

## **Neighborhood Leadership Gathering**

### **Planning for Bellevue's Fiscal Future: Navigating Boom Times and Budget Constraints**

**October 11, 2022**

#### **Survey Results**

From September 26 – October 11, sixty-two residents responded to a short survey to share their budget priorities on Engaging Bellevue.

#### **What qualities contribute most toward making Bellevue a great place to live, work or play**

- Lower taxes, strong police service focusing on crime prevention and punishment, and protection of parks.
- Public Safety
- common sense and safety, city amenities and community environment, education resource
- The natural beauty and open spaces of the city while having a large downtown area giving the best of both worlds.
- Great schools, investment in community, well maintained
- Helping solve the climate crises so we can actually walk and exercise outside without having to breathe the smoke of our State's forest going up in flames.
- The Parks and Open Space system
- Beautiful open spaces, quality and reliable services, safe, clean and diverse communities.
- More greenery, park with parking availability will attract more people and families
- There are no such qualities because the city of Bellevue poorly managed, has a poorly qualified City Council, and has excessively high taxes and utility rates.
- Diversity of housing -- high (not medium density) near transit (TOD), and low density available for those that want it. People should be able to age in place rather than getting priced out (or requiring renting a room out or reverse mortgage).
- Keep great job environment and oppose all Seattle policies
- I do not feel this is any longer true. Developers and private equity became greedy and the City Council was perhaps taken in by their promises...
- Modern safe city
- Clean, safe, availability of shopping and dining choices
- Green spaces, clean, fairly low crime

- Safe community, great parks, variety of beautiful & safe single-family neighborhoods, growing & vibrant downtown, city government responds to most problems.
- Safety and green spaces/parks/trails
- there are no small businesses, no culture, except rich people culture and douchiness. change it
- Less frenetic than Seattle, and certainly a lot less drama!!! SO GLAD that I chose to buy in Bellevue nearly 30 years ago instead of Seattle. As many other people agree, the trees, especially larger, older trees (get those tree codes updated and in force ASAP!!!) and parks and other green space. Which also contribute to my assertion of less frenetic. A really well-run government and a city council that works well. I think the city more or less listens to its residents, as well as its RE developers and other businesses. There are many more attributes I could list but I'll stop here.
- Well maintained, good policing, nice green spaces, good accommodation for walkers, cyclists
- Schools are very good.
- Great parks, services, growth, walkability, public transportation, capable first responders and government
- Parks, open space, safety , transportation, good businesses that pay employees well
- Safety, low density suburban community, quality people, quality amenities.
- The people in our neighborhood make Bellevue so great. We share food, help each other, and the city has so many amenities, stores, eateries, spas, etc.
- Natural spaces, places for community to gather and share, better flowing traffic, less congestion.
- Safe, Clean, Vibrant Community - free from crime and encampments - that prioritizes the rights of taxpaying citizens.
- Natural areas, parks, quality of schools,
- Affordability
- Parks, walkways, and our neighborhoods.
- The maintenance of 'a well balanced mix of urban environment with... natural space'
- Professional public safety. Great parks. Clean, well-planned transportation.
- Great parks, dynamic downtown
- Public safety, clean and safe environment. Lots of options for dining, retail, entertainment, and recreation. A good balance of urban feel and green space

- Variety of neighborhoods, sense of community for each one; different employers with jobs of many skills and levels; natural areas and parks for outdoor recreation
- Safety of person and personal property,, natural beauty in the form of parks and outdoor spaces, churches, excellent employment opportunities, good roads to drive on, reasonably good traffic, quality places for dining and entertainment
- Prosperous and diverse and clean parks
- The whole region is wonderful. The climate is perfect (for now), and there is a lot of greenspace.
- Having housing affordable enough that my kids could afford to live here would make it a great place.
- The wonderful parks & open spaces including BBG, the many small beach parks, and the downtown park. The tree lined streets and walkways. The excellent schools & lovely libraries. The walkable, small businesses are a rare but notable treat ( Resonate, Cypress, the now defunct Ooba Tooba)
- Convenient transportation through beautiful neighborhoods to good jobs
- Abundance of green spaces and parks both in neighborhoods and in urban environment provide respite, 'quiet time,' and spaces to relax and/or exercise as a break from everyday work and home routines.
- Well managed city, not like Seattle
- Foremost, I would like to see it continue to be a place of relatively low crime. In addition, I would like for us to continue to value parks and open spaces. It will be nice when most of the downtown area construction is "done," and there are not so many road closures and detours (but, I understand that is temporary). I miss our Main Street Bridge, LOL.
- Safe Welcoming Good Schools Good Neighbors Great Amenities
- Controlling greenhouse gas emissions ASAP!
- inclusive and safety
- It's gotta be the Eastrail. I use the hell out of the section completed last year, the one connecting NHS to Gene Coulon. I see many others also using it too. Honorable mentions include the bowling alley in one of the squares probably owned by Kemper Freeman in Downtown Bellevue (Lincoln Center? Bellevue Square? Bellevue Center? Lincoln Square?), the parks all over the place such as Lewis Creek Park, and Mercer Slough.
- Public safety
- Police, Fire and first Responders, school district is good, accountability to our rule of law for all. The parks are great but we need more. The TREES, keep the

