

MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Commission

From: Joel Pfundt, Transportation Manager
Kimberly Scrivner, Transportation Planner
Janice Swenson, Senior Planner

Date: January 25, 2023

Subject: Transportation Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan Update – Status Report

I. RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Transportation Commission receive a status report on the Transportation Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan update process including an overview of two reports that have been completed to initiate an equitable and inclusive Comprehensive Plan update process and assist with our long-range planning efforts:

- Community Engagement Plan prepared by Broadview Planning
- Equity Review and Engagement Program report prepared by ECONorthwest

II. BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

A. Introduction

In 2022-2024, the City of Kirkland is conducting a state-mandated update of the [Kirkland Comprehensive Plan](#) with a target completion in fall of 2024. The Comprehensive Plan is a citywide guide for how we as a community will manage growth over the next 20 years. The last major update was in 2015 for the horizon year of 2035. For this update, the new horizon year is 2044. The update process is an opportunity to reflect on what people value about Kirkland today, the kind of community we aspire to become, and create a policy roadmap to achieve that vision.

A major component of this update includes updating the [Transportation Master Plan](#) which was originally developed in 2015. The Transportation Master Plan will then inform the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Transportation Commission received a [briefing](#) on July 21st, 2022 that included an outline of the process, requirements and direction for the Comprehensive Plan and the TMP update.

B. Key Themes of the Comprehensive Plan Update

At their meeting on April 19, 2022 City Council agreed on the following key themes to be interwoven into the Plan and the planning process:

- Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity & Belonging (DEIB) initiatives from the City's adopted DEIB 5-year roadmap
- Promoting sustainability to address human health, economic opportunity, climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental protection
- Ensuring affordable housing options for all
- Developing accessible and mobile connections within Kirkland and to the regional transit system
- Advocating resiliency to future emergencies and fiscal planning for a thriving local economy
- Guiding innovation, technology, and resilience in six areas: Transportation & Mobility, City Infrastructure, Digital Transformation, Built Environment, and Community Engagement

C. Community Engagement Plan (CEP)

Broadview Planning consultants worked with City staff to develop a [Community Engagement Plan](#) for the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan updates. A key goal of the community outreach and engagement strategy will be to conduct an equitable, inclusive process with an emphasis on engaging key stakeholders who have been historically underrepresented in previous planning efforts. This focus includes community members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA+), youth, seniors, low-income households, people experiencing homelessness, and immigrant communities including people facing language barriers. One of the first steps will be outreach to these “priority populations” to start recruiting for focus group members to discuss each Element topic area. The City intends to provide stipends for focus group participation.

The CEP recommends a menu of public outreach and engagement activities staff can use, key messaging, suggested survey questions, phrasing, and best practices for community engagement throughout the process. Activities include creating focus groups for each of the Elements, conducting in-person and virtual events and surveys, working with high school classes in the Lake Washington School District, and attending community events. The CEP will also be a guide for future long range planning processes and staff training opportunities. A major theme of the engagement effort will be meeting and engaging with members of the community outside of City Hall – at grocery stores, schools, places of worship, and community events – to “meet people where they are” and gain feedback on citywide planning issues from a broad cross-section of the community. While this update will still include traditional engagement events such as community meetings hosted by the City, less emphasis will be placed on these formal community engagement events at City Hall, because such events have been more difficult for working people, youth, lower-income households, and others to attend.

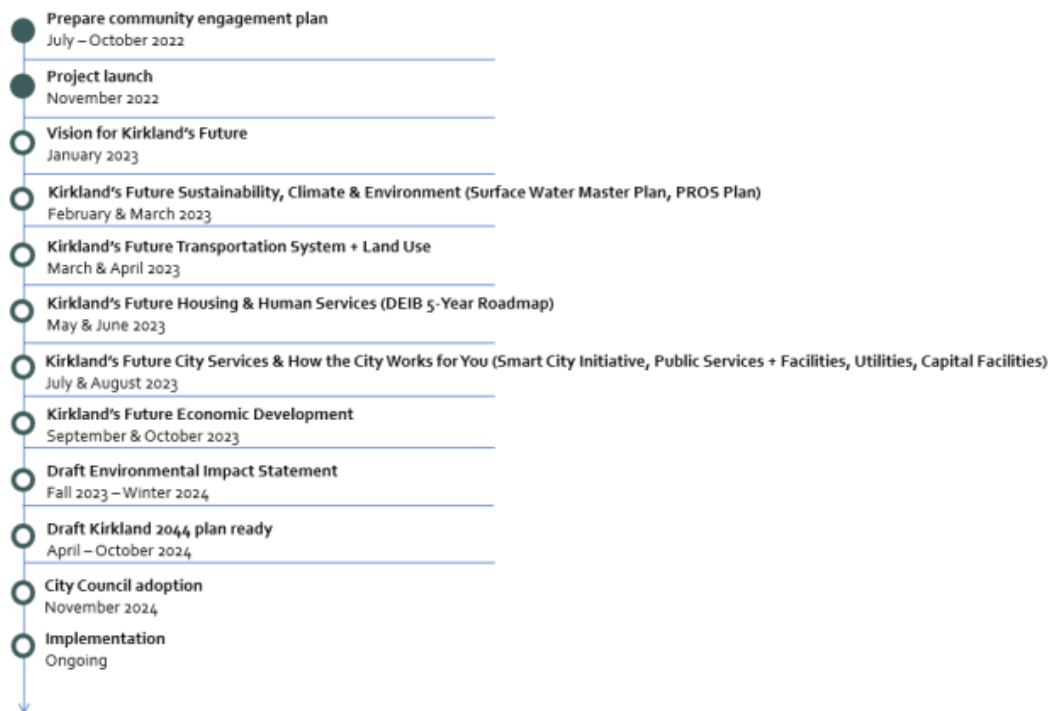
Staff in the Planning and Building Department, Public Works Department-Transportation Division, and City Manager's Office-Community Engagement and Outreach Division will

coordinate to implement the CEP with other citywide community events during the 2022-2024 timeframe.

