



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 23, 2014

To: Transportation Commission

FROM: Jon Regala, Senior Planner
Jeremy McMahan, Planning Supervisor

SUBJECT: Kirkland Zoning Code Amendments to Multi-Family Parking Requirements - Right Size Parking Briefings, File No. CAM13-02032

RECOMMENDATION

Receive briefings from staff and consulting team on Right Size Parking study and Kirkland applicability. Provide initial feedback and on additional data needs and process.

BACKGROUND

As part of the adopted 2013-2014 Planning Work Program, the City will be considering Zoning Code amendments for multi-family parking requirements. As a project resource, King County has completed one of the most comprehensive surveys of multi-family parking utilization available. The data includes a survey of 228 sites throughout the County, totaling over 33,000 housing units and over 50,000 parking stalls. This study, funded by a grant from the Federal Highway Administration, is part of a project called Right Size Parking.

Fortunately for the City, the Right Size Parking Project also included resources for cities to implement pilot projects to put the data to practical use. Kirkland was one of four King County cities selected to participate. As a result, Kirkland has significant technical resources available to assist with the potential amendments to the Kirkland Zoning Code. Resources include a team of consultants who participated in Right Size Parking study and are currently assisting four other King County cities (Redmond has contracted with the team outside the King County grant program) with review of their parking requirements.

The attached Technical Memo provides an overview of the Right Size Parking study, the resources available, and initial observations of Kirkland's parking requirements as they relate to the survey data.

The first step in the code amendment process is this series of briefings. Staff and the consulting team will brief the City Council Planning and Economic Development Committee, Planning Commission, Houghton Community Council, and Transportation Commission.

Following the review of the technical information, the key questions for these briefings are:

- Of the two approaches to parking presented (market-based approach and context-based approach), which is most appropriate to Kirkland?
- Are there areas in Kirkland where a different approach should be considered?
- What additional background information is needed to consider code amendments (additional local data, etc.)?

Following the briefings, staff and the consultant team will gather any additional data needed and conduct additional analysis. Staff anticipates that the code amendments process would begin with Planning Commission study sessions in the first quarter of 2014. The goal would be to complete the project by the third quarter of 2014.

Attachment

1. Right Size Parking Technical Memo

**RSP Kirkland Pilot Project Technical Memo
Right Size Parking Project – King County Metro
11-12-13**

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This technical memo describes the opportunities to apply “right size parking” concepts in the City of Kirkland through a pilot project funded by the King County Metro Right Size Parking (RSP) project. It is intended to provide ideas and guidance for the most promising avenues to pursue in the Kirkland RSP Pilot Project. The memo begins with background information on the larger RSP project, and a summary of the proposed Kirkland RSP Pilot. It then provides an overview of the parking environment in Kirkland, followed by a discussion of RSP strategies that would be most appropriate in Kirkland, including market- and context-based approaches to setting minimums, on-street management, shared parking, and pricing.

2 THE RIGHT SIZE PARKING PROJECT

Right Size Parking (RSP) is three year grant project funded by the Federal Highway Administration’s Value Pricing Program and managed by King County Metro Transit. The overarching goal of the RSP project is to foster livable communities by optimizing the allocation of parking resources. More specifically, the purpose of the RSP project is to impart data and strategies to help developers, jurisdictions, and neighborhoods accurately project the optimum amount of parking for new multifamily developments.

The amount of parking is optimized—i.e. right sized—when it strikes a balance between supply and demand, and the challenge lies in determining the correct balance with confidence. Today, multifamily buildings often provide too much parking, which can be an impediment to achieving a wide range of community goals. However, providing too little parking can also be a significant risk in terms of real estate marketability and neighborhood impacts.

The RSP project has produced numerous work products, including best practices research, a technical policy memo on RSP barriers and opportunities, multifamily parking utilization surveys, parking code gap analysis, an online multifamily parking demand calculator, model parking code, strategies for pricing, transportation demand management, and parking management, and lastly, pilot projects.¹ The pilot projects are intended to apply the RSP concepts developed in earlier phases, working in partnership with municipalities or private parties.

The RSP project also included a robust stakeholder engagement process. The process included separate segments for the initial project phase and the demonstration project phase, with a series of 15 meetings occurring over an approximately 1.5 year period. Stakeholders were divided into two groups: (1) a jurisdictional committee consisting primarily of planning staff from King County cities, and (2), a development committee consisting primarily of private and non-profit developers and development financiers. A City of Kirkland planning staff member was an active participant on the jurisdictional committee for both phases on the RSP stakeholder process and the City Planning Director served on the development committee.

