

City of Bellevue Diversity Advantage Plan 2025-2035



Embracing our journey, fostering belonging
today, co-creating an equitable tomorrow.





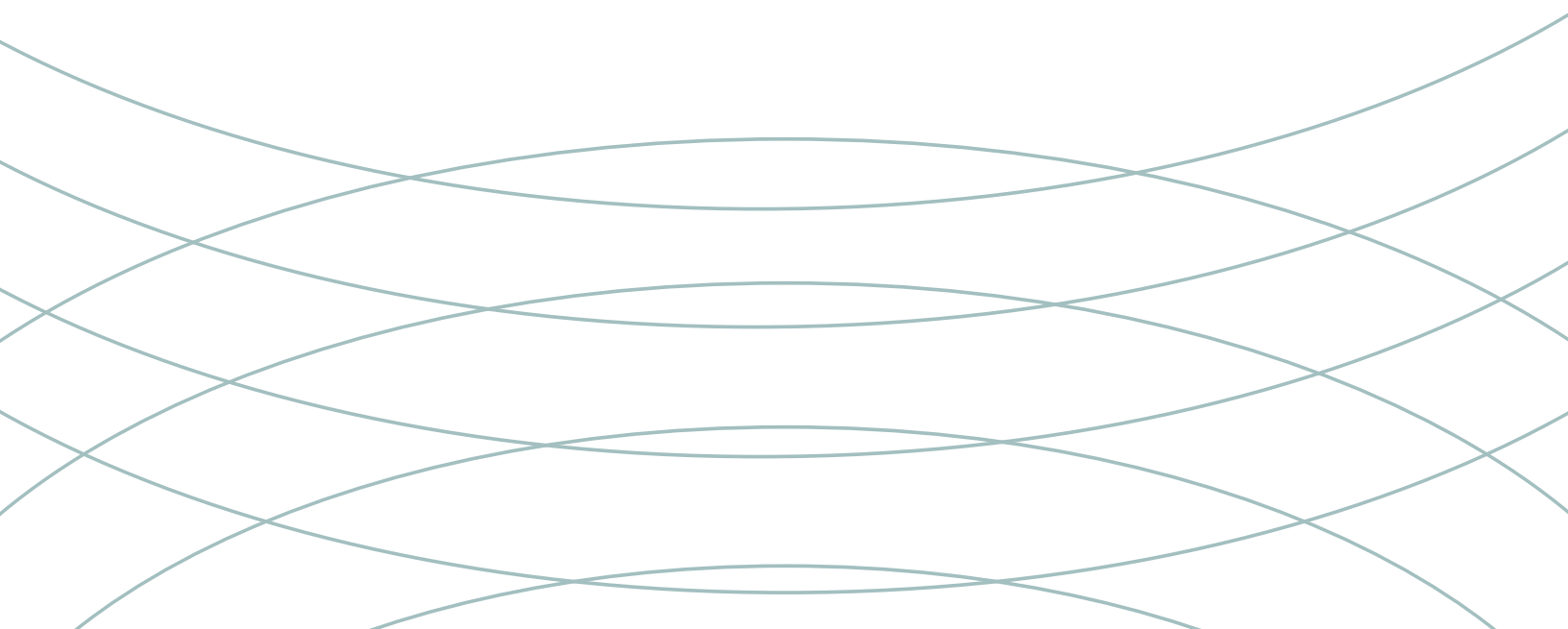
Legal Disclaimer

The City of Bellevue is committed to fostering a workplace and communities that uphold the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion while remaining compliant with all applicable laws – federal, state, and local.

This plan does not, nor is it intended, to promote actions or decision-making that is motivated, in whole or in part, by the protected characteristics of any individual or group; or might otherwise discriminate against any individual or group based upon protected characteristics.

To the contrary, this plan is intended to protect and advance the civil rights of all the City's employees and residents. However, the City recognizes that not all individuals begin from the same starting point and may face challenges that may not be shared across the region's multiple and diverse member groups. Therefore, the City intends to be mindful of these differences, while striving to create environments and communities that support fairness, access, opportunity, and respect for everyone. In implementing this plan, the City's departments are encouraged to engage, early and often, representatives of the Diversity Advantage Team, Human Resources, and the City Attorney's Office.

If any portion, clause, or provision of this plan is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unlawful, invalid, or unenforceable, such provision shall be severed from the remainder of the plan. All remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect to the extent permitted by law and shall be construed to best effectuate the intent of the City of Bellevue to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.



Raindrop

by Soo Hong

After moving to this country and city, I began creating a series of Raindrop paintings as a ritual to emotionally embrace this place as my new home. The raindrop serves as a metaphor for the rainy Pacific Northwest, with each drop representing an individual within the community. This project evolved into Rain Village, an ongoing community art initiative that received support from the City of Bellevue during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this Diversity Advantage Plan update, I continued with the raindrop theme to emphasize the idea of individuals coming together as one community. While raindrops have no inherent color, they reflect one another and collectively contain all colors, much like the way they form rainbows. The raindrop lines were inspired by a participant's drawing from a previous community art project, which I rendered in 3D. I believe art becomes more inclusive and personal when it incorporates contributions from others.

Bellevue is a unique city, rich in cultural diversity and guided by a forward-thinking vision for the future. Within the raindrops, I included watercolor paintings to convey the city's warmth and fluid nature. My inspiration was drawn from Byung-Chul Han's *Hyperculture* and Zygmunt Bauman's *Liquid Modernity*, which expanded my understanding of how culture and community have evolved and continue to transform.

Bauman's concept of *Liquid Modernity* highlights how traditional structures and identities are becoming fluid in an ever-changing modern world. This fluidity reflects how individuals and communities must continuously adapt and renegotiate their sense of belonging. In Bellevue, a city marked by rapid growth and increasing cultural diversity, this theory underscores the importance of fostering equity and inclusion as part of creating a cohesive community. Just as raindrops merge to form rivers or rainbows, individuals in a community must navigate their unique identities while coming together to shape a shared future.

Byung-Chul Han's *Hyperculture* explores the coexistence of multiple cultures in a globalized world, emphasizing how interactions between these cultures can enrich and transform communities. Rather than seeing cultural diversity as a source of tension, Han's theory encourages us to embrace these interactions as opportunities for growth and innovation. In the context of equity and belonging, this perspective reinforces the need for spaces where everyone feels seen and valued, allowing diverse voices to collectively shape a more inclusive community.

Through the metaphor of the raindrop, I aimed to convey these ideas. The fluid, reflective nature of raindrops represents both the challenges and opportunities of a diverse and evolving society. This artwork seeks to inspire warmth, openness, and a flexible mindset, encouraging us to embrace change and work together to build a future where equity and belonging thrive.



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1. Land Acknowledgement

On behalf of the City of Bellevue, we acknowledge the land we are on as the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish people, the traditional home of all tribes and bands including the Duwamish, Suquamish Tribe, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. We take this opportunity to honor and express our deepest respect to the original caretakers of this land; A people that are still here, continuing to honor their heritage.

It is important to note that this kind of acknowledgement is not a new practice developed by colonial institutions. Land acknowledgement is a traditional custom dating back centuries for many Native communities and nations. For non-Indigenous communities, land acknowledgement is a powerful way of showing respect and honoring the Indigenous Peoples of the land on which we work and live. Acknowledgement is a simple way of resisting the erasure of Indigenous histories and working towards honoring and inviting the truth.



2. Acknowledgements

The Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 is the result of countless hours of work from people across our organization and community. The development of this plan was a deeply collaborative effort. We would like to express our gratitude towards three groups in particular who paved the way for both the development and ongoing success of this plan with their commitment to a diverse, inclusive and equitable Bellevue.

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THE 2023 CENTERING COMMUNITIES OF COLOR COORDINATING TEAM





WELCOMING
WEEK

Alleluia
comes
world



3. Introduction

Just over a decade ago, the City of Bellevue created the Diversity Advantage Initiative and the City Council adopted the city's first diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategic plan, called the Diversity Advantage Plan (DAP). In 2014, the city was responding to significant changes in the demographics of the Bellevue community. In the nearly 25 years spanning from 1990 to 2014, the face of Bellevue had changed. The Bellevue of 1990 was largely homogenous, with 87% of the community identifying as white, US-born and English-speaking (86%). By the adoption of the DAP in 2014, nearly half of the community identified as a race other than white, approximately 40% of residents were foreign-born and less than 60% of the population spoke English in their homes.

With 93% of the city's population growth being comprised of immigrants and refugees between 2000 and 2015, the city knew that it had to change to meet the changing needs and lived experiences of its residents. Bellevue embraced this evolving diversity, adopting the vision statement "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past." The 2014 Diversity Advantage Plan has been fundamental to bringing that vision to life.

Bellevue is Washington's fifth-largest city with 155,000 full-time residents and a daytime population of 270,000. The rich diversity in race, ethnicity, culture, age, language, ability, gender and sexual orientation within our community defines Bellevue's identity. Nearly 60% of residents identify as people of color and there are over 100 languages spoken in our schools. In the 11 years since the writing of the original DAP, diversity has become who we are as a city. While Bellevue continues to welcome the world and celebrate diversity, the city is also dedicated to understanding and responding to the ways in which some communities may not be able to access and benefit from the high-quality services, resources and opportunities the City of Bellevue is committed to providing to all of our residents and community members. With the development of the Diversity Advantage Plan 2035, the city is positioning itself to offer more inclusive growth, strive for more equitable outcomes and foster a deeper sense of belonging in our communities today and for years to come.

What is the Diversity Advantage Plan 2035?

The Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 (DAP 2035) is a citywide strategic plan designed to embed diversity, equity and inclusion into every facet of Bellevue's operations, services and culture. DAP 2035 identifies a vision for and commitment to a more equitable community. The plan has 41 long-term Equity Objectives shaped by years of community and staff engagement and three Guiding Principles to help us understand the how and why of this ongoing journey. The plan focuses on both community-facing services and programs and the organization's internal culture and practices.

Why update the Diversity Advantage Plan?

The original 2014 plan requires an update to reflect Bellevue's shifting priorities, emerging challenges and opportunities and changing demographics. While Bellevue residents overall enjoy a high level of prosperity compared to other cities in our region, Bellevue's growth has also exacerbated some significant challenges. These challenges often impact individuals and social groups differently within Bellevue. A deeper discussion of these challenges and impacts can be found in the data presented in Section 6 of this document. The DAP 2035 delivers a blueprint to build a Bellevue where all community members have what they need to thrive, regardless of their different identities.

In addition to the changes in our community, the city as an organization has also undergone significant changes since the 2014 plan. Thanks to the original DAP, the organization has continued learning what it takes to be a local government committed to DEI. We have woven DEI more deeply into our culture and daily operations and have a more developed understanding of community engagement and culturally responsive services.

DAP 2035 builds on previous successes and introduces new initiatives and more opportunities for community collaboration to foster belonging. This evolution ensures that Bellevue's DEI efforts remain relevant, responsive and co-created with those directly impacted and attuned to both present and future needs.

4. Our Vision and Values

At Bellevue, we believe diversity is our strength. This commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is reflected across all levels of the organization.

Council Vision: Bellevue is an Equitable Community.

We envision a Bellevue that is diverse and welcoming, and everyone, from newborn babies to people with decades of life experience, feels a sense of belonging, with opportunities to engage and thrive. Equity is a core value, and we actively work to build an inclusive community, free from racism, hate or bias.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: A Core Value

At the City of Bellevue, we create an inclusive and equitable community where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered to thrive. We create an environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, and experiences equitable treatment. We value the unique perspectives, backgrounds and identities of all individuals, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to thrive and contribute to our community. We promote inclusivity, respect and fairness in every aspect of our operations, services and interactions.





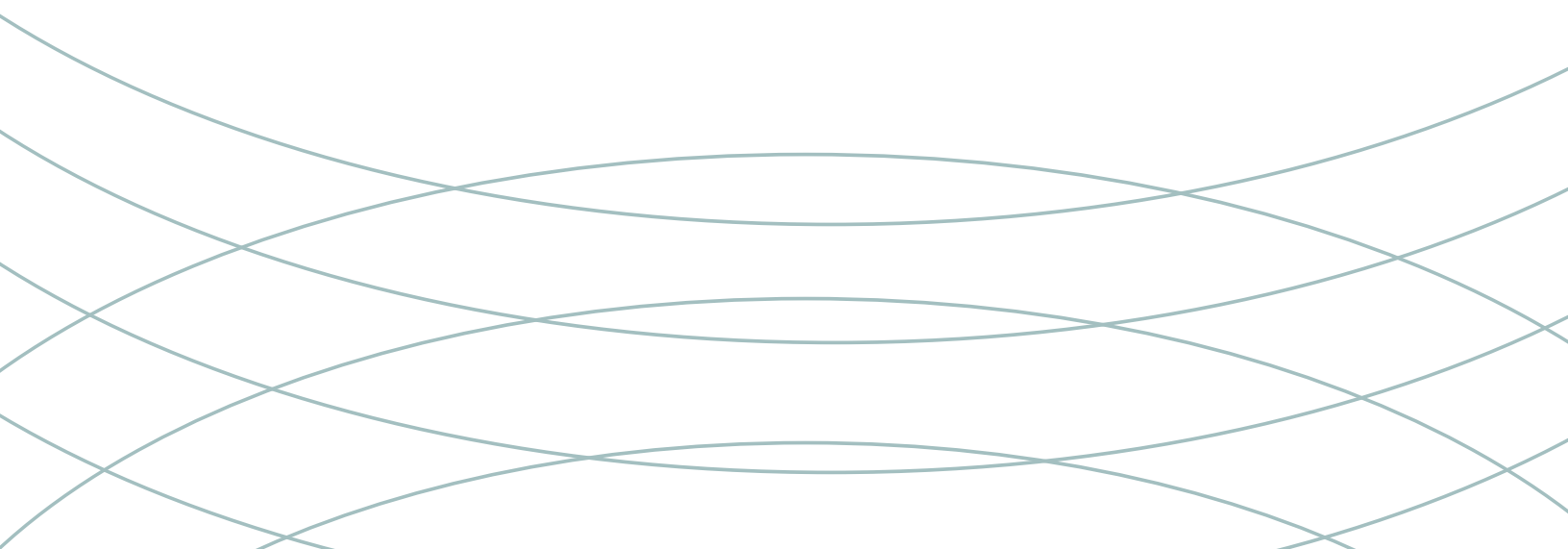
4.1 Striving for Equity

The council's vision statement of "welcoming the world, diversity is our strength" is a strong acknowledgement that Bellevue's vast diversity enhances our community with a vibrant mix of cultures, foods, traditions, beliefs and languages, fueling innovation and opportunity. However, this diversity also requires ongoing efforts to ensure that all residents benefit from this strength and that everyone in our community has access to city services and programs. To do this, we must commit to considering how historic legacies and present-day challenges may continue to unintentionally create and sustain barriers between some of our communities and the resources Bellevue provides.

The DAP 2035 centers **equity** as the primary lens through which we view and understand our work.

Equity means everybody in our community can access, participate in and benefit from services, resources and opportunities that contribute to a high quality of life, no matter an individual's identities. **Put simply**, in an equitable society, one's **identities** are not accurate predictors of one's **outcomes**.

Different from **equality**, equity considers how the **unique identities, circumstances, and histories** of different people may impact experiences within **institutions and systems**.



Understanding Marginalized Communities

One strategy for applying an equity lens to the City's work is understanding if and how some communities may lack meaningful access to city services and resources or may not experience as many of the benefits to living in Bellevue as others. While any member of our community may lack access for any number of reasons, it can be helpful to consider how marginalized communities may be impacted differently than other communities within Bellevue. Marginalized communities refer to groups of people who have historically been minority groups and whose needs and experiences have not always been considered in the design of services, policies and resources. Some of these communities have even suffered from legal practices of discrimination. Examples of groups of people that could be considered marginalized include:

- People of color
- Immigrants and refugees
- People with disabilities
- The 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) community
- Youth and elders
- Limited English proficiency communities
- People experiencing homelessness
- Neurodivergent people
- People with mental or behavioral health challenges
- Women and gender-diverse communities

It's important to understand that the experiences, challenges and needs of these communities will be as diverse as the communities themselves and vary greatly. While some of these groups may be more likely to experience challenges to things like accessing housing or starting a business, others may experience some level of economic prosperity while still facing barriers to feeling included in the Bellevue community.

Additionally, strategies that successfully increase access and benefit for one group may not be the right strategy for another group. Rather than being prescriptive, considering the diverse experiences and needs of marginalized communities is an invitation to reflect on where there are opportunities to think innovatively about how we are serving our communities. The City of Bellevue is committed to ensuring all of its community members are able to benefit from our services, policies and programs. Considering those who may find themselves more at the margins of our community is one tool for helping us meet that commitment.





4.1.2 Putting Equity into Perspective

Below, we see two different communities (**Community A** and **Community B**) and the community gardens that are supposed to help provide healthy, nutritious food to the people who live there. Consider the two different community gardens—what do you notice about them? What is similar? What is different?

Community A hosts a healthy, abundant community garden. The blueberry plants are thriving, and the baskets of blueberries are overflowing. The soil looks rich, and the garden is getting lots of sun and just the right amount of rain. Community A is able to access plenty of fruit to feed their community.

However, in **Community B**, we see a different story. The blueberry bushes look small, weak and unhealthy. They are barely producing any fruit, and it looks like weeds are starting to take over the garden. Furthermore, the soil looks deficient, and the plants' roots are shallow and weak. What's going on in Community B?

When we look closer, we see that **Community B** has some structural barriers and challenges that are interfering with the garden's ability to thrive. At some point, someone built a fence around the garden. Maybe the fence was at one time supposed to serve a purpose. But today, it's blocking the garden's access to the sun it needs to grow and produce food for the community. Similarly, in the background, we see smokestacks, hinting that Community B is home to a factory. Could the smoke and pollution from that factory be contributing to the unhealthy soil and plants in Community B's garden?

The images above are a simplified way of thinking about how the complex combination of different laws, policies, practices, and cultural beliefs that have, over many generations, constructed barriers (physical and otherwise) for many **historically marginalized communities** to access the resources they need to thrive. Whether that resource is quality housing, transportation, cultural amenities, safe neighborhoods or healthy food, we know that structural inequities play a role in determining access.

However, a happy ending to this story is still possible. In the image below, we see a new image of Community B ten years later. The fence has been removed and the smokestacks are gone. We can see by the shovel and wheelbarrow that people have been investing time and resources to make sure Community B has healthy food. And slowly but surely, the soil is becoming richer and the blueberry bushes are producing more fruit.

This is an important reminder that what has been **constructed** can be **deconstructed**, including inequitable systems. To do so will require curiosity and thoughtfulness about the root causes of inequities, and a willingness to invest time, energy and resources to deconstruct those barriers.

Community A: 2025



Community B: 2025



Community B: 10 Years Later



5. History of Bellevue's DEI Initiative

The city's DEI efforts are not new. In the following section, we will explore the foundational work that paved the way for the development of DAP 2035, highlighting how Bellevue's DEI initiatives have evolved over the years.

