



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**City Manager's Office**  
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3000  
[www.kirklandwa.gov](http://www.kirklandwa.gov)

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Joy Johnston, Interim Communications Program Manager  
David Wolbrecht, Senior Neighborhood Services Coordinator

**Date:** July 8, 2021

**Subject:** Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day Proclamation

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Mayor proclaim July 26, 2021 as Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day in the City of Kirkland.

## **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day commemorates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26th, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. The law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, assuring them of equality of opportunity, full community participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Today, one in four Americans with disabilities are able to participate in their communities and workplaces thanks to the ADA.

The day not only celebrates the anniversary of the ADA, but it also recognizes that the ADA was groundbreaking for all American people, as it prohibited the discrimination against people with disabilities. It gave people with disabilities rights for which many thousands had been fighting for decades. By providing equal access to education, employment, entertainment, facilities, and more, the ADA has been crucial in creating policies, practices, and views to foster a more inclusive environment.

The law broke down barriers individuals with disabilities faced every day. Over time, common barriers such as narrow doors and small bathroom stalls became accessible to wheelchairs. Other examples include braille signs and crosswalks for the vision impaired. The changes also improved mobility and safety. Beyond structural changes, the act motivated designers to develop enhanced technology and multifunctional approaches to fit every ability.

Numerous organizations in Kirkland work with clients and communities to bring forth the promise of hope and freedom that is envisioned by the passage of the ADA, including some that receive Human Services grant funding from the City.

As a public agency, the City is required by federal law to evaluate its policies, programs, and services and identify barriers under the ADA. In addition, federal law requires the City to develop and have available to the public an ADA Transition Plan that provides the means and timeframe to be compliant with Title II of the act. The Transition Plan is a living document posted on the City's website for public review and comment and is updated annually.

As the City was developing its ADA Transition Plan, in January of 2017, the Mayor proclaimed Kirkland a safe, inclusive, and welcoming city for all people. Shortly thereafter, the City Council passed a related resolution that directed City staff to explore with community members any actions the City and community could take to ensure a safe, inclusive, and welcoming city for all people.

In August 2018 the City published a draft [ADA Transition Plan](#). Informed by both the City's commitment to be a safe and inclusive community and obligations under federal law, City leadership determined that the ADA Transition Plan presented an opportunity to expand the City of Kirkland's understanding of a specific segment in our community – people affected by disabilities. As a result, the City Manager directed City staff to consult with key stakeholders in the Kirkland community, including community members affected by disability and their families, social service organizations, and others, to get input on the ADA Transition Plan and feedback about other possible actions the City might take to best meet the needs of those affected by disability in Kirkland. The final report of findings (Attachment B) from that engagement effort has been provided to Department leadership and supplements the on-going commitment in all City Departments to be more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities. This commitment is demonstrated in various recent projects such as:

- the new [playground at Juanita Beach Park](#) the newly opened [Totem Lake Park](#) that are inclusive and accessible to children of all abilities;
- a [relaunch of the City's website](#) to provide better ADA accessibility;
- expanded [disability parking downtown](#);
- continued [funding for human services organizations](#) providing services to people with disabilities; and
- the addition of an ADA-specific category on the [OurKirkland platform](#).

By proclaiming July 26, 2021 as Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day in Kirkland, the City reaffirms its commitment to being a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community for people with disabilities and invites the community to celebrate the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of this civil rights law and the many contributions of individuals with disabilities to our community.

In recognition of this proclamation, City staff will issue a press release announcing the new ADA-specific category on OurKirkland as well as a new webpage on the City's website with information on various ADA-related information.

Attachment A: Proclamation

Attachment B: ADA Transition Plan - Outreach Report



# A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

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## Recognizing July 26, 2021 as Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day in the City of Kirkland

**WHEREAS**, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed on July 26, 1990 to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities and usher in an era of independence, freedom of choice, control of their lives, and fair opportunity without barriers; and

**WHEREAS**, by providing equal access to education, employment, entertainment, facilities, and more, the ADA has been crucial in creating policies, practices, and views to foster a more inclusive environment; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous organizations work with Kirkland community members to bring forth the promise of hope and freedom that is envisioned by the passage of the ADA; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 21, 2017 the City Council adopted Resolution R-5240 declaring Kirkland a safe, inclusive and welcoming community for all people and inviting the community to come together to discuss and support the shared values of diversity and inclusion and identify additional actions that can be taken by the City and the community to help keep Kirkland a safe, inclusive and welcoming city for all people; and

**WHEREAS**, as a public agency, the City of Kirkland is required by federal law to evaluate its policies, programs, and services and identify barriers under the ADA; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 2018, the City published a draft ADA Transition Plan, and City leadership determined that the ADA Transition Plan presented a great opportunity to expand the City's understanding of a specific segment in our community – people affected by disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, throughout 2019, City staff consulted with key stakeholders in our community, including community members affected by disability and their families, social service organizations, and others, to get input on the ADA Transition Plan and feedback about other possible actions the City might take to best meet the needs of those affected by disability in Kirkland; and

**WHEREAS**, the feedback received from this engagement effort supplements the on-going commitment in all City Departments to be more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities, which is demonstrated in various recent projects such as the new playgrounds at Juanita Beach Park and the newly opened Totem Lake Park that are inclusive and accessible to children of all abilities, a relaunch of the City's website to provide better ADA accessibility, expanded disability parking downtown, continued funding for human services organizations providing services to people with disabilities, and the addition of an ADA-specific category on the OurKirkland platform; and

**WHEREAS**, the City reaffirms its commitment to be a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community for people with disabilities and will continue to implement policies and programs supportive of this commitment.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I**, Penny Sweet, Mayor of Kirkland, on behalf of the Kirkland City Council, do hereby proclaim July 26, 2021 as Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day, and invite the community to celebrate the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of this civil rights law and the many contributions of individuals with disabilities to our community.

Signed this 20<sup>th</sup> Day of July 2021.