2.2 The RSP Multi-Family Residential Parking Calculator

The RSP project included an extensive survey of multi-family projects in King County to collect data on parking supply and utilization. The projects surveyed 228 sites throughout the County, totaling over 33,000 housing units and over 50,000 parking stalls. The RSP utilization survey data was used to develop a statistical model that predicts parking demand based on land use and building characteristics. After analyzing over 100 variables, the following seven variables were selected that together can predict over 80% of the observed variation in parking utilization in multifamily projects:

- transit frequency
- percent of affordable units
- number of bedrooms
- population and employment density
- unit size
- unit rent
- parking price

A public, web-based user interface was built to allow easy access to the information provided by the RSP Multifamily Residential Parking Calculator.² The web tool has several components for communicating

¹ See <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/up/projects/right-size-parking/> for RSP reports and documents.

² The RSP King County Multi-Family Residential Parking Calculator is online here: <http://www.rightsizeparking.org/>

RSP information. The home page gives explanatory information and displays a “heat map” of King County that color codes areas according to predicted parking demand i.e., green indicates lower demand, and red indicates higher. The interface allows users to zoom in and select a specific parcel (or parcels), after which data for a prototypical building on that site is displayed. Project parameters and land use context factors can then be adjusted by the user to represent a planned project, or to simply observe how different factors affect predicted parking demand. The web interface also displays comparative parking “impacts,” including capital costs for parking construction, and vehicle-miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions for building residents.

The RSP calculator could be used as a tool for municipalities to help determine defensible parking requirements for development projects on a case-by-case basis. The RSP Calculator and the data behind it could also provide valuable input for setting the metrics for “context-based” adjustments to minimums, as was done for several of the RSP model code metrics, as noted in Appendix 6.1.

2.3 The RSP Model Code

One of the main work products of the RSP Project is a model code document that integrates all of the research, stakeholder input, and analysis to provide a resource for planners to implement code that supports RSP and other regional goals. The model code is comprised of two approaches: *market-based*, and *context based*. In the market-based approach minimums are set to zero, and the market determines the amount of parking. The RSP project concluded that a market-based approach most effectively matches parking supply with parking demand and eliminates the possibility of requirements forcing developers to build more parking than is needed. At the same time, it cannot be overstressed that removing minimums does not mean that no parking can be built, nor does it mean that no parking will be built. In almost all cases, developers will build parking anyway, because their projects would not be marketable without it.

It was also recognized that a market-based approach might not be acceptable in many jurisdictions, and the model code includes a context-based approach for which minimums are set based on the unique context and characteristics of a given project. The process has two steps: First, a generalized place type and associated base parking minimum is assigned. Second, a series of adjustments is applied to that base minimum to account for specific building and contextual features, such as the unit type, expected tenant, proximity to transit, use of transportation demand management and so on. The full menu of possible context-based adjustments proposed in the model code is given in Appendix 6.1. Further information on the RSP Model Code can be found in the RSP Model Code Technical Memo, available for download at the King County Metro RSP web site.³

³ <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/up/projects/right-size-parking/>

3 THE KIRKLAND RSP PILOT PROJECT

Kirkland was awarded one of four pilot project grants by RSP to investigate updating the City's parking codes to promote RSP outcomes that align with City goals. RSP multifamily parking utilization survey data indicate that in Kirkland, actual parking demand is less than what parking codes require and that, where modifications are not being requested and approved, parking is being oversupplied in multifamily projects. This oversupply is at cross purposes with many of Kirkland's stated goals, including supporting economic development, creating affordable housing, building a sustainable community, encouraging efficient transportation, and protecting community character.

The City of Kirkland's adopted 2013-2015 Planning Work Program includes code amendments to consider revised parking standards, and the pilot project will assist in that endeavor. The objectives of the pilot project are to review all multifamily parking requirements for the City and establish requirements that reflect market demand, protect adjoining neighborhoods from parking spillover, and are adaptive to changing conditions. The pilot project will also explore opportunities to unbundle parking pricing by reviewing acceptance in the local real estate market as well as acceptance in adjoining neighborhoods. The project scope includes:

- Attendance and presentations at a series of meetings with the Kirkland City Council Planning and Economic Development Subcommittee, the Planning Commission, the Transportation Commission, and the Houghton Community Council
- Parking utilization surveys of multifamily projects
- Development of a Technical Memo that addresses RSP opportunities in Kirkland
- Parking Pricing Research
- Development of draft parking code

Kirkland's RSP pilot project grant includes support from the following consultant team that has been engaged throughout the larger RSP project:

- Rick Williams Consulting: on-street and off-street parking inventories and utilization surveys, strategies for on-street parking management and shared parking
- Fehr & Peers: parking demand data analysis, transportation demand management strategies
- VIA Architecture and Planning: policy and code analysis and development, land use planning
- Kidder Matthews: real estate development economics and market analysis, pricing analysis

4 EXISTING PARKING ENVIRONMENT IN KIRKLAND

4.1 Minimums

As shown in the map in Appendix 1, Kirkland's multifamily zones can be divided into five categories based on their parking stall minimum requirements:

