



## **CITY OF KIRKLAND**

### **Public Works**

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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Kim Scrivner, Transportation Planner  
Doug McIntyre, Transportation Manager  
Julie Underwood, Director of Public Works

**Date:** September 19, 2023

**Subject:** Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Planning Commission receive a briefing about the TMP update and provide input to staff.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **TMP Update**

The City of Kirkland is in the process of updating the Transportation Master Plan<sup>1</sup>, in coordination with the State-mandated update of the Kirkland Comprehensive Plan<sup>2</sup>, for the next 20-year horizon.

The TMP is its own stand-alone planning document that looks at the broad, twenty-year vision for the future of transportation (see “Relationship Between the TMP and the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element,” below). The purpose of the TMP is to address current and future conditions of Kirkland’s transportation system and consider all modes of travel such as walking and rolling, bicycling, riding transit, and driving. The TMP includes goals and policies that guide future planning and investments in Kirkland’s transportation system, including the creation of a prioritized project list covering the next twenty-years. The currently adopted TMP<sup>1</sup> was last updated in 2015.

The TMP will ensure that growth throughout the City accommodates all modes of travel to create a welcoming, connected, multimodal, and pedestrian-friendly environment. The TMP update will evaluate Kirkland’s transportation system’s existing conditions (i.e. sidewalks, bike lanes, transit service, travel patterns and volumes, areas with traffic delay, pavement conditions, intersection level of service, existing land use, etc.). The update also includes an extensive public engagement process to identify community priorities and inform the policies and project

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<sup>1</sup> 2015 Transportation Master Plan - <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/TMP>

<sup>2</sup> K2044 Comprehensive Plan Update - <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/K2044>

list of the TMP. The update also analyzes future conditions, such as projected travel patterns, planned transportation projects, future growth, and land use. These elements will help the City prioritize projects and programs, develop work programs, and guide consideration of code and ordinance adoption.

### **Relationship Between the TMP and the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element**

While the TMP is a stand-alone planning document, the major elements of the TMP will become the Transportation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The goals, policies, and prioritized project list of the TMP will be carried over into the Transportation Element (or chapter) of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

While the TMP will provide more detail, context, and background about various elements in the *Comprehensive Plan*, the *Comprehensive Plan* also helps inform the development of the TMP. For example, the land use forecasts from the Land Use Element in the *Comprehensive Plan* are used in the TMP to project traffic volumes and inform future conditions.

### **Major Elements in the TMP include:**

- Existing and future conditions
- Goals, policies, and actions
- Multimodal concurrency\* to support ambitious mode-split goals
- Multimodal transportation modeling and alternatives analysis to evaluate the performance of the transportation network and land use plan
- A fiscally constrained project list that includes cost estimation, prioritization, and financial forecasting/balancing
- An update to the performance measures and monitoring program

\*Concurrency is a program that ensures that as the city grows, the transportation system supports that growth. Multimodal concurrency ensures that all modes of transportation are supported through investments and as development occurs.

### **Major Changes and Assumptions include:**

- Reaffirm modal priorities: 1. Pedestrians, 2. Bicyclists, 3. Transit, 4. Motor Vehicles
- Incorporate Kirkland's Complete Streets policy and the Safe Systems Approach from the Vision Zero Action Plan
- Integrate adopted planning efforts since 2015 including:
  1. Vision Zero Action Plan (VZAP), 2022
  2. Active Transportation Plan (ATP), 2022
  3. Safer Routes to School Action Plans (SRTS), 2020
  4. Kirkland Transit Implementation Plan (KTIP), 2019
  5. Intelligent Transportation System Plan (ITSP), 2020
  6. NE 85th Street Station Area Plan, 2023
  7. Citywide Transportation Connections, 2019
  8. Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP), 2022
  9. Studies such as the Lake Washington Boulevard Promenade Study, the NE 128<sup>th</sup> St Corridor Study, Holmes Point Corridor Study, etc.
  10. External Plans (Sound Transit 3, King County Metro's long-range plan, MetroConnects)
- Incorporate and/or expand on topics such as:
  - Equity and inclusiveness
  - Sustainability

- Transportation related technology and innovation
- Micro-mobility/mobility hubs
- Parking and curb management

