



## **CITY OF KIRKLAND**

**Department of Parks & Community Services**

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### **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Michael Cogle, Deputy Director, Parks & Community Services

**Date:** November 5, 2014

**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Park Element Revisions

#### **Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission receives a draft of proposed revisions to the Park, Recreation, and Open Space Element of Kirkland's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Background**

A final draft of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan was reviewed by the City Council earlier this year, and will be formally adopted in early 2015. The Planning Commission was presented with the Draft PROS Plan in May of 2014. The Plan is available for review online on the City's website [here](#).

Proposed goals and policies from the PROS Plan have been incorporated into the attached proposed revision of the Comprehensive Plan's Park chapter. Staff will be available to answer questions at the Commission's upcoming meeting.

#### Attachments:

- 1 – Draft Park Element – Clean Copy
- 2 – Draft Park Element – With Track Changes



# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE



*“Puddle Jumpers” sculpture at Marina Park*

Parks and other open spaces make an important distinct contribution to the landscape and quality of life in Kirkland. Imagine Kirkland without its distinctive waterfront parks and other parks and open spaces dotted throughout the City. Over the past several decades, Kirkland has had the vision to aggressively pursue land acquisition and park development for the public’s enjoyment. An outstanding mosaic of parks and facilities has evolved.

The Kirkland Parks & Community Services Department manages the city’s recreation programs; park planning, acquisition, development and maintenance; community services; and the Green Kirkland Partnership. The Department’s mission is to support a healthy and sustainable community by providing high quality parks and recreation services, ensuring a collaborative community response to basic human needs, and protecting our natural areas.

Specifically, the City aims to:

- Preserve and maintain parklands and open spaces to create safe places for people to visit.
- Conserve and sustain natural areas for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.
- Provide comprehensive year-round recreation opportunities to enhance physical, mental and social well-being.
- Establish partnerships to ensure a comprehensive system of programs, facilities and services are available to meet the recreation and human service needs of the Kirkland community.

## *EXISTING CONDITIONS*

Kirkland’s diverse park system includes over 588 acres of parkland and open spaces, including community and neighborhood parks and natural areas. In addition, other public parks and open spaces, such as Big Finn Hill Park and school partnership sites, add another 366 acres of diverse parkland. The City’s 12.8 miles of trails and park paths connect people to parks, neighborhoods and other community destinations. The City also offers a diverse array of recreation, sports, fitness, arts, music and self-improvement classes and programs for all ages.

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Kirkland is fortunate to have a number of large parks owned by other public agencies that are within, or adjacent to, the city limits. These parks help meet local recreation needs and contribute significantly to the overall quality and diversity of parks and recreation in Kirkland. These sites include Saint Edward State Park, Bridle Trails State Park, Totem Lake Park, Big Finn Hill Park, OO Denny Park and a number of school facilities with sport fields and indoor gymnasiums.

Kirkland is a stable and maturing community with many families and children. As the City responds to the needs of its new residents and the operating demands of its existing facilities, new investments in parks and recreation will be necessary to meet the needs of the community, support youth development, provide options for residents to lead healthy active lives and foster greater social and community connections.

## Waterfront Parks

Kirkland's waterfront parks (both city and non-city owned) are a distinctive part of the City's park system. They bring identity and character to the park system and contribute significantly to Kirkland's charm and quality of life. The city's waterfront parks stretch from the Yarrow Bay Wetlands on the south, to O.O. Denny Park on the north, providing Kirkland residents year-round waterfront access. Kirkland's waterfront parks provide citizens a diversity of waterfront experiences for different tastes and preferences. Citizens can enjoy the passive and natural surroundings of Juanita Bay and Kiwanis Park as well as the more active swimming and sunbathing areas of Houghton and Marsh Parks. These parks truly identify Kirkland as a waterfront community.

The high visibility and use of Kirkland's waterfront parks require high levels of maintenance, periodic renovation, and security. Swimming beaches, docks, recreational moorage facilities, boat ramps, and shoreline walkways, where issues of liability are very important, must be kept safe and in good condition for the public's enjoyment and use.



*Marina Park in Downtown Kirkland*

## Natural Park Areas

The natural park areas, such as Juanita Bay Park, Yarrow Bay Wetlands, Heronfield Wetlands, Totem Lake Parks, and Watershed Park provide residents with important natural open space and critical urban wildlife habitat. They are part of providing a balanced park system for citizens. Passive recreation uses such as walking, bird watching, interpretive educational programs and signage, and non-motorized trail systems are appropriate for these sites.

## Community Parks

# **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

Community parks are usually 15 to 30 acres in size and are generally defined as larger, diverse recreation areas serving both formalized active recreation needs as well as recreation use benefiting the neighborhood surrounding the site. Community parks are where the majority of active recreation occurs. Community parks often include recreation facilities such as sport fields and/or community centers.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks serve both limited active and passive recreation needs of a residential neighborhood and are usually no more than 15 acres and no less than 0.5 acres in size.

### ***RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS***

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element supports the Community Character Element by establishing policies to ensure continued provision of the parks and open space amenities that help establish Kirkland's character. The Element functions in concert with the Natural Environment Element by establishing policies for the acquisition, development, and preservation of City-owned natural areas. The Land Use Element is supported through policies to ensure continued provision of facilities and services to support anticipated growth. In addition, this Element establishes policies for the coordination of funding and level of service requirements set forth in the Capital Facilities Element. Finally, this Element works in tandem with the Shoreline Area Chapter by establishing policies for the acquisition, development, and preservation of City-owned shoreline recreation, open space, and natural areas.

### ***RELATIONSHIP TO PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN***

The Park, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive (PROS) Plan is the City's long-range functional plan for Kirkland's parks, open spaces, and recreational uses. The Plan is prepared by the Department of Parks and Community Services and the Kirkland Park Board for City Council review and adoption. To remain eligible for certain State and County grant funding, the City is required to update the Plan every six years. The Plan was updated in 2014. That Plan is closely related to the Parks Element of the City Comprehensive Plan. The Park Board has relied heavily on the City Comprehensive Plan and, in turn, this Element relies heavily on the work of the Park Board in establishing goals and policies.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element supports the continued provision of accessible and well-maintained facilities and services for current and future residents. Levels of service are established for facilities. Policies are established for coordination with other service providers to ensure efficiencies in utilization of park and recreational facilities and services. The City will promote environmental conservation and education for publicly owned natural open space areas.

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

**Goal PR-1: Acquire, develop, and renovate a system of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces that is attractive, safe, functional, and accessible to all segments of the population.**

**Goal PR-2: Enhance the quality of life in the community by providing services and programs that offer positive opportunities for building healthy productive lives.**

**Goal PR-3: Protect, preserve, and restore publically-owned natural resource areas.**

## 1. Community Engagement

### **Policy 1.1 - Community Involvement**

**Encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.**

The City should involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning, design and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and build public support. Park planning should be integrated with the neighborhood planning process and should pursue opportunities to partner with residents and neighborhood groups to improve, maintain and monitor local parks, natural areas and trails. The City should identify underrepresented segments of the community and work to improve their capacity to participate in park planning and decision making.

