



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Planning and Building**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Lindsay Levine, AICP, Senior Planner  
Scott Guter, AICP, Senior Planner  
Allison Zike, AICP, Deputy Planning & Building Director  
Adam Weinstein, AICP, Planning & Building Director

**Date:** September 19, 2023

**Subject:** **2044 Comprehensive Plan Update Briefing – Housing Element and Human Services Element**

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission receive a briefing on the 2044 Comprehensive Plan update process as it relates to updates to the Housing Element and the Human Services Element. Staff has grouped these two elements together for the purposes of community outreach and this briefing because the policies therein are interconnected and complementary to each other. The Planning Commission will hold the public hearing on the revised Housing Element and Human Services Element goals and policies in 2024 as a formal part of the legislative process to amend the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council will establish the final policy direction for the two elements based on a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

This memo contains:

- Information on regulatory and consistency requirements related to the Housing and Human Services Elements;
- What staff has learned from community input on the Housing and Human Services Elements thus far;
- List of potential study issues or policy changes being explored for the Housing and Human Services Elements; and
- Next steps.

## KIRKLAND 2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (K2044) UPDATE PROCESS OVERVIEW

The City of Kirkland is in the process of conducting a state-mandated update of the Kirkland Comprehensive Plan with a target completion date of mid-2024 (the State deadline for City Council adoption is December 31, 2024). The Comprehensive Plan is the primary citywide guide for how we, as a community, manage growth over the next 20 years (with a horizon year of 2044) in terms of land use, transportation, and the public facilities and services necessary to support that growth. The Comprehensive Plan also

includes goals and policies for how the City addresses housing, sustainability and climate change, economic development, parks and open space, human services, and more.

The two-year Comprehensive Plan Update (referred to hereafter as K2044) process will be an opportunity to reflect on the kind of community we aspire to become and create a policy roadmap to achieve that vision. The process involves staff in each department, City Boards and Commissions, and an extensive community engagement process focused specifically on reaching a wide diversity of perspectives as has been discussed with Planning Commission in the previous briefing on the K2044 Community Engagement Plan on December 8, 2022<sup>1</sup>. Simultaneously the Transportation Master Plan is being updated guided by the Public Works Transportation Division and the Transportation Commission.

The last major update to the Kirkland Comprehensive Plan was in 2015. The K2044 Plan update will need to be consistent with updated State, regional, and King County policies and plans, along with local plans, discussed further in the element subsections below. As part of the process to certify Kirkland's K2044 Plan, the State, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and King County will review drafts and approve the final Plan, once adopted by City Council.

Additional information about the update process can be found in the briefing memos from the Planning Commission's April 28, 2022<sup>2</sup> and City Council's December 8, 2022<sup>3</sup> meetings. Meeting packets, presentations, and other documents and resources are available on the City's K2044 Comprehensive Plan update webpage at [Kirklandwa.gov/K2044](http://Kirklandwa.gov/K2044).<sup>4</sup>

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Beginning in early 2023, Staff has conducted a substantial number of public outreach and community engagement activities to implement the community engagement plan.<sup>5</sup> Below is a summary of community engagement activities accomplished to date, or in progress as of September 2023:

- EcoNorthwest Equity Review Report<sup>6</sup> of existing Comprehensive Plan elements;
- Project webpage updates and list serv email announcements;
- Community-wide Visioning event (January 2023);

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/planning-commission-december-8-2022-k2044-update-overview.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/planning-commission-april-28-2022-comprehensive-plan-engagement-plan-econw-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/city-council-dec-13-2022-comprehensive-plan-update-engagement-plan-econw-report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Code-and-Plan-Amendment-Projects/Kirkland-2044-Comprehensive-Plan-Update>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/community-engagement-plan-k2044-kirkland-comprehensive-plan-finalwappendixabc12152022.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/planning-amp-building/kirkland-2044-comp-plan/equity-review-report-kirkland-comprehensive-plan-econorthwest-final20221108.pdf>

- Surveys (651 responses have been received for the Housing and Human Services survey to date. The survey will be open until the end of October);
- Focus Group recruitment focused on priority populations;
- Focus Group meetings for Sustainability, Climate Change & Environment; Parks; Land Use; Transportation; Housing; and Human Services elements;
- Publication of informational handouts (included materials translated into Arabic, Farsi, Portuguese, Russian, simplified Chinese, and Spanish);
- Presentations to community groups, Boards and Commissions (City Council, Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, Youth Council, Senior Council, Human Services Commission), neighborhood associations, and Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods;
- Tabling at community events ( Evergreen Health Fair, Town Hall on Bikes, Eastside for All event, Grand Opening of Totem Lake Connector Bridge, Re-opening of 132nd Square Park, King County Promotores Network Health Fair, Kirkland City Hall for All event);
- Tabling at other locations and events (Peter Kirk Community Center, seasonal events, farmers markets); and,
- Class projects with Lake Washington and Juanita high schools and student surveys.

