

Develop & Test an Equity Lens

A First Step

Staff proposes to develop and test an equity lens within the City's 2023-2024 budget development process that will serve as the first step in a multiple budget cycle process. This lens will serve as one more tool to inform budget decision-making in addition to performance measures, financial resources, value, community and Council feedback, among others. In a deliberate effort to ensure this equity lens is well-considered, this first step is limited in scope and will gather existing information about City operations and resource allocations to establish a baseline for equity-informed decision-making going forward. That information will be mapped alongside intersectional demographic data (e.g. racial/ethnic composition, median household income, among others) to tell a visual and narrative story. This process will serve as a test with opportunities for feedback to ensure what is developed works for Bellevue's diverse communities. Staff acknowledges that there will be limitations in available data and future iterations will be able to garner new data.

Nearby Best Practices

Staff has examined the best practices of other Puget Sound jurisdictions that have developed varied methods to include considerations of equity into their budget decision-making processes. Notably, staff reviewed efforts by the City of Tacoma and the Port of Seattle which are on their own paths and levels of maturity. The City will continue to learn from these examples among others.

Next Steps

Budget Office and Diversity Advantage Team staff will be working with subject matter experts throughout the City to identify, examine and put into context the existing operational metrics. The vision is that the metrics will highlight the prior resourcing of Strategic Target Areas across Bellevue neighborhoods. See the example to the right. Please note that the data used was draft and the map is purely for illustrative purposes to better explain the staff proposal.

