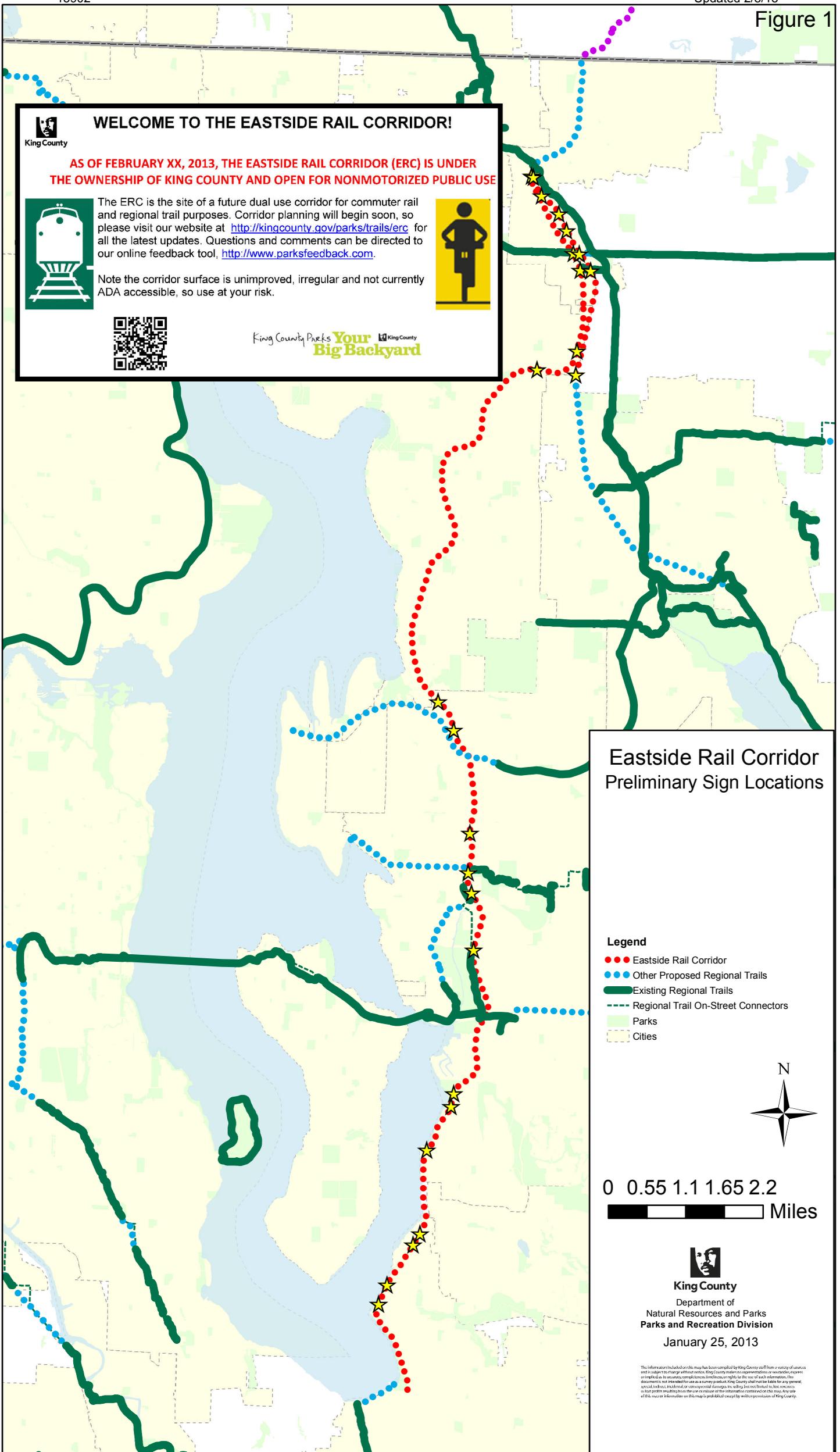
**AS OF FEBRUARY XX, 2013, THE EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR (ERC) IS UNDER THE OWNERSHIP OF KING COUNTY AND OPEN FOR NONMOTORIZED PUBLIC USE**

The ERC is the site of a future dual use corridor for commuter rail and regional trail purposes. Corridor planning will begin soon, so please visit our website at <http://kingcounty.gov/parks/trails/erc> for all the latest updates. Questions and comments can be directed to our online feedback tool, <http://www.parksfeedback.com>.