## **HOUSING ELEMENT**

### **Background**

Washington State’s Growth Management Act (GMA) Section 36.70A.070<sup>7</sup> RCW, amended with House Bill 1220 (2021), requires counties and cities to include a Housing Element within their comprehensive plans to plan and accommodate housing that is affordable to all economic segments of the population, promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourages preservation of existing housing stock. Counties and cities must conduct a housing needs assessment, set affordable housing targets, and monitor performance to meet those targets. Counties and cities may not prohibit emergency shelters, transitional housing, or permanent supportive housing in any zones in which residential dwelling units or hotels are allowed, and must adopt regulations allowing accessory dwelling units. Kirkland has already fulfilled the bulk of these requirements and will coordinate with King County, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) and other Eastside cities on needed revisions to the Housing Element.

The existing Housing Element contains 3 goals and 17 related policies. Attachment 1 contains a list of the existing goals and policies without the corresponding narrative text. The entire existing Housing Element can be accessed online.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70a.070>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Kirkland/html/KirklandCP07/KirklandCP07.html>

**Housing Need**

For the year 2044, Kirkland’s allocation of King County’s growth targets is summarized below. Keep in mind that, as shown in the table below, the City has capacity in its existing Comprehensive Plan for 19,595 additional housing units and 36,082 additional jobs (see Table 1 note, below), which provides significant flexibility to shape its land use future with the assurance that growth targets will be accommodated, particularly when paired with the additional growth that can be accommodated as part of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and Kirkland Zoning Code (KZC) amendments for the NE 85<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area Plan. We would also note that the existing capacity numbers do not fully incorporate the additional capacity associated with Kirkland’s middle housing program.

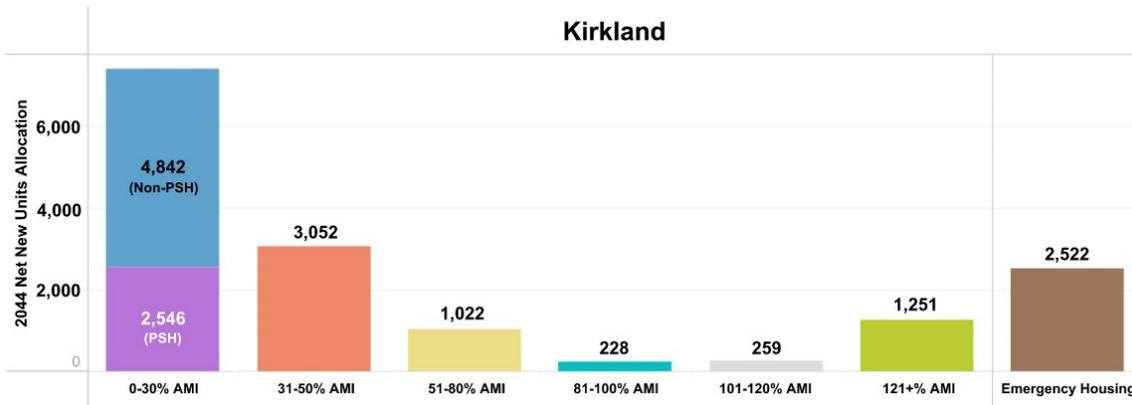
**Table 1: Growth Targets**

HOUSING UNITS			JOBS		
Existing (2018)	<b>K2044 Target (2019-2044)</b>	Existing Capacity (2023)*	Existing (2018)	<b>K2044 Target (2019 – 2044)</b>	Existing Capacity (2023)*
38,656	<b>13,200 (above 2018 existing)</b>	19,595	49,280	<b>26,490 (above 2018 existing)</b>	36,082