## 2. Neighborhood & Community Parks

### **Policy 2.1 – Park Acquisition**

**Acquire additional parklands necessary to adequately serve the City’s current and future population based on adopted service levels.**

The City should provide a service standard of 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons of developed neighborhood parks and 2.25 per 1,000 residents of developed community parks.

The City should proactively seek parkland identified within the PROS Plan, in both developed and undeveloped areas, to secure suitable locations for new parks to serve future residents. Acquisition opportunities should be evaluated based on criteria such as improvement to existing level of service, connectivity, preservation and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents. To provide equitable park distribution, the City should prioritize park acquisition in underserved areas where households are more than one-quarter mile from a developed park and in areas of the City facing population growth and residential and commercial development.

### **Policy 2.2 – Park Improvement**

**Improve park sites to meet the active and passive recreational needs of Kirkland residents.**

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Park sites should be developed based on master plans, management plans, or other adopted strategies to ensure parks reflect local needs, community input, recreational and conservation goals, and available financial resources. The City should prioritize park development in underserved areas where households are more than one-half mile from a developed park and in areas of the City facing population growth and residential and commercial development.

## 3. Waterfront Parks

### **Policy 3.1 – Waterfront Parks**

**Maintain and enhance Kirkland’s waterfront parks to connect residents with the water and provide unique recreational experiences.**

The City should pursue opportunities to acquire additional privately held waterfront parcels as available; particularly sites that might create needed connections for a more continuous lakefront corridor or will provide lake access in underserved areas. The City consider opportunities to retain and repurpose street ends to create water access points and explore opportunities for cooperative or joint use ventures.

Non-motorized small craft water-oriented activities/programs along the shoreline should be encouraged where appropriate and consistent with public interest and needs.

## 4. Trail Network

### **Policy 4.1 – Trail System**

**Develop a network of shared-use pedestrian and bicycle trails to enable connections within parks and between parks, nearby neighborhoods, public amenities, and major pedestrian and bicycle routes identified in the Active Transportation Plan.**

Trail system planning and development should be coordinated with the City’s Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Management Plan to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicyclist network. The City should facilitate and provide for a high degree of trail connectivity from core signature trails, such as the Cross Kirkland Corridor, to neighborhood, park and waterfront destinations.

The City should partner with local utilities, public agencies and private landowners to secure trail easements and access to open space for trail connections. The City should integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.

### **Policy 4.2 – Signature Trails & Connections**

**Develop, enhance and maintain signature greenways and trails that stretch across the community and that connect residents to the City’s many parks, natural areas, recreation facilities and other amenities.**

**Kirkland Waterfront:** The City should strive to create a continuous pedestrian and bicyclist greenway along the lakeshore through parks, neighborhood greenway improvements, and trail easements.

**Cross Kirkland Corridor:** Develop or improve parks adjacent to the Cross Kirkland Corridor to provide additional amenities and create pleasant destinations or stopping points along the trail.

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Bay to Valley Connection: Build on the City's existing parks and natural areas along Forbes Creek and NE 100th Street to create an east-west trail that connects users from Juanita Bay through central Kirkland and into the Sammamish Valley.

Finn Hill Connection: Consider protection and development of a greenway and trail corridor to connect existing trail systems and provide additional recreational amenities.

Eastside Powerline Corridor: Explore opportunities to develop a north-south trail under the Seattle City Light (SCL) power lines to link Kirkland's eastern neighborhoods to Bridle Trails State Park and other existing parks, the Cross Kirkland Corridor, major retail and employment destinations, and to other neighborhoods.

Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail: Support the continued implementation of the Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail to provide water trails along Lake Washington and adjoining water bodies.

## 5. Recreation Facilities & Programming

### **Policy 5.1 – Recreation Services**

**Provide a variety of recreational services and programs that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.**

The City should design programming and services to meet the needs of diverse users, including at-risk communities or those with special needs. The City should ensure accessibility of programs by holding classes and activities at locations throughout the community and at affordable rates. The City should promote and coordinate recreational opportunities provided by partners to help connect residents with options to learn and recreate.

### **Policy 5.2 – Community Centers**

**Maintain and enhance Kirkland's community centers to provide recreational opportunities, community services and opportunities for residents to connect, learn and play.**

Kirkland's existing community centers should be managed to provide a diverse array of recreational programs, services and experiences for all City residents.

The City should examine the need for additional community recreation facility space to meet indoor recreation needs for athletics, recreation classes, and meeting space, and consider development of an additional multiuse indoor facility that provides space to provide a comprehensive recreation program to Kirkland residents.

### **Policy 5.3 – Aquatic Facilities & Programs**

**Provide opportunities for aquatic recreation through the City's pools and lakefront facilities.**

The City should maintain and enhance aquatics facilities and programs at existing outdoor and lake sites. The City should explore opportunities to develop indoor aquatic components as part of a multiuse facility, potentially in partnership with other organizations or agencies.

### **Policy 5.4 – Recreation Programs For All Ages**

**Provide programming and services that support recreation and learning for target populations, including youth, teens, adults and older adults.**

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

The City should continue to expand and diversify its popular youth programs to meet the growing need for engaging, affordable, safe options for children. The City should partner with the Lake Washington School District, community partners, recreation providers, and sports organizations to offer both drop-in and structured programs in sports; art, music and dance; and educational and environmental activities for youth. The City should build on existing partnerships to expand teen programming to include additional individual athletics, fitness, and alternative sports programs.

The City should also explore options to expand the quantity and breadth of adult programs offered, in partnership with other recreation providers and organizations. Finally, the City should continue to provide and expand opportunities for seniors to engage in social, recreational, educational, nutritional, and health programs designed to encourage independence, in partnership with community agencies.

## **Policy 5.5 – Universal Access & Inclusion**

**Strive to reduce barriers to participation and provide universal access to facilities and programs.**

Future improvements to parks, recreation facilities and trails should be designed to be in compliance with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act and with universal accessibility in mind. The City should continue to develop and offer recreational programs for youth and adults with special needs and support inclusion opportunities in all programs.

## **Policy 5.6 – Specialized Recreation Facilities**

**Establish and operate specialized recreational facilities (e.g. action sports facilities, off leash areas, skateparks, community gardens) to respond to identified public needs, as appropriate.**

The City should consider local needs, recreational trends, and availability of similar facilities within the region when planning for specialized recreational facilities. The City should consider providing facilities for alternative or emerging sports, such as skateboarding, BMX, mountain biking, ultimate Frisbee, disc golf, climbing and parkour, to offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences.

