

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT  
[kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035](http://kirklandwa.gov/kirkland2035)

# ABOUT GROWTH



A CONTINUING REPORT ON THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Bikes, buses and automobiles



A cyclist commutes north on Market Street. Balancing the City's transportation choices, while reducing the number of people who commute alone in automobiles, is one of the City Council's 10 goals. Achieving that goal relies, in part, on providing the types of infrastructure that makes cycling, walking and bus riding safer and more efficient.

Kirkland's Transportation Master Plan will map out City's future in mobility

**F**our years ago, the City's Transportation Commissioners peered into the future of Kirkland's traffic. They saw climate change and population growth, dwindling supplies of land and money.

They realized the way Kirkland had thought about traffic in the previous seven decades wouldn't work for the next five decades. Kirkland, they concluded in their resulting 12-page vision-statement, *Transportation Conversations*, would have to plan more deliberately to move people, not just cars.

"Capital project spending is not currently balanced across modes," the commission said in its report. "Only a small fraction directly benefits cyclists and pedestrians."

### TO LEARN MORE

- Contact Teresa Swan, senior planner: 587-3258; [tswan@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:tswan@kirklandwa.gov)
- Or David Godfrey, transportation engineering manager: 587-3865; [dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov)

“Growth is not something being imposed on Kirkland by itself.”

— **Chandler Felt**, *King County demographer*



*Photo courtesy of Chuck Taylor*

Walkers participate in the National Alliance on Mental Illness walk in October 2012.

The ‘small fraction’ of funding dedicated to cyclists and pedestrians might make sense for the Kirkland of 2013—a time when 85 percent of its residents

**15%**

of Kirkland residents rely on carpools, buses, bikes or walking to commute to work.

than 20,850 jobs and 8,570 households. Development, by then, will have made the City more dense, and therefore more efficient to navigate by foot, bike and bus—yet more frustrating to

navigate by automobile.

To prepare for that future, Kirkland’s leaders could continue to prioritize automotive travel by squeezing any remaining vehicular capacity out of the City’s shrinking land-supply. Or, they could go another route: They could steer more of the City’s transportation infrastructure to accommodate a blend of automotive, bike, pedestrian and bus travel.

The first option focuses on supply—the supply of roads. The second option focuses on demand—the public’s demand for travel.

More than likely, says Joel Pfundt, chair of Kirkland’s Transportation Commission, leaders will pursue both options—maximizing vehicular capac-

## What’s in a Transportation Master Plan?

- Financing plan
- Regional policies
- Use analysis
- Concurrency
- Level of Service (LOS)
- Multi-modal LOS
- Active transportation
- Transit
- Pedestrian safety
- Bicycle greenways
- Project prioritization

ity where possible while continuing to build infrastructure that accommodates bus, bike and foot travel.

Doing that, however, is a complex exercise that requires leaders to consider a series of variables and sometimes conflicting City goals, such as land use, funding, sustainability, concurrency, and the community's preferred level of service.

To make these kinds of decisions now, City leaders have relied on an array of guides: The City's Active Transportation Plan, its safe school walk route plan, its Intelligent Transportation Systems Plan and the City Council's official goal of reducing motorists' reliance on single occupancy vehicles and improving connectivity and multi-mobility.

"What we don't have now is an integrated list of projects," says David Godfrey, Kirkland's manager