Note the corridor surface is unimproved, irregular and not currently ADA accessible, so use at your risk.



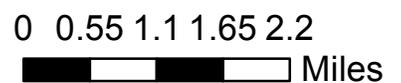
King County Parks **Your Big Backyard** King County



**Eastside Rail Corridor Preliminary Sign Locations**

**Legend**

- ● Eastside Rail Corridor
- ● Other Proposed Regional Trails
- Existing Regional Trails
- - - Regional Trail On-Street Connectors
- Parks
- Cities

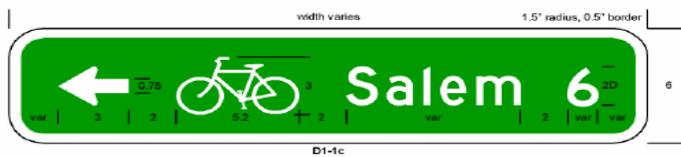
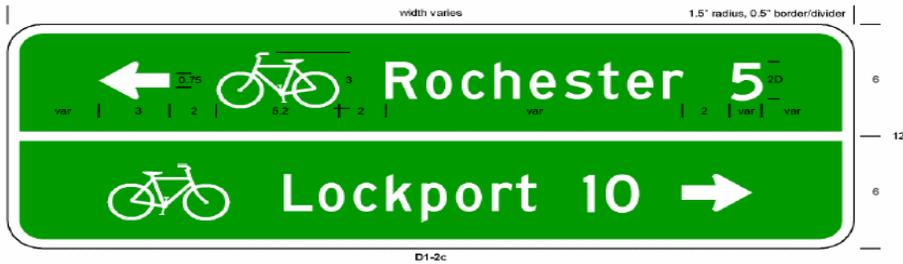
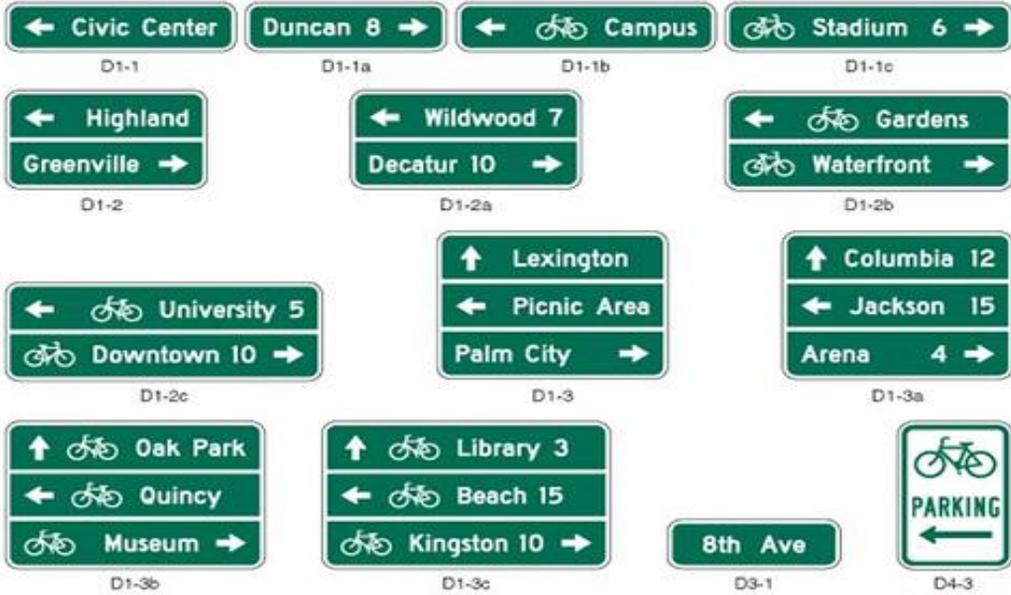


