

Kirkland making walkability a top priority

08:05 AM PDT on Tuesday, June 30, 2009

By JANE MCCARTHY / KING 5 News



[Video: Kirkland making pedestrians a top priority](#)

SEATTLE - New research shows the majority of Americans favor building communities where people can walk more. The city of Kirkland has been trying to prioritize pedestrians for years.

"In the surveys that we do with our populous, it is right up at the top," said Kirkland Deputy Mayor Joan McBride.

Kirkland was the first city in the nation to offer pedestrian flags to help people safely cross the street. They were also the first city in the state to develop a "complete streets" ordinance, which aims to be inclusive to all traffic.

But for developers, creating so-called walkable communities in well-developed cities can be tough.

"Just finding parcels of land that are close-in that actually meet the definition of a walkable community," said Eric Campbell, President of CamWest Development.

But Campbell did discover an opportunity to develop a walkable community with the Nettleton Mansion, just a couple blocks from downtown Kirkland.

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He took the nearly 100-year-old mansion, restored it and moved it about 80 feet. Now, 25 more homes are being build on the remainder of the property.

In Nettleton Commons, as it's called, cars will be concealed with garages situated in the back, and porches will face the street.

"You want the eyes of the community to be on the street to really help the interaction," said Campbell.

That's the kind of things Kirkland is encouraging more developers to do. They encourage developers to steer clear of high fences in favor of inviting home fronts.



The City of Kirkland has been trying to prioritize pedestrians for years.

And they are grateful the old Nettleton Mansion survived a new wave of change.

"CamWest did not have to preserve this building," said Deputy Mayor McBride. "They did not have to do that and we are grateful as a community."

The new Nettleton Commons is rated a "walkers paradise" by Walkscore.com, because of its proximity to businesses. You can find out how your neighborhood scores by just typing in your address on the Web site.