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ABOUT GROWTH



A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Summer at Marina Park: Kirkland's small-town charm has been a priority since City leaders drafted its first comprehensive plan 50 years ago. **BELOW:** Harry Cummings, 88, reviews the Comprehensive Plan he authored in 1963.

For the greatest benefit ...

This year, Kirkland's leaders and citizens will be discussing the City's future

TO LEARN MORE

■ Contact Teresa Swan, senior planner: 587-3258; tswan@kirklandwa.gov

■ Or Paul Stewart, deputy planning director: 587-3227; pstewart@kirklandwa.gov

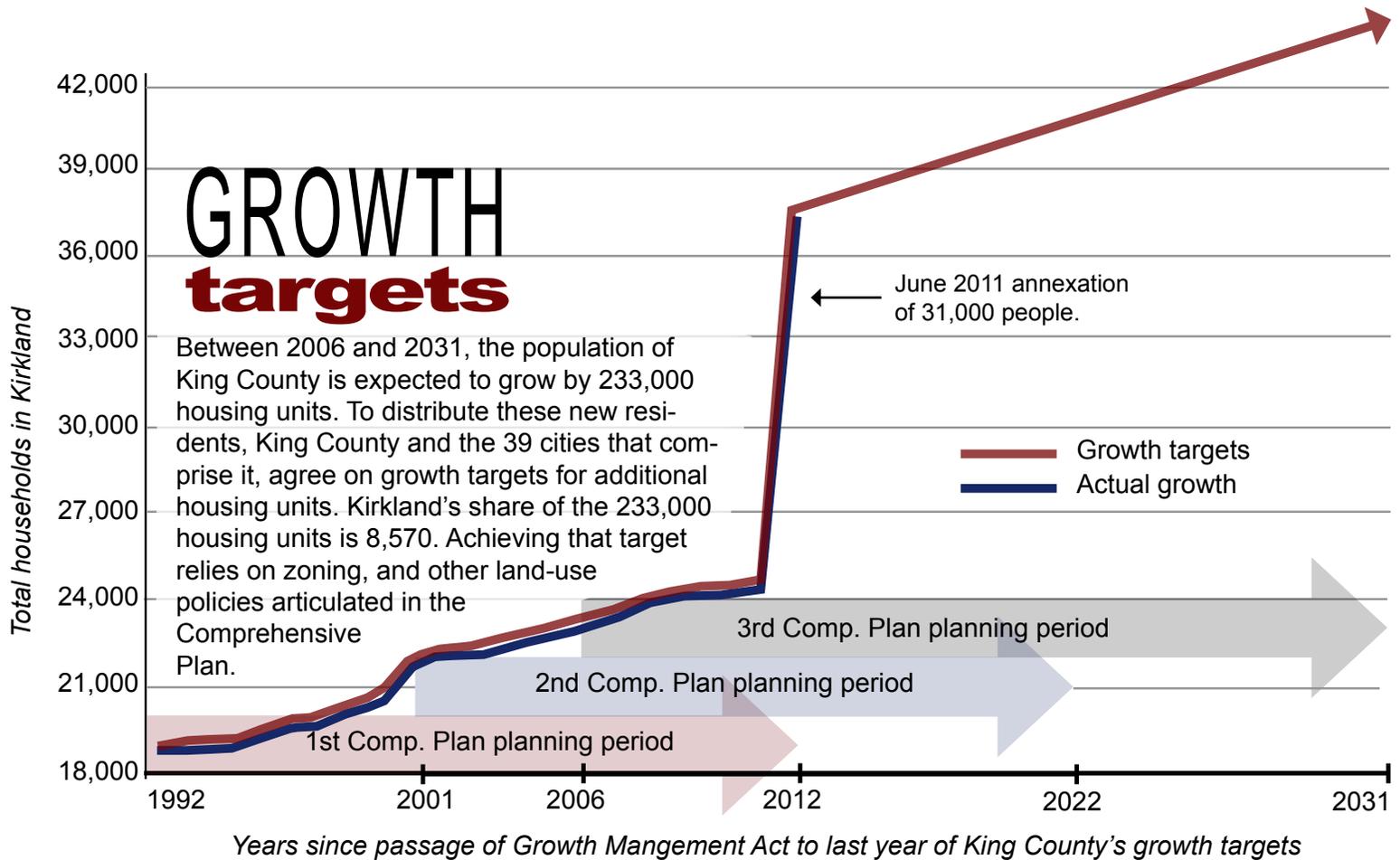
In 1959, Kirkland had 6,400 residents and three elementary schools. Its entire downtown offered less retail space than today's Parkplace. But Kirkland was about to change. The state, you see, was building a bridge that would connect Kirkland to Seattle at a time when Seattle was preparing for the 1962 World's Fair, and the 10 million people who'd be venturing there to experience it. And Kirkland's local leaders were still talking about a possible merger



