



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
Department of Parks & Community Services  
505 Market Street, Suite A, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300  
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** David Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Jennifer Schroder, CPRP, Parks and Community Services Director

**Date:** February 5, 2010

**Subject:** Draft response to Mr. Bill Dunlap's email regarding signs in parks about Budget Reductions

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Mr. Dunlap who emailed comments regarding signs in parks about budget reductions.

### **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

On January 31, 2010, Mr. Dunlap emailed the City Council regarding a sign that was posted in his local park regarding service reductions in neighborhood parks. Jason Filan, Park Maintenance Manager immediately followed up with a phone call.

The sign was developed in response to several phone calls inquiring as to why garbage cans were removed from neighborhood parks. The removal of garbage cans from 17 neighborhood parks, the elimination of portable toilets throughout the park system, and the year-round closure of restrooms at the North Kirkland Community Center Park, Phyllis Needy Houghton Park and South Rose Hill Park are among the many reductions in service approved by Council.

The sign will be in place temporarily to inform park visitors why the reduction in amenities at their park. Attached to this memorandum is a copy of the sign that is installed.

Att.

# CITIZENS OF KIRKLAND

## Service Reductions in Kirkland's Park System

The City of Kirkland regrets to advise that due to the failure of the voted private utility tax in the November 2009 election, service reductions are in effect. Impacts to Kirkland's park system include: removal of garbage cans from 17 neighborhood parks, the elimination of portable toilets throughout the park system, and the year-round closure of restrooms at the North Kirkland Community Center Park, Phyllis Needy Houghton Park and South Rose Hill Park. We take pride in our parks system and apologize for any inconvenience. We appreciate your help in keeping Kirkland's parks clean.



**From:** Bill and Carla Dunlap [mailto:104dunlaps@comcast.net]

**Posted At:** Sunday, January 31, 2010 9:23 PM

**Posted To:** Kirkland Council

**Conversation:** Park service reduction sign

**Subject:** Park service reduction sign

Dear City Council,

A City sign was posted at my local park that states that reductions to park services were necessary do to the "failure of the proposed utility tax increase". This statement made me angry and defensive, especially since I did not vote for the utility tax.

I couldn't help to think that the City was trying to send the voters a message on the ramification of voting down the utility tax. These cuts were necessitated I believe by decisions made by you to work within the City budget. The sign conveys a negative attitude in my opinion and should be removed or reworded.

Sincerely,

Bill Dunlap

12821 NE 104th Street

February 16, 2010

**DRAFT**

Mr. Bill Dunlap  
12821 NE 104<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Mr. Dunlap,

Thank you for your recent email to the Kirkland City Council about the service reduction sign you observed at a neighborhood park. I understand Jason Filan, our Parks Maintenance Manager immediately followed up with you in response to your concern.

The City has been experiencing unprecedented revenue loss in the past two years which significantly impacts our budget. It is the responsibility of the City Council to adopt and maintain a balanced budget where expenses equal revenue. The City Council approved service level and expenditure cuts, the use of reserves and the implementation of revenue increases to balance the 2009-2010 budget. One of the revenue increasing strategies was to place a proposed tax rate increase on private utilities (telephone, electricity and natural gas) on the November 2009 General Election ballot. As you are aware, the proposition failed and an unfortunate consequence is that further reductions had to be implemented beginning the first of this year.

Probably the most notable reductions Kirkland residents and visitors are experiencing is the lack of trash cans and portable toilets and the closure of restrooms at many of our neighborhood parks. It was an extremely difficult decision to make such reductions because Kirkland prides itself on its park system. The intent of the signs posted at impacted parks was to explain to park users the reason why certain services were no longer available. We apologize if the sign created a negative impression. Over time the signs in our parks will have served their purpose and will eventually be removed. In the meantime, it's important that residents are aware of budget impacts that are occurring citywide.

The City is committed to communicating budget issues that impact citizens and we value the feedback we receive from citizens. We encourage residents and businesses to stay informed and involved in the decision making of the City Council. In March, the City Council will begin its 2011-2012 Budget adoption process. This process will be challenging like the last as the City continues to have economic challenges to overcome.

The City Council appreciates you sharing your thoughts. Should you have further questions about the budget process, please contact our Finance and Administration Department at 425-587-3100. To receive email alerts regarding Budget Updates, please subscribe to Kirkland Email Alerts at [www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/E-Bulletins](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/E-Bulletins).

Sincerely,  
Kirkland City Council

By: Joan McBride, Mayor