



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Department of Parks & Community Services**  
505 Market Street, Suite A, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300  
[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)

---

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Dave Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Jennifer Schroder, Director of Parks & Community Services  
Carrie Hite, Deputy Director of Parks & Community Services  
Linda Murphy, Recreation Manager  
Jeff Price, Recreation Supervisor

**Date:** May 9, 2006

**Subject:** Step Up to Health Update

**RECOMMENDATION:**

City Council review the information and update concerning the Step Up to Health Summit held in February 2006.

**BACKGROUND:**

Step Up to Health is a national initiative developed by the National Recreation & Park Association to help local park and recreation departments partner with new and existing agencies and individuals on areas of health and wellness. There also have been some regional and local efforts under way by Public Health to spearhead some health impacts to battle the current health trends. Currently, the state of Washington has one of the highest obesity rates in the country (per the Center For Disease Control), with 21% of our youth in high school either overweight or at risk of being overweight (CDC). Deputy Mayor Joan McBride had also expressed some interest and volunteered to co-chair a community health summit in Kirkland.

On Saturday, February 4, 2006, the City of Kirkland co-sponsored a community-wide health summit called Step Up to Health, which was held at Evergreen Health Care. The goals of the summit were to educate the public on health trends and issues, both nationally and locally, and to develop a community plan for making a cultural change to inspire our community to be more physically active. The summit sponsors included Bastyr University, Evergreen Health Care, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Montlake Bicycle Shop, Washington State Traffic Safety Coalition, and the Seattle Seahawks. The summit planning committee was chaired by Deputy Mayor Joan McBride, and consisted of youth, seniors and local business interests. We would like to thank Deputy Mayor Joan McBride who was very instrumental in this project and was chair of the summit planning committee. The committee was very diverse consisting of youth, seniors and local business interests.

The summit reached a maximum capacity of 80 participants, including 20 seniors, 10 youth, and representatives from both private and public companies and agencies. The educational speakers in the morning sessions included Dr. Basia Belza from the University of Washington Nursing Program, and Elizabeth Marazita from Bastyr University, a nationally recognized expert in Asian health and medicine. Other speakers included a Seahawk Alumni and a representative from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. The afternoon breakout sessions, which were facilitated by Meeting Works, were

designed for participants to 'roll up their sleeves' and provide input and ideas on how to get our community more physically active. At the end of the summit, these ideas were collected and a vote was taken by the participants on which short and long-term ideas should be pursued. Below are the top projects which came out of the breakout sessions, and an update on each:

- Way Finding signs: The first Way Finding route has been established in the City. It is called the Lakeview Walk, and stretches from the downtown along Lake Washington Blvd to Yarrow Point, and makes a loop along Lakeview on the way back.
- New community center: There is a CIP funded project this year to complete a feasibility and design for a community center. This will include identifying possible partnerships and sites.
- Alternative youth activities: Parks staff is working on developing some alternative programs and classes for youth who don't fit the highly competitive, select-level skill set activities, currently available in our community. A few of these new activities are targeted to begin the fall of 2006.
- Walking School Bus: City staff has had preliminary conversations, and will include the Lake Washington School District in the first planning stages. At this point, we don't have staff capacity to put a comprehensive program together, but we will work with the district to assist in the process.

Other ideas and suggestions from the summit include: a reflexology path in a local park, competition between schools to get students more physically active, a health fair, and community fundraising for future projects.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will continue to work on the top projects as outlined above. Our department will also continue our partnership efforts with Public Health – Seattle & King County's Obesity Forum, PACEN (Physically Active Communities of Eastside and North end), and the efforts of the National Recreation & Parks Association's Step Up to Health – It Starts in Parks campaign. A longer term step includes the possibility of having biannual health summits, which will enable the City to gauge community interests and concerns, provide education on our on-going efforts, and to exchange ideas on how to get our community more healthy.