



Budget: Mayor James Lauinger

Police

Crime Prevention: Councilmember Dave Asher

1. What is being done about loitering/drug dealing at bus terminal/Lee Johnson ball field? Moved family here this summer after 20 years in Seattle. I walk my dog at all hours and I'm astounded by the open drug dealing and obnoxious loitering. I called Police and City Council in August/September but without response.

Response: The Transit Center on Third Street is adjacent to Peter Kirk Park. As a transportation hub, the area has constant traffic and has become a meeting place for many people. The Police Department monitors the area and takes enforcement action whenever violations are observed. This is an on-going enforcement area for the district officers and Community Service Unit. The Police Department works with the METRO Police on this issue to provide public safety response to complaints in the area. Maintenance of the Transit Center is done by METRO Transit and supplemented by Kirkland Parks Department. The grounds are kept clear of trash and containers emptied frequently. Persons found littering in the area are cited by Police. Additional officers were assigned to the area of the transit center and downtown on overtime to address many of these concerns during December 2007. They were successful in arresting several people for alcohol and drug offenses and issued trespass letters prohibiting violators from returning.

Without additional information regarding the comment about calling the police in the August/September time period, I can not respond to their concerns. If this party would like further contact, please contact Sergeant Saloum at 425-587-3400.

2. Everest Neighborhood has one of the only active Block Watch Programs in the City. What are the crime statistics for Everest compared with the rest of the city? What crime trends do you see happening in Kirkland and how can Everest continue to combat crime in our neighborhood?

Response: The police department does not track specific crime statistics for each individual neighborhood. Anecdotally from crime report history it is clear that the Everest neighborhood has one of the lowest "crime rates" in the city.

The "crime trends" occurring in Kirkland today are primarily minor property loss through car prowls, auto theft and graffiti. Citizens can help combat these issues in several ways.

Regarding car prowls, the easiest way to avoid becoming a victim is to park in well-lit areas, lock vehicles when unattended and remove items of value that may be attractive to thieves. People frequently leave expensive items in their cars such as GPS units, cell phones, sports equipment, firearms, laptop computers and credit cards. Alarms are very helpful in reducing theft.

Regarding auto thefts, the easiest way to reduce the risk of becoming a victim is again to park in well lit areas, keep the car locked when not in use and be aware of the people around your home. Do not be afraid to call the police when someone arouses your suspicion.

Regarding graffiti, the best remedy is to call the police when it is discovered and then clean it up as soon as possible after it has been reported. Graffiti or "tagging" that is left on display may attract more of the same type of actions by others who frequently see themselves as artists in competition with other "taggers".

A well organized Neighborhood Watch is a good way to reduce crimes. By getting to know your neighbors and paying attention to what is going on around your home, you can be ready to call in suspicious persons or vehicles. KPD has a Neighborhood Resource Officer who can provide information on organizing a watch program.

Public Works

Traffic and construction: Councilmember Bob Sternoff

3. What will the right of way improvements look like on 6th Street S. after the new project is done?

Response: In front of the Google project, there will be one through lane in each direction and a center two-way-left-turn lane for most of the frontage. Parking will be prohibited on both sides of the street. About 1200' of 5' wide sidewalks with planter strips and street trees will be built on the west side of the street.

4. What will the intersection improvements at 6th Street S./108th Avenue and NE 68th Street look like and when will they be completed?

Response: There will be two new projects at this intersection. One will add a new right turn lane by the 7/11 for turns from westbound to northbound. The other will reconfigure the eastbound to southbound right turn lane to make it easier for busses to navigate. The projects are planned for completion in late 2009.

5. What other improvements will be made to lesson the impact of traffic on 6th Street S. after this large development goes in?

Response: See the answers to questions 3 and 4. We will also be working with Google to promote trip reduction as much as we can. The building is required to have a "Transportation Management Plan" which specifies actions the occupants must take to encourage bus, bike, walk and ridesharing. The fact that Google's employees begin and end work later than the traditional office site will make the impact less than what might otherwise be expected

6. What traffic studies have been done on the impact of the Google Development and Park Place redevelopment on the Everest Neighborhood?

Response: The normal traffic studies required of developers was prepared. If you would like to review the study or if you have questions about it, contact Thang Nguyen at tnguyen@ci.kirkland.wa.us or (425) 587-3869.

