

July 23, 2023

To: Bellevue City Council

Fr: Craig Spiezle

Good evening. My name is Craig Spiezle a resident of Bellevue. I would like to thank Council for your leadership last week providing direction to the Transportation Department regarding the impact of paid parking and second for directing the Planning Department to remove "areas of opportunity" from the EIS. These actions speak to how Council listens to the community. Thank you

Representing a collation of neighbors, I am asking Council to create an enhanced community engagement framework, maximizing civic engagement, trust and transparency. Current efforts and tactics being employed are no longer adequate reflecting the size and diversity of Bellevue.

City departments have rapidly introduced initiatives which often have outpaced the Council's, Commission's, the community's ability to adequately comprehend and respond to the information presented.

To help address these challenges, we are proposing a six-point plan with the goal to solicit community input.

1. **Engage Neighborhood Associations** - Contact designated neighborhood liaisons in all neighborhoods being impacted to help maximize engagement and solicit public comment.
2. **Provide Ample Time for Public Comment** - The comment period should correlate to the complexity and the amount of information being presented by staff.
3. **Balance Oral Comments from Bellevue Stakeholders** - Often there are three groups vying to make oral comments. Citizens, Bellevue business organizations and external special interest groups. Controls should be established to ensure all Bellevue constituents are heard. It should not be a race get to City Hall before 5 PM to register. For transparency, all speakers and organizations should be required to disclose the city where they reside or work from.
4. **Require Video Recordings & Establish Consistent Practices** for all public meetings for key Commissions and respective city departments. Audio only recordings do not provide adequate context to the material being presented.
5. **Emphasize Intuitive Naming for Optimal Engagement** - Lately some initiative titles have lacked intuitiveness for the average person. One example is the "Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton Vision Implementation." This name failed to convey it encompassed up-zoning in residential areas and neighbor centers. The result was it negatively impacted public comment from those being impacted.
6. **Establish a Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Council**, to provide review into community engagement plans, prior to city departments soliciting public input.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. I look forward to working with the city to help implement these and other recommendations to help maximize transparency, trust and civic engagement.

Craig Spiezle
425-985-1421
craigsp@agelight.com