

Comparison of Basic Zoning Regulations

“Low Density” Residential Zones (King County R-1 through R-8 compared to Kirkland RSX Zones)

The following summary of King County and City of Kirkland regulations is intended as a general overview. Due to the complexity of the standards and various provisos found in the regulations, readers are advised to review the actual codes if they have a specific question. The codes are available on the respective County and City websites.

Regulation:	King County:	Kirkland	Proposed Zoning Regulations (RSA Zones)
Maximum height	35' but can reach 45' if building setbacks increased	30'	30' (35' for Goat Hill area)
Minimum front yard setback	20' for garage 10' for main house	20', but 13' for open entry porches	City regulation
Minimum garage setback	No such regulation	8' greater than required for remainder of the house, garage width limited to 50% of total width of front façade	City regulation
Minimum rear yard setback	5'	10'	City regulation
Minimum side yard setback	5' each	5' each	No change
Maximum lot coverage (all impervious surfaces)	R-1 zone 30% R-4 zone 55% R-6 zone 70% R-8 zone 75%	50%	City regulation (except 30% for RSA 1)
Maximum size of home (FAR - floor area ratio)	No such regulation	50% of lot size (20% for RSX 35)	City regulation (except 20% for RSA 1)
Residential density by zone	Units per acre (R-1, R-4, R-6 & R-8) Includes all areas for road dedication, easement road & wetland/streams. Minimum lot size is 2,500 sq ft.	Minimum lot size (Most common: 7,200 sq ft & 8,500 sq. ft.) Excludes areas for road dedication, some easement roads, & wetland/streams, but includes part of buffer.	Units per acre (RSA 1, RSA 4, RSA 6 & RSA 8) Includes all areas for road dedication, easement road & part of wetland/stream buffer. Minimum lot size is 70% of County zone.

Regulation:	King County:	Kirkland	Proposed Zoning Regulations (RSA Zones)
Size limit of vehicles, boats & trailers	Not regulated	Prohibits if greater than 9' high and 22' in length. Allows 24 hours for loading. May apply for permit to store if adequately screened. Enforced on complaint basis	City regulations, but "grandfather" existing as of effective date of annexation if registered with City 6 months after annexation.
Storage Containers	Not regulated	Only allowed on temporary basis	City regulations, but 10 year "sunset" on existing, no replacement allowed
Accessory dwelling units (ADU)	Must be in same building as primary unit if lot is less than 5,000 sq. ft. or on lots with more than one primary unit. Primary or accessory unit limited to 1,000 sq. ft. unless in attic or basement.	Size limited to 40% of combined primary and ADU sq. ft. Detached ADU limited to 800 sq. ft. Height cannot exceed 15' above primary structure or greater than 25', whichever is less.	City regulations
Home occupations	Limited to 20% of floor area of home, excluding garage and any other building on the site. One non-resident employee, but no limit on resident employee. Customers by appt only.	Limited to 500 sq. ft. Two non-resident employees. No more than 6 customers per day and no more than 2 at a time. One vehicle per business. May be able to exceed requirements through a zoning permit	City regulations

Regulation:	King County:	Kirkland	Proposed Zoning Regulations (RSA Zones)
Animals	<p>Poultry/fowl: -Less than 21,780 sq. ft. lot: 3 per household -More than 21,780 sq. ft. lot: 1/1 sq. ft. structure (maximum structure size is 2,000 sq. ft., must be kept in building or pen)</p> <p>Livestock (horses, cows...): -Minimum 20,000 sq. ft. lot (without a permit) -6 per acre in a structure -3 per acre if outside</p>	<p>Poultry/fowl: -Less than 35,000 sq. ft. lot: not allowed -More than 35,000 sq. ft. lot: 20 plus 1 for each additional 500 sq. ft. of lot area</p> <p>Livestock (horses, cows...): -Minimum 35,000 sq. ft. lot (without a permit) -2 per 35,000 sq. ft. plus 1 for each 17,500 sq. ft.</p>	County regulations for lots less than 21,280 sq. ft., otherwise City regulations
Tree removal on existing lots ¹	Allowed (special regs. for Holmes Point Overlay)	Allows removal of up to 2 significant ² trees per year. If last 2, replacement plantings required	City regulations (special regs. for Holmes Point Overlay)
Tree removal in new construction or major remodel	Allowed (special regs. for Holmes Point Overlay)	Prioritizes retention of significant trees in setbacks. Required tree density of 30 tree credits per acre. Incentives and variations to development standards available.	City regulations (special regs. for Holmes Point Overlay)

¹ Both City & County allow hazardous trees to be removed anywhere on the property and prohibit tree removal in greenbelts, wetlands, streams & hillside areas.