trees and green space for our health, enjoyment, oxygen, carbon capturing abilities, for wildlife and birds.

- Climate & landscape
- The climate, the landscape, the environment, the general vibe and energy of the population. Coming from the midwest, Bellevue is gorgeous and people are way less angry.

**Please rank the following in order of which best matches your highest priorities (1 = highest; 8 = lowest).**

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>AVG.</b>
<b>RANK</b>	

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. Keeping the community safe by preparing and responding to emergencies timely and effectively       | 3.05 |
| 2. Maintaining a well balanced mix of urban environment with natural neighborhoods and open space     | 3.65 |
| 3. Focusing on high performance, well managed government that serves the public                       | 3.73 |
| 4. Improving transportation and related services to ensure transportation is reliable and predictable | 3.98 |
| 5. Maintaining and developing a caring, connected, and intellectual community                         | 4.62 |
| 6. Being an active leader and partner in the region   | 5.56 |
| 7. Developing and attracting high quality businesses and employees                                    | 5.56 |
| 8. Attracting residents and visitors by providing a variety of amenities and activities               | 5.86 |

**Please share why your highest priority is so important to you.**

- Reduction in taxes, strong police service focusing on crime prevention and punishment, and protection of parks.
- When people do not feel safe, the fabric of our society is eroded. Without Public Safety addressing the basic needs for a welcoming environment, nothing else matters.
- safety always first.

- A efficient and well run government will mean limiting tax hikes to the residents of the community while ensuring that the major services are well performed and available to the city residents.
- The traffic is ridiculous and needs to be address region wide
- You do even list my highest priority -- which is that City of Bellevue be a REAL partner towards solving climate change worldwide rather than being a doormat for Puget Sound Energy to wipe their feet on.
- None of these represent my highest priority. I feel the highest priority is to provide adequate funding to maintain City assets that are built. By not providing adequate funding you will reduce asset life cycles costing tax payers more money to renovate later, increase liability exposure and potential for litigated damages, and deteriorate Bellevue's City in a Park image that attracts business and resident to our City in the first place.
- Hard to prioritize one over another as all of the items listed compliment each other why the City of Bellevue is a wonderful place to live. However, Safety is a core need for myself and family. Knowing that safety matters in our community is a big reason why I continue to live in Bellevue vs moving to another community.
- Government needs to fund for department of police so that we have more active police officer to provide protection service for the Bellevue residents and business. We do not have enough workforce compared to population size of this area.
- If this objective is achieved, there will be fewer people in Bellevue
- Keeping homeless people off public property
- Safety is so important because if your neighborhood is no longer walkable because of speeding Amazon, UPS, Fed Ex, USPS trucks, gig drivers, School.pol drivers, etc., our small neighborhood streets become just major catalyts for Greenhouse Gas Emissions. This affects our vulnerable young children with asthma and other life long illnesses. And now young couples cannot afford the big houses developers are building in Lake Hills, Somerset and Eastgate as part of the EASTGATE Project. The police are very dedicated to safety in downtown Bellevue but they do not have the officers to cover all of Bellevue. The covenants of HOAs and HCAs are protecting some West Bellevue neighborhoods from providing affordable housing NOW. This NIMBY attitude is prima facie evidence of exclusivity, not inclusivity. How can the Bellevue City Council say "Diversity is our Strength" when this attitude continues to block more affordable housing?
- Nothing matters without public safety

