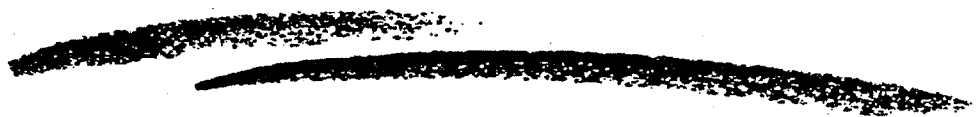


Cultural Diversity Task Force



Report and Community Action Plan
March 1993
City of Bellevue, Washington



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CULTURAL DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

Transmittal Letter

March 25, 1993

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

It is with pleasure that we bring our final report to you and to the citizens of Bellevue. Throughout the course of our nine-month effort, the members of the Task Force have learned a great deal from each other and from those in the community who have assisted us.

This report is a call for the creation of a Community Partnership to deal with the issues we have identified here. Our Community Action Plan outlines steps to be taken by various Bellevue institutions. In addition, we recommend that you establish policy to assure a positive, long-term focus on diversity and that you endorse a public information effort which describes Bellevue's diversity-past, present, and future.

We wish to acknowledge the leadership of the City Council in establishing this task force and in pursuing the vision of Bellevue as a city that truly values, appreciates and nourishes its human diversity. We also want to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to our work. Many citizens and community leaders joined in our discussions and, in effect, created our action plan and recommendations.

We are proud to have served on this task force and are eager to see our recommendations implemented.

Sincerely,

Task Force

List of Task Force Names

Resolution

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON
RESOLUTION NO. 5515

CULTURAL DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The City of Bellevue is changing. As the center of the rapidly growing Eastside, Bellevue is far from the suburban bedroom community of the 1960s and 1970s or the city in municipal adolescence described in the 1980s. The 1990s see a city that is truly coming of age. Bellevue is culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse; and it features economic diversity as well as diversity of lifestyle. Having recognized this, in 1991 the Bellevue City Council presented its vision for Bellevue 2005: a vision of a strong, dynamic community and a community that recognizes and honors the cultural mix of its citizens.

For the purpose of creating an environment and an atmosphere where the differences within our community can be viewed as an essential ingredient in making this City a place where all are welcome and valued, the Cultural Diversity Task Force will explore, survey, and document Eastside diversity in our residential and workforce communities. That data will be compiled in the form of recommendations, strategies, and a direction, and then presented to the Mayor and the City Council for adoption and implementation.

- Cultural Diversity Task Force

In 1992, the City Council elected to pursue this vision to lead Bellevue to the 21st century by encouraging its rich diversity. The Council set in motion two parallel and complementary initiatives: one to create the Cultural Diversity Task Force, which recognizes, values, and nurtures human diversity; and the other to create Bellevue Community Summit '92, Partners in Economic Vitality, which focuses on and invigorates the City's economic diversity. These two community-based processes, viewed together, establish the foundation for reaching the City Council's vision for Bellevue.

It is in this spirit that the Task Force presents this report and its recommendations to the City through the City Council to recognize this opportunity to create a community which truly embraces diversity as its greatest asset. The Task Force also believes that greater understanding and appreciation of diversity will lead to the discovery of the many common bonds we have with each other, which, in turn, will help us unite as a community. To this purpose, the Cultural Diversity Task Force report is dedicated and presented as an action plan for the City.

The sum of living which includes backgrounds, values, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors built up by a group of human beings that present a desired and positive effect on society.

- Cultural Diversity as defined by the Task Force

ACTION PLAN APPROACH

Although Bellevue City Government has a prominent role in the community, it is by no means solely responsible for creating a community where diversity is welcomed and valued. As such, the Task Force set out to establish an action plan for the entire community. The Task Force dedicated itself to learn what concerns and desires people have and to make recommendations to several Bellevue institutions which have the capacity to meet these concerns and desires both

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positively and productively. Presented here, recommendations and an action plan are based on a commitment to the vision of Bellevue as a community which welcomes, values, and nourishes its diversity.

THE TASK FORCE

Often, a community's formal discussion of cultural, racial, or ethnic diversity occurs as the result of an incident which has sparked community tension. In such circumstances, a sense of urgency motivates that community to solve a problem or repair an unfortunate social circumstance. Bellevue's Task Force, however, was not formed as a result of a particular incident or problem. Its creation resulted from a recognition that Bellevue's population is increasingly diverse culturally, ethnically, and racially and that this diversity should be recognized, embraced, and valued.

The Bellevue City Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 5515 on June 1, 1992, establishing a forward-looking task force charged with developing a policy-based action plan for the community. This signaled the beginning of a Significant public effort to raise community awareness and consciousness around the diversity that is Bellevue today and to help assure that the City of Bellevue and other institutions in the community are looking ahead to meet the needs of all the City's citizens.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The resolution spelled out several specific areas of focus for the Task Force: to report on the cultural and ethnic history of Bellevue; to report on the current cultural and ethnic mix of the City; to report on trends and issues facing the community regarding the evolving cultural mix; to prepare an action plan to assure the continued positive relations among the various ethnic and social communities in Bellevue; and to develop means for providing continuing positive focus on the benefits of cultural diversity. The resolution asked that the Task Force complete its work by March of 1993.

To eliminate prejudice and discrimination by promoting education and understanding that accepts, appreciates, and nurtures our differences.

- Task Force Goal Statement

In June, the Mayor and City Council appointed the sixteen-member Cultural Diversity Task Force, which represents a cross section of Bellevue's cultural, ethnic, racial, and spiritual diversity. Two Youth Link members were also included. Wayne Tanaka, then President of the Bellevue School Board, was asked to chair the Task Force, and Dr. Thomas L. Les Puree from the Evergreen State College agreed to serve as an advisor to the group. On July 23 the Task Force met to begin its work.

The early meetings were primarily dedicated to a review of Bellevue's demographics presented by school district and city demographers and to a review of what other municipalities had done in the area of cultural diversity. These discussions set the stage for the Task Force to determine its direction, establish its goals, and define its charge.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the breadth and scope within which the Task Force would focus and the relative importance of the elements set out in the resolution. Ultimately, a

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broad definition of cultural diversity' was chosen and an agenda established that was inclusive and dedicated to creating a welcoming community for all individuals. In allowing a broad definition, Task Force members were able to consider all elements of human diversity: race, ethnicity, culture, religion, lifestyle, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation. The overriding focus was that of coming together and expanding mutual understanding. To that end, the group prioritized its energies in the areas of identifying issues and establishing an action plan for the community.

