

Supportive Housing Annotated Best Practice Guide for Community Engagement City of Bellevue



Overview

This *Supportive Housing Best Practice Guide for Community Engagement* provides Supportive Housing providers recommendations and practical tools for productive engagement with Bellevue’s community. This guide is designed to provide short term benefits for the entire community including:

- Neighbors becoming informed about permanent supportive housing, including who lives there and how it works.
- Providers becoming informed about local neighborhood and business needs, insights and expertise.
- Ensuring ongoing communication to provide greater access and transparency to project information, volunteer opportunities and ways for engagement.
- Establish a strong foundation for positive relationships between existing neighbors, new neighbors, and housing operators long after the construction has ended.
- Welcoming and connecting the new residents into the neighborhood and city of Bellevue.

Content Sections

Shared Values and Mutual Benefits Bellevue is a city with shared vision and values. This section emphasizes how Bellevue’s shared community values are advanced through productive community engagement and collaboration.

Introductions and Definitions Providing clarity on definitions for Supportive Housing and Supportive Services as defined in the Bellevue Land Use Code (LUC).

Right-Sizing Community Engagement A range of community engagement topics and approaches will be recommended to supportive housing providers which adjust outreach based on the size of the project and potential impact on the surrounding community.

Preparing for Community Engagement Planning for what information about the project to share to increase understanding about supportive housing and address questions and concerns, as well as, how to facilitate productive two-way conversations to solicit valuable community input.

Early Community Notification This section will stress the importance of early notification to the surrounding neighbors and businesses around a project location as a key component to setting up future relationships with our community on a good foundation.

Determine What is Fixed and What is Flexible This section will assist supportive housing providers with providing clarity on where community input can best contribute to shape positive outcomes for the entire neighborhood.

Digital Presence, Community Information Meetings, Listening Sessions and Drop-In Open Houses Tips and tools to understand local demographics and approaches to communicate with greater transparency and productivity with Bellevue’s diverse community.

Addressing Neighborhood Safety Neighborhood safety is a shared value and responsibility for our entire community. Scalable community outreach to incorporate community input addressing communication plans, neighborhood safety, utilization of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) approaches to site design, and neighbor relationships.

Reporting on Accomplishments This section will recommend providing transparency within annual reports posted on the program website detailing how the program has served its residents and the broader community.

Tools

The Best Practice Guide for Community Engagement will also provide specific tools and resources that can assist supportive housing providers to better understand our community and support their productive engagement with surrounding residents and businesses. These tools will include:

- [Neighborhood Services](#) at the City of Bellevue can provide assistance with identifying local neighborhood associations and community groups.
- Information on Bellevue community demographics and top languages spoken can be found on the [City of Bellevue Community Data](#) and the [State of Our Neighborhoods](#) Dashboards.
- Bellevue's [Universal Design Booklet](#) provides Best Practices for Accessibility in Trainings, Meetings and Events.
- [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) is a crime prevention approach used to evaluate the physical security of sites, structures, and surroundings. When implemented, these design considerations can lead to a reduction of fear and incidence of crime while improving quality of life.
- Community and Provider Agreements (optional template) - Community and Provider agreements may help neighbors and permanent supportive housing providers understand each other's goals and points of view and can result in agreements that benefit all. Acknowledge agreements on areas of common ground, including input for project design (optional), communication protocols, ways to maximize safety, or other areas.
- [Bellevue's Conflict Resolution Center](#) may be requested for a neutral mediator from where parties wish to negotiate over a set of issues.
- Community connections between all residents in neighborhoods increase the safety of everyone. The City of Bellevue has neighborhood programs like [NeighborLINK](#), which supports summer block parties and gatherings, can assist in creating neighborhood events to build community.
- [Bellevue's Make A Difference Volunteer Guide](#) shares opportunities for the community to meaningfully contribute to the ongoing success of the supportive housing programs.

References

The Best Practice Guide for Community Engagement is informed by the work of City of Bellevue's community engagement on Homeless Services Uses LUCA and from local supportive housing providers. Additional input is integrated from the City and County of Denver, [Supportive Housing Neighborhood Engagement Guide](#), and the [Homeless Leadership Coalition](#) (Central Oregon), a collaboration of community partners in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.