



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT + ECOSYSTEMS

Why is this important?

A healthy, functioning natural environment is essential to life. Streams provide a place for plants and animals to exist in an urban environment, and support salmon, who need clean water. Our urban forest provides shade, processes our carbon dioxide, sequesters our carbon and cleans the air. Our parks and open spaces provide beauty and places for all of us to relax.

Kirkland influences how clean and healthy Lake Washington is for humans and wildlife because rain carries pollution from wherever it falls.

How is Kirkland doing now?

Kirkland's creeks and lakes face water quality and habitat challenges typical of urbanizing areas. More than 119 acres of City owned natural areas and open space park lands have been enrolled in restoration. From 2010 to 2018, citywide tree canopy cover dropped by 272 acres, mostly in single family residential areas. More than 90 percent of residents live within a ten minute walk of a park.

What key goals are included?

Key natural environment and ecosystem goals include:

- Protect and clean the water in Kirkland's streams, lakes and wetlands for people and wildlife
- Restore 500 acres of natural area
- Use less pesticides in parks and City properties
- Ensure that all community members have access to parks and open space within a 10-minute walk
- Continually improve parks and reduce participation barriers to meet all residents' recreational needs
- Increase tree canopy cover and optimize tree preservation and planting for health and equity

What is the Sustainability Master Plan?

The Sustainability Master Plan is a ten-year planning document that outlines community-level goals and actions intended to help Kirkland meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Major community needs are:

- clean air and water
- healthy food to eat
- safe ways to get around
- more housing options that allow people of all economic means to live and thrive
- a more equitable and socially just city that is welcoming and inclusive of all people



How can you help meet these goals?

- Hand-pull weeds in your yard and avoid using chemical pesticides
- Build healthy garden soil with compost and mulch
- Wash your car at a commercial carwash
- Volunteer with the Green Kirkland Partnership to restore Kirkland's natural areas
- Scoop your pet's waste, bag it, and put in the trash
- Plant a native tree, and don't cut down trees unless needed for safety
- Advocate for making progress towards identified goals at the Planning Commission, Parks Board, and City Council

For all goals and actions, see the Sustainability Master Plan.