Early DEI Initiative

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. However, as major demographic shifts reshaped the community, the council in 2011 directed city staff to establish the Bellevue Diversity Initiative. This initiative aimed to research best practices, identify opportunities and challenges and engage a broad spectrum of community members, staff and key partners to reimagine the city's approach to DEI.

5.1 Development of the 2014 Diversity Advantage Plan

In December 2014, after extensive research and community input, the council adopted the Bellevue Diversity Advantage Plan along with the vision statement: "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past."

The Diversity Advantage Plan was developed as a strategic response to Bellevue's rapidly increasing diversity. The plan included 60 recommendations within seven focus areas: Cultural Competence in City Government, Cultural Competence in the Community, Human Services, Public Safety, Education, Economic Development, and Civic Engagement. It set forth ambitious goals to enhance inclusivity, promote equity and celebrate the city's cultural richness.





6. Community Demographics and Data

Bellevue's demographic landscape has experienced significant transformation over the past few decades across a wide range of identities, including race, place of birth, age, language, and more. This evolving diversity highlights the critical importance of fostering inclusive public spaces and services that support all residents.



Race

60%

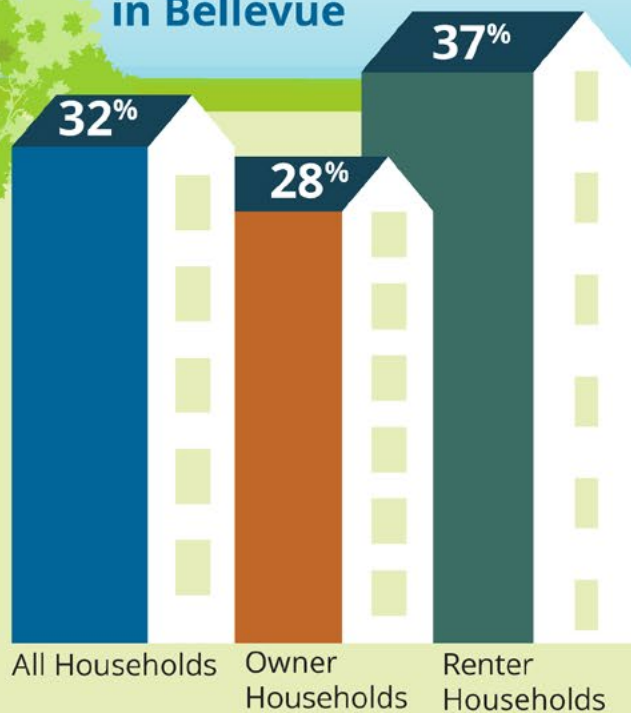
60% of Bellevue's total population identifies as a race other than white.

72%

72% of Bellevue's youth under the age of 18 identifies as a race other than white.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B01001B-I).

Cost-Burdened Households in Bellevue



Source: American Community Survey. 2023 1-Year Data Profiles (Table DP04).

\$100,000

What a two-person household with one child would need to earn in Bellevue to meet their basic needs.

Source: 2025 estimates from the MIT Living Wage Institute.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table S1801).



\$158,000

The median income in Bellevue.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1903, 2023.

Top 10 languages:

Chinese	Japanese
Spanish	Russian
Hindi	Tamil
Korean	French
Telugu	Vietnamese

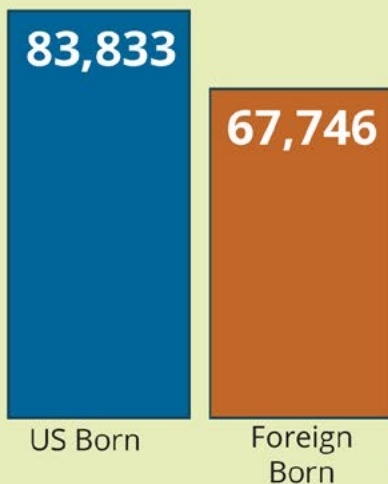
107
languages spoken
in Bellevue

60%
of residents speak
something other
than English as their
primary language.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
2019-2023 American
Community Survey 5% Public
Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)
Estimates for the Greater
Bellevue PUMA.

National Origin

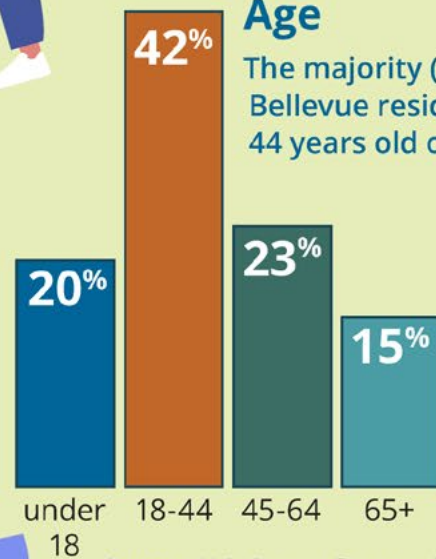
Nearly 45% of Bellevue's residents
were born outside of the US.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. 2023
American Community Survey 1-Year
Estimates (Table DP02).

Age

The majority (62%) of
Bellevue residents are
44 years old or younger.

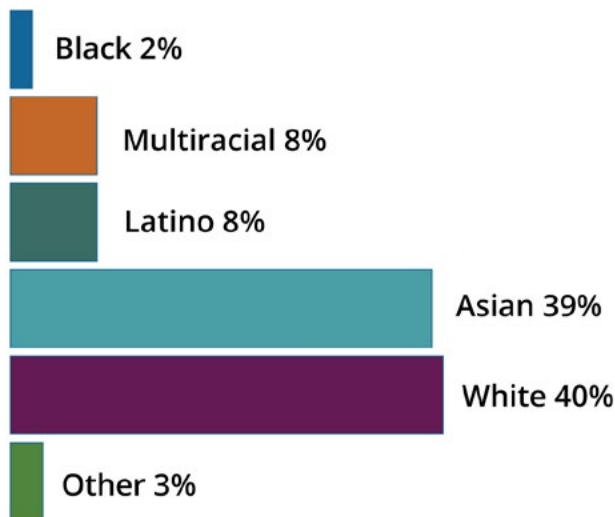


Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023
American Community Survey 5-Year
Estimates (Table DP05).

6.1 Racial and Ethnic Diversity

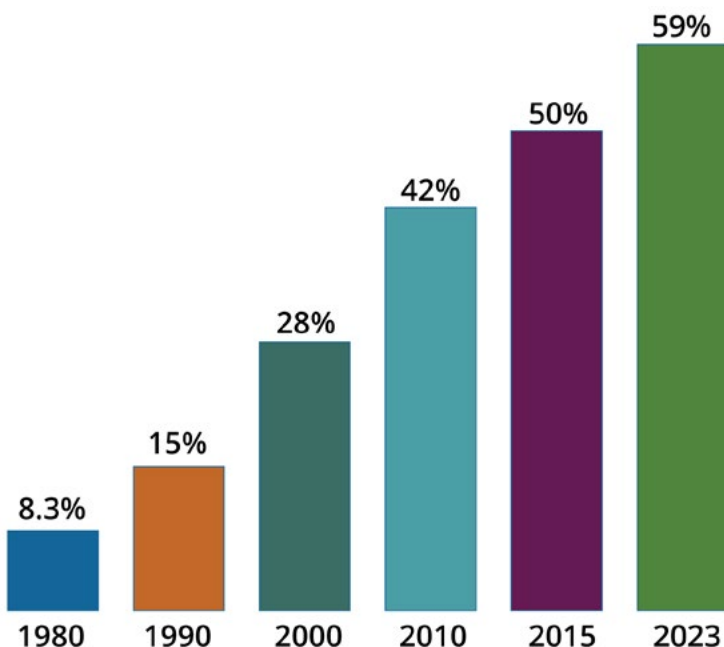
Since 1990, the proportion of people of a race or ethnicity other than non-Hispanic white has increased substantially. Whereas in 1990 that group accounted for just 15% of Bellevue's population, by 2023 that figure had climbed to about 60%. Bellevue's Asian and Hispanic populations have been the fastest-growing populations over the past two decades, with their size more than doubling between 1990 and 2010. At nearly 40% of all city residents, Bellevue's Asian population itself includes a significant degree of diversity, representing people of Chinese, Asian Indian, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese descent, among other countries and regions.

If Bellevue's youth are an indication of the future, Bellevue's racial and ethnic diversity will continue to increase. In 2020, Bellevue's children (under 18) were more racially and ethnically diverse than Bellevue's adult population. All racial/ethnic groups aside from non-Hispanic white occupied a larger share of the under-18 population than the Bellevue population as a whole.



Racial Makeup of Bellevue

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B01001B-I).



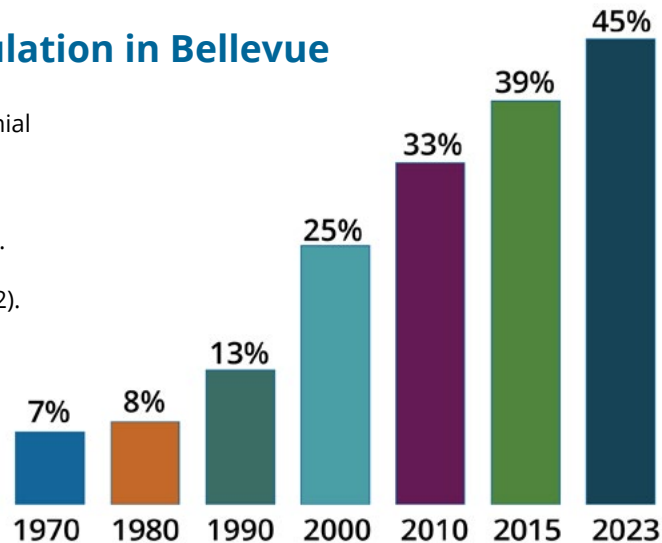
Black, Indigenous and People of Color in Bellevue Over Time

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980-1990 Decennial Censuses (Tables NTA13 & NP10). Retrieved via IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census (Table P006); U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Tables DP02 & DP05).