with the town of Houghton.

To prepare for the change, Kirkland's leaders wrote a manifesto of sorts—37 pages of maps, visions

and recommendations that translated the community's values into a general plan. That document became Kirkland's first Comprehensive Plan.



What's in a Comp Plan?

- Community Vision
- Natural Environment
- Land-Use
- Housing
- Econ. Development
- Transportation
- Parks/Rec/Open space
- Utilities
- Public Services
- Human Services
- Capital Facilities
- Neighborhoods
- Shorelines
- Methodologies
- Visit http://kirkland-code.ecitygov.net/CK_comp_Search.html for the Comprehensive Plan

The author was a consultant—an ambitious architect from Michigan's Cranbrook College named Harry Cummings. Cummings would eventually design some of Kirkland's most iconic spaces, including Doris Cooper Houghton Beach Park.

And in the 1963 Comprehensive Plan, he recommended a variety of improvements that have helped define Kirkland's modern identity.

"I drive through town everyday and I can see the effects everywhere I look," he says.

Along the waterfront, for example, he saw a string of parks, and admonished the City to acquire as much lakefront land as possible. Around the downtown business district, he saw a ring road that would increase traffic flow. He wanted Sixth Street to extend

south, down the hill and to the floating bridge.

To such a small town, these were ambitious plans. Cummings knew it. Which is why, in a 1959 *Eastside Journal* article, however, he presented his argument:

"[We could] 1. Let the growth come and then attempt to solve the problems that come with the growth as they arise."

Or "2. Anticipate the problems as well as the growth, and by study and long-range planning, prepare the way for orderly development of a nature that will benefit the greatest number of people over the longest period of time."

Kirkland, today

Fifty years later, Kirkland is begin-

ning its fifth significant iteration of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan will build on the ones that precede it. And it'll look 20 years into the future, when leaders expect to add another 8,570 households and 20,850 new jobs.

"This is our blueprint for the future," says Paul Stewart, Kirkland's deputy planning director. "It tells us what we want to do, where we want to go and how we are going to get there."

The Growth Management Act

To some extent, some of the direction for the Comprehensive Plan is provided by the Growth Management Act—passed by the state legislature in 1990 and reinforced with three hearings boards in 1991.

Perhaps more than any other land use law in the state, the Growth Management Act is influencing where and how Puget Sounders live, work and play. It is helping to make downtowns denser, yet more attractive, and more



David Bricklin, 60, while hiking the Pollalie Ridge in the Snoqualmie Valley.

"Green hillsides all of a sudden were stripped bare and covered with homes and roads. Forests were being mowed down, and there was a lot of clear cutting. And there were traffic jams where people had never before had traffic jams."

—David Bricklin,
lead advocate for the
Growth Management Act

livable, say several peer-reviewed journal articles.

By preventing developers from building up excessive stocks of homes, experts say it blunted the blow of the 2008 housing crisis to Puget Sound. It also helped create 10 new Puget Sound cities—Woodinville, SeaTac, Shoreline, Kenmore and Sammamish, among them—and contributed to Kirkland's annexation of Finn Hill, Kingsgate and North Juanita. Above all, its purpose is to harness rural sprawl—that tendency for

unplanned development to devour farmlands and forestlands, while demanding huge public investments of infrastructure.

