



Bellevue  
Human Services



Bellevue Human Services  
NEEDS UPDATE | 2021-2022  
[BellevueWA.gov](http://BellevueWA.gov)

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# Overview



# Overview

The City of Bellevue publishes the Human Services Needs Update prior to the beginning of each two-year human services funding cycle. Since 1989, this report has offered a summary of trends within Bellevue, East King County, the Puget Sound region, Washington State and the nation. This report leverages multiple sources to better understand Bellevue's human service needs, including a phone and online survey with Bellevue residents, online surveys from service providers and consumers, key informant interviews, and community conversations. Through this report, we hope to provide a broad vision and context for understanding human service needs and to inspire actions that will ameliorate barriers to achieving a high-quality of life for all Bellevue residents.

The full report is divided into the following areas:

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential
- Specific Populations:
  - Older Adults
  - People with Disabilities
  - Refugees and Immigrants
  - School-Aged Children and Youth
  - Veterans
- Special Focus Area: COVID-19

Continued on next page



As staff collected data across need areas, several themes emerged throughout all chapters.

## Increased needs will continue post-pandemic

- The pandemic has highlighted that health, social, and economic equity is still not a reality; COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, putting them more at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.
- Pre-pandemic safety nets were eliminated, which means post-pandemic that the slightest unexpected expense could plunge a household into homelessness, meaning vulnerable households will be living in a precarious situation for quite some time.
- COVID-19 guidelines led to social isolation for many individuals in our community, especially older adults and people with disabilities. The stressors of social isolation, the disruption of daily life, and grief have strained many people's mental health and coping abilities.

## High cost of living in Bellevue

- High cost of living and lack of affordable housing continues to be a major concern for Bellevue residents across all segments of the population, but some groups are particularly vulnerable to the housing crisis (i.e., low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and older adults on fixed income.)
- The rising cost of living and doing business in Bellevue is a significant challenge for the human service sector, impacting everything from staff recruitment and retention to service delivery.
- Many families still struggle to provide for their children because the cost of living in Bellevue is outpacing earnings. Affordable, quality childcare is critical so that families can work and provide for their families, but many families struggle to find accessible, affordable childcare.


## Lack of access for certain groups

- Despite the individual and collective efforts of our region's human service providers, there remain substantial challenges to ensure all members of Bellevue's diverse and growing community have the resources they need to thrive.
- Many residents are not aware of how to access human services when the need arises, and several are unaware of what resources exist. Some of the factors that contribute to this include not having easy access to a computer, limited language skills, not needing to access services in the past, and fear about accessing services.
- The need for more culturally- and linguistically-responsive human services grows as East King County becomes more diverse. In addition to providing translated information, there is a need for more diverse staff who are not only bilingual but also culturally competent. There is also a specific need for more culturally responsive behavioral health services due to the stigma around accessing services.
- Coordinated transportation is a rising issue for all population and in all services areas, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals that work non-traditional hours. Transportation is needed for residents to attend medical appointments, maintain employment, access human services, pick-up groceries, and to stay engaged in the community.

# Challenges experienced by human service agencies

- Human service providers inevitably face capacity challenges, even without a global pandemic. However, COVID-19 has caused not only a tremendous increase in service need, but it has also required significant adjustments to how services are delivered. Both of these have stretched organizations' already-limited resources.
- Nonprofit agencies are reporting substantial increases in operations expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including staffing costs (e.g., hazard pay), increase service demand, personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, and technology requirements for virtual services. In addition, agencies are reporting a reduction in revenue.
- Providers report that they are experiencing a staffing shortage due to their inability to pay a competitive wage. They reported that with the cost of living in East King County, there is an extra challenge in maintaining staff since many cannot afford to live here.





Although we saw increased needs in the majority of the areas noted in the full report, the overview chapter highlights the areas with significant increases or shifts in need. For additional detail, please reference the corresponding chapter(s) in the Human Services Needs Update.

## Areas of need with a significant increase

### Behavioral Health Services

- Behavioral health needs in our community outweigh the capacity of our providers and providers are reporting extensive waiting lists for services.
- Although behavioral health needs are experienced by individuals from all socio-economic groups, there is an inverse relationship between household income and feelings of anxiety and depression.
- There is a significant increase in need for behavioral health services for children and youth, as well as higher rates for youth suicidal ideation and attempt. The pandemic further intensified the strains on young people's mental health and well-being, as well as on the youth mental health system.

### Homelessness

- Preventing individuals from entering homelessness prevents ongoing trauma that can lead to other challenges and is more cost-effective than attempting to return an unhoused individual to stability. Behavioral health services have been identified as a key strategy to maintaining housing stability. In addition, providing financial assistance to help residents maintain their housing is an important strategy for ending homelessness.
- Homelessness shelter and services continues to be an increasing need in East King County. East King County has low-barrier shelters that provide services for each of the following populations: single men, single women, families with children, and youth and young adults. However, the shelters are often either close to capacity or over capacity. When a shelter is over capacity, they provide local resources as well as refer individuals to shelter in either Seattle or South King County, forcing Bellevue residents to leave their city of residence in order to access resources.

### Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

- Racial and ethnic discrimination is a rising concern in our community. Many refugees and immigrants are refusing services and disengaging from other public or private systems. The most commonly cited reason for doing so was the perception that accessing resources is not safe for them or their family due to their citizenship status. These fears about immigration status are also fueling the stress felt by both children, youth and their families.
- The number of hate crimes and bias incidents have been increasing both in the reports gathered by Bellevue Police Department and through reports gathered by King County Coalition Against Hate and Bias (KCCAHB), a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression.



## Domestic Violence

- Survivors of domestic violence are faced with barriers to housing and legal services. The high cost of housing in Bellevue creates a serious challenge for survivors who want to remain in the community to maintain their jobs and support systems. Accessing pro-bono or affordable legal representation for child custody, protection orders, immigration, and financial issues is another huge challenge. Without these services, it becomes much harder for survivors to maintain their safety, return to employment, and become self-sufficient
- The rise in domestic violence was reported by several providers who stated that people have been isolated due to COVID-19, which has led to increased stress for many households. This stress has resulted in more reports of domestic violence.

## Legal Services

- Many low-income people are not able to access legal services due to inability to pay for legal fees. Low-cost or free civil legal aid and free legal assistance are a growing need for many residents.
- Provider's stated that there is a significant lack of resources for those who need legal assistance to address their immigration status in the courts and for those trying to attain citizenship.



# Bellevue: A Community Profile



# Bellevue Community Profile

This chapter provides a general overview of changing demographics in Bellevue. For specific information about these topics as they relate to Human Services, see the following chapters:

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be a Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential
- Specific Population Chapters:
  - Older Adults
  - Refugees and Immigrants
  - People with Disabilities
  - School-Aged Children and Youth
  - Veterans
- Special Focus Area: Homelessness

## Land Acknowledgement

The City of Bellevue acknowledges that we are on the Indigenous Land of Coast Salish people who have reserved treaty rights to this land, including the Duwamish, Suquamish Tribe, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Tulalip Tribe, and Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived, and continue to live, here since time in memory.

## Population

### Existing Snapshot

On April 1, 2021, Bellevue's population was estimated to be 149,900, making Bellevue the fifth largest city in Washington state; just behind the cities of Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma and Vancouver, Washington.<sup>1</sup>

#### Top Ten Largest Washington City Populations, 2021

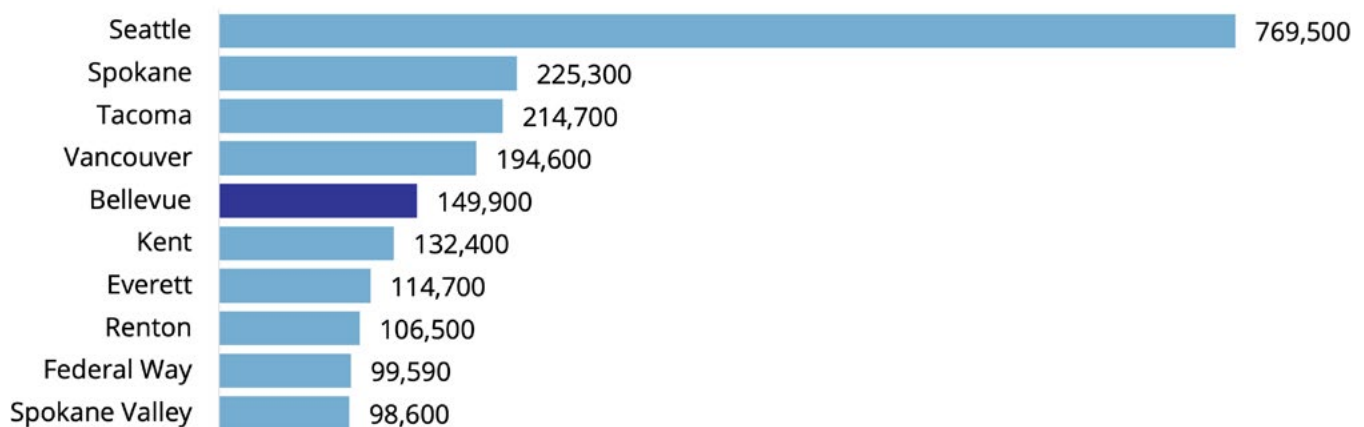


Figure 1 | Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, Population Estimates Division.

Bellevue’s population is just under two percent of the state’s total population and about seven percent of King County’s population. The City covers an area of approximately 33.5 square miles resulting in a population density of 4,475 people per square mile.

Lake Hills is the city’s largest neighborhood area in terms of population followed by Downtown and Crossroads. BelRed, Factoria, Wilburton and Woodridge are neighborhoods with the smallest populations.

**Trends and Projections**

Since Bellevue incorporated in 1953, the city’s population has grown at an average annual rate of 4.9 percent per year. However, much of that growth was due to annexation, especially annexation that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s when Bellevue quintupled in size annexing nearly 19 square miles. The city’s population ballooned by a factor of ten, climbing from 5,950 in 1953 to 61,196 in 1970.<sup>2</sup>

**Bellevue Population 1953 to 2021 with Shares of Growth from Annexation and Natural Increase/Immigration, and Forecast Population to 2035**

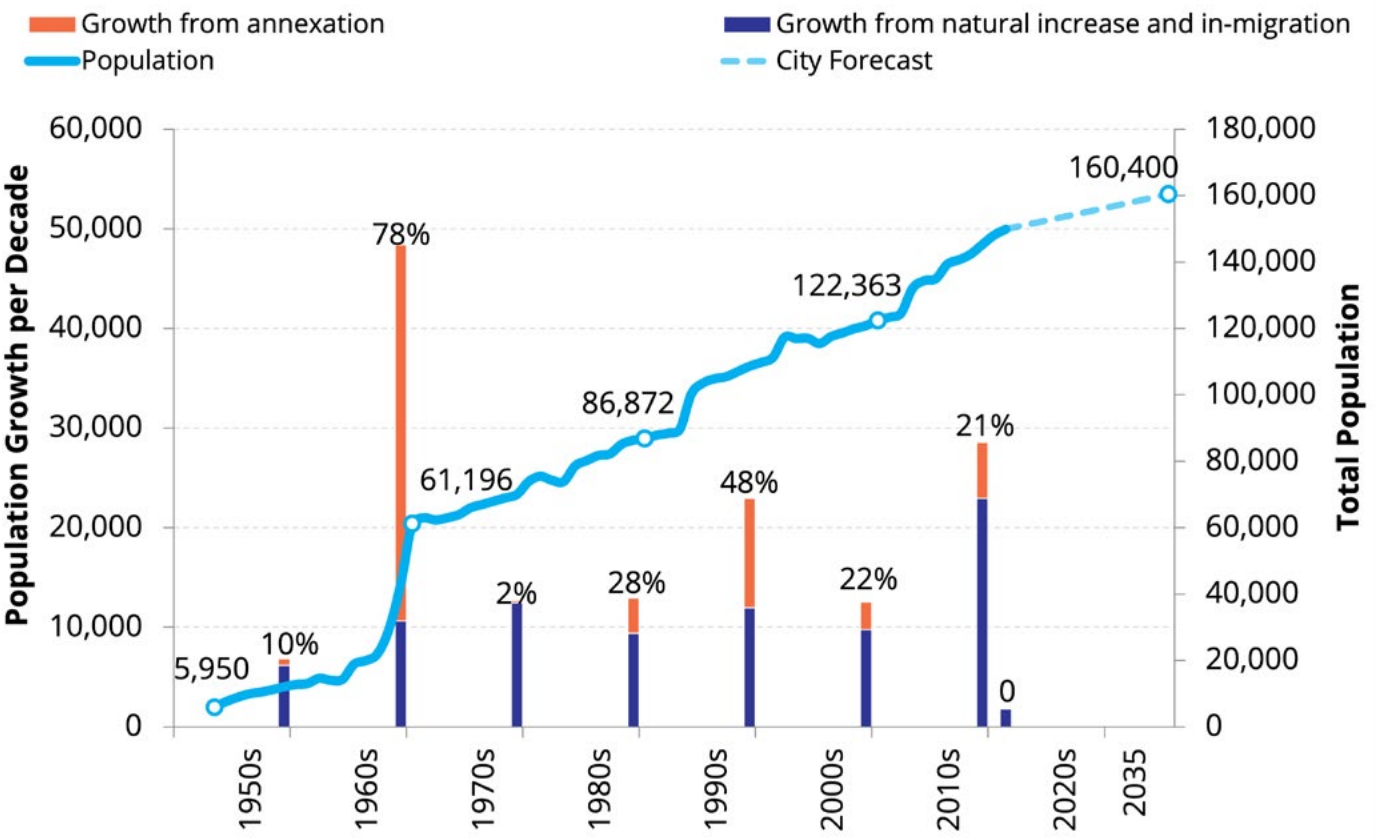


Figure 2 | Sources: Population estimates prior to 2000 are from the City of Bellevue with decade points from the U.S. Census Bureau. Estimates from 2000 on are from Washington State’s Office of Financial Management. Official population estimates are for April 1st of the specified year. Forecast is from the City of Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan adopted in July 2015.

Since 1970, annexations have represented 26 percent of Bellevue’s population growth, and population has grown on average 1.8 percent per year.

Between 2010 and 2021, Bellevue’s population, not including population in annexation areas, grew by 17.9 percent, slower than King County overall at 18.7 percent, yet faster than Washington State at 15.5 percent. Since 2010, populations in Seattle and Eastside cities including Issaquah,



Redmond, Newcastle, Kirkland, and Sammamish all grew faster than Bellevue, while populations in Mercer Island, Woodinville, Renton, and the Points communities grew slower.

The city and the county are in the process of adopting new growth targets for 2044 that will be the basis for the City’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan. The city expects to grow by an average of 1% to 2% annually between now and 2044.

Neighborhood Patterns

Downtown and BelRed are projected to be the city’s fastest growing neighborhood areas over the next 20 years.<sup>3</sup>

Characteristics

Place of Birth

For decades, most of Bellevue’s residents have come to Bellevue from other states or from abroad. In 1970, about 49 percent of Bellevue’s residents had been born in another state, five percent had been born outside of the United States (including those who were born in Puerto Rico, U.S. Island areas, or born abroad to an American parent) and five percent had been born in a foreign country (includes anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth, including those who have become U.S. citizens through naturalization). Since 1970, the share of Bellevue’s residents who were born in a foreign country has increased steadily, climbing from five percent in 1970 to 41 percent in 2019.<sup>4</sup>

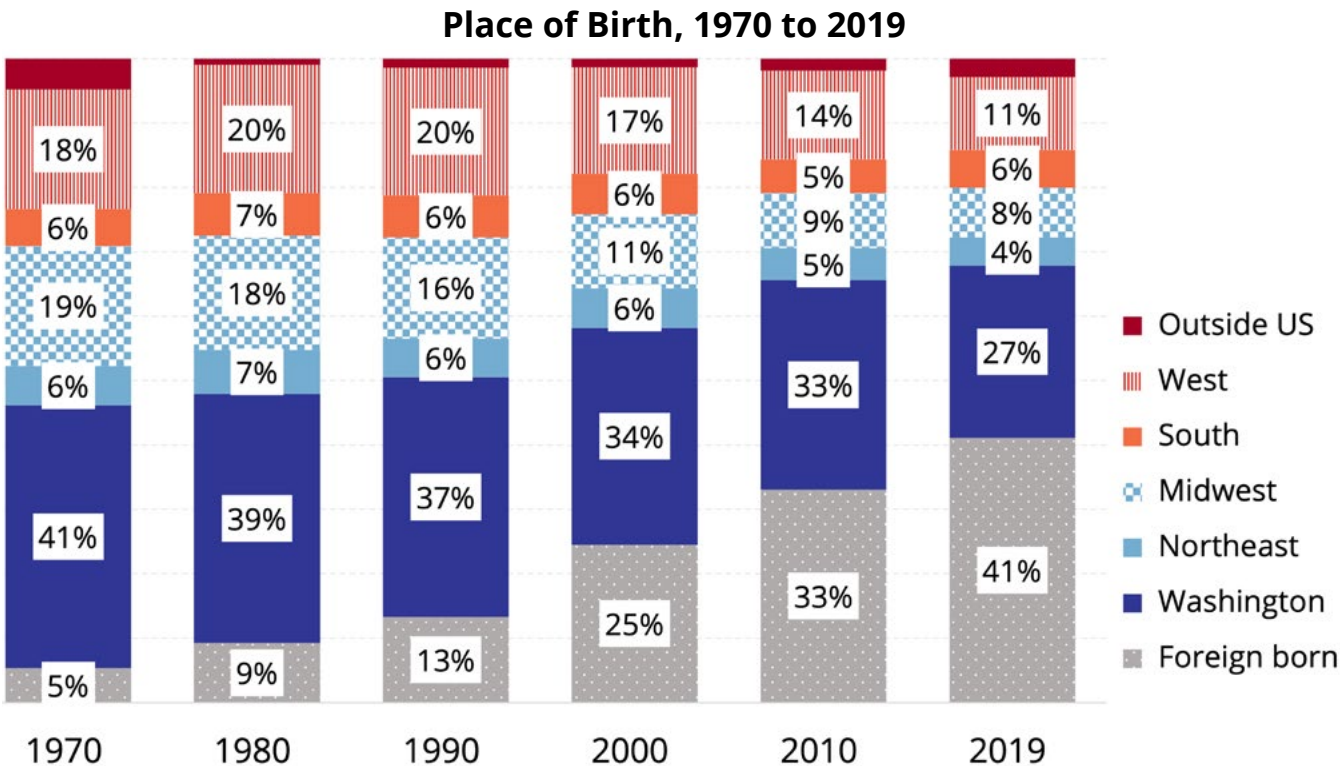


Figure 3 | Sources: IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org and U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table B05002.

Beginning in the 1990s, Bellevue’s industries began shifting towards technology. Many early immigrants working in the technology field settled in Bellevue to be close to work. Communities grew around these individuals and families, some of whom worked in technology fields but others working in other fields and contexts. Between 1990 and 2000, immigrants from foreign countries comprised about 67 percent of Bellevue’s population growth. Between 2000 and 2010,



immigrants comprised about 107 percent of Bellevue's growth, while the US born\* population shrank in size.<sup>5</sup> This phenomenon occurred in metropolitan areas across the country. Governing magazine found that 37 growing metro areas would have lost population had it not been for new residents from abroad.<sup>6</sup> Since 2010, immigrants have contributed to about 73 percent of Bellevue's population growth. With greater shares of people moving to Bellevue from overseas, this has influenced Bellevue's increasing cultural diversity. (\*US born includes people with citizenship born outside the US.)

### US born and Foreign-born Shares of Population Growth, 1990 to 2019

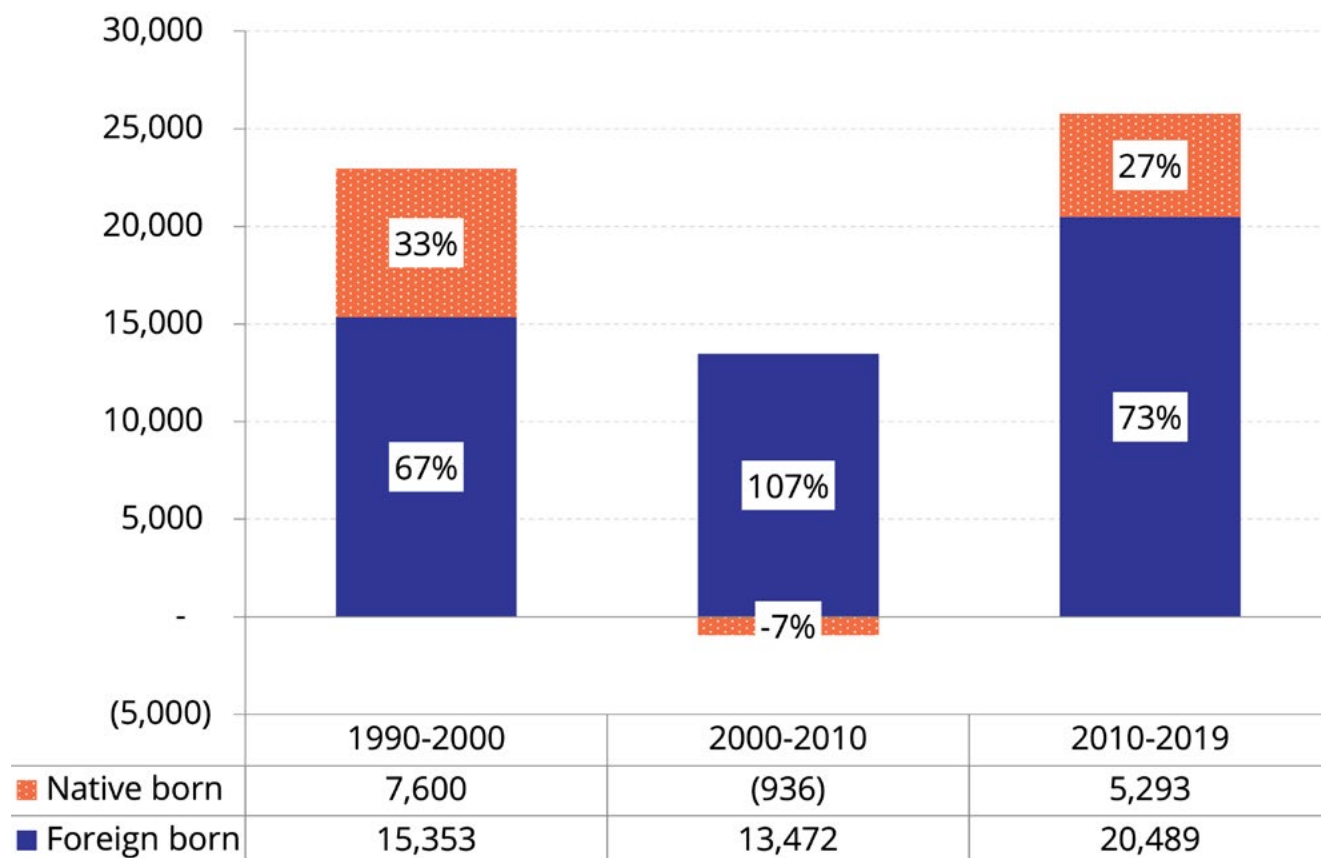


Figure 4 | Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census and 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys.

## Cultural Diversity

### Existing Snapshot

The City acknowledges that racial and cultural diversity are different. Racial groups contain many different cultural backgrounds and some cultural backgrounds are held by people identifying with different racial categories.

"Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past."

~ Bellevue City Council Vision

When looking at race/ethnicity in this report, Hispanic/Latino populations are grouped separately from racial categories where possible. Any individual who reported being Hispanic/Latino,

regardless of their race, is categorized as Hispanic/Latino, and White refers to all White residents who are not Hispanic/Latino.

With over 41 percent of its population having been born in over 90 different foreign countries, Bellevue is culturally diverse. About 50 percent of its population are people of color and about 44 percent of its population over five speak a language other than English at home.

### Bellevue's Race and Ethnicity Distribution, 2019

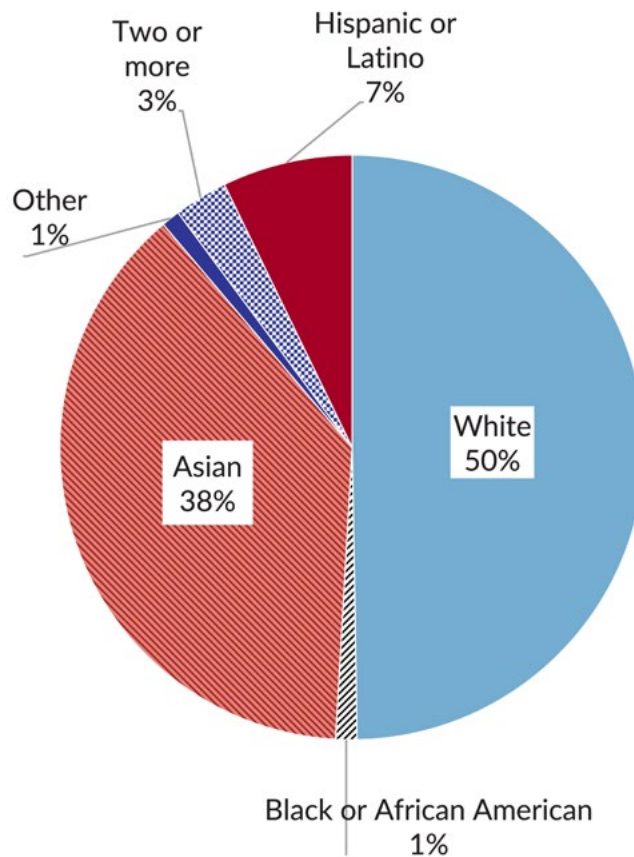


Figure 5 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, table DP05<sup>7</sup>.

Asians comprise about 38 percent of Bellevue's population, making it the second largest racial category in Bellevue. Among cities across the nation with 100,000 in population or more, Bellevue has the 9<sup>th</sup> largest Asian population as a percent of the total population and the highest percentage in the nation outside of California and Hawaii.

Hispanics/Latinos are Bellevue's third largest population group comprising about seven percent of Bellevue's population. People of two or more races comprise three percent of Bellevue's population followed by Blacks or African Americans who comprise about one percent.

### Neighborhood Patterns

The population in all neighborhoods is at least 30 percent people of color. The majority of residents in Crossroads, Factoria, Bridle Trails, Somerset, Wilburton, and Woodridge neighborhoods are people of color. West Lake Sammamish, West Bellevue, Northeast Bellevue, and BelRed are the neighborhood areas with the smallest proportions of people of color.