7. Street improvements for 9th Avenue S. and 6th Street. It is very difficult to make a left turn from 9th to 6th.

Response: The neighborhood traffic control program can help you with this question. Contact Jim Dare at (425) 587-3868 or jdare@ci.kirkland.wa.us for more information. He would be happy to meet with you or a group of neighbors to discuss options for your consideration. We should look at all the side streets as a group; a similar study was made on Market Street where the issue was the same; getting from side streets onto a busy main street and we came out with some good ideas on how to improve things.

8. Install/connect sidewalks on Kirkland Way specifically from Ohde Avenue/Kirkland Way west under/over the railroad crossing to 6th Avenue S. 4 way stop.

Response: We are working on a revision to the non-motorized plan and in a preliminary ranking that section was in the highest priority group. The old railroad underpass with its narrow width is one of the major impediments to making the connection (see question 9). The capital improvement program includes funding for sidewalks each year. Projects are ranked and funded by priority which includes the ranking from the non-motorized plan. Please contact Public Works Department at (425) 587-3800.

9. What can be done to improve the situation for traffic and pedestrians using, crossing, and entering 6th Ave S. between Houghton and Park Place? The road is dysfunctional and an eye sore, and without serious changes, it's going to get worse with traffic from the Google development and possible development at Park Place. Examples of problems: no pedestrian crossing to pedestrian stairs at the top of 3rd Ave. S.; difficulty and danger pulling out from 5th Ave S. and 9th Ave S. onto 6th St. S. because of heavy traffic, limited sight lines (parked cars too close to corners block visibility); no sidewalk on most west side of road approaching railroad tracks from south; discontinuous sidewalk on east side of the road as you near Kirkland Ave.; telephone poles and trash containers blocking sidewalk; no street trees or other visual amenities; no bike lanes going into Houghton; and an overloaded intersection in Houghton with cars backing up the hill to I-405 (a free right-turn lane as you come down the hill into Houghton would help, and it would also address the safety issue of having buses and trucks scraping the stoplight pole several times a year -- what if a pedestrian were standing there -- they'd be squished!).

The issue of 6th St. South's poor condition is one of the most pressing specific issues I see facing our neighborhood. This road is heavily used as a gateway into both Downtown and Houghton as well as a major pedestrian corridor between these two areas and also feeding children to and from Lakeview Elementary. It should look nice and function well.

Response: Breaking this comment down into some of its components:

Things we can do soon/right away:

- *Pedestrian crossings: Yes, changes can be made to better align with the places where people want to cross.*
- *Exiting on to 6th/ sight distance/ parking restrictions. See the answer to question 5. Also, its fairly simple to extend red curb.*
- *Adding bike lanes: We plan to re-stripe 6th Street to add bike lanes from NE 68th to Kirkland Way this summer.*
- *Turn lanes at intersection of 6th Street/NE 68th Street: see answer to question 2.*

Jim Dare (425) 587-3868 or jdare@ci.kirkland.wa.us in the Public Works neighborhood traffic control program would be happy to coordinate these issues with you if you'd like him to, just let him know.

Things that take time/are expensive/require more process

- *Adding sidewalks: This would be done through redevelopment or through specific projects funded by the City. For example, a City project will add 560' of sidewalks on the east side of 6th Street S. between 1st Ave. S and Kirkland Way.*
- *Relocating utility poles: The poles along 6th have high voltage cables so they are extra difficult and expensive to move or put underground, but it's not impossible.*
- *Adding street trees/improving the streetscape: Street trees are usually placed one of two places; between the sidewalk and the curb or in a center median. On 6th Street, there's currently not enough room to place them by the sidewalk so property would have to be purchased which adds to the cost and complexity of the project. A median could be created, but it would mean removing parking and limiting left turns where the median is located.*

Comprehensively addressing these bullets suggests a 6th Street design study. Usually these studies are done through the neighborhood comprehensive plan update or by other council direction.

Burlington Northern Railroad: Council members Tom Hodgson and Mary-Alyce Burleigh

10. What is the status of this right of way? What does the Kirkland City Council want to see done with this right of way?

Response: The railroad, King County and the Port of Seattle are working out a deal to get the right-of-way into public hands. Council has supported the idea of getting the right-of-way in public ownership and has urged the parties to come to agreement. Almost everyone agrees that getting the right-of-way in public hands and using a portion of the right-of-way for a bicycle and walking trail is a good idea. There are more questions about what to do with the tracks. Some groups believe that it would be easy and relatively inexpensive to upgrade the tracks so that they could handle passenger trains and don't want the tracks removed. Those groups support a trail separated from and beside the rails. The county's original plans called for removing the tracks and putting the trail where the tracks are now.