The City should consider siting additional off leash areas in suitable parks, where off-leash use is safe and would have limited environmental impacts.

The City should provide community gardens at suitable sites to provide opportunities for gardening, healthy eating and social connections and to encourage productive landscapes. The City should consider developing and managing community and experiential gardens in partnership with community organizations or educational programs.

## 6. Athletics

### **Policy 6.1 – Field Sports**

**Provide a citywide system of sports fields and programs to serve field sport needs of the community, in partnership with the Lake Washington School District, local sports organizations, and other regional providers.**

The City should enhance maintenance, investments and safety of sports fields to better serve recreation users and extend playing seasons. The City should assess overall sports fields needs on a regular basis, based on existing inventories and local participation trends. The City should explore options to use existing sites more efficiently and/or acquire additional field space to meet capacity needs. Consideration should be given to resurfacing existing

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

or new fields to artificial turf to allow more intensive use of field space, extend field seasons, and limit play cancellations due to rain and muddy conditions.

The City should continue its active partnerships with the Lake Washington School District and other recreation providers and actively explore opportunities for greater joint use of facilities.

## **Policy 6.2 – Indoor & Outdoor Court Sports**

**Provide and enable access to a citywide system of indoor and outdoor sports courts, gymnasiums and programs for Kirkland residents.**

The City should maintain and enhance the City's partnership with the Lake Washington School District for use of their gymnasiums and athletic fields for organized recreation and sports activities. The City should consider installing basketball, volleyball, and/or tennis courts in future community parks or community centers and explore options to develop half-court basketball courts in neighborhood parks, as appropriate, particularly in underserved areas or where there is expressed neighborhood interest.

## 7. Conservation & Stewardship

### **Policy 7.1 – Natural Area Preservation**

**Preserve significant natural areas to meet outdoor recreation needs, provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature, and meet habitat protection needs.**

The City should preserve high resource value, significant, or connected natural resource areas through acquisition or other protection (e.g. conservation easements) as they become available. The City should prioritize particularly high value resources, or those that create important wildlife and recreation connections within the existing system for preservation. This should include greenways and other corridors that provide wildlife habitat connectivity.

### **Policy 7.2 – Natural Area Restoration & Management**

**Restore and manage City-owned or managed natural areas to protect and enhance their ecological health, sensitive habitats and native species.**

The City should actively work to improve the conditions of City-owned natural areas through invasive species removal; planting of native species; restoration of urban forests, creeks, wetlands and other habitat; and improvement of hydrological conditions. Management of natural areas should integrate with the City's urban forestry management planning.

The City should pursue opportunities to provide appropriate public access (e.g. trails, viewpoints wildlife viewing areas, and boat landings) within natural areas to support passive recreation and environmental education.

### **Policy 7.3 – Shoreline Restoration**

**Restore Kirkland's shoreline on Lake Washington in accordance with the Shoreline Restoration Plan to improve habitat, hydrology and recreational opportunities.**

The City should pursue opportunities to remove bulkheads and other impervious surfaces in parks along the Lake Washington shoreline that impede natural habitat functions and increase stormwater flows into the lake. When developing or improving waterfront parks, the City should consider opportunities to restore degraded shorelines, increase riparian vegetation and other habitat features, and provide for additional pervious surfaces and green infrastructure.

# **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

## **Policy 7.4 – Ecosystem Services**

**Protect and improve the City’s natural systems or features for their value in providing ecosystem and infrastructure services.**

The City should manage forested areas for invasive species and to encourage the establishment and succession of conifers and other native plants. Parks should be designed and restored to naturally capture and filter stormwater to improve watershed health.

The Parks and Community Services Department should partner with the City’s Public Works Department to identify opportunities to coordinate park, greenway, green infrastructure, stormwater and active transportation planning and projects.

## **Policy 7.5 – Environmental Education**

**Promote environmental stewardship and education through informational signage, materials, programs and partnerships.**

The City should enhance partnerships to create opportunities for educational programs and recreational opportunities in the City’s natural area parks and other local resources. The City should integrate interpretive signage that reflects Kirkland’s history, culture, natural assets, and wildlife populations into parks and natural areas to support learning.

## **Policy 7.6 – Conservation Partnerships**

**Promote environmental stewardship and education through informational signage, materials, programs and partnerships.**

\_\_\_\_End Draft Document\_\_\_\_



# ~~X.~~ **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

### ~~◆~~ **RELATIONSHIP TO THE FRAMEWORK GOALS** ~~◆~~

The ~~Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element~~ highlights the following Framework Goals:

- ~~✓~~ **FG-1** ~~Maintain and enhance Kirkland's unique character.~~
- ~~FG-2~~ ~~Support a strong sense of community.~~
- ~~FG-3~~ ~~Maintain vibrant and stable residential neighborhoods and mixed-use development, with housing for diverse incomes, ages, and lifestyles.~~
- ~~FG-4~~ ~~Promote a strong and diverse economy.~~
- ~~✓~~ **FG-5** ~~Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to ensure a healthy environment.~~
- ~~FG-6~~ ~~Identify, protect and preserve the City's historic resources, and enhance the identity of those areas and neighborhoods in which they exist.~~
- ~~FG-7~~ ~~Encourage a sustainable community.~~
- ~~✓~~ **FG-8** ~~Maintain and enhance Kirkland's strong physical, visual, and perceptual linkages to Lake Washington.~~

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

- ✓ ~~FG-9 Provide safety and accessibility for those who use alternative modes of transportation within and between neighborhoods, public spaces, and business districts and to regional facilities.~~
- ~~FG-10 Create a transportation system which allows the mobility of people and goods by providing a variety of transportation options.~~
- ✓ ~~FG-11 Maintain existing park facilities, while seeking opportunities to expand and enhance the current range and quality of facilities.~~
- ~~FG-12 Ensure public safety.~~
- ✓ ~~FG-13 Maintain existing adopted levels of service for important public facilities.~~
- ~~FG-14 Plan for a fair share of regional growth, consistent with State and regional goals to minimize low density sprawl and direct growth to urban areas.~~
- ~~FG-15 Solve regional problems that affect Kirkland through regional coordination and partnerships.~~
- ~~FG-16 Promote active citizen involvement and outreach education in development decisions and planning for Kirkland's future.~~
- ~~FG-17 Establish development regulations that are fair and predictable.~~

# ~~X.~~ **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE**

VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

**A. INTRODUCTION**

# X—PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES



*“Puddle Jumpers” sculpture at Marina Park*

Parks and other open spaces make an important distinct contribution to the landscape and quality of life in Kirkland. Imagine Kirkland without its distinctive waterfront parks and other parks and open spaces dotted throughout the City. Over the past several decades, Kirkland has had the vision to aggressively pursue land acquisition and park development for the public’s enjoyment. An outstanding mosaic of parks and facilities has evolved.

