

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

May 16, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, and Councilmembers Barksdale, Lee, Robertson, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

Mayor Robinson congratulated the Newport High School team that was crowned as national champions in the world's largest student rocketry competition over the weekend. The team received the top score at the American Rocketry Challenge and will represent the United States in the International Rocketry Challenge. Ms. Robinson said the students exemplify the community focus areas of education, innovation and technology.

Councilmember Barksdale referred to the mass shooting in Buffalo, New York over the weekend, noting that he has family members from that area. He said it is important to remember that this type of incident impacts people across the country and it introduces a degree of uncertainty about what might come next. In addition to the 10 individuals killed in Buffalo, one person lost his life during a shooting at a Taiwanese church in California over the weekend. There are indications that the Buffalo suspect deliberately targeted a black community, and the gunman at the church expressed anger toward Taiwan. Mr. Barksdale requested a moment of silence to remember and honor the individuals who tragically lost their lives.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers were present. Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis led the flag salute.

(a) Bike Everywhere Month Proclamation

Councilmember Barksdale read the proclamation recognizing May 2022 as Bike Everywhere Month in Bellevue, noting that the City recently added 9.8 miles of bicycle and pedestrian

system improvements on SE Newport Way, West Lake Sammamish Parkway, Eastrail and the Mountains to Sound Greenway.

(b) National Public Works Week Proclamation

Councilmember Robertson read the proclamation recognizing the week of May 15-21, 2022 as National Public Works Week in Bellevue and encouraged all residents and civic organizations to recognize the contributions made by public works staff every day to ensure the community's health, safety and quality of life.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Oral Communications

- (a) Margie Ye encouraged the City to build a cross-cultural center and shared a story about a friend's dinner parties in which everyone would participate in preparing the meal and sharing their cultures.
- (b) Mason Ji said he was speaking on behalf of a nonprofit organization known as the Friends of Bellevue Cross-Cultural Center. He said the group is prepared to support the development and success of a cross-cultural center. He noted his previous experience with the United Nations negotiating international treaties. He said the most productive moments of his UN career were conversations over coffee, and that is the type of experience envisioned in a cross-cultural center in Bellevue.
- (c) Debbie Lacy said she is the founder and Executive Director of Eastside for All, a nonprofit race and social justice advocacy organization based in East King County. The organization launched in 2019 and, approximately 20 years ago, Ms. Lacey co-founded the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition. She expressed support for the cross-cultural center and thanked staff for the feasibility study. She said the draft summary report recommends that "the City could lead a process to identify a lead nonprofit organization to become the project champion." She encouraged the City to conduct a request for proposal (RFP) process to solicit proposals from organizations. She urged the City to ensure that there is broad inclusion and warm invitations to communities that tend to be underrepresented in community engagement processes. She said Bellevue has the opportunity to pioneer an innovative project. She expressed concern that the feasibility study did not prioritize the value of physical cross-cultural space. She encouraged the City to partner with an organization with proven experience related to cross-cultural spaces and activities.

- (d) Alex Zimmerman said there is fascism in America dominated by women and people of color. He said that four of the five Port of Seattle commissioners are minorities, and he noted an all-female school board. He expressed concern about gas prices and the oil companies that are making record profits as well as high housing and food prices.
- (e) Larry Graham expressed support for the tree code recommendations from the Trees 4 Livability group. He expressed concern about the removal of significant and landmark trees without a permit. He suggested that a permit should be required to remove any tree more than six inches in diameter. He said landmark trees are more than 30 inches in diameter and can be 100-200 years old. He said trees are critical to preserving Bellevue's character. He said most surrounding cities have stricter tree codes. He said he is not suggesting that the City stop the construction of new homes. He built a large custom home himself and chose to retain many of the trees. He said a builder would have removed all or most of the trees.
- (f) Lee Sargent, a Sherwood Forest resident, expressed concern regarding the loss of trees throughout Bellevue. He noted that surrounding cities have stricter tree codes, which attracts builders to Bellevue who want to remove trees to build large houses. He urged the Council to act quickly to update Bellevue's tree codes.
- (g) Heidi Dean thanked the Councilmembers and City staff who participated in the neighborhoods conference on Saturday. She said she attended workshops on civic engagement, hybrid government, and reimagining retail, and she participated in the Eastrail tour. She said the sessions were educational and enjoyable. She thanked Edward Butterfield, the City's Public-Private Partnership Manager, and his team for the fantastic reimagining retail workshop. She believes he understands what is needed to address neighborhood businesses and she thanked him for listening to residents.
- (h) Eva Collins, Deputy Superintendent for the Bellevue School District, thanked the Council for its generous support of the Eastside Pathways program. She said the City's support helps to encourage stakeholders, individuals and nonprofit organizations to work together to ensure equitable pathways for children, youth and young adults. She said the District is examining its own practices in the areas of early learning, mental health, and racial equity.
- (i) Maliha Amarsi expressed support for the creation of a cross-cultural center in Bellevue.