Crossroads, Somerset, and Bridle Trails have the highest percentages of Asian residents at just shy of 50 percent of the population. Factoria and Wilburton have the highest percentages of Black

or African American residents. Eastgate and Factoria, have the highest percentages of multi-racial residents, and Lake Hills, Crossroads, and Factoria have the highest percentages of Hispanic/Latino residents.<sup>8</sup>

## Comparisons

Nationally, the largest racial group is White with Hispanic/Latino as the second largest racial group, followed by Black or African American and then Asian. In King County, Seattle and Bellevue, Asians comprise the second-largest racial group after White, followed by Hispanic/Latinos. In King County and Seattle, Black or African American is the fourth largest racial group. However, in Bellevue, people of two or more races are more populous than Black or African American.<sup>9</sup>

### Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, United States, Washington, King County, Bellevue, and Seattle, 2019

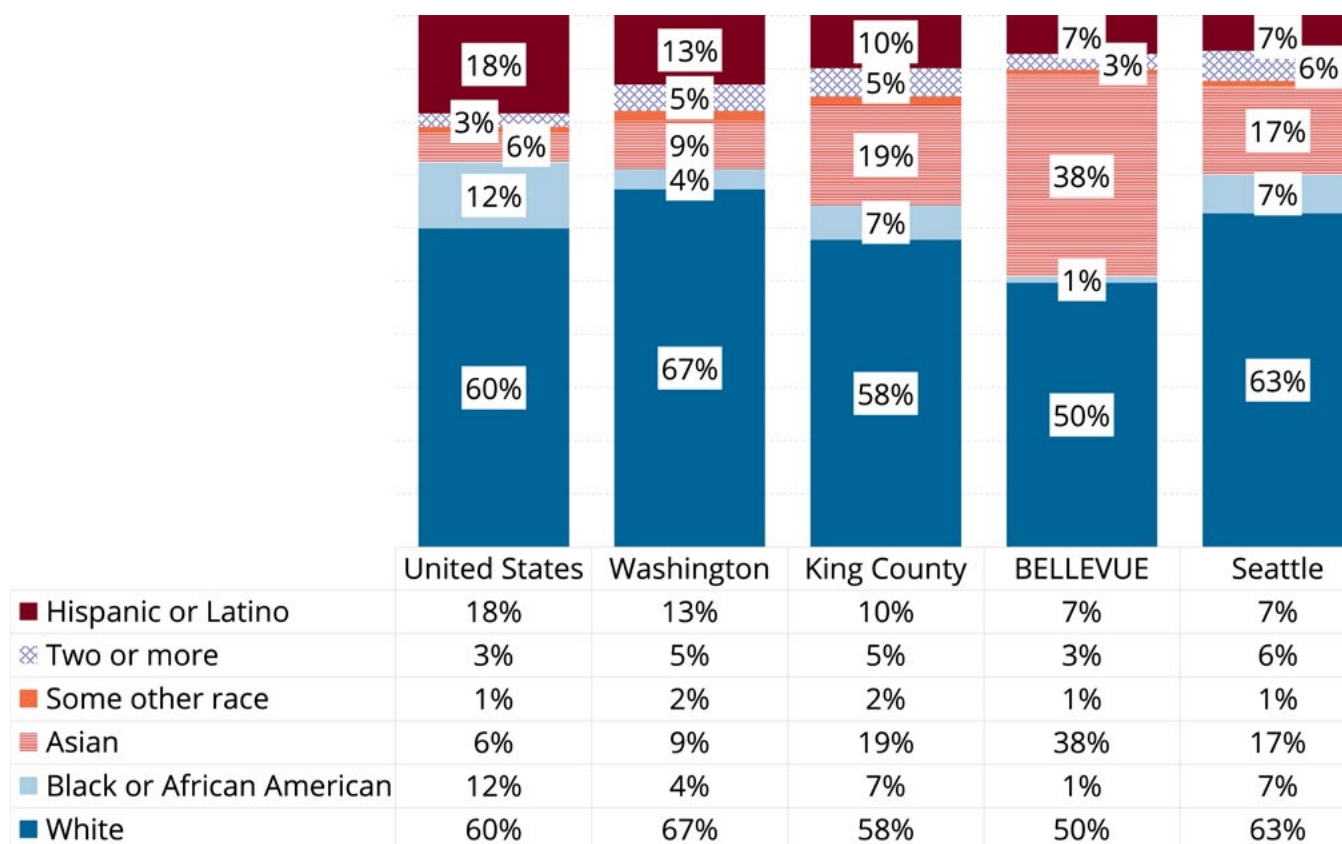


Figure 6 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

## Characteristics

### Race and Ethnicity by Age

Each racial/ethnic group in Bellevue includes people of all ages but the distribution of ages varies across groups. About 21 percent of Bellevue's White residents are older adults versus 4 percent of Bellevue's Hispanic/Latino residents. About 48 percent of Bellevue's multi-racial residents are under the age of 18 compared to 16 percent of White residents.<sup>10</sup>

**Race and Ethnicity Distribution by Age, 2015-2019**

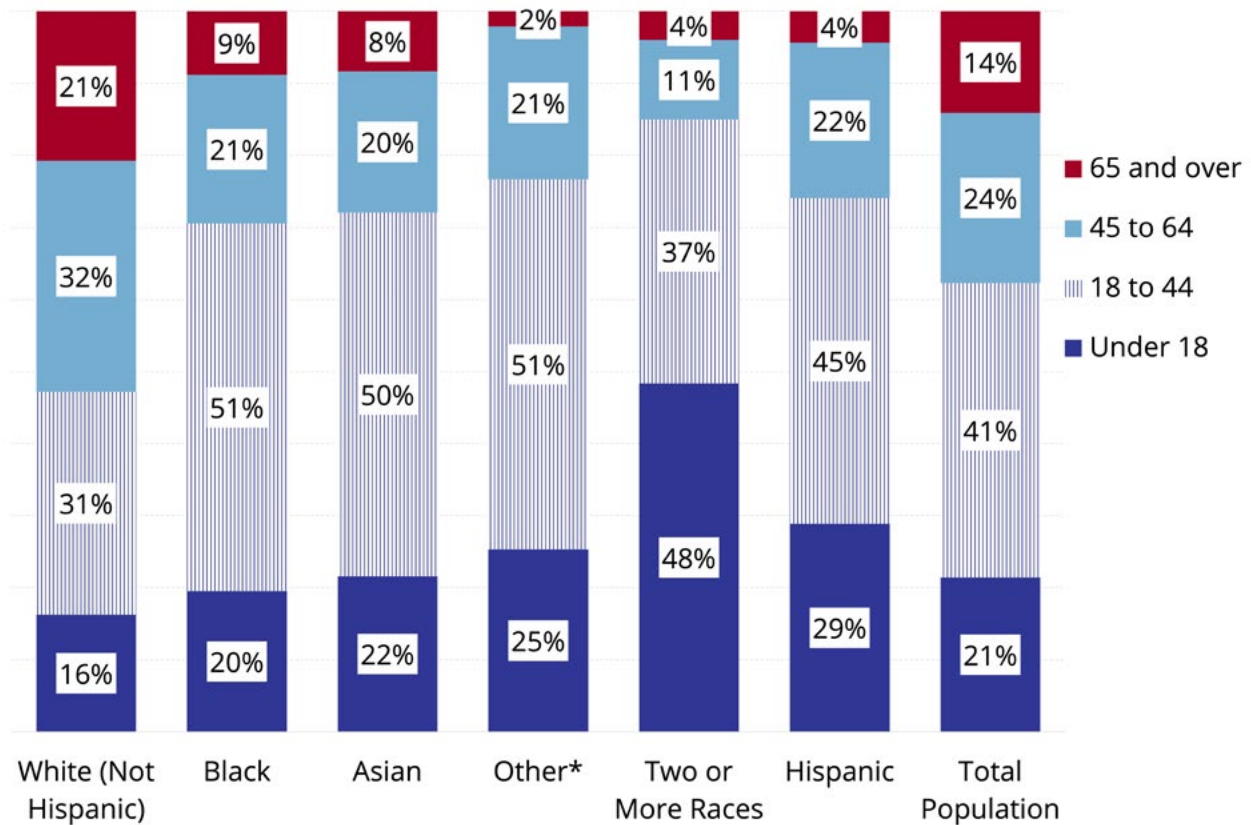


Figure 7 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### Language Spoken at Home

As Bellevue's foreign-born population has increased, so has the percentage of people who speak a language other than English at home. Over the past three decades, the percentage has climbed from 14 percent in 1990 to 44 percent in 2019.<sup>11</sup>

Nearly 15 percent of Bellevue residents reported they spoke English less than "very well." During the 2020-2021 school year, about 100 different first languages were spoken by students enrolled in Bellevue School District.<sup>12</sup>

Starting with 2016 datasets, the U.S. Census Bureau stopped reporting on languages at the same level of detail for geographies smaller than counties. Bellevue City staff developed a method of combining data on language groups from the American Community Survey with data on languages spoken by elementary school students in Bellevue School District and surrounding school districts to estimate the top 10 languages spoken in Bellevue. The most spoken language after English is Mandarin Chinese (about 10 percent of the population speak this at home), followed by Spanish (about 5 percent of the population), Korean (3 percent), Russian (2 percent),

and Japanese (2 percent). Other common languages are Vietnamese, Hindi, Telugu, Cantonese, and Tamil (all spoken by 1 to 2 percent of the population).

## Neighborhood Patterns

At least a quarter of residents in every neighborhood speak a language other than English at home. Over half of people age 5 and over in the Crossroads and Bridle Trails neighborhoods speak a language other than English at home. About a quarter of people in Crossroads speak English less than “very well”. About 2 in 10 people in Wilburton, Bridle Trails, Factoria, and Lake Hills speak English less than “very well”. At least 1 in 10 residents speak English less than “very well” in every neighborhood in Bellevue.”<sup>13</sup>

## Trends and Projections

### Trends in the Percentage of People who Speak a Language Other than English, 1990 to 2019

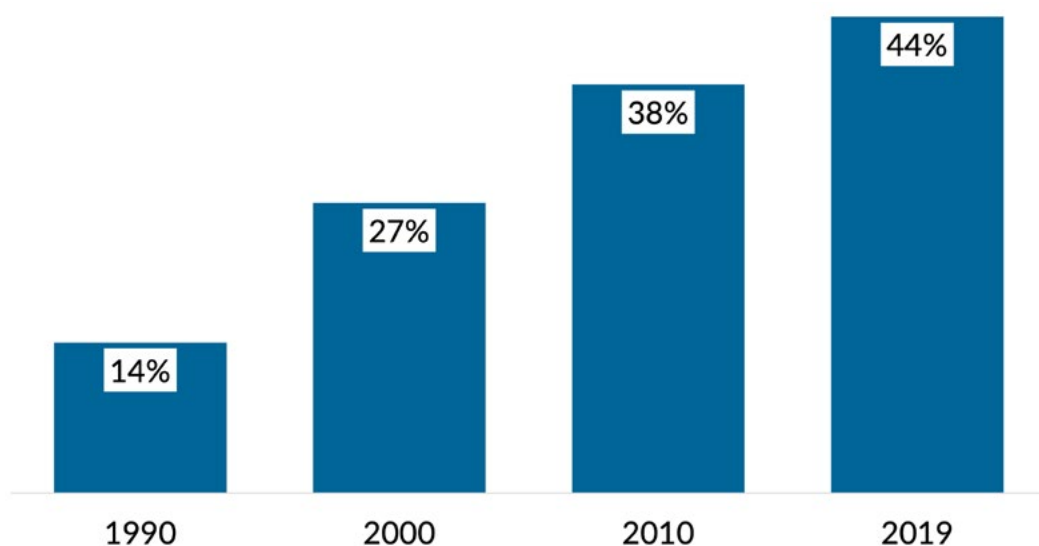


Figure 8 | Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census and 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys

The percentage of the population of people of color in Bellevue has tripled over the past three decades climbing from 15 percent in 1990 to about 50 percent in 2019. This trend mirrors national trends where the proportion of people of color has increased from 24 percent to 40 percent during the same period. It also brings Bellevue more in line with the Western region of the United States, which has had higher proportions of people of color over the decades. <sup>14</sup>



## Trends in the Percent of People of Color in the United States, the Western Region of the U.S. and in Bellevue, 1990-2019

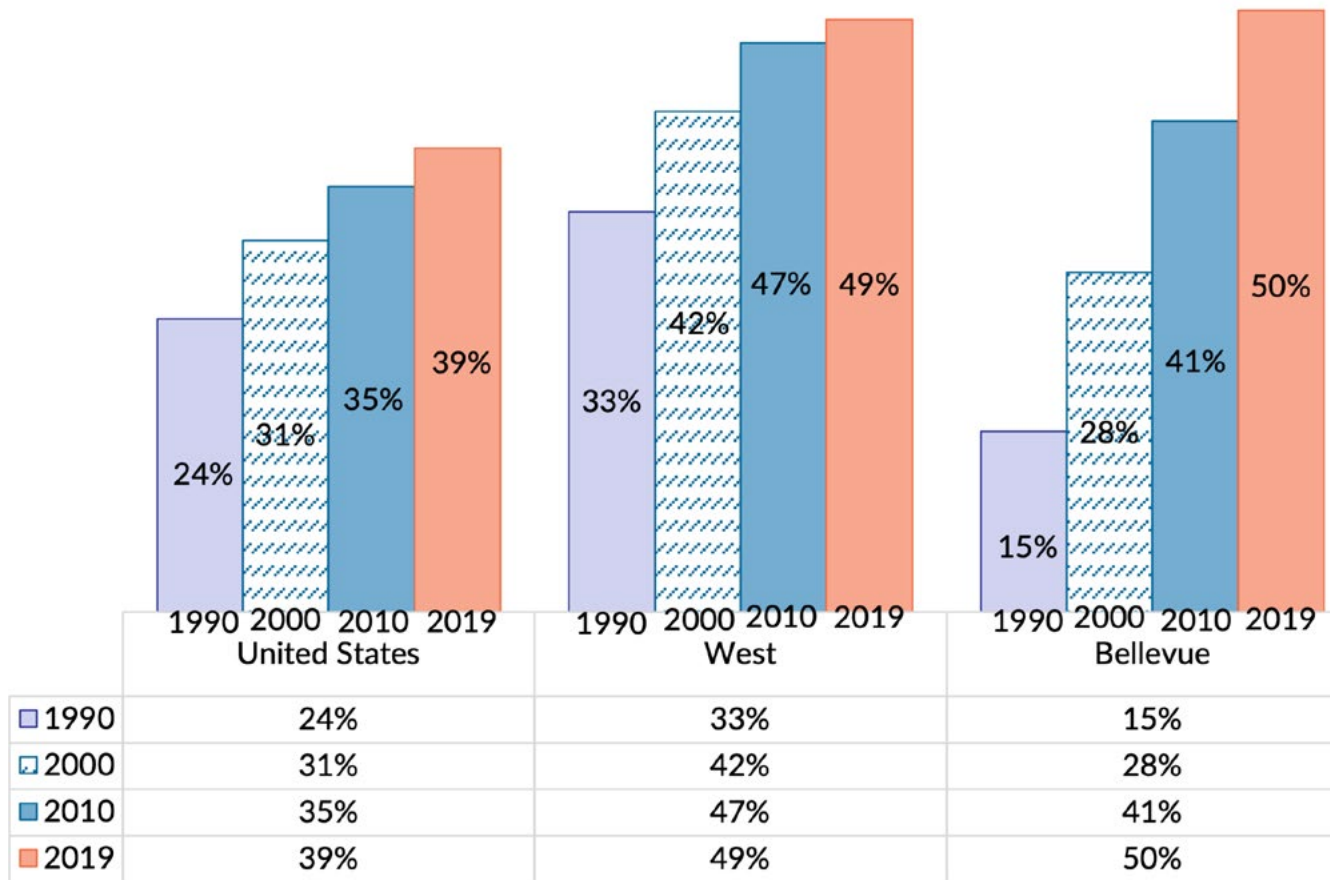


Figure 9 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census and 2019 American Community Survey.

Bellevue's Asian population has been the fastest growing non-White population group since 1990, growing from just under ten percent of the population to about 38 percent in 2019.<sup>15</sup>

Within Bellevue's Asian population, Chinese and Asian Indian residents have increased in number the most. The number of Chinese residents has grown from just over 2,600 in 1990 to about 21,000 in 2019. Asian Indians have witnessed similar rates of growth, especially since 2000. Bellevue's Japanese and Korean populations have been relatively stable since 2010.<sup>16</sup>

## Population Trends of Bellevue's Largest Asian Populations: 1990 to 2019

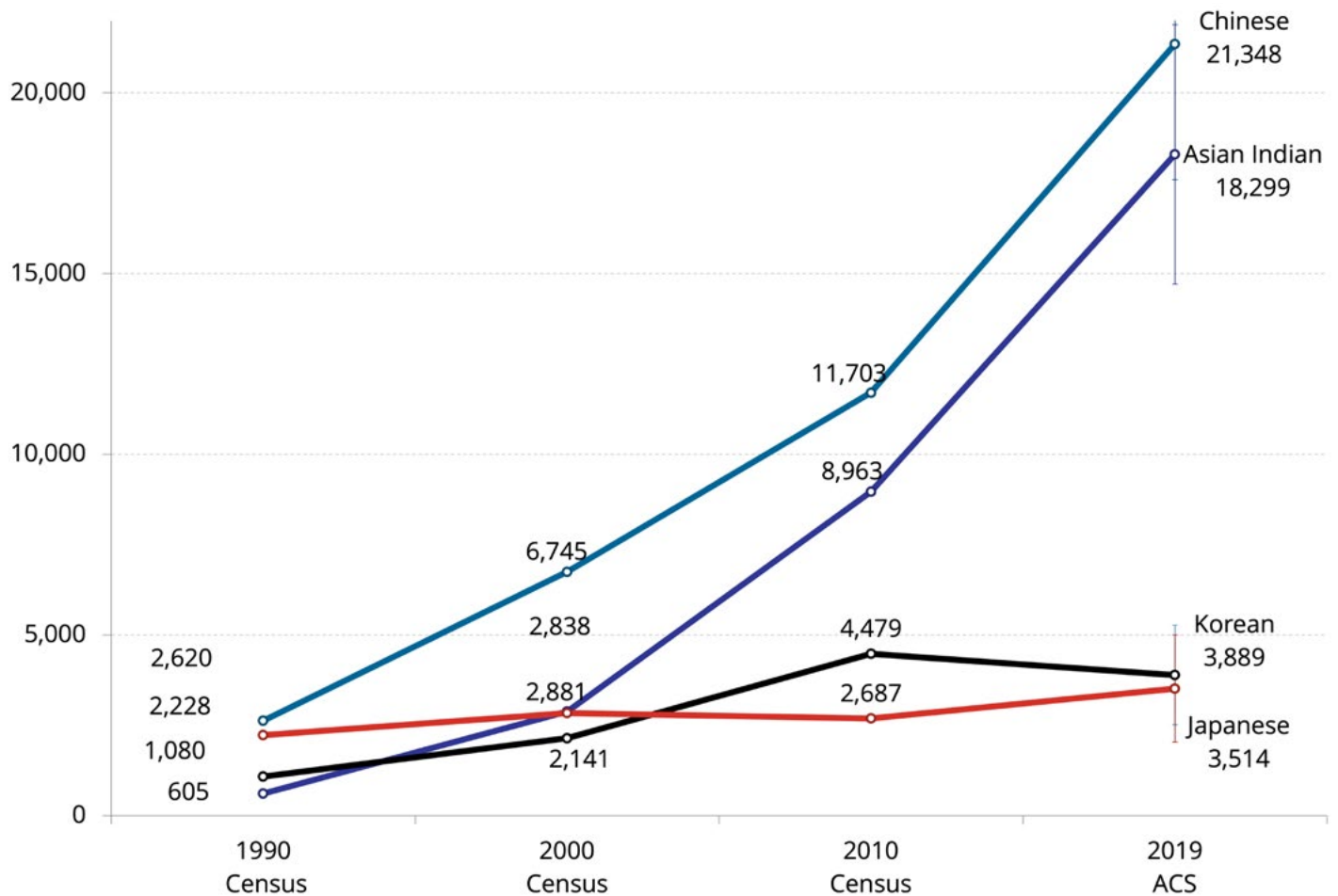


Figure 10 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2019 American Community Survey

The proportion of Hispanics/Latinos living in Bellevue has gradually increased over the decades. Hispanics/Latinos comprised about three percent of Bellevue's population in 1990 and by 2019, they comprised about seven percent. The proportions of people in Bellevue who are of two or more races or who are Black or African American have remained relatively steady over the decades.<sup>17</sup>

## Trends in the Percentage of Black or African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and People of Two or More Races in Bellevue: 1990 to 2019

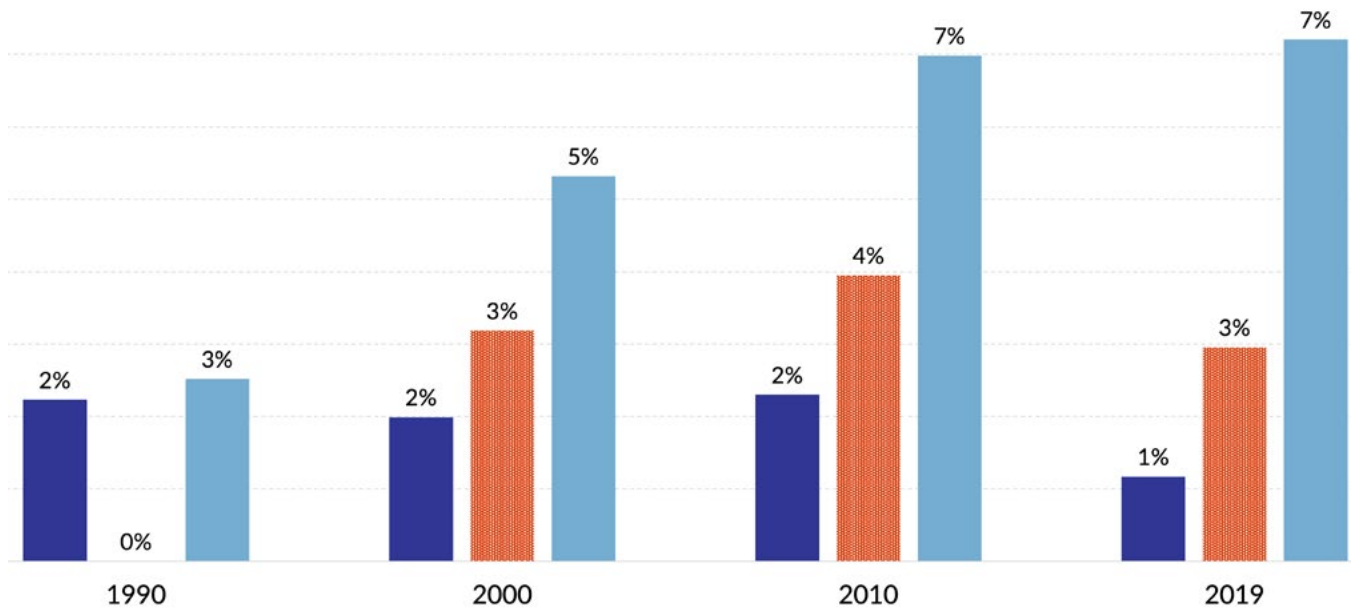


Figure 11 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2019 American Community Survey.

Bellevue's cultural diversity is likely to be a permanent characteristic of the population into the future. The population has been about half people of color since about 2015. However, the cultural background of residents continues to change. Trends indicate that the number of residents of Chinese and Asian Indian ancestry will likely continue to grow, and the trend toward more diverse language groups continues as well.

## Age Diversity

### Existing Snapshot

In 2019, Bellevue residents early in their career, ages 18 to 44, were the city's largest age cohort at 41 percent. The next largest age cohort was Bellevue residents late in their career, 45 to 64, at 24 percent, children under the age of 18 were 21 percent of the population and older adults, 65 years and older, were 14 percent.<sup>18</sup>

**Bellevue Age Distribution, 2019**

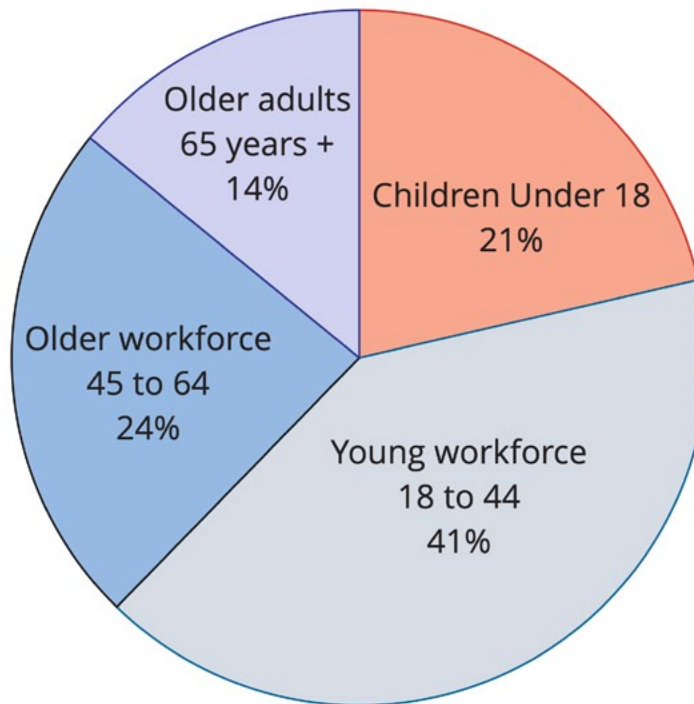


Figure 12 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, table DP05.

Bellevue's median age in 2019 was 36.5 years. Because Bellevue's estimate has such a large margin of error (1.7 years), it is not statistically different from the median age of the U.S. (38.5), Washington State (37.9), King County (36.9), or Seattle (34.7).

Bellevue currently has a very similar age distribution as King County. Its age distribution, however, differs markedly from that of Seattle, which has an even larger share of the population in the young working age cohort.

## Age Distribution Comparisons, 2017

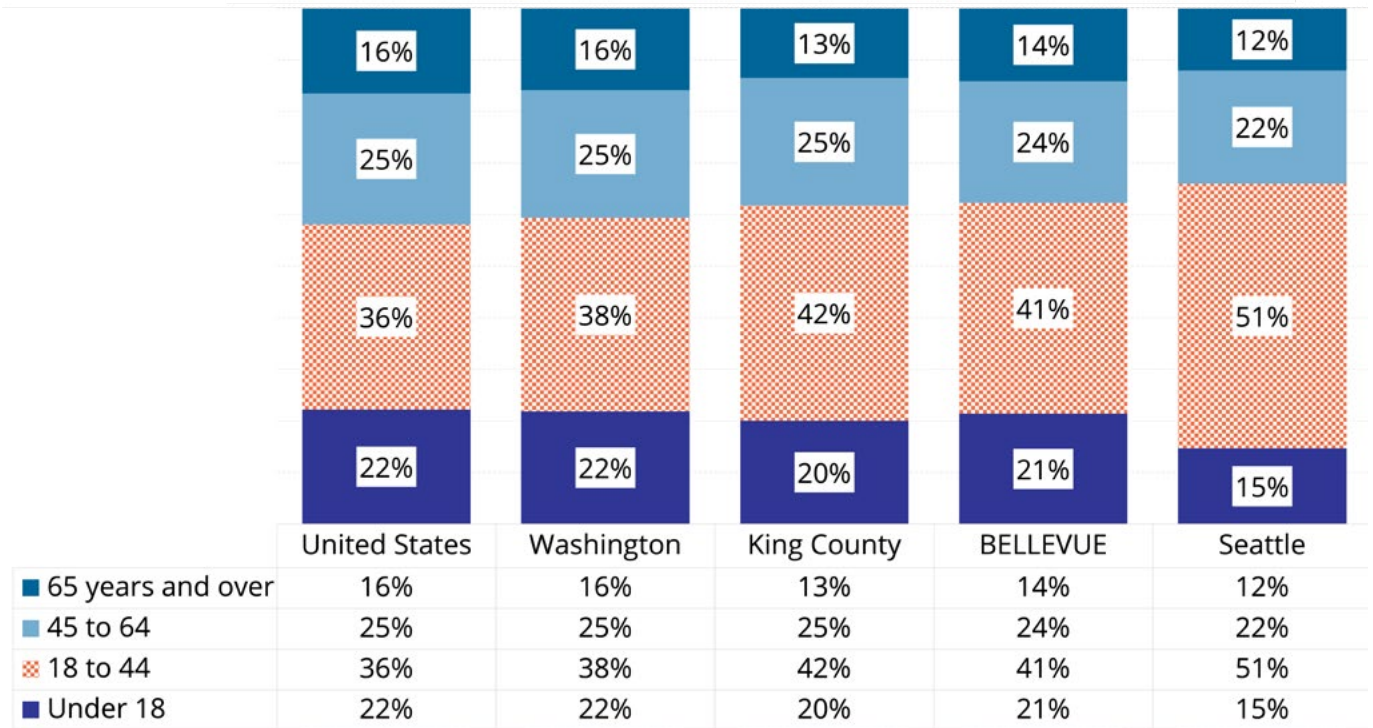


Figure 13 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey.

### Neighborhood Patterns

About a quarter of residents in the Somerset, Cougar Mountain / Lakemont, Northeast Bellevue, and West Lake Sammamish neighborhoods are under 18. BelRed, Downtown, Northeast Bellevue, Northwest Bellevue, and West Lake Sammamish have the largest share of their residents in the older adult cohort, 65 years and over. Crossroads and Downtown stand out with over half of their population in the young working-age cohort, 18 to 44. And Factoria and Somerset have over a third of their populations in the older working age cohort, 45 to 64.<sup>19</sup>



## Characteristics

### Age by Gender

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

While the median age for Bellevue's population as a whole was 36.5, the median age for males was lower at 34.2 than the median age for females at 38.6. Because they have such large margins of error, the difference is not statistically significant. However, in looking at Bellevue's age population pyramid, which shows the distribution of the population in five-year age increments by gender, it is clear that men outnumber women in the young working age cohort (18 to 44). The proportion of males in Bellevue at 51 percent was slightly higher than the proportion of females at 49 percent.

