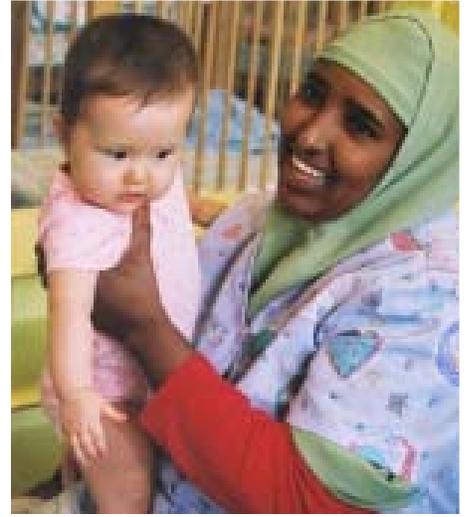


# *Human Services* Needs Update

2009-2010



## *Overview*



City of Bellevue  
Parks & Community Services Department  
[www.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.bellevuewa.gov)

# Acknowledgements

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## Human Services Commission

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Jan Stout, Chair, 2009  
Nancy Huenefeld Gese, Vice-Chair, 2009  
Stefanie Beighle  
John Bruels  
Doug Hoople  
Brian Plaskon, M.D.  
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Special thanks to the Bellevue Network on Aging for their invaluable participation in the community involvement process for this report.

# Understanding Our Neighbors' Needs

Every two years, the City of Bellevue publishes a Needs Update documenting the human services needs of people in our community. Understanding what people need, and how those needs are changing over time, is a key part of a deeply-held, citywide commitment to the most vulnerable of our neighbors. Over the last two years, as a result of the economic crisis called by many the “Great Recession”, the faces of those who are considered vulnerable has changed significantly. Many have never had to ask for help before, have never lost their jobs, or been without health insurance. The recession has taken its toll on Bellevue residents as it has with many others in the nation, with the demand for basic needs increasing dramatically while fewer financial resources are available to provide that help. Crises often present unique opportunities to respond in creative and collaborative ways, including improving the way services are provided and forming new partnerships with neighbors in the community to help meet the needs. In 2009, the City of Bellevue launched a multi-pronged initiative called “Bellevue Cares” which offered assistance such as regional food drives and an enhanced website on local health and human service resources. Such efforts will continue until the economy shows more signs of improvement for Bellevue residents.

We begin gathering information for the Needs Update by convening community conversations through a variety of surveys and small group discussions, and then analyze data using information from the 2006-2008 American Community Survey, King County, United Way of King County, and other local and national public and non-profit agencies. The result is a rich picture of our community that allows us to understand what is happening and then take action.

## Key Issues for 2009-2010

Six issues came up repeatedly in our research and in our conversations in the community. These key issues affect people of all ages and all walks of life, from very young children to older adults:

The Effects of the Recession  
Affordable Housing  
Health Care  
Employment  
Support for Older Adults  
Needs of Immigrants and Refugees

This Overview presents a summary of each of these six key issues—current conditions and trends, unmet needs, implications for action, and our response as a community. Other areas that need our attention, such as domestic violence and services for children and youth, are equally important. Information about all these issues can be found in the full *Needs Update*:

[www.bellevuewa.gov/  
humanservices\\_needs\\_update.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/humanservices_needs_update.htm)

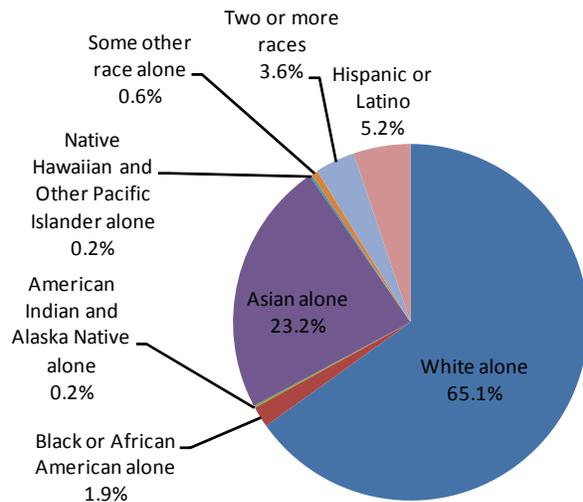


## Community Profile

As our data review shows, Bellevue is changing.

