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# City of Kirkland

## Planning and Building Department



### *Land Acknowledgment*

*We acknowledge that the Southern Salish Sea region lies on the unceded and ancestral land of the Coast Salish peoples, the Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Snohomish, Suquamish and Tulalip tribes and other tribes of the Puget Sound Salish people, and that present-day City of Kirkland is in the traditional heartland of the Lake People and the River People. We honor with gratitude the land itself, the First People – who have reserved treaty rights and continue to live here since time immemorial – and their ancestral heritage.*

### *Vision Statement*

*Kirkland is one of the most livable cities in America. We are a vibrant, attractive, green and welcoming place for everyone to be. Civic engagement, innovation and diversity are highly valued. We are respectful, fair, and inclusive. We honor our rich heritage while embracing the future. Kirkland strives to be a model, sustainable city that values preserving and enhancing our natural environment for our enjoyment and future generations.*

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## Kirkland Planning Commission

### Agenda

#### Regular Meeting - Hybrid

Council Chamber and Virtual  
Thursday, April 23, 2026  
6:00 PM

#### **To join the meeting via Zoom:**

<https://kirklandwa-gov.zoom.us/j/84038812324?pwd=ajlnT01Fd2VHVmJvSE9SUXQ3ZDZaQT09>

Passcode: 114965

Webinar ID: 840 3881 2324

To join via telephone: +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) US US

To provide public comment in advance of the meeting please email [planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:planningcommissioners@kirklandwa.gov).

*If you have questions about an item on the agenda, please contact the project planner listed below.*

This meeting packet is also available online on the Planning and Building Department webpage:

<https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Planning-Commission>

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Comments From the Audience - Limited to 3 Minutes**
4. **Special Presentations**
5. **Study Session**
  - a. **NE 85th St Station Area Activation Update**

**Purpose:**

Receive an update from the City's Economic Development Manager on work to activate the NE 85th St Station Area.

Staff Contact: Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager, [jdavishayes@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:jdavishayes@kirklandwa.gov) 425-587-3038

Adam H Weinstein, AICP, Planning & Building Director, [AWeinstein@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:AWeinstein@kirklandwa.gov) 425-587-3227

Allison Zike, Deputy Planning and Building Director, [azike@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:azike@kirklandwa.gov) 425-587-3259

6. **Public Hearings**
7. **Reading and / or Approval of Minutes**
8. **Administrative Reports and Planning Commission Discussion**
  - a. Public Meeting Calendar Update
9. **Comments From the Audience**
10. **Adjournment**
11. **Placeholder**

Note: If you would like more information on an item on this agenda, please call the Planning & Building Department at 425-587-3600. **Please refer to the file number and planner listed for that item.**

For more information on the Planning and Building Department public comment and rules and procedure, visit our [Public Comments and Rules of Procedures](#) webpage.

- [Planning Commission Rules of Procedure](#)

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[에게titleviordinator@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:에게titleviordinator@kirklandwa.gov) 또는 425-587-3831로 연락하십시오.

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**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**PLANNING AND BUILDING**  
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033  
425-587-3000

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager

**Date:** April 15, 2026

**Subject:** **NE 85th St Station Area Activation Update**

### RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update from the City's Economic Development Manager on work to activate the NE 85th St Station Area.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The NE 85th Street Station Area (Station Area) is part of the Greater Downtown Urban Growth Center and the City's Comprehensive Plan policies support the Station Area as an area where future growth should be focused.
- Following rezones to increase development capacity in 2022 and 2023, properties in the Station Area are not yet redeveloping in the way the City envisioned.
- Council has expressed interest in exploring ways to encourage redevelopment in the Station Area and to ensure that any new development is accomplishing the type of density designated for the City's Urban Growth Centers.

### BACKGROUND:

The City has worked to leverage the historic transit investment in Kirkland at I-405/NE 85th Street by adopting the Station Area Plan (SAP), a subarea plan centered on the future Sound Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "Stride" Station, along with associated zoning changes. The SAP aims to transform the area into a vibrant, mixed-use environment and a model of innovation, with plentiful affordable housing and a mix of job types linked by transit.<sup>1</sup>

Development incentives baked into the SAP and associated planning documents include:

- Upzones adopted in 2022-2023, including a flexible form-based code;
- Station Area infrastructure projects included in Capital Improvement Program;
- Planned Action Ordinance adopted to streamline environmental review of future development projects;
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District adopted to foster the development of infrastructure and open space in the area;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Planning-Projects/NE-85th-Street-Station-Area-Plan>

- Encouragement of Development Agreements if flexible development standards are desired; and
- “Pioneer provision” establishing a lower affordable housing requirement (consistent with typical City-wide affordable housing requirements) for the first 624 residential units developed in the Station Area.

In the two years since the adoption of the SAP, construction on the NE 85th Street/I-405 interchange has progressed, but properties within the Station Area are not yet redeveloping in the way that the SAP envisioned, with higher-density housing and commercial uses. One prime Station Area site is currently under review to be developed with townhomes even though the plan allows for development of taller and higher-intensity mixed uses. This property is currently for sale.

Staff notes that there are several factors that have likely contributed to a lack of immediate redevelopment in the Station Area, including, but not limited to:

- Uncertainty about the future of commercial, retail, and office space that remains from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The high costs of developing large multi-family and mixed-use projects, including the cost of land and building materials, and high interest rates. These factors have slowed large development projects throughout the region;
- A lack of a “catalyst” project in the Station Area to provide a hub of activity and encourage other complementary development;
- The Station Area is primarily made up of numerous private properties with only a few large, single-owner properties, meaning that larger-scale redevelopment requires a coordinated effort; and
- The impacts of the interchange construction are substantial and developers and property owners may be waiting for the project to be complete before proceeding.