- Downtown (CBD)
 - 1 per bedroom or studio units (minimum 1.3 per unit average)
 - guest parking: 0.1 bedroom or studio unit with a minimum of two per development
 - in-lieu fee option
- General Residential
 - 1.7 per unit
 - guest parking: up to 0.5 per unit
- Shoreline
 - 2.0 per unit
 - guest parking: up to 0.5 per unit
- Totem Lake: Case by Case basis (KZC 105.25)
- South Kirkland TOD: 1.1 per unit

Other pertinent elements of Kirkland's multifamily parking code include:

- Discretionary parking modifications where a detailed study documents lower demand than the code requirement. When such changes are being considered, City code requires public notice to all property owners within a 300' radius of the development site and allows administrative decisions by the planning official and traffic engineer to be appealed to the hearing examiner. This public notice requirement and appeal process has the potential to cause significant delays in project permitting.
- Parking requirements for affordable housing units may be reduced to one stall per unit if the owner commits by covenant to one car per unit.
- Bicycle parking spaces are required for new development with six or more motor vehicle parking spaces, at a ratio of one bicycle space for each 12 required motor vehicle parking spaces. Covered and secured bicycle storage provided on site can be credited towards parking requirements at a ratio of one less parking stall per six bicycle spaces (maximum 5% reduction in required parking).
- Two or more uses may share a parking area if the number of parking spaces provided is equal to the greatest number of required spaces for uses operating at the same time, with a City-approved agreement between property owners. Final parking stall requirements are based on analysis of peak demand for each use.
- In the CBD (downtown) zones, projects may pay a fee-in-lieu of \$20,000 per stall into a special fund that is used to provide and upgrade municipal off-street parking.
- In CBD zones that allow residential suites, the minimum is reduced to 0.5 per unit for residential suites that agree to manage demand and monitor and limit car ownership.

4.2 On-street Parking

Areas with regulated on-street parking are primarily located in downtown, typically with 2 hour limits, but also some 30 minute limits. First Street, 3rd Avenue, 2nd Avenue South, and State Street have 4 hour limits. In downtown, on-street parking has no time limit on Market Street north of Central Way, Central Way between 3rd and 5th Streets, and 3rd Avenue between 1st and 2nd Streets.

Downtown Kirkland also has several off street lots including:

- Lake Street & Central Way Lot (3 hour limit)
- Lakeshore Plaza Lot (3 hour limit)
- Peter Kirk Municipal Garage (4 hour limit)

The Lake Street Lot and Lakeshore Plaza have pay stations that charge \$1.00 per hour from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. All Day parking (9 a.m.-9 p.m., Mon-Sat) is available in the Park & Main Lot for \$1.00 per hour. There are also several private pay lots in downtown. Downtown employee parking permits are available at no charge for parking at the Peter Kirk Municipal Garage (library garage).

The City has generally been opposed to Residential Parking Zones (RPZs). Kirkland staff has indicated that the City will likely want to avoid any changes to parking codes that would necessitate the implementation of parking management, which is seen as too much of a drain on City resources, and also unpopular with residents.

4.3 RSP Surveys

The RSP data represents a robust collection of regional data from multifamily sites throughout King County and a significant statistical analysis of context-based variables that affect parking demand. Parking utilization for each site was observed under carefully controlled, consistent conditions. Parking counts were completed during mid-week days (Tuesday through Thursday) at the peak parking demand hours for residential land uses, which falls between 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. Parking counts were not completed during weeks with major holidays considering residents could be on vacation.

The RSP parking utilization survey included 10 multifamily projects located in Kirkland, and the results, aggregated by neighborhood, are shown in Table 1. On average, the 10 projects supplied 43 percent more parking than the observed utilization. The amount of oversupply in individual buildings ranged between 14 to 173 percent. These result are consistent with the RSP survey findings county wide, which showed that on average buildings supply 40 percent more parking than the observed utilization.

The average observed parking ratio was 1.20 per unit, ranging between 0.9 and 1.5 for individual buildings. The observed average ratio is significantly lower than the minimums specified for Kirkland's downtown (1.6), general residential zones (1.7) and shoreline zones (2.0). Only the South Kirkland TOD area has a lower minimum than the observed average, but that area has unique conditions.

Totem Lake minimums are determined on a case-by-case basis, so a direct comparison to the observed utilization can't be made. However, a multifamily development just south of Totem Lake was recently

approved for a ratio of 1.1 per unit. There is also a recent affordable multifamily project in Totem Lake that was approved for a parking ratio of 0.79 per unit.

Four of the 10 Kirkland projects surveyed charge residents rent for parking that is unbundled from the rent of the unit (in other words, the tenant pays apartment rent and parking rent separately – if needed). Monthly parking rates in these buildings ranged between \$40 and \$83. Three of the 10 projects had shared parking between residents and other uses, though the number of shared stalls was relatively small, numbering 12, 14, and 33 stalls.

