

# MEMORANDUM



City of Bellevue

**DATE:** Oct. 4, 2021

**TO:** Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Brad Harwood, Chief Communications Officer, 425-452-6837  
City Manager's Office

**SUBJECT:** Savvy Communications Award

In the spring of 2020, as many Bellevue residents and businesses were reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic shutdown it triggered, the City of Bellevue used a variety of electronic avenues – from special web pages to social media posts – to share safety tips and key resources. To reach many residents who didn't have computer access, including Bellevue's most vulnerable, the city that May released a special edition of It's Your City, its resident newsletter.

In September, Bellevue won a [Savvy Award from 3CMA](#) (the City County Communications and Marketing Association) for its "Apart Together" issue. This is a major recognition, as hundreds of cities applied for Savvy awards this year for communications efforts concerning COVID-19 response.

"Great job providing a vital resource to those in your community and overcoming barriers to access by providing it in multiple languages and formats," noted one of the judges. Another judge wrote, "This project showed a unique understanding of the needs of the city's target audience and a willingness and ability to adjust resources during a crisis to meet those needs."

The city's communications team, which includes public information officers who support operational departments, produces It's Your City three times a year, with layout support from the Information Technology Department's Graphics team. Communications and Graphics played key roles in the production of "Apart Together" too.

For this powerful issue, created on a compressed timeline by staff working remotely, other departments provided essential assistance. Neighborhood Outreach (Community Development) contributed crucial articles about ways residents were rallying in the crisis. Human Services (Parks & Community Services) gathered information about nonprofits and created the multilingual insert with a map of food banks and other resources. The Diversity Advantage team (City Manager's Office) arranged for translations of the entire issue, which were made [available online](#).