This report presents the work of the Task Force in each of the five areas established in Resolution No. 5515:

- A brief historical review, with a recommendation for heightened public information about Bellevue's past, present, and future diversity.
- A detailed demographic analysis, based on information from the recent 1990 census, the Bellevue Public Schools, the City of Bellevue, Seattle King County Public Health Department, and Bellevue Community College.
- A detailing of public outreach and issue identification.
- An institutionally focused action plan.
- A means to provide continuing positive focus on cultural diversity.

Task Force members are grateful to all of those citizens who contributed time, energy, and ideas to this effort. Without their help this report would not have been possible.

SECTION II

HISTORY

Picture

Bellevue School District 1928 class. Courtesy Marymoor Museum

APPROACH

The Task Force has neither commissioned nor undertaken a detailed cultural history of Bellevue. Rather, the history component has been developed to help add understanding and meaning to the events of the present. As such, the Task Force viewed this brief history as the context for its work and as a vehicle to raise public awareness and understanding.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Task Force began its work on the cultural history of Bellevue by reviewing existing historical information on the City and by consulting with the Bellevue Historical Society. The review included the City's archives; books such as Bellevue, The First 100 Years; the recent series of articles which appeared in the Journal American on Japanese settlers; photos from the Bellevue Public Schools and Marymoor Park Museum; a chronicle by the City; and the Bellevue Historical and Cultural Resources Survey.

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The Task Force invited Sid White and Pat Matheny White, who authored *The People's of Washington* for the Washington State Centennial, to provide perspective on the nature and scope of producing a cultural history for Bellevue. They were also asked to provide an overview of options available to the Task Force for heightening public awareness of the City's cultural history.

Given the overall focus on issue identification and on production of a community action plan, the group determined that the most relevant approach was to use Bellevue's cultural history to develop a better understanding of the issues of today and to educate the public as to Bellevue's diversity past, present, and future.

Picture

1930 Bellevue Japanese Clubhouse Dedication. Courtesy Marymoor Museum

THE PAST

Originally, Native American people of the Puget Sound Salish groups populated the area now known as Bellevue. Maps illustrate frequently used trails that were the trading and transportation routes people traveled prior to European settlement. Recent studies show that there were Native American villages and burial grounds in the Meydenbauer Bay area and in the area around Mercer Slough.

Between 1869 and 1920, frontier settlers German, Welch, Scottish, English, Irish, Norwegian, Swedish, Polish, Finnish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and African American - occupied the fertile areas of what is now Bellevue. These settlers were predominantly farmers and loggers.

The Wilburton Mill, which was located near the present City Hall site, opened in 1895 and employed over 400 mill workers by 1900. Of European and Japanese ancestry, these mill workers were housed in and near the camp. Similarly, coal mining activity to the south in the upper reaches of Coal Creek and in Newcastle brought mine workers and support people of European descent to the coal-rich area. In the 1880s a crew of Chinese were also employed to remove the rejected coal from the bunkers. In the early 1890s African Americans were used as strikebreakers in the Newcastle mines. Eighty African Americans were secretly transferred to work in the Newcastle mines in 1891 at reduced wages. This resulted in protest walkouts by whites who feared that precedent would be established for pay cuts for all mine workers. Wages for African Americans were generally 15 to 20 percent less than for whites. When the labor problems were eventually resolved, many of the African Americans remained to work in the mines, establishing the first significant settlement of African Americans on the Eastside. (Bellevue Historical and Cultural Resources Survey)

Map

Native American travel routes. Courtesy Marymoor Museum and Journal American 1982

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Dairy fanning and fruit and vegetable cultivation also predominated in the early 1900s. Many fanners were Japanese, having arrived from Japan in the 1890s. Exclusion and discrimination haunted the Japanese. "By 1921 Washington State had enacted a law forbidding the Japanese from purchasing additional land. Many Japanese circumvented this law by making deals that

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gave whites technical ownership of the land and the Japanese became employee 'managers.' Many of the Japanese who leased the land in this fashion usually had to move to new plots within five years because their rents were raised and they were unable to continue making a living. (Bellevue Historical and Cultural Resources Survey) A series of articles in the Journal American by news editor David Neiwert detailed the experiences of the Japanese agriculture community during the period of the Second World War. Neiwert's interviews with many prominent individuals in the Japanese community illuminated the tragic ordeals these people faced in the May 1942 evacuation. A train departing from Kirkland carried Bellevue's entire Japanese population of over 300 people to internment camps in California. Each family was numbered, the children were tagged, and all were allowed to bring only what they could carry. The Japanese population lost everything with internment: their property, jobs, businesses, and homes.

Graphic

Produce label from early Bellevue. Courtesy Kelly Smith

THE RECENT PAST

The rapid growth of the Bellevue area began as transportation links to Seattle were established and the floating bridges built. This bedroom community offering safety, good schools, a pleasant environment, good commercial services, and easy access to work and recreation grew quickly.

Following incorporation in 1953, the City of Bellevue expanded rapidly, annexing such areas as Lake Hills, Wilburton, Woodridge, Crossroads, Bridle Trails, and Sammamish in the 1960s. While the growth in population during this period was pronounced, the growth in the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity was modest. This suburban growth gave rise to an image of Bellevue as a white, affluent suburb. Only in the mid-1980s did human diversity grow more quickly. To this extent, much of the cultural and ethnic history of Bellevue is most accurately characterized as an emerging profile of community diversity.

Graphic

Produce label from early Bellevue. Courtesy Kelly Smith

Yet, as the community is changing, many in Bellevue-and certainly in the region-are unaware of the growing diversity of Bellevue today. Outdated impressions and old stereotypes linger. To bridge the gap, the Task Force believes that the most relevant step to be taken regarding the City's cultural and ethnic history is to educate and inform the public about Bellevue's increasing diversity. The following is the means envisioned by the Task Force.

Graphic

Real Estate Ad. Courtesy Bellevue Friends of the Library

AN EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATION

Focusing on the richness and vibrancy that diversity brings to a community, a publication should be produced which highlights the City's past, present, and future diversity. The public information piece would educate and inform the general public as well as the school-age population. The document should be divided chronologically to show the progression of immigration and population growth through today and also highlight the City Council's vision of

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Bellevue as a truly welcoming city. By using available historical information, the oral histories of the past can be made more meaningful and relevant.

The second section of this profile would be, in essence, History of the Present, using the demographic work of the Task Force embellished with stories of new arrivals to Bellevue. A profile of the City's current diversity could then be brought out.

The third section would be looking ahead to Bellevue tomorrow, highlighting the diversity of our school-age population and the demographic trends, as well as Task Force recommendations that speak to the City Council's vision of a future Bellevue which truly welcomes, values, and nurtures its diversity.