City Clerk Arredondo noted that three individuals had already spoken in support of the cross-cultural center and encouraged Ms. Amarsi to email her comments to [Council@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Council@bellevuewa.gov).

Mayor Robinson encouraged Ms. Amarsi to reach out to Councilmembers individually to share her comments.

- 5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.
- 6. Report of the City Manager

(a) Bellevue Youth Link Program

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced staff's update regarding the Bellevue Youth Link program.

Toni Esparza, Assistant Director, Parks and Community Services Department, said Youth Link was established in 1990 and is one of the longest running youth leadership programs on the Eastside. Youth Link originated as a partnership of the City, Bellevue School District and other community stakeholders to provide opportunities for youth civic engagement, support leadership development and to encourage input to the City regarding youth concerns, interests and policy work. The Bellevue Youth Link Board includes 12 youth and six adults. The Bellevue Youth Council is a broader component of the program with open membership to any youth in the community. The Council currently has 85 middle school and high school youth members who serve on action teams that plan service projects and community events.

Ms. Esparza said the Youth Link program has expanded its boundaries to engage with youths from around the world. She said members of Bellevue's program recently helped the City of Lake Forest Park and Rockaway Township in New Jersey to start youth councils and their own versions of the Youth Link program. She said Youth Link has received national and local recognition, including from the Washington Recreation Program Association and for the teen closet program, Youth Link University and the Unity Through Diversity event. The Youth Link program has been involved with the Bellevue Skate Park, Youth Link University, the youth involvement conference, community leadership awards, food pantries and the Kids Care coat drive.

Patrick Alina, Youth Link Program Coordinator, said that Youth Link members quickly responded to the challenges of the pandemic to organize projects supporting youth mental health needs and housing and food insecurity, and to find new opportunities for community collaboration despite the uncertainties brought by the pandemic. Members of the Youth Link Board partnered with a local AI (artificial intelligence) technology company and social services providers to pilot an AI chat bot, Helio Health, to help youth navigate critical mental health resources. Mr. Alina said Youth Link members opened a new virtual outlet for teens experiencing isolation via virtual teen café projects. Students also saw the need to support other students with virtual tutoring.

During the pandemic, the youth leaders identified the need to provide appropriate information and resources to Bellevue's diverse community about COVID-19 and available vaccinations. Mr. Alina said Youth Link opened its first community food pantry in June 2021 in the Crossroads area and participated in other food drives. Additional projects include the Kids Care coat drive, distribution of feminine hygiene kits and the Unity Through Diversity event.

Ms. Esparza invited the Council and the public to attend Youth Link's 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Community Leadership Awards event on Wednesday, May 25, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Councilmember Barksdale, liaison to the Youth Link Board, commended the youth for caring about their community and for taking actions to help others. He thanked staff and the adults who work with the Youth Link program as well.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: None.

8. Consent Calendar

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 7-0, and the following items were approved:

- (a) Motion to Approve Payment of Claims and Payroll for the Period April 1, 2022 – April 30, 2022.
- (b) Motion to approve an increase to the construction contract with Road Construction Northwest (Bid No. 21092) by \$159,645 to a revised total contract amount of \$878,928.30 plus any additional applicable taxes for the Somerset Reservoir No. 1 Decommissioning project (CIP Plan No. W-85).
- (c) Ordinance No. 6660: 1) authorizing execution of a funding agreement with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) to accept \$133,350 of state funds for summer youth programming; and 2) amending the 2021 - 2022 Operating Grants and Donations Fund to increase the appropriation by \$133,350.
- (d) Ordinance No. 6661: 1) authorizing execution of an interagency agreement with the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) to provide an instructor to the WSCJTC and to accept full reimbursement of the employee's salary and benefit costs, 2) amending the 2021-2022 General Fund Budget by \$118,869.95, and 3) authorizing an additional full-time employee position to be paid from the funds received under this agreement; providing for severability; and establishing an effective date.
- (e) Resolution No. 10097 authorizing execution of all documents necessary to implement settlement of the claim brought by Patrick Cambas in the total amount of \$126,345.80.

