Grant Degginger re-elected mayor

The City Council elected Claudia Balducci to be deputy mayor and Grant Degginger to be mayor for the next two years.

Connie Marshall steps down

Three-term Bellevue City Council member Connie Marshall announced in January that she would resign. In a statement read during the Council’s Jan. 14 study session, Marshall said she had “accomplished what I came here to do.”

“I’ve helped to guide Bellevue’s vision to position itself as the ‘hub’ of the Eastside without being the gorilla,” Marshall said. “We have transformed ourselves to be the transportation hub, the cultural hub, the economic hub and the medical hub.”

Before a crowd of family and friends, including King County Councilman Reagan Dunn, the City Council and supporters on Jan. 22 presented Marshall with flowers and plaques for her nearly 10 years of service.

Marshall’s present term would have expired in two years. The Council is expected to decide soon how to fill her position until the next municipal election in 2009.

“Connie has been an outstanding leader, someone who kept her eye on the big picture and got things done,” City Manager Steve Sarkozy said. “We are going to miss her immensely.”

Marshall began her career on the council in 1998, and served two consecutive terms (2002 to 2005) as mayor. She has also served as a Sound Transit board member since 2004.

During her tenure, Bellevue underwent many significant changes, including:

- Transformation of the central business district into a regional employment center for the retail, high-technology and banking industries;
- Construction of a regional transit center downtown;
- Construction of a new City Hall downtown;
- Major expansion of cultural and arts programs throughout the city;
- Major arterial improvements, including the Northeast 10th Street overpass, now under construction.

In her remarks, Marshall said Bellevue was on the right track, poised to become a “world class and memorable city.”

“It’s been a privilege and honor to serve on the City Council for the past 10 years,” she said. “And I want to thank everyone who helped me get here – there are so many of you. I have loved my experience and will cherish the memories.”
Slicing the property tax pie
By Bellevue City Councilmember Don Davidson

It’s that time of year again. Property taxes are due soon, and a lot of people will be asking themselves the same question: “Where do my property tax dollars go, anyway?”

If you think the City of Bellevue receives the majority of the property taxes you pay, you’re in for a surprise. The fact is that last year, despite imposing a modest tax increase to pay for critical capital improvement projects, the city received only 14 percent of the total property taxes paid by Bellevue homeowners.

State and local schools combined collected the most, 57 percent, while King County came in second, with 17 percent. Special districts, such as the Port of Seattle, together collected 12 percent.

It’s important we know where our tax dollars are going, and what they are being used for. We deserve maximum value from our tax dollars.

For many years now, the Bellevue City Council has practiced this philosophy. We have largely held the line on property tax increases, while delivering top value for the tax dollars collected.

We have lived within our means and controlled spending by identifying efficiencies and encouraging innovation through new technologies and other means. And we have attempted to balance residential and business tax responsibilities by creating an environment that encourages businesses to locate and invest here.

Indeed, for eight years, from 1998 through 2006, the council imposed no increases in city property taxes. And the 2 percent increase approved by the Council for 2007 translated into a property tax increase for the average Bellevue homeowner of about $11 each year. This year’s 2 percent tax increase will boost taxes by about the same, small amount.

In comparison, the average Bellevue taxpayer this year will pay an additional $148 in property taxes to King County to pay for voter-approved parks expansion and maintenance levies, as well as ferry and flood control district bonds.

It’s easy to determine where our tax dollars go, and the value we receive. Low crime, great parks, excellent public safety services, quality residential neighborhoods and robust commercial areas — all are hallmarks of our community and the reasons why we are considered one of the best places in the nation in which to live, work and play.

In coming months, the topic of property taxes is likely to surface again as the City Council begins public deliberations on the next biennial budget and the city’s long-range financial plan. The deliberations will focus on how we maintain the current level of services and meet new demands in the face of rapid growth and other challenges.

For example, the city’s Parks and Recreation Improvement bonds will expire this year, decreasing property taxes by an average of $26, but leaving the city with no steady revenue stream to replace the funds.

Questions the Council will likely face are:

• How do we ensure the long-term viability of our city’s economic engine?
• How do we maintain the integrity of our neighborhoods in the face of continued growth?
• How do we provide the cultural and recreational amenities that residents and visitors demand?
• How do we build a transportation system that meets current and long-term mobility needs?
• How do we make sure we’re doing what we need to do to promote environmental stewardship?
• How do we maintain high levels of citizen satisfaction as they relate to city services such as public safety?

Residents and others will have ample opportunity to engage in frank discussions with Council members as we tackle these and other questions. I encourage all of you to stay informed and get involved.

Residents Talk

If you had the time, what kind of volunteer activity would you choose to do? If you are already volunteering, what are you doing now?

Nick Ayers: “I haven’t volunteered for a while. I built houses in Mexico as part of a church group, and that was fun. I’d do that again. My second choice would be to volunteer for the Humane Society.”

Marilyn Campbell: “I’ve volunteered for the Bellevue Police Department since last fall. I went through the Community Academy. It’s so fascinating. I work at the Crossroads Police Station. I just wanted to give back and say ‘Thank you for keeping us safe,’ I love it.”

Noriko Obata: “I volunteer in Bellevue schools. I’d like to volunteer at the downtown library. My kids are still small and the library volunteers always help me with me with my questions.”

Matt Stermer: “It would be a community service to help keep the neighborhood clean and safe, or maybe the Boys and Girls Club. Something that helps kids.”

Matt Stermer: “It would be a community service to help keep the neighborhood clean and safe, or maybe the Boys and Girls Club. Something that helps kids.”
Crime in Bellevue down across the board

Crime was down significantly in Bellevue during the first half of 2007, according to statistics released in January by the FBI.

"It's really gratifying to see the continued efforts of the Police Department and citizens pay off."

Police Chief Linda Pillo

With no murder cases, only one traffic fatality and a continued downward trend in property crimes, Bellevue continues to be one of the safest communities in the nation.

"It’s really gratifying to see the continued efforts of the Police Department and citizens pay off," said Police Chief Linda Pillo. "The partnerships we’ve forged throughout the community are an extremely important reason for our success, and will grow increasingly important as we work to meet future challenges."

On Jan. 7, the FBI released its preliminary crime statistics for the first six months of 2007.

Five Washington cities with populations over 100,000 were included in the study: Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver and Bellevue. In Bellevue, violent crime is down from 98 incidents in 2006 to 64 in 2007. This category includes murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault.

Property crimes, which include burglary, larceny (theft), motor vehicle theft and arson, are down from 2,257 in 2006 to 2,073 in 2007. The number of arsons in Bellevue plummeted 45 percent.

The only category to see an increase for the same time frame in 2007 was motor vehicle theft, rising from 199 incidents to 251. However, a preliminary analysis of the auto theft statistics for the entire year show that the number of arsons in Bellevue plummeted 45 percent.

Homicide 2 0 −100%
Rape 22 14 −36%
Robbery 41 26 −36%
Aggravated Assault 33 24 −27%
Violent Crime Total 98 64 −34%
Burglary 303 256 −15%
Larceny 1715 1555 −9%
MV Theft 199 251 +20%
Arson 20 11 −45%
Property Crime Total 2237 2073 −11%

The Bellevue Police Department’s proactive efforts and partnerships are paying off.

Participating in a statewide effort to reverse the shoreline degradation in Washington, Bellevue will update its shoreline management regulations. City officials hope to come up with changes that will facilitate restoration and more public access.

The shoreline management regulations that typically generate concern among waterfront property owners – standards for docks and bulkheads – were changed when Bellevue’s critical areas ordinances were updated in 2006, so will be largely left alone.

Shoreline management is important in Bellevue, with properties covered by the regulations along Lake Washington, Lake Sammamish, Phantom Lake, Mercer Slough and Kelsey Creek. The wetlands associated with these water bodies are also covered.

Bellevue’s current Shoreline Master Plan, essentially a planning and zoning ordinance that governs waterfront development here, was drafted in 1974. The plan followed the passage by the state in the early 1970s of the Shoreline Management Act, intended to prevent the "inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state’s shorelines."

The law’s three broad policies include encouraging water-dependent uses, protecting shoreline natural resources and promoting public access. Cities like Bellevue are the primary regulators, but the state Department of Ecology reviews local programs and permits decisions.