Council has taken the position that the trail is the highest priority use for the corridor. They believe that the rail idea is worth thinking about but there are important unanswered questions about cost, timing, ridership and impacts on non-motorized use.

11. When is the City going to do something about the overpass on Kirkland Way? Is it still an unfunded project in our Capital Improvement Program?

Response: Yes it's still unfunded. With the use and ownership of the rail line in flux (see previous question) we may want to reconsider the function of the bridge. Perhaps it would no longer be needed and could be removed. Or perhaps funding would be available for development of the trail that would help us improve the bridge.

Miscellaneous Public Works: (not fitting into assigned topics)

12. Would like LID for under-grounding power on east side of street, minus high voltage poles. (See letter to Ray Steiger)

Response: The use of a Local Improvement District (LID) to underground the overhead power involves a lengthy process with a number of required steps. In order for the City to undertake the process of forming an LID, two criteria must be met:

- 1) *The method of LID assessments must assure equitable distribution based on the benefit derived to a given property*
- 2) *The benefit to each assessed property must be greater than the assessment to each property.*

With the conversion to underground utilities, benefit is typically due to view enhancements and general aesthetic improvements. In a current potential LID that involves properties in the west of Market neighborhood, the Council has directed staff to work with the LID proponents on an agreement to cover the initial costs of forming an LID. In the case of the proposed LID, those costs are approximately \$20 - \$25 per foot of underground conversion or approximately \$1,500 per property. Council would support a similar arrangement in the case of 6th Street.

13. Garbage pick up any other day than Monday morning – trash cans on sidewalks all weekend.

Response: The Everest neighborhood is one of four neighborhoods that that receive garbage and recycling service each Monday and our goal is to remain as predictable and consistent as possible by providing service on a regular day and at a regular time. In fact, the City's solid waste and recycling contractor, Waste Management, is contractually bound to provide service on the established service days for the duration of the contract. As such, the service day for the Everest, Moss Bay, Central Houghton, and Lakeview neighborhoods will remain on Mondays. However, the City of Kirkland does have an established ordinance that addresses trash cans on sidewalks and reads as follows:

16.08.070 Garbage carts and ordinance units—Placement.

All garbage carts and ordinance units shall be placed by the occupant in a convenient, accessible location as near as practicable to the city street right-of-way, upon the ground level or ground floor, or in a sturdy rack not over fourteen inches above such level or floor, except that sunken cans may be below the ground level. With automated garbage and recycling trucks, street placement is preferred for the most efficient collection. There shall be two feet clearance between each cart and two feet from any other obstructions (i.e., mailbox, fence, car) so the hauler can access containers with automated truck arms and avoid contact with nearby obstructions. Where no other suitable area is available, garbage carts or ordinance units may be placed in the sidewalk or in the alley for collection, but shall not be so placed until a reasonable time prior to collection and shall be removed within a reasonable time thereafter.

What this typically means is that a customer may place his or her cart at the curb the evening before or the morning of service and should remove it, whenever possible, in the evening on the day of service. If there is a specific property or group of properties that are not in compliance with the ordinance, you may report this to the City of Kirkland at (425) 587-3804. A friendly reminder letter will be sent which explains the ordinance and requests compliance. We have found this method to be effective and it has increased compliance with our ordinance. In addition, the City also sends periodic reminders in utility bills and other publications.

Parks

Kirkland Parks: Council member Jessica Greenway

14. What is the plan for the land purchased by the city on 10 St. S adjacent Everest Park? Is there a master plan for all the land east of Everest Park now that the city owns it?

Response: Last year the city completed the purchase 5 parcels (4.59 acres) within this open space. Preventing development of these parcels will protect the open channel portion of one of our most valuable urban creeks in Kirkland which is Everest Creek. Everest Creek is an important source of cool clean water for Lake Washington and thus, supports Chinook salmon and other fish populations in the lake.

Additionally, the open space has a collection of mature native vegetation and soils that are necessary to maintain watershed hydrology, stable stream channels, and healthy aquatic systems. Native vegetation and soils are also the most cost-effective and efficient tools for managing storm water quantity and quality. It is easier to prevent storm water pollution through maintenance of natural areas than it is to clean storm water once it has become polluted.

