

VI. LAND USE



CHARTING A FUTURE COURSE

◆ RELATIONSHIP TO THE FRAMEWORK GOALS ◆

The **Land Use Element** highlights the following Framework Goals:

- ✓ **FG-1 Maintain and enhance Kirkland's unique character.**
- ✓ **FG-2 Support a strong sense of community.**
- ✓ **FG-3 Maintain vibrant and stable residential neighborhoods and mixed-use development, with housing for diverse incomes, ages, and lifestyles.**
- ✓ **FG-4 Promote a strong and diverse economy.**
- ✓ **FG-5 Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to ensure a healthy environment.**
- FG-6 Identify, protect and preserve the City's historic resources, and enhance the identity of those areas and neighborhoods in which they exist.
- FG-7 Encourage a sustainable community.
- ✓ **FG-8 Maintain and enhance Kirkland's strong physical, visual, and perceptual linkages to Lake Washington.**
- ✓ **FG-9 Provide safety and accessibility for those who use alternative modes of transportation within and between neighborhoods, public spaces, and business districts and to regional facilities.**
- ✓ **FG-10 Create a transportation system which allows the mobility of people and goods by providing a variety of transportation options.**
- FG-11 Maintain existing park facilities, while seeking opportunities to expand and enhance the current range and quality of facilities.
- FG-12 Ensure public safety.
- FG-13 Maintain existing adopted levels of service for important public facilities.
- ✓ **FG-14 Plan for a fair share of regional growth, consistent with State and regional goals to minimize low-density sprawl and direct growth to urban areas.**
- ✓ **FG-15 Solve regional problems that affect Kirkland through regional coordination and partnerships.**
- FG-16 Promote active citizen involvement and outreach education in development decisions and planning for Kirkland's future.
- ✓ **FG-17 Establish development regulations that are fair and predictable.**

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A. INTRODUCTION

Kirkland’s existing pattern of land use has served the City well for many years. Over the next 20 years, the real challenge for the community will be how to preserve existing community character in the face of continued population and employment growth.

Kirkland is part of a regional and interrelated pattern of land uses. Most land in the City is devoted to housing, and the majority of Kirkland residents commute to other communities to work.

The following Table LU-1 shows the percent of land uses based on the City’s total land area in 2001:

Table LU-1
2001 – Land Use by Percent of the City’s Total Land Area

Land Use	Percent
Residential	63
Institutional	9
Parks	8
Commercial	5
Office	4
Industrial	4
Vacant	6
Utilities	1

Source: City of Kirkland “Community Profile”

Kirkland is also a balanced community, providing shops, services and employment both for local residents and for those who live in other communities. In fact, in 2000 Kirkland’s ratio of jobs to households was very close to the same as exists in King County, illustrating that Kirkland had its fair share of jobs. Table LU-2 below shows the job to household ratios for 2000 and 2022 at growth targets.

Table LU-2
Jobs to Household Ratio

	2000	2022 @ Growth Targets
Kirkland	1.40	1.44
King County	1.42	1.50

Source: 2001 King County Annual Growth Report

Kirkland is also a city of neighborhoods – each with its own mix of population, housing, commercial opportunities, and visual features which help form its unique character. The City’s residential neighborhoods are generally strong and well established. They are also diverse in housing type, size, style, history, maturity and affordability. The Citywide residential density increased between 1991 and 2001 from an average of 6.9 to 7.16 dwelling units per residential used acre. More mixed-use residential/commercial centers have developed, including Juanita Village and Downtown Kirkland.

The commercial areas are healthy, offer a broad range of goods and services, and provide a strong tax base to help fund public services and facilities. Kirkland has a diverse economic base with several retail centers, mixed-use retail/office districts, a regional health care center, auto dealerships, business parks, industrial complexes and home-based businesses.

More information on existing land uses can be found in the City’s *Community Profile* document available in the Planning Department at Kirkland City Hall.

Between 2003 and 2022, the City will grow by nearly 9,697 new residents and 8,800 jobs, resulting in increased needs for housing, commercial floorspace, and public services. Under the Growth Management Act, planning policies seek to direct growth to existing and emerging urban areas within the metropolitan region. The King County Growth Management Planning Council has determined that Kirkland must plan to accommodate 5,480 new households and 8,800 new jobs over the next 20 years. These increases in households and jobs are referred to as “growth targets.” The term “households” refers to occupied units.

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A regional trend toward smaller household sizes across all age groups will mean that the City's housing supply will have to grow at an even faster rate than the population, and that the type and size of housing units may need to adjust.

While continued increases in services-sector employment may provide more opportunities for Kirkland residents to work and shop in their community, it may also mean lower wages – impacting housing affordability.

Future growth will raise other issues relating to land use: special needs housing, increased traffic congestion, diminished natural resources and challenges to locate regional facilities. A larger proportion of elderly residents will focus new attention on the special housing and transportation needs of this group. Land use relationships which support transit and provide shops and services closer to home will be important for those with decreased mobility. And, with growth not only in Kirkland, but throughout the Puget Sound region, the community will continue to suffer from the problems of traffic congestion, diminishing natural resources, and the need to find locations for new regional facilities. Regional solutions will be needed to solve these problems.

Issues which must be addressed by the Land Use Element include:

- ◆ How to plan for the 2022 household and employment growth targets established by the King County Growth Management Planning Council.
- ◆ How to manage the new growth to protect the residential character of the community, while allowing for new and innovative development that responds to changing household needs.
- ◆ How to preserve a diversity of employment opportunities and maintain viable commercial areas.
- ◆ How to use the pattern of land use to minimize traffic congestion and protect local air quality.

- ◆ How to maintain a land use pattern that can be efficiently and effectively served by public services and utilities.
- ◆ How to protect Kirkland's environmentally sensitive areas, open space corridors, drainage basins, steep slopes, and shoreline as new housing units and commercial floorspace are developed.
- ◆ How to respond to the regional responsibility to help site new regional facilities.

The Land Use Element works together with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan to answer these questions. While the Land Use Element addresses accommodating growth and sets out general residential siting criteria, the Housing Element more specifically addresses issues of neighborhood character, affordability, and special needs housing.

The Transportation Element identifies the improvements needed to support the land use pattern established by the Land Use Element.

Growth management concerns identified in this element, such as preservation of community character, relationship to the natural environment, and adequate public and human services are amplified in the Community Character, Natural Environment, Parks and Recreation, Capital Facilities, Human Services, Utilities, and Public Services Elements.

Finally, the Land Use Element's discussion of commercial areas is strongly tied to the Economic Development Element. Kirkland's goal to "strengthen the unique role and economic success of Kirkland's commercial areas" (Economic Development Goal ED-3) is echoed in the Land Use Element.