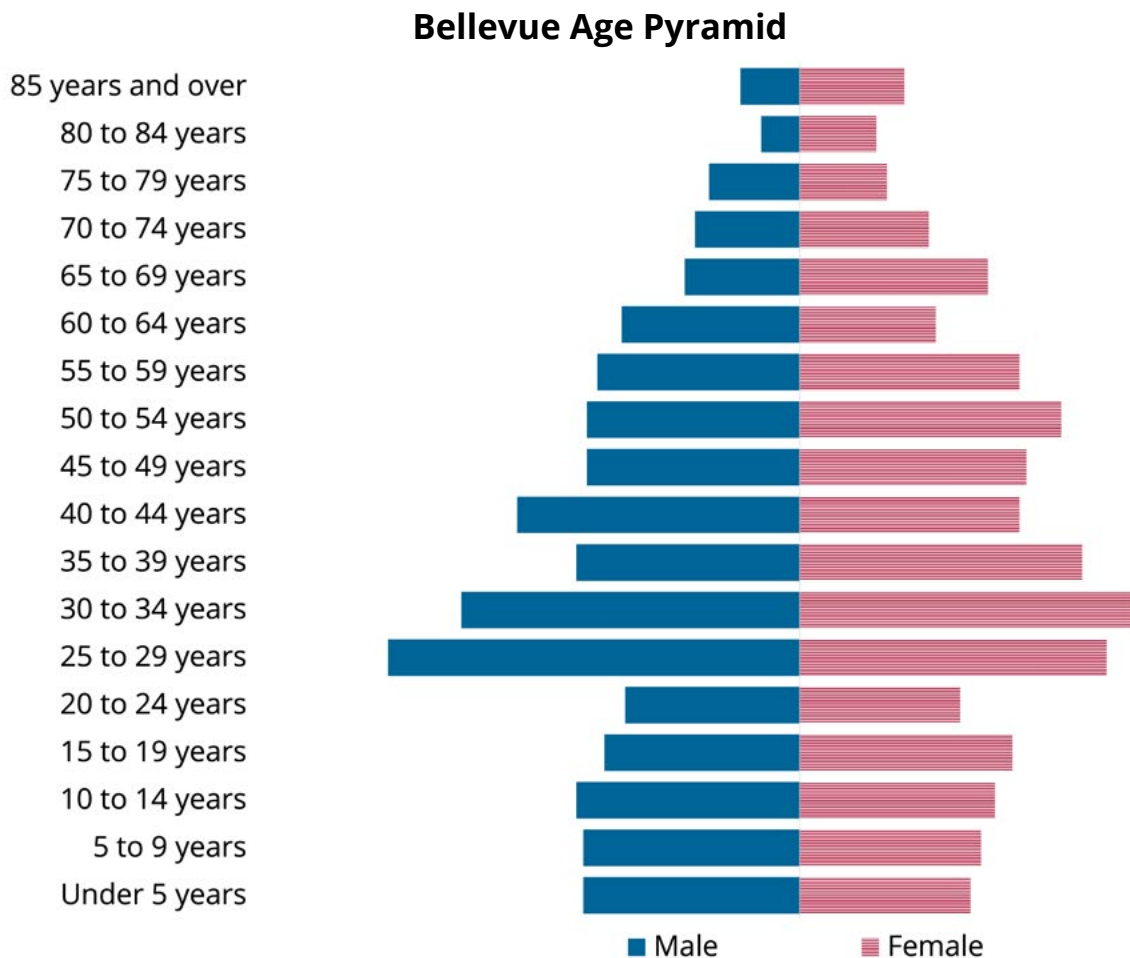


Figure 14 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, table S0101.

## Age by Race/Ethnicity

Age also differed by race and ethnicity. At the high end, Bellevue's White population had a median age of 46.7 in 2015-2019. In contrast, Bellevue's multi-racial population had a median age of 19.2. Median ages of other racial and ethnic population groups in Bellevue were in the lower to mid-thirties.<sup>20</sup>

**Median Age by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, 2015-2019**

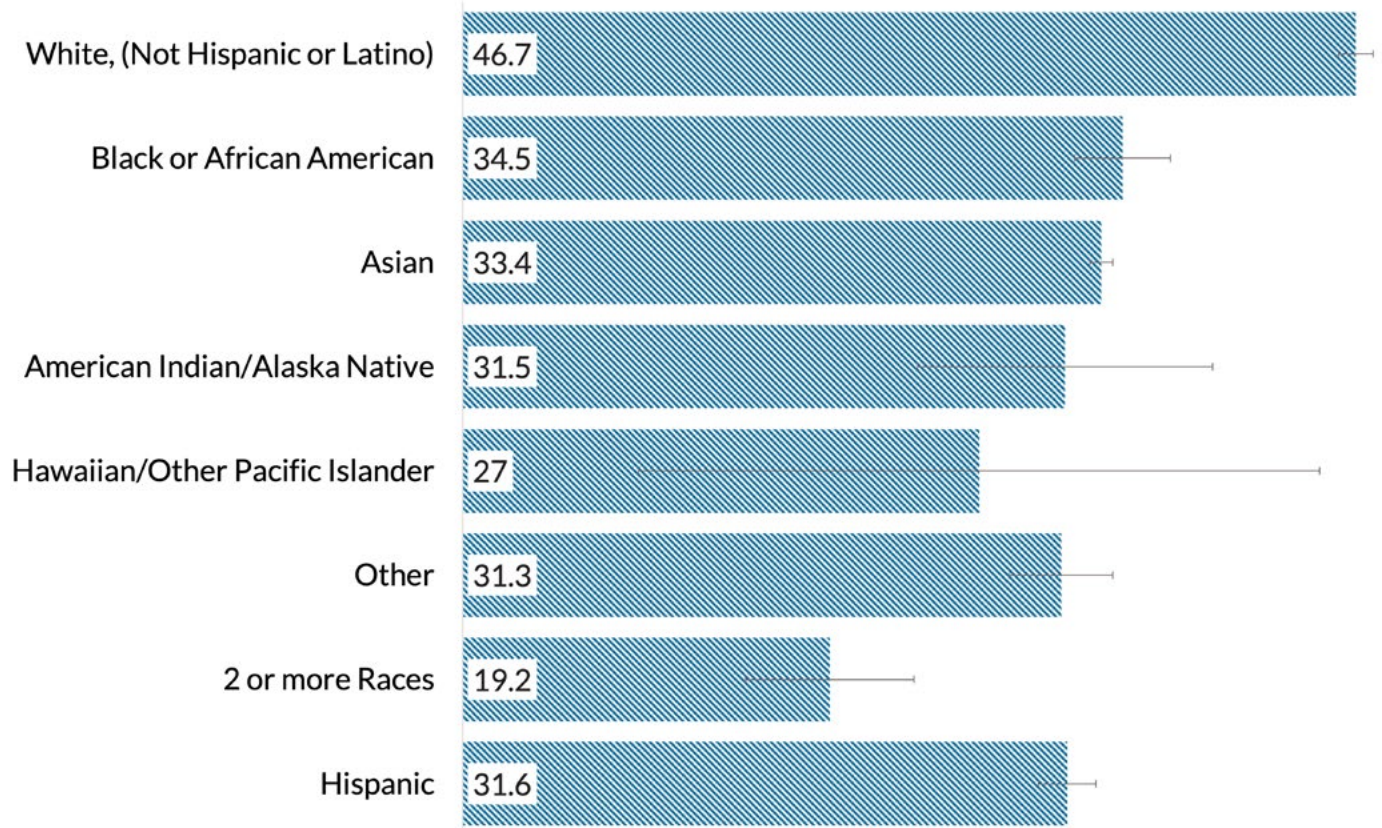


Figure 15 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Bellevue's children had the highest percentage of people of two or more races at 9 percent, whereas Bellevue's young workforce had the highest percentage of Asians at 42 percent. Bellevue's residents 45 to 64 years of age were less racially/ethnically diverse with White residents comprising 63 percent of their population. Bellevue's older adults, 65 years and over, were the least racially/ethnically diverse with 74 percent of their population being White.<sup>21</sup>

## Age Distribution by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-2019

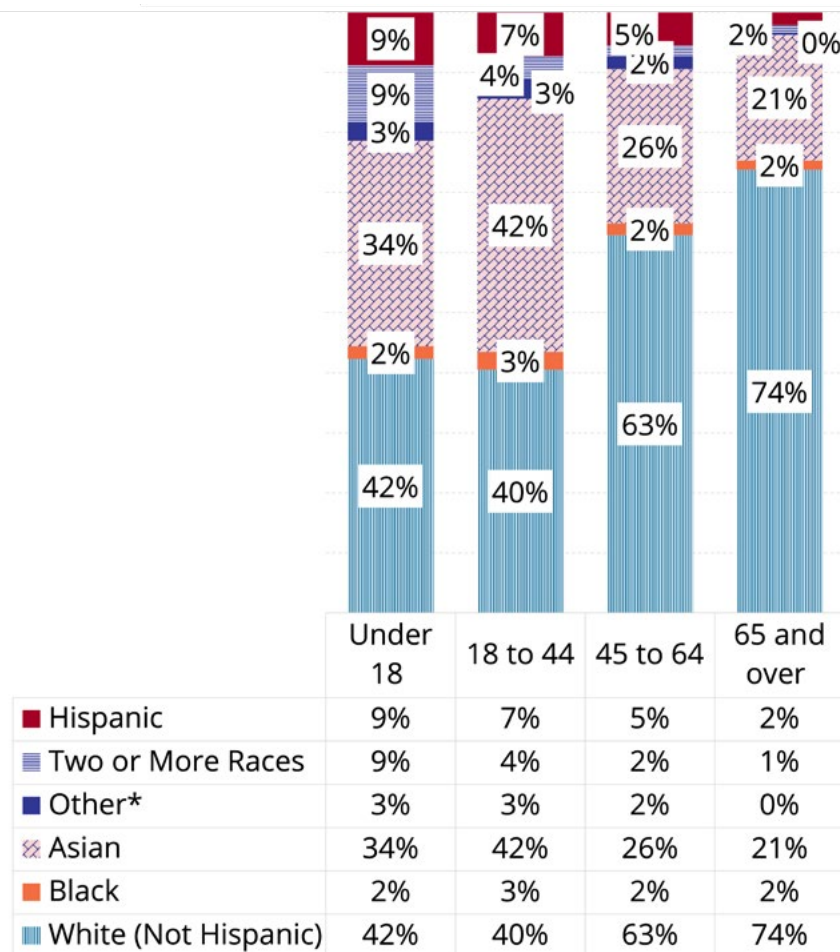


Figure 16 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Trends and Projections

While the number of people within each age cohort has increased over the decades, certain cohorts have grown faster than others resulting in shifts in their proportions over time. In 1970, most neighborhoods were filled with new homes occupied by first-time home buyers and nearly 57 percent of its households were married-couple families with children. Over 41 percent of its population was under the age of 18, another 39 percent between the ages of 18 and 44, 17 percent between the ages of 45 and 64 and only three percent were 65 years or older.

As the city matured so did its residents, creating a more diverse age distribution of the population. By 1980, young adults had become the largest age cohort and remain so today, yet their proportion declined from 1990 to 2010 as the older workforce (45 to 64) and older adults (65 plus) increased in size. In 2015, the young adult cohort began to increase again after the steady decreases since 1990, and in 2019, this cohort was 39 percent of the population. Growth in the proportion of older adults has slowed despite increases in the older adult population statewide.<sup>22</sup>

As baby boomers (born between 1944 and 1964) continue to age into the older adult cohort, the proportion of people over 65 within Bellevue is expected to increase. Nationwide, older adults are projected to comprise over 20 percent of U.S. residents by 2030, and if projections hold true, by 2035 the population 65 and older would outnumber people younger than 18 for the first time in U.S. history.<sup>23</sup>

## Trends and Projections of Annual Increases in the Older Adult Population (65 years and over) for Washington State, 1971-2040

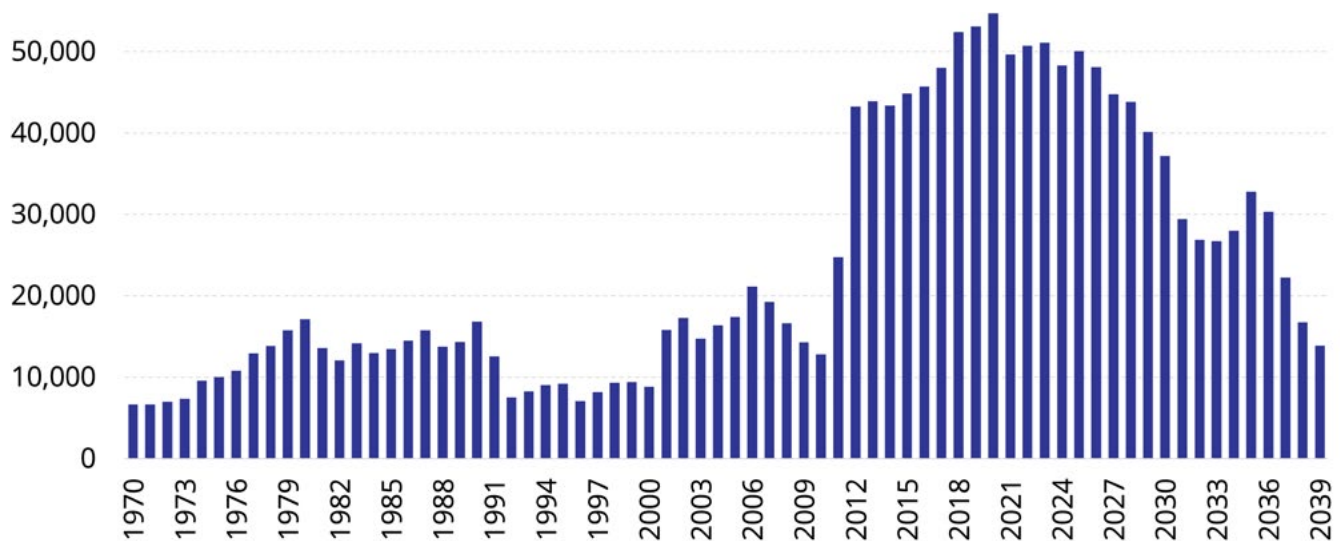


Figure 17 | Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division, State Population Forecast 2010-2040, November 2018.<sup>24</sup>

Whether Bellevue will witness the same rate of increase in its older adult population as the state and nation is difficult to predict. As jobs in Bellevue's Information Technology cluster grow, Bellevue will likely continue to attract the young, educated and relatively well-paid workforce. This new young population could be added on top of Bellevue's existing population, or it could displace some of Bellevue's older residents who may look to find more affordable housing options outside of the city.

## Prosperity

### Labor Force Participation and Employment Rates

About 69 percent of Bellevue's population 16 years and over were in the labor force in 2019. For men age 20 to 64, about 91 percent were in the labor force. Only 75 percent of women in the same age bracket were in the labor force. Women with children under six years old were less likely to be in the labor force (63 percent) than those whose children at home were all age six to 17 (79 percent).<sup>25</sup>

About 50 percent of people with incomes below the poverty level were in the labor force, yet 43.2 percent of them were unemployed. About 57 percent of people with any disability were in the labor force, yet about 18 percent of them were unemployed.

In 1990, labor force participation in Bellevue was 73. Since 2010, labor force participation has hovered between 65 and 69 percent. This lower rate could be due in part to the larger share of Bellevue's population who are older adults who have lower rates of labor force participation.

### Jobs

With an estimated 158,805 total /145,145 covered jobs, Bellevue had the second highest employment base of Central Puget Sound cities in 2018 after Seattle and followed by Tacoma, Redmond, and Everett. Bellevue employment comprised seven percent of all jobs in the region.<sup>26</sup>

## Top Ten Largest Central Puget Sound Cities in Terms of Covered Employment, 2020

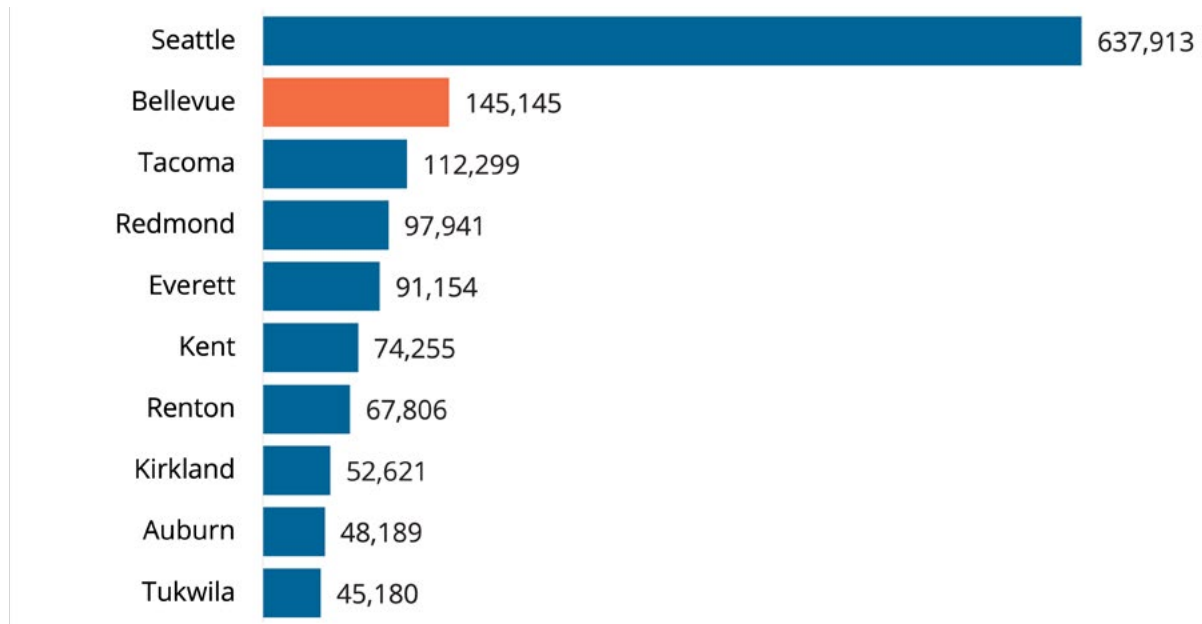


Figure 18 | Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2020 Covered Employment Estimates by Jurisdiction

Despite fluctuations in economic cycles, the number of jobs in Bellevue has grown at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent since 2000. Currently, Bellevue's rate of job growth is on target to reach a total of 192,800 by 2035. As the region updates its vision for 2050 and cities update their Comprehensive Plans for 2043, Bellevue's targeted rate of job growth could change.

### Job estimates to 2020 and projections to 2035

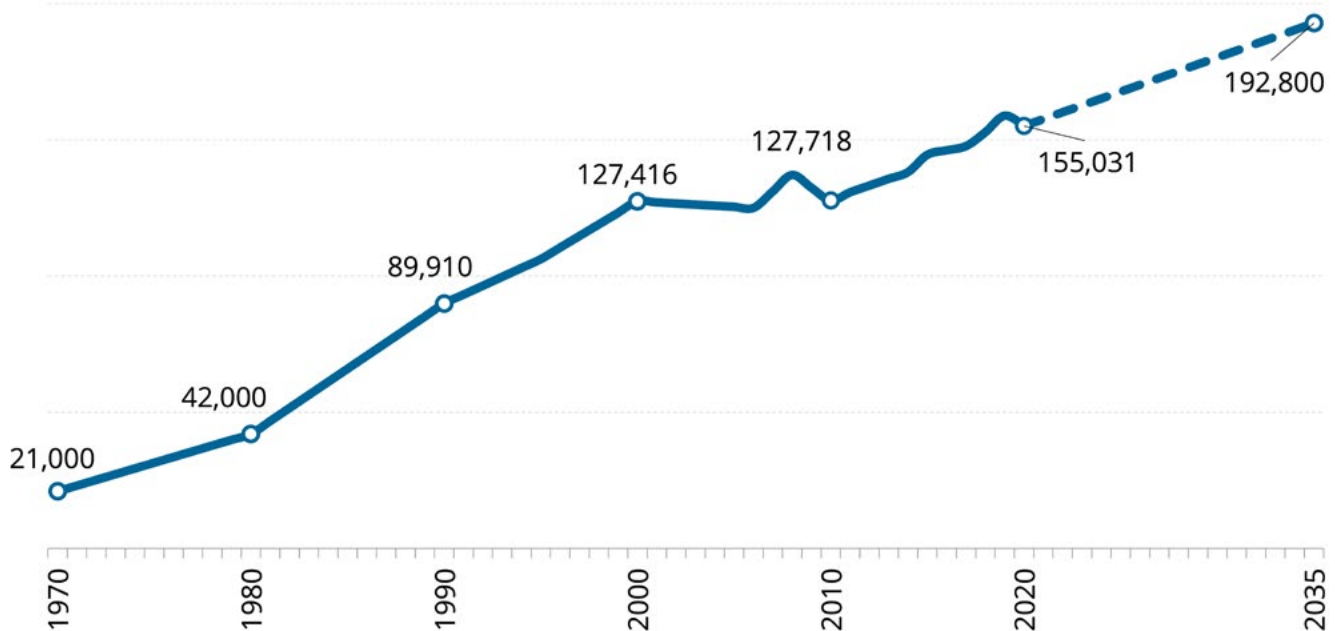


Figure 19 | Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2020 All Job Estimates, Bellevue & Major Employment Centers



## Industry Shifts

Beginning in the 1990s, the service sector began to make up a larger and larger share of total employment. This was mainly caused by the growing information industry, one of several industries that make up the service sector in Bellevue. In 2020, the Service sector had about 61 percent of jobs in Bellevue, up from 53 percent in 2000 and 46 percent in 1995.<sup>27</sup>

### Citywide 2020 Employment by Major Industrial Sector

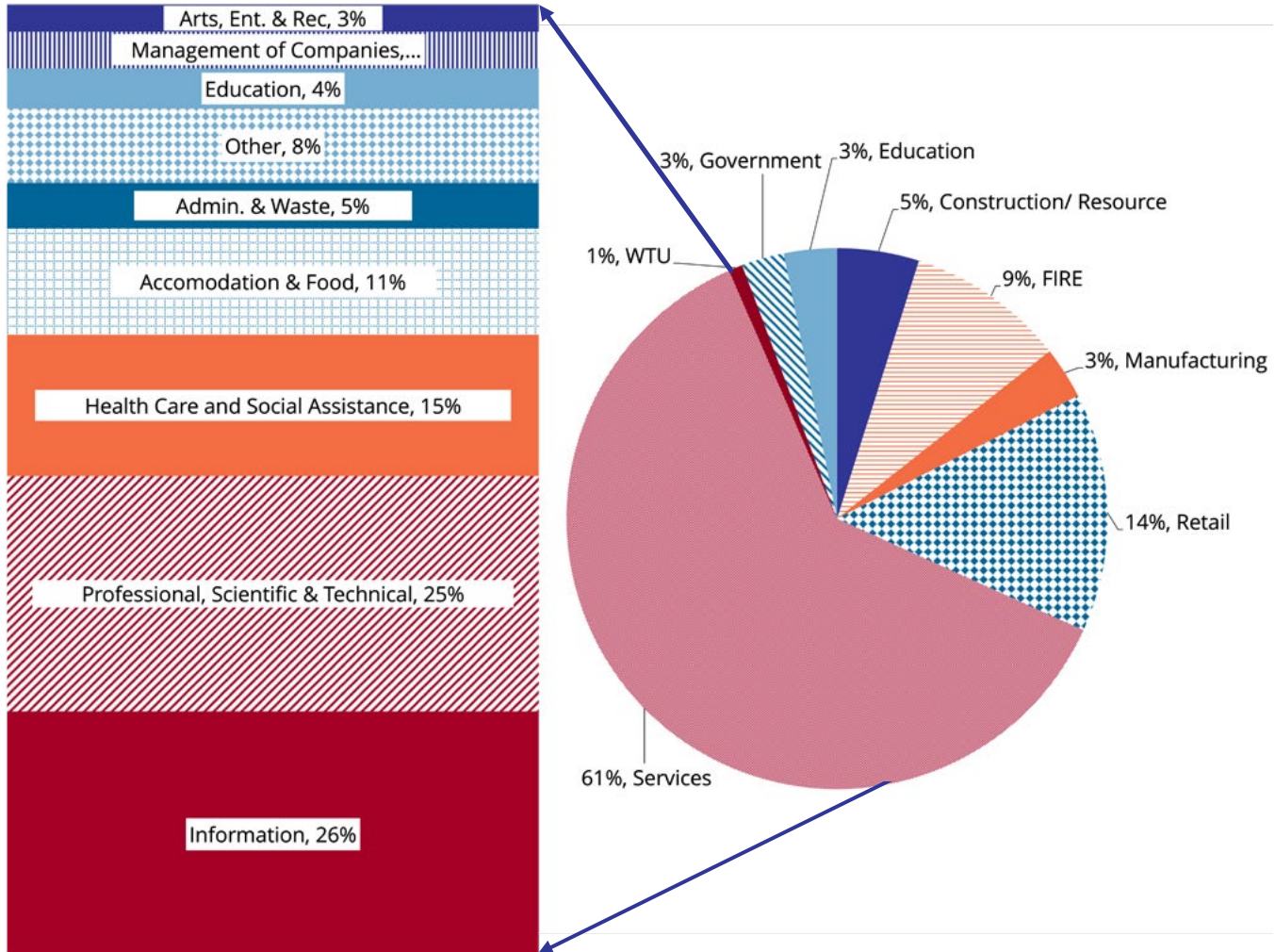


Figure 20 | Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2020 All Job Estimates, Bellevue & Major Employment Centers

In 2020, Redmond, Bellevue, Seattle, Kirkland, and Tacoma all had over 50 percent of their jobs in the Services sector, which included jobs in the Information, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Health Care and Social Assistance and other Services sectors.

## Occupation Shifts

With a shift in industry came shifts in occupation. In 2019, about 67 percent of Bellevue residents who work were in management, business, science, and arts occupations up from 53 percent in 2000 and 40 percent in 1990. In contrast, the percentage of residents in sales and office occupations declined from 38 percent in 1990 to about 15 percent in 2019.<sup>28</sup>

### Trends in Occupation, 1990 to 2019

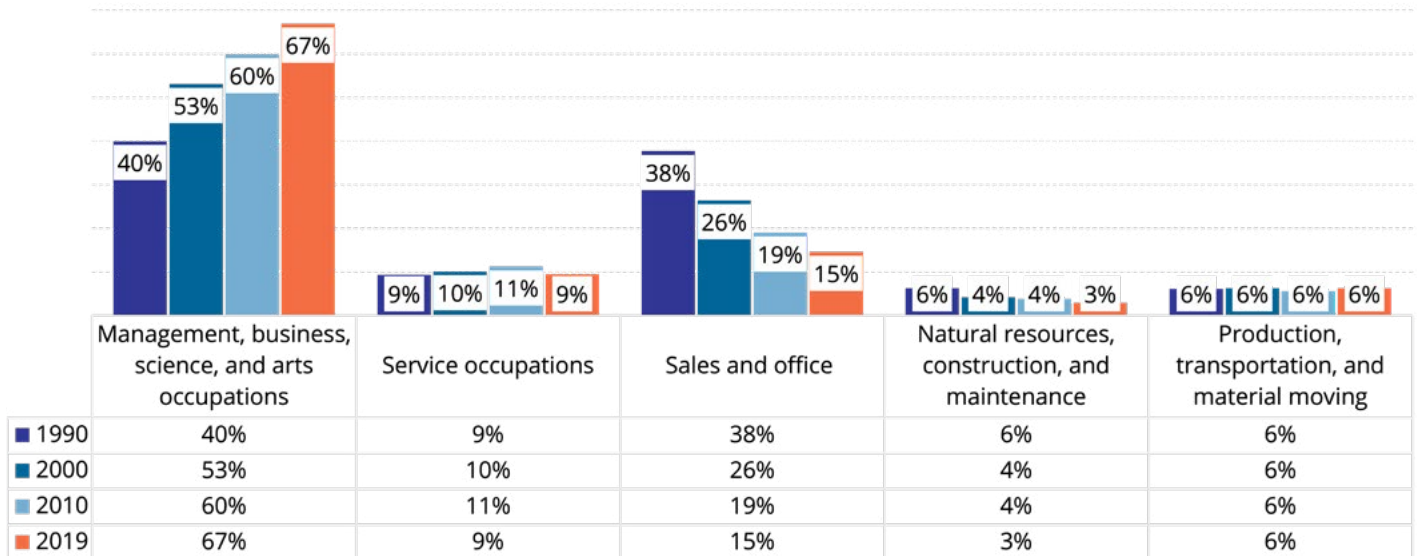


Figure 21 | Source: U.S. Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey

Not all the shift in occupations can be attributed to the shift in industry. As shown in the chart above comparing occupations of workers who work and live in Bellevue, a higher proportion of workers who live in Bellevue work in management, science, business, and arts occupations, which has been noted has the highest median earnings. With job growth outpacing housing growth, competition for housing in Bellevue has led to increased housing values and those with higher earnings have been able to out-compete those with lower earnings resulting in a disproportionate share of people in management, science, business, and arts occupations living in Bellevue.