This publication should be completed within the year, sent to every Bellevue address, and made available to every public and private school in the City for incorporation into the curriculum. Additionally the profiles should be developed into a display which can be used in public spaces around Bellevue, at civic events, and in the City's schools.

Picture

Bellevue Public Schools

SECTION III

DEMOGRAPHICS

METHODOLOGY

This demographic section, compiled primarily from data provided by the 1990 decennial census, seeks to identify trends in population change and to present comparative information of major ethnic/racial categories. The Task Force sought data from other sources-community organizations, service providers, and schools-and cites the appropriate source. It is important to note that unless otherwise stated, all charts and graphs included in this report represent the City of Bellevue and that for the purpose of this demographic review, the Census Bureau terminology was used. The grouping, labels, and categories are those of the census. The Census Bureau developed categories in which to sort information collected by racial and ethnic groups. Listed alphabetically, the categories, as defined by the census, are:

- American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black
- Hispanic*
- Other
- White

* Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race; therefore, their numbers may be duplicated in other groups.

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Further, each category can contain national/ethnic subgroups; it is therefore important to acknowledge the diversity even within these categories. As it becomes available and is released from the census, the City may want to update this report with data on more specific groups. Of particular interest would be the Asian/Pacific Islander category, which represents the largest minority group in Bellevue and contains over 18 different subgroups.

POPULATION CHANGES

With a 1990 population of 86,874, the growing City of Bellevue is the fourth largest city in the state. During the 1980s the minority population of Bellevue doubled and now represents 13.5 percent of the City's population. The expanding minority population is consistent with expansion experienced by many of the nation's urban centers and the growth trends of both King County and the State of Washington.

Within the population, the most dramatic growth has been in the Asian/Pacific Islander population. This category includes over 18 different ethnic groups. The growing Chinese population of 2,423 is the largest of all minority groups.

Graphs (3)

Bellevue's Changing Population

1990 Bellevue Population by Race and Hispanic Origin

ANCESTRY/ORIGIN

In addition to the racial/ethnic categories defined by the census data (Black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic), the census also provides information which supports a broader profile of the diverse identities of the population.

- Over 11,000 residents speak a language other than English.
- Bellevue residents indicated ancestral ties to over 34 different countries / regions.
- As of 1990, there were 11,548 residents of Bellevue who were born outside of the United States. Nearly half (48.46 percent) of this population came to Bellevue during the 1980s.

Graph

Speak Language Other Than English

Foreign-Born Population

DISTRIBUTION

Two significant patterns emerge in the age distribution characteristics of the population. Children are disproportionately of minority populations, and seniors (65+) are disproportionately White.

Children

The larger proportion of children within the minority population is consistent with state and national trends. Bellevue School District statistics of 1992-1993 indicated that minority students comprised 24.4 percent of the district enrollment, while the general population was 13.5 percent minority. Over 16.5 percent of the enrollment represented students of Asian and Southeast Asian

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cultures. The school district is challenged by the need to provide bilingual programs to its students, who speak, collectively, over 30 different languages.

The change in the racial/ethnic mix of the school population has been rapid. While the student composition has been changing, that of the teachers and staff has remained relatively constant. An important component in the relationship is overall enrollment. In 1980, 19,381 students were enrolled in Bellevue public schools. In 1993 total enrollment is 14,758.

Seniors

Between 1980 and 1990 the population of Bellevue's senior citizens almost doubled (98 percent). The national rate of growth for this population group is 22 percent.

Graphs

Age Distribution (Percent of Population Within Each Group)

Bellevue School District (Percentage of Minority Populations)

Bellevue School District (District Enrollment)

Bellevue School District (Percentage of Minority Enrollment Populations)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

Income

Bellevue is generally characterized as a community of relative affluence. In comparison to the rest of the region, the census income data supports that general conclusion. The median household income in Bellevue is \$43,800, compared to a King County median household income of \$36,179. However, an income gap exists between the White population and the minority populations. The most dramatic is the 65 percent difference between White and Black income levels.

While earning less than the White population, minority residents of Bellevue have average incomes that exceed the average for the region.

Employment

The 1990 data portrays a lower-than-average overall unemployment rate for the City of Bellevue. The segment of the adult population (ages 16 and over) experiencing the highest unemployment was Black females at 6.1 percent.

Characteristic of the national trends in the workforce, more than 50 percent of females in all groups are in the labor force. The rates for female participation are highest in the Black, American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut, and Hispanic populations. One consequence of the changing pattern of work among females in general, and the even higher rates among minority women, is greater demand for childcare resources and increasing needs for trained, multicultural childcare workers.

In the two years since the census, the overall unemployment rate in Bellevue has risen from 3.0 percent to 4.6 percent. It is assumed all categories are now experiencing a higher rate of unemployment.

Graphics

Characteristics of Employment - Male (Persons 16 Years and Older)

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Characteristics of Employment - Female (Persons 16 Years and Older)

Educational Attainment

Bellevue is a highly educated community. Educational attainment is a population characteristic that is commonly linked to other socio-economic indicators, such as income and employment. Each of the population categories exceeds the regional average in educational attainment.

The Asian/Pacific Islander category records the highest proportion of its population holding college and graduate degrees (over 60 percent). This group also has a significant portion of its population (15 percent) that has attained less than a 12th grade education. This category includes over 18 nationalities - a number of which are recent immigrants or refugees - in addition to second- and third-generation Americans of Asian/Pacific Islander heritage.

Graph

Educational Attainment (Persons 18 and Older)

Poverty

Minority populations are more likely to be poor. For the 1990 census, poverty was defined as a family of four with a household income below \$12,674.

Those populations with the highest percentage in poverty status are Black (16.1 percent) and Asian/Pacific Islander (14.2 percent). Within both of these groups, there is a higher proportion of poor among children and the aging population.

Graph

Poverty Status (Percent of Total Population in Each Group)

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Owning vs. Renting

The majority (60 percent) of the White population own their own homes. Among the Asian/Pacific Islander population, owning and renting are almost evenly divided. In all other population groups, the majority of persons live in rental housing.

House Value

While there is variability in home ownership patterns among the population groups, there is remarkable consistency in reported value of homes owned. For all groups, the average value of homes is in the range of \$200,000 to \$240,000.

Graphs

Household Tenure (Owner Occupied vs. Renter Occupied)

Value of Owner Occupied Houses

DISABILITY

A growing component of Bellevue's diverse population is the residents that are disabled. The number of persons with disabilities grew dramatically during the 1980s. The Washington Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities reports that the percent of the population with disabilities

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increased from 8.7 percent in 1980 to 14 percent in 1985. This increase is attributable to advances in medicine which extend the capacity to prolong life and the growing number of elderly in the population.