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B. THE LAND USE CONCEPT

The fundamental goal of the Land Use Element is to maintain a balanced and complete community by retaining the community's character and quality of life, while accommodating growth and minimizing traffic congestion and service delivery costs. To accomplish this, the Element:

- ◆ Seeks a balanced and complete community with shops, services and employment close to home; numerous civic activities and entertainment options; high-quality educational facilities; numerous parks; and a variety of housing choices.
- ◆ Identifies the values which must be weighed in managing growth. Goals and policies promote a land use pattern that is orderly, compact, well-designed, and responsive both to the natural and physical environment.
- ◆ Proposes a land use pattern that supports a multi-modal transportation system and results in more efficient service delivery. Placing urban neighborhoods around commercial areas – called “centers” or “villages” in other communities – allows residents to walk or bicycle to corner stores or neighborhood centers, and then connect by transit to other commercial areas. High-capacity transit could connect and serve larger commercial areas, both inside and outside of the community.
- ◆ Protects existing residential neighborhoods. Goals and policies support a stable nucleus of single-family housing and more housing options. Higher-density residential areas continue to be located near commercial centers and transportation hubs.
- ◆ Supports a range of employment opportunities in the City and sets out standards for vibrant commercial areas. Opportunities for new growth are provided in the Totem Lake Center and Downtown Kirkland. Other existing commercial areas in the City are maintained and strengthened. While not encouraging heavy industry, goals and policies work to preserve opportunities for higher-paying jobs to locate in the City.

- ◆ Encourages preservation of an open space network, including environmentally sensitive areas, recreational facilities, and the shoreline; and
- ◆ Acknowledges the City's regional role in working with other jurisdictions and the County to site regional facilities.

C. LAND USE MAP AND DEFINITIONS

While the Land Use Element goals and policies set forth general standards for locating land uses, the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) indicates, geographically, where certain types of uses may be appropriate.

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map identifies areas for a range of housing densities and a variety of nonresidential uses. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map contains land use designations reflecting the predominant use allowed in each area. These designations are reflected in a broad variety of zoning districts on the Kirkland Zoning Map. Within some of these land use designations are mixed-use developments.

Land use can be affected by regulations that protect sensitive areas and their buffers and limit development on seismic and landslide hazard areas. The Sensitive Areas Map in the Comprehensive Plan depicts the approximate locations of known sensitive areas which include streams, minor lakes, wetlands, drainage basins, and 100-year floodplains. The geological map in the Comprehensive Plan notes the approximate locations of seismic and landslide hazard areas.

The land use categories mapped on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map are:

Low-Density Residential – single-family residential uses from one to nine dwelling units per acre for detached residential structures and one to seven dwelling units per acre for attached residential structures in certain low-density areas where the Plan allows clustered development through a PUD. Detached single-

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family dwelling units are physically separated by setbacks from other dwelling units. Attached single-family dwelling units, only allowed in specified areas, are physically connected by means of one or more common walls; each unit has its own exterior entrance; dwelling units are not stacked above or below one another; and density and height limitations associated with single-family zoning classifications are met.

Medium-Density Residential – detached residential uses at 10 to 14 dwelling units per acre and attached or stacked residential uses at eight to 14 dwelling units per acre.

High-Density Residential – detached, attached, or stacked residential uses at 15 or more dwelling units per acre.

Office – uses providing services other than production, distribution, or sale or repair of goods or commodities. Depending on the location, these uses may range from single-story, residential-scale buildings to multistory buildings and/or multibuilding complexes.

Office/Multifamily – areas where both office and medium- or high-density residential uses are allowed. Uses may be allowed individually or within the same building.

Commercial – may include retail, office, and/or multifamily uses, depending on the location. Retail uses are those which provide goods and/or services directly to the consumer, including service uses not usually allowed within an office use. Commercial areas can range in size and function from small residential markets serving the immediate neighborhood to regional draws such as in Totem Lake and Downtown.

Industrial – uses predominantly connected with manufacturing, assembly, processing, wholesaling, warehousing, distribution of products, and high technology.

Light Manufacturing Park – places of business activity that includes light manufacturing, high-technology enterprises, warehousing, wholesale activities, and limited retail and office uses. Light manufacturing

park uses do not require large signs or customer parking facilities and do not involve activities which create significant off-site noise, light or glare, odors, smoke, water quality degradation, visual blight, or similar impacts.

Institutions – existing uses such as educational facilities and hospitals for which special planning districts have been developed.

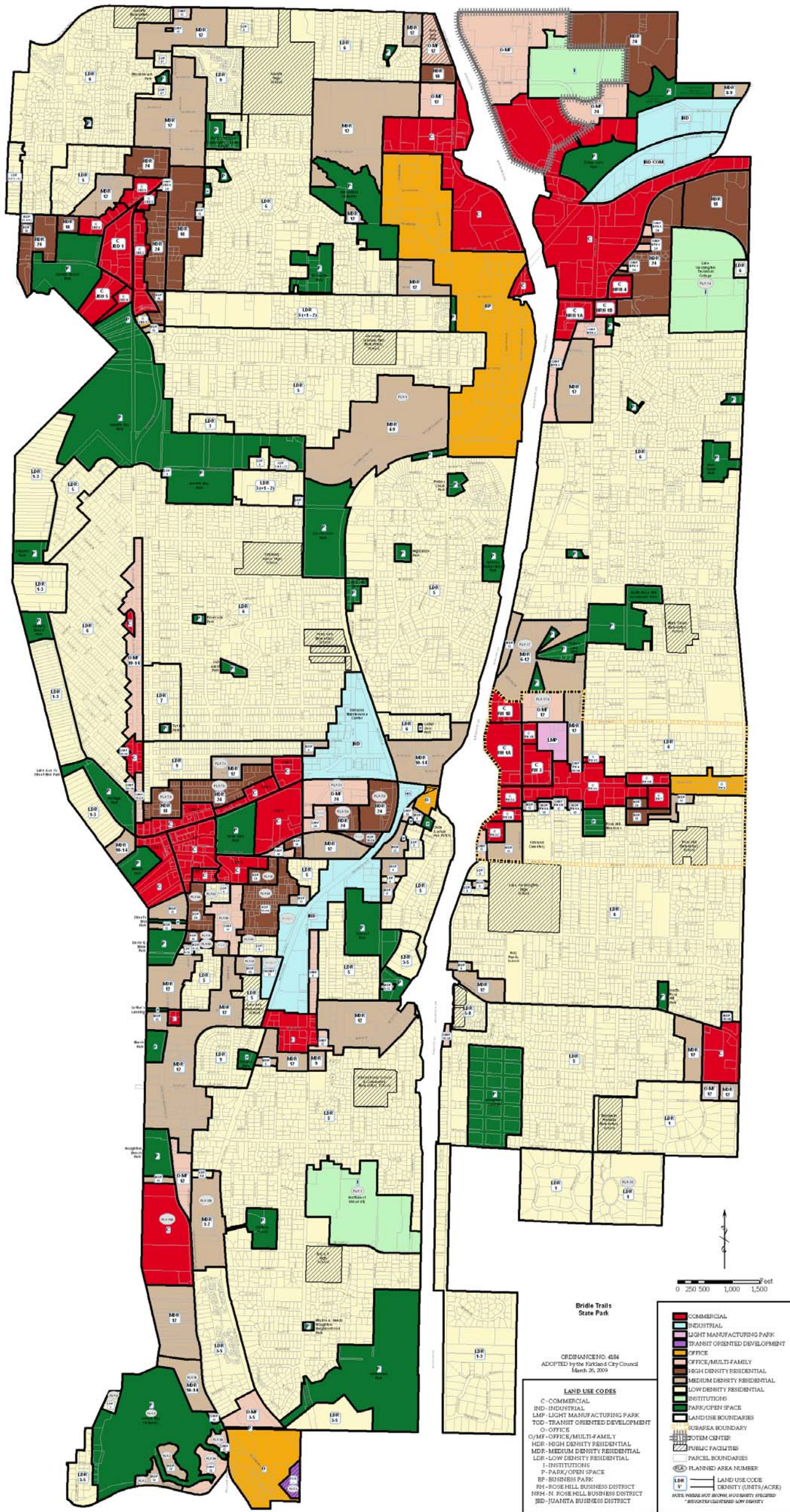
Public Facilities – existing public uses such as schools and government facilities.