- Since 2000, population growth in Bellevue slowed to about 1% annually, but some census tracts within the downtown and south-eastern part of Bellevue are experiencing higher rates of growth. In 2009, Bellevue's population was estimated at 120,600.
- The population is growing older. During 2006-2008, 14.4% of Bellevue residents were 65 or older. Bellevue has the highest proportion of older adults compared to Washington State, King County, and Seattle.
- The population is growing more diverse, with non-White residents making up almost 35% of the population during 2006-2008. Bellevue is more racially diverse than the county overall and has the highest percentage (31%) of foreign-born residents in the county, State, and U.S.

- More people are living in poverty. Bellevue's median income is higher than King County's, but poverty levels for individuals have increased from 5.6% in 1990 to 6.9% during 2006-2008.



Bellevue's Racial Distribution in 2006-2008

## Key Issues for 2009-2010

### Effects of the Economic Recession

Bellevue residents were not immune to the economic recession over the past two years and their lives still continue to be affected. There are a number of indicators from local non-profits and state agencies that demonstrate the increased number of people in need.

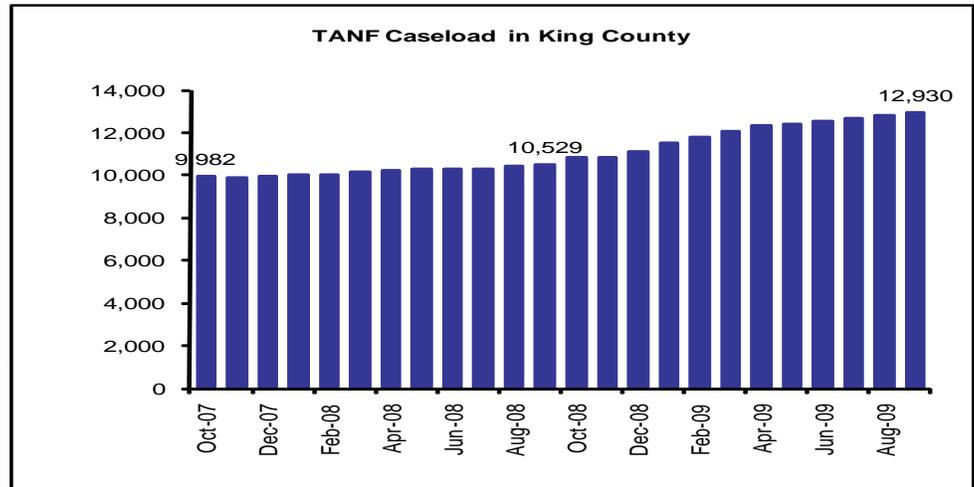
- The Eastside office of the State Department of Social and Health Services reports that the number of adults on the Temporary Aid to Needy Families program rose between January 2007 and January 2009 after a large reduction between 1997 and 2007.
- Applications for Basic Food Assistance (formerly called food stamps) increased steadily in late 2008 and early 2009. Hopelink reported that requests for food increased 31% between September 2008 and January 2009 compared to the same period in the previous year.
- In the Bellevue School District in October 2009, 21% of the 17,311 students qualified for free or reduced price lunch, a 3% increase over 2008.
- Reports of domestic violence increased, which typically happens when unemployment is high and families are under more stress. Requests for counseling, for both adults and children and youth also rose, at a time when more people have lost their health insurance and are unable to pay for counseling.
- Non-profit agencies are also feeling the effects of the recession in the decrease in the number and dollar amount of grants from

public sources as well as foundations, individuals and business. Forecasts for the next several years are that this trend will continue.

recession-community-resources.htm.) and allowing people to have payment plans for utility bills, more lenient shut-off policies, and extended discount and rebate programs.

### What we are doing:

Many efforts in the community are ongoing to assist those in need. The City of Bellevue launched the Bellevue Cares Initiative in March 2009 to address some of the issues. This includes providing an information clearing house to help find resources on the Bellevue Cares website ([www.bellevuewa.gov/](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/)



Source: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

## Affordable Housing

Although home prices continued to fall nationally during 2009, prices in Bellevue are still high enough that affordable housing remains an issue for almost 60% of residents.

