

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

DATE: February 6, 2024

TO: Human Services Commission Members

FROM: Jesse Canedo, Chief Economic Development Officer
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Community Development

SUBJECT: Cultural & Economic Development

DIRECTION: Information Only

Cultural & Economic Development staff will provide the commission with an overview of some of the ways our division is working in areas that intersect with human services, including workforce development, small businesses support, cultural development, and education as these factors contribute to a household's stability.

Background

Bellevue's Economic Development Plan's vision is as follows: "Bellevue is a vibrant and inclusive global innovation hub fueled by a highly educated, entrepreneurial and diverse workforce. With our stable and talented workforce, well-connected transportation system, breathtaking beauty and innovation-oriented culture, businesses grow and prosper in Bellevue."

We strive to achieve this vision by supporting a number of projects and programs broadly sorted into four workstreams:

1. Arts & Culture
2. Business Development
3. Grand Connection
4. Public-Private Partnerships

These workstreams share overlap with Human Services work and activity in multiple different ways. CED strives to support Bellevue residents' economic and social wellbeing by supporting career pathways, small business development, arts and culture opportunities,

and many other specific programs. Human Service funded organizations often provide complementary services supportive of Cultural and Economic Development's goals by supporting residents' basic needs.

Workforce Development

Starting in 2022, Bellevue launched a pilot workforce development program with the goal of supporting Bellevue's employers and residents in upskilling and reskilling to fit the needs of today's labor market. The program accomplished this through two primary methods; resident navigation and employer programming.

Resident Navigation: CED's Workforce Development Program offers 1x1 navigation appointments to residents to provide access to the many disparate employment assistance programs offered by the Employment Security Department, Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council, Human Service funded organizations, and others. For example, CED often refers residents to Bellevue Center for Career Connections for resume development assistance and other services.

Employer Services: CED works with local employers and organizations to launch work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, apprenticeships, and other programs. For example, CED recently partnered with Bellevue College and Amazon to launch the inaugural cohort of Mentors in Tech students at Bellevue College which will provide mentorship to students in BS in Computer Science along with a 6-2 week internship with local employers.

Small Business Support

Business support staff collaborate and coordinate with Human Services on several channels. Areas of overlap focus on the work with Community-Based and Needs-Based Organizations on the Eastside. Parallel and intersecting work with these organizations help to provide robust and numerous touchpoints in the community for business support services. One of the major avenues of collaboration is the Community Development Block Grant Microenterprise Support program. Staff collaborate and offer support through resource and information connections to the organizations in the selected cohorts. Some of the areas small business support which help support the goals of human services are:

Education & Networking: Small businesses often start with passion and subject matter expertise while knowledge of general business operations can vary. The Small Business Support program connects business owners to educational resources often taught by non-profit community providers and organizers. Entrepreneurs have access to the Startup 425 program which hosts networking events and peer learning opportunities.

Consulting/Advising: Bellevue businesses have access to a Small Business Development Advisor that provides no-cost, one-on-one, confidential advising to help entrepreneurs and small business owners start, grow, or buy/sell their businesses.

Financial connections: Businesses looking for funding to grow their business can be connected to resources like the Small Business Administration's 7a loan program or Community Development Financial Institutions.

Permitting/Regulation navigation: Businesses can be connected to local business licensing, permitting, and tax support as well as WA State permitting. For example, CED staff helped Facing East, a Taiwanese restaurant, resolve permit miscommunication between Development Services and the construction contractor so they could move into a new space.

Site Selection: Businesses expanding, relocating, or starting have access to support for finding potential locations in the city. For example, CED staff has supported 4 businesses in the Park Row shopping center find new locations within the City before redevelopment occurs on the site. Staff connect business owners with property information that best suits their needs.

Arts & Culture

Bellevue's nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$54.3 million in economic activity in 2022, according to the recently completed national study. The typical arts event attendee spent \$49.07 per person here, excluding the cost of admission, more than \$10 above the national average showing the strength of this sector in our local economy.

According to Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (Attachment A), an economic and social impact study conducted by Americans for the Arts and released in October, over 850,000 people attended nonprofit arts and culture events in Bellevue in 2022, with roughly 20% of that audience comprised of tourists and visitors.

