

## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ELEMENT SUMMARY

### VISION

**BELLEVUE'S ACTIVELY ENGAGED CITIZENRY SHAPES THE CITY'S FUTURE.**

***Bellevue has a strong social fabric, where community groups, businesses and the city organization work together to address our needs. The city makes citizen engagement a high priority, and residents know that their local government listens and responds to them. Bellevue's residents care about the city and work collectively to address mutual needs.***

### MAJOR THEMES & DRIVERS

As the first element of the Comprehensive Plan, the Citizen Participation Element is a testament to how deeply the City of Bellevue values community engagement. Although public involvement is an important principle of the Growth Management Act, it is not a required element and rarely included so prominently in other comprehensive plans. The Citizen Participation Element focuses primarily on citizen participation in planning and land use processes. There are eight policies that recommend processes for citizen engagement and give guidance on how citizen participation should be used in making land use decisions.

### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

**Master Planning.** New policy (CP-X1) encourages community involvement through the master planning of large public projects. This can support the master planning process the city uses and as implemented can help to provide a more predictable review process for large public projects.

**Emerging Technology.** New policy (CP-X2) addresses the use of new and emerging technologies to enhance citizen engagement. These technologies are constantly changing and evolving and provide the promise of providing the community additional opportunities for engaging with their city.

### ISSUES/MAJOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION TOPICS

As noted above, this element primarily focuses on planning and development. The Planning Commission discussed whether to broaden the scope of these policies to include engagement associated with other city actions and concluded that the City's outreach is generally excellent and requires no additional policy support.

The element was updated to recognize the continual changes to the community with additional background information. The Bellevue citizenry is growing increasingly diverse – in terms of language, culture, physical ability, and economics – creating a simply more complex outreach undertaking. The Planning Commission discussed how the element should be updated to best recognize this community change, including whether policies should be explicit about new programs for engaging a diverse population, such as staff training and alternative outreach

methods. Rather than adding specific new policies focused on an increasingly diverse community, the Commission concluded that a broad policy best captures the need of the whole community with language such as found in CP-2, “Capture the interests of the entire community...”

#### **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Any questions about what is recommended for change?
- Any additional information needed on this topic?
- Any gaps or concerns to follow up on?