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Penny Sweet, Mayor



December 22, 2020

## City of Kirkland

### ADA Transition Plan - Outreach Report

In the lead up to the 2019 ADA Transition Plan review, the City Manager's Office initiated a process to expand the current public comment and review methods to better meet the needs of the population most impacted by the ADA protections. The expansion of community outreach methods also aligned with the City Council Proclamation, Resolution (R-5240) and resulting work program that commits Kirkland to be a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community for all.

The ADA Transition Plan program of work presented an ideal opportunity to expand the City of Kirkland's civic engagement efforts with a targeted group in our community – people with disabilities. Designing an intentional and inclusive public engagement process would both recognize and appreciate the unique barriers to engagement for the population most impacted by the ADA Transition Plan and would best inform the City of any existing policies, programs and services that are barriers to access.

The outcomes of the City's community outreach on the ADA Transition Plan were identified as followed:

1. Providing **opportunity for people with disabilities** and their advocates **to be heard** by City government, and **to understand and ask questions on** the role of City government in protecting and advancing the ADA.
2. Soliciting **information from the Kirkland community** that can be used to **inform future City strategies**, policies, and community engagement efforts.
3. **Building a robust and inclusive list of stakeholders**, including advocacy organizations, service providers and community groups that the City can work with on future engagement efforts.

This report sets out the feedback received in the expanded community outreach and engagement to people with disabilities and service providers in the city. The wide range of information collected is intended to both inform the ADA Transition Plan, but moreover, to deliver an overarching analysis of the needs of people with disabilities in the Kirkland community.

### Equity Impact Analysis (EIA)

As part of the expansion of community outreach and engagement, the City sought to incorporate an equity impact assessment (EIA). An EIA is a tool to support policy makers and program administrators in thinking about how to advance equity and inclusion in their day-to-day work. It includes stages of critical thinking, data gathering, outreach and analysis and recommendations to decision makers. An EIA is a tool that supports public sector decision-makers to think critically about policies, programs, services and initiatives (PPSI) and should inform:



(1) How to avoid creating disproportionate impacts for historically marginalized or underrepresented groups; and

(2) How to identify opportunities to advance equity and inclusion.

Using an EIA tool does not automatically make policies or services equitable and inclusive for communities. Rather, what is learned in the process of using the tool informs how a public sector agency can plan and implement with equity and inclusion at the forefront.

The EIA on the ADA Transition Plan was carried out during the design of the outreach and engagement activities. The full EIA is attached in Appendix A.

### Existing Outreach Model

As a public agency, the City of Kirkland is required by federal law to evaluate policies, programs, and services and to identify barriers under the ADA, and to develop and have available to the public an ADA Transition Plan that provides the means and timeframe to be compliant with Title II of the act. The Transition Plan is a living document, which is posted on the City's website for public review and comments and is updated annually.

In past updates the City would have the ADA Transition Plan and associated materials available on its website. Members of the public could reach out directly with feedback and Human Resources staff would collect the information and update the Transition Plan. The City would also solicit feedback verbally at in-person community meetings such as the Neighborhood Associations. Feedback collected throughout the year from these methods are generally specific and fall into one of six areas: administrative processes, effective communication, web accessibility, program access, sidewalks and ramps and emergency management. Publishing information online and being responsive to residents who reach out proactively has been the standard form of outreach.

### Feedback from Internal Stakeholders

Before going out to the community, we sought to learn from internal stakeholders about the current City of Kirkland ADA Transition Plan and how information received from the public gets incorporated into existing operations and ongoing City planning. City staff from the Planning and Building, Public Works, Parks & Community Services, and Human Resources Departments attended a meeting on December 12, 2018 to share information on how the City considers the feedback from previous ADA Transitions Plans. Some examples include:

- The City has a **funding plan for ADA compliance**, such as improvements to sidewalks, and is responsive to residents who reach out to identify other areas for consideration. The **transportation group is working on a block-by-block ADA plan for accessible parking** to address current gaps in access. In the development of Capital projects, best practices around equipment and technology are included, such as voice instruction for crosswalks.
- The City **partners with the King County Housing Repair Program** on their loan program for homeowners who need assistance to upgrade their homes to be ADA accessible.
- The **Parks & Community Services department looks to total accessibility, mobility and play efforts** for all abilities when designing play structures. For example, wood chips are technically



ADA compliant for playgrounds, but feedback from residents is that rubber surfaces are easier for wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

The Human Services division suggested reaching out directly to the City of Kirkland's Human Services Commission (HSC) to learn more about stakeholders who could be consulted during the outreach process. On February 22, 2019, **City staff attended a Human Services Commission meeting** to share the current approach for ADA Transition Plan outreach and seek feedback and suggestions on local organizations to involve. The HSC members were interested in and supportive of the proposed expansion of outreach and engagement for the ADA Transition Plan and provided feedback on agencies and service providers to work with on this effort.

### ***Feedback from ADA Stakeholder Meetings***

City staff invited stakeholders to two sessions, on August 26, 2019, and September 5, 2019, to talk about the ADA Transition Plan and provide input. Representatives from [Community Homes](#), [Sound Generations](#), [Old Friends Club of Kirkland](#), [WA Autism Alliance](#), [Kinderling Early Intervention](#), [Imagine Housing](#) and the [Together Center of Redmond](#) attended and provided valuable feedback. These service providers and community leaders informed the principles of the City's outreach effort. For example:

- **Answers are in the room** – To be informed by input from the disability community – people directly affected by disability and their allies, families, and service providers.
- **Build long-term relationships** – Take time to build relationships with people you are seeking feedback from in the community.
- **Be accountable** – Close the feedback loop and share back what the City learns in its outreach to the people consulted.