- The median price for all Eastside homes and condos in June 2009 was \$476,000; though less than in previous years, it is still significantly more than the median-income family could afford.
- Average rents have increased, as the table shows, but more incentives—such as free parking—are available in 2009 than in 2007.
- The number of properties at risk of foreclosure and those that have been foreclosed upon in Bellevue increased during 2008 and the first two quarters of 2009. Notice of Trustee Sales jumped from 30 to 131, a 337% increase.
- Nearly 38% of Bellevue renters and 30% of homeowners pay more than 30% of their income for housing.
- Housing for older adults and people with disabilities is even more challenging given these populations' special needs and often, lower income status.
- The annual One Night Count of the Homeless in 2009 increased with a total of 158 unsheltered individuals found in Urban East King County. A study by the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee recom-

Area	Average Rents in Bellevue (\$)							
	Studio		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom (1 bath)		3 Bedroom	
	April 2007	April 2009	April 2007	April 2009	April 2007	April 2009	April 2007	April 2009
Bellevue - East	722	787	886	987	999	1139	1,162	1562
Bellevue - West	842	994	1,141	1,361	1,191	1366	1,854	2267
Bellevue - Factoria	N/A	N/A	887	979	1,068	996	1,406	1,562
Bellevue - Average	782	891	971	1,109	1,086	1,167	1,474	1,797
King County	742	844	842	961	890	1003	2,140	1,375

mends creating 1,800 units of housing for those who have been homeless.

**What we're doing:** Bellevue participates in A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), and since 1993, about 2,965 units of affordable

housing have been created or will soon become available on the Eastside due to ARCH's contributions. In 2007 the YWCA opened a daytime drop-in center for homeless women on the Eastside; in 2008 Sophia Way, a women's shelter, was created by Congregations for the Homeless.

## Health Care

Health Care has been a key national concern for the last twenty years, and Bellevue is no exception: almost half of Bellevue residents believe affordable medical insurance is an important issue for our community. Now, with high unemployment, even more people lack health care, which puts many at risk for more serious, preventable problems.

- Seven percent of East King County adults ages 18-64 lacked health insurance in 2008, up from 5% in 2001.
- Over a five year average from 2001-2005, 7.4% of Bellevue residents reported that they did not see a doctor due to the cost.
- Over half of those who responded to our community survey reported not being able to pay for dental care. This is a growing problem for older adults as Medicare does not cover dental care.

- In Bellevue, 7.8 out of every 100 deaths are attributed to drug or alcohol related causes. Therapeutic Health Services reports seeing more indigent and working poor clients needing substance abuse treatment than in previous years.
- Bellevue's ongoing influx of immigrants means that many people need interpreters, translated information and culturally relevant healthcare.

**What we're doing:** Bellevue provides funding for several non-profit health care and mental health agencies. HealthPoint served 1,100 Bellevue residents during 2008, and the number is on track to exceed that in 2009. Funding for mental health counseling was provided to several agencies including Sound Mental Health and Asian Counseling and Referral Service.

## Employment

The unemployment rate rose sharply over the past two years as the recession created significant job losses. Nationally, the rate went from 4.7% in 2007 to almost 10% in 2009. In Bellevue in September 2009, the rate was 7.2%. In 2009, over 43% of Bellevue residents think that unemployment is a significant community program.

- Though Washington State has the highest minimum wage in the nation, it still is not a living wage, defined as the minimum income needed to purchase the basics without assistance from public programs. In Bellevue, it has been estimated that a single adult with two children needs to earn about \$27/hour

to make ends meet. However, many jobs available in this weak economy pay less than that.

- Childcare rates are the highest in East King County. For a family with an infant and a pre-schooler in full-time care, it can cost between \$21,424 and \$26,312 annually. Subsidies are needed for many families who cannot pay the full cost of quality care, but State funding for this purpose is decreasing.
- Support for employment training is important to help people retrain for new jobs. Especially important are programs that include ESL classes with job-related content.

**What we're doing:** We provide low-income families who do not qualify for State childcare subsidies scholarships so they can have continued to work. We work with a number of agencies to provide vocational ESL that includes childcare. We support training programs for individuals, families and people with disabilities.



## Older Adults

The percentage of residents 65 and over has increased more in Bellevue than elsewhere in the county, from 10.4% in 1990 to 13.4% in 2000 and 14.4% in 2006-2008. Older adults may need additional services and assistance as they age in place.

