

AGENDA ACCESS, ADVOCACY, EQUITY & ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

July 14, 2026

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



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2. Use of intimidating, threatening, or abusive language;
3. disobedience of an order to be seated or to discontinue further comments;
4. and/or engaging in violent behavior,

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will be deemed out of order and may be removed from the meeting and/or have his or her virtual microphone muted.

CITY OF ELLENSBURG
ACCESS, ADVOCACY, EQUITY & ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION AGENDA
Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via [Zoom](#)
Zoom Webinar ID: 860 4488 5223
Zoom Webinar Passcode: 960657
Tuesday, July 14, 2026
5:00 PM - Regular Meeting

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

1.A Phil Backlund, Amber Darting, M. Eliatamby-O'Brien, Nancy Goodloe, Judd Grey, Kathryn Martell, Lorena Medina-Dirksen, Cody Natland

2. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)

3. Public Comment PUBLIC COMMENT RULES FOR ALL MEETING PARTICIPANTS

1. Each speaker's comments are to be limited to 3 MINUTES and must state their name and city of residence. 2. Speakers are cautioned not to engage in conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the AAEE Commission meeting. 3. Comments must be related to the commission's business or over which the Commission has control. 4. Speakers may not identify themselves as candidates for elective public office or make any statements which assist or discuss the campaign of a candidate for elective office or discuss or campaign for or against a ballot proposition.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.A Approval of AAEE Commission Meeting Minutes from June 9, 2026

5. New Business

5.A Comprehensive Plan Update (Public Comment Opportunity)

5.B Preliminary Discussion of the 2026 Workplan

6. Liaison Reports Dr. Elvin Delgado and Ruben Cardenas - CWU; and Rhonda Schmidt - Ellensburg School District

7. Subcommittee Reports

7.A Grants Subcommittee: Review and approve 2026 AAEE Commission Grant Application

8. Commission Representative Update

9. Staff Report

9.A Staff Report

10. Adjournment Next Meeting: August 11, 2026 at 3 p.m. in Council Chambers



For more information on the Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission contact Public Information Officer Nicole Klauss at 509-925-8657.

CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

**Minutes of Access, Advocacy, Equity, &
Engagement (AAEE) Commission Meeting**

June 9, 2026

3:00 PM

Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Goodloe called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Goodloe welcomed and introduced the two new commission members. Kandee Cleary and Amber Hoefer did not seek reappointment and their terms expired in May.

Roll Call Present: Phil Backlund, Amber Darting, M. Eliatamby-O'Brien, Nancy Goodloe, Judd Grey, Kathryn Martell, Lorena Medina-Dirksen, and Cody Natland.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; Lisa Young, HR Director; Dan Carlson, Community Development Director; Mark Rud, Associate Planner; Ruben Cardenas, CWU Associate Vice President liaison; and 2 members of the public.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Backlund moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Natland seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioner Grey had not yet arrived).**

3. Public Comment

Chair Goodloe called for public comment. William Coleman provided public comment.

4. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Darting moved to approve the meeting minutes from the May 12 and May 19 AAEE Commission meetings. Commissioner Backlund seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioner Grey had not yet arrived).**

5. New Business

A. Associate Planner Mark Rud presented on the current draft of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 2. Community Character and Voices. Commission members provided feedback. William Coleman provided public comment.

B. City Manager Heidi Behrends Cerniwey presented on the commission's draft work plan. Commissioner Backlund made a motion to approve the work plan as summarized in the two pages for 2026. Commissioner Martell seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Grey requested that staff rearrange the work plan in chronological order of due date. **Motion approved 7-0.**

C. Chair Goodloe introduced the draft Council commitment resolution that City Council will consider at the June 15 meeting and invited commission members to attend the meeting.

6. Liaison Reports

Ruben Cardenas reported that CWU is finishing their academic year and commencement is this week.

7. Subcommittee Reports

Chair Goodloe reported the Grants Subcommittee is meeting on Friday.

8. Commission Representative Reports

No reports.

9. Staff Report

Staff requested a volunteer to replace Amber Hoefer and Kandee Cleary on the Climate and Environmental Planning Task Force. Kathryn Martell volunteered for the role.

Staff reported:

- New commission members will be onboarded after the meeting.
- City is looking for Ad Hoc Committee to consider possible taxi code changes.
- Touch A Truck and Coffee With City Council are on June 17.
- Juneteenth Celebration is on June 19.
- Community Picnic is on July 4.
- The AAEE Commission will be transitioned to new staff members this summer: Lisa Young and Gretchen Delaford.

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Drafted by Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission

Drafted: 6/10/26

Approved:



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MEETING DATE: July 14, 2026

TO: Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission

FROM: Stacey Henderson, Planning Manager

SUGGESTED MOTION/ACTION

Staff requests guidance and recommendations to bring to Council on July 20 regarding the proposed Chapter 2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging.

BACKGROUND/ SUMMARY:

City of Ellensburg planning staff presented to the AAEE commission in May and June of 2026. In May, staff presented a proposed path forward for rewriting and reworking the existing Chapter 9 content, and in June, staff presented a preliminary proposed draft. Since the June AAEE meeting staff have heard from many commission members, and have provided an updated draft for review that hopefully captures the valuable feedback received.

Comp Plan Periodic Update Process

The comprehensive plan docketing process of 2025 is a separate process from the periodic update to the comprehensive plan. What staff is working on now is the periodic update for the comprehensive plan, which is a complete overhaul, review, and analysis, to see how it needs to be updated to meet the needs of our community for the next 20 years. This is an opportunity to reimagine, reconfigure, reassess, and rewrite, based on extensive policy analysis, new state mandates, commerce guidance, best practices, and community feedback.

There are new requirements that require reviewing the code and comp plan from new perspectives, such as completing a Racially Disparate Impacts report as presented by Lily Frey to AAEE in May, or the adequate provisions review which required staff to review our entire development process, identify barriers, and identify possible solutions to those barriers. Required this year was an entirely new chapter addressing climate hazard



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planning, which entailed a complete deep dive and analysis into the existing environment chapter to evaluate how these two similar topics will co-exist in the comp plan.

In fall 2025 and early winter 2026, the project team set to work analyzing the current plan, current studies, reports, and county wide policies that exist, to identify gaps, needs, and to provide context as to which direction this updated plan should go. An extensive Land Capacity Analysis was completed to understand current capacities for housing and development, and if more space in the UGA is needed looking to 2046. The transportation consultant completed traffic modeling and has integrated active transportation plans into future goals. The project team and environmental consultant completed an extensive policy audit memorandum and Ellensburg climate hazards and impacts assessment.

In early 2026, the project team also set forth conducting extensive group interviews with members and organizations throughout the community to understand utility and facility needs, community needs, and what needs to be considered looking to the future. The team posted surveys online and hosted a monthly task force meeting to address the new climate chapter.

