

neighborhood news



September 2020

news for and about
Bellevue neighborhoods

“Creating Home Together”

Tuesday, Sept. 15

1-2:30 p.m.

Virtual Cultural Conversations, celebrating National Welcoming Week

Cultural Conversations begins a new season of storytelling and connection with “Creating Home Together” for National Welcoming Week, which is celebrated Sept. 12-20.



What would make us feel more at home, especially with social distancing and virtual connection? What can we create together? How can we be more inclusive?

Given the upheaval caused by the pandemic, coupled with the fight for social justice, it may feel as though we have traveled to a distant land. The furniture and wallpaper are the same, but no matter how much physical and mental organizing we undertake, it just doesn't quite feel like home. The social connections that we value or wish to create, appear to be currently out-of-reach.

During this virtual Cultural Conversations, we'll travel together through “Zoom Rooms” where you will see old friends and make new ones, be inspired, and create Cultural Conversations.

The next Cultural Conversations is scheduled for Tuesday Oct. 27, 1-2:30 p.m.

Cultural Conversations, a program entering its eleventh season, has transformed relationships and perspectives among diverse women in our community through education and storytelling. This free event is open to all the public. RSVP appreciated for planning purposes: neighborhoodoutreach@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-6836.



Virtual Neighborhood Leadership Gathering:

COVID-19 Community Impact and Response

Thursday, Sept. 17

7-8:30 p.m. | Zoom public meeting

COVID-19 has interrupted the ways that we live and work, and how we relate to one another on a daily basis. During this unprecedented time, Bellevue has proven itself to be a caring and resilient community. What does that mean for our local economy? Will we adapt to new challenges? Will we find ourselves (and our neighbors) in need of assistance?

You are invited to be part of a virtual presentation and panel discussion on what we are learning from the impact of COVID-19 on our community and the local economy. You are encouraged to share your insights through real-time polling, to ask questions of panelists and learn how we can all contribute to becoming a stronger and more resilient community.

City of Bellevue panelists will include:

- ◆ Mac Cummins, Community Development Director
- ◆ Michael Shiosaki, Parks and Community Services Director
- ◆ Jesse Canedo, Chief Economic Development Officer
- ◆ Toni Esparza, Assistant Director, Parks and Community Services

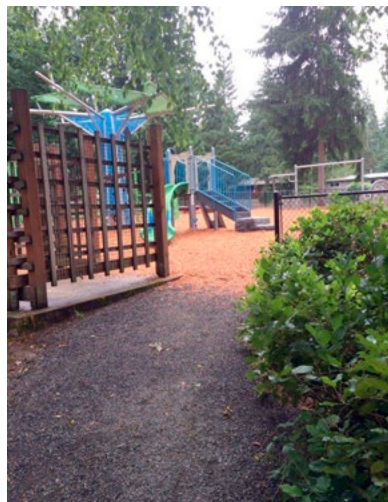
Neighborhood Leadership Gatherings are open everyone invested in the quality and health of their neighborhoods. To properly plan for the virtual format, participants must RSVP to 425-452-6836 or neighborhoodoutreach@bellevuewa.gov.



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BellevueWA.gov/neighborhood-news

NEP update for Wilburton and Crossroads

Wilburton residents: Look for your NEP Voter's Pamphlet to arrive in the mail in early September and return the enclosed postage-paid ballot. Voting is by mail only, and is limited to one ballot per household address. Ballots must be postmarked by Friday, Oct. 23 to be valid. Information on the 10 enhancement projects on your ballot can be found on the Wilburton page in the Neighborhood Areas section at BellevueWA.gov/nep.



Crossroads residents: The votes are in! Look for your NEP Project Announcement Newsletter to arrive in mailboxes in mid-September with details on the projects that you and your neighbors chose to fund with the \$439,000 NEP budget allotted to your neighborhood. Please

let us know how you liked the NEP process in your area by returning the postage-paid evaluation form postcard, or submit your comments online using the NEP evaluation form found at BellevueWA.gov/nep.

Evaluations must be postmarked or submitted online by Friday, Oct. 30.

