

City of Bellevue Innovative Design Partnership Policy

(Version 1.0)

Purpose

To create a policy for engaging in and evaluating design partnerships with the aim of developing, testing and demonstrating innovative solutions in City of Bellevue advancing operations. This policy sets forth:

1. Goals and guiding principles for partnership
2. Partnership prioritization
3. Guidelines for a transparent and objective selection process

Background

The City of Bellevue is home to many of the leading technology companies in the world. The Bellevue City Council Vision includes the idea that innovation is an integral part of the community, embracing and supporting innovation in all aspects such as systems, institutions, businesses, schools, and government. Based on feedback from community engagement work through the City's Inclusive Innovation Forum, the Bellevue community and businesses have identified a need for policies and actions that support increasing innovative partnerships in city services.

This policy addresses barriers to fully utilizing the opportunities that an innovative economy offer. The City is interested in making it easier to test and grow innovative ideas with the City, recognizing the need to balance risk and rewards and understanding some innovation projects may not be successful.

Policy

The City may enter into Design Partnership Agreements with the purpose of testing, evaluating and/or demonstrating innovative solutions if the potential partnership follows the Goals of Design Partnerships and meets the requirements of the Guiding Principles set forth in this Policy, and complies with applicable laws. The application of this Policy depends on the type of Design Partnership as defined in this policy. The City may consider but it is not limited to, some of the following to enter into a meaningful Design Partnership:

1. Make available temporary use of City owned land, facilities, equipment, right of ways and data.
2. Where appropriate, consider extended use of City assets that provide opportunities to demonstrate the return on investment provided by a particular innovation.
3. Make available staff expertise to hone and refine ideas and solutions in partnership.
4. Provide financial assistance for some costs associated with project implementation.

Definitions

A “**Design Partnership**” refers to a contractual agreement between the City and businesses, nonprofit organizations, and/or other governmental agencies to test, evaluate and/or demonstrate innovative solutions utilizing City land, facilities, equipment, right of ways, and data, and staff time. The partnership may fall into the following types:

1. “**Pilot Project**” refers to a product, process, service, or information technology that is currently available in the U.S. marketplace and that the City may want to explore for further application to improve City services.
 - a. Should, to the extent possible, follow procedures established by the Finance Department/Procurement Division.
 - b. Must demonstrate technical feasibility and alignment with city priorities before moving to further evaluation stages.
2. “**Demonstration/Testing**” refers to a request by an outside party for the City to provide the outside party with City land, facilities, right of ways, equipment or/and data for the purpose of testing, evaluating and/or demonstrating the outside party innovative solution.
 - a. Requires an initial feasibility assessment, prepared by the outside party, to identify costs and benefits associated with the project.
 - i. Cost assessments should factor in:
 1. City staff time and potential workload impact
 2. Potential risks to the City
 - b. Projects where costs outweigh potential benefits will not proceed as a Demonstration/Testing Project.
3. “**Mutual Development Opportunity**” refers to a partnership that the City has identified as a potential candidate for a contribution toward economic development and/or has the potential for a benefit for use by the City.
 - a. Must demonstrate a contribution to economic development or provide a direct benefit to city services.

- b. If the City would not typically engage in such a project independently, other City departments may allocate resources to enable participation.

“Innovative solution” refers to a product, process, service, or information technology that is new or improves an existing product, process, service, or information technology and is in limited deployment or not currently deployed in the U.S. marketplace. An Innovative solution is expected to deliver measurable benefits compared to current practice in the areas of environmental benefits, performance, overall process reliability and control, or economic or social benefits. Moreover, an innovative solution shall consist of a specific and identifiable research component.

Goals of Design Partnerships

In alignment with the city Strategic Framework and Council Priorities, the City strives to achieve one or more of the following with these Design Partnerships:

- **Prioritization of Innovation Enhancing City Services:** Embrace cutting-edge technologies and innovative ways and ideas to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of municipal services. These partnerships should support City and Council priorities identified in the strategic framework and council priorities.
- **Growth and Sustainment of Diverse Partnerships:** Establish and maintain relationships with diverse partners to drive continual innovation and mutual benefit. Foster partnerships between government, academia, and industry to drive interdisciplinary innovation.
- **Support of Start-up Ecosystem:** Create a fertile ground for start-ups to thrive by providing opportunities for collaboration and practical application of their innovations.
- **Support of Community Technological Education Opportunities:** Enhance technological literacy and skills within the community, including youth, by promoting educational initiatives and resources.
- **Supporting Digital Equity Opportunities:** Ensure all community members have access to technological tools and resources, bridging the digital divide and fostering inclusive growth.

Guiding Principles

Both the City and the Design Partner’s goals should be openly and clearly stated. The City will strive to ensure that a proposed partnership is mutually beneficial to both parties. All

partnerships shall be consistent with all applicable policies and ordinances set by the City, with variance from policy subject to City Council approval.

Mitigated Risk

The external partners, their employees and potential subcontractors must comply with all applicable laws, codes, rules, regulations and requirements pertaining to the execution of the demonstration project.

Coordination

The City will identify a **Design Partnership Coordinator** from the Lead Department to coordinate the partnership creation process as defined in this policy. Each proposed partnership will coordinate with relevant City departments identified by the Design Partnership Coordinator as being crucial to the success of the project.