The number of persons age 65 and over increased 98 percent during the 1980s. It is estimated that this age group accounts for almost half of the disabled population. While there are both difference and diversity in this group, mobility and self-care limitations produce a similarity of needs and issues for the aging and disabled population. The passage of the 1990 American with Disabilities Act, a landmark public policy achievement for persons with disabilities, requires that the community ensure opportunity and civil protection for this growing population.

PROJECTIONS

As Bellevue continues to grow as a major urban center of the state, it will become increasingly diverse. State population forecasts present a pattern of general decrease in the White population during the next 20 years and a corresponding increase in other population groups. A combination of higher birth rates, higher rates of in-migration, and the overall younger age of the minority population account for this developing trend. The growing numbers of refugees contribute to the immigration pattern. King County Refugee Planning Committee estimated 4,500 refugees settled in King County in 1992, an increase of 70 percent from 1990. Of this number, 40 percent were Southeast Asian, 45 percent East European, and 10 percent African.

Data gathered from various organizations serving Bellevue and the Eastside, including Seattle King County Public Health Department and Bellevue Community College, corroborate the trend of on-going growth in the diversity of the population.

Graphs

Washington State Population of Race/Ethnic Group (Projected Growth 1990-2010)

Bellevue Community College (Enrollment percentage comparison by Ethnicity)

Seattle King County Public Health – Patient Report

1990 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS/MAPS

Graphs

1990 Census (Characteristics of Population) (Detail of Race and Hispanic Origin Categories)

Distribution of Black Population

Black Population

Distribution of Asian & Pacific Islander Population

Asian & Pacific Islander Population

Distribution of Other Population

Other Population

Distribution of Hispanic Population

Hispanic Population

SECTION IV

CULTURAL DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

IDENTIFICATION OF TRENDS AND ISSUES

The Task Force determined early on that identification of trends and issues-along with developing a community action plan-was the primary focus of its attention. Therefore, an aggressive process of community outreach was devised to learn of the issues, concerns, and trends facing the community. To accomplish this, over 200 groups or individuals were initially identified and contacted.

Photos from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROCESS

Each Task Force member chose a number of individuals and groups to contact and interview. The Task Force believed it was necessary to affirmatively seek out the concerns of groups who did not regularly participate in City government processes. With staff assistance, scores of contacts were made throughout the community over the life of the group. Task Force members solicited groups' concerns and reported them to the rest of the Task Force. This major public process constituted a significant level of effort.

Additionally, agency directors and community leaders gave detailed presentations to the Task Force. The Police Chief; the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for Bellevue Public Schools; the Executive Director of Eastside Mental Health; the directors, staff, and students of area Chinese schools; the Executive Director of the North and East King County Multi-Service Centers; the Director of Asian Counseling and Referral Services; representatives of the African American community; a presentation of Native American concerns; trainers on workforce diversity; representatives of the City's personnel, human services, and parks & recreation programs - all provided the Task Force with valuable insight.

To provide greater access to community members and to increase awareness of community diversity and City facilities and programs, the Task Force met twice monthly in the evenings at community facilities-including the North Bellevue Community and Senior Center, Crossroads Community Center, Highland Community Center, Robinswood Park Cabana, and City Hall.

Photos from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

To organize and analyze the information being gathered, the members divided themselves into four subcommittees which focused on:

- education issues
- economic issues
- law and justice
- youth and social services

Each subcommittee prepared a set of draft issue papers. In January the issue papers were distributed to the community for comment and discussion. The Task Force organized two events to gain public comment and suggestions: a Community Forum on February 6, 1993, and a Public Hearing on February 18, 1993 - both held in City Hall.

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The Community Forum featured facilitated discussion groups which reviewed the draft issue papers prepared by the Task Force subcommittees. Approximately 130 individuals participated in twelve discussion groups. The participants provided thoughtful and creative advice to the Task Force while having an opportunity to learn from each other during the upbeat and positive event. The Forum significantly enhanced and enriched the work of the Task Force.

With 27 individuals addressing the Task Force, the Public Hearing also provided an important means of gaining public response to the draft issue papers. Additionally, the Task Force received a number of letters. Phoned in comments were also received by the Task Force and City Council staff and were noted for group discussion. Following this extensive public process, the Task Force used the comments and suggestions to prepare the final policy recommendations.

Photo from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

TRENDS AND ISSUES

All of the work of the Task Force—demographic analysis, interviews, presentations, public outreach—paints a picture of a community increasingly diverse in culture, race, ethnicity, and lifestyle. Naturally, a diversifying population displays a diversity of needs. The following generally summarizes the issues, trends, and concerns identified by the Cultural Diversity Task Force.

Public Information and Awareness

There is a significant lack of language-appropriate and culturally relevant information in the community. No central location or entity exists to provide information on housing, health care, employment, legal justice, public safety, language classes (English as a second language), and goods and services in a coordinated and meaningful fashion.

A very common theme heard during the community outreach and forum was that there is an absence of coordinated information which explains City services, government programs, educational opportunities, employment availability, and goods and services in Bellevue. Available information is either so spread out and specialized that it is unusable, or it is not available in languages many people need. Many agencies are individually producing non-English information and/or are providing programs and services desired, yet there is no central focus, interconnection, or overall referral clearinghouse to bring it together.

Similarly, a lack of awareness of Bellevue's diversity exists. Many feel that the stereotypes of Bellevue as an affluent white community are true. Many Bellevue residents are seemingly unaware of the demographic changes their community is experiencing. The patterns of overall population growth and employment growth are mentioned in Bellevue and the Eastside, yet little recognition seems to exist regarding the increasing cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. Additionally, old, inaccurate stereotypes of Bellevue are, at times, reinforced in the local print and broadcast media.

Cultural Displacement

Moving to the United States from another culture often results in a number of problems. Significant numbers of people from Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, South and Central America, and Africa are now coming to Bellevue and the Eastside. Many find that their traditional family roles and values are significantly altered and supplanted by majority cultural values.

