



## Memorandum

**Date:** March 26, 2024  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Adam Weinstein, Planning and Building Director  
**Subject:** 2044 Comprehensive Plan Update and Transportation Strategic Plan: Development Capacity Analysis

Under the Growth Management Act, Kirkland is required to plan for 20-year housing and employment growth targets allocated by the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The City must document that the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations would allow for growth through 2044 to meet the targets. This development capacity analysis, prepared by the City's Planning and Building Department and Parametrix consultants, - provides a summary of the methodology and data used to determine that **Kirkland can meet its assigned growth targets.**

## Growth Targets

Kirkland has been assigned housing and employment growth targets through the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), and specifically the County's Urban Growth Capacity Report. The Growth Management Act requires the City to plan to accommodate anticipated future growth in households and employment. The assigned targets per the 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report are for the period 2019-2044 and represent net new housing units and jobs above the City's 2019 existing housing units and employment. The capacity analysis is based on 2022 King County Assessor's information.

---

**Housing Target: 13,200 net new units**  
**Employment Target: 26,490 net new jobs**

---

## Summary of Analysis

A land capacity analysis is a process through which the City examines how many housing units and/or jobs could be accommodated on a specific parcel based on what is allowed by the zoning standards for that parcel. In many cases, the existing development on a parcel is less than the maximum allowed, which would mean that parcel has additional capacity for more housing units and/or jobs than exist today (e.g., a parcel that is currently developed with a 2-story building where development regulations allow for a 5-story building has additional capacity). Completing an analysis of where this condition exists in the City, with additional considerations for which parcels are most likely to redevelop (discussed in a below subsection), helps us understand how much housing and employment growth the City can accommodate beyond the housing units and jobs we have in the City today.

The findings of the land capacity analysis are documented by the Development Capacity table below (Table 1). This analysis shows that the City has more than enough capacity to accommodate its assigned growth targets, if we account for the growth the City has seen between 2019 (when targets were set) and 2022 (the analysis year). In 2044, the City is expected to have a surplus capacity of 6,234 housing units and 858 jobs above the King County growth targets. That said, it could be in the City’s interest to continue expanding capacity beyond what is needed to meet the growth targets and achieve important community-wide objectives such as housing affordability, better transit service, and reductions in per capita energy use.

