Kingston General Topics

Dear Kingston Residents,

As you know, transportation issues have been an extremely hot topic for Kingston. I previously prepared an information sheet about efforts underway to improve traffic. It can be found here.

Over the years, I have also received questions about other topics in Kingston. This document addresses some of those, including parking, the Seaside development currently under construction on Lindvog Road, frontage improvements, downtown garbage cans and zoning updates of the Urban Village Center that covers much of downtown Kingston.

I want to make sure Kingston residents and business owners have accurate information. If you have other issues or questions, please contact me at rgelder@co.kitsap.wa.us or (360)337-7080.

October 23, 2019

Q: *What is being done about parking in Kingston?*

A: With the start of Kitsap Transit's fast-ferry service from Kingston in late 2018, many residents expressed concern that street parking would be taken by commuters and not available to business patrons and employees. Most of downtown Kingston has two-hour parking. Some residents and business owners complained about the lack of enforcement on the parking, so the Citizens On Patrol (COPs) volunteers of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office increased their patrols and enforcement of the two-hour parking requirement through much of downtown Kingston.

The enforcement helps prevent commuters from parking on the streets, but we have also received complaints from downtown business owners and employees about being ticketed for parking near their businesses or jobs. If there are enough citizens and business owners interested in reviewing parking regulations and making recommendations for changes, I would be happy to work with a group to study the issue. If you would like to be involved, please contact Jennifer Haro in my office at jharo@co.kitsap.wa.us or (360) 307-4212.

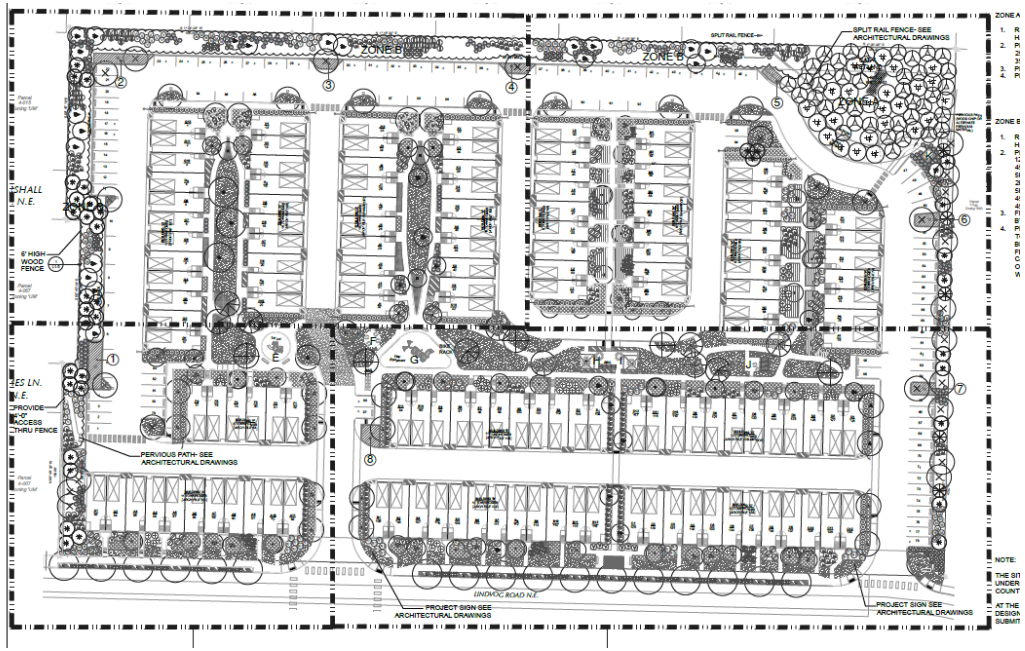
Those who walk on the Washington State Ferries or ride the fast ferry are encouraged to use Kitsap Transit bus service to get to the ferry terminal. Their schedules during commute hours match up well with both ferry services. Other options include a park-&-ride lot within walking distance at nearby Bayside Community Church on West Kingston Road, and direct bus service from both the George's Corner Park & Ride and the North Viking Transit Center in Poulsbo. A bonus: the Kitsap Transit boats will wait for buses if they are running late.

