

Kirkland's Active Transportation Plan Update

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the timing of the ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN Update?

Public engagement will continue until Dec. 1. Staff will be presenting to the Transportation Commission the draft plan at their Dec. 15 meeting. Once staff has incorporated comments from the Transportation Commission, it will post a more formal version of the draft plan on the Active Transportation Plan website for public review. Staff will then continue to work with the Transportation Commission and Council during winter and early spring 2022.

How are you planning on making streets safer for bikers and walkers?

The Active Transportation Plan will identify proposed future bicycle improvements and pedestrian priorities such as places for additional sidewalks and crossings. The plan will then prioritize these recommendations based on criteria such as equity and access to transit, activity centers, parks and the Cross Kirkland Corridor. The criteria will also include crash history. These recommendations will then become projects, which the city will pursue through our local Capital Improvement Program, grants and other initiatives.

The goal is to evaluate these locations for the most effective treatments that will improve safety for people while they are walking and rolling on bicycles, wheelchairs and scooters. A goal is to separate people as much as possible from motor vehicle traffic. The resulting methods could be reducing speeds, separating bicycling- and walking-oriented facilities from motor vehicles, improving crosswalks and crossings and lighting.

To what extent is the plan being prepared with a look to racial equity?

We are prioritizing equity in the plan update. Income level and racial demographics are two key factors in our analysis for determining how we develop our transportation networks. In a larger sense though, active transportation directly addresses equity. For some of our community members, active transportation is the only mode of travel that is available to them because they don't own a functional motor vehicle. The folks need safe connections, including access to transit. This is a connected network is so important. With a connected network, people can safely access important destinations, such as activity centers, transit stations and schools without a vehicle. We are prioritizing what locations need these improvements the most.

Can we propose lowering speed limits city wide to make streets safer for rolling?

Yes, we are currently creating our Vision Zero Action Plan, and one of the key factors we're looking at are speeds. The Vision Zero Action Plan looks at safety with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero. This effort is happening in tandem with the ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

update. One of the proposed actions for Council to decide is to re-evaluate speeds city-wide. However, reducing speed limits—without changing the environmental contexts—rarely reduces speeds. This is why we are evaluating additional design features that discourage speeding, such as narrowing auto travel lanes, installing speed cameras in school zones and creating more visible crossings.

What are Neighborhood Greenways?

[Neighborhood Greenways](#) are street corridors, where walking and bicycling for all ages and all abilities are the priority modes of travel and driving a motor vehicle is the alternative mode of travel. These are often streets with low speeds and low traffic-volumes that are comfortable alternative to bike lanes on busy arterials. Greenways often have signs, pavement markings and traffic control measures that enhance the comfort and safety of walking and bicycling. As such, driving an automobile on a greenway, by design, is less convenient than driving on the other streets.

Kirkland

What happened to the bike-share program?

The Kirkland City Council did approve a bike share program and many companies initially reached out to Kirkland with interest in operating a bike-share program in Kirkland. However, the business model for bike-share programs changed to include scooters. The City Council did not approve a scooter-share program due to concerns about safety and sustainability. Scooter equipment is not very durable and methods of charging their batteries require many driving trips to pick-up, charge and drop-off scooters. Council did not believe that scooter programs were consistent with the City's goals for safety and sustainability. There were also concerns about the limited space on sidewalks; particularly downtown where City leaders anticipated high use. Staff is continuing to monitor the market and may pursue a bike-share program again for a company focused exclusively on bicycles. So far, those companies are focused on larger markets such as Seattle.

How are you going to persuade people to change their behavior to walk and ride more?

Kirkland has a Transportation Demand Management coordinator who works on encouragement programs such as Kirkland's Green Trip Program and also by working with major employers to encourage employees to walk, bike and take transit. Kirkland's communication's department has also been working with Transportation to identify opportunities to encourage safe behaviors and to share opportunities to walk and bike more.

Are electric bikes and alternative types of bikes (such as bike delivery) allowed in bike lanes and on the CKC? How about scooters?

Yes, Kirkland allows all types of bicycles in bike lanes and on the Cross Kirkland Corridor. However, the Cross Kirkland Corridor does have a 15 mile-per-hour speed limit for all types of bikes. A series of legacy laws that derive from an age of loud, gas-powered scooters bans all scooters from the Cross Kirkland Corridor, sidewalks and streets when their speeds exceed 25 miles per hour. These rules are mostly

obsolete so staff will work with Council after the adoption of the ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN to update scooter policy to be more relevant to the use of electric scooters in bike lanes.