Parks/Open Space – natural or landscaped areas used to meet active or passive recreational needs, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and/or preserve natural landforms and scenic views.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) – area where a higher intensity mix of uses is allowed, together with transit facilities, in order to support the increased use of transit and reduce reliance on roads and single-occupant vehicles.

CITY OF KIRKLAND COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE MAP

Department of Planning and Community Development



LU-1 Comprehensive Land Use Map

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Table LU-3 below provides a range of residential densities described in the Comprehensive Plan with comparable zoning classifications.

**Table LU-3
Residential Densities and Comparable Zones**

General Residential Densities	Residential Densities as Specified in Comprehensive Plan in Units per Net Acres (d/a)	Comparable Zoning Classification
LOW DENSITY	Up to 1 d/a	RS – 35,000
	Up to 3 d/a	RS – 12,500
	4 – 5 d/a	RS – 8,500 RS – 7,200
	6 d/a	RS – 7,200
	7 d/a	RS – 6,300
	8 – 9 d/a	RS – 5,000
MEDIUM DENSITY	8 – 9 d/a	RM – 5,000
	10 – 14 d/a	RM – 3,600
HIGH DENSITY	15 – 18 d/a	RM – 2,400
	19 – 24 d/a	RM – 1,800

Higher unit per acre counts may occur within each classification if developed under the City’s PUD, innovative or affordable housing programs.

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D. LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal LU-1: Manage community growth and redevelopment to ensure:

- ◆ An orderly pattern of land use;
- ◆ A balanced and complete community;
- ◆ Maintenance and improvement of the City's existing character; and
- ◆ Protection of environmentally sensitive areas.

Goal LU-2: Promote a compact land use pattern in Kirkland to:

- ◆ Support a multimodal transportation system;
- ◆ Minimize energy and service costs;
- ◆ Conserve land, water, and natural resources; and
- ◆ Efficient use of land to accommodate Kirkland's share of the regionally adopted 20-year population and employment targets.

Goal LU-3: Provide a land use pattern that promotes mobility and access to goods and services and physical activity.

Goal LU-4: Protect and enhance the character, quality, and function of existing residential neighborhoods while accommodating the City's growth targets.

Goal LU-5: Plan for a hierarchy of commercial development areas serving neighborhood, community, and/or regional needs.

Goal LU-6: Provide opportunities for a variety of employment.

Goal LU-7: Establish a coordinated and connected system of open space throughout the City that:

- ◆ Preserves natural systems;
- ◆ Protects wildlife habitat and corridors;
- ◆ Provides land for recreation; and
- ◆ Preserves natural landforms and scenic areas.

Goal LU-8: The City should maintain criteria, regulations and procedures that allow for the siting of essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

By managing and shaping growth in ways that reflect community values, new growth will complement, rather than detract from, existing development. Community values, however, require balance: maintaining existing residential character may not always be supportive of facilitating infill development, or supporting a multimodal transportation system. The viability of some commercial and industrial districts and the ability to achieve compact growth may be impacted by the presence of environmentally sensitive areas. Achieving a balanced and complete community with a full range of shops, services and employment to complement and support the residents while reducing dependence on the transportation system is important to the quality of life. The challenge is to weigh these sometimes conflicting community values and strike a balance. In the long run, and over the breadth of development in Kirkland, then, all values are achieved.

Goal LU-1: Manage community growth and redevelopment to ensure:

- ◆ *An orderly pattern of land use;*
 - ◆ *A balanced and complete community;*
 - ◆ *Maintenance and improvement of the City's existing character; and*
 - ◆ *Protection of environmentally sensitive areas.*
-

Policy LU-1.1: Tailor development regulations to fit unique circumstances.

Traditionally, development regulations have attempted to avert conflict by segregating development types into districts with relatively uniform development characteristics such as permitted uses or height. In many areas of Kirkland, this approach is a reasonable and effective method for regulating development.

In other parts of Kirkland, it may be possible and desirable to have several different types of development located relatively close to each other. Such a blending of development types could help reduce dependence on the automobile and provide greater opportunities

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for innovative mixed-use development. In these areas, development regulations may need to be specially developed to address the district's unique characteristics.

Special development regulations may also be necessary to take account of other factors influencing and shaping new growth.

Policy LU-1.2: Create logical boundaries between land use districts that take into account such considerations as existing land uses, access, property lines, topographic conditions, and natural features.

Boundaries between land use districts should make sense. Where features such as roads or parcel lines cannot be used to identify boundaries, natural features, such as streams or topographical changes, can form distinct edges. Allowed uses should be compatible with adjacent land use districts through physical improvements and/or design elements.

Policy LU-1.3: Encourage attractive site and building design that is compatible in scale and in character with existing or planned development.

Attractive site and building design can create a cohesive and functional development that reflects local character and fits well with surrounding uses. In parts of the City where the community vision has not yet been realized, however, new development should not necessarily look to surrounding uses for design ideas. Instead, the Comprehensive or Neighborhood Plan should be used to provide guidance on desirable characteristics.

Policy LU-1.4: Create an effective transition between different land uses and housing types.

Some of the most sensitive lands to plan are the transition areas between different types of uses. Uses along the boundary of a commercial area may generate impacts on nearby residential uses. Maintaining privacy may be an issue when mixing residential densities. Residential uses in too close a proximity to industrial development may set up nearly unresolvable conflicts with regard to noise and traffic.