9. Public Hearing: None.

10. Study Session

- (a) Update on Fire Inspection Fee Program

City Manager Miyake recalled that in 2018, the Council authorized an increase in fire inspection staffing and fees in response to the growth in residential and commercial activity. This topic was last before the Council in October 2020.

Fire Chief Jay Hagen said that in 2018, the Council approved the addition of two fire prevention officers and a fee increase to support the increased workload. He introduced staff to provide the update on the fire inspection fee program.

Fire Marshal Travis Ripley said the forecasted cost recovery need for fire prevention activities was calculated based on the time spent on maintenance inspections by the administrative assistant, program analyst and seven fire prevention officers. The department achieved 90 percent cost recovery in 2020 and 100 percent cost recovery in 2021 and is on track to reach 100 percent cost recovery this year. He said most buildings are inspected every two years.

Mr. Ripley said the fire prevention division moved to paperless inspection software to track all inspections and worked closely with customers throughout the COVID-related business closures and pressures. Fire Department staff collaborated with staff in the Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Department to ensure that invoices are generated, and that fee collection is consistent and timely. Mr. Ripley said the fire prevention division transitioned to paperless billing in 2021.

Ongoing improvement efforts include: 1) collecting improved building information and billing contact data, 2) educating building and business owners about the fire prevention program and about fire and life safety, and 3) monitoring the nexus between the fees collected and the time spent on inspections. Mr. Ripley said staffing is in line with short-term growth. The fire prevention division is on track to meet established goals and expectations and is committed to continuous improvement.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for the presentation and for their work to achieve cost recovery goals. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Assistant Fire Marshal Jacob Branstetter said approximately 80 percent of the occupancies in Bellevue are 100 percent compliant with their fire and life safety systems.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Mr. Ripley said the fire prevention division is working to make sure it is not over-charging for inspections. Ms. Robertson said she would like the program to continue to support itself through fees while maintaining fairness for business and building owners. In further response to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Ripley said staff offered virtual information sessions during the pandemic to assist the public.

Councilmember Lee asked whether the Fire Department assists building and business owners in correcting problems or violations. Noting that 80 percent of buildings and businesses are compliant with the codes, he asked whether it would be possible to focus more efficiently on the 20 percent who are not in compliance.

Mr. Branstetter confirmed that fire prevention staff work with business owners to prevent and correct problems. He said staff's role is both education and enforcement.

Mr. Ripley said customers typically have multiple options for correcting a problem. In severe cases, staff might conduct a second inspection.

Chief Hagen said the original mandate by ordinance is to collect approximately 75 percent of the program's costs through the collection of inspection fees. He said City staff met with business leaders about a year into the program and learned that business and building owners prefer to be responsible for the billing from the City and to pass those costs on to the tenant. He noted an adjustment to the fee for inspecting parking garages to match the reduced level of effort required compared to other types of square footage. He said they have adjusted fees for certain small business inspections as well and they continue to learn on an ongoing basis.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

At 7:05 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:15 p.m.

(b) Phase III Report of the Cross-Cultural Feasibility Study

City Manager Miyake introduced discussion regarding the Phase III cross cultural feasibility study report. He said the City has conducted a number of studies in recent years to evaluate the feasibility of a cross-cultural center. He said staff is seeking Council direction regarding the report's recommendations.

Dr. Linda Whitehead, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, said staff is seeking direction to move forward with programming for cross-cultural activities in the City's community centers and other locations and to identify community partners for a future cross-cultural center.

