

Minutes, Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods
April 13, 2022 Virtual online meeting

Note: Action items are highlighted in yellow.

Neighborhoods attending:

Central Houghton	
Everest	Walter Jaccard
Evergreen Hill	Johanna Palmer
Finn Hill	Bill Blanchard (KAN Chair)
Highlands	Launa Johnson
Juanita Neighborhoods	Leo Gilbert
Lakeview	Mark Still
Market	Ken MacKenzie, Mark Nelson, Liz Hunt
Moss Bay	
Norkirk	Janet Pruitt
North Rose Hill	
South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails	Chris Kagen

City Staff/Elected Officials attending:

- David Wolbrecht, Communications Program Manager
- Kurt Triplett, City Manager
- Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager for External Affairs
- Jon Pascal, Councilmember
- Allison Zike, Senior Planner
- Joel Pfundt, Transportation Manager
- Rochelle Starrett, Transportation Engineer
- Victoria Kovacs, Transportation Planner
- Jeremy McMahan, Deputy Planning Director

Guests:

- Roshan Parikh, Market, on the KAN working group for 85th Station Area
- Sheila Cloney, Norkirk
- Jim Hoff, South Rose Hill
- Martin Morgan, South Rose Hill
- Peter Donaldson, Sustainability Ambassadors

7:04pm Introduction

- Chair Bill Blanchard called the meeting to order
- Round-the-horn introductions

7:08pm Public comments

- None

7:09pm 85th St. Station Area Plan

- [Link](#) to City’s project webpage
- Opening remarks by Roshan
 - Significant impacts expected, not well covered by the current plan
 - Expected to see a robust plan with projections that would not include a decline in level of service
 - Want to know that the entire vicinity is addressed, and not just for bike and pedestrian impacts
 - Recent Council remarks (e.g., Mayor Sweet) have asked about impact on buses and traffic throughput, not well addressed
- [Allison] Summary of questions on record
 - Thank you for the questions you’ve all brought to public meetings
 - Confusion around WSDOT/ST project (interchange) vs. Station Area Plan projects
 - What has been studied for transportation: vehicle trips? Intersections?
 - Adequacy of the transportation analysis
 - Traffic related to LWHS + increased development density on the Lee Johnson site
 - Traffic at the 85th/120th intersection
 - Traffic impacts from passenger pick-up/drop-off area (“Kiss&Ride”) in Highlands
 - Timing of bus rapid transit (BRT) construction related to station area plan (SAP) adoption
 - Concerns that the plan is not adequate for bicycle and pedestrian mobility
 - What has been studied for transportation: vehicle trips? Intersections?
 - [Joel] Review of study cycles to date
 - 2020-2022 summary, from baseline findings to specific analyses
 - Ongoing: Coordination with project team for final Plan vision, goals, and policies
 - [Roshan] The plan seems to focus on impact for bikes and pedestrians; want to see detailed analysis for vehicles
 - [Joel: displayed a slide. [Source](#)]

Vehicle Trips

- Estimated number of trips generated under each growth scenario using the Bellevue-Kirkland-Redmond (BKR) travel demand model (MXD) a trip generation tool that accounts for land use and density
- Applied mitigation measures including Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, intersection analysis and projects, bold bike/ped network vision
- Currently estimating bike/ped mode share

Exhibit 1-27. PM Peak Hour Vehicle Trips Generation using MXD+/BKR Model Mode Share Estimates

Alternative	PM Peak Hour Vehicle Trips	Net Change in Trip Generation Compared to No Action Alternative
Existing	4,559	—
2035 No Action	10,320	—
2044 Alternative A	11,140	820
2044 Alternative B	16,140	5,820
2044 Alternative 2	17,601	7,286
2044 Alternative 3	19,473	9,158