One contributor to Bellevue's racial and ethnic diversity is the increase in the number of residents who were born outside of the U.S. From 1980 to 2023 the proportion of foreign-born residents climbed from 8% to about 45% of Bellevue's population. The primary regions in which foreign-born residents were born shifted from Canada and Northern Europe to Asia.

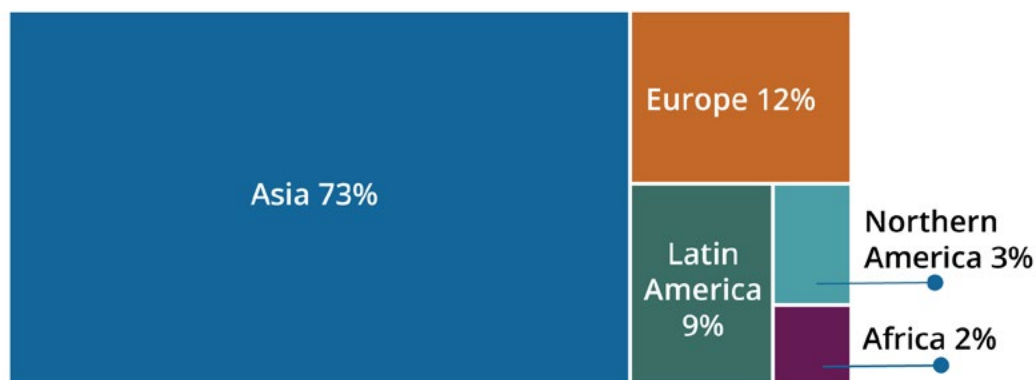
Growth of Foreign-Born Population in Bellevue

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1970-1990 Decennial Censuses (Tables NT25, NTB9, NT33, NT37 & NP42). Retrieved via IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org; U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 Decennial Census (Table DP2); U.S. Census Bureau. 2010, 2015, and 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP02).



In 2023, nearly 75% of Bellevue's foreign-born residents were born in Asia, compared to about 12% from Europe and 9% from Latin America. This increase in Bellevue's foreign-born population, along with the shift from Europe to Asia and to a lesser extent Latin America, has led to much greater racial and ethnic diversity within the city.

Origin of Foreign-Born Population in Bellevue

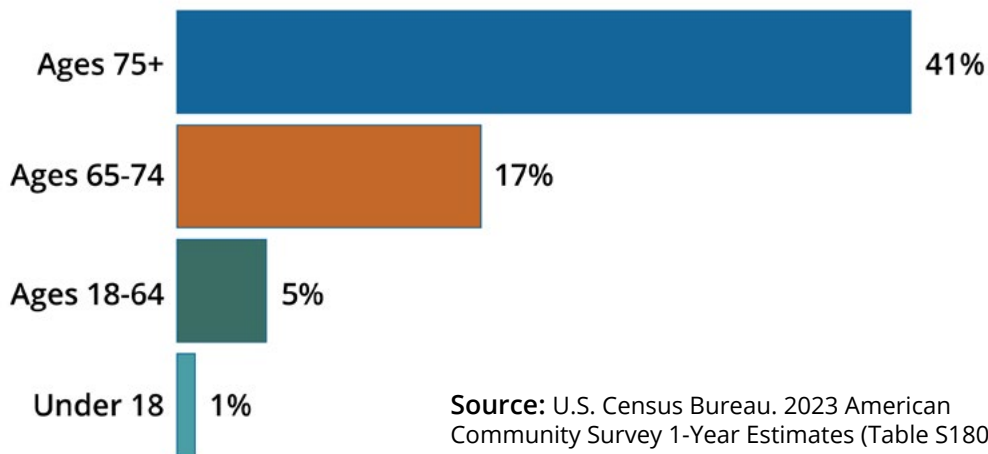


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP02, 2023.

6.2 Disability

According to the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), Bellevue has a relatively lower proportion of residents with disabilities compared to King County, Washington state, and the broader U.S. However, it's important to note that having a disability can include a wide range of different experiences, which may not be fully captured by data sources such as the American Community Survey. Additionally, the likelihood of having a disability increases significantly with age, affecting 41% of Bellevue residents age 75 or above. These statistics highlight the ongoing need for inclusive infrastructure and services that cater to the varying needs of residents with disabilities, particularly as the city's population ages.

Disability by Age in Bellevue



6.3 Biological Sex, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

The Bellevue community is also diverse in terms of biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.

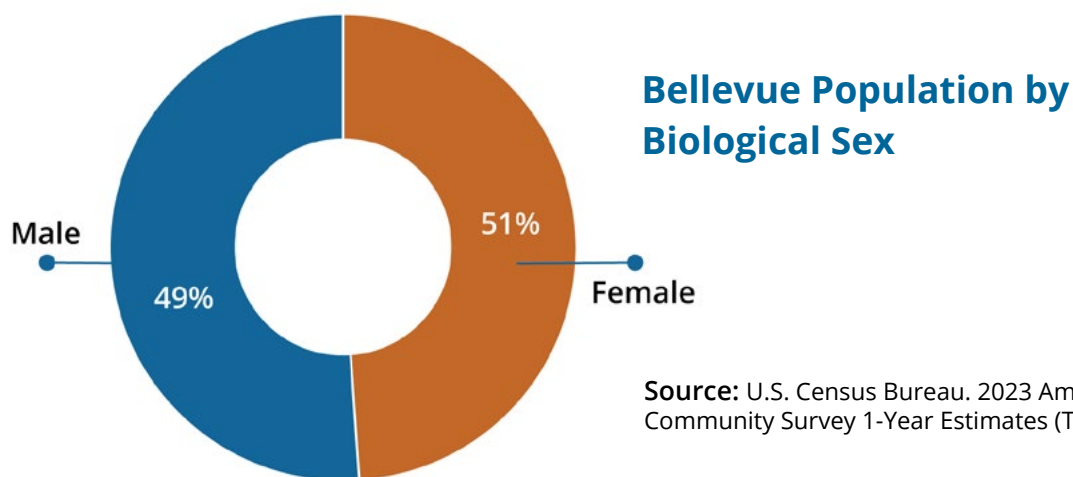
Someone's biological sex is primarily associated with a set of physical and biological attributes and is often assigned at birth as either female or male. However, even biologically, there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed.

Distinct from biological sex, gender refers to a set of socially constructed beliefs, roles, expressions and behaviors. While within some cultures gender has been understood as the same as biological sex, someone's understanding of their own gender and their expression of that gender can exist outside of the male/female binary. One's internal sense of being a man, woman, both, in between, or outside of the gender binary may or may not correspond with their biological sex assigned at birth. Gender identity is internal and personally defined.

Sexual orientation refers to a person's sexual and/or romantic desire and preference for relationships based on sex and/or gender. Sexual orientation is fluid and can also include asexuality.

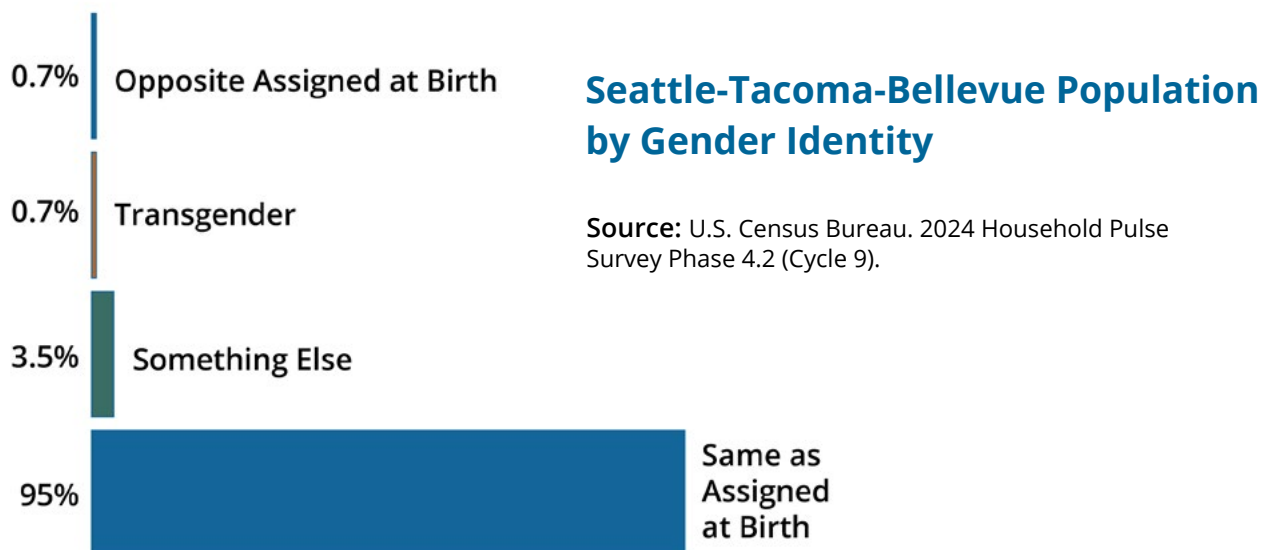
Understanding diversity in biological sex, sexual orientation and gender identity within our communities can be a difficult endeavor. Currently, major sources of community data such as the U.S. Census do not ask about sexual orientation or provide options outside of male/female for respondents to select in terms of their sex or gender identity. Unfortunately, this limits our ability to understand the prevalence of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community specifically within Bellevue. The data simply does not exist at the time of the writing of this document. However, some limited data sources have allowed us to learn more about these important identities within our communities at a regional level.