Building and site design can act to minimize such conflicts. Buffers, such as fences, berms, or vegetation, located along the boundary of two unlike uses can minimize visual and noise impacts. Buildings might also serve a buffering purpose to the extent that they serve as screens or insulation.

Organization of uses on a site may also ease a transition. For example, on a site including both office and retail uses that adjoins a residential neighborhood, it may be more appropriate to locate the offices closest to the neighbors. In general, office uses have lesser impacts in close proximity to homes than do other commercial land uses.

Within many of the City's commercial areas, mixing of land uses is encouraged to bring shops, services and offices in close proximity to residential uses. These areas provide an immediate market for the commercial services, and convenient shopping and employment opportunities to the residences while also reducing the need to drive.

Policy LU-1.5: Regulate land use and development in environmentally sensitive areas to ensure environmental quality and avoid unnecessary public and private costs.



The Park at Forbes Creek Apartments

Development in natural constraint areas may increase health and safety risks and create other unnecessary costs associated with hazards like landslides, flooding, uneven settlement, erosion, and disrupted subsurface drainage. Public and private costs are also incurred from development in areas with natural amenities or which perform utilitarian or biological functions. The purpose of this policy is to regulate, and in some cases restrict, development activity to en-

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sure a high standard of environmental quality, and to prevent undue costs to property owners, neighbors, and the City.

Goal LU-2: Promote a compact land use pattern in Kirkland to:

- ◆ ***Support a multimodal transportation system;***
 - ◆ ***Minimize energy and service costs;***
 - ◆ ***Conserve land, water, and natural resources; and***
 - ◆ ***Efficient use of land to accommodate Kirkland's share of the regionally adopted 20-year population and employment targets.***
-

Policy LU-2.1: Support a range of development densities in Kirkland, recognizing environmental constraints and community character.

The Countywide Planning Policies establish two broad categories of lands: urban and rural. Urban lands are those which are inside the Urban Growth Area, ranging from the suburban densities of much of the Eastside to the very high urban densities found in downtown Seattle. The Countywide Planning Policies identify all of Kirkland as an urban area.

Policy LU-2.2: Use land efficiently, facilitate infill development or redevelopment, and, where appropriate, preserve options for future development.

As with any natural resource, land can be used either efficiently or inefficiently. The intent of this policy is to ensure that Kirkland's land is used in the most efficient manner possible.

Some land in or adjacent to developed areas has been skipped over as development shifted to outlying areas. In some cases, natural constraints or other factors may have rendered the land unsuitable for development. It is not the intent of this policy to encourage development in environmentally sensitive areas or preclude the use of undeveloped land for open space. However, infill development is encouraged when environmental protection is ensured.

Redevelopment of existing development (for example, converting a parking lot to a new building with structured parking) may also occur as land use plans change. As in all cases, however, the benefits to be achieved under this policy must be weighed against the values expressed in other policies of this Plan – such values as historic preservation and maintenance of existing affordable housing.

This policy also extends the notion of “recycling” to land use. As with other natural resources, land can be developed in a way that permits the land to be used again. For example, in cases where a property owner wishes to retain a large lot for personal use, but subdivide the rest of the property, the option for future subdivision of the large lot should be preserved, if possible.

Policy LU-2.3: Ensure an adequate supply of housing units and commercial floorspace to meet the required growth targets through efficient use of land.

As growth occurs, the need for new housing units and commercial floorspace will increase. Kirkland is required to accommodate growth targets for household units and employment established by the King County Growth Management Planning Council as mandated by the Growth Management Act. The community must balance this need with the desire to retain existing community character and with the City's ability to provide infrastructure and public services to serve the new growth. The City should monitor its existing residential and nonresidential capacity to determine how fast and where new growth is occurring and whether Kirkland can accommodate the required growth targets. Available capacity is a calculation of likely development potential in the foreseeable future based on certain assumptions and factors and assumed to cover a 20-year time horizon. Table LU-4 below shows that the City can accommodate the 2022 growth targets with its available capacity.

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Table LU-4

Comparison of Growth Targets and Available Capacity

	2000 Existing ¹	2022 Growth Targets ²	Available Capacity ³
Housing Units	21,831	27,311 (at 5,480 new households)	28,900
Employment	32,384	41,184 (at 8,800 new jobs)	54,600

Sources:

- 2000 housing units: Office of Financial Management (OFM)
2000 employment: City estimate based on existing nonresidential floor area and information about the typical number of employees/ amount of floor area for different types of nonresidential uses. By comparison, the PSRC estimated 2000 employment was 38,828. Examination of PSRC records found errors suggesting this was a significant overestimate.
- Targets for household and employment growth between 2000 and 2022 were assigned by the King County Countywide Planning Policies. Targeted growth was added to the 2000 totals to establish the 2022 totals.
- City estimates.

LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES

Land use/transportation linkage policies address the relationship between the land use pattern and a multi-modal transportation system. Separation of jobs and housing means longer commute trips – generally accommodated on the City’s roadways either by private automobile or transit. When shops and services are long distances from residential areas, this also translates into additional vehicle or transit trips. Allowing residential and nonresidential uses to locate in closer proximity provide transportation options making walking or bicycling more feasible.

Site design standards also impact the ability of drivers, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists to get around. Policies in this section discuss the importance of considering connections and alternative transportation modes when planning new development. The special needs of industrial development are also addressed.

Goal LU-3: Provide a land use pattern that promotes mobility and access to goods and services.

Policy LU-3.1: Provide employment opportunities and shops and services within walking or bicycling distance of home.

Kirkland presently has a fairly complete network of commercial and employment centers, and many of the City’s residential neighborhoods can easily access a shopping area. This policy attempts to further strengthen the relationship between urban neighborhoods and commercial development areas.



Juanita Village as a mixed-use center

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Policy LU-3.2: Encourage residential development within commercial areas.

Residential development which is incorporated into commercial areas can provide benefits for businesses and residents alike. Housing within commercial areas provides the opportunity for people to live close to shops, services, and places of employment. Conversely, residents living within commercial areas create a localized market for nearby goods and services, provide increased security, and help to create a “sense of community” for those districts.

Residential development within commercial areas should be compatible with and complementary to business activity. Residential use should not displace existing or potential commercial use.

Policy LU-3.3: Consider housing, offices, shops, and services at or near the park and ride lots.

Park and ride facilities provide a potential location for offices, shops, and services serving two sets of customers: nearby residents and transit riders. In addition, housing at these facilities supports transit use. However, the design of these facilities would have to be carefully considered to ensure protection of the surrounding neighborhood. The City should work with Metropolitan King County to develop standards for housing, offices, shops and services at these facilities.

Policy LU-3.4: Provide easy access for industrial development from arterials or freeways. Recognize the potential importance of proximity to rail lines in industrial siting. Avoid industrial access through residential areas.

