



MEMORANDUM

To: Kirkland Transportation Commission

From: Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager
Kari Page, Neighborhood Services Coordinator

Date: May 17, 2010

Subject: Update: Planning Process for Eastside Rail Corridor Public Participation

Background

The purpose of this memo is to update the Transportation Commission on the public participation planning process being coordinated by facilitation staff Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager and Kari Page, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator for the Eastside Rail Corridor and to receive direction from the Commission on the following:

- Proposed public participation techniques
- Public participation outline and adjusted timeline

Based on discussions at the City April 6, 2010 City Council meeting, the Transportation Commission is interested in conducting the public participation process to help guide the development of a community "Interest Statement" about the short term and long term vision of the corridor. The Commission desires that the Interest Statement be based upon public input as well as other practical considerations of rail and trail uses along the corridor. The Commission intends to forward its recommended Interest Statement to the City Council for the Council's consideration.

Key Stakeholder Interviews & Issues

Interviews have been conducted with several internal and external stakeholders. A key internal stakeholder is an individual or group associated with the City of Kirkland such a city commission or agency involved or interested in the ownership rights of the corridor, such as King County and Sound Transit. A key external stakeholder is an individual who has been actively involved in or may be impacted by the uses of the Eastside Rail Corridor, such as a property owner or business along the portion of the corridor that lies within Kirkland city limits.

In Kirkland there is great public interest in the Eastside Rail Corridor which was affirmed in the key stakeholder interviews. Eighteen (18) interviews have been completed to-date. The interviews resulted in identifying common and diverse perspectives about the corridor, additional stakeholders to contact in the future and a basis to evaluate the levels of concerns about various issues associated with the corridor.

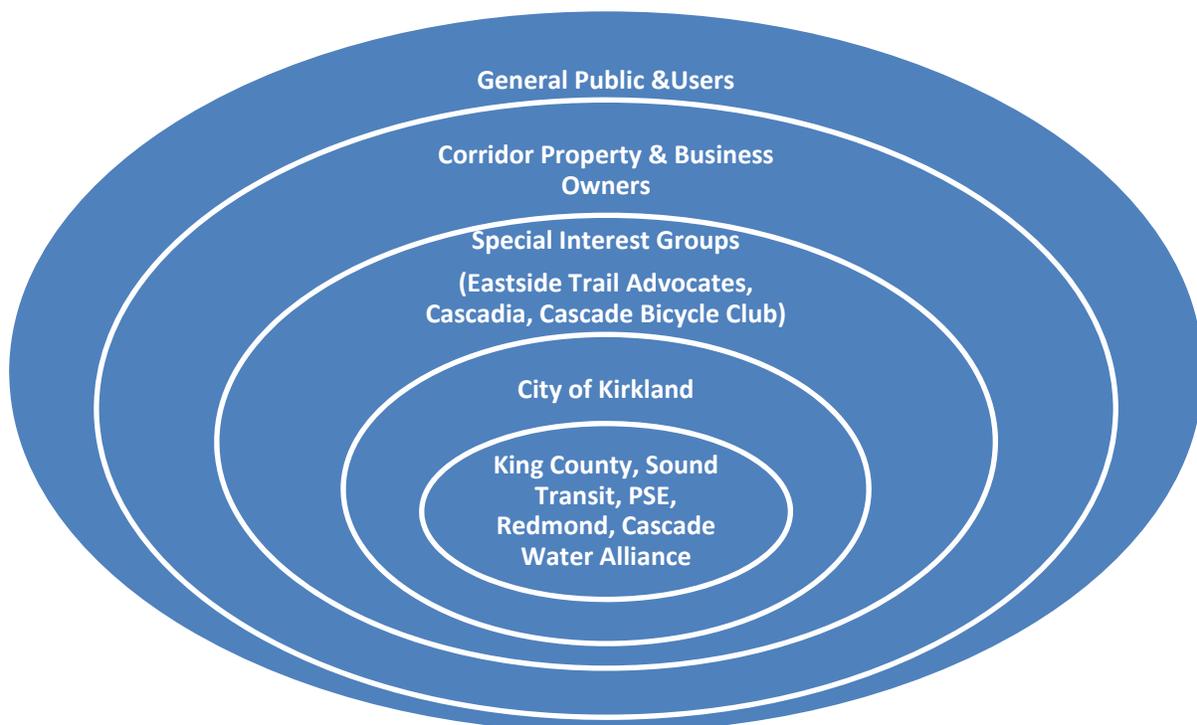
Interviews were conducted with some Transportation Commissioners; many reflected that for Kirkland's public participation process to be credible and successful:

