

## SAMMAMISH SENIORS COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

September 28, 2022

Guest Speaker: Ben Yazici, Former Sammamish City Manager  
Don Gerend, Discussion Facilitator      21 recorded attendees

### Ben's Background

- At University Place when loaned to City of Sammamish at the request of Mike Wilson in 2000
- 3<sup>rd</sup> employee of the city, 1<sup>st</sup> in Public Works
- Office was located near Safeway on north end of Sammamish
  - 1 year turned into 15 years as a city employee
  - 1<sup>st</sup> City Manager
  - 2016 retired from Public Service, served as consultant
  - Now focuses on family and just became a grandparent in March 2022
- Currently serves as a volunteer Senior Advisor for City Managers Association
  - Works with city managers, cities with challenges, and their leaders

### Guidance for Sammamish Seniors Development:

- Contacted Scott McColl, current city manager
- Recommended continued broader conversation with city
- Acknowledged greatest need for older adults is decreasing their social isolation
  - Invite them to volunteer
    - Become mentor to youth, both HS and college age
    - Offer to help older adults prepare their annual tax forms
    - Participate in an environmental project
    - Adopt a street for clean-up and maintenance
    - Identify projects that benefit the entire community, not just seniors
  - Benefits of volunteering for older adults
    - Good for heart health
    - Decreases bone loss
    - Teaches new skill sets
    - Improves mental cognition
    - Satisfaction with giving back to your community

### Ben's Reminders:

- We are a young city and it will take time to develop a program as mature as surrounding cities
- Identify diverse funding streams
- Work with other local nonprofits for support
- Identify national nonprofits who have established senior support programs
- Identify a City Council champion and garner support from at least 3 more council members
- Look again at current properties for program housing
- Lodge at Beaver Lake, Central Washington University campus, YMCA all good possibilities

### Funding Suggestions

- City line item
- Local nonprofits
- Rotary
- National nonprofits
- Grants, ask for feedback if not funded

### Next Steps for Sammamish Seniors Development

- Continue developing relationship with city council
- Focus on enough funding to acquire a PT staff for program coordination
- Use on-site volunteers to staff programs
- Continue to use development volunteers to pursue short- and long-term strategic planning
- In person gatherings are critical to decrease social isolation