



DATE: May 7, 2012

TO: Mayor Lee and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jan Hawn, Finance Director 452.6846
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SUBJECT: Public Engagement on the Budget Process

Following the workshop on April 2, 2012, Council requested staff to bring back the 2013-2014 public involvement process specifically looking to ensure that Bellevue is getting a wide input from citizens.

Historical and Current Public Involvement:

Bellevue historically, and currently, uses multiple methods for gathering citizen input on budgeting including statistically-valid surveys, community meetings, and public hearings. For the 2013-2014 Budget One Process, the established approach has several prongs:

- **Biennial Budget Survey (provided to Council at April 2, Workshop)**
 - Surveys for budget priorities, highest issue(s) that Council should address in the biennium under survey, importance and satisfaction with key service delivery areas, and addresses levels of taxation;
 - The survey is based on a random sample of City households;
 - At least 400 completed surveys are sufficient to have confidence in projecting the findings on Bellevue's residential population;
 - The margin of error (a statistic expressing the amount of random sampling error in the survey's results) is about plus or minus 5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level; and
 - Single- and multi-family quotas are sought to ensure a representative sample of households. A 50/50 male/female split is also sought within each of the quota groups.
- **Annual Performance Survey (will be provided to Council upon completion)**
 - Relates to municipal performance overall, quality of life, value for tax dollar, service delivery and customer satisfaction;
 - Findings presented to Council annually and included in many ICMA template submissions;
 - The survey is based on a random sample of City households;
 - 400 completed surveys are sufficient to have confidence in projecting the findings on Bellevue's residential population;
 - The margin of error is about plus or minus 5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level; and

- Single- and multi-family quotas are sought to ensure a representative sample of households. A 50/50 male/female split is also sought within each of the quota groups.
- Three public hearings to be held May 14, July 23, and a date yet to be determined in November. (One public hearing is required by State law.)
- Staff is working with Council-appointed Boards and Commissions to obtain input throughout the budget process. These Boards and Commissions each have a different process, but all culminate with the ability for the Board and Commission to provide input to the budget.
- In addition to the structured involvement noted above, the City continues to provide presentations to community organizations upon request; examples include the Bellevue Chamber, BDA and neighborhood groups. Requests for information and/or explanation of the budget process are provided to anyone who asks; several citizens routinely ask for and receive information and updates.

Attachment A provides a history and list of the various citizen outreach efforts specifically regarding the budget fiscal condition and process which Bellevue uses or has used.

Additional Public Involvement Proposed for the 2013-2014 Budget One Process

In response to the Council request on April 2, staff proposes to hold two community forums to provide education and gather input, with the focus on providing a venue for anyone who is interested. One would be held at Crossroads and the second at City Hall, targeted for completion by June 15. This would allow time for incorporation of feedback prior to the Results Teams' final work. Both would be advertised via postcard mailings to neighborhood liaisons and the Budget Office would collaborate with Neighborhood Outreach staff to garner additional participants. The forums will be conducted in "open house" style so that participants can be educated on the fiscal condition of the City as well as enable staff to gather citizen input on their priorities.

Attachment A: Budget Outreach History 1997-2012

1998 – Present:

- Biennial Budget Survey
 - Findings presented to Council each biennium
 - Surveys for budget priorities, highest issue(s) that council should address in the biennium under survey, importance and satisfaction with key service delivery areas, and addresses levels of taxation
 - 2008, 2010, and 2012 Budget Surveys shared with RT members as well
 - The survey is based on a random sample of City households.
 - At least 400 completed surveys are sufficient to have confidence in projecting the findings on Bellevue's residential population.
 - The margin of error (a statistic expressing the amount of random sampling error in the survey's results) is about plus or minus 5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.
 - Single and multi-family quotas are sought to ensure a representative sample of households. A 50/50 male/female split is also sought within each of the quota groups.
- Annual Performance Survey
 - Relates to municipal performance overall, quality of life, value for tax dollar, service delivery and customer satisfaction.
 - Findings presented to Council annually and included in many ICMA template submissions
 - The survey is based on a random sample of City households.
 - 400 completed surveys are sufficient to have confidence in projecting the findings on Bellevue's residential population.
 - The margin of error (a statistic expressing the amount of random sampling error in the survey's results) is about plus or minus 5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.
 - Single and multi-family quotas are sought to ensure a representative sample of households. A 50/50 male/female split is also sought within each of the quota groups.
- During Biennial process - Three public hearings held in May, July, and November.
- During Mid-Biennial process – One public hearing held in November.
- Staff is working with Council-appointed Boards and Commissions to obtain input throughout the budget process. These Boards and Commissions each have a different process, but all cumulate with the ability for the Board and Commission to provide input to the budget.
- City Council receives updates and provides action/direction at various policy points through the budget process.
- In addition to the structured involvement noted above, the City continues to provide presentations to anyone upon request; examples include the Bellevue Chamber, and neighborhood groups. Requests for information and/or explanation of the budget process are provided to anyone who asks; there are several citizens who routinely ask for and receive information and updates.

1999-2000 Additional Budget Community Outreach

The Budget Office took the survey questions to locations where people gathered to target and reach a population not easily reached through surveys (faith-based groups, ESL classes, and adult GED classes)

- Conducted activities in Russian, Spanish (used a professional translator) & English.
- Well received though many people attending were not Bellevue residents, but were attending events in Bellevue.
- Asked many of the survey questions in small group meetings.
- Conducted \$1.00 allocation exercises. Opinions of these residents were similar to those of the greater population.

1997 – 1998 Additional Budget Community Outreach

- The Budget Office and PCD collaborated on a formal budget presentation at various community centers, seeking citizen input
- Publicized through Neighborhood Outreach staff
- Few residents showed up. Often, more staff than residents
- Revised in subsequent years -- outreach to places where language and economically diverse groups gathered such as at churches, ESL classes, specialized adult education programs of the Bellevue School District