- Those 75 years and older have been the fastest growing group in the city, comprising 46% of the population of older adults. These “oldest” older adults are more likely to be disabled and may need extra in-home care.
- The need for long term care options is increasing as older adults live longer. Recent cuts to State funding for adult day health services and transportation has created challenges for older adults and people with disabilities, as well as their caregivers.
- The recession has been especially challenging for many older adults who live on fixed incomes. Some have lost savings and funds in their retirement accounts. More are returning to the workforce to make ends meet. During 2006-2008, 7.3% of older adults over age 65 were living below the poverty line compared to 6.9% of the total Bellevue population. Transportation is a major access issue for older adults. Over 12%

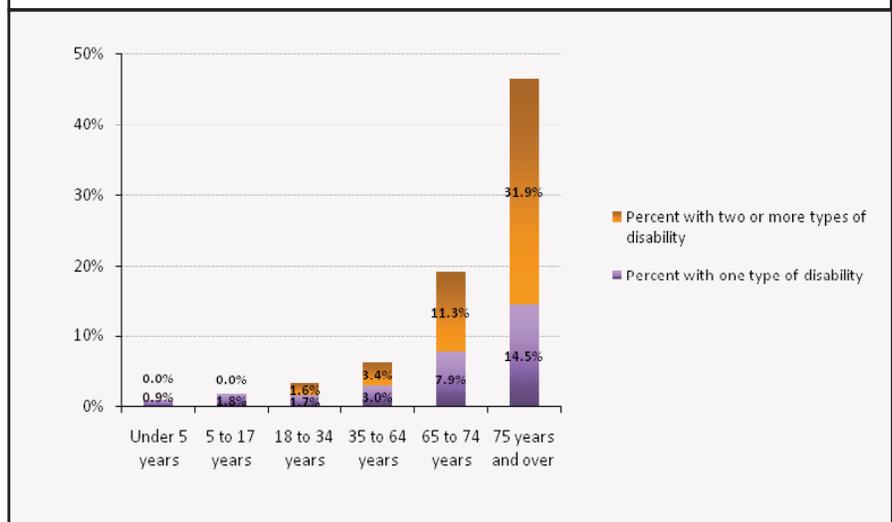
of residents over 65 do not have a vehicle. Requests for volunteer transportation rides are on the rise.

- Older adult abuse reports are increasing Statewide. Estimates are that for every report of abuse or neglect, about five go under-reported.

**What we're doing:** We're working with the Bellevue Network on Aging and Seattle/King County Aging and Disability Services to help older adults and support caregivers. We are funding services such as adult day health and Meals on Wheels to help older adults live at home as long as they are able.

### Bellevue Population with Disabilities by Age (2008 ACS)

\* The likelihood of having a disability increases with age.



## Immigrants & Refugees

The number of foreign-born Bellevue residents has more than quadrupled from 7% in 1980 to 13.3% in 1990 to 31% in 2006-2008.

- The Asian community in Bellevue is now proportionally larger than in any other community except Newcastle, including King County and the State.
- Bellevue's Hispanic/Latino community more than doubled between 1990 and 2006-2008, from 2.5% to 5.6%.
- According to the 2006-2008 American Community Survey, approximately 33% of Bellevue residents speak a language other than English. Students in Bellevue schools speak 81 languages and dialects. Top languages are Spanish, Korean, Chinese-Mandarin, Chinese-Cantonese, Russian, Vietnamese, Japanese, French, Hindi and Telegu.
- Immigrants and refugees may need help with translation, culturally appropriate nutrition, legal assistance for immigration issues and navigating daily tasks in their new culture.

- Requests for English-as-a-Second-Language classes continue to increase significantly especially in a tight job market.

**What we're doing:** Bellevue has supported the Eastside Refugee & Immigrant Coalition's Cultural Navigator program for new residents. We've also sponsored parenting groups, provided websites and other services in multiple languages. Our "Wrap Around Services Program" at Lake Hills Elementary School and Odle Middle School focuses particularly on families whose first language is not English.



## Other Areas of Need

The six issues summarized in this Overview represent the biggest concerns for Bellevue residents. But other needs came up in our community conversations and research. These areas of need and our research are discussed in the Needs Update:

- **Early learning opportunities.** Research is clear that high quality early learning opportunities including home visiting programs help children succeed in school and in life. Unfortunately, Head Start preschool programs in Bellevue serves only 18% of the eligible low-income children.
- **Veterans.** About 20% of veterans who reside in King County call East King County their home. Older vets are the largest group represented. Many vets are returning home from the current conflicts with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, Traumatic Brain Injuries, Military Sexual Trauma, and other needs for services that are beginning to impact local service providers.
- **Mental health services for children and youth.** Organizations that provide counseling and treatment for children and youth are seeing more clients than ever before, including more from immigrant families. The Crisis Clinic's Teen Link phone line handles about 1,000 crisis intervention calls annually, about one quarter in North and East King County. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning youth are among a very high risk group for mental health issues.
- **Sexual Assault treatment and prevention.** King County Sexual Assault Resource

Center reports that intake calls are at an all-time high; for every one person they can provide therapy for, they must turn nine people away.