The Kirkland Parks & Community Services Department manages the city’s recreation programs; park planning, acquisition, development and maintenance; community services; and the Green Kirkland Partnership. The Department’s mission is to support a healthy and sustainable community by providing high quality parks and recreation services, ensuring a collaborative community response to basic human needs, and protecting our natural areas.

Specifically, the City aims to:

- Preserve and maintain parklands and open spaces to create safe places for people to visit.
- Conserve and sustain natural areas for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.
- Provide comprehensive year-round recreation opportunities to enhance physical, mental and social well-being.
- Establish partnerships to ensure a comprehensive system of programs, facilities and services are available to meet the recreation and human service needs of the Kirkland community.

~~The City continues to be faced with the challenge of meeting the park and recreation needs of a diverse range of age groups and interests throughout the entire City. At the same time, the window of opportunity to acquire available land suitable for parks and open space is shrinking. Consequently, the City must strategically and creatively position itself to deal with the open space demands of those areas within its urban growth boundaries. Renovation of certain parks is important to keep them safe and functional and to reduce unnecessary maintenance costs.~~

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

Looking at current City parks and recreation services through the year 2022, the following important issues and opportunities face Kirkland:

- ~~(1) Acquiring and developing additional parkland in areas of the City where parkland and recreational opportunities are deficient, by providing neighborhood parks, community parks, and open space.~~
- ~~(2) Providing additional pedestrian and bicycle trails and linkages, including the acquisition of greenways, between parks, open spaces, and neighborhoods.~~
- ~~(3) Developing facilities such as restrooms and additional benches in new and existing parks.~~
- ~~(4) Meeting City indoor recreation needs for fitness, athletics, recreation classes, and meeting space.~~
- ~~(5) Enhancing and expanding recreational opportunities at existing waterfront parks.~~
- ~~(6) Providing ongoing renovation and maintenance of parks and facilities.~~
- ~~(7) Continuing and enhancing “partnerships” with the Lake Washington School District, King County, and neighboring cities in the mutual use and development of parks and recreation facilities.~~
- ~~(8) Encouraging healthy lifestyles by providing a variety of opportunities for physical exercise.~~
- ~~(9) Providing diverse and affordable recreation programs to meet citizen needs and interests, particularly those of youth, teens, older adults and residents with special needs, and complement programs offered by other recreation providers in the community.~~
- ~~(10) Promoting habitat conservation through acquisition and preservation of important natural areas, and continuing development of interpretive education programs.~~

### *EXISTING CONDITIONS*

The existing City owned park system contains 554 acres, of which about 209 acres are developed. Much of the developed park system consists of 10 waterfront parks, 22 neighborhood parks, seven community parks and five nature parks. The balance of the City’s park acreage can be classified as natural/open space areas and underdeveloped community and neighborhood parkland.

In addition to City owned parks, other public parks in Kirkland include the King County owned Big Finn Hill Park (220 acres) and Juanita Woodlands (37 acres); O.O. Denny Park (46 acres), which is owned by the city of Seattle; and Totem Lake Park (17 acres) which is owned by the King Conservation District.

A detailed inventory and classification of existing parks, open space, and recreational facilities is contained in the parks functional plan, titled Kirkland’s Comprehensive Park, Open Space, and Recreation Plan. That inventory is adopted as background for this Element as though set forth herein.

Kirkland’s diverse park system includes over 588 acres of parkland and open spaces, including community and neighborhood parks and natural areas. In addition, other public parks and open spaces, such as Big Finn Hill Park and school partnership sites, add another 366 acres of diverse parkland. The City’s 12.8 miles of trails and park

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

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### **Community Parks**

Community parks are usually 15 to 30 acres in size and are generally defined as larger, diverse recreation areas serving both formalized active recreation needs as well as recreation use benefiting the neighborhood surrounding the site. ~~The City currently has a shortage of developed community parks.~~ Community parks are where the majority of active recreation occurs. Community parks often include recreation facilities such as sport fields and/or community centers.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

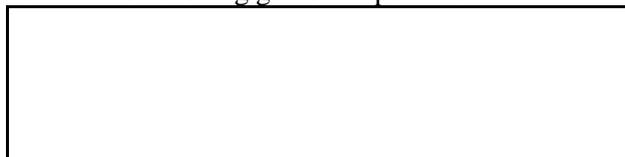
~~Kirkland's major need in parkland is in neighborhood parks.~~ Neighborhood parks serve both limited active and passive recreation needs of a residential neighborhood ~~within a quarter mile radius~~ and are usually no more than 15 acres and no less than 0.5 acres in size.

## ***RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS***

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

~~*Goal PR-1: To acquire, develop, and redevelop a system of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces that is attractive, safe, functional, and accessible to all segments of the population.*~~

The basis of Kirkland's parks system is the provision of diverse recreation opportunities and experiences for all Kirkland residents. Specifically, the open space, parks, park facilities, and recreation programs serve the following purposes:

- ~~(1) To contribute to the overall quality of life for Kirkland residents by providing facilities and programs for both active and passive recreation.~~
- ~~(2) To improve the aesthetics of the City, including ornamental plantings, public art, and other beautification efforts.~~

~~*Policy PR-1.1: Acquire parks, recreation, and open space facilities in those areas of the City facing population growth, commercial development, and in areas where facilities are deficient.*~~

A major component of this Element is the need to acquire more parkland. Specifically, this includes acquiring land suitable for parks in City neighborhoods with existing and projected deficiencies, based on the Land Use Element, and where opportunities arise to make key linkages in the park system.

Another component is to provide neighborhood parks within walking distance of every Kirkland resident. This is best accomplished by providing a system of neighborhood parks which are located within easy reach of Kirkland residents and which meet the diverse recreational needs identified by the community. It is critical that the City be prepared to take advantage of opportunities to obtain properties needed for park and open space purposes.

Although Kirkland is blessed with extraordinary waterfront parks, we should capture opportunities if additional waterfront becomes available. If privately held lakefront parcels adjacent to existing beach parks or at other appropriate locations become available, we should make an effort to acquire these pieces. The City should continue to pursue creative use of waterfront street ends.

~~*Policy PR-1.2: Develop pedestrian and bicycle trails within parks and linkages between parks and the city's major pedestrian and bicycle routes identified in the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) and between parks and nearby neighborhoods, commercial centers and public facilities, including schools.*~~

Trails provide people with valuable links between neighborhoods, parks, schools and other public facilities, commercial centers and other regional nonmotorized facilities. In some cases, public trails provide alternative transportation connections between communities. The citizens of Kirkland have consistently identified the need for more trails as a top priority.

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The City's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) provides the City's strategic goals and policies related to comprehensive trail planning including route designation, classification, funding priorities, and design standards. The ATP Plan was developed by the City's Public Works Department, working cooperatively with the Department of Parks and Community Services, the Planning and Community Development, and the public.