In 2003 the state extend its shoreline management guidelines to emphasize ecologically appropriate development. Bellevue has to update its shoreline regulations accordingly by 2010.

The state’s guidelines dictate a six-phase planning process between now and then, with public input at each step. The first phase of the update, drafting a public participation plan and completing a shoreline inventory, is set for completion in the spring.

The Bellevue Planning Commission will be the primary forum for public input and review of the components of the updated shoreline plan. In addition, the city will be soliciting feedback through phone surveys, focus groups, open houses and public hearings.

Please refer to the city’s web page, http://www.bellevuewa.gov/shoreline-master-plan.htm, for more information about this project.
City expands volunteer programs

Do you have a passion for volunteering or a desire to volunteer in the future? If you answered yes to either question, the city hopes you will participate in an online survey. The survey – at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/volunteer-survey.htm – is aimed at helping the city target its efforts to promote and encourage volunteerism. You can also provide input by contacting Charlie Bush, Assistant to the City Manager, at 452-6837 or cbush@bellevuewa.gov.

Council OKs neighborhood livability code changes

The Bellevue City Council has approved some code changes aimed at protecting neighborhood character and livability from some of the impacts of new home construction and large-scale remodels, but it’s not done yet.

The code amendment package approved in December addresses greenscape, trees, lot build-up and unscreened construction debris. The Council will likely consider a second phase of code changes this year.

All of the regulatory changes address public concerns about the loss of trees, greenscape, light and privacy often associated with the construction of large, new homes, labeled by critics “megahouses.”

The “neighborhood character” code amendments came out of months of study and public outreach by the Bellevue Planning Commission and city staff.

**Phase Two amendments could include:**
- Additional tree retention requirements for single-family residential zones;
- Development standards for building projects exceeding a certain size threshold;
- Separate setback requirements for mechanical equipment and guest cottages;
- Prohibition of lot assembly which would result in a parcel’s size exceeding the minimum lot size for that district by more than 10 percent;
- Changes in codes or procedures that define remodels;
- Changes in codes or procedures that allow private streets to count as part of setbacks;
- Requirements for clean-up of abandoned building sites.

Pay utilities bills online

Bellevue-area utilities customers can now manage their utilities bills online. By registering at MyUtilityBill.bellevuewa.gov, a customer can pay their bill electronically with a credit or debit card, access water consumption history and view account and rate information.

Notice of the service, which took effect Jan. 3, was included with January utilities bills. For more information, customers can call the Utilities Department at 425-452-6973.

The city provides water, sewer and stormwater services to about 35,000 residential and commercial customer accounts in Bellevue, Medina, Clyde Hill, the Point Cities and some areas of Issaquah.
A visit with new Police Chief Linda Pillo

Following the retirement of Police Chief Jim Montgomery last year, city officials performed a nationwide search for his successor. Linda Pillo, a 22-year veteran of the Bellevue department, who has been serving as interim chief, was chosen.

Pillo: It feels fantastic. It is really a great honor to have been selected as the new police chief for Bellevue, especially through a national search. I had some very tough competition.

IYC: How does it feel to be Bellevue's police chief and its first woman chief?

Pillo: When I was growing up, policewomen were not very common, so I was looking at more traditional careers. But when I went into college, I had always been interested in law and I thought criminal justice might be a really good field to study. I got a degree in criminal justice at Washington State University, but was interested in the rehabilitative field and was looking at probation opportunities. So even getting out of college, I wasn't really thinking law enforcement was going to be my career.

IYC: What was your first job as a police officer?

Pillo: At Mercer Island in 1979, where I thought I'd get some experience as a police officer, and then go into probation work. After about a year as a police officer, I enjoyed it so much that I realized that this was the career for me.

IYC: Can you recall the first day on the job at Mercer Island as a uniformed police officer and what was going through your mind at that time?

Pillo: Well, I was actually the second female officer for Mercer Island. The other had been there for close to a year and had blazed the trail for me. I was excited, but definitely apprehensive, because even though I had a four-year degree, it never prepares you for that on-the-job experience. Fortunately, with Mercer Island, they put new officers with experienced ones right from Day One.

IYC: I would imagine that one of the most rewarding things about being a police officer is that you never know from day to day what's going to happen when you come to work. Was there ever a time over your 28 years in law enforcement when you've actually been afraid for your life?

Pillo: Yes, more than once. I never had anyone pull a gun on me, but certainly there have been incidents where I have had to use force and get into scuffles to make an arrest. I was never seriously injured, thank goodness, but the risk is always there for officers. When you think about it, it is quite odd to have to wear a bullet-proof vest to work. You always have to be aware of your surroundings because you never know. Even when you are pulling somebody over for a minor traffic violation, you may be pulling someone over who is wanted for murder and thinks you know who they are.

IYC: Other than your promotions, tell us about your proudest achievements or most rewarding experiences as police officer?

Pillo: I was Bellevue's very first DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer. I had an opportunity to go from police work into education, teaching fourth- and fifth-grade students in Bellevue's schools. It was very rewarding when you could see such a wonder on a child's face. It really makes you proud to see children be able to say no to drugs and alcohol. DARE lasted at Bellevue for about 14 years in all, I started that program, and it was quite successful.

IYC: Do you think it is easier today for women to enter the law enforcement field than when you started?

Pillo: Most definitely. Although in any occupation, you need to prove yourself. Even way back in 1979 when I started, once I had proven to my fellow officers and to community members that I could do the job as well if not better than some, people accepted me. That is the same today. However, there have been so many dramatic changes that it is easier to come into this field as a female now.

With the new police chief in place, the Bellevue Police Department is working towards being one of the best in the nation.

IYC: What do you hope to accomplish as police chief over the next five years?

Pillo: Well, in the first year, we have to do a lot of procedure refinement and training. We will also have to make sure we have a solid foundation for the next three years. It's really important to have a good understanding of the current system before you can improve it. We also have to work on reducing crime and increasing public safety.

IYC: Do you think it is easier today for women to enter the law enforcement field than when you started?

Pillo: Absolutely. It means being proactive. It really means going out there, meeting with the community, finding out what the issues are, and having residents feel comfortable to call us. Community policing is getting the word out, if there are crime trends in neighborhoods or businesses, so people can be even more on the lookout for suspicious activity. We're taking care of the smaller crimes before they turn into bigger crimes.

IYC: What are some of the ways you form those types of partnerships and relationships?

Pillo: One of the things we have is the Community Academy. Twice a year, we have volunteers who take an opportunity to talk to our personnel services unit staff and ask about the force?

Pillo: I would like to utilize technology to facilitate on-line reporting and more information sharing, pushing information about suspects and warrants out to officers on the street fast.

IYC: What accounts for that? Why has Bellevue Police Department been so successful in keeping our crime rates so low compared to other cities the same size nationwide?

Pillo: Well, I wish I could take credit completely for the crime differences but there's several factors involved with crime and jurisdictions. The socio-economic level is one and Bellevue's is a bit higher than other areas in the region, with a low unemployment rate.

Along with that though, we have some very, very good programs, some introduced very recently and some several years ago. Back in the early 1980s, when domestic violence was first really getting some press, our prosecutors and police were aggressive about enforcement, including mandatory arrests and counseling. We were national leaders in that. In most murders, the victim knows the attacker. And many times it is or has been a partner, so I think our approach to domestic violence has made a difference.

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Rubber sidewalks are something new underfoot in Bellevue

The city’s first sections of “rubber sidewalk” are about to be laid down as part of a test program to determine how well the new material works in areas where tree roots have buckled traditional concrete sidewalks. 

Made of ground-up used tires and a urethane resin binder, rubber sidewalk pavers are flexible enough to accommodate root growth, helping to reduce cracking and decrease potential tripping hazards. The pavers can even be removed for tree root maintenance.

Starting Feb. 11, contractors will remove old, damaged sidewalk blocks and install rubber sidewalk pavers downtown, near problem trees, along a half-block stretch of Northeast 10th Street, west of 102nd and Avenue Northeast.

Bellevue planners and transportation engineers are hopeful the technique will prove useful elsewhere, since there are more than 700 sidewalk locations across the city with heaving problems.

In addition to being less prone to heaving, rubber sidewalks offer important environmental benefits that help the city meet its environmental stewardship goals. They can save trees that might otherwise need to be removed, and the use of recycled rubber means fewer tires will wind up in landfills.

