

Leadership Eastside Group Project for 2005/2006

EastsideConnections.com

Connecting the Eastside Community to its Shared Resources

Trinity Parker, Sound Transit

Laurene Burton, Evergreen Healthcare

Stephanie Mapelli, City University

Scott Sadler, YMCA

Quinn Elliott, Kirkland Arts Center

Scott Harlan, First Mutual Bank

EastsideConnections

What to do.
Who to know.
Where to go.
How to get there.

One resource on the Eastside.

We'll show you the way.

www.eastsideconnections.com

Connecting people with resources on the Eastside.

The banner features a teal vertical bar on the left. The main content is on a green background. At the bottom, there is a collage of three images: a crowd of people, a modern building with a purple facade, and a group of cyclists riding on a path.

Executive Summary

Our group's project is to develop and publicize a website that provides access to the many shared resources available to Eastside residents.

The community on the Eastside of Lake Washington is defined more by geography and the common interests of its residents than by municipal boundaries. We believe that most residents of the Eastside feel they are members of at least two communities: their city of residence and the Eastside as a whole. However, it can be difficult to connect with other Eastsiders and the myriad of resources available. These resources include social services, arts, children's programs, learning opportunities, family activities, education, and municipal services, and are comparable to those found in any large urban, American city.

We feel Eastside residents need a simple way to connect to information about the region including community events, family activities, and access to social service and other resources. EastsideConnections.com is designed to meet this need. The vision for EastsideConnections.com is to take a step towards blurring the municipal boundaries that divide the region and embrace the vision of one common Eastside community.

A beta version of EastsideConnections.com was launched in April 2006. Refinements continue to be made to the content and functionality. A publicity campaign is being developed and will be launched along with the website when testing is complete.

We are very proud of the work completed in a few short months. That success could only happen with significant contributions of time and ideas from partners in the community, particularly two student website designers from Cascadia Community College (Dan Bair and Debbie McClintock) and a graphic arts student at Lake Washington Technical College (Chris Tabor).

Sample Webpage:

EastsideConnections

Fri April, 21, 2006
[Bookmark Website](#)
[Send Website to Friend](#)

Search Search Connections [Live Search](#) | [Website Map](#) | [Help](#) | [Theme](#)

[Browse Connections](#) [Get Listed](#) [Choose Search Method](#) [Eastside Frontpage](#)

Listing 163 Connections

Home

Business Resources

- General Business
- Bringing Business
- Starting a Business
- Business Counseling
- License and Permits
- Business Taxes

[View More](#)

Cities and Government

- City Websites
- Police and Fire Dept
- Consumer Protection
- Register to Vote
- State Permits
- Vessel Information

[View More](#)

Community Connections

- Eastside Communities
- Neighborhoods
- Utilities
- Newspapers
- Adopt a Pet
- Weather

[View More](#)

Eastside Facts

The average household income on the Eastside is \$92,961.

Emergency Announcements

There are currently no announcements.

Top Connections

- Northwest Center
- King County Office of Emergency Management
- 3 Days 3 Ways
- Redmond Cycling Club
- State of Washington Map Resources

Education

- City Libraries
- Assessment Tests
- Colleges and Universities
- Curricular Resources
- K - 12 Education
- Computers for Kids
- Teacher Education

[View More](#)

Emergency Information

- Amber Alerts
- Who to Call
- Preparedness Guides
- Helpful Information
- Travel Information
- Health Alerts
- General Information

[View More](#)

Kids and Family

- Fun Stuff For Kids
- Arts (for kids)
- Sports (for kids)
- After School Programs
- Family Fun Adventures
- Parents, Click Here!
- Sub Category

[View More](#)

Health and Services

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Senior Services
- Ethnic Resources
- Work / Employment (Jobs)
- Consumer Services
- Unemployment

[View More](#)

Recreation

- Art Galleries
- Touring Washington
- Events and Festivals
- Performing Arts
- Parks
- State Events

[View More](#)

Transportation

- Bicycle Program
- Driving Directions
- D.O.T. Cameras
- WA State D.O.T.
- Transit
- Maps

[View More](#)

Newest Connections

- Lake Washington Schools Foundation
- Northshore Performing Arts Center
- Starlight Children's Foundation
- Redmond Historical Society
- Angel Care Breast Cancer Foundation

All Eastside Connections

- [View All Connections](#)

All E.C. Sponsors

- [View All Sponsors](#)

All E.C. Facts

- [View All Eastside Facts](#)

Current Eastside News

Stay current with Eastside news and events by viewing all your local news here.

Copyright ©2005 - 2006 Eastside Connections & Leadership Eastside. All Rights Reserved.
[Home](#) | [About](#) | [Get Listed](#) | [Sponsors](#) | [Browse](#) | [Search](#) | [Contact](#) | [Help](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS](#)

Project Formation and Definition

Our project was unique in its formation. The team's success can be traced back to its first 10 minutes together. When the time came for individuals to self select their team, class members were drawn to projects that peaked their interest. The six of us were attracted to an idea that we felt satisfied a need, was tangible, easy to understand, and achievable within the eight-month time frame. We quickly came to consensus on project scope, website content, and the necessary timeline. We were fortunate that consensus among six new acquaintances was built quickly and easily. By day's end, we had secured the domain name EastsideConnections.com and began mapping out the project.