The meetings also served to **inform the type of information the City should look to collect** from stakeholders during the listening sessions, and more importantly, how to frame the questions in ways that would be straightforward for respondents. Examples included:

- Are we being responsive to accessibility requests?
- Are the programs we are running inclusive? Are they responsive to community needs?
- Are we making investments in areas that will address barriers? – ex. Investments in facilities, curb ramps?
- Infrastructure – Can you get in buildings safely?
- Accessibility – How can you read our websites? Can you be involved in our public process?

Stakeholders were very **appreciative of being involved in the outreach and engagement**, with several commenting that it was valuable to understand what the City currently does and the process on how to give feedback for the future.

Some of the themes to come out of the discussions were around:

- **The City of Kirkland's role not just in facilitating connections, but in being a community convener** and a trusted source of identifying resources for people with disabilities and their families, especially families new to the area.



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- **The intersection of disability and affordability;** with rising house prices in the area, how can people with disabilities stay in their communities? Community Homes purchases and renovates homes, and staffs them, so people with disabilities can live in their community. But with rising prices, the group cannot afford to purchase housing in Kirkland, which often means people with disabilities must move out of their communities and further from their families and support networks. Stakeholders noted that there is no statewide systems to address affordable housing for people with disabilities.
- The **need for community space in urban Kirkland to host programming** for people with disabilities, such as activities for seniors with dementia in Kirkland or young adults with developmental disabilities. Stakeholders gave examples of nearby opportunities in other local areas such as Bellevue and Redmond, and hoped for similar spaces in Kirkland.
- The **shortage of caregivers for seniors**, especially caregivers who speak languages other than English. In addition, the need to have culturally relevant services that reflect the broad community, so that all people, including those new to the areas such as immigrants and refugees, feel confident accessing services.
- The significant barrier of high-quality, low-cost, safe, and reliable **transportation** for people with disabilities.

### Feedback from Listening Sessions

The City used the feedback from the ADA Stakeholder sessions to design a series of listening sessions that would gather information from a diversity of people with disabilities. Themes from the sessions are described below. Any specific areas of feedback, such as streets in need of improved crosswalks or lighting, were shared with relevant City staff and are also included in [Appendix B](#).

### *Listening Session #1 – October 28, 2019*

#### Imagine Housing – The [Athene](#)

By partnering with Imagine Housing, City staff came to the Athene senior housing complex in the Totem Lake area of Kirkland. Many people age into disability, and issues of mental health, mobility and sensory disability were all discussed at this meeting. Several themes that came up in conversation:

- The **social isolation** that many residents feel, especially as they may move to Kirkland for the opportunity to live in affordable senior housing and must move away from their established support networks.
- **Concerns about safety** of the local area. Residents mentioned that after representatives from the Kirkland Police Department came for a “coffee talk” at the Athene, residents were more open to reaching out.
- The City does a great job at being responsive to concerns; however, the challenge is that people do not know where to go to give input. In addition, there was a feeling that the **City should go to stakeholder directly, instead of asking people to come to the City**.
- Many residents want more interactions with the City, but shared safety concerns with coming to downtown Kirkland.



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It was moving to hear residents share about the amount of paperwork needed to qualify for services they are entitled to, such as accessible shuttles and they shared that it is a mind shift to think that “someone wants to hear from me.” Several people remarked that it **builds trust when people see the visible changes that result from their interaction with the City**, such as seeing when a crosswalk or sidewalk fix that was recommended is addressed. Overall, the residents who attended **expressed gratitude for City staff coming to them and seeking input**.

### *Listening Session #2 – November 4, 2019*

#### Community Homes

Community Homes provides, promotes, and sustains community-based housing for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They currently serve over 50 residents across eight shared living households throughout King County. Live-in, licensed care providers ensure continuity of support services. In partnering with Community Homes, City staff came to a residence in the Kingsgate area of Kirkland that is home to seven adults with development disabilities. The residents welcomed City staff into their home and shared their areas of interest and concern, including:

- Several residents have jobs through supported employment programs in neighboring areas such as Redmond and Bellevue. Parents and residents emphasized that finding jobs is difficult, and the more the City could do to **encourage employers to start supported employment programs** would be appreciated.
  - For example, Microsoft has a long-standing Supported Employment Program that two of the residents are employed through; could the City of Kirkland facilitate a conversation with the new Google campus?
- The **desire for more events, programs and recreation opportunities in Kirkland**. Several residents mentioned local opportunities, such as the Saturday night social activities held at the Crossroads Mall in Bellevue, programs at the [Alyssa Burnett Adult Life Center](#), [Friendship Adventures](#), [Northshore Wranglers](#) and programs through the [adaptive recreation programs](#) at the City of Redmond. In addition, several residents were concerned about the cost of City recreation programs and how it can limit access for people who are on fixed incomes.
- Questions about **how the Kirkland Police Department are educated in working with people with disabilities**, especially those adults with development disabilities who may need assistance understanding instructions from police or public safety officers.
- **Accessibility for pedestrians**, especially as traffic increases, and the need for lighted cross walks so people can safely cross streets.

Overall, participants encouraged City staff to remember that **delivering “inclusive” or “accessible” services is not the same thing as sites and staff being welcoming and embracing of people with disabilities**. It was a reminder to look beyond ADA Act compliance and towards a view of designing and delivering services for people of all abilities.

### *Listening Session #3 – November 7, 2019*

#### PROVAIL





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PROVAIL is one of Washington State's largest, multi-service agencies dedicated to meeting the needs of children, youth, and adults with disabilities who need an integrated, complex set of services to live life according to their own choices. To learn more about young adults' experience with disability, City staff attended a meeting convened by the **PROVAIL Transition program, which aims to help high school students with a disability leave school with a paid job and seamless transition to adult life** and support services. The [Kirkland Transition Academy](#) operates as an embedded program with the Lake Washington School District. Students, their families and PROVAIL staff met at the Juanita office to share their perspectives.