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Additionally, these new arrivals often have vast language and cultural adjustments to make. While some services exist to assist them, there are generally no centralized, coordinated information services to help these individuals in an organized fashion. New arrivals must cope with a maze of government agencies and social service providers who each offer quality services, but in a specialized way. The array of providers can be confusing to those raised in this culture and can be completely bewildering to those whose social and cultural context is for example Vietnam, The Ukraine, or Honduras:

Language

The increasing non-English-speaking population has difficulty understanding official and commercial communication. Institutions and businesses in this area communicate in English to the exclusion of the non-English-speaking/reading population. An example of this trend was reported in the aftermath of the Inaugural Day wind storm. Large areas of Bellevue and the Eastside were without power for several days in January. Fearing that fires and carbon monoxide poisonings could result as people brought gas heaters and Bar-B-Qs into homes, public safety and health agencies issued warnings and cautions through local media. Nevertheless, health service providers still responded to large numbers of cases of carbon monoxide poisoning, a significant percentage of which were non-English-speaking patients who didn't understand the English broadcasts and publications.

Similarly, public safety providers in Bellevue, police and paramedics predominantly, are increasingly faced with situations where they are unable to communicate with citizens or where citizens are unaware of the role of emergency medical providers. Most public agencies find translators in short supply and have difficulty coordinating the various individual needs a client may have.

Photo from Cultural Diversity Community Forum February 6, 1993

Further, the demand for English as a Second Language classes is far greater than the supply. Presently, applicants must wait six months or longer to enter these classes at Bellevue Community College.

Employment

Bellevue is home to an increasing number of new arrivals from other parts of the world—particularly Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. A primary concern of these citizens is to find and secure adequate, suitable employment. A gulf presently exists between those desiring employment and those with the capacity to hire. This is a gulf of awareness, resulting from a lack of cultural understanding, a lack of understanding of the institutional context of employment in this society, and a lack of language skills.

Fairly significant numbers of immigrants from Eastern Europe are settling in the Bellevue area, many of whom possess professional skills and trades learned in the former Soviet system; trained engineers, draft persons, mechanics, for example. Many of these individuals speak English, yet they remain unemployed or underemployed. Often, the reason lies in a lack of understanding of the context of employment in this society. In a Soviet centrally planned economy, work is provided to those with training and skills. Marketing one's skills in a hiring context is unheard of, as are the

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limiting factors of union membership, professional licenses, apprenticeships, or operators' licenses-all basic requirements for trade and professional positions here, but of which these individuals have little understanding.

Similarly, cultural differences often work against new arrivals. In certain Asian cultures, for example, cultural norms dictate never praising oneself, speaking very modestly of abilities and accomplishments, and avoiding direct eye contact with persons in positions of respect.

Consequently, in an employment interview, an individual with this cultural context might continuously look down, refusing to make eye contact with an interviewer, and might speak condescendingly of his/her skills and abilities.

Small Business Assistance

People arriving here have voiced frustration regarding how to start businesses. Entering the business world as the owner/operator of a small business enterprise is, under the best of conditions, risky. For refugees and immigrants, there are additional risks because of language barriers, lack of insight into United States business practices, and a lack of understanding of the American public as purchasers of goods and services.

Further, some individuals have identified the absence of particular goods or services desired by their racial, cultural, ethnic, or religious background. Zoning information, rental/lease arrangements, business licensing, and loan/finance requirements are overwhelming. The result is that these needs go unmet in Bellevue, and those desiring the goods or services travel to Seattle where older, established businesses exist.

Photo from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

Housing

The cost of housing in Bellevue can be prohibitive. Many who find employment in the increasing services sector of the local economy are unable to locate housing in the community commensurate with the salaries offered. This often leads to shared housing and families doubling up to meet the cost of an apartment. The alternative is to live outside Bellevue and commute, thereby adding to the congestion and pollution plaguing the region. The City of Bellevue has devised policies to assist in the construction of lower-cost housing and has made funds available through the work of the Human Services Commission; however, the demand for lower-cost housing appears to far exceed the supply. There is also a lack of balance and dispersal of affordable housing community-wide.

City Services

Outreach into the community and an understanding of the cultural circumstances, lifestyles, and languages of all Bellevue citizens are needed. Generally, City services are explained in English and marketed in traditional ways which do not reach today's diverse population. Illustrating the concern is an example of an older citizen from another culture who received a City of Bellevue letter. In the country from which she emigrated, receiving such an official-looking letter was not only an unwelcome occurrence, it was often a very bad sign. Fearful and unable to read it, she lived anxiously for several weeks before showing it to a friend. The letter, written in English, contained the City's standard notice of a community meeting to explain City services.

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Further, public safety personnel need to understand the community they serve and the languages spoken in that community. The Bellevue Police Department is perceived as not being a part of some of the groups they serve.

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The City of Bellevue is working to create a work place which values diversity. Bellevue has made significant strides to increase diversity in hiring and works to assure cross-cultural awareness through mandatory employee training. The City does not, however, offer benefits to domestic partners of its employees as other area governments do (i.e., City of Seattle and King County).

Hate Crimes

Hate crimes based on color and on sexual orientation have been increasing locally, and nationally. Hate crimes can also be difficult to account for with certainty because they often go unreported or are not indicated with statistical accuracy. The City of Bellevue and the Bellevue Police Department do not tolerate hate crimes, as defined in state law, and they do actively pursue and fully prosecute those suspected of committing such crimes. Currently, however, the City has not enacted laws to classify crimes perpetrated against individuals based on sexual orientation as hate crimes.

Bellevue Public Schools

Diversity in Bellevue Public Schools is dramatically increasing. School district officials have taken important strides to expand culturally relevant education and to meet the language needs and customs of this diverse population. A recent conference hosted by the school district featured national experts on diversity in public school curriculum. Yet diversity in hiring for classroom teachers is far from matching the diversity in student population. Similarly, significant numbers of counselors and role models who reflect the cultural and racial diversity of the community are lacking in the schools.

Language barriers and cultural differences are manifest in the most pronounced way for families with school-age children. Parents in a family arriving from a distinctly different culture often express the sense of having lost their children. Because school-age children quickly learn the languages, customs, and behaviors of their new culture, the traditional roles of parents and children become blurred in these families. This is particularly acute for some Asian immigrants where the tradition of authority and respect for elders can be lost as children become the experts in the new culture and resist traditional values. The role of public school education in this dynamic is critical.

As hate crimes and intolerance have increased in the adult population, racial slurs and intolerance are reported to be more prevalent in schools as well. School district personnel swiftly intervene to stop any such incident but are alarmed by the increasing occurrences.

Photo from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

Gang Activity and Drug & Alcohol Abuse

Gang activity among various ethnic groups is increasing in Bellevue. While the Bellevue Police Department closely monitors gang activity, the reasons and circumstances that lead young people to join gangs is largely going unaddressed. Similarly, substance abuse among the City youth is

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on the increase, particularly alcohol, which is said to be the drug of choice for youth in the community. While the Bellevue Public Schools, police, parks and recreation departments, social service providers, and religious groups are all making laudable efforts to provide positive alternatives for youth, gang activity and drug and alcohol use continue to rise.