The team has a broad range of skills - from marketing and creative experience to planning and technical skills. However, the team was lacking one key skill necessary to design and build a website: a website designer.

The team's initial thought was to approach a partner organization in the community such as a college or municipality and work with that organization's Information Technology department to do the design and host the site. If the partner organization was a college, we hoped the project could be perpetually maintained and enhanced by their web design students.

We continue to seek a long term partner to sustain the site, however, we were fortunate to find partners interested in devoting valuable resources to project development.

Cascadia Community College Steps Up

Another Leadership Eastside classmate introduced our team to the technology faculty at Cascadia Community College, one of whom mentioned our project to his students, two of whom expressed interest in participating. The skills of both of the students met our needs, and Dan and Debbie joined our project.

Dan introduced the team to Chris who was the creative force in designing the website's logo and "look and feel".

This created a win-win situation for both parties. The students met a critical need for the team while fulfilling their internship requirement. By working (gratis) for our team, they met a Cascadia Community College course requirement while working on a project that interests them (all are Eastside residents). The quality of the work provided by these students is excellent, particularly as the project complexity increased. Dan, Debbie, and Chris have spent hundreds of hours working on the design and creation of the site.

Our team participated in the home page layout and worked with Dan and Debbie crafting the site map. A portion of the team focused on logo design, site colors,

and the overall website “look and feel”, while others provided the necessary content to fill out the site links.

EastsideConnections.com is more than just a page of links to websites maintained by other Eastside resources. The site provides live Eastside newsfeeds from area newspapers, weather, current traffic, and a rotating banner showing interesting, and sometimes surprising facts about the Eastside community. The Cascadia students designed a sophisticated infrastructure for the site that includes a database to manage links and information, and an innovative search mechanism to help the user find the information they seek quickly and easily.

During the design phase, team members worked on a publicity campaign aimed at drawing people to the website. We have created a media list, arranged for editorial mention in Eastside newspapers, written a press release, designed the ad for an email campaign and created a giveaway bookmark. Additionally we will launch an email marketing campaign, enlisting our Leadership Eastside classmates.

The total cost of the project, to date is \$135.

- Registering the domain name cost \$35.
- Annual website hosting costs \$100.

There were other minimal costs associated with publicity campaign, but those are as yet not quantified. The team equally shouldered all project costs.

Key Milestones

The key milestones for this group are:

- September 23, 2005, group formation and project goal developed.
- November, 2005, the Cascadia student partners secured. Without this, the project would remain a good idea though with no tangible vehicle to showcase that idea.
- April 20, 2006, the live beta site was launched and for the first time our group was able to see a working site.

Role of Community Partners

The group originally envisioned working closely with other not for profit organizations to help design and promote the website. When the reality of a tight timeline became clear, the team scaled back its aspirations. Given the timeframe of the Leadership Eastside calendar, there simply is not enough time to design, create, and launch the site, create a publicity campaign, and enlist community partners to promote and/or create the finished product.

The key community partners at this juncture are Cascadia Community College and the three students resulting from that partnership. The team met our project objectives because of their assistance.

Leadership Eastside

The core goals of Leadership Eastside are to build connections within the community and to create a catalyst for change. By launching this site and executing a successful marketing campaign, we believe this project effectively meets both of those goals.

Recommendation on sustainability

The long term sustainability of the website is the current focus of the team, and we have identified four paths which could be followed separately or in tandem towards a self-sustaining web source for Eastside information and resources:

- Our team continues to work on this project over the remaining two years of the Leadership Eastside program. Tasks would include refining the website, launching the publicity campaign, and seeking out a long term partner(s) for web site hosting and maintenance of the content.
- Another possibility is to seek long term funding from the cities identified as the geographic area of the Eastside. A nominal annual fee of \$100 per entity could generate enough income to cover to costs of web hosting and web master costs.
- A future Leadership Eastside group could take the project to this next phase focusing on developing their team's vision for the next phase of development.
- A long-term partner, i.e. a community or technical college could assume project responsibility using it as part of their website design and marketing curriculum.

The path we take is dependent on Leadership Eastside's expectations of our team for years two and three of the program, the possibility of having a future LE team continue the project, the longer term desire of Dan, Debbie, and Chris to stay involved in the project, and our success in identifying a long term community partner.

Conclusion

The team has created a wonderful Eastside Community resource. The product, even in its current beta-form, meets the vision the team arrived at in our first few hours together. The resources available on the site are representative of the entire Eastside community. With further refining and a publicity campaign, the site has the potential to be used heavily and relied on by Eastsiders for important information. The team is committed to ensure that success and sustainability.