Because of the heavy truck traffic generally associated with these uses, industrial development should not route traffic through residential neighborhoods. Instead, industrial areas should depend on transportation routes which link them directly to arterials, in close proximity to freeway interchange areas.

Industrial users may also need service by rail, and, in fact, most of Kirkland’s industrial areas are located near the Burlington Northern railroad tracks. Access to rail lines should be preserved for major industrial areas.

Policy LU-3.5: Incorporate features in new development projects which support transit and nonmotorized travel as alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.

Site design can play an important role in encouraging use of alternative transportation modes. Locations of buildings and bus stops on a site, for example, can mean the difference between having transit users walk long distances through the rain or being dropped off at the door. Something as simple as the provision of covered bicycle racks may encourage a would-be cyclist.

Policy LU-3.6: Encourage vehicular and nonmotorized connections between adjacent properties.

Improved pedestrian connections between adjacent properties and to adjacent streets minimizes walking distances and provides safe walking surfaces, which in turn can result in less driving and more opportunities for physical activity. Vehicle connections between adjacent properties reduce congestion on streets, number of turning movements and gasoline consumption. Lack of connections between adjacent properties may mean that a car must return to a busy street and then turn again into an adjoining lot to gain access. Fences or impenetrable landscape buffers may prevent pedestrian connection to the business next door or force long detours out to the sidewalk and then back into the adjoining property. The intent of this policy is to encourage connections and to avoid such unintentional barriers to easy access.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Most of the land in Kirkland is developed with housing of some type whether detached single-family homes, townhouses, or other attached or stacked units. Preservation and protection of these residential neighborhoods is an important goal. Kirkland will continue to be primarily a residential community and that preservation and protection of residential neighborhoods is an important goal.

The notion of preserving community character is one that is explored more fully in the Housing Element and the Neighborhood Plans, where careful review of the features that make a neighborhood unique are

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identified. In the Land Use Element, the general notion of protection of community character is promoted. However, this Element also acknowledges that the community will be growing and that a balance must be struck between providing more housing units and preserving the neighborhoods as they are today.

Several of the most important housing issues – affordability, special needs housing, and accessory units – are not addressed in this Element. They are discussed, instead, in the Housing Element.

Goal LU-4: Protect and enhance the character, quality, and function of existing residential neighborhoods while accommodating the City's growth targets.

Policy LU-4.1: Maintain and enhance Kirkland's single-family residential character.

The community vision, as described in the Vision Statement of this Plan, is that Kirkland's residential areas are diverse with a variety of housing choices including single-family detached, attached, stacked, cottage, carriage styles and accessory dwelling units.

Policy LU-4.2: Locate the most dense residential areas close to shops and services and transportation hubs.

Denser residential areas such as apartments and condominiums should continue to be sited close to or within commercial areas and transportation hubs to increase the viability of the multimodal transportation system.

Policy LU-4.3: Continue to allow for new residential growth throughout the community, consistent with the basic pattern of land use in the City.

Although the Land Use Element states that opportunities for new housing units should be dispersed throughout the community, significantly greater densities are not targeted for low-density neighborhoods. Instead, infill development is expected in these areas based on availability of developable land, while higher densities are clustered near existing commercial areas.

Policy LU-4.4: Consider neighborhood character and integrity when determining the extent and type of land use changes.

Protection of community character is a theme woven throughout the Land Use Element. Community character is most clearly expressed through the Neighborhood Plans. It is the intent of this policy to direct specific consideration of the unique characteristics of neighborhoods, as described in the Neighborhood Plans, before committing to major area-wide residential land use changes.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Commercial land uses are a critical part of the Kirkland community. They provide shopping and service opportunities for Kirkland residents, and also create employment within the City. The tax revenues generated by business help fund the capital facilities and public services that residents enjoy.

In return, the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods provides a main attraction for both businesses and their patrons. The proximity to Lake Washington, the fine system of parks, the availability of a regional medical center with good medical care, top notch educational facilities, the environmental ethic of the community, and quality infrastructure attract outsiders to Kirkland and make the City a good place to do business – for employers, employees, and customers.

Problems that the community faces – traffic congestion, particularly – create concerns for commercial land uses. Ease of transporting goods and adequate parking are especially important. An underlying premise of the Land Use Element, expressed in the Vision Statement, is that, in the future, residents of the City will not drive as much as they do presently to minimize traffic congestion and reduce parking needs. To that end, the Element attempts to promote commercial land use patterns that support alternative transportation modes and locate housing in commercial areas where appropriate.

Along with the need to provide new housing units for future residents, the City will need to designate adequate land area for commercial uses, some of which

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may employ Kirkland residents. If the opportunity for local employment is increased, the high proportion of residents who work outside the community may be reduced. This in turn would ease traffic congestion by shortening commute trips and making other modes of travel to work more feasible.

Currently, a hierarchy of “commercial development areas” exists in the City, based primarily on size and relationship to the regional market and transportation system (see Figure LU-2: Commercial Areas).

Some of Kirkland’s commercial areas serve primarily the surrounding neighborhood; others have a subregional or regional draw. Most of the larger commercial areas are centered around major intersections. They depend on principal arterials, the freeway, or the railroad for goods transport and for bringing in workers or customers. Smaller commercial areas, Neighborhood Centers, for example, have a more localized draw. Residents depend on their neighborhood grocery store, dry cleaners, bank, etc., for everyday needs.

The Land Use Element provides general direction for development standards in commercial areas and describes the future of specific commercial areas in Kirkland. The following terms are used in the discussion of commercial land uses:

Urban Center

An Urban Center is a regionally significant concentration of employment and housing, with direct service by high-capacity transit and a wide range of land uses, such as retail, recreational, public facilities, parks and open space. An Urban Center has a mix of uses and densities to efficiently support transit as part of the regional high-capacity transit system.

Activity Area

An Activity Area is an area of moderate commercial and residential concentration that functions as a focal point for the community and is served by a transit center.

Business District

A Business District is an area that serves the subregional market, as well as the local community. These districts vary in uses and intensities and may include office, retail, restaurants, housing, hotels and service businesses.

Neighborhood Center

A Neighborhood Center is an area of commercial activity dispensing commodities primarily to the neighborhood. A supermarket may be a major tenant; other stores may include a drug store, variety, hardware, barber, beauty shop, laundry, dry cleaning, and other local retail enterprises. These centers provide facilities to serve the everyday needs of the neighborhood. Residential uses may be located on upper stories of commercial buildings in the center.

Residential Market

A residential market is an individual store or very small, mixed-use building/center focused on local pedestrian traffic. Residential scale and design are critical to integrate these uses into the residential area. Uses may include corner grocery stores, small service businesses (social service outlets, daycares), laundromats, and small coffee shops or community gathering places.

