

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Overview and updates from the Inclusive Innovation Forum including introduction of a resolution to establish a technology innovation policy framework that includes policy support to increase innovative design partnerships.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

Staff will provide updates on Inclusive Innovation Forum work and seeks Council direction regarding a resolution to establish a technology innovation policy framework that includes an innovative design partnership policy. This is intended to streamline and encourage design partnerships between the City of Bellevue and businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to return at a future meeting on consent with the proposed resolution to establish a technology innovation policy framework that includes policy support to increase innovative design partnerships.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In the second half of 2024, staff from the Information Technology Department conducted outreach with businesses, individuals, and non-profits to gather input on increasing innovation in Bellevue services. This work included stakeholder interviews, an open public survey, and thus far two in-person events soliciting feedback on priorities and actions.

From this input, staff and community members honed focus to three areas: supporting and enhancing digital equity; augmenting policies and priorities; and building thriving innovative ecosystems. The forum formed sub teams around these three areas of focus which include Bellevue staff, community members, and businesses. The sub teams have developed work plans and will share them at the next Forum on June 4.

Supporting and Enhancing Digital Equity

Short term priorities for this team include establishing baselines and partnerships through mapping local assets, identifying potential partners, collecting data through surveys and intake forms, conducting outreach to local organizations, and setting a structured process for continuous data gathering and analysis. Partnerships would help provide equitable access to free or low-cost devices so everyone can fully engage in digital life, education, and work. This team also seeks to expand the provision of free, accessible tech support to help individuals confidently manage and resolve digital issues. Long term priorities include partnering to provide digital literacy classes and expanding opportunities for free and low-cost connectivity.

Augmenting Policies and Priorities

A short-term priority for this sub-team is supporting the proposed draft innovation resolution. The resolution would make it easier for start-ups seeking to test ideas with the city of Bellevue enter into partnership agreements. This priority also aligns these innovative partnerships with existing Council and strategic framework priorities.

Building Thriving Innovation Ecosystems

This sub team seeks to connect local government, education, established businesses, and startups to spark ideas, build innovative projects and enhance the innovation ecosystem. Short-term priorities for this sub-team include launching an innovation challenge, hosting an inclusive innovation event day in the fall, and forming partnerships to explore sustainable innovation space.

Draft Resolution

The attached draft resolution prioritizes the innovative solutions to enhance city services by encouraging and streamlining design partnerships between the City and businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions, including:

- Supporting innovation partnerships with companies and entrepreneurs.
- Enhancing digital equity partnerships and opportunities.
- Assessing emerging technologies for wider deployment.
- Supporting digital equity opportunities.
- Supporting start-up ecosystem.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Embedded in Council Priorities is the statement, “Innovation is an integral part of our community. We embrace and support innovation in all aspects of our community – systems, institutions, businesses, schools and government. This innovative spirit is crucial to Bellevue’s success.” The innovation forum seeks to enhance and support innovation across the community and the eastside.

Fiscal Impact

There is no direct fiscal impact to the resolution. In the 2025/26 budget process, council adopted an innovative CIP to support this work. This funding will support innovation efforts and long-term goals to augment funding through partnerships.

OPTIONS

1. Direct staff to return on consent with the proposed resolution to establish a technology innovation policy framework that includes policy support to increase innovative design partnerships.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Technology Innovation Policy Framework Resolution

B. Draft City of Bellevue Innovative Design Partnership Policy

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N/A