

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Resolution adopting the Bellevue Economic Development Plan which sets forth direction to guide the City's economic development activities over the next five years.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Resolution will formally adopt the updated Economic Development Plan and initiate its implementation after a thorough development process. The 16-month process included nine briefings with Council, eight focus groups, and input from 75 businesses and community members, with each informing the analysis and strategy development work by consultants at multinational firm EY Consulting.

The new plan places a focus on small business with six new focus areas to address identified gaps in Bellevue's long-term economic development approach. In July 2020 staff and the consultant re-affirmed the strategies and refined the implementation tactics included in this plan to be reflective and responsive to the impacts of COVID-19. The attached version reflects Council's recent feedback and national best practices which will provide the strategic direction of economic development activities over the next five years.

RECOMMENDATION

Move to adopt Resolution No. 9834

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

This is the ninth presentation to Council regarding the updates to the City's Economic Development Plan. The Bellevue City Council adopted the current Economic Development Plan (the Plan) in July 2014. That plan focused on four direct strategies:

1. Cultivate Bellevue's Next Generation of Technology Entrepreneurs
2. Position Bellevue as a Pacific Rim Gateway
3. Strengthen Bellevue's Tourism and Visitor Cluster
4. Develop a Multi-pronged Economic Development Marketing Campaign

Under the Plan, the direct strategies provided direction for the highly targeted activities of Economic Development staff. Each year, the Economic Development staff develops an Action Plan that summarizes the specific tasks, roles, resource requirements and partnerships needed that year to continue delivering on the current Plan's recommendations.

Plan Update Objectives

In July 2019, Council approved eight objectives for the Economic Development Plan Update:

1. Identify ways to support the **creative economy**
2. Explore new opportunities to support **small business**
3. Support more robust **retail** activity
4. Identify best practices for integrating **new businesses** into the community
5. Support **capacity building** for community groups
6. Integrate key recommendations from **Tourism Plan**
7. Make the Plan easier to update
8. Support local **workforce development** options and programs

Based on the Council-approved objectives, staff has worked with the consultant to review previous studies and documents, perform a data analysis of Bellevue's economic position, and conduct extensive stakeholder outreach with more than 75 participants. These combined inputs help to inform the content of the updated plan.

Based on these inputs, the consultant developed comprehensive themes, affirmed the current plan's foundational strategies (with one addition), and recommended strategies and implementation tactics for six direct focus areas to address identified gaps in Bellevue's economic development approach and achieve the City's vision for the future. In July 2020 staff and the consultant re-affirmed the strategies and refined the implementation tactics included in this plan to be reflective and responsive to the impacts of COVID-19. These recommendations were presented and affirmed by Council at the July 6 Council Meeting and a draft plan was presented to Council at the September 21 Council Meeting. At that time, the Council expressed support for the plan and suggested refinements that emphasize the importance of diversity and multiculturalism in Bellevue, highlight needed community services, and reinforce the importance of partners in economic development. The refinements are detailed in Attachment C.

Implementation Timeline

This Economic Development Plan is intended to be a five-year strategy document. As a continuation of current practices, an annual action plan will be developed based on available resources to provide more specificity about what will be done, by whom. This annual planning process will ensure we advance aggressively towards the end points established in this plan while maintaining flexibility to respond to opportunities and changes in the market and existing resources. The annual planning will also inform when to shift to the growth tactics in the plan. Based on the annual action plan, quarterly updates will be given to Council that highlight progress in achieving the goals.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The recommended strategies most closely align with and support the following adopted policies:

Comprehensive Plan

ED-1. Maintain a business climate that supports the retention and expansion of the City's economic base.

ED-2. Promote local businesses and locally produced goods and services.

ED-5. Develop and maintain regulations that allow for continued economic growth while respecting the environment and quality of life of City neighborhoods.

ED-11. Provide City leadership and direction to maximize the business retention and recruitment efforts of Bellevue's economic development partners.

ED-13. Promote on-going communication between city and private sector to help guide the City's marketing and development efforts.

ED-14. Recognize the economic development benefits of City and private sector investments in urban amenities like arts and culture, open space and recreational facilities, and high-quality urban design. Strengthen the City's assets in these areas as an explicit component of the City's economic development strategy.

ED-17. Develop an environment that fosters respect for all individuals and groups and promotes equal opportunity. ED-18. Promote opportunities for self-sufficiency for all Bellevue residents by encouraging employers to hire people with special needs and disabilities.

ED-20. Recognize retail strength as an engine of economic activity and a magnet for visitors.

ED-21. Support economic development in the City's commercial areas.

ED-22. Support efforts that promote tourism, hotel, retail and arts businesses.

ED-29. Encourage provision of life-long learning opportunities.

ED-30. Facilitate efforts of businesses and institutions to train workers for today's and tomorrow's jobs, and support continuing education in the community.

ED-35. Promote and nurture entrepreneurial development in Bellevue by exploring ways to retain or create areas where small or emerging businesses can develop and flourish.

ED-36. Maintain and regularly update the Economic Development Plan to ensure the City's focus areas and goals are forward-looking and targeted while being flexible enough to be able to respond to market changes.

ED-37. As part of on-going Economic Development strategic planning, consider the use of organizational and financial tools or investments, including public-private partnerships where appropriate, to catalyze or leverage private sector and other resources to accomplish the City's economic development and land use vision.

The new strategies also build on the strong foundations put in place through implementation of the 2014 Plan. Adoption of the recommended strategies may inform future updates to Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan in 2023.

Fiscal Impact

Development of the Economic Development Plan comes from the general fund in the adopted 2019-2020 City budget. Initial implementation of the plan will be based on the existing 2019-2020 resource levels.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the Resolution adopting the Bellevue Economic Development Plan which sets forth direction to guide the City's economic development activities over the next five years.
2. Do not adopt the Resolution, direct staff to modify or revise portions of the Plan and return at a later date for approval.
3. Do not adopt the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. Economic Development Plan
 - B. Economic Development Plan Appendix
 - C. Refinements made to the Draft ED Plan
- Proposed Resolution No. 9834

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A