There has been a lot of progress implementing the 2015 TMP including, the completion of modal plans and various studies. That provides a foundation for the future project list based on those planning activities. The TMP update will compile the projects from those plans into a comprehensive list and reconcile any overlaps. Those plans also provide additional context for policy updates. Additionally, the TMP will provide guidance on competing project priorities through the prioritization process. There are also emerging topics that were not addressed in the 2015 plan that now can be addressed through the TMP update. Some examples include looking at how freight and trucks navigate the city, electrification for emerging battery powered vehicles, micro-mobility programs such as bike share or curb management that considers increased ride-share, delivery services and other uses of curb space such as parklets or seating areas.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

### **Activities**

Beginning in early 2023, staff conducted a substantial number of public outreach and community engagement activities to implement the community engagement plan. Below is a summary of community engagement activities accomplished to date some of which are discussed in greater detail below:

- Development of a Community Engagement Plan<sup>3</sup> for the entire Comprehensive Plan Update effort, prepared by Broadview Planning consultants
- Equity Review Report<sup>4</sup> of existing Comprehensive Plan elements, prepared by EcoNorthwest
- Project webpage updates and listserv email announcements
- Transportation and Land Use survey
- Focus Group recruitment focused on priority populations
- Focus Group meetings for Transportation and Land Use elements
- Publication of informational handouts (included introduction materials translated into the four most common languages in the City besides English)
- Presentations to community groups, Boards, and Commissions (Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, Youth Council, Senior Council, Human Services Commission), and Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods
- Community events (Town Hall on Bikes, Eastside for All event, Kirkland City Hall for All event)
- Tabling events (seasonal events, Evergreen Health Fair)
- Class projects with Lake Washington High School and student surveys
- Community-wide visioning event (January 2023)
- Virtual Community-wide meeting (June 2023) specific to the TMP

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3 K2044 Community Engagement Plan - <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/community-engagement-plan-k2044-kirkland-comprehensive-plan-finalwappendixabc12152022.pdf>

4 Equity Review Report - <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/equity-review-report-kirkland-comprehensive-plan-econorthwest-final20221108.pdf>

## **Survey Results**

The initial outreach for the TMP was coordinated with the *Comprehensive Plan* outreach, specifically linking with the Land Use element because transportation and land use are intricately linked. This included the Transportation and Land Use survey, which was open for several months beginning in March, 2023, and ending on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The survey asked questions about commute patterns and typical travel modes as well as interest in using other modes (such as what would influence a person to take another mode of travel). There were over 500 responses to the survey (see Attachment A - Transportation and Land Use Survey Results).

## **Focus Groups**

Reflecting Kirkland's emphasis on reaching priority populations, the Community Engagement Plan<sup>3</sup> recommended several focused conversations with targeted recruitment to underrepresented groups. Larger community-wide discussions, which tend to attract people more comfortable with City planning processes, were paired with two focused conversations that recruited priority populations to lift up their often underrepresented perspectives.

Recruitment for the focus groups started with priority populations, but anyone interested was welcome. There was a lot of interest in both the Transportation and Land Use focus groups, which met twice in May, 2023, and had twenty-three people attend the first session and fourteen people attend the second. The people in the focus group ranged in age from 25-65+, 60% white, 40% BIPOC, ~30% representation from the LBGTQIA+ community and included a wide range of incomes. About 50% of the focus group participants identified as having a household income of over \$100,000 per year (22% preferred not to answer). Participants were almost split 50/50 by identified gender (one person preferred not to answer).

The first focus group session gave an overview of the Land Use and Transportation Elements, shared the Guiding Principles from the 2015 TMP and asked for thoughts on the future of transportation (changes, desires, challenges, etc.). At the second session, the group reviewed the revised guiding principles and offered additional comments.

## **Transportation Commission**

The Transportation Commission has discussed the TMP at five of its meetings in 2023, including workshops in May and June. At the workshops, the Transportation Commission vetted and updated the proposed guiding principles, worked with staff to recommend the updated goals, and gave detailed feedback to staff on updates to the TMP policies.

Staff will continue having regular briefings with the Transportation Commission through the TMP update process, and the Transportation Commission is scheduled to have a joint meeting with the Planning Commission in October.

## **Ongoing Community Engagement**

Information from the initial outreach helped to inform the guiding principles which, in turn, helps inform the update to the goals, policies, and project prioritization. Once the project list is compiled and prioritization measures are created, an additional round of engagement with the community, the focus groups, the Transportation and Council will occur. The final stage in the engagement process will be sharing the draft plan once it is developed.

## **DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Guiding principles were used in the development of the 2015 TMP (page 9, vii)<sup>1</sup>. Updating the guiding principles afforded an opportunity to reassess the needs and challenges people experience with transportation in Kirkland and what was missing from the previous TMP.

