

## Moss Bay Neighborhood Plan Survey Results Report July 9 2021

In May – June of 2021, the City of Kirkland conducted an online survey in order to aid the update of the Neighborhood Plans for the Moss Bay and Everest neighborhoods. This is a summary of the results and key themes from the Moss Bay neighborhood portion of the survey.

The goal of the survey was to gather information to help determine if the future visions for each neighborhood reflect the desired future growth of each area, identify key challenges or improvements to be considered during the plan update process. The results will help revise the vision statements and policies for the neighborhood plans.

The Survey Monkey survey was open for approximately one month and consisted of 26 questions. Participants were asked to identify what about their neighborhood is important to them, and what they would like to see changed, identify values, and gauge key topics and physical areas of interest.

Promotion of the survey consisted of mailing postcards with the survey link and QR Code to over 5,000 residents and property owners within the Moss Bay neighborhood, a link to the survey was included on the project webpage, the survey link was included in a list serv announcement to those who requested updates on the plan, the Moss Bay Neighborhood Association sent an email announcement and the Youth and Senior Council was encouraged to participate.

### *Quick Facts and Demographics of Participants -*

- *Who participated?*

*When asked to identify which neighborhood you live, work, worship or visit?*

Approximately 84 people responded to the Moss Bay Survey. Participants were prompted to select what ties they have to each of the two neighborhoods, such as if they are a resident, a frequent visitor, or connected with a local business. Here are the results:

Moss Bay residents: 79

Moss Bay business: 7

Moss Bay employee: 1  
Moss Bay visitor: 5

- *Home ownership or renter*- Many respondents own their home (61 people). Eight people were renters.
- *Length of time living in neighborhood*: The majority (twenty-eight) of people have lived in Moss Bay longer than ten years, sixteen people from 5-10 years, thirteen people 2-5 years and twelve people have lived here less than two years.
- *Age*- Of the 84 respondents the majority were of age 65+ (24 people), 14 people were 55-64, 12 were 45-54, 8 were 35-44 and ten people were under 35. 14 skipped the question and 2 people preferred not to answer the age question.
- *Ethnicity*- Most respondents were white (53). 2 people consider themselves as Asian, 2 Hispanic/Latino persons, 1 Indian. No responses were obtained from those identifying as Black or Native American/Native Alaskan. 14 people skipped the question or preferred not to answer.
- *Mobility*- 56 of respondents did not identify any disability, 4 have mobility issues, 2 have hearing issues, and 14 people skipped this question and 10 people preferred not to answer.

#### Staff Analysis:

*According to 2020 ESRI data, 77% of Moss Bay community members were identified as white, 14% Asian, 5.6% Hispanic origin, 1.6% Black and 1.6% two or more races.*

Given the promotion of the survey through many different outlets, staff hoped for a greater number of participants. Even with putting the various languages on the postcard that was mailed to all residents and property owners within the neighborhood, the ethnicity could have been more diverse. Those not answering the question about their race (14) is difficult to interpret, but if they came from origins other than white, it could be significant in determining if our outreach is reaching more diverse community members. We are continually looking for innovative ways to increase and diversify our outreach and this will evolve, and we will get better results over time.

## **Survey Questions and Key Themes**

### *Q.2 What top 3 things makes your neighborhood a great place?*

Respondents identified a wide variety factors that make their neighborhoods enjoyable places to live and overall didn't express the need for change. Key themes from the comments:

- Walkability; and access to downtown shops, the Lake and I-405
- Parks and especially waterfront parks
- Human scale of buildings

### Staff analysis:

The things that people value the most are by design and there is a feeling that the City should continue to foster other aspects such as transportation that make this neighborhood more livable for all who live here now and so that there is a more diverse community in the future.