*\*Note: Estimate pending completion of the City’s 2044 capacity analysis. Number reflects approximate remaining capacity from K2035 Plan (units/jobs planned for but not achieved) + additional capacity adopted in NE 85<sup>th</sup> St Station Area Plan*

**Kirkland’s Affordable Housing Targets**

Consistent with the GMA, the King County Planning Policies establish that cities must plan for affordable housing based on a range of income levels and provides allocation of housing needs to local jurisdictions. Table 2 shows King County’s housing needs allocation for Kirkland (13,200) by income levels expressed in Area Median Income (AMI). The table also shows the number of emergency housing units that Kirkland is required to accommodate. Kirkland will need to show how our land use designations will provide sufficient capacity for these affordable housing targets at the respective income levels, and show how the City will accommodate for its share of emergency housing needs with the K2044 update.



**Table 2: Kirkland’s Allocated Housing Needs by AMI plus Emergency Housing Accommodation.** Note: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing

### Statutory and Policy Guidance for Update

The GMA requires that plan elements be consistent with each other, relevant county-wide planning policies, and relevant multi-county planning policies. Attachment 2 includes a summary of recommendations from regional and local plans that pertain to the Housing Element.

The Comprehensive Plan Update will align with or incorporate recommendations and goals from City plans such as the DEIB 5-Year Roadmap,<sup>9</sup> Housing Strategy Plan,<sup>10</sup> relevant updates about Human Services since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2015, and suggestions from the EcoNorthwest Equity Review Report.

### Community Engagement Comment Themes

Comments from the community through the Housing and Human Services survey (Attachment 5) and discussion at meetings, public outreach events, and focus groups include the following themes:

- More affordable housing is needed;
- More diverse housing options to help address affordability are needed;
- Concern for displacement of renters and seniors;
- More housing should be focused within walking distance of transit;
- More housing should be suitable for seniors and people with disabilities; and,
- Policies should help lower-income populations attain home ownership.

### Housing Element Study Issues

Throughout the K2044 Update process, staff reviewed feedback from various meetings, focus groups, and public comments and compiled policy/study issues that staff will consider when updating the elements, in addition to updates that are required and alignment with various City, State, and regional plans. The below is a list of key policy issues for the Housing Element; previously discussed with the PC at their July 27, 2023

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/roadmap-as-adopted\\_1.pdf](https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/roadmap-as-adopted_1.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/planning-amp-building/housing-strategy-plan-1.pdf>

meeting:

- Encourage more middle housing and other creative housing types in compliance with new State requirements;
- Reduce the number of residential zoning districts to encourage more regulatory consistency citywide;
- Simplify development standards and the permitting process, potentially incorporating Form-Based Code principles, to increase predictability and encourage more development;
- Study how to encourage more housing near existing and planned future transit;
- Consider more compact development such as converting medium density areas to high density areas (to anticipate return of a state transit-oriented development (TOD bill)) and upper middle housing (up to 12-unit multiplex);
- Eliminating maximum densities (in terms of numbers of units per acre) in multifamily and mixed-use districts (i.e., densities would be governed by building envelopes);
- Study minimum densities for more efficient use of available land;
- Up-zone key residential areas (near transit and to build out 10-minute neighborhoods) to increase housing choices affordable to a wider range of incomes (mixed use/mixed income);
- Up-zone or otherwise incentivize the redevelopment of properties owned by religious organizations to accommodate development of affordable housing;
- Reduce parking requirements to reduce housing development costs;
- Anticipate increased density with Community-Initiated Amendment Requests
- Study city-wide inclusionary zoning requirements;
- Consider transfer of development rights to preserve existing affordable housing;
- Consider City-wide commercial linkage fees to better tie economic growth with housing growth;
- Consider policies that require new detached dwelling units to be “ADU-ready,” especially within large homes or large lots, while ensuring that new requirements do not add significant time or process to the permitting process;
- Consider policies that require ADUs to be incorporated into newly-built residential projects, and require new detached dwelling unit projects to be designed to accommodate future ADUs;
- Consider policies that encourage retention of older, smaller homes;
- Consider policies to provide direct assistance to help low- and moderate income households buy a first home; and,
- Consider policies that address displacement of low- and moderate-income households through relocation assistance.

## **HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT**

### **Background**

The existing Human Services Element goals and policies define the City’s role in fostering diversity and equity, and supporting nonprofit organizations that serve the physical, economic, social, and quality of life needs of members of the community. The

Human Services Element supports the provision of services that are utilized by those who have historically faced barriers in accessing human services because of identities that include race, gender, age, ability/disability, and/or economic status. The Element also supports measures to ensure that Human Services programs are available and accessible to all.

