

Quick Facts: **Urban Separators Project**

The City needs to make some tough decisions about how to balance the need for **more housing** for Kent residents with the **long-term benefits of preserving open space**. Your ideas will help City staff come up with policy options to recommend to the Kent City Council.

This project is about finding the best use for land in urban separators

Kent first designated urban separators back in 2001. A lot has changed since then, and more people than ever want to live in Kent! Now some people who own land in urban separator areas want to build more houses on their properties than the current rules allow.

City Council asked City planners to find out if it might make sense to allow more housing in certain urban separator areas and how the rules would need to change to make that happen. Planners need to study how more buildings in urban separator areas could affect the environment, and find out what people who live in Kent want them to look like in the future.

Whatever the City decides to do, it needs to fit with the goals of the City, the county, and the Puget Sound region.

The City is looking at multiple options

City planners have come up with some ideas for urban separators. These aren't the only things the City could do, and we don't have to choose one or the other. The City is hoping more ideas from residents will help guide their discussions.

- **Don't make any changes.** Leave urban separators the way they are.
- Find ways to **reward land owners** for keeping their land as open space – for example, lowering their tax bills.
- Keep urban separators the way they are for now, but find areas that could be used for **more housing in the future** if the City runs out of space to build.
- **Change the rules** for how houses in urban separators can be built – like how much open space needs to be left in place, how far apart the houses need to be, and what kinds of buildings can go there.
- Find areas in urban separators that could be used for **more housing now** and designate them as something other than urban separators.

What is an urban separator?

“Urban separator” is a type of land use designation in Kent that's part of the City's comprehensive plan and the county's planning policies. It is meant to preserve open space, connect wildlife habitat, and protect other natural areas, while allowing a small amount of housing.

Zoning rules in urban separators allow one house per acre. Kent's urban separators are shown in **green** in the map on the back.