### *Q.3 What are the top 3 things would you like to see changed to make your neighborhood even better?*

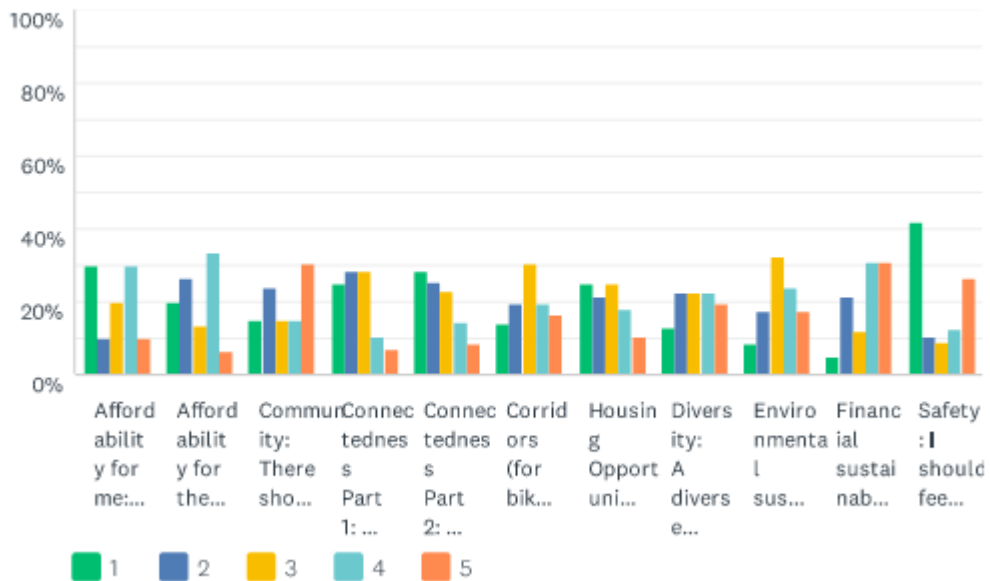
#### Key themes received from comments:

- Less noise overall from commercial businesses (both restaurants and landscaping), roads, cars that put off excessive motor and braking noise
- Reduce congestion from vehicles
- Increase parking options (especially the restricted 2-hour parking) and additional disabled parking in downtown
- Increase pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to separate from cars and make it even safer
- Traffic calming and reduction of speed limits
- Increased heights and density to promote affordable housing and a more diverse community
- Reduced construction and density and keeping building heights down to preserve a smaller downtown area
- More affordable and attainable housing options
- More useful retail stores (such as hardware) and diverse businesses
- Better pedestrian and bicycle crossing at major intersections coupled with safety measures like lighting
- More benches at the parks

Staff Comments: People have opinions on both sides of the growth, no growth issue. But there may be room to consider greater density for affordable housing that is integrated in the neighborhood. It is clear there are many advocates for increased pedestrian and bike infrastructure and connectivity to major destinations around the city.

Q.4 Select the top five values that are most important to you for your neighborhood, where #1 is the most important

Answered: 78 Skipped: 6



Top 5 Ranking Results:

1. **Safety:** I should feel free from the risk of danger and loss in my home and around and in the neighborhood.
2. **Affordability for me:** My home or apartment fits in my budget.
3. **Connectedness Part 2:** I should easily be able to walk to places I need to go to for services, recreation or work.
4. **Connectedness Part 1:** I should easily be able to walk to places I need to go by whatever mode works best (walking, biking, bussing or driving).
5. **Housing Opportunity:** People who wish to live here can find suitable housing in the neighborhood regardless of age, income, race or other factors.

Staff comments:

Answers suggest that safety is of the most importance and connectedness in the neighborhood by whatever means was a close second. Housing affordability for oneself and then by others was also a high priority.

*Q.5 What is your favorite place in your neighborhood?*

Top choices:

- Marina Park (25% of 68 responses)
- Waterfront
- Peter Kirk park
- My home
- Local shops

Staff comments:

The community loves the downtown parks!

*Q.6 What are some amenities that your neighborhood currently lacks but needs? Where are they needed? Why are they important?*

Top choices:

Retail such as hardware, gifts and housewares and electronics  
Contiguous sidewalks near and leading to CKC and where not there now  
More parking options  
More pedestrian safety and protected bike lanes  
More dog areas in local parks

*Q.7 Business owners: What are some amenities or other businesses you would like to see that would be beneficial to your business and the community?*

Key themes received from comments:

- More commuting and affordable housing options for employees
- Businesses working together to build and strengthen their businesses
- More food, restaurants and pharmacies and less vape, gyms and bridal shops
- Off street parking