## Neighborhood Patterns

About 1 in 5 workers in Factoria and were employed in Service occupations. About 1 in 5 workers were employed in Sales and Office occupations in Northwest Bellevue, Newport, Cougar Mountain/Lakemont, Eastgate and West Bellevue. Almost 4 in 5 people were employed in Management, Business, Science and the Arts in Downtown and about three-quarters of workers in Bridle Trails were employed in that occupation group. About 1 in 10 people were employed in Production, Transportation and Material Moving occupations in Lake Hills and Wilburton. Very few workers in any neighborhood are employed in Natural Resources, Construction and Maintenance Occupation but the neighborhood with the most was Lake Hills at about 5 percent.<sup>29</sup>

## Comparison of Occupations of Workers who Work and Live in Bellevue, 2013-2019

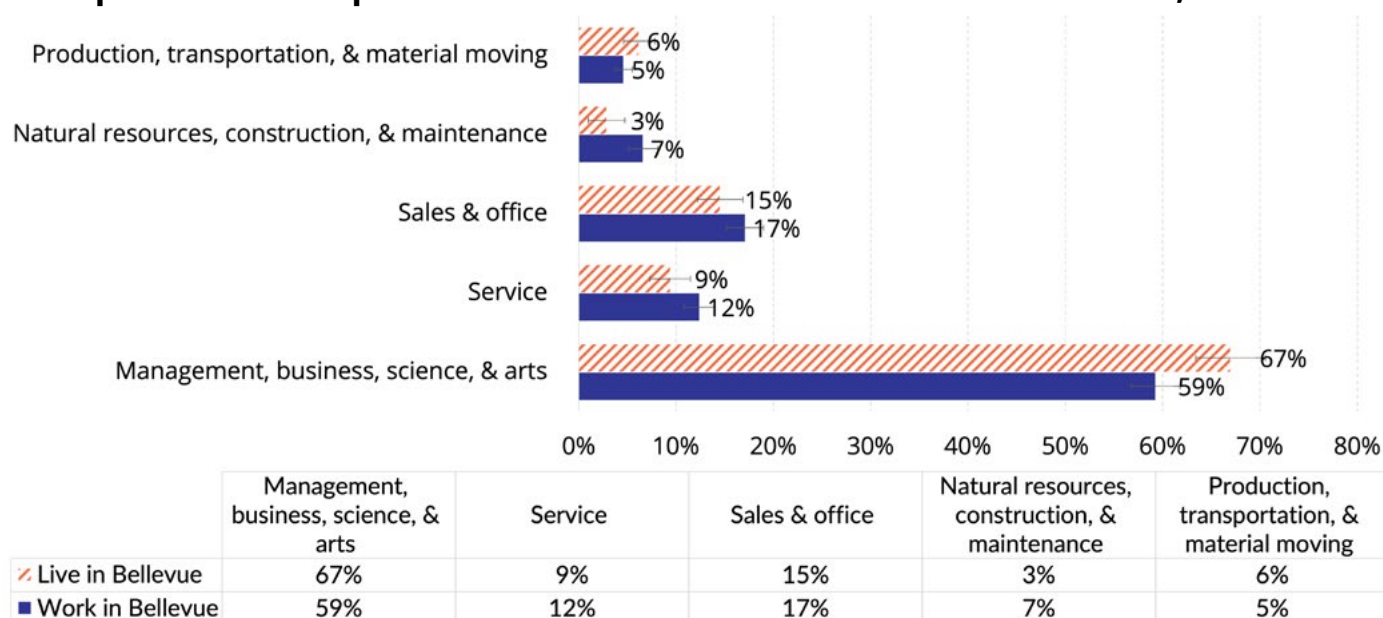


Figure 22 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables S0802 and S0804

## Earnings

Median earnings of Bellevue residents who work were higher than those in the county and state for all occupations except for Natural Resource, Construction and Maintenance occupations. Yet, earnings varied significantly by occupation in 2019. Full-time workers in Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations had median earnings of \$122,482 compared to median earnings of \$39,051 for full-time workers in Service occupations.<sup>30</sup>

### Comparisons of Median Earnings by Occupation, 2019

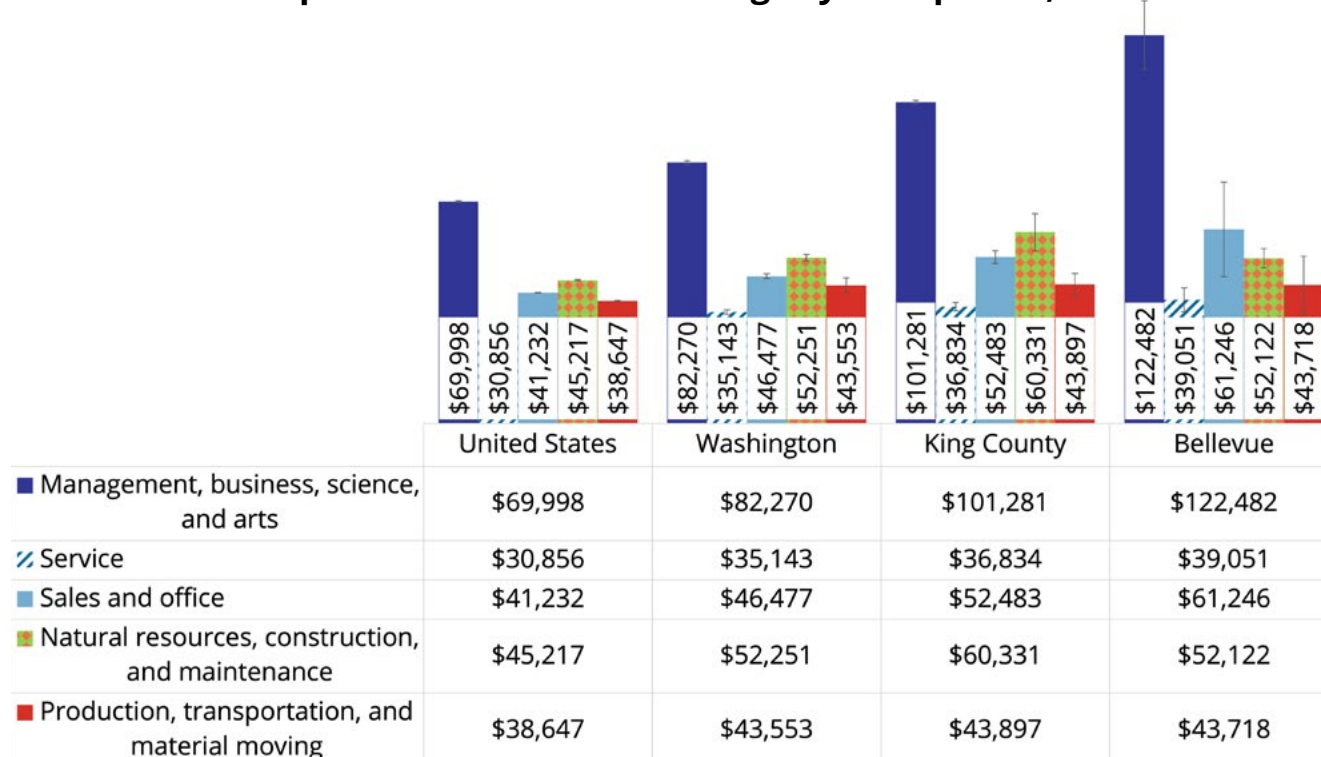


Figure 23 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2412



In 2019, over half of Bellevue’s residents who worked full-time had relatively high earnings at or above \$100,000 annually. Another 28 percent had moderate earnings between \$50,000 and \$100,000, and the remaining 20 percent of residents working full-time had relatively low earnings of less than \$50,000.<sup>31</sup>

Earnings Distribution of Full Time Workers, 2019

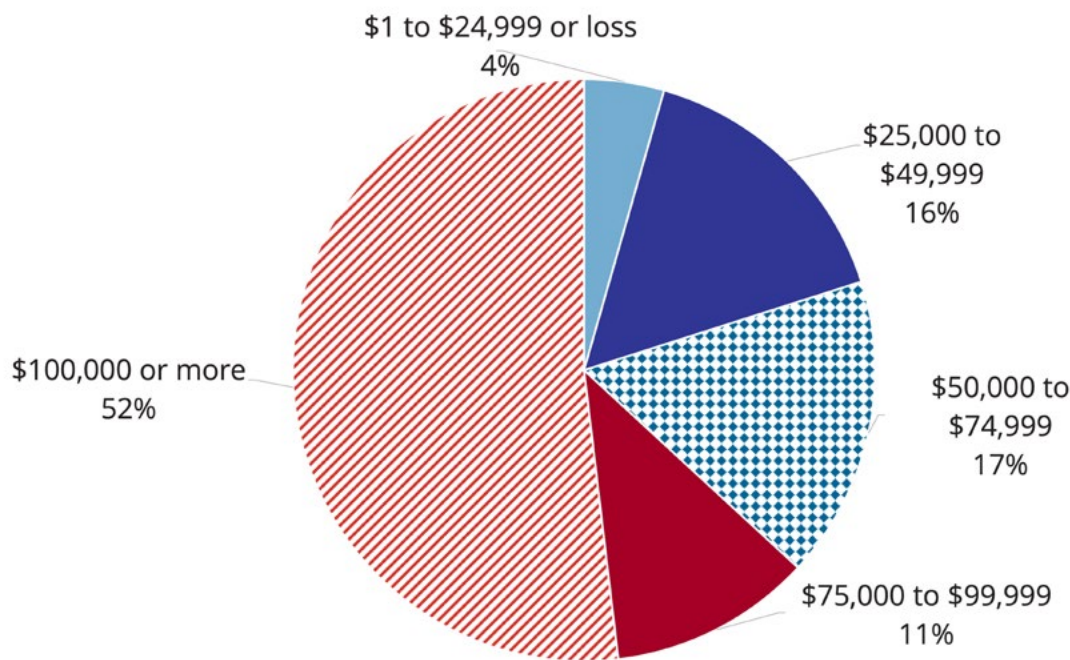


Figure 24 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2001

Median earnings varied by educational attainment with residents who did not graduate from high school having median earnings of about \$46,000 and those with a graduate or professional degree having median earnings of about \$100,000 annually.<sup>32</sup>

Median Earnings by Educational Attainment. 2019

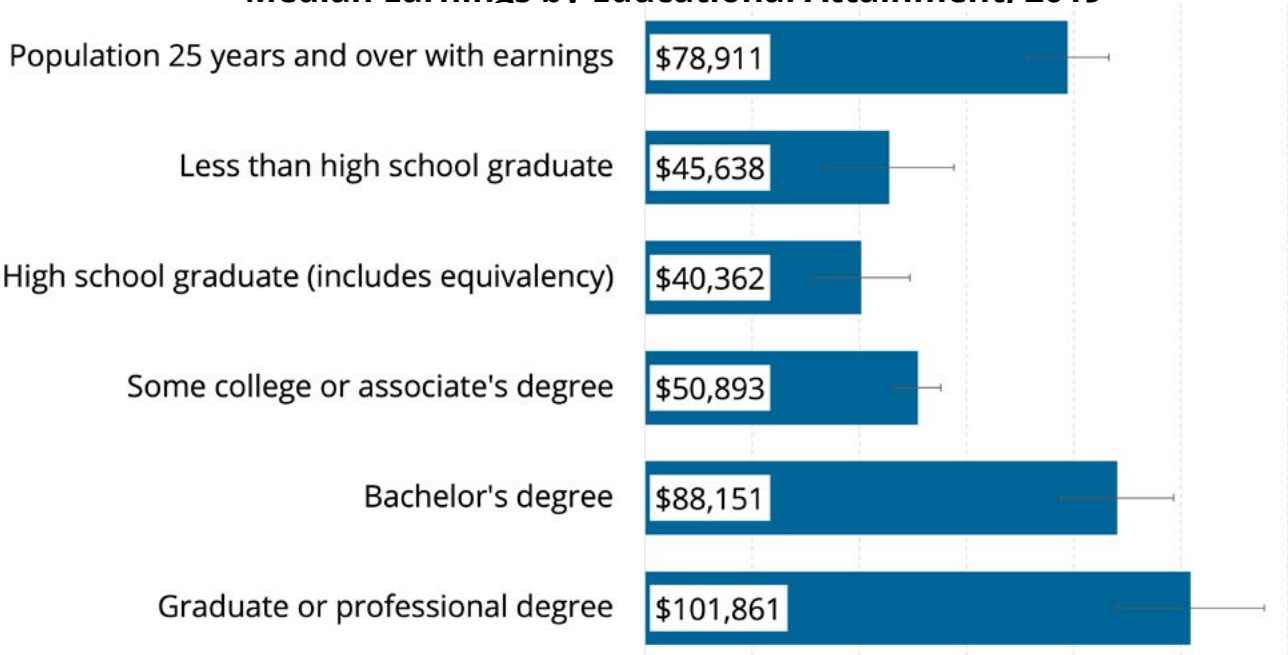


Figure 25 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2001

## Educational Attainment

Bellevue's population has become more highly educated over time with the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher climbing from 46 percent in 1990 to 54 percent in 2000 to 59 percent in 2010 and finally to 71 percent in 2019. The largest increase occurred in the segment of the population with a graduate or professional degree, which jumped from about 19 percent in 2000 to about 36 percent in 2019.<sup>33</sup>

### Bellevue Educational Attainment Distribution Trends, 1970 to 2019

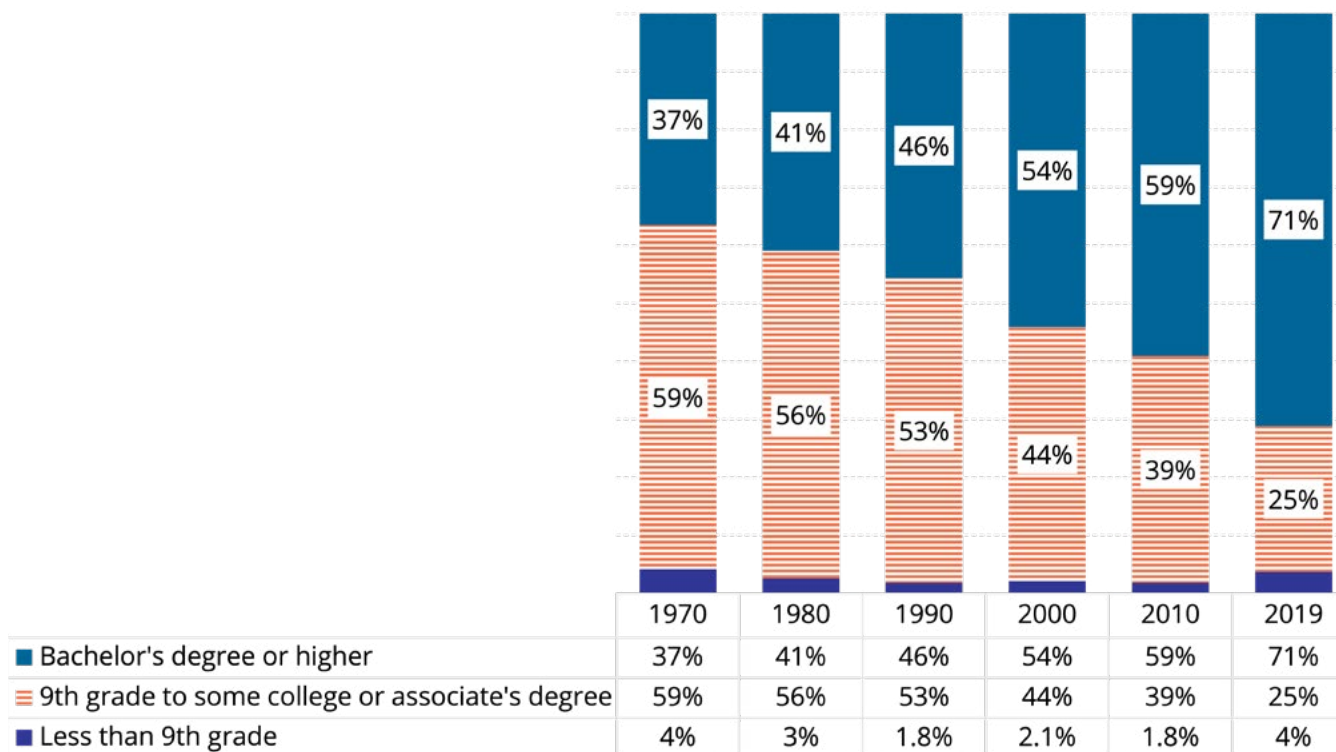


Figure 26 | Source: Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 11.0 [Database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 2016. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V11.0>. <http://www.nhgis.org>; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys.

In 2019, about 36 percent of Bellevue's adult population 25 years and over had a bachelor's degree, another 17 percent had an associate degree or attended some college, seven percent had graduated from high school, and about five percent had less than a high school education.<sup>34</sup>



## Educational Attainment Distribution, 2019

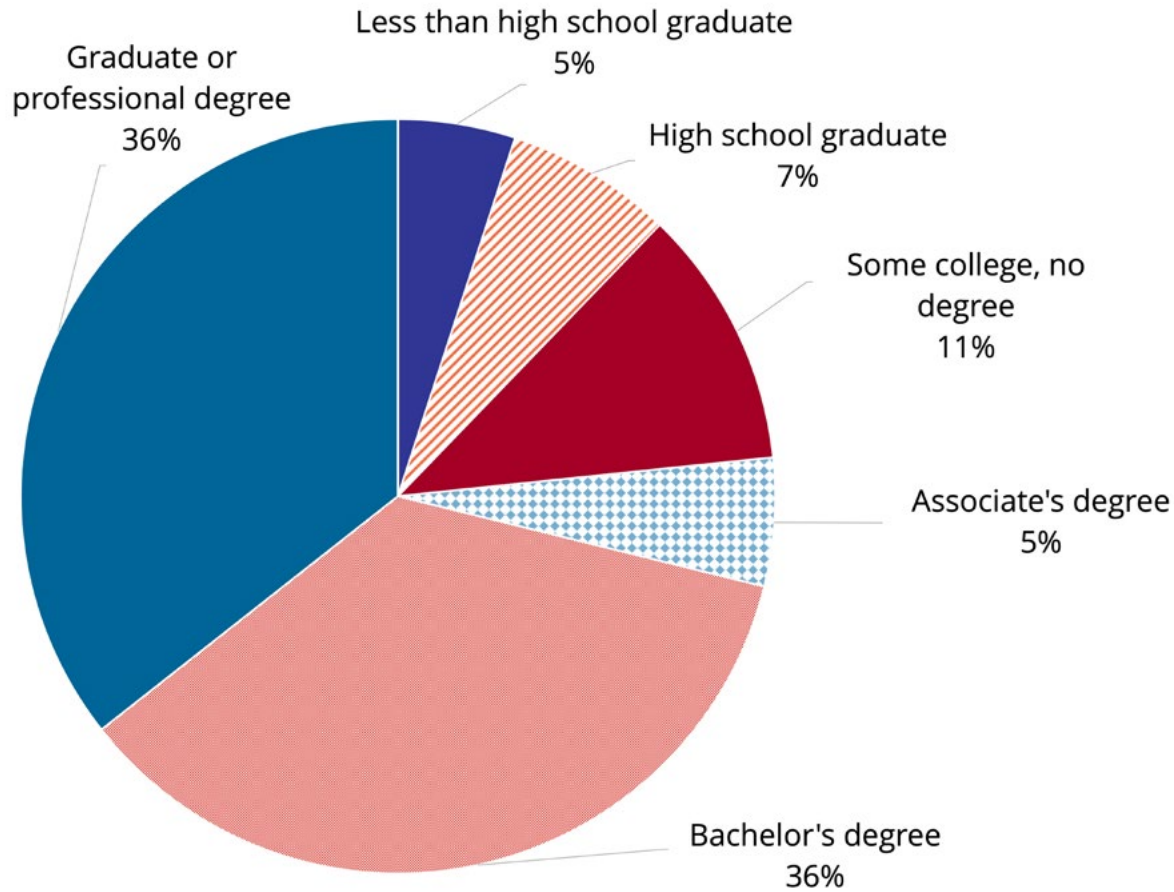


Figure 27 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

### Neighborhood Patterns

At least half of residents age 25 or older in all neighborhoods had a bachelor's degree or more education. More than 75 percent of residents age 25 and older in Bridle Trails, Downtown, and Somerset had bachelor's degrees or more. In contrast, more than seven percent of residents age 25 and older in Lake Hills, Factoria and Crossroads had not graduated from high school.<sup>35</sup>

## Household Income

Bellevue continues to have a disproportionate share of households with high incomes. In 2019, 31 percent of Bellevue's households had incomes of \$200K or more compared to 21 percent of all households in King County, and 11 percent in Washington state. Forty-one percent of Bellevue households have a household's income between \$75K and \$200K, similar to King County (42 percent) However, in Bellevue has a lower proportion of households with household income under \$75K, 28 percent compared to 37 percent in the county.<sup>36</sup>

In 2019, about a fifth of Bellevue's households had incomes less than \$50K. About another fifth had incomes between \$50K and \$100K and the remaining 62 percent of households had incomes of \$100K or more.

### Comparisons of Household Income Distribution, 2019

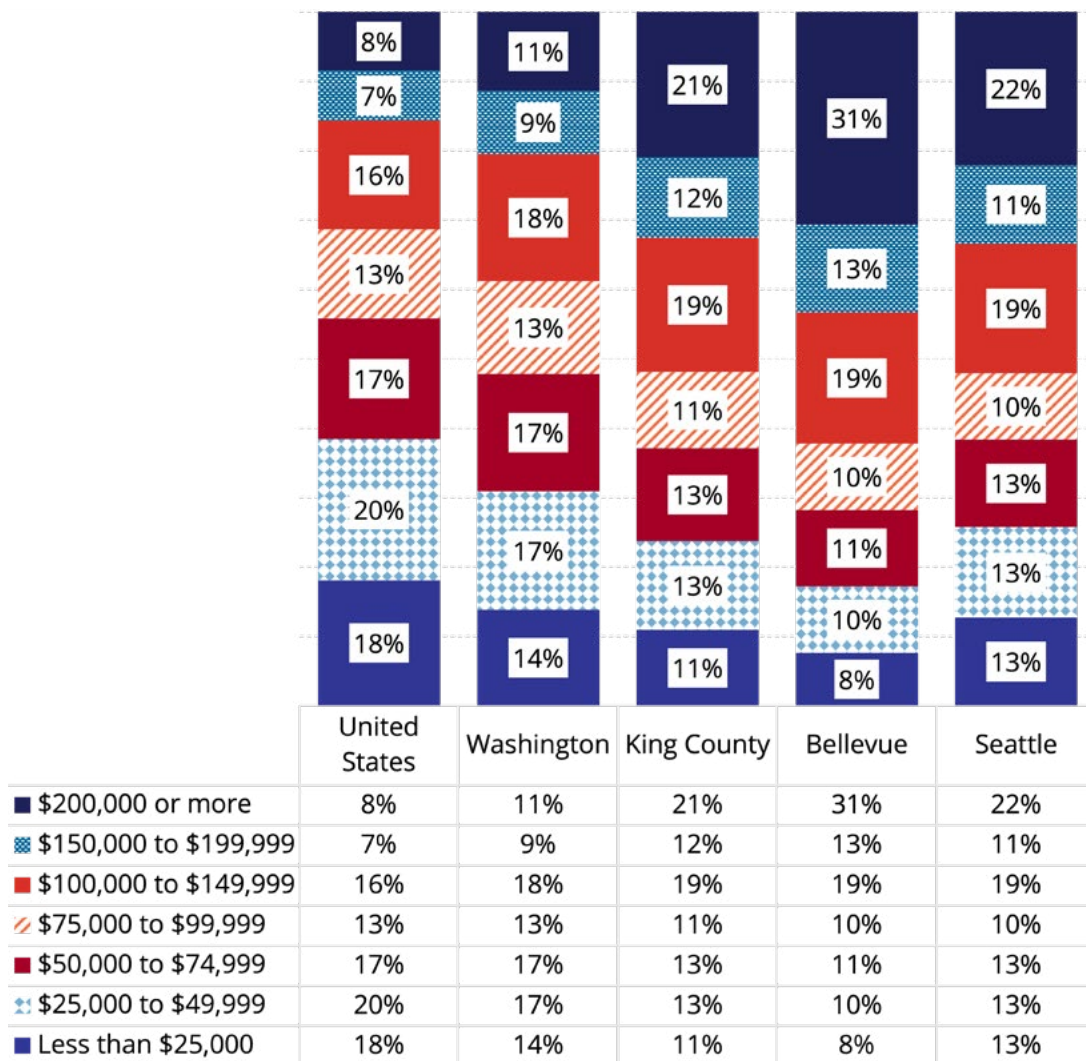


Figure 28 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP03

## Neighborhood Patterns

Downtown and Northwest Bellevue had per capita incomes of over \$85,000. Per capita income was lowest in Crossroads, Lake Hills and Factoria, all under \$50,000. Average household income was highest in Cougar Mountain/Lakemont, Somerset, and Northwest Bellevue and lowest in Crossroads and BelRed.<sup>37</sup>

## Poverty

The percentage of individuals in Bellevue who have incomes below the poverty level has remained relatively constant over the decades. Both the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses estimated the poverty rate for Bellevue to be about six percent. In 2010, it was estimated at nine percent. However, in 2019 the estimate was back down to about six percent.<sup>38</sup>

In 2019, about 7.9 percent of children, 7.5 percent of adults 65 years and over, and 14.6 percent of female single-parent families were in poverty.<sup>39</sup>

## Households

### Household Growth

As of April 1, 2021, an estimated 64,295 households were located in Bellevue housing units. By 2035, 70,300 households are projected to be living within the city of Bellevue.<sup>40</sup>

### Household Types

From 2010 to 2019, all household types except single-parent households grew in number. However, as a percent of all households, only married couple households with children grew slightly. All household types have remained relatively stable as a percent of all households since 2010. The one exception is single-parent families, which have had a small but steady decline in the city as a percent of all households since 1980.<sup>41</sup>

Bellevue had higher proportions of married couples without and with children than the nation, state, county, or the City of Seattle. Its household type proportions came closest to those of Kirkland. Bellevue also had a lower share of 2+ person non-family households than the state, county, or the City of Seattle.<sup>42</sup>

### Household Type Distribution Comparisons, 2019

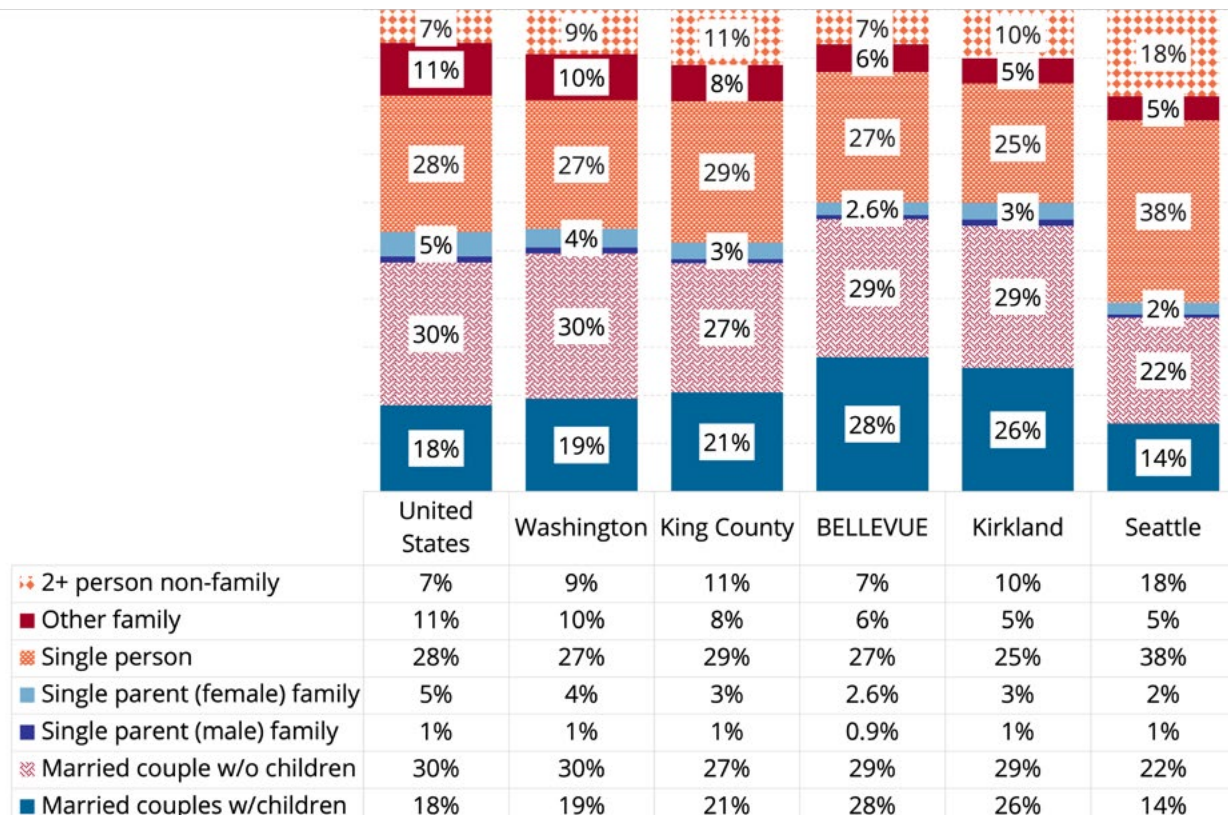


Figure 29 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

## Household Size

From 1970 to 2000 Bellevue's average household size decreased from 3.4 to 2.37. It then climbed back up to 2.41 in 2010, and in 2019 it was estimated to be 2.47. This reversal in average household size was unforeseen; a contributing factor may be growth in Bellevue's foreign-born population, who on average have a larger household size than Bellevue's US born\* population.<sup>43</sup> (\*US born includes those born outside the US with US citizenship.)