Kitsap Transit also offers the Kingston Ride Fast-Ferry Commuter Service that will pick up and take you to the ferry if you book 24 hours in advance for $2/trip within the service area. Call (844) 475-7433 to make a reservation. The map on the left shows the Kingston Ride Commuter Bus Service area in white, as well as bus routes that serve the Kingston area.

For more information on park & rides, bus routes, or fast-ferry service, visit www.kitsaptransit.com.

Q: *Is the Seaside development required to provide traffic mitigation or extra parking for the impacts of the new residents' vehicles?*

A: The Seaside development will add 140 townhomes on the west side of Lindvog Road. The property is slightly larger than seven acres, and include open space, recreational amenities and internal access roads. Lindvog Road will be upgraded with a curb, gutter, planting strip and a six-foot sidewalk in front of the development. The intersection at Lindvog and Highway 104 was determined to be adequate to meet the needs of additional traffic, so no upgrades were required. The developers must provide a transit stop at the northwest corner of Highway 104 and Lindvog, including an ADA accessible path from the development. The project is performance-based, which allows flexibility in design and site layout if certain conditions are met.



The applicant requested a reduction in required parking spaces, which was granted by the Hearing Examiner. Kitsap County Code allows for up to a 25-percent reduction in parking. The applicant requested a 15-percent reduction, providing 238 parking spaces for the 140 units. The applicant argued that because the project is located so close to transit routes, the ferry terminal, shopping and local amenities, people who chose to live there would not have as many cars as a typical family. The developer is also adding covered bicycle parking for residents.

There will be codes, covenants and restrictions placed on the owners of the Seaside units, including:

1) parking is for operable vehicles only and no maintenance work can be conducted on vehicles;
2) limits on parking over 24 hours, with the homeowner's association having the authority to remove vehicles that violate the rule;
3) garages must be kept clear to accommodate a vehicle.

We will keep a close eye on how well the parking reduction works (or doesn't work) so that future projects put in an appropriate amount of parking. Because of the transit options and walkability of the Kingston area, people shouldn't need as many cars as in a suburban area.

Q: *What determines whether a construction project is required to add frontage improvements (like sidewalks)?*

A: The short answer is the Kingston Design Standards. They were a product of the Kingston Community Design Study, conducted in 1993.

There are two kinds of developments relevant to the Kingston Urban Growth Area: platting and urban commercial.

For urban plats, it is clear frontage improvements are required. The interior of a plat also has frontage improvement requirements, though interior sidewalks are exempt for plats serving four or fewer lots.

The Kingston Design Standards apply to commercial development and on Page i, Paragraph 3 indicate that: *Any existing structure or facility that does not conform to these standards is exempt from compliance unless the use or the structure is modified, upgraded, remodeled, or otherwise improved. All single-family residential structures are exempt from these design standards.*

One literal interpretation is that no commercial project is exempt from the design standards, except where a revised Certificate of Occupancy has no other permit associated with it (for example, no changes to the property except in business name only). However, there have been exemptions for permitted development in the past. Exemptions were given when it was not safe, nor feasible from an engineering standpoint, to construct sidewalks or other frontage improvements.

The Kitsap County Department of Community Development (DCD) takes its cue on these determinations from Public Works for County roads or the Washington State Department of Transportation for state highways. In the case of recent improvements to McDonalds, WSDOT did not want sidewalks encroaching into the ferry holding lane. DCD has not implemented a sidewalk requirement when the sidewalk would otherwise reduce a performance standard that is or was already required, typically related to landscaping or parking. For example, if a required parking area needed to be eliminated or reduced to make room for a sidewalk, DCD would not require the sidewalk.

Q: Why doesn't the County provide garbage cans in downtown Kingston?

A: The history of the trash cans (or lack thereof) on Main Street along Highway 104 in downtown Kingston goes back a decade. Below is a timeline for a better understanding of previous efforts to provide this service.

February 2009

The Port of Kingston reported to the Commissioners' Office that trash cans in downtown Kingston along State Route 104 were overflowing. The Kingston Chamber's Revitalization Association had installed five trash cans years previously on state of Washington right-of-way.

Various agencies over the years picked up the trash including Waste Management and Kitsap County Parks staff. In Feb. 2009, parks staff stopped emptying trash cans due to severe staff reductions during the recession and because parks did not own the trash cans nor were the cans located on County property. Then Commissioner Steve Bauer encouraged downtown businesses to work together through the Chamber to maintain the trash cans. It was suggested that downtown businesses share the cost of a common dumpster for the trash, most of which was generated from their businesses. It was noted then that Kitsap County's Public Works Department Solid Waste Division does not empty public trash cans.