The Neighborhood Enhancement Program is a city-funded program that allows residents to propose and select modest capital projects to enhance their neighborhoods. The program rotates through the city's 14 NEP neighborhood areas, serving two areas each year. The \$5 million program allocation is distributed among each of the NEP neighborhood areas, according to the number of households in each area.

Next on the list for NEP, in 2021, are the West Bellevue and Woodridge neighborhood areas. West Bellevue will kick off in late January and look for NEP to come to Woodridge in early April. To find out which NEP neighborhood area you call home, when NEP will be in your area, and how much funding your area has been allocated, please visit BellevueWA.gov/nep.

Help with housing conflicts during COVID-19 crisis

Because of the number of people in Washington who are dealing with arrearages (an amount of money that is owed and should have



been paid earlier) in housing payments, Governor Inslee included in his July 24 COVID-19 Proclamation that "Landlords and tenants are expected to communicate in good faith with one another, and to work together, on the timing and terms of payment and repayment solutions that all parties will need in order to overcome the severe challenges that COVID-19 has imposed for landlords and tenants alike. *I strongly encourage landlords and tenants to avail themselves of the services offered at existing dispute resolution centers to come to agreement on payment and repayment solutions.*"

Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center has been helping landlords and tenants negotiate rent payments both before and during the COVID-19 crisis. Since March, landlord-tenant cases have tripled. Accordingly, BCRC is prioritizing our services that help landlords and tenants negotiate rental payment arrangements. Our center also receives referrals for foreclosure alternative cases through the Department of Commerce. Bellevue has one of the few certified foreclosure mediators in the state on staff.

Rental payment negotiation assistance. Landlords and tenants can call the BCRC to arrange an intake. Our conciliators will help determine options for various arrangements between landlords and tenants, which may include referring you to the four-page worksheet that the state's attorney general has created to help calculate a fair and reasonable rental payment arrangement, and help walk you through it. If you feel you need help in negotiating with the other party (landlord or tenant), our conciliator can call the other party to see if they are willing to negotiate, and if agreed, provide conciliation over the phone until you both reach an agreement. If it seems necessary, the BCRC can also arrange a mediation via Zoom.

Mortgage foreclosure alternative mediation. Mortgage holders may also be experiencing financial hardship that affects the ability to stay current on mortgage payments. If your lending institution has notified you that they are starting foreclosure proceedings, we strongly urge you to contact an attorney or housing counselor to ask about the Foreclosure Fairness Program. This is a program that

grants homeowners the right to sit down in mediation with their lending institutions to negotiate alternatives to foreclosure. If your home is in Bellevue, the Department of Commerce may make a formal referral to our office for mediation. For more information on this program, please visit our webpage below for links.

Rental assistance funds. Our program does not administer rental assistance funds, but there are funds that are becoming available through various non-profits from the Federal CARES Act. The Washington Department of Commerce is expected to distribute another \$100 million. Links to application forms for these funds can be found on our website below.


If you are considering applying for rental assistance, it is advised that you apply soon, as some of the funds must be used by Oct. 31. Other funds need to be spent by Dec. 31. This means that you can't wait for the crisis to be over to apply.

Rental assistance doesn't have to be for past-due rent. You can apply if you are up-to-date now, but don't feel able to pay next month's rent. Assistance is limited to three months of rent. Also, rental assistance may be available to friends or family who are offering a place to stay in an informal way, without a written lease.

And as the governor stated, the forms encourage negotiation. For instance, landlords may be more likely to receive payment if they are willing to settle for 80 percent of the amount due. There are many stipulations for what landlords and tenants can and can't negotiate, so it is a good idea to read the current amendments of the governor's moratorium. These sites can also be found on our website.

Please contact our office for any questions or assistance that you may need at 425-452-4091 or email us at bcrc@bellevuewa.gov. Links to all listed resources are on our website resource page: bit.ly/2FPAs8. Scroll to the article entitled "Covid-19 Housing Payment Assistance Information."



 For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-2735 (voice) or email mheilman@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice) or email ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov. If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.

Mini City Hall launches COVID-19 Resource Navigator program

Bellevue Mini City Hall has launched a program called COVID-19 Resource Navigator to help residents locate needed resources during the pandemic. The resource navigators are highly experienced in different systems and are knowledgeable about organizations that provide help during these difficult times.