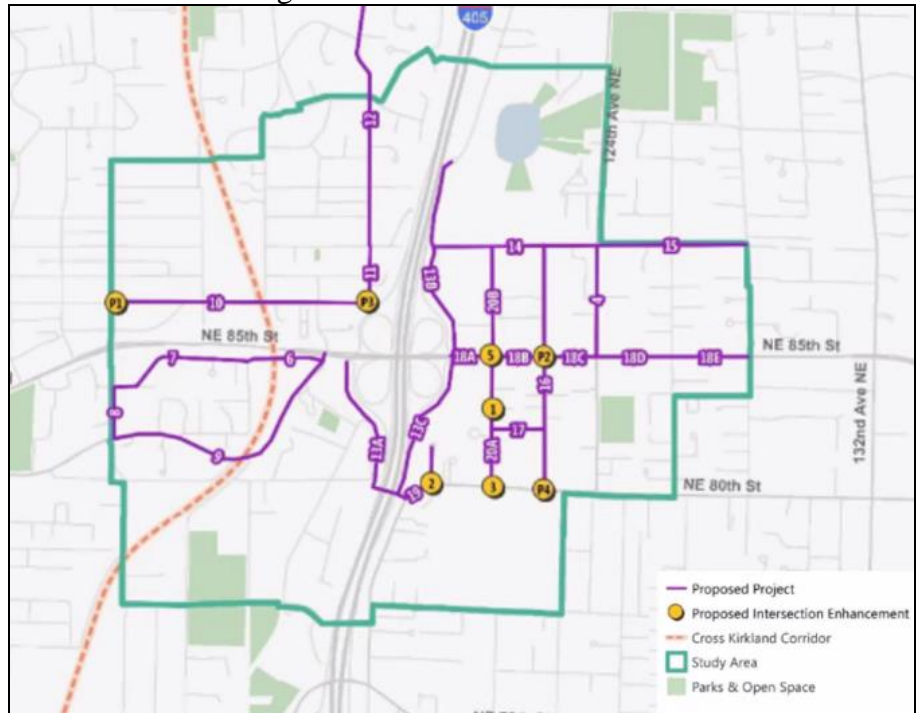
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021.

Exhibit 3-16. PM Peak Hour Vehicle Trip Generation using MXD+/BKR Model Mode Share Estimates

Quadrants	2035 No Action (DSEIS)	2044 Alternative A	2044 Alternative B	2044 Alternative 2 (DSEIS)
NW	930	930	1,280	1,000
NE	3,850	4,480	4,920	10,110
SW	1,910	1,850	2,360	2,190
SE	3,630	3,880	7,580	4,300
Total	10,320	11,140	16,140	17,600
Mode Share (SOV/Carpool/Transit)	70% / 23% / 7%	70% / 22% / 8%	71% / 21% / 8%	72% / 21% / 7%

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021.

- [Roshan] Did the analysis show a decline in level of service?
 - [Joel] Yes, at some locations. Looking at some expansions and modifications to mitigate:



- Remember that the new 405 intersection will be more efficient than the existing intersection, which will have beneficial improvements
- [Joel] We will have to accept some level of urban congestion, because we live in a vibrant, growing community. We are focused on people and safety and not just cars.
- [Allison] We heard concerns that the studies weren't performed at appropriate times of day. We did conduct studies at PM peaks for all intersections studied, and also at AM peak for select intersections.
- [Roshan] We hear a lot about getting people out of their cars, but they won't do that until they have a good reason to do so. I'm concerned about addressing the reality of vehicle capacity now.
- [Leo] As someone who tries to get around the city without a car, I appreciate the City's language supporting alternative transportation. I don't mind car congestion when there are good alternatives.
 - [Roshan] Want to see continuing possibility for the public to have feedback and input, as these plans reach further detail. Without knowing the particulars, it's hard to know how we can invest in ancillary infrastructure.
 - [Janet] The language needs to be brought down to a simpler level; it's a lot of jargon and I don't think it's been communicated well at the people level.
- Communication strategy [Ken]
 - Most people in the community are aware that something related to the BRT is happening, but scant understanding of the SAP

- The City’s communications about the SAP have failed to connect to the community
 - The web site is simultaneously too detailed and too superficial
 - The project is changing faster than the City is communicating
 - Neighborhoods are generally unaware that their Neighborhood Plan is being updated
 - Who is writing the new Station Area Neighborhood Plan? Is there one?
 - Kan has been meeting with neighborhoods to fill the communications gap
- Comments
 - Some positive comments
 - Many more concerns
 - LWHS access gridlock
 - Overcrowded schools
 - Parks accommodating 20,000+ more visitors
 - SRH/BT impact piling on top of Bridle Trails Shopping Center and transfer station
 - Kiss&Ride is insufficient to replace a parking garage
 - Need more housing options
 - Golden opportunity to “go big” on bike/ped access; need a bigger vision
 - Metro bus concerns; will they amp up service properly?
 - Where will mom&pop services and shops go? They’re being pushed out, as they were at Park Place
 - Will taxes go up?
 - Where will all the new residents work? It doesn’t sound like a “walk to work” neighborhood
- Community outreach unrealized opportunities
 - Results/data from City events are not available
 - Online open house, online survey, service provider workgroup, meetings-in-a-box, student project at LWHS, city presentations at 10 Neighborhood Association meetings
 - Ken’s analysis of SAP Draft EIS comment

- Positive community response has been misrepresented to Council:

