City of Bellevue

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2010

TO: Chair Roland and Members of the Parks and Community Services Board

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SUBJECT: Briefing on Bellevue's Latest Demographics
(Information only; no Board action requested.)

Overview
The board meeting on June 8, 2010 will include a briefing on Bellevue's latest demographic information. Staff will describe the new American Community Survey and discuss highlights of Bellevue's changing demographics. Descriptions of key characteristics and trends are provided below to give the board time to review the information and formulate questions.

Bellevue's mail participation rates for the 2010 Census and the non-response follow up operation, which is still in progress will also be discussed, as well as the schedule for release of 2010 Census data. The decennial Census is crucial in that it attempts to count every single individual in the nation. Getting an accurate count is critical to ensuring fair representation and distribution of federal funding.

American Community Survey (ACS)
Detailed demographic data comes currently from the American Community Survey (ACS), which replaced the former Census long form. In the past, the Census long form was sent out along with the decennial Census to a sample of the population to collect information similar to what the ACS collects now. While similar to the long form, the ACS is different in some fundamental ways:

- First, the American Community Survey provides more frequent updates on how our population is changing. Instead of surveying households only once every ten years, the ACS is sent out every month to 250,000 households across the nation or 3 million households a year (roughly 2.1% or 1 in 48 households every year).
- Second, because it is sent out every month, it is considered a continuous survey instead of a point in time survey. The data collected represent a *period* of time rather than a *snapshot* in time. With the long form, we could say 54% of Bellevue's population over 25 had a Bachelor's degree or higher as of April 1, 2000. In contrast, with the ACS data we can only say 59 percent of Bellevue's population had a bachelor's degree or higher during 2006-2008. ACS estimates represent the average characteristics during a period of time.
- Third, because the ACS is sent out to only 2.1% of US households every year, the accuracy of the estimates is not as high as the long form estimates. However, accuracy improves with larger time periods.

Accuracy depends on the size of the sample taken and three things affect the sample size of the American Community Survey:

1. length of time period under which data is collected,
2. size of the population in a given geographic area, and
3. the number of categories for a particular characteristic.

The longer the time period during which data is collected, the larger the geographic area and, the fewer the categories for a characteristic the larger the sample size will be. In terms of time periods, the Census Bureau produces estimates in three different sizes:

1. 1 year estimates,
2. 3 year estimates, and
3. 5 year estimates.

The 5 year estimates are the largest since they include data collected over a 5-year time period versus the 1-year estimates, which include only 1 year of data collection. In terms of geographic size, the Census Bureau divides geographic areas up by the size of their populations. The three size categories are:

1. Areas with 65,000 population or more (11 of the largest cities in Washington: Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, Spokane, Everett, Kent, Yakima, Bellingham, Vancouver, Spokane Valley, Federal Way)
2. Areas with 20,000 population or more (58 cities in WA including: Redmond, Kirkland, Mercer Island, Shoreline, Issaquah, Sammamish, Renton etc)
3. All other areas (Fringe cities, Census Tracts, Census Block Groups)

Only areas with 65,000 in population or more receive annual estimates; Places with 20,000 or more receive 3-year estimates; and Areas with less than 20,000 receive estimates that cover a 5-year period of data collection.

In terms of categories, characteristics with a large number of categories will have smaller sample sizes within each category and therefore estimates will be less accurate. For instance, when looking at race, there are only 7 categories. So our estimates of how many people of each race reside in Bellevue are relatively accurate. However, when looking at ancestry, the number of categories is much larger making the sample from each ancestry group quite small and therefore the accuracy is relatively low. What is nice about the ACS is that margins of error are published alongside estimates giving one a better sense of the accuracy of each estimate.

What does this all mean for Bellevue?

- Approximately 1,100 households within Bellevue receive an ACS questionnaire every year, which is not bad for analyzing citywide characteristics that have few categories.
- Greater accuracy however is gained with the 3-year estimates and comparisons between Bellevue and neighboring jurisdictions are made possible.
- Estimates at the neighborhood or Census Tract level are only produced from the 5-year estimates, the first of which are due to be released this coming December.