On October 21, 2025, Council discussed several options to ensure the development of higher-intensity development in the Station Area through the implementation of minimum densities, or the prohibition of lower density housing types, like townhomes.<sup>2</sup> A high-level summary of the feedback provided at that meeting is that Council expressed general support for prohibiting the development of new townhomes and single-family homes in the Station Area, with somewhat lesser support for establishing minimum height requirements. Council also indicated a desire to incentivize desirable development in the Station Area and to limit minimum density requirements to only portions of the Station Area. Based on this feedback, Planning Commission has held a public hearing and made a recommendation to Council to implement a prohibition on further development of townhomes in the Station Area that Council will be considering for adoption at their April 21, 2026 meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:**

Since joining the City in 2025, the Economic Development Manager has engaged property owners, brokers, investors, and developers on Station Area opportunities. In addition to one-on-one outreach, staff promoted the Station Area at several meetings of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP), and BisNow monthly events as well as Urban Land Institute’s “Emerging Trends in Real Estate” in November 2025. The City was an official sponsor of BisNow’s Construction and Development Summit on October 9, 2025, which allowed City

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2025/october-21-2025/9e\\_business.pdf](https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2025/october-21-2025/9e_business.pdf)

staff to host a booth to promote the area in more detail.

The City held a roundtable with property owners, developers, investors, and brokers on November 13, 2025 in partnership with Greater Seattle Partners. (See Recap Memo - Attachment 1.) Attendees noted that Kirkland in general, and the Station Area in particular, are desirable places for development but expressed concerns about redevelopment, including challenges for feasibility that include high land costs, high construction costs, extended entitlement timeframes, affordable housing requirements at relatively deep levels of affordability, and high interest rates. Suggestions from the meeting included implementing state-required parking reform as soon as possible and exploring flexible approaches to ground-floor commercial space requirements. It should be noted that since the November 2025 roundtable, Council has adopted code amendments that eliminated parking requirements in the Station Area, and the State has adopted legislation that will require the City to expand housing as an allowed use in the Station Area Commercial Mixed Use district (all other Station Area districts already allow housing). Other development standards are already quite flexible in the Station Area making it easier to achieve the Station Area's maximum allowed heights and reducing affordable housing requirements for near-term development as seen in Attachment 2.

Other economic development-related activities the City has undertaken to promote development in the Station Area, along with other related notes of interest, include:

- A call for letters of interest was released on December 15, 2025, to develop branding and marketing materials that highlight the Station Area's redevelopment potential and long-term vision (see Attachment 3). The creation of marketing materials that effectively communicate to the development industry will help to continue to raise awareness of the opportunities in the Station Area. The City received 19 responses and selected Watson Creative based on their authentic approach and experience within the real estate industry. A kick-off meeting with City staff occurred in mid-April, 2026. The community will be able to provide input on the naming of the area through a community survey.
- City staff are beginning discussions with the University of Washington's Runstad Department of Real Estate Master of Science program staff and students to explore opportunities for projects related to activating the area.
- City staff are working on hosting a grocer roundtable in response to recent grocery store closures and consolidation in the region. Outreach to regional and district staff for national grocery stores has begun and staff has plans to contact local chains such as Mayuri, Kitchen and Market, Town and Country, Uwajimaya Asian Market, and Wholesome Foods. The City would be represented by the City Manager's Office, Planning & Building Department, and the Police Department at the roundtable. In order to learn about operational approaches to opening new stores and closing existing ones, staff is strategizing on the best method to proceed by inquiring with grocers about the level of detail they are willing to discuss with competitors in the room. This could result in a roundtable that focuses on general conversations, with smaller follow-up meetings with specific grocers to learn more.
- The City recently signed an agreement with the Seattle Kraken to build an Iceplex and Community Center at the former Houghton Park & Ride site. While the project site is not located in the Station Area, it is located in close proximity and could help encourage redevelopment in the area, especially of new hotels.
- Staff is working with NAIOP, the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and BisNow to explore sponsorship or focused opportunities to promote the Station Area to developers, similar to the Developer Roundtable held in November 2025.

- Three hotel developers are exploring the Station Area, along with more than a half dozen multifamily developers.
- The Crescent Lighting/Main Street property (i.e., where a townhome development is proposed) was paused to solicit a new buyer and has indicated the site will soon move forward with permitting.
- Council approved early implementation of the lower parking minimums required by SB 5184. This change eliminated parking minimums in the SAP area.
- Planning Commission has recommended to Council a focused package of code amendments to encourage development in the Station Area that Council will be considering for adoption at their April 21, 2026 meeting. The amendments, if adopted, would expand flexibility that can be *requested* through a development agreement, prohibit *new* townhome proposals, and extend the pioneer provision for affordable housing requirements.

### **Council Direction for Station Area Activation**

Given Council's interest in this topic, staff identified several options for catalyzing the Station Area for Council's consideration at their February 27, 2026 retreat. Council was presented with 3 options (see Attachment 4), and acknowledged that many factors were outside the City's ability to control. The Council agreed with the staff's recommendation to proceed with implementing minimum densities (by prohibiting townhomes) and parking requirement changes. The Council did encourage staff to explore higher heights along NE 85<sup>th</sup> and analyze the affordable housing income levels at a future point. Council encouraged staff to provide additional information with them as developers identify potential barriers as specific property due diligence is conducted.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Economic Development will continue to promote the Station Area to the real estate community, including through the implementation of the branding and marketing collateral to be completed in Fall 2026. The City will host a cohort of international businesses interested in expanding to the Puget Sound Area on May 1, 2026 to promote the Station Area. Additional Business Roundtables will be hosted to learn more about barriers to business expansion and to collaborate with existing medium and large businesses to promote the area.

On April 21, 2026, Council will consider adoption of the Planning Commission recommendations for near-term code adjustments in the Station Area.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. NE 85th St Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap
2. NE 85th St Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation
3. Branding and Marketing Collateral Development
4. SAP Discussion Slides - February 2026 Council Retreat

## Attachment 1 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**  
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033  
425-587-3000

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager  
Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager

**Date:** December 18, 2025

**Subject:** NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap

**SUMMARY:**

- On November 13, the City hosted an invite-only roundtable in coordination with Greater Seattle Partners, the region's recruitment agency. Thirty-five people attended the event.
- The presentation and discussion were focused on sharing information about the NE 85th Street Station Area Plan and development standards as well as Greater Seattle Partners' not-yet-released site selector study about the region's competitiveness.
- Developers were asked to share concerns about development challenges (regulatory and non-regulatory) and ideas to catalyze redevelopment. Adjustments to parking and affordable housing requirements were suggested. Staff made several points of clarification, including in regard to ground floor commercial requirements and base and maximum height requirements.
- There are currently five properties within the NE 85th Street Station Area that are being explored for redevelopment, most early in the permit or pre-permit process.

**PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION DETAILS:***Presentation*

The Developer Roundtable was hosted by the City to increase awareness about redevelopment opportunities within the NE 85th Street Station Area. The group was welcomed by City Councilmembers Black, Falcone, and Pascal; Kathryn Straub, Executive Director of Kirkland Chamber; Deputy City Manager Jim Lopez, and Economic Development Manager Jen Davis Hayes. Having these partners standing side by side demonstrated the willingness to work together to achieve the vision for the Station Area. In addition to these leaders, Planning and Building Director Adam Weinstein, Deputy Director Allison Zike, and two Chamber board members attended to answer questions and show support from the business community.

Allison Zike and Jen Davis Hayes presented a slide show, which is provided as Attachment 1, sharing the vision and high-level attributes of the Station Area. They spoke about the once-in-a-generation transportation investment at I-405/NE 85th Street and the spillover economic development and community-building potential of the Kraken Iceplex and Community Center. They ended by highlighting the advantages of developing in the Station Area, along with the incentives

## Attachment 1 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap

designed by the City to encourage redevelopment (ranging from pioneer affordable housing requirements, to establishing a Tax Increment Financing District, to encouraging the use of Development Agreements to customize development standards on large sites).

The Greater Seattle Partners presentation focused mostly on business recruitment and the perception of the region throughout the nation and internationally. This was meant to provide information about the continued appeal of the Seattle region in attracting economic activity (along with some of its challenges) and to help refine messaging to potential investors and developers.

### *Discussion*

Of the 21 developers, investors, and property owners that attended the event, about half have not developed before in Kirkland. Most expressed interest but have not proceeded due to feasibility or lack of land options. Some of the questions reflected perception about development conditions in Kirkland rather than first-hand experience.

Staff heard that Kirkland is a coveted place to develop. Developers also shared comments that are known concerns about redevelopment, including challenges for feasibility that include high land costs, high construction costs, extended entitlement timeframes, affordable housing requirements at relatively deep levels of affordability (50% of the Area Median Income [AMI]), and interest rates. While most developers desire a 3% or 4% interest rate environment, most realize that the current ~7% is the “new normal”. The number of multi-family housing projects in the pipeline regionally is much lower than it has been over the last several years, which will result in less housing being delivered regionally in 2026 and 2027, therefore increasing rents. The increase of rents may result in more projects. This is because rising rents improve the financial feasibility of multifamily development by increasing projected revenues and making new construction more viable for investors and lenders. However, rising rents impact affordability, placing increased financial strain on many households and making it harder for residents to remain or move into Kirkland.

The following questions and comments were addressed by Allison Zike, Adam Weinstein, Jim Lopez, or Jen Davis Hayes.

Questions about development process:

- Design review process, upcoming reform, and the desire for clarity on timelines and predictability. *Staff noted that there is an interim process for design review to align with state law in advance of likely City Council adoption of a reformed process in early 2026. That new process is likely to be administrative and more streamlined than the current process.*

Questions and comments about development standards:

- Why Kirkland has not yet implemented the State-required parking reform in Senate Bill 5184 and is waiting until the deadline in 2027. This would be seen as an incentive to develop in Kirkland. *Adam shared that the City Council has already adopted the new requirements incrementally (e.g., for co-housing and middle housing) and the Planning & Building Department's workplan will be under review in early 2026. There may be an opportunity to make these changes earlier than the deadline.*
- Kirkland requires too much ground floor commercial space. It was also shared that some investors/finance partners will not invest in projects with a certain minimum requirement of ground floor commercial use. *Allision shared that with the Station Area's form-based code, ground floor use requirements are flexible.*
- Maximum allowed heights. The height of a building is a factor for the construction type. Wood over podium (5 – 6 floors over 1 podium floor) construction can be accommodated within an 85' height limit. After that, the building type requires steel, and the additional costs

## Attachment 1 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap

do not pencil at the 150' of maximum height allowed in the northeast quadrant of the plan area, closest to the I-405. Maximum allowed height would need to be 200'+ to account for these extra costs. *Adam explained that the 150' height limit was based on traffic studies showing that additional building height in the northeast quadrant of the plan area would result in significant unavoidable congestion impacts that could be avoided by maximum 150' building heights.*

- Too many development requirements that add to costs and do not make projects feasible to build, especially with competition for investors that look throughout the country and are able to receive higher rates of return in other regions.
  - Suggestion to eliminate the dual maximum allowed heights (i.e. 40'/85', 40'/60', etc.) in the Station Area, under which taller buildings can be built if the requirements of the incentive program are met. The comment assumed that the extra requirements in a 40'/85' parcel would add more costs than benefits. (Using this zone as an example – but true for all areas with a base and maximum.) *Allison shared that if the project is multi-family and does not provide commercial space above the 40' base, the project will be able to build to 85' without any other requirements because required affordable housing would satisfy the incentive requirement.*
  - Affordable housing required for 15% of the units at 50% AMI may have made sense during lower interest rate eras, but this and other development requirements add too much cost. *Staff noted that the pioneer provision in the Station Area Plan only requires a standard affordable housing set aside of 10% of units at 50% AMI, which aligns with the standard in place in most of the rest of Kirkland. This pioneer provision applies to the first 624 newly built residential units in the Station Area. In addition, properties are eligible for an 8-year Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) if at least 10% of units are at the required affordability level. A 12-year MFTE is available for projects providing at least 20% of the units as affordable. (Note: The fact that there are limited number of units and a project isn't vested until a complete building permit is submitted makes some developers wary that they will not benefit from the pioneer provision if other developers apply prior to their application.)*
- City Council is currently exploring a minimum density in this area which would not allow townhomes to be built. The commenter suggested that this removes flexibility. *Adam responded that this area is intended to be a dense neighborhood to allow more people to benefit from the BRT and to help expand the supply of affordable housing. He noted that the policy considerations are difficult: that more housing of any kind is desirable, but that there are limited areas in the City where multi-family housing can be built.*
- Recommendation made for Kirkland to expand MFTE to mirror what the State allows to encourage more development. *Staff said they would explore this option. Kirkland provides an 8-year and 12-year tax exemption. The State allows 20-year exemptions and in 2025 passed a 20-year Transit Oriented Development (TOD) MFTE category the City can consider. The recent MFTE analysis will help to inform future discussions.*
- Comment that the planned action ordinance provides more certainty for that portion of permit review, which is beneficial.