Chapter 9

The more analysis and work that took place, the more the needs of this updated plan became clear. The project team completed a policy analysis and crosswalk regarding all goals and policies in the plan, including the existing goals and policies of chapter 9. Based on all this work, it became clear that a new format to this chapter may be necessary and more effective for use throughout the plan. The existing Chapter 9 was originally adopted to the comprehensive plan during the yearly docketing process. In order to add this content to the comprehensive plan during the yearly docketing process, it was best to add a standalone chapter as opposed to incorporating new content throughout the plan which would require readopting multiple chapters at once.

ANALYSIS

Overall Plan



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The intro and community profile have been renumbered as chapters, because they are important elements of the plan. They show users how to use the plan and provide contextual information as to the history of Ellensburg, as well as our strategic planning and community access and belonging priorities. It was also determined through a policy analysis workshop that the new required climate chapter, and existing environment chapter have enough overlapping policies and goals to be combined. The numbering of the chapters has been adjusted to reflect new work and needs of the plan, as seen below:

Existing	Proposed
Intro	1: Introduction
Community Profile	2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging
Chapter 1: Land Use	3: Land Use Element
Chapter 2: Housing	4: Housing Element
Chapter 3: Transportation	5: Transportation Element
Chapter 4: Capital Facilities	6: Capital Facilities and Utilities Element
Chapter 5: Parks and Recreation	7: Parks and Recreation Element
Chapter 6: Economic Development	8: Economic Development Element
Chapter 7: Environment	9: Climate and Environment Element
Chapter 8: Historic Preservation	10: Historic Preservation
Chapter 9: Access, Engagement, and Belonging	
Appendix A: 6-year Capital Improvement Plan	Appendix A: 6-year Capital Improvement Plan
Appendix B: Transportation Improvement Plan	Appendix B: Transportation Improvement Plan
Appendix C: Household and Employment Growth	Appendix C: Racially Disparate Impacts Memo
Appendix D: Level of Service Reports	Appendix D: Household and Employment Growth
Appendix E: Travel Demand Documentation	Appendix E: Level of Service Report
	Appendix F: Travel Demand Documentation
	Attachment A: Public Outreach- Feedback List



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Proposed Chapter 2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging

The following is a crosswalk and explanation of how and where the current content in Chapter 9 has been moved to proposed Chapter 2 and throughout the plan. Provided in the agenda packet, is the proposed draft Chapter 2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging.

Existing Chapter 9 Sections	Connection Between Existing and Proposed	Proposed Chapter 2 Sections	Additional Location
<i>What You Will Find/ Overview</i>	Copied - some direct, some rewritten	<i>What you will find</i>	
<i>Background and Context</i>	Copied - some direct, some rewritten	<i>Community Belonging</i>	
	Existing Content	<i>Local Context Natural Environment</i>	
	New Content	<i>Land Acknowledgement</i>	
	New Content	<i>Community Vision and Strategic Vision</i>	
<i>Why this Matters in Ellensburg</i>	Copied – some direct, some rewritten	<i>Access, Engagement, and Belonging</i>	
<i>Fostering a Sense of Belonging</i>	Copied – some direct, some rewritten	<i>Access, Engagement, and Belonging</i>	
<i>Recognizing the Past – Looking to the Future- Past</i>	Combined existing history sections of existing Chapter 2 and 9.	<i>Ellensburg History</i>	



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Present	Not copied to Chapter 2- Concept of content covered in Community Development, and Access, Engagement, and Belonging section. Don't need the past- present- future format in Chapter.		
Future			Data moved to 4. Housing Element: Household Characteristics, Demographic Trends, and Homelessness and Unhoused Population.
Goals and Policies			
Goal- 1	Copied to Chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies	
<u>Policy A</u>	Copied to Chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies	
Program 1	Copied to Chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies	
Program 2	Copied to Chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies	
<u>Policy B</u>	Guiding Principles section of proposed chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies	
Program 1	Guiding Principles section of proposed chapter 2	Comp Plan Guiding	



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		<i>Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 2</i>	Removed- More suitable for strategic plan	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 3</i>			Parks and Rec -Goal PR-2
<i>Program 4</i>			Economic Development – Policy ED-3
<i>Goal-2</i>			Parks and Rec – PR 2.1
<i>Policy A</i>			Parks and Rec - PR 3.3
<i>Program 1</i>			Parks and Recreation – PR 3.3
<i>Program 2</i>			Parks and Rec and Land Use – PR 2.2, and LU-1B
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development – Goal ED – 1
<i>Policy B</i>	Guiding Principles section of Proposed chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>	Removed- More suitable for strategic plan	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 2</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development Goal ED-1
<i>Goal- 3</i>	Redundant- combine with goal 1 into one access- focused goal.	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Policy A</i>	Redundant- combine with goal 1	<i>Comp Plan Guiding</i>	



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		<i>Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>			Transportation Goal- T-3
<i>Program 2</i>			Housing- Goal H-2
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development- ED-1
<i>Policy B</i>			Parks and Recreation- PR 2.1
<i>Program 1</i>			Parks and Recreation- PR 2.3
<i>Program 2</i>			Economic Development- ED-1
<i>Action Items</i>	Removed		
<i>Policy Connections</i>	Removed		

Attachments:

- 1) Existing Chapter 9
- 2) Proposed Chapter 2 with goals and policies track changes



CHAPTER 9 ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT, & BELONGING

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- Background information and context related to local history, current events, and plans for the future, addressing the City's efforts to ensure residents can participate fully and access opportunities without unnecessary barriers.
- Policies that seek to make City resources more accessible to all.
- Policies that direct the City's efforts towards encouraging welcoming and inclusive environments within the Community.
- Policies intended to support a culturally inclusive community, where all people experience a sense of belonging.

OVERVIEW

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs that define how the City of Ellensburg can play a role in fostering an environment of understanding, equity, and belonging within the community. It recognizes that not all community members experience the city in the same way, and that some face barriers that make it harder to access information, services, or opportunities. The intent of this chapter is to identify ways the City can understand and reduce those barriers, strengthen community connections, and support a sense of belonging for everyone who lives here.

This document is a starting point for the City. There are likely many issues not yet articulated that can be addressed later as they are identified. This chapter is a living document; it is intended to be revisited and revised periodically. The focus is on listening, improving access, and ensuring that people of all backgrounds and identities can engage meaningfully in Ellensburg community life, regardless of background and experiences.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The City of Ellensburg is committed to creating a community with a lived and built environment that improves lives, supports all people, and provides residents with opportunities to flourish. Creating a community where people can thrive requires paying attention to the lived experiences of those who may encounter obstacles--whether physical, social, economic, or cultural--that impact their ability to navigate daily life or engage with local government. Doing so can help create a thriving local economy, retain our residents and attract new ones, and foster an environment where individuals can achieve their full potential.