Bellevue's average household size is about the same as King County's and the state's but smaller than the nation's average household size. It is much larger than the City of Seattle's.<sup>44</sup>

### Average Household Size Trends, 1970-2019 and Comparisons, 2019

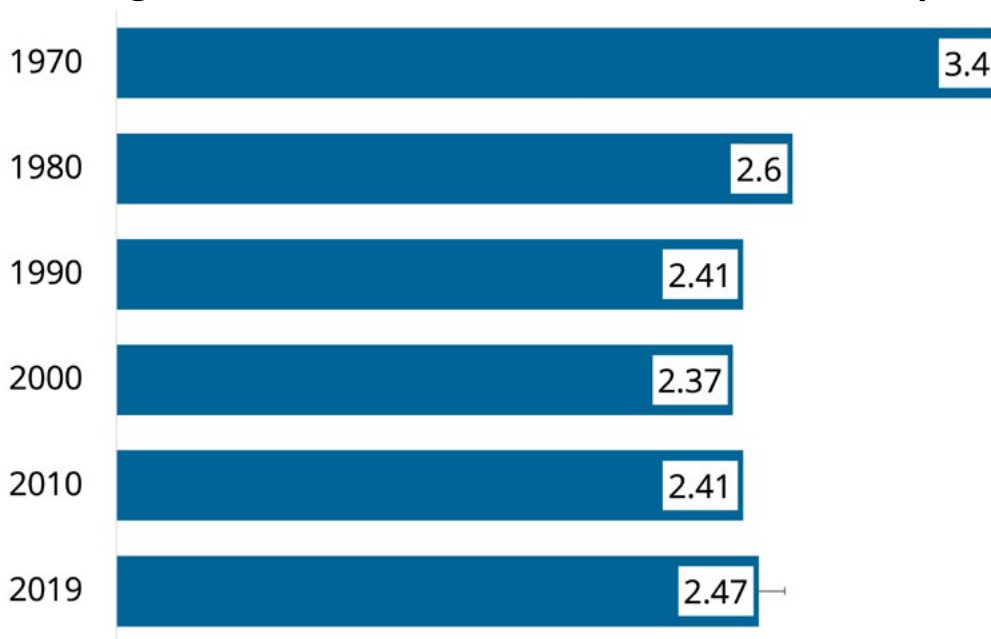


Figure 30 | Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 Census and 2019 American Community Survey

## Tenure

About 50 percent of Bellevue's households owned their own home in 2019 and 50 percent rented. Owner households were larger on average than renter households containing 2.68 people per household compared to 2.27 people for renter households.<sup>45</sup>

In 2019, about 68 percent of Bellevue's households had moved into their units since 2010 with 40 percent having moved in since 2017. Another 16 percent had moved in during the 2000s, eight percent in the 1990s, nine percent before 1990.<sup>46</sup>

Recently, much of Bellevue's new housing construction has been in rental units. The percentage of households renting in Bellevue has therefore increased. Most new multi-family units have been studios and one-bedrooms, many of which are rental units. Most new single-family units have been four-bedrooms and larger, leaving a gap in new construction of family-sized units for both the rental and ownership markets.

## Neighborhood Patterns

The neighborhood with the highest percent of renter-occupied housing units were BelRed at over 90% renter-occupied. Crossroads and Downtown both have high renter occupancy with over 80% of units occupied by renters. On the flip side, over 90 percent of units in Somerset are owner-occupied. Cougar Mountain/Lakemont, Newport, and Northeast Bellevue also had over



80% of units occupied by owners. While these extremes are good to note, also important to this discussion is that an equal number of neighborhoods are very close to the city's over 50-50 split between owner and renter occupied units.<sup>47</sup>

## Housing Value, Cost and Affordability

In 2019, 41 percent reported the value of their housing unit was one million dollars or more and about 45 percent of owner households reported the value of their housing unit fell between \$500K and \$1M. About another 10 percent reported the value of their unit was between \$300K and \$500K and two percent reported the value of their unit was less than \$300K.<sup>48</sup>

In 2019, households with a mortgage were paying a median of \$3,126 on housing a month and about 28 percent of these households were paying 30 percent or more of their incomes on housing. In comparison, homeowners without a mortgage had a median monthly housing cost of \$1,033 and 15 percent were paying 30 percent or more of their incomes on housing. Median gross rent in Bellevue in 2019 was about \$2,119 and 38 percent of renters were paying 30 percent or more of their incomes on housing.<sup>49</sup>

As job growth continues in Bellevue, demand for housing will increase, pushing prices higher if the increase in housing units does not keep pace with the job growth. Strategies for increasing the supply of housing for all economic levels will help Bellevue meet demand and maintain affordability for all segments of the population.

## Implications

### Growth

It is likely Bellevue will continue to experience job and population growth.

- Increased job growth will result in greater demands for housing, which could lead to cost escalations and increasing housing unaffordability if job growth is not balanced by housing growth. If housing costs increase, workers in occupations with lower earnings will continue to be less likely to be able to afford housing within the city requiring them to travel longer distances to get to work.
- Job growth could lead to greater traffic congestion if more workers are traveling to Bellevue from outside of the city.
- A variety of opportunities will be made available to tap efficiencies gained by increased job and population concentrations including more frequent bus service and access to a greater variety of goods and services.
- An increased imbalance of jobs and housing will diminish access to jobs and services for lower income households further degrading racial and social equity.
- Denser development requires more recreation and open space for a diversity of ages.

### Diversity

It is likely Bellevue will continue to diversify both in terms of age and race and ethnicity.

- A greater proportion of older adults will require additional caregiver services, transportation services, and health and medical emergency services.
- Additionally, public spaces will need to be better equipped to accommodate people with hearing and ambulatory disabilities, which increase with age.



- A greater proportion of people from places abroad where English is not spoken as the primary language, will require continued translations of city information into other languages.
- A greater diversity of cultures would benefit from increased cross-cultural forums and events to enhance cultural knowledge, awareness, and competency.

## Prosperity and Households

It is likely Bellevue will continue to attract businesses in the tech sector that pay high wages, and it is also likely there will be greater demand for employees who work in lower paying jobs such as food service, retail, and maintenance jobs.

- The gap between rich and poor in the community could further increase.
- Further displacement of lower income households could occur especially for those who pay market rents.
- Continuing to implement the Affordable Housing Strategy and looking for additional opportunities to increase the supply and variety of housing types would help ensure household types from all income levels could live in Bellevue and benefit from the high quality of opportunities the city provides.

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## Endnotes

- 1 State of Washington Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2021 population of cities, towns, and counties used for the allocation of selected state revenues. <https://www.ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-estimates/april-1-official-population-estimates>
- 2 Population estimates prior to 2000 are from the City of Bellevue with decade points from the U.S. Census Bureau's decennial censuses. Estimates from 2000 on are from State of Washington Office of Financial Management. Official population estimates are for April 1st of the specified year. Forecast is from the Land Use element of the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan adopted in July 2015, page 37. <https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/file/2019-07/Land%20Use%20August%202019%200519.pdf>
- 3 Land Use element of the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan adopted in July 2015, pages 38 and 39. <https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/file/2019-07/Land%20Use%20August%202019%200519.pdf>
- 4 IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org) and U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census and 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys, Table DP02.
- 6 "Immigrant Population Growing Faster Than Natives in Many Metro Areas," Governing Magazine, March 26, 2013 by Mike Maciag, <https://www.governing.com/blogs/by-the-numbers/international-migration-immigrant-population-growth-data-for-metro-areas.html>.
- 7 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Tables DP05 and DP02.
- 8 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP05.
- 9 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP05.
- 10 Ibid, Tables B01001A-I.
- 11 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census and 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys, Table DP02.
- 12 Personal communication, Bellevue School District, 2020-2021 school year.
- 13 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and C16001.
- 14 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census and 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP05.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, and 2019 American Community Survey, Table C01015.
- 17 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, and 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP05.
- 18 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP05.
- 19 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP05.

- 20 U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B01002B-I.
- 21 U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B01001A-F.
- 22 IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org) and U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP05.
- 23 Vespa, Jonathan, David M. Armstrong, and Lauren Medina, "Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060," Current Population Reports, P25-1144, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2018.
- 24 Washington State Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division, State Population Forecast 2010-2040, November 2018.
- 25 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2301.
- 26 Puget Sound Regional Council, 2018 Covered Employment Estimates by Jurisdiction and 2018 PSRC All Job Estimates, Bellevue & Major Employment Centers.
- 27 Puget Sound Regional Council, 1995 Covered Employment Estimates by Jurisdiction, 2000 and 2018 PSRC All Job Estimates, Bellevue & Major Employment Centers.
- 28 U.S. Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 and 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP03.
- 29 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP03.
- 30 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2412.
- 31 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table S2001.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 11.0 [Database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 2016. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V11.0>. <http://www.nhgis.org>; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys, Table DP02.
- 34 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 35 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP02.
- 36 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP03.
- 37 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP03.
- 38 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, and 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys, Table DP03.
- 39 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP03.
- 40 State of Washington Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2021 Housing units. <https://www.ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-estimates/april-1-official-population-estimates>; projection from the Land Use element of the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan adopted in July 2015, page 37. <https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/file/2019-07/Land%20Use%20August%202019%200519.pdf>
- 41 Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 11.0 [Database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 2016. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V11.0>. <http://www.nhgis.org>; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2019 American Community Surveys, Table DP02.

- 42 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 43 U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 Census and 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 44 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 45 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP04.
- 46 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP02.
- 47 Calculated based on housing unit data from the King County Assessor parcel table and estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Tables B25024, B25032, B25033, and DP04.
- 48 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, Table DP04.
- 49 Ibid.

# Special Focus Area: COVID-19





# The COVID-19 Pandemic



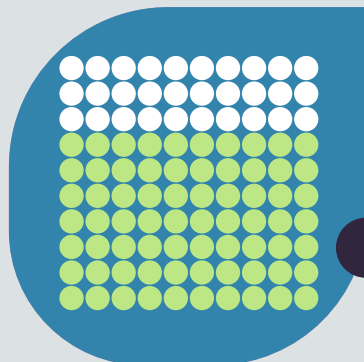
Nearly **160,000** documented **COVID-19** cases in King County, approximately **7,000** in Bellevue alone.

**86%** of King County residents are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.



**16%** of Bellevue households experienced a decrease in income specifically because of the pandemic.

More than **\$11 million** in additional human services funding to help residents weather the pandemic.



**70%** of East King County human service providers report an increase in service demand since the pandemic started.

# The COVID-19 Pandemic

This Special Focus Area of the 2021-2022 Human Services Needs Update provides a brief background of COVID-19 as well as the pandemic's impacts.

- Far-reaching effects, including impacts on health outcomes as well as economic indicators;
- Disproportionate impacts on low-income communities and communities of color; and
- Consequences for human service providers and the overall safety net.

Finally, the chapter closes out with a discussion of how the City of Bellevue has responded to human service needs related to the crisis.

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this chapter relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters. Similarly, for additional information about some of the broader topics raised in this chapter (e.g., rental assistance, mental health), see their respective chapters:

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential

Finally, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase, **"Racial (In) Equity Data Point."**

## Key Findings

- Many low-income Bellevue households' pre-pandemic safety net was eliminated as households had to use these resources to meet their basic needs. Many households are continuing to work to overcome the obstacles they encountered due to the pandemic, including job loss, wage reductions, medical costs, the unavailability of childcare, and either high amount of back rent or even loss of housing.
- The pandemic has highlighted that health equity is still not a reality; COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, putting them more at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.
- The pandemic has caused both a tremendous increase in human service need as well as significant adjustments to how services are delivered. Both have stretched organizations' already-limited resources at a time when costs are increasing and revenue is decreasing.

## Background

Washington State confirmed the first COVID-19 case in the United States on January 21, 2020, followed shortly by the first death from the disease in the U.S. on February 29. East King County was immediately and profoundly affected by COVID-19, as a long-term care facility in Kirkland was identified as an early epicenter for the disease.<sup>1</sup>

Since those initial cases, efforts to limit the spread have included widespread closures of schools, businesses, and non-health related services, mass testing and contact-tracing efforts, and vaccine drives (see Timeline of Key COVID-19 Policies for an overview). From March 2020 through October 2021, Washington had approximately 660,000 confirmed cases; Figure 1 shows the growth in COVID-19 cases across King County over that same period. Bellevue's COVID-19 cases followed similar trends, reaching a total of 6,873 cases through October 2021.<sup>2</sup>

Public health experts agree that the true number of cases in the state is much greater than the number that have been confirmed by laboratory tests. It is very difficult to know the true number, as many people may experience only mild illness or be asymptomatic and testing is not widely available. In addition, new variants such as Delta (identified in summer 2021) and Omicron (identified in fall 2021) may spread more rapidly, lead to more severe illness, and/or be resistant to some forms of treatment.<sup>3</sup> As of November 2021, approximately 9,000 Washingtonians had died of COVID-19 across the state, 2,020 of which were in King County.<sup>4</sup>

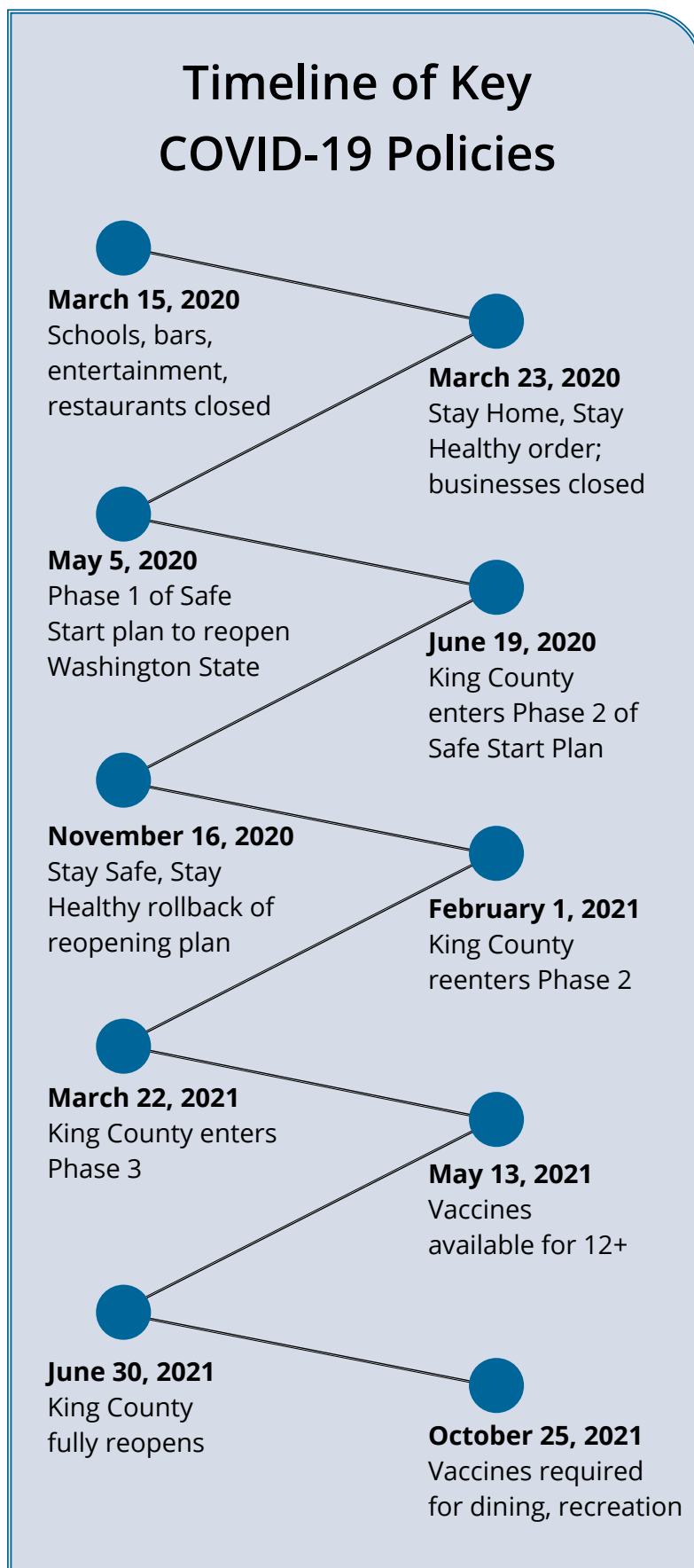


Figure 1 | Source: Public Health Seattle & King County—Economic, social, and overall health impacts dashboard

Despite the grim reality of the pandemic's toll, there are some reasons for hope. Washington State enjoys one of the highest vaccine rates in the nation, with more than 70% of all eligible residents fully vaccinated and 78% having received at least one dose.<sup>5</sup> More than 93% of all King County residents had received at least one vaccine dose, and 86% had been fully vaccinated; across the Bellevue, Issaquah, and Mercer Island region, nearly 92% of all eligible residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine.<sup>6</sup> Racial and ethnic disparities within vaccine rates do exist; for example, across both King County and the East region, Hispanic/Latino residents have the lowest vaccination rates at 77% and 76%, respectively.<sup>7</sup> However, all groups have exceeded the 70% threshold, a critical step toward achieving herd immunity.<sup>8</sup>

### Cumulative COVID-19 Cases in King County

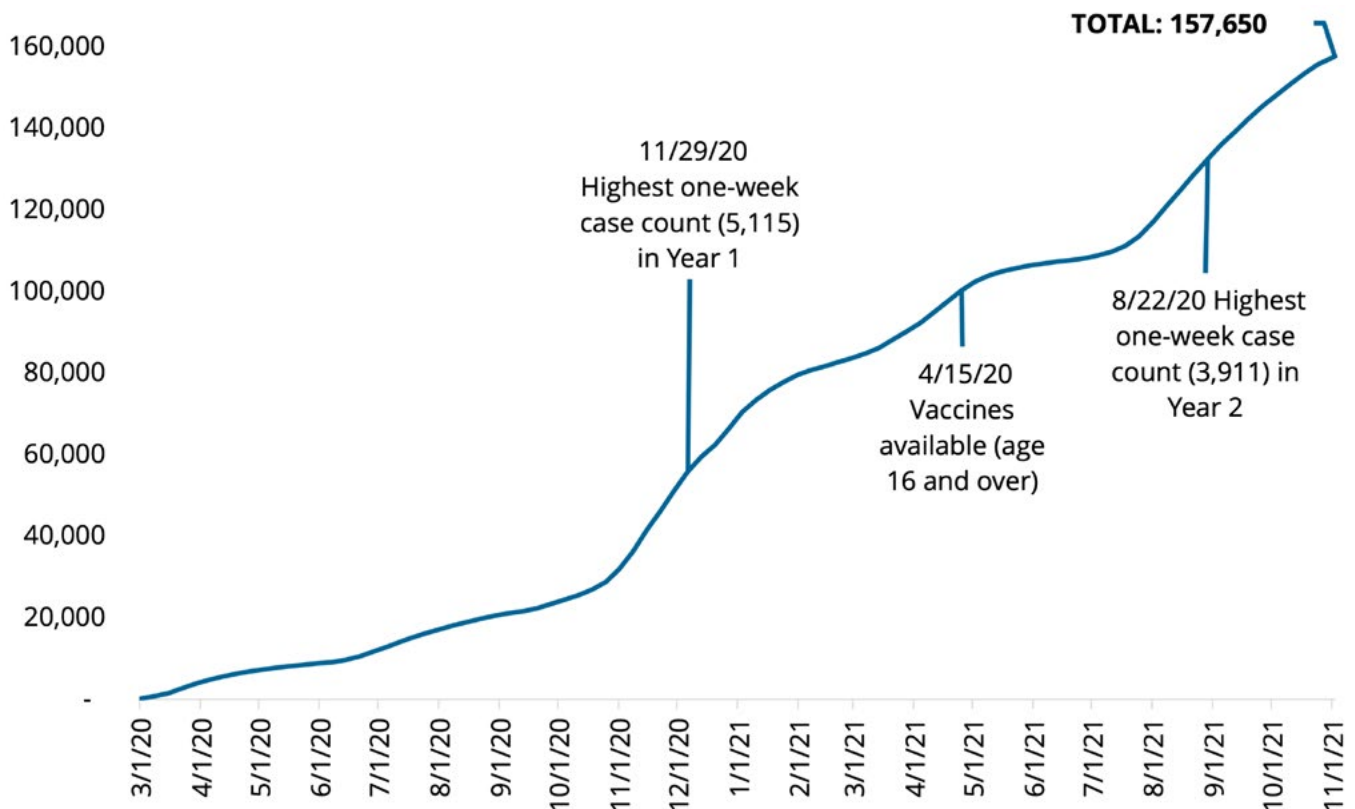


Figure 2 | Source: Washington State Department of Health

## COVID-19's Far-Reaching Effects

Efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 have contributed to the dramatic increases in the number of King County residents who are unemployed or furloughed, and/or need assistance affording food, utilities, housing, and accessing health care. In addition to social isolation, the disruption of daily life, and grief, these stressors have strained many people's mental health and coping abilities.<sup>9</sup> The following data points highlight just some of the pandemic's pervasive and continuing effects:

- Approximately 9,000 more King County households received Basic Food assistance in November 2021 than January 2020, a 9% increase.<sup>10</sup> Over that same period, there was an 11% increase in Bellevue (zip codes 98004, 98005, 98006, 98007, 98008) households receiving Basic Food assistance.<sup>11</sup>
- There are numerous indicators of worsening behavioral health as the pandemic has continued. Countywide, there was a 25% increase in calls to the behavioral health crisis

line in October 2021 compared to 2019.<sup>12</sup> As of October 11, 2021 (the most recent data available), approximately 23% of Census Pulse Survey respondents from the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue Metropolitan Service Area reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless for more than half the week. In terms of anxiety, approximately 27% of respondents reported feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge for more than half the week.<sup>13</sup> While not directly

comparable, only 11% of King County adults reported experiencing 14 or more days of poor mental health in a given month prior to the pandemic.<sup>14</sup>

- In a 2020 survey, 25% of King County respondents reported that COVID-19 had an impact on their ability to meet financial obligations. In a 2021 survey of Bellevue residents, 81% of respondents that experienced a decrease in income attributed it to the COVID-19 pandemic. Across all Bellevue households, approximately 16% experienced a decrease in income specifically because of the pandemic.<sup>15</sup>
- Across King County, 49% of 211 calls between January 4 and November 28, 2021 requested housing-related assistance.<sup>16</sup> As of July 2021, approximately 7,600 Bellevue households were considered “very” or “somewhat” likely to be evicted in the next two months. The average rental debt owed by these households ranged from \$4,000 to \$11,000.<sup>17</sup>
- King County’s unemployment rate peaked at 15.1% in April 2020; during that same period, nearly 220,000 workers were receiving unemployment benefits. Although some data indicate the economy is recovering (for example, as of October 2021, the countywide unemployment rate had dropped to 4.4%), there are still nearly 40,000 unemployed individuals across the county.<sup>18</sup> As of July 2021, there were approximately 3,300 unemployed, job-seeking Bellevue residents.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, in the 2021 phone/online survey, unemployment was considered a major/moderate problem by 26% of respondents, a significant increase from 2019.<sup>20</sup>

“[We have] transitioned to all remote services... we are conducting groups via telehealth, although many of our clients are not participating in those groups ...We are seeing that telehealth services are not as effective for some of our clients, which is causing some to experience increased symptoms along with COVID-19 isolation.”

~ Provider Respondent,  
COVID-19 Funding Impact Survey



# Racial (In)Equity Data Point: The Disproportionate Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone in our community, but certain groups – including racial and ethnic minorities – are more vulnerable than others. The pandemic has highlighted that health equity is still not a reality as COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, putting them more at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. For example, Figure 2 shows that Bellevue residents identifying as Hispanic account for approximately 7% of the city's population, but nearly 18% of all COVID-19 cases.<sup>21</sup>

## Bellevue and King County COVID-19 Cases by Race/Ethnicity

	Bellevue		King County	
	Percent of Total	Percent of All COVID-19 Cases	Percent of Total	Percent of All COVID-19 Cases
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.31%	0.43%	0.61%	0.88%
Asian	35.70%	20.42%	19.00%	13.17%
Black	2.46%	5.92%	6.77%	10.93%
Hispanic	6.92%	17.66%	10.35%	20.41%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.33%	0.76%	0.86%	2.78%
Other	4.52%	7.98%	4.73%	6.39%
White	49.75%	46.83%	57.68%	45.44%

Figure 2 | Source: Public Health Seattle & King County, COVID-19 Data Dashboards<sup>22</sup>

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has identified several factors that contribute to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color.<sup>23</sup> These include:

- **Healthcare:** Some racial and ethnic communities face multiple barriers to healthcare access and use. At least 6,000 Bellevue residents were uninsured as of 2019, but stark differences exist across racial and ethnic groups. For example, the uninsurance rate among White residents was approximately half that of Black residents and American Indian/Native Alaska residents, a quarter that of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents, and only one-tenth that of residents of another race.<sup>24</sup> Even with insurance, out-of-pocket costs may still prevent individuals from seeking treatment. Across King County, between 9% and 22% of adults had unmet healthcare needs due to cost. Once again, there are clear differences across racial and ethnic groups. Approximately 9% of both White adults and Asian adults had unmet needs due to cost, compared with 14% of both Black adults and multiracial adults and 18% of Hispanic adults (of any race).<sup>25</sup> For more information about health care access, see Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible).

- **Occupation:** Some racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to work in essential settings (e.g., healthcare facilities, farms, factories, grocery stores, public transportation), which substantially increases likelihood of exposure to COVID-19. For example, in Bellevue, 7% of Asian residents worked in the service industry, compared with 12% of White residents and multi-racial residents, 24% of Black residents and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander residents, 35% of American Indian or Native American residents and Hispanic residents (of any race), and 47% of residents of some other race.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the annual median earnings of full-time workers in service occupations in 2019 was just \$39,051;<sup>27</sup> as a result, workers may forego missing work (even if sick) as they may not have enough saved up to cover essential items like food, rent, and other important needs. For more information about employment, see Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential.
- **Housing:** Living in crowded conditions can make it very difficult to quarantine when a household member is or may be sick. Nationwide, people from racial and ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in crowded housing (defined as more than one person per room) than non-Hispanic White people, and this crowding can enhance exposure to COVID-19. While not directly correlating with race or ethnicity, native-born residents in Bellevue have, on average, smaller household sizes than their foreign-born counterparts.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Bellevue households whose primary language is not English were more likely to exceed one person per room than those who primarily spoke English at home.<sup>29</sup> For more information about housing, see Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead.

## Organizational Impacts of COVID-19 on Human Service Providers

Human service providers inevitably face capacity challenges, even without a global pandemic. However, COVID-19 has caused not only a tremendous increase in service need, but it has also necessitated substantial adjustments to how services are delivered, both of which have stretched organizations' already-limited resources.

- **Changing service demands.** The speed and scale of the COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted the social safety net, and nonprofits are struggling to ensure that the community's needs are being met. For example, in a 2021 survey of East King County human service providers, 70% (n=27) of respondents report an increase in service demand over the previous 2 years. For those organizations reporting either no change (n=7) or a decrease (n=5), many referenced state-mandated closures (e.g., childcare centers) or reduced enrollment due to fear of COVID-19 exposure (e.g., dental care).<sup>30</sup> Regardless of the type of change, fluctuating service demands have necessitated adjustments in how services are provided, as many providers have expressed concern about how to continue to safely meet client need while social distancing. Although many programs have successfully transitioned their services to a virtual format, this approach can be a barrier depending on the type of service and/or client capacity (e.g., access to computer, webcam, internet) and capability (e.g., comfort with technology).
- **Increased expenses.** In a 2020 survey of East King County providers, respondents reported substantial increases in operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including staffing costs (42%, n=25), PPE (58%, n=35), cleaning supplies (60%, n=36), and technology (65%, n=39). Although 92% of respondents (n=55) reported receiving additional funding

(e.g., loans, grants, donations) to offset COVID-19's impact, providers reported average additional spending of \$306,780 (min: \$0, max: \$2,575,000) in 2020 due to the pandemic.<sup>31</sup> Unsurprisingly, these trends continued into 2021: 80% (n=39) reported their programs continued to incur additional, unbudgeted expenses because of the pandemic. The three most common drivers of these additional expenses were costs related to staffing (e.g., hazard pay, continued need for Personal Protective Equipment; 48%), increased service demand (26%), and technology requirements for virtual services (20%).<sup>32</sup>

"Earned revenue is down, staff time to outreach efforts to engage clients is greater, and the work is being done mostly via telehealth and online portals, which has added extra costs. In-person is happening on a limited basis and has added extra costs to maintain PPE standards and safety."

~ Agency Respondent, Provider Survey

- **Reduced revenue.** Beyond just these additional expenses, two-thirds (n=60) of East King County providers reported that their 2020 revenue was significantly impacted by the pandemic, with "impact" defined as a 10% or greater loss in budgeted revenue. Overall, the average projected revenue loss through the end of 2020 was \$494,657, although projected losses ranged from \$3,000 to \$4,000,000. Furthermore, 4% of respondents also pointed to substantial reductions in fundraising revenue and program funding.<sup>33</sup>

## The City's Human Services Response to COVID-19

The City of Bellevue has responded and continues to respond to the human service needs created by the pandemic in a wide variety of ways.