The disadvantages are that rubber sidewalks cost more and it’s not yet known how long they will last. The test project will help Transportation Department staff evaluate their durability and the long-term maintenance costs of rubber sidewalks compared with other materials.

While the cost of materials and installation for rubber sidewalks is about 37 percent higher than for the concrete sidewalks being installed at the same location, those expenses represent less than one-third of the project’s overall price tag of $44,500. Removal of old sidewalks, traffic control and other expenditures account for most of the total cost.

What transportation managers want to learn from the project is whether the long-term savings – the “life-cycle cost” – of using rubber sidewalks near trees offsets the upfront costs, and whether those costs will drop as the product is more widely employed.

Rubber sidewalks have been around since 2001 and about 60 cities nationwide, including Kirkland, Seattle, Olympia and Tacoma, are testing the surface as a substitute for concrete.

Transportation group makes getting around easier for seniors

Getting around can be challenging for many older adults who lack the money or ability to continue owning and driving a car. Without affordable transportation options, seniors become isolated and struggle to live independently.

With the number of Americans aged 65 and older expected to double over the next 20 years, the demand for transportation assistance will only grow. Local government agencies and nonprofit groups have formed the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative to coordinate existing services and develop new ones.

Currently, seniors can get individual trip planning assistance and refresher driving classes designed for them. Volunteers deliver meals to seniors and shuttle them to doctor appointments. King County Metro Transit offers specially-equipped Access shuttles for people with disabilities.

Easy Rider recently received funding for two new programs expected to be implemented by this summer. The Bus Buddy program will offer one-on-one training to help seniors confidently ride the bus, and Dial a Ride will provide transportation from outlying areas to transit centers served by multiple bus routes.

Partners in Easy Rider include the Bellevue Transportation and Parks & Community Services departments, Aging and Disability Services, Hopelink, Sound Transit, King County Metro and the United Way of King County East Community Council.

In 2006, the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative conducted a random survey mailed to 10,000 Bellevue households in which at least one person over the age of 60 resided. Approximately 1,700 households responded to the survey, representing 2,499 individuals. The input is helping the collaborative address local demands, and they continue to solicit input about transportation needs of older adults.

To provide feedback or to learn more about the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative, contact Bellevue’s Aging Services staff at the North Bellevue Community Center, 425-452-7681.

Transportation Resources for Older Adults

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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Contact information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver Education Classes</td>
<td>AARP (American Association of Retired Persons)</td>
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<td>1-888-AARP-NOW (1-888-227-7669) <a href="http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety/wrapr_driver.py">http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety/wrapr_driver.py</a></td>
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<td>AAA Washington</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1-800-562-2582</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online or traditional classes available</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.aaawwa.com/insurance/driving_improvement/ids.asp">http://www.aaawwa.com/insurance/driving_improvement/ids.asp</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North Bellevue Community 425-452-7681</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound Transit Senior Bus Pass</td>
<td>1-800-201-4900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Services Senior Shuttle</td>
<td>206-727-5262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Services Volunteer Transportation</td>
<td>206-448-3740</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Services Nutrition Transportation</td>
<td>206-748-7586</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Cancer Society</td>
<td>1-800-728-5588</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hopelink</td>
<td>1-800-923-7433</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Kidney Centers</td>
<td>206-205-3971 ext. 5355</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith in Action</td>
<td>425-491-2817</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Information about human services</td>
<td>Phone: 211</td>
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The Bus Buddy program will offer training for seniors, so they can ride the bus confidently.
Children’s Hospital on the way

Bellevue’s rapidly expanding medical district received a major boost in December when City Council members unanimously approved the sale of 6.6 acres to Children’s Hospital for a new ambulatory care facility. The sale is expected to close in April.

“We have literally saved the best for the last,” Chelminiak said, referring to the fact that Dec. 10, the day Council approved the sale, was the last Council meeting of the year.

In a year of significant accomplishments for the city, this may be the greatest. With Children’s Hospital, we now have three major facilities present in our medical district, and that fulfills a long-term vision for the city.”

Councilman John Chelminiak hailed the Council’s decision as one of the most important of the year.

“We have literally saved the best for the last,” Chelminiak said, referring to the fact that Dec. 10, the day Council approved the sale, was the last Council meeting of the year.

“In a year of significant accomplishments for the city, this may be the greatest. With Children’s Hospital, we now have three major facilities present in our medical district, and that fulfills a long-term vision for the city.”

The land is located just northeast of the existing Overlake Hospital Medical Center and Group Health Cooperative. Overlake presently is expanding its facility, while Group Health is constructing a new medical center across the street.

Bellevue City Manager Steve Sarkozy said the sale accomplishes two important goals for Bellevue and the Eastside.

“It will expand world-class medical services for children living on the Eastside,” Sarkozy said, “and it will also provide much needed funds to provide future jail services.

The property at 116th Avenue Northeast, just north of Northeast 12th Street -- just outside the city’s central business district -- was originally purchased by King County for a future jail and justice center. It was deeded to Bellevue and 37 other cities by King County when the county announced several years ago it would stop contracting with the municipalities in 2012 to provide misdemeanor jail services.

Proceeds from the sale of the property, which will range from $10.5 million up to $13 million depending on future zoning of the site, will be used by the cities to either build a jail at a different location or contract with a provider for services, Sarkozy said.

A Children’s spokesperson said the hospital plans to build a 50,000-square-foot ambulatory care facility to add outpatient specialty services, urgent care and pediatric specialty offices to treat Eastside children closer to where they live.

Interest-free loans available for weatherization projects

Bellevue homeowners with low to moderate incomes can receive up to $35,000 in zero-interest loans and grants from Bellevue’s Home Repair Program for weatherization projects, including roof repair and installation of energy-efficient furnaces, insulation and storm windows.

To be eligible for assistance, you must have owned and lived in the house for which you are requesting assistance for at least a year, the house must be within the Bellevue city limits and you must meet the program’s income requirements.

To determine eligibility, count the number of household members residing in the house (household size) and check the maximum allowable income based on that household size at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/homerempair_assistance_eligibility.htm.

For more information about Bellevue’s Home Repair Program, call the Parks & Community Services Department at 425-453-6884 (TDD: 411).

Bellevue launches youth court

Bellevue Youth Court, where juvenile offenders are sentenced by a judge and jury of their peers, is now in operation. Convening for its first session at City Hall last month, Bellevue’s is the first youth court in King County where misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases are handled.

One of just two such juvenile courts in Washington, the Youth Court is modelled after Whatcom County’s Teen Court, which officials there link to a sharp decline in recidivism among second-time juvenile offenders.

“Peer pressure can exert a positive influence on teen behavior by providing a meaningful and immediate effect upon the offender,” said Cathy Beatty of Northwest Youth Services, which coordinates Whatcom County’s program.

Bellevue Youth Court is a three-year pilot project, with high school students trained by professionals to perform court duties. Thirty to 40 student volunteers will serve at each session as judges, jurors, bailiffs, clerks, prosecutors and defense advocates/attorneys.

The program will primarily serve second-time offenders and, in its first year, will sentence misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases. Other youth courts in the region focus on truancy, graffiti or traffic school.

Bellevue Youth Court respondent are referred for sentencing by King County Diversion Court. In order for a respondent’s case to be sentenced by Bellevue Youth Court, the respondent must admit responsibility for their actions and agree to be sentenced by this court of their peers. The Youth Court is required to report all respondents under King County Diversion program guidelines, which includes a provision that the respondent must complete disposition within six months.

The program is funded by Bellevue Youth Link, which will contribute up to $50,000 over the three years. Bellevue Youth Link initiated the program in 2003 and also manages the Bellevue Youth Court volunteer program. Court coordination services are provided by Youth Eastside Services and are supervised by Bellevue Probation Services. The program is authorized by King County Superior Court and the state.

Other program partners include: King County Juvenile Court, King County Prosecutor’s Office, King County Diversion Program, Bellevue School District and Washington Administrative Office of the Courts. Community attorneys, including some City of Bellevue attorneys will also serve as mentors to teen volunteer attorneys.

The court will operate on the “restorative justice” model, a national initiative of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that seeks to provide for accountability, competency development and community safety.

An independent professional program evaluation will be conducted at the conclusion of the three-year pilot program.