- Bellevue is car-centric and it is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Lane and sidewalk closures are capricious and lengthy. Getting around town is onerous and the freeway is a parking lot every day.
- Without well ordered government, the other items aren't feasible in the long term.
- Public safety is most important because if people are unsafe, nothing else matters. We wouldn't feel safe enough to go to parks or events, shopping, use transit, etc.
- Do not let the Seattle scourge invade once safe Bellevue. Hire police. Respond quickly. Keep our city safe.
- honestly highest priority should be AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP! MAKE THE THOSE HUGEASS MULTIMILLION DOLLAR CONDOS AFFORDABLE FOR LOWER INCOME PEOPLE!!!
- I think that none of the other priorities will be as effectively and efficiently managed unless our government is top-notch and well-run.
- People who care can help those in need
- Quality of life in Bellevue is important to me and my family. We are house owners and want to feel like we matter as much as office buildings. It seems like offices matter more than residents.
- In the area I live, downtown, I observe more frequent street activity that makes me feel unsafe.
- Creation is in jeopardy we need to take care of it
- We deserve to always feel safe.
- Bellevue is a City in a Park. I love the gardens and wildlife. They are what makes our neighborhoods so caring and beautiful. I love meeting with my neighbors in our backyards looking at the trees, the stream, and occasionally seeing g a racoon, hawks, rabbits, beavers, coyotes, bald eagles. It is so special.
- Connection and community creates a meaningful life and a caring and safer environment.
- None of the other priorities are possible if people feel they are not safe in a community.
- The quality of life in Bellevue is dependent upon the natural areas, retaining the tree canopy and expanding parks system. Over development of retail and housing threatens this key element of Bellevue's attractiveness and desirability for residents
- It all start with well managed government that serves the public
- Public safety is the first responsibility of a democratic government. By the way, the last option is phrased to put the City's wish for urbanism "in balance" with a commitment to the environment. There should be an environmental

stewardship option without the spin. Like many City-initiated surveys, this one is skewed by the nature of its language and its wording. The "high-performance, well-managed government" sometimes seems more focused inward on staff than on our neighborhoods.

- You have skewed the survey as you don't include adapting to climate change (reducing GHG) or problem of affordable housing. I wanted to leave them all blank but it is not possible to do that.
- The increases in crime has had an effect on our adult children and their families. This is the main reason they moved out of Bellevue.
- Public safety is why government exists.
- Important to see Bellevue be fiscally prudent and effectively invest in the community.
- With the current and new (anticipated) growth in Bellevue over the next several years, it is critical to ensure our police and fire as well as EMS are well equipped to assist the public with any and all emergencies quickly. Given the current environment and revolving door of criminals, reducing crime and the fear of crime becomes even more urgent and critical. With the light rail coming, a police transit unit will be needed to maintain public safety. The CCAT team will also be needed to respond to mental health and other incidents.
- Safety should be number one, because without safety there is no freedom.
- Without a safe city to live in none of the other items listed really matter. What good is it to have a nice community, with nice people, quality businesses and employees, good government, reliable transportation, great amenities, or active involvement if one does not feel safe to enjoy any of it?!
- Crime And homelessness are on the rise. I see it every day on my drive into Bellevue.
- The east side is very car dependent. This exacerbates inequality by requiring a car for the majority of areas outside of downtown. Robust transit and increased development of mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods would reduce inequality and increase quality of life for all residents, along with reduced climate impact and more local business opportunities.
- My true first priority is substantially increasing the housing supply in high opportunity areas (meaning current single family neighborhoods), but that wasn't an option on the list. I would like Bellevue to lead on something, anything. This city never is the first to do anything innovative, we are always beat by Kirkland or Redmond. (Example, tenant protections.)
- A truly 'well-managed government that serves the public' will most effectively accomplish all these other important goals.

- Bellevue is below par on open spaces. Nature is disappearing from neighborhoods, and cannot be replaced.
- Balance of urban environment along with open space and natural neighborhoods lends itself to creating an improved general environment for citizens and businesses of Bellevue.
- The number 1, 2 and 3 priority has to be to build much more housing and I am not sure why that wasn't even listed above. There is plenty of open space around Bellevue, inside Bellevue we need density.
- As an average citizen, I don't feel I have a lot of power to change anything. So, if I believe our local government is run by people who have my best interests at heart, I will rest a bit easier.
- I want to feel safe.
- If The Bellevue City Council's Vision is one that espouses that "Residents live in a safe clean City that promotes health living and well being" we need to immediately reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Amazon's delivery drivers and warehouses increase greenhouse air emissions with their increased amount of deliveries in our neighborhoods. Gig drivers are on the rise! Greenhouse gas emissions can greatly increase the likelihood of asthma in our children. These emissions can also lead to heart trouble in our children. Also, downtown Bellevue has so many parking spaces in the condos and office buildings that were built. If you have parking spaces, people will drive! The traffic is horrendous!
- Economic growth benefits everyone, so we need to do our best to attract good well paying jobs!
- safety and business development
- As a kid, I have always wanted to explore all the cool places in Bellevue and not be stuck in the cul-de-sac hellhole that is South Bellevue, but that is not possible when the only bus to have stops less than an hour away by foot only comes when NHS begins or ends.
- Because as I age and need emergency services I need them to be available and reliable.
- Global warming, climate is changing for our collective destruction. Bellevue must maintain the large trees in existence now. Stop cutting trees and increase tree canopy. Buy more lands for open space. Provide trails, plant more trees and water them. Do not allow ADU/ little houses sharing Single zoned neighborhood. Existing yards within SFR zones are were more trees can continue to grow and new trees can be planted and watered/ cared for by residents. Land use code laws need to be changed so new construction houses have more space/ room for trees to grow. Bellevue needs to keep the trees