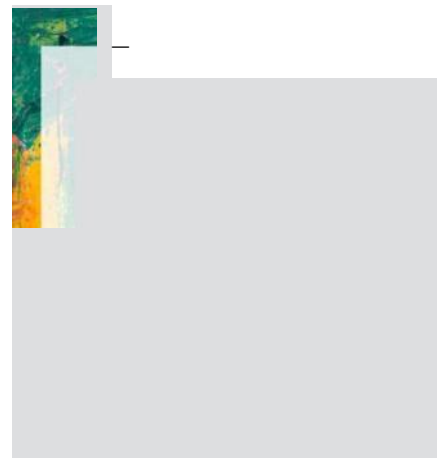
In recent years, national and local conversations have highlighted the importance of understanding how different groups in our community experience Ellensburg. In 2020, many residents shared that certain challenges or barriers affect their ability to access opportunities, feel safe, or feel like they belong. These conversations highlighted the need for the city to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and working toward solutions that foster participation, fairness, and a sense of belonging for all who live here. The goal of this chapter is to identify ways the City can recognize and address these barriers, and strengthen community connection by consistently listening to residents, responding to concerns, and supporting practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg's civic, social, and economic life.

Why this matters in Ellensburg

Ellensburg is home to residents with a wide range of life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances. Not everyone moves through our community with the same level of ease or access, and some residents encounter challenges that others may never see. When the City understands these differences and plans with them in mind, it helps ensure that public services, facilities, and community spaces are welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone.

Paying attention to where people may face barriers, whether physical, social, economic, cultural, linguistic, or informational, allows the City to identify gaps early and respond in ways that strengthen trust and connection. When residents feel seen, valued, and able to participate fully in community life, the whole city benefits. This approach supports a healthy civic environment, fosters stronger neighborhoods, and contributes to a resilient local economy.

The purpose of this chapter is to guide the City in proactively recognizing where barriers may exist, listening to community experiences, and continually improving how we engage with and serve the public. By building a community where all residents can participate and feel a sense of belonging, Ellensburg positions itself to grow in a way that is inclusive, collaborative, and forward-looking.



Fostering a sense of belonging

Creating a community where everyone feels they belong requires us to pay attention to the experiences of residents who may not always feel fully seen or heard. When we make space for voices that have been, or continue to be, overlooked, we build trust, strengthen connection, and help ensure that the future we shape reflects the needs and hopes of all who live here. It is important for the City of Ellensburg to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, the City of Ellensburg can support a strengthened sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.

To support all residents, the City will continue to work on goals and policies that actively recruit participation and involvement from all residents within the community, foster a sense of belonging, and engage those who experience barriers to social and cultural participation. These methods can include listening tours, surveys, discussion groups, and use of a variety of media and print publications designed to be accessible to all residents. Creating and supporting goals and policies that meet the community members where they are will help to remove the barriers that make accessing or engaging with basic community services challenging. Increasing accessibility to important resources and opportunities that best meet residents varying needs helps all residents succeed.



Recognizing the Past - Looking to the Future

An important step in building a forward-thinking vision within the community is to first learn about our local history, listen to residents' perceptions now, and consider how new goals and policies will positively affect the City of Ellensburg's plans for the future. The City cannot adequately support our community and elevate all people, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or experiences, without first building a base of contextual knowledge, understanding, and trust.

Past

Historically, Ellensburg has been, and still is, a multicultural community composed of a broad range of people and families, with many stories and experiences that have yet to be discovered or shared. Acknowledging and learning local history within the community, the positive and the negative, can help increase awareness and empathy toward others and strengthen our community as a whole. Understanding local history can help create a more inclusive environment for all, where residents feel welcome and equally represented.

Kittitas Valley has always been, and continues to be, sacred to Native people. Traditionally, the

Pshwanapum lived in the Kittitas Valley as a sub-band of the larger political and extended family networks of the Yakama tribes and bands. The Pshwanapum members were also referred to as the K'titas ("Kittitas") band, and they moved seasonally throughout the valley and nearby mountains to harvest roots, salmon, berries, game, and medicines. Several other tribal nations including Kiala, Tatxanixsha, Yumi'sh, and Che-lo-han, would hunt and trade in this area as well. Many descendants of these tribes continue to live throughout the 1855 Treaty

Territory of the Yakamas, practicing, honoring, and teaching the heritage and ancestry of the area. (*Information sourced from Daily Record News article from Aronica Family October 12, 2020, and Kittitas Valley Historical Museum*)

In addition to the many contributions from those commonly identified as the founders of modern Ellensburg, the histories and experiences of those often overlooked within Ellensburg for their contributions and background continues to be uncovered within documentation and oral records, and there is still much more to be discovered. Residents from Black, Chinese, Jewish, Hispanic, and Japanese communities moved to Ellensburg as early as the mid-19th Century for reasons including migrant labor, such as work on the railroad or at local businesses. Sources such as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps have shown that Ellensburg used to have a "China Town," and "Chinese Laundries" appear to have existed throughout town (Sanborn Map 1888). An African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1908 at 404 South Main Street, and many Black individuals played on local baseball teams as well. There is also evidence at times of divisive behavior and negative language towards these communities during this time, as found in newspaper advertisements regarding restaurants and hotels that employed individuals.

Present

Despite Ellensburg's vibrant multicultural and diverse makeup, individuals from historically underrepresented communities and backgrounds still report that they feel invisible, experience targeted and discriminatory comments and unwelcoming behavior. While members of some communities within Ellensburg have reported experiencing negative or targeted incidents, they also believe that Ellensburg can be more engaging, welcoming, and inclusive, and that the welcoming nature of our community can rise to a deeper level of acceptance and affirmation, and can draw on the talents, skills, and experiences of all who live here.

Ellensburg is often a welcoming community where people come together in times of need, where neighbors look out for one another. However, fully supporting and accepting identities, cultures, and backgrounds of those who experience unwelcoming behaviors or additional barriers, can be improved. Strengthening our ability to include and support people of all backgrounds remains an ongoing priority. Similar to what many towns and cities around the country are currently experiencing and working on, the City of Ellensburg recognizes it needs to be more responsive and prepared when handling issues related including all residents, present and future. This chapter lays the groundwork for this to happen, as the City continues towards a future of growth and expansion.