Goods and Services

Goods and services for an increasingly diverse population are often unavailable in Bellevue. Basic personal requirements-such as dietary needs, health and appearance needs, and clothing-for a non-European population are often unavailable. Those who do not speak English are unable to conduct business or make purchases in many Bellevue establishments because no provisions have been made to serve non-English-speaking customers. Such services as Spanish-speaking cash machines are limited in Bellevue. Of particular concern is the fact that people of color have cited examples of having been made to feel unwelcome-watched, hurried, and in some instances, harassed-by some merchants.

Transportation

Non-English-speaking populations have difficulty with public transportation in Bellevue. Posted schedules, signs, and information on Metro routes are in English. Additionally, there are no bus routes to Seattle King County Public Health Department facilities, the Department of Social and Health Services, Eastside Mental Health, and Bellevue City Hall from many Bellevue neighborhoods. Individuals without automobiles in Bellevue are seriously inconvenienced.

Social Activities

Bellevue and the Eastside generally lack social and recreational activities desired by the area's diverse population. As with goods and services, culturally relevant social activities have not been established in Bellevue, leading people to travel to Seattle for recreation. This is of particular concern for youth who cite few alternatives for social activities on weekends and in the evenings in Bellevue.

Arts

The Bellevue Arts Commission, Park Board, and Parks & Recreation Department have begun to recognize the importance of diversity in Bellevue. In 1992 the City held Festival, a festival of art and culture in Bellevue. This event was very welcome in the community. Crossroads Mall has also hosted arts, information, and music events focusing on the City's diversity. In 1993 Eastside Mental Health and Friends of Youth have proposed a street fair concept featuring cultural diversity on the Eastside. Such events highlight and celebrate our increasing diversity and bring needed awareness and appreciation.

Photos from Cultural Diversity Community Forum, February 6, 1993

Beyond these events, however, there is little ongoing encouragement or recognition given to ethnic art and music. Public space, for example, is not provided for cultural arts activities on a regular, consistent, or known basis.

SECTION V

CULTURAL DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Task Force members defined their charge broadly. They chose to report on diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, and lifestyle and to address their recommendations through the City Council to the entire community. As such, the recommendations made here are addressed not only to City Government, but through the City to several major institutions of the community-the public schools, the private schools, the business community, social service agencies, and the media.

Each institution plays a significant role in leading a positive response to the needs, issues, and trends discussed in this report. While some issues and concerns can be addressed individually by a particular institution, the need for more and improved public information and education is best met through a community partnership with the broad participation of many community groups and institutions. The Community Action Plan, therefore, lays out a blueprint of action for each of Bellevue's major institutions individually and calls for a partnership between the institutions to unite around diversity.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND INFORMATION PARTNERSHIP

Cultural diversity should receive more recognition City-wide through a coordinated public education and information partnership. City government should coordinate this partnership, with Bellevue businesses, Bellevue Public Schools, Bellevue Community College, social service agencies, professional organizations, service groups, government agencies, and private schools and colleges all actively participating. Working together, these groups can create needed- public education, referral, and information programs which are available to everyone in the community.

Recognizing the Pacific Rim and global focus shaping the City's business core, the Chamber of Commerce and Bellevue Downtown Association are naturals to participate in the partnership. The Bellevue Chamber of-Commerce has a wealth of experience and expertise through its membership, which should be used in educational forums. The Bellevue Downtown Association is also well positioned to provide educational opportunities and support through its members.

Both libraries in Bellevue should also devote particular attention to multicultural awareness throughout their facilities and increase and feature non-English publications as a part of this community-based program.

The Task Force recommends the following actions steps:

- Establish programs, seminars, forums, and meetings around a host of relevant and meaningful topics, with the City organizing and facilitating community resources to conduct these programs.
- Design seminars and forums to explain specific practices to those who are unfamiliar with cultural traditions, institutions, and services within the City.
- Use the business community's knowledge, perspective, and support as a cornerstone in forming a partnership for cultural appreciation and understanding.
- Highlight Bellevue public and private schools, Bellevue Community College, and City University as leaders in developing and hosting seminars.
- Encourage professional organizations, local services, clubs, and retired persons to participate.
- Include the Seattle King County Public Health Department, the Employment Security Administration, the Small Business Administration, and the Department of Social and Health Services in the planning and hosting of these events.

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- Request the King County Library to establish a cultural education section in the new Bellevue Library, accenting the positive cultural diversity focus.
- Request that the Meydenbauer Center contribute space for seminars and events sponsored under this program.

Examples of areas to be addressed in this partnership include:

The Legal Justice System

Many citizens, particularly those arriving in the United States from other countries, have little understanding of the workings of our legal justice system. This lack of understanding contributes to fear, mistrust, and negative impressions of law enforcement agencies, the legal system, and government in general.

The structure, function, and operation of the legal justice system are complex and require explanation in seminars and classes. Information regarding the legal system, the role of the police, and the role of other agencies and groups needs to be distributed in a variety of languages. Forums focused on individual rights and freedoms, as well as individual responsibilities and obligations, are an important part of this partnership.

Employment

Finding suitable employment is a particularly critical problem facing people of color and individuals of various ethnic backgrounds who have arrived here from other countries and other parts of the United States. Often, language and cultural differences become insurmountable for those seeking employment. While these individuals may possess the required skills, they often do not have the cultural or language understanding needed to access employment.

Skills training workshops and seminars to assist individuals in job search are needed. Existing local resources should be used to conduct these workshops. Employment seminars should be broadened to include more information on interview skills, completing job applications, resumes, and job placement and referral services for a greater number of participants.

General Information

General information regarding local government structure, function, and laws; transit; public health services; and banking are needed. This partnership should provide continuing understandable information in all these areas in a format which is readily understood and available in many languages. Such information includes transit routes; the location of medical, dental, and mental health services; employment and housing opportunities; childcare providers; and public safety issues.

Starting Small Businesses

There is a need for business start-up seminars focusing on showing financing principles, tax systems, licensing, zoning, etc. The Small Business Administration-in conjunction with private sector organizations, financial advisors, lenders, realtors, and City zoning officials- should conduct seminars in their specialties. Training should address the needs of those who have been traditionally excluded, such as limited English-speaking populations, people of color, women, and youth. The training should be a mix of components that will not only address the unique needs of the target population, but will also provide the participants with traditional training activities designed to prepare an individual for entry into the business world.