For information about Bellevue Youth Court volunteer opportunities, contact Bellevue Youth Link at 425-452-2834.

Websites now in four languages

In an effort to reach more residents with important news and information about city services and facilities, the City of Bellevue now offers websites for Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese languages.

When the city set out to revamp its website in 2006, it planned to develop additional sites with basic information about key services in foreign languages spoken by large numbers of residents.

The Spanish site was rolled out along with the redesigned main city site in August of 2006. A Chinese site was made available in September, a Russian one in October and, finally, a Vietnamese one in December.

“Census Bureau surveys indicate that non-native English speakers represent 32 percent of Bellevue’s population, so we’re gratified when we find effective ways to reach them,” City Manager Steve Sarkozy said.

The foreign language sites, all accessible from links on the left column of all city web pages – http://www.bellevuewa.gov/ – are just one of several ways Bellevue has upgraded its Internet presence to improve communications with citizens.

Staff in the Communications Department worked with the Neighborhood Outreach team to develop the foreign-language websites. Residents representing each minority group were polled about the information they considered essential, and a private translation service was hired to render that information in the foreign languages. Staff in the Outreach office who speak the other languages reviewed pages for accuracy.

The sites feature numerous links to pages in the “Helpful Connections” booklet, produced and translated into several languages by the Eastside Human Services Forum and the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition.

Bellevue’s foreign-language websites are distinct from the English site, each one focused on key topics not subject to frequent change.

The city continues to refine its website to make key information more accessible. If users have suggestions, they can share them with online editor Claude Iossi at cioso@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4448.
Costco applies for zoning change to build Kelsey Creek store

By James E. Bell, East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC) Chair

Costco applied in September 2007 to change the zoning at Kelsey Creek Center and allow construction of a 140,000-square-foot retail center where the old K-Mart sits vacant.

The first public meeting for this application was Dec. 4 before the East Bellevue Community Council. About 25 area residents heard presentations by the city and Costco. Everyone who spoke or submitted written comments became a party of record. They will receive notice of the upcoming Hearing Examiner’s meeting. You can become a party of record and comment /advise the outcome by contacting Mike Upston (452-2970 or mupston@bellevuewa.gov) at Bellevue’s Planning and Community Development department.

If the rezone, Design Review and construction permits are approved, work could start this summer with opening of a new retail Costco in late 2008 or early 2009.

Mike Upston, the city’s lead planner for this application, described how the current property is zoned Community Business (CB) with a concomitant zoning agreement (CZA). This CZA has zoning requirements, land uses allowed and not allowed, and development standards that are specific to this site. It also requires Kelsey Creek to be opened if the retail area is increased.

Upston said that this application is different than the Costco Fresh proposal of several years ago. This application is for a standard store, albeit a little bit smaller to fit on the site. An average Costco is about 160,000 square feet. This site would be about 140,000 square feet.

In 2002-2003 Bellevue was talking about requiring Kelsey Creek to be opened. Now we are looking at leaving it to function the way it does but providing a better culvert that’s clean and provides the necessary flow.

In exchange, the applicant would put the money and resources somewhere else. The first obvious option is to improve the Larson Lake area. The Parks Department has a project there that Costco could add value to and make it better than we have today. This includes pedestrian connections to the park and trail system and improved habitat.

Specifically the city is looking at the site rezoning back to Community Business. In exchange for taking away the concomitant agreement, Bellevue would ask for a binding agreement that would require a number of improvements to the site and a mitigation plan for improvements to Larson Lake. The list includes: reconstructing the culvert, providing storm water detention, putting filters in the catch basins, putting in landscape improvements, putting in a trail and doing the off-site mitigation. So, if for some reason the rezone were granted but the Costco store weren’t built, there would be certain improvements to the property and mitigation improvements in the connection to the Larson Lake.

Andy Dempsey and Transportation Solutions Inc. (TSI) are the traffic engineers hired by Costco for this project. They are working with the Bellevue transportation engineers to develop solutions that minimize the impact of Costco traffic.

The initial part of the analysis was for concurrency. This indicated that the Costco store would have about 850 trips going in and out of the parking lot during the peak P. M. hours. That is 425 cars in and 425 cars out. About 25 percent of those cars were already on 148th or Main. This level passes the concurrency management standards for Bellevue during the week and shows that the overall road network in this area of Bellevue could handle the traffic that’s expected from a Costco of this size.

TSI also did a Saturday traffic analysis because Costco generates more traffic on Saturday than weekdays. They estimate there would be about 575 cars in and 575 cars out during the busiest time on a typical weekend. Of course the normal level of traffic on 148th is lower on the weekend.

TSI also did a neighborhood analysis at the community’s request. This was to determine whether there was a significant potential for folks travel through the neighborhood rather than using 148th. They found that it would take 1 1/2 to 2 times longer to go through the neighborhoods than to use 148th for access to the site.

We welcome comments about the East Bellevue area. You can share your views with the Community Council via e-mail at EBCC@bellevuewa.gov. To find out more about the agendas and decisions of EBCC go to the website, http://www.bellevuewa.gov/EBCC_Homepage.htm and look under city government.

Next step is the Hearing Examiner

A public hearing by the Hearing Examiners is tentatively scheduled for March. The Hearing Examiner holds the public hearing for the City Council.

At the hearing, city staff will present their staff report with recommendations for the rezone and the required conditions for removing the concomitant zoning agreement. The Hearing Examiner will also take public testimony regarding the rezone application.

Following that, the Hearing Examiner will submit a recommendation to the City Council for approving the rezone.

Costco describes plans

Peter Kahn, the Costco representative, said that the company proposes to build a 140,000-square-foot Costco warehouse without the automobile amenities, without the tire center and without a gas station.

It will have the standard Costco one-way in and one-way out of the building access. Parking will increase from 742 to 856 spaces. Costco will also acquire the Shell Station property and convert that to parking spaces.

Currently there is no stormwater treatment on the site. Costco will provide stormwater treatment to substantially reduce the pollutants going into the creek. Some of this will incorporate low-impact development technologies in the landscaping plan.

Landscaping will increase to meet current Bellevue standards. Increased perimeter landscaping will soften the view of the site from 148th Avenue and Main Street.

Transportation is a big issue. Costco has three goals: 1) Keep the traffic moving on 148th 2) Get people in and out of the site and 3) Ensure member traffic doesn’t cut through neighborhood streets.

Costco thinks the addition of this retail store will save overall travel trips on the road system. There are about 51,000 Costco members in the Bellevue zip codes area. Of these, about 35,000 shop the Issaquah and Kirkland areas about 34 times a year. The rest shop other area stores.

The travel distances to the Issaquah and Kirkland are 7.2 and 7.7 miles each way from the corner of 148th and Main. If this project moves forward and the average shopper drove 3.7 miles back and forth for a round trip, it could save an annual average of 8 million miles by Costco members. That would save just under 400,000 gallons of gasoline at 20 mpg.
Bel-Red Corridor vision moves a step closer to reality

Plans to transform the Bel-Red Corridor from a light industrial district into high- and mid-rise neighborhoods featuring office buildings, retail space and housing took a step toward reality with recent changes proposed for the city's comprehensive plan.

The draft Bel-Red Subarea Plan may not sound interesting, but it will guide the development of zoning changes that allow for new uses in the 900-acre corridor just east of downtown. The plan is based on a vision crafted over two years by a steering committee, with considerable public input.

There will be more opportunities for public involvement while the Planning Commission and City Council consider the draft plan.

Residents can learn about and comment upon the draft plan at a Planning Commission meeting, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, in room 1E-113 of Bellevue City Hall, 450 110th Ave. N.E. The Commission will consider recommendations from four other city boards and commission on proposals for Bel-Red.

For copies of the draft Bel-Red Subarea Plan or for more information about the project, please visit the Bel-Red project website http://www.bellevuewa.gov/bel-red_intro.htm, or contact Paul Ingham at pingham@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4070.

Bel-Red Corridor tabbed wildlife sanctuary

The greens are green in more ways than one at the Bellevue Golf Course. The Audubon Society has certified the course in North Bellevue as a sanctuary for wildlife.

Located at 5500 140th Ave. NE, the golf course features increased plantings of native vegetation for birds and wildlife and enhancement of natural corridors to other habitat areas.