- Participants reiterated what was heard at HERO House and Community Homes, encouraging the City of Kirkland to **expand programming and recreation opportunities for young adults with disabilities**. They noted that inclusive recreation is not only about mobility and facilities, but **quality, accessible programming in the recreation centers**. Many of the students' report going to Bellevue, Redmond, or the Northshore area for recreation programming, and encouraged the City of Kirkland reach out to learn more about best practices for inclusive programming. Several of the program sites were also mentioned at Community Homes; see [Appendix C](#) for a full list.
- Since the Transition Program supports students in securing jobs after high school, several staff **encouraged the City of Kirkland to start a Supported Employment Program** to model and lead other small businesses in employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Any support the City could offer to **support access to local jobs for students** with the Transition Program would be appreciated.
- **Transportation, including pedestrian accessibility** were also highlighted as key for this population. The Kirkland Transit Center was identified as an area that did not always feel safe for students using buses to go to and from school, work and PROVAIL offices.
- As mentioned at Imagine Housing and Community Homes, people want to learn more about programs to **facilitate connection between people with disabilities and their families with the Kirkland Police Department**. Examples of programs put on by Woodinville Police Department and Redmond Police were cited.
- The students hoped for **opportunities to be visible in community**, with several mentioning the City of Redmond's pilot with King County Metro to put on a shuttle for shopping in the downtown area.
- The need for **more accessible, affordable housing in Kirkland** was also brought up as a key means for young adults to become independent, while staying in the community where their family and supports are.

### Listening Session #4 – December 12, 2019

#### [HERO House](#)

HERO House NW uses a psychiatric rehabilitation model that focuses on socialization and community engagement to support people with mental illness. Through their [Bellevue Clubhouse](#) in Factoria, they create a safe space where members living with serious and persistent mental illness can forge meaningful relationships and gain real opportunities to reintegrate into society by becoming gainfully



employed, pursuing an education and obtaining stable housing. City staff visited the Bellevue clubhouse, where residents from across the Eastside gathered during their weekly meeting to share their thoughts on how Kirkland can be more safe, inclusive and welcoming. Comments ranged from:

- Similar to the residents at Community Homes, there was a **strong desire for more amenities and areas for people to gather** with friends.
- Staff who assist jobseekers find supported employment expressed the need for **more opportunities for job connections in areas with good access to transit, particularly downtown**. Staff shared how they have had positive interactions with the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and were hopeful the City of Kirkland could **facilitate a positive engagement with the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce**.
- Staff encouraged the City to make **more downtown parking spaces for oversize vehicles**, as human service organizations often have 15-person or more accessible vehicles that are used for job development and taking people to special events.

## Themes from Outreach Activities

### Develop Partnerships

At each outreach meeting or listening session the consistent message was a desire for the City to partner on an ongoing basis with the non-profit and community sector. Service providers and community organizations know where the unmet needs are and being in dialogue with those organizations is key to the City meeting its goal of being safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all people in Kirkland.

### Be Proactive

The message from the expanded and proactive outreach was hugely positive. People with disabilities and other stakeholders were deeply appreciative of the opportunity to speak face to face, in their familiar space (or even their home, as with Listening Session #1) with City staff. Asking about what they want to see in an ADA Transition Plan was one step, but the richer conversation came from staff asking the questions, *“How could we create more inclusive communities?”* and *“What can the City of Kirkland do to be more safe, inclusive and welcoming?”*.

### Promote Community Connections

Through the feedback received about bus routes, local amenities, job opportunities and housing, the respondents seemed to be asking the question of what the City’s role is in promoting community connections, advancing inclusion, and combating isolation of people with disabilities, including seniors. It is an important question for City leaders to consider, especially as the City looks towards a post-pandemic future in 2021.

Overall, feedback from residents and service providers was very supportive of the work currently being done by the City and people encouraged Kirkland to position itself as a leader in fostering connection and inclusive communities.



## Recommendations

The advancement of these recommendations should be taken forward by staff who led the engagement efforts from the City Manager's Office, under the direction of the Assistant City Manager James Lopez. The report findings should be shared back with internal City stakeholders, as well as the external stakeholders who participated in meetings and listening sessions.

1. **City as Convener** – City of Kirkland to use its relationships with other government agencies to **strengthen connections** between disability services providers and agencies responsible for transportation, housing, and employment. For example, to bring together the Chamber of Commerce to talk with supported employment providers about how to advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the downtown core.
2. **Proactive Engagement** - Through its leadership, the City can raise visibility and connect groups around shared mutual interests such as making Kirkland safe, inclusive and welcoming for all. Stakeholder groups would welcome the City's role in hosting or promoting events that touch on the lives of many people with disabilities, such as a resource fair for residents to meet with providers and learn about careers in caregiving, housing options and programs in the community. to learn about caregiving opportunities.
  - a. The City's government relations team can learn from service providers and advocates about the needs of people with disabilities and use that information in Kirkland's legislative agenda in Olympia.
3. **Center the voices of people with disabilities** – As the City engages in comprehensive planning and considers the question of 'how to create inclusive communities?', it should build on the relationships created through outreach efforts and hear directly from people with disabilities. As the positive response to this outreach showed, the City can lead on fostering connections and delivering inclusive communities where everyone feels safe and welcome.
  - a. The City should also include disability as an optional demographic question in future survey work.
4. **Inter-Agency Collaboration** – Many of the significant challenges that residents brought up cannot be addressed through one local jurisdiction; rather, inter-agency cooperation is needed. For example, the City can be a leader and a convener of conversations with agencies such as King County Metro, Sound Transit and Hopelink around safe, accessible transportation that meets the needs of people with disabilities.
  - a. City of Kirkland should continue to consider its role in promoting community connections, increasing inclusion, and combatting isolation.
5. **Intersection of disability and affordability** – As the City develops long-range plans and considers the issues of housing affordability and the development of new homes, it should keep in mind



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the intersection of disability and affordability. As our outreach showed, people with disabilities often have support networks and relationships built up over many years with social service providers in their local area, and the ability to live in community is key to combating social isolation and for some, making the transition to independent living.

