



DATE: May 3, 2021

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Dan Lassiter, Community Services Supervisor, 425-452-4470
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Parks & Community Services

SUBJECT: National Older Americans Month Proclamation

President John F. Kennedy designated May 1963 as Senior Citizens Month, encouraging the nation to pay tribute to older people across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter's changed the name to Older Americans Month, proclaiming a time to celebrate those 60 and older through ceremonies, events and public recognition. For 33 years, the City of Bellevue has celebrated National Older Americans Month. This year's theme, "**Make Your Mark,**" encourages and celebrates countless contributions that older adults make to our communities.

According to the 2016 US Census Bureau American Community Survey, the percentage of the population 65 years and older living in the United States and specifically in Bellevue is 14 percent. This number is expected to continue to grow, with the percentage of people 65 years and older anticipated to surpass those age 18 and under by the year 2035.

The City of Bellevue provides program opportunities to meet the changing needs of a more active, diverse older adult population. Programs and activities, including aerobic and strength building, decrease the chance of a fall, which is the number one occurrence leading to a loss of independence. In 2020, parks and trails remained open during the pandemic and the Bellevue Golf Course, Robinswood Tennis Center, and the Bellevue Aquatics Center were safely opened in accordance with the Governor's SafeStart Washington guidelines.

All of these options encouraged a level of physical activity that benefited the older adult population in Bellevue. Virtual programming and the continued re-opening of community centers in 2021 under the Governor's Healthy Washington Road to Recovery Guidelines provide additional opportunities for physical activity and fitness programs. In 2021 and 2022, additional resources have been awarded by the King County Veteran, Senior and Human Services Levy to enhance activity at Bellevue community centers for older adults and to promote serving as community hubs for aging adult activity.

The Bellevue Network on Aging (BNOA), which strives to raise awareness of needs and resources that support older adults through life's transitions, advocates for increasing Bellevue's transportation options, affordable housing, and outreach to educate aging adults of local resources to help them in everyday life.

We invite the Bellevue City Council, staff, volunteers and all members of the community to join us in celebrating National Older Americans Month.

Attachments

- A. Bellevue Network on Aging 2020 Activity Report
- B. Proclamation