Dr. Whitehead recalled that the Cross-Cultural Programming Public Outreach Study report was released in October 2018 and the Cross-Cultural Feasibility Assessment report was released in November 2020. The third phase was the Cross-Cultural Feasibility Study completed in April 2022 to be presented tonight. The purpose of that study was to explore the vision of providing space and programs dedicated to cross-cultural engagement.

Linda Cheu, Vice President of Economics at AECOM Technical Services Inc. (AECOM), said the initial feasibility work was a preliminary analysis regarding a wide range of feasibility issues. She said the consultants conducted more than 100 interviews and discussions with stakeholders, including community members, possible partners, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, cultural facilities, corporate and development community, City Councilmembers and City staff. A survey of potential users was sent to approximately 90 people and the City received more than 60 responses. Ms. Cheu said the consultants completed benchmarking work and reviewed nearly 30 cultural centers. Based on that work, they developed a potential program and completed a non-site-specific building test fit analysis. AECOM's cost consultancy group estimated capital costs, developed an operating plan for the facility, assessed feasibility across four areas and developed an implementation strategy.

Ms. Cheu said the cross-cultural center is intended to house a mix of cultural, multicultural and cross-cultural activities. The vision includes the goal of providing a place for formal program as well as informal interactions. She said the center is envisioned as a mission-driven facility, meaning that operations, costs and revenues will be strategically tied to an organizational purpose.

Ms. Cheu acknowledged that cross-cultural engagement is a priority for the City and the community and there is a demonstrated commitment to supporting spaces for cross-cultural activities. She said that for a cultural center, demand relies on having sufficient programming related to the facility's mission as well as users who can pay for the space or funders who are able to cover full operating costs. She said the demand for a nonprofit facility is closely paired with the ability for the sustainable operation of the facility.

Ms. Cheu said the majority of stakeholders have discussed the center as a community-led, City-supported effort. However, a successful public-nonprofit partnership depends on a dedicated nonprofit partner who is willing to focus on inclusivity and able to work with groups throughout the community. She said organizational capacity building will likely be required. She said the development of a cultural center requires intensive leadership and an organizational and financial commitment. She said the ability to operate sustainably should drive overall project feasibility decisions.

The estimated development cost for a cross-cultural center is \$35 million, excluding site costs. Alternative facility development models include: 1) nonprofit capital campaign, 2) City-funded, 3) real estate partnership or development incentive, and 4) angel donor. The current estimate assumes a 27,000 square foot facility with \$1.9 million in annual operating costs. Ms. Cheu said an estimated 20 percent of the operating budget could be covered by earned revenue, leaving the need for approximately \$1.5 million annually in contributed income. She said many cultural centers combine elements of the facility operating models noted above.

Ms. Cheu said that short-term recommended strategies include the use of City-owned space for cross-cultural activities, an investment in capacity building for cross-cultural nonprofit organizations, City funding/grants for community-led cross-cultural programming and staff assistance in the areas of development and programming. Next steps over the long term include the City working with the community to identify and support a nonprofit partner, determine priorities and to identify available funding to support the center's development and operations. The role of community partners is to form the nonprofit organization, complete the strategic plan, build organizational capacity (i.e., establish board, hire staff and cultivate funding relationships), develop a track record of successful programming, hire a capital campaign counsel and to work with the City to identify site opportunities and to participate in site planning studies.

Dr. Whitehead summarized that the community supports the development of a cross-cultural center and programming. The Phase III study completes the Council's request to explore the vision of providing space and programs dedicated to cross-cultural engagement. She said no benchmarking examples exist for cross-cultural focused facilities and programming. However, she said there is existing capacity at community centers for programming. Dr. Whitehead said



three elements are needed to translate community interest into the effective demand for a facility: 1) mission-driven partner organization, 2) capacity building, including funding and promotions, and 3) time.

Dr. Whitehead requested Council direction to move forward with programming for cross-cultural activities in community centers and with community partners and to identify community partners for a future cross-cultural center.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Lee complimented Ms. Cheu and AECOM for their work. Mr. Lee said the purpose of a cross-cultural center is to bring people together. He noted the need for a facility to accomplish the vision. He expressed support for the recommended approach and next steps. Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Cheu said the estimated size of 27,000 square feet is typical for this type of center. Councilmember Lee said he believes there are interested partners in the community.