The Human Services Element is used by the Human Services Division (within the Parks and Community Services Department) and the Human Services Commission as a general guidance document and to help guide funding decisions, since the Element sets overarching goals and policies for the provision of Human Services in the City.

The existing Human Services Element contains 6 goals and 26 related policies. Attachment 3 contains a list of the existing goals and policies without the corresponding narrative text. The entire existing Housing Element can be accessed online.<sup>11</sup>

### **Statutory and Policy Guidance for Update**

The Human Services Element is an optional part of the Comprehensive Plan per the GMA. The GMA requires that plan elements be consistent with each other, relevant county-wide planning policies, and relevant multi-county planning policies. Attachment 4 includes a summary of recommendations from regional and local plans that pertain to the Human Services Element.

The Comprehensive Plan Update will align with or incorporate recommendations and goals from City plans such as the DEIB 5-Year Roadmap, Housing Strategy Plan, relevant updates about Human Services since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2015, and suggestions from the EcoNorthwest Equity Review Report.

### **Community Engagement Comment Themes**

Comments from the community through the Housing and Human Services survey (Attachment 5) and discussion at meetings, public outreach events, and focus groups include the following themes:

- Support for low-income renters;
- Need for more affordable housing options;
- Address behavioral and mental health;
- Support for the unhoused;
- Support for the elderly to be able to continue living in Kirkland;
- Encourage development of affordable housing that has services or amenities like grocery stores on-site;
- More programs that address food access;
- Lack of public transportation options to access certain services; and
- Spreading awareness about programs and services.

### **Human Services Element Study Issues**

Throughout the K2044 Update process, staff reviewed feedback from various meetings, focus groups, and public comments and compiled policy/study issues that staff will consider when updating the elements, in addition to updates that are required and alignment with various City, State, and regional plans. The following is a list of key

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Kirkland/html/KirklandCP12B/KirklandCP12B.html>

policy issues for the Human Services Element; previously discussed with the PC at their July 27, 2023 meeting:

- Incentivizing the creation of more affordable housing (this will primarily be addressed in the Housing Element, but the Human Services Element will have supportive policy);
- Incentivizing the creation of housing for seniors (this will primarily be addressed in the Housing Element, but the Human Services Element will have supportive policy);
- Recognize the evolving nature of the provision of services to address mental health issues, drug addiction, and homelessness across federal, State, and regional agencies and other organizations, and describe how the City could step in to fund or fill gaps;
- Include information about new agencies, programs, and facilities in the human services field since the Comprehensive Plan was last updated, such as the Regional Crisis Response Agency (RCR), and King County's Health Through Housing Initiative (La Quinta Inn in Kirkland);
- Work towards obtaining reasonable and fair allocation of King County tax dollars (Veterans and Human Services Levy) to City of Kirkland to support initiatives such as Health Through Housing, King County Regional Housing Authority, RCR Agency, homeless outreach, and other services the City provides; and
- Improve awareness of available services and resources

#### **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Does the Planning Commission have any questions on the regulatory requirements or existing Housing or Human Services goals and policies (from the 2015 update)?
2. Does the Planning Commission have any questions or comments about the study issues?

#### **NEXT STEPS**

For the remainder of 2023, staff will continue to conduct the community engagement activities outlined above to gather public input on each Element, attend Board and Commission meetings for their input, and begin to draft edits to each Element. The goal is to have draft Elements of the Comprehensive Plan completed in early 2024 for review by the various Boards and Commissions, with a tentative Planning Commission public hearing set for Spring 2024 and final adoption by the City Council in fall of 2024.

Other tasks in the K2044 Update scope include conducting a land use capacity analysis to measure against the City's assigned jobs and housing growth targets, update the Community Profile, update the Transportation Master Plan (basis for the Transportation Element), and conduct an environmental review of proposed changes.

Attachments:

1. Existing Housing Element goals and policies
2. Housing Element summary of potential State, Regional, County, local policy

topics for consideration

3. Existing Human Services Element goals and policies
4. Human Services Element Summary of potential State, Regional, County, local policy topics for consideration
5. Housing and Human Services survey summary

cc: File: CAM22-00023

Jen Boone, Human Services Manager