

Kirkland Totem Lake

Kirkland, a city with a 2010 population of 48,787 residents, sits on Lake Washington, bordered by Bellevue to the south and Redmond to the east. Incorporated in 1905, the city can trace its commercial roots to the wool milling and ship building industries, while also serving as a hub for cross-lake ferries. The city’s boundaries have expanded at several points in its history, most recently with a 2011 annexation that added an additional 32,000 residents. The Totem Lake neighborhood was annexed in 1974.

The Kirkland Totem Lake regional growth center was designated in June 2003. The center is characterized by office, retail, and institutional uses, as well as moderate and high-density residential. Totem Lake is home to Evergreen Hospital, the city’s largest employer, a recent regional transit center and Totem Lake Mall. The center offers redevelopment opportunities and access to the regional transportation system via I-405. The center’s natural features include Totem Lake and its wetland trail.

Acreage, Density & Mix of Activity

Totem Lake is a larger regional growth center in terms of total gross acreage (860 acres) with a net developable acreage of 679 acres (79% of gross acres). In terms of its role in the city overall, Totem Lake contains 13 percent of the city's land area, 11 percent of the population, 13 percent of the housing, and 38 percent of the employment. Compared to centers as a whole, Totem Lake has a medium number of total activity units (17,269), with mostly employment-oriented activity (68% jobs/32% residents) and moderate density of activity (20.1 units per gross acre).

Urban Form

Totem Lake's average parcel size is 2.2 acres, which is larger than the 1.1-acre average size for growth centers. Totem Lake provides a moderately walkable pedestrian environment, with a nearly complete network of sidewalks (88% coverage) but very large blocks at a 10.6-acre average size.

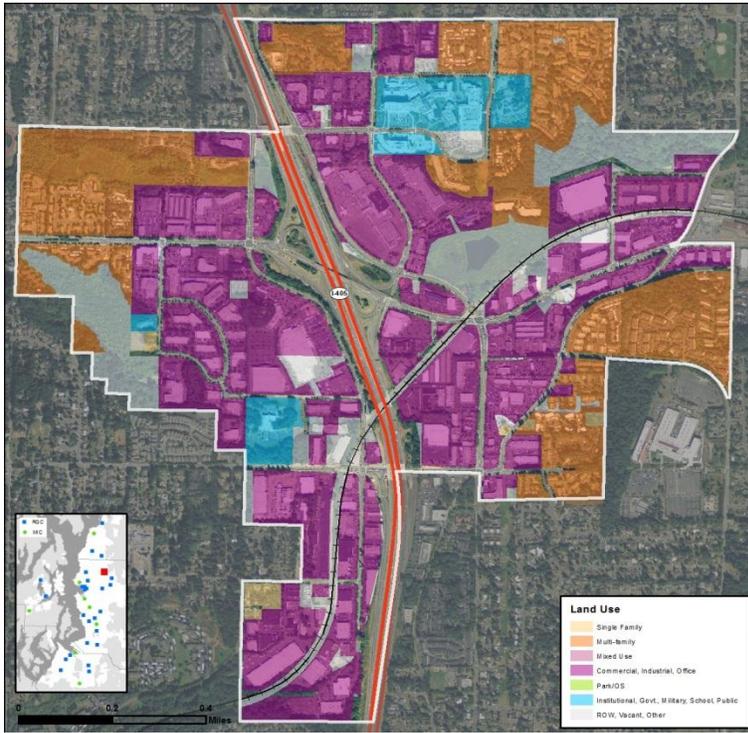
The presence of amenities is an important aspect of urban form. Totem Lake has a moderate set of urban amenities (217 total amenities / 0.25 amenities per gross acre). Public/Civic Services (60%) and Food/Drink (23%) represent the largest amenity categories, with specific concentrations in Healthcare, Restaurants and Electronics/Toys.

2010 Summary Statistics

Land Use	
Gross acreage	860
Average block size (acres)	10.6
Average parcel size (acres)	2.2
Mix of Uses	
Population/Employee ratio	.47 : 1
Population+Employee/acre	20.1
Population	
Total population	5,487
Population density/acre	6.4
Change (2000–2010)	852
Housing	
Total housing units	3,115
Housing unit density/acre	3.6
Change (2000–2010)	641
Employment	
Total employment	11,782
Employment density/acre	13.7
Change (2000–2010)	-1,625
Transportation	
Housing access to transit	66%
Employee access to transit	74%
Work-based mode share	
SOV / HOV	80% • 9%
Walk & Bike / Transit	3% • 8%

Urban Amenities

Food & Drink	
Restaurants	34
Grocery	6
Cafes & Bars	6
Home Supplies & Services	
Pet Supplies	1
Laundry & Haircuts	7
Home supplies	5
Clothing & Shoes	4
Banks	8
Arts & Recreation	
Spectator Sports	-
Fitness & Outdoors	9
Electronics & Toys	2
Bookstores & Libraries	1
Arts & Culture	-
Public & Civic Services	
Social Services	4
Schools & Childcare	2
Police, Fire, Postal, City Hall	-
Pharmacy	4
Healthcare	120
Residential Care Centers	4



Land Use

The major land uses in Totem Lake are commercial (27%), multi-family residential (29%), industrial (24%) and vacant developable (11%). About 57 percent of the center's 679 net acres are in employment-related use. Approximately 30 percent of the land in the center are exclusively residential uses.