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The objectives of this program are to provide information necessary to make a realistic, informed decision about becoming the owner/operator of a small business, small business development and management that will lead to the successful development of a business plan, assistance in meeting licensing and regulatory requirements, assistance in loan application procedures, assistance in gaining necessary capital, and follow-up assistance and advice to successful start-ups for a defined period of time.

Health Services

Seattle King County Public Health Department, Group Health, the Department of Social and Health Services, Eastside Mental Health, and Overlake Hospital need to provide collaborative information and seminars in areas such as culturally appropriate childcare, healthcare availability, and facilities. Social and cultural adjustment forums are also needed and should be organized in collaboration with groups such as existing ethnic counseling services.

Youth and Family Services

This partnership should work with Bellevue schools to focus on youth and family services around cultural understanding. Cultural displacement of families with school-age children is particularly acute. Children more quickly assimilate into American culture at the expense of the values of their traditional cultures. Native American children and those of immigrant families are often forced to be a part of two distinctly different cultures. These families would benefit from a thoughtful and comprehensive partnership providing school-based and family-based information and understanding. School counselors, teachers, and family counselors from these cultures should share a common focus and aim.

THE CITY OF BELLEVUE

The City has taken important steps to recognize, enhance, and value diversity. Personnel practices in hiring, education, and policy development have begun. To recognize the strength and benefit of our diversity, these beginnings must continue and be built upon with vigor. The following outlines actions the City should take to address the issues and trends that have been identified.

Personnel Practices

- Enhance the City's policies of respecting, recruiting, and promoting diversity. The City of Bellevue should effectively recruit and retain individuals who speak languages in addition to English. This is particularly important in public safety professions.
- Continue as mandatory for all employees the cultural diversity awareness classes and seminars, with periodic follow-up and reinforcement. These should focus on respect for all people. The principles of cross-cultural appreciation should be reinforced for all new hires and required regularly for all individuals.
- Lead the community by example and encourage other public and private organizations to institutionalize valuing diversity. The City of Bellevue should encourage all public and private sector organizations to promote the principles of recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce.
- Extend City benefits to domestic partners of City employees.

Hate Crimes

- Continue the City of Bellevue and the Bellevue Police Department's aggressive policy employing every legal means to fully prosecute those suspected of committing hate crimes.

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- Seek any available legal means to strengthen laws protecting rights for all individuals, including the adoption of local ordinances protecting individual rights based on sexual orientation.
- Through its legislative agenda, the City should support state legislation which protects the basic civil rights of all people, regardless of sexual orientation.

Community Policing

- The mission of Police Department should be more strongly focused on becoming a part of Bellevue's increasingly diverse community. Police personnel should make purposeful efforts to reach out and become part of the various communities that are Bellevue today.

Youth Services

- Actively establish the City's role in the growth and development of Bellevue's youth in partnership with schools and other social activities.
- Strengthen and expand Youth Link and existing after-school programs.
- Adopt strong public policy, encouraging cross-cultural appreciation and understanding among the City's youth.
- Partner with the public and private schools to institute, promote, and recognize education which celebrates cultural, racial, and ethnic differences.
- Seek commitments to extend DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) into more grades and school programs.
- Heighten the City support for substance abuse treatment programs.

Housing

- Continue and increase efforts to have more lower-cost housing constructed throughout Bellevue.
- Encourage the distribution of funding through the Human Services Commission for more affordable housing in the City of Bellevue.

Public Service Programming

- Promote and encourage media coverage that celebrates Bellevue's cultural diversity and provides awareness to break down stereotypes. Use cable TV and other means to produce and air programs which promote cross-cultural competence.
- Produce and distribute public service announcements which well come diversity as a wholly positive and essential part of a vibrant fulfilling community. It should be shown that Bellevue will not accept bigotry, exclusion, or discrimination in any way whatsoever.

Transportation

- Encourage Metro to increase non-English information on transit routes and scheduling.
- Promote greater Metro transit service to Bellevue neighborhoods, particularly to public health, social services, and government agencies.

BELLEVUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Roughly one-quarter of Bellevue's public school population are people of color. The diversity of the school-age population is growing rapidly, and nowhere are actions taken as critical as those that affect our children and youth. As such, considerable Task Force time has been spent focusing on issues regarding youth and education.

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Bellevue Public Schools should move quickly to institute fundamental changes in core services to meet the needs of this changing population. The needs of youth today reflect the multi-cultural demographics in a myriad of ways. Cross-cultural understanding, recognition, and appreciation of different students' circumstances and needs; appreciation of various behavioral needs and traditions; and opportunities for understanding, listening, and alternative activities which show that all are welcome and promote belonging are increasingly needed.

Curriculum

- Recognize the need of its diverse student population in every aspect of service delivery.
- Focus curriculum on cross-cultural awareness and appreciation of differences. To accomplish this, adoption of an aggressive, recognized multi-cultural curriculum should occur immediately and be instituted in every Bellevue public school and woven into all programs as a part of daily study throughout the school year.
- Provide extensive cross cultural awareness and appreciation training for all staff, including teachers, administrators, counselors, office staff, bus drivers, and food service workers.

Role Models

- Recruit aggressively and creatively to employ a significantly increased number of teachers and counselors who reflect the cultural and racial diversity of the student population and who are trained to understand and relate to the needs and circumstances of today's school population. Positive role models and available, relevant counseling are needed in all schools. This should include bringing more community members into the schools through programs such as VIBES (Volunteers in Bellevue's Education System).
- Appreciate contributions of teachers from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds. These individuals should be mentored and supported for leadership positions.
- Sponsor more parent involvement and family social events which would focus on cross-cultural awareness. This will provide positive cross-cultural experiences for parents as well as students and can be a part of the community partnership program.
- Create college scholarships to assist and encourage students of color to obtain degrees in teaching and return to the Bellevue public schools as teachers.

Community Involvement

- Expand incentives for students to contribute to the community and to complete school.
- Broaden opportunity for youth within the community. Students may come to value the opportunity within the community if avenues for community involvement are established with local business and the City of Bellevue.

Recognition

- Establish recognition and awards program for schools and individuals who demonstrate effective approaches to promoting cross-cultural awareness. Innovation within schools should be encouraged, recognized, and rewarded within the community.

Positive Alternatives

- Provide a positive alternative to gang activity and drug and alcohol abuse for youth in Bellevue. Youth from immigrant and minority populations are at risk to join youth gangs which offer a sense of belonging. These youths, desperately need alternatives.
- Establish groups in schools, modeled after effective programs in other cities, which have been shown to counteract growing gang activity.

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- Provide mentors and positive role models for a diverse school population to counter the seduction and camaraderie offered by gang activities.