## Other questions and comments:

- Comment that the area has great access to freeways and visibility for projects. The connections between this area and downtown increase the attractiveness of the area.
- During the presentation, the City shared the connection between the NE 85th Street area and Kraken Iceplex and Community Center development, noting a potential catalyst for hotel and other development. One developer noted the unlikelihood that the Iceplex would create that catalyst for redevelopment due to the distance between the areas. *While the Iceplex would not be within the Station Area, it is in close proximity, and staff did hear after the*

## Attachment 1 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Recap

*event that there is interest in developing more hotels in the area and the rezoning provides more reasons to build there.*

- Capacity of the tax-increment financing district. Overall, this tool received a positive response. *Staff did not recall the precise financial capacity of the TIF and followed up with attendees that the adopted ordinance estimated approximately \$58 million to construct TIF projects.*
- Acknowledged the potential that changing regulations to align precisely the current economic conditions might impact the ability of the City to achieve its full vision for the area.

**OTHER STATION AREA UPDATES:**

- A call for letters of interest was released on December 15 to develop branding and marketing materials that highlight the NE 85th St Station Area's redevelopment potential and long-term vision. This work will begin in March and will help to create a distinctive name and brand identity for the area. The creation of marketing materials that effectively communicate to the development industry will help to continue to raise awareness of the opportunities. The call for letters of interest is provided as Attachment 2 for reference.
- Without sharing confidential information, it should be noted that developers have contacted the City to explore redevelopment of four properties (beyond the current townhomes project). Some of the projects would begin to fulfill the City's vision for the area by providing mixed-use, multi-family housing and expanding hotel options.
- Staff is beginning discussions with the UW's Runstad Department of Real Estate Master of Science program staff and students to explore opportunities for projects related to activating the NE 85th Street Station Area.
- In October 2025, Planning and Building Director Adam Weinstein presented options for the LRM to explore options to retain and attract grocery stores in response to recent closures of Kroger stores in surrounding communities. City Council agreed with the option to host a grocer roundtable in the 1st quarter of 2026. Outreach to regional and district staff for national grocery stores began and staff will also contact local chains such as Mayuri, Kitchen and Market, and Wholesome Foods. Staff anticipate hosting the roundtable in February or March.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Partner with Planning staff to consider options to address developers' comments.
- Branding & marketing materials development to begin in first quarter of 2026.
- Ongoing outreach and conversations with developers, investors and property owners to spark interest in the area.
- Host NE 85th St Station Area event with real estate associations, such as NAIOP, BisNow, and Urban Land Institute, anticipated in first or second quarter of 2026.
- Explore opportunities to partner with UW Runstad Department of Real Estate.
- Host grocer roundtable in February or March to learn about how decisions are made to locate and maintain grocery stores in a community. If there are specific questions councilmembers would like addressed, please contact Jen Davis Hayes.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 – November 13 Developer Roundtable Presentation

Attachment 2 – Branding and Marketing Collateral Development

Attachment 3

# Welcome to Kirkland



Major Private Employers

Evergreen Healthcare

Google

Amazon – Project Kuiper

Electronic Arts (EA)

Kenworth Trucks

Astronics Advanced

Electrical Systems

BHC Fairfax Hospital



96,920 ↑ 98.7% since 2010



36.9 Median Age



31.1% Non-White

Median HH Income: \$145,533  
(2023)



53,997 jobs

Attachment 2 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation

**NE 85<sup>TH</sup> ST STATION AREA:  
FOCUSING ON GROWTH IN KIRKLAND**



# 2044 Vision



Recent zoning changes expand high-technology, office, and residential uses

Attachment 2 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation

## Why Consider Locating in the NE 85th Station Area?

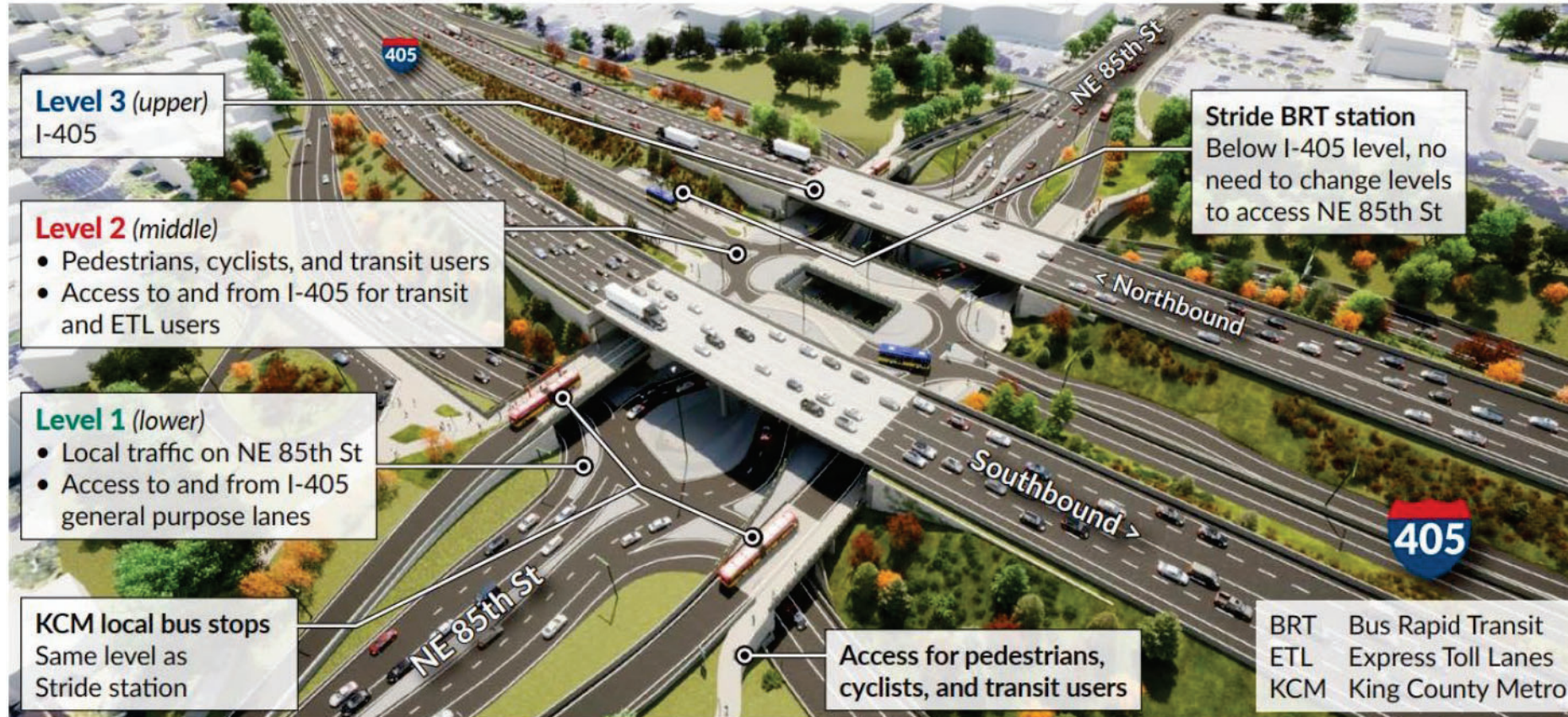
The new Sound Transit Bus Rapid Transit station at I-405 and NE 85<sup>th</sup> will **connect Kirkland regionally** to light rail at Bellevue, Lynnwood, and to SeaTac with frequent bus service.