Staff began the conversations with the focus groups and with the Transportation Commission by outlining the guiding principles from the 2015 TMP and asking the following questions:

*How do you see transportation changing and what does that look like in the future? Do the changes in transportation you think might happen match what you would want to see? What do you see are the biggest challenges to getting to your vision or what you aspire to?*

As a result of the input, the following draft guiding principles are proposed:

- **Create a More Equitable and Multimodal Transportation System for All Users:** Improve travel options that are inclusive for people of all ages and abilities while reducing reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips. This includes investing in safe and connected walking and bicycling infrastructure, connections to transit and activity centers, advocating for increased transit service that connects locally and regionally and encouragement programs that reduce trips and increases education about travel options. Support innovative transit services such as local shuttle services, ride share services and micro-mobility options through advocacy, supporting new innovative services and assessing curb space management policies.
- **Safety:** Ensure the safety of people using the transportation system, particularly those walking and bicycling who are the most vulnerable. This includes sidewalk connections and maintenance, providing more connected and protected bike lanes as well as separating people walking and bicycling from each other on pathways and trails, and assessing vehicle speeds. Ensure people who are aging in our community and people with disabilities have safe infrastructure to get around without encountering barriers or having to drive.
- **Sustainability** includes both sustainability of our environment and sustainability of our systems. Environmental benefits of walk/bike infrastructure and reducing the number of car trips are not just for personal health but support improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gases and reduced congestion. System sustainability involves ensuring proper maintenance of our transportation system, such as ensuring we have budget and staff to properly repair sidewalks, sweeping bike lanes, maintaining trails, and providing general roadway and pavement maintenance.
- **Innovation and Electrification:** With new technologies and innovative transportation solutions as well as more people using electric bikes and electric vehicles, investment in infrastructure should support these uses with increased access to charging stations (for all vehicle types), increased awareness, and support for innovative services. This includes policy and regulations that govern shared use environments between e-bikes and pedestrians, infrastructure for locking/storage, parking policies, etc.

At this stage, there is no prioritization, and these may change based on Council feedback, but the draft language proposed has been endorsed by the Transportation Commission.

## TMP GOALS UPDATE

The table below outlines proposed changes to the goals from the 2015 TMP as endorsed by the Transportation Commission.

2015 TMP Goals			Proposed Action	Proposed Updates		
Goal Name		Goal Statement		Proposed Goal Name		Proposed Goal Statement
T-0	Safety	By 2035 eliminate all transportation related fatal and serious injury crashes in Kirkland.	Maintain.	T-0	Safety	By 2035 eliminate all transportation related fatal and serious injury crashes in Kirkland.
T-1	Walking	Complete a safe network of sidewalks, trails and crosswalks where walking is comfortable and the first choice for many trips.	Combine and update for consistency with the Active Transportation Plan and because there are many overlaps (greenways, CKC, etc.).	T-1	Active Transportation	Create and maintain a high-quality network of complete and connected low-stress walking and bicycling facilities, including sidewalks, trails, crosswalks, and bikeways making active transportation a first choice for many trips
T-2	Biking	Interconnect bicycle facilities that are safe, nearby, easy to use and popular with people of all ages and abilities.				
T-3	Public Transportation	Support and promote a transit system that is recognized as a high value option for many trips.	Update to better define what actions the city actually can and will take	T-2	Public Transportation	Through coordination with regional agencies and improvements within the City of Kirkland, the city will support and promote a transit system as a high value option for many trips.
T-4	Motor Vehicles	Provide for efficient and safe vehicular circulation recognizing congestion is present during	Update name of goal to better reflect goal statement.	T-3	Vehicle Network Management	Provide for efficient and safe vehicular circulation recognizing congestion is present during parts of most days.

		parts of most days.				
T-5	Link to Land Use	Create a transportation system that supports Kirkland's land use plan.	Update goal statement to be more specific	T-7	Land Use	Coordinate transportation and land use planning and policies to ensure future growth is livable, walkable, accessible, transit oriented and connected.
T-6	Be Sustainable	As the transportation system is planned, designed, built, maintained and operated, provide mobility for all using reasonably assured revenue sources while minimizing environmental impacts.	Update goal statement to specifically call out resources for maintenance and then environmental impacts through storm and GHG reductions.	T-5	Sustainability	Allocate resources to ensure existing assets and future growth of the transportation system are adequately maintained. Minimize transportation environmental impacts through mode shift, stormwater mitigation and other GHG reduction efforts.
			NEW	T-4	Equity	The transportation system should address the mobility needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, income or background while prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable users to advance the City's commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

