



CITY OF KIRKLAND
City Manager's Office
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3001
www.kirklandwa.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager
From: Marilynne Beard, Deputy City Manager
Date: April 19, 2013
Subject: KIRKLAND 2035 UPDATE #2 AND DEMONSTRATION OF INTERACTIVE CIP MAP

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council receives a short staff presentation on the status of major plan updates and projects.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

This is the second in a series of monthly updates to the City Council on major plan updates, projects and outreach activities. The most current information will be provided at the meeting and will include a description of recent activities related to:

- Development of an overarching outreach plan for all related studies taking place in 2013 and 2014
- Update on the Kirkland 2035 webpage and email
- Preliminary results of surveys related to the comprehensive plan update process
- A summary of presentations made to advisory groups, neighborhood associations and other community groups
- Scheduled dates for outreach activities
- Status of selected studies
- New communication materials developed and in development (see attached materials related to various elements of the Comprehensive Plan)

Interactive CIP Map

During the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) update process last fall, the City Council asked staff to develop an online/interactive map application for easy access to information on funded and unfunded CIP projects. In November, staff presented a draft of the interactive map to Council and received feedback. The purposes of the map are:

- To provide easy access to the City's CIP project information such as locations, project funding details, project status, construction impacts, etc.;
- To provide direct contact information for the Project Manager and Outreach Coordinator;

- To encourage citizen engagement by sharing ideas with city staff through the “suggest a project” tool;
- To replace the old CIP web site with new technology architecture, improved functionality, and regular database maintenance;
- To enable GPS geo-locator for easy searching and navigation on mobile devices; and
- To achieve measurable efficiency gains by reducing the amount of telephone and e-mail responses that most departments regularly handle as routine public inquiries.

Outreach

Several staff members, consultants, and volunteers from the Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods have tested and provided feedback on the map. Changes were made where possible and other items were added to the “wish list” for future application updates. Staff has a vigorous outreach program scheduled to promote and publicize the use of the interactive map. The timing is opportune for the many public outreach/planning initiatives taking place this year and next. The following is a listing of scheduled outreach activities to promote, publicize and use the new map.

Public uses in planning and outreach activities: residents can use the map to determine where current funded and unfunded CIP projects are located, to identify specific locations of concern, and submit ideas for future improvements. The studies and plans to use the map include:

- Juanita Drive Corridor Study
- Surface Water Master Plan
- Walk and Roll Safety Fair
- Lakeview Elementary School year end barbeque
- Transportation Master Plan
- Cross Kirkland Corridor Master Plan
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan
- Capital Improvement Program update process
- Street levy requests for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements

Meetings and Events: The map will be on display at these upcoming meetings and events.

- Cross Kirkland Corridor Business Roundtable: May 14th
- Kirkland’s Walk ‘n’ Roll Safety Fair: June 7
- Planning Day Event: June 8
- Juanita Drive Corridor Study public workshop: June 12
- Farmers Markets: Summer 2013 and Summer 2014
- Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods: May Meeting
- Chamber of Commerce: Spring or summer meeting
- Neighborhood Associations: May or September 2013 meetings

Written material and flyers: The map will be promoted in the following publications.

- Articles in City Update
- News release (w/video)
- On Track Newsletter for Totem Lake

Online: Online notices will be sent and posted on the City's web site to publicize the map.

- May Hot Sheet
- Information on *Twitter*
- Kirkland Reporter and community blogs
- City List Serves (Neighborhood News, CIP, other related lists)
- QR Codes to direct people to web site
- Announcement on the City's home page

Staff will demonstrate the interactive map at the May 7 Council meeting.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035

ABOUT GROWTH



A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Summer at Marina Park: Kirkland's small-town charm has been a priority since City leaders drafted its first comprehensive plan 50 years ago. **BELOW:** Harry Cummings, 88, reviews the Comprehensive Plan he authored in 1963.

For the greatest benefit ...

This year, Kirkland's leaders and citizens will be discussing the City's future

TO LEARN MORE

■ Contact Teresa Swan, senior planner: 587-3258; tswan@kirklandwa.gov

■ Or Paul Stewart, deputy planning director: 587-3227; pstewart@kirklandwa.gov

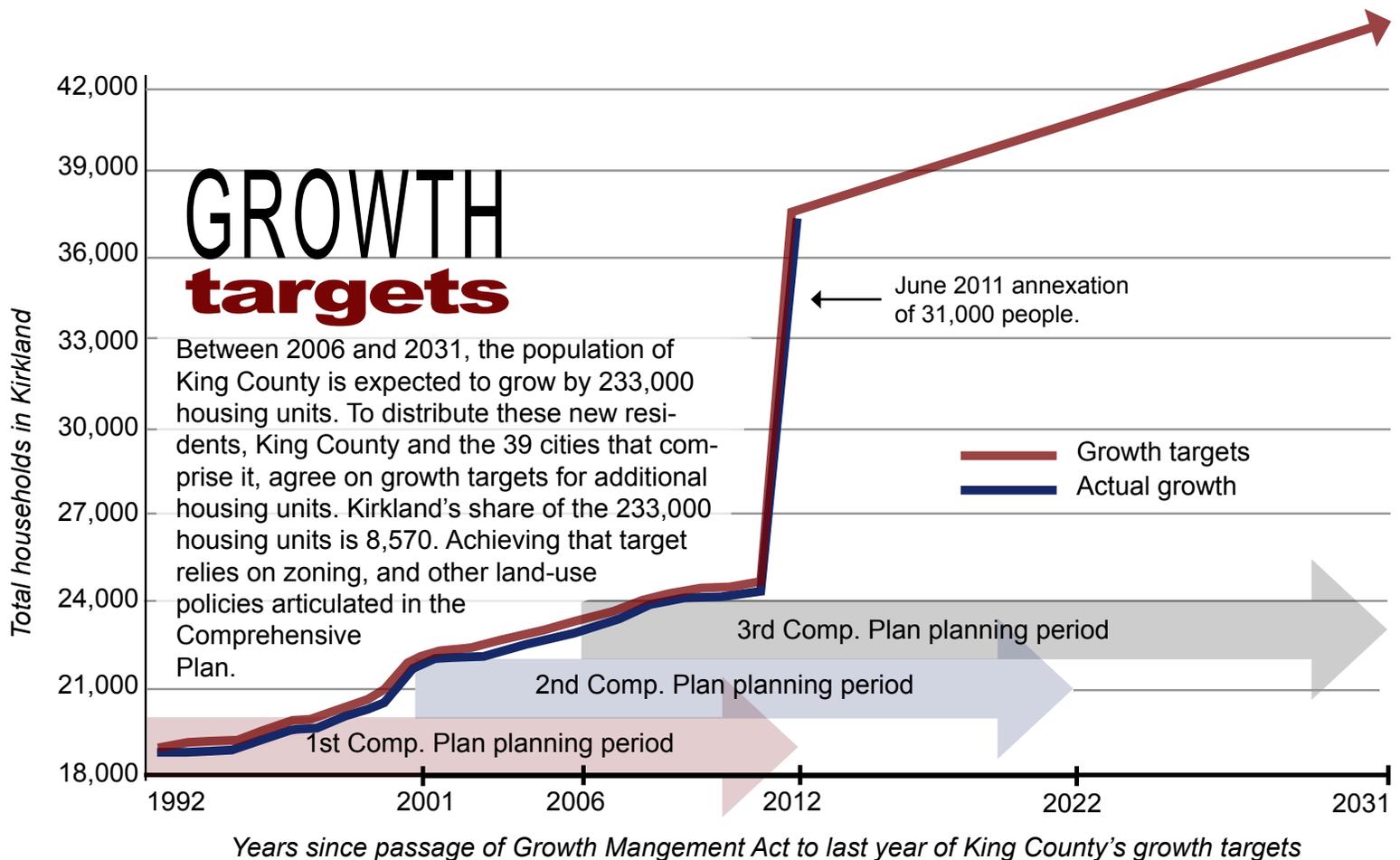
In 1959, Kirkland had 6,400 residents and three elementary schools. Its entire downtown offered less retail space than today's Parkplace. But Kirkland was about to change. The state, you see, was building a bridge that would connect Kirkland to Seattle at a time when Seattle was preparing for the 1962 World's Fair, and the 10 million people who'd be venturing there to experience it. And Kirkland's local leaders were still talking about a possible merger