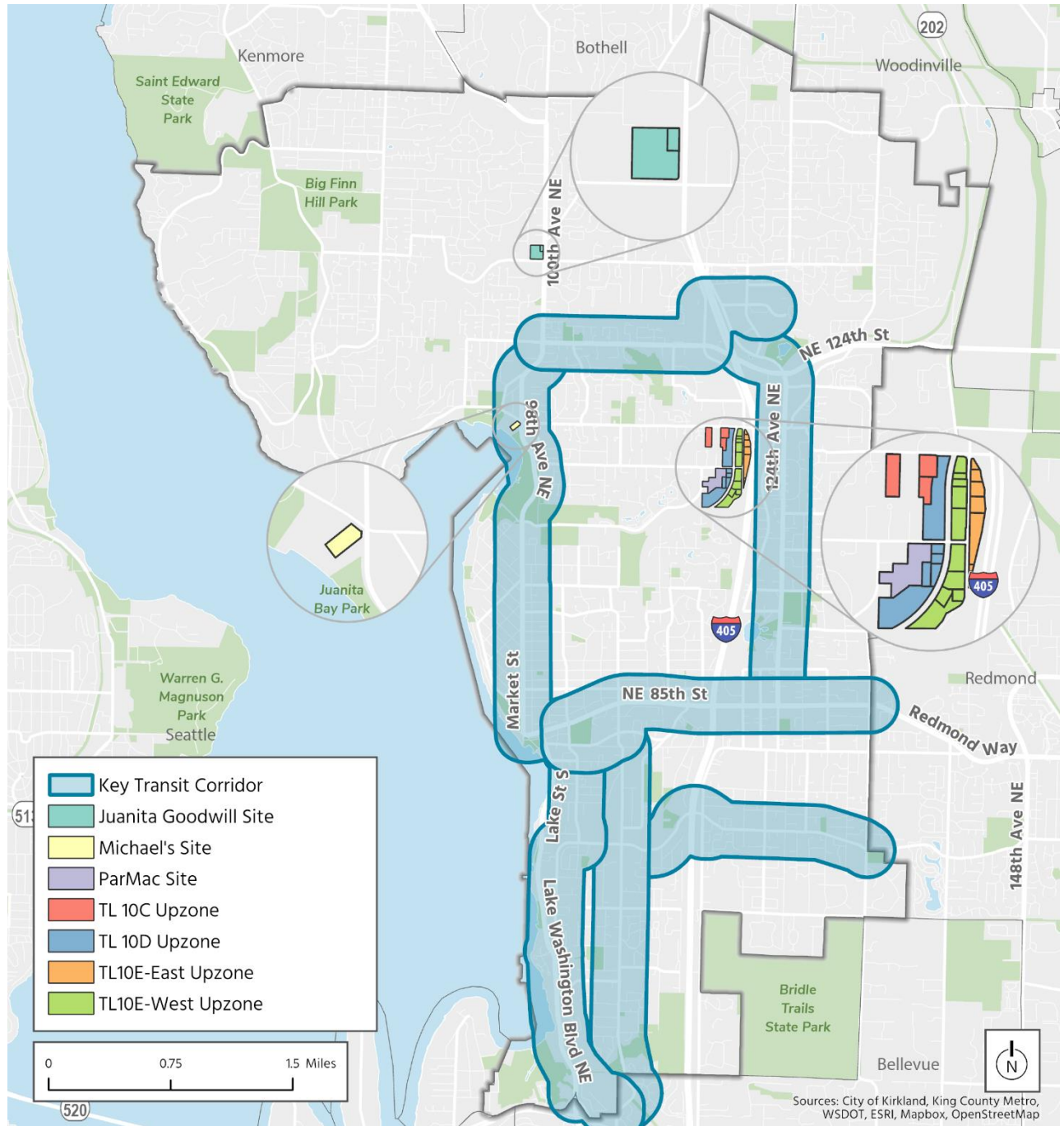
**Table 1. Development Capacity**

<b>Summary of Kirkland Capacity Analysis</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>Kirkland’s Assigned Growth Target for 2044</b>	13,200	26,490
<b>King County 2019 Values (existing)</b>	38,656	49,280
<b>King County Total Target for 2044*</b>	51,856	75,770
<b>2022 Values (existing)</b>	41,785	50,786
<b>Kirkland Additional Capacity for 2044 (existing zoning)</b>	16,305	25,842
<b>Kirkland Total for 2044**</b>	58,090	76,628
<b>Kirkland Surplus Capacity for 2044 (existing zoning)***</b>	6,234	858
<b>Notes:</b>		
* 2019 actuals plus assigned growth targets		
** 2022 actuals plus additional capacity (baseline analysis results)		
*** Difference between Kirkland totals for 2044 and King County total targets for 2044		

## **Analysis of Capacity Increase from Zoning Modifications**

In addition to baseline capacity analysis outlined above, the City has analyzed the additional housing and employment growth capacity that could be realized from several potential zoning changes, including upzoning along key transit corridors and parcel-specific changes based on expected land use changes. These potential changes were analyzed within the context of a Focused Growth Alternative.

**Figure 1. Focused Growth Alternative**



The Focused Growth Alternative is a land use growth alternative that includes corridors and parcels identified for additional density allowances. Potential growth areas are delineated within one quarter mile of identified major transit corridors. Parcels within this area would be subject to the zoning changes with increased density allowances. The future zoning for these areas would be mixed-use commercial and residential, with a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for non-residential uses set at 0.25 and a residential density allowance of 50 units per acre.

In addition to major transit corridors, the Focused Growth Alternative analyzes growth from zoning changes to specific parcels and zoning districts, including:

- Juanita Goodwill Site
- Michael’s Site
- ParMac Site
- Totem Lake Zones
  - TL 10C Upzone
  - TL 10D Upzone
  - TL 10E-East Upzone
  - TL 10E-West Upzone

**Table 2. Development Capacity with Zoning Changes**

<b>Summary of Kirkland Capacity Analysis with Potential Zoning Changes (Focused Growth Alternative)</b>		
	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>2044 Growth Targets</b>	13,200	26,490
<b>Kirkland Additional Capacity for 2044 (existing zoning)</b>	16,305	25,842
<b>Kirkland Additional Capacity for 2044 (above 2022 existing, with potential zoning changes)</b>	34,933	39,989
<b>Kirkland Total for 2044 (including 2022 existing, with potential zoning changes)</b>	76,718	90,775
<b>Kirkland Surplus Capacity for 2044 Above Growth Targets (with potential zoning changes)</b>	24,862	15,005
<b>Note: These zoning changes have not been made. This analysis was conducted to provide insight into the potential impacts of these changes and data to support decision making. As such, this analysis does not constitute a recommendation for specific zoning changes.</b>		

Table 3 provides detailed capacity analysis results for the zoning changes to transit corridors. The table includes current dwelling units and employment, the capacity for growth calculated from the citywide capacity analysis, and the additional capacity from targeted zoning changes.