6. **Intersectionality** – While this outreach effort was more expansive than the annual ADA Transition Plan update, it could never reach all the different stakeholder groups that serve people with disabilities. As the City continues to reach out to community, it should forge connections with groups that serve the LGBTQIA and immigrant/refugee communities, and those that center the voices of people of color.
  - a. In addition, the City through its Human Services Plan could set aside funding for non-profits to access cultural competency and equity training, so that more providers can best serve the needs of our diverse population.
7. **Continue Best Practices** – In addition to the existing programs and services offered through the City of Kirkland, there are many examples of best practices in the areas of adaptive recreation, community programming, supported employment and public safety across the Eastside. The **City should reach out to its neighboring municipalities** of Bellevue, Redmond, Woodinville and Seattle to **learn more and to share their own best practices**. A list of local resources and programs that were brought up throughout the outreach effort is attached in Appendix C.
8. **Promoting Visibility** – We heard that people want more opportunities to be visible in the community. This feedback can impact several areas:
  - a. City of Kirkland can help **identify community space in urban Kirkland** that could be used for programming for disability-serving organizations. More opportunities for socializing, such as the HERO house clubhouse model shows, combats social isolation and fosters community.
  - b. In addition, just as the City puts out a guide to what is going on in Kirkland cultural events, businesses, community gatherings, the City should consider putting together a **resource guide to aging and disability resources in the community**.
  - c. When planning special events, employ universal design principles and start from the concept of **making the event inclusive for everyone**, versus putting the onus on people to reach out directly if they need accommodations.
9. **Expand Community Programming Opportunities** – At every outreach event, respondents talked about the value of community and recreation programs and how this is an area where they want to see more offerings in Kirkland. City of Kirkland should review and potentially **expand community programming in adaptive recreation** for the disability community. In particular:
  - a. Consider the specific needs of the 18-24 population
  - b. Investigate if the City can partner with Washington State DDA to accept funding for community programming, which would reduce the financial barrier to participation for those on fixed incomes



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10. **Advance economic Opportunities** – Nationwide, there is a 40% gap between the employment rate of people with disabilities and those without. Young adults who age out of public-school programming have assistance in job searching, but jobs are increasingly hard to find – especially those near transit. Respondents raised several areas where the City could support job development for people with disabilities, including:
  - a. **Convene meetings with the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce** and employers in the downtown core so they can become familiar with the opportunities to employ people with disabilities.
  - b. The City of Kirkland can lead by example and **implement its own Supported Employment program.**
  
11. **Public Safety and the disability community** – At two of our listening sessions, parents brought up their fears for their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities who may not understand instructions given out by public safety officers and escalation that could result. Given this concern, many people wanted to learn more about the training currently provided to Kirkland first responders about the unique needs of the disability community. The City should review and **assess the current training for public safety officers** and work with stakeholder groups to share that information. The City should also proactively reach out to stakeholders to address any **potential gaps in knowledge** around the specific needs of interacting with **people with more significant disabilities and mental health conditions.**



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## **Equity Impact Assessment**

### ***City of Kirkland – ADA Transition Plan Outreach & Engagement***

December 21, 2020

#### **Stage 1 – Big Picture Thinking**

#### **Stage 2 – Learning & Consultation**

#### **Stage 3 – Analysis**

#### **Stage 4 – Making a Plan**

**Stage 1** – Big Picture Thinking is about doing a preliminary assessment of the policy, program, service or initiative (PPSI) that is being reviewed. It involves stepping back from the detail and the day-to-day to ask questions about how the issue is related to equity.

**Stage 2** – The learning and consultation stage involves data collection and analysis, and then using that information to plan outreach and engagement activities to learn even more. This where consulting with internal and external stakeholders happens, and most importantly, engagement with service users and residents. This stage takes the longest amount of time in the EIA process, and depending on the scale and impact of the issue, will need to incorporate feedback loops with stakeholders.

**Stage 3** – Analysis requires deep reflection and critical thinking, as well as vulnerability to admit the issue may have some flaws that need addressing. This stage starts with synthesis of Stage 2 information and identification of gaps in data, feedback still needed, and missing stakeholders. It then moves into critical thinking about how PPSI may have positive or negative impacts on equity and inclusion.

**Stage 4** – Making a Plan is the culmination of the EIA process, and where innovation and design come into play. Developing an inclusive and equitable issue is the goal and is accomplished by making recommendations, identifying an implementation plan and tracking steps to get there. This stage results in a document to share with decision-makers for review and feedback.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **Equity Impact Assessment**

#### ***City of Kirkland – ADA Transition Plan Outreach & Engagement***

December 22, 2020

##### **Stage 1 – Big Picture Thinking**

##### **Stage 2 – Learning & Consultation**

##### **Stage 3 – Analysis**

##### **Stage 4 – Making a Plan**

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**Stage 2** – The learning and consultation stage involves data collection and analysis, and then using that information to plan outreach and engagement activities to learn even more. This where consulting with internal and external stakeholders happens, and most importantly, engagement with service users and residents. This stage takes the longest amount of time in the EIA process, and depending on the scale and impact of the issue, will need to incorporate feedback loops with stakeholders.

**Stage 3** – Analysis requires deep reflection and critical thinking, as well as vulnerability to admit the issue may have some flaws that need addressing. This stage starts with synthesis of Stage 2 information and identification of gaps in data, feedback still needed, and missing stakeholders. It then moves into critical thinking about how PPSI may have positive or negative impacts on equity and inclusion.

**Stage 4** – Making a Plan is the culmination of the EIA process, and where innovation and design come into play. Developing an inclusive and equitable issue is the goal and is accomplished by making recommendations, identifying an implementation plan and tracking steps to get there. This stage results in a document to share with decision-makers for review and feedback.



## ***Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)***

### **Stage 1 – Big Picture Thinking**

While it may sound obvious, having a clear description of the policy, program, service or initiative is critical.

