

DATE: May 26, 2015

TO: Mayor Balducci and City Councilmembers

FROM: Brad Miyake, City Manager 425-452-4096

SUBJECT: Bloomberg: *What Works Cities*

Background

The City of Bellevue intends to express interest in participating in the Bloomberg Philanthropies *What Works Cities* Initiative.

The newly announced competitive program is a 3-year \$42 million initiative to help 100 mid-sized cities (populations between 100,000 and 1,000,000) to better use data and evidence at all levels of government. The program is a comprehensive initiative to help cities use data and evidence effectively. The program will help cities:

- Create sustainable open data programs and policies that promote transparency and robust citizen engagement;
- Better incorporate data into budget, operations, and policy decision making;
- Conduct low-cost rapid evaluations that allow cities to continually improve programs; and
- Focus funding on approaches that deliver results for citizens.

Information

Bellevue is well poised to participate in the *What Works Cities* initiative and can both learn and offer expertise on many fronts. For example, a principle of the Budget One, process focuses on results for the community. It is an effort to provide resources for service delivery that matter most to the community. Involvement in the Bloomberg program will provide an opportunity to incorporate performance management even more effectively into our budget process and allow us to better use data to determine whether we are making progress in delivering our services in the most efficient and effective ways.

One of the Leadership Team's goals for the City's current performance management program is for decisions, problem solving, and communications to be evidence based at all levels of the organization. The Bloomberg program offers the City an opportunity to strengthen its current performance management program

The Bloomberg program also offers opportunities to enhance our Smart Cities initiative and partnerships through peer-to-peer discussions that advance ideas and possibly funding to improve digital technologies. Both the E-CityGov Alliance and Fiber Consortium provide examples of Bellevue helping to shape technology innovation based on regional business drivers.

Bellevue already uses some real time data, which is one of the pillars of *What Works Cities*: Our intelligent transportation system with “smart” traffic signals uses real-time data to improve the flow of traffic throughout the city, and the mobile application, *My Bellevue*, allows residents and other stakeholders to report issues 24/7. Both programs enlist stakeholders in solving immediate challenges while, at the same time, enhancing stakeholder engagement. Bellevue’s Information Technology Strategic Plan already identifies data analytics as a priority across most departments.

Although we are already on the path, participation in this initiative could provide both City management and Council with additional access to best practices, expertise, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities that will help Bellevue enhance use of data and evidence to help solve challenges facing our community. The program will seek to help cities enhance their analytic tools and skills. The program supports our high performance organization goals relating to innovation and collaboration. It will provide us with tools and technical assistance to continue our journey to be future focused.

Below are many of the Bellevue initiatives already in progress that align with the standards of *What Works Cities*.

What Bellevue Is Doing Now	<i>What Works Cities</i> Standard
Council’s Vision	Define goals and progress; Engage residents
HPO Training	Collaborate and galvanize
Budgeting for outcomes	Evaluate impact; Use evidence of impact; Redirect funds
Citizen surveys	Collect data; Share openly; Use data to inform decisions
Annual performance report	Public use of data
Performance management system	Use data and evidence to inform decisions
ICMA Data	Use data and evidence to inform decisions
Performance forums	Understand performance; Assess progress
Public facing web page	Share openly; Engage residents
My Bellevue, mobile applications	Engage residents
Website redesign and open data projects	Facilitate public use of data; Share openly and often
Business survey	Collect, share
Continue to integrate data and performance measures in various ways throughout the Budget One process	Use data and evidence to inform decisions

Application integration	Collaborate and galvanize; Collect data
Electronic records management and discovery tools	Collaborate and galvanize
Smart City planning	Use data and evidence to inform decisions
Expanding connectivity options	Engage residents

What Works Cities Program Partners

- Partners in the initiative include [Results for America](#), which will lead and coordinate the effort and work to advance a nationwide dialogue on the need for cities to use data and evidence in decision-making.
- The [Center for Government Excellence](#) at Johns Hopkins University, which will work with participating cities to assess the current state of *What Works* practices and support implementation and enhancement of open data and performance management programs.
- The [Government Performance Lab](#) at the Harvard Kennedy School, which will support participating cities in improving the results they achieve with their contracted dollars.
- The [Sunlight Foundation](#), which will work with cities to create meaningful and sustainable open data policies.
- The [Behavioral Insights Team](#), which will help cities conduct low-cost, real-time assessments of their services as a first step toward continuous improvement of those services.

Next Steps

To show our interest in the *What Works* programs, we plan to complete a short online survey expressing both our commitment to and interest in increasing our use of data and evidence to inform decision-making.

Attached are the questions from the survey and the standards of the *What Works City* Program.

Participation in this program could ultimately help us enhance our ability to drive analytics, transparency, accountability, and engagement levels. We trust that Council concurs and will enthusiastically support our statement of interest, which is due on June 1. Bloomberg Philanthropies intends to select the first *What Works Cities* participants in mid-June.

Attachments

- A. *What Works Cities* Standard
- B. *What Works Cities* Statement of Interest **Questions?**