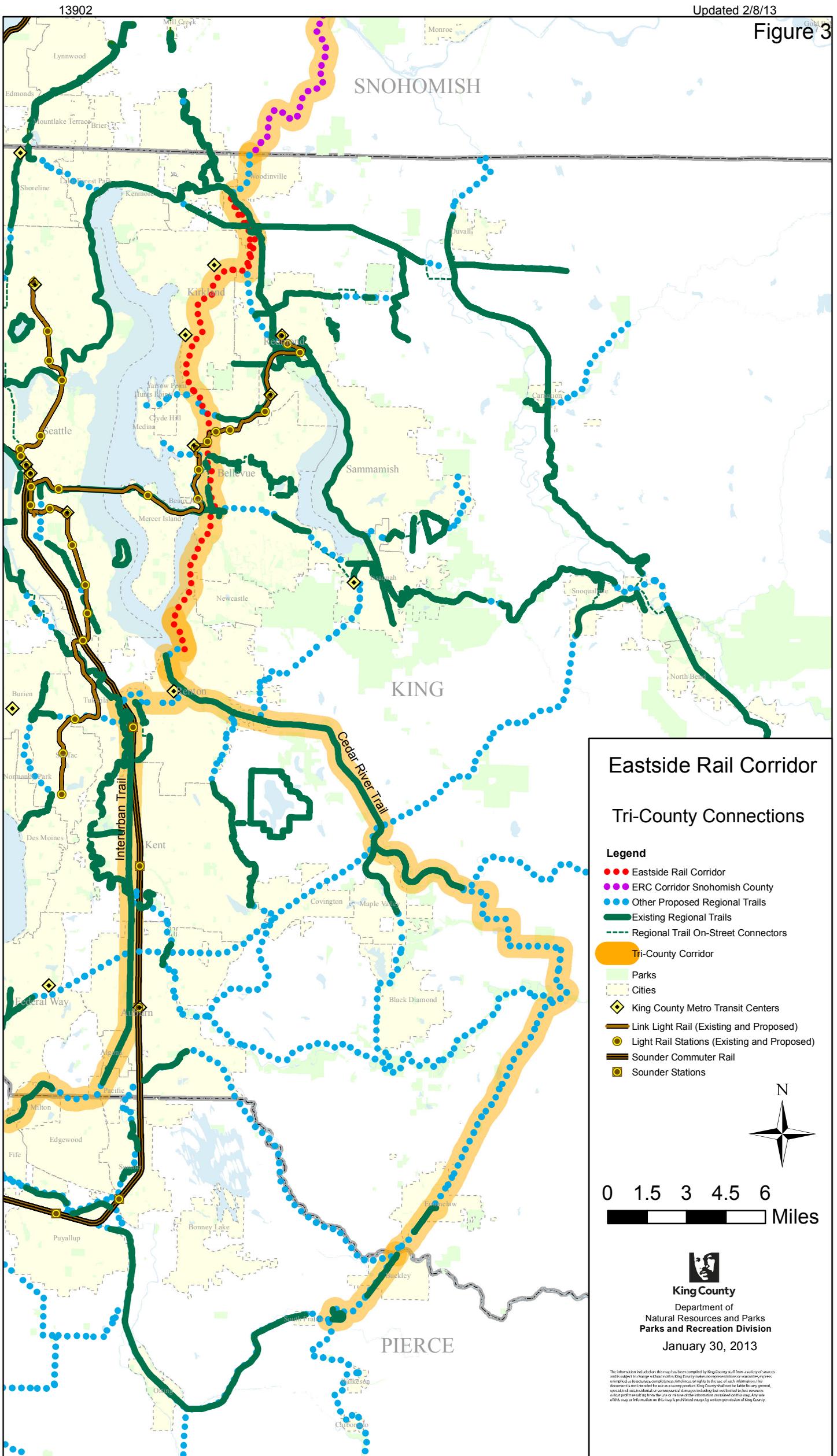
**King County**  
 Department of  
 Natural Resources and Parks  
**Parks and Recreation Division**  
 January 25, 2013

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# Wayfinding Examples

Figure 9B-4. Guide Signs and Plaques for Bicycle Facilities (Sheet 1 of 2)