The Station Area Plan was directed by the City Council in 2019 to leverage this once in a generation regional BRT transit investment.

*The Station Area is a thriving, transit-oriented, walkable district with high tech and family wage jobs, plentiful affordable housing, sustainable buildings, park amenities, and commercial and retail services.*  
-Station Area Vision



# The future of Northeast 85th Street



Attachment 2 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation

## Kirkland's Station Area is planned to accommodate diverse uses and building types



Innovative school space



Vibrant mixed-use development, with ample public space for residents and employees

Attachment 2 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation

## Kirkland's Station Area is planned to accommodate diverse uses and building types



Places for people to gather



Incentives for sustainable development;  
Flexible code that allows for many types of  
businesses and housing

# Seattle Kraken Iceplex & Kirkland Community Center Open 2027

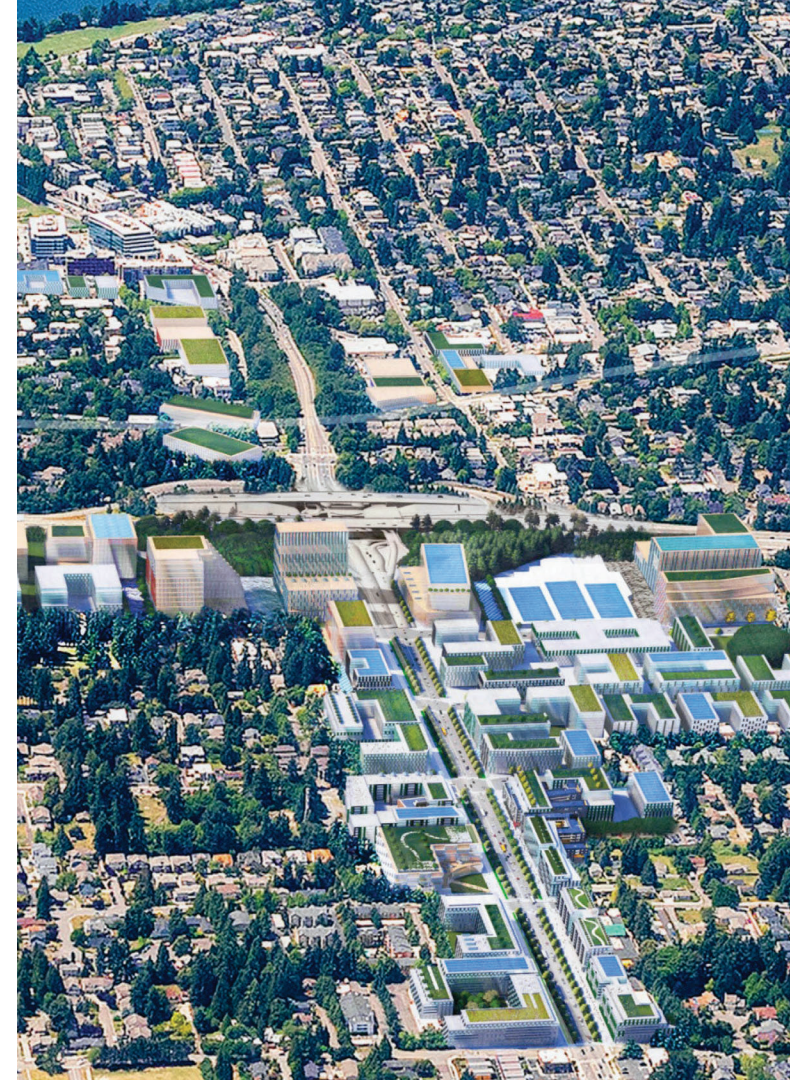


Attachment 2 - NE 85th Street Station Area Developer Roundtable Presentation

## Kirkland's Station Area is Ready for Growth

The City has invested significant resources into planning for the area and completed many steps to streamline future development.

- Upzones adopted in 2022-2023
- Fiscal Impacts and Community Benefits Analysis
- Station Area projects included in Capital Improvement Program
- Planned Action Ordinance
- Tax Increment Financing District
- Encouragement of Development Agreements







 **GREATER SEATTLE**  
PARTNERS

# **Strategic Site Selection:**

Business Attraction in Greater Seattle and Beyond

**By Victoria DePalma, Ph.D.**  
Greater Seattle Partners Research Director

# Introduction

- Cities compete nationally and globally for investment and jobs.
- Site selection is influenced by workforce, infrastructure, cost, incentives, and quality of life.
- Seattle has world-class talent and innovation but faces real and perceptual challenges
- Alignment of assets, readiness, and storytelling determines success.







## Recommendations for Business Attraction

- Leverage iconic companies as ambassadors (Microsoft, Boeing, Salesforce).
- Foster academia–industry collaboration to solve operational challenges.
- Highlight case studies and testimonials to build credibility.
- Target industries strategically based on strengths.