April 2009

The Port of Kingston worked with the Chamber to explore different options, including putting the trash in the port's dumpster. The port felt "business owners should take ownership of and pride in the space in front of their stores" and pledged to work closely with business owners on a solution.

Commissioner Bauer included a request for six Bigbelly solar compacting trashcans for downtown Kingston to replace the old ones, funded through President Obama's Department of Energy stimulus package. The County worked with the Chamber to determine the best locations for the receptacles. The hope was that the compacting feature would resolve some of the overflowing trash problem since much of the waste was Styrofoam food containers and coffee cups from nearby businesses.

There was unanimous support for the Bigbelly trash cans. Community members and the Chamber explored different options for trash collection. The most popular solution was to contract a local person or company to empty the trash cans. A memorandum of understanding was drawn up between the County and the Chamber, wherein the County retained ownership of the trash cans and the Chamber was responsible for maintenance (including vandalism), emptying them, discarding the waste, covering liability and training volunteers. The trash cans had optional ad panels the Chamber could install so they could sell ads if they wanted to create income to pay for the trash pickup service.

Meanwhile, prior to installation of Bigbelly receptacles, businesses were asked to empty the old trash cans in front of their businesses and drop bags in the port's dumpsters. Instead, several businesses unscrewed the cans from the sidewalk and took them away.

March 22, 2010
Memorandum of Agreement between the Chamber and County signed.

April 2010
Bigbelly compacting trash cans installed. A Chamber member agreed to set up and coordinate training and scheduling of volunteers with trash being dumped in the port's dumpsters.

August 2010
Local businesses began to complain trash cans were overflowing. The trash cans near the restaurants needed to be serviced a minimum of two to three times per week during the summer. Volunteers were having a hard time keeping up.

December 2010
Local food vendors were observed using the trash cans for disposal of their business garbage and sidewalk debris. The Chamber was encouraged to do door-to-door outreach to local businesses, explaining the trash cans are maintained by volunteers and a community effort and that they shouldn't be using them for their business waste.

February 2011
Chamber began exploring grants to fund a professional service to empty and maintain the Bigbelly trash cans but continued to either use port or local business dumpsters. The Chamber struggled to find enough volunteers to continue emptying the cans.

August 2014
The Chamber notified the County with 30 days' notice that they wished to withdraw from the agreement, as most of the business owners along the highway hadn't stepped up to assist. The County made plans to remove the Bigbelly receptacles and relocate them to park properties.

September 2014
Trash cans removed.

Kitsap County does not have the funds nor staffing to install new cans, or to pick up and dispose of garbage downtown. We do not have garbage cans anywhere else in the County outside of our parks or county-owned buildings. However, I would support efforts of downtown businesses, community groups and volunteers to bring trash cans and service to downtown Kingston.

Q: What are proposed changes to UVC (Urban Village Center) zoning downtown?

A: The County's Department of Community Development is working on updates to zoning and development codes for downtown Kingston, specifically the Urban Village Commercial (UVC) zone, as part of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update. A Kingston UVC workgroup was formed in 2018, made up Kingston residents and business owners representing a variety of interests. Some of the regulations that apply to the UVC zone have been a barrier to development envisioned in the 2016 Kingston Subarea Plan.

Some of the recommended changes in this year's update include:

- Address regulatory barriers to achieving the existing vision for a pedestrian-oriented downtown business district
- Clarify and update the Kingston Design Standards
- Reduce parking requirements within a short distance of the ferry terminal
- Incentivize parking located underground, under building, or in parking structures
- Create more flexibility for off-site parking
- Increase maximum building height from 35 feet to 45 feet, with a 10-foot setback on any portion of building over 35 feet
- Incorporate changes to allowed uses within the UVC zone

Recommendations will be brought to the Planning Commission for a public hearing in late 2019 and for consideration and approval by County Commissioners in 2020. For more information, visit https://tinyurl.com/kitsap2019cpa or contact Peter Best at pbest@co.kitsap.wa.us or (360) 337-7098. You may also visit https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAKITSAP/subscriber/new to sign up for email updates.