Mayor Robinson said the Council has been talking about the Performing Arts Center Eastside (PACE) for a number of years and the City pledged significant financial assistance if PACE reaches a specific funding goal. She said both PACE and the cross-cultural center are intended to be places to explore cultures and arts and to provide performances. She suggested exploring a partnership with the PACE organization.

Councilmember Robertson thanked staff for the presentation and expressed support for moving forward as recommended. She concurred with the recommendations to initiate programming and capacity building and suggested there are opportunities for under-used facilities and venues. She expressed support for the idea of partnering with PACE. She suggested perhaps repurposing portions of community centers for cross-cultural programming. She asked whether it is feasible to have multiple partners. Dr. Whitehead said she believes partners will include both nonprofit and for-profit entities.

Ms. Robertson suggested, as the City moves forward with the BelRed and Wilburton land use plans, considering whether an incentive should be provided to encourage a developer/business to build the center as part of their project and to then dedicate it to the City for use. She said additional development incentives could be identified as well.

Councilmember Barksdale expressed support for the recommended next steps. He prefers a partnership with other entities and expressed an interest in moving forward with cross-cultural programming in existing spaces.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the presentation and expressed enthusiasm for developing a cross-cultural center. He thanked Councilmember Lee and others who have advocated for a center for a number of years. Mr. Nieuwenhuis noted the importance of identifying strong partners and determining how to develop a sustainable center.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Cheu said the projected revenue includes facility rentals, usage fees and other sources, depending on the activities provided in the facility. Ms. Cheu said a center in Bellevue could likely generate a higher percentage of earned revenue than facilities in some cities.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis expressed support for Mayor Robinson's idea of partnering with PACE in the short term and/or long term. He concurred with Councilmember Robertson's suggestions regarding land use incentives and the potential use of City properties. Mr. Nieuwenhuis suggested that all options should be considered, and he expressed support for moving forward.

Councilmember Zahn said there has been interest from the community and the Council over the past 10 years for a cross-cultural center. She expressed support for the Phase III study recommendations. She suggested looking beyond community centers for additional facilities for programming including City Hall and other public spaces (e.g., libraries, schools).

Regarding available capacity at community centers, Ms. Zahn suggested that estimates related to capacity should be updated as centers are fully operating again following the height of the pandemic. She noted previous discussions about increasing active recreation at community centers. She suggested exploring multiple partners and considering the development of a cross-cultural center as part of another private or private-public project.

Referring to revenue generation, Councilmember Zahn said a cross-cultural center should be accessible to everyone. She recommended that the Council discuss whether levy funding could support the center. She suggested Bellevue College as a potential partner. She concurred with Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis about continuing to consider all options.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the recommendations and noted that cross-cultural activities are essential in a global economy. He said the goal of this effort is to provide equity for different cultures in Bellevue and the region to better understand each other. He expressed support for looking at cross-cultural engagement strategies and coming back later for continued discussion. He said the cross-cultural center as proposed has not been developed elsewhere. He encouraged a focus on programming regardless of whether there is a dedicated facility.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to direct staff to move forward with programming for cross-cultural activities in the City's community centers and with community partners, as well as identify community partners for a future cross-cultural center.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

At 8:08 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a break. The meeting resumed at 8:20 p.m.

(c) Retail Study Update

City Manager Miyake introduced discussion regarding the initiation of the retail study by economic development staff. The study is consistent with the 2020 Economic Development Plan adopted by the Council.

Jesse Canedo, Assistant Director, Community Development Department, introduced staff's update regarding the retail study scope and timeline.

Edward Butterfield, Public-Private Partnership Manager, said the sales tax generates 32 percent of Bellevue tax revenue. He noted that retail development provides services for residents and tourists, opportunities for placemaking, and amenities for employees.

Mr. Canedo noted the redevelopment of mixed uses in recent years in Kirkland's Totem Lake area, Redmond's downtown, Bothell and Woodinville. He said retail services are moving closer to where people live and work which provides enhanced opportunities for small restaurants and retailers.

Mr. Butterfield said that policies related to retail activity are included in the Council Vision, Economic Development Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. He said retail businesses are key elements in urban growth centers and transit-oriented development (TOD). The general goals of the retail study are to: 1) define current and future retail needs to ensure a healthy and diverse retail mix and to identify City actions to support retail activity, and 2) incorporate a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure that diverse voices and community-based organizations are represented in public engagement and in the findings and final report. The study will be a data-informed approach and will provide key economic and market information.