**Table 3. Detailed Capacity for Zoning Changes to Transit Corridors**

<b>Capacity Analysis with Zoning Changes (Specific Parcels and Zones Only)</b>	<b>Total Dwelling Units (2022)</b>	<b>Total Jobs (2022)</b>	<b>Additional Housing Capacity without Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Employment Capacity without Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Housing Capacity with Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Employment Capacity with Zoning Changes</b>
<b>100th Ave NE to Totem Lake Transit Center (NE124th St/NE 128th St)</b>	4,140	8,869	993	926	1,007	936
<b>6th St S to 132nd Ave NE (NE 68th St/NE 70th Pl)</b>	1,305	793	100	9	2,092	1,113
<b>Downtown Transit Center to 132nd Ave NE (Central Way/NE 85th St)</b>	4,116	9,640	2,820	2,540	4,322	3,581
<b>Downtown Transit Center to 100th Ave NE (Market St)</b>	3,180	2,499	372	442	4,386	2,604
<b>Downtown Transit Center to S Kirkland Park and Ride (NE108th Ave NE/6th St/98th Ave NE)</b>	1,093	4,978	86	153	2,949	1,720
<b>Downtown Transit Center to S Kirkland Park and Ride (Lake St/Lake Washington Blvd NE)</b>	2,916	7,474	651	1,679	2,271	3,016
<b>NE 85th St to Totem Lake Transit Center (124th Ave NE/Totem Lake Blvd)</b>	1,861	3,339	998	4,548	3,600	5,941
<b>All Transit Corridors</b>	<b>18,611</b>	<b>37,592</b>	<b>6,020</b>	<b>10,298</b>	<b>20,627</b>	<b>18,911</b>
<b>Notes: The capacity with zoning changes is comparative, not additive to the baseline capacity. Employment from home occupation is included in employment capacity for both baseline and zoning change.</b>						

Table 4 provides detailed capacity analysis results for the zoning changes to specific sites and zones. The table includes current dwelling units and employment, the capacity for growth calculated from the citywide capacity analysis, and the additional capacity from targeted zoning changes.

**Table 4. Detailed Capacity for Zoning Changes to Specific Parcel and Zones**

<b>Capacity Analysis with Zoning Changes (Specific Parcels and Zones Only)</b>	<b>Total Dwelling Units (2022)</b>	<b>Total Jobs (2022)</b>	<b>Additional Housing Capacity without Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Employment Capacity without Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Housing Capacity with Zoning Changes</b>	<b>Additional Employment Capacity with Zoning Changes</b>
Juanita Goodwill Site	-	77	243	39	600	8
Michael’s Site	-	37	9	43	300	12
ParMac Site	-	164	-	-	1,200	7
TL 10C Upzone	82	195	76	263	381	584
TL 10D Upzone	-	524	11	382	1,008	1,517
TL 10E-East Upzone	-	193	-	325	-	3,413
TL 10E-West Upzone	-	940	-	235	871	1,279

**Notes: Capacity with zoning changes is comparative, not additive to the baseline capacity. Employment from home occupation is included in employment capacity for both baseline and zoning change.**

### Analysis of Capacity Impacts from Increased Middle Housing Construction

The City also conducted analysis to understand the growth impacts of increased construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), cottage units, and/or two- and three-unit homes (collectively referred to as “middle housing”) in the City’s single family residential zones. This analysis does not include growth assumptions from the Focused Growth Alternative described in the previous section. The City expects that middle housing construction will increase in the future, and this analysis provides insight into how middle housing could impact growth capacity in low-density residential zones. Note that the zoning allowances to accommodate these housing types in Kirkland were adopted in 2020.

The analysis used the following Middle Housing construction rates:

- For the 992 single family residential parcels *within* the NE 85th Street station area: 20% additional units (meaning that 20% of parcels that might traditionally only include one single-family dwelling would add at least one additional unit of middle housing)
- For the 24,175 single family residential parcels *outside* the NE 85th Street station area: 10% additional units (meaning that 10% of parcels that might traditionally only include one single-family dwelling would add at least one additional unit of middle housing)

**Table 5. Development Capacity with More Missing Middle Housing**

<b>Summary of Kirkland Capacity Analysis with More Middle Housing</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>King County Growth Target for 2044</b>	13,200	26,490
<b>Kirkland Additional Capacity for 2044 (existing zoning)</b>	16,305	25,842
<b>Kirkland Additional Capacity for 2044 (with More Middle Housing)</b>	2,616	n/a
<b>Kirkland Total for 2044 (with More Middle Housing)</b>	<b>60,706</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Note: The capacity estimates for More Middle Housing are based upon the Existing Plan Alternative as the baseline, and do not include increased capacity of the Focused Growth Alternative.</b>		

## Summary of Methodology

This section summarizes the methodology used in analyzing the capacity of land to accommodate new development during the 20-year time horizon of the 2024 Kirkland Comprehensive Plan update, which extends to 2044.