with the town of Houghton.

To prepare for the change, Kirkland's leaders wrote a manifesto of sorts—37 pages of maps, visions

and recommendations that translated the community's values into a general plan. That document became Kirkland's first Comprehensive Plan.



What's in a Comp Plan?

- Community Vision
- Natural Environment
- Land-Use
- Housing
- Econ. Development
- Transportation
- Parks/Rec/Open space
- Utilities
- Public Services
- Human Services
- Capital Facilities
- Neighborhoods
- Shorelines
- Methodologies
- Visit http://kirkland-code.ecitygov.net/CK_comp_Search.html for the Comprehensive Plan

FUTURE

continued from Page 1

The author was a consultant—an ambitious architect from Michigan's Cranbrook College named Harry Cummings. Cummings would eventually design some of Kirkland's most iconic spaces, including Doris Cooper Houghton Beach Park.

And in the 1963 Comprehensive Plan, he recommended a variety of improvements that have helped define Kirkland's modern identity.

"I drive through town everyday and I can see the effects everywhere I look," he says.

Along the waterfront, for example, he saw a string of parks, and admonished the City to acquire as much lakefront land as possible. Around the

downtown business district, he saw a ring road that would increase traffic flow. He wanted Sixth Street to extend south, down the hill and to the floating bridge.

To such a small town, these were ambitious plans. Cummings knew it. Which is why, in a 1959 *Eastside Journal* article, however, he presented his argument:

"[We could] 1. Let the growth come and then attempt to solve the problems that come with the growth as they arise."

Or "2. Anticipate the problems as well as the growth, and by study and long-range planning, prepare the way for orderly development of a nature that will benefit the greatest number of people over the longest period of time."

FUTURE

continued from Page 1

Kirkland, today

Fifty years later, Kirkland is beginning its fifth significant iteration of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan will build on the ones that precede it. And it'll look 20 years into the future, when leaders expect to add another 8,570 households and 20,850 new jobs.

"This is our blueprint for the future," says Paul Stewart, Kirkland's deputy planning director. "It tells us what we want to do, where we want to go and how we are going to get there."

The Growth Management Act

To some extent, some of the direction for the Comprehensive Plan is provided by the Growth Management Act—passed by the state legislature in 1990 and reinforced with three hearings boards in 1991.

Perhaps more than any other land use law in the state, the



David Bricklin, 60, while hiking the Pollalie Ridge in the Snoqualmie Valley.

"Green hillsides all of a sudden were stripped bare and covered with homes and roads. Forests were being mowed down, and there was a lot of clear cutting. And there were traffic jams where people had never before had traffic jams."

—David Bricklin,
lead advocate for the
Growth Management Act

Growth Management Act is influencing where and how Puget Sounders live, work and play. It is helping to make downtowns more attractive, more expensive and more livable, say several peer-reviewed journal articles.

By preventing developers from building up excessive stocks of homes, experts say it blunted the blow of the 2008 housing crisis to Puget Sound. It also helped create 10 new Puget Sound cities—Woodinville, SeaTac, Shoreline, Kenmore and Sammamish,

among them—and contributed to Kirkland's annexation of Finn Hill, Kingsgate and North Juanita. Above all, its purpose is to harness rural sprawl—that tendency for unplanned development to devour farmlands and forestlands, while demanding huge public investments of infrastructure.

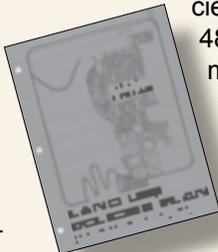
It does this by requiring cities to create 20-year plans and to update them at least once every eight years.

Where did it come from?

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN KIRKLAND

1963

At 37 pages, Kirkland's first Comprehensive Plan provides a "general design" for future growth. Neighborhood land-use is driven by the City's three elementary schools. Transforming the industrial waterfront into a shoreline of parks is a major focus.



1977

Kirkland adopts the Land Use Policies Plan. The 489-page document serves as the City's first detailed long-range plan. It includes Kirkland's first neighborhood plans.

1990 & 1991

Motivated by the environmental and eco-

nomics impacts of rural sprawl, the state legislature passes the Growth Management Act. The sweeping land-use law requires jurisdictions to create land-use comprehensive plans that confront issues, such as land-use, transportation, housing. Jurisdictions can update their plans annually, but must do so every eight years.

1995

After three years of

public involvement and study, Kirkland issues its first Comprehensive Plan required by the Growth Management Act. The plan details a 20-year vision of Kirkland, ending in 2012.