Mr. Butterfield said the study will include a retail leakage analysis to identify the retail sectors missing in Bellevue and will explore market trends, a retail square footage analysis of Bellevue, and a regional analysis. He noted the need to look at capacity building to catalyze the creation of sustainable business districts citywide. He said the study will be aligned with and inform existing planning efforts including the Comprehensive Plan update and Wilburton and BelRed area planning. The study will explore strategies for preserving existing small businesses and for creating spaces for more independent retail businesses. Mr. Butterfield said the study will review the target sectors desired by the community (e.g., breweries, night life, entertainment) and explore ways to encourage those businesses.

Auto retail sales are a key component of sales tax revenue. As the City plans for the Wilburton area, staff wants to ensure that creative, compact layouts and building models are considered with auto dealers. Mr. Butterfield noted the City's interest in preserving and growing auto-related businesses.

Mr. Butterfield said staff has been involved in stakeholder engagement with small business owners, community based organizations, residents, real estate brokerage community, business associations and property owners. Staff would like to issue the request for proposals (RFP) and select a consultant in June if possible. Staff will return to the Council during the third quarter for approval of the contract. The study will be conducted during the fourth quarter and the Council will be updated in late 2022 or early 2023.

Councilmember Stokes commented on how retail has changed during and since the pandemic. He said many people are buying cars online now, and he concurred with the importance of keeping auto dealers in Bellevue. Mr. Canedo said car dealers prefer large, flat lots because they are less expensive to build than parking garages. He said the City continues to look for opportunities as the community redevelops including related to the deployment of electric vehicles, which changes the relationship between a dealer and a multi-level mixed use development.

Councilmember Robertson said she looks forward to the outcomes of the study. She concurred with Councilmember Stokes' interest in exploring options with auto dealers. Ms. Robertson encouraged the City to continue to provide space for other major items including electronics, e-bikes, and appliances. She said that anything delivered in Bellevue generates sales tax for Bellevue. She said contractors sometimes code their purchases based on where the contractor is located instead of Bellevue where the materials are to be used.

Councilmember Zahn said she looks forward to the completion of the retail study and to understanding the retail leakage analysis. She wondered about the impact of the new normal and changing habits following the pandemic. She expressed support for the focus on small businesses, including breweries and other services desired by the community, to enhance progress toward the 15-minute city goal. She concurred with the importance of retaining auto dealers. She said she would like to see a zero waste store in Bellevue, noting that there is one in Kirkland. Mr. Zahn said that as the City adds more retail, she wants to ensure that existing small businesses are not displaced. She asked whether the City has a list of all businesses in Bellevue.

Mr. Canedo said the City issues lifetime business licenses and therefore does not have accurate data regarding businesses that have closed. To supplement the data, staff has been involved in walking tours of retail areas throughout Bellevue to identify businesses and better understand the needs. He said the consultant's work will help to identify both missing services and service classifications that are perhaps overrepresented in Bellevue.

Responding to Councilmember Zahn regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, Mr. Butterfield said staff and the consultant will explore how to embed those values into the study. Mr. Butterfield acknowledged the importance of an equitable engagement plan and data collection practices.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis encouraged the review of retail activity citywide, especially in areas that have had challenges for a number of years (e.g., Newport Hills, Lake Hills Village, Factoria). He expressed an interest in an amenities leakage analysis. He looks forward to learning more about the amenities desired by both residents and employers/employees. He would like more information in the future regarding discussions with stakeholders. He suggested taking advantage of what Bellevue can offer regionally and building on our successes.

Mr. Canedo confirmed that the study will look at retail activity citywide.

Councilmember Barksdale expressed support for the study and the emphasis on small businesses. Regarding the retail leakage analysis, he suggested considering services that might be related to one's cultural background (e.g., hair stylists).

Mr. Barksdale opined that small businesses will continue to have a role in attracting workers and residents to Bellevue. He said he appreciates the focus on diversity, equity and inclusion in terms of stakeholder engagement and outreach to businesses outside of Bellevue that would like to relocate here. Referring to the discussion about identifying the list of current businesses, Mr. Barksdale wondered whether utilities data could provide that information.