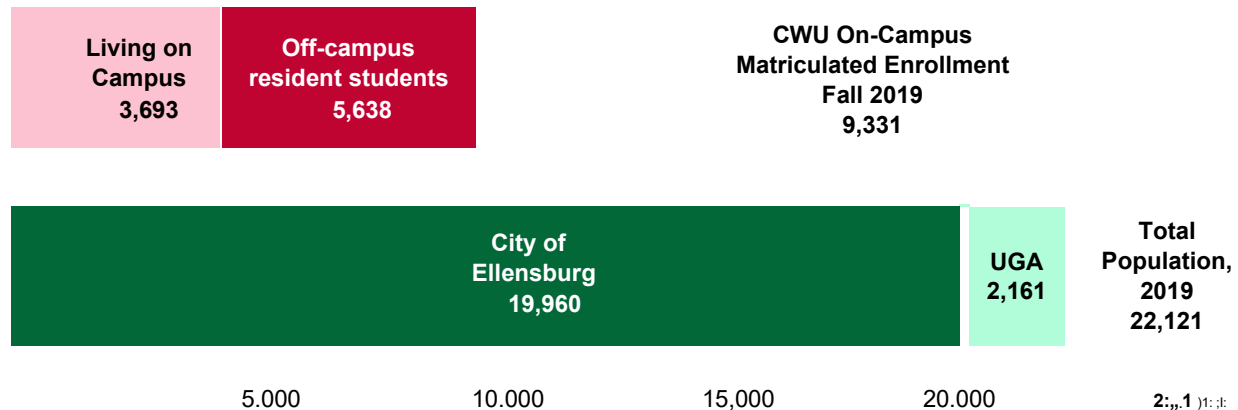
Future

Our dynamic community landscape has continued to develop, particularly in the last ten years, growing in size and in the diversity of residents. Statistics from the City of Ellensburg's 2021 Housing Action Plan, show that in 2020, the estimated population of the City, with its urban growth area, (UGA) was 22,879 people, demonstrating a growth rate of roughly 1.9% annually

¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and/or questioning

since 2015. Of the 22,879 people, roughly 9,331 constitute CWU enrollment, 3,693 of which were on-campus living, and 5,638 representing off campus resident students, as depicted in *Figure 26*.

Figure 26. CWU Student Population and Total Population, 2018

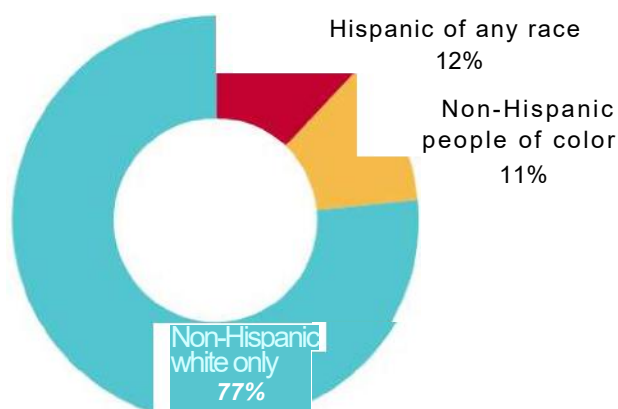


Students living on campus represents the housing occupancy for Fall 2019. Programmed capacity is 3,918 and the full built capacity is 4,249.

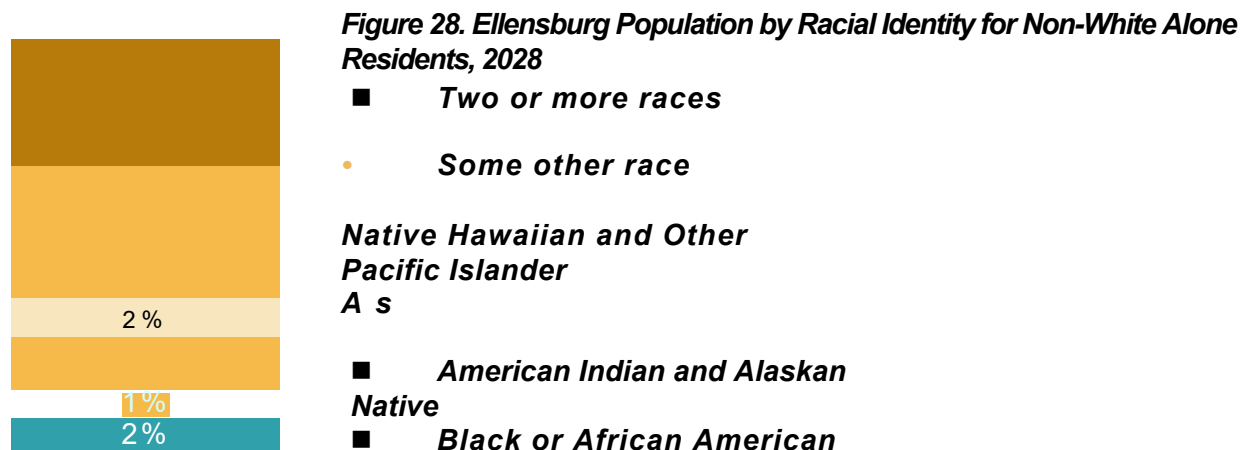
Sources: Central Washington University — Ellensburg Campus, Fall 2019; Washington OFM, 2021; BERK, 2021

As the City continues to support the needs of the diverse communities that live here, it is important to recognize that the statistics reflected in this chapter from the 2021 Housing Action Plan, do not reflect all of the varied demographics of our community. It is still valuable to look at current information that is available as we work towards obtaining more detailed statistics. It is anticipated that by 2040, 20% of the County population will be in the age bracket over age 65, and 19% in the age bracket of 45 to 64. At the same time, proportional decreases are expected for school-aged youth (5 to 19).

The Census also captures the ethnic background of respondents. As shown in *Figure 27* below, the Ellensburg community in 2018 was majority White and non-Hispanic (77%) but is growing to be more multicultural. From 2010 to 2018, Ellensburg's Hispanic population increased from 7% to 12% overall, and non-Hispanic non-white residents increased from 8% to 11%. *Figure 28* provides a further breakdown of the Non-White Alone demographics.

Figure 27. Ellensburg Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2028

Sources: ACS 5-year B02001 estimates, 2018; BERK, 2021.



Sources: ACS 5-year B02001 estimates, 2018; BERK, 2021.

As we look at Ellensburg's present landscape, it's important to recognize how changes in Ellensburg's population have been influenced by many factors, including the role of our local university, and these shifts continue to shape the character of the community. The University's emphasis on attracting diverse students, faculty, and staff, and those from underrepresented backgrounds and identities, continues to impact the demographics of Ellensburg. The changing nature of the labor force has also created greater diversity in the community. People from many countries have settled in Ellensburg over the years, and there is no reason to think that these influential factors are going to be less impactful in the future.

As Ellensburg continues to grow, there is the potential for those whose identities are not within the majority to feel excluded, unless the community has a plan for improving its relationships with all residents. The City of Ellensburg has developed this chapter in a sincere effort to create safe, welcoming, and understanding community— one where all residents know they belong and are welcome.

GOALS, POLICIES, & PROGRAMS

These goals, policies, and programs contain steps that the City of Ellensburg will take to create an inclusive, welcoming, equitable, and safe community.

Goal -1: Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs, and Events.

Policy A Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, utilizing the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Program 1 Provide increased access to government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.

Program 2 Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.

Policy B Promote and encourage community engagement and outreach to all.

Program 1 Actively encourage participation from the public for community projects, events, and recreational activities, through a wide variety of media and information distribution methods.

