

PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS,** Welcoming Week, September 13 - 22, 2024 is a nation-wide celebration honoring the history, achievements, experiences, and struggles of immigrant and refugee people throughout the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** the cities of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, and Sammamish have jointly celebrated Eastside Welcoming Week for the past eight years; and
- WHEREAS,** Eastside Welcoming Week is an annual event bringing our region together to acknowledge the contributions of immigrants and refugees and the role diverse communities play in fostering inclusion, belonging and making people feel welcome; and these cities recognize the importance of ensuring that all residents feel safe, secure, and welcome; and
- WHEREAS,** East King County is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse regions in Washington State, with over 35% of our residents coming from places outside of the United States and 38% of residents speaking a language other than English at home; and
- WHEREAS,** in our highly mobile region, nearly one in five residents have lived in their current residence for less than one year; and
- WHEREAS,** realizing our vision for a welcoming community requires actively addressing the daily challenges of those in our community who do not feel welcome, safe, valued, or included; and
- WHEREAS,** historic and current impacts of individual, institutional, and systemic racism that result in harmful disparities in education, employment, income, housing, criminal justice, and quality of life, as well as sense of belonging; and
- WHEREAS,** our community, like others across the nation, has structures, systems, and policies that contribute to injustice, racial inequality, and discriminatory treatment against residents who were born in another country, are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and other identities; and
- WHEREAS,** to capitalize on diversity as an asset, our community must strive to create a culture and environment that ensure everyone can belong and thrive; and
- WHEREAS,** there are many ways to celebrate Eastside Welcoming Week including by amplifying the voices and experiences of immigrant people, uplifting them to share their stories, and/or attending a Welcoming Week event; and
- WHEREAS,** events and educational resources in our region help celebrate Welcoming Week. For a list of all regional events visit 9th Annual East King County Welcoming Week at Eastside For All.

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE MAYORS OF BELLEVUE, ISSAQUAH, KIRKLAND, REDMOND, AND SAMMAMISH, WASHINGTON, jointly proclaim September 13-22, 2024, as

EASTSIDE WELCOMING WEEK

and invite the community to engage in opportunities during Eastside Welcoming Week and beyond to learn, connect across differences, and take joint action to achieve a welcoming, equitable, and inclusive community.

Lynne Robinson, Mayor
City of Bellevue

Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor
City of Issaquah

Kelli Curtis, Mayor
City of Kirkland

Angela Birney, Mayor
City of Redmond

Kali Clark, Mayor
City of Sammamish