the collective “we” have. Do not allow ADU take spaces that are currently open space for green space and trees. If office buildings that are currently being built are not going to be used for office workers, then build and provide those existing office buildings into apartments. Existing Bellevue residents are not being served by more pressure on their quality of life by corporations coming to set up shop in Bellevue. The recent mistake City Council made was not voting for common sense safeguards that Jennifer Robertson wrote for emergency housing within neighborhoods. Residents should not have to deal with preventable behaviors challenges that homeless populations and causes. Homeless services providers need rules, regulations and prove that they are accommodating Bellevue rules around the nine Robertson recommendations that were voted down. Prevention measures are better than cleaning up messed up, preventable quality of life challenges. Priorities need to be on maintaining existing Bellevue residents quality of life not becoming another Seattle with Silicone Valley riches that destroys what Bellevue has now. Priority on Environmental goals/ suggestions to keep our environment clean and healthy.

- Public transportation needs to be reliable so people aren't forced to use cars, which are inefficient and unsafe. Many of us don't want to drive, but feel that the city provides no other viable option.
- The local government needs to be competent, informed, organized and must do what's best for its people in a timely manner. Residents are too overburdened to become experts in city planning and are not able to advocate for the issues that affect them. The government must figure out who is being underserved and what to do to help in small, quick steps.

### **What is the biggest problem facing Bellevue?**

- Too much development, too little enforcement of laws, neighborhood degradation, loss of parks. Also, these surveys are terrible and are done with the intention of 1) checking a box for public engagement, and 2) to get your end goal approved. Our city staff and some council members are corrupt and are changing Bellevue without the residents approval and knowledge.
- Lack of support for the public safety providers - officers and fire fighters need take home cars and day care in addition to public support.
- amenities are not the same quality / quantity in different communities.
- I am concerned with crime and homeless issues. I keep hearing about all the theft at stores and homes and makes me feel very insecure. Having homeless people and tents all around also makes me feel less safe and it impacts the

well being of all. We should be compassionate and find better options for them.

- Rents and home prices being so high that people who have lived here for years are forced to move out.
- An ineffectual form of government. City of Bellevue as LONG outgrown its current "amateur country club" form of government where there is not a REAL mayor who actually manages City Staff and is directly held responsible to the voters - IE a directly elected mayor.
- In the long run it will soon be deteriorating infrastructure
- Rapid growth of business coming to Bellevue, vs services to keep up with that growth.
- Bellevue downtown residents are already vulnerable due to recent increasing number of crimes like property burglary, property theft, vehicle theft, assault, robbery, trespassing etc. Homelessness and unsheltered people have also become more visible here. Residents are in fear as the construction activity for new transportation (TRAIN) system will be activated and it will bring more people and business in this area and make this community more vulnerable if number police are not increasing to serve this population.
- Property taxes and utility rates are excessively high.
- Keeping King County making us like Seattle
- Safety for the residents.
- Taxes
- Bellevue is car-centric and it is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Lane and sidewalk closures are capricious and lengthy. Getting around town is onerous and the freeway is a parking lot every day.
- Crowding and increased urbanization changing the city dynamics
- Crime from other communities coming to our neighborhoods
- City government shifting to liberal King County bad policies on homeless, shelters, homeless hotels..
- rich people thinking they own everything. unaffordable housing for lower income people and people of colour. inequity and inequality.
- How will we manage and afford all the growth????? While doing our utmost to retain as much of our familiar Bellevue qualities that attracted all of us here.
- too many people decreasing the quality of life
- Would like to see more independent small businesses, and traffic problems.
- Growing pains that come with a boom. Safety, security, traffic.
- Combatting climate change, Affordable housing for those who work in Bellevue
- Increased crime.