The ponds are protected now, with cart paths relocated away from them and pesticides banned from use near them. Water quality is tested regularly on the site. Invasive blackberry and ivy has been removed; and nest boxes, feeders and brush piles have been built for wildlife.

In addition to certifying the course, Audubon International is recognizing course superintendent Randy Leifer for environmental stewardship. Bellevue Golf Course, managed by Premier Golf Centers for Bellevue, is the 11th course in Washington to receive the certification.

“Our community has a proud tradition as a steward of the environment,” Mayor Grant Degginger said. “This honor is another reflection of that.”

Over the years, Bellevue’s ongoing environmental programs have helped earn the city the nickname, “City in a Park.” Last year, the City Council adopted an expanded environmental stewardship initiative, and as part of that initiative, approved a Bellevue Climate Action resolution to reduce the city’s greenhouse gas emissions.

Several other environmental projects are currently underway, including an expanded focus on the city’s tree canopy, utilization of natural drainage and green building practices, and expansion of recycling efforts throughout the city, including parks and ball fields.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, endorsed by the United States Golf Association, provides information and guidance to help golf courses preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural resources.

Golf courses from Africa, Australia, Canada, Central America, Europe and Southeast Asia have also achieved certification in the program.

Call it an encyclopedia for Bellevue commuters, a fountain of transportation options or a one-stop source of travel alternatives for workers, students and employees. Chooseyourwaybellevue.org, is a new website launched recently by the City of Bellevue, King County Metro and TransManage, the transportation arm of the Bellevue Downtown Association. The online resource provides tips on how to keep moving during roadway construction projects and provides alternatives to driving alone, including:

• Commute options for walking, biking, bus, carpools, vanpools, Flexcar, ferry and rail.
• Real-time traffic maps and cameras for Bellevue and the Seattle area.
• Travel resources such as trip planners and bicycle routes.
• Special features such as a “Tips and Testimonials” section, a “Commute Cost Calculator” and “Tracker,” which provides real-time bus arrival predictions at specific route locations.
• Information organized both by travel option and by the type of traveler (commuter, resident or student).

Chooseyourwaybellevue.org encourages travelers to try an alternative, even if it’s just one trip a week. Making a difference doesn’t mean giving up driving entirely; it’s about finding new ways to match the travel mode to the trip.

For example, saving one gallon of gasoline by not driving alone prevents 19.4 pounds of carbon dioxide (the most prominent greenhouse gas) from going into the air, and every mile saved by walking, biking or telecommuting saves about one pound of carbon dioxide.

Sponsors of Chooseyourwaybellevue.org maintain that as the number of employees and residents in Bellevue grows, the most cost-effective and environmentally sound way to maintain accessibility on city streets is to promote alternatives to driving alone.

To illustrate the challenge, sponsors point out that the number of people now working in downtown Bellevue, about 35,000, is expected to increase by 80 percent, to 63,000, by 2020. The residential population is forecast to jump from 4,500 today to 14,000 in 2020, an increase of more than 210 percent.

Meanwhile, the percentage of travel downtown by transit, vanpool, carpool, biking and walking was just 29 percent in 2005, meaning that 71 percent of the travel was by solo drivers. By 2020, planners say, that share needs to increase to about 50 percent for the street network to remain functional.

New website for Bellevue commuters

Bellevue High School students plant native vegetation by a pond at Bellevue Golf Course to improve habitat for wildlife.
Protecting floodplains pays off

The rain storm that lashed this region in December set a new 24-hour rainfall record for Bellevue – 6.1 inches of rainfall overwhelmed storm drains and caused local streams to surge over their banks.

The flooding was dramatic, but protection of the city’s floodplains paid off, with Bellevue residents and businesses sustaining relatively little property damage. Cities in Washington that took a more casual approach to floodplain protection saw entire commercial districts submerged by muddy water.

To ensure that Belgians’ floodplains continue to accommodate surging waterways, residents are advised to determine whether they are in floodplains and to act accordingly. All residents are cautioned to take steps to prevent flooding. In Bellevue, the major streams are Kelsey Creek and its tributaries (Valley, West Trib and Richards creeks), Coal Creek to the south, Lewis Creek draining to Lake Sammamish and Sturtevant Creek draining Lake Bellevue and the downtown area.

Wherever you live in Bellevue, you’re probably near water. The city has more than 60 miles of streams, more than 800 acres of wetlands, three small lakes and is bordered by Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish.

The Bellevue stormwater system is made up of streams and pipes, which collect and carry rainwater in a manner that preserves natural habitat and minimizes flooding. Floodplains hold the water when the streams and pipes are temporarily overwhelmed.

Do you live in a floodplain?

Most floodplains in cities have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and are included in the community Flood Insurance Study, available at Bellevue’s Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. NE and at Development Services, City Hall, 450 110th Ave. NE.

To find out if your property is located in a floodplain, call Utilities at 425-452-7860 and have your address handy. You can also search for your parcel by visiting the city website, at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/floodplain_map.htm.

A standard homeowner’s insurance policy typically does not cover flood damage. Federally-backed flood insurance is available to Bellevue residents by visiting the city website, at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/floodplain_map.htm.

To prevent property damage, most residents in floodplains choose to purchase flood insurance. A 25 percent discount is available to residents within a floodplain. To inquire about flood insurance, contact Development Services regarding construction requirements in Special Flood Hazard Areas.

When building improvements equal or exceed 50 percent of the building’s market value, the city and NFIP will require new building construction code requirements. Elevation certificates for legal non-conforming structures – buildings built in the floodplain prior to floodplain regulations – are maintained by the city and are available to the public.

Call Utilities 24-hour emergency number 425-452-7840 to report: flooding, drainage problems, dumping in streams or lakes, hazardous road conditions, pollutant spills, water interruptions, wastewater overflows and water main breaks.

New initiative geared to maintaining health of city’s transportation system

As the rapid growth in jobs and population continues, particularly in downtown Bellevue where an unprecedented building boom is taking place, the city has responded with a new initiative that seeks to ensure the future viability of the transportation system.

City Manager Steve Sarkozy launched the Bellevue Mobility Initiative with the idea that maintaining a healthy system will require a variety of transportation options appropriate for the city’s transforming urban environment. Because it’s a complex challenge, Sarkozy also said the solutions will require cooperation that cuts across departmental boundaries.

To achieve these goals, a broad approach is anticipated, as reflected in the main elements of the Bellevue Mobility Initiative:

- Develop a downtown traffic management plan to maximize traffic flow on existing roadways, using techniques such as “intelligent transportation systems,” including the use of cameras, signal synchronization, transit signal priority and message signs.
- Complete projects already in the pipeline, such as the extension of Northeast 10th Street across Interstate 405; also, plan, finance and begin new projects designed to ease congestion, such as the widening of Northeast 2nd Street, and the extension of the Northeast 6th Street transit and HOV ramp across I-405.
- Take a proactive approach to protecting neighborhoods from downtown spillover traffic. One idea is to develop an enhanced “toolkit” of traffic calming options that could include road closures or turn restrictions.
- Address issues related to “concurrency,” which requires that a city’s transportation infrastructure keep pace with development. Ways must be found to make sure Bellevue’s traffic volumes don’t outstrip the system’s capacity.
- Create a transit plan for downtown that supports infrastructure improvements to expand regional bus service, extend the light rail system through downtown Bellevue and improve highways to provide better downtown access. Also, improve the pedestrian and bicycle system downtown to encourage walking and riding as an alternative to single occupancy vehicles.
- About 35,000 currently work in downtown Bellevue, but the number is expected to increase by 80 percent, to 63,000, by 2020. The residential population is expected to jump from 4,500 today to 14,000 by 2020, an increase of more than 210 percent. Computer modeling predicts a 33 percent increase in the afternoon traffic delay downtown over the next 10 years.

For more information about transportation projects downtown, see the Downtown Bellevue Projects Update on page 12-14.
Seafair Marathon could cross 520, comments sought on route

The Seafair Marathon, a source of pride for many residents and aggravation for some when Bellevue hosted it the past three years, may follow a dramatically different route this year. Instead of weaving exclusively through Bellevue streets, the proposed routes for the marathon and half-marathon, set for June 29, would start in Seattle and cross the 520 Bridge.

