

City of Bellevue UAS Program

FAQs

What is a UAS?

UAS is an Unmanned Aerial System and is commonly called a drone. A drone is an aerial device with an onboard computer that is operated remotely, generally by a pilot on the ground using a handheld controller. Small UAS are battery operated, weigh less than 55 pounds, have several rotors like a helicopter, and are equipped with a video camera.

What would the City of Bellevue use UAS for? What would be prohibited?

Uses could include:

- Disaster response and recovery
- Training, marketing/outreach
- Crime or crash scene preservation and documentation

Prohibited uses include the weaponization of UAS and general surveillance.

How is my privacy protected?

Protecting public privacy is of utmost concern to the city. Absent a search warrant or exigent circumstances, UAS operators and observers shall not intentionally record or transmit images of any location where a person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g. inside a house or fenced yard). Operators and observers shall take reasonable precautions to avoid inadvertently recording or transmitting images of areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Who will be operating the UAS and what training do UAS pilots undergo?

Operators are employees or certified contractors of the City of Bellevue. All UAS operators have attained FAA Remote Pilot Certification as well as additional training through the city.

What rules and regulations must city UAS pilots follow?

All city personnel and contractors working on behalf of the city with UAS responsibilities are trained in city, state and federal laws and regulations, as well as policies and procedures governing the deployment and use of UAS.

What should I do if I see a UAS being flown illegally?

You may call the city's non-emergency line, (425) 577-5656. Or, if you can locate the UAS operator and you feel safe doing so, try talking to the operator first. They may not be a city employee or certified contractor and may not be aware of applicable regulations.

How do I ask a question or make a complaint about UAS use in Bellevue?

You can contact uas@bellevuewa.gov.



Private Use of UAS in Bellevue

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Is a permit from the City required to fly a UAS in Bellevue?

Generally, no permit is required to fly a UAS within the City of Bellevue. However, if you intend to make use of a City of Bellevue park for your UAS operation such as taking off, landing, or the control of a UAS a parks permit is required.

Is a right of way permit required if I'm flying over a City Bellevue street or sidewalk?

Federal regulation prohibits UAS flight operations over persons, occupied vehicles, or vulnerable infrastructure. A right of way permit would be necessary to close a portion of a City street or sidewalk if your UAS flight cannot be accomplished while such streets or sidewalks are occupied.

Is a City of Bellevue business license required if operating a UAS within the City of Bellevue for commercial purposes?

To conduct business in Bellevue, businesses must register with the city and obtain a Bellevue business license if you meet any of the following criteria:

1. You have a physical location in the city, or
2. Your annual gross receipts in the city will exceed \$2,000.

Can a UAS fly over my private property?

Federal regulations govern all navigable airspace including UAS flights over private property. Such flights are generally permitted. However, UAS operators must abide any other applicable law or regulations. Thus, a UAS cannot be operated in such a manner that endangers persons or property.

What should I do if I believe a UAS is being operated in an unsafe manner?

If there is an immediate hazard to persons or property, please call 911. Otherwise, please report the incident using the Bellevue Police non-emergency phone number, 425-577-5656.

Are there places where I can fly my UAS for fun?

Marymoor Park Airfield in Redmond allows for use of UAS with a Marymoor R/C Club Membership and registration. The airfield is located in the northeast corner of Marymoor Park at 6046 W. Lake Sammamish Parkway NE, Redmond, Washington.