As the pandemic continues to impact Bellevue, human service needs also have increased in the community. For many who are unfamiliar with the resources available to them, or those who never needed financial and other assistance, it can be overwhelming to navigate through all the complex government resources and application processes. The COVID-19 Resource Navigator will provide personalized assistance and customized recommendations to help you make sense of all the programs and community resources.

Here are some of the resources that the COVID-19 Resource Navigator can help you to find:

- ◆ Food assistance programs
- ◆ Small business loans
- ◆ Unemployment claims
- ◆ Housing or rent assistance programs
- ◆ Healthcare resources and COVID testing sites
- ◆ Immigration issues and legal referrals

What you can expect when you call the COVID-19 Resource Navigator program:

- ◆ A person who will listen to you
- ◆ Someone who is patient and empathetic to your situation and concerns
- ◆ A navigator to research your questions, and customize solutions that are a best fit for your situation
- ◆ A connection to the best resources that can help solve your problems

The COVID-19 Resource Navigator program is a free public service through Mini City Hall. Phone consultations are available by appointments only on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. A typical appointment is 30 minutes, depending on needs.

Appointments are available in English, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Somali and many other foreign languages. Call 425-452-2800 or email minich@bellevuewa.gov to get started!

City of Bellevue accepting applications for Small Business Relief Grants

The Bellevue City Council authorized the use of \$185,000 in Federal CARES Act funding for a small business relief grant program. The program will provide \$5,000 grants to nearly 40 small, Bellevue-owned businesses and arts organizations to help overcome COVID-19 business disruptions.



Applications will be accepted through Sept. 17, and eligible businesses will be randomly selected through a lottery. Eligible businesses must employ 2-25 people, have annual revenue under \$5 million, and they must have sustained at least a 20% year-over-year drop in revenues resulting from COVID-19, with expenses not previously satisfied by other funding sources. Details and assistance are available at BellevueWA.gov/bizresources.

The grant program builds on previous work by the city to support small businesses throughout COVID-19, including:

- ◆ **(re)STARTUP425**, a collaborative effort providing free, one-on-one technical assistance to small businesses and nonprofits on the Eastside.
- ◆ **Deferred B&O tax filings** and payments and waived water service late fees and disconnections.
- ◆ **What's Open Eastside**, an interactive map highlighting businesses and nonprofits that are operating, as well as special hours, pickup and delivery options, and online services.
- ◆ **Expansion of patio dining** on Main Street and for other businesses by allowing temporary expansion of sidewalk cafés into select on-street parking spaces.

Spanish

La ciudad de Bellevue acepta solicitudes de subvenciones para pequeñas empresas. Para obtener información detallada y asistencia, ingrese a BellevueWA.gov/BizResources



Traditional Chinese

貝爾優市現接受小型企業救濟金發放申請。詳細資訊與幫助請瀏覽 BellevueWA.gov/BizResources.

Russian

Городская администрация Bellevue принимает заявки на получение грантов для поддержки малого бизнеса. Узнать подробности и получить помощь можно по ссылке BellevueWA.gov/BizResources

Korean

벨뷰시, 소기업 재난지원금 신청 접수 중. 詳細資訊與幫助請瀏覽 BellevueWA.gov/BizResources

BBQ Safety tips from Bellevue Fire Department

As we leave behind our summer activities and start packing up our water toys, we can look forward to beautiful September and October days that lend themselves to outdoor grilling.

Nationally, between the months of May and September, nearly 11,000 home fires are started by grills and BBQs, resulting in serious injury and millions of dollars in property loss. Bellevue is not immune to this trend. Each year, we respond to dozens of BBQ-related fire incidents, some of which result in significant property damage or homes lost entirely. The good news is, there are ways to safely enjoy this favorite pastime!

First and foremost, always use your grill, BBQ, or smoker outside and well away from anything that can catch fire, such as your home, deck railings, eaves, or overhanging branches. Keep your grill free of grease and fat buildup by cleaning it after each use. Never leave your hot BBQ unattended; plan your food preparation accordingly. Always open your gas grill lid before turning on the flow of gas and lighting it. Allow coals to completely cool before disposing of them in a metal container.