Parent Involvement

- Offer seminars through the schools to bring parents and students together. Breaking down stereotypes and biases must focus on parent attitudes.
- Produce information through schools in a variety of languages for those parents whose primary language is not English.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Private schools serving the Bellevue area are encouraged to incorporate cultural awareness into curricula and to embrace the principles of appreciating and valuing diversity. Schools should develop partnerships with public agencies to expand access to broad community resources.

PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA

Due to the powerful capability of the media to educate and increase public understanding, concerted efforts should be made to inform and educate editorial writers, reporters, and broadcast journalists about Bellevue's diverse population. The media should be encouraged to report on issues of cross-cultural awareness and understanding without promoting racial stereotypes or glamorizing violence.

BUSINESSES

Beyond active participation and support for the community education and outreach partnership, the business community has an important role in recognizing and supporting a community which truly welcomes and embraces diversity.

Goods and Services

- Market more actively to Bellevue's diversifying population. Clearly, a significant amount of potential business revenue is being lost to Seattle. As the needs of the increasingly diverse populations are not being met here, people are traveling to Seattle and, in some cases, Vancouver, BC to obtain culturally and ethnically appropriate goods and services.
- Focus the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and The Bellevue Downtown Association resources on assisting members to identify and meet the needs of this growing Eastside market.

Language

- Recognize that an increasingly larger number of potential customers are most comfortable with languages other than English. Spanish, for example, is the first language of an increasing Eastside population.
- Recognize language difference. Be sensitive to and assist people with communication and understanding.

Sensitivity

- Be sensitive and aware of issues of cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity. The Task Force heard a number of examples where people of color were made to feel uncomfortable or

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unwelcome in some Bellevue businesses or major shopping centers. Instances where African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians felt watched, followed, and hurried along were cited.

- Provide seminars and courses on cultural awareness and sensitivity for Bellevue's commercial sector. The Chamber of Commerce, The Bellevue Downtown Association, and Bellevue Square Merchant's Association should sponsor and encourage such programs for their members.

SECTION VI

Throughout the work of the Task Force it has become clear that the City of Bellevue needs a continuing policy and operational focus on cultural diversity. The demographic analysis shows increasing cultural diversity and pluralism in the community. The work of the Cultural Diversity Task Force and the community discussion of these ideas should be the beginning of a Citywide commitment to the principles of appreciating, honoring, and nurturing Bellevue's diversity. It is critically important that the City establish an ongoing commitment to this vision and focus. The City Council should aggressively implement the action plan items and establish a means to assure an ongoing commitment to the vision which led to the creation of the Task Force. The City Council should also establish a timeline for implementing these recommendations. In this spirit, the following recommendations for continuing focus are offered.

City Council Policy

The City Council should adopt a clear policy statement affirming their strong commitment to the dignity of all individuals and to the principles of appreciation of diversity. This policy should affirm the principles of respecting and valuing our diversity as a unifying bond for all Bellevue citizens. This policy should be incorporated into the City's comprehensive plan as well as the City's operational policies.

Policy Presence

By the end of 1993, the Bellevue City Council should establish a continuing and ongoing policy-level commitment to cultural diversity. Either through creation of a new board or commission or incorporation with an existing policy body, the continuation of policy level discussions dedicated to cultural diversity is needed in Bellevue. This policy presence should involve Task Force members to assure continuity with the recommendations presented in this report. Such a group should make policy recommendations to the City Council on issues of diversity in the community and provide oversight to assure completion of items directed toward the City in the action plan.

THE CONTINUING POSITIVE FOCUS

Operational Presence

By the end of 1993, the City should establish a continuing operational presence for cultural diversity. Many action plan items and policy recommendations of the Task Force require City implementation and action. The City, either by creation of a new office or by assignment to an existing department, should create a high profile presence charged with carrying out the action plan items related to City service provision. This office should lead, organize, and coordinate the community education and outreach partnership recommendations of the action plan as well.

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Three additional areas of commitment should be actively pursued by the City and community to assure an ongoing continued focus.

Community Summit

The ideas, action plan, and recommendations of the Cultural Diversity Task Force should be incorporated into the ongoing community summit process. The summit process is viewed as wholly complementary to the work of the Task Force, and inclusion of the action plan ideas in the summit process is encouraged and welcomed.

Cultural Center

The City should encourage the establishment of a Cultural Center for Community Unity. This center could be established as a non-profit organization sponsored by the City of Bellevue, Bellevue Public Schools, the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, The Bellevue Downtown Association, religious organizations, social service agencies, ethnic associations, and interested parties. As proposed, the Center would be a resource for businesses, schools, and other organizations; a referral and assistance center for newcomers; and a source of community unity. It could also be a showcase for arts and music.

Symbols of Commitment

The City should seriously consider establishing a unifying, readily identifiable symbol for Bellevue's commitment to diversity. This should include creating a phrase or logo. Awards for contributions to diversity in social services, arts, education, and youth services should also be created and given prominence in Bellevue.

The issue identification and the Community Action Plan and recommendations contained herein are intended to inform the City Council and the citizens of Bellevue and to inspire them to action. This report reflects nine months of community outreach and analysis performed by the Cultural Diversity Task Force.

The Task Force recognizes that every action has a cost. While the City Council resolution that guided the group's work did not include evaluating costs or identifying revenues to fund actions, the Task Force believes that these recommendations are not cost-prohibitive for any group or institution. Rather, the Community Partnership and institutionally focused Action Plan items are set out in a way that will spread the cost and provide the greatest public benefit.

This work should be seen as a beginning, not an end. The same spirit and vision which led to the creation of the Task Force and inspired its work must again carry forward to ensure that the recommended actions will be implemented.

The City Council and the community must continue to reach out to all citizens as they have done in this process. In this way, the vision of Bellevue as a City which truly values, appreciates, and nourishes all of its human diversity will be realized.

SECTION VII

CONCLUSION

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SECTION VIII

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Task Force wishes to extend formal recognition and appreciation to those whose contributions made this work possible.

To the City Council, who appointed, empowered, and funded the Task Force:

List of City Councilmembers

To all who gave of their time to assist the Task Force by participating in the Community Forum, Public Hearing and regular meetings:

List of Names

To those who assisted in our learning and understanding by making presentations to the Task Force:

List of Names

To those City staff who gave of their time to facilitate group discussions during our Community Forum:

List of City Staff

To those City staff and consultants who assisted the Task Force in various technical and support activities:

List of City Staff and Consultants

Should anyone wish additional information on the work of the Task Force, please contact the City of Bellevue at 637-7886.