#### ***What is the PPSI?***

##### *➤ Why is it needed?*

As a public agency, the City of Kirkland is **required by federal law** to evaluate its policies, programs, and services and identify barriers under the ADA.

In line with the City Council’s Resolution R-5240 Declaring Kirkland as a Safe, Inclusive and Welcoming City for All People, the City has expanded its public outreach and engagement process. The public outreach and engagement process for the ADA Transition is an **opportunity to move beyond compliance towards authentic engagement** with the population most affected by the ADA Act – people with disabilities.

##### *➤ Who is the audience?*

The ADA Transition Plan is required by federal law to be developed by the City of Kirkland and be available to the public. All residents of Kirkland are open to provide comments. However, given the intent of the Plan is to provide transparency into the civil rights protections for people with disabilities, the **outreach effort is targeted at people with disabilities, their families and allies and organizations that support or provide services to people with disabilities** in Kirkland.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), **one in four US adults – 61 million Americans – have a disability** that impacts major life activities. The CDC divides disability into six types:

- Mobility (serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs)
- Cognition (serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions)
- Hearing (serious difficulty hearing)
- Vision (serious difficulty seeing)
- Independent living (difficulty doing errands alone)
- Self-care (difficulty dressing or bathing)

The Plan provides the means (the “how”) and timeframe (the “when”) the City’s compliance with Title II of the act. The Transition Plan is a living document posted on the City’s website for public review and comment and is updated annually. The Transition Plan is used by a range of City staff across departments in ongoing planning, budgeting and Capital Improvement efforts.

##### *➤ What are the intended outcomes?*





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The intended outcomes of this outreach process are:

1. Providing **opportunity for people with disabilities** and their advocates **to be heard** by City government, and **to understand and ask questions on** the role of City government in protecting and advancing the ADA.
  2. Soliciting **information from the Kirkland community** that can be used to **inform future City strategies**, policies, and community engagement efforts.
  3. **Building a robust and inclusive list of stakeholders**, including advocacy organizations, service providers and community groups that the City can work with on future engagement efforts.
- *How is the PPSI related to equity and inclusion along the following markers of difference? Is there likely to be a high, medium or low impact for certain groups of people?*
- *Race or ethnicity?*
  - *Gender and gender identity?*
  - *Disability?*
  - *Age?*
  - *Sexual orientation?*
  - *Religion, Faith or Belief?*
  - *Socio-economic factors?*

The presence of a disability affects people of all races/ethnicities, gender identities, ages, sexual orientations, faiths/belief groups and socio-economic groups. While some people are born with a disability or disabilities, anyone at any point in their life may acquire a temporary, intermittent, or permanent disability.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines disability as:

*"...a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment."<sup>1</sup>*

It is important to remember that while some disabilities are visible, such as someone using a mobility device, many others are invisible, such as mental health conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ada.gov/ada\\_intro.htm](https://www.ada.gov/ada_intro.htm)



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The presence of a disability may present a significant impact on a person's ability to be employed, and/or employed at a level that provides for enough income for a basic standard of living. Nationwide the **disability employment gap is over 40%** between people without disabilities and people with disabilities<sup>2</sup>. In fact, the CDC found that the percentage of adults with disability increased as income decreased. As Kirkland is an increasingly high-cost of living area, the **connection between disability and affordability** should be explored in the fieldwork.

As people age, they are more likely to acquire a disability or disabilities, meaning **older adults are also a group that should be consulted** as part of the ADA Transition Plan outreach. The CDC estimates that 2 in 5 adults age 65 and older experience disability.<sup>3</sup>

Nationwide data from the CDC shows that **disability is more common among women, non-Hispanic American Indians/Alaska Natives, and adults with lower income**.<sup>4</sup>

➤ *Which communities and groups will need to be involved in the development of the PPSI?*

**People with disabilities, as well as the family members, guardians, and service providers** who support those with more significant disabilities should be involved in the development of the ADA Transition Plan outreach. **Advocates and social service agencies** are key to this outreach effort.

The design of the outreach should be **intentional about including outreach with people of different genders, ages, religious beliefs, and racial identities**. Stakeholder groups should include those that serve people with limited incomes. Staff should also seek opportunities to learn about any barriers faced by people with disabilities who identify as part of the LGBTQIA community.

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<sup>2</sup> [Cornell University Disability Statistics Resource](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p0816-disability.html>

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*



## Stage 2 – Learning & Consultation

EIA's should ensure that the PPSI incorporates the best available data, and that outreach and engagement approaches include communities and groups that will be most impacted. This stage should set out how equity information, research and best practice has been collected. It should also describe in detail the fieldwork plan and the feedback loops back to stakeholders and communities.

***What available data do we have on the service users/customers/communities that will be impacted by this PPSI?***

- *Equity profile of service users by race/ethnicity, gender and gender identity, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion/faitth and socio-economic status.*

As stated in Part 1, the presence of a **disability affects people of all races/ethnicities, gender identities, ages, sexual orientations, faiths/belief groups and socio-economic groups**. However, nationwide data shows that disability is more common among women, non-Hispanic American Indians/Alaska Natives, and adults with lower incomes.

The CDC Disability and Health Data System estimates the prevalence of disability in each state, with the most recent information from 2018. The 2018 **Washington state disability prevalence was 23.1%**, with those experiencing **cognitive disabilities the highest percentage at 10.3%**<sup>5</sup>.

