CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Parks & Community Services
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MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay

From: Carrie Hite, Deputy Director
Jennifer Schroder, Director

Date: January 16, 2007

Subject: Special Presentation: King County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

RECOMMENDATION: City Council is informed of the King County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and their effort in Kirkland.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:
There has been a growing community concern in the City of Kirkland about the care and safety of over 900 seniors and other disabled adults living in nursing homes, assisted-living facilities and adult family homes. This has prompted the King County Long Term Care Ombudsman program to launch an outreach and recruitment effort seeking Kirkland residents to become volunteer ombudsmen.

After an initial meeting with City Council member Joan McBride, an initial meeting with the Senior Council and subsequent meetings with staff, the King County Long Term Care Ombudsman decided to launch this program in Kirkland as a pilot expansion. The main focus and priority is increasing ombudsman visits to over 360 residents living in Adult Family Homes which house six or fewer residents. Sixty private homes in the Kirkland area are licensed by DSHS to provide care up to six adults per home. These residents are frail, elderly, and/or disabled and live largely unknown to their neighbors.

Currently, there are only two citizens who are certified volunteer ombudsmen working in Kirkland. One is assigned to the nursing home and one visits Adult Family Homes. They provide support and assistance to residents in having their concern about their care resolved.

There is a critical need for 15 volunteer ombudsmen from the Kirkland community to visit in their neighborhoods.

Solid Ground (formerly the Fremont Public Association) is the sponsoring agency for this program. They will be introducing themselves to Council, providing a brief description and history of the program, airing the Public Service Announcement that was produced by the City to show on KGOV, and describing the training and certification process.

Please also see this February 7, 2006 article published in the Seattle Times:
http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/PrintStory.pl?document_id=2002789115&slug=elderdeath07m&date=20060207