



Kirkland Greenways FAQ

People all over Kirkland want safe streets for their kids - for their families - but often they don't know where to start or how to make it happen. Greenways are part of the answer...

What is Kirkland Greenways' goal?

Kirkland Greenways' vision is a Kirkland where people from 8 to 88 can get around on a complete network of safe streets.

Whether you are walking or jogging, in a wheelchair or a car, on a med-scooter or riding your bike, greenways get you to school, the library, the café, businesses and services or your local park: Greenways knit our communities together, connecting us to all the local places we want to go.

The answers that follow were put together by Kirkland Greenways volunteers and are meant to provide information and inspire discussion! We welcome your input and further refinement, as these ideas could become the actual standards by which Greenways are implemented in Kirkland.

What is a Neighborhood Greenway?

Neighborhood Greenways are:

- Residential streets with low traffic volume and traffic speeds
- Streets that have been selected, scouted, and signed to help people get around
- Attractive streets that connects us to where we want to go
- Low-stress connections between parks, schools, businesses and other places too!
- Quieter, slower-paced places where all our neighbors' safety is understood to be the priority.

What are the key elements of a Neighborhood Greenway?

- **Connections:** A few blocks can connect with other neighborhoods to extend for a few miles.
- **Safety:** Cars traveling on greenways mostly belong to the people who live there - volumes are already low (< 500 cars/day) and speeds are reduced.
- **Greenery:** Neighbors and the City can agree to add more trees or greenery in the planting strips where desired, hence the name "Greenway."
- **Ease:** Stop signs are oriented to prioritize flow along the greenway so that bicycles and pedestrians can travel with safety.
- **Crossings:** People driving and people biking or walking co-exist. Where people need to cross busy arterials, many tools can be used to get bicyclists and pedestrians across safely while allowing cars to flow along the arterial.
- **Charms:** Greenways are not cookie cutter projects; they should highlight each area's charms.

Will I be able to drive on a Greenway?

Absolutely! And we hope you will drive slowly and remember that your kids and your neighbors may be walking the family dog, riding their bikes, jogging or playing in the street.

How will Neighborhood Greenways be identified and selected?

Each Greenway could first be identified either by individual neighborhoods, interested groups, or by the Kirkland Transportation Commission. The expectation is that:

- Routes will be designed and approved collaboratively with the neighborhood and informed by organizations such as the Parks Board, local PTAs, the Kirkland Senior Council and more.
- Proposed Greenways - or elements for future ones - will hopefully be added to the updated Transportation Master Plan.
- Grants would be applied for, and city projects could be prioritized based on chosen routes.

If my neighborhood is selected for a Greenway, what happens next?

Conceivably, once a residential street is recommended for consideration as a Neighborhood Greenway, neighbors would be notified and invited to a public meeting to discuss the project. There would be an opportunity to talk with leadership from City of Kirkland, Kirkland Parks and where water-runoff is an issue, with Kirkland Public Works. Creating the design for the Neighborhood Greenway is an interactive process and our neighbors will be a key part of the discussion.



Will Greenways have more public art or trees?

Some neighborhoods may want more trees and coordinated planting to contribute to our tree canopy and to create a new look in the neighborhood or to create rain gardens to deal with storm runoff.

The right tree planted in the right place can transform what had been a dreary residential street, providing color and sense of neighborhood pride and connections.

How do you recognize a Greenway?

Neighborhood Greenways create a sense of invitation by employing painted sharrow markings and Greenway signs which also serve to alert people driving to the fact that they are on a Greenway and are expected to drive carefully.

Can emergency vehicles use Greenways?

Of course! Neighborhood Greenways will be designed so that fire trucks, ambulances, and police cars can get to the houses along the Greenway.

Do all my neighbors need to approve the greenway before it is added?

Selecting the Greenway should be a collaborative process where everyone in the neighborhood is invited to attend public meetings and discuss the options and possibilities.

What are the other advantages of a Greenway?

Our goal is that these streets will be sufficiently safe that your 8-year-old daughter or granddaughter could confidently ride her bicycle the entire length of a Greenway.

Will bike commuters use the Greenways?

They certainly can but are not required to. Whether biking or driving, everyone should expect to be cautious and cognizant of other road users when on a greenway.

How might Greenways affect my property values?

Experience with property owners along amenities like the Burke Gilman or Sammamish River trail shows that proximity to the trails is a real estate plus. We've also seen that a higher rating on sites like WalkScore correlates to an increase in your property value of between \$500-\$2000 per point. And there's even a BikeScore available now for many cities across the nation.¹

Some people will never ride a bike on a Greenway. Why should their tax money go to create a Greenway?

When infrastructure is improved to make walking and biking safer, traffic safety is improved for all users – including people driving.²

Greenways are for people who want to:

- Live in a quiet, calm neighborhood.
- Let our children play outside safely
- Walk or ride in front of their homes in relative peace
- See more green and flowering trees and improve how their neighborhoods look and feel

Note that even before the Greenways movement many local residents were asking their transportation departments for traffic calming devices to help keep high-speed drivers from affecting their neighborhoods.

¹ <http://www.walkscore.com/live-more/>

² <http://ugreenways.org/media/RaismanLearPresentation.pdf>