In terms of biological sex, Bellevue's population is about 50% male and 50% female.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table S0101).

Starting in 2021, the Census Household Pulse Survey, which was originally developed to understand the impacts of COVID-19, started asking respondents about gender identity and sexual orientation at the state level and for the 15 largest metropolitan areas in the nation. According to 2024 data from that survey, about 5% of adults in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Area identify as a gender outside of the male-female gender binary.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024 Household Pulse Survey Phase 4.2 (Cycle 9).

Additionally, data from the same survey indicate that a little over 20% of adults in this same region identify as something other than straight or heterosexual.

Sexual Orientation of Adults in Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metro Area



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2024
Household Pulse Survey Phase 4.2 (Cycle 9).

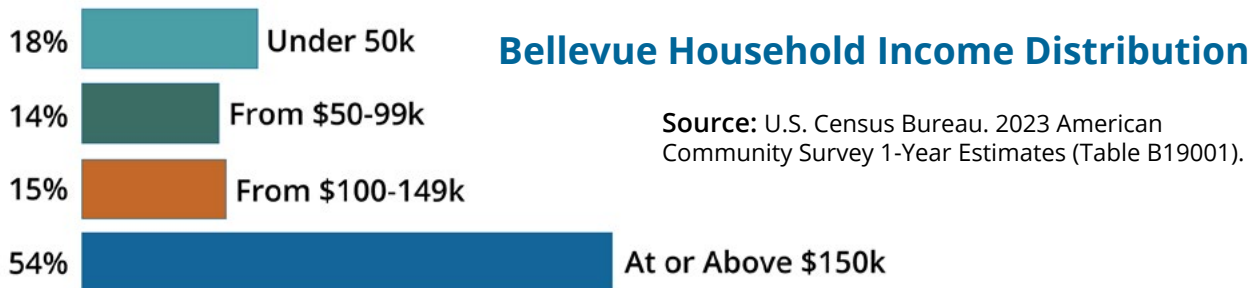
Similarly, the Healthy Youth Survey shows that rates of LGBTQ+ identity are similar within high school-age youth. About 20% of 8th and 10th and 24% of 12th grade respondents in King County indicated they identified as a sexual orientation other than heterosexual/straight in 2023 (Healthy Youth Survey 2023, King County, Grades 6, 8 and 10).



6.4 Income

The median household income in Bellevue is among the highest in the nation (\$158,000 in 2023) according to estimates from the 2023 American Community Survey. This reflects a trend of higher wages and a higher cost of living in the greater Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metro area. Estimates from the MIT Living Wage Institute indicate that a two-person household with 1 child living in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan area would need to earn about \$100,000 just to meet their basic needs.

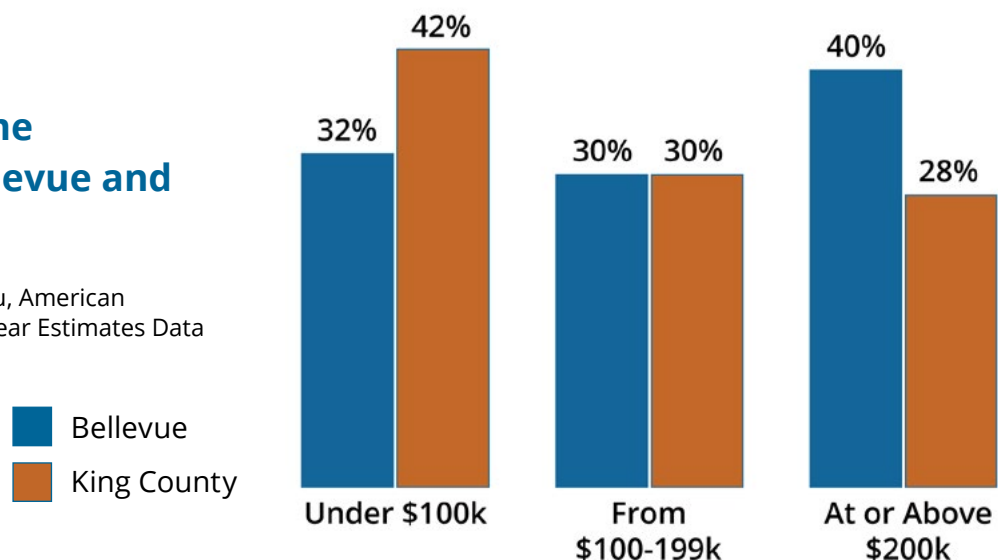
However, not all Bellevue households are economically advantaged. In 2023, while the average income among the top 20% of Bellevue households was \$560,700, the average income among the bottom 20% of households was just \$28,400. In the same year, 18% of Bellevue's households had an annual income below \$50,000 and another 14% had incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Similarly, nearly one-third of all households in Bellevue are cost-burdened, meaning these households pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs like rent or a mortgage.



While the median household income within Bellevue is slightly higher than other municipalities in the region, it's important to note that the region as a whole also has a high cost of living, indicated by the area median income of \$146,500 in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metro area. However, relative to all households in King County, low-income households were underrepresented in Bellevue in 2023 while high-income households were overrepresented. These gaps are likely driven in part by difficulties accessing affordable housing in Bellevue for low-income households in the region.

Household Income Distribution, Bellevue and King County

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, 2023.



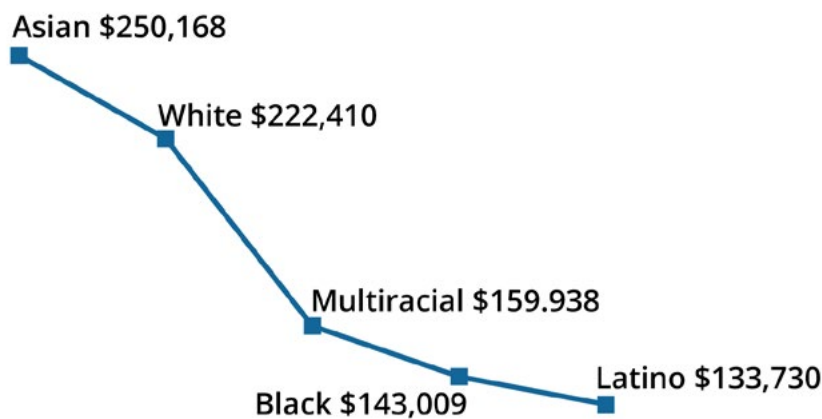
6.5 Disparate Outcomes: Seeking Prosperity for All

While Bellevue is known across the region for being an affluent, safe and beautiful place to live, the city has not escaped disparate outcomes for some of our communities. These disparities are especially prevalent when we look at differences in income, access to housing, home ownership and experiences of poverty across different racial groups. Within Bellevue, data shows that Black, Hispanic/Latino and multiracial households are experiencing the majority of these disparities.

6.5.1 Income Across Racial Groups

Bellevue residents enjoy a relative level of prosperity across all racial groups compared to neighboring cities and regions. However, this prosperity is not equally shared across racial groups. As noted above, the median household income of Bellevue was \$158,000 in 2023. However, data shows that Asian and white households are more likely to earn more than the median income, while Black and Hispanic/Latino households are more likely to learn less than the median income. Hispanic/Latino households on average make just over half (53%) of what Asian households make and about 60% of what white households make. Please note that Bellevue is home to individuals with racial backgrounds outside of the data presented in these graphs, such as Alaska Native, American Indian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. However, the small percentage of respondents from these backgrounds prohibits us from being able to share reliable data about these racial groups.

Average Household Income by Racial Group

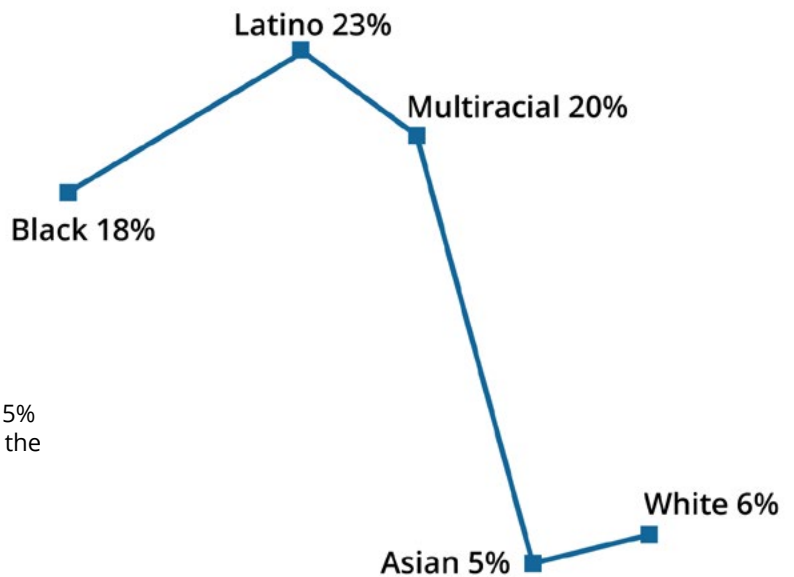


Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B11001B-I, B19025B-I).

Similarly, Black, Hispanic/Latino and multiracial residents are significantly more likely to experience poverty in Bellevue compared to white and Asian residents.

