



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Planning and Building Department
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Adam Weinstein, AICP, Director of Planning and Building
Dawn Nelson, Planning Manager
Kurt Aldworth, Building Official
Xiaoning Jiang, Resilience and Technology Officer
Joe Plattner, Geographic Information Systems Supervisor

Date: August 24, 2021

Subject: GEO-NOTIFICATION APPLICATION DEMONSTRATION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council receives an overview and demonstration of the new geo-notification application that the Development Services group and the Geographic Information Systems team have been developing. Councilmembers are encouraged to ask questions about the content of this memo and provide staff with guidance on the tool development before the final rollout to the community.

BACKGROUND

The City has a public notification process for many land use applications that involves notice boards, publication in the newspapers, and mailings. However, many development projects do not require a land use permit and the associated public notice but may still generate community interest in the immediate or broader neighborhood. Although the community does not have the opportunity to participate in a public process for these types of non-discretionary permits, they still may wish to be informed about upcoming changes and construction in their neighborhood. Often, a neighbor may not be aware of new construction until the equipment shows up on the job site – at which time they contact the City to find out what is happening and how they can learn more. The City also engages in other activities (ranging from code enforcement actions, to City-wide code amendment processes, to the construction of small-scale stormwater improvements) that may not be the subject of widespread noticing, but still may be of interest to some community members.

In 2018, at the urging of City Council, the Planning and Building Department proposed the implementation of a new tool to address this community need. In late 2020, City staff evaluated multiple technology tools and selected the Tyler Socrata "software as a service" (SaaS) solution. This software is owned by the same company as EnerGov, the City's permit tracking software, and thus is easier to manage and more integrated with existing City software systems than other options that staff evaluated.

The geo-notification software will enable Kirkland residents to self-select the information that is useful to them and receive e-mail alerts when new development activities or code enforcement actions are happening near their interest area. The software is also part of a larger City-wide effort to make City project and development information more accessible to the public. A cross-departmental implementation team including Planning and Building, Public Works, Fire Prevention, and IT-GIS was formed in May 2021 to implement the tool.

Please note that this new tool is intended to supplement rather than replace the required land use notification process. Though the phase one pilot project is focused on development activity and code enforcement within the City, the plan is for the tool to expand to provide other location-based notifications to Kirkland residents. Other applications might include CIP Projects, Our Kirkland Service Requests, and Public Safety Calls.

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

This is a location-based notification tool that would allow community members to receive email alerts when development projects are proposed, or permits are issued, or code enforcement cases are added in the vicinity of their selected location or neighborhood. The tool would enable users to self-select the desired notifications by land use permit, building permit, and code enforcement case type and proximity. The users would be able to:

- View the map for activity and detailed information according to a given timeframe and location;
- Link to the MyBuildingPermit.com site to explore land use and building permit project details;
- Search addresses on the map and receive notifications about activity within a self-selected radius;
- Subscribe to daily, weekly, or monthly email alerts to be notified of what activities have occurred within their interest areas;
- Display development trends using heatmaps;
- Use multiple parameters such as permit type and location to create custom alerts;
- Access and manage alerts as needed;
- Download permit data and print selected records as needed; and
- Export reports.

NEXT STEPS

The team has made significant progress in a short period of time with the help from the vendor and the projected go-live date is October 1, 2021. Staff will be working on final site design, help tools, data clean up, and an advertising campaign over the next month. The working name for the system is Kirkland Activity Map.