- Cognitive disability – 10.3%
- Mobility Disability – 9.8%
- Independent Living Disability – 6.0%
- Hearing Disability – 5.4%
- Vision Disability – 3.4%
- Self-care Disability – 2.8%

2018 Washington state **age breakdown:**

- 18-44 years old – 16.3% disability
- 45-64 years old – 26.9%
- 65+ - 37.4%

The prevalence of disability for children is reported using different measurements, and the most accurate information for school age children will come from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

2018 Washington state **sex breakdown:**

- Male – 22% disability
- Female – 24% disability

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<sup>5</sup> Accessed via: CDD [Disability and Health Data System](#)



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### 2018 Washington state **race/ethnicity breakdown:**

- White, non-Hispanic – 23.3%
- Black, non-Hispanic – 27.6%
- Hispanic – 27%
- Asian, non-Hispanic -12.4%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic – 23.6%
- American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic – 41.6%
- Other/multiracial, Non-Hispanic – 32.1%

Given the **disproportionately high rate of disability for people of American Indian or Alaska Native and Multiracial groups**, the City may wish to consider how to target outreach efforts to those populations and/or service providers who work with these groups.

### 2018 Washington state **Veteran Status breakdown:**

- Veteran – 26.6% disability
- Non-Veteran – 22.7% disability

### ➤ *Evidence from relevant surveys, complaints, outreach efforts*

To design an intentional and inclusive fieldwork plan that is relevant to the local area, it is important to be informed by Kirkland-level data. For example, **what does the City currently know about the population of people with disabilities in Kirkland?** How many people in Kirkland identify as having one or more disabilities? In reviewing the 2018 Kirkland Residents Survey and the City of Kirkland's Comprehensive Plan – two sources of information about the population in Kirkland – the self-identified demographic breakdowns only include gender, race, neighborhood. Unfortunately, since **respondents were not asked to self-identify in terms of disability**, there is no breakdown by disability.

City staff reviewed prior feedback on the ADA Transition Plan, which generally fell into one of six categories: administrative processes, effective communication, web accessibility, program access, sidewalks and ramps and emergency management. The City of Kirkland's Human Resources department holds responsibility for the ADA Transition Plan.

City staff from the Planning and Building Services, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Human Resources and Human Services Division convened for a meeting on December 12, 2018 to share information on how the City considers the feedback from previous ADA Transitions Plans. Some examples include:

- The City has a **funding plan for ADA compliance**, such as improvements to sidewalks, and is responsive to residents who reach out to identify other areas for consideration. The **transportation group is working on a block-by-block ADA plan for accessible parking** to address current gaps in access. In the development of Capital projects, best



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practices around equipment and technology are included, such as voice instruction for crosswalks.

- The **City partners with the King County Housing Repair Program** on their loan program for homeowners who need assistance to upgrade their homes to be ADA accessible.
- The **Parks & Recreation department looks to total accessibility, mobility and play efforts for all abilities** when designing play structures. For example, wood chips are technically ADA compliant for playgrounds, but feedback from residents is that rubber surfaces are easier for wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

The Human Services division suggested reaching out directly to the City of Kirkland's Human Services Commission (HSC) to learn more about stakeholders who could be consulted during the outreach process. On January 22, 2019, **City staff attended an Human Services Commission meeting to share the current approach for ADA Transition Plan outreach and seek feedback** and suggestions on local organizations to involve. The HSC members were interested in and supportive of the proposed expansion of outreach and engagement for the ADA Transition Plan and provided feedback on agencies and service providers to work with on this effort.

### *What do stakeholders think about the PPSI?*

- *How have you consulted with key stakeholders in the process of developing the PPSI?*

After pulling together a **stakeholder list of 30+ community groups and service providers** that directly support people with disabilities, the **City held two external stakeholder group meetings** with representatives from seven number of agencies. Combining the internal and external feedback from stakeholders with research on best practices, the City **designed a series of listening sessions in partnership with local organizations**, at sites that were accessible for their population served.

The City **planned an online community survey on the ADA Transition Plan** and sought feedback from stakeholders on the questions to include and methods to publicize it. The survey was intended to be for anyone living, working, or visiting Kirkland, with or without a disability. The survey was due to be released in February 2020 but had to be **put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic**.

- *What do stakeholders think? What have we done already and what more do we need to do?*

**Stakeholders were consistently appreciative of the City's approach** of seeking input not just on the ADA Transition Plan, but more broadly on how the City can support a safe, inclusive, and welcoming Kirkland for people with disabilities. Many stakeholders remarked on the trust that can be built with community through this type of proactive outreach and **encouraged the City to continue coming to the community in places residents already gather and receive services**. Stakeholders impressed on the City the potential of its role as a convener to bring together other partners, such as the business community, to advance issues like employment for people with disabilities.



**More information on what stakeholders think is in the full Outreach Report.**

- *What are some potential barriers to participation for different groups? What voices have been missing from your outreach?*

**The goal was to design a fieldwork plan for people with disabilities that was intentional and inclusive.**

Many people with disabilities experience economic constraints or and/or transportation challenges which make coming to City Hall or City facilities for meetings difficult and time consuming. For example:

- A person on the Autism spectrum may encounter sensory challenges with navigating a large, and unfamiliar location like the Town Hall and may be challenged by the prospect of interacting with groups of people at a community meeting.
- A person experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder may be triggered by being out alone at night and would not be able to attend an evening event.
- Older adults or people with sensory or physical disabilities may not have easy access to the Kirkland newsletter or filling out an online survey.

With these considerations in mind, the **City designed a series of listening sessions that were targeted towards issue areas and groups within the wider community.** In being intentional about our outreach, careful consideration was given to the format, the venue and how proactive to be in communicating the events. For these reasons, it was decided to hold meetings in partnership with local organizations, at sites that were accessible for the populations they served.

Given the intellectual and cognitive disabilities of some of the stakeholders at the listening sessions, service providers worked with City staff on questions to pose. For example:

- Instead of “How easy is it to access Kirkland’s parks?”, staff asked, “Do you go to the park in Kirkland?”
  - Instead of “How accessible are Kirkland’s recreation programs?”, staff asked, “Do you take any classes through the parks department?”
- ***Gaps:** Areas where more information is required and longer-term measures to be taken to strengthen data?*

Given what little is known about the experiences of people with disabilities in Kirkland, **future residents’ surveys should include a question for respondents to self-identify as having a disability or not.** This would allow for demographic breakdowns by disability status, which could be especially important when seeking input on residents’ views towards safety, transit, economic opportunity, and housing affordability.



