



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Planning and Building Department**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner  
Eric R. Shields, AICP, Planning Director  
Joel Pfundt, Transportation Engineering Manager  
Kathy Brown, Public Works Director

**Date:** November 2, 2017

**Subject:** HOUGHTON/EVEREST NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER UPDATE

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide direction on:

1. Whether to include a five story incentive if a developer built the southbound right turn lane on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center;
2. Whether to include an alternative zoning method for assuring that certain 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor transportation projects are constructed prior to allowing new development in the HENC.

### II. BACKGROUND

The recommendations from the Planning Commission (PC) and Houghton Community Council (HCC) on the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center Plan amendments were presented to the City Council at a study session on June 6, 2017. Additional information was brought to the City Council at its regular meetings on July 5<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup>, September 19<sup>th</sup> and October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

At the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Council directed staff to add language to the Comprehensive Plan stating the need for a southbound right turn lane on 6<sup>th</sup> Street South at NE 68<sup>th</sup> St. The Council also asked staff for funding options for the right turn lane since it is the one proposed project in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Study that would reduce vehicle delay at the intersection of NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street and 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

#### A. Transportation Information

##### NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street and 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Intersection Performance

Table 1 below describes the level of service and delay per vehicle at the NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street and 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE intersection under four scenarios.

Scenario 1 is the calculated level of service using actual vehicle count data collected at the intersection. The other three scenarios are calculated based on forecasted traffic volumes for the year 2035 and are compared to Scenario 1.

Scenario 2 represents the total entering vehicles forecasted to use this intersection based on the planned growth and transportation improvements within Kirkland and the region between now and 2035 based on the Kirkland 2035 Comprehensive Plan. This scenario results in the level of service shifting from E to F and the greatest increase in seconds of delay per vehicle.

Scenarios 3 and 4 represent the vehicle trips estimated to use the NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street and 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE intersection if development occurs under the Moderate Change or Greater Change scenarios. The analysis shows that more development in the neighborhood center does result in some additional increase in the seconds of delay per vehicle.

**Table 1. NE 68<sup>th</sup> St and 108<sup>th</sup> Ave NE PM Peak Hour Intersection Performance**

Scenario	LOS	Delay (sec/vehicle)	Additional Delay (sec/vehicle)	Total Entering Vehicles
1. Existing	E	62	NA	2,520
2. Comprehensive Plan 2035 (30')	F	142	80	3,855
3. 2035 Moderate Change (35')	F	148	86	3,920
4. 2035 Greater Change (55')	F	158	96	4,025

*Proposed 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Study Improvements*

City staff has developed a proposed list of improvements for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center. This project list was developed based on feedback from the community, Transportation Commission, Planning Commission and City Council and is included in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Study. Most of the projects on this list will improve safety for all modes, including walkability, bicycle friendliness of the area and reliability and performance of transit. Each of the projects could be built as City projects, or could be conditions of redevelopment. *The proposed southbound right turn lane on 6<sup>th</sup> Street is the one proposed project that would reduce vehicle delay at the intersection (Table 2).*

**Table 2. NE 68<sup>th</sup> St and 108<sup>th</sup> Ave NE PM Peak Hour Intersection Performance**

Scenario Performance with Southbound Right Turn Lane	LOS	Delay (sec/vehicle)	Delay Reduction (sec/vehicle)	Total Entering Vehicles
2035 Moderate Change (35')	F	111	37	3,920
2035 Greater Change (55')	F	119	39	4,025



**B. Funding Options for 6<sup>th</sup> Street Left Turn Land**

1. Provide City funding: Staff will complete the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Plan and add the proposed projects (including the right turn lane) to the Unfunded 20 year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP). The Council could then decide to move the right turn lane to the 6 Year Funded Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) if it chooses.

This option may increase transportation impact fees if the impact fees are updated to include the additional projects added to the CFP and CIP. The project will also require buying a portion of the corner site from the property owner in order to construct the right turn lane and the loss of several parking stalls on that site.

2. Provide a redevelopment incentive: Allow 5 stories for a development that will pay for the right turn lane.

The southbound turn lane is a costly investment that would likely prevent redevelopment if it were required as mitigation under the existing zoning or proposed 2-3 story zoning. In addition, only a small proportion of the traffic growth in the area can be linked to potential development of the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center sites. Table 1 shows that only an additional 65 trips can be tied to the 3 story redevelopment option when compared to the expected intersection use based on the existing Comprehensive Plan for 2035. The main traffic growth in this area will come from outside the neighborhood center, not the potential development. Therefore, there does not appear to be a clear nexus to require the

construction of the turn lane as mitigation for a redevelopment at the proposed three story height limit.

