



CITY OF KIRKLAND
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
425-587-3000

MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager of External Affairs
Erika Mascorro, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager
Daniel Lazo, Senior Community Engagement Coordinator

Date: November 18, 2025

Subject: **Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Proclamation**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Mayor, on behalf of the City Council, proclaims January 19, 2026, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in Kirkland.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is an American Federal and Washington State holiday commemorating January 15, the birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- This proclamation aligns with Kirkland's values to be a welcoming community and its strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB).
- This proclamation is part of the City Council's adopted 2025-2026 proclamation calendar.

BACKGROUND:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is a state and federal holiday commemorating January 15, the birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The holiday was first established when it was signed into law on November 2, 1983, by President Ronald Reagan. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday is not observed on the 15th of January each year, but rather on the third Monday of January. This year, the holiday is observed on Monday, January 19th.

In 1994, Congress initiated the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and Service Act, challenging Americans to transform the holiday into a day of community volunteer service to honor his life and encourage Americans to find common causes and methods of improving their communities. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led national nonviolent campaigns for racial justice during the civil rights movement that assisted in bringing about the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Holiday and Service Act was signed into law by President Bill Clinton on August 23, 1994. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service projects are organized by a wide range of nonprofit and community organizations, educational institutions, public agencies, private businesses, and other organizations across the nation.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

By proclaiming January 19, 2026, as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, the City Council is encouraging all Kirkland residents and businesses to serve their neighbors and community. The City has year-round volunteer opportunities. Community members interested in finding more information about MLK Jr Day of Service in Kirkland and in volunteering are encouraged to learn more about the City's Volunteer Program on the City's website, at kirklandwa.gov/volunteer.¹

There are many special events and programs celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. throughout the surrounding area that provide educational opportunities and engage the community in social justice topics. In addition to visiting the City's website for information, here are a few places to look for volunteer opportunities:

- **Environmental Stewardship**
 - Green Kirkland Partnership on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. at Juanita Heights Park²
 - Green Kirkland Partnership on Monday, January 19, 2026, at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. at Everest Park³
 - Green Kirkland Partnership on Monday, January 19, 2026, at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Kingsgate Park⁴
 - Organize your friends and family for your first cleanup event of the year as Adopt-a-Road sponsors
- **Educational Opportunities**
 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Film Screening at City Hall Council Chambers on Friday, January 23, time to be determined
 - Black History Month Film Screening at City Hall Council Chambers on Friday, February 6, time to be determined
- **Community Support Opportunities**
 - Sophia Way – Volunteer, donate a meal, or host a donation drive⁵
 - New Bethlehem Family Shelter – Donate a meal or volunteer⁶
 - Safe Parking Program – Donate meals or goods⁷
 - Nourishing Network – Food donations⁸
- **United Way of King County**⁹

In addition to volunteering, consider researching a cause that matters to you and learning about local organizations making progress in that area. For example, WA Immigrant Solidarity Network¹⁰ offers ways to get involved in immigrant rights advocacy.

¹ <https://kirklandwa.gov/volunteer>

² <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Eventbrite/Forest-Stewardship-at-Juanita-Heights-Park-1975612282519>

³ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Eventbrite/Everest-Park-Forest-Stewardship-Event-on-MLK-Jr.-Day-1977511671643>

⁴ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Eventbrite/Kingsgate-Park-Forest-Stewardship-Event-on-MLK-Jr.-Day-1977515138011>

⁵ <https://sophiaway.org/volunteer/>

⁶ <https://ccsww.org/services/new-bethlehem-programs/>

⁷ <https://lakewaumc.org/donation-page/>

⁸ <https://nourishingnetworks.net/kirkland/give-help/food>

⁹ <https://volunteer.uwkc.org/>

¹⁰ <https://waisn.org/get-involved/>

While the holiday is an opportunity to honor progress that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. worked for, it should also be used as learning opportunity for how far the nation still must go to achieve racial equality. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.” It is that hope that fuels the diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work and supports our City values to be a welcoming city to all.

This proclamation supports Kirkland’s goals expressed in Resolution R-5240 (2017) declaring Kirkland a safe, inclusive, welcoming community for all; Resolution R-5434 (2020) expressing commitments to improving the safety and respect of Black people and approving the framework to create a community committed to examining and dismantling interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism in Kirkland; Resolution R-5548 (2022) adopting the City’s DEIB 5-Year Roadmap; Resolution R-5686 (2025) declaring Kirkland as a welcoming, inclusive, and safe city for 2SLGBTQIA+ people and recognizing their human rights and well-being; and Resolution R-5693 (2025) reaffirming the City’s commitment to being a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community where all people belong.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff is still working with stakeholders to identify who will be accepting this proclamation at the Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Proclamation



A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service January 19, 2026

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American Baptist minister, political philosopher, and one of the most prominent leaders in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968; and

WHEREAS, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and opportunity for all and he challenged all residents to help build a more perfect union and live up to the purpose and potential of America, and his teachings continue to guide and inspire us in addressing challenges in our own communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, Congress initiated the King Holiday and Service Act, a nationwide effort to transform the federal holiday honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. into a day of community service, grounded in Dr. King's teachings, that helps solve social problems while focusing on bringing people together and breaking down the barriers that have divided us as a nation; and

WHEREAS, serving one's community on the King Holiday is an appropriate way to honor Dr. King Jr., meet local and national needs, bring our residents together, and strengthen our communities and nation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is the only federal holiday commemorated as a National Day of Service, and it offers an opportunity for Americans to give back to their communities on the holiday and make an ongoing commitment to service throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service projects are being organized by a wide range of nonprofit and community organizations, educational institutions, public agencies, private businesses, and other organizations across the nation; and

NOW THEREFORE, the Mayor, on behalf of the City Council, does hereby proclaim Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 19, 2026, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in Kirkland, and calls upon the people of Kirkland, Washington, to serve their neighbors and their community through participation in community service projects and other acts of volunteerism.

Signed this 6th day of January, 2026

, Mayor