² In Kirkland, a significant tree is defined as 6" diameter at 4.5' from the ground. In King County, it is 8" diameter for evergreens and 12" diameter for deciduous trees at 4.5' from the ground.

Regulation:	King County:	Kirkland	Proposed Zoning Regulations (RSA Zones)
Tree removal in subdivisions	Requires 10 significant trees or 5% of all trees to be saved, whichever is greater, excluding critical areas. Some trees can be counted as 2 tree credits if certain size and quality of tree are met.	Prioritizes retention of significant trees in setback yards and retention of tree groves. Required tree density of 30 tree credits per acre. Incentives and variations to development standards available.	City regulations (special regs. for Holmes Point Overlay)
Wetland buffers ³	50' – 200', 15' buffer setback	Wetlands 25' – 100', 10' buffer setback	City regulations
Stream buffers	25' – 115', 15' buffer setback	25' – 75', 10' buffer setback	City regulations
Lake Washington buffer	115', 15' buffer setback	No buffers (zoning and shoreline setbacks apply)	City regulations

³ City & County use different rating systems, buffer standards & buffer reduction provisions

Comparison of Basic Zoning Regulations

“Medium – High Density” Residential Zones (King County R-12 through R-24 compared to Kirkland RM 1.8 through RM 3.6 Zones)

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Regulation:	King County:	Kirkland	Proposed Zoning Regulations (RMA Zones)
Maximum height	60' (up to 80' in some zones with density incentives or transfer of development rights)	30'	35'
Minimum front yard setback	10'	20'	20'
Minimum rear yard setback	5' (increased where adjoining low density)	10'	10'
Minimum side yard setback	5' (increased where adjoining low density)	5' min., two sides must equal 15'	5' min., two sides must equal 15'
Maximum lot coverage (all impervious surfaces)	85%	60%	60%
Residential density by zone	12–24 units per acre	12-24 units per acre	No change

Comparison of Building Height Regulations

Commercial Zones (King County NC and CB compared to Kirkland BN and BCX Zones; King County O compared to Kirkland PR)

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Business District	County Maximum Allowable Heights	City Maximum Allowable Heights	Proposed Zoning Regulations
North & South Finn Hill NB Zone	35', but can reach up to 45' if for every 1' of additional height over 35', the required yards are increased by 1'.	BN: 30'	35' (BNA)
Juanita CB Zone	35' (limited by NS P5 suffix)	BCX: 30', may be increased through Process IIA	35' (BC 1), no increases
Kingsgate CB Zone	35' base, may be increased to 60' subject to performance standards	BC and BCX: 30', may be increased through Process IIA	35' base (BC 2), may be increased to 60' subject to performance standards
Juanita Office & R-48 Zone	45'-65' subject to performance standards	30'	35' base (PRA), may be increased to 60' (3 story max.) through increased setbacks

Comparison of Other Regulations for Commercial Business Zones

Commercial Zones (King County CB compared to Kirkland BC and BCX Zones)

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Use Regulations	King County	Kirkland	Proposed zoning regulations (BC 1 and BC 2 Zones)
Auto and boat sales	Not allowed in any annexation commercial zone	Allowed in most commercial zones	Allow in Kingsgate, & Juanita commercial areas
Storage service	Allowed only in Kingsgate commercial area	Allowed in limited commercial zones	Not allowed
Signs	Up to 20' high sign on a pole or a base	Up to 12' high sign on a base	City regulations
Lot coverage	Office 75% Commercial 85% Industrial 90%	Office 70% Commercial 80% Industrial 90%	City regulations

Density	King County	Kirkland	Proposed zoning regulations (BC 1 and BC 2 Zones)
Kingsgate and Juanita Zones	48 units/acre, incentives allow 150% increase, 200% increase if all affordable	No density limits in BC or BCX	48 units/acre. Kirkland's affordable housing incentives for density increases