



## **CITY OF KIRKLAND**

### **Department of Public Works**

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**[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)**

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**To:** Dave Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager

**Date:** August 21, 2008

**Subject:** CORRESPONDENCE FROM MR. JOHN JUGE

#### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Mr. Juge who e-mailed to propose installing traffic signals at mid-block pedestrian crossings in order to improve traffic flow.

#### BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Mr. Juge is concerned with the effects of pedestrian crossings on traffic flow. Interruptions to flow occur when moving streams of traffic are forced to stop in order to yield to crossing pedestrians. On streets with crosswalks that are between signalized intersections, for example the crosswalk on Lake Street at Park Lane, signal coordination is disrupted by random crossings. Mr. Juge suggests that these disruptions could be minimized by signalizing crosswalks so that WALK signals are shown in coordination with adjacent traffic signals.

Currently, pedestrians are afforded a certain increase in mobility because of the ability to cross without waiting for a signal. This comes somewhat at the expense of increased traffic congestion. However, even if Council wished to change the balance between mobility and congestion, signals might not be the best answer. Simply removing the mid-block crosswalks would encourage pedestrians to cross at existing signal. This would keep coordination intact and eliminate the expense of the signals. In the past, citizens have requested removal of crosswalks and Council has not wished to remove them.

**From:** John Juge [mailto:johnj@rlgloans.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 31, 2008 1:08 PM  
**To:** KirklandCouncil  
**Subject:** suggestion for improving traffic flow on Lake Street in the down town core  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon,

A thought occurred to me, that if the city installed "Walk/Don't Walk" signals at every cross walk in the downtown core, and then timed them with the local lights, it could reduce congestion considerably.

I noticed that pedestrians crossing during green lights, against traffic, caused the majority of congestion. Cars have to wait for them and by the time they get through the cross walk the light is red again... it is very frustrating, and causing a huge back up. In front of starbucks alone, that crosswalk has caused many backups all the way to Park Place on Central Way.

So would it be possible to install signals at every cross walk and time them to only allow people across during the N/S red lights?

*John Juge*

President  
Residential Lending Group,  
a division of Loan Network LLC

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September 3, 2008

**DRAFT**

Mr. John Juge, President  
Residential Lending Group  
11215 NE 116<sup>th</sup> Place  
Kirkland, WA 98034

Dear Mr. Juge:

Thank you for your email to the Kirkland City Council concerning pedestrians and traffic congestion. As you know, Kirkland prides itself on being a walkable community by providing pedestrian-friendly amenities such as sidewalks, trails and flagged crosswalks.

You are correct that during certain times of the day and certain seasons of the year, uncontrolled pedestrian crosswalks, like the one on Lake Street at Park Lane in downtown Kirkland, may cause increased delay for traffic. To a certain extent, there is a trade-off between pedestrian mobility and automobile congestion.

It is the City's current policy is to offer pedestrians increased mobility, even if it results in delays to motor vehicles during periods of heavy traffic. Your suggestion to install "Walk/Don't Walk" signals at existing uncontrolled crosswalks in downtown is an interesting concept that raises cost issues (signals cost around \$150,000 each). Such signals would, no doubt, benefit vehicle traffic during heavy congestion times but would be less beneficial to pedestrians who would experience substantial wait times.

For many years, Kirkland has strived to become a pedestrian-friendly City that encourages transportation by means other than automobiles. Thank you again for your suggestion; we count on citizens like you that use Kirkland's streets every day, to provide fresh ideas for better operating our City.

Sincerely,  
KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

By James L. Lauinger, Mayor