- The City should first educate stakeholders with factual information
- All voices should be heard and understood throughout the process (reach the “unbiased”)
- The City should constantly communicate feedback received to all stakeholders
- The City’s process will be credible if based upon real data (not just gut feelings)
- That whatever use(s) is decided for the corridor, we will know success when it’s being used and is accepted by the community

Common issues reflected in the key stakeholder interviews include (not listed in any specific order):

- Use of corridor: rail use, trail use, dual use
- Timing of development of corridor
- Public safety concerns
- Rail operations
- Trail design
- Other development along corridor
- Future, long term use of the corridor
- Connection with regional transportation system
- Funding of corridor development
- Overcoming “Not In My Back Yard” sentiment

Based upon key stakeholder interviews, facilitation staff views the following stakeholders in the “orbits of public participation” below. The “orbit” graphic is an IAP2 method to depict stakeholders’ involvement at a particular time in the process. Stakeholders will move closer to the decision makers throughout the City’s process depending on their level of interest or concern.



Level of Participation

Using analysis techniques adopted by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), stakeholder issues (see above section) were rated at a level of concern (none, low, moderate, high, unknown). Using pre-determined assessment questions about the level of difficulty to address the issue, potential impacts to the public and how much do major stakeholders care about the issue, a rating (score) was calculated. The score places the issue on the IAP2 Spectrum) (Attachment A). The score fell within the “involve” level.

Several commonly known public participation techniques that support the “involve” level include: advisory groups, workshops, and tours/field trips. The City has used several of the “involve” techniques in recent years with environmental sustainability issues, climate protection goals, and, most recently, neighborhood plan updates.

Recommended Techniques

Request: Staff seeks direction from the Commission as to which techniques it is interested in engaging various stakeholders.

There are complex issues around the current and future ownership of the corridor and existing and potential easement rights of the corridor. These issues make the public participation planning complex. There are major decisions yet to be finalized about the corridor. There are many individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups that would appreciate being involved in Kirkland’s public participation efforts. Although the analysis emphasizes the “involve” level, staff recommends some activities for the “inform” and “consult” levels.

Level of Participation	Proposed Techniques	Description	Stakeholders to Engage
Inform	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Webpage (exists) 2. Fact Sheet 3. List Serv (exists) 4. City newsletter 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/Public_Works/Transportation_Streets/Eastside_Rail_Corridor 2. To be created for public distribution 3. Email updates sent to subscribers (30 subscribers) 4. Published quarterly, 1 printed, 4 online (March, June, September, December) 	1-4. All
Consult	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey (statistically valid) 2. Comment Card (not statistically valid) 3. Focus Group 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a statistically valid survey with help from consultant.* 2. Have comment cards available at public facilities and community & special events (e.g. Farmers Markets) 3. Work with trained facilitator with representatives of all stakeholder groups.* 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General public 2. Corridor property & business owners + general public 3. Representative sample of all stakeholders