For this presentation the 3-year estimates spanning 2006-2008 were used. These provide greater accuracy than the annual estimates and allow comparisons to be made between 58 of Washington's largest places (with populations of 20,000 or more).

Two important things to remember when looking at these estimates and comparisons are:

1. Smaller cities such as the Point cities are not considered in the comparisons.
2. The time period covered by these estimates (2006-2008) was largely before the recession hit in full force.

Demographic Characteristics

Age

Young workforce adults represent the largest age cohort with 35 percent followed by the older workforce with nearly 28 percent. School age children from 5 to 19 comprise about 17 percent; older adults comprise 14.4 percent and finally children under 5 comprise about five and half percent.

In comparison to neighboring jurisdictions Bellevue had a slightly larger proportion of older adults. And, while Bellevue had a similar proportion of young workforce adults (35%) to the nation and state (35%), in comparison to Redmond (44%), Kirkland (40%) and Seattle (43%), Bellevue's proportion of young workforce adults was much smaller. This was especially true for the population age 20 to 29 years old. Out of Washington's largest places Bellevue had the eleventh highest median age at 40.0. Mercer Island had the highest median age of 47.1 and Pullman had the lowest with 22.5.

In terms of trends, Bellevue's median age has been increasing over the past two decades going from 35.4 in 1990 to 38.2 in 2000 to 40.0 in 2006-2008. In contrast, the proportion of children in Bellevue has remained relatively stable since 1990. Preschool children made up 5.9% of Bellevue's population in 1990, 5.6% in 2000 and 5.5% (+/-0.6%) in 2006-2008. School age children made up 17.5% of Bellevue's population in 1990, 17.5% in 2000 and 17.4% (+/-) in 2006-2008.

One of the fastest growing segments of Bellevue's population is older adults which made up 10.4% of the population in 1990, 13.4% in 2000 and 14.4% in 2006-2008. The aging of the baby boomers has tremendous implications for Bellevue and other communities. When the baby boomers reach their senior years beginning in the year 2014, their preferences, needs, and political clout will lead to changes in many facets of society. Changes will likely be needed, starting now, to existing services, transportation systems, housing, and community resources in order to meet current and future seniors' needs.

Race and Ethnicity

Bellevue is in the top third for being one of Washington's most racially/ethnically diverse large places. Bellevue ranks 17th out of 55 of the largest places in the state with a diversity index of 0.52, and Bellevue has the 14th lowest percentage of residents who are white alone.

Social Characteristic

Place of Birth

Closely related to race and ethnicity is one's place of birth. Bellevue's population as a whole had the highest percentage of foreign-born residents of Washington's large places in 2006-2008 with 30.9% of its residents being born in a foreign country.

Asia is where most of Bellevue's foreign-born residents come from with China, comprising 21%, India 15%, Korea and SE Asia 7% and Japan 4%. The remaining 10% come from other parts of Asia. Another 18% were born in Europe, followed by 10% in Latin America, 4% in North America, 3% in Africa and less than 1% in Oceania.

Chinese make up almost 40% of Bellevue's Asian population whereas Asian Indians make up less than 23%. Yet, since 1990, Asian Indians have increased in population size by over 900%.

Ability to Speak English

With about a third of its residents speaking a language other than English at home, Bellevue ranked 6th in the state with only Pasco, SeaTac, Renton, Paine Field–Lake Stickney and Lynwood having higher percentages. Bellevue's proportion of foreign language speakers was higher than that in Seattle, King County, Washington State and the nation as a whole.

The top ten languages spoken at home in Bellevue other than English were Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Other Asian, Russian, Hindi, Japanese, Other Indo-European, Vietnamese and Persian. Over 13% of Bellevue's residents reported that they speak English less than "very well", and about 8% of Bellevue's residents were linguistically isolated meaning they lived in a household where no household member age 14 years or over spoke only English or spoke English "Very well". This was a higher percentage than existed in the cities of Kirkland, Redmond, and Seattle and higher than King County and Washington State as a whole.

Household Type

During 2006-2008, "single person" households surpassed "married couples without children" to comprise the largest proportion of Bellevue households. Bellevue's proportion of single-person households has been increasing from 26% in 1990 to 28% in 2000 to 30% in 2006-2008. Approximately 29% of the single person households were older adults. Of these older adults living alone, 82% were women and 18% were men.

Educational Attainment

Bellevue is known for is its good schools, and it follows that Bellevue also has one of the highest percentages of residents over 25 with bachelor degrees or higher at 59% (36% with bachelor degrees and another 23% with graduate degrees). This has steadily increased from 46% in 1990 to 54% in 2000 to 59% in 2006-2008. Only 5 other large places in Washington had higher percentages with Mercer Island at the top with 75% of its 25 and over population with bachelor degrees.

Economic Characteristics

Occupation

It follows that with high levels of education, most of Bellevue's workforce population are in management, professional, and related occupations. Bellevue has the 7th highest percentage of their workforce population in those occupations at 57.8%.

Commute Mode to Work

In Bellevue as a whole, almost 30% of Bellevue's workforce residents commuted via means other than "drive alone". Just over 40% of Bellevue's workforce residents work within Bellevue. Below are Bellevue's rankings for non-drive alone travel modes:

- 5th highest percentage of workers who worked at home – Mercer Island #1 with 12.2%, Bainbridge next with 11.1%. There has been an **increasing trend** in the proportion of workers who work at home. In 1990 3.9% of Bellevue's workforce worked at home. This rose to 5.0% in 2000 and in 2006-2008 was at 6.8%.
- 9th highest percentage of workers who walked – Pullman #1 with 21 %, Seattle next with 8.6%
- 12th highest percentage of workers who took public transportation – Bainbridge #1 with 28.4%, Seattle next with 18.1%. Almost 2% more workers are taking public transportation in Bellevue now than took it in 2000.
- 16th lowest percentage of workers who drove alone. This percentage has decreased almost 7% since 1990 and almost 4% since 2000.
- 4th lowest percentage of workers who carpooled – Pasco #1 with 21.8%

Vehicle Ownership

Older adult householders were twice as likely to have no vehicle available than Bellevue's households overall.

Household Income

Bellevue had the 13th highest median **household** income and the 11th highest **family** income of Washington's large places in 2006-2008. It also had the 5th highest percentage of families with incomes of 200K or more. Sammamish had the highest median household income at 130,033. The median was around 56,160, and the low was 26,663 in Pullman WA. Household median income has steadily increased in Bellevue since 1990. In 2008 inflation adjusted dollars, it rose from 73,434 in 1990 to 75,432 in 2000 to 81,184 in 2006-2008.

Householders over 65 had median incomes less than 68% of Bellevue's households overall.

Poverty

While poverty rates in Bellevue remained below national averages in 2006-2008, Bellevue may have seen increases in poverty levels since 2000. The percent of individuals with incomes below the poverty level was 5.6% in 1990 and 5.7% in 2000 compared to the 6.9% in 2006-2008. The percent of families with incomes below the poverty level was 3.4% in 1990 and 3.8% in 2000 compared to 5.0% in 2006-2008. With the recent recession, rates have likely increased.

Comparing poverty levels estimated by the ACS versus the Census is one of those items where the data may not be comparable due to the collection method. The ACS collects data throughout

the year on an on-going, monthly basis and asks for a respondent's income over the "past 12 months." Census 2000, however, collected the income data for a fixed period of time -- "during 1999" (the last calendar year). In a comparison study between Census 2000 income data and the 2000 ACS, income collected in Census 2000 was found to be about 4 percent higher than that in the 2000 ACS.

In terms of age, poverty rates were highest for individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 (16%), 6 and 14 (10.5%), 16 and 17 (8.9%), and 65 and 74 (8.6%). Nearly 68% of individuals between 18 and 24 had incomes 50% or less than the poverty level. Overall 8.0% of Bellevue's youth (under 18) was in poverty. Families with a female householder, no husband present and related children ages 5 to 17 had the highest family poverty rates of 30%.

For the nation as a whole, 9.7% of older adults were in poverty. For Bellevue, the rate of poverty for older adults was 7.3%, slightly higher than what it was for Bellevue's population as a whole.

Poverty is measured for purposes of the Census by using several thresholds that vary by family or household size. For example, in 2008, a family of four with an income under $21,460 was considered below the poverty level. These income thresholds are consistent throughout the country. Note that the ACS measured poverty status in 2006-2008 and that rates may have increased since 2008 due to the recent recession.

It should also be noted that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses a different approach for identifying low-income thresholds that takes geographic differences in median income into account. The HUD-defined fiscal year 2009 income limit for a very low-income (50% of Area Median Income or AMI) family of four in the Seattle-Bellevue, WA HUD Metro FMR Area, (including King and Snohomish counties) was $42,150. HUD's income limit for an extremely low-income (30% of AMI) family of four was $25,300. The fact that HUD's low-income limits are so much higher than the Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for this area underlines the care needed when considering poverty rates.

Housing Characteristics

Type

In terms of structure type, Bellevue's housing units are split almost evenly between single family and multi-family buildings. Because this data was collected during 2006 through 2008, Bellevue will see even higher percentages of units in structures with 20 or more units in 2009 with the new high-rise development in downtown.

Several demographic characteristics are related to structure type. In terms of household types, almost 77% of Bellevue's married-couple families lived in single-family houses compared to only 35% of Bellevue's non-family households. If the percentage of non-family households continues to increase, Bellevue could see a higher percentage of households living in multi-family structures.

In terms of race, while less than 30% of Bellevue's white non-Hispanic or Latino residents lived in structures with 5 or more units in 2006-2008, about 43% of Bellevue's Asian residents, 55%

of Bellevue's Hispanic/Latino residents and 62% of Bellevue's African American residents lived in structures with 5 or more units. If Bellevue continues to become more racially and ethnically diverse Bellevue could see a higher proportion of its households living in multi-family structures.

Tenure
About 59 percent of Bellevue's occupied housing units are owner occupied. While this is a lower percentage than found in the nation, state, and county as a whole, it is a higher percentage than found in Seattle or Redmond and is about the median value for Washington's large places.

Occupancy
In terms of vacancy, rates in Bellevue were very similar to those found in King County as a whole, with rental units being almost 2.5 times more likely to be vacant than owner occupied units.

Cost and Affordability
Housing values in Bellevue remain high, with Bellevue having the 5th highest median housing value of Washington's large places at 577,200. Only Mercer Island, Cottage Lake, Bainbridge Island, and Sammamish were higher.

Higher values translate into high monthly housing costs. Bellevue had the 5th highest monthly median housing cost for owners with a mortgage at $2,403 and the 7th highest cost for owners without a mortgage at $662, and the 10th highest medium gross rent at $1,203. Currently, 28% of Bellevue's homeowners with a mortgage and 30% of Bellevue's renters have monthly costs more than 35% of their household's income.

Where to Get Further Information
To get further information:

- Go to Bellevue's demographic webpage:

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/demographics.htm

- Or go directly to the US Census Bureau's American FactFinder website:

http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en&_ts=

- Or call or email Gwen Rousseau at:

(425)452-2743 grousseau@bellevuewa.gov

Update on the 2010 Census Operations
Over 74 percent of Bellevue's households mailed in their Census this was down from 76 percent in 2000. Hopefully when all vacancies are accounted for the final mail in rate will at least match or be higher than it was in 2000. The areas with the lowest mail participation rates as you can see on the map were the Crossroads, Bridle Trails, and downtown areas. These areas had high percentages of multi-family rental units, which are considered some of the hardest areas to count. Also, the Crossroads area has the highest percentage of Hispanic residents, who are typically hard to count.

As we speak Census Takers are out in the field knocking on doors working to collect information from those households who failed to mail in their form. They will be out in the field until the beginning of July. People can recognize a census taker by the badge they wear and sometimes

by the bags they carry. If anyone is unsure of whether a person is a legitimate Census taker, they can call the local regional office at to verify the person is working for the Census Bureau. All Census employees have had their fingerprints taken and background checks run and all employees have taken an oath for life not to release any confidential Census information. They can face penalties of up to 5 years in jail and/or $250,000 worth of penalties for failing to abide by their oath.

Data from the 2010 Census will be the first data representing a complete count of the population since 2000. It will be made available for redistricting purposes in February 2010 and for analyses in June 2011. Also, remember that next December the first 5-year ACS data will be made available at the block group level.