Bellevue is home to a vast array of nonprofit arts and culture organizations like KidsQuest Children's Museum, Theatre33, the Bellevue Arts Museum, Tasveer Film Festival, Wintergrass music festival, the School of Taiko, Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra, International Ballet Theatre, and many more.

The City of Bellevue has long supported the arts and creativity with grants to local artists and arts organizations, business support for creative economy enterprises and the purchase of art for public display.

The arts-related economic activity in 2022 was comprised of \$10.8 million in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and \$43.5 million by their audiences in event-related spending at local businesses including restaurants, retail shops, and lodging – supported approximately 600 jobs and generated \$10.5 million in local, state and federal taxes.

Arts & Culture in Human Service

As part of the vast economic impacts of a robust creative sectors, the arts play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of human services contributing to a holistic approach that addresses the diverse needs of individuals and communities, both economically and socially. For more information, please see Attachment B, a collection of arts & human services studies and quick facts compiled by Americans for the Arts. Here are some key places where the arts can benefit residents and visitors of Bellevue:

Arts & Health: Therapeutic Benefits: The arts are often utilized in therapeutic settings to promote emotional healing, self-expression, and mental well-being. Art therapy, music therapy, and other creative interventions are employed by human service professionals to address issues such as trauma, stress, and mental health challenges.

Example: creative writing offers physical benefits to those battling terminal diseases. [In one study, HIV positive patients show a strengthened immune level after just 30 minutes of writing.](#) Similar results were found with asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, and Hepatitis B patients.

Arts & Health: Healing Spaces: Environments enriched with art can create healing spaces within healthcare facilities, shelters, or rehabilitation centers. The aesthetics of art contribute to a more positive and supportive atmosphere for individuals seeking assistance.

Example: [Patients who see nature or art from their hospital beds recuperate almost one day faster and require fewer pain medications.](#) About 25 million people per year stay in the hospital, which adds up to a potential of \$56 billion in savings per year.

Arts & Community Cohesion: Community Building: Arts and cultural activities have a positive effect on social cohesion by bringing generations together, encouraging partnerships and intercultural understanding, reducing fear of crime, and fostering organizational skills. [People engaging in the Arts report feeling more in control of their lives and more activated as citizens.](#)

Arts & Education: Youth: Arts education provides individuals with opportunities to develop creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills. Human services that focus on education and skill development often incorporate artistic elements to enhance learning experiences and empower individuals to express themselves.

Impact: The arts help people succeed. [Low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely to graduate college than their peers with no arts education, and 5 times less likely to drop out of school than their peers.](#)

Arts & Education - Lifelong Learning/Aging: The arts add value and fulfilling experiences to life at all ages. [Activities like dancing, playing an instrument, and reading lower the risk of dementia. Older adults who do at least 11 cognitive or physical activities per month are 63% less likely to have dementia.](#)

Arts & Equity and Diversity: Understanding and appreciating diverse cultures is essential in human services. The arts can serve [as a bridge to promote cultural competence while increasing empathy and the ability to see another person's point of view by showcasing the rich diversity of traditions, beliefs, and practices.](#) Cultural events and artistic expressions contribute to a more inclusive and understanding society.

Arts & Agriculture/Food: Feeding the Community is essential work. In Seattle, community gardens with significant public artworks tend to be larger gardens with more members, and to have at least one annual community celebration, [producing more food in and for the community.](#)

Arts & Public Welfare - Creating a Safe Haven: The safety of our community is paramount, and cities should leverage every tool available to reduce domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, hate crimes and bias.

Example: [Arts-rich communities have 18% less serious crime and 14% fewer reports of abuse and neglect.](#) A NY study shows that lower-income neighborhoods with higher cultural assets show less child abuse and neglect investigations (14%), obesity (5%), and serious crime (18%). Kids from those communities also scored 18% higher in English Language Arts and Math exams than their peers.

Conclusion

Cultural and Economic Development and Human Services have complementary missions that support Bellevue residents in ensuring Bellevue is an equitable and caring community

where everyone can thrive and belong. Ensuring collaboration where overlaps in missions occur and focusing on areas of expertise will allow the city as a whole to advance its vision.