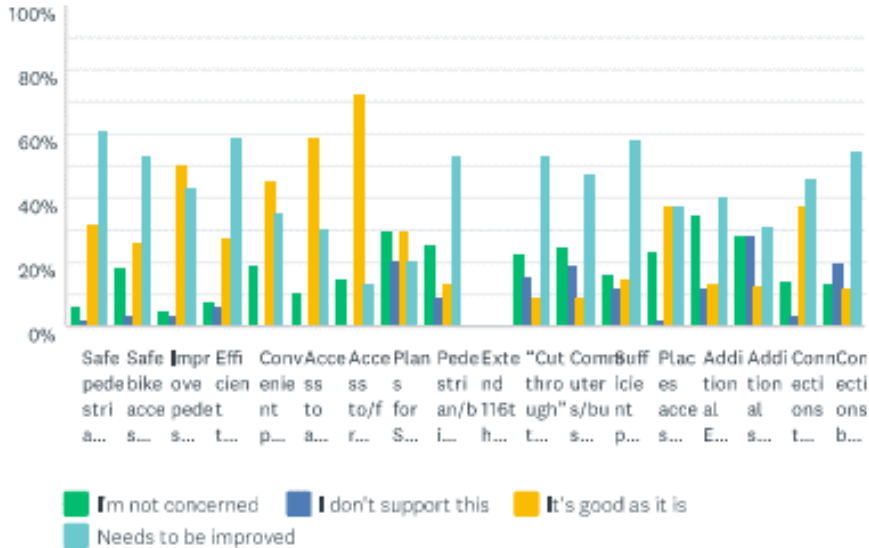
Staff comments: Land Use exists to have more of the supporting businesses mentioned, but the city does not determine who a landlord can rent to if the use is allowed. There are policies that can be considered to further support housing that is more affordable so that there are options for employees.

For Questions 8-15, respondents were asked to rate each of the following topic areas. Responses indicating needing improvement are in bold.

*Q.8 Transportation Infrastructure*

### Q8 Transportation infrastructure

Answered: 72 Skipped: 12



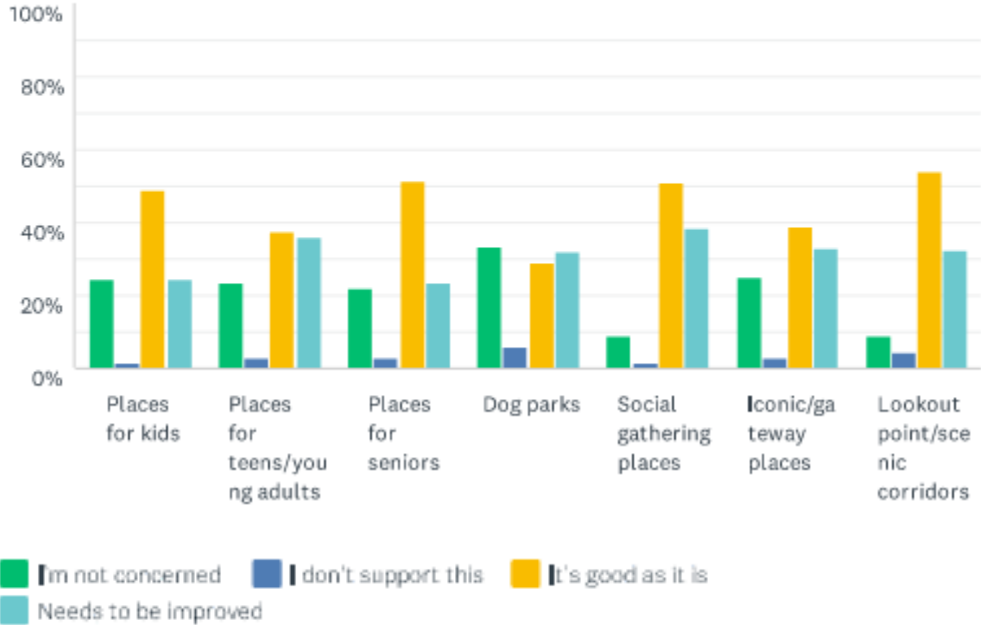
- [1] I'm not concerned
- [2] I don't support this
- [3] Good enough as it is
- [4] Needs to be improved

Key Needed Improvements:

***Safe pedestrian access, safe sidewalks, safe bike access, efficient traffic flow, pedestrian access to area east of I-405 and cut through traffic from streets leading to Lake WA BLVD & 6th Street S and Central Way.***