*“You guys have some iconic companies in the Greater Seattle area. Having them be a part of our storytelling, whether its case studies, testimonials quotes...goes a long way. The C-suite decision makers always want to have some feel for what their peers are doing and where their peers operate businesses. Having the Microsofts, Boeings, Salesforce...having all of them lean into ‘hey this is how we’ve grown and scale our business, here’s the success we have, here is the incredible talent we have, here is our great partnership with the regional economic development group. Those things come across as really compelling.”*



## Perception is Everything

- Narratives shape whether cities are even considered for investment.
- Seattle struggles with negative headlines (homelessness, costs).
- Need proactive marketing, branding, and testimonials.
- Cities like Austin and Atlanta have reshaped reputations successfully.

*“More important than people think is the actual perception of your city...you have to market your city for economic development outside of your city.”*

*“Company testimonials are important and more trustworthy”*

*“Telling your own story in a way that’s authentic is important because otherwise other people negative sell and tell a story about you. That’s what people will hear if there’s not a counter argument out in the market”*

## Closing the Perceptual Gap

- Our partners at BCG conducted a regional competitiveness study across 18 peer metro's (US and Canada)
- Ranked each city across 75 key metrics, and 3 broad categories germane to business attraction (see appendix)
- Comparing these metrics with the national perceptions of site selectors interviewed:
  - Greater Seattle has greater cultural assets than are being recognized
  - Site selectors are more critical of our infrastructure than rankings would suggest
  - Our innovation ecosystem is stronger than perceived
- Action item...



## Hosting Site Selector Visits

- Control every detail of the visit to shape perception.
- Showcase both business and lifestyle advantages.
- Economic development entities must be professional and proactive.
- Align government, utilities, and partners to show readiness.



## Promote Subregional Strengths and Industry Clusters

- Highlight the unique assets of subregions: Tacoma (manufacturing), Redmond (tech), and Bothell (life sciences).
- Tailor messaging to specific industries, showcasing how each county supports their operational needs.
- Develop cluster maps and case studies to visualize ecosystem strengths and supply chain connectivity.
- In tech/AI, biotech, Greater Seattle's deep talent pool and innovation ecosystem can outweigh higher costs.
- **Action item:** identify and promote Kirkland's subregional specialties



Attachment 3 - Branding and Marketing Collateral Development - NE 85th  
Street St

## Branding and Marketing Collateral Development – NE 85th Street Station Area, Kirkland, WA

### I. Overview

The City of Kirkland is seeking letters of interest from qualified brand-marketing firms to develop a distinctive identity brand and supporting professional marketing collateral targeted at real estate developers and investors. The goal is to promote urban commercial real-estate opportunities in the NE 85th Street Station Area.

### II. Background

The NE 85th Street Station Area<sup>1</sup> spans over 700 acres in Kirkland, WA centered by the construction of the new NE 85<sup>th</sup> and I-405 reconfigured interchange and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Stride station. These investments are a once-in-a-generation regional transit investment and an opportunity to build new neighborhoods to meet Kirkland's long-term vision for sustainable urban development that supports housing, employment, innovation, and mobility.

The area has seen major public investments in environmental analysis, transportation, and infrastructure improvements. The City of Kirkland has proactively invested in planning studies and adopted a Planned Action Ordinance to streamline the development process, creating a clear and predictable path for new projects. There are opportunities for innovative development of varying types and scales within the area.

While the foundation for growth is in place, opportunities for specific redevelopment sites remain limited at this time. This effort aims to generate interest among current property owners, developers, and investors.

### III. Scope of Work

- 1) The first element of the project is to create a distinctive name and brand identity for the NE 85<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area – one that is reflective of Kirkland and this area. The selected firm will be expected to engage partners and create name and branding concepts that resonate with the community and position the area for long-term recognition. The resulting brand package will provide clear messaging and visual direction.
- 2) The second element of the project is to develop a suite of marketing materials that effectively communicate the redevelopment potential of the NE 85th Street Station Area. These materials should clearly highlight the area's strengths—including recent rezoning, major transit investments, and long-term growth opportunities—and be tailored to audiences such as developers, investors, and property owners. The goal is to create engaging, high-impact collateral that attracts capital, prompts developers to pursue opportunities, and directly supports the advancement of real estate deals in this emerging district.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Planning-Projects/NE-85th-Street-Station-Area-Plan>

Attachment 3 - Branding and Marketing Collateral Development - NE 85th  
Street St

## Example Deliverables:

- One-page fact sheets or flyers tailored for distinct audiences (e.g. developers, investors, property owners, commercial tenants)
- Flexible presentation deck for use at developer meetings, industry events or City briefings
- Webpage content and visuals
- Social media content and visuals
- Print and digital media advertising content and visuals
- Recommendations for additional outreach formats

**IV. Deliverables**

- 1) Draft and final name and brand for the NE 85<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area.
- 2) Draft and final versions of all marketing materials in editable and print-ready formats.

**V. Letter of Interest**

Please include the following in your letter of interest:

- 1) Firm Profile – Overview, location, relevant experience
- 2) Project Approach – Narrative outlining how your team would approach this project and detailed deliverables
- 3) Team Composition – Resumes or bios of key personnel
- 4) Relevant Work Samples – Especially in urban development, real estate, or city branding
- 5) Project Timeline – Estimated timeline from kickoff to final deliverables
- 6) Cost Proposal – Itemized budget and fee structure
- 7) References – At least two references for similar work

**VI. Evaluation Criteria**

Letters of Interest will be evaluated based on:

- Demonstrated experience with similar marketing and collateral development projects
- Quality and creativity of past work
- Understanding of urban development, real estate, and public-private investment audiences
- Cost-effectiveness and clarity of budget
- Proposed timeline and availability

**VII. Estimated Timeline**

- Letter of Interest Request Release Date: Monday, December 15, 2025
- Bids accepted through Monday, January 26, 2026 at 4 pm
- Interviews (if needed) weeks of February 2 and 9, 2026
- Selection Notification by February 23, 2026
- Project Kick-off: March 2026

**VIII. Questions and Submission Instructions**

Submit questions and letters of interest electronically to:

Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager, City of Kirkland, City Manager's Office  
[jdavishayes@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:jdavishayes@kirklandwa.gov); 425-559-3062 (cell, text OK)

**IX. Additional Information**

To learn more about the NE 85th St Station Area and related planning efforts, visit  
[Kirklandwa.gov/StationAreaPlan](http://Kirklandwa.gov/StationAreaPlan).