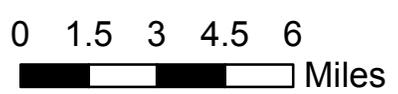


### Eastside Rail Corridor

### Tri-County Connections

#### Legend

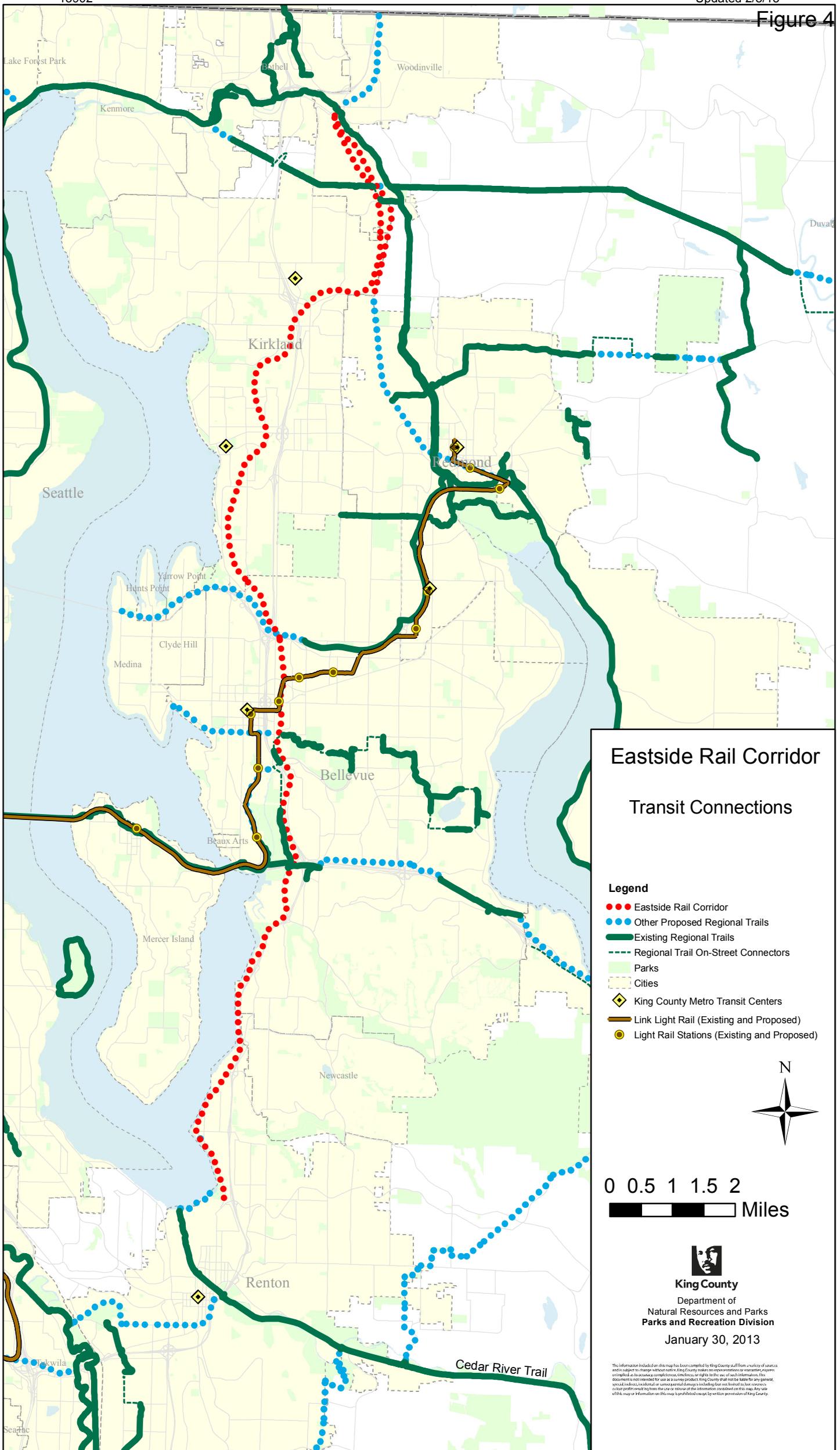
- Eastside Rail Corridor
- ERC Corridor Snohomish County
- Other Proposed Regional Trails
- Existing Regional Trails
- - - Regional Trail On-Street Connectors
- Tri-County Corridor
- Parks
- Cities
- ◆ King County Metro Transit Centers
- Link Light Rail (Existing and Proposed)
- Light Rail Stations (Existing and Proposed)
- Sounder Commuter Rail
- Sounder Stations