Q.9 Social Amenities

w r d: 69 Skipp d: 15

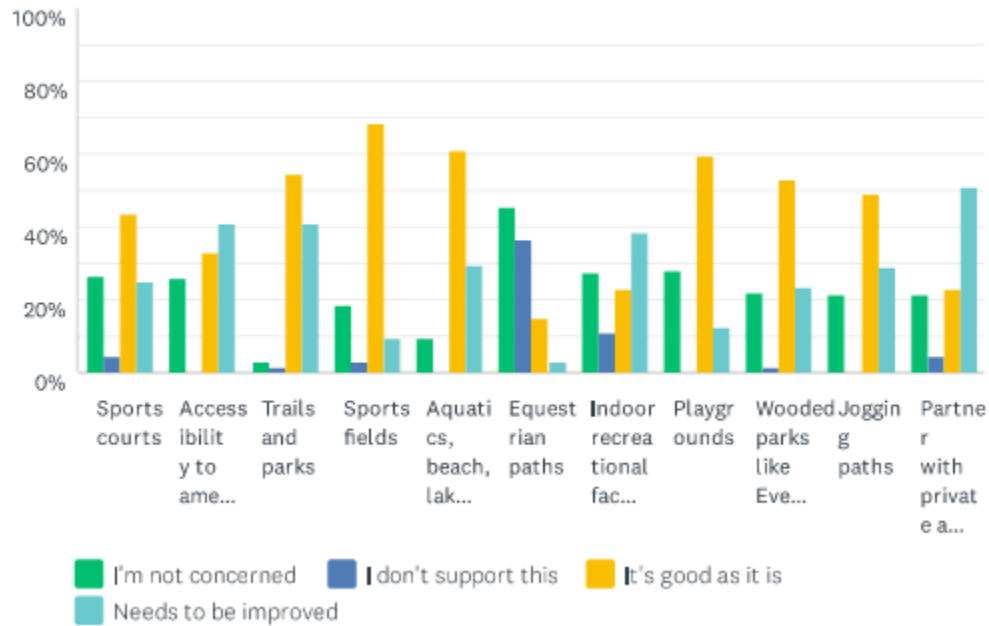


- [1] I'm not concerned
- [2] I don't support this
- [3] Good enough as it is
- [4] Needs to be improved

- Key Needed Improvements:
- o Places teens/young adults
  - o Dog Parks
  - o Social gathering spaces

## Q.10 Recreational Amenities

Answered: 69 Skipped: 15



### Key Needed Improvements:

- Accessibility to amenities for people with disabilities
- Indoor recreational facilities
- Partnerships with public and private entities to provide more recreational amenities
- Trails and parks

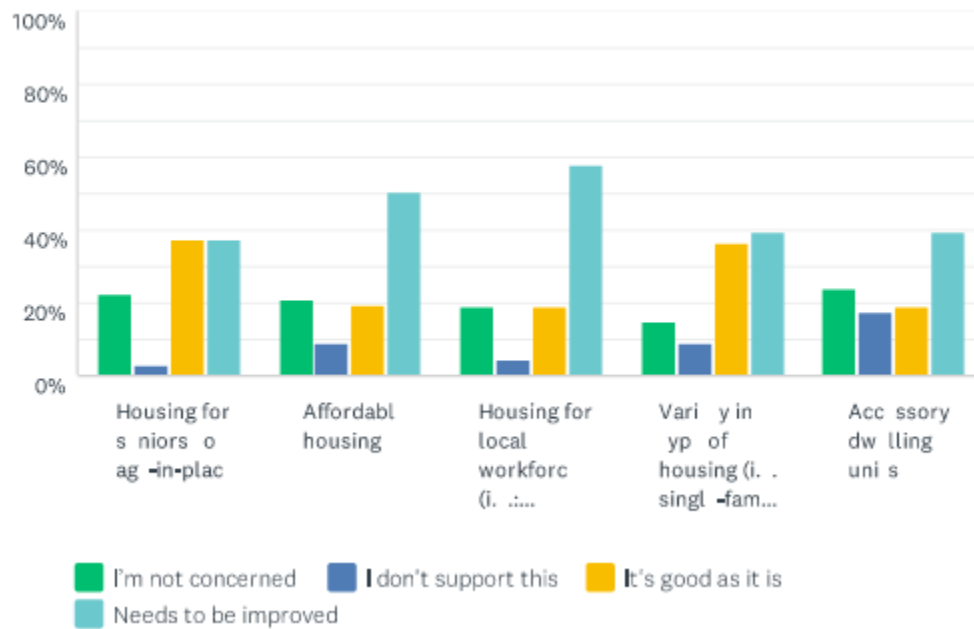
### Staff comment:

Some of the suggested improvements, like trails and park had a much greater number of respondents saying things were good as is and this was also true with the notion of more sports fields, courts, playgrounds, jogging paths and wooded parks.



