

# THE BELLINGHAM PLAN



## EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE CIVIC PRACTICES

Chapter Update Summary | November 2024





# Proposed *New Chapter* for the 2025 Plan

## Why are we proposing this new chapter?

**Community feedback:** We heard how important equitable and inclusive civic practices are to the community.

**Significance:** This topic is important and should be consolidated so relevant information is easier to find.

## Where are we in the process of developing this chapter?

**Collecting feedback:** This chapter summary is higher level than others. Because this is a new chapter, we want to get feedback from the community and community partners before developing it too far.

**Integrating feedback:** Next, we will integrate feedback as we develop the new chapter.

## How can you help shape this chapter?

**Provide feedback:** This is new and we are sharing our ideas now to ensure there's time to collect and integrate your feedback. Let us know what's missing and what you'd like to see in this chapter.

**Review the final draft:** We will have a final draft chapter later, which you are also invited to provide feedback on.



# What the Community Said

*These descriptions summarize the most common opinions we heard relevant to this chapter.*

Everyone should have a voice, and we should put extra effort into reaching those who aren't represented yet.

Community engagement is important. It is a part of what makes us Bellingham.

Equity is important. We want our choices today to benefit everyone in the future.

I wish it was easier to understand how everything the City is working on relates.

We want civic services and processes for all of our neighbors, including the local Tribes.

The best decisions come from listening to many viewpoints and choosing directions that benefit everyone.

We like to know what the City is working on and how our ideas might be incorporated.





## Comprehensive Plan Themes Related to Civic Practices

**We are proposing a variety of updates to our 2016 Comprehensive Plan. While the plan is divided into distinct chapters, there are updates that touch multiple chapters.**

Here are the most significant updates related to equitable and inclusive civic practices. These themes span multiple chapters beyond this one.

- >> Better public accessibility of the plan itself
- >> Inclusive and equitable citywide planning
- >> Collaborative “One City” approach

**Get a quick overview of the most significant updates we're proposing.**

If you haven't yet, take a look at the [Summary of Proposed Updates](#). It describes the most significant updates we are proposing. We recommend viewing that the summary first, and then diving in here for more details on the new civic practices chapter.



# What exists in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan?

**While the Equitable and Inclusive Civic Practices chapter is new as an individual chapter, 2016 Comprehensive Plan chapters reference civic practices in these main ways:**

In the Land Use Chapter

**Public participation in planning**

**Reaching out to underserved populations**

**Culture of dialogue & partnerships**

**Transparent Processes**

In the Housing Chapter

**Equitable and inclusive community involvement in planning**

In the Transportation Chapter

**Equitable public engagement**

**Equitable investments**

**Accessible facilities**

In the Economic Development Chapter

**Collaboration with County, Port, and regional partners**

In the Capital Facilities and Utilities Chapter

**Public participation in planning facilities and improvements**

In the Parks, Recreation & Open Space Chapter

**Park improvements & service partnerships for underserved areas**

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion training for staff**

**Public participation in Parks planning**



# Equitable and Inclusive Civic Practices Chapter Proposed Topic Areas

In addition to concepts from the 2016 plan, we heard feedback from the community related to equitable and inclusive civic practices that we will add to or emphasize more in the 2025 plan. Topics from the 2016 plan along with the new ones can be represented in the following proposed topic areas.

## Proposed New Chapter Topic Areas

Accessible and  
Equitable Services  
and Processes

Outreach and  
Engagement

Government to  
Government &  
Tribal Relations



Proposed Topic Area

# Equitable and Inclusive Civic Practices Chapters

These can be grouped based on how they are addressed in the current plan today.

## Proposed New Chapter Topic Areas

Accessible and  
Equitable Services  
and Processes

Outreach and  
Engagement

Some Updates



*These areas will include minor updates to existing policies. The main changes will be in how they are gathered and emphasized in their importance.*



*HB 1220 (2021) requires the City to identify and address policies with racially disparate or exclusionary impacts.*

Government to  
Government &  
Tribal Relations

New Concept



*This area is mostly new to the plan and reflects a stronger emphasis on collaboration with local Tribes.*



*HB 1717 (2022) and relevant RCW define specific requirements related to Tribal outreach and participation.*



# Community Feedback

This chapter is new and we are sharing our ideas now to ensure there's time to collect and integrate your feedback. Let us know what you think!

Consider...

**Is anything big missing?**

**What are some of the details that you want to make sure get covered alongside these topics?**