The City of Bellevue Special Events Committee an application from SeaFair to significantly alter their route. To comment on potential conditions or routing of the event for final Committee approval, please complete the comment section below and mail to City of Bellevue Special Events Committee, PO Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012; by fax to 425-452-7221; or e-mail sec@bellevuewa.gov. For information about how this event will impact our community, please contact Victoria Hollerbach, Special Events Committee Chair, at 425-452-6850. Comments are due by February 28, 2008.

Special Events Committee 2008 Event Feedback

I wish to comment about the Seafair Marathon:

Comment:

(optional): Name ______________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Comment: ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
I wish to comment about the Seafair Marathon: _________________________________________________________________________

Mail or fax to: City of Bellevue Special Events Committee
PO Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009-9012
Fax # 425-452-7221

Your comments can also be submitted by email to: sec@bellevuewa.gov
Downtown Bellevue Project Update

The building boom in downtown Bellevue shows no sign of letting up, as permit requests in 2008 are continuing at a record pace. As both the residential population and work force continue to increase rapidly, several new projects have been launched to enhance livability and support walkers, riders and drivers in the city's fastest growing neighborhood. This Downtown Bellevue Project Update provides a roundup of projects undertaken by the city and the state, as well as construction activity by private developers. Many of the projects are in the planning stage; others are under construction.

To help you locate where these projects are, please see the map below.

Ashwood Park Plaza

The Plaza will provide easy access to Ashwood Park and to the Ten20 Tower building, now under construction, creating a strong civic presence on a prominent downtown corner. The space will include benches, signage at the entrance, a water feature and public art. The $1.2 million project is now under construction and will be finished this spring. For more information, please contact Brian Krause at 425-452-6992.

Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

After acquiring land along Meydenbauer Bay, the city is developing a master plan for a public waterfront easily accessible from downtown Bellevue and nearby neighborhoods. To implement the plan, changes to the city's Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code are expected to be adopted early this year. The city has expanded the planning process to include the area surrounding the new park. Work on the $400,000 planning effort will continue until the middle of this year. For more information, please contact Robin Cole, 425-452-6195, or Mike Bergstrom, 425-452-4474.

Downtown Circulator

Because the downtown population is growing in both the employment and residential sectors, it's becoming increasingly important to provide transportation options for linking downtown together. A downtown and residential sectors, it's becoming increasingly important to provide transportation options for linking downtown together. A downtown

Downtown Wayfinding

Because many of the signs and kiosks that help guide pedestrians in Downtown Bellevue are outdated or in need of significant maintenance, the city has embarked on a "wayfinding" project. Phase 1 of the project will include signs in and around the Bellevue Transit Center, as well as new kiosks on the NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor between Bellevue Way and Meydenbauer Center. The budget for

Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center

The Downtown Bellevue Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC) program seeks to maintain an efficient transportation system by providing alternatives to driving alone. The employer-based program will provide help and incentives for employees choosing travel alternatives such as transit, carpooling, vanpooling, walking or riding a bicycle. Currently, a Commute Trip Reduction plan update (which is the city's program for larger employers) and the GTEC plan are under review by the Puget Sound Regional Council and the state Department of Transportation. Public comment will be accepted through Feb. 22, 2008. For more information, please contact Kate Johnson at 425-452-7896.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan Update

An update of the city's 1999 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan is nearing completion. The 2007 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan project will:

- Produce an updated blueprint to make walking and bicycling in the city an attractive, safe travel mode for commuting and recreation.
- Develop a prioritized list of pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements to support continued growth, development and neighborhood livability.
- Coordinate with other non-motorized planning efforts under way regionally.
- Provide a mechanism to inform and involve the community about pedestrian and bicycle planning.

This plan is expected to be finalized in March and presented to City Council for approval this spring. You can provide input on the draft plan at http://www.Bellevuewa.gov/pedbikeplan.htm. For more information, please contact Franz Loewenherz at 425-452-4077.

CIP Projects

Projects In Review

Freeway Improvements

It's Your City
the project is $100,000, plus $53,559 from the Bellevue Arts Program. For more information, please contact Kevin McDonald at 425-452-4538.

Projects in the Capital Improvement Program Plan

Please note that some of these projects are in the conceptual design stage, with the expectation that they will be funded this year.

1. 106th/108th Avenue NE One-Way Couplet

A one-way couplet (a pair of one-way streets) has been proposed for 106th Avenue NE 108th Avenue NE between Main Street and NE 12th Street to improve traffic flow. This project was identified in the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Subarea Plan and the Downtown Implementation Plan. Further analysis of one-way streets in the downtown has been deferred until 2010, when more information will be available on the alignment of a proposed light rail line through downtown Bellevue. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382.

2. Downtown Great Streets Conceptual Design Plans

Making downtown a better place to walk is a priority of the community and a key recommendation of the Downtown Implementation Plan. Current city standards for downtown street frontages offer a limited range of materials and design options.

The Great Streets project is producing conceptual design plans for five key corridors: downtown: Bellevue Way near Meydenbauer Bay waterfront; NE 10th Street, 106th Avenue NE and 108th Avenue NE. It will provide a palette of pre-approved options for building and landscape materials and design features for use along other downtown streets. Another element will be a plan for public art along downtown streets and an “art walk” from City Hall to the Meydenbauer Bay waterfront. Conceptual design plans for this $156,000 project will be finalized in early 2008, following review by City Council. The Council has allocated $3.8 million to invest in constructing Great Streets recommendations by the end of 2009. For more information, please contact Mike Ingram at 425-452-4166.

3. 8th Street Widening: 106th Avenue NE to 108th Avenue NE

This project will add a third lane on Northeast Eighth Street from 108th Avenue Northeast to 106th Avenue Northeast, where it will become a right-turn only lane. It was recommended by the Downtown Implementation Plan to improve traffic flow along Northeast Eighth. Sidewalks will be reconstructed next to the new lane. The $4 million project is 50 percent designed. Construction is expected to begin in summer 2008 and wrap up by November 2008. For more information, please contact Paul Krawczyk at 425-452-7905.

4. NE 6th Street: Bellevue Way to 110th Avenue NE (Pedestrian Corridor)

Northeast Sixth Street, called the “pedestrian corridor,” is the central east-west pedestrian route downtown. It connects the shopping and entertainment district along Bellevue Way with the office core, transit center, and the city hall/convention center district to the east. Bellevue’s City Council has urged a strong vision and a coordinated approach to transform the corridor into a signature element for the city.

Three locations have been identified along Northeast Sixth where new landscaping and walkways are proposed: 105th Avenue to 106th Avenue, north side; 106th Avenue to 107th Avenue, north side; and 107th Avenue to 108th Avenue, south side. The budget for this project is $3 million. For more information, please contact Emil King at 425-452-7723 or Patti Wilma at 425-452-4114.

5. NE 6th Street Corridor Enhancements and HOV Extension

This project would extend Northeast Sixth Street across I-405, allowing buses and carpoolers (high occupancy vehicles or HOV) to cross the freeway without the traffic signal delays found on Northeast Fourth, Eighth and 12th streets. The need to reduce transit travel times will become increasingly important with the future implementation of King County Metro’s Rapid Ride, a bus rapid transit service connecting downtown Bellevue and downtown Redmond. A project budget, design schedule and construction timeline have not yet been determined. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382.

6. NE 4th Street Extension

The extension of Northeast Fourth Street between 116th and 120th avenues was evaluated within the context of the redevelopment of auto row, and as a component of both the Wilburton/NE 8th Street Study and the Bel-Red Corridor Study planning efforts. It is a critical project, extending the grid of arterial streets serving both the downtown and the redeveloping area just to the east. It would offer needed relief to traffic on Northeast Eighth Street between 116th and 120th avenues. A project budget, design schedule and construction timeline have not yet been determined. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382.

7. NE 2nd Street Alignment Pre-Design Analysis: Bellevue Way to 112th Avenue NE

The widening of Northeast Second Street was identified in the City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Subarea Plan and in the Downtown Implementation Plan to improve traffic flow through downtown. Plans call for widening Second Street from three lanes with on-street parking to five lanes between Bellevue Way and 112th Avenue Northeast, with eventual connection to a future interchange at I-405. The current project budget is $6.29 million. This project is designed to accommodate future “braided” ramps to and from SR 520, due to northbound traffic entering I-405 from the NE 8th ramp and exiting the freeway to SR 520. To reduce that congestion and improve safety, a new structure is being built on northeast I-405. A joint effort by the state Department of Transportation and City of Bellevue, the “braided crossing” structure will be built to separate the merging and weaving traffic flows. The total cost of the project, which is funded by Washington State, is $252 million. Construction is scheduled to start in 2009 and continue through 2012. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382 or visit the state DOT website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/i405/NE10thSR520.

