



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Department of Public Works**  
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800  
[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** David Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Van Ingram-Lock, Management Analyst  
Erin Leonhart, Facilities & Administrative Manager  
Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director

**Date:** June 7, 2007

**Subject:** TYLER AHLGREN RESPONSE LETTER REGARDING CLIMATE CHANGE AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter to Mr. Tyler Ahlgren.

### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Mr. Ahlgren sent a letter expressing his general concerns about Kirkland's response to climate change and efforts pertaining to youth education and outreach.

The attached response letter was prepared explaining that Kirkland signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement and, as a result, committed to: conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory (already completed), set reduction targets, and develop and implement an action plan for reduction. The response also highlights the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department's Youth Services Programs including youth's appointment to City Boards and Commissions, the formation of the Youth Council, and the establishment of the Teen Center, Youth Peer Court and Junior Park Rangers.

**Tyler Ahlgren**  
**POBox 2849**  
**Port Angeles, Wa. 98362**

Mayor Lauinger and Council Members  
Office of the Mayor  
123 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Kirkland, Wa 98033

May 22, 2007

Dear Mayor Lauinger,

These days, it isn't hard to find problems confronting our communities. Most will agree that education and prevention are the most cost effective way to deal with many of them, whether they be social issues such as substance abuse and crime, or environmental problems like pollution and Climate Change.

While lawmakers and civic leaders talk about legislating "change" with laws, ordinances and fines, the reality is that these problems exist because of our activities and consuming habits. No one forces each of us to abuse substances, commit crimes, waste energy or buy gas guzzling vehicles; these are things we've learned to do as we have grown up. Values we have learned to incorporate into our lives, coming from the cultural sources we interact with, one of the most influential being television.

But we can learn to do things differently. Drinking and driving, smoking, and teen pregnancies have been declining for years now, as a result of ongoing public education programmes. Seat belt use in vehicles has increased, and lives have been saved because of public education efforts.

I'm sending letters to schools, colleges, universities, and student groups suggesting the following. That the drama, creative writing, media arts, communications, audio/visual departments and other such classes consider encouraging their students to create ads, public service announcements, plays, and skits about social issues and Climate Change from their perspectives. That these be directed at their peers, as well as others, using references relevant to them. Suggesting that the local media be asked to do stories on these efforts, to publish or air the ads and PSAs, as incentives for the students to see their works go public, and to help educate others. Perhaps create contests with regional educational facilities each submitting entries, with winners in each of a number of categories having their ads or PSAs aired.

"It isn't cool to be the fool". Or, "You're only fooling yourself if you think it is cool to be the fool." Video clips with teenagers hanging around drinking and "party-ing" .. transforming into a group of older homeless street people drinking and "party-ing" under a bridge in a stereotypical encampment ... with a line like "Working towards YOUR future?" ..

Or, a video clip of a stereotypical "air-head" "clueless" teenager going about their daily life, leaving incandescent lights burning, turning on TV shows glamorising fuel guzzling vehicles with obvious joy.. eating lots of junk food.. Then, as they are continuing with these behaviours.. they are seen to be sweating increasingly (ridiculously so) .. make-up running.. otherwise perfect hair- dos collapsing into sweaty straggly messes.. with a line like "Making Climate Change happen isn't a pretty sight!" ..

**RECEIVED**

MAY 25 2007

**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**

I think providing the students with a few examples to stimulate their imaginations would be helpful in getting them to start thinking how their actions, activities and beliefs are contributing to these problems. And, to start to change the peer pressures that dictate that engaging in harmful behaviour is "cool". Adults cannot tell youth such things with any real successes, but peers can.

The budgets and resources expended by city, county, state and federal governmental agencies and departments (such as law enforcement, the courts, medical services, social services, infrastructure and maintenance, site remediation, FEMA, etc) in their efforts to deal with the aftermath effects of the various problems such as substance abuse, crime, pollution and Climate Change comprise the bulk of taxpayers' monies. Certainly attempting to address the root causes of these issues can be seen as benefiting taxpayers, too.

Perhaps you will find this proposal worthy of your advocacy, and will know of ways to promote such ideas to the local media, schools, service groups and others. With the computer technologies now commonplace in many educational facilities, such efforts are do-able, and will help teach students a wide range of skills, besides personal responsibility.

Again, thank you for efforts and forward thinking leadership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Ahlgren', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tyler Ahlgren

June 20, 2007

**DRAFT**

Mr. Tyler Ahlgren  
P O Box 2849  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

RE: CLIMATE CHANGE EFFORTS AND YOUTH OUTREACH

Dear Mr. Ahlgren:

Thank you for your letter regarding climate change and outreach to youth. The City of Kirkland has many exciting efforts underway in both areas. Kirkland signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement and, as a result, committed to: conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, set reduction targets, and develop and implement an action plan for reduction. We just completed the first step and City Council received a report of the emissions inventories at our Council Study Session on May 1, 2007.

In regards to youth outreach, the City of Kirkland is recognized as a regional leader in the areas of Youth Services. Solid partnership relationships have been established with the Kirkland Police and the Lake Washington School District and with every youth-serving social, recreational, and health service agency in the area. As of spring 2001, youth have been appointed to the City Boards and Commissions, serving as full voting members. Positive youth issues have risen to the forefront of community awareness.

The next step in meeting our Climate Protection Agreement commitment is establishing emissions reduction targets and development of an action plan to meet those targets. We will examine the full spectrum of alternatives to reduce our emissions, including capitalizing on our strong Youth Services programs.

We appreciate your interest. If you would like to know more about the May 1st Council meeting, the City's current environmental initiatives or our Youth Services programs, please visit our website at [www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us). Please contact Van Ingram-Lock in our Public Works Department at (425) 587-3907 or [vingram-lock@ci.kirkland.wa.us](mailto:vingram-lock@ci.kirkland.wa.us) if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

James L. Lauinger, Mayor  
For the Kirkland City Council

cc: Jennifer Schroder, Director of Parks & Community Services  
Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director  
Paul Stewart, Planning & Community Development Department Deputy Director