2004

Two years after beginning its second major Comprehensive Plan revision, Kirkland finishes its first major update of the Comprehensive Plan. This one articu-

lates residents' visions for the City through 2022.

2013

City leaders begin Kirkland's third significant update of the Growth Management Act-influenced Comprehensive Plan, which will articulate the community's vision for the City through 2035. One of the issues: How to grow by more than 8,500 households, and 20,000 jobs.

FUTURE

continued from Page 1

In the decade before its passage, a Washington state population boom was encouraging sprawl. The state's population ballooned by nearly 600,000 people; King County's by nearly 200,000.

"And with that came a lot of new problems," says David Bricklin, one of the state's most active advocates for managed land use, in a 2005 interview with Washington state archivist Diane Wiatr. "There was a loss of lots of open space in communities all around the state. Green hillsides all of a sudden were stripped bare and covered with homes and roads. Forests were being mowed down, and

there was a lot of clear cutting. And there were traffic jams where people had never before had traffic jams."

1.3 million

The number of additional people state population forecasters expect central Puget Sound by 2031.

In 1990, Bricklin and the Washing-

ton Environmental Council that he led lobbied the state legislature to pass a land-use law that would require cities and counties to plan for population growth.

"We threatened if they didn't pass a strong law, we'd pursue an initiative," Bricklin said.

Over the next two years, the legislature did pass a law it called the Growth Management Act. Oregon



Photo courtesy of Astronics

Astronics, pictured here, moved into a 14-acre Totem Lake facility in January 2013. Totem Lake is Kirkland's only Urban Center and one of 17 throughout King County. Urban centers are planning districts intended to provide a mix of housing, employment, commercial, and cultural amenities in a compact form.

passed the nation's first growth management legislation in 1973. Florida followed Oregon 12 years later.

Florida's law served as the model for the one Washington state would adopt in 1990 and 1991.

How does it work?

Under Washington's law, the state forecasts population growth for each of Washington's 39 counties. The counties, then, distribute the population to their cities. And the cities become responsible for attracting and accommodating their share of those populations.

Kirkland's share of the 1.3 million people and one million jobs forecasters expect for the central Puget Sound region by 2031 is 8,570 households and nearly 20,850 new jobs.

"That's a hefty number," says Chandler Felt, King County's demographer, who specializes in growth management. "But it's in

line with the way Kirkland has been growing. Additional space will have to be found—either through rezoning ... or in this case, planning the city's designated Urban Center. You can't be passive. The City will have to act positively to make space for this growth that is coming."

This process has already started with Kirkland's Geographic Information Systems analysts. They are preparing a report that will determine how much space the City has, what kind of space and where it is.

If the resulting analysis shows Kirkland does not have the space necessary to accommodate the forecasted population, its leaders will re-examine how the City uses its space.

Meanwhile, the City's leaders will be engaging in a continuous conversation with its residents about what kind of community they want—now and in the future.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035

ABOUT GROWTH



A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Image courtesy of GGLO

An early drawing of Juanita Village featured a plaza at the mixed-use development's northern entrance.

Vision. Plan. Zone.

Twenty-five years ago, Juanita Village was a concept—inspired by a community's vision and zoning crafted to achieve it. Today it is a model for small-scale urban redevelopment.

For years, the 11-acre block at 98th Avenue Northeast and Juanita Drive had been short-changing its neighbors. Littered amongst a dental office, barber shop and bank, were a vacant Chevron station, a vacant Market Place grocery, and weeds. Lots of weeds.

But the site had something its neighboring residents considered invaluable: Through the billboards and the wafting heaps of landscaping bark, was a view of Juanita Bay. Residents wanted to keep that view, scrap

almost everything else and exchange it for a neighborhood center—a neighborhood living room—where, by walking, they could do business, do lunch or coffee. They sketched out this vision in their neighborhood plan. And when the City Council adopted it into Kirkland's Comprehensive Plan, it became the basis for a customized zone, tailored specifically to the topography and geography of those 11 acres.

Authority to zone

Kirkland has 145 total zones spanning

TO LEARN MORE

■ Contact Teresa Swan, senior planner: 587-3258; tswan@kirklandwa.gov

■ Or Paul Stewart, deputy planning director: 587-3227; pstewart@kirklandwa.gov

Staying flexible

All developments require building permits. Some, however, require zoning permits that rely on decision-makers to evaluate the development proposal against City codes. Depending on the type of permit, the decision-maker may be the planning director, hearing examiner, design review board, or City Council. Below are common examples of zoning permits:

VARIANCE

When it's used: When an applicant hopes to develop land in a way that is inconsistent with the zoning code, but compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. Usually applies to individual properties or small developments

An example: Resident wanting to decrease setbacks

Requires: Proof of hardship

Decision-maker: Planning Director

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

When it's used: When a developer wants to apply unique rules to an entire development

An example: Lake Washington Institute of Technology

Requires: Public benefits from the developer to off-set impacts

Decision-maker: City Council, after a public hearing administered by hearing examiner

DESIGN REVIEW

When it's used: Used in design review districts, which are typically the City's more intensive commercial area

An example: Bank of America's mixed-use building on Kirkland Avenue and Lake Street

Requires: Consistency with the design guidelines adopted in the Municipal Code

Decision-maker: Design Review Board

seven broad categories: institutions, parks, housing, industrial, office, transit-oriented development and, of course commercial. These zones are law. Their purpose is to help manifest the community's vision as articulated in its Comprehensive Plan. Without a Comprehensive Plan to implement, the zones have little legitimacy.

This was the ruling in 1958 by King County Superior Court Judge Malcom Douglas, who invalidated all of the zones King County had established up to that point.

"You cannot have enforceable zoning regulation until you have a proper Comprehensive Plan adopted in compliance with the statutes," he said in his July 23, 1958, oral opinion in the State of Washington vs. King County.

That decision spurred cities throughout King County to draft their own Comprehensive Plans, says Harry Cummings, the author of Kirkland's first Comprehensive Plan.

"Everyone was scrambling to get one," he says.

Private Amendment Requests

The spirit of Douglas' decision persists today in Kirkland. If a developer wants to shape land in a way that differs from the City's zoning and the Comprehensive Plan upon which that zoning is based, the developer must submit a Private Amendment Request. This is no small matter. Private Amendment Requests are proposals to amend some aspect of the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning code.