8. Main Street Urban Design

The Downtown Implementation Plan recommended a review of the Main Street corridor from Bellevue Way to 112th Avenue Northeast to evaluate design concepts that would enhance the street’s character, improve the pedestrian environment and add landscaping. This urban design study is just getting underway, with completion anticipated by the end of 2008. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382.

9. Downtown Mid-Block Crossings

Because downtown’s “superblocks” are much longer in length than typical city blocks, this project calls for identifying and installing mid-block crossings with signals to make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to get around. This $1.3 million project will consider location, geometric design elements, weather protection, lighting, aesthetic treatments, and traffic progression and delay. A construction timeline has not yet been determined. For more information, please contact Paul Krawczyk at 425-452-7905.

Freeway Improvements

10. NE 10th Street Extension, Stages I and II

The city’s Downtown Implementation Plan identified the need for improved access and increased circulation between downtown and the city’s medical district along 116th Avenue NE, east of I-405. The NE 10th Street Extension is one of several steps that will address growing travel demand. Stage I, currently under construction by the City of Bellevue, creates a five- to seven-lane arterial from I-405 to 116th Avenue NE, between Overlake Hospital and the new Group Health building located on the northwest corner of NE 8th Street. The project will also widen 116th Avenue NE by adding one additional southbound lane, two new signalized intersections, sidewalks and landscaping. The project is expected to be completed this spring.

Stage II of the project, led by the state Department of Transportation, will extend NE 10th Street east from 112th Avenue NE, over I-405 to connect with the Stage 1 section of NE 10th Street adjacent to the Overlake Hospital campus. The NE 10th Street bridge over the freeway is being designed to accommodate future “braided” ramps to and from SR 520, a short distance to the north. The total cost for both stages of the project is estimated at $62.6 million. For more information, please contact Rick Logwood at 425-452-4388.

11. I-405: Northbound NE 8th Street to SR 520 Braided Crossing

Freeway congestion is common on I-405, from NE 8th Street to SR 520, due to northbound traffic entering I-405 from the NE 8th ramp and exiting the freeway to SR 520. To reduce that congestion and improve safety, a new structure is being built on northbound I-405. A joint effort by the state Department of Transportation and City of Bellevue, the “braided crossing” structure will be built to separate the merging and weaving traffic flows. The total cost of the project, which is funded by Washington State, is $252 million. Construction is scheduled to start in 2009 and continue through 2012. For more information, please contact Nancy LaCombe at 425-452-4382 or visit the state DOT website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/i405/NE8thtoSR520.

12. I-405: 112th Avenue SE to SE 8th Street Widening Project

The state Department of Transportation has partnered with the city to make improvements in both the northbound and southbound direction on I-405 to address the extreme congestion south of downtown Bellevue. This project will reduce congestion and fix the “Wilburton Weave,” which occurs...
between SE 8th Street and I-90. The following improvements are under construction:

**Northbound:**
- One new northbound lane from 112th Avenue SE to SE 8th Street is being added.
- The existing I-405 southbound structure over I-90 is being converted to a northbound HOV lane.
- A new ramp meter at 112th Avenue SE is being added.
- The existing bridge over Coal Creek Parkway is being widened.

**Southbound:**
- One southbound lane from SE 8th Street to I-90 is being added.
- The Wilburton Tunnel for the new southbound lane is being removed.
- A new three-lane southbound I-405 bridge is being constructed over I-90.

**Be Aware: Crews will close southbound I-405 for three weekends this summer**

This coming August, crews will close southbound I-405 completely from SE 8th Street to I-90 during three full weekends, beginning Fridays at 11 p.m. and ending at 5 a.m. each Monday: August 8-11, August 15-18, and August 22-25. The closures are needed to remove the Wilburton Tunnel safely and efficiently.

This $211 million project is underway for the northbound I-405 improvements; the southbound I-405 improvements will begin this spring. Completion of the full project is expected in 2009. For more information, please contact Rick Logwood at 425-452-6858.

**Commercial & Private Development Projects**

Because developers and utility companies conduct work in and around city streets, the City of Bellevue coordinates its construction efforts with those of private companies. Drivers and pedestrians should anticipate periodic lane and sidewalk closures adjacent to several of the commercial developments in downtown Bellevue. Downtown projects include the following projects listed in the table below:

For more information on commercial and private development projects, please contact Patti Wilma, Department of Planning & Community Development, 425-452-4114, or Pwilma@bellevuewa.gov

### Commercial and private development projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In review</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Avalon at NE 10th</td>
<td>939 Bellevue Way NE</td>
<td>400 residential units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Pacific Regent Phase II</td>
<td>919 109th Ave NE</td>
<td>168 units of senior housing in 22-story addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. European Tower I</td>
<td>930 109th Ave NE</td>
<td>18 residential units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Vida Condominiums</td>
<td>11011 NE 9th St</td>
<td>241 residential units and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Legacy Apartments</td>
<td>200 106th Ave NE</td>
<td>250 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The Summit Building C</td>
<td>320 108th Ave NE</td>
<td>15-story office building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Marriott Hotel</td>
<td>11009 NE 3rd Place</td>
<td>376 rooms and restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Odegard Bellevue Apts.</td>
<td>204 111th Ave NE</td>
<td>50 apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Bellevue Plaza</td>
<td>139 106th Ave NE</td>
<td>800 residential units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Bellevue at Main</td>
<td>15 Bellevue Way SE</td>
<td>138 residential units; 75,000 square feet (sf) of office; 37,000 sf of retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Ventana on Main</td>
<td>10713 Main St</td>
<td>68 apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under construction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Belletini</td>
<td>1115 – 108th Ave NE</td>
<td>150 senior housing apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Belcarra</td>
<td>1032 106th Ave NE</td>
<td>320 apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Vue Bellevue</td>
<td>10710 NE 10th St</td>
<td>202 apartments and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Ten20 Residential Tower</td>
<td>1020 108th Ave NE</td>
<td>175 condos; 20-story tower with ground floor retail, theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Hyatt Expansion</td>
<td>10500 NE 8th St</td>
<td>350 hotel rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Washington Square</td>
<td>10620 NE 8th St</td>
<td>400 condos, two levels of retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Ashwood II</td>
<td>909 112th Ave NE</td>
<td>274 apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. The Bravern</td>
<td>11155 NE 8th St</td>
<td>620,000 sf of office, 456 condos, 240,000 sf of retail and restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Bellevue Towers</td>
<td>10608 NE 4th St</td>
<td>480 condominiums in two, 43-story towers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. City Center East</td>
<td>10903 NE 6th St</td>
<td>700,000 sf of office and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Avalon Meydenbauer</td>
<td>250 Bellevue Way NE</td>
<td>368 apartments, retail, grocery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Tower 333</td>
<td>333 108th Ave NE</td>
<td>348,000 sf of office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. 112th Avenue Mixed Use</td>
<td>317 112th Ave NE</td>
<td>300 residential units and 25,000 sf of commercial use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Meydenbauer Inn</td>
<td>211 112th Ave NE</td>
<td>59 multifamily units and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Metro 112 (One Main)</td>
<td>317 – 112th Ave NE</td>
<td>300 apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Group Health/Overlake</td>
<td>925 116th Ave NE</td>
<td>Ambulatory care facility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions/comments: If you have questions or comments about the Downtown Bellevue Projects Update, please call 425-452-6638 or write Tresa Berg, Public Involvement Manager, City of Bellevue Transportation Department, P.O. Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012, or Tberg@bellevuewa.gov. To learn more: For additional information about many of the projects listed in the Downtown Bellevue Projects Update, visit the City of Bellevue web pages at [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans_construction_update.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans_construction_update.htm) or [http://www.bellevuewa.gov/city_initiatives.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/city_initiatives.htm).
Community Calendar

February

Valentine’s Day Dance
Feb. 12, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
North Bellevue Community Center, 4063 148th Ave NE
$3 per person at the door. The 20-piece “Sound Of Swing” performs.
425-452-7681