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Although we had a representative from a children's early intervention service provider at the ADA Stakeholder meeting and one of the listening sessions included high school students, there is **more to learn about children and disability in Kirkland**. There are many informal support groups for parents and family members of children and young people with disabilities, and the City could reach out to learn more about their experiences. In addition, gathering information from the Lake Washington School District's (LWSD) Special Education division, LWSD Special Needs Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and from early intervention providers would be a future step to learn more about children and young adults.

The CDC data on Washington State shows that there are **disparities in terms of prevalence of disability and different racial/ethnic groups**, especially with Native Americans and Alaska Natives. The outreach effort intended to partner with a multi-cultural service provider for a listening session, but that did happen in the time frame of the outreach. **City staff should continue to build relationships with providers of culturally competent disability services and seek feedback from this population.**

- *How feedback and challenge from informed groups and individuals will be used to ensure that the final PPSI is robust, addresses identified need and promotes equity and inclusion.*

The specific feedback for the ADA Transition Plan will be relayed to the Director of Human Resources to incorporate in the next version of the Plan. Regarding the feedback on how to make Kirkland more safe, inclusive, and welcoming for people with disabilities, **City staff will present the Outreach Report to the full City Council for comment and direction on the recommendations**. The City will also share the report with the Human Services Commission, and the stakeholders who participated in the outreach and engagement effort. One of the outcomes of this effort was to develop long-term relationships with community groups that the City can go back to about future policies, programs, or initiatives; having a more diverse pool of stakeholders will promote equity and inclusion in the longer term.



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### Stage 3 – Analysis

This is where data and information is synthesized and impact is assessed. It is essential to consider not just the intended consequences of the PPSI but also any unintended consequence and barriers that might prevent it being effective for certain community groups. This section sets out how equity information has been analysed and the likely impact identified.

- *Will any groups be negatively impacted because of the PPSI?*

As the ADA Transition Plan is a federal requirement to **promote** civil rights for people with disabilities, it is unlikely to have negative impacts.

- *Will there be issues of access for some groups?*

All members of the public can give feedback on the ADA Transition Plan, either through the City's website or by calling the City of Kirkland. The expanded outreach and engagement process sought to proactively reach out to several segments of the people with disabilities population, for example, seniors, young adults, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people with mental health disabilities. There will always be more groups of people who could have been consulted, however, in collecting a large list of stakeholder organizations the City can reach out even wider for future ADA Transition Plan updates.

- *How might the PPSI positively impact equity and inclusion?*

As the City continues to implement parts of the ADA Transition Plan, it will increase accessibility for residents of Kirkland. The outreach done through the ADA Transition Plan, including the stakeholder meetings and listening sessions, will hopefully build trust and relationships with those in the community who are invested in advancing equity and inclusion. The **recommendations from the Outreach Report will support the City's intention to be safe, inclusive and welcoming for all residents.**





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### Stage 4 – Making a Plan

This section sets out recommendations, actions to be taken to address any adverse impacts, and other areas that could promote equity and inclusion. It is recommended that Stage 4 identifies who in the organization is accountable for next steps; that it sets out clear measures for tracking progress; and clearly shows how communication will flow back to stakeholders and the broader community.

- *What are the recommendations to advance equity and inclusion for the PPSI?*

The full **ADA Transition Plan Outreach Report sets out the recommendations for future action**. Once the report is presented to the City Council, the intention would be for staff to capture feedback and direction for next steps and set out the means to implement and track progress.

- *How can we mitigate any negative issues identified in Stage 3?*

There were no negative issues identified in Stage 3, however, there is always room for improvement in the depth and breadth of outreach. For example, given the timing of the pandemic, staff were not able to finalize an in-person listening session with an organization that serves people with disabilities from multi-cultural backgrounds. This engagement should be prioritized as the City works through the recommendations in the Outreach report.

- *How will the PPSI be implemented and communicated to make it accessible and transparent?*

The City of Kirkland has a new website landing page which will share the learnings from the outreach activities, as well as the updated ADA Transition Plan. **City staff will reach back out to stakeholders to share the Outreach Report.**

- *Who is responsible for making recommendations to the appropriate body? i.e. City Manager, City Council, Department Director? How will we track progress on recommendations?*

The **Assistant City Manager will work with staff to convey the feedback and recommendations** to the City Manager, City Council and Department Directors. Ideally, the City would set up a regular review to implement and track progress of the recommendations adopted. The ADA Transition Plan is updated every year, so residents will be able to see progress in terms of ADA Title II accessibility.



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## **APPENDIX B**

### **Specific Feedback from ADA Transition Plan outreach:**

Accessibility concerns were brought up around these specific areas and have been transmitted to the Human Resources department for inclusion in the ADA Transition Plan.

- Kirkland downtown library stairs
- Sidewalks needed at 128<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and 132<sup>nd</sup> NE
- North end of Kirkland – bus service gap
- Oversized parking spaces at City facilities – for buses /vans
- Lighting at Lakeview Drive, Lk WA Blv, 68<sup>th</sup> Street between Met Market and PCC
- Lighting along walkway of 124<sup>th</sup> and Cross Kirkland Corridor underpass
- Can NE 124<sup>th</sup> be on the snowplow route?
- No crosswalks mid-block along NE 124<sup>th</sup> St



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## **APPENDIX C**

### **Local Resources**

Several service providers and programs were referenced as positive examples throughout the outreach.

[Alyssa Burnett Adult Life Center](#)

[Friendship Adventures](#)

[City of Redmond Adaptive Recreation](#)

[City of Bellevue Highlands Center – Adaptive Recreation](#)

[Northshore Wranglers through the Northshore Senior Center](#)

[City of Bellevue Disability Services](#)

[Bridge of Promise](#)

[ARC of King County resource list of recreation opportunities](#)

[Seattle Children's Playgarden](#)