Program 2 Provide City staff and elected officials with tools and regular training to understand and lead actions that are inclusive and equitable.

Program 3 Establish an ongoing review process of the costs for City-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure that all members of the public have access to these services.

Program 4 Support civic education programs that actively engage diverse groups of the community, and encourage diverse representation among local leadership, organizations, and agencies.

Goal -2: Foster Understanding, Inclusive Excellence, Multiculturalism, and Belonging within the Community.

Policy A Encourage cultural sharing.

Program 1 Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.

Program 2 Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.

- Program 3** Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City government, Central Washington University, businesses, and education and social service sectors, through shared events, projects, and outreach, to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus, and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.
- Policy B** Encourage local leadership to address ongoing issues that create barriers for participation.
- Program 1** Encourage City leadership to demonstrate support of groups that experience additional social barriers or a sense of exclusion through a variety of proclamations, and publicly speak to local actions that affect the diverse members of the community.
- Program 2** Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions.
- Program 3** Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support a broad spectrum of community members from different backgrounds and cultures.

Goal -3: Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.

- Policy A** Ensure that high quality service programs are available, accessible, and utilized by all in order to support resident's basic needs.
- Program 1** Partner with local health and social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.
- Program 2** Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging people to be located close to services and amenities.
- Program 3** Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to health care providers with varied expertise and backgrounds who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.
- Policy B** Encourage healthy activity and lifestyle by making recreational resources and opportunities accessible and welcoming to all residents.
- Program 1** Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.
- Program 2** Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations, and schools, to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Work with DEI Commission to begin regular review of current City policies and procedures to better engage those who face barriers or have been less represented within the City's planning .
 2. Provide opportunities for staff and elected officials to engage and learn more about ways to reduce barriers and make Ellensburg more welcoming.
 3. Increase use of community engagement to help with local outreach.
 4. Review fees and costs for city sponsored recreational and leisure activities.
 5. Develop a framework of accountability.
 6. Develop a work plan for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission.
-

POLICY CONNECTIONS

The **Housing** chapter includes policies and land use designations that support the development of many types of housing to ensure that people who live and work in Ellensburg have adequate housing choices.

The **Transportation** chapter includes policies related to providing a variety of transportation networks that is available for all community members.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter includes policies that focus on providing public facilities and utilities that are accessible and affordable to all community members, including access to the library, reasonably priced utilities, and access to data and technology. This chapter also provides goals centered around providing excellent public safety services.

The **Parks and Recreation** chapter includes policies that focus on providing citywide programs and services that meet all community and group needs, in addition to preserving historical areas and features, while also developing high quality, diversified cultural arts facilities and programs that increase community awareness, attendance, and participation opportunities.

The **Economic Development** chapter includes policies related to growing and sustaining local businesses, while creating opportunities for new businesses that can provide goods and services that meet the needs of the local and regional community.

2. Our Community: Access, Engagement, and



Belonging

What you will find in this chapter

- Community Conversations
- Ellensburg History
- Community Vision and Strategic Direction

1. City of Ellensburg Guiding Principles for the Comprehensive Plan and City Planning

Community Belonging

Ellensburg lies at the heart of central Washington. It is home to families, farmers, educators, health care workers, artists, and students - to name a few - many born and raised here, and many who have found their home here. Each community member brings to the table a different lived experience, new traditions, perspectives, and beliefs, which is what makes Ellensburg such a vibrant community.

The City of Ellensburg is committed to creating a community with a lived and built environment that improves lives, supports all people, and provides residents with opportunities to flourish. Creating a community where people can thrive requires paying attention to the lived experiences of those who may encounter obstacles – whether physical, social, economic, or cultural – that impact their ability to

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navigate daily life or engage with local government.

In recent years, national and local conversations have highlighted the importance of understanding how different groups in our community experience Ellensburg. These conversations highlighted the need for the City to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and strengthening community connection by consistently listening to residents, responding to concerns, and supporting practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg's civic, social, and economic life.

Throughout the 2026 Periodic Update process, the City has worked towards ways to reduce and remove barriers for all residents, and strengthen community connection. This document is a starting point for that important work, with acknowledgement that there are likely many issues not yet articulated that can be addressed as they are identified.

Local Context

Natural Environment

Ellensburg lies 110 miles east of Seattle and 170 miles west of Spokane. Two interstate highways and various state highways provide access to and through the area, connecting the Cascades to the west and the farmland to the east. The City's footprint is approximately 7.6 square miles, with another 7.1 square miles in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) to accommodate for future growth.

The City of Ellensburg sits at an elevation of 1,540 feet in a fertile basin next to the Yakima River, east of the Cascade mountain range, and on the western side of the Columbia Plateau. Enormous basaltic lava flows 15 million years ago, and a series of glacial flooding events after the ice age, shaped the landscape of central and eastern Washington. Ellensburg has a climate that experiences both hot summers and cold winters. Temperature patterns vary considerably within the seasons. The Cascade Mountains to the west effectively block much of the rain from the wetter side of the state, producing a dry climate with an average of less than ten inches of rainfall per year.

Ellensburg experiences four distinct seasons and a strong breeze in the spring and summer months. High summer temperatures (June through September) average about 80° Fahrenheit, and winter temperatures (December through March) average around 21° Fahrenheit. The Ellensburg basin is composed of agricultural land with a significant portion located within the 100-year floodplain. The surrounding topography includes snow-capped mountains, irrigated valley land, desert terrain, and two major rivers: the Yakima and the Columbia.

Land Acknowledgment

The City of Ellensburg is located on the historic home of the K'ti'tas and Pshwánapam bands of Indigenous people. Today, these bands are part of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, a federally-recognized Native Nation constituted under the Treaty with the Yakamas of 1855. The Indigenous stewards of this land practiced a subsistence lifestyle through fishing, hunting, and gathering since time immemorial and remain committed stewards of this land, cherishing it, protecting it and using it, as instructed by their elders through generations, and actively practicing the traditions and culture as neighbors in the Ellensburg community.



Ellensburg History

The earliest known inhabitants of Kittitas Valley were Psch-wan-wap-pams also known as the Kittitas band of the Yakama or Upper Yakama Tribe. The Kittitas Valley was one of the few places in Washington where both camas and kouse plants grew. For this and other reasons the valley was an important gathering place for regional tribes who congregated to harvest these foods, socialize, fish, and trade.

Though fur traders and Catholic missions had established themselves earlier, Euro-American settlers in greater numbers began moving into the Kittitas Valley in the early 1860s. By the end of the 1860s, a trading post known as Robber's Roost was established near the present corner of Third and Main Streets. In 1871 John Alden Shoudy, who in 1875 platted the town streets and named the community Ellensburg in honor of his wife, Mary Ellen, purchased this post. In 1894, the United States Post Office requested the 'h' be dropped from the City's name.