### Additional Human Services Funding

The City has made several additional human services investments throughout the pandemic to ensure residents can access critical supports to help them stabilize throughout crisis. Additional investments have been made in the areas of food assistance, behavioral health, childcare, and legal services. These include:

- \$450,000 from the Council Contingency Fund towards 5 existing contracts the City had in place for rent assistance.
- \$1,560,658 in special Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus relief funds (CDBG-CV, CDBG-CV2, CDBG-CV3) authorized under the CARES Act. These dollars supported several pandemic-related services, including rental assistance, homeless shelters, food assistance, behavioral health, and childcare.
- \$506,934 in unallocated prior year CDBG funds authorized under the CARES Act. These funds supported homeless shelters, childcare and legal services responding to the coronavirus.
- \$1,579,493 in Coronavirus Relief Funds authorized under the CARES Act. These funds supported emergency financial assistance, food assistance, and general operations support.
- \$7,000,000 in American Rescue Plan Act, federal funding designed to provide direct relief to cities, towns, and villages in the United States as they work to address the growing needs from the pandemic. These funds were allocated to support housing stability, specifically in the form of rental, mortgage, and move-in assistance.

### **Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center (BCRC)**

BCRC helps the community resolve conflicts through free, confidential, and impartial conflict coaching, conciliation, and mediation. In 2021, BCRC provided the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program for negotiating repayment plans between landlords and tenants as an alternative to eviction proceedings. In addition to negotiating these cases, BCRC works with consortiums of rental assistance agencies and homelessness organizations to tighten the safety net under tenants and landlords experiencing the challenges of rent shortfalls.<sup>34</sup>

### **Bellevue Fire CARES (BFCARES)**

At the onset of the pandemic, many social service organizations suspended their services and community outreach. Due to the overwhelming increase in referrals to and need for Bellevue Fire CARES (BFCARES) services, BFCARES continued to provide in-person services, often bridging the gap left by the absence of other services. For example, BFCARES:

- Visited homes and conducted video calls with King County Fall Prevention to assess the environment and make recommendations to prevent future falls.
- Provided support to older adults (who may struggle with technology or remote services) by sitting with them while they completed phone assessments, facilitating tele-health appointments, and bringing paper applications for social services.
- Made daily phone calls to individuals who had become isolated because of the quarantine and had no one checking on them.
- Picked up and delivered prescription medication to individuals with COVID-19 and older adults unable to leave their homes.
- Delivered food boxes to clients with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms when Hopelink volunteers were no longer able to do so. As the pandemic continued and Hopelink lost volunteers, BFCARES took over daily food delivery to Hopelink clients.

### **Bellevue Fire Department**

The Bellevue Fire Department deployed mobile teams of firefighter/emergency medical technicians to ensure that vulnerable residents were able to access vaccines, including those in adult family homes and those unable to leave their homes. In addition, the Fire Department's mobile teams have conducted vaccine pop-up clinics throughout the community.<sup>35</sup>

### **Bellevue Police Department**

The Police Department maintained police services to those who contacted the city with needs during the pandemic and continued to respond to all calls. For those who did not feel comfortable with in person contact we changed our processes to take calls in other ways (by phone, or online) or make contact with the public differently (not entering houses or maintaining distance). Police teamed with the Bellevue Fire Department for a coordinated response to high risk COVID-19 locations like nursing homes and group living locations (i.e., Congregations for the Homeless).<sup>36</sup>

### **Communications**

In the spring of 2020, as many Bellevue residents and businesses were reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic shutdown it triggered, the City of Bellevue took a comprehensive approach to communicating resources to residents. Web pages were translated into multiple languages with details about COVID-19 and food, shelter and rental assistance. Social media posts in multiple languages provided information about the City's response to the pandemic and available resources. All Bellevue addresses received a postcard translated into four languages

with information about food banks and other local nonprofits. A special edition of the resident newsletter, *It's Your City*, went to 67,000 residential and business addresses in Bellevue. Online versions were available in multiple languages. The "Apart Together" issue, presented in multiple languages, featured an insert with a map of local food banks and other key resources. In addition, 50,000 COVID-19 resource flyers for food access, housing and rental assistance, and medical/mental health assistance were circulated in seven languages through Bellevue School District, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations.<sup>37</sup>

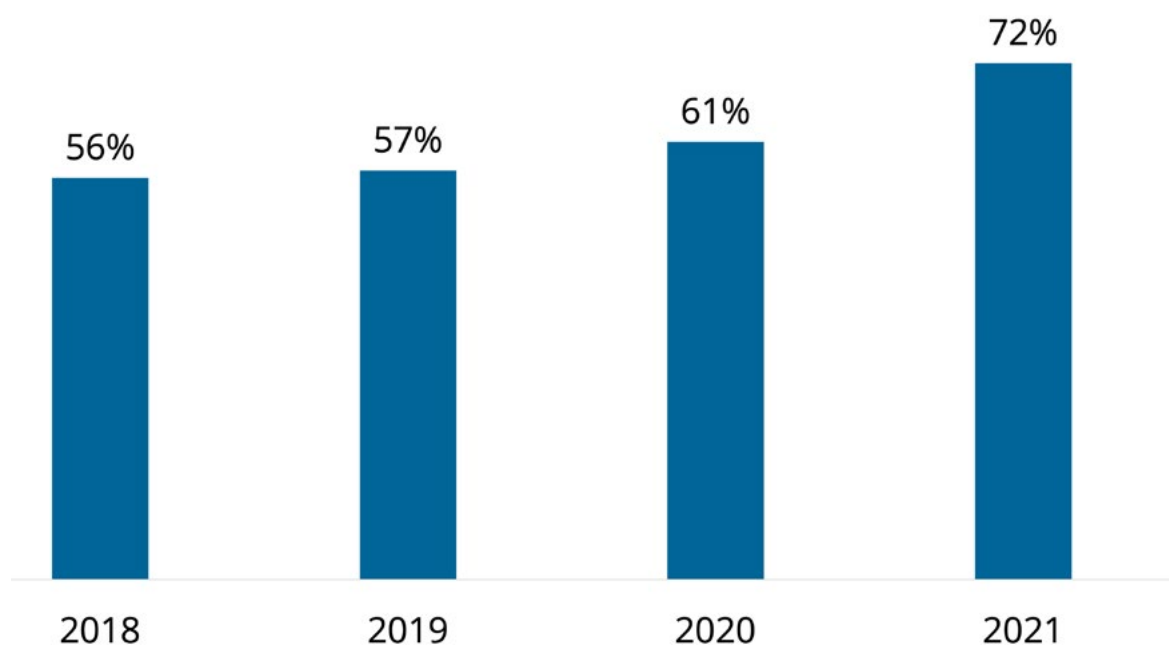
### Homelessness

The Homeless Outreach Coordinator worked with shelters and day centers to address isolation and quarantine space needs, expand hours, and identify needed resources. Staff worked with Congregations for the Homeless to modify the temporary shelter space at Lincoln Center to accommodate physical distancing and isolation needs, and provided additional facilities to allow for quarantine of active COVID-19 cases (porta-potties, pallet shelters). Staff updated the City's website and distributed informational cards to help unhoused residents find current information about shelters, food banks, and other resources. Direct outreach with unhoused clients has continued throughout the pandemic, with updated protocols and PPE to enhance safety.<sup>38</sup>

### Mini City Hall's COVID-19 Resource Navigator Program

Crossroads Mini City Hall is an information and resource hub for delivering culturally appropriate, linguistically inclusive customer service to the Bellevue community. In recognizing the need to provide greater support to community members who have experienced the health and economic impact of the pandemic, the Mini City Hall COVID-19 Resource Navigator Program was created in April of 2020 to specifically help people access health and safety information and to navigate human service resources. In 2020 alone, Mini City Hall served more than 10,000 people and handled more than 30,000 requests, the vast majority of which were human service related.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile, human service needs as a percentage of all Mini City Hall requests have continued to grow throughout the pandemic.

### Human Service Needs as a Percentage of all Mini-City Hall Requests





**Probation**

The clients served by the Adult Misdemeanant Probation Division in the City of Bellevue consist of a high number of criminal justice-involved vulnerable individuals. Many of these clients face many challenges such as socioeconomic barriers, chronic health issues and disability, and housing instability. The staff of the Probation Division pivoted to provide virtual supervision and supportive classes to ensure these clients could continue to meet their obligations to the court, which increases safety for the entire community.<sup>40</sup>

**Recreation**

North Bellevue Community Center and Highland Community Center staff quickly identified the impact of isolation on the vulnerable populations most served at these centers: older adults and individuals with disabilities. As a result, while in-person services were suspended early in the pandemic, staff at these centers engaged in intentional outreach to their customers and their caregivers, and also developed virtual programming to ensure the older adults and individuals with disabilities in the Bellevue community continued to receive opportunities to engage and recreate. In addition, the Bellevue Aquatic Center has remained open for much of the pandemic (after the initial closure of all facilities), thus ensuring that the Warm Water Therapy Pool was open for people living with chronic health conditions along with their caretakers and physical and occupational therapist.<sup>41</sup>

**Utilities**

To help residents experiencing financial stress due to the COVID-19 outbreak, from March 11, 2020 through December 31, 2021, Bellevue Utilities suspended all water shutoffs for non-payment. During this time, customers were not assessed additional fees or charges for past-due payments.<sup>42</sup>

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## Endnotes

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# Goal Areas



# Food to Eat and Roof Overhead



**74%** rated affordable housing as a community problem.

Bellevue Food banks provided nearly **3 million** meals in 2020.



**50,000** King County households are at risk of eviction without rental assistance resources.

The City supported **29,486** bed nights in 2020 for people experiencing homelessness.



**20%** of Bellevue households are cost burdened by rent.



# Goal #1

## Food to Eat and Roof Overhead

This chapter includes data about:

- Food security and hunger
- Emergency financial assistance
- Affordable housing
- Homelessness

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **"Racial (In)Equity Data Point."**

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

### Key Findings

- The high cost of living is repeatedly identified by Bellevue residents and community conversations as a top issue. This is true across many socioeconomic segments of the population.
- The lack of affordable housing continues to be reported by residents as the top community problem, and this is a substantial problem for moderate-income and low-income households, many of whom are cost burdened.
- Homelessness has been a top community problem since 2015, rising from 30% of respondents naming it as a major or moderate concern in that year to 46% of respondents in 2021.
- The community rated hunger as a major or moderate problem, which has remained statistically flat since 2011.

### Food Security and Hunger

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, as well as the limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in a socially acceptable way.<sup>1</sup> Food insecurity can have a devastating effect on a person's health and wellbeing; it can result in lower diet quality and less variety, both of which can contribute to being overweight, and unpredictable availability of food can lead to overeating.<sup>2</sup>

## Community Voice

- In the 2021 community phone and online survey, 25% of respondents rated hunger as a major or moderate problem in Bellevue.<sup>3</sup>
- In the consumer survey, 7% (n=8) of respondents said they could only rarely or never have enough income to pay for food. Among those making less than \$50,000, 18% (n=7) said the same.

## Prevalence

- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 13.4% of households in Washington State were food insecure prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>4</sup>
- A more recent study focusing specifically on COVID-19's impacts found that 30% of Washington households were experiencing food insecurity. Of those households, more than half (59%) had children.<sup>5</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In this study, respondents of color were more than 1.5 times as likely to be food insecure as white respondents.<sup>6</sup>
- Crisis Connections 211 is a one-stop approach for information about health and human services that streamlines access to social service agencies and resources in King County. Food-related calls accounted for 19% of all Bellevue calls to Crisis Connections 211.<sup>7</sup>
- For information about children and food security and hunger, please see the section School-Aged Children & Youth.

## Service Trends

- Basic Food includes the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously known as “food stamps,” and the state-funded Food Assistance Program (FAP). FAP is for immigrants who meet all the eligibility requirements for SNAP except citizenship or alien status.<sup>8</sup>
- The Washington State Food Security Survey (WAFOOD) found that use of any food assistance (SNAP, WIC, school meals, food banks, etc.) rose from 29% statewide before COVID-19 to 42% in January 2021. WAFOOD also found that of all forms of food assistance, food banks have seen the largest increase in demand statewide; 13% of survey respondents statewide reported using food banks pre-COVID-19 compared to 20% in January 2021.<sup>9</sup>
- According to King County's COVID-19 data dashboard, 3,755 households across Bellevue (zip codes 98004, 98005, 98006, 98007, 98008) received Basic Food assistance in June 2021, approximately 6 percent of all households. Households within the 98007 zip code accounted for more than a third (1,361) of Bellevue households on Basic Food.<sup>10</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Zip code 98007 is also the most racially diverse Bellevue zip code, as more than half (52.1%) of all residents identify as Black, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native and/or Hispanic/Latino.<sup>11</sup>

“We have seen an increase in food insecurity across all populations from older adults to young children. We’ve also seen a need for diapers and formula. There was a demand for food delivery during COVID. Bellevue Fire CARES has been delivering to Bellevue households both involved in services through Bellevue Fire CARES and referrals from the foodbank, but it is not sustainable.”

~Participant, Bellevue Fire CARES  
Community Conversation

- Hopelink's food assistance programs provide emergency and supplemental food to help end food insecurity. In all of 2020, Hopelink provided a total of 2,931,180 meals.<sup>12</sup> Between just March 2020 (the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic) and January 2021, Hopelink provided nearly 2.2 million meals to 15,346 clients.<sup>13</sup> In comparison, Hopelink provided 2,359,458 meals in all of 2019.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2020, Renewal Food Bank provided more than 25,000 bags of groceries to Bellevue residents.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, the organization provided nearly 40,000 bags in 2019. The agency attributes the drop to service interruptions due to COVID-19.<sup>16</sup>

## Emergency Financial Assistance

Emergency Financial Assistance programs help keep families from falling through the cracks into perpetual homelessness. Assistance can include things like utility supports, which keep the home habitable, or eviction prevention assistance, which protects a family's rental history, keeps them from incurring the costs of eviction and, most importantly, ensures the stability of knowing they have a place to live.

### Community Voice

- Twenty-six percent (n=5) of providers report clients need emergency financial assistance but cannot find it in the community.
- In the 2021 community phone and online survey, 6% of household respondents reported struggling to pay utility bills.<sup>17</sup>

### Prevalence

- Washington State enacted an eviction moratorium "bridge" between June 30, 2021 (when the eviction moratorium expired) and October 31, 2021, at which point federal, state, and local housing stability programs should be operational.<sup>18</sup> Even still, most experts still predict a "tsunami" of evictions.
- In an average year, there are 17,000 evictions filed in the state. According to the King County Bar Association's Housing Justice Project, even a few thousand additional evictions could overwhelm the court system.
- The Northwest Justice Project estimates that, as of January 2021, roughly 60,000 to 140,000 people in Washington State were in danger of eviction or mortgage default.<sup>19</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, 27% of all respondents in Washington (n=148,687) report it is very likely (n=10,462) or somewhat likely (n=29,176) they will have to leave their home due to eviction.<sup>20</sup>
- These same data suggest that across the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metro Area, an estimated 89,144 households are currently behind on rent. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** When compared with their overall population percentage, Black and Hispanic respondents disproportionately reported likelihood of eviction.
- King County estimates that nearly 50,000 households are at risk of eviction without rental assistance resources. In 2020, more than 25,000 households expressed a need for rental assistance from the King County Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Program (EPRAP). Bellevue residents represented only 4% (n=401) of all applicant households eligible for the individual tenant lottery, and only 3% (n=169) of those selected.<sup>21</sup>

## Race/Ethnicity of Seattle Metro Area Population VS Reported Likelihood of Eviction

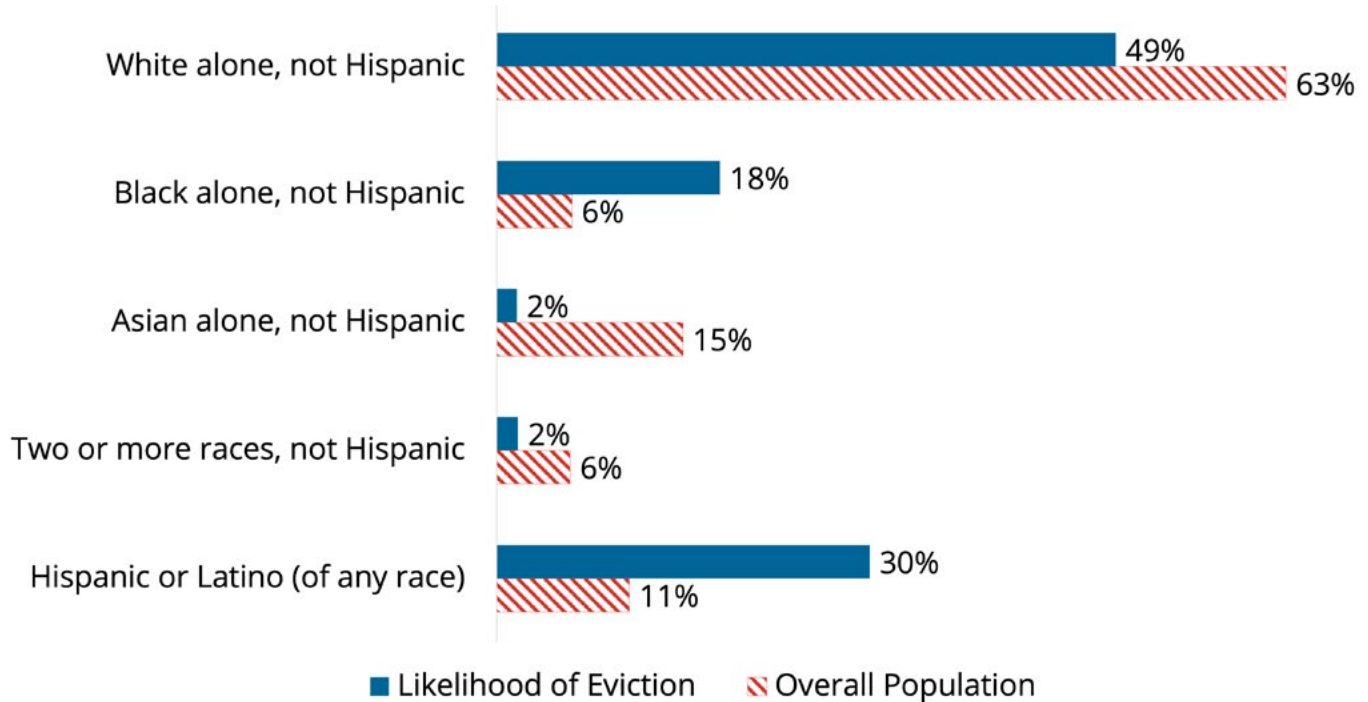


Figure 1 | U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey: Week 34, July 21-August 2

## Service Trends

- In 2020, Hopelink helped 3,098 clients through emergency financial assistance and \$1,469,746 was distributed to mitigate crisis and prevent eviction.<sup>22</sup>
- Using funds from the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Home Energy Lifeline Program (HELP), Hopelink helped 9,284 clients and distributed \$3,762,560 in energy assistance in 2020, an increase of nearly 30% over the previous year.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2020, Solid Ground's King County Housing Stability Project served 49 Bellevue households in need of move-in or eviction prevention assistance.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2020, the City's Utility Discount Program provided utility discounts and rebates for 1,016 low-income seniors and disabled residents who receive water, sewer and drainage services from the City of Bellevue. That same year, the Utility Tax Rebate Program provided refunds of utility taxes to 1,042 low-income residents. These numbers represent respective increases of 4% and 5% over 2019 service numbers.<sup>25</sup>

## Affordable Housing

Housing is defined as affordable if its occupants pay no more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities or for mortgage, taxes, and insurance. According to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), households paying more than 30% of their income for housing are considered cost burdened. Households paying more than 50% of their income for housing are considered severely cost burdened and may have trouble affording basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

## Community Voice

- This was the twelfth consecutive phone/online survey in which lack of affordable housing received the greatest percentage of major and combined major/moderate ratings, at 74%.<sup>26</sup> The percentage of respondents rating homelessness as a major or moderate problem changed from 35% in 2017 to 42% in 2019, a statistically significant increase.<sup>27</sup>
- Concerns about the cost of living in Bellevue were the most prominent theme across all Community Conversations, with many expressing that people cannot reasonably afford to live here anymore.
- Regarding Bellevue residents' ratings of major or moderate problems in their households, 8% of respondents reported not having enough money to pay for housing and 13% reported living in housing with unaffordable major repairs.<sup>28</sup>
- In the consumer survey, 29% (n=32) of respondents said they could only rarely or never find affordable housing. Among those making less than \$50,000, 54% (n=17) said the same.

## Prevalence

- As Figure 2 shows, between 2013 and 2017 (the most recent data available) almost one-third (30%) of Bellevue households were cost burdened, meaning they spent more than 30% of their income on housing. This included 13% of households that spend more than 50% of their income on housing (severely cost burdened). For households whose income is below half of the area median income, 40% are severely cost burdened. Renters are more likely to suffer some sort of cost burden than owners.<sup>29</sup>

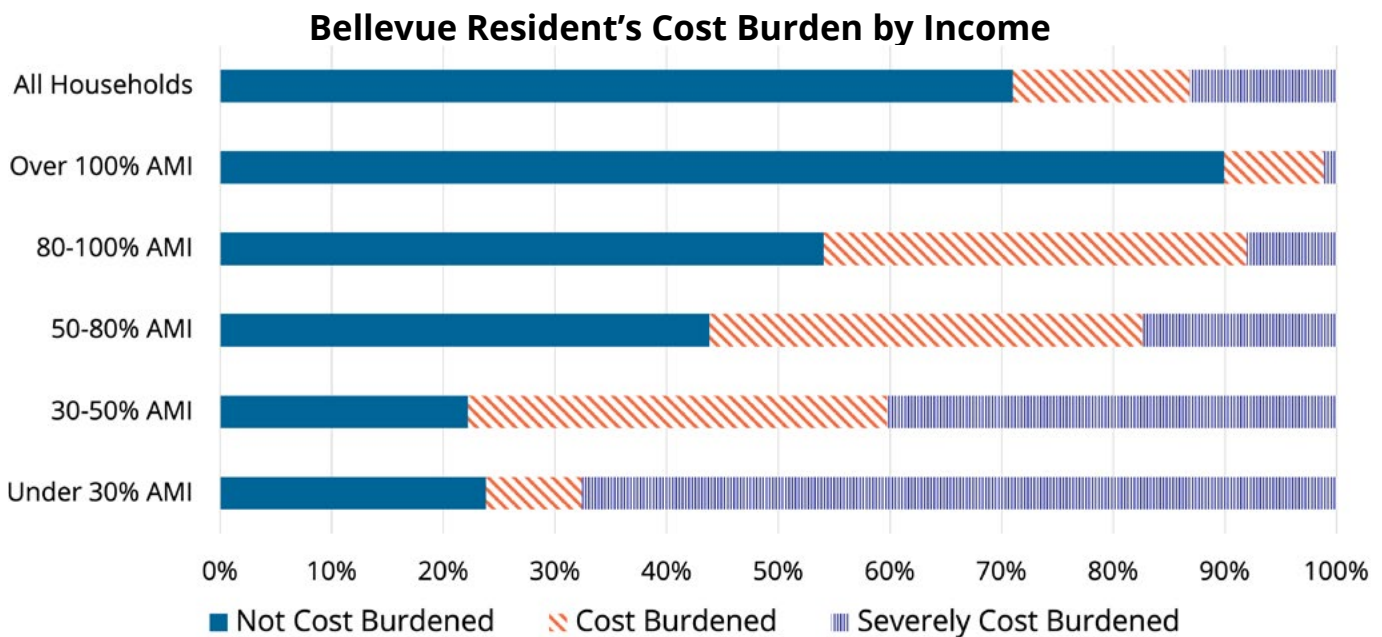


Figure 2 | Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development/Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy<sup>30</sup>

- In Bellevue, the fair market rent estimate for a one-bedroom rental property in ZIP code 98004 decreased from \$2,610 in fiscal year 2020 to \$2,400 in fiscal year 2021. Across all Bellevue zip codes, the average drop was 8%, and zip code 98007 had the largest drop at 10%.<sup>31</sup>
- While rents have marginally fallen over the past year, home prices have seen astronomical increases. The median single-family home in King County last month sold for \$869,975,



a 29.5% increase from the same time last year. On the Eastside, the median home price increased 37.4% - from \$945,250 to \$1,298,475 – between May 2020 and May 2021.<sup>32</sup>

- Section 8 vouchers help people with low incomes rent homes on the private market. With a voucher, people pay at least 28%, but not more than 40% (in the first year), of their household income for rent and utilities. King County Housing Authority (KCHA) pays the difference between their portion of the rent and the amount their landlord charges. Tenant-based vouchers are portable and a program participant can take the voucher to any rental property to try and use it, assuming the tenant can afford their portion of the rent. Project-based Housing Choice Vouchers are used in KCHA units and nonprofit-owned housing sites. *KCHA's Section 8 program is not accepting applications, and they last held a lottery for vouchers in March 2020.*<sup>33</sup>
- KCHA administers approximately 400 units of subsidized housing in Bellevue.<sup>34</sup>
- Crisis Connections 211 is a one-stop approach for information about health and human services that streamlines access to social service agencies and resources in King County. The top needs in 2020 were rental assistance (637), emergency shelter/motel vouchers with (363), and move-in assistance (78). Calls for rent assistance in 2020 represented 29% of the calls from Bellevue. All housing-related calls including rental assistance accounted for 71% of Bellevue calls.<sup>35</sup>

## Service Trends

- Bellevue recently approved funding through the 2019-20 ARCH Housing Trust Fund rounds for several projects, including:
  - Together Center Redevelopment in Redmond (280 units)
  - Community Homes Shared Living and Adult Family Home in Newcastle and Bothell (8 beds)
  - Samma Senior Apartments in Bothell (87 units)
  - Horizon at Totem Lake in Kirkland (300 units)
  - Eastgate Supportive Housing in Bellevue (95 units)
- In 2021, Bellevue also approved supplemental funding for the Eastside Men's Shelter project, and funding for a King County Housing Authority acquisition of the Illahee Apartments, which will be converted to public housing over time. Another 360 affordable units got under construction in Bellevue in 2021. ARCH funds were previously approved for this project, but funds were returned after the project was able to secure a larger award from King County.
- In addition to affordable housing and shelter investments, covenants were executed for a total of 51 affordable units created through land use and incentive programs in 2019-20.<sup>36</sup>
- The largest production of affordable units through regulatory incentives occurred in 1992 when Bellevue had a mandatory inclusionary zoning program, however some of these have lost affordability over time because of changes in the affordability covenants that the City directed at that time. The City and ARCH expects production of units affordable at 80% AMI to increase in the coming years now that the City has made changes to its Multifamily Tax Exemption program.

## Affordable Housing Units Created in Bellevue, 1996-2018

Target Population	Direct Assistance - Total	Direct Assistance New Construction	Direct Assistance-Preservation	Regulatory Incentives	Total Affordable Units/Beds
0-50 AMI	1,161 units	547 units	614 units		1,161 units
51 – 80 AMI	455 units	129 units	326 units	299 units	754 units
81-100 AMI				8 units	8 units
101-120 AMI				22 units	22 units
Total Units	1,616 units	676 units	940 units	429 units	1,945 units

Figure 3 | Source: A Regional Coalition for Housing<sup>37</sup>

- In addition to City and ARCH programs, King County Housing Authority has recently acquired six properties with roughly 1,100 units that they will preserve as workforce housing, with rents at approximately 80% AMI.
- As of September 2021, KCHA had approximately 946 households utilizing tenant-based vouchers to pay a portion of their rent. 41% of these households have at least one elderly member. Of the remaining households, 28% have a member with a disability and the remainder are families, the majority of them with children. In total, these households include 554 children. The annual rental subsidy associated with these vouchers is over \$16.4 million and supports very low-income households – the average income of tenant-based households in Bellevue was \$17,112 in 2020.<sup>38</sup>

“We need to start to the conversation by discussing how Section 8 should be an entitlement program. In our safe parking program, our current clients are stuck living in their cars. They are not able to get into affordable housing programs due to the long waiting lists and limited options, so Section 8 is needed for them to move into affordable housing.”

~Participant, Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee

## Homelessness

Broadly speaking, homelessness is the situation of an individual, family, or community that lacks stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate means and ability of acquiring it. Housing is crucial to helping people improve their health and well-being, find and keep jobs, and moving from poverty to self-sufficiency.<sup>39</sup>

## Community Voice

Forty-six percent of respondents identify homelessness as a major or moderate problem in the community.<sup>40</sup>

## Prevalence

- Since 1980, Seattle and King County has held a point in time count in January of people experiencing homelessness to provide a snapshot of the problem and track trends over time.

- The count conducted in January 2019 found a total of 11,199 individuals in King County. As shown in Figure 1, 47% (5,228) were sleeping unsheltered on the street, in cars or RVs, in tents or in abandoned buildings and 53% (5,971) were sheltered in emergency shelters and transitional housing. There was an 8% decrease in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Seattle/King County compared to 2018.<sup>41</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** As shown in Figure 4, compared to the overall population of Seattle/King County, homelessness disproportionately impacts people of color.