Demographics

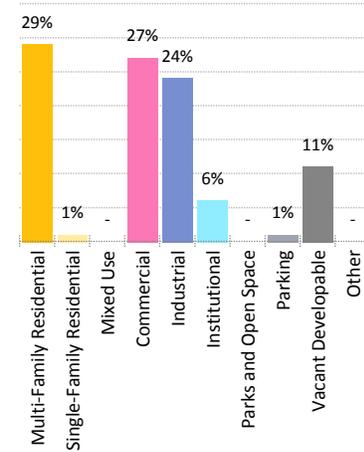
The total population in Totem Lake is 5,487, and grew by 852 residents from 2000 to 2010. The center has more working age residents than the region as a whole, with a moderate share of youth (15%) and a smaller share of seniors (9%). The age of residents is predominantly 18-34, followed by 35-64 (76% for both age groups combined). At 30 percent, Kirkland Totem Lake's racial diversity is greater than the region's 27 percent share of non-white residents. The groups with the highest shares in Totem Lake are White (70%), Asian (14%), Other (12%) and African American/Black (3%). Twelve percent of residents identify as Hispanic.

Employment

The total employment in Kirkland Totem Lake is 11,782, and decreased by 1,627 jobs from 2000 to 2010. The major industry sectors are Services (68%), followed by Retail (15%). Some of the largest employers in this center are Evergreen Medical Center, Nintendo, Fred Meyer, and various medical offices.

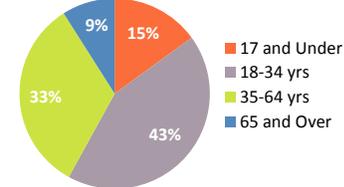
Current Land Use

(679 net acres)



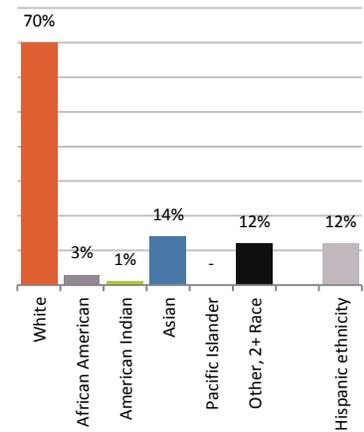
Age of Residents

(5,487 residents)



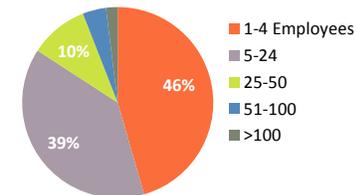
Racial/Ethnic Composition

(5,487 residents)



Size of Businesses

(579 workplaces)



Housing

Totem Lake has 3,115 total housing units, with a density of 3.6 housing units per gross acre. From 2000 to 2010, housing increased by 641 units (26% growth). Residential development in Totem Lake is almost exclusively in structures containing 5- to 19- and 20+ multifamily units. Per King County Assessor records, single family and 2 – 4 unit multifamily structures comprise only 3.7% of the housing in the center. In terms of unit affordability, Totem Lake's owner-occupied housing tends to be less expensive than the region as a whole (based on Census Block Group data). The center's share of units under \$300,000 is 56 percent, whereas the region's share is 38 percent. The center's share of units over \$500,000 is 12 percent, equal to the region's 12 percent.

Transportation

For work-based trips, the Totem Lake regional center's travel characteristics are similar to the region as a whole. The region's single-occupant vehicle (SOV) share is 76 percent, while the center's share is 80 percent. The region's non-SOV mode share is 24 percent, with 10 percent in transit and 5 percent in walk/bike. The center's non-SOV share is 20 percent, with 8 percent in transit and 3 percent in walk/bike. Total daily trips from Kirkland Totem Lake are moderately focused on destinations in regional centers (25% of all trips); this includes trips that stay within the center (15%) and trips that go to other centers (10%).

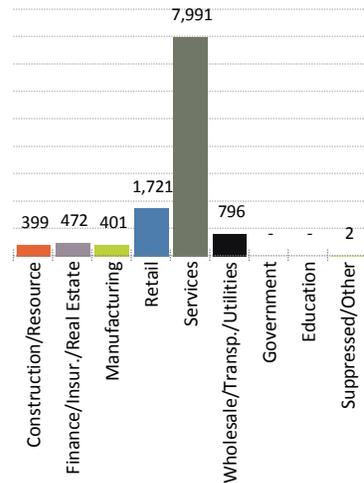
In terms of employee access to transit, Totem Lake has good access, with 74 percent of employees within a 1/4 mile walk to a transit stop. For the 1/2 mile walkshed, the center has nearly complete levels of employee access to transit (94%). For residential, Totem Lake has partial access, with 66 percent of housing units within a 1/4 mile walk of transit. For the 1/2 mile walkshed, the center has complete levels of residential access to transit (100%).