During this platting period, The Northern Pacific Railroad donated land in hopes that the town would be a rail-based center for the area's abundant farmland, forests, and mines. Ellensburg grew slowly until plans for rail access were completed and the 1886 arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad helped stimulate markets in cattle, dairy products, timber, wool, and hay. Community boosters hoped Ellensburg would be the new state capitol due to its central location. Such speculation even led to the construction of a mansion to house the future Governor on the corner of what is now Chestnut Street and Third Avenue.

A disastrous fire on July 4, 1889 changed the course of the community's history. The fire, fanned by Ellensburg's famous winds, destroyed most of the business district and many homes. Although the community put forth a heroic effort and rebuilt its downtown within the year, Olympia was ultimately chosen as the state capital. The efforts to place the state capital did help bring an important element to Ellensburg; during the State Legislature's first session, Washington State Normal School (now Central Washington University) was established. In 1891 the doors opened for 86 students. Today Central Washington University has an on-campus enrollment of approximately 6,700, occupies more than 300 acres, and is the county's largest employer.

In addition to the many contributions from those commonly identified as the founders of modern Ellensburg, the histories and experiences of those often overlooked within Ellensburg for their contributions and background continues to be uncovered within documentation and oral records, and there is still much more to be discovered. Residents from Black, Chinese, Jewish, Hispanic, and Japanese communities moved to Ellensburg as early as the mid-19th Century for reasons including migrant labor, such as work on the railroad or at local businesses. Sources such as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps have shown that Ellensburg used to have a "China Town," and "Chinese Laundries" appear to have existed throughout town (Sanborn Map 1888). An African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1908 at 404 South Main Street, and many Black individuals played on local baseball teams as well. There is also evidence at times of divisive behavior and negative language towards these communities during this time, as found in newspaper advertisements regarding restaurants and hotels that employed individuals.

To the world outside Kittitas County, Ellensburg is famous for its annual Fair and Rodeo. The Ellensburg Rodeo was founded in 1922 through the combined efforts of local ranchers and cowboys, the Kittitas



County Fair organization, local businesspersons, and the Yakama Nation. The Ellensburg Rodeo served as a nostalgic celebration of the frontier lifestyle, where townspeople could join ranchers, farmers, and Native Americans in an annual gathering. The Fair and Rodeo has become a way to foster business and promote Ellensburg's identity as a destination.

Historically, Ellensburg has been, and still is, a multicultural community composed of a broad range of people and families, with many stories and experiences that have yet to be discovered or shared. Acknowledging and learning local history within the community, the positive and the negative, can help increase awareness and empathy toward others and strengthen our community as a whole. Understanding local history can help create a more inclusive environment for all, where residents feel welcome and equally represented.

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Community Vision and Strategic Direction

In June of 2026, the Ellensburg City Council adopted a new five-year Strategic Vision for 2026-2031 after holding a retreat to consider strategic questions, with input from the public, who were invited to attend and participate. The Strategic Vision represents the most important issues facing the City of Ellensburg and establishes precedence for expenditure of staff and other City resources. While the Strategic Vision has a shorter timeframe than the Comprehensive Plan, the priorities identified by the City Council help inform the policies and strategies included in this long-range plan. Together, the Strategic Vision and the Comprehensive Plan help ensure that day-to-day decisions and long-term planning efforts work toward shared community goals.

The Strategic Vision identifies five strategic pillars for Ellensburg:

2. Community Safety, Civic Engagement and Cultural Inclusion
3. Infrastructure, Utilities, and Mobility
4. Economic Vitality and Workforce Resilience
5. Housing Opportunities and Neighborhood Stability
6. Organizational Excellence and Fiscal Stewardship

These priorities reinforce many of the goals and policies found throughout this Comprehensive Plan, which help inform not only physical planning decisions, but also how the City approaches community engagement, participation, accessibility, and connection.

Access, Engagement, & Belonging

The themes of access, engagement, and belonging; and the strategic pillars, are a lens through which the periodic update team worked when updating the comprehensive plan. Community conversations and engagement efforts in recent years have highlighted that residents do not always experience Ellensburg in the same way. While many people describe Ellensburg as welcoming and community-oriented, some residents have shared experiences of exclusion, unwelcoming behavior, or barriers that affect their ability to access opportunities, feel safe, or feel like they belong. These conversations reinforced the need for City government and staff to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and working toward solutions that foster participation, fairness, and



a sense of belonging for all who live here. By doing so, City government and staff can help strengthen community connection and support practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg's civic, social, and economic life.

Why This Matters in Ellensburg

Ellensburg is home to residents with a wide range of life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances. Not everyone moves through our community with the same level of ease or access, and some residents encounter challenges that others may never see. When the City government and staff understand these differences and plans with them in mind, it helps ensure that public services, facilities, and community spaces are welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone.

Bringing awareness to where people may face barriers, whether physical, social, economic, cultural, linguistic, or informational, allows City government and staff to identify gaps early and respond in ways that strengthen trust and connection. When residents feel seen, valued, and able to participate fully in community life, the whole City benefits. This approach supports a healthy civic environment, fosters stronger neighborhoods, and contributes to a resilient local economy.

Fostering a Sense of Belonging

It is important for City government and staff to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, City government and staff can strengthen a sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.

To support all residents, City government and staff will continue to advance goals and policies that actively recruit participation and involvement from all residents within the community, foster a sense of belonging, and engage those who experience barriers to social and cultural participation. Throughout the comp plan, possible barriers have been considered and brought to focus to address, whether it's accessibility to affordable housing, accessibility to safe transportation, or being provided affordable city programs and utilities. It is important to always be learning, listening, and communicating as a community, to better respond to varying needs.

Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies

As Ellensburg continues to grow and evolve, themes related to access, engagement, and belonging provide important context for how the City approaches inclusive public participation and community-building efforts. The following guiding principles are synthesized from Periodic Update outreach efforts to date, and reflect the community values and priorities discussed throughout the following elements. They are intended to support a welcoming, accessible, and connected community and provide overarching guidance for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan across all elements.



- ◆ **Inclusive Engagement:** Support inclusive and accessible community engagement opportunities that encourage participation from people with varied backgrounds, experiences, identities, and needs.
 - **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission and local community organizations, and City Staff, to brainstorm and standardize outreach methods for advertising engagement opportunities, and frequent collaboration to ensure City events are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.
- ◆ **Accessible Information and Services:** Support equitable access to public information, City services, programs, community resources, and participation opportunities, including efforts to reduce language, communication, and accessibility barriers.
 - **This looks like:** Creating standardized practices and trainings among city staff to ensure programs, resources, and participation opportunities across departments are advertised and organized in a consistent and welcoming manner with opportunity for participation regardless of accessibility, language, or communication needs.
- ◆ **Welcoming and Respectful Community:** Foster a welcoming community where residents feel respected, safe, supported, and connected, and where people from varied backgrounds and experiences feel a sense of belonging.
 - **This looks like:** Supporting a wide range of events, activities, and resources that provide an opportunity for community members to share their traditions and experiences, and foster connections with others.
- ◆ **Reducing Barriers:** Work to identify and reduce barriers to participation in civic, social, and community life, including physical, financial, cultural, transportation, informational, and language barriers.
 - **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission, local community organizations, and City Staff, to identify ways we can listen, learn, and move forward with creating a built and lived environment that is more welcoming to all.
- ◆ **Community Connection:** Encourage opportunities for cultural sharing, collaboration, relationship-building, and community connection among residents, organizations, businesses, institutions, and community partners.
- ◆ **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission, local community organizations, and City Staff, to encourage opportunity for new events and collaboration too build community connection.