## Q.11 Housing Priorities

Answered: 70 Skipped: 14



### Key Needed Improvements:

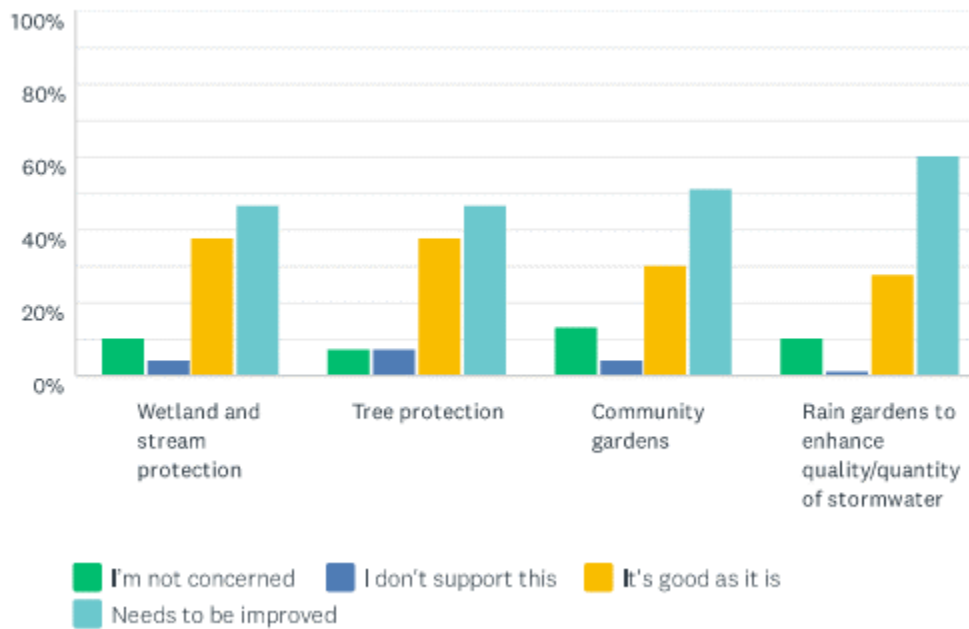
- Affordable Housing
- Workforce Housing that is affordable
- Diversity of housing options besides single-family
- More accessory dwelling units

### Staff Comments:

It is not surprising that housing is not affordable to all, but the desire exists in the community to explore making changes to provide more diverse housing options that can serve employees of businesses and to encourage more diversity in the community.

## Q.12 Environmental Features

Answered: 69 Skipped: 15



### Key Needed Improvements:

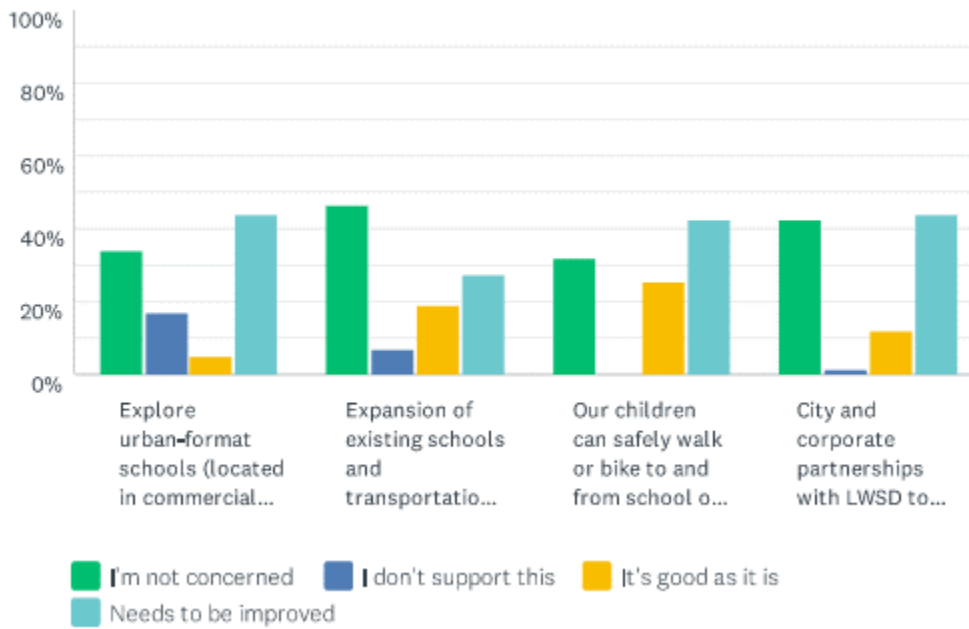
- Rain gardens to control stormwater quality/quantity
- Community gardens
- Wetland and Stream protection
- Tree protection