			NEW	T-6	Technology and Emerging Practices	The transportation system should be flexible and equipped to adapt to new technologies and innovative solutions that expand mobility choices for people living and working in Kirkland.
T-7	Be an Active Partner	Coordinate with a broad range of groups; public and private to help meet Kirkland's transportation goals.	REMOVE. Add partnerships to policies and actions under other goals.			
T-8	Transportation Measurement	Measure and report on progress toward achieving goals and completing actions.	REMOVE. Goals will be measurable, and the performance monitoring program will address this as a key component of the plan, not a goal.			

While the above summarizes the Transportation Commission's feedback, the following are additional comments from staff for Council consideration for their September 19<sup>th</sup> Study Session.

- **The Sustainability goal** in the 2015 TMP was focused on sustainably maintaining our transportation system while mentioning minimizing environmental impacts. The updated proposed goal language maintains this structure keeping maintenance (and sustainable funding for maintenance) under this goal while strengthening the sustainability of air (greenhouse gas reductions) and water. Council may consider creating a separate maintenance goal.
- Both **Sustainability and Equity** are cross-cutting topics. Council could consider combining these into one goal as elements of these would be included throughout other goals in the respective policies and actions.
- The goal of **Be an Active Partner** is proposed to be removed as policies and actions related to partnerships will be included under the other goals. However, Council may consider keeping this or reframing due to the importance of maintaining partnerships with external organizations such as Sound Transit, King County Metro, and the Puget Sound Regional Council, to emphasize the priority of participating in regional transportation planning work.



Staff will summarize to the Planning Commission Council's discussion of the proposed goal updates. Changes to policies will be discussed at future Transportation Commission and City Council meetings. The 2022 Progress Report on key measures of the TMP is currently available<sup>5</sup>.

## **NEXT STEPS IN TMP DEVELOPMENT**

The next stage of the TMP Update is to develop the prioritized and fiscally constrained twenty-year project list. To do so, a comprehensive list of all identified projects is being compiled into one unified list that includes projects from the 2015 TMP that have not been implemented, projects from various adopted plans and studies, as well as additional projects identified by staff (typically related to safety and operations), and suggestions by the public.

The project prioritization process will include criteria that are clear and measurable. This, at a minimum, will include criteria such as assessing safety (using crash data and trends), equity, and access (to transit, to destinations, etc.). Council input on the project prioritization criteria will aid the TMP project team in creation of the project prioritization framework. The prioritization process will be critical because the needs identified through the various modal plans—and ultimately our comprehensive project list—likely will exceed projected funding resources over the twenty-year horizon.

## **ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND KEY QUESTIONS**

Staff will be working closely with the Transportation Commission on details related to policy updates, projects lists and prioritization, etc. However, the goal of engagement with the Planning Commission is to ensure important topics and perspectives are considered in relation to other Comprehensive Plan elements the Planning Commission is providing direction for, and particularly as they relate to land use data and assumptions. The second goal is to relay progress and inform the Planning Commission about the overall progress of the update.

As the policies are updated, ensuring that key elements and emerging topics are addressed is critical. There are some topics that are new which include:

- Greater emphasis on equity and sustainability
- Greater protection for active transportation users
- Curb management and parking topics
- Technology and innovation
- Flexible transit

Questions for Planning Commission:

- Does the Commission have any questions about the above new topic areas for the TMP?
- Does the Commission have any comments or direction related to the above topics?

## **NEXT STEPS FOR THE PROCESS**

Staff will report on City Council's feedback on the Guiding Principles, the updated goal structure, and prioritization criteria from their September 19<sup>th</sup> Study Session. Then, at the October 25<sup>th</sup> Joint meeting with the Transportation Commission, staff will seek guidance on topics related to the prioritization of projects and programs. After the October 25<sup>th</sup> Joint meeting, the Transportation Commission will assume the main responsibility for reviewing the TMP update and the next time the Planning Commission will review this work will be as part of the Transportation Element in the overall Comprehensive Plan update work.

The overall timeline for the TMP update is in sync with the K2044 *Comprehensive Plan* which is scheduled for adoption in the fall of 2024.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Transportation and Land Use Survey Results
2. 2015 TMP Goals and Policies Summary