This methodology was based on principles established for all cities in King County as coordinated by the King County Demographer, Chandler Felt. The methodology has been slightly modified to reflect conditions in Kirkland.

For each redevelopable parcel in each zone of the City, the analysis estimates the capacity of the parcel for additional new development in the next 20 years. For many developed properties that are fully built out under existing zoning, the capacity for additional growth is zero, and no change is expected. Capacity is calculated for each parcel, except when abutting parcels are under common ownership, in which case capacity is calculated for all parcels under common ownership. Parcels that have known planned development under active permits or construction with the City are also calculated separately if the building residential and employment capacity is already known.

Capacity is determined by the maximum development allowed by the zoning, accounting for a number of factors that are likely to reduce the magnitude or likelihood of development by 2044. Capacity for residential land use is expressed as additional dwelling units and resulting households, while capacity for nonresidential uses is expressed in additional floor area and resulting additional employees.

The analysis had two broad components:

- i. Determining the parcels on which development and/or redevelopment would likely occur between 2022 and 2044; and
- ii. Determining the amount of development that would be likely to occur on each newly developed and/or redeveloped parcel.

The following is a detailed description of the applied methodology for the capacity analysis.

1. Parcels Likely to Develop. Developable parcels include both those that are vacant and those that are likely to redevelop.
  - a. Vacant parcels are those without any development as of the date of the analysis.
  - b. Redevelopable parcels are those that are currently developed, but due to the nature of existing development, are expected to redevelop within the following 20 years.
    - i. Parcels within single family residential zones were considered to be redevelopable if they were large enough to be subdivided into two or more lots that meet the minimum or average lot size established in the Zoning Code for the zone in which the parcels are located.
    - ii. Parcels within multi-family zones were considered to be redevelopable only if:
      1. Existing density is less than 60% of the maximum permitted density; and
      2. Existing dwelling units are rentals. All condominium developments were assumed to not be redevelopable due to inherent problems with divided ownership.
    - iii. Parcels within commercial, industrial and office zones were assumed to be redevelopable only when the assessed value of the land was high in relationship to the assessed improvement (e.g., structures) value. All parcels where the improvement value was less than half of the land value were included in the analysis as redevelopable.
2. Amount of Development on Vacant and Redevelopable Parcels. The amount of development assigned to vacant and redevelopable properties reflects the maximum density or intensity allowed under the existing zoning or, in cases where the maximum was considered unlikely to occur, a somewhat lesser than maximum amount based on past actual developments in the same or similar zones.
  - a. In single family residential zones, the number of new lots was calculated by dividing the size of the vacant and redevelopable parcels by the minimum or average lot size within the applicable zoning districts.
  - b. In multifamily zones, the number of new units was calculated based on the parcel size and the maximum number of dwelling units per acre allowed by the applicable zoning districts.
  - c. In commercial, industrial and office zones, floor area ratios (FAR) were assigned to each major use in each zone. The FARs were intended to reflect the intensity of new development for different kinds of uses that was thought likely to occur, based in part on actual recent development in the applicable or similar zones. For example, in the CBD 1A, 1B, 4, 6 and 8 zones, the FARs assigned were: 0.2 for commercial uses, 0.3 for office uses and 2.5 for residential uses (the residential FAR was then converted to a density of 125 units/acre).



3. Adjustments. In addition to the calculations above, a number of adjustments were made to account for specific circumstances including:
  - a. Streets. For large parcels zoned low density residential, parcel area was reduced up to 5% to account for potential right of way dedications and access easements;
  - b. Critical Areas. Using GIS data of known stream and wetlands, the area of parcels containing streams, wetlands and required buffers were deducted from parcel area prior to calculating potential new development; and
  - c. Special Generators. Known future developments and recently completed developments were removed from parcel-area-based calculations; known dwelling units and employment numbers were added directly and included in capacity totals.
4. Calculating Households and Employees. Following calculation of development potential for each parcel, the number of potential households and employees was calculated:
  - a. Households were assumed to be the same as the number of dwelling units;
  - b. Employees were calculated using the following rates:
    - i. Commercial uses: 2 employees per 1000 square feet of building area;
    - ii. Office uses: 4 employees per 1000 square feet of building area;
    - iii. Industrial uses: 1.7 employees per 1000 square feet of building area; and
    - iv. Home occupation: 0.0919 employees per dwelling unit in residential zones (based on home occupation employment ratio).