### Staff Comments:

Respondents also mentioned that things were as good as it is for Wetland and Stream and Tree protection which can indicate that the community may be divided on issues that relate to development or redevelopment of land.

### Q.13 Schools

Answered: 59 Skipped: 5



#### Key Needed Improvements:

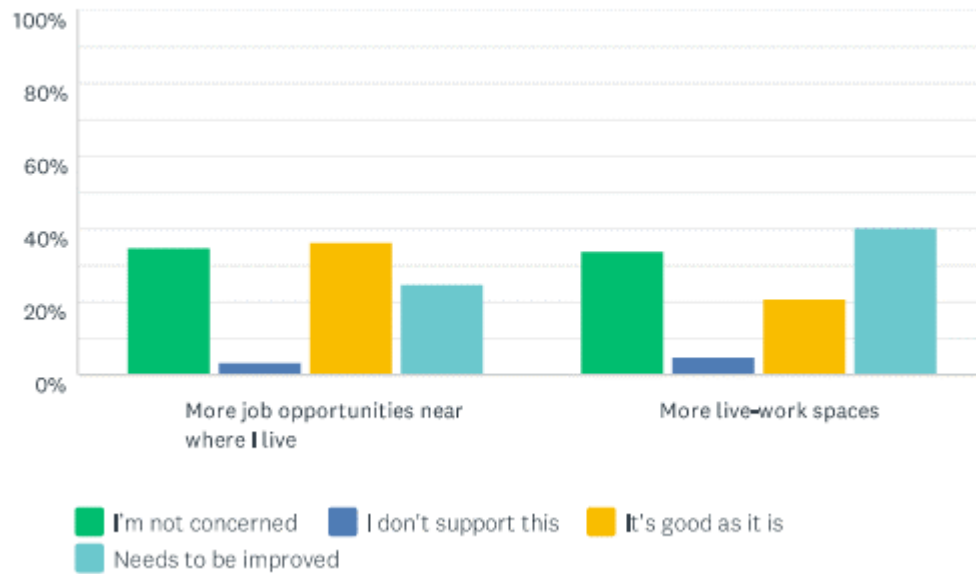
- Exploration of urban-format schools (located in commercial areas)
- Child walk and bike safety to and from school
- City and corporate partnership with Lake Washington School district
- Expansion of existing schools and transportation options

#### Staff Comments:

It is clear what most people are concerned with and staff acknowledges that the City does not control the school district but works with as much as possible in partnership on initiatives such as Safer Routes to Schools.

## Q.14 Employment

Answered: 62 Skipped: 22



### Key Needed Improvements:

- More live-work spaces

### Staff Comment:

Most respondents appear to be not concerned or feel that Kirkland is good as is for job opportunities near where they live. Staff's finds this interesting because many of the community members that live in Kirkland do not work in Kirkland. Perhaps a much larger sample size would yield different answers regarding employment.

## Q.15 What types of companies would you like to see nearby as a possible employer?

### Key Themes from Comments:

Over 50% of respondents want more technology companies (small, med and large) and some felt that other types of businesses that pay a "living wage" would also be a welcome addition.

## Q.16 If you own a business or want to start a business, what might attract you to relocate or add a location in this neighborhood?