Light Industrial/High Technology Area

A Light Industrial/High Technology area serves both the local and regional markets and may include office, light manufacturing, high technology, wholesale trade, storage facilities and limited retail.

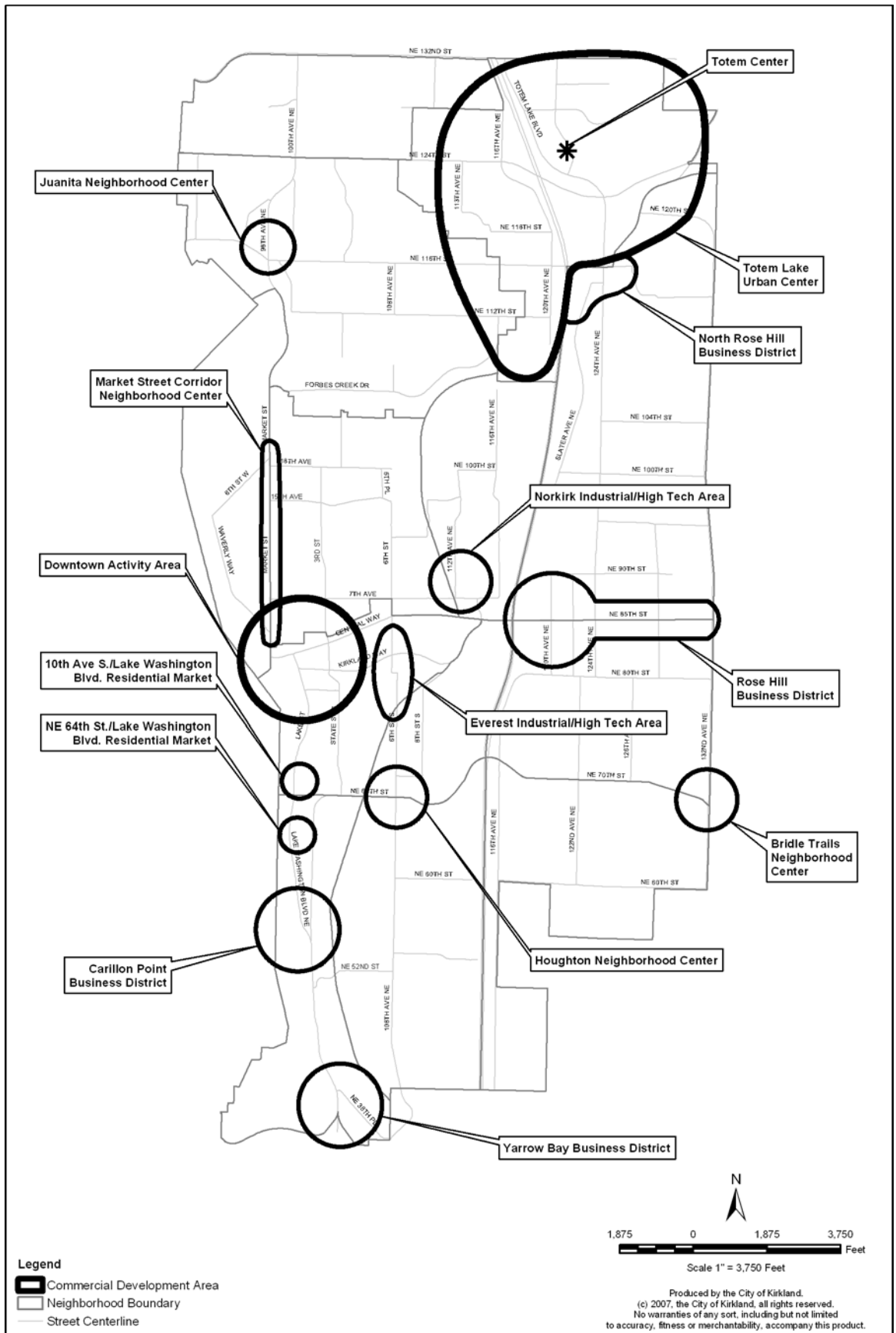


Figure LU-2: Commercial Areas

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Goal LU-5: *Plan for a hierarchy of commercial development areas serving neighborhood, community, and/or regional needs.*

Policy LU-5.1: *Reflect the following principles in development standards and land use plans for commercial areas:*

Urban Design

- ◆ *Create lively and attractive districts with a human scale.*
- ◆ *Support a mix of retail, office, and residential uses in multistory structures.*
- ◆ *Create effective transitions between commercial area and surrounding residential neighborhood.*
- ◆ *Protect residential areas from excessive noise, exterior lighting, glare, visual nuisances, and other conditions which detract from the quality of the living environment.*

Access

- ◆ *Encourage multimodal transportation options, especially during peak traffic periods.*
- ◆ *Promote an intensity and density of land uses sufficient to support effective transit and pedestrian activity.*
- ◆ *Promote a street pattern that provides through connections, pedestrian accessibility and vehicular access.*
- ◆ *Encourage pedestrian travel to and within the commercial area by providing:*
 - *Safe and attractive walkways;*
 - *Close groupings of stores and offices;*
 - *Structured and underground parking to reduce walking distances and provide overhead weather protection; and*

- *Placement of off-street surface parking to the back or to the side of buildings to maximize pedestrian access from the sidewalk(s).*

- ◆ *Promote non-SOV travel by reducing total parking area where transit service is frequent.*

Each commercial area has its own unique attributes, although generalized development guidelines which work to preserve community character and support a multimodal transportation system are described in the above policies. Particular emphasis is placed on improving pedestrian accessibility in commercial areas.

These policies recognize that urban design is important, and that well-designed commercial areas, in partnership with Kirkland's residential neighborhoods, will project a positive community image.

Good urban commercial design complements and enhances adjacent residential areas.

Policy LU-5.2: *Maintain and strengthen existing commercial areas by focusing economic development within them and establishing development guidelines.*

The intent of this policy is that future economic development be concentrated in existing commercial areas. This concentration can help to maintain and strengthen these areas and also promote orderly and efficient growth that minimizes impacts and service expansion costs. Concentration also allows businesses to benefit from proximity to each other.

Intensification, rather than expansion of the boundaries of existing commercial areas into surrounding residential neighborhoods, is desirable. Infilling is preferred, particularly when it would create a denser pattern of development that is focused less on the private automobile and more on the opportunity for multiple transportation modes. Redevelopment may also provide new opportunities, especially in commercial areas where the community vision has changed over time.