November-December 2022 Project Launch - The major media launch will occur during November-December to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan and to direct people to the webpage and provide information about how to get involved in the process. This will include a call to action to register for the Visioning Event and fill out targeted surveys to guide future amendments. Staff will also begin attending community events in December (e.g., Google Lights on CKC, Light Up Kirkland at Juanita Beach Park, Urban Festival & Winter Market at Kirkland Urban) to introduce this project to community members and help people take the Visioning survey ahead of events January. January 2023 Visioning Event and Process - A visioning process will begin in January with a virtual event (tentative date is January 11th), pop-up engagement meetings within the community, and additional surveys - with the goal of having people assess if the city's existing Vision Statement and Guiding Principles still reflect the community's common values and to identify issues or concerns the community would like to see addressed with the Comprehensive Plan update process. The outcome of this process could result in a revised Vision Statement and Guiding Principles to guide revisions to policies in the General Elements. Early 2023 Recruitment for Focus Groups and Community Engagement around each Element - Throughout 2023, we will establish focus groups for each Element and community engagement opportunities (housing, transportation, sustainability environment, etc.) along with specific outreach to priority populations. The results of these activities will help guide potential policy changes to each Element.

Below is a preliminary schedule for community engagement topics and activities that are planned for 2023-2024.

Kirkland 2044 timeline



D. ECONorthwest Equity Review and Engagement Program Report

Goal 4.2 of the City's [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging 5 Year Roadmap](#) includes an implementation item to "*identify and utilize an equity-centered third-party review process for the City's Comprehensive Plan and other long-range planning processes*".

ECONorthwest consultants (supported by Broadview Planning) were retained to conduct an equity gap analysis of the existing Comprehensive Plan. Their assessment is contained in the [Equity Review and Engagement Program report](#).

The Equity Review and Engagement Program report contains a demographic profile of Kirkland, including maps where there are populations living at risk of displacement and higher health risks, an overview of new requirements from the Regional and State levels that cities should consider when planning for equity and inclusion, an equity framework guide, and questions we should consider when updating the Plan. The report also refers to the City's DEIB 5-Year Roadmap recommendations. Report recommendations will be incorporated into the revised Comprehensive Plan Element policies and text.

The list below is a summary of the report recommendations for improvements to consider with our Comprehensive Plan update:

- Increase accessibility of Comprehensive Plan - make it more interactive and user friendly; and easier to search for information.
- Incorporate more accurate recounting of histories of discrimination and Kirkland history - colonialism, slavery/anti-Black racism, the Chinese exclusion, the internment of Japanese during World War II, exclusionary zoning practices.
- Integrate the "Kirkland Native History Document" into the Comprehensive Plan to align with Kirkland's 5-Year DEIB Roadmap (3.5 Policy) and Land Acknowledgment.
- Include an explicit acknowledgement of and remedies addressing historic discrimination,
- Incorporate the Community Engagement Strategy - to connect with hard-to-reach populations. Conduct cultural competency training for staff and community members.
- Expand the Community Profile - to consider future trends; issues that will shape the character and needs of the community.
- Continually integrate equity guidance - as an ongoing activity to integrate equitable planning best practices.
- Develop and incorporate implementation plan and plan performance tools - Using metrics for monitoring, performance measurement, and a strategy for reporting out results (such as a plan scorecard) to help ensure the plan results in measurable actions.
- Revise language within the Comprehensive Plan to be more inclusive - specific examples are given for certain elements.

E. Request For Proposal (RFP) for Environmental Review and Transportation Master Plan consultant services

A major task of the Comprehensive Plan update is also an update to the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) that will then lead to revisions to the Transportation Element. Public Works Transportation staff are taking the lead on the TMP update with involvement of the Transportation Commission. A major part of the environmental review will assess our transportation network (facilities, level of service, etc.) to be consistent with the land use plan at the appropriate funding and performance levels. The GMA specifically requires that the Transportation Element be “consistent with and implement the land use element.” Consistency means that the transportation plan be sufficient in scope (projects, funding, and level of service) to carry out the Land Use Element. The TMP must support the Land Use Map with adequate transportation facilities.

Unlike with the last major update, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may not be needed as part of the Comprehensive Plan update to analyze the environmental impacts of the anticipated minor to moderate policy changes, as the NE 85th St Station Area Plan Final Supplemental EIS recently analyzed a considerable increase to jobs and housing capacity and additional capacity may not be added with this update. Other types of environmental analysis to evaluate potential growth strategies could include issuing an addendum to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan update EIS, a supplemental EIS, adoption of existing EIS documents, or a Determination of Non-Significance. If a comprehensive EIS is not pursued, resources could be allocated to other elements of the planning effort (e.g., more robust public outreach, improved plan graphics, or exploration of zoning and sustainability programs to advance the Comprehensive Plan vision).

With the above in mind, Planning staff and Public Works Transportation has issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to seek the same consultant services to provide both environmental review and transportation consultant services to update the TMP. Anticipated start of work is February-March 2023. Completion of the TMP update is scheduled to be complete in September 2024 or sooner.

NEXT STEPS:

Once the consultant team is brought on-board, staff expect to bring frequent updates to the Transportation Commission on progress for the Transportation Master Plan update to ensure staff receives direction throughout the update process.