One important goal for recreational and commuter trail planning noted in the Active Transportation Plan is the development of a recreational trail system within the Cross Kirkland Corridor. This trail is part of the Eastside Rail Corridor, a regional facility traveling through many Eastside cities and providing critical links to other existing regional trails such as the Sammamish River Trail. This project is visionary and requires an interjurisdictional effort for planning and implementation.

Another goal is development of a north-south recreational trail under the Seattle City Light (SCL) power lines within the SCL easement and various access points to the future trail. This trail would also connect to other communities and neighborhoods.

*~~Policy PR-1.3:—Ensure adequate maintenance and operation funding prior to development of parks and recreational facilities.~~*

Renovation and maintenance is a very high priority for parks and facilities. There is a significant public investment in developing parks, playgrounds, buildings, and special facilities such as the outdoor pool. Consequently, it is very important to provide adequate maintenance and operation support when new parks and other facilities are developed. By deferring maintenance and operation support and not practicing preventative maintenance, long term maintenance and operation costs will rise, and facilities will deteriorate quicker, resulting in replacement or significant repair sooner than they should.

*~~Policy PR-1.4:—Renovate parks and facilities in a manner that will conserve the use of energy and other resources and maximize efficient maintenance practices.~~*

As the City's park system matures and requires periodic renovation, emphasis should be placed on developing improved methods of conserving energy, using better equipment and innovative practices, and designing park areas in such a manner as to reduce long-term maintenance and operating expenses.

To maintain efficiency in the areas of renovation and maintenance, the City's park maintenance program includes:

- ◆ ~~A systematic inventory of parks system infrastructure, including site furniture, sports courts, park pathways, playgrounds, and buildings in order to project future budgeting and timing for replacement and repairs.~~
- ◆ ~~Use of modern, efficient and certified equipment.~~
- ◆ ~~Efficient and effective use of seasonal part-time employees.~~
- ◆ ~~A scheduled preventative maintenance management system to efficiently allocate and plan maintenance activities.~~
- ◆ ~~Supplementation of park maintenance with volunteer groups, students, neighborhood groups, and service organizations.~~

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- ~~◆—Ongoing training provided for full-time maintenance staff.~~
- ~~◆—Use of contract maintenance in selected functions to meet peak demands and help maintenance staff respond to more specialized and urgent work needs.~~

~~Renovation is a key component to a healthy park system. As Kirkland grows, and park use increases in frequency and intensity, periodic renovation is essential to keep pace with recreational needs, changes in safety guidelines, demands on use, and the need for continued effective and efficient maintenance.~~

~~*Policy PR 1.5:—Acquire, develop, and renovate park facilities using traditional and new funding sources while preserving high-level maintenance standards and program quality.*~~

~~The priorities for acquiring, developing, and renovating parks are intended to be fluid and dynamic. Priorities change continually as opportunities and needs arise. Those opportunities must be weighed against available resources.~~

~~Following is a brief description of each category of park capital improvements:~~

### ~~Acquisition~~

~~A priority of the Kirkland parks system should be to capture opportunities to acquire unique park sites. Unique sites may be located near existing parks, be unusual in size, and/or exceptional in character.~~

~~The window of opportunity to acquire suitable parkland is shrinking rapidly. Surveys of the public have placed a top priority on acquisition of land for a park and trail system.~~

### ~~Development~~

~~Kirkland's increasing population and recreation activity have increased the demand for active indoor and outdoor facilities. There is a real need to develop new neighborhood parks in certain areas of the City to provide playgrounds, picnic areas, playcourts, and playfields within walking distance. Additionally, there is a need to further expand the City's public trail system.~~

~~In determining when a park should be developed, several key factors should be considered:~~

- ~~◆—Will park resources be made more accessible?~~
- ~~◆—Will it respond to an opportunity or demand?~~
- ~~◆—Will it help to achieve a balance among park types?~~
- ~~◆—Will it make the site more accessible, interesting, and safer for the public's use?~~

### ~~Renovation~~

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~~One of the most important things that must be done to a park system is to keep it in good condition. Practicing preventative maintenance and improving parks and facilities on a scheduled basis maintains user satisfaction, protects the public's investment, and is part of maintaining the community's positive image. Parks and facilities which are not regularly maintained and improved result in higher incidents of vandalism and other unwanted activities and security problems.~~

~~There are several key factors that influence the need to renovate parks including:~~

- ~~◆ Age and condition of facility;~~
- ~~◆ Changing use patterns;~~
- ~~◆ Safety and liability problems;~~
- ~~◆ Unnecessary maintenance costs.~~

~~Many of the parks and facilities acquired when the system was first developed are in need of renovation now, and others will have to be renovated in the future to extend their usefulness to the public. The City's recent renovation work to the restrooms, docks, and other facilities has proven to stabilize or reduce maintenance and operation costs through improved design and use of better materials.~~

### **Financing**

~~The City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Capital Facilities Plan contain capital project needs and funding sources for parks projects. Capital project financing comes from a variety of sources including current operating funds, reserve funds, impact fees, grants, private sector support, and voter approved general obligation bonds. Additional funding sources should be explored to finance the Comprehensive Park, Open Space, and Recreation Plan.~~

~~*Policy PR-1.6: Ensure that parks are provided using the following standards to determine the need for parks.*~~

~~**Table PR-1**  
**Park and Open Space Levels of Service**~~

<del>Facility</del>	<del>Standard</del>
<del>Neighborhood Parks</del>	<del>2.1 acres/1,000 persons</del>
<del>Community Parks</del>	<del>2.1 acres/1,000 persons</del>
<del>Nature Parks</del>	<del>5.7 acres/1,000 persons</del>

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The “concurrency” requirement does not apply to the facilities identified in Table PR-1 (i.e., new development will not be denied based on these identified standards). However, mitigation, impact fees, or other development contributions are required to meet the standards for desired level of service found in Table PR-1.

### *RECREATION*

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*Goal PR-2: Enhance the quality of life in the community by providing services and programs that offer positive opportunities for building healthy productive lives.*

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Recreation provides individuals in the community with opportunities for satisfying use of their leisure time and for engaging in daily physical exercise. Participation in recreation activities enriches lives, prevents social isolation, and increases the sense of community. It also helps people maintain a healthy weight and heart which can reduce the risk of many diseases and health conditions. People may enjoy exposure to a wide variety of recreation skills and experience. A significant share of demand for recreation services is met by the private sector and nonprofit agencies and organizations.

However, a large segment of the population does not have the opportunity or inclination to participate in private recreation. It is the responsibility of the City to provide recreation facilities and programs and City-wide wellness events which are sensitive to the needs of the community and resources of the parks system. It is the intent of the City to offer diverse, accessible, and affordable recreation opportunities.