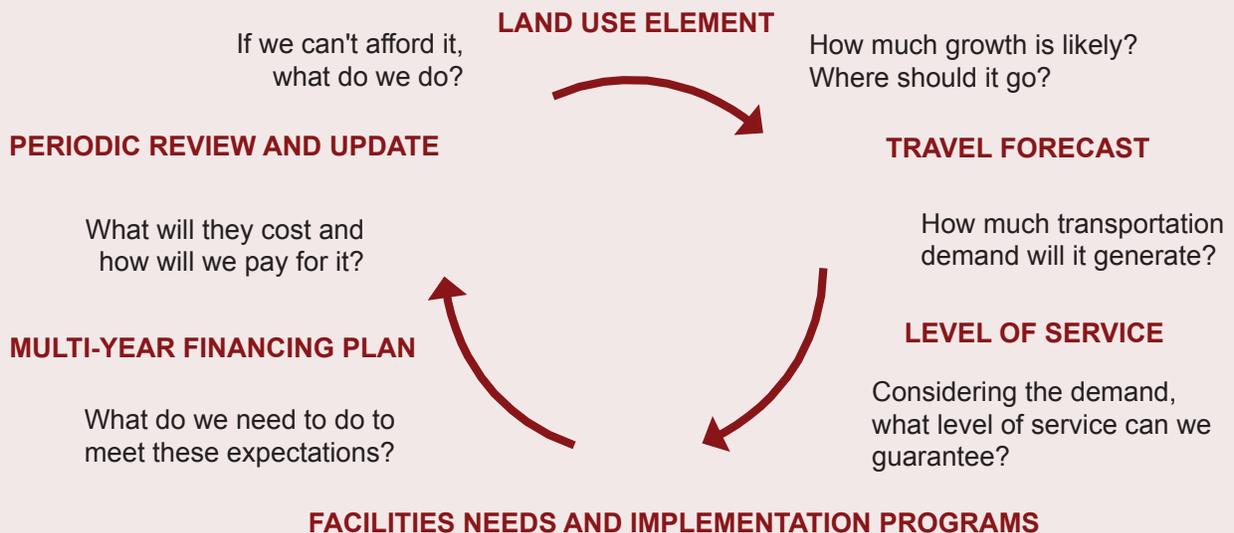
Photo courtesy of Will Christiansen

Sound Transit worked with the City of Kirkland in 2010 to make Kirkland's downtown transit center (pictured here) safer and more efficient. It now accommodates more than 13,000 vehicles, including buses, and 2,000 transit riders daily.

of transportation engineering. "For every project, we need to be able to describe where it came from, what its purpose is and how it will benefit the City."

By 2015, Kirkland will have that unifying plan, its first-ever Transportation Master Plan. This plan will

## THE PLANNING CYCLE



comprise one part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is due in 2015.

The Transportation Master Plan will examine the ways people move throughout Kirkland and project the ways they'll move in the future. It'll consider school walk routes, bike lanes, medians and street lights. Park and rides and parking lots will come under its review. As will intelligent transportation systems and traffic signal timing.

And the Transportation Master Plan will identify the funding sources of each resulting project, whether they be state and federal grants or gas taxes and local levies.

To devise the plan, Kirkland's leaders will be collaborating with its public through a variety of forums, such as workshops, public hearings, and surveys.

"[The master plan and the public participation process] will give the community a clear vision," Pfundt says.

"It will give us an opportunity to have a conversation with the public about what transportation will look like."

Those are fundamental questions. And their answers rely on several variables, such as the public's preferences, the resources available to the city and projections of population and development.

One of the most influential variables in this process is a law the state legislature passed in 1990 and reinforced in 1991: the Growth Management Act.

The Act requires cities to accommodate population growth by using space more efficiently within devel-

oped areas, rather than sprawling outward.

Using space, of course, requires some change. And change is not always popular or immediately understood—especially when the changes—at first glance—seem counter intuitive and counter-productive.

"Designating more bike lanes while traffic contin-



Photo courtesy of Caron Lemay

Members of Kirkland Greenways use markers to designate the neighborhood streets that would make safe and efficient "Greenways" for cycling, walking and other forms of active transportation.

ues to worsen might not seem like a good investment," says Godfrey, Kirkland's transportation engineering manager. "But as we continue to grow, and grow more dense, those active transportation modes are going to become more efficient."

Collaborating with the public to plan for this change is a goal of the Transportation Master Plan and the 20-year Comprehensive Plan of which transportation is a part.

"Growth is not something being imposed on Kirkland by itself," says King County demographer Chandler Felt. The state requires Kirkland to accept growth and to plan for it, Felt says.

The role of the Transportation Management Plan is to determine how the City's transportation infrastructure will respond to the growth.

## 254

The total mileage of Kirkland's streets.