"Private Amendment Requests acknowledge that circumstances might change over the life of a Comprehensive Plan," says Marilynne Beard, deputy city manager for the City of Kirkland. "Maybe the community didn't think of something back when we were doing the Comprehensive Plan, that today, really would be a good thing for Kirkland. Private Amendment Requests create a process for those ideas to become reality."

For this reason, the Growth Management Act requires cities to consider them. It does not, however, guarantee their approval. To win approval, a Private Amendment Request must pass the scrutiny of City planners, the Planning Commission, and ultimately the City Council (see "*Staying Flexible*").

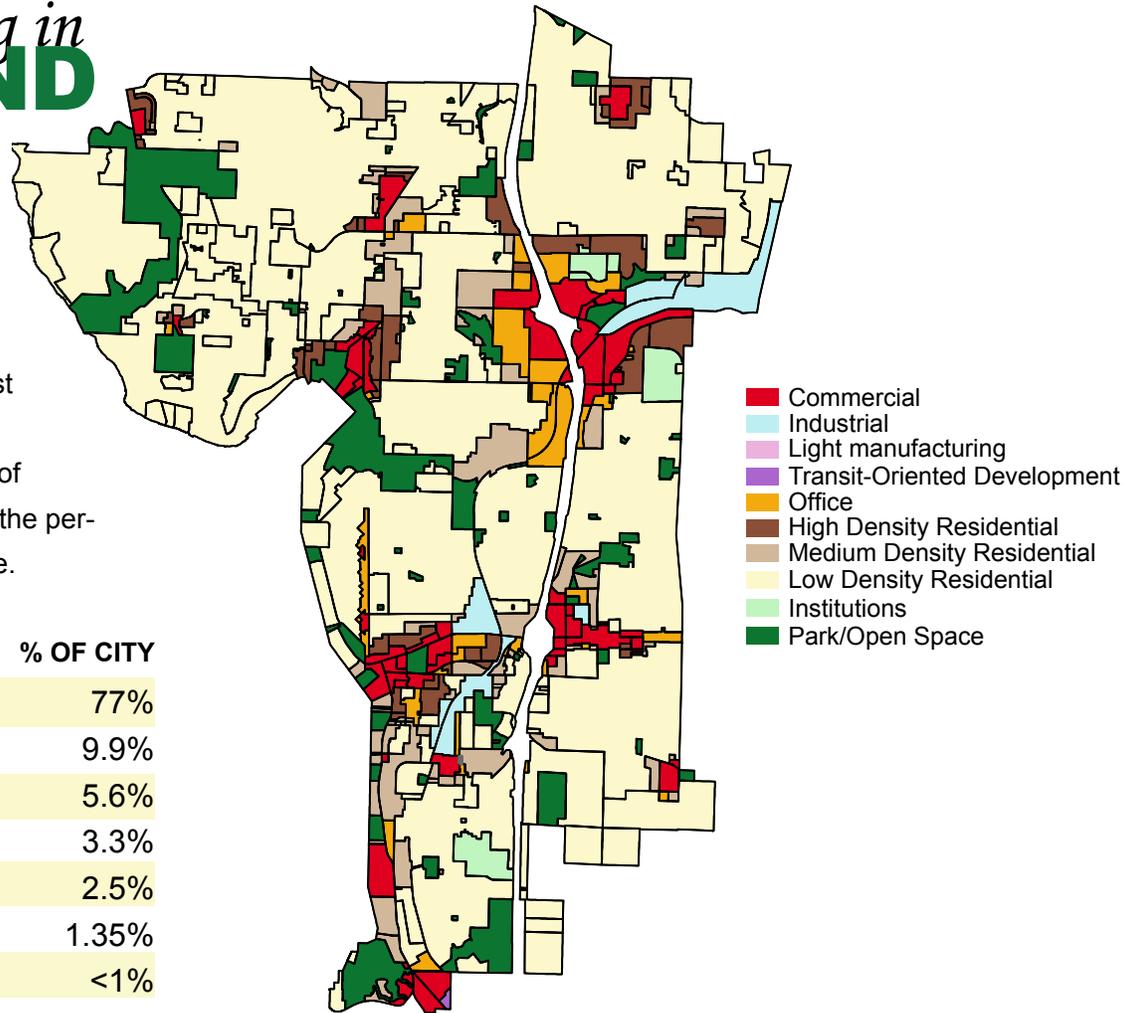
The City Council typically considers three to four every two

"You cannot have enforceable zoning regulation until you have a proper Comprehensive Plan ..."
—Malcom Douglas,
Superior Court judge of King County, in his 1958 oral opinion, which invalidated all of King County's zoning

zoning in KIRKLAND

More than three-quarters of the City is zoned as some form of residential—high-, medium- or low-density. The rest of Kirkland’s 17.63 square-miles are divided amongst six other zoning types. Below is a list of those types, the number of zones associated with them and the percentage of the City they comprise.

CATEGORY	# OF ZONES	% OF CITY
Residential	56	77%
Park/Open Space	1	9.9%
Commercial	47	5.6%
Office	30	3.3%
High-tech/industry	4	2.5%
Institutions	6	1.35%
Transit-oriented	1	<1%



years, says Joan Lieberman-Brill, the City of Kirkland planner who deals with Private Amendment Requests. On average, the Council approves about half of them. This year, the City Council received three. Among them: Evergreen Health, which wants to rezone one of its properties from High-Density Residential to Institutional to match the zoning on the rest of its properties.

30 feet

The maximum building height allowed without a public hearing process under the Juanita Business District zones

“Pretty simple,” says Lieberman-Brill. “But it would amend the Comprehensive Plan. And that’s a big deal.”

Juanita Business District

Through the new zoning, the 11-acre block at 98th Avenue Northeast and Juanita Drive

became the Juanita Business District. The zoning required three public paths that would break up the super-block, provide views of the lake and offer

pedestrian access throughout the development and to Juanita Beach Park. To protect pedestrians from the rain, the zone required awnings. To reduce the development’s perceived size, the zoning said building-size and style should vary. Their roofs should be sloped. Their walls should offer walkers something to look at, such as windows and balconies.

“We were getting a lot of ‘Let’s put an AM/PM on the corner there’ from prospective developers,” says Angela Ruggeri, the Kirkland planner who co-drafted the Juanita Business District zoning. “We saw it as a unique situation. We realized it could be the center of the neighborhood.”