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Policy LU-5.3: Maintain and enhance Kirkland’s Central Business District (CBD) as a regional Activity Area, reflecting the following principles in development standards and land use plans:

- ◆ ***Create a compact area to support a transit center and promote pedestrian activity.***
- ◆ ***Promote a mix of uses, including retail, office and housing.***
- ◆ ***Encourage uses that will provide both daytime and evening activities.***
- ◆ ***Support civic, cultural, and entertainment activities.***
- ◆ ***Provide sufficient public open space and recreational opportunities.***
- ◆ ***Enhance, and provide access to, the waterfront.***

As its name implies, the Central Business District (CBD) has historically been the center of commercial activity in Kirkland. As Framework Goal 3 states, Downtown is also a residential, civic, cultural, and entertainment focal point and has the most dominant role in contributing to the City’s identity. These prominent roles of the CBD should be maintained and enhanced.

Policy LU-5.4: Support Totem Lake’s development as an Urban Center with a diverse pattern of land uses.

- ◆ ***Recognize Totem Center, the area around Totem Lake Mall and Evergreen Healthcare Medical Center, as the “core” district where the highest densities and intensities of land use are focused.***
- ◆ ***Create a compact area to support the planned transit center and promote pedestrian activity.***
- ◆ ***Encourage uses which will provide both daytime and evening activities.***
- ◆ ***Provide sufficient public open space and recreational opportunities.***

- ◆ ***Enhance the natural condition and function of Totem Lake.***
- ◆ ***Affirm or create a “sense of identity” for the Totem Lake Urban Center.***
- ◆ ***Provide an interconnected street system for pedestrian and vehicular access.***

Totem Lake is a major center of employment and trade for the City. In 2003, the neighborhood had the most land devoted to commercial, industrial and office uses in the City, and the second-highest residential densities per residentially developed acre. The Totem Lake Neighborhood is also home to the City’s largest employer, Evergreen Healthcare Medical Center. The boundaries of the Totem Lake Urban Center generally correspond to the neighborhood boundaries, with a relatively small addition at the Center’s east border, where a multifamily area in the North Rose Hill neighborhood is included.

The policies above are designed to reinforce Totem Lake’s important commercial role, but also to set a new direction for development in the Totem Center core of the Totem Lake Urban Center. The Totem Center boundaries encompass the Totem Lake Mall, the Evergreen Healthcare Medical Center, and the mixed-use areas west and north of the hospital campus. Increases in residential and commercial densities in Totem Center will serve two purposes – providing new housing units for the growth expected in Kirkland over the next 20 years, and developing higher intensity and a more compact land use pattern that encourages pedestrian use and provides additional support for transit. By the year 2022, it is expected that 11 percent of the City’s housing growth and 42 percent of the City’s employment growth will have occurred within the Totem Lake Neighborhood.

Totem Center may serve as the focus for the diverse land uses in the overall Urban Center, and to provide the area with a recognizable heart providing a sense of identity to the Totem Lake neighborhood. The larger Totem Lake Urban Center is poised to achieve many of the goals of growth management, including an efficient transportation system with transit and the pedestrian and bicycle access called for in this plan, as

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well as a compact, mixed-use development pattern. Designated densities in the Totem Lake Urban Center are sufficient to accommodate an increased share of the region's growth, and its needs for housing, jobs, health care and other services, along with cultural and recreational activities. Regional investment in additional transportation infrastructure will support Totem Lake Urban Center in achieving these goals.

Policy LU-5.5: Enhance and strengthen the commercial viability of the Rose Hill Business District by implementing the NE 85th Street Subarea Plan.

The Rose Hill Business District is a commercial corridor located along NE 85th Street connecting Redmond with I-405 and Kirkland. The business district's role is one of serving both the local market in Kirkland, particularly the North and South Rose Hill Neighborhoods, and a broader subregional area due to direct freeway access. The NE 85th Street Subarea Plan set a new direction for the corridor with the goal of transforming the current strip center development pattern into more mixed-use development by implementing the following principles in development standards and transportation improvements:

- ◆ Land use policies encourage taller buildings located near the I-405 freeway interchange with lower buildings toward the east portion of the corridor and adjacent to residential areas to the north and south.
- ◆ New design standards will create an attractive commercial area by encouraging buildings to be oriented to the sidewalk with parking to the side or rear, enhance pedestrian orientation, and create effective buffers and transitions between commercial uses and adjacent residential uses.
- ◆ New street improvements such as new sidewalks, lighting and street trees will revitalize the district and increase pedestrian circulation and safety.
- ◆ Transportation improvements planned by Sound Transit and King County along the corridor will improve local and regional transit mobility.

Policy LU-5.6: Encourage increased residential capacity in the North Rose Hill Business District (NRHBD) to help meet housing needs.

- ◆ ***Encourage mixed-use commercial/residential development.***
- ◆ ***Promote a broad range of uses as an extension of the Totem Lake Urban Center.***
- ◆ ***Provide a transition to the residential core in the North Rose Hill neighborhood.***

The North Rose Hill Business District is a mix of retail, wholesale, and office businesses. Along NE 116th Street and close to I-405, a broad range of uses is encouraged as an extension of the Totem Lake Urban Center. By providing height and/or density incentives for residential uses, the area near the freeway should redevelop over time with mixed-use commercial/residential. Further from the freeway and east of the NE 116th Street/124th Avenue NE intersection, commercial uses with a neighborhood orientation are appropriate in recognition of this area's proximity to residential development. Development to the south along Slater Ave. NE and 124th Avenue NE should redevelop with stand-alone residential or mixed-use office/residential uses as a transition to the residential core of the North Rose Hill Neighborhood.

Policy LU-5.7: Emphasize new office development with a complementary mix of supporting uses in the Business District at the Yarrow Bay interchange area.

The Yarrow Bay interchange area is largely developed with offices and this pattern of land use should continue. However, supporting retail uses, such as office supply stores, restaurants and delis, and print shops, should be encouraged to locate in this area to minimize travel trips by office workers.

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LU-5.8: Promote development within the Bridle Trails, Houghton, and Juanita Neighborhood Centers that becomes part of the neighborhood in the way it looks and in the functions it serves.

Neighborhood centers provide services to surrounding residential neighborhoods so that residents may shop close to home. They also may function as the focal point for a community. Because of these important ties to their neighborhood, neighborhood centers should develop in ways that provide goods and services needed by the local residents, enhance physical connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, foster good will and provide an opportunity for people to mingle and converse.

Policy LU-5.9: Allow residential markets, subject to the following development and design standards:

- ◆ ***Locate small-scale neighborhood retail and personal services where local economic demand and local citizen acceptance are demonstrated.***
- ◆ ***Provide the minimum amount of off-street parking necessary to serve market customers.***
- ◆ ***Ensure that building design is compatible with the neighborhood in size, scale, and character.***

The intent of this policy is to permit small individual stores or service businesses in residential areas on a case-by-case basis. These businesses should cater to nearby residents, be oriented to pedestrian traffic, and require very little customer parking. They should be designed and located in a manner that is compatible with adjacent residences and that will not encourage the spread of commercial uses into residential areas. They should be located where local economic demand and neighborhood acceptance can be demonstrated.