The acquisition of these parcels is consistent with the Comprehensive Park, Open Space and Recreation Plan to provide unique natural resources and protection of critical urban wildlife habitat for its citizens.

There is no master plan for development.

Planning

Tree Ordinance: Deputy Mayor Joan McBride

15. How does the Tree Ordinance address trees located in the right of way?

Response: Trees in rights of way are regulated by Chapter 19.36 in the Kirkland Municipal Code. Except for routine maintenance, it is unlawful to cut, prune or modify trees in rights of way without approval of the Public Works Department. In general only trees that are hazards, are causing damage to property or have been damaged by improper arboricultural practices are allowed to be removed. If removal is allowed, planting of replacement trees is usually required. For further information, please contact Wendy Kremer in the Public Works Department at 587-3908.

16. What is the city doing to cooperate with residents in enforcing the tree ordinance?

Response: The tree ordinance regulates the cutting of trees both during the process of land development and on property that has already been developed. On developed property, a property owner may remove up to two "significant trees" (defined as trees of six inches in diameter or greater at breast height) of their choice each year except for the last two significant trees on the property. The Planning Department encourages those wishing to cut trees to submit a tree cutting request form. Enforcement of violations on developed property is generally initiated in response to complaints submitted to the Planning Department. If a violation occurs, a Code Enforcement Officer contacts the property owner and asks that the violation be corrected by planting replacement trees. If the owner is cooperative, the City provides a reasonable amount of time for the planting to occur. If the owner is not willing to correct the violation, the City will impose fines. The fines may be waived if the trees are planted, but if the owner continues to be unresponsive, the matter will be sent to a collection agency to recover the fines. The amount of fines may be up to \$1,000 per tree.

17. Can the City's enforcement be more cooperative and solutions be negotiated? The tree ordinance is unattainable.

Response: The tree ordinance allows considerable flexibility. For developing properties, the ordinance seeks to retain as many trees as possible but does not prevent development in order to save a tree. Minor modifications to site plans may be requested in order to save a specimen tree. Where sufficient trees are unable to be saved, the ordinance requires planting of new trees to achieve a specified tree density. The planting location is up to the developer. On developed property the choice of tree cutting and planting is up to the property owner, provided that no more than two significant trees are cut per year and the last two remaining significant trees remain on the property.

Miscellaneous Planning

18. What financial help is available to assist disabled to become home owners?

Response: The Washington State Housing Finance Commission has a program that may be of assistance. Information is available on their website: <http://www.wshfc.org/buyers/downpayment.htm>.

19. Did the City Council consider that negative financial impact on single family properties when they decided to allow duplexes, multiplexes, and triplexes to be planned in single family neighborhoods? This is not the solution to affordable housing.

Response: With the restrictions imposed, the Planning Commission and City Council did not feel that allowing two and three unit homes within single family neighborhoods would have a financial impact to surrounding property values. The size of such structures will be limited to less than the size of a typical new single family home, and the design must be compatible with single family homes. Further, such homes may not be located closer than 500 feet to one another. The intent of allowing such homes is to allow a diversity of housing to accommodate changing demographics and smaller family sizes in a form that is relatively more affordable than a traditional single family home.

20. Why doesn't the City include appurtenances as part of the height restrictions in Kirkland? Bellevue requires all appurtenances to conform to the height restriction. Kirkland should too.

Response: Kirkland's height limits have been established to accommodate a typical number of stories. In most cases, height limits are quite restrictive. The Zoning Code establishes restrictions on the height and horizontal coverage of appurtenances above the height limit.

21. Make empty lot @ 68th and 6th Street South (behind 7-11) into passive pocket park. "Proposed" use of car lot, garage, office retail and drive through coffee is inconsistent with neighborhood character.

Response: As noted, the property is currently owned and may be developed by the owner. This property has been suggested by neighbors in the past as a "pocket park" but access issues, small size, and its relationship to surrounding developed properties make it a poor candidate for a public park.

22. The parking strip adjacent (just west of Lakeview Elementary) to the school and in front of vacant lot is a real eyesore. Who is responsible for maintenance and what can be done to weed and clean it up?

Response: Maintenance of parking strips is the responsibility of the abutting property owner. This can be a problem when the abutting lot is vacant. If the lot in concern is the one at the northwest corner of State St. and NE 68th St., a building permit application has been submitted for the construction of four single family homes on that lot. Once development occurs, maintenance of the strip should improve.