TABLE 1: Summary of the ten projects in Kirkland surveyed by the RSP project

N'hood	Projects	Total Resid. Units	Total Resid. Stalls	Supply (stalls / unit)	Utilization (stalls / unit)	Excess Supply (stalls/ unit)	Stalls Shared w/other Uses	Bicycle Parking Stalls	Total Resid. Square Footage	Stud.	1-bds.	2-bds.	3-bds.
Juanita	4	891	1,557	1.75	1.20	0.55	47	0	742,855	24	334	274	48
Totem Lake	2	400	564	1.41	1.18	0.23	12	0	295,342	50	167	149	28
Other*	4	613	978	1.60	1.22	0.38	0	92	190,436	38	251	285	36
TOTALS	10	1,904	3,099	1.63	1.20	0.43	59	92	1,986,314	112	752	708	112

*These four projects are located in Bridal Trails, Lakeview, Moss Bay, and North Rose Hill, but specifics are undisclosed to protect confidentiality.

4.4 RSP Gap Analysis

The following analysis compares the City of Kirkland’s municipal parking code against the predicted RSP multifamily parking utilization rates. Within multifamily or mixed use zoning areas, the ratio of the minimum parking requirement to the RSP-predicted parking utilization was calculated for each parcel.

Figure 1 and Table 2 summarize the results of the parking supply to RSP demand analysis. On the map, blue shaded parcels (of which there are none in Kirkland) would represent a situation where municipal parking minima are less than predicted utilization, orange parcels (e.g., South Kirkland Park and Ride) have parking minima roughly aligned with utilization, and the tan and brown parcels have minima that exceed RSP expected utilization.

As shown, the City’s minimum parking requirements generally result in a minimum-to-utilization ratio of above 120 percent, which also could be interpreted as 20 percent or greater oversupply. Ratios exceeding 160 percent are present in several areas of the City. Much of the variation shown on the map has to do with the predicted parking utilization rates from the RSP model. For example, the rate of “oversupply” is higher along 100th Ave NE in Juanita because the RSP tool predicts that parking utilization is lower in areas that are immediately adjacent to corridors with transit service (e.g. the 255 Route).

The only area where the code is in rough balance with utilization is in the South Kirkland Park and Ride area, which recently underwent a parking code adjustment with the development of TOD zoning for the site. Also notable is that the Totem Lake area has parking requirements that are determined on a



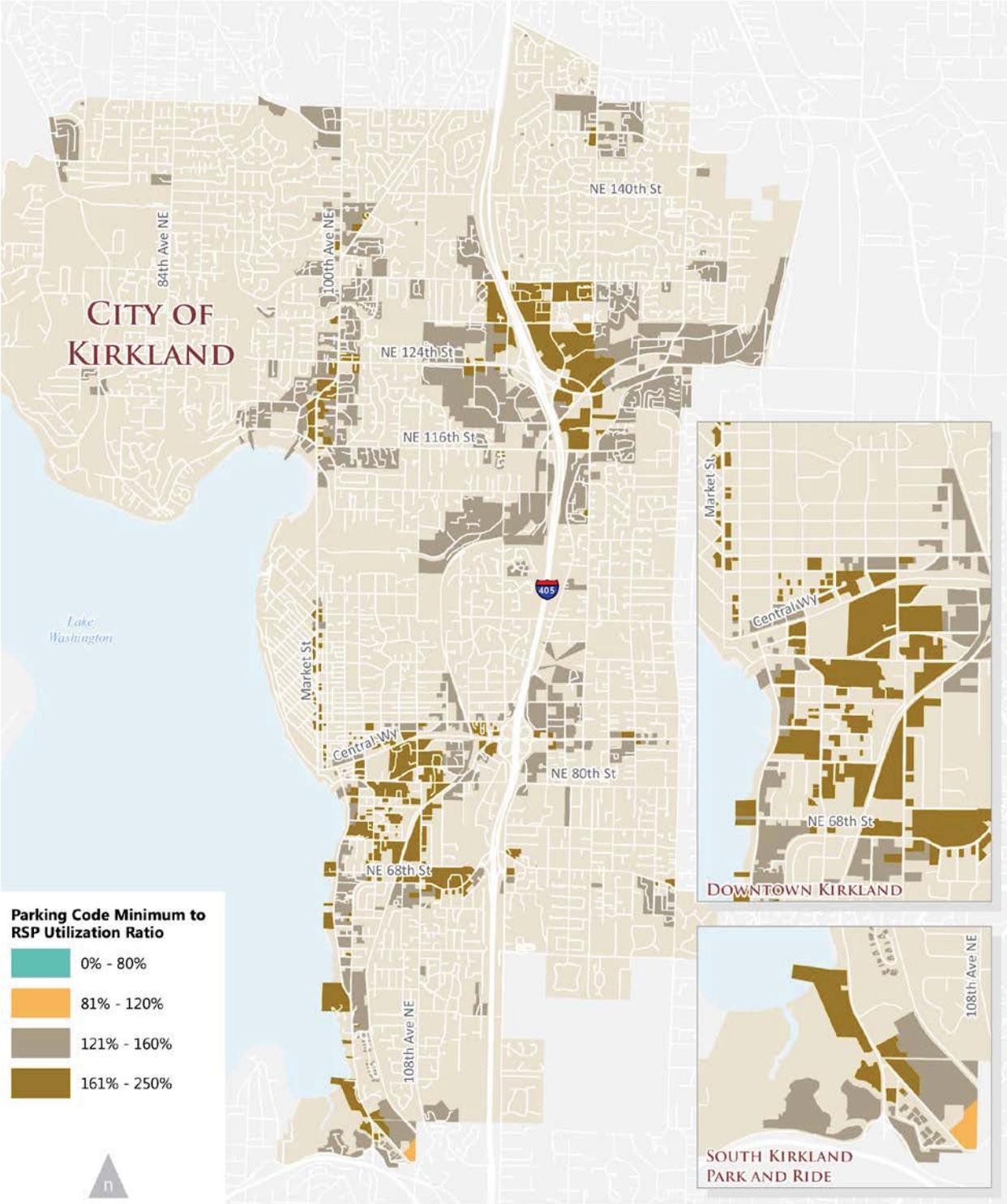
project-by-project basis. The figure shows the gap in parking requirements and utilization that would occur assuming that the City's typical rate of 1.7 parking stalls per unit was applied. However, based on conversations with City staff, two recent projects have been approved with parking supplies that are roughly equal to the anticipated RSP utilization.

