USER-CENTERED DESIGN
RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR BELLEVUE'S PUBLIC WEBSITE

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THE CHALLENGE

In the information technology age, user-friendly design has become increasingly important. Official city websites are often the first point of contact between local government and the residents and visitors of a city; therefore, they play a critical rolein the city making a positive first impression and easing public access to information and city services. For this Livable City Year project, the City of Bellevue engaged with media design students from the University of Washington, asking them to evaluate the user-friendliness of the current City of Bellevue website and to consider ways to make the website more user-centered. Students were asked to identify different types of users ("personas") who regularly visit the City's website and to base their design recommendations on them.

PERSONAS

1. **"Job Searching Jin"** – Individuals looking for a job
2. **"Maia the Mom"** – Parents looking for extracurricular activities for their children
3. **"Thomas the Tourist"** – Short-term visitors looking for things to do in and around Bellevue
4. **"Activity Seeking Anya"** – Residents of Bellevue looking for new activities

OUR METHODS

To discover how people currently use the City's website, we collected data using Google Analytics. This allowed us to see how many people currently use the website, what they seek, as well as the most-searched-for pages and words. Our goal was to come up with tasks for interviewees to complete. These tasks would allow us to observe and analyze how people interact with the website, and they would help us in determining design suggestions for the City.

Sample mockup home page LCY STUDENT TEAM

Next, we decided who to interview. We went back to the Google Analytics data to look for emerging patterns and we studied demographics of Bellevue to determine target groups. In analyzing demographics, we considered significant, growing, and overlooked populations that stand to be the most affected by redesigning the City's website. We interviewed a total of five community members.

We brainstormed as many types of human users as we could, as well as reasons they would visit the City's website. We looked at top pages visited, top key search words, and demographic groups. This brainstorming process informed our creation of the following four "personas."

MAIA

Age:	38
Ethnicity:	Asian
Marital Status:	Married
Occupation:	Housewife
Languages:	Chinese/English

Pain Points
- having her kids stuck inside with nothing to do
- not finding enough support from her community events
- language barrier
- not enough resources available to teach her kids
- lack of information channel
- unfamiliar with govt. workflow

Goals
- finding ways to keep her kids busy after school
- take an English learning class
- pay family bills
- seeking a high ranking primary school for her kids

Maia the Mom, one of four personas
LCY STUDENT TEAM

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

In mockups of the City's home page, we illustrate the following redesign suggestions:

- Display information on the home page that relates to topics people actively seek
- Reduce the size of the search bar and position it in the top right corner to encourage people to view the content on the home page and scroll
- Present a clean layout and spotlight upcoming activities and events to engage with the public
- Separate news stories from events
- Use color coded tags to help people identify topics of interest and navigate the site
- Use photos to help visualize calendar events