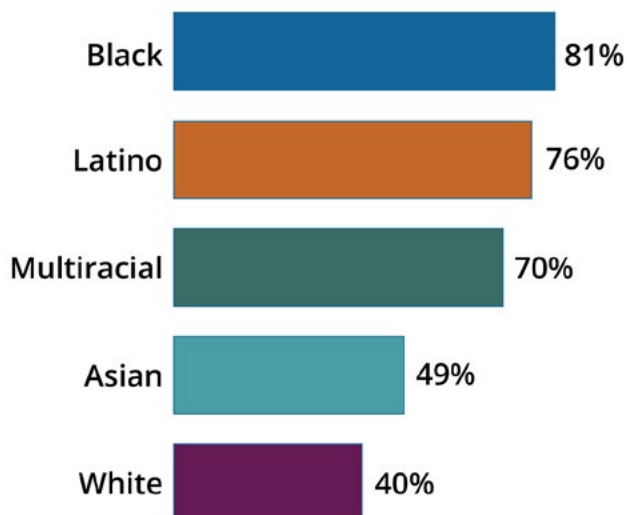
Bellevue Households Experiencing Poverty by Racial Group

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B25003B-I, S1701); U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 5% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Estimates for the Greater Bellevue PUMA.



6.5.2 Housing Disparities

The rising cost of living in Bellevue has exacerbated wealth inequalities, making homeownership increasingly unattainable for many, especially within Black and Hispanic communities. While 40% of white and 50% of Asian households rent their homes, these numbers soar to almost 80% for Black and Hispanic households. Homeownership is especially important as it serves as a key pathway to building generational wealth. Owning a home allows families to build equity over time, creating financial stability that can be passed down through generations, while also helping protect against rising rent costs. However, the barriers to homeownership faced by many Black and Hispanic households continue to perpetuate economic inequality.



Renter Households in Bellevue by Racial Group

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B25003B-I, S1701); U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 5% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Estimates for the Greater Bellevue PUMA.



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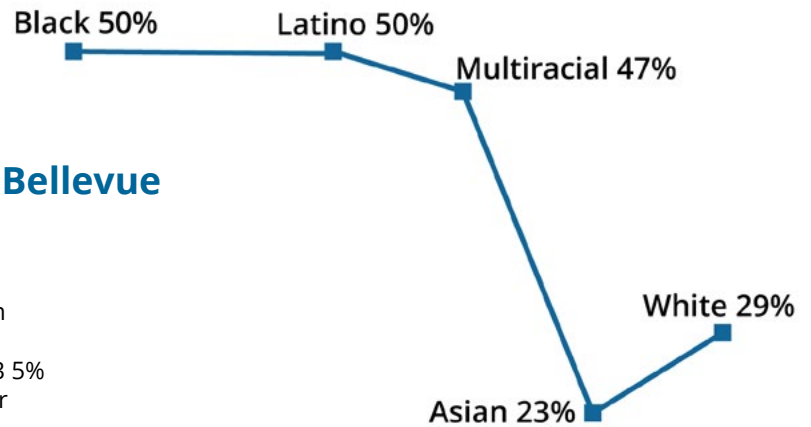


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Black, Hispanic/Latino and multiracial households in Bellevue are also cost burdened at much higher rates than white and Asian households. These disparities not only affect housing stability but also contribute to the risk of displacement.

Cost-Burdened Households in Bellevue by Racial Group

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables B25003B-I, S1701); U.S. Census Bureau. 2019-2023 5% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Estimates for the Greater Bellevue PUMA.



When looking at economic and housing outcomes through a racial lens in Bellevue, we clearly see disparities across the different racial groups that make up our diverse community. It is these differences in access, opportunity and outcomes that drives Bellevue's commitment to identifying and understanding any ways in which our policies and practices may be influencing these inequitable differences.

By reflecting on Bellevue's past and present challenges, we are better equipped to create a more equitable future. The connection between the city's history and its current realities highlights the critical need for the DAP 2035 to function as a dynamic, evolving framework capable of dismantling historical barriers to equity and inclusion. The development of the DAP 2035 is part of an ongoing journey toward equity acknowledging present-day disparities that continue to impact the lives of Bellevue's residents and community members. Guided by the voices of those most affected by these inequities, we hope this plan can provide a path toward a more just future for all in Bellevue.

7. Community Engagement and Data Collection Methodology

The update of the Diversity Advantage Plan was a collaborative and inclusive process, shaped significantly by the active engagement of Bellevue's community members and city staff. This journey began with a series of intentional engagements designed to understand the aspirations and concerns of Bellevue's diverse population. Community engagement was instrumental in shaping the guiding principles and goals of the DAP 2035. Over the course of two years, close to 1,000 residents and community members from diverse backgrounds spoke with each other and the city about their aspirations, dreams, ideas and challenges.

7.1 Centering Communities of Color Community Dialogues

In 2021, the council stood up the Centering Communities of Color (CCC) initiative to better engage and understand the lived experiences of Bellevue's communities of color, who make up nearly 60% of Bellevue's population. This term refers to individuals who identify as a race other than white, and may include individuals from Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latine, Pacific Islander, Southwest Asian, North African and/or Indigenous descent. In 2023, the CCC Coordinating Team, comprised of dedicated Bellevue residents, students and workers committed to advancing racial equity, led a series of community dialogues to include community members from all backgrounds in conversations about what matters most to them. These sessions were strategically held at various times and locations across the city to ensure broad participation. The dialogues focused on belonging, racial equity and social justice and encouraged community members to discuss the unique needs and opportunities for communities of color in Bellevue.

More than 300 individuals participated in these dialogues, resulting in seven community priorities to be integrated into city policies, strategies, practices and procedures.

- Open and accessible government that reflective and is inclusive of the Bellevue community
- Accessible and convenient transportation options
- Community third spaces that inspire belonging
- Cultural events that reflect the community
- Affordable housing for generations to come
- Providing human services and community aid
- Investing in community agents of change, such as nonprofits and schools, and providing human services and community aid

At a community open house that followed the community dialogues, participants identified affordable housing, spaces for belonging, and investing in community partners as the top three priorities for the city.



7.2 Diversity Advantage Plan Update Community Conversations

In fall 2023, staff convened another community conversation devoted to the update of the DAP. Over 50 community leaders representing different racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, genders, sexual orientations, religions, ages and abilities gathered to identify key priorities that needed to shape the DAP 2035. From this conversation, the following three priorities surfaced as clear needs for investment:

- **Affordable Housing:** Addressing housing affordability is a critical need. Support the production of affordable housing, prioritizing affordability projects and programs for families and advocating for diverse housing and childcare options were identified.
- **Authentic Community Engagement:** Enhance communication with Bellevue's diverse population through two-way channels, user-friendly online resources and community liaisons for new residents and immigrants.
- **Embracing Cultural Diversity and Belonging:** Foster inclusion and belonging through the celebration of cultural diversity. This includes cross-cultural events, festivals and sustained engagement with cultural and community organizations.

7.3 Cross-Cultural Center Community Workshops

Staff also held a series of community workshops focused on facilitating cross-cultural interactions and exchanges across the community. In 2023, more than 150 community members were engaged in helping the city understand what was important to them about bringing Bellevue's diverse residents and community members together through intercultural events and programs. Participants in these workshops brainstormed over 100 ideas for activities that would bring people from different backgrounds together in an intentional, mutual exchange of cultural knowledge, approaches and traditions. These workshops helped staff understand what the community priorities were around cross-cultural learning and relationship building and influenced portions of the DAP 2035.

In addition to the strategies for community engagement described above, staff also leveraged information shared by the community through other engagement initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Plan Update and the Human Services Needs Update.

7.4 Employee Feedback

In parallel, city staff provided critical input through retreats and meetings. They stressed the importance of a clear, user-friendly roadmap that aligns with the city's DEI vision. Their feedback called for a comprehensive strategy that integrates change management principles, adopts a strengths-based approach and ensures accountability across all city operations. This input highlighted the need for continuous adaptability and effective community collaboration, ensuring that DEI efforts are not only implemented but also sustained over time.

7.5 Synthesis and Development

By the end of the community and staff engagement portion for DAP 2035, staff had collected over 1,000 individual ideas, thoughts, needs and desires for what the future of DEI in Bellevue should look like. While some of these ideas were broad or more overarching ("I want more access to affordable housing options," or "I want to feel like I belong"), others consisted of more specific strategies or actions for the city to consider.

Our approach to synthesizing this feedback involved a thorough review of all participants' ideas, while prioritizing those themes and needs that were consistently identified as the most crucial to the communities we engaged. Demographic and outcome data was then overlayed with the qualitative, narrative-based data gathered during the engagement. This combination of qualitative and quantitative data analysis provided a more holistic understanding of the community's differing needs and aspirations. Ultimately, it was this process that led to the crafting of the DAP 2035's core components: the guiding principles and the equity objectives. This community-driven process, combined with continuous city staff engagement, will help ensure that DAP 2035 is not just a document but a living, evolving plan that will guide Bellevue toward a more equitable and inclusive future.





8. Guiding Principles

To make our community's vision a reality, we rely on these set of guiding principles to ensure our approach to DEI is deeply rooted in every aspect of the city's operations and culture. These principles are the foundation upon which we build our DEI strategies, shaping the way we serve our community and address disparities. The following principles offer clear directions to guide our decisions and behaviors:

- 1 Align with Strategic Framework:** This strategy guides the City of Bellevue's actions and initiatives. The strategy aligns with the city's long-term goals, the council's 20-year vision and feedback from the community. Embedding diversity, equity and inclusion into the strategic framework ensures that city departments are working together and reinforcing a unified approach. The Diversity Advantage Plan is a necessary and impactful tool for building a thriving community.
- 2 Support Bellevue's DEI Core Value:** Bellevue's core value (BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-managers-office/mission-core-values) of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion creates a community where everyone belongs and is empowered to thrive. We recognize and value the unique perspectives of all individuals. The DEI core value aligns with the city's other values of Exceptional Public Service, Stewardship, Commitment to Employees, Integrity and Innovation.
- 3 Start with Race:** Bellevue seeks to address the historic and ongoing barriers faced by people of color. We acknowledge that race remains a primary predictor of many outcomes related to well-being and quality of life. We strive for more equitable access within our systems and throughout the community, regardless of identity, which will benefit all employees and residents. After receiving feedback from the communities we serve, this approach requires us to use data to understand and identify any disparate impacts resulting from city services, programs, and policies on communities of color. Moreover, this approach advances the city's adopted vision in which "we actively work to build an inclusive community, free from racism, hate, or bias."