- The demand to have Bellevue change and meet the needs of everyone on the planet, especially young college educated people who have not lived in Bellevue very long. Just because they want to live in Bellevue doesn't mean we have to pay for their living expenses and they seem to be demanding it.
- I think you're doing a great job. It's a tough balancing act. Probably the biggest problem is enough money to do everything you want to do. I would like to see the opportunity for smaller properties to build ADU for family members to live.
- Proximity to Seattle.
- Balance of development and retaining key elements of quality of life
- Affordability, transportation, public safety, and environment
- Crime, pollution, polarization, and OVER development at the expense of the natural environment. Bellevue is the proverbial "hungry ghost."
- crime and traffic
- Adapting to climate change (need bigger budget and staff) and affordable housing.
- Increasing crime
- Bellevue needs to finance, leverage, and secure funding for more affordable apartments. It should NOT take the city council another 20 years to meet this pressing need more fully.
- Traffic
- Public safety, traffic congestion downtown, new light rail and anticipated transit issues
- Accountable government needs to have visible results toward solving challenges that are destroying our sense of peace and purpose
- Crime! We moved here almost 8 years ago. Our welcome to Bellevue was a home robbery one month later (thankfully we were not home at that time). That said crime keeps getting worse in Bellevue and in the state of WA. When I am out I'm always making sure no one is following me home from the bank, the mall or even as I am driving. I was in Target a few weeks ago and a homeless man tried to walk out with a stack of clothes. He was stopped by the security guard. Sadly this happens a lot on Bellevue. It seems to be commonplace now. We went to the Bravern a few weeks ago and the security guard at the store we went to had to unlock the door just to let us in to shop. This is not normal! I love to exercise and walk in my neighborhood but since the pandemic there have been people sleeping in their vehicles (SUVs, cars, camping recreational vehicles) so now I have to carry pepper spray. All this to say I don't feel very safe here. The city of Bellevue has to do better for its citizens. We want to get out and be out but with safety concerns we aren't getting out as much as we used to or like to.

- Colonizing of the homeless and crime.
- Bellevue housing is way too expensive and I think this results in Bellevue being a relatively sterile feeling city due to the lack of social diversity. It's hard to have arts and culture when people can't afford to live off of those things here. We need to build way more housing with increased density.
- Housing affordability.
- The conundrum of land use, middle income housing affordability, and livability/ neighborhood character
- Maintaining livable neighborhoods while developing the urban job center
- Difficulty and barriers to the building of workforce housing. Should use mandatory inclusionary zoning for such housing in new developments, as cash offsets are not working very well.
- Not enough apartment buildings, too much single family zoning. Please build as much dense housing as possible to make it easier for teachers and police to live in our city.
- High property taxes forcing out long-term home owners. :( Just notified that our property taxes on 2200 square foot house, 8,000 square foot lot, may go from \$10,000 this year to about \$17,000 next year. Not sure how we will manage that.
- Indifference Too Many New Comers Are Not Engaged
- For affordable housing, many affluent neighborhoods on the Eastside and their HOAs or HCAs hide behind covenants that will not allow Accessible Dwelling Units. These neighborhoods also have limits on how many individuals can live in a rental house. Factoria, Eastgate, Somerset, Lake Hills, Newport Hills are not the only neighborhoods that should help the poor and communities of color to move the needle right away! We need to pull together to face this immediate challenge and show humanity, compassion and understanding. NIMBY is not a compassionate solution!
- Housing is too expensive and unaffordable
- population, business development and safety
- The lack of affordable housing and housing in general really! There's too much demand for housing and prices are skyrocketing. I don't know how I will be able to live here in 10 years once I'm booted out of my parents' house and have to rent for like \$2000 a month or buy a house for \$1,500,000. But those numbers are only like that right now! In the future they're probably gonna be like \$3 million or similar and I'll be screwed over no matter how high-paying of a CS job I might have.
- Taxes

- Selling out to the developers who want to destroy the tree canopy and City of Bellevue let's them get away with it. Considering ADU in SF zones is a bad idea.
- Increasing population is leading to a housing shortage. We need more housing (within existing areas, without sprawling), and better public transit to serve the extra people.
- Extreme car dependency. It is nearly impossible to participate in our society without access to a personal automobile. That's an unreasonable expense for a person to NEED to have, and it doesn't scale when more people move into the region. It's wasting resources and wealth and contributing negatively to everyone in the region through lost time in traffic, stress and anxiety in traffic, poor air quality, inefficient land use, infrastructure maintenance costs... Also, not anywhere near enough housing :)