Bird Walk at the Bellevue Botanical Garden
Feb. 13, 9 a.m. – noon
12001 Main St.
With East Lake Washington Audubon Society. Pre-registration required.
425-576-8805

King County Master Gardeners Workshop
Feb. 16, 10:30 a.m. – noon
Lake Hills Greenbelt Demonstration Garden,
156th Ave SE and SE 16 St.
Learn how to prune and Espalier fruit trees and graft vines.
425-452-7225

Heritage Series
Feb. 21, 7 p.m.
Bellevue City Hall
450-110th Ave. NE
Entertaining and informative program about Eastside history.
Presented by the Eastside Heritage Center in partnership with the City of Bellevue. 425-450-1049

March

King County Master Gardeners Workshops
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. – 12 noon
Lake Hills Greenbelt Demonstration Garden,
156th Ave SE and SE 16 St.
425-452-7225

March 1 – Pruning Shrub and Ornaments
March 8 – Hellebores
March 15 – Roses in Puget Sound Selection, Planting and Care
March 29 – Asian Vegetables

Environmental Education Workshops
Select Saturday workshops, 10-11 a.m. at Lewis Creek Park, 5808 Lakemont Blvd. SE. Pre-registration required. Free, for ages 6+.
425-452-4195

March 1 – Wetland Filters
Unearth the mystery of wetlands and see how they store and clean water.

March 15 – Watershed Basics
Learn about our watersheds and how we can keep them healthy.

March 22 – Forest Ecology
Explore Lewis Creek Park and learn about all of the other exciting types of forests in our region.

Hellebore Open House & Plant Sale
March 2, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Bellevue Botanical Garden
Displays and sales of hellebores.
425-452-2750
www.bellevuebotanical.org

Senior Showcase
March 7 & 8, Friday, 1 & 7 p.m.
Saturday, 7 p.m.
Bellevue Yacht Club, 16661 Northup Way. $5/festival seating
425-452-7155

St. Patrick’s Day Dances
March 11, 2 to 4 p.m., $5
March 15, 7 to 9 p.m., $5
North Bellevue Community Center,
4063 148th Ave NE.
425-452-7681

Family Night Out
March 14, 8-10:30 p.m.
Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th St. Enjoy sports, games, art and crafts, a movie and refreshments. Free. No pre-registration is required. Parent must accompany their child at all times. 425-452-4874

Stewardship Saturdays
March 15 & 22, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., locations to be announced.
Community volunteer events to provide opportunities to participate in the care of our city’s park resources. Sign up as a group or participate as an individual.
425-452-7225

St Patrick’s Day Luncheon
March 17, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
North Bellevue Community Center, 4063 148th Ave NE. $3 suggested donation. Ages 60+ Includes lunch, music and more. Pre-registration is requested by March 10.
425-452-7681

Heritage Series
March 20, 7 p.m.
Bellevue City Hall, 450-110th Ave. NE. Discover the history of the Eastside presented by Eastside Heritage Center in partnership with the City of Bellevue.
425-450-1049

Crossroads March Madness
March 28, 8-11:30 p.m.
Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th St. March Madness is here, so bring your game to Crossroads. This is a night full of basketball and fun. No need to have a team, as staff will form teams. For ages 15-19. Free.
425-452-4874

April

Crossroads March Madness
April 4, 8-11:30 p.m.
Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th St. March Madness is here, so bring your game to Crossroads. This is a night full of basketball and fun. No need to have a team, as staff will form teams. For ages 15-19. Free.
425-452-4874

April Pools Day
Apr. 19, 12 noon to 3 p.m.
Bellevue Aquatic Center, 601-143rd Ave. NE. Free swim, raffles, safety and lifeguard demonstrations.
425-452-4444

Wild-N-Wooly Sheep Shearing,
Apr. 26, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Kelsey Creek Farm, 410 130th Pl. SE. Free parking at the International School, 445 - 126th Ave. SE. Free shuttle to farm and entrance. Sheep shearing, spinning demonstrations, children’s crafts, tractor rides, pony rides, food and more.
425-452-7688

20th Annual Senior Housing Fair
Apr. 26, 1 to 4 p.m.
North Bellevue Community Center, 6063 148th Ave NE. Free open house and education sessions on topics including living in your own home, subsidized housing, adult family homes, nursing assistance, retirement and assisted living. Co-sponsored by Overlake Hospital Senior Care and City of Bellevue. 425-452-7681

Seasonal

Crossroads Par 3 Golf Course Opens March 1
15801 NE 15th Street
An excellent beginner and family course that takes about an hour to play. The holes range in length from 63 to 107 yards.
425-452-4873
www.bellevuewa.gov

Bellevue Botanical Garden Tours
April – October. Saturdays and Sundays, 2 p.m. at Bellevue Botanical Garden, 12001 Main Street.
425-451-3755

Nature Walks in Mercer Slough
May – Oct., Saturdays, 2 – 3 p.m. at Winters House, 2102 Bellevue Way SE. Free guided nature walk in Bellevue’s largest wetland park. 425-452-2752

Seasonal Fresh Produce Stands
Morgan Slough Blueberry Farm and Bil Mar Fruit & Produce
April – October, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Each April 26- Apr. 27, 2 p.m. Bellevue Youth Theatre, 16661 Northup Way. Story of the beautiful princess who slept for a hundred years. $9/reserved seat.
Apr. 26 – Growing Tomatoes
Sleeping Beauty
Apr. 28- Apr. 19, 25, 26, 7 p.m.; April 20 & 27, 2 p.m.
Bellevue Youth Theatre, 16661 Northup Way. $3 per person at the door. The 20-piece “Sound Of Swing” performs.

Earth Day–Arbor Day Community Celebration
April 19, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Volunteer projects in various locations, 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Community celebration family festival, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Lewis Creek Park, 5808 Lakemont Blvd. Plant trees and build a healthy community. Volunteer projects, interactive displays, activities and entertainment.
425-452-7106

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425-452-7106
Light rail routes still being studied

Although voters last November turned down Proposition 1—which would have funded construction of a light rail line through Bellevue—city officials are still planning for commuter trains to possibly come through the city.

Sound Transit continues work on an environmental analysis of routes and alignments, and expects to issue a draft environmental impact statement in the fall. One of the best opportunities for Bellevue to influence any future light rail decision for the Eastside will come during the months before Sound Transit identifies a preferred route and releases a final EIS.

Bellevue officials are moving forward with the city’s Light Rail Best Practices Project, intended to allow residents and staff to learn from the light rail “best practices” of other cities—what works and doesn’t work—and to put Bellevue in a better position to influence future decisions by Sound Transit.

For more information about the Light Rail Best Practices Project, including schedules for committee meetings and other events, visit http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light_rail_best_practices_public_involvement.htm.

The Best Practices effort began in July 2007 and will continue through June of this year. So far, three open houses have been held, as well as monthly meetings by the Light Rail Best Practices Committee, comprised of members from city boards and commissions and one City Council member. All meetings are open to the public.

In recent months, committee members have met to discuss information compiled by a team of consultants about what other cities with light rail systems have done to address specific topics identified as important by Bellevue residents. Those topics include: connecting people to light rail, property values, community and neighborhoods, station security, land use, street design and operations, construction impacts and mitigation, as well as elevated, at-grade and tunnel options.

Committee members or city staff have visited light rail systems in Dallas, San Diego, San Jose and Portland to learn first-hand what’s been done and how well it’s working.

In the coming weeks, Committee members will continue collecting information, comments and ideas from the public as they consider what the best practices should be for Bellevue. In May or June, the panel will produce a catalog of best practices for Bellevue and propose policies for the city’s comprehensive plan in order to assist the Council in responding to Sound Transit’s draft environmental impact statement.

For online information about the Light Rail Best Practices Project, including schedules for committee meetings and other events, visit http://www.bellevuewa.gov/light_rail_best_practices_public_involvement.htm.

To provide comments on the project, e-mail LRBestPractices@bellevuewa.gov; send paper mail to Light Rail Best Practices, P.O. Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009; contact Mike Kattermann, planning project manager, at mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-2042; or Maria Koengeter, transportation project manager, at mkkoengeter@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-6459.

For more information on Sound Transit’s East Link light rail proposal see http://www.soundtransit.org/c2245.xml.