

August 31, 2012

## **Kirkland City Council to Get First Look at Fire Department Strategic Plan**

*September 4 Study Session dedicated to transmittal of the report*

The Kirkland City Council will get its first look at the [draft Fire Department Strategic Plan](#) produced by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI). The report concludes an extensive study of the department's current organizational conditions, analysis of future service demand, and an assessment of future opportunities for cooperative service delivery. At its Study Session on September 4, the Council will receive a presentation on the report and provide direction on the process the City should use to determine which recommendations should be implemented and how and when to implement those strategies. The Study Session begins at 6 p.m. and will be aired live on K-GOV, Comcast Channel 21 and Frontier Channel 31, as well as online. The [report](#) and [meeting video](#) can be found at [www.kirklandwa.gov](http://www.kirklandwa.gov).

The draft report notes that Kirkland Fire Department (KFD) is a high-quality organization that has the potential to be a great organization. The report integrates organizational and community ideas and describes several key findings and recommendations including:

- Community and city representatives are supportive of the KFD and understand the importance of the fire suppression, emergency medical response, fire prevention, emergency management and other services it provides. ESCI recommends that the department enhance internal and external communications efforts to better inform and engage the community.
- Fire and emergency medical functions are providing services at a level similar to surrounding agencies. However, the high volume of calls for emergency medical services can hamper response to fire calls and often requires that KFD seek mutual aid assistance. Response to the north Finn Hill area is generally below target response times and the plan to relocate Fire Station 25 (Holmes Point) will create service gaps in other areas. ESCI recommends that Kirkland explore the potential for creating a jointly-staffed fire station with the Northshore Fire District.
- The Fire Prevention Bureau provides a high level of development review services, but is not able to conduct annual fire inspections for all occupancies. ESCI recommends that that Kirkland consider adopting a new ordinance requiring fire sprinklers in all new residential construction is an effective fire prevention strategy.
- KFD's current response time standards are inconsistent with the resources they have at this time. As a result, response time standards should either be adjusted to reflect a

standard achievable with current department resources or additional personnel and equipment should be added to enable the department to meet adopted response time standards. Additional fire station staffing should be added in the northern and southern portions of the city.

The Fire Strategic Plan contains a total of 90 recommendations. In the coming months, City staff and elected officials will work together on reviewing the findings and recommendations and developing a plan to implement those recommendations that are feasible. Should you have specific questions, please submit a "[Ask a Question](#)" ([www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/CMO/question](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/CMO/question)) or contact the City Manager's Office at 425-587-3001.