Success Criteria & Measurable Results

At the outset of each Design Partnership a set of **performance measures** should be established. At the conclusion of each project, a report evaluating the project against the stated performance measures and any additional information should be forwarded to the Design Partnership Coordinator per agreed upon OKRs.

The success of Bellevue's Innovation Framework partnership is measured through **four key areas**:

1. **Impact & Community Benefit** – Ensuring projects enhance city services and improve accessibility for all residents.
2. **Performance & Tracking KPIs** – Establishing clear metrics to monitor progress, efficiency, and impact over time.
3. **Scalability & Long-Term Adoption** – Evaluating whether successful innovations can be expanded city-wide.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement & Collaboration** – Measuring community involvement and business engagement in partnerships.

Partnership Duration

Each Design Partnership should have a limited duration that is established at the outset. At the conclusion of each project a report evaluating the project against the stated performance measures and any additional information should be forwarded to the Design Partnership Coordinator. In the event that a private party provides resources to advance a demonstration (including but not limited to: capital funds, grant funding, technology

deployment and technical expertise), then the term of the partnership may occur for a longer duration than otherwise contemplated in this Policy in consideration of that investment. Depending on the partnership agreement the City may require partners to remove all equipment or materials installed and to return City property to its original condition.

Responsibilities

All design partnerships will be coordinated by the leading City department(s) under the direction of the Design Partnership Coordinator.

The Design Partnership Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Implementing this policy.
- Providing guidance to all City departments regarding the interpretation and application of this policy.
- Reviewing and assisting in the development of partnership agreements.
- Tracking and reporting all demonstration partnerships developed by City departments.
- Acting as a contact person for partnership opportunities and connecting potential demonstration partners with appropriate departments.
- Recommending to the appropriate Authority approval or denial of the proposed Design Partnership Agreements.
- Regularly reporting to the City Council regarding the implementation of this policy and the status of all partnership agreements approved to date.

Framework for Engagement

Potential partners will be required to submit detailed project proposals outlining the innovative solution, its potential impact on city services, and the resources needed for implementation. The evaluation process will consider the following factors:

- **Alignment with City Priorities:** The proposal must align with the city's strategic goals and priorities.
- **Feasibility and Scalability:** The proposed solution should be feasible for pilot implementation and have the potential for scalability across the city.
- **Community Impact:** The solution should demonstrate clear benefits to the community, including technological education and digital equity.

- **Resource Requirements:** The proposal must outline the necessary resources, including funding, staff, and infrastructure, and demonstrate the partner's capability to provide these resources.

Selection Process

The Design Partnership process ensures efficient, fair, and strategically aligned collaborations while allowing flexibility when necessary, ensuring Bellevue fosters innovative and beneficial partnerships.

Step 1: Identification

The city department or Design Partnership Coordinator determines the appropriate type of Design Partnership:

- Pilot Projects – Small-scale trials following City procurement rules.
- Demonstration/Testing Projects – Require a cost-benefit analysis before approval, evaluating expenses, risks, and service impact.
- Mutual Development Opportunities – Must offer economic or operational benefits. The City may negotiate with multiple partners for the best outcome.

Step 2: Prioritization

The Design Partnership Coordinator, alongside City departments, prioritizes potential partnerships based on:

- Strategic alignment with the City's mission and core services.
- Compliance with existing laws, policies, and practices.
- Risk vs. Benefit analysis, ensuring value outweighs potential liabilities to prevent misalignment between City and partner objectives.

Step 3: Approval

- Design Partnership Agreements require approval from the ITD Director and Lead Department Director.
- City Council approval is required when partnerships:
 - Involve City revenues or expenses exceeding \$350,000.
 - Pose extraordinary risks to the City.
 - Require exemptions from standard City policies.

Step 4: Procurement and Contracting

- Pilot projects:

See City's procurement policies.

- Demonstration/Testing projects and Mutual Development projects:

The Design Partnerships Coordinator should consult with Procurement first. For most projects, the Design Partnerships Coordinator may have the option to negotiate an agreement directly with a potential partner or partners.

The Design Partnerships Coordinator may also have the option to negotiate concurrently with multiple different potential partners.

It is the City's intent to support the use of a streamlined contracting process that prioritizes the parties reaching a timely agreement consistent with laws, rules, orders, agreements, and the goals articulated in this policy and applicable City code.

Measuring & Monitoring

Once a Design Partnership is approved, the process moves into implementation, performance tracking, and evaluation to ensure success.

Step 1: Implementation & Kickoff

- Establish milestones, roles, and expectations.
- Allocate resources, funding, and infrastructure.
- Set up clear reporting and communication channels.
- Step 2: Monitoring & Performance Tracking
 - Provide regular progress updates.
 - Track impact
 - Assess project alignment.

Step 3: Evaluating Success & Viability

- Review whether the project supports City priorities.
- Assess operational efficiency and potential barriers.
- Gather feedback on usability and benefits.

Step 4: Continuation or Termination Decision

- Successful projects may scale or transition to permanent implementation, where funding and priorities support
- Terminate projects if goals are unmet, resources constrained, or risks outweigh benefits.

Step 5: Documentation & Lessons Learned

- Record successes, failures, and best practices.
- Share insights for future innovation strategies.
- Deliver final design partnership report.