



DATE: September 13, 2021

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

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SUBJECT: 2021 Neighborhood Walks

The 2021 Neighborhood Walks were scheduled as the first opportunity to meet in person, as outdoor pandemic restrictions eased. The walks allowed for a reaffirmation to vital two-way conversations between the public and City leadership. Residents welcomed the opportunity to share the unique aspects of their neighborhoods and their priorities. The walks were well-attended, as the City Manager and directors from all departments interacted with residents, and specific concerns are being addressed by the appropriate departments.

This year's walks were held in the following neighborhoods, which had not previously hosted walks: Somerset at Somerset Elementary School with 55 residents, West Bellevue at Enatai Park with 14 residents, Northeast Bellevue at Ardmore Park with 38 residents, and one virtual walk was conducted online with eight residents attending.

There were common concerns that were repeated during the events, including: public safety and police services, changing neighborhood character, desire for more connections with new neighbors, increasing homelessness and the need for human services, multimodal transportation planning, protection of the natural environment, tree removal ordinances and developer compliance, and mailbox and car theft.

Some specific topics of concern included: King County hotel purchase for supportive housing in Redmond, planning coordination with the county and other municipalities, Great Neighborhoods plans, disturbances in "view" areas, the increasing need for affordable housing, "mega houses" replacing vintage homes, and aging in place. There were also several residents that offered suggestions about how to improve the City's outreach and communication to increase engagement with all residents, including website improvements and continuing some virtual programming for broader access.

During each of the walks, residents expressed gratitude for their neighbors and for City staff and City Council visiting with them in their neighborhood.

The 2021 Neighborhood Walks continued the series which began in 2017, providing an informal setting for residents and staff to discuss assets and concerns that are unique to each neighborhood. The objectives of Neighborhood Walks are to build trust through two-way communication and strengthen constructive dialogue between residents and City leadership.