PLYMOUTH
CROSSING



CFH

9. Equity Objectives: Roadmap to Belonging

The Equity Objectives below, which provide a roadmap for the city's diversity, equity and inclusion work, were directly influenced by the community's thoughts, ideas and desires. Whereas the Guiding Principles tell us the *why* and *how* we will implement this plan, the Equity Objectives provide a clear and strategic direction for Bellevue's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts over the next decade.

The Equity Objectives identify 41 areas of focus for the city to pursue that will help us create a more equitable and inclusive community. They speak to work happening across every department and are purposefully written to reflect both our current efforts and future, aspirational areas of work. These objectives align with the city's Strategic Target Areas, which guide the city's policy and budget. This alignment helps ensure that DEI is integrated and woven into all that we do rather than something "extra" that is considered after the fact. It also helps us think about important cornerstones of the city's services – like transportation, public safety and communications – through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion.

While these Equity Objectives speak to the desire for everyone in our community to access what they need to thrive independent of demographic identities, both quantitative and qualitative data points to a trend of some marginalized communities continuing to experience disparities in access, opportunity and outcomes. As such, a successful implementation of these Equity Objectives requires the city to think critically about how different communities are experiencing the activities and services outlined within the Objectives.

The Equity Objectives are the tool we use to turn our values and principles into concrete actions. They ensure that our DEI core values are not only upheld but actively integrated across all city operations, moving Bellevue toward a more inclusive community where systemic inequities are dismantled and the well-being of all individuals is prioritized.



High-Performance Government

Bellevue provides equitable, exceptional services through data-informed and collaborative decision-making, strategic public investment, a commitment to a diverse workforce and an inclusive organizational culture. The city actively works to identify and dismantle systemic barriers in our operations and services. Staff work in an equitable environment and have the skills and resources to provide equitable and culturally responsive services to the community.

E1.1 Attract, retain and develop a diverse, high-performing workforce.

E1.2 Provide employees access to career advancement and growth opportunities, positioning the city as an employer of choice.



E1.3 Foster a workplace culture that supports physical and psychological safety, where employees can belong, feel valued, respected and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

E1.4 Promote work-life balance through supportive programs that maintain a healthy workforce and sustain employee well-being.

E1.5 Implement procedures and protocols to use disaggregated data and drive data-informed decision-making to ensure effective and responsive delivery of city services to all members of the community.

E1.6 Develop and implement tools and procedures to apply diversity, equity and inclusion principles consistently across all areas of city work.

E1.7 Implement continuous improvement processes and integrate DAP milestones into the city's accountability systems to track and monitor progress effectively.

E1.8 Strengthen staff understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion concepts, and develop skills and capacity to deliver culturally responsive services to all community members.

E1.9 Ensure all members of Bellevue's diverse communities have full access to city information, so that anyone can actively and meaningfully participate in their city government and neighborhoods.

E1.10 Strengthen city community engagement strategies and programs to foster effective, trauma-informed collaboration with Bellevue's communities, ensuring that diverse perspectives can guide city policy and planning decisions.



Vibrant Economy

Bellevue has a diversified economy and is an inclusive economic hub. We support a culture that allows businesses and nonprofits of all sizes to thrive, fueling innovation, prosperity and economic opportunity for all. We partner with our community to include vibrant arts and culture offerings as a cornerstone of our city.

Business Support

E2.1 Promote open and meaningful access to city partnerships and contracts for everyone, including small businesses, nonprofits and Women and Minority-owned Business Enterprises.

E2.2 Identify and reduce regulatory barriers to ensure all businesses and organizations, including Women and Minority-owned Business Enterprises, nonprofits and community-based organizations, can successfully start and operate in Bellevue.

Arts and Culture

E2.3 Collaborate with partners to ensure Bellevue's arts and culture offerings are inclusive of the diverse identities and backgrounds of Bellevue's communities, enhancing the cultural vibrancy of the city.



Safe and Efficient Transportation System

Bellevue offers a multitude of transportation options, with an emphasis on reliable, predictable, and sustainable travel options that respond to the diverse transportation needs within our communities. Bellevue is well-connected to the region via roads, trails and transit. The transportation network is well-maintained to provide safe travel in neighborhoods, to schools, to health and well-being services, and to Bellevue's bustling entertainment, shopping and commercial centers. Bellevue advances equity through transportation so that all individuals can travel through the city safely and feel a sense of belonging.

Transportation

E3.1 Collaborate with regional partners to enhance access to reliable, efficient transit services and new transportation modes, addressing any barriers to reliable and accessible transportation and improving mobility for all communities.

E3.2 Ensure transportation safety for all users across Bellevue's roads and neighborhoods, and identify and address safety disparities that may disproportionately impact communities.



High-Quality Built and Natural Environment

Residents have access to a wide variety of housing types in Bellevue to meet the needs of households across all income bands and life stages. Bellevue is a community of diverse, vibrant and well-maintained neighborhoods with connections to transportation, schools, parks, trails and the natural environment. The community enjoys access to a variety of recreational and open space opportunities within walking distance of homes and businesses. Our parks and recreation system connect residents and visitors to nature and provides opportunities for improved mental and physical health.

Information Technology

E4.1 Collaborate with partners to increase access to the internet and technology and reduce the digital divide for all community members.

Affordable Housing

E4.2 Provide for affordable housing options, including multifamily and multi-generational housing, to reduce housing cost burdens and increase access to affordable housing opportunities for all present and future residents.

E4.3 Provide for programs and systems that promote housing stability for renters.

E4.4 Increase affordable homeownership opportunities, providing more access to homeownership within Bellevue.

Climate Change

E4.5 Strengthen local climate resiliency and preparedness and identify and respond to any communities disproportionately impacted by climate change.

Parks and Spaces

E4.6 Ensure all communities within Bellevue have equal access to parks, community spaces and essential public infrastructure, and identify and respond to any disparities in access.

E4.7 Enhance access to culturally relevant gathering and recreational spaces throughout the city to meet the diverse needs of Bellevue's residents.



Community Safety & Health

Bellevue promotes a community where all people can thrive, feel safe and enjoy access to city amenities and services. Police, fire and emergency personnel provide services to the community every day that reflect our high standards and the needs of the communities we are here to serve. We work together with the community on education, prevention and preparedness. Bellevue takes a collaborative approach to public safety by partnering with agencies across the region. Bellevue customers experience reliable, high-quality and sustainable utility and public services that also advance a clean and healthy environment.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

E5.1 Engage relevant communities in creating supportive systems that deter racism and hate crimes, promote the reporting of bias-based incidents and foster a sense of safety and belonging.

E5.2 Provide culturally responsive education to and engage in two-way communication with all of Bellevue's communities on public safety and emergency preparedness, ensuring education and communication meet the unique needs of the communities we serve.

E5.3 Equip public safety professionals with the knowledge, skills and training they need to safely and effectively serve community members from all backgrounds.





E5.4 Continue to provide timely emergency response to all communities, and address any actual or perceived disparities in service delivery.

E5.5 Expand timely, accessible and equitable non-emergency interventions by police and fire departments, ensuring effective connections to crisis intervention and nonemergency services and reducing reliance on emergency resources.

E5.6 Enhance the well-being and resilience of first responders by providing mental and emotional health services and peer support, to address the physical and emotional impacts of distressing experiences.

E5.7 Analyze new public safety technology for bias and address any actual or perceived inequitable impacts, including any perception of bias.

Criminal Prosecution

E5.8 Provide for a community-based approach to prosecution that emphasizes problem-solving, rehabilitation, engagement, and prevention, to address the root causes of criminal behavior rather than traditional punitive measures, when appropriate.

Utilities

E5.9 Provide reliable, high-quality and affordable utility services that improve public health and ensure equitable access for all residents.



Thriving People & Communities

We strive toward creating a community where every individual has access to necessary resources, housing and services. We recognize existing needs and disparities, including racial and socioeconomic, and work intentionally to address structural and systemic inequities. The city prioritizes the delivery of programs and services in ways that are equitable, inclusive, accessible and culturally responsive. The city partners with residents, schools, businesses, faith communities and nonprofits to work together for the well-being of all.

Services

E6.1 Strengthen equitable access to human services in ways that meet the diverse and evolving needs of Bellevue communities, and are delivered through approaches that are shaped by the culture, language and lived experiences of those receiving the services.

Homelessness

E6.2 Support services and programs aimed at preventing homelessness and ensure equity and compassion in homelessness response.

Community Programs

E6.3 Provide accessible and culturally responsive programs and cross-cultural engagement opportunities that foster connection, learning and belonging across Bellevue's diverse communities.

E6.4 Expand capacity and infrastructure for supporting community-led initiatives.

E6.5 Ensure that community centers and city facilities are accessible and responsive to the needs of Bellevue's diverse communities.

Community Leadership

E6.6 Create meaningful, accessible opportunities for community leaders from diverse identities, perspectives and experiences to participate in and influence civic engagement and decision-making.

E6.7 Enhance opportunities for community members coming from diverse identities, perspectives and lived experiences to participate on boards, commissions and elected bodies.

Disability and Language Access

E6.8 Improve accessibility across city services and infrastructure for people with disabilities to ensure equitable participation and compliance with established standards.

E6.9 Develop strategies to dismantle ableism and promote universal design practices, ensuring that city operations and services are inclusive and equitable for both the public and staff with disabilities.

E6.10 Ensure city services and information are accessible to non-English speakers by complying with language access requirements and eliminating language bias for meaningful participation.







10. Accountability and Implementation

As we move forward, Bellevue's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion calls upon everyone within the organization to play a part in shaping a future where all residents feel valued and empowered. To do that, it is vital to have practices and tools in place to make sure that the principles and objectives included in this plan turn into action and tangible benefits for our communities.

10.1 Accountability

The 2014 Diversity Advantage Plan listed 60 recommended actions for the city to accomplish for a more inclusive community. These recommendations have impacted the city and its operations in such deep and complex ways that it is impossible to fully measure and understand the positive ripple effects of the plan on the organization and our communities. However, while the impacts of work like this can be difficult to measure at times, it is still important to attempt to objectively track and communicate progress towards our intended outcomes and objectives. Unfortunately, the 2014 DAP never resulted in the creation of metrics or indicators for success, making it difficult to evaluate and share our success at implementing the recommended actions.

The DAP 2035 offers us another opportunity to more intentionally commit to accountability and transparency with our communities by setting up tools and practices for measuring our success and progress on this plan. As part of the implementation of DAP 2035, the city will be developing and sharing two key tools to ensure ongoing accountability to this plan and the communities we serve:

- 1** A citywide **Strategic Equity Plan** identifying near-term activities and strategies will be updated regularly to ensure the city stays agile and responsive in its implementation of DAP 2035. This action plan will identify the top priorities and concrete actions staff are taking to move us closer to achieving the Equity Objectives. These specific actions and strategies will also be informed by the community engagement data collected in 2023, in addition to more recent engagement and survey data.
- 2** A **DAP 2035 Data Dashboard** will share data and progress on a set of Key Equity Indicators selected to help us understand to what degree we are accomplishing the Equity Objectives.

10.2 Implementation: Bellevue's "Equity Ecosystem"

Thanks to the more than a decade-long history of integrating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles into the city's operations and services, there are currently dozens of programs, policies and tools that the city already uses to implement the objectives and principles included in this plan. This complex, nuanced combination of approaches and tools is our "equity ecosystem." Like an ecosystem found in nature, the different components of our equity ecosystem support and interact with each other to ensure we are creating an environment that is healthy for everyone who lives, works and plays in Bellevue. In the figure below, a flower is used to represent this ecosystem.

Bellevue's Equity Ecosystem



10.2.1 Our Foundation: The Leaves of a Flower

At the base of our flower symbolizing Bellevue's Equity Ecosystem, there are four leaves that represent the foundation of DAP 2035. These leaves are what feed and nourish the flower and its petals.

Strategic Target Areas & DEI Core Value

The bottom two leaves of the ecosystem are the Strategic Target Areas and the DEI Core Value. These two components of the ecosystem are the foundation that drives and supports everything that stems above. The DAP 2035 is aligned with the Strategic Target Areas so that the city is consistently understanding and implementing our policies, practices and programs with an equity lens. Similarly, Bellevue's DEI Core Value speaks to the city's dedication to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion being a standard approach to how we complete our work.

Disaggregated Data & Community Engagement

The second set of leaves speaks to how the city ensures we are responsive to the evolving and diverse needs of our communities. By using disaggregated data—or data that has been separated by different demographics of our population—staff are better able to understand how different groups within our community are being impacted and served by city services and operations. This helps the city design our processes and services in a way that will benefit our entire community, regardless of identities.

In addition to data, the city also relies on consistent engagement and conversation with our communities to inform our priorities. Examples of how the city currently supports engagement and communications include the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network, the annual Performance Measures Survey, the Community Outreach Assistants, the Communications Team, the Community Engagement Team and the Centering Communities of Color Coordinating Team. Through these methods and more, Bellevue knows we need to be in consistent and trusted communication with our communities to build a more equitable city.

10.2.2 Our Center: DAP 2035

At the center of our ecosystem, we have the Diversity Advantage Plan 2035, which also includes the Diversity Advantage Team (DAT). Together, the plan and DAT serve as guides and conveners for the next ten years of the city's DEI work, all of which should be able to relate back to the principles and objectives included in the DAP 2035.

10.2.3 Our “How:” The Petals

The city uses a variety of strategies for carrying out the principles and objectives identified in this plan. Here's a look at some of the key strategies we use.

Internal Workgroups

In addition to our community-led groups focused on implementing diversity, equity and inclusion, the city also hosts many internal, employee-led groups tasked with turning ideas into actions and expanding the city's capacity to do this work well. These groups include **departmental DEI teams** that guide departments in thinking about their specific bodies of work through an equity lens, the citywide **Diversity Liaison Team** that brings together staff from each department to one cohesive team focused on collaboration and **employee resource groups** that provide staff with safe and supportive environments to explore topics related to different identities, such as disability or cultural diversity. The city also houses the **ADA and Title VI Core Team**, which is made up of employees from different departments and is tasked with implementing and monitoring legal and strategic activities aligned with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Programs and Services

Bellevue also invests in a continuum of programs and services developed specifically to address inequities in access and opportunity. These programs include, but are not limited to, human services funding, the Cross-Cultural Center without Walls program, interpretation and translation services, Cultural Conversations, the Community Crisis Assistance Team, the Homelessness Outreach Team, ADA accommodations and cultural events.

Plans and Metrics

In addition to the larger Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 that encompasses work across the city, each department will also develop its own near-term Strategic Equity Plan. These plans will identify the specific strategies and activities departments and teams will be committing to, in addition to the intended impacts of those strategies. The Action Plans will be accompanied by metrics for measuring success and a set of Key Equity Indicators for helping us define success and measure progress. These Action Plans will be the vehicle through which the DAP 2035 comes to life in tangible ways.

Toolkits

Staff have developed a variety of user-friendly tools to more effectively and consistently apply an equity lens to our day-to-day operations. These tools offer strategies and processes for designing our services for equity, no matter the job title of an employee. Examples include the Budgeting Equity Toolkit, the Bellevue Equity Data Atlas, the Universal Design Toolkit and the Inclusive Interactions Toolkit. Future opportunities would include tools for unbiased hiring practices and equitable community engagement practices.

Training and Education

The city is committed to continuous learning and improvement. In order to do better, we need to know better. In partnership with Human Resources, the Diversity Advantage Team has developed a 4-hour training for full-time staff. This training helps build a consistent understanding of and commitment to foundational concepts of DEI across the organization. In addition to these trainings, specific departments and teams may participate in educational opportunities that relate to applying an equity lens to their specific bodies of work. The Diversity Advantage Team also fosters strong relationships with all departments within the city so they can act as consultants, coaches and thought partners for designing and planning for equity.

Bellevue's "Equity Ecosystem"

Like an ecosystem found in nature, the different components of our equity ecosystem support and interact with each other to ensure we are creating an environment that is healthy for everyone who lives, works and plays in Bellevue.

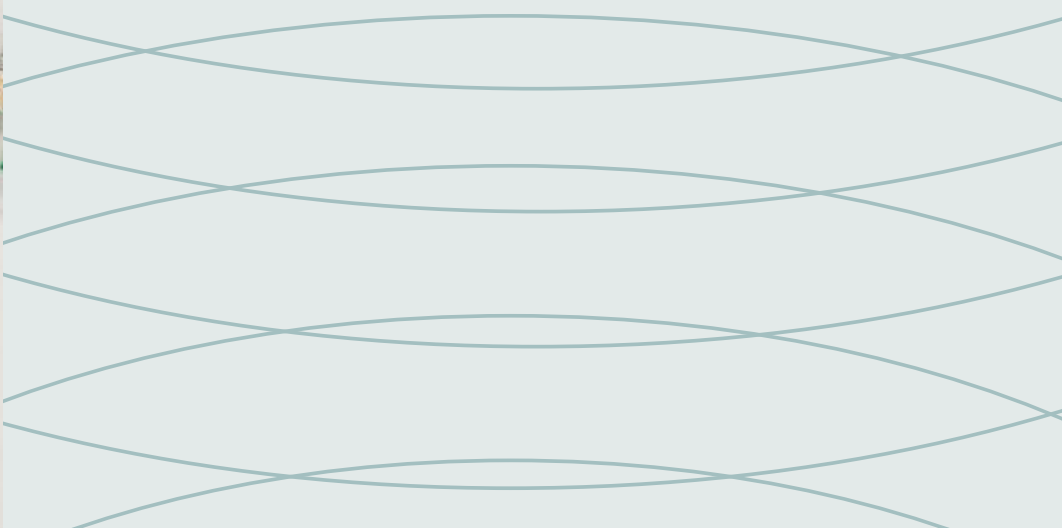






11. Conclusion

Bellevue has grown over this past decade. We have grown as a community, in our diversity and in our commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion. Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 is a response to and celebration of that growth. But, it is also a tool for ensuring we don't stop growing, and that our growth into the future serves all of our diverse communities. Diversity is our strength, and the city values Bellevue being a place where anyone can belong. By 2035, we hope to see a Bellevue that preserves the richness that comes from our diversity while creating more meaningful opportunities for all of our community members to thrive. It is through collaboration and partnership with the communities we serve that this hope can become a reality.





For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable modification requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-7881 (voice) or email diversity@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding modifications, contact the City of Bellevue ADA, Title VI, and Equal Opportunity Officer at ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov.



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