### Individuals Experiencing Homelessness, Total Count Population by Race and Ethnicity

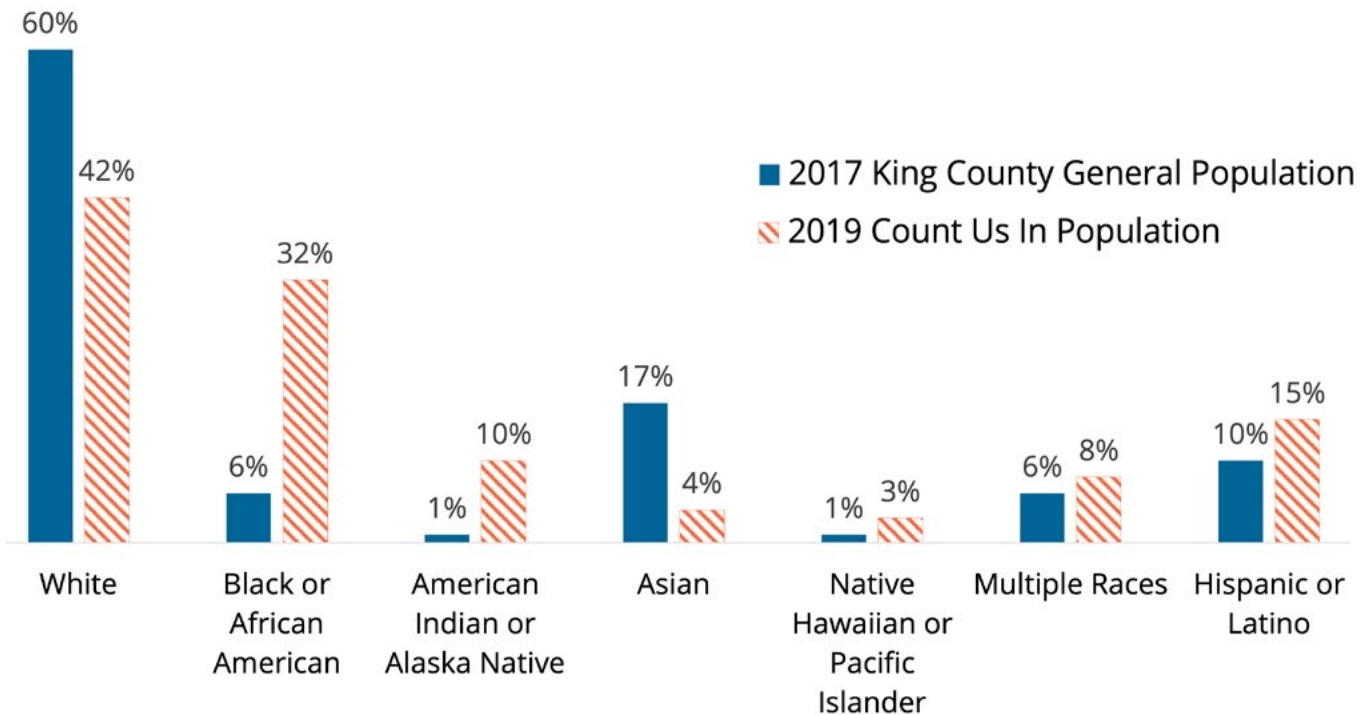


Figure 4 | 2020 Count Us In Comprehensive Report

- In 2020, Count Us In found 446 unsheltered individuals in urban East King County (including portions of Bellevue, Kirkland and Redmond). This represents a 32% increase from the 2019 count.<sup>42</sup> According to King County Regional Homelessness Authority CEO Marc Dones, the One Night Count routinely undercounts people experiencing homelessness, indicating that there are likely far more than 446 unsheltered individuals.<sup>43</sup>

### Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness, By Region

REGION	Unsheltered					
	2018		2019		2020	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
East County	6%	393	6%	337	8%	446
North County	4%	251	2%	85	1%	56
Northeast County	2%	137	2%	99	3%	167
Seattle	71%	4,488	68%	3,558	67%	3,738

REGION	Unsheltered					
	2018		2019		2020	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Southwest County	15%	974	21%	1,084	1%	56
Southeast County	1%	77	1%	65	20%	1,115
TOTAL	100%	6,320	100%	5,228	100%	5,578

Figure 5 | Source: 2020 Seattle/King County Count Us In Report

- For the 2020-2021 school year, Bellevue School District reported that 333 students were experiencing homelessness, an 86% increase from the 2011-2012 school year (182 students). Two hundred and sixty youth were doubled up (i.e., some type of shared living arrangement such as staying with friends) due to economic or similar reasons, 41 were living in an emergency/transitional shelter, 12 were unsheltered at some point, 19 used a hotel/motel as a primary form of residence, and 68 were unaccompanied youth living on their own without a legal parent/guardian.<sup>44</sup>

## Service Trends

- Congregations for the Homeless (CFH) operates a no-barriers, year-round emergency overnight shelter as well as a rotating emergency shelter. In 2020, CFH provided 18,159 bed nights with City of Bellevue funds, serving as many as 215 individuals from Bellevue.<sup>45</sup>
- The Sophia Way operates a no-barriers, year-round emergency overnight shelter that rotates between different congregations as well as a six-month intensive shelter program. In 2020, the agency provided 2,852 bed nights with City of Bellevue funds, serving as many as 30 individuals from Bellevue.<sup>46</sup> In August of 2020, The Sophia Way opened an additional site in Kirkland called Helen's Place.<sup>47</sup>
- Catholic Community Services (CCS) operates a no-barriers, year-round emergency overnight shelter that rotates between different congregations as well as an extended shelter. In 2020, CCS provided 2,932 bed nights with City of Bellevue funds, serving as many as 82 individuals from Bellevue.<sup>48</sup>
- LifeWire operates a confidential shelter for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence. In 2020, they provided 3,920 bed nights with City of Bellevue funds, serving as many as 73 individuals from Bellevue.<sup>49</sup>
- Friends of Youth operates shelters for youth ranging in age from 11 to 24. In 2020, the agency provided 1,623 bed nights with City of Bellevue funds, serving as many as 16 individuals from Bellevue.<sup>50</sup>
- In Fall 2019, Bellevue added a Homelessness Outreach Coordinator position as part of Bellevue's strategic effort to help the city advance a proactive and comprehensive response to the challenging issue of homelessness. In addition to providing direct assistance to those experiencing homelessness, this staff person coordinates efforts across city departments, external partners, and regional service providers. This staff person also responds to related community issues and develops performance metrics for Bellevue's work to reduce homelessness.<sup>51</sup>

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# Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities



**95,782** King County 211 calls for human services needs.

**57%** of East King County providers report that clients don't know how to access needed services.



**20,605** "baby care" bundles of formula, car seats, and diapers provided to Bellevue families.

**37%** of community members rated lack of affordable legal services as a top community problem.



**61%** of Bellevue School District parents feel emotionally supported.

## Goal #2

# Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities

This chapter includes data about:

- Finding Help: Information and Referral
- Legal services
- Support for individuals, families, and adults raising children

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase, **"Racial (In)Equity Data Point."**

## Key Findings

- Many residents are not aware of how to access human services when the need arises, due lack of knowledge of resources in the community. Some of the factors that contribute to this include not having easy access to a computer, limited English language skills, and not needing to access services in the past. The Crisis Connection's King County 2-1-1 is one way to fill this critical information gap.
- All families need support, regardless of socio-economic status. However, some Bellevue families may need additional social support to raise their children, care for aging and or disabled loved ones, or a combination of the three. Family, friends and neighbors are becoming even more important because funding is often limited for many formal services, such as family support programs.

## Finding Help: Information and Referral

Residents in our community often don't know where to turn for help when an issue arises. Information and referral services provide the bridge to connect people with the resources to assist them in alleviating their crisis and removing the barriers to access.

### Community Voice

- In the provider survey, 57% (n=16) of respondents report that not knowing where to find help is a barrier for clients in accessing needed services.

- Lack of transportation was one of the most frequently mentioned gaps for all populations and in all service areas during community conversations. It leads to lack of access to needed services and isolation. “Inadequate public transportation” has increased as a major/moderate community problem in the phone and online survey since 2003. In 2021, 41% of respondents identified inadequate public transportation as a community problem. Seventeen percent of the respondents rated it as household problem, which was the third-highest rated problem.<sup>1</sup>

“We have seen an increase in need and it is taking a long time for agencies to process requests, especially for financial assistance. With most of the services being offered remotely, people are no longer able to meet in person to get questions answered and they often are not able to speak to a live person. They are missing these interactions and often have to wait a long time after requesting services to get an answer. Another challenge is that all the applications are online, which requires the skills needed to navigate an online application and submit needed documentation.”

~Participant,  
Bellevue Mini City Hall Community Conversation

- In the 2021 phone/online survey, 8% of respondents said that people in Bellevue do not have enough access to human services. Mental health services were the services deemed most difficult to access.<sup>2</sup>
- In the consumer survey, 32% (n=35) of respondents said they had difficulty accessing resources to meet their needs. Among those making less than \$50,000, 53% (n=20) said the same.

## Prevalence

- In 2020, staff at the City of Bellevue’s Mini City Hall at Crossroads Shopping Center received more than 30,000 requests from customers asking for resource and information referrals. During the second quarter of 2020 (the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic), 61% of resource and information requests were related to human services; in 2018 and 2019, these percentages were 56% and 57%, respectively, for the same period. As the pandemic continued to rage on, the need intensified: in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2020, the percentage of overall requests related to human services rose to 80%, a stark difference from 56% (2018) and 55% (2019). Many people who have requested assistance had never asked for help in the past. The most frequent requests are food, shelter, unemployment, and rental assistance. The need for legal assistance along with immigration issues also continue to be the undertone of most customer interactions.<sup>3</sup>
- According to staff at Crisis Connections, the number of calls answered and logged rose 13% from 67,677 calls in 2019 to 76,767 calls in 2020. In addition, Crisis Connections logged 19,015 calls in 2020 through the COVID-19 helpline, accounting for 95,782 calls.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2020, Crisis Connections 211 logged 2,182 calls with clients who self-identified as calling from Bellevue. This is an almost 27% increase from the 1,722 calls logged from Bellevue in 2019. This is not including an additional 323 calls from Bellevue in 2020 through the COVID-19 hotline.<sup>5</sup>



## Increase in 211 Calls Between 2019 and 2020

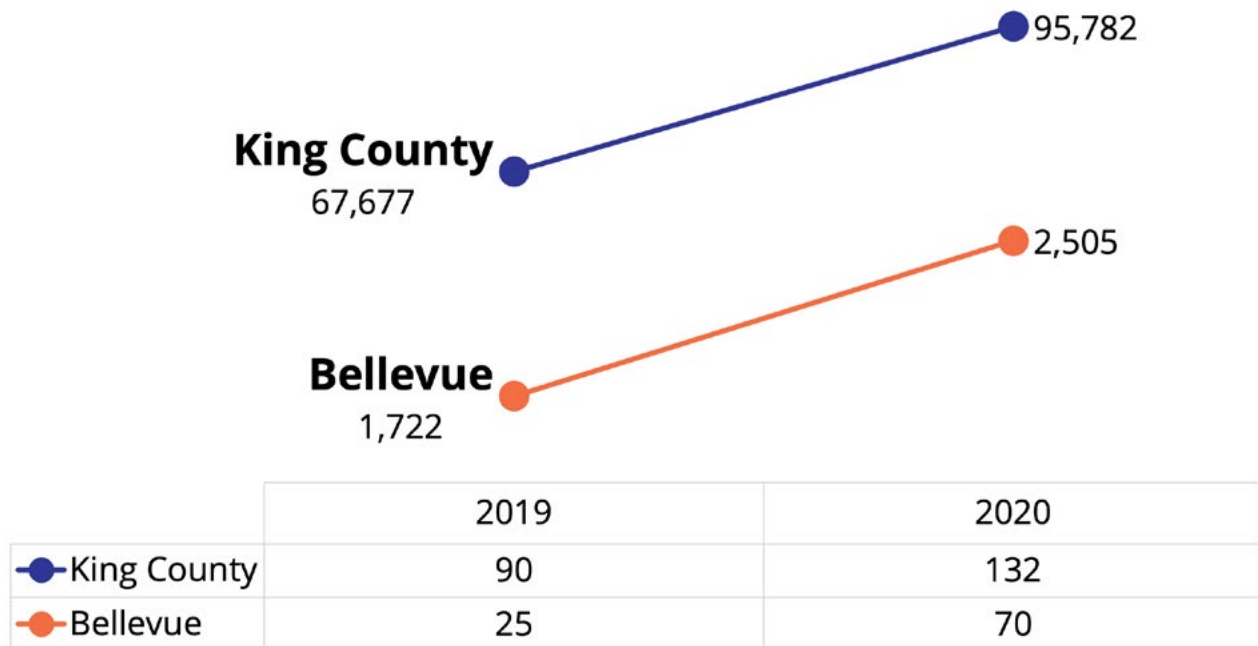


Figure 1 | Source: Crisis Connections<sup>6</sup>

## Service Trends

- Crossroads Mini City Hall is an information and resource hub for delivering culturally appropriate, linguistically inclusive customer service to the Bellevue community. Along with its many community partners, Mini City Hall provides an array of services on-site and virtually including
  - The Russian and Chinese Family Resource Support Program provided by Chinese Information and Service Center
  - Computer coaches through King County Library System, and
  - Health resources through State Health Insurance Benefit Advisor (SHIBA), International Community Health Services (ICHS), Public Health and India Association of Western Washington.
- In recognizing the need to provide greater support to community members who have experienced the health and economic impact of the pandemic, the Mini City Hall COVID-19 Resource Navigator Program was created in April of 2020 to specifically help people access health and safety information and to navigate human service resources. The program was offered in multiple languages.<sup>7</sup>
- Crisis Connections provided 253,000 referrals to callers in 2020.<sup>8</sup>

## Legal Services

Many low-income people are not able to access legal services due to inability to pay for legal fees, including civil legal aid, free legal assistance, and advocating for laws and policies that promote fairness.

## Community Voice

In the 2021 phone/online survey, 8% of respondents reported that lack of affordable legal services was a major or moderate household problem. Thirty-seven percent of respondents rated it as a major or moderate community problem in 2021, a significant increase from 2019.<sup>9</sup>

## Prevalence

- In 2016, the most recent data available, 71% of low-income households experienced at least one civil legal problem, including problems with domestic violence, veterans' benefits, disability access, housing conditions, and health care.<sup>10</sup>
- Eighty-six percent of the civil legal problems faced by low-income Americans in 2016 alone received either no legal assistance or inadequate legal assistance.<sup>11</sup>
- Low-income Americans seek professional help for only 20% of their civil legal programs. The top reasons for not seeking professional legal help are deciding to deal with a problem on their own, not knowing where to look for help/what resources exist, and not being sure whether their problem is a legal issue.<sup>12</sup>
- The average number of civil legal problems per low-income household in Washington has tripled over the past decade.<sup>13</sup>
- The highest prevalence of legal problems for low-income households in Washington are in the areas of health care, consumer/finance, and employment. This is a change from the 2003 finding where top occurring problems included housing, family relations, and employment.<sup>14</sup>

## Service Trends

- In 2020, Eastside Legal Assistance Program provided free legal assistance to 338 Bellevue residents, in the form of trainings, information sessions, and one-on-one legal consultation.<sup>15</sup>
- In 2020, King County Bar Association provided free legal assistance to 485 Bellevue households.<sup>16</sup>

## Support for Individuals, Families, and Adults Raising Children

Social support helps to give people the emotional and practical resources they need to feel cared for, valued, and secure. The term 'social support' refers to the physical and emotional comfort and practical resources we receive from family, friends, and others. Studies show that social support is an important factor in predicting health and wellbeing no matter what age.

## Community Voice

Thirty-three percent of the 2021 phone/online survey respondents identified lack of resources to provide support to parents as a major or moderate community problem. This is the first year the question has been asked.<sup>17</sup>

## Prevalence

- Almost three-quarters (73.7%) of parents and caregivers of children in 5th grade and younger in King County had someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting or raising children in 2017 and 2019. Among households in the Bellevue School District, 61% of parents and caregivers reported having someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting and raising children.<sup>18</sup>

- According to Communities Count, King County parents with household incomes below \$50,000 were less likely to report having emotional support than parents in households with incomes above that threshold.<sup>19</sup>

“Families are requesting assistance that have never had to ask for help. When they call in, they often say they are asking for a friend, but it ends up being for them. We are working to find ways to make sure families feel comfortable and make sure they understand all the community resources that are available to them.”

~ Participant,  
Bellevue LifeSpring Community Conversation

- **Racial (In)Equity Data**

**Point:** Reports of support and connection for parents

and caregivers varied across racial groups. Across the county, parents and caregivers of Asian (60.7%), Black (58.9%), and Hispanic (51.1%) children were less likely than parents of multiple race (83.2%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (83.7%), or White (86.4%) children to report having emotional support with parenting. Parents of American Indian/Alaska Native children reported rates between these groups (77.3%). However, in Bellevue School District, 71% of parents and caregivers identifying as Hispanic reported having someone who provided emotional support. In contrast, only 53% of Asian parents and caregivers and 65% of White parents reported feeling supported. Data for other racial and ethnic groups were unavailable.<sup>20</sup>

- Work and family support needs in the U.S. are increasing as more families work longer hours and have more responsibilities for caring for their children. In Bellevue, about 86% of children live in a two-parent household.<sup>21</sup> In two-parent families, about 81% of fathers and 50% of mothers work outside of the home.<sup>22</sup>
- Mothers in low-income families are more likely than their high-income counterparts to be breadwinners. For example, in 69% of families in the lowest income quintile, the mother is the primary income earner. In contrast, the mother is the primary income earner in only 29.6% of families in the top income quintile. These differences stem from several factors, including marital status (e.g., families with multiple wage earners are less likely to be low income, and high-earning women are more likely to marry high-earning men), the presence of school-aged children (e.g., mothers' labor market participation increases when children begin attending school, as women are more likely to stay home with children), and the gender wage gap (e.g., women make, on average, less than their male counterparts and are more likely to work in lower-wage jobs).<sup>23</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Women of color are, on average, significantly more likely than White women to be breadwinners for their families, although they may be less likely to be co-breadwinners.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, racial earnings gaps persist; research indicates that White individuals may make up to 23% more than Black individuals with the same educational background.<sup>25</sup>
- Single parents may need more support. Whether mothers or fathers, they often have increased needs because they may be the sole providers for their children. About 14% of children in Bellevue live in single-parent households.<sup>26</sup> Most single-parent households are headed by a woman. Roughly 23% of female-headed single-parent Bellevue households live in poverty; for those female-headed single-parent households with at least one child under age 5 and one between the ages of 5 and 17, 50% live in poverty.<sup>27</sup>

- Beyond caring for children, many parents may also provide care to older family members; these caregivers are commonly called the “sandwich generation.” Forty-seven percent of Americans, ages 40 to 59, are in the sandwich generation.<sup>28</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** According to Pew Research, “Three-in-ten Hispanic adults (31%) have a parent age 65 or older and a dependent child. This compares with 24% of whites and 21% of blacks.”<sup>29</sup>
- For more information about older adults and/or people with disabilities and Supportive Relationships, please see the section(s) Older Adults and/or People with Disabilities.

## Service Trends

- Family Connections Centers (FCC) facilitate improved access to human services between home, school, and community. Staff refer families to local agencies for clothing and food, as well as counseling, housing, employment, emergency financial assistance and health care.
- Hopelink’s Family Development program works with families for up to two years to help mitigate barriers to housing stability and long-term self-sufficiency. In 2020, they provided 881 hours of case management to 102 Bellevue Families.<sup>30</sup>
- Home visiting programs have been shown to increase parent-child bonding and result in children gaining the social-emotional and other skills that improve school readiness. Between July 2018 and June 2019, home visiting services were provided to 2,806 families in Washington State. Nearly 60% of families served were in extreme poverty.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2020, Eastside Baby Corner provided 20,605 bundles of items to 1,725 Bellevue residents. These item bundles include necessities such as formula, car seats, and diapers.<sup>32</sup>
- Kinderling’s ParentChild+ program offers home visiting for families with a child between 16-30 months old at enrollment, focusing on early learning, school readiness, and parenting skills to enhance their child’s development. All 23 families enrolled during the 2020-21 school year were very low income. They came from 12 countries and spoke 6 languages; 70% spoke Spanish. More than one-third of the children qualified for developmental therapies or special education.<sup>33</sup>

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# A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse



Between January and June of 2021, there were **22** hate crimes and bias incidents reported to Bellevue Police Department.

**1** in **3** homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation.



**50%** of transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives.

The Bellevue Police Department recorded **1,137** incidents in 2020 where domestic violence was indicated.



In 2020, the Count Us In report found **1,211** individuals experiencing homelessness were fleeing from domestic violence.

# Goal #3

## A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse

This chapter includes data about:

- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Human Trafficking

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In)Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

### Key Findings

- Survivors of Domestic Violence (DV) face barriers to housing and legal services. The high cost of housing in Bellevue creates a serious challenge for survivors who want to remain in the community to maintain their jobs, stay close to support systems, and for children remain in the same school. More shelter beds and affordable permanent housing options with services are needed. Pro-bono or affordable legal representation for child custody, protection orders, immigration, and financial issues is another huge challenge. Without these services, it becomes much harder for survivors to maintain their safety, maintain or return to employment, and sustain or establish self-sufficiency.
- Child abuse occurs in approximately 70% of families experiencing domestic violence.<sup>1</sup> Holistic programs including prevention and earlier interventions are needed to break the cycle of abuse for future generations. For children and youth who have witnessed abuse, support groups and individual counseling need to be available to address the resulting trauma.
- Sexual assault continues to be a public safety issue. It is critical to support community education about sexual assault, rape, child sexual abuse, and consent workshops for youth.
- Poverty can be a correlating factor in child abuse and neglect. Parents and caregivers experiencing economic hardship have day-to-day challenges providing the basics for their

children; therefore programs offering basic needs assistance to families with children, outlets for stress, and supportive services are needed.

- Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents are increasing issues in our community along with increased reports of racial and ethnic discrimination and other types of discrimination.

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence (DV), specifically intimate partner violence (IPV), profoundly affects the lives of survivors as well as the entire community. DV incidents involve family or household members; traditionally the term has referred to altercations between partners and former partners, but it also includes roommates with or without a romantic relationship, and parents or children. Individuals may be of the same gender. Domestic violence includes dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. Domestic violence is drastically underreported; therefore these statistics do not capture actual the number of individuals that have experienced DV but the number of individuals that reported experiencing it. In addition, COVID-19 resulted in isolation for many residents, which led to a reduction in reported domestic violence cases at the beginning of the pandemic, but an increase number of cases overall.

### Community voice

- Although domestic violence remains as a second-tier community problem by respondents in 2021, 27% of survey respondents rated DV as a minor or moderate community problem which is a 9% increase from 2019 (18%).<sup>2</sup>
- Despite survey results, the rise in domestic violence emerged as a constant theme during community conversations. Many participants discussed that that people have been isolated over the last year and half due to COVID-19, which has led to increased stress for many households. This stress has resulted in more reports of domestic violence.
- BGLAD is a weekly drop-in social support group for youth at Youth Eastside Services, established as a welcoming and affirming space for people exploring or seeking support for their identities. In a community conversation with BGLAD, participants reported that DV cases in the LGBTQIA+ community are often not taken seriously, and frequently there are no police records of incidents.

### Prevalence

- Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men in the US reported having experienced intimate partner violence during their lifetime. DV has a severe impact on its victims, including adverse physical and mental health outcomes and a high risk of homicide (1 in 6 homicides are perpetrated by an intimate partner). Pandemic and disaster response literature suggest this pandemic increases risks, particularly for individuals who have already experienced DV.<sup>3</sup>
- Data from the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office indicates that DV homicides nearly doubled in 2020 compared to prior years; from 7 each in 2018 and 2019 to 13 in 2020 (data only available through September 2020). DV had also been linked to an additional 15 deaths in 2020. This included murder-suicides, homicides committed by convicted DV perpetrators, and officer-involved shootings of DV suspects.<sup>4</sup>
- In Washington State, Domestic Violence offenses made up 49.7% of all Crimes Against Persons and 2.7% of all Crimes Against Property.<sup>5</sup>

## Bellevue Police Reports Indicating Domestic Violence

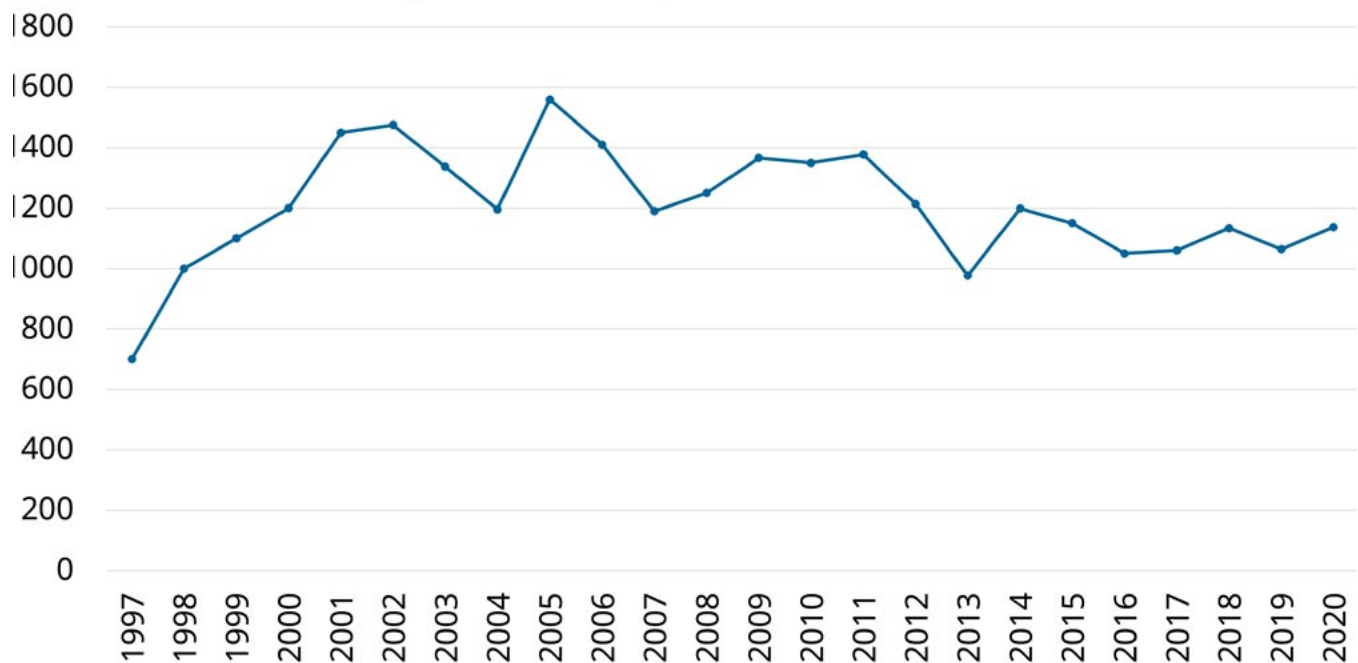


Figure 1 | Source: Bellevue Police Department

- The Bellevue Police Department recorded 1,137 incidents in 2020 where domestic violence was indicated. As Figure 1 shows, the number of reports of domestic violence to the Bellevue Police Department has remained relatively steady since the large drop in 2013. From 2014 to 2020 the City averaged 1,113 domestic violence reports per year. Note: The data collected reflects reports where domestic violence was indicated - which includes all case types, not just assaults. In addition, the data does not include cases where domestic violence occurred but was not reported to the police.<sup>6</sup>
- LifeWire is a DV agency that provides an array of services to domestic violence survivors in East King County. They reported that their Helpline calls for survivor advocacy increased 33% between 2019 and 2020: from 2054 to 2174. They stated that calls to the helpline reduced significantly the first two months of COVID-19 as survivors were trapped with abusers, and thus, may not have been able to reach out for help. During this time LifeWire advocates used a variety of means to connect with current participants when the phones went silent, being very careful to assess safety. This included email, text, and even use of “code words” that represented safe times to talk with clients. The Helpline provides safety planning and short-term advocacy, as well as a gateway to all LifeWire services.<sup>7</sup>
- On the day of the National DV count 2020:
  - 1,206 adult and children DV survivors were in emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other housing program provided by a DV providers in Washington.
  - 1,100 adults and child survivors received non-residential assistance and services (counseling, legal, advocacy, and children’s support groups).
  - 603 individuals had unmet requested services and approximately 62% of the unmet requests were for housing or emergency shelter.<sup>8</sup>



- LGBTQ members fall victim to domestic violence at equal or even higher rates compared to their heterosexual counterparts.
  - 3.8% of lesbian women and 61.1% of bisexual women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime, as opposed to 35% of heterosexual women.
  - 26% of gay men and 37.3% of bisexual men have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime, in comparison to 29% of heterosexual men.
  - Only 26% of men in a male same sex relationship called the police for assistance after experiencing near-lethal violence.<sup>9</sup>
  - 31% to 50% of transgender people have experienced domestic violence, compared to the general population at 28 to 33 percent.<sup>10</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Black and Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) individuals are disproportionately impacted by DV. Black women experience DV at a rate 35% higher than White women. They are also more likely to be killed by their intimate partner. Between 21% and 55% of Asian and Pacific Islander women have experienced DV. More than 1 in 3 Native and Indigenous women will experience DV in their lifetime. Hispanic and Latina women experience DV at rates similar to White women, but Latina immigrants are more likely to experience DV after moving to the U.S.<sup>11</sup>
- Housing is a major concern for DV survivors and their families. In 2020, the Count Us In report (formerly One Night Count) found 1,211 individuals experiencing homelessness were fleeing from domestic violence. This is about 10% of the total homeless population and an increase of about 700 individuals since last year. About 69% of domestic violence victims are unsheltered and 15% have children with them.<sup>12</sup>
- LifeWire states that the needs of DV survivors continually outweigh capacity and that demand for services has increased during the pandemic. The organization served more survivors last year with shelter and housing solutions than in any year prior, yet they are still having to turn away one survivor household for every one served. They also reported about a three-week wait to respond to non-urgent/non-lethal requests for advocacy services, and they still have waiting lists for mental health and legal advocacy services.