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Figure 4

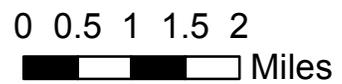


### Eastside Rail Corridor

### Transit Connections

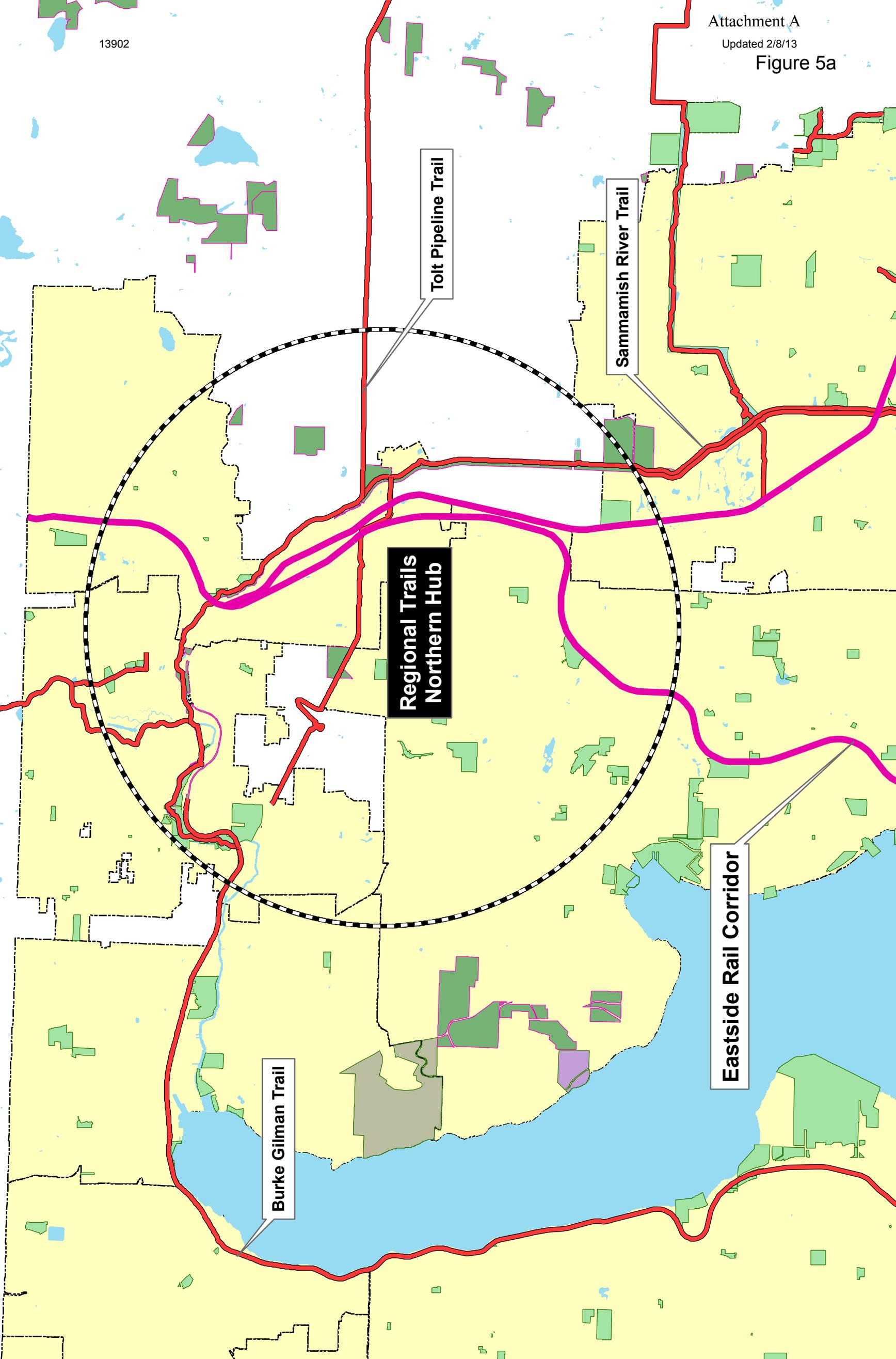
#### Legend

- ● ● Eastside Rail Corridor
- ● ● Other Proposed Regional Trails
- Existing Regional Trails
- - - Regional Trail On-Street Connectors
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Tolt Pipeline Trail

Sammamish River Trail

Regional Trails  
Northern Hub

Burke Gilman Trail

Eastside Rail Corridor

Figure 5b



Figure 6