### Key Themes from Comments:

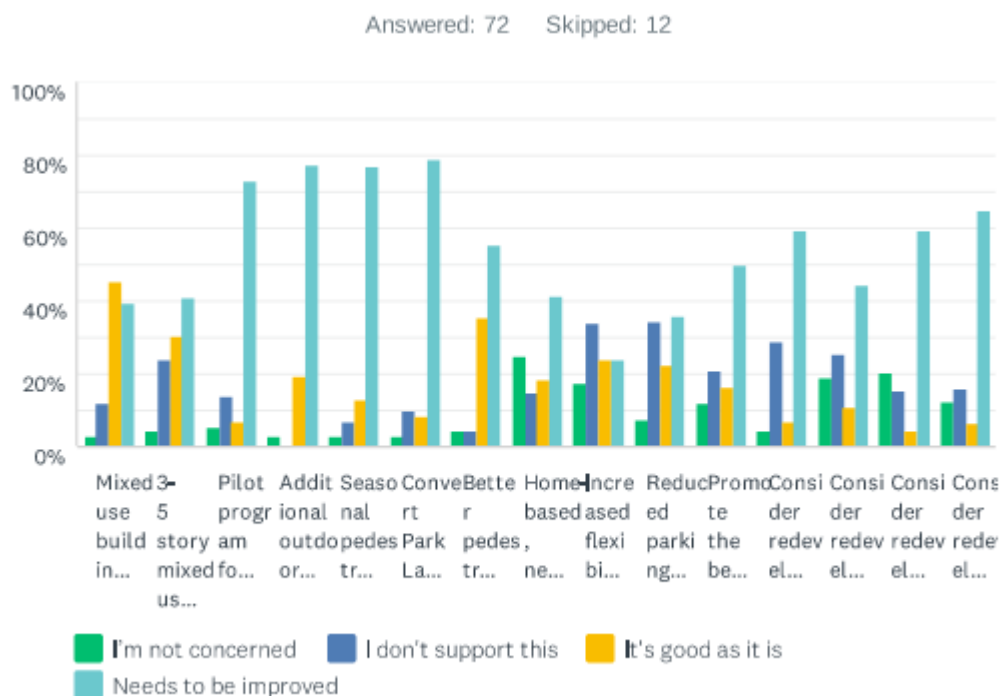
More parking was mentioned a few times, and affordable places for employees to live near work. But other factors such as the high cost of doing business, and decision-making that is detrimental to businesses by the City of Kirkland was also mentioned as being a limiting factor to locating a business in downtown Kirkland.

*Q.17 What types of commercial or retail uses, amenities, and community benefits would improve the Everest Commercial and Light Industrial Area along 6th Street So and NE 68th Street?*

**Key Themes from Comments:**

Although this question is centered around the Everest neighborhood, the respondents felt that more mixed-use development, more restaurants, breweries and a garden/nursery would be good. And keeping an interesting mix of business types would be important as re-development occurs.

*Q.18 Rate some ideas that should be further explored*



- Support exploring these ideas:
  - 3-5 story mixed use buildings with residential above retail and live work options
  - Pilot program for pop-up businesses such as food trucks and kiosks
  - Additional outdoor seating for restaurants and cafés
  - Convert Park Lane to pedestrian only either seasonally or permanently
  - Seasonal pedestrian mall on Park Lane to open more retail opportunities
  - Make better pedestrian connections to downtown and major transit hubs
  - Promote the benefits to Transit Oriented Development
  - Reduce parking requirements for business well served by transit
  - Consider redevelopment of the following parking areas/vacant lots:
    - Lake & Central
    - Wester Lot south of City Hall
    - Vacant lot next to Wester Lot
    - Aux lot (Market and Central)

*Q.19 What are some ways that we could connect with our neighbors to discuss these topics and find out what is important to them? (locations, events, etc.)*

Key themes received from comments:

Many responded that greater connection is especially important after 2020, and that virtual platforms along with in-person meetings are desirable. But, also exploration of unique formats and new places to host in-person meetings such as the Library may attract more community members to become involved. A downtown kiosk, or bulletin board was one interesting idea, and perhaps some kind of incentive in exchange for more youth participation to learn what they feel is important to them.

