



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
Planning and Building Department  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager  
**From:** David Barnes, Senior Planner  
Adam Weinstein, Planning and Building Director  
**Date:** February 20, 2019  
**Subject:** Sustainability Master Plan

**Recommendation**

Using the questions at the end of this memo as a framework for discussion, provide preliminary feedback to staff on the development of the City's Sustainability Master Plan.

**Background**

The City has embarked on the development of a Sustainability Master Plan, which is included in the 2019-2020 City Work Program and is identified as a 2019 project in the Planning Work Program. The preliminary scoping process has commenced and feedback from Council will help inform the content and format of the plan. A Sustainability Master Plan is discussed in the Environment Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and is intended to identify best practices that allow Kirkland's many sustainability strategies to be implemented and measured and, if needed, adjusted to achieve a livable and sustainable community.

Livability has been defined as a quality of life standard that is attached to a place, and can encompass everything from aesthetics to the basic needs of living such as clean water, air, healthy food, affordable housing, education, employment opportunities, and well-functioning infrastructure. Sustainability means meeting our present needs while ensuring that future generations have the ability to meet theirs. To become a more sustainable city, we need to consider the long term and wide-ranging impacts of our actions and to more effectively coordinate our policies and programs to adapt to new situations. The three key areas of sustainability are:

- **Ecological Sustainability:** Ensure that natural systems and built structures protect plants and animals, create a healthy environment, and promote energy efficiency.
- **Economic Sustainability:** Ensure a strong economy that is able to support our community while not compromising the environment in which we live.
- **Social Sustainability:** Ensure that we provide a sense of community to our residents, and support basic health and human service needs.

Resilience, as an aspect of sustainability, relates to how a community can adapt to an ever-changing environment in a socially responsible manner.

Because sustainability is a major principle and governing value in the Comprehensive Plan, sustainability concerns and objectives are integrated into many major City policy and functional plans, including: the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Natural Resource Management Plan, Surface Water Master Plan, and Climate Protection Action Plan. In addition, the City has successfully accomplished many sustainability-focused projects over the last several years, including: LEED certification of the Kirkland Justice Center, incorporation of high building performance standards at Kirkland Urban, several Solarize Kirkland campaigns, the transition of the City's fleet to more fuel efficient vehicles, the installation of solar panels on City facilities, and implementation of a robust transportation demand management program for City staff.

However, limited coordination has been undertaken of the City's many sustainability initiatives. As a result, individual sustainability efforts sometimes operate in a vacuum, even though all City departments/divisions are engaged in robust sustainability efforts, ranging from ensuring that government facilities operate with reduced energy inputs (Facilities), to promoting green infrastructure (Public Works), to using integrated pest management techniques in open space areas (Parks and Community Services), to using technology to ensure the City functions more efficiently and intelligently (IT), to undertaking planning efforts to accommodate a growing population near transit hubs (Planning & Building). In addition, because there are so many disparate sustainability documents and programs, some are not utilized or implemented to their full potential.

### **Proposed Guiding Principles for Sustainability Master Plan**

Based on the assumption that the City already has many aspirational goals for sustainability, following are some ideas and potential guiding principles for developing the Sustainability Master Plan. These were developed by staff based on feedback from the community and a review of the City's existing sustainability programs:

- The Master Plan should be informed by meaningful and broad-based public outreach that encompasses diverse members of the community, ranging from residents, to business owners, to environmental groups, and the development community.
- The Master Plan should encompass both government and community operations.
- Instead of creating new aspirational sustainability goals, the Master Plan should more effectively coordinate and integrate the ones we already have, and seek to reduce redundancy in our various sustainability efforts.
- The Master Plan should be a concise, graphically-oriented, usable document, that can be a useful handbook for both City staff and the community to guide our sustainability efforts.
- The Master Plan should include a strong implementation strategy/program so that the plan doesn't languish on a bookshelf.

### **Public Outreach**

In support of the City's operational value of civic engagement, City staff are in the preliminary stages of drafting an extensive public participation process in parallel with

scoping the Sustainability Master Plan. Understanding the various perspectives in the community on the topic of sustainability will help inform a Master Plan that is both representative of Kirkland's unique character and responsive to the community's needs. Utilizing the methodology and strategic approach of recent civic engagement efforts such as the Gun Safety and Community Safety outreach of mid-2018 and the Bike Share Pilot Program outreach of winter 2018/19, staff will seek comprehensive input from residents, the business community, and other key stakeholders to help understand the community's perspectives on various questions, including:

1. Do you know what sustainability is? Can you describe what sustainability means to you or your business?
2. What kind of metrics are important to look at and measure when looking at Kirkland's sustainability profile?
3. How should the City evaluate success when reporting on the implementation strategies of the Master Plan?

### **Questions for City Council**

1. Does the Council agree with the Guiding Principles in this memo? Should they be amended and are there additional principles that should be added?
2. What should staff consider and prioritize as it creates the plan?
3. Are we on track to ensure that Kirkland has access to clean water, air, attainable home ownership, education and employment opportunities, access to food and walkable and connected neighborhoods/business districts for both the near and long term? What could we do better?
4. Does the Council have additional ideas for engaging the community in development of the Sustainability Master Plan?