

## Strategic Planning Update

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### Listening Tour Update and Strategic Priorities Affirmation

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee convened on February 5, 2025, with the following agenda:

1. Review early themes from Listening Tour
2. Strategic Matrix exercise to evaluate the draft strategic priorities

Goal: Advance the eight draft priorities to a more succinct and differentiated set of strategic priorities

### Listening Tour Update

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As of February 5, 2025, 6 of the 13 planned sessions of the Listening Tour had been completed. Sessions completed included:

- Student Affairs
- Board of Trustees
- Achieving the Dream
- Academic Affairs
- Associated Student Government
- College Assembly

The remaining 7 sessions will be completed throughout February.

The remaining sessions include:

- K12 Partners (2/10)
- Higher Ed Partners (2/10)
- Workforce Advisory Board (2/11)
- Community Leaders (2/12)
- Foundation Board (2/12)
- Community Leaders + General Make-Up Session (2/13)
- Tribal Leaders (date TBD)

## Strategic Planning Update

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### Listening Tour Early Themes

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Several discussion items in the Listening Tour protocol focus on identifying **strengths** of Bellevue College as well as **weakness and/or barriers** that prohibit the college from reaching its greatest potential. Themes across the stakeholder groups include:

#### *Strengths*

##### **Excellent People, and Positive Career Impacts**

Career resets, culture of promoting from within

##### **Dedication to, and Improvement on DEI**

While not always a priority, respondents have seen major progress on DEI in their time at BC

##### **Complete Commitment to Students**

Strong and streamlined student services boast higher quality than competitors

##### **Size, Location, Brand Recognition**

BC has, in some ways, risen above 2-year stereotypes

##### **Strong Community Connections**

K12 relationships, workforce advisory boards, and other relationships

##### **Academic Excellence**

Strong and differentiated programs (e.g., health sciences, technology) taught by standout professors and instructors

#### *Weakness and Barriers*

##### **Leadership Turnover**

Frequent turnover at all levels affects employees and students across the institution

##### **Lack of Psychological Safety**

Some feel unable to engage in constructive conflict, or reasoned disagreement about priorities

##### **Process- vs. Outcomes-Driven Culture**

BC often approaches problems by creating new processes. Hiring and onboarding specifically called out here.

##### **Scheduling and Course Availability**

Almost everyone discussed course bottlenecks and other process headaches

##### **Basic Services Sometimes Lacking**

Fancy new labs juxtapose against facilities issues and classrooms without working clocks

##### **Ineffective Program Review Process**

Unclear goals for process, little transparency of outcome, lack of market research, and inadequate marketing for programs

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### **Listening Tour Early Themes (continued)**

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Participants also provided insights regarding the opportunities that they see for the college as well as their “hopes” or ambitions for the strategic plan.

#### *Opportunities*

##### **Improved Communication & Collaboration Between Offices**

Strong collaboration between academic and student affairs could be replicated across campus

##### **Clarification of Online Strategy**

Many want more in-person classes

##### **Engage Alumni as Ambassadors**

Cultivate a lifelong Bulldog identity

##### **Distinctive Student Engagement Proposition**

Beyond simply competing on cost, BC should compete on student engagement and experience. Reduce red tape for student-facing services.

##### **Increase Academic and Prof. Ed. Innovation**

Embed professional certificates in degrees, streamline credit for prior learning

##### **Improve Access for Working Students**

Expand hours for on-campus services

#### *Hopes and Ambitions for the Strategic Plan*

##### **Focus and Clarity, Not All Things to All People**

Numerous respondents hoped for clear focus areas and transparent decisions that would enable them to effectively make tradeoffs and prioritize their work

##### **Streamlined Operations and Processes**

Make it easier for students to enroll and learn, and for employees to hire, retain, and thrive

##### **Define and Articulate DEI Beyond Race**

Operational mission that includes religion, ability, gender identity, and beyond

##### **Clearly Defined Service Area**

Especially for professional and technical programs

##### **Creating a More Data-Driven Culture**

Metrics for accountability at every level. Dashboard to track progress against strategic priorities.

##### **Enhanced Employee Experience**

Improved pay (if possible), non-comp benefits, opportunities for advancement

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### **Observations of Listening Tour Early Themes and Next Steps**

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Listening Tour themes related to Strengths and Weaknesses align with the SWOT exercise completed by the Steering Committee. This affirms that the work of the Steering Committee is representative of the stakeholders from across the college.

The themes gleaned from the listening tour around opportunities are largely internal facing, focused on how the college can improve internal processes and impact on internal stakeholders (students, faculty, staff). Through the SWOT exercise, the Steering Committee was prompted to consider the opportunities the external forces present for the college. Thus, the identified opportunities from the Steering Committee do not align with those identified by the listening tour participants.

Many of the remaining listening sessions are with external partners (K-12, area four-year universities, community leaders). These sessions will illuminate any new or different themes that are important to stakeholders who engage with the college in unique ways.