It does this by requiring cities to create 20-year plans and to update them at least once every eight years.

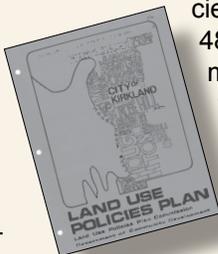
Where did it come from?

In the decade before its passage, a Washington state population boom was encouraging sprawl. The state's population ballooned by nearly 600,000 people; King

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN KIRKLAND

1963

At 37 pages, Kirkland's first Comprehensive Plan provides a "general design" for future growth. Neighborhood land-use is driven by the City's three elementary schools. Transforming the industrial waterfront into a shoreline of parks is a major focus.



1977

Kirkland adopts the Land Use Policies Plan. The 489-page document serves as the City's first detailed long-range plan. It includes Kirkland's first neighborhood plans.

1990 & 1991

Motivated by the environmental and eco-

nomics impacts of rural sprawl, the state legislature passes the Growth Management Act. The sweeping land-use law requires jurisdictions to create land-use comprehensive plans that confront issues, such as land-use, transportation, housing. Jurisdictions can update their plans annually, but must do so every eight years.

1995

After three years of

public involvement and study, Kirkland issues its first Comprehensive Plan required by the Growth Management Act. The plan details a 20-year vision of Kirkland, ending in 2012.

2004

Two years after beginning its second major Comprehensive Plan revision, Kirkland finishes its first major update of the Comprehensive Plan. This one articu-

lates residents' visions for the City through 2022.

2013

City leaders begin Kirkland's third significant update of the Growth Management Act-influenced Comprehensive Plan, which will articulate the community's vision for the City through 2035. One of the issues: How to grow by more than 8,500 households, and 20,500 jobs.

County's by nearly 200,000.

“And with that came a lot of new problems,” says David Bricklin, one of the state's most active advocates for managed land use, in a 2005 interview with Washington state archivist Diane Wiatr.

“There was a loss of lots of open space in communities all around the state. Green hillsides all of a sudden were stripped bare and covered with homes and roads. Forests were being mowed down, and there was a lot of clear cutting. And there were traffic jams where people had never before had traffic jams.”

In 1990, Bricklin and the Washington Environmental Council that he led lobbied the state legislature to pass a land-use law that

1.3 million

The number of additional people state population forecasters expect central Puget Sound by 2031.

would require cities and counties to plan for population growth.

“We threatened if they didn't pass a strong law, we'd pursue an initiative,” Bricklin said.

Over the next two years, the legislature did pass a law it called the Growth Management Act. Oregon passed the nation's first growth management legislation in 1973. Florida followed Oregon 12 years later.

Florida's law served as the model for the one Washington state would adopt in 1990 and 1991.



Photo courtesy of Astronics

Astronics, pictured here, moved into a 14-acre Totem Lake facility in January 2013. Totem Lake is Kirkland's only Urban Center and one of 17 throughout King County. Urban centers are planning districts intended to provide a mix of housing, employment, commercial, and cultural amenities in a compact form.

How does it work?

Under Washington's law, the state forecasts population growth for each of Washington's 39 counties. The counties, then, distribute the population to their cities. And the cities become responsible for attracting and accommodating their share of those populations.

Kirkland's share of the 1.3 million people and one million jobs forecasters expect for the central Puget Sound region by 2031 is 8,570 households and nearly 20,850 new jobs.

“That's a hefty number,” says Chandler Felt, King County's demographer, who specializes in growth management. “But it's in line with the way Kirkland has been growing. Additional space will have to be found—either through rezoning ... or in this case,

planning the city's designated Urban Center. You can't be passive. The City will have to act positively to make space for this growth that is coming.”

This process has already started with Kirkland's Geographic Information Systems analysts. They are preparing a report that will determine how much space the City has, what kind of space and where it is.

If the resulting analysis shows Kirkland does not have the space necessary to accommodate the forecasted population, its leaders will re-examine how the City uses its space.

Meanwhile, the City's leaders will be engaging in a continuous conversation with its residents about what kind of community they want—now and in the future.