

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

Date: October 9, 2019

To: Youth Link Board

From: Betsy Anderson, Senior Planner
Parks & Community Services

Subject: Recreation Program Plan Update
(Information and feedback)

Bellevue Parks & Community Services is in the process of updating one of its long-range policy documents, the Recreation Program Plan. First developed in the late 1990s, the Recreation Program Plan is revised every five years and guides the department's investment in recreation programming. Parks & Community Services is one recreation provider among many in Bellevue, and the plan defines the city's role within this larger system. The current plan dates from 2015 and the update is required for our agency re-accreditation in 2020.

At the October 9 Youth Link Board meeting, staff will provide a brief overview of the plan and the update process and would like to spend the bulk of the time soliciting input from the Board about recreation needs in the community. Additional information about the plan update and planning framework is included below: staff would also welcome any feedback members may have about the plan content and approach.

While the core tenets of the current plan remain relevant and have served the department well, staff have identified the 2020 plan as an opportunity to provide a few key updates to the plan's focus and structure. Core similarities and key differences between the 2015 plan and the proposed 2020 update are listed below.

Core Similarities with Existing Plan

The plan update will continue to:

- Focus on meeting the needs of residents with limited opportunities for recreation and filling needs not provided by other entities;
- Emphasize well-coordinated recreation programs and collaboration with partners;
- Focus on health and community building; and
- Identify the need for ongoing data collection to inform program offerings.

Key Differences from Existing Plan

Staff propose the following updates to the current plan:

- The plan structure is streamlined so that it will be more user-friendly.

- In alignment with the citywide Diversity Advantage Initiative, the plan more strongly emphasizes the role of equity, diversity, accessibility, and cultural competence in program planning and delivery.
- The staff planning team has undertaken public outreach to vet the proposed goals and strategies and collect information to help refine the plan's actions.

Draft Planning Framework

To focus the public outreach effort, the staff planning team has developed a draft planning framework to guide conversations with the community and with the city's boards, commissions, and advisory networks. The draft vision, guiding principles, and goals and strategies are grounded in the department's philosophy of recreation but are updated to more fully reflect the breadth of the department's work and to respond to current opportunities and challenges. Staff will seek feedback on these draft plan components over the spring and summer. Input received will help refine the plan's content and the focus of the department's recreation programming over the next five-year planning cycle.

Draft Vision for Recreation

Bellevue is a healthy community where all people participate in a range of recreation activities of their choosing, offered by any service provider, allowing them to be physically and mentally healthier and better connected to their neighbors and to the community.

Draft Guiding Principles for Recreation

- 1) Health-Focused:** We implement and support services, programs, and initiatives that promote the physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals, families, neighborhoods, and community.
- 2) Building Community:** We are a trusted resource that creates and enhances relationships and connections between our residents.
- 3) Culture of Excellence:** We provide and/or facilitate inclusive, accessible, and equitable recreation programs for all, where everyone can expect quality staff, programs, and facilities.
- 4) Dynamic and Resourceful:** We are highly responsive to an ever-changing community, providing opportunities that are relevant and well-coordinated.

Draft Goals and Strategies

- I. Ensure that every Bellevue resident can access recreational opportunities and community services.**
 - Evaluate and improve department programs, systems, and resources to ensure that recreational programs and community services are equitable and accessible in development and delivery.

- Connect with new audiences through expanded outreach and communication efforts.
- Identify opportunities to expand program access for those who work or go to school in Bellevue.

II. Offer programs and services that are consistent with our guiding principles and reflect the community's interests and needs, specifically those of underrepresented groups.

- Place special emphasis on programming and spending to meet the needs of those with limited opportunities for recreation.
- Identify and address gaps in program and service delivery in collaboration with community members and organizations.
- Empower staff to respond nimbly to the changing recreational needs of a growing city.
- Engage with new and established partners to enhance program and service delivery.

III. Promote community well-being through programs and services that instill a sense of belonging and inclusion.

- Expand recreation choice for people with disabilities by promoting both adaptive recreation opportunities and inclusion services throughout the system, to better connect residents to the community.
- Promote recreation, gathering places, special events, and time to connect as important facets of a livable community and healthy economy.

IV. Foster individual health and wellness through opportunities for structured and unstructured play, exercise, and recreation.

- Provide resources and programs that promote lifelong fitness and healthy lifestyles.
- Develop programs and tools that get people outside and encourage exploration of parks and trails.
- Design programs and facilities that provide opportunities for play for residents of all ages.
- Provide recreation programs and community services that support children and youth in the development of physical, cognitive, and social skills; expanded learning opportunities; and risk reduction.

Copies of the 2015 Recreation Program Plan are available online at:

<https://parks.bellevuewa.gov/planning-and-development/studies-plans/recreation-program-plan>. We welcome your input on the plan update. To share feedback, please contact Betsy Anderson at 425-452-4280 or EHanderson@bellevuewa.gov.