TABLE 2: RSP Gap Analysis

Location	Required Minimum (stalls per unit)	Average RSP Predicted Utilization (stalls per unit)	Required Minimum to RSP Predicted Utilization Ratio	Gap Between Requirement and RSP Predicted Utilization (stalls per unit)
General Residential	1.70	1.10	155%	0.60
Downtown (CBD -1, -2, -8 ¹)	1.56	1.04	149%	0.52
Totem Lake	1.70 ²	1.05	162%	0.65
S. Kirkland TOD	1.15	1.05	110%	0.10

Notes:
¹ CBD average parking requirements are vary by bedroom and location. An average was calculated based on the typical housing in the area.
² Totem Lake does not have traditional parking minima. They are set project-by-project. For this analysis, the typical City requirement was assumed.

FIGURE 1: RSP Gap Analysis



4.5 The Kirkland Comprehensive Plan

The Kirkland Comprehensive Plan includes numerous goals and policies that provide rationale for updating the regulations described above to promote RSP outcomes. With respect to Land Use, one of the most relevant policies is LU-5.1, which includes the following principles:

- Encourage multimodal transportation options, especially during peak traffic periods.
- Promote an intensity and density of land uses sufficient to support effective transit and pedestrian activity.
- Encourage pedestrian travel to and within the commercial area by providing... placement of off-street surface parking to the back or to the side of buildings to maximize pedestrian access from the sidewalk.
- Promote non-SOV travel by reducing total parking area where transit service is frequent.

More directly, policy LU-3.5 states: “Incorporate features in new development projects which support transit and non-motorized travel as alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.” Note that more efficient utilization of parking should be considered a “feature” supporting transportation alternatives.

Regarding transportation specifically, Policy T-1.4 contains the following language:

“Kirkland’s vision for transportation promotes the movement of people throughout the City and region by expanding opportunities to use transit, ridesharing, and nonmotorized facilities.... Alternate modes of travel reduce energy consumption, air pollution, and noise levels... the City should pursue all possible alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.”

More generally, framework goal FG-7—*Encourage a sustainable community*—includes the following language: “We strive to accomplish our goal by reducing our contribution to climate change... Among the varied tools are land use goals and regulations that encourage pedestrian-oriented and compact development in our neighborhoods...”

Additional framework goals that are aligned with RSP include:

- *FG-3 Maintain vibrant and stable residential neighborhoods and mixed-use development, with housing for diverse incomes, ages, and lifestyles.*
- *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-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. (Note that one of the benefits of RSP is that it enables higher density development by reducing the need for parking.)*

5 STRATEGIES

5.1 Market-based Approach

The RSP Model Code’s preferred recommendation for promoting RSP outcomes is a market-based approach, which involves removing minimums and letting the market determine how much parking is built. However, due to concerns about the risk introduced by unregulated parking, in most of the City of Kirkland a market-based approach is likely to be unacceptable to the community in the near term, with the possible exception of the Totem Lake area.

Totem Lake is the only area in the City where the parking requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis. This approach is intended to give developers flexibility. There is interest and momentum within the City to get development happening in Totem Lake. For these reasons, Totem Lake is the best opportunity in Kirkland to explore a market-based approach to parking minimums.

The chief concern to address for a market based approach is what happens if developers underbuild parking, and in particular, determining where spillover parking would have impacts. Much of the Totem Lake area consists of superblocks with strip commercial development and large surface parking lots; there is very little on-street parking. As such, any spillover from underparked residential buildings would most likely impact private surface parking lots, and this could create a burden of policing the lots on those property owners. However, Totem Lake is a designated regional urban center, and most cities do not consider potential parking spillover into private lots to be an “impact” in urban centers. There is typically an expectation that private property owners have the responsibility to manage their parking in urban locations.