**Costs associated with hiring a survey and public involvement firm*

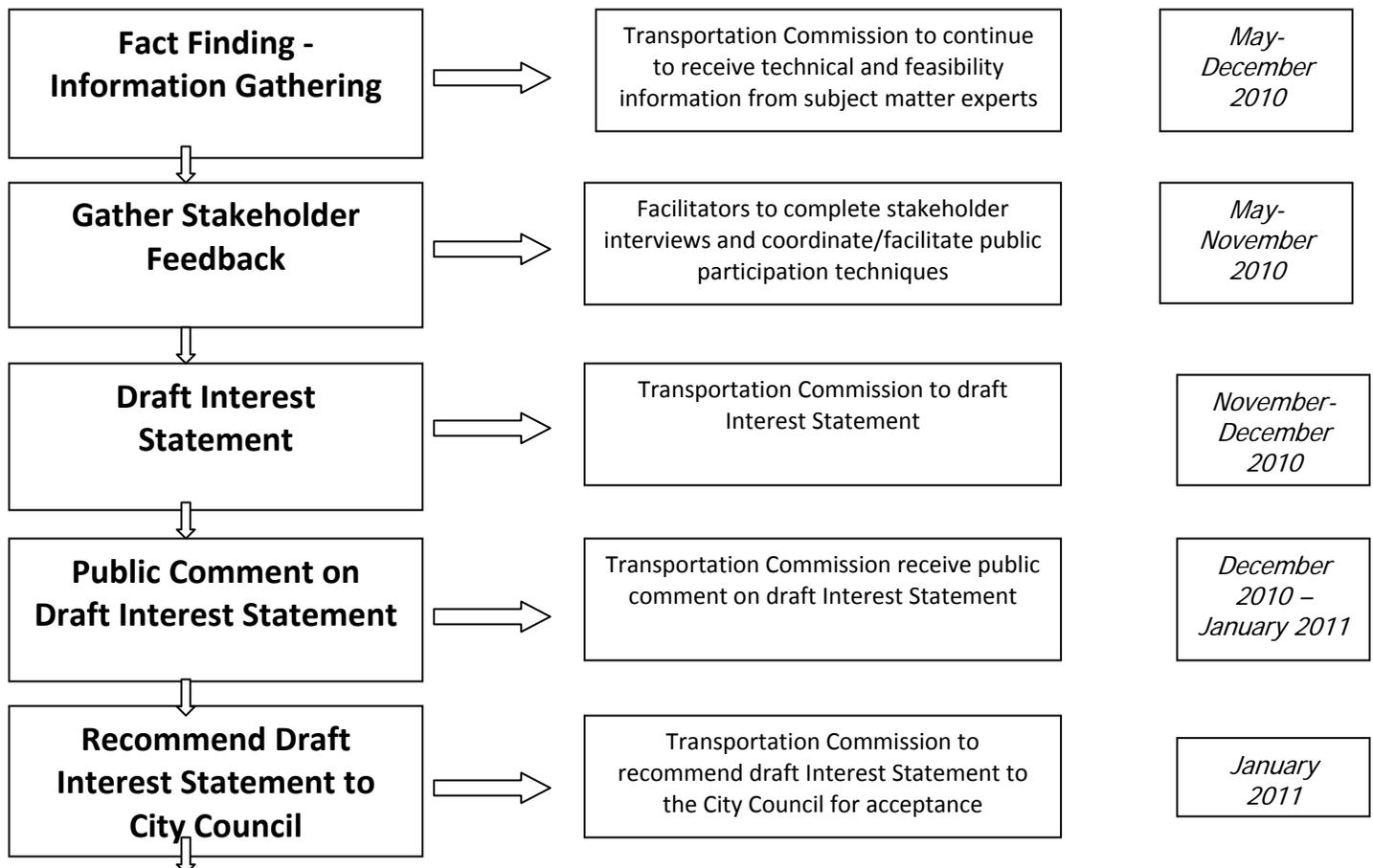
Level of Participation	Proposed Techniques	Description	Stakeholders to Engage
Involve	1. Tour/Field Trip 2. Open Space Meeting 3. World Café	1. On-site informational meeting/tour 2. Self-directed meeting, break out groups, address issues & concerns of a large group 3. A meeting process featuring a series of simultaneous conversations in response to predetermined questions.	1. Available to all 2. Special interest groups 3. Available to all

Process Outline

Request: Staff seeks direction from the Commission about the proposed outline and adjusted timeline. Does the Commission prefer to accept public input through the IAP2 techniques, draft an Interest Statement and forward it to the Council or does it prefer to include an opportunity for public comment prior to forwarding it to the Council?

The following process outline intended to be a road map of steps in the City's public participation process. The timeline is adjusted from the original timeline presented to the Commission. Summertime is a difficult time to engage the stakeholder in public participation. By engaging the public in early fall, all subsequent action steps will be delayed from the original proposal. However, the City should be flexible with this timeline should King County and Sound Transit initiate their public participation efforts sooner than expected.

Process for Developing Kirkland's Interest Statement in the Eastside Rail Corridor





Summary

The City of Kirkland seeks to be an active partner when King County and Sound Transit begin their public planning process for the Eastside Rail Corridor. The Kirkland Transportation Commission seeks to develop an Interest Statement for Kirkland that will identify the community's needs and vision of the future development of the corridor. It further seeks to present the Interest Statement and pertinent background information to the City Council so that the Council can represent Kirkland's interest in the corridor.

The public participation techniques recommended in this memo are presented for the Commission's review and direction to staff. Please contact Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager at 425-587-3021 or mstake@ci.kirkland.wa.us or Kari Page, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator at 425-587-3011 or kpage@ci.kirkland.wa.us with any questions.

Attachment A: IAP2 Participation Spectrum