Process IIA

The zone also had a stipulation built into it: “If the development exceeds 30 feet above average building elevation, then Process IIA,” the Juanita Business District zone says. In planning speak, Process IIA is a form of a conditional use permit, which requires a



Pedestrians cross the Juanita Village plaza while crews build the final 200-unit apartment building on the villages' west edge. High-density, mixed-use developments, such as Juanita Village, are the model for future land-use in Kirkland.

quasi-judicial public hearing process, complete with expert testimony, public comment and a hearing examiner.

"People expect 30 feet in height," Ruggeri says. "But this was a much bigger project. We wanted people involved in the decision."

The zoning created a paradox, of sorts—a neighborhood center that had to be walkable for residents, profitable for developers and supportive to the collective vision of neighborhood.

The zoning gets implemented

The solution—drafted by Alan Grainger's Seattle-based GGLO architectural team—called for 459

homes, 70,000 square feet of commercial space, 900 parking stalls and two acres of landscaped plazas and courtyards. To break up the super block and protect the view, the design included a multi-purpose street, lined with small shops and culminating with a public plaza.

When taken together, the development would look and function like a village. Grainger knew, however, it could not function with 30-foot-high buildings. So he designed them to be taller—up to 78 feet tall.

The public hearing

That detail triggered Process IIA, a public hearing that, on July 31, 2000, was administered by the City's hearing examiner. Residents filled the City Council Chambers and spilled into the lobby. Kevin Hanefeld, the co-chair of Juanita Neighborhood Association, was one of them. "It was full and lively," he says. "The public process drew people out—right, wrong or indifferent."

They came to participate in a decision about their community's vision and the zone crafted to protect that vision. Residents wanted a neighborhood living room with a view. The developer wanted at least 400 apartments, 70,000 square feet of commercial space and 78 feet in height.

The hearing would determine whether the two were compatible with Kirkland's comprehensive plan and the zoning code its residents, staff and leaders had drafted to manifest it.

Twenty-seven residents spoke that evening; 22 in favor of the village's design. Those closest to the process spoke too: The planners. The architects. The developers. The traffic engineers. They talked about concurrency and scale; multi-mobility and storm water drainage.

In the end, all of that talk—from the residents and the experts—was intended to answer one question: Does the vision of the architect match the vision of the community? And it did.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035

ABOUT GROWTH



A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Bikes, buses and automobiles



A cyclist commutes north on Market Street. Balancing the City's transportation choices, while reducing the number of people who commute alone in automobiles, is one of the City Council's 10 goals. Achieving that goal relies, in part, on providing the types of infrastructure that makes cycling, walking and bus riding safer and more efficient.

Kirkland's Transportation Master Plan will map out City's future in mobility

Four years ago, the City's transportation commissioners peered into the future of Kirkland's traffic. They saw climate change and population growth, dwindling supplies of land and money.

They realized the way Kirkland had thought about traffic in the previous seven decades wouldn't work for the next five decades. Kirkland, they concluded in their resulting 12-page vision-statement, *Transportation Conversations*, would have to plan more deliberately to move people, not just cars.

"Capital project spending is not currently balanced across modes," the commission said in their report. "Only a small fraction directly benefits cyclists and pedestrians."

TO LEARN MORE

■ Contact Teresa Swan, senior planner: 587-3258; tswan@kirklandwa.gov

■ Or David Godfrey, transportation engineering manager: 587-3865; dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov

“Growth is not something being imposed on Kirkland by itself.”

— **Chandler Felt**, *King County demographer*



Photo courtesy of Chuck Taylor

Walkers participate in the National Alliance on Mental Illness walk in October 2012.

The ‘small fraction’ of funding dedicated to cyclists and pedestrians might make sense for the Kirkland of 2013—a time when 85 percent of its residents

15%

of Kirkland residents, who rely on carpools, buses, bikes or walking to commute to work.

use automobiles to get to work. For the Kirkland of 2032, however, it might not make as much sense. By then, Kirkland’s leaders expect the City to have grown by more

than 20,850 jobs and 8,570 households. Development, by then, will have made the City more dense, and therefore more efficient to navigate by foot, bike and bus—yet more frustrating to

navigate by automobile.

To prepare for that future, Kirkland’s leaders could continue to prioritize automotive travel by squeezing any remaining vehicular capacity out of the City’s shrinking land-supply. Or, they could go another route: They could steer more of the City’s transportation infrastructure to accommodate a blend of automotive, bike, pedestrian and bus travel.

The first option focuses on supply—the supply of roads. The second option focuses on demand—the public’s demand for travel.

More than likely, says Joel Pfundt, chair of Kirkland’s Transportation Commission, leaders will pursue both options—maximizing vehicular capac-

What’s in a Transportation Master Plan?

- Financing plan
- Regional policies
- Use analysis
- Concurrency
- Level of Service (LOS)
- Multi-modal LOS
- Active Transportation
- Transit
- Pedestrian safety
- Bicycle Greenways
- Project Prioritization

ity where possible while continuing to build infrastructure that accommodates bus, bike and foot travel.

Doing that, however, is a complex exercise that requires leaders to consider a series of variables and sometimes conflicting City goals, such as land use, funding, sustainability, concurrency, and the community’s preferred level of service.

To make these kinds of decisions now, City leaders have relied on an array of guides: The City’s Active Transportation Plan, its safe school walk route plan, its Intelligent Transportation Systems Plan and the City Council’s official goal of reducing motorists’ reliance on single occupancy vehicles and improving connectivity and multi-mobility.