The City plays both a primary and supportive role in recreation. In certain instances, the City’s role is to provide facilities and coordination, while in other cases, the City assumes a direct operating role. For example, the City’s role in youth baseball and soccer is to provide, schedule, and maintain ballfields within the City’s park system, while the City assumes direct responsibility for offering recreation programs and services to the elderly.

*Policy PR 2.1: Examine the need for additional community recreation facility space to meet indoor recreation needs for athletics, recreation classes, and meeting space.*

At present, Kirkland has two Community Centers and a Teen Center. The Parks and Community Services Department has been extremely fortunate in being able to use Lake Washington School District indoor facilities for City-sponsored recreation activities and programs. The use of school district facilities has enabled the City to provide a much higher level of service than would otherwise have been possible. Factors including increased demand for City and school district facilities, and limited availability of school district facilities continue to fuel the need for additional City-managed public recreation facility.

*Policy PR 2.2: Ensure that recreation facilities are provided using the following standard to determine the need for recreation facilities.*

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES

**Table PR-2**  
**Recreation Space Levels of Service**

<del>Facility</del>	<del>Standard</del>
<del>Indoor (Non-Athletic) Recreation Space</del>	<del>700 sq. ft./1,000 persons</del>
<del>Indoor (Athletic) Recreation Space</del>	<del>500 sq. ft./1,000 persons</del>

The “concurrency” requirement does not apply to the facilities identified in Table PR-2 (i.e., new development will not be denied based on these identified standards). However, mitigation, impact fees, or other development contributions may be required to meet the standards for level of service found in Table PR-2.

*~~Policy PR-2.3: Encourage nonmotorized small craft water-oriented activities/programs along the shoreline where appropriate and consistent with public interest and needs.~~*

Kirkland has miles of waterfront with major portions in publicly owned parks. The City should strive to maximize its use to the continued benefit of its citizens. In the future, providing programs for small craft such as canoeing/kayaking, sailing, rowing, and sailboarding should be encouraged. Programs oriented around nonmotorized boating activities provide excellent opportunities to teach lifelong recreation skills in addition to emphasizing water and boating safety.

Kirkland’s two public boat launch facilities provide important access to Lake Washington. A small facility in Houghton Beach Park provides for hand launching of nonmotorized boats, and at Marina Park in the Downtown area, a one-lane facility exists for trailerable boats. However, this facility has several problems including poor traffic circulation and congestion, and inadequate and insufficient parking. To address these concerns, new regulations went into effect in 1989. The City should cooperate with other jurisdictions to assure that this regional need is addressed with regional participation and resources. Such facilities are best located where there is an opportunity for adequate on-site parking and where intrusions into neighborhoods can be kept to a minimum.

*~~Policy PR-2.4: Coordinate with neighboring cities, King County, Finn Hill Park and Recreation District, Northshore School District, and Lake Washington School District in the planning and provision of recreation activities and facilities.~~*

### **Partnership with Lake Washington School District**

For years, the City has enjoyed a cooperative relationship with the Lake Washington School District in the use of their indoor facilities for a variety of organized recreation and sports activities. The use of these facilities has enabled the City to provide a much higher level of service than would otherwise have been possible. The City reciprocates with priority use of its facilities for school activities and by providing scheduling services for outdoor facilities.

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~~Currently the Parks and Community Services Department provides field coordinating and scheduling services for the school district and community sports organizations. These sites range in character from open lawn areas at public schools and parks (originally not intended for sports activities) to formal athletic fields with complete facilities.~~

~~The school system is a major partner in the provision of the City's park and recreation services in terms of open space acreage and recreation facilities. There continues to be high demand and insufficient supply for facilities such as practice and game fields. Increase in population growth will aggravate this situation. Conditions will not improve without effective partnerships between sports organizations, the City, the school district, and subregional providers of recreation.~~

~~To ensure that school district facilities will continue to be available for City sponsored recreation programs, in 2000, the City and school district entered into a joint use agreement setting forth the conditions and understandings necessary for reciprocal use of recreation facilities and joint development of capital projects.~~

~~In the future, the City should work more closely with the school district to actively explore opportunities for greater joint use of facilities. A cooperative effort on the part of the school district and the City to renovate existing playing fields on school sites should be continued as a step to providing additional needed ballfield space for soccer, softball, and baseball. Independent sports organizations are experiencing a shortage of practice times and space. With facility upgrades and ongoing maintenance, facilities can be more playable and safer to use.~~

### **Partnership with King County**

~~As the Eastside continues to urbanize, the role of King County parks becomes more important in acquiring, developing, and maintaining the larger land holdings for the region. In the future, there will be an increasing need for regional parks. The role of King County in providing parks is also changing with a major focus on systems of open space corridors that conserve natural resources, and agriculture lands that provide recreation opportunities, fish and wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, and regional trails that link cities and communities.~~

~~***Policy PR 2.5: Provide Kirkland citizens of all ages and abilities the opportunity to participate in diverse, challenging, and high-quality recreation programs and community wellness events that are both accessible and affordable.***~~

~~Comprehensive recreation opportunities are a major ingredient of a successful community. By providing services that are creative, educational, and responsive to the needs of the public, the City can significantly enhance the quality of life in Kirkland and encourage a healthy lifestyle.~~

~~As demand for recreation activities grows, emphasis will be placed on programs, activities, and events that are safe, appropriately priced, and held at convenient locations and times. It is the intent of the City to closely monitor local and national trends so as to offer the most diverse, accessible, and affordable recreation opportunities possible to Kirkland citizens.~~

~~Kirkland citizens are served by other recreation providers as well. The City should continue to act as a resource agency for the community in promoting, coordinating, developing, and maintaining community leisure activities and wellness events. Innovative methods of service delivery can be developed through continued arrangements with~~

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~~the school district, private nonprofit agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club and Kirkland Arts Center, and the local business community.~~

~~*Policy PR 2.6:— Enhance the quality of life for the older adult population by providing opportunities to engage in social, recreational, educational, nutritional, and health programs designed to encourage independence.*~~



*Pedestrian bridge through Juanita Bay Park wetlands*

~~Kirkland has a significant older adult population, and activities offered at the Peter Kirk Community Center are increasingly popular. Trends in older adult programming for the next decade will include a demand for:~~

- ~~◆—Lifelong learning activities;~~
- ~~◆—Health and fitness programs;~~
- ~~◆—Diverse programs that address the expanding age range of the older adult population and its subsequent variety of activity levels;~~
- ~~◆—Programs that provide for transportation to and from the activities.~~

~~It is important that the City recognize these trends and focus attention on programs that meet these changing needs.~~

~~*Policy PR 2.7:— Determine the need and provide access to recreation programs for citizens with physical and developmental disabilities.*~~

~~Specialized recreation programs for mentally and physically challenged individuals will continue to grow and take on a regional significance. The City will need to continue to work with other recreation providers in serving Kirkland citizens with special needs.~~

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## VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

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~~Goal PR-3:—Protect, preserve, and restore natural resource areas.~~

