

DATE: September 5, 2017

TO: Mayor Stokes and City Councilmembers

FROM: Mac Cummins, PCD Director
James S. Henderson, Economic Development Director
Joshua Heim, Arts Program Manager

SUBJECT: Creative Edge Project Update

Create Edge: a creative economy strategy for Bellevue

Bellevue is a center for innovation and technology in the Puget Sound Region. Bellevue's rise and continued growth as an information technology hub is largely based on the talent that resides in Bellevue or commutes to Bellevue's employers daily. Therefore, the need to cultivate, attract and retain talent is at the heart of the city's ability to grow and innovate.

Creative Edge will identify how the arts, culture and creative sectors contribute to Bellevue's community and economy – known as the creative economy – and develop a strategy to strengthen and grow these sectors. The creative economy is defined as the segment of the larger economy whose principle orientation is to apply creative ideas and processes to generate goods, services, and innovations that provide both economic and aesthetic value.

The project includes developing a values framework; economic research and analysis; strategy development; implementation; and dissemination. A draft values framework has been developed and the economic research and analysis is complete. In September, the project will shift to strategy development.

Bellevue has a highly ranked creative economy

The project consultant is complete with the research phase of the Creative Edge project and the preliminary findings suggest Bellevue outranks other "edge cities" and Seattle on a number of creative economy factors including talent, tolerance, and technology. The findings suggest Bellevue's creative index ranks first with Sunnyvale, CA and Cambridge, MA and above Seattle. The research phase included an economic analysis, a creative business survey, and stakeholder interviews. A report is available with these findings upon request.

Next steps: develop the strategy

Staff will host a Creative Edge Workshop for arts, business, and civic leaders to set priorities and develop strategies based on the research findings. The workshop will take

place on September 13th from 10am – 2pm at Bellevue City Hall. Council members are invited to participate. The Office of Economic Development (OED) will provide an overview of the strategy the council at the OED updated scheduled in October.

Attachments

- A. Creative Edge Bellevue
- B. Project Process