# NE 85<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area

Check-in and  
discussion



*City Council Retreat  
February 27, 2026*



# Incentives and Activation Efforts

## Development incentives – existing

- Substantial upzone
- Reduced minimum parking requirements
- Flexible form-based code
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Planned Action Ordinance
- Use of Development Agreements
- “Pioneer” affordable housing provision
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects

## Activation activities – completed/ongoing

- Work with NAIOP, ULI, BisNow – events + promotion
- Developer/investor/owner broker roundtable
- Branding and marketing – to create distinctive name/brand
- Collaboration with UW Runstad Department
- Grocer roundtable
- Kraken Iceplex
- Work with hotel and other developers

## To come (near term)

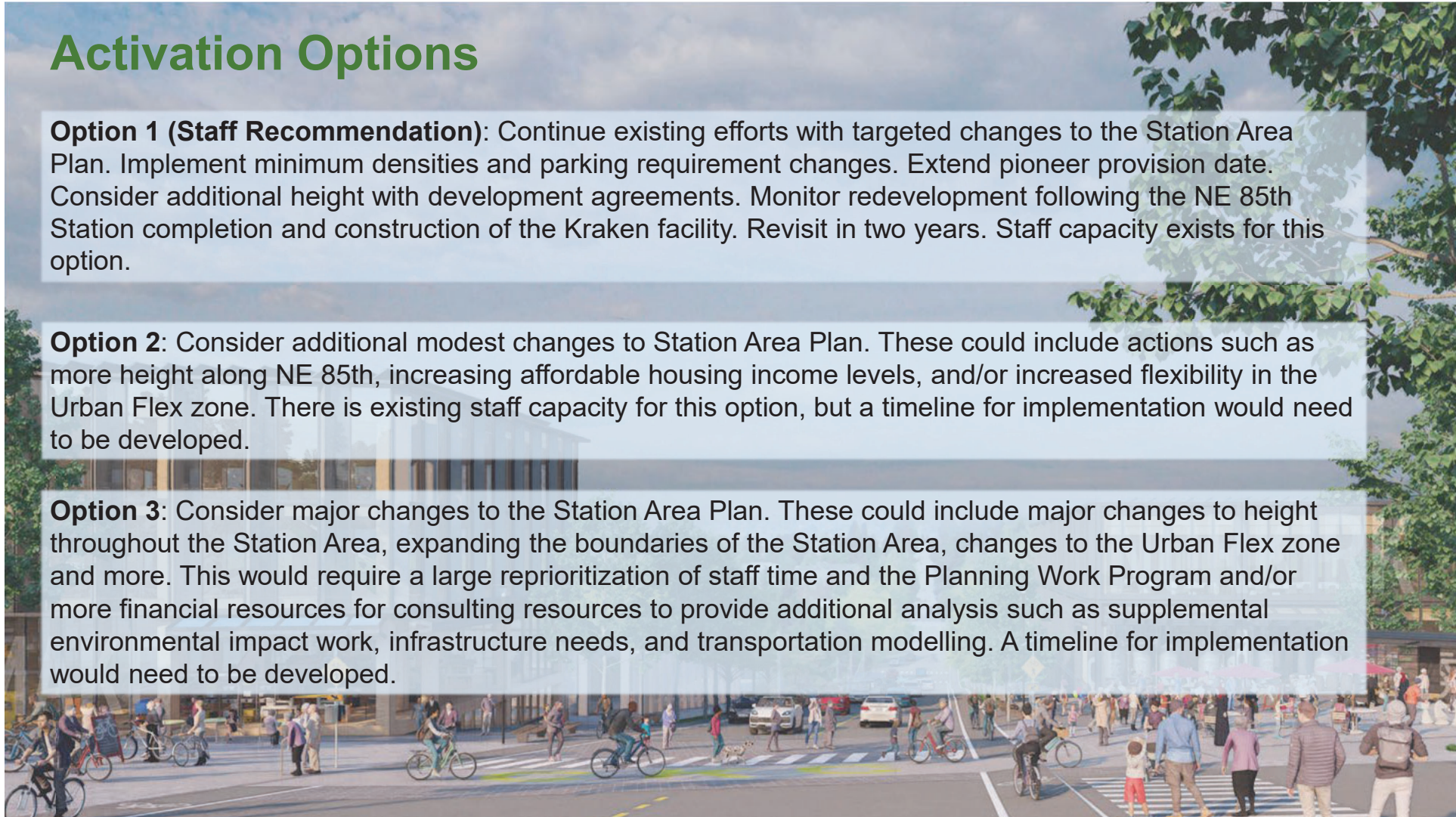
- Prohibit townhomes
- Eliminate parking minimums in some/all of Station Area
- Evaluation of more flexible use of Development Agreements (for height/land uses)

## Activation Options

**Option 1 (Staff Recommendation):** Continue existing efforts with targeted changes to the Station Area Plan. Implement minimum densities and parking requirement changes. Extend pioneer provision date. Consider additional height with development agreements. Monitor redevelopment following the NE 85th Station completion and construction of the Kraken facility. Revisit in two years. Staff capacity exists for this option.

**Option 2:** Consider additional modest changes to Station Area Plan. These could include actions such as more height along NE 85th, increasing affordable housing income levels, and/or increased flexibility in the Urban Flex zone. There is existing staff capacity for this option, but a timeline for implementation would need to be developed.

**Option 3:** Consider major changes to the Station Area Plan. These could include major changes to height throughout the Station Area, expanding the boundaries of the Station Area, changes to the Urban Flex zone and more. This would require a large reprioritization of staff time and the Planning Work Program and/or more financial resources for consulting resources to provide additional analysis such as supplemental environmental impact work, infrastructure needs, and transportation modelling. A timeline for implementation would need to be developed.