Additionally, leaks and breaks in gas grills cause a much higher number of fires than do charcoal BBQs. If you are using gas or propane, check for leaks before use at the start of each grilling season. This can be done by applying a light soap and water mixture to the tank hose, opening the grill lid, then turning on the gas. The sudden appearance of large, soapy bubbles is indicative



of a leak. If you suspect a leak, discontinue use until your grill can be serviced by a professional.

We all love BBQ, but the Bellevue Fire Department prefers not to be invited to an emergency dinner. Follow these simple tips and you'll be well on your way to safe grilling!

Slow down, drive safely

Usually, this time of year, we'd be warning you to slow down and watch out because kids are heading back to school. Since we are in the middle of a pandemic, schools are online. But we're still here to say: "Slow down!"



During August's Virtual Neighborhood Walks, vehicular speeding was commonly mentioned as a community concern. "Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we've cited drivers for speeds 20-30 mph over the stated speed limit. That is extremely dangerous and a common cause of collisions," said Major Andrew Popochock. "Just because there are fewer cars on the roads does not mean speed limits don't apply," he added.

If you are concerned about speeding or parking issues in your neighborhood, you can make a Traffic Service Request (TSR) at bit.ly/31t8SoE. These TSRs go to a supervisor in the Traffic Section for review and further action. The form requires your name and address, the location of the problem area and details of the issue. You may request to remain anonymous.

"Our motorcycle officers are routinely assigned to work TSRs. We appreciate resident feedback so we can respond to trouble areas," Popochock explained. "Also, as of Sept. 1, our traffic unit will be fully staffed for the first time in several years. Please report your traffic concerns to us so that we can help ensure everyone's safety."

Concealed Pistol License processing resumes

Beginning in early September, the Bellevue Police Department will resume processing new Concealed Pistol License (CPL) applications. Please note that applicants must get fingerprinted through a third-party agency.

When City Hall closed due to COVID-19 health risks, in-person city services, such as fingerprinting, were suspended. That meant that the department could no

longer process new CPL applications since fingerprints are required to complete the request.

"We still cannot offer in-person fingerprinting services here at City Hall because of the COVID-19 restrictions," said Major Mark Tarantino. "But we have been able to find an outside agency to handle the fingerprinting services. We're pleased to be able to process new CPL license applications once again and offer this service to our residents," Tarantino explained.

The Bellevue Police Department has an agreement for processing with Bellevue Fingerprinting Service. CPL applicants who are Bellevue residents are encouraged to call Bellevue Police Records at 425-452-6917 before obtaining fingerprints.

For more information, please visit our website: bit.ly/3lrU7uy.

Free tools to help you save water and money at home

If you've been considering ways to reduce your home's water use, we want to help – and now is a great time!



Bellevue Utilities customers always have access to free indoor and outdoor water efficiency items through our membership in the Cascade Water Alliance. Throughout September, you can also get free shipping on all orders.

Installing water-efficient fixtures like those listed below, and practicing wise water use, can help you control your home's water use and potentially lower your utility bills. It also helps us ensure a reliable water supply for future generations.

To order items, visit [Cascadewater.org/water-efficiency/free-items](https://cascadewater.org/water-efficiency/free-items). Homeowners need an account or customer number from their utility bill. Free items are also available for apartment or condo owners and managers.

Sample free water conservation items available:

- ◆ **Low-flow showerhead:** Reduces gallons per minute and energy demand from your water heater
- ◆ **Dye tablets and strips:** Helps in finding silent toilet leaks that can add up to big water waste
- ◆ **Digital shower timer:** Attaches to the wall with a suction cup

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- ◆ **Kitchen faucet aerator:** Reduces water flow, with 360-degree swivel capability
- ◆ **Bathroom faucet aerator:** Reduces water flow, but not performance

Helping our partners create additional affordable housing

The City of Bellevue is exploring ways to create opportunities for affordable housing on faith-based, nonprofit and public surplus property.