Goals and Policies

Goal –1: ~~Increase accessibility~~ Increase equitable access and identify barriers to City Resources, Programs, and Events for all community members.

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Policy A Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, utilizing the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and complying with ADA accessibility, services standards, and providing equitable access to information.

Program 1 Provide increased equitable access to information including providing government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.

Program 2 Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.

Program 3 Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions.

Creating a community where everyone feels they belong requires us to pay attention to the experiences of residents who may not always feel fully seen or heard. When we make space for voices that have been, or continue to be, overlooked, we build trust, strengthen connection, and help ensure that the future we shape reflects the needs and hopes of all who live here. It is important for City government and staff to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, City government and staff can strengthen a sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.

Policy Connections

The **Land Use** chapter contains a set of policies on creating public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all users.

The **Housing** chapter contains a set of goals to support housing options for residents of all incomes, abilities, and ages.

The **Transportation** chapter contains a set of goals on transportation accessibility to essential services.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to ensure equitable access to city services for all residents.

The **Parks and Recreation** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to improve access to recreation facilities and programs and support cultural programming.



The **Economic Development** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to support civic engagement with community members from diverse backgrounds and strengthen City partnerships.

The **Climate and Environment** chapter contains a set of goals to identify impacts of climate change through an environmental justice framework.



AAEE Commission 2026 Work Plan Summarized

For the remainder of 2026, the AAEE Commission will focus on:

- Develop Spending Plan for 2026 (Requires Council Approval)
- Develop 2027 funding and policy for ongoing AAEE grants to establish a sustainable funding source and align timelines with other City grant programs. Forward to Council for consideration. (Urgent)
- Review and participate in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (Chapter 9 and others) – Open House in July 2026
- Develop guidance on reaching marginalized groups for outreach for City-sponsored community events (to incorporate in AAEE grants)
- Support and participate in City-sponsored community events that are meant to bring the community together
- Participate in civic education opportunities
- Develop metrics and other standards to measure impact of committee work over time (Subcommittee/Staff)

Action Item	Responsible Party	Due Date
Continue Ongoing -Proclamations/Days of Recognition	Subcommittee	Ongoing
2026 Spending Plan	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	June 2026 (approved 6/1/26) – remaining \$3,300 unallocated
Grant Policy -update with AAEE framework for 2026 and future years -develop assessment tool to measure participant outcomes -establish 2027 process and sustainable funding request	Subcommittee/Staff Support	June/July 2026
Administrative -Review Commission Roles -Update interview questions for membership	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	July 2026
Comp Plan Elements Periodic update; Chapter	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	July 2026 – Open House December 2026 - Complete

9; Housing; Economic Development, etc. -Consultation -Open House -Additional Outreach -Community Conversation		
Community Events -Juneteenth -Fourth of July/Independence Day/America 250 -And others partnership opportunities	Commission or Subcommittee/Staff Support	September 2026
Outreach Guidance -workshops/event planning and outreach strategies -Cultivate access points to distribute information to marginalized and micro-communities -Develop workshops to educate staff on access/trust building for all groups in community (all services)	Subcommittee/Staff	December 2026
Build Metrics and Tools to measure outcomes and impact of Commission -engagement actions -grant activities -events	Subcommittee and Staff	December 2026
Access to Civic Education (Prepare item for Constitution Day or Ellensburg Academy)	Subcommittee	March 2027



Meeting Date: July 14, 2026

City of Ellensburg

Access, Advocacy, Equity & Engagement Commission

Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Grants Subcommittee: Review and approve 2026 AAEE Commission Grant Application

Submitted by:

Department: City Manager

Suggested Motion/Action:

Make a motion to approve the 2026 AAEE Commission Grant Application.

Background/Summary:

The Grant Subcommittee consisting of City Manager Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, Councilmember Nancy Goodloe, and commission members Judd Grey and Amber Darting have met several times to refine the 2026 AAEE Commission grant process and application. On June 1, the City Council approved \$4,000 for the 2026 AAEE Grant Program. The money must be awarded and spent in 2026. Review and approve the attached grant application and process.

The application period will open on August 3, 2026 and close at 5 p.m. on August 31, 2026. The Commission subcommittee will review applications and make a recommendation for funding at the September AAEE Commission meeting. All recommended grants will be forwarded to the Ellensburg City Council for review and approval. Awarded grant funds must be spent in the 2026 calendar year. Documentation is required for reimbursement from the City. A grant agreement must be signed before funds can be spent, which may require liability or other insurance be in place depending on the proposed use of the grant funds.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Analysis:

N/A

Financial Impact:

The Commission has \$4,000 allocated for 2026 grants.

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

1. Draft - 2026 Application for AAEE Grant Program 7-9-26

2026 Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement (AAEE) Commission Grant Application

[Fillable PDF]

Introduction

The purpose of this grant program is to support projects and activities that advance access, advocacy, equity, and engagement in Ellensburg by fostering meaningful community participation, improving equitable access to information and services, promoting multicultural understanding, and strengthening a sense of belonging for all residents and visitors.

Grant information will be posted on the City of Ellensburg website and social media channels on Monday, August 3, 2026. Completed grant applications (submitted as a Word document or PDF) should be sent to City Manager's Office. Up to \$4,000 is available for grants in for events and activities to be completed before December 31, 2026.

The grant application period will close at 5 p.m. on August 31, 2026. The AAEE Commission grant subcommittee will review applications and make a recommendation for funding at the September AAEE Commission meeting. All recommended grants will be forwarded to the Ellensburg City Council for review and approval. Awarded grant funds must be spent in the 2026 calendar year. Documentation is required for reimbursement from the City. A grant agreement must be signed before funds can be spent, which may require liability or other insurance be in place depending on the proposed use of the grant funds.

Please note that applicants may not apply to multiple City grant programs for the same project in 2026.

Grant Program Goals

- Foster civic engagement and meaningful community participation.
- Improve equitable access to City services, information, and opportunities, including traditionally underserved or marginalized populations.
- Promote multicultural understanding and a stronger sense of belonging.
- Expand education and outreach that support diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.
- Support community asset-building through inclusive programs and partnerships.
- Encourage collaborative solutions that strengthen community well-being, safety, and vitality.
- Build sustained partnerships for multicultural activities and community dialogue.
- Create events and gatherings that connect residents and strengthen community relationships.