“What we don’t have now is an integrated list of projects,” says David Godfrey, Kirkland’s manager



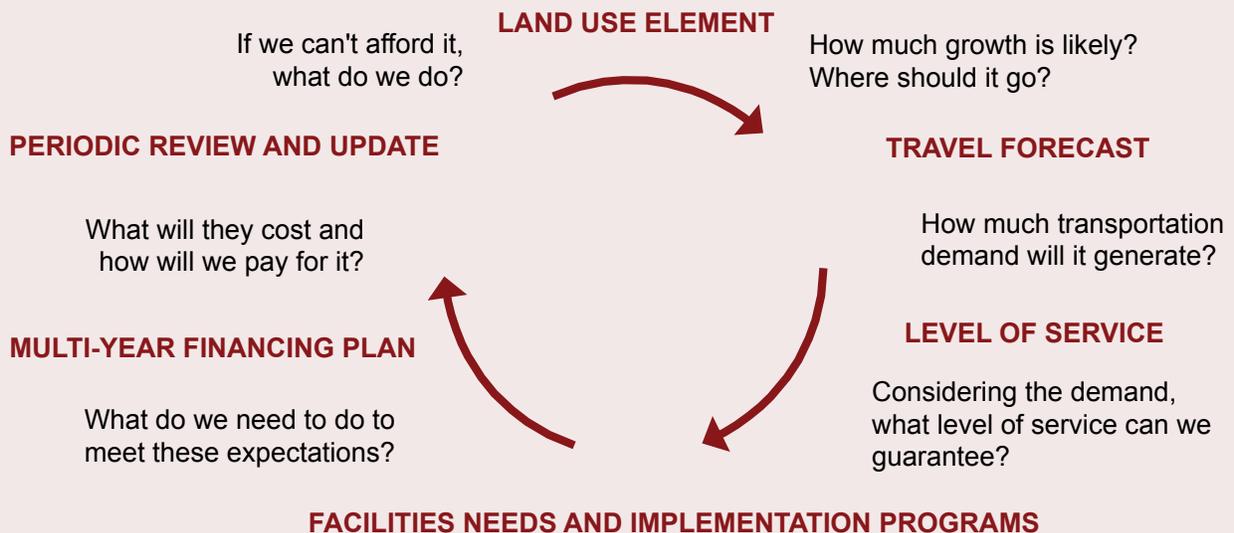
Photo courtesy of Will Christiansen

Sound Transit worked with the City of Kirkland in 2010 to make Kirkland’s downtown transit center (pictured here) safer and more efficient. It now accommodates more than 13,000 buses and 2,000 transit riders daily.

of transportation engineering. “For every project, we need to be able to describe where it came from, what its purpose is and how it will benefit the City.”

By 2015, Kirkland will have that unifying plan, its first-ever Transportation Master Plan. This plan will

THE PLANNING CYCLE



comprise one part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is due in 2015.

The plan will examine the ways people move throughout Kirkland and project the ways they'll move in the future. It'll consider school walk routes, bike lanes, medians and street lights. Park and rides and parking lots will come under its review. As will intelligent transportation systems and traffic signal timing.

And the Transportation Master Plan will identify the funding sources of each resulting project, whether they be state and federal grants or gas taxes and local levies.

To devise the plan, Kirkland's leaders will be collaborating with its public through a variety of forums, such as workshops, public hearings, and surveys.

"[The master plan and the public participation process] will give the community a clear vision," Pfundt says.

"It will give us an opportunity to have a conversation with the public about what transportation will look like."

Those are fundamental questions. And their answers rely on several variables, such as the public's preferences, the resources available to the city and projections of population and development.

One of the most influential variables in this process is a law the state legislature passed in 1990 and reinforced in 1991: the Growth Management Act.

The Act requires cities to accommodate population growth by using space more efficiently within devel-

oped areas, rather than sprawling outward.

Using space, of course, requires some change. And change is not always popular or immediately understood—especially when the changes—at first glance—seem counter intuitive and counter-productive.

"Designating more bike lanes while traffic contin-



Photo courtesy of Caron Lemay

Members of Kirkland Greenways use markers to designate the neighborhood streets that would make safe and efficient "Greenways" for cycling, walking and other forms of active transportation.

ues to worsen might not seem like a good investment," says Godfrey, Kirkland's transportation engineering manager. "But as we continue to grow, and grow more dense, those active transportation modes are going to become more efficient."

Collaborating with the public to plan for this change is a goal of the Transportation Master Plan and the 20-year Comprehensive Plan of which transportation is a part.

"Growth is not something being imposed on Kirkland by itself," says King County demographer Chandler Felt. The state requires Kirkland to accept growth and to plan for it, Felt says.

The role of the Transportation Management Plan is to determine how the City's transportation infrastructure will respond to the growth.

254

The total mileage of Kirkland's streets.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035

ABOUT GROWTH

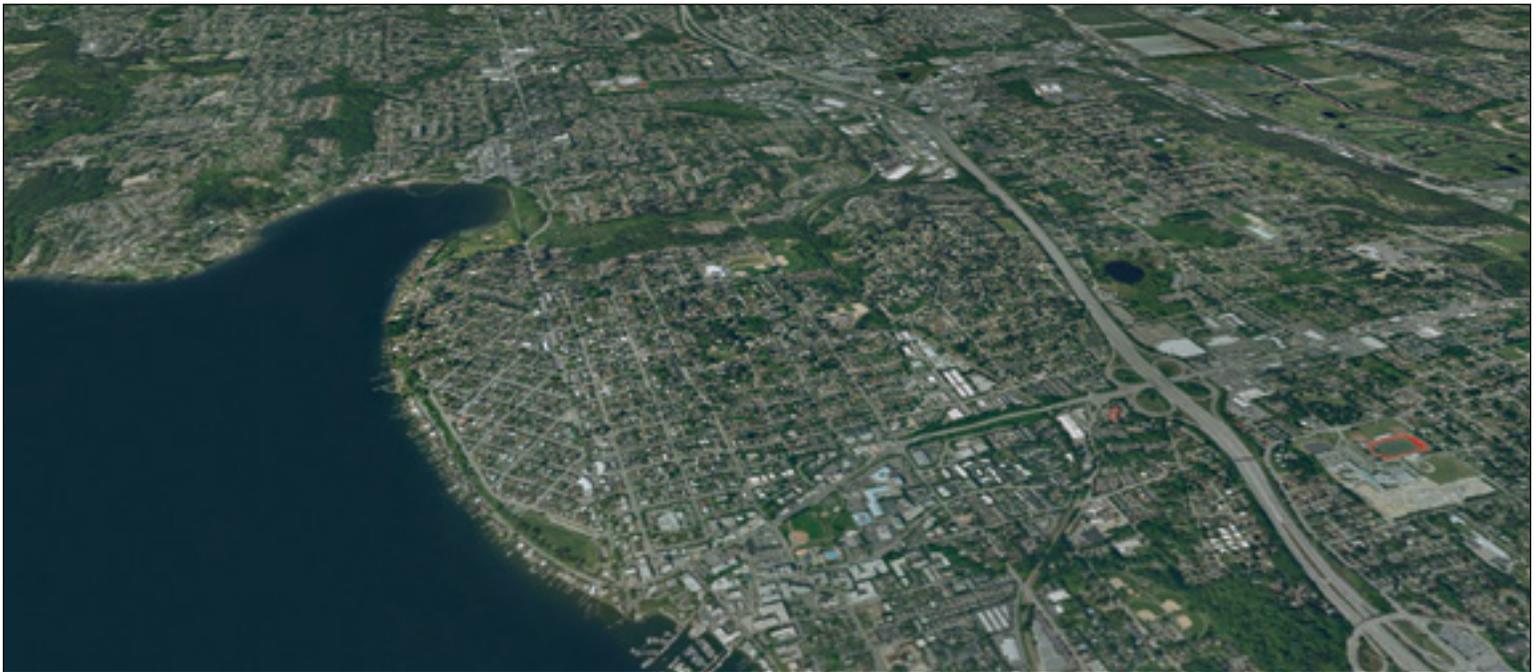


A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

“With limited resources, it becomes a question of how much can you tolerate and how much can you afford.”

