

# MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &  
Community Services

DATE: June 6, 2023

TO: Human Services Commission Members

FROM: Saada Hilts, Human Services Planner  
Parks & Community Services

SUBJECT: Panel Conversation: Trends and Challenges with Services to Asian and Pacific Islanders

## Background

The need for more culturally and linguistically responsive human services grows each year as Bellevue's population diversifies. According to the [Human Services Needs Update](#), nearly 55,000 Bellevue households speak a language other than English at home; 55% speak an Asian and Pacific Island language. The City's growing diversity urges us to recognize the need to enhance services that advance critical and culturally relevant services for Asian and Pacific Islanders experiencing disparities in human services. Human Services staff have assembled a panel of organizations that provide programming focused on supporting Asian and Pacific Islanders.

Representatives from the following agencies will be joining the panel:

- Karia Wong: Family Resource Center Director at Chinese Information and Service Center
- Michael Byun: Executive Director at Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Lalita Uppala: Executive Director at Indian American Community Services

[Chinese Information and Service Center](#) (CISC): CISC is a nonprofit organization working to support immigrants and their families by providing linguistically and culturally appropriate information, referral, advocacy, social, and support services to the Chinese immigrant community and immigrants from Eastern Europe, Latin America, and other parts of Asia. Services include early childhood education, youth development, family support, senior and disabled adult services, and health care access programs.

[Asian Counseling and Referral Service](#) (ACRS): ACRS is grounded in a commitment to social justice, and provides services that advance the health, well-being, dignity, and empowerment of Asian and Pacific Islanders and other communities experiencing disparities in health, human services, and education. Annually, they reach 30,000+ people in 40 languages.

[Indian American Community Services](#) (IACS): IACS serves the Indian American community through programs and services for all life stages such as seniors, youth, women, and families who are navigating complex life circumstances through cultivating and fostering an environment of inclusion and diversity and belonging.

Panel members will be asked round-robin style to answer the following questions:

1. What are misconceptions or misunderstandings about Asian and Pacific Islanders?
2. What are the most significant human services needs and barriers impacting Asian and Pacific Islanders?
3. Provide a brief overview of your program and the services provided that address these needs and barriers?
4. What challenges is your agency experiencing that the Commission should be aware of?

Commissioners will be invited to ask questions after the panel has completed answering all questions.