	For SAP	Neutral on SAP	Against SAP
Opinion/Recommendation	19.6%	9.8%	70.6%
Key Issues Named			
Affordable Housing	60%		
Need Open Space	20%		
Building Height			72%
Traffic Congestion			50%
Density			31%
Kirkland Character			31%
Alternatives Called Out			
Against Alternative 2			86%
Against Alternative 3	20%		89%

- KAN is Kirkland’s primary community information conduit
 - Both directions, to/from City
 - Feedback represents the whole community: all neighborhoods, all people
 - KAN participants have deep credibility, live in the community
 - KAN participants are volunteer leaders
 - Provide positive and negative ideas and feedback
 - KAN wants the City to take KAN’s ideas and input seriously
 - KAN wants the City of Kirkland to succeed
 - [Bill] Summary: we feel that when we talk to our neighbors, it’s clear that the City’s messages are not getting out there.
 - [Kurt] Please share Ken’s presentation with us.
 - Concerns [Liz]
 - Big project! It takes hundreds of pages to describe it. There is no one-pager.
 - Parts of plan don’t feel flushed out
 - Traffic impact
 - Measurements in 2020 captured pandemic levels?
 - [Joel] No, the study was based on 2019 data.
 - Affordable housing
 - Crosswalks amid heavy traffic
 - [Joel] When WSDOT did that analysis, they made assumptions about a level of alternative transportation usage: current conditions, forecasting the bike and walking trips. Difficult to forecast in detail, but they look at how it will impact operations near the BRT and throughout the interchange.

- [Liz] If Google is successful in getting employees out of cars, then that implies a heavy impact on the bike/ped infrastructure; not sure that's reflected in the projections.
 - Kiss&Ride is terrifying to the people in that neighborhood; no parking in that area, and people will be looking for that, no matter how you build it.
 - Latest study session highlighted how difficult it is to locate school expansion property now. You can put preschools in office space, but much harder for other schooling.
 - LWHS property is being slated for residential and commercial use? How can that be good when it's already hard to find school space?
 - [Allison] We designated it as "civic mixed use" because the school district doesn't yet have a plan for how to create public/private or other mixed-use plans, so we want to give them the opportunity to partner in innovative ways. It's not Kirkland trying to take that land.
 - [Kurt] One of the conversations we've been having has been around housing for school staff. This could be a way for the district to address one of their own challenges.
 - Kirkland is a thriving city because of the expertise of Kirkland city staff. We ask that we be recognized as well as "feet on the street," people intimately connected to the community, as a resource.
- Conclusion [Bill]
 - Analogy: When a development sign goes up on the property next to you and people go nuts ... We want to be part of helping everyone understand what's happening, how to participate, how to be involved.
 - Allison has a deck with graphics and answers to some of tonight's questions.
 - [Chris] WSDOT selling the Houghton Park & Ride?
 - [Kurt] WSDOT is surplusing the property and has solicited offers from Kirkland and from King County, and we have formally indicated interest in acquiring the property. We're not sure what we'd do with it, but we'd rather have it than have it go to the County (which has not tendered interest) or to private sale.
 - [Kurt] We have a staff and Council that really loves this City and does a great job to support it.

8:00pm Park Lane closure: Sheila Cloney (<mailto:sheilacloney@gmail.com>)

- Small business consultant; used to work for Kirkland City, has been active with Seattle City Council on traffic issues, also owns a small business in Edmonds
- Closure of Park Lane
 - Reached out to small businesses in Kirkland who wanted to know about how road closures have worked in other cities
 - Park Lane closure had started before COVID pandemic
 - Formed the Kirkland Downtown Alliance
 - City Council decided last year to defer Park Lane closure for two years

- Businesses remain unsettled about what's going to happen next
 - Rumor that some Councilmembers want to consider permanent closure in 2023
 - Claims of broad public support
 - City survey that supported closure
 - Sheila looked at the survey and feels that it was biased; language favored closure
 - Businesses in Edmonds did their own surveys
 - Respondents expressed support for closure
 - BUT they expressed that they thought that the businesses themselves supported the closure, which was not true
 - Edmonds ended their closure program at the end of last summer
 - It was a “dismal failure”
 - Did not stimulate commerce
- Want to have clear communication between the businesses and the city residents, without any intermediaries
- Group is also working this year on cleaning up the downtown
- [Liz] What is the name of your organization
 - Kirkland Downtown Alliance. Different from the Kirkland Downtown Association, which really just organizes events. Chamber of Commerce is focused on regional issues. So we're filling a gap for representing the interests of the downtown merchants and property owners.
- [Leo] If I remember correctly, many downtown businesses supported more closure than what the Council provided. We in KAN were frustrated when Council made their decision, because it countered what we perceived to be popular choice. You described Edmonds as a dismal failure, but I observed a thriving Park Place closure with outdoor tables, lots of pedestrian traffic.
 - [Sheila] The majority of downtown businesses do not support permanent closure. Remember that there are many non-retail businesses in the area: service providers, etc. Those businesses rely on parking for visitors.
 - [Bill] It was a mixed bag, as I recall. Many businesses approved of the nighttime closures.
 - [Janet] Check with Karen Story if you want the details.
 - [Sheila] I encourage you to go back and listen to that Council meeting (Spring 2021); we had a robust set of speakers on the topic. The downtown is a central business district. If the City wants to change it to a park setting, they need to change that designation. Businesses need a fair chance to leave if the conditions are changing.
- [Bill] We'll stay in touch.