—THANG NGUYEN, *City of Kirkland Transportation Engineer*

Do we concur?



An aerial view (looking northeast) of Kirkland shows the basics of the City: land-use and transportation. Concurrency is what defines and describes the relationship between these two basic responsibilities of the City of Kirkland.

Back in 2004, Kirkland’s transportation commission had to pick a number. The number they chose would define one of the City’s most fundamental relationships: The relationship between development and transportation infrastructure; between the places where people go—housing, shopping centers, work sites—and the infrastructure that helps get them there—roads, turn lanes, traffic signals.

The Growth Management Act has a word for that relationship: “concurrency.”

Maintaining concurrency is one of the

Growth Management Act’s 13 goals.

Defining it, however, is up to the individual City. The way Kirkland defines it accounts almost exclusively for automobile traffic at signalized intersections. The number of people riding bikes or walking doesn’t figure in.

This, however, will likely change by 2015.

Kirkland’s Transportation Commission is currently devising a proposal for a concurrency metric that would include all of the City’s traffic—including bicycles, buses and pedestrians. This could influence the type of transportation projects Kirkland funds

TO LEARN MORE

■ Contact Paul Stewart, deputy planning director: 587-3227; pstewart@kirklandwa.gov

■ Or David Godfrey, transportation engineering manager: 587-3865; dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov

in the future. It could also improve travel efficiency for bikes, buses and pedestrians, which is part of the City Council's official goal for balancing Kirkland's transportation choices.

Concurrency, the Kirkland way

Goals, of course, need measures. And in 1992, when the Growth Management Act required cities throughout the state to come up with their own goals for concurrency and the methods of measuring it, Kirkland's leaders devised a rather simple metric: The number of automobiles intending to move through an intersection during rush hour—the volume—divided by the number of vehicles that intersection is designed to move—the capacity. Engineers refer to this as the Volume over Capacity ratio.

“An easy way to think about that is a

glass filled with water,” says David Godfrey, Kirkland's manager of transportation engineering. “The glass is the number of vehicles that can move through the intersection. And water is the cars. If the glass is partially full that's good

but if you pour so many cars through the intersection that they are spilling all over the place, that's a V over C ratio greater than one.”

Things that increase the V over C ratio are things that increase traffic volume: shopping centers, apartment complexes, office parks. Things that reduce the ratio are things that increase the intersection's

capacity, such as additional turn lanes or Intelligent Transportation System technology. Adding sidewalks, bike lanes and bus routes doesn't help much since, remember, the City's measurement accounts primarily for automobiles at signalized intersections.



Photo courtesy of Oran Viriyincy

A familiar sight: Congestion on Interstate 405 in Kirkland. Interstates and state highways are exempt from state and local concurrency requirements.

600,000

The number of trips Kirkland engineers estimate residents make on the City's streets every day.

Level of Service

The Growth Management Act also required Kirkland to establish ceilings on how much congestion it will allow. This is the level of service component of concurrency.

Once a city has committed to a level of service, it must adhere to that service level until the city council officially changes it.

So, if a developer proposes an office park that would exceed the city's established ceiling on volume over capacity, state law requires that city to reject the proposal.

“... [U]nless transportation improvements and strategies are implemented to accommodate the de-

THE ISSAQUAH EXAMPLE: Why we can't just stop growth

In response to the public's demand for less traffic congestion, the Issaquah City Council in 1995, established a high level of service for its streets. This slowed the pace of in-city development. Development outside the city, however, continued. With it, came traffic, which “tripped”

Issaquah's concurrency threshold in many areas. This resulted in a seven-year halt to development throughout most of the city, which slowed the rate of congestion. Even that wasn't enough, however. To become compliant with its concurrency standard, says Mark Hinthorne, special proj-

ects director for Issaquah's mayor, the City Council knew it had to build more capacity, including an estimated \$24 million project to widen a section of Issaquah-Pine Lake Road to five lanes. It also changed the way it measures concurrency and established a high level of service.

velopment within six years,” says the 2005 Puget Sound Regional Council report, *Options for Making Concurrency More Multi-Modal*.

Two decades ago, Redmond, Bellevue and Issaquah all chose high levels of service—that is they chose to ensure efficient traffic flow through their streets. To achieve that, however, they’d have to

achieve one of two feats: Harness local and regional development, over which they had some, but not total control. Or continue to increase the vehicular capacity of its streets.