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~~Natural areas and open spaces are a vital component of the health and well being of the community. Conservation and enhancement of the ecological resources found within the City is a key component of its land use and park planning. In surveys and workshops, Kirkland citizens have consistently identified natural areas as being a key component of park planning.~~

~~Bodies of water in Kirkland, other than Lake Washington, include Forbes Lake, Forbes Creek, Juanita Creek, Cochran Springs Creek, Yarrow Creek, Everest Creek, Totem Lake, and numerous smaller streams and tributaries. These resources provide valuable habitat for wildlife and contribute to water quality. Totem Lake Park is owned by the King County Conservation District. Important portions of Forbes Lake, Forbes Creek, Cochran Springs Creek, Yarrow Creek, and Everest Creek are under City ownership.~~

~~Open space corridors serve many important functions, including recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and the connection of individual features that comprise a natural system (e.g., wetlands linked by a stream within a watershed). Kirkland's open space corridors are composed of parks and other publicly owned land, along with sensitive areas and their buffers.~~

~~Policy PR-3.1:—Work cooperatively with numerous resource management agencies and citizens to care for streams, enhance and protect wetlands, improve wildlife habitat, and provide limited public access.~~

~~Recognized impacts associated with an ever increasing urban population include the loss of privately owned open spaces, an increase in ornamental and invasive plants which threaten native vegetative communities, and an increase in competitive pressure upon native wildlife by nonnative species and domestic pets.~~

~~The City has the opportunity to continue to participate with both State and federal agencies and a variety of citizen groups to maintain and enhance existing resources, provide valuable educational opportunities, and provide a level of public use appropriate for the area.~~

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~~Policy 1.1 - Community Involvement - Encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.~~



*Educational sign and boardwalk at Juanita Bay Park*

~~Over 60 percent of the City's parkland inventory provides valuable habitat for urban wildlife. In many cases, these parks also provide opportunities for interpretive education. The City must continue to balance the public benefits of providing access to these areas while limiting potential adverse impacts.~~

~~Acquisition is a key component to protection of valuable habitat. The City should review key parcels of land as they become available for inclusion into the existing network of parks and open space. The inclusion of these lands should be prioritized based on the following factors:~~

- ~~◆ Areas which are intrinsically biologically critical by virtue of their continuity with other, existing natural areas.~~
- ~~◆ Areas which provide benefits to the greater community, including water quality functions, hydrologic management, and erosion control.~~
- ~~◆ Areas of unique scenic quality.~~
- ~~◆ Areas which are culturally significant.~~
- ~~◆ Areas which provide significant fish and wildlife habitat.~~
- ~~◆ Areas located in neighborhoods with identified deficiencies in open spaces and parks.~~

## 1. Community Engagement

### Policy 1.1 - Community Involvement

Encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.

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The City should involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning, design and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and build public support. Park planning should be integrated with the neighborhood planning process and should pursue opportunities to partner with residents and neighborhood groups to improve, maintain and monitor local parks, natural areas and trails. The City should identify underrepresented segments of the community and work to improve their capacity to participate in park planning and decision making.

## 2. Neighborhood & Community Parks

### Policy 2.1 – Park Acquisition

Acquire additional parklands necessary to adequately serve the City’s current and future population based on adopted service levels.

The City should provide a service standard of 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons of developed neighborhood parks and 2.25 per 1,000 residents of developed community parks.

The City should proactively seek parkland identified within the PROS Plan, in both developed and undeveloped areas, to secure suitable locations for new parks to serve future residents. Acquisition opportunities should be evaluated based on criteria such as improvement to existing level of service, connectivity, preservation and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents. To provide equitable park distribution, the City should prioritize park acquisition in underserved areas where households are more than one-quarter mile from a developed park and in areas of the City facing population growth and residential and commercial development.

### Policy 2.2 – Park Improvement

Improve park sites to meet the active and passive recreational needs of Kirkland residents.

Park sites should be developed based on master plans, management plans, or other adopted strategies to ensure parks reflect local needs, community input, recreational and conservation goals, and available financial resources. The City should prioritize park development in underserved areas where households are more than one-half mile from a developed park and in areas of the City facing population growth and residential and commercial development.

## 3. Waterfront Parks

### Policy 3.1 – Waterfront Parks

Maintain and enhance Kirkland’s waterfront parks to connect residents with the water and provide unique recreational experiences.

The City should pursue opportunities to acquire additional privately held waterfront parcels as available; particularly sites that might create needed connections for a more continuous lakefront corridor or will provide lake access in underserved areas. The City consider opportunities to retain and repurpose street ends to create water access points and explore opportunities for cooperative or joint use ventures.

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Non-motorized small craft water-oriented activities/programs along the shoreline should be encouraged where appropriate and consistent with public interest and needs.

### 4. Trail Network

#### Policy 4.1 – Trail System

Develop a network of shared-use pedestrian and bicycle trails to enable connections within parks and between parks, nearby neighborhoods, public amenities, and major pedestrian and bicycle routes identified in the Active Transportation Plan.

Trail system planning and development should be coordinated with the City's ~~Action~~ Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Management Plan to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicyclist network. The City should facilitate and provide for a high degree of trail connectivity from core signature trails, such as the Cross Kirkland Corridor, to neighborhood, park and waterfront destinations.

The City should partner with local utilities, public agencies and private landowners to secure trail easements and access to open space for trail connections. The City should integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.

#### Policy 4.2 – Signature Trails & Connections

Develop, enhance and maintain signature greenways and trails that stretch across the community and that connect residents to the City's many parks, natural areas, recreation facilities and other amenities.

Kirkland Waterfront: The City should strive to create a continuous pedestrian and bicyclist greenway along the lakeshore through parks, neighborhood greenway improvements, and trail easements.

Cross Kirkland Corridor: Develop or improve parks adjacent to the Cross Kirkland Corridor to provide additional amenities and create pleasant destinations or stopping points along the trail.

Bay to Valley Connection: Build on the City's existing parks and natural areas along Forbes Creek and NE 100th Street to create an east-west trail that connects users from Juanita Bay through central Kirkland and into the Sammamish Valley.

Finn Hill Connection: Consider protection and development of a greenway and trail corridor to connect existing trail systems and provide additional recreational amenities.

Eastside Powerline Corridor: Explore opportunities to develop a north-south trail under the Seattle City Light (SCL) power lines to link Kirkland's eastern neighborhoods to Bridle Trails State Park and other existing parks, the Cross Kirkland Corridor, major retail and employment destinations, and to other neighborhoods.

Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail: Support the continued implementation of the Lakes-to-Locks Water Trail to provide water trails along Lake Washington and adjoining water bodies.

### 5. Recreation Facilities & Programming

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### Policy 5.1 – Recreation Services

Provide a variety of recreational services and programs that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.