8:25pm [Sustainability Ambassadors](#) summer internships

- Peter Donaldson presenting, Director of Sustainability Ambassadors
- Non-profit organization, scope of King County (19 school districts, 39 cities)
 - Goals:
 - Empower youth through civic work

- Curriculum design for teachers; meet academic standards through civic involvement
 - Improve community through collective impact
- Pilot program for SNAP: 4-6 paid students (high school, college)
 - Sustainable Neighborhood Ambassador Program
 - Link to [Climate Justice Ambassador Internships](#) (mailed later by Peter); application deadline 4/22/22
 - Some funding from City, matched by the non-profit
 - Invest in youth as active players, owning the solutions
 - Each intern is expected to engage 50 peers
 - Develop systems thinking
- Recruiting for these interns
 - Lots of tools ready to support them
 - Kirkland's own Sustainability Master Plan
 - Some projects already identified. Examples: water conservation, tree planting, biking to school
- Peter and David Barnes will be writing a scope document for City engagement
- Engaging with KAN
 - Juanita and SRH are obvious candidates due to high schools
 - Leaning into understanding the neighborhoods, engaging with students
- [Bill] We'll put our heads together and get back to you with ideas
 - We're always looking for ways to engage young people (Leo is our poster child)
 - [Peter] Please propagate our message out to any school or youth organization you connect with. Particularly interested in educators who work with climate issues in curriculum.
 - Maybe we can form a joint summit or such
- [Launa] I am the sustainability chair for Hyland school, would love to connect
 - [Peter] I've connected with the PTSA sustainability chairs; thank you
- [Leo] I'll recommend your group to a person in my neighborhood who may be interested.

8:43pm Open discussion

- [Leo] Totem Lake homeless/vagrant population
 - Encampment on southbound 405 onramp
 - Reported it a month ago; the case was closed but nothing has happened
 - Fenced utility area has been broken into
 - Occupation of the area on the Cross-Kirkland Corridor; concern for safety of trail users
 - Not advocating for arrest, but want to keep it from going unchecked as it has in some Seattle area
 - [Bill] Will call Chief Harris to discuss directly. City has resources to bear and is hiring more.
 - [Roshan: described a couple of encounters with people in need]
- Park Lane closure

- [Bill] Sheila is a Norkirk resident, wants to get more involved
- [Ken] Apart from Sheila as an individual: Should we consider supporting a new form of downtown alliance? Is KDA truly moving away from small business advocacy and representation? [Bill: Google pays KDA's rent, provides a space for them]
- [Liz] I was concerned about how she dodged the question of how many people are in her group, would like to know more.
- [Chris] If she joins any Neighborhood Association, then by all means I'd like to hear her voice. I'm leery of her organization and who she represents; all I see online is an Edmonds organization by that name.
- [David] KAN bylaws specify who is and isn't on KAN.

8:54pm Neighborhood Services updates

- David Wolbrecht presenting
- Autonomous personal delivery devices
 - If you're interested, check out the [City page](#) with information and outreach opportunities
 - Ken has seen them in Bothell
 - Janet has seen testing on 7th in Norkirk; they are not yet permitted
- Neighborhood Safety Program
 - Still pending hiring of David's successor
-

8:47pm Roundtable

- Norkirk (Janet)
 - Norkirk Garage Sale coming up again
 - Waverly Beach Park egg hunt went well
- Highlands (Launa)
 - Easter egg hunt this Saturday
- Finn Hill (Bill)
- Houghton (Larry)
- Moss Bay (Bea)
- Juanita (Leo)
- SRH/BT (Chris)
- Market (Ken)
- Evergreen (Johanna)

9:02pm Closing

- Adjourned at 9:02pm
- Next meeting: May 11, 2022
- Off for June/July/August