By 2002, researchers from the Washington State Transportation

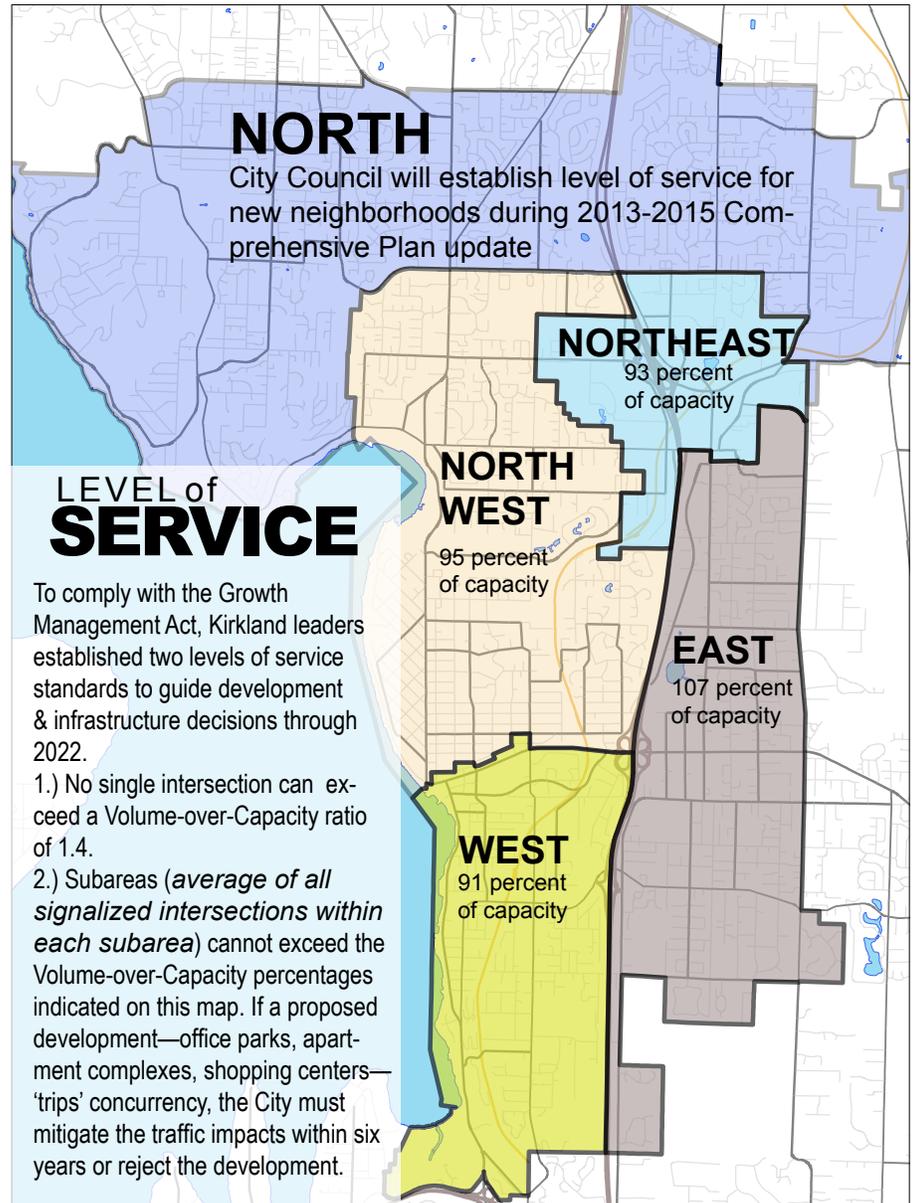
Center, found perils in all three cities.

“Under this measurement system, Issaquah is currently out of compliance with concurrency requirements,” their resulting November 2002 report *East-side Transportation Concurrency Study* said. “In Redmond, two of seven zones are out of compliance. Bellevue is currently in compliance, but further development likely will raise compliance issues.”

Back to the number

Kirkland chose a different path. Unlike Bellevue, or Redmond or Issaquah, Kirkland’s leaders established a different level of service that would allow significant congestion. And the number they used to describe that level of service was 1.4.

“We figured out what the V over C would be like in 20 years as a result of development and zoning,” says David Godfrey,



The City of Kirkland currently measures concurrency at signalized intersections with the following formula: The volume of automobiles intending to move through an intersection at rush hour, divided by the number of vehicles that intersection is designed to usher. To include other forms of travel, such as bike-commuting, transit ridership and walking, leaders are working on a new formula, which will be included in Kirkland’s first-ever Transportation Master Plan.

Kirkland’s manager of transportation engineering. “And then we set it high to ensure it would always be realistic.”

By doing so, City leaders said, we, as a City are willing to grow, to transform from a bedroom community into a place where people can live, work and play. But we don’t want to build five-lane arterials that will attract overflowing freeway traffic. We don’t want to continue investing all of our transportation resources into one form of travel—automotive. And to be this kind of a community, we recognize we will either have to



Northeast 130th Street and 120th Avenue Northeast, left photo, has a Volume-over-Capacity ratio of .39, lowest of the 52 intersections Kirkland tested in 2013. The intersection of Juanita Drive and Holmes Point Drive had a ratio of 1.10, the highest. The difference? Lanes vs. signal phases, says Thang Nguyen, Kirkland's transportation engineer in

tolerate more traffic congestion or continue investing in infrastructure, such as the Cross Kirkland Corridor, which expands transportation choices.

"You don't want gridlock," says Thang Nguyen, Kirkland's transportation engineer responsible for testing concurrency. "With limited resources, it becomes a question of how much can you tolerate and how much can you afford."

What about now?

The intersection with the City's worst Volume-over-Capacity ratio is at North Holmes Point Drive Northeast and Juanita Drive Northeast. That ratio is 1.1.

It is comprised of two three-way intersections, separated by a few hundred yards.

"But they work as one system," says Nguyen.

More signal phases means fewer vehicles get through. Despite this, traffic congestion is a problem "only when there's an accident," says Bach Tram, owner of Family Cuts, a hair salon, which sits on the corner. Meanwhile, over at Northeast 130th Street and 120th Avenue Northeast, the City's best intersection, the 32-year owner of Compound Pharmacy, says traffic outside her window is a daily reality.

"From early in the afternoon, it's backed all the way up the hill," says Cathy Devine. So what explains the discrepancy between the intersections' Volume-over-Capacity ratio and their neighbors' experiences with them? "Perception," Nguyen says.

CONCURRENCY TEST

Fifty-two of Kirkland's intersections function systemically to regulate the City's entire traffic flow. These are called "Concurrency Intersections." Whenever a proposed development requires a State Environmental Policy Act review, engineers test all of the City's Concurrency Intersections for their Volume-over-Capacity ratios. The intersections with the highest ratios are listed below.

Intersection	Volume	Capacity	V/C ratio
North Holmes Pt/ Juanita Dr NE	1,506	1,375	1.10
Juan.-Wood. Way/ 100th Ave. NE	1,414	1,375	1.03
NE 85th St/ 132nd Ave NE	1,381	1,375	1.00
NE 124th St/ Slater Ave NE	1,378	1,375	1.00
NE 85th St/ 122 Ave NE	1,382	1,425	.97
NE 145th St/ Juan.-Wood. Way	1,324	1,375	.96
116th Way NE/ NE 132nd St	1,292	1,375	.94
NE 124th St/ 116th Ave. NE	1,246	1,375	.91
Simonds Road/ 100th Ave. NE	1,781	1,500	.90
NE 70th St/ 116th Ave. NE	1,224	1,375	.89