On the other hand, if surface lots are underutilized—which many in Totem Lake appear to be—a demand for residential parking could provide a new source of income for the owners of surface parking lots. Further study of parking resources in Totem Lake would be necessary to develop a market-based approach that properly mitigates any potential negative impacts to surrounding properties.

Of the several parking management strategies described in the RSP Model Code, one that may be best suited to a market-based approach in Totem Lake is improving utilization of existing off-street parking lots. Totem Lake has numerous off-street surface parking lots, most of which appear to have significant excess supply, at least during specific times of the day or week. Enabling this parking resource to be utilized would provide a safety valve for any spillover problems caused by underbuilt multifamily parking. Municipalities can play a direct role in connecting parking consumers with parking lot owners. For example, the City of Long Beach, CA, administers an innovative program that enables owners of underutilized private parking lots to lease their parking to local residents.⁴

⁴ Information on the City of Long Beach program can be found at <http://www.communityparking.com>

5.2 Context-based Approach

Kirkland’s existing codes that set parking minimums in the downtown, general residential, and shoreline areas all have the potential to be improved through the incorporation of elements of the “context-based” approach proposed in the RSP Model Code. Each of these areas is discussed separately below.

Downtown

The current code for downtown was adopted in 2010, but there have not yet been any major multifamily developments to test it. The RSP gap analysis discussed above indicates that there is room to lower the minimum and still accommodate expected parking demand. Refining parking minimums using a context based approach would be a defensible way to lower minimums and get the requirements more in line with actual demand.

The first step of the RSP context-based approach is to set a baseline parking minimum based on the general level of urban characteristics of the place. Because downtown is the most urban area in Kirkland, it would be expected to have a lowest baseline minimum of all Kirkland’s multifamily areas (based on RSP predictive variables).

Given that parking requirements are minimums only, and also that urbanizing places such as downtown Kirkland can be expected to exhibit general trend toward lower parking demand over time, it is appropriate to set minimums at or slightly below the RSP calculator’s demand predictions. Considering the predicted utilization for the CDB shown in Table 2 above, an appropriate choice for the baseline minimum would be approximately 1 per unit.

There are several possible context based adjustments proposed in the RSP model code that could be applied in downtown Kirkland. (For reference the full menu of options in the RSP model code is provided in Appendix 2.) In particular, one factor unique to the downtown code is the way the minimum is defined to scale up linearly with the number bedrooms in a unit. Actual demand is not linearly proportional to bedrooms as the bedroom count gets higher, so as bedroom count goes up the required minimum in downtown becomes incorrectly inflated. As noted in the Gap Analysis section above, based on average bedroom counts in typical multifamily housing in Kirkland’s downtown, the required minimum would be 1.6 per unit. That is barely a reduction from the general residential requirement of 1.7 per unit.

The effect of the number of bedrooms on demand could be more accurately accounted for through the set of adjustments recommended in the RSP model code, as shown in Table 3 below. The “X” in the table indicates that the baseline minimum would be multiplied by this factor to determine the adjusted minimum. The specific factors in Table 3 were based on statistical analysis of data from the 208 multifamily projects that were used to develop the RSP parking utilization calculator (bedroom count was one of the seven independent variables used in the predictive statistical model).

Table 3: RSP Model Code proposed multipliers to adjust minimums according to bedroom count

studio	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom+
0.85X	1X	1.6X	1.8X

Note that Kirkland's current requirement for 0.1 guest stalls per bedroom could also be modified according to the metrics in Table 3 above.

Other context-based adjustments (see Appendix 2 for reference) that would be most relevant to downtown Kirkland, and that are not sufficiently addressed in existing code, include:

- Low-income units: The RSP survey data showed an average demand reduction of 35 percent for these units.
- Senior units: The RSP survey data showed an average demand reduction of 50 percent for these units.
- Assisted living units: Existing Kirkland allows a reduction to 1 per unit, but this could be further reduced based on the RSP multifamily survey data (see Appendix 2 for the RSP model code's proposed reduction).
- Transit Access: The RSP Model Code proposes a reduction of 25 to 50 percent, depending on proximity and level of service.
- Transportation Management Plan (TMP): Existing Kirkland code specific to residential suites includes TMPs as one of several conditions for reduced parking requirements. The RSP Model Code proposes a reduction of up to 20 percent.
- Transit supportive building and site design: The RSP Model Code proposes a reduction of up to 10 percent.
- Parking price unbundled from the unit price: The RSP survey data showed an average demand reduction of 20 percent when parking was unbundled.
- Remote parking: The RSP Model Code proposes a one-for-one exchange of on-site for off-site parking.
- Car share stalls: The RSP Model Code proposes a reduction of four stalls for every car share stall.