## Service Trends

- The Bellevue Police Department (BPD) works closely with and relies heavily on LifeWire's services. In all cases of domestic violence involving police, an advocate works with the individual identified as the victim, explaining the complicated justice system, providing them with information on No Contact and Protection Orders, and planning for safety. The advocate accompanies the victim to court, works closely with the city attorney's office, and is in weekly contact with the prosecutor's office. In 2019, the BPD Domestic Violence Victim Advocate worked with 282 misdemeanor cases with an average caseload of 23.5 cases per month. The average case load in 2020 was 19.75 per month with a total of 237 misdemeanor cases. The City's victim advocate reported that fewer misdemeanor cases were filed in 2020 due to COVID-19, particularly during the spring and summer months. Between January and August of 2021, 161 cases have been filed, averaging 20 cases per month.<sup>13</sup>
- BPD DV Victim Advocate reported that the biggest challenges for individuals experiencing domestic violence are lack of shelter, affordable housing, access to free/reduced fee legal services, and financial resources.<sup>14</sup>

- LifeWire reported that their primary growth has been in shelter/housing services as this continues to be the greatest unmet need for survivors. In 2020, LifeWire provided some form of shelter or housing to 386 households. By providing more housing assistance in 2020, they were able to reduce their turn-away rate to 1:1. Much of this assistance was in the form of flexible funding to survivor households who were directly impacted by the economic downturn as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic vulnerability and homelessness directly impact a survivor's ability to escape DV and remain independent after having left an abusive partner.<sup>15</sup>

"There is not enough shelter and housing for DV survivors. They often end up going back to their abuser because there is nowhere for them to stay while they wait for a shelter or housing opening at LifeWire or another DV provider."

~ Participant, Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network (BDAN) Community Conversation

- Legal assistance remains a primary need for survivors of domestic violence. LifeWire added a third Legal Advocate position in 2021, and partners with Eastside Legal Assistance Program to facilitate pro bono legal services. LifeWire's legal advocates have helped file twice as many DV protection orders (DVPO) in 2020, compared to previous years. Requests for DVPOs increased dramatically during the pandemic as survivors were forced to spend more time at home with abusive partners and lost many of their opportunities for independence, escape and support. Yet, the agency still has a waiting list and it typically takes about three months to meet with a legal advocate, except in cases of serious emergency.<sup>16</sup> In 2020, 209 survivors accessed legal advocacy services for issues ranging from DV protection orders to marriage dissolution and parenting plans.<sup>17</sup>
- Mental health counseling is included in the full range of services needed for survivors. Providers report that many survivors are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicidal ideation as a result of their abuse. There is still typically a waiting list to access services. 158 survivors and youth utilized LifeWire's mental health services in 2020.<sup>18</sup>

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity, including taking advantage of victims not able to give consent, making threats and/or with the perpetrators using force. Most victims and perpetrators know each other. Long-term symptoms include anxiety, fear, or post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>19</sup> Sexual abuse occurs in all communities and among all socio-economic groups.

## Prevalence

- In Washington State, 5,432 sexual offenses were reported in 2020.<sup>20</sup> A rape occurred every 3.7 hours and for all other forcible sex offenses, there was an occurrence every 1.7 hours.<sup>21</sup>
- Over the past ten years (2011-2020) the Bellevue Police Department received an average of 23 reports of rape per year. On average, approximately 23% (5 out of 23) of the reports of rape per year are related to domestic violence.<sup>22</sup>
- Adults who have been sexually assaulted or raped have a likelihood of suffering negative health consequences, including depression, suicide, and alcohol abuse. Ninety-four percent of women who are raped experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

during at least the two weeks following the rape. 33% of women who are raped contemplate suicide and 13% of women who are raped attempt suicide. Approximately 70% of rape or sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, a larger percentage than for any other violent crime. People who have been sexually assaulted are more likely to use drugs than the general public.<sup>23</sup>

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Indigenous Americans are twice as likely to experience a rape/sexual assault compared to all races. 41% of sexual assaults against American Indians are committed by a stranger; 34% by an acquaintance; and 25% by an intimate partner or family member.<sup>24</sup>
- One in two transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives. This indicates that the majority of transgender individuals are living with the aftermath of trauma and the fear of possible repeat victimization. <sup>25</sup> Twenty-one percent of transgender, genderqueer, and/or nonconforming (TGQN) college students have been sexually assaulted, compared to 18% of non-TGQN females and 4% of non-TGQN males. <sup>26</sup>

## Service trends

- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) provides services to children, youth, and adult victims of sexual violence and their families. These services include legal advocacy, helping the victims navigate the criminal justice system, connections to needed services, and building the skills to support their loved ones who have been victimized. In 2020, KCSARC reported that 4,560 King County individuals and their families accessed direct services for a total of 18,565 legal and general advocacy services. This included 219 Bellevue residents who received 1,138 legal and general advocacy services.<sup>27</sup> Twenty-three percent of KCSARC's client services were provided to East King County residents.<sup>28</sup>
- Harborview Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress Services (HSATS), provides a full range of services, including crisis response, advocacy, counseling for child and youth victims of sexual assault and assistance for parents/caretakers.<sup>29</sup> In 2020, they provided 112 hours of counseling to 30 Bellevue residents. They have locations located in both Bellevue and Redmond.<sup>30</sup>

## Child Abuse & Neglect

Child abuse is the physical, psychological, sexual mistreatment of children, and/or neglect of children by their parents or guardians. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse, but rates are hard to establish because neglect is often unreported.

## Prevalence

- Nationally during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019, CPS agencies received an estimated 4.4 million referrals involving the alleged maltreatment of approximately 7.9 million children. More than half (54.5%) of referrals were screened in for investigation or assessment by CPS agencies in the 45 States that reported statistics. Approximately one-fifth (16.7%) of the children investigated were found to be victims of abuse or neglect — a rate of 8.9 per 1,000 children in the population.<sup>31</sup> Note: Being screened out does not necessarily mean that abuse did not occur. When a report is “screened out,” no action is taken, or the report is transferred to a more appropriate agency. Usually, a report is “screened out” when there’s not enough information on which to base an investigation, CPS or police judge the information to be inaccurate or false, or the information in the report doesn’t meet definitions for child abuse or neglect used by the protective authorities. <sup>32</sup>

- In King County, Child Protective Services (CPS), a state agency, responds to reports of suspected abuse involving children. In 2016, a total of 8,238 households in King County were investigated. This has declined from a high of 9,756 in 2007. In 2015, about 30 out of every 1,000 households in King County were investigated or assessed by CPS.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Households of the following racial and ethnic groups were most likely to be investigated or assessed by CPS in 2015, American Indian/Alaska Native (145 per 1,000 households), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (80 per 1,000) and Black/African American (77 per 1,000). Looking across all demographics, Asian households were much less likely to be investigated or assessed, with only 11 investigations or assessments per 1,000 households.<sup>33</sup> There are a variety of factors that may contribute to racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system; including but not limited to structural racism (e.g., historical policies and cultural dynamics); disproportionate and disparate needs of children of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, particularly due to higher rates of poverty, which is also fueled by systemic racism; racial bias and discrimination exhibited by individuals (e.g., caseworkers, mandated reporters), child welfare system factors (e.g., lack of resources for families of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, caseworker characteristics).<sup>34</sup>
- 1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year.<sup>35</sup>
- By age 12, 83% of homeless children have been exposed to at least one serious violent event, and nearly 25% have witnessed acts of violence within their families.<sup>36</sup>
- A majority of child sexual assault victims are ages 12-17. 34% of child victims of sexual assault and rape are under age 12, and 66% of child victims of sexual assault and rape are age 12-17.<sup>37</sup>
- Adults abused as children, who receive no treatment, may experience psychological distress many years after the abuse. These traumatic childhood experiences, which are examples of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), become significant risk factors for serious challenges later in life (substance abuse, depression, suicide, parenting problems). Without intervention or help for the child, typical psychological development can be negatively affected.<sup>38</sup> Eighteen percent of children in Washington State have two or more ACES. <sup>39</sup>

## Service trends

Children living in LifeWire's shelter or transitional housing programs participate in services with an advocate to develop emotional intelligence, healthy ways to express themselves, positive communication skills, and healthy relationship skills. LifeWire reported that during the pandemic it has been much harder to serve children with direct advocacy. However, children in their shelter and transitional housing did receive direct advocacy services and they worked hard to create technology access for survivors and children, including the creation of a "Zoom Room" at their transitional shelter which also allowed the children in that program to participate in an art therapy group."<sup>40</sup>

## Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents

A hate crime occurs when someone maliciously and intentionally commits physical assault, poses threats to a person or group of people that causes the victims to have "reasonable fear" that the attacker will cause physical injury or property damage, and/or damage or destruction of a victim's property based on the attacker's perception of a victim's race, color, religion, ancestry,

national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or mental, physical, or sensory disability.

Bias incidents are acts of prejudice that are not criminal in nature and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage. Threatening words do not constitute a hate crime offense if it is apparent to the victim that the person does not have the ability to carry out the threat. Just because these incidents cannot be criminally charged does not mean they are not important to report. These kinds of incidents have negative impacts on whole communities and deserve to be elevated and understood by the public. Some examples of bias incidents include yelling profanity and insults; distributing racist flyers in public places; and displaying hateful materials on private property.

## Community voice

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Thirty-five percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate community issue, a 10% increase from 2019 and 22% increase from 2009.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Twenty percent of the consumer survey respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination most of the time or sometimes. 31% of respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing discrimination other than racial or ethnic discrimination.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Seven percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate household issue, a 2% decrease from 2019 and the same as 2009.
- Nine percent of the community phone/online survey respondents rated experiencing any other type of discrimination as a major or moderate household issue. This question was asked for the first time, so data from past years is not available for comparison.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Both racial or ethnic discrimination and other types of discrimination is a community issue discussed in the majority of community conversations; it was also brought up by several providers in the provider's survey. During a community conversation with Bellevue Mini City Hall staff, it was reported that racism has increased since the beginning of the pandemic, especially for the Asian community. "We've seen it beginning with people throwing stuff at them and escalated to violence. People are hesitating to report these incidents. Many older adults have reported fear to go into the community because they don't feel safe."

## Prevalence

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In 2020, 468 hate crime incidents were reported in Washington State.<sup>41</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Between January and June of 2021, the Bellevue Police Department received reports for 10 hate crimes and 12 bias incidents, for a total of 22 hate crimes and bias incidents reports. In 2020, there were a total of 23 reports: 18 hate crimes and 5 bias. Hate crimes and bias incidents often go unreported.<sup>42</sup>



## Hate Crimes Reported to Bellevue Police Department

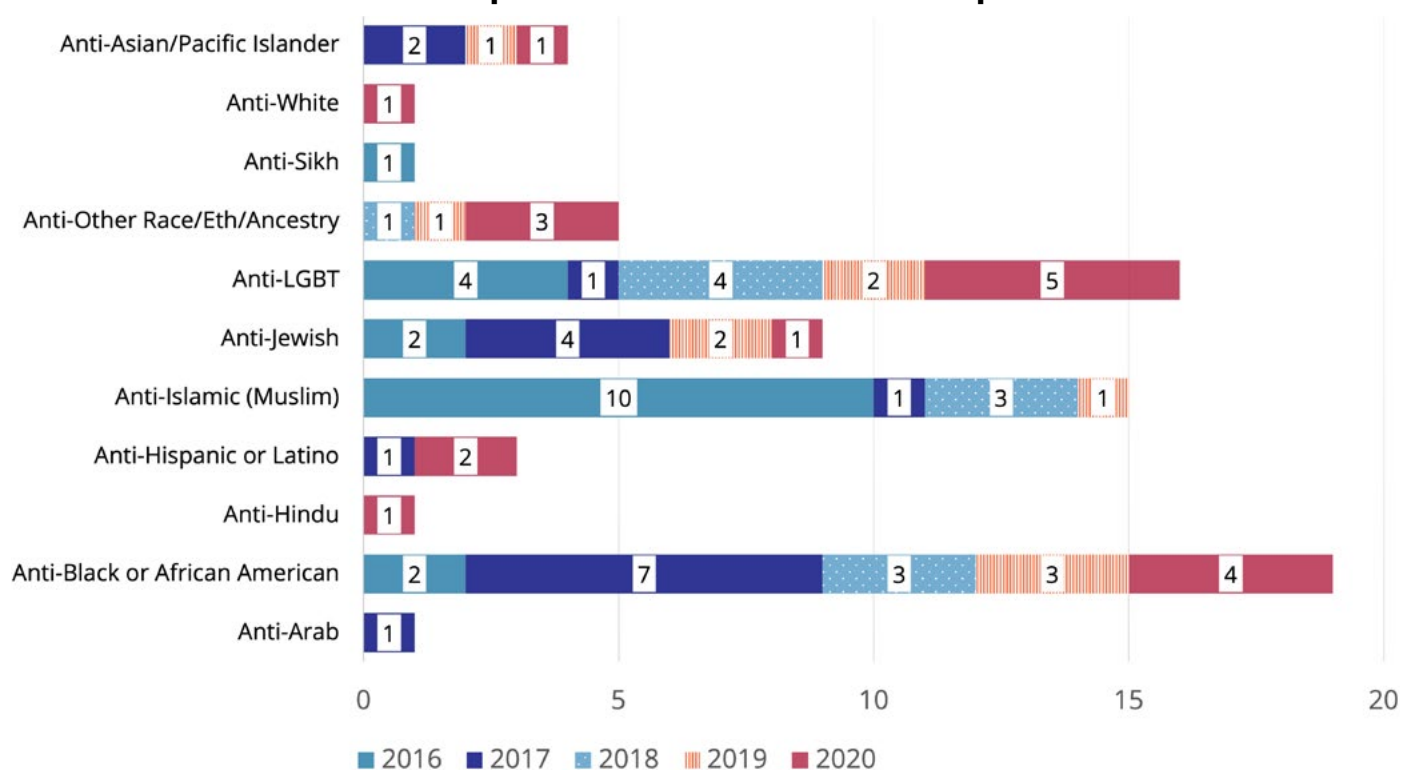


Figure 2 | Source: Bellevue Police Department <sup>43</sup>

- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Figure 2 displays the total number of hate crimes in Bellevue since 2016, breaking down both whom the crime was committed against and the total for each year.<sup>44</sup>
- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** King County Coalition Against Hate and Bias (KCCAHB) is a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression. The coalition was formed because traditional law enforcement remedies disproportionately affect communities of color; hate and bias crimes and incidents go largely under-reported; the data collected is limited in its utility; and visibility and community empowerment have deterrent effects on hate and bias crimes. The Coalition Partners are also the administrators of the Hate and Bias Incident Response Survey which collects data from communities affected by hate and bias. Eight agencies are participating in KCCAHB with 7 collecting response surveys. These include three agencies with an Eastside presence: Chinese Information and Services Center (CISC), Eastside for All, and Muslim Community & Neighborhood Association (MCNA).<sup>45</sup>
- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Eastside agencies participating in KCCAHB (CISC, Eastside for All, and MCNA) and partnering Eastside Agencies (Eastside Embrace, Indian American Community Services, Immigrant Women's Community Center, and 4 Tomorrow) are focusing on collecting data and addressing hate and bias incidents in EKC. Between April 2020 and May 2021, KCCAHB received 87 hate and bias incidents in East King County. This includes 53 reports to Eastside providers, 17 reports to CISC, and 8 reported to United Indians of All Tribes.<sup>46</sup>

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** CISC has an in-house Anti-Bias/Anti-Hate Program that was started in response to rising anti-Asian sentiment during COVID-19. They provide outreach, support, referrals to resources and education. Since July 2020, CISC has collected over 200 reports in King County in six languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Russian, Spanish, and English.<sup>47</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Eastside KCCAHB members (besides CISC) and partnering Eastside agencies reported that the majority of the hate crimes and bias incidents reported to them occurred in the following places: private business or workplace (32%), school K-12 (15%), street or sidewalk (15%), and hospitality (restaurant, hotel, retail, etc.) (13%).<sup>48</sup> CISC reports the majority of the hate crimes and bias incidents reported to them occurred in the following places: street or sidewalk (25%), other - airport, preschool, library, while driving/on road, etc. (14%), public transportation (11%), and hospitality (9%).<sup>49</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In 2021, there have been two very public instances in Eastside King County where hackers posted racial slurs and white nationalist messages. The first occurred in June 2021 on Lake Washington School District's website. Then the second event happen in September 2021 at the Welcome Week event "Equitable Economic Development: Embracing Opportunities for Our Region" held over Zoom that was cosponsored by East King County Cities, including Bellevue, and OneEastside. Eastside for All Founder, Debbie Lacy wrote "We need the racist terrorism and violence to stop. Eastside For All is committed to supporting community members experiencing hate and bias through awareness-building and advocacy efforts."<sup>50</sup>

"This happened in a city in East King County: "My sister-in-law had a horrifying experience at a gas station. When she tried to prepay with cash, the cashier refused to take her money. She asked why and he yelled, 'I don't need your money or business!' He continued yelling, 'Get out of here now!' She felt shaken and left without gas. She felt that her hijab and the color of her skin are what motivated this man to threaten her."

~ Shared by Eastside for All
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) 2016 report on hate violence there were 28 reported LGBTQ and HIV-affected hate violence homicides. 79% were people of color: 18 people who were Black and 4 who were Latinx. Nineteen of the homicides (68%) were transgender and gender non-conforming people. Of the total number of homicides, 17 (61%) were transgender women of color. Seventeen (61%) of the victims were below the age of 35.<sup>51</sup>

*For more information about refugee and immigrants and fear and discrimination, please see the section Refugee and Immigrants.*

# Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking is defined as the inducement of a person to perform a commercial sex act, labor, or services, through force, fraud, or coercion. Human trafficking can also occur if a person under 18 years old of age has been induced or enticed, regardless of force, fraud, or coercion, to perform a commercial sex act. <sup>52</sup>

## Prevalence

- Human Trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Victims are coerced to prostitute and often subjected to physical and psychological dangers, such as severe beatings, rape, drug addiction and other forms of violence.<sup>53</sup> In Washington State, 272 cases of human trafficking were reported in 2019, an increase from 229 cases in 2018 and twice as many reported cases as in 2015 (135 cases). Since 2007, there have been 1,449 cases reported in the state.<sup>54</sup>
- The typical age of entry into prostitution is between 13 and 15 years old. Most of these youth are American. Most of them are trafficked in hotels.<sup>55</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In King County, 52% of all child sex trafficking victims are Black and 84% of youth victims are female, though Black girls only comprise 1.1% of the general population.<sup>56</sup>
- Forty-six percent of homeless LGBTQ youth report running away from home due to family rejection of their sexual orientation and 17 percent ended up on the streets after they aged out of the foster care system. 1 in 3 homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation. There is a disproportionate number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth in the commercially sexually exploited population. LGBTQ youth's entry into commercial sexual exploitation often begins with survival sex or the exchange of sexual favors for basic needs like food, shelter, or clothing. Homeless LGBTQ were three times as likely to engage in survival sex than their heterosexual peers. Homeless LGBTQ youth are roughly 7.4 times more likely to experience acts of sexual violence than heterosexual homeless youth.<sup>57</sup>

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## Endnotes

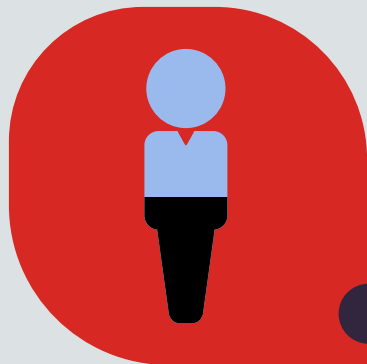
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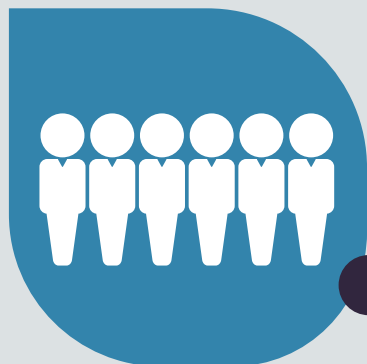
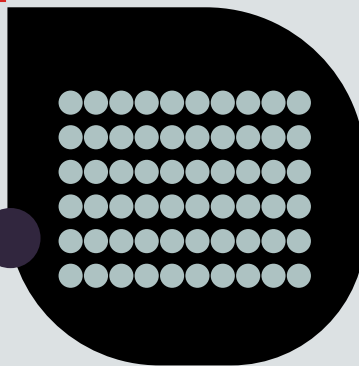
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# Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible



**45%** of community members say lack of affordable medical care is a top issue for the Bellevue community.

**60** confirmed drug and alcohol-related deaths in East King County.



**6,000** Bellevue adults are uninsured.

**33%** of adults in central and northeast Bellevue did not have a dental checkup in the last year.



**20%** of adults in the U.S. experience mental illness each year.

## Goal #4

# Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

This chapter includes data about:

- Health indicators, medical coverage, and access to care
- Dental care
- Substance use disorder
- Mental health

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase, **"Racial (In)Equity Data Point."**

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Key Findings

- Under the health care plans made available after the Affordable Care Act, many vulnerable people now have coverage who were uninsured before ACA. However, coverage does not automatically translate into positive health outcomes, as many still cannot access medical, vision, dental, or mental health services.
- Many community members are struggling with mental health issues, which are exacerbated by a lack of access to affordable, accessible, and culturally competent care.
- Lack of accessible dental care remains a problem for the Bellevue community: service providers, consumers, and residents all identify it as a major health issue, often exacerbated because the Affordable Care Act does not mandate provision of dental insurance.

## Health Indicators, Medical Coverage, and Access to Care

Public Health Seattle King County and the Washington State Department of Health track a number of health indicators to identify a community's general health. A city health profile is a public health report that provides information on health indicators and their determinants. The purpose of the report is to inform policymakers, government agencies, and the public about population health at the local level. Some of these indicators include life expectancy, access to health care, and late or

no prenatal care. Overall, the City of Bellevue’s ratings on the majority of these types of indicators show a greater level of overall health and well-being for its residents compared to King County and Washington State.<sup>1</sup>

When people are uninsured, they typically use the emergency department (ED) of a local hospital for healthcare, which is extremely expensive. Many patients cannot pay these bills, so they apply for what is called “charity care” from the hospital, which may pay for a portion of their bills (from 20% to 100%).

### Community Voice

- Affordability of medical care and medical insurance was a significant community and household concern for phone/online survey respondents. Forty-four percent of survey respondents rated lack of affordable medical insurance as a major/moderate community problem. Forty-five percent of survey respondents rated lack of affordable medical care as a major/moderate community problem.<sup>2</sup>
- In the phone/online survey, not being able to pay for medical insurance was a problem for 9% of households. Not being able to get medical insurance was a problem for 9% of households, and the ability to pay for doctor bills was a problem for 11% of households.<sup>3</sup>
- Thirty-two percent (n=6) of provider survey respondents report that their clients need health care but cannot access it.
- In the consumer survey, 19% (n=21) of respondents said they could rarely or never find affordable medical care. Among those making less than \$50,000, 25% (n=10) said the same.

### Prevalence

- As demonstrated in Figure 1, insurance rates vary substantially across different populations in Bellevue. Although the overall uninsurance rate is only 5%, there are stark differences across racial/ethnic groups, education levels, and income.<sup>4</sup>

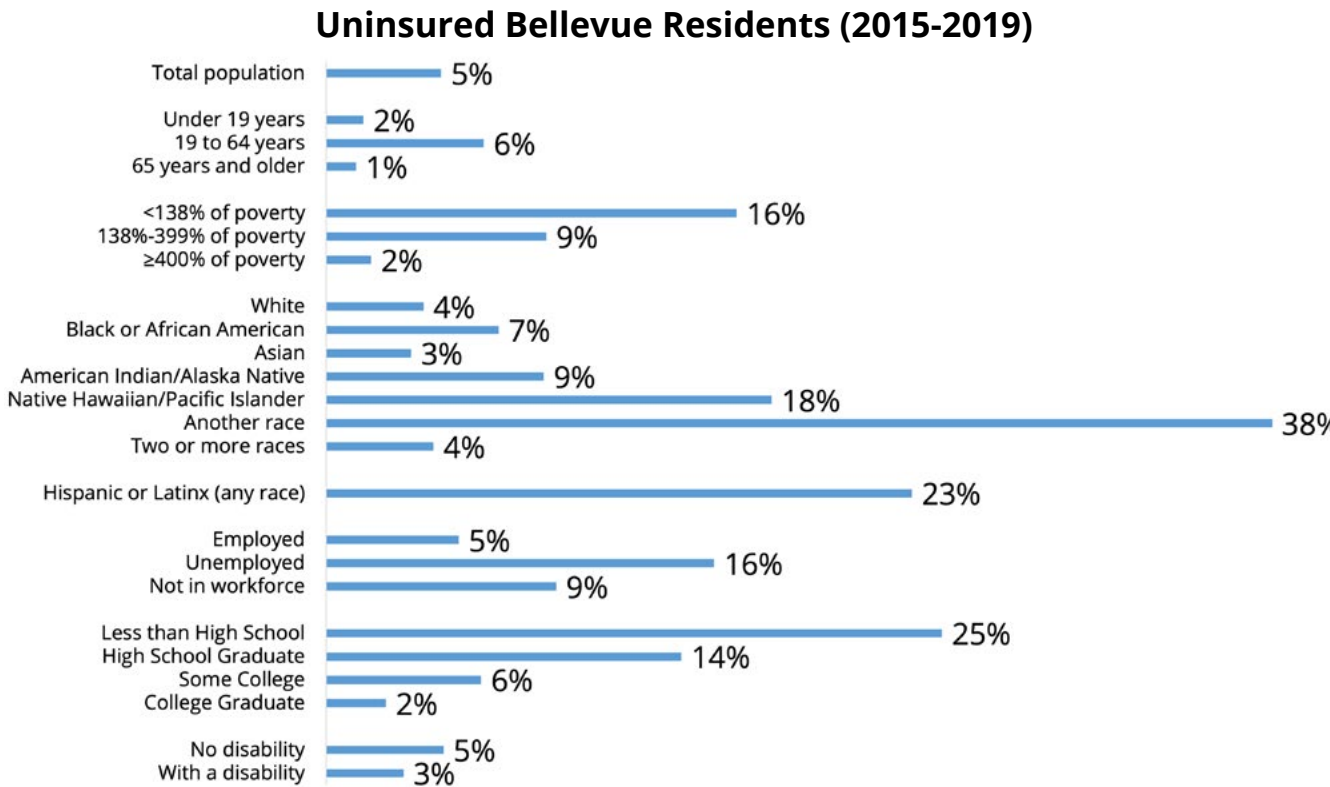


Figure 1 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau<sup>5</sup>

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In King County, Black adults are more than 2 times less likely to have insurance compared to White adults. Additionally, Black people are more than 1.5 times as likely to have unmet health care needs due to cost compared to White people.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2019, approximately 4.6% of Bellevue residents were uninsured, compared with 5.3% across King County. In Bellevue, approximately 6,000 adults between the ages of 19 and 64 were uninsured (an uninsured rate of approximately 6%) while only 1% of children (under age 19) and older adults (over age 65) were uninsured.<sup>7</sup>
- In King County, 10.3% of adults reported needing to see a doctor in 12 months but could not because of cost. Across Bellevue, these percentages ranged from 4.4% (Bellevue-South) to 8.9% (Bellevue-West).<sup>8</sup>

## Service Trends

- As of August 2021, more than 2.1 million Washingtonians are enrolled in Medicaid programs, nearly 470,000 of them are King County residents.<sup>9</sup>
- Washington hospitals reported \$1.039 billion in charity care charges in fiscal year 2019. This is an increase of 8.7% from those reported in fiscal year 2018.<sup>10</sup>
- HealthPoint serves low-income adults, children and youth, many of whom are homeless or in transitional housing. In 2020, HealthPoint provided medical care to 1,312 Bellevue residents.<sup>11</sup>

## Dental Care

Those who have the least access to preventative services and dental treatments have greater rates of oral disease. Similar to broader health access issues, oral health access is strongly tied to educational level, race and ethnicity, and income.<sup>12</sup> Dental decay is the most common chronic disease of childhood, impacting the ability to eat, talk, smile, pay attention and learn in