Goal LU-6: Provide opportunities for a variety of employment.

Policy LU-6.1: Provide opportunities for light industrial and high technology uses.



405 Corporate Center

While Kirkland is not interested in recruiting heavy industry, the City is supportive of existing industrial enterprises and wants to encourage new high-technology businesses to locate here.

Policies that encourage residential and retail encroachment in industrial areas drive up the cost of land and promote conflicts which may force displacement of industrial operations. The strategy in the Land Use Element is to maintain industrial uses, while acknowledging that, in some parts of the City, industrial lands may be considered for conversion to other land uses.

Recognizing that each industrial area in the City has its own distinct character, the range of uses may vary between districts and may include some nonindustrial uses. Factors which should be taken into account when determining appropriate land uses include existing uses, surrounding uses, the local transportation system, and the effect on maintenance of primary jobs in the local job market.

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Policy LU-6.2: Encourage and support locations for businesses providing primary jobs in Kirkland.

Primary jobs bring dollars into the community and result in a higher per capita income for Kirkland residents. As incomes go up, more money can be spent on goods and services. Housing becomes more affordable and the City's ability to finance public services is increased.

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

Open space is land area free of buildings or other structures which may serve amenity, utilitarian and/or recreational purposes. Open space also may protect and preserve special natural places such as stream corridors, wetlands, drainage basins and wildlife habitat. As growth continues, the value of open space will increase, providing relief from the urban environment and an opportunity to experience nature inside the City.

The City already owns important areas of open space – including Juanita Bay Park, property along Forbes Creek, Yarrow Bay Park, Watershed Park, and the waterfront parks – that could serve as the foundation for an open space system. Wetland and stream setbacks and buffers provide corridors of open space. Native Growth Protection Easements, held by the City, also preserve, in perpetuity, environmentally sensitive open spaces and habitat.

Open space goals and policies are included in the Natural Environment, and Parks and Recreation Elements. The intent of the following goal is to prompt further action to identify and develop a coordinated and connected open space system. The accompanying policies address this process, and also speak to certain specific types of open space, such as view corridors and the shoreline.

Goal LU-7: Establish a coordinated and connected system of open space throughout the City that:

- ◆ *Preserves natural systems,*
 - ◆ *Protects wildlife habitat and corridors,*
 - ◆ *Provides land for recreation, and*
 - ◆ *Preserves natural landforms and scenic areas.*
-

Policy LU-7.1: Preserve and enhance the natural and aesthetic qualities of shoreline areas while allowing reasonable development to meet the needs of the City and its residents.



Houghton Beach Park

Kirkland is extremely fortunate to be located along the shores of Lake Washington. The Lake not only provides valuable recreational and scenic opportunities, it is also a significant source of the City's identity.

Policy LU-7.2: Promote public access to the shoreline where it is not in conflict with preserving environmentally sensitive areas or protecting significant wildlife habitat.

Maintaining and improving links to Lake Washington are important parts of the City's desired future. The Vision Statement says that access to and along the waterfront continues to be a priority. The Totem Lake and Forbes Lake shorelines also offer valuable resources to the community.

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Policy LU-7.3: Distribute parks and open spaces throughout the City, but particularly focus new facilities in areas of the City facing the greatest population growth, in areas where facilities are deficient, and/or in areas where connections of the open space network could be made.

The intent of this policy is to establish priorities for open space acquisition or protection.

Policy LU-7.4: Work with adjacent jurisdictions and State, federal, and tribal governments to identify and protect open space networks to be preserved within and around Kirkland.

Preserving open space corridors inside in the City need not conflict with private property rights or preclude the reasonable use of land. To this end, a variety of strategies should be considered that provide opportunities for negotiating “win-win” approaches to preservation and development.

Policy LU-7.5: Preserve urban separators (permanent low-density lands which protect environmentally sensitive areas and create open space corridors within and between urban areas), including Lake Washington, Bridle Trails State Park, and St. Edward’s State Park.

Urban separators break up urban development and help distinguish between communities. Kirkland is fortunate to have several “ready-made” urban separators. The City should also explore opportunities to create new urban separators as part of the open space network.

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES, GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities serve a variety of populations. Some serve local low-income residents who may not have easy access to private transportation. Others, such as landfills, serve regional waste haulers in large trucks along with local residents. Recognition of the unique characteristics of the clients of these facilities is important to their siting.

Government facilities are uses consisting of services and facilities operated from any level of government. Community facilities are uses that serve the public and are generally of a public service, noncommercial nature and usually operated by nonprofit agencies or organizations. Some government and community facilities are also classified as “essential public facilities” as defined in Chapter 36.70A RCW and as discussed below in more detail.

RCW 36.70A.200 states that, “No local comprehensive plan or development regulation may preclude the siting of essential public facilities” and requires that each county and city have “a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities.” Essential public facilities are defined in RCW 36.70A.200 as “those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, State education facilities and State or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, State and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020.” The State Office of Financial Management maintains a list of essential State public facilities and may at any time add facilities to the list.

The intent of the following goal is to acknowledge that different essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities have different siting needs, depending on their customers and their unique characteristics. Kirkland residents depend on all of these facilities. For that reason, their location within the City should not be precluded. However, Kirkland is also a well-established community with a strong desire to maintain existing community character. The possible negative impacts of siting these facilities in the City should be mitigated to the maximum extent possible, but mitigation should not be unreasonable to the point of precluding the facilities.

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Goal LU-8: The City should maintain criteria, regulations and procedures that allow for the siting of essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities.

Policy LU-8.1: Work cooperatively with King County, the State and/or other cities to site essential public facilities.

The King County Countywide Planning Policies set out a process whereby all local jurisdictions and the County will jointly develop standards for the siting of essential public facilities. The City should work cooperatively with the State, King County and other cities in the siting of essential public facilities.

Policy LU-8.2: Consider the following in siting essential public facilities:

- ◆ *Accessibility to the people served;*
- ◆ *Public involvement;*
- ◆ *Protection of neighborhoods;*
- ◆ *Preservation of natural resources;*
- ◆ *The cost-effectiveness of service delivery;*
- ◆ *Location near transit and mixed-use centers; and*
- ◆ *The goals and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan.*

The intent of this policy is to set forth the criteria which Kirkland should use in assessing locations for new or expanded essential public facilities.

However, the criteria may not be used to deny approval of or impose restrictions on essential public facilities inconsistent with State statutory provisions and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

Policy LU-8.3: Design essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities to reduce incompatibility with adjacent land uses.

It may be impossible for some essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities to be completely compatible with adjacent land uses. The unique nature of their operation and their special siting needs may result in some conflict with surrounding development. However, such incompatibilities should be minimized and these facilities should take responsibility for being good neighbors.

The City's development regulations contain review processes and criteria for siting essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities.