

Diversity Advantage Plan Progress Report



Equity

Access

Inclusion

Opportunity

City of Bellevue, Washington | 2015-2017

Front and back cover photos by Tatiana Savchenko, volunteer photographer for The City of Bellevue, captures friendships across cultural boundaries for a photo exhibit during Welcoming Week 2017.

Contents

- Our “Why” 2
- Who we are 3
- Building Cultural Competency in the Community..... 6
- Building Cultural Competency in City Government..... 9
- Civic Engagement 14
- Human Services..... 15
- Education 16
- Public Safety..... 17
- Economic Development 19
- The Diversity Advantage Plan 60 Recommendations 20



“Bellevue welcomes the world.
Our diversity is our strength.
We embrace the future while
respecting our past.”

~ Council Vision 2014

A message from the Bellevue City Council



From Left to Right: Councilmember Ernie Simas, Councilmember Jennifer Robertson, Mayor John Stokes, Deputy Mayor John Chelminiak, Councilmember Lynne Robinson, Councilmember Conrad Lee, Councilmember Kevin Wallace

Over the years, Bellevue has blossomed into one of most diverse in the state of Washington. Our unique blend of cultures has greatly contributed to the city’s reputation as one of the best places to live in the world. As a city, we are dedicated to serving everyone in our community. The Diversity Advantage Plan is part of this commitment.

It’s an exciting time to live here. In no small part to our diversity, Bellevue’s future is very bright!

~ Mayor John Stokes

The Diversity Advantage

Thanks to city investment, clear objectives and shared leadership within the community, the Diversity Initiative has made considerable progress. Created in 2014, when the City Council adopted the Diversity Advantage Plan, it is aimed at helping the City of Bellevue better serve the community. The central idea is simple: recognize and leverage Bellevue's unique diversity as a major asset.

The sixty point plan is a citywide initiative benefiting from wide participation across all departments. More importantly, participation extends into the Bellevue's neighborhoods. This collaborative approach has moved the project forward; giving the community a sense of shared leadership on diversity and the complex issues associated with it.

Because of the public's interest and ongoing participation in the Diversity Initiative, accountability is a key component. This update is intended to share the various organizational and community achievements directly associated with the plan's 60 recommendations. The following pages follow the structure of the plan's focus areas. These include:

- Building Cultural Competence in the community;
- Building Cultural Competence within City Government;
- Civic Engagement;
- Human Services;
- Public Safety;
- Education and
- Economic Development

Demonstrating the ongoing importance of the work, the Diversity Advantage team was transitioned to the City Manager's Office in 2017. This move highlights the importance of the plan and the need for further progress.

CITY OF BELLEVUE DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE PLAN

Guiding Principles:
Enrich the quality of life for all through...



Access:

Build an environment that values the abilities of all, by proactively removing barriers and providing accommodations for full participation.



Equity:

Create a fair and just community where equality is the outcome by recognizing and correcting historic and systemic inequity.



Inclusion:

Foster a welcoming city, by providing a safe and gracious space where the entire community can engage in civic life.



Opportunity:

Share prosperity by connecting residents, schools, businesses, faith and non-profits to work together for the common good.



Understanding Cultural Competence:

Produce equitable policies and practices, by developing skills and knowledge that facilitate effective interactions across diverse cultures.



and always Why:

"Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past."

Council Vision 2014

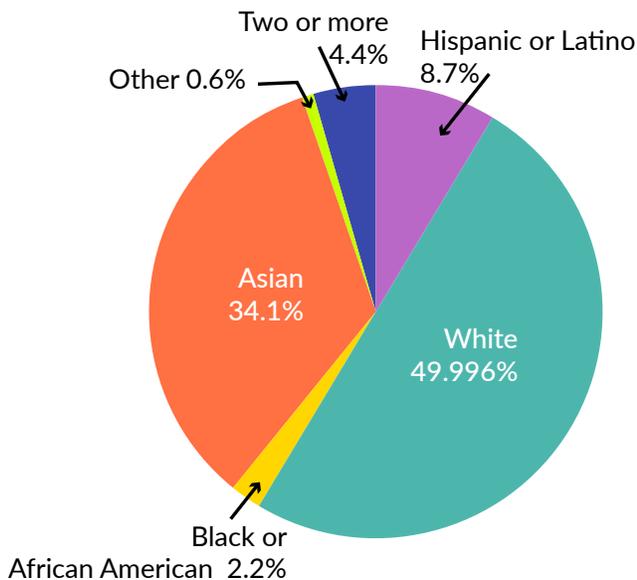
City of Bellevue
Diversity Advantage



Our “Why”

The City of Bellevue spans 33.5 square miles from Lake Washington to Lake Sammamish with a diverse population of approximately 140,000. Over the past several decades, Bellevue has grown from a quiet suburban community into a dynamic multicultural city. The rapid demographic shift in Bellevue offers both opportunities and unique challenges.

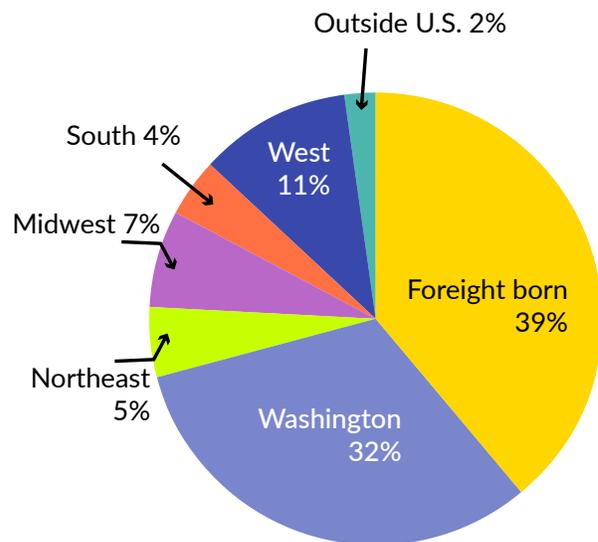
In 2015, non-Hispanic whites no longer represented the majority of Bellevue residents. Instead, a plurality of races/ethnicities existed. Since 1990, the proportion of minorities in Bellevue has more than tripled going from 15 percent in 1990 to just over 50 percent in 2015.



Bellevue's Race/Ethnicity Distribution 2015.

The number of foreign-born residents in Bellevue has more than doubled over the past 15 years, comprising 93 percent of Bellevue's overall population growth. This is a leading contributor to Bellevue's cultural

diversity. In 2015, about 39 percent of Bellevue's residents were born in a foreign country, about a third were born in Washington State, and just under 29 percent were born in a different U.S. state. About 42 percent of Bellevue's population in 2015 spoke a language other than English at home. Bellevue School District reported having 95 different languages spoken by children enrolled during the 2016-2017 school year.



Place of Birth of Bellevue's Population in 2015.

Since 1970, Bellevue's household types have diversified. Although single person households and married couples without children have comprised the largest portions of Bellevue's households for the past four decades, their shares have been declining since 2000. Information technology is Bellevue's largest job sector. It witnessed the largest growth in the number of jobs between 2009 and 2015, making Bellevue a regional hub for IT.

Bellevue boasts a highly educated community and workforce with 66 percent with a Bachelors degree or higher. This has translated into an increase of professional and management opportunities in business, science, and the arts. This trend has also raised median income while raising housing costs making it challenging for some of the 24 percent of families making less than \$50,00 a year.

The percentage of Bellevue's population who are older adults, 65 years and older, has increased over the decades from 10.4 percent in 1990 to 14.4 percent in 2015. Although our older adults are proportionally susceptible to disabilities, Bellevue has an overall lower share of its population with disability types compared to Washington State and the United States. During 2010-2014, about 8.4 percent of the Bellevue's population had one or more disabilities with ambulatory issues being the largest.

Who we are

The following city-related groups are leading the charge in making the Diversity Advantage Plan a reality.

Bellevue City Council and the Leadership Team

Recommendation: Obtain endorsement and direction from the City Council and Leadership Team to include cultural competence as a core competency of the organization in policy and practice.

Robust commitment and strong active leadership from the Bellevue City Council and City Leadership Team have driven the prioritization of diversity efforts. Proceeding the adoption of the Council Vision Statement and Diversity Advantage Plan in 2014, the implementation of the plan was added to the list of council priorities to ensure positive movement. The Leadership Team, which includes Department Directors who have been champions in operationalizing the recommendations.

Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network

The Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN) is appointed by the City Manager and made up of a diverse group of 19 community members who provide support and advice on ways to improve the city's ability to communicate, collaborate and better serve Bellevue's diverse population. BDANs work centers around the following three areas:

- Outreach
- Engagement
- Culturally responsive governance



*Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network Retreat
October 2016*

Diversity Advantage Team

The Diversity Advantage Team is housed under the City Manager's Office, comprised of the diversity outreach and engagement administrator, the diversity and inclusion administrator, and the ADA/Title VI administrator. This team serves as catalyst to consult and partner with city departments and the community on their efforts directed by the Diversity Initiative and its guiding principles.



“When I think of a city that cares, I think of Bellevue. I have been inspired by their dedication to community through networks that engage and empower. The Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN) is one such network, and I’m proud to represent our community.

~ Aisha Kabani
BDAN member

Diversity Liaisons

Diversity Liaisons are an interdepartmental team selected by leadership and colleagues. They are an empowered and impassioned group aimed at stimulating organizational change by serving as a resource for departments. Liaisons foster two-way communication by serving as a conduit between the Liaison team and departments.

ADA Core Team

This team, led by the ADA/Title VI Administrator, is made up of employees from several different departments at the City of Bellevue. These diverse and informed perspectives bring to fruition the recommendations of the Self-evaluation and Transition Plan. This document incorporates the feedback of residents of Bellevue with disabilities as well as experts in the field. By exploring a wide breadth of issues impacting this population, from access to physical spaces throughout the city to the internal processes at the City of Bellevue, this plan functions as the guiding document for the ADA Core Team as they work to eliminate barriers and ensure equity for this population.

The Diversity Advantage Plan

In 1993 a Cultural Diversity Task Force convened to create Bellevue's first diversity Report and Community Action Plan. This diversity action plan served the city for two decades. As illustrated in "Our Why" section, major demographic changes have occurred since 1993.

Recognizing this shift, in 2011 the City Council instructed city staff to form the Bellevue Diversity Initiative to research best practices, explore opportunities and challenges, and engage with a wide variety of community members, stakeholders, and partners.

In December 2014, City Council adopted the results of this research in the Bellevue Diversity Advantage Plan, and the vision statement "Bellevue Welcomes the World. Our Diversity is Our Strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past". The Plan includes sixty recommendations within the following seven focus areas:

- Cultural Competence in City Government
- Cultural Competence in the Community
- Human Services
- Public Safety
- Education
- Economic Development
- Civic Engagement

* Please note the sixty recommendations are listed on the back of booklet.

Bellevue's Commitment

To keep growing as a culturally competent city, the Bellevue community must:

- Provide safe and welcoming living and working environments
- Collectively correct systemic inequities
- Respectfully engage cross-culturally in community life
- Express diversity through arts and culture

To keep growing as a culturally competent organization, the City of Bellevue will:

- Enact and uphold equitable policies and practices
- Train and hire culturally competent staff
- Provide programs that are responsive and accessible to all



Building Cultural Competency in the Community

Recommendations: Support and produce special events, art exhibits and performances, educational materials, festivals and public information that increase opportunities for cultural interaction and education.

Improve Outreach and Engagement to build relationships with isolated communities and establish trust and affinity.

Coordinate with local community groups and organizations dedicated to issues of diversity and culture.

Provide funding and partnership to community groups or initiatives that meet City of Bellevue diversity goals.

Encourage and support community conversations on the issues of disability, economic class, gender, sexual orientation race and ethnicity.

The city has a proud tradition of public programs focusing on engaging community, and highlighting Bellevue's rich diversity. Bellevue offers an array of opportunities for cultural interaction.

I am proud to volunteer and live in a city that values the diversity of its residents. Through diversity programs I have learned new things and have built lasting friendships with others in the community.

~ Anthony Austin
resident

These public programs can lessen a feelings of disconnectedness and help shape the way we experience the community.

Through collaborative partnerships and community support Bellevue offers events, dialogues, and celebrations. Throughout the year, these programs foster connections that build trust among residents and visitors. Attendees consistently express that they learn something new and find interesting ways to connect with others. This level of connection helps address misunderstandings by shedding light on culture, stories and issues that may be unfamiliar.



Community members pack council chambers for the Neighborhood Forum: "Dialogue with our Muslim Neighbors" in March 16, 2016.

Welcoming Week

“Welcoming Week” is a national event which is locally spearheaded by the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition. Twenty-eight organizations made up of municipalities, community groups, faith organizations, and non-profits have worked together to bring Welcoming Week to the Eastside. In only its second year, 2017 boasted over thirty related activities that brought people from different backgrounds together to build a welcoming eastside.

All events were free and open to all, examples include resource fairs, dance parties, community dialogues, educational opportunities, art events, and cultural celebrations. Some Bellevue sponsored events were:

- **“Ask a Muslim or Two”** an intergenerational dinner and community dialogue to bring Muslim and non-Muslims together.
- **“Playing for Change”** This family friendly event was developed for people of diverse backgrounds to meet each other using activity stations, group exercises, and exhibits.
- **Cultural Conversations: I and We Cultures**

Bellevue community events:

- **8 Borders, 8 Days screening** by First Congressional Church of Bellevue, MAPS-AMEN
- **Conversation Circle** by English Language Learner’s Alliance
- **Tamil Story Time** by the King County Library System
- **Mediation and Chair Yoga** by India Association of Western Washington
- **Annual Welcome America Health Fair** by International Community Health Services and Bellevue YMCA



Members of the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network hold a welcoming sign at the Playing for Change event as part of Welcoming Week festivities. September 23, 2017.



For over 25 years, the Cultural Crossroads Festival hosts a three day extravaganza featuring two cultural performance stages, international bazaar, and exhibits. Sponsored by VL Cultural Productions, Crossroads Bellevue, and the City of Bellevue. 2016 Photos by Jal Schrof.



Community members gather to denounce racism on the Eastside at the Eastside Race and Leadership Coalition event held at Bellevue City Hall.



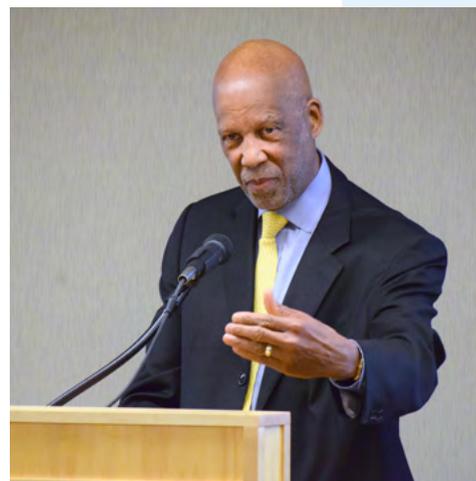
Collaborative and supported community programming

- Choosing to Lead
- Moving Beyond First Impressions
- Dr. Martin Luther King City Hall
- MLK Community Celebration at Crossroads
- Diversity Advantage Breakfast
- ADA 25th Anniversary
- Dialogue with our Muslim Neighbors
- Youthlink: Moving Beyond First Impressions
- Rags to Riches Event 2016
- Cultural Crossroads
- NW Ukrainian Festival
- Flavors of India
- Cultural conversations
- Power of One LGBT Conference
- “Better Together” (3 part series)
- Earth Cycles-International World Music

- Tasveer: South Asian Film Festival
- BSD: The Boom and Shout Experience

Cultural Conversations

There is no better substitute for getting to know each other than talking face to face. Hosted by the city’s Neighborhood Outreach department, Cultural Conversations has blossomed into a fun way for women to get to know each other in Bellevue. The program was developed by a small group of women who wanted to better connect to their community. Cultural Conversations provide monthly gathering that feature new themes, unique story telling formats, and small group discussions. The regular women’s gathering has been so well received that it has an evening forum that includes men once a year.



Dr. Terrence Roberts: Member of the Little Rock Nine speaks at a City MLK event on Jan 16, 2016

The Choices for People with Disabilities

The Choices for People with Disabilities Plan has at its core five primary goals: first, to ensure that people with disabilities have access to facilities, city parks, and programs. This means working to remove barriers, ensure continued growth programs and services, and providing information to the public about accessible opportunities for recreation. Second, to expand these opportunities by developing inclusive activities at other facilities, providing information and referrals to partnering recreation sites, and expanding skill-based programming. Third, this plan highlights the need to increase staff awareness regarding the barriers residents with disabilities face, the benefits of equitable services, improving staff qualifications, and providing culturally competent training to community partners as requested. Goal four of

the Choices Plan seeks to improve community awareness of the inclusive programming offered by City of Bellevue. Lastly the need to expand programming to better serve the needs of people living with a variety of disabilities is addressed by this plan.

Since the 1970s, the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services programming has provided innovative recreational opportunities for people with disabilities. This started by offering classes in the evenings at the Highland Community Center. This early commitment to inclusion, and the programming born of it, has expanded exponentially since that time. Through the development and implementation of the Choices for People with Disabilities Plan, the City of Bellevue is further demonstrating a commitment to the health and happiness of all our citizens.

Building Cultural Competency in City Government

Organizational Assessment

Recommendations: Regularly review and evaluate citywide cultural competence efforts in the following categories: organizational values, policies, staffing, resources, service delivery and public outreach.

Establish a knowledge base of best practices and available resources for cultural competence and equity within the city.

Establish performance measures to track progress at meeting goals and actions of the Initiative.

In 2016, a general organizational assessment was conducted to serve as a starting point to examine organizational practices that impact the city's ability to offer culturally competent



programs and services to staff and residents. The organizational assessment and the plan recommendations helped inform ongoing departmental workplans.

Training and Development

Recommendations: Provide systematic and regular cultural competence training for all city staff over a five-year period.

Provide cultural competence training for city volunteers and community leaders including those serving on city boards, commissions and advisory committees.

The professional development of city staff in cultural competence, equity, access and inclusion is a growing field across the nation. The city has dedicated resources for a 9-hour “Cultural Competency Foundations” training for all city staff.

Additional trainings include “Implicit Bias Awareness” to reduce harmful effects in interactions and decision-making processes, and “Disrupting and Addressing Historical and Institutional Inequities”.

The Diversity Team also offers opportunities for additional training and presentations to external partners.



Cultural Competency Foundations training is offered to staff multiple times a year.

“Being in an ERG is an opportunity to connect with my community in a meaningful way to share work & life experiences and discuss opportunities to positively impact not only our staff community, but the community of Bellevue.”

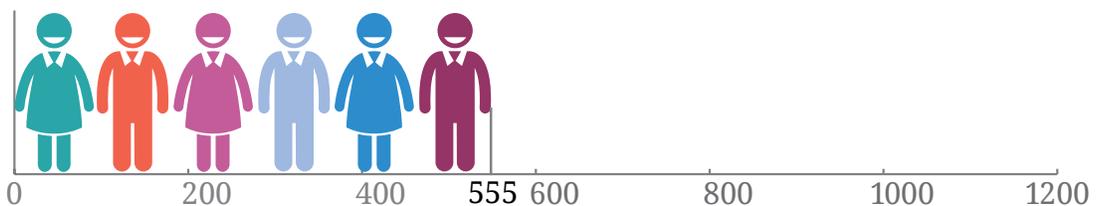
Citywide Initiatives

Diversity Talent Hiring Initiative

Recommendation: Promote and advance recruitment efforts of diverse city staff to better reflect city demographics.

In partnership with the Human Resources department, the Diversity Talent Hiring Initiative, was created to develop and implement process enhancements for recruitment, hiring and retention. This initiative has resulted in “Implicit Bias Awareness” training for managers and review teams, development of a manual “Hiring for Equity: A recruitment guide for hiring managers”, a Supported Employment program which provides employment opportunities for people living with disabilities, and the creation of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

2015-2017 | Staff trained 555 (46%)





Supported Employment Team at the Breakfast Awards 2017.

Supported Employment

As a commitment to reduce barriers to gainful employment, this program provides employment opportunities with the support needed to empower living with disabilities to succeed. Since its inception in 2016, the city has hired eight supported employees throughout the organization. Bellevue was a nominee for the “Governor’s 2017 Employer of the Year” for the successful work and impact of the Supported Employment Program.

Perhaps nowhere is the 2014 Council Vision “our diversity is our strength” clearer than in the success of this endeavor. By focusing on the principle of talent acquisition and finding the right fit for the various positions the participants hold, this program is mutually beneficial; the City of Bellevue benefits from having a more productive and diverse workplace, while the employees gain valuable skills and experience. With an eye to the future and a commitment to seeing this program continue to thrive, the Diversity Advantage Team, in partnership with City of Bellevue Human Resources, will continue to spearhead the Supported Employment Program.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

While many ERGs are centered around networking and the social gathering, the city’s ERG program is focused on advancing Council’s Vision statement of “Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength”, as well as the city’s values through an empowered

workforce. ERGs will address challenges of inclusion and enhance shared leadership by bringing forward collective and diverse ideas, experiences and perspectives.

The city currently offers the following ERGs to all city staff:

- Staff of Color and Allies
- Staff/Family with Disabilities and Allies
- LGBTQIA and Allies

Procurement Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Recommendation: Promote and support programs that offer community-based employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment.

The Finance Department is leading the Procurement Diversity Inclusion (PDI) Plan in an ongoing effort to maximize equity and opportunity in the procurement process to small businesses, including those owned by women and minorities. To help inform the plan, the city hosted two community informational sessions and online surveys. A common recommendation from the survey and community input was to increase the city’s engagement with small businesses through participation in outreach



Councilmember Conrad Lee speaks with staff at the beginning of the M/WBE & Small Business Procurement event on December 5, 2017.

and networking events, and visibility of procurement processes and upcoming projects. The city is also reviewing and recommending inclusion efforts for its procurement processes, and providing training to staff that enhances procedures to promote small business and Minority Women Business inclusion, whenever possible. In December 2017, the city hosted its inaugural reverse vendor fair, “Empowering Opportunity: M/WBE and SBE Procurement and Networking Seminar.”



Language Access

Recommendations: Establish Citywide standards for translation of written material, interpretation services at meetings, and for physical access to meetings and programs.

Dovetail the city's existing accessibility and compliance programs (ADA, Section 504, Title VI) with the Diversity Initiative to achieve similar goals of increased performance and outcomes across all city services.

The City of Bellevue earns its reputation as a truly global city with its sustained dedication to promoting and preserving the innumerable cultures which call Bellevue their home. Nowhere is this more apparent than in its linguistic diversity.

With over 39 percent of its population having been born in a foreign country in 2015, city's cultural diversity includes a little over 50 percent people of color and 42 percent speaking a language other than English at home. Over 99 languages, outside of English, are spoken in Bellevue homes.

While many residents are multilingual, 10% of households have limited English proficiency (LEP) and additional 4% of the population lives with sensory disabilities which may affect access to information in the absence appropriate language access tools.

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the city offers resources to address the full range of language access. This includes telephonic interpretation, onsite bilingual staff, cultural navigators in Mini City Hall, and third-party providers for language interpretation, translation, and captioning.

Assisted listening devices are available through a built-in hearing loop system in Council Chambers, Council Conference Room, and at the Bellevue Youth Theatre.

Interpretation and translation happen in many different contexts. The city has adopted several different resources to address the full range of interpretation and translation needs. These include 24/7 telephonic translation, on-site language services at Mini City Hall, internal and external language translation, and Communication Access Real Time Transcription (CART).



Empowered Employees

In conjunction with policy work, organizational change drives at the heart of trust and communication. To provide exceptional public service, the organizational culture must strive to create an environment where diversity and inclusion in staff is valued. In the last two years, internal programming has provided an opportunity and platform for staff to engage with one another on pressing issues that impact both the staff and resident community. Some of this programming includes:

- Staff Dialogues – Orlando: violence at Pulse nightclub; “Thrival” and Self-care; How to difuse conflict; Charlottesville: allies against hate
- Martin Luther King Jr. Week – Dr. DiAngelo training with the Leadership Team and inaugural “MLK City Manager’s Awards”
- Critical Pride



Organizers of the City Critical Pride Event for staff, 2016.



Staff gather to learn more about the Diversity Advantage Initiative through staff testimonials at the Large Management Team meeting 2016.

Civic Engagement

Recommendation: Emphasize outreach to establish trust within the social networks of our diverse communities as the first step in broadening their participation

In order to reap the full benefits of the community, engaging diverse residents needs to be a part of this equation. Within our neighborhoods emerging leaders exist and it is imperative that we cultivate and leverage these assets. Bellevue is creating pathways for residents and visitors to be actively involved in contributing back to our community. While the benefits of broad civic participation are clear, some major obstacles remain a hindrance to participating. With direct support from community members we are finding better cultural responsive ways to engage.

Bellevue Essentials

Sponsored by the city's Neighborhood Outreach staff, Bellevue Essentials provides an entry point for emerging community leaders. This transformational nine-week program highlights the structures and inner workings of city government in many arenas. Topics include demographics, public process, city planning, economic development, human services, utilities, finance and transportation, public safety, and more. This diverse group of graduates are well equipped to get more involved in the city and non-profit arenas on the Eastside.

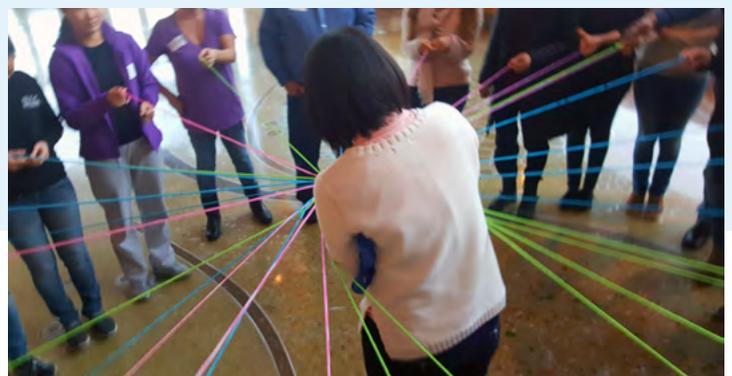


Volunteer Bridge participants receive their certificates after a four week volunteerism course. April 2017.

Volunteer Bridge Pilot

Recommendation: Recruit diverse community volunteers to support programs and services that meet human service needs in Bellevue.

In 2017 nineteen participants from various countries participated in a four-week Volunteer Bridge Pilot. Volunteer Bridge supports Bellevue's diverse population become engaged in volunteerism. The course included demystifying the volunteer process, panel discussions and connecting participants with organizations. Participants engaged cross-culturally and gained a better understanding of community need.



Volunteer Bridge participants demonstrate community interconnectedness, April 2017

Human Services

Recommendations: Support human service organizations in providing cultural competence training for their staff.

Assist non-profit human service agencies in providing culturally competent care and support to Bellevue residents of all ages, abilities and ethnic backgrounds.

Engage the Eastside Human Services Forum in regional discussions of diversity in human services.

Human service providers have a longstanding history of understanding the unique challenges and opportunities our diversity brings. Bellevue's direct service providers often prevent people from "falling through the cracks" of our support systems. To better serve our community, it is imperative to gain a better understanding of how to adjust our practices to be culturally responsive.

With recent dramatic demographic shifts, it is necessary for our service organizations to further develop their understanding of racial equity to best find ways to provide culturally responsive services to their clients. As part of this journey, the city recently offered a free two-part racial equity training to human service grantees receiving city funding.

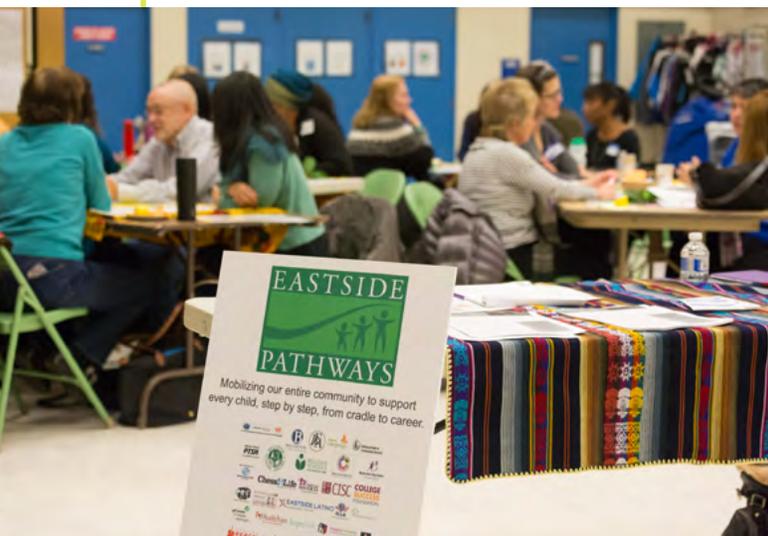
The Eastside Human Services Forum advocates for human services in state and federal legislative agendas each year. Members use an evaluative criteria on equity to rate issues and budget items that are important to support.



Education

Eastside Pathways

The City of Bellevue is a key partner and supporter of Eastside Pathways. A collaborative partnership of more than 60 cross-sector organizations including non-profits, public, private, and municipalities using a collective impact approach. Work groups focus on education issues including improving school readiness, creating engaging summer and extended learning opportunities, supporting good attendance, and enhancing career readiness opportunities.



Wrap Around Services

Recommendation: Strengthen Wrap-Around Services for targeted schools within the Bellevue School District to build up community efforts to address achievement gaps where they exist.

Our schools often serve as the heart of the community. Bellevue city staff provide support at Title I Schools including Lake Hills and Stevenson Elementary to provide services, programs and activities for youth and families in some of the community's most diverse schools.

Co-sponsorship

Boom and Shout

Recommendation: Support local schools and colleges in providing comprehensive services and support to diverse student populations to erase achievement gaps where they exist.

The BOOM Experience is a program designed for male students that racially identify as African, Black, Hispanic, LatinX, Native American, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander or mix of any, who are in grades 7-12 in the Bellevue School District. The program provides an opportunity for these students to connect, be inspired, find support, and be taught by men who also racially identify with them.

The Power of One Conference

In 2017, Bellevue College hosted the NASPA's The Power of One LGBT Student Leadership Conference. Bringing together students from multiple states the conference develops leadership skills and builds a community of support. In addition, professional development was provided for administrators, faculty/staff and/or advisors to LGBTQ students.

Public Safety



A strong sense of security and safety is important in the place we work, live, or raise our kids. Bellevue's Police and Fire departments are dedicated to exceptional service to our community. Bellevue's first responders have significantly ramped up efforts to build relationships and engage diverse communities to improve public safety for everyone.



Recommendation: Periodically convene focus groups of people of various ages, abilities, race and ethnic backgrounds to ask and learn about appropriate public safety service delivery methods.

Bellevue Police Department Tomorrow's

Program: Community Advisory Boards:

Efforts to strengthen relationships with Bellevue Police Department (BPD) and cultural groups have resulted in the BPD Community Advisory Boards; Latinx, LGBTQIA, African American, Asian, Muslim, and Faith. These groups are an opportunity for community members to provide information and guidance from their respective areas of expertise and take information back into the community.

Recommendation: Continue recruitment efforts designed to diversify public safety staff to better reflect city demographics.

Recruitment Efforts: The Bellevue Police and Fire are actively working on diversifying their workforce to better reflect the community. A career with both departments is a challenging, yet very rewarding opportunity.

Recommendation: Address under-reporting of crime by promoting the City of Bellevue as a safe place for residents to report instances of civil rights violation, housing and other forms of discrimination.

CopLogic: Online reporting tool for bias-related events. Bellevue Police added this feature to the online crime reporting system on the Bellevue Police website. Residents are encouraged to call 911 if they believe a crime has occurred.

Recommendation: Improve outreach and engagement to build relationships with isolated communities and establish trust and affinity.

Safe Place: Bellevue Police Department Safe Place program allows local businesses, schools, and other organizations to act as a way-point for victims of anti-LGBTQ crimes. For easy identification, organizations that participate get a police shield in the rainbow colors of the pride flag to affix to doors or windows.

Fire CERT programs to vulnerable populations:

City Emergency Management team efforts have been focused on supporting vulnerable populations. These include outreach, programs and trainings geared to those with disabilities, retirement homes and living in assisted facilities. Recently Bellevue hosted a CERT training focused with people with access and functional needs.

Bellevue's first responders also make it a priority to build relationships in our community and spend valuable time at schools, open houses, special events, and fairs. The important goal is to build bridges built on trust.



Economic Development

STARTUP425

Foundations

Recommendation: Improve regional efforts to support entrepreneur and small business creation, including training, loan assistance, mentoring opportunities, gathering spaces and networking.

Through a collaboration with KCLS and other Eastside cities, a business workshop series called Startup 425 Foundations was offered to budding entrepreneurs in Bellevue. This series boasted highly diverse gender and ethnic participation. Subjects included topics like ideation, business planning, networking, financing and marketing.

Small Business Support

Bellevue supported a small business advisor through the Washington State Small Business Development Center to provide no-cost mentoring services to small businesses. In 2017, the advisor has helped raise over \$3 million in financing.

The Creative Edge Study

Recommendation: Increase support for artists (e.g. funding, exhibition/performance opportunities, etc.) whose work addresses intercultural themes.

The Creative Edge study is currently examining the impact of the creative economy in Bellevue, including the technology sector. Diversity and cultural programming will be a part of the review and action planning in effort to continue to be an attractive place for a global workforce.



The Diversity Advantage Plan

60 Recommendations

CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN CITY GOVERNMENT

1. Obtain endorsement and direction from the City Council and Leadership Team to include cultural competence as a core competency of the organization in policy and practice.
2. Hire a Cultural Competence and Equity professional to integrate cultural competence and equity as elements in City policy development, programming, service delivery and program evaluation.
 - a. Regularly review and evaluate City-wide cultural competence efforts in the following categories: organizational values, policies, staffing, resources, service delivery and public outreach.
 - b. Establish a knowledge base of best practices and available resources for cultural competence and equity within the City.
3. Establish performance measures to track progress at meeting goals and actions of the Initiative.
4. Provide systematic and regular cultural competence training for all City staff over a five-year period.
5. Provide cultural competence training for City volunteers and community leaders, including those serving on City boards, commissions and advisory committees.
6. Add cultural competence as an evaluative criterion in the City's budget process.
7. Strengthen and advance recruitment efforts of diverse City staff to better reflect city demographics.
8. Dovetail the City's existing accessibility and compliance programs (ADA, Section 504, Title VI) with the Diversity Initiative to achieve similar goals of increased performance and outcomes across all City services.
9. Establish City-wide standards for translation of written material, interpretation services at meetings, and for physical access to meetings and programs.
10. Conduct a comprehensive review of public information tools, protocols and resources to identify strategies and methods for more effective communication with diverse populations.
11. Explore and identify additional Mini-City Hall locations to improve local accessibility to City services.
12. Dedicate resources for City departments to innovate and at to provide culturally competent services and improve public outreach and civic engagement.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Invest in more public gathering spaces, or Third Places, throughout Bellevue for people to connect, celebrate and interact.
2. Support and produce special events, art exhibits and performances, educational materials, festivals and public information that increase opportunities for cultural interaction and education.
3. Convene a community advisory group to explore a charter to establish a “Bellevue Diversity Institute”. This experiential learning center would serve as a citywide cultural center and would be a resource for businesses, schools and other community groups and organizations. Its mission would be to educate, celebrate, challenge and inspire Bellevue to be a welcoming and inclusive community that embraces diversity.
4. Improve outreach and engagement to build relationships with isolated communities and establish trust and affinity.
5. Develop a Cultural Liaison Program, where representatives of culture groups work as liaisons between their group and the City, or other community institutions.
6. Continue to produce and distribute demographic information and analysis to residents, businesses, nonprofits and public and private educational institutions to elevate understanding of Bellevue's ever-evolving diversity.
7. Produce welcome packets for new residents with language translations available, promoting community organizations, City services and local businesses.
8. Increase public awareness through branding work that incorporates key messaging about Bellevue as a welcoming community with a world-wide view, and acceptance of diversity as a positive aspect of living and working in Bellevue.
9. Collect regular community feedback and utilize volunteers to help assess City services from a diversity perspective. Track performance measures on cultural competence exhibited within the community.
10. Coordinate with local community groups and organizations dedicated to issues of diversity and culture.

HUMAN SERVICES

1. Support the establishment of a year-round homeless shelter on the Eastside.
2. Translate city materials on human service resources and referral programs available in Bellevue into the most commonly spoken languages.
3. Assist non-profit human service agencies in providing culturally competent care and support to Bellevue residents of all ages, abilities and ethnic backgrounds.
4. Engage the Eastside Human Services Forum in regional discussions of diversity in human services.
5. Promote bi-cultural and bi-lingual programs that help individuals access public and nonprofit human services systems, such as the Cultural Navigator Program.
6. Support human service organizations in providing cultural competence training for their staff.
7. Recruit diverse community volunteers to support programs and services that meet human service needs in Bellevue.

PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Continue recruitment efforts designed to diversify public safety staff to better reflect city demographics.
2. Provide ongoing cultural competence training to all public safety staff.
3. Improve access to public health and safety information through partnerships with ethnic media.
4. Address under-reporting of crime by promoting the City of Bellevue as a safe place for residents to report instances of civil rights violation, housing and other forms of discrimination.
5. Periodically convene focus groups of people of various ages, abilities and race and ethnic backgrounds to ask and learn about appropriate public safety service delivery methods.
6. Support public safety programs that outreach to vulnerable people groups, including the elderly, disabled and isolated communities.

EDUCATION

1. Collaborate with the Bellevue School District, Bellevue College and other community organizations to establish a common language and definitions around cultural competence and social equity.
2. Encourage and support community conversations on the issues of disability, economic class, gender, sexual orientation race and ethnicity.
3. Support local schools and colleges in providing comprehensive services and support to diverse student populations to erase achievement gaps where they exist.
4. Strengthen Wrap-Around Services for targeted schools within the Bellevue School District to build up community efforts to address achievement gaps.
5. Work with Bellevue School District, Eastside Pathways and other education programs to share information and identify strategies to improve teacher/family communications.
6. Work with community partners to provide leadership training and mentoring opportunities for our youth.
7. With community partners, develop a long-term marketing education and branding strategy to focus positive attention on diversity and diverse groups.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Provide opportunities for current and future Bellevue residents and workers by implementing regulatory and incentive tools to increase the supply of affordable housing.
2. Improve regional efforts to support entrepreneur and small business creation, including training, loan assistance, mentoring opportunities, gathering spaces and networking.
3. Embed cultural competence within City organizational policy such as the Comprehensive Plan and Economic Development Strategy.
4. Promote and support programs that offer community-based employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment, such as ability, age and language.
5. Convene periodic gatherings of Bellevue's public and private institutions and business leaders in efforts to collectively apply corporate citizenship resources to local diversity initiatives.
6. Identify gaps in goods and services provided on the Eastside for specialized markets.
7. Work with the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce to reinvigorate the Bellevue Entrepreneur Center.
8. Protect and improve transit services.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

1. Emphasize outreach to establish trust within the social networks of our diverse communities as the first step in broadening their participation.
2. Develop and implement a strategy to increase diverse representation on City boards, commissions, advisory committees and task forces. This should include efforts to identify, recruit and train emerging leaders to be considered for these appointed positions.
3. Interpretation, translation and accommodation services at public meetings should be consistent and reliable over time to shape community expectations.
4. Encourage faith community leadership to become more civically engaged.
5. Increase support for artists (e.g. funding, exhibition/performance opportunities, etc.) whose work addresses intercultural themes.
6. Partner with the Eastside Heritage Center to interpret the history of diversity in the Bellevue community.
7. Collaborate with local partner organizations to develop community leadership training and mentoring programs benefiting under-represented population groups.
8. Develop and implement a civic engagement strategy to increase general participation in local government among diverse populations.
9. Ensure that civic engagement events include follow up efforts to inform participants of how their input has influenced decision making.
10. Provide funding and partnerships to community groups or initiatives that meet City of Bellevue diversity goals.



Diversity Advantage Team
City of Bellevue

450 110th Street NE
PO Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

www.bellevuewa.gov

City of Bellevue, Washington | 2015-2017



www.bellevuewa.gov