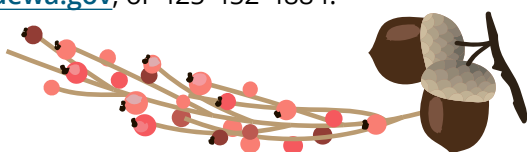
The city's Affordable Housing Strategy was adopted in 2017 and sets a goal of creating 2,500 affordable homes in 10 years. The strategy outlines 21 actions that the city should take to preserve and increase affordable housing.

Action C-1 of the Bellevue Affordable Housing Strategy calls on the city to "increase development potential on suitable land owned by public, non-profit housing and faith-based entities for affordable housing." Recently-passed state legislation (SHB 1377) requires cities to provide incentives for affordable housing built on land owned by religious institutions.

With all this in mind, the city council initiated work on a policy and code change on July 20, which would provide incentives for affordable housing on property owned by faith organizations and housing nonprofits, as well as public surplus property. Outreach to the city's affordable housing partners, religious entities, and housing and neighborhood groups is ongoing. City staff hope to bring a policy proposal to council by the end of 2020, with approval and implementation of the new city code expected in early 2021.

At the city's Engaging Bellevue website (engagingbellevue.com) you can find out more information, ask questions and leave comments. You can also sign up for a virtual community webinar which is to be held on Sept. 24 at 6 p.m. for an overview and discussion of the policy objectives. To participate please register on engagingbellevue.com at "C-1 Affordable Housing Webinar." You will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

If you have questions or comments about the project, please contact Janet Lewine, Senior Planner at jlewine@bellevuewa.gov, or 425-452-4884.



Fall Prevention Awareness Week Sept. 21-25:

Tips for preventing falls

The Bellevue Network on Aging would like to increase awareness of fall prevention during Fall Prevention Awareness Week, Sept. 21-25.



The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) stated that "falls are a public health problem that are largely preventable." DOH further points out that each year 28% of Washington residents over age 65 experience a fall and that in 2018 there were 20,994 hospitalizations for falls involving adults age 65+.

However, there are ways we can help prevent falls. For example:

- ◆ Wear shoes that fit and have a solid, no-skid sole.
- ◆ Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medications for fall-related side effects.
- ◆ Have a yearly vision and hearing checkup and wear glasses and hearing aids if prescribed.
- ◆ Keep physically active to extent you are able and, with your doctor's approval, engage in exercises and programs designed to improve balance, flexibility, strength and endurance.
- ◆ Make your home safer. King County emphasizes that 50 to 70% of falls are due to home hazards and describes multiple steps one should take to improve home safety. For example, keep stairways, halls and walkways well lit, arrange furniture so you have room to walk without obstacles, install secure handrails on both sides of stairways and keep the staircase uncluttered. Also, keep regularly used items within easy reach, install grab bars by the toilet and inside the shower and tub areas, and use non-skid bathmats.

The Eastside has a variety of fall prevention resources and programs, which are listed on the Sound Generations website: soundgenerations.org/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Resources-Eastside.pdf. However, many programs are not currently operating due to COVID-19; please check their services offered.

The City of Bellevue offers the following senior exercise programs through YouTube. [youtube.com/watch?v=6S4HGiszp04](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S4HGiszp04); and [youtube.com/watch?v=0luIF4fMPeQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0luIF4fMPeQ). Bellevue will soon be offering additional virtual fall prevention programs through a website to be known as "Bellevue at Home."

Finally, the Bellevue Fire Department has established Bellevue Fire CARES, which helps residents get the resources and equipment they need to be safe in their homes: BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/fire/medical/fire-cares.

Take a self-guided neighborhood tree tour!

Enjoy the start of autumn by exploring the trees around you with the help of a self-guided neighborhood tree tour!

Throughout spring and summer, Bellevue's neighborhood tree ambassador volunteers worked hard to create walking tours of the trees in their neighborhoods. These tours include information about the fascinating trees and other landmarks along various neighborhood routes. Each tour has a unique theme and perspective based on the interest and knowledge of the tree ambassador who created it.



Although they had hoped to lead their tours in person, the tree ambassadors have been flexible and created self-guided tree tours for community members to download from the city's website. Each tour includes a map of the route, photos of each tree or other landmark, and a written description and narrative. Currently, tours in Northeast Bellevue, Wilburton, Downtown and Crossroads are published at BellevueWA.gov/trees. Check back in the coming weeks to find additional tours in these and other neighborhoods.

