

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

The Diversity Advantage Team will provide a progress update of the City of Bellevue Diversity Advantage Initiative.

Elaine Acacio, Diversity and Inclusion Administrator, 452-4246
Yuriana Garcia Tellez, Diversity and Engagement Administrator, 452-7886
Blayne Amson, ADA/Title VI Administrator, 452-6168
City Manager's Office

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

INFORMATION ONLY

Staff from the Bellevue Diversity Advantage team will provide an update on progress made over the past year. The presentation is for information only, and no direction is being sought from Council at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

The Diversity Advantage Plan, adopted in 2014, outlines 60 recommendations that guide the work of the Diversity Advantage Initiative in integrating culturally responsive approaches within six focus areas: cultural competence in city government, cultural competence in the community, human services, public safety, education, economic development, and civic engagement. Further shaping the work are the guiding principles of access, equity, inclusion, opportunity and understanding cultural competence.

The Diversity Advantage team provides an annual update to Council highlighting Citywide progress in espousing and living Council's vision of, "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength."

Since the last Council update in 2018, the team has welcomed a new ADA Administrator and Diversity and Engagement Administrator. With the team fully staffed, and continued support from the organization, Council and community stakeholders, the initiative has continued to make impactful, responsible, and sustainable progress.

2018 - 2019 Highlights

Outreach and Engagement

Culturally agile outreach and engagement provides the City opportunities to foster new relationships as well as to continue to build upon existing ones with the end goal of serving all of Bellevue with information, services, and programs equitably. With the City's growth and everchanging diverse population, having an understanding of the issues, needs, and expectations of their city government is vital. Below are some highlights around this work:

- Cross Cultural and Programming Study – Phase 1
- Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network

Public Programs

As part of outreach and engagement, public programming remains an important part of the work found within the Diversity Advantage Initiative. Some examples of public programming created, sponsored, or maintained include:

- Signature programs: Welcoming America Week, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, Day of Service and Guest Keynote, Youthlink Unity Through Diversity, Cultural Conversations
- Partnerships: Arts & Culture exhibit and guest artist collaborations; Race and Equity Summit and Census 2020 Let's Get Real
- Sponsorships: Cultural Crossroad Festival; Bellevue College Pride; Tasveer South Asian Film Festival; BSD Shout and Boom Experience

Community Partnerships

The City's partnerships with diverse communities have been a hallmark of diversity work long before the Diversity Advantage Initiative was adopted. Partnerships are a crucial method by which the diversity team, and the City, can conduct and maintain strong relationships with the community, as well as, understand the needs of the community and gain the insights of those most impacted by the efforts of the initiative. The relationships fostered include non-profits, faith-based organizations, human services, and both primary and higher education institutions found in Bellevue and the Eastside. Additionally, the City actively participates with coalitions and networks such as Eastside Pathways, the Eastside Race and Leadership Coalition, Census 2020 Communities Count Committee, Governing for Regional Equity & Inclusion and Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition.

Organization-wide Diversity Advantage Initiative Activities

Efforts towards becoming a culturally competent organization continue as Bellevue leads and innovates ways to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion in services and programs to residents as well as within its organizational culture and workforce. The workforce is the City's greatest asset. A workforce that values equity is a direct benefit to all who live, work, and play in Bellevue as it enhances an environment of belonging. While the first few years of the initiative focused on developing foundational knowledge, the last two years have unleashed a growth in knowledge, skillset and implementation around this work. Some examples from the 2018-2019 term include:

- 2018-2020 departmental workplans on diversity
- Development of cross functional teams: Diversity Liaisons, Employee Resource Groups, ADA Core Team
- Development and implementation of curriculum on cultural competence, implicit bias, and Title VI
- Development of Employee Resource Groups (Disability Allyship Resource Team (DART), Employees of Bellevue for Racial and Cultural Equity (EmBRACE), and Rainbow Alliance for Diversity (RAD)

What's Ahead

- Cross-Cultural Programming Study – Phase II
- Exploration of Cultural Liaisons program
- Expansion of training offerings: equity in procurement and contracting, Hiring for Equity 2.0, Title VI
- Continued implementation of the ADA Self-evaluation and Transition Plan and Departmental workplans on diversity

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

N/A

Fiscal Impact

N/A

OPTIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. 2019 Progress Report
- B. Executive Summary of Departmental workplans on diversity

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

Diversity Advantage Plan
2017 Council Update
ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan
Cross-Cultural Programming Public Outreach Study