

Content and Use Policy

City of Bellevue E-Mail List Server

I) Mission

- 1) The City of Bellevue subscription e-mail service enhances communication between city government and Bellevue's residents, businesses, City Council and staff by providing information from the city about policies, operations and activities conducted by or sponsored by the City of Bellevue, solely or in partnership with other agencies or jurisdictions.

II) Objectives

- 1) Provide information commonly requested by large numbers of users by providing a direct delivery system, making delivery of the information more efficient for the city and more convenient for citizens;
- 2) Customize information to the readership to greatest degree possible on a topical and geographical/neighborhood level in order to provide information that is as relevant as possible to the user and effective as possible for the city.

III) Policies for Selecting Lists

1) External Lists

External lists provided via the list-server must be approved by the Web Governance Group after completion of appropriate approval processes in the initiating department;

- (a) Lists should be targeted to specific topics, newsletters or other regular communication elements that are known to be of interest to Bellevue residents, business or workers.
- (b) The list-server can be used to manage public comment period notices and information; however the system does not track any identifying information about those subscribing;
- (c) External list-server lists should not be used for communications *between* staff or committee members or for operational issues with citizen workgroups working with the city. However, it can be used to distribute information to a broader audience about the ongoing work activity of a committee or workgroup.
- (d) The list-server should not be used for e-mailing lists intended for communications between groups of employees (See Internal Lists) or between Bellevue staff and staff of other agencies;

2) Internal Lists

Internal lists provided via the list-server must be approved by the Web Governance Group after completion of appropriate approval processes in the initiating department;

- (a) Lists should be targeted to specific topics, newsletters or other regular communication elements that are known to be of interest to employees;
- (b) The list-server should not be used to coordinate internal workgroups, but may be used to distribute information about that group's activities;

IV) Content Policy

- 1) Content released on the city's external e-mail subscription service must be consistent with the service's mission as described above;
- 2) Content will accurately reflect City Council, city and departmental management policy positions. Political advocacy by individuals or interest groups, including current and former elected city officials, is not appropriate material for the city's e-mail subscription service;
- 3) The department from which the list is managed is responsible for the content of all messages released via that list. Normal publications review procedures should apply;
- 4) All content must adhere strictly to the description of the list to which the user has subscribed. Sending e-mails to subscribers that are different than the requested information could create an annoyance for the subscriber and encourage the subscriber to opt out of the service. HOWEVER, short promotional items (2 sentences maximum) that notify the user about similar information or available lists are allowed. They should include a link to the city web page containing that information;
- 5) The City of Bellevue subscription e-mail service does not accept paid advertising of any kind;
- 6) No material determined to be obscene, indecent, illegal or libelous will be included in any city subscription e-mail service message.

V) Text and Graphics Guidelines

- 1) Text length should be limited in order to avoid extensive message scrolling by the message recipient, but should contain enough information to provide a complete, basic outline of the issue or issues addressed in the message. The user should be linked to the web site for longer text and extensive graphical presentations;
- 2) Messages can be a combination of graphics and text, but since graphical images create a larger file and can be problematic for some e-mail recipients, care should be taken to ensure that graphics add to the communications value of a message rather than for cosmetic purposes only. Since graphics will be referenced and downloaded from the web server by a user's Internet browser, a good rule to follow for the size of individual graphics is that used for the web site, which limits most graphics to 30K;

- 3) Refer users to longer text and graphics by providing a web link, but be sure to provide fundamental information in the text on the e-mail;
- 4) Avoid the use of blue and underline fonts because these are normally inserted characteristics for web links. Use of these characteristics in other places may confuse the reader.
- 5) Each e-mail will contain:
 - a) Graphical information identifying the e-mail as being from the City of Bellevue;
 - b) A link to the privacy policy;
 - c) A link to the web site registration page with notice that it is available for the purpose of removing a subscriber's name from a mailing list or for selection of new subscriptions.