Since requiring construction of the turn lane as part of redevelopment at the proposed three story height would be difficult from both a nexus and an economic standpoint, the primary remaining option to accomplish this goal would be to provide a redevelopment incentive such as additional height in return for building the right turn lane. Under this scenario, the additional height would **only** be allowed **if** the turn lane were built as part of a site redevelopment. Ideally, redevelopment would occur in combination with the property to the west on the north side of 68<sup>th</sup> Street (see area outlined in white below) since access points to the corner site are closer to the NE 68<sup>th</sup> St./6<sup>th</sup> St. S. intersection than desired for safe traffic movement. Shifting access westward would be preferable and allow for better coordination with other properties in the Center. Combining redevelopment of this site with adjacent property also would provide a greater area for redevelopment and make such redevelopment more feasible.



**C. Method for Assuring Transportation Improvements are Constructed Prior to New Development**

Council member Asher expressed an interest in providing a method for assuring that investments in the transportation system occur prior to, or at the time of, new development in the HENC. The transportation study prepared for 6<sup>th</sup> St. S/108<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE (Corridor) in concert with the neighborhood center study identified the 6<sup>th</sup> St. S/108<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE and NE 68<sup>th</sup> St. intersection as the most congested intersection in the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center. There are multiple proposed projects in the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor study. Some, like sidewalk

improvements and driveway consolidations, can be accomplished through development regulations and mitigation requirements. Others, such as transit on the Cross Kirkland Corridor, are far too expensive and uncertain to reasonably condition redevelopment on their completions. However, staff has identified several projects that benefit the corridor that Council could consider requiring prior to redevelopment. The following three transportation improvements would improve this intersection for all travel modes:

1. Add a southbound to westbound right turn lane at the Corridor intersection with NE 68<sup>th</sup> St, (discussed above);
2. Add a northbound transit queue jump lane at the intersection; and
3. Add continuous bicycle lanes.

These improvements are all identified in the 6th St Corridor Study Report (see Table 2. Recommended Corridor Improvements in the report). The southbound right turn lane is part of project 8C, the northbound transit queue jump is identified as part of project 7E and the bike lanes are identified as part of project 7C.

To assure that these transportation projects are completed prior to any (or a significant amount) of new development, staff could investigate how the City could make development approvals conditional upon completion of the projects. This could potentially be done in two different ways, as described below:

1. Condition all proposed HENC zoning changes to the completion of the three transportation improvements. Under this option, the contemplated zoning changes would not be actualized until the three projects are done.
2. Tie the addition of floor area to the traffic level of service (LOS) at the intersection of the Corridor with NE 68<sup>th</sup> St. With this idea, additional floor area would be prohibited if the intersection exceeds a specified alternative LOS.

LOS is fundamentally a measure of traffic volume as a percentage of street capacity. LOS E represents a 0.91 to 1.00 volume to capacity ratio. The Council may recall that the City's previous concurrency management system established maximum average numerical LOS's for subareas of the City. The LOS's varied by subarea, but were mostly above 0.9. The maximum LOS at any single intersection was 1.4. Staff would propose that the trigger be LOS F at the intersection. In this scenario, if a redevelopment under the proposed zoning came in for a permit and the LOS was not yet F, that project could proceed. If a second project came it and the LOS was now F, that project could not proceed until the three transportation projects were completed.

It's worth noting that although the intersection improvements would add additional people moving capacity to the intersection, neither of these options will "solve" traffic congestion in the Corridor because a much greater contribution of traffic to the Corridor comes from other areas of the city and the latent demand to use this intersection far outstrips the added capacity. However, these

options would prevent development in the HENC zones from moving forward until additional multi-modal capacity was added at the intersection.

### **III. CITY COUNCIL - NEXT STEPS**

- Provide direction at the November 8 Council meeting on whether to include a five story incentive if a developer built the southbound right turn lane on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center;
- Provide direction on whether to include an alternative zoning method for assuring that certain 6<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor transportation projects are constructed prior to allowing new development in the HENC.
- Return to City Council on December 12, 2017 for final action on the Houghton Everest Neighborhood Center ordinances.
- Present the amendments to the Houghton Community Council in January 2018 for final action following action by the City Council on the ordinances.