Affordable Housing on Faith-owned Land

Planning Commission Public Hearing
August 27, 2026

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON FAITH-OWNED LAND

CITY OF KIRKLAND WASHINGTON

Agenda

- Receive a staff briefing on the proposed zoning amendments.
- Hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on these amendments.
- Deliberate and make a recommendation to the City Council.

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Council & PC Direction

By-right approach granting all faith-owned sites development bonus.

Make straightforward standards adapted from existing regulations.

Use height limits, setbacks, and transitions to shape building capacity rather than relying solely on density.

Allow added flexibility for mixed uses and active frontages, preserve open space, and support modest increases in lower-density areas.

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Outreach Update



Received Survey Responses from:

- Salt House Lutheran Church
- Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
- Lake Washington United Methodist Church
- Bellwether Housing
- Wallace Properties

Interviewed:

- Lake Washington United Methodist Church

Consulted:

- Housing Development Consortium
- Eastside for All

Presented before:

- Eastside Affordable Housing Coalition
- Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council

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Faith-based Organization Feedback

- Interested in a straightforward framework for development
- Concerned about their development experience and lot coverage requirements
- Staff Response: Amendments include by-right, administrative process and reduce lot coverage requirements; ARCH will provide technical assistance

Affordable Housing Developer Feedback

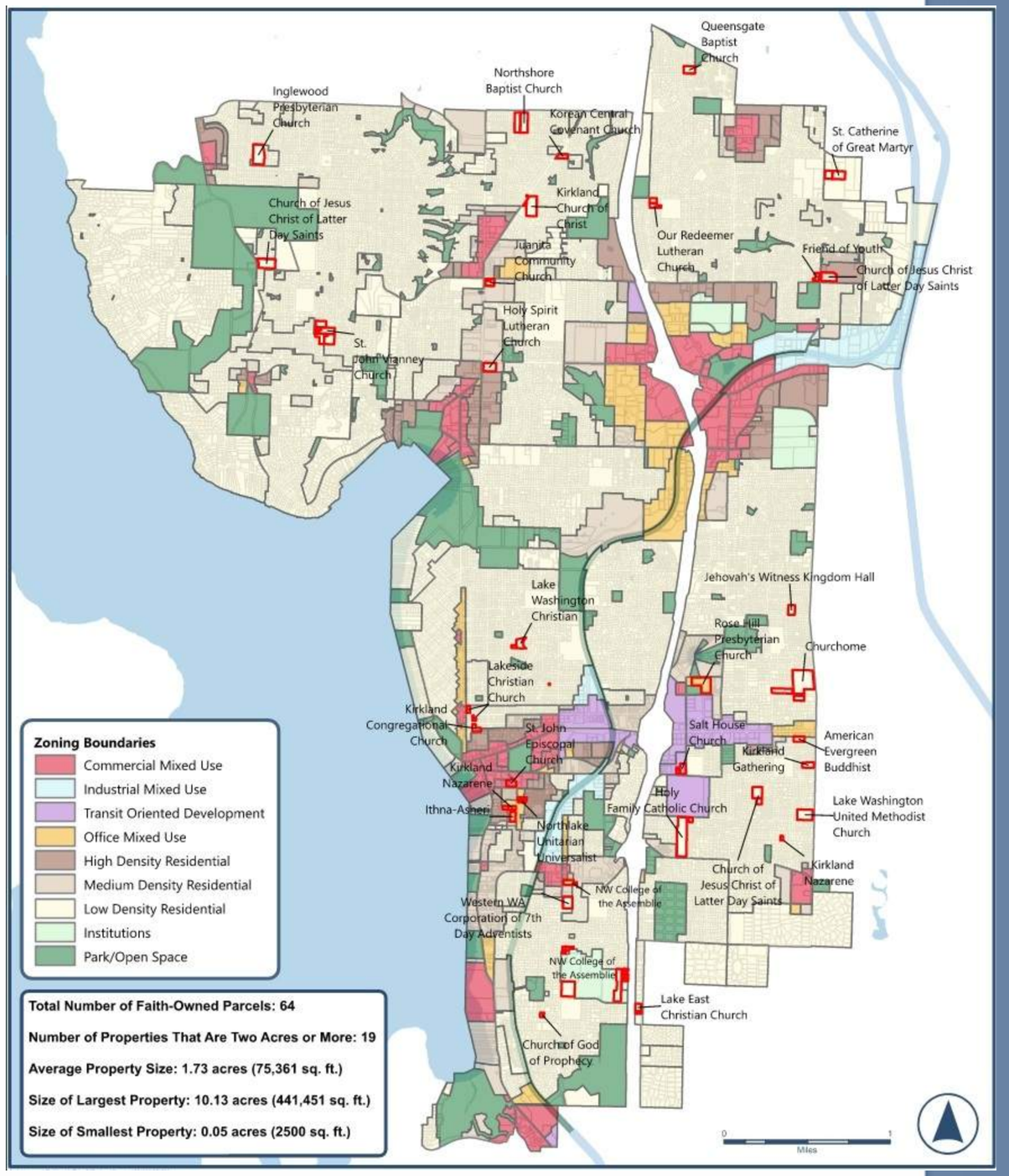
- Appreciate Design Review exemption; reduces time and cost.
- Support exchange ratios; recommend factoring in project feasibility.
- Council/DRB involvement adds risk. Most projects need minor deviations; allow common departures to be staff-approved.
- Staff Response: Amendments provide by-right development bonus, and additional administrative bonus option.

Faith-owned Properties in Kirkland

- **37 organizations own 64 parcels (160 total acres)**
  - 19 parcels are 2 acres or more
  - Many are collectively owned by a single faith-organization

- **54% are in low density zones**
- **4% are in medium and high-density zones**
- **42% are in office, commercial, institutional, or TOD zones**

- **40% contain multiple critical areas including streams and geologically hazardous areas**



(Base) Bonus Standards for Affordable Housing*

"Underlying" Zoning Standards Related to Faith-Based Facilities and Residential Uses**	"Proposed" Alternative Zoning Standards For Affordable Housing on Faith-Owned Properties
Low-Density Zones: 70% Maximum Lot Coverage 30 ft. Maximum Building Height	**Medium-Density Zones Equivalent:** 70% Maximum Lot Coverage 35 ft. Maximum Building Height *(Max. 50 ft. with additional bonus)*
Medium-Density Zones: 70% Maximum Lot Coverage 35 ft. Maximum Building Height	**High-Density Zone Equivalent:** 80% Maximum Lot Coverage 40 ft. Maximum Building Height *(Max. 60 ft. additional bonus)*
All Other Zones: [varying maximum lot coverage and maximum building height, depending on zone]	**All Other Zones:** Residential development would be given an additional 15 ft. above the maximum building height for Faith-Based Facility uses in the applicable zone *(or additional 25 ft with additional affordable units).*
Alternative required yard standards for all zones are crafted to allow for infill development.	

***Eligible development must provide either: 50% of units at 80% AMI, or 20% of units at 50% AMI**

** "Underlying" and "Alternative" maximum lot coverage are based on the allowed lot coverage for Faith-Based Facility use. "Underlying" and "Alternative" maximum building heights are based on the maximum allowed for residential uses.

(Base) Exchange Ratio

An **optional method** to provide affordable housing at **different affordability levels**

Renter-Occupied: Exchange Ratio (50% AMI : Equivalent AMI Unit)*	
≤ 30% AMI	2:1
≤ 40% AMI	1.5:1
≤ 60% AMI	1:1.3
≤ 70% AMI	1:1.17

Owner-Occupied: Exchange Ratio (80% AMI : Equivalent AMI Unit)*	
≤ 90% AMI	1:1.3
≤ 100% AMI	1:2.1

Council favored applying the exchange ratios as part of the "base bonus" standards.

Can be applied to all required affordable units, or just the affordable units (beyond base) required for the additional height bonus

*Exact ratios pending final calibration

(Base) Bonus Standards for Affordable Housing

Design Review Exemption:

- ✓ Removes added time and costs for project feasibility

Remove Density Maximum & Floor Area Ratio Standards:

- ✓ Allows for more affordable housing to be built on site

Lot coverage exemption for existing buildings:

- ✓ To help retain existing faith-based facilities

Flexible required yards:

- ✓ To locate new housing away from existing buildings, critical areas, and trees
- ✓ Allows for street activation

Allows for Director approval of minor deviations:

- ✓ Accounts for existing conditions while maintaining project feasibility

Allows for Council-approved development agreement:

- ✓ Addresses the need for deviations beyond what can be addressed in these code amendments

Council broadly supported the proposed code amendments, appreciating its simplicity, and alignment with underlying zoning

Additional Height Bonus (beyond base)

Bonus maximum building height awarded for additional affordable housing units **above** the State requirements (e.g., by providing an additional set percentage of affordable units).

- Up to a maximum of **50 feet** in low density zones
- Up to a maximum of **60 feet** in medium density zones
- Up to **25 feet** above the maximum height otherwise permitted for Faith Based Facility uses in all other zones

Council supported the additional height bonus but requested clearer qualification criteria for the bonus.

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Proposed Services

- **City of Kirkland**
  - ✓ Free Pre-submittal Conferences and Expedited Permit Review

- **ARCH**
  - ✓ Early education, due-diligence support, and guidance for discernment and community decision-making
  - ✓ Feasibility studies, technical assistance, and connections to outside resources
  - ✓ Support with partnerships, RFQ/P processes, and specialized professional services

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Next Steps

- Staff will present draft code, affordable housing options, and Planning Commission recommendation to City Council.

Questions?

Public Hearing

Public Testimony

Planning Commission Deliberation

Potential Motion: Recommend the Affordable Housing on Faith-Owned Land zoning code amendments as drafted by staff.