The City should design programming and services to meet the needs of diverse users, including at-risk communities or those with special needs. The City should ensure accessibility of programs by holding classes and activities at locations throughout the community and at affordable rates. The City should promote and coordinate recreational opportunities provided by partners to help connect residents with options to learn and recreate.

### Policy 5.2 – Community Centers

Maintain and enhance Kirkland’s community centers to provide recreational opportunities, community services and opportunities for residents to connect, learn and play.

Kirkland’s existing community centers should be managed to provide a diverse array of recreational programs, services and experiences for all City residents.

The City should examine the need for additional community recreation facility space to meet indoor recreation needs for athletics, recreation classes, and meeting space, and consider development of an additional multiuse indoor facility that provides space to provide a comprehensive recreation program to Kirkland residents.

### Policy 5.3 – Aquatic Facilities & Programs

Provide opportunities for aquatic recreation through the City’s pools and lakefront facilities.

The City should maintain and enhance aquatics facilities and programs at existing outdoor and lake sites. The City should explore opportunities to develop indoor aquatic components as part of a multiuse facility, potentially in partnership with other organizations or agencies.

### Policy 5.4 – Recreation Programs For All Ages

Provide programming and services that support recreation and learning for target populations, including youth, teens, adults and older adults.

The City should continue to expand and diversify its popular youth programs to meet the growing need for engaging, affordable, safe options for children. The City should partner with the Lake Washington School District, community partners, recreation providers, and sports organizations to offer both drop-in and structured programs in sports; art, music and dance; and educational and environmental activities for youth. The City should build on existing partnerships to expand teen programming to include additional individual athletics, fitness, and alternative sports programs.

The City should also explore options to expand the quantity and breadth of adult programs offered, in partnership with other recreation providers and organizations. Finally, the City should continue to provide and expand opportunities for seniors to engage in social, recreational, educational, nutritional, and health programs designed to encourage independence, in partnership with community agencies.

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### Policy 5.5 – Universal Access & Inclusion

Strive to reduce barriers to participation and provide universal access to facilities and programs.

Future improvements to parks, recreation facilities and trails should be designed to be in compliance with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act and with universal accessibility in mind. The City should continue to develop and offer recreational programs for youth and adults with special needs and support inclusion opportunities in all programs.

### Policy 5.6 – Specialized Recreation Facilities

Establish and operate specialized recreational facilities (e.g. action sports facilities, off leash areas, skateparks, community gardens) to respond to identified public needs, as appropriate.

The City should consider local needs, recreational trends, and availability of similar facilities within the region when planning for specialized recreational facilities. The City should consider providing facilities for alternative or emerging sports, such as skateboarding, BMX, mountain biking, ultimate Frisbee, disc golf, climbing and parkour, to offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences.

The City should consider siting additional off leash areas in suitable parks, where off-leash use is safe and would have limited environmental impacts.

The City should provide community gardens at suitable sites to provide opportunities for gardening, healthy eating and social connections and to encourage productive landscapes. The City should consider developing and managing community and experiential gardens in partnership with community organizations or educational programs.

## 6. Athletics

### Policy 6.1 – Field Sports

Provide a citywide system of sports fields and programs to serve field sport needs of the community, in partnership with the Lake Washington School District, local sports organizations, and other regional providers.

The City should enhance maintenance, investments and safety of sports fields to better serve recreation users and extend playing seasons. The City should assess overall sports fields needs on a regular basis, based on existing inventories and local participation trends. The City should explore options to use existing sites more efficiently and/or acquire additional field space to meet capacity needs. Consideration should be given to resurfacing existing or new fields to artificial turf to allow more intensive use of field space, extend field seasons, and limit play cancellations due to rain and muddy conditions.

The City should continue its active partnerships with the Lake Washington School District and other recreation providers and actively explore opportunities for greater joint use of facilities.

### Policy 6.2 – Indoor & Outdoor Court Sports

Provide and enable access to a citywide system of indoor and outdoor sports courts, gymnasiums and programs for Kirkland residents.

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The City should maintain and enhance the City’s partnership with the Lake Washington School District for use of their gymnasiums and athletic fields for organized recreation and sports activities. The City should consider installing basketball, volleyball, and/or tennis courts in future community parks or community centers and explore options to develop half-court basketball courts in neighborhood parks, as appropriate, particularly in underserved areas or where there is expressed neighborhood interest.

### 7. Conservation & Stewardship

#### Policy 7.1 – Natural Area Preservation

Preserve significant natural areas to meet outdoor recreation needs, provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature, and meet habitat protection needs.

The City should preserve high resource value, significant, or connected natural resource areas through acquisition or other protection (e.g. conservation easements) as they become available. The City should prioritize particularly high value resources, or those that create important wildlife and recreation connections within the existing system for preservation. This should include greenways and other corridors that provide wildlife habitat connectivity.

#### Policy 7.2 – Natural Area Restoration & Management

Restore and manage City-owned or managed natural areas to protect and enhance their ecological health, sensitive habitats and native species.

The City should actively work to improve the conditions of City-owned natural areas through invasive species removal; planting of native species; restoration of urban forests, creeks, wetlands and other habitat; and improvement of hydrological conditions. Management of natural areas should integrate with the City’s urban forestry management planning.

The City should pursue opportunities to provide appropriate public access (e.g. trails, viewpoints wildlife viewing areas, and boat landings) within natural areas to support passive recreation and environmental education.

#### Policy 7.3 – Shoreline Restoration

Restore Kirkland’s shoreline on Lake Washington in accordance with the Shoreline Restoration Plan to improve habitat, hydrology and recreational opportunities.

The City should pursue opportunities to remove bulkheads and other impervious surfaces in parks along the Lake Washington shoreline that impede natural habitat functions and increase stormwater flows into the lake. When developing or improving waterfront parks, the City should consider opportunities to restore degraded shorelines, increase riparian vegetation and other habitat features, and provide for additional pervious surfaces and green infrastructure.

#### Policy 7.4 – Ecosystem Services

Protect and improve the City’s natural systems or features for their value in providing ecosystem and infrastructure services.

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The City should manage forested areas for invasive species and to encourage the establishment and succession of conifers and other native plants. Parks should be designed and restored to naturally capture and filter stormwater to improve watershed health.

The Parks and Community Services Department should partner with the City's Public Works Department to identify opportunities to coordinate park, greenway, green infrastructure, stormwater and active transportation planning and projects.

### Policy 7.5 – Environmental Education

Promote environmental stewardship and education through informational signage, materials, programs and partnerships.

The City should enhance partnerships to create opportunities for educational programs and recreational opportunities in the City's natural area parks and other local resources. The City should integrate interpretive signage that reflects Kirkland's history, culture, natural assets, and wildlife populations into parks and natural areas to support learning.

### Policy 7.6 – Conservation Partnerships

Promote environmental stewardship and education through informational signage, materials, programs and partnerships.