

City of Poulsbo

Parks & Recreation Department



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Sound to Olympics Trail – Learn & Ride

Poulsbo, WA – Amid sunny skies and fair weather, a wide variety of elected officials from the City of Poulsbo, Kitsap County, City of Bainbridge Island, and Bainbridge Island Metro Parks & Recreation District joined a supportive group of 40+ cyclists on a first-time policy ride to learn about the forthcoming Sound to Olympics Trail

The ride was tailored specifically for elected officials, organizational representatives, and key stakeholders to ride, learn, and connect with one another while cycling a 13-mile section of the Sound to Olympics (STO) trail from Poulsbo to Bainbridge Island. Mayor Rebecca Erickson welcomed the riders, stressing the importance of this collaborative work on the trail.

“This trail is essential to connecting our communities and providing a safe separated route from vehicles,” said Mayor Erickson. “The planning work being done today for the Sound to Olympics Trail will benefit generations to come, linking our communities and furthering sustainable transportation. Thank you to our elected officials for taking time to learn about this vital route.”



The Sound to Olympics Trail (STO) is not a single trail, but a network of trails across Kitsap County, Washington, connecting the Puget Sound to the Olympic Peninsula. It is a key link in the Great American Rail Trail and the regional Mountains to Sound Greenway. A core part of the trail connects communities from Bainbridge Island through Kitsap County to the Olympic Discovery Trail.



Tom Curley, Suquamish Tribe GIS Program Manager, met the group near the Agate Pass Bridge to thank elected officials for taking the time to learn about the route and share a few of its challenges. “It’s essential that jurisdictions not only partner and inform one another, but also ensure our state legislators are aware of the importance of transportation funding to help complete the development of this route.”



There are multiple coalitions, organizations, and agencies working together to plan, fund, and develop the route. On the ride, elected officials heard presentations from various staff and officials from the City of Poulsbo Public Works and Engineering, Kitsap County Public Works, WSDOT, City of Bainbridge Island Sustainable Transportation, Kitsap County’s Accessible Communities Advisory Committee, Cascade Bicycle Club, Leafline Trails Coalition, West Sound Cycling Club, Suquamish Tribal Transportation, Squeaky Wheels Bicycle Advocacy, Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation, and North Kitsap Trail Association.

“We are so thankful for the many stakeholders who are involved in helping to plan, fundraise, collaborate, and build the STO”, said Dawn Janow Bainbridge Island Metro Parks & Rec Commissioner. “It’s pretty incredible to see such a strong collaboration working on this generational goal.”

The STO links communities, parks, and open spaces, strengthening local connections and offering shared experiences for residents. It offers a separated, park-like experience from high-speed roadways, providing a safe and pleasant alternative for walking, running, biking, and rolling, as well as for individuals using mobility devices.



Kitsap County Commissioner Christine Rolfes said “The portion of the Sound to Olympics Trail along Hwy 305 that we bicycled together will play a critical role in bringing Kitsap County’s communities together, from Poulsbo to Suquamish to the Bainbridge Island ferry. It will provide a viable option for people to recreate and travel the corridor safely, without a car, and allows community members with mobility challenges vastly increased freedom to access new areas via this safer route option.”



The Learn & Ride also had a stop along the developed section near the Bainbridge Island Ferry Terminal. Barb Trafton, Trails Director for the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation, spoke of lessons learned when building the popular section and its wide usage with cycling, ferry commuters, visitors, and residents. Those lessons were shared with elected officials and partners, who later finished the bike ride down at the rowing center.

“The Sound to Olympics Trail is important as it provides a route for safe non-motorized transportation, enhances connectivity, increases the quality of life for all community members,” said Mayor Ashley Mathews. “This essential planning also helps create a sustainable transportation option that serves disaster preparedness, which is especially important in our region.”



These types of policy rides are important as they engage elected officials with the project directly, connect them to the experts, and allow for meaningful engagement to better understand the challenges and opportunities.

The City of Poulsbo wishes to thank the elected officials who attended the ride and the many supporters, including Cascade Bicycle Club, Leafline, Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation, Puget Sound to Pacific, West Sound Cycling Club, Squeaky Wheels Bicycle Advocacy Group, North Kitsap Trails Association, WSDOT, Kitsap Transit, Kitsap County, Parametrix, City of Bainbridge Island, Suquamish Tribe, Night Owl Cycling, Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park & Recreation District, and Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee.

A special thank you to the Poulsbo Police Department for supporting the safety of the policy ride and to Kitsap Transit for generously arranging transportation back from Bainbridge Island.