- **Emergency shelters and transitional housing for young adults.** Young people who are homeless need help learning to live on their own, including developing job skills. Many of these young adults have a history of physical abuse, some sexual abuse, and are struggling with substance abuse issues.
- **Low-cost legal services.** Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, immigrants and refugees, and homeowners facing foreclosure are among the groups that need dependable, affordable legal assistance.

## Next Steps

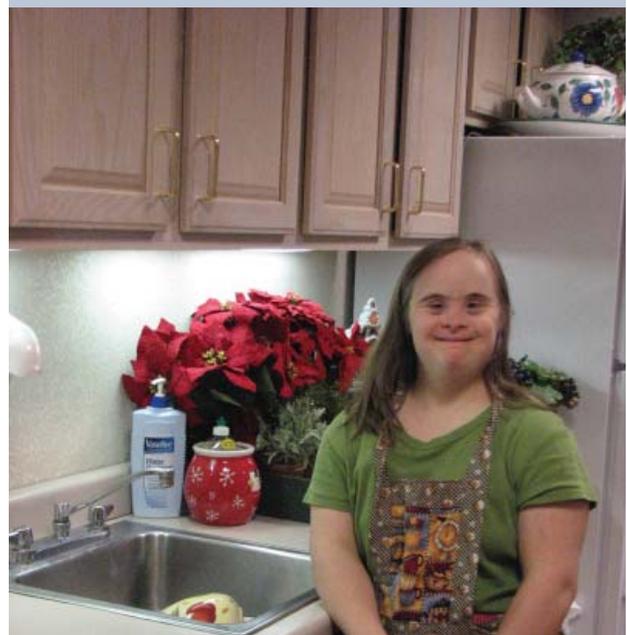
Our Needs Update won't just sit on the shelf. Instead, it will help us plan the best uses for City resources especially during these hard economic times.

- **Human Services Commission.** Bellevue's Human Services Commission will consider the issues identified in the Needs Update as it prepares for the 2011-2012 funding cycle. Now, more than ever, our investments must effectively meet real needs, many a result of the recession, and leverage new resources.
- **Regional Efforts.** Human services needs reach beyond our city boundaries. We work closely with other governments and non-profit, community, and faith-based organizations around the region to improve mental health services, develop affordable housing, work to end homelessness, and many other community issues.
- **Community Presentations.** The Needs Update is based on conversations in the community, and our work continues as we share it through community presentations. Please contact Alex O'Reilly at 425-452-2824 or via email, [aoreilly@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:aoreilly@bellevuewa.gov) for more information.



## What's Working

- Emergency assistance providers served at least 6,400 Eastside residents with financial assistance to stay in their housing during a crisis. This assistance helped keep them safe and avoid homelessness.
- The Children's Response Center helped over 150 children and their family members with counseling. These children and their families had no insurance and no other way to obtain the help they needed.
- 362 immigrants and refugees were provided with ESL instruction and employment services through Jewish Family Service. They improved their writing scores and became more comfortable navigating life in English.



## Human Services Agencies Funded in 2009 by the City of Bellevue

The City of Bellevue does not provide human services directly. Instead, we partner with community-based organizations that help us serve our neighbors in need:

A Regional Coalition for Housing  
Asian Counseling & Referral Service  
Assistance League of the Eastside  
AtWork!  
Bellevue College  
Bellevue School District  
Bellevue Boys & Girls Club  
Catholic Community Services  
Child Care Resources  
Children's Response Center - Harborview  
Chinese Information and Service Center  
Consejo Counseling & Referral Service  
Crisis Clinic  
Eastside Baby Corner  
Eastside Domestic Violence Program  
Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council  
Eastside Legal Assistance Program  
Elder and Adult Day Services  
Emergency Feeding Program  
Friends of Youth  
Healthpoint  
HERO House  
Hopelink  
Jewish Family Service  
Jubilee REACH Center  
Kinderling Center  
King County Housing Authority  
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center  
KITH  
NAMI Eastside  
Refugee Women's Alliance  
Senior Services  
Solid Ground  
Sound Mental Health  
St. Andrew's Housing Group  
The Salvation Army  
Therapeutic Health Services  
World Impact Network  
YMCA  
Youth Eastside Services  
YWCA

For more information about other human services programs,  
call the Community Information Line: 2-1-1.

[www.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.bellevuewa.gov)