Plan Overview

The Totem Lake Neighborhood subarea planning efforts were first adopted in 2002 and last revised in 2010. The subarea planning effort serves as an element within the city's comprehensive plan. It addresses the Totem Lake Neighborhood, which has boundaries that generally correspond with the city's designated regional growth center. The recent Kirkland annexation has changed the boundaries of the Totem Lake Neighborhood to be less consistent with those of the regional growth center. The Totem Lake Neighborhood element includes sections on the vision for the center, economic development, transportation, housing, public services and facilities, natural environment, and urban design. The element also includes a number of helpful maps for transportation, land use, and design treatments, among other issues.

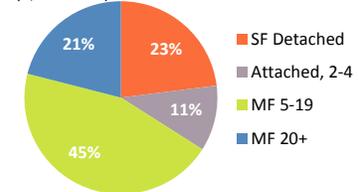
Jobs by Sector

(11,782 jobs)



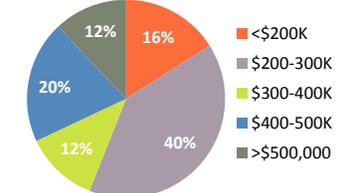
Housing Units by Type*

(3,044 units)

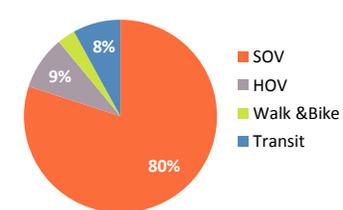


Value of Owner-Occupied Units

(1,380 units)



Mode Shares

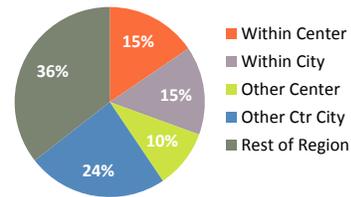


*Census Block Group geography for Totem Lake includes areas outside the center that skew the overall profile of housing. Per King County Assessor records, single family and 2 – 4 unit multifamily structures comprise only 3.7% of the housing in the center.

Comparison to Center Plan Checklist

The city's primary center planning document was reviewed to evaluate the extent to which the plan addresses topics in the PSRC Regional Center Plan Checklist. This policy-level review of the current plan is intended both to provide preliminary assessment of consistency of the plan with center guidelines and to evaluate the Regional Centers Checklist for any potential improvements.

Trip Destinations



Many aspects of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist are addressed in the plan element. The element includes a comprehensive vision statement that describes the desire for the center. The relationship between the natural and built environment is addressed to a great degree with a section devoted to the natural environment, including identification and provisions for critical areas as well as the treatment of stormwater. The center plan calls for designing a transit- and pedestrian-friendly environment. A section on housing also includes policies and discusses implementation measures that could be taken to address housing diversity and affordability. The economic role of the center is also discussed in a detailed manner.

There are elements of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist that are not addressed explicitly in the plan element. Many of these can likely be attributed to the original adoption date of the plan. For example, it does not include a regional context and still includes policies calling for pursuing the designation within King County that would allow it to become a regional growth center. The element also does not explicitly address adopting growth targets and mode split goals for the center. The issue of parking is also only partially addressed. The treatment of public services is also inconsistent throughout the element. For instance, the element includes a list of needed transportation improvements, but does not include other public facilities and services for the area. However, where several of the issues are not addressed—such as public services, air quality, etc. — the narrative provides direction on where additional guidance is found within the comprehensive plan. For instance, within the public services and facilities section, it describes that the “City of Kirkland and other agencies provide a wide range of public services and facilities to serve residents and workers in the Totem Lake Neighborhood. Policy direction for these services is provided in three functional elements of Comprehensive Plan: Public Services/Facilities, Capital Facilities and Utilities.”

Planning Challenges & Implementation Strategies

As noted in its March 2010 presentation to the Growth Management Policy Board, as well as a 2011 survey, the Kirkland-Totem Lake center's issues include encouraging today's development to meet long-term density goals, establishing attractive amenities in the center, encouraging pilot projects in the community to overcome market perceptions, and balancing growth with needed road improvements. The city identified several physical infrastructure issues, including lack of fine grained street grid, limited connectivity due to freeway and arterials bisecting the center, roads with outdated and potentially unsafe designs, and lack of transit service and pedestrian facilities.

Kirkland has employed strategies to address challenges and plan for the success of the Totem Lake center. Regulatory mechanisms have included zoning changes to increase development potential throughout the center, including taller buildings and, in some cases, minimum density requirements. Mixed use is allowed and frequently required throughout the center, and the city has established development bonuses for affordable housing and public improvements. Zoning regulations require a portion of affordable units in new residential buildings exceeding a specified height.