Program Guidelines

Eligible Applicants: Non-profit organizations, civic groups, neighborhood groups. Partnerships among groups will also be considered.

Eligible Locations: The services or program funded by the grant must take place within the City of Ellensburg.

Eligible Expenses: Personnel, professional services, supplies and materials, construction costs, public information and outreach for expenses within the 2026 calendar year.

Measuring Success: Groups are required to define how they will measure success. In addition, participants in funded programs will be asked to complete a brief assessment tool.

The Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission (AAEE) acknowledges that commissioners are often active community volunteers. Current AAEE Commission members and organizations of which they serve as board members or principals may apply for grant funding but will recuse themselves from participating in grant evaluation and decisions on funding.

Match: Matching funds are encouraged but not required for this program. The following items count as matching funds: cash, volunteer hours, and donated materials, equipment use, or professional services.

Project Timeline

Application Due Dates: Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2026. Submit completed applications to:

City Manager's Office

City of Ellensburg

501 N. Anderson Street

Ellensburg, WA 98926

citymanager@ellensburgwa.gov

Award Decisions: Award decisions will be made and notifications sent to applicants by September 30, 2026.

Project Time Limit: All projects must be completed before December 31, 2026. A final report on execution must be submitted to the Council Subcommittee via the City Manager's Office pursuant to the executed Grant Agreement. The report should describe your successes and/or challenges with the grant award. *The final report on execution must be submitted in order to qualify for additional City grants.*

Application Process

Project Applications: Applications must be made either electronically or on paper forms provided by the City. Applications are available on the City's webpage at www.ellensburgwa.gov/grants or can be obtained from the City Manager's Office by calling 509-962-7221.

Project Description: The description of the project should include the overall purpose of your project and the location where it will take place.

Project Goals and Strategies: Identify specific goal statements for your project. For each goal statement, identify at least one strategy you will use to meet that goal.

Accountability: Explain how your project addresses the Grant Program Goals as outlined in the application packet, the City's Strategic Vision www.ellensburgwa.gov/strategicvision, and [ECC Chapter](#)

1.88 ACCESS, ADVOCACY, EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION. Identify each program goal that the project addresses and provide a brief explanation on how the project addresses that goal. Your project should meet at least one of the Grant Program Goals.

Budget Plan: List each resource needed to complete your project. Please show other sources of funding (if applicable) and explain how grant funding will be spent. Please include the following, as applicable:

- The value of volunteer labor as established by the Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer hours: <https://www.independentsector.org/research/value-of-volunteer-time>
- Equipment donated is valued at the hourly rental rate for the equipment used for the project.
- Donated professional services are valued at the "reasonable and customary" rate for the services.

Review Process

Written applications will be reviewed by members of the AAEE Commission. If requested, applicants may be asked to present an overview of the project and how it meets the City's goals, limited to 15 minutes.

The AAEE Commission will make a funding recommendation to the City Council. City Council will make the final determination of funding. Applicants may be asked to present their projects to the City Council as well.

Reporting Requirements and Accountability

If awarded, an agreement will be executed to outline the specific conditions of the project. A final report must be submitted to the Commission via the City Manager's Office pursuant to the executed Grant Agreement.

2026 Access, Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Commission Grant Application

Please limit responses to 3 pages in not less than 10-point type font (not including budget).

Primary Contact Person

Name:

Organization Representing:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

E-mail:

Project Information:

Description of the project/program and what you hope to accomplish with the project/program. Please include how you plan to promote the event or program.

Project/Program Goals and Actions:

Develop and list specific goal statements for your project/program. Describe how your project relates to the Grant Program Goals (above) as outlined in the introductory materials.

Each goal statement should have at least one action/strategy for how you plan to meet that goal.

Measuring Success:

Describe how you will measure the success(es) of your project/program. Note: Grantees will be required to use a brief survey assessment tool for participants of events in addition to their proposed measure of success.

Timeline for the project:

Provide specific dates for the start and ending of your project/program.

Project Budget: (Must provide budget in this format)

Project Revenue	Amount
Grant Request	
Cash Match from Applicant	
In-kind match from Applicant	
Cash from other Sources	
• Source:	
• Source:	
Total Project Revenue	

Project Expenses				
Item	Total Cost	Applicant “In-Kind” Match*	Applicant Cash Match**	Requested Grant
Personnel				
Materials/Supplies				
Professional Services				
Other				
Total Expenses				

*Applicant In-kind Match: The documented value of non-cash resources contributed by the applicant to support the proposed project, such as staff time, volunteer labor, donated materials, use of facilities, equipment, or professional services. In-kind match must include expenses directly related to the project, necessary and reasonable, documented, assigned a fair market value, not counted toward another grant.

**Applicant Cash Match: The amount of cash the applicant will contribute toward the total cost of the proposed project. Cash match must be verifiable and documented, committed to the project, used for eligible project expenses, not paid by the same grant program, allowable under the grant guidelines.

Milestone	Responsible Party	Projected Date for Completion	Outcome



Meeting Date: July 14, 2026

City of Ellensburg

Access, Advocacy, Equity & Engagement Commission

Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Staff Report
Submitted by:
Department: City Manager

Suggested Motion/Action:

Listen to staff updates.

Background/Summary:

Staff Updates

- Lisa Young and Gretchen Delaford will be taking over the commission starting this month. You will hear from them moving forward.
- Share with your networks: People for People is updating the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) for Kittitas County. The plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. It also outlines strategies to improve access and guides the prioritization of transportation services for funding and implementation. This is your opportunity to help shape how transportation funding is prioritized by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). A survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WH367QL>.

Upcoming City events and activities:

- The free Summer Reading Program is in progress at the Library. Stop by to pick up a reading log and learn about free activities for adults and youth.
- Online registration for the Youth Gladiator Dash closes on July 14. The event is August 1 and day-of registration does not include a t-shirt.
- Stop by the Foundry Building on Wednesday, July 22 from 4-6 p.m. to review the draft Comprehensive Plan. Chapters are currently posted at www.ellensburgwa.gov/ellensburg2046.
- Enjoy free music at N. Alder St. Park on Thursday nights from 6:30-8 p.m. Starting July 23.
- Nominations are open for the 2026 Arts Advocate and Arts Treasure Awards through August 31, 2026.
- Coffee With City Council from 9-11 a.m. on August 8 at Unity Park across from the Ellensburg Farmer's Market.
- The City of Ellensburg is accepting applications for Council-funded Grant Programs and Arts Commission Grants for work to be completed in 2027. Each program has a

specific purpose, application, and set of requirements. The application deadline is 5 p.m. On Monday, August 31, 2026. Find grant information at www.ellensburgwa.gov/grants.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Analysis:

N/A

Financial Impact:

None.

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

None