Please email trees@bellevuewa.gov with any questions.



Downtown light rail tunnel officially completed

There's now light at both ends of the downtown tunnel following Sound Transit's Aug. 19 announcement that its contractors had substantially completed this important section of the East Link light rail extension.

The tunnel stretches one-third of a mile and will connect the East Main Station at 112th Avenue Northeast and Main Street to the Bellevue Downtown Station adjacent to City Hall when East Link begins operating in 2023.



"Working together, the city council, community and Sound Transit developed an alignment that works not only for the Bellevue community, but also for the commuters who will come to work in Bellevue," said Bellevue Mayor Lynne Robinson. "I'm excited to ride this beautiful route through the Eastside."

Overall, East Link will extend light rail 14 miles from downtown Seattle to downtown Bellevue and the Overlake area of Redmond via I-90, with 10 stations.

More information on the East Link Extension is at soundtransit.org/eastlink.

Boards and Commissions Meetings

As of April 1, no meetings are taking place at City Hall. Stay updated on meetings and cancellations: BellevueWA.gov

All meetings are conducted at City Hall unless otherwise noted. Agendas are subject to change. If a holiday occurs on a Monday, please check the updated calendar. Agendas can be downloaded from the city's web pages listed below. Meeting alerts are available through subscribing to the City's Special Meeting Notices page. BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-clerks-office/special-meeting-notice

Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network

(6 p.m., Bellevue City Hall) Last Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-managers-office/diversity/bellevue-diversity-advisory-network

East Bellevue Community Council (6:30 p.m., Lake Hills Clubhouse, 15230 Lake Hills Blvd) First Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/east-bellevue-community-council

Arts Commission (4:30 p.m., 1E-109) First Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/arts-and-culture/arts-commission

Environmental Services Commission

(6:30 p.m., 1E-113) First Thursday of each month Utilities.BellevueWA.gov/conservation-and-the-environment/environmental-services-commission

Planning Commission (6:30 p.m., 1E-113) Second and fourth Wednesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/planning-commission

Transportation Commission (6:30 p.m., 1E-113) Second Thursday of each month with fourth Thursday as needed. BellevueWA.gov/planning/transportation-commission

City Council BellevueWA.gov/Legistar.com/Calendar.aspx

Day	Scheduled Meeting(s)	Location	Public Comment Opportunity
First four Mondays of each Month, except August and December	6 p.m., Regular Meeting	Virtual Bellevue TV channel 21 and BT YouTube channel youtube.com/user/BellevueWashington	Written Communications Only
August – first Monday only			Email: council@bellevuewa.gov
December – first and second Mondays only			Subject line - "Written Communications (insert date of meeting)" by 3 p.m. the day of the meeting.

Human Services Commission (6 p.m., 1E-113) First and third Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-clerks-office/boards-and-commissions/human-services-commission

LEOFF 1 Disability Board (6 p.m., Room 1E-118) First Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/human-resources/retirees-former-employees/leoff-1-disability-board

Library Board (5p.m., Lake Hills, Bellevue or Newport Way Library) Third Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-clerks-office/boards-and-commissions/library-board

Parks & Community Services Board

(6 p.m., 1E-113) Second Tuesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-clerks-office/boards-and-commissions/parks-and-community-services-board

The Bellevue Network on Aging (BNOA) 8:30 a.m., North Bellevue Community Center 4063 148th Ave NE, Bellevue) First Thursday of each month BellevueWA.gov/bnoa

Special Events Committee (8:30 a.m., 1E-112) Second Thursday of each month Parks.BellevueWA.gov/special-events/special-events-committee

Youth Link Board (6 p.m., 1E-120) Second Wednesday of each month BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/city-clerks-office/boards-and-commissions/youth-link-board

Bellevue's Neighborhood Services Division offers a variety of programs and partnerships for neighborhood leaders and active residents. To learn more about citizen involvement opportunities and programs to enhance neighborhoods, please visit our website at: BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/neighborhoods or call 425-452-6836 or email: neighborhoodoutreach@bellevuewa.gov. To subscribe to this newsletter, visit: BellevueWA.gov/neighborhood-news