# Backup Slides




Today




# 2044 Vision



**NOTE: This calendar is subject to change on a daily basis. It does not constitute legal notice.  
 PLANNING DEPARTMENT ITEMS ONLY. CHECK WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS FOR THEIR MEETING AGENDA ITEMS.**


City of Kirkland - Planning & Building Department - Public Meeting Calendar				
Regular Meeting Times Unless Otherwise Noted:				
City Council: Study Session 5:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:30 PM (1st & 3rd Tuesday)		<a href="#">City Council Webpage</a>		(H) = Hearing
Planning Commission: 6:00 PM (2nd & 4th Thursday)		<a href="#">Planning Commission Webpage</a>		
Hearing Examiner: 10:00 AM (1st & 3rd Thursday)		<a href="#">Hearing Examiner Webpage</a>		(S) = Study Session
Design Review Board: held on a case-by-case basis for each permit, as needed		<a href="#">Design Review Board Webpage</a>		
April		2026		Last Updated: 4/16/26 9:24 AM
MEETING LOCATION: HYBRID VIA ZOOM (UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 	2 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM  COM21-00059 (SC) COM26-00016 (DH)  Admin: JD	3
6	7 City Council 7:30 PM  State Parking Requirements (SB 5184) Implementation Adoption (MR)  Neighborhood Plan Amendment Request Briefing (LBL)	8	9 Planning Commission 6:00 PM  Residential Lot Splitting (H) (SG)*Tentative  Housing-on-Faith-Owned-Land-Briefing (SG)*Tentative  State of the Urban Forest & UFMP Update (SS) (AH)  Admin: TG	10
13	14	15	16 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM  COM26-00070 (SC) COM26-00028 (SC)  Admin: TG	17
20	21 City Council 7:30 PM  Housing-on-Faith-Owned-Land-Briefing (SG)  Earth Month Proc (DB) NE 85th Street Station Area Zoning Code Amendments Adoption (LBL)  2026-2028 Planning Work Program Adoption (AZ/AW)  Bridle Trails Apartments MFTE (DN)	22	23 Planning Commission 6:00 PM  NE 85th St Station Area - Economic Development Update Briefing (AZ)  Admin: TG	24
27	28	29	30	


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<b>May</b>		<b>2026</b>		Last Updated: 4/16/26 9:24 AM
MEETING LOCATION: HYBRID VIA ZOOM (UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>City Council</b> 7:30 PM</p> <p>Code Enforcement Code Amendments (S) (DN/SS)</p> <p>Affordable Housing Week Proclamation (LA)</p> <p>Housing on Faith-Owned Land Briefing (SG)</p>	6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hearing Examiner</b> 10:00 AM</p> <p>High Quality Tree Service (CE-SLS)</p> <p style="color: red;">Admin: JD</p>	8
11	12	13	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Planning Commission</b> 6:00 PM</p> <p>Housing on Faith-Owned Land Briefing (SG)</p> <p>Residential Lot Splitting (H) (SM)*Tentative</p> <p style="color: red;">Admin: TG</p>	15
18	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>City Council</b> 7:30 PM</p> <p>Residential Lot Splitting Adoption (SG)*Tentative</p> <p>Middle Housing's Affordable Housing Requirement Briefing (SG)*Tentative</p> <p>Housing Dashboard Briefing (SG) *Tentative</p>	20	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hearing Examiner</b> 10:00 AM</p> <p style="color: red;">Admin: TG</p>	22
25	26	27	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Planning Commission</b> 6:00 PM</p> <p style="color: red;">Admin: JD</p>	29
<p style="color: red;"><b>Memorial Day</b> City Hall Closed</p> 				

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Planning Commission: 6:00 PM (2nd & 4th Thursday)		<a href="#">Planning Commission Webpage</a>		
Hearing Examiner: 9:30 AM (1st & 3rd Thursday)		<a href="#">Hearing Examiner Webpage</a>		(S) = Study Session
Design Review Board: held on a case-by-case basis for each permit, as needed		<a href="#">Design Review Board Webpage</a>		
June		2026		Last Updated: 4/16/26 9:24 AM
MEETING LOCATION: HYBRID VIA ZOOM (UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2 City Council 7:30 PM	3	4 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM Monich (CE - SLS) COM25-00070 (SC)	5
8	9	10	11 Planning Commission 6:00 PM  *Bloxhub Introduction and Totem Lake SIS Visioning Summary (MR)* Tentative	12
15	16 City Council 7:30 PM  Residential Lot Splitting Adoption (SM)*Tentative	17	18 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM	19 JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY CITY HALL CLOSED  
22	23	24	25 Planning Commission 6:00 PM	26
29	30			

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Planning Commission: 6:00 PM (2nd & 4th Thursday)		<a href="#">Planning Commission Webpage</a>		
Hearing Examiner: 9:30 AM (1st & 3rd Thursday)		<a href="#">Hearing Examiner Webpage</a>		(S) = Study Session
Design Review Board: held on a case-by-case basis for each permit, as needed		<a href="#">Design Review Board Webpage</a>		
<b>July</b>		<b>2026</b>		<i>Last Updated: 4/16/26 9:24 AM</i>
MEETING LOCATION: HYBRID VIA ZOOM (UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM	2
				INDEPENDENCE DAY OBSERVED CITY HALL CLOSED 
6	City Council 7:30 PM	8	Planning Commission 6:00 PM  Housing on Faith-Owned Land (H) (SG) *Tentative	10
13	14	15	Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM	17
20	City Council 7:30 PM  Urban Forest Management Plan Update Briefing #2 (SS) (AH)	22	Planning Commission 6:00 PM	24
27	28	29	30	31

Public Meeting Calendars Planning and Building

City of Kirkland - Planning & Building Department - Public Meeting Calendar				
Regular Meeting Times Unless Otherwise Noted:				
City Council: Study Session 5:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:30 PM (1st & 3rd Tuesday)	<a href="#">City Council Webpage</a>	(H) = Hearing		
Planning Commission: 6:00 PM (2nd & 4th Thursday)	<a href="#">Planning Commission Webpage</a>			
Hearing Examiner: 9:30 AM (1st & 3rd Thursday)	<a href="#">Hearing Examiner Webpage</a>			
Design Review Board: held on a case-by-case basis for each permit, as needed	<a href="#">Design Review Board Webpage</a>	(S) = Study Session		
August		2026		Last Updated: 4/16/26 9:24 AM
MEETING LOCATION: HYBRID VIA ZOOM (UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3	4 City Council 7:30 PM	5	6 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM	7
10	11	12	13 Planning Commission 6:00 PM Urban Forest Management Plan Update Briefing #2 (AH)	14
17	18 City Council 7:30 PM	19	20 Hearing Examiner 10:00 AM	21
24	25	26	27 Planning Commission 6:00 PM	28
27	28	29	30	31