



## CITY OF KIRKLAND

Public Works Department

123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3000

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

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### MEMORANDUM

**To:** David Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Tami White, Parking Coordinator

**Date:** October 8, 2009

**Subject:** Response to Glenda Schmidt on the zoning code and parking modifications in downtown Kirkland

#### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Ms. Schmidt who contacted staff about downtown Kirkland parking and the zoning code. Ms. Schmidt questioned the exceptions allowed in the zoning code and the funding mechanisms for additional public parking downtown.

#### BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

The Zoning Code allows for exceptions (fewer stalls) when an applicant can justify a lesser need for parking. Downtown, several projects have been built with one parking stall per bedroom instead of the basic code requirement of 1.7 stalls per unit. No exceptions have been given on commercial or office parking requirements. The residential parking for such projects is usually behind a locked gate and therefore is not public parking. Therefore, requiring more residential parking would not result in an increase in public parking supply. The Parking Advisory Board directed staff to measure the actual parking rates in several buildings that are parked at one stall per bedroom. Observations performed in the early morning when occupancies are highest showed that parking was not fully utilized and that there was no "spill over" parking on adjacent streets.

The Parking Advisory Board is engaging in processes to look both at parking rates and at possible funding scenarios for additional parking supply. Ken Dueker, Vice Chair of the Parking Advisory Board has been in touch with Ms. Schmidt in response to her email and has invited her to participate in both processes.

**From:** Glenda Schmidt [mailto:glenda@schmidtfinancialgroup.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2009 5:02 PM  
**To:** Tami White  
**Subject:** Downtown Kirkland Parking

It is my strong belief that Kirkland residents should NOT be asked to contribute to a municipal parking garage to solve Kirkland's current and future parking problems as long as Kirkland Zoning Code allows parking modifications.

It is my understanding we have parking requirements clearly spelled out for developers based on what the redevelopment project will provide (retail/commercial/residential use) in the Kirkland downtown core areas. Then we reduce the number of required parking slots based on the parking modification section of our Zoning Code which is a carryover from times past, exacerbates the parking problem and provides developers a quantifiable economic benefit.

There are two possible solutions. One, eliminate parking modifications from our zoning code which forces developers to provide adequate parking based on project usage (retail/commercial/residential). Two, eliminate parking modifications but allow some flexibility to developers who would like to pay into a parking trust in lieu of providing all the required underground parking.

According to our current DRB, one underground parking slot costs a developer \$50k-\$65k. Think about that. Waiving 100 parking slots is an economic benefit of \$5 mil - \$6.5 mil. How can we justify that to Kirkland residents? How can we ask Kirkland residents to reach into their pockets to solve our parking problem and allow this inequity to persist?

I could go on and point out the inequity of Private Amendment Requests where we waive required parking slots because a developer is selling the concept of 'shared parking' or 'public transportation incentives'.

But I'm not trying to be negative as much as I'm trying to provoke a public discussion. Tami, please distribute this email to City Council members, appropriate City Hall employees and the Parking Volunteer Committee(s) for consideration. I would sincerely appreciate a response back (City Council, City Hall, Parking Committee) as I am interested in feedback.

Thank You.



**Glenda Schmidt**  
620 Kirkland Way, Suite 205  
Kirkland, WA 98033  
(p) 425-893-9195  
(f) 425-893-9824

October 20, 2009

**D R A F T**

Ms. Glenda Schmidt  
620 Kirkland Way, Suite 205  
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your interest in promoting discussion about parking in downtown Kirkland

The Parking Advisory Board (PAB) is working on two projects that directly impact the topics you mentioned in your email. First, the PAB is developing a stakeholder process that will help determine recommendations for sharing costs of additional public parking between property owners, those who park downtown and the general public. Representatives from a number of stakeholder groups, including downtown residents will be participating.

Second, the PAB is beginning to review the Zoning Code requirements for parking. They will be examining a number of questions including the subject of exemptions. This work will be conducted in conjunction with the Planning Commission and will be presented to Council for review and approval. There will be opportunity for public input along the way.

As you point out, the Zoning Code currently allows parking modifications when a study justifies the request. In the past, modifications have been allowed on the residential portion of developments, but not on the retail or office components. At the request of the Parking Advisory Board, staff has conducted follow up studies on the actual parking demand where residential parking reductions were granted. Several sets of observations found empty parking in the residential areas of the buildings and no "spill over" on the surrounding streets. These findings indicate that the modified amounts of residential parking are adequate.

Once again, City Council appreciates you taking the time to share your thoughts on downtown parking. We understand Ken Dueker, vice-chair of the Parking Advisory Board, has been in dialogue with you. If you have any additional questions, please contact Tami White, Parking Coordinator, at 425.587.3871.

Sincerely,

Kirkland City Council

James Lauinger, Mayor

cc: Parking Advisory Board