General Residential

The RSP gap analysis discussed above indicates that there is room to lower the minimum in the general residential areas and still accommodate expected parking demand. As with downtown, a context-based approach could provide a defensible methodology for reducing minimums. Unlike downtown, however, the general residential zones are spread throughout the City and have large variations in basic land use characteristics. The RSP context-based approach involves setting a baseline minimum, but due to these variations, a uniform baseline may not be appropriate for all of the general residential areas. For example, Juanita Village is one area that could be expected differ enough from the more typical general residential areas such that it could be assigned a unique baseline minimum.

Determining the best way to handle baseline minimums in the general residential areas will require further analysis of how land use varies among the different general residential areas. Note that large-area parking demand maps generated by the online RSP calculator tool could be used to help characterize land use variation. In any case, given the projections of the RSP calculator (see Table 2), an appropriate baseline would be about 1.1 per unit.

Several of the context-based adjustments described above for downtown would also be appropriate for the general residential areas, including number of bedrooms, low-income, senior, and assisted living units, and transit access. Unbundling, TMPs, and car share are likely to be less appropriate in general residential areas with a more suburban character and less transit. In particular, RSP research has shown that parking price has dwindling influence on parking demand in places where there are limited alternatives to travel by car.

Shoreline Areas

The shoreline zones have the highest minimums in the City at 2 per unit. Not only is this relatively high requirement inconsistent with Kirkland's general residential zones (1.7 per unit), it is also in conflict with shoreline policies that indicate parking is not a desired use in these areas. These circumstances support the case for reductions in required minimums in the shoreline zones. If nothing else, minimums should at least be made consistent with the general residential requirement of 1.7 per unit.

As with the downtown and general residential areas, a context-based approach could provide a defensible methodology for reducing minimums in the shoreline areas. The areas cover a relatively limited extent, and are similar in general land use characteristics—most are located directly on the shore of Lake Washington on the west side of Lake Washington Blvd between downtown and Yarrow Bay. Thus, it can be expected that a single baseline minimum would apply well to all the areas; although, consideration should be given to removing the shoreline parking designation for the parcels near downtown and to apply the downtown rates.

Regarding context-based adjustments, those recommended above for the general residential areas would be most appropriate for the shoreline areas. In fact, one potential option would be to standardize the context-based approach for both the shoreline and general residential areas.

Totem Lake

Totem Lake should be considered for a market-based approach to parking minimums, as discussed in the next section. If the existing case-by-case approach is retained, the City could explore the potential for allowing the RSP Parking Calculator to be used to review the parking minimums proposed by developers.

South Kirkland TOD

The requirements in this zone—1.1 per unit—were recently updated to be consistent with the planned TOD, currently under construction. As such, it is not likely to need any further changes in the near term.

5.3 On-street Management

In general, as parking resources become more highly utilized, the need for on-street management rises. However, management requires City resources, and can be unpopular with local businesses and residents. A key point to make clear is that if parking minimums are reduced according to the concepts developed by the RSP project, the impact on street parking should be minimal. When parking requirements are based on RSP principles, it means that parking resources are used to their maximum efficiency, i.e., demand is absorbed by empty stalls in residential projects and no additional pressure is put on stalls on the street. Thus, in most of Kirkland on-street management should not be seen as an issue that would be exacerbated by reduced minimums that have been properly calibrated.

Currently, on-street parking management in Kirkland is almost entirely limited to the downtown area, and it may be appropriate to reassess these measures, depending on the specifics of what is proposed regarding adjustments to multifamily parking minimums. Since most of downtown on-street parking has a two hour limit, it would not be expected that residential parking spillover is creating much if any conflict with commercial parking. However, it is possible that spillover parking is impacting neighborhoods adjacent to downtown where on street parking does not have time limits. If downtown minimums are proposed to be reduced, the potential for this type of spillover should further explored, ideally through on-the-ground observation.

One parking management strategy discussed in the RSP Model Code that the City could consider is utilization monitoring. Public perception of on-street parking availability is not always aligned with actual utilization. In some cases, utilization surveys may help assuage concerns if the surveys document that there actually is significant excess on-street parking supply within a given neighborhood. Another potential option is for cities to commit to routine utilization monitoring, and implement contingency measures if utilization rates hit unacceptable levels. This method would be most suitable to mitigate potential impacts of a market-based approach for which minimums have been removed. (Note: To the best of our knowledge there is no precedent for a City making such a commitment to monitor and mitigate, but it is suggested here as an avenue for exploration if significant parking reductions are pursued.)

5.4 Shared Parking

Kirkland allows shared parking throughout the City “if the number of parking spaces provided is equal to the greatest number of required spaces for uses operating at the same time...” But there are further steps the City could consider to better promote shared parking as an RSP strategy.

The potential for shared parking agreements between adjacent properties greatly expands the opportunities for shared parking, but it also necessitates the establishment of formal legal agreements between different property owners. The risk and hassle associated with such agreements is a major barrier to the implementation of shared parking. To overcome this barrier and promote adoption of shared parking schemes, the City could consider developing a model shared parking agreement designed to make the process easier to navigate and to reduce legal risk.

Because they typically have a single owner, mixed-use projects present an opportunity for shared parking without the need for a legal agreement between different owners. Within individual mixed-use projects that contain uses that have complementary parking utilization patterns, sharing of the onsite parking can allow for a reduced number of parking stalls in the project. Shared parking arrangements in mixed-use projects also open the possibility for accommodating guest parking in a pool of shared parking, such that the extra stall requirement for guest parking could be eliminated.

A shared arrangement within a single project usually requires that the parking facility be designed to allow all tenants and visitors access to all areas of the parking lot. In typical mixed-used buildings with structured parking, the residential portion of the parking is designed to be securely isolated from parking available to non-residents. One possible solution is a moveable gate or barrier that could accommodate variations in utilization between the residential and commercial portions of the project. Another design strategy is to make multifamily parking garages accessible to all tenants and visitors without compromising resident security, for example with parking elevators open to public plazas instead of interior lobbies.

Because downtown has relatively high density and a diverse mix of uses, it can be expected to have the best opportunities for shared parking in Kirkland. In the general residential zones, the biggest opportunity for shared parking is in the Juanita Village area, where there is an appropriate mix of uses. In most other general residential areas, it is much less likely that there will be complimentary uses near each other to support shared parking. The preponderance of private surface parking lots presents a unique opportunity for shared parking in the Totem Lake area. No matter what the location, the key role that the City can play is to facilitate connections between multifamily developers and owners of adjacent available parking that could support shared parking arrangements.

5.5 Pricing

Pricing parking in multifamily developments is most effective when off-site parking options such as on-street stalls or public parking lots are also priced, which is not the case in most of Kirkland. In addition, Kirkland's dominant land use patterns and limited transit are such that pricing parking in multifamily buildings would be expected to have a modest effect on parking utilization and car ownership. In Kirkland, some households may be willing to reduce from owning two cars to one car, but going totally car free is likely to be a realistic option only for residents of areas with significant transit service (i.e. – the 255 bus route).

However, even with the above limitations, promoting priced parking is an important strategy the City could pursue to help encourage an evolution toward RSP in Kirkland. When the price of parking is unbundled from the price of the unit, consumers get a more transparent understanding of the actual costs of storing their car, and that understanding typically underscores the potential of alternatives to owning car.

One method Kirkland could use to promote pricing in multifamily developments is to offer a reduction in parking requirements in exchange for unbundling. The RSP model code context-based approach proposes a reduction of 20 percent for unbundling, based on data from the multifamily utilization survey. If desired, that percent reduction could be tailored to better fit the Kirkland context, since in much of the City that context may translate to a weaker relationship between parking price and utilization, as noted above. The City could also consider specifying reductions that vary by zone, or offering the reduction in the downtown area only. Since it the most urban area in Kirkland, the downtown area would be expected to have the strongest relationship between pricing and utilization.

Pricing on-street parking in downtown Kirkland would complement unbundling in multifamily buildings to create a rational market for parking that would promote RSP outcomes. To help overcome political resistance to charging for on-street parking, the City could consider implementing a Parking Benefits District in downtown. In Parking Benefit Districts, revenue collected for parking fees within the District are spent on improvements within District. Because the revenue gets spent locally, members of the community tend to be much more receptive to parking management that involves meters or paid permits.

APPENDIX 6.1: RSP Model Code proposed context-based adjustments and reductions

ADJUSTMENTS FOR HOUSING UNIT TYPE:

studio*	1-bedroom*	2-bedroom*	3-bedroom+*	residential suite
0.85X	1X	1.6X	1.8X	0.5X

ADJUSTMENTS FOR RESIDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

very low-income	low-income*	workforce	senior*	assisted living	dormitory
0.5X	0.65X	0.75X	0.5X	0.33X	0.33X

REDUCTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES:

frequent transit	fixed-guideway transit	bike share facility	resident TMP	transit-supportive design
25% / 50%	50% / 100%	up to 25%	up to 20%	up to 10%

REDUCTIONS FOR OFF-STREET PARKING MANAGEMENT:

unbundling*	shared parking	remote parking	in-lieu fee	deferred parking	lease/deed restricted parking
20%	up to 50%	up to 100%	up to 100%	up to 50%	up to 100%

PARKING STALL SUBSTITUTIONS:

car share stalls	bike parking stalls	motorcycle parking	adjacent on-street spaces
4 : 1 (up to 40%)	1 : 4 (up to 25%)	1 : 2 (up to 5%)	1 : 1

Notes:

1. Factors appended with an asterisk* are those that were derived from the RSP multifamily parking utilization survey statistical analysis.
2. An "X" in the table indicates that the baseline minimum would be multiplied by this factor to determine the adjusted minimum.

APPENDIX 6.2: Kirkland's multifamily zones and parking requirements