*Q.20 If you have other thoughts about your neighborhood or the plan, please add them here.*

Key themes received from comments:

- Improve survey
  - Several questions were confusing
  - Define what redevelopment of city owned parcels means
  - Confusing to use terms such as needs to be improved and, I'm not concerned
- Parks:
  - We have a wonderful neighborhood. Keep the parks in beautiful shape, have parking available and they will come.
  - More parks. More places to walk to. Stay Walkable
  - More benches and picnic tables
- Development:
  - no more high-density commercial buildings. The residents of Moss Bay are not being considered in any plans. It's horrible how we have been treated in past with Urban. Please please listen to the tax paying voters and not the developers.
  - Moss Bay has and continues to see large development projects despite lack of access and additional stress on already insufficient parking. Perhaps a time out is needed until solutions are found
  - Keep building heights along Lake Street, Kirkland Way, Park Lane and Central, - west of Peter Kirk Park to small town dimensions, it's the charm that brings people here to spend their \$\$
  - No more construction in Kirkland Urban!
  - Density is good as is, redevelopment or higher building heights is highly undesirable, trees are overtaking downtown area, they need to be reduced in height and trimmed out
  - Please limit development. We do not have the infrastructure to support an increase in population. Keep it quaint, beautiful. It should not feel urban.
  - Require new residential buildings to have underground parking.
  - Please maintain downtown height restrictions for retaining Kirkland's identity of a sunny lakeside community (as opposed to high rise Bellevue and Redmond). Prefer the downtown character to reflect intimate community atmosphere such as Edmonds.
  -

- Parking and Traffic and Transit:
  - Maybe we should zone parking??
  - To expand parking, improve visitor access to downtown Kirkland and support the local business community, develop off-site parking with shuttle bus between long term parking and downtown Kirkland during peak season. This would relieve parking congestion in the central downtown area, allow visitors to dine and shop or spend the day without the worry of 30 min or 2-hour parking.
  - Transit is fine, but don't destroy driving in a misguided attempt to promote transit use. Kirkland is already a great place to walk around and driving is still reasonable. Let transit stand on its own merits, otherwise I fear Kirkland will turn into Seattle, where you have to either spend hours or pay a fortune in parking fees if you want to go outside of your neighborhood for errands. I moved from Seattle specifically because I felt that I was trapped in my walkable neighborhood there. If you build mix-used buildings, build enough parking and road capacity to support the residents and customers actual usage, not the usage you wish them to have. Build transit and bike paths as well, but don't use them as an excuse to cut road capacity.
  - Traffic flow, parking, loud cars are huge issues now
  - You've made quaint Kirkland a nightmarish traffic jam. It's delightful shops and restaurants are inaccessible because of lack of parking and incessant construction barriers.
- Other comments
  - People who don't pick up after their dogs and let them off leash are huge issues now
  - Focus more on asking people how they think we should achieve our goals, rather than asking for permission for every change. We have a lot of shared goals that the community has already agreed to (for example, in the Sustainability Master Plan), but our outreach meetings feel like they are designed to give people a chance to oppose every idea. We should start with the assumption that we need to achieve our goals and focus the conversation around what the best way is to do that.
  - Keeping the unique vibrancy is very important to me.
  - Ban 5G transmitters in residential areas...shame on KCC.
  - Focus on us as "Citizens", not as "Consumers". Teach us how to walk, not how to drive. Develop a tax structure that allows us to pay for improvements through income taxes, not through sales taxes.
  - I currently rent in a mid-rise condo building. I would like to have to opportunity to buy and stay here permanently, but there are few affordable places to purchase. I see a lot of rental building slated to be built over the next few years, but I am concerned about the emphasis on 3-5 story rental buildings to solve the affordability issues. I would like to see a greater emphasis given to encouraging new condo properties, small cottage housing properties, and townhome development that can be purchased. COVID has shown us that emphasis should also be given to Livable housing that includes access to private outdoor space. Housing that includes 2 or more bedrooms is necessary to provide space to families

- Thank you for doing this and asking our opinions was mentioned several times.

*Next Steps*

The Kirkland Planning and Building Department plans to continue to work with the Moss Bay neighborhood to address these concerns as the planning process moves forward, due to be completed at the end of 2021. This survey is just one of the several public outreach tools being used to gather public input for each Neighborhood Plan. The survey results will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council.

For more information regarding the Neighborhood Plan update process please visit the project webpage or contact David Barnes, Senior Planner, Kirkland Planning and Building Department at [dbarnes@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:dbarnes@kirklandwa.gov)