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The City of Kirkland is covering the 2013-2014 budget process



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BUDGET BYLINES



A CONTINUING CITY OF KIRKLAND REPORT ON THE 2013-2014 BUDGET PROCESS

With levies, come opportunities

Proposition 1 allows City to keep roads safe, efficient

Commuters have driven the 15 blocks of 108th Avenue between the Metropolitan Market and B.E.S.T. High School more than 50 million times since crews last overlaid it in 1997, according to City of Kirkland calculations. If it had to, it could accommodate a few million more trips.

But the arterial is cracking. At its intersection with 60th Street, the cracks that first appeared years ago have progressed into what engineers call alligator cracks. Longitudinal cracks are appearing in the wheel ruts along most of the 15-block section.

Better days are ahead, however. 108th Avenue is one of six arterials Kirkland engineers plan to overlay in 2013, thanks largely to the annual \$3 million streets levy

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Alligator cracks appear on 108th Avenue Northeast at its intersection with Northeast 60th Street.



Photo courtesy of Plant Girl Squad

ABOVE: O.O. Denny Park's access to Lake Washington, and a healthy forest is an asset to Finn Hill and the City of Kirkland. **BELOW:** Marcus Webb, a parks maintenance lead, prepares Lee Johnson Field.

Prop. 2 brings O.O. Denny into City's park network

One-half of new revenue will help parks department maintain and operate parks

When Finn Hill's 17,000 residents agreed in 2002 to manage O.O. Denny Park, they hoped, with time and a rebounding economy, some other jurisdiction would eventually relieve them of their obligation.

When the City of Kirkland stretched its boundaries in 2011 to include Kingsgate, North Juanita and Finn Hill, it became the obvious choice.

"But they stated up front: 'We can't manage O.O. Denny Park,'" says Rick Smith, chair of the five-member Finn Hill Park and Recreation Commission. "It's not in our budget."

Kirkland did, however, agree to ask its voters. And on Nov. 6, 58 percent of those voters said yes. They approved Proposition 2, a \$2.35 million-per-year levy that will help the City maintain, restore and enhance Kirkland's network of 45 parks.

Within seven years, Park planners say the levy

will help the City complete a series of vital projects: Renovate docks and the shoreline along Lake Washington, continue the partnership with the Lake Washington School District that gives residents access to ballfields at 16 schools in Kirkland. The levy would replace the Juanita Beach Bathhouse and renovate Edith Moulton and Waverly Beach parks. And it would help the

City realize the decades-old goal of transforming the old Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail corridor into the Cross Kirkland Corridor's interim bicycle and pedestrian trail.

Lifeguards will return to Houghton, Waverly and Juanita beaches. Maintenance crews will return

more frequently to all of the City's parks.

And come this spring, the City of Kirkland will begin maintaining and operating O.O. Denny Park.

"We will probably hand off responsibility April 1," Smith says.



PARKS, cont. Page 2



The intersection of arterial and neighborhood street at 132nd Avenue Northeast and Northeast 61st Street reveals differences in two treatment approaches. **Below**, severe alligator cracks, such as the ones in this section of Northeast 60th Street, usually require total reconstruction. Reconstruction can cost \$63 per square yard, or \$66,000 per city block. Roads with PCI ratings of 20 or so typically require reconstruction.

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voters passed in the Nov. 6 election.

That levy will help construct sidewalks to the rest of Kirkland's 12 elementary and middle schools. It will restripe 230 crosswalks and upgrade 50 of the City's most trafficked crosswalks with warning lights. Over time, the levy will expand Kirkland's 40 miles of bike lanes and make the City's network of parks, transit routes, schools and commercial areas more connected for walkers and cyclists.

One of the levy's most effective contributions to Kirkland, however, is this: It empowers the City to repair and maintain 49 lane miles of road—more than twice as much in previous years—before the costs to repair them escalate exponentially.

The cost per square yard for reconstructing an arterial is \$63, more than double the cost to overlay it. That's because overlaying a road requires crews to grind off the two- or three-inch surface and lay a new one down. Reconstruction requires crews to re-engineer it—to tear it down to its foundation and rebuild it.

To determine which kind of treatment an arterial requires, engineers score its condition against what they call the Pave-

ment Condition Index. A 100 on the index means the road is in perfect condition. Anything below a 20 on the index typically means the road requires a total rebuild.

When engineers evaluated Kirkland's arterial and collector streets in 2010, they scored their collective condition at 64.



“As you move further and further down the [Pavement Condition Index] chart, your treatment methodologies change,” says Ray Steiger, Kirkland's public works director. “If your road has reached 60, you're going to have to be doing some patching and then an overlay. And if you let it degrade all the way down to where the pavement has alligator cracks, water will be seeping through. There'll be patches. What this says is you need to do a total reconstruction. That is: take out the whole road, put in a brand new bed, new asphalt, and bring that all the way up.”

Next year, engineers will evaluate 500 lane miles of Kirkland's roads, including its neighborhood

streets.

SLURRY SEAL

Neighborhood streets often qualify for a treatment that arterials don't: Slurry Seal, which costs about \$3 per square yard.

“Slurry Seal can extend the life of a street by five to 10 years,” says Andrea Swisstack, Kirkland's project engineer tasked with street preservation.

Starting in 2013, the streets levy allows Kirkland to Slurry Seal roughly 30 lane miles of road, Swisstack says.

To qualify for Slurry Seal, however, a street must usually score 80 or better on the Pavement Condition Index.

To do that, it must be largely free of cracks. Regardless of their conditions, arterials aren't good candidates for Slurry Seal. That's because Slurry Seal covers the entire road and takes several hours to cure.

“So we have to close down the whole road for almost a day,” Swisstack says. “And we don't want to shut down an arterial for a day.”

Slurry Seal has one other limitation. Too many layers of it can impede access to underground utilities. Ultimately, however, it allows Kirkland keep more street in good condition.

“It's a tool,” Swisstack says. “It's a tool to keep our streets safe in a cost-effective way.”

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The hand-off will allow Finn Hill's park district to use its remaining \$100,000 in reserves to enhance the park with a new shelter, new benches or augmented parking.

Next to opening restrooms in neighborhood parks throughout the City, taking over O.O. Denny might be one of the easier projects enabled by Proposition 2.

One of the Proposition's more daunting tasks, however, is to help Kirkland move toward its goal of providing a park within walking distance of every resident. Before Kirkland annexed Kingsgate, Juanita and Finn Hill in 2011, three out of every four residents lived within a quarter-mile of a neighborhood park. That percentage declined with annexation.

“The areas with the biggest opportunity are Finn Hill, North Juanita and perhaps Kingsgate,” said Michael Cogle, Kirkland's deputy director of parks.

Like the rest of Kirkland, Kingsgate doesn't have much land available for parks. Many of its neighborhoods, however, do have private parks, operated by homeowners' associations.

“Intermingled in those areas are people who are not allowed to use those parks,” Cogle said. “We're trying to figure out how to work with that dynamic.”

Cogle said expanding Kirkland's park system will rely largely on the City's ability to acquire new land.

“We've had to purchase primarily large parcels that are usually residential properties,” Cogle said. “Then most often ... begin accumulating contiguous parcels to create a park.”

The most recent product of this approach is four-acre Rose Hill Meadows Park in the North Rose Hill Neighborhood. That began as a single parcel nearly two decades ago. “And it is the product of a half a dozen contiguous parcels,” Cogle said.

GIS analysts are currently examining the City to identify Kirkland's most pressing needs and opportunities for neighborhood parks.