Councilmember Lee thanked staff for their work and expressed support for their recommended approach. He noted the importance of generating good information during the study.

Mayor Robinson said that everything the City does should incorporate an equity and sustainability lens. She said retailers are happy that the City is conducting the study and they look forward to learning about the results.

Ms. Robinson concurred regarding the importance of retaining auto dealers. She said there are a number of small auto dealers in Bellevue that offer added services beyond simply buying a car online.

Mayor Robinson encouraged opportunities for artists to display their artwork in retail spaces. Mr. Canedo said the results of the study will help staff understand ways to work with brokers that might be able to use vacant space for art displays or pop-up activity. He noted staff's interest in exploring how organizations (e.g., Old Bellevue Merchants Association) can provide opportunities for connections between artists and small businesses.

Councilmember Zahn noted there is currently a pop-up space in the Factoria mall with an art display by Newport High School students.

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions

- (a) Ordinance No. 6662 amending Sections 3.55.030, 3.56.030, 3.61.030, 3.62.030, 3.63.030, and 3.64.030 of the Bellevue City Code to reinstate limitations on members of commissions and boards attending meetings remotely

City Attorney Kathy Gerla recalled that prior to the pandemic, the Bellevue City Code stated that no more than two members of a Board of Commission could participate remotely at any one meeting, and each member's remote participation was limited to four meeting per year. Those restrictions were removed from the code during the pandemic to allow the Boards and Commissions to hold virtual meetings with all members participating remotely.

During the March 21, 2022 meeting, the Council directed staff to bring back an ordinance that would allow three members to participate remotely per meeting and that would eliminate the

annual maximum number of meetings allowed for each member's remote participation. In response to that direction, staff presented proposed Ordinance No. 6659 to the Council on April 25, 2022. Following discussion, the Council did not take action on the ordinance and provided further direction to staff for a final ordinance.

Ms. Gerla said Ordinance No. 6662 retains the provisions in the prior proposed ordinance and adds two new provisions: 1) sentence added to Section E.1 that encourages Board and Commission members to attend meetings in person when practicable, and 2) addition to Section E.2 that requires the presiding officer to be physically present for meetings or to pass the presiding officer role to another Board or Commission member who will be physically present at the meeting. Ms. Gerla noted that other jurisdictions (i.e., Issaquah, Kirkland, Seattle, Shoreline) have adopted similar requirements for their Council meetings.

Ms. Gerla recalled that the Council raised a concern about the ability to effectively manage a hybrid meeting if members of the public are participating in person and Board and Commission members are participating remotely. She noted there is only one camera in the meeting room used by the Boards and Commissions. As a result, if the presiding officer was participating remotely, they would not have a good view of the Board, Commission or the public.

Ms. Gerla said the proposed ordinance addresses a number of equity considerations. It broadens the number of members allowed to participate remotely and eliminates the annual restriction on remote participation by members. She said this expands accessibility and allows more individuals to participate remotely in meetings if needed. She said the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions apply to the code as well.

Ms. Gerla said staff recommends approval of the proposed ordinance as revised for tonight's action.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked Ms. Gerla for the information and for her work on the ordinance. Mr. Nieuwenhuis encouraged collecting data regarding remote participation and the impact of the revised code.

Mayor Robinson said she would like to hear feedback from Board and Commission members as well. Referring to the provision that remote participation must be approved by the Board or Commission in advance of the meeting, Ms. Robinson said she wants to ensure that is not an arbitrary decision. She would like the decision to be based on how many people are needed to reach a quorum and the number of members who may participate remotely per meeting.

Ms. Gerla said the code limits remote participation to three members per meeting. She acknowledged that a Board or Commission could deny a member's request to participate remotely.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for the ordinance and encouraged a broader equity review of all codes.

Councilmember Robertson expressed support for the ordinance and noted that it addresses her concerns. She concurred with Mr. Nieuwenhuis' interest in a review of the effects of the ordinance after one year.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for the ordinance.

Councilmember Stokes concurred.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to adopt Ordinance No. 6662, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

13. Unfinished Business: None.

14. New Business: None.

15. Executive Session: None.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC  
City Clerk

/kaw