Sessions are expected to conclude by the end of February. A summary report of key themes from the Tour will be produced by EAB and shared with the Steering Committee for continued consideration in the planning process.

## Strategic Planning Update

### Analysis of Emerging Strategic Priorities

Following examination of internal and external data sources as well as consideration of the key themes impacting higher education and the community college sector, the Steering Committee identified a set of eight draft strategic priorities. These priorities have been in consideration since December 2024 and have been shared with stakeholder groups as part of the Listening Tour.

During the February Steering Committee meeting, participants conducted a critical examination of these themes, with a focus on identifying ambitious priorities that will allow Bellevue College to thrive in the next five years and position the college competitively in the region.

#### *Strategic Priority Analysis*

To move from a generic set of priorities to a more strategic set of ambitions, the Steering Committee considered the intersection of the college's strengths and opportunities. Using the matrix below, the committee considered the eight draft priorities and their connections.

	Strength	Weakness
Opportunity	Immediate ways to win	Areas for internal Development
Threat	Wait and See	Risk management

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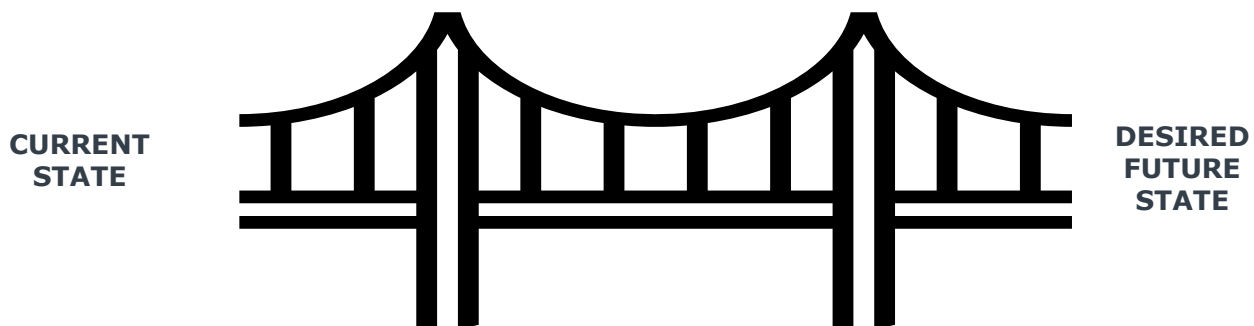
### Analysis of Emerging Strategic Priorities (continued)

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#### *Imagining a Desired Future State*

The Steering Committee was also prompted to consider the desired future state of the college as it relates to each of the emerging priorities. Using the analogy of a bridge, the committee considered the current state of the college, imagined a desired future state five year from the present, and identified gaps that exist that prohibit the college from reaching that desired future state.

This exercise called on the Steering Committee to utilize the future visioning skills that were presented at the January meeting, with consideration of the many inputs into this process so far: internal and external data, examination of trends across higher education, the unique needs of the Bellevue College service area and beyond, inputs from stakeholders.



1. What would success around this priority look like in 5 years?
2. How would Bellevue College be changed or transformed because of progress and achievement around this priority?
3. What are some of the current gaps to achieving success in this priority?

## Strategic Planning Update

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### Affirmation of Strategic Imperatives

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#### *Positioning Bellevue College for Success 2026-2030*

The critical examination of the emerging priorities culminated in identification of three strategic priorities that will serve as the framework of the Bellevue College Strategic Plan, 2026-2030:

*\*Titles of the priorities will be iterative as the Action Teams conduct deeper examination*

#### 1. Holistic Student Experience

#### 2. Employee Experience

#### 3. Community Vibrancy



#### *Emerging Graphic Representation \*in progress*

The Steering Committee considered a graphic representation of the interconnection of these strategic priorities.

1. The **Student Experience** is at the center of everything the college does.
2. The **Employee Experience** is encompassing of who the college is and what the college does well. This is inclusive of the themes from the listening sessions of a need for increased efficiency, academic innovation, and challenges related to capacity.
3. **Community Vibrancy** is indicative of the college's commitment to the service region. The term "community vibrancy" is the language used for this focus area of the college's work with Achieving the Dream. The term was chosen to show alignment between the strategic efforts related to ATD and the strategic plan.

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### Next Steps

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#### *Assembling Action Teams*

Bellevue College leadership is committed to the strategic planning process being an inclusive exercise that invites the voices of a broad array of stakeholders in multiple ways. The next steps in this process reflect that commitment.

Cross-functional teams (Action Teams) of 6-12 stakeholders, with expertise around each of the themes, will be assembled to provide a deep focus on each of the three strategic priorities. These teams will have faculty and staff representation and will be chaired by member of the Steering Committee. These teams will begin working in March and continue through the completion of the plan in June 2025. The Action Teams will be responsible for defining the strategic priorities, identifying key initiatives to support the priorities and identifying metrics to help monitor progress during plan implementation.