



City of Kirkland
Planning and Building
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MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission

From: Scott B. Guter, AICP, Senior Planner
Allison Zike, AICP, Deputy Planning & Building Director
Adam Weinstein, AICP, Planning & Building Director

Date: September 17, 2024

Subject: **2044 Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing #4- Housing Element, File No. CAM22-00032**

Recommendation

Conduct a public hearing to gather public testimony on proposed amendments to the draft Housing Element (Attachment 1) of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Housing Inventory and Analysis (Attachment 2).

A separate memo for the September 26, 2024 meeting includes background material for the public hearing on the draft Glossary, History of Kirkland, and Community Profile.

At the close of the public hearing, staff recommends the Planning Commission (PC) conduct deliberations and make recommendations to City Council (Council) on the Housing Element.

Background

Kirkland 2044 Comprehensive Plan (K2044) Update Process Overview

The City of Kirkland is in the process of conducting a major update of the existing Kirkland Comprehensive Plan¹ (Plan) adopted in 2015 for a planning horizon of 2035. The Plan is the primary citywide guide for how the community should evolve over the next twenty years (new horizon year of 2044) in terms of land use, transportation, and the public facilities and services necessary to support this change. The Planning Commission staff report from the first public hearing on May 9, 2024² provided background information for the broader K2044 Update, including a summary of engagement.

The K2044 Comprehensive Plan project webpage³ has information to help the community learn more about the K2044 update. The webpage includes a landing page for key topic areas including: draft goals and policies for each Element; basic information about the Plan update; past staff presentations and memorandums; information on the

¹ <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Kirkland/>

² <https://kirklandwa.primegov.com/portal/item?id=406>

³ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Planning-Projects/Kirkland-2044-Comprehensive-Plan-Update>

neighborhood plan updates; and a community engagement page detailing how to get involved in the process and how to submit comments.

Housing Element Update

The Planning Commission (PC) discussed the Housing Element at their September 28, 2023⁴, February 22, 2024⁵, March 28, 2024⁶, August 8, 2024⁷ meetings, as well as the May 3, 2024⁸ joint City Council (Council)/PC retreat. During these meetings staff provided background information on State-mandated updates to the Housing Element, the housing data gathered at that time, and the public feedback staff received during outreach and engagement activities. Staff also presented and received feedback from the PC on draft Housing Element goals and policies at these meetings.

City Council Feedback

On September 3, 2024⁹, staff briefed Council on the Housing Element and the feedback received by the PC at their August 8, 2024 meeting. The following bullet list highlights the questions and comments received from Council. Note, a similar bulleted list of the PC's feedback was transmitted to Council at their September 3 meeting.

- There is strong support for the framing of policy H-1.3 directing increased housing development to areas with infrastructure, services, and amenities. All policies should build off of H-1.3. For instance, policy H-1.10, mentions focusing density near transit, but without added specificity of 1.3.
- Policy H-1.11 - why should we limit concentration of affordable housing to areas where transit and employment exist or is planned?
- Policy H-1.12 - why not preserve all affordable housing?
- Housing element should focus more on providing affordable housing throughout the city and not just in commercial centers and urban centers.
- There are places in Housing Element that mention affordable housing "throughout the city". Housing vision should make clearer what "throughout the city" means.
- There should be a throughline between the concept of coordinating transit infrastructure (see Draft Transportation Element. Policy T-10.4¹⁰) with planned land use. The City should show its work and provide signposts for how City will approach future changes and demonstrate with proper concept, i.e. providing evidence that idea or project is feasible and effective.
- There is community consensus about building in our urban centers. The Council wants more detail about what housing types we allow in urban centers (split by regional centers, neighborhood centers, transit corridors).
- Clarify what "prioritizing" <30% AMI housing means.

⁴ <https://kirklandwa.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=529>

⁵ <https://kirklandwa.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=895>

⁶ <https://kirklandwa.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=1111>

⁷ <https://kirklandwa.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=1707>

⁸ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/City-Council/Council-Meeting-Minutes-and-Agendas/2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Meetings/May-3-2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Retreat/Agenda-May-3-2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Special-Meeting>

⁹ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/City-Council/Council-Meeting-Minutes-and-Agendas/2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Meetings/September-3-2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Meeting/Agenda-September-3-2024-Kirkland-City-Council-Regular-Meeting>

¹⁰ Policy T-10.4: Partner with transit agencies to ensure Kirkland receives high-quality transit service that is coordinated with planned growth and land use.

- Goal H-3 – should add regional and local authority as future funding sources.
- Housing Element should have language that adds a sense of urgency to housing production.
- Focus on a quicker policy implementation, e.g. 6-year timeline.
- Provide policy that directs City to work with neighborhoods to redevelop their neighborhood centers (focus on helping where people have asked for development).
- Add policy that directs the City to work with developers to enable more Station Area Plan (SAP) development.
- Appreciate policies that include seniors, wants more detail about how the City supports that population.
- Concerned about policy H-1.9 regarding development on faith-based properties. Supports CAR process for faith-based property rezones but does not want the City to just rezone all faith-based properties without their involvement.

King County Feedback

In accordance with Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)¹¹ staff submitted the draft housing and land use elements, draft land use map, and draft housing inventory and analysis to King County's Affordable Housing Committee¹² (AHC), which is assigned to review draft comprehensive plans to ensure consistency with countywide policy goals in the CPP Housing Chapter. AHC also requires that cities submit draft housing-focused policy implementation plans. The AHC formalized their comment letter at their September 5 meeting. Attachment 3 contains the AHC housing-focused draft comprehensive plan review comment letter. Note that staff has made several updates to the draft Housing Element since submitting it to the AHC that incorporates feedback from the PC, Council and ARCH staff. Staff is confident that these changes do not conflict with the findings in the AHC comment letter.

Housing Land Capacity Analysis

To show compliance with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.070(2)(a)¹³ (codified into the Growth Management Act by passage of HB 1220) and demonstrate consistency with CPP H-1 and H-11, staff is conducting a housing land capacity analysis consistent with Washington State Department of Commerce guidance. Once complete, this analysis will be incorporated into the Housing Inventory & Analysis. Preliminary results of this analysis indicates that Kirkland has insufficient capacity under existing zoning for housing serving households earning under 80% AMI. However, the capacity analysis of the currently-proposed Comprehensive Plan Update indicates that the City is meeting its allocated housing need by income segment. Staff will present findings of this analysis at the hearing on September 26.

Revisions to the Housing Element

The following table outlines the changes made to the Housing Element since the August 8, 2024 PC meeting. These changes reflect feedback received by the PC, Council, and A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) staff, and information obtained from the

¹¹ https://cdn.kingcounty.gov/-/media/king-county/depts/dchs/housing/affordable-housing-committee/ahccompplanreview/kc_2021_cpp%20ord_19660_113021.pdf?rev=194224480ab14c61b76d89f03603b7eb&hash=0BAA96D98BEEDC6A1987DEF283C53C3D

¹² <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs/human-social-services/housing-homeless-services/affordable-housing-committee>

¹³ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70a.070>

Housing Inventory & Analysis. For clarity, a strikethrough and underlined version of the Housing Element is provided with Attachment 4.

Section	Update Description
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended to clarify what the city is advocating for “throughout the city”.
Future Housing Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a description of how housing needs were allocated to the city. Added a summary of preliminary findings from housing land capacity analysis.
Increase housing supply, particularly for households with greatest need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H-1.1 – Added new policy based on the finding from the housing land capacity analysis and the “urgency” in closing housing needs deficiencies (New H-1.1). H-1.3 – Amended to reflect desired outcome of increasing affordable housing either through incentives or requirements (previously H-1.2). H-1.5 & H-1.6 – Clarified that drafted policies are intended for both “market rate” and affordable housing (previously H-1.4 & H-1.5). H-1.11 – Moved policy to this section based on “city-wide” effort to reduce displacement and preserve existing housing. Removed term “affordable” to eliminate confusion regarding what is being preserved (previously H-1.12).
Expanded housing options and increased affordability accessible to transit and employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H-1.12 – Added new policy regarding meeting housing needs in areas with existing/planned infrastructure, services, and amenities. H-1.13 – Amended to include existing and planned infrastructure, services, and amenities (previously H-1.10). H-1.14 – Amended to include a broader description of affordability and added “commercial centers” and “transit” to policy (previously H-1.13). H-1.15 – Added new policy to collaborate with developers in providing affordable housing.
Collaborate regionally to increase housing production and address housing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H-1.17 – Amended to include emergency housing.

Expand housing and neighborhood choice for all residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H-2.2 – Moved housing policy from other section to reflect a “city-wide” aim to provide affordable housing opportunities (previously H-1.11). • H-2.3 – Amended to include existing and planned infrastructure, services, and amenities (previously H-2.2). • H-2.9 – Clarifies what no net loss means and added programs to policy language (previously H-2.8). • H-2.10 – Clarifies what “portable” means (previously H-2.9). • H-2.12 – Added new policy to include landlord support in eviction prevention. • H-2.13 – Clarifies what fair and equal access to housing means (previously H-2.11). • H-2.17 – Removes affordable to prevent misinterpretation (previously H-2.15). • H-2.18 – Added new policy to support developers in the creation of sustainable housing for all stages of life and the promotion of shared spaces.
Measure results and provide accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H-2.24 – Added monitoring progress towards providing housing by income segment and emergency housing (previously H-2.22). • H-2.25 – Added new policy advocating for regional housing reporting metrics.
Subsidy and Homelessness Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal H-3 – Added rapid rehousing and subsidy to goal.
Be an active partner in the regional effort to achieve housing security for those in most need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H-3.3 – Added regional and local funding, and emergency housing to policy. • H-3.5 – Added emergency to housing needs.

Public Comments

Public comments received over 2022-2024, through September 19, 2024 (prior to the publication of this memo) are available on the K2044 webpage¹⁴. Public comments are also available organized by subject matter¹⁵. Additional public comments received after

¹⁴ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/4/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/2022.12.06-2024.05.14_public-comments_k2044.pdf

¹⁵ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/4/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/2022.04.19-2024.05.14_public-comment-tracker_k2044.pdf

the publication date will be provided to the PC prior to the public hearing and compiled and posted on the K2044 webpage after the hearing.

Next Steps

Staff has sent draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan to the Puget Sound Regional Council and to the Department of Commerce (60-day notice of intent to adopt requirement) for review and comment for compliance with State and Regional requirements. These agencies may suggest revisions be made to the draft Plan. Staff will report back to the Planning Commission suggested changes prior to adoption.

Following the September 26, 2024, public hearing, the PC should deliberate and discuss a recommendation on the Housing and Appendix chapters of the Plan to Council. The PC may direct staff to make additional changes to the draft chapters based on the public testimony received and their deliberation.

A joint study session for the PC to relay their recommendation on the draft Comprehensive Plan to Council is scheduled for October 15, 2024. Final adoption of the full Plan by Council is scheduled for December 10, 2024, and public comments are accepted until that date.

Attachments

1. Draft updated Housing Element hearing version
2. Draft Housing Inventory & Analysis public hearing version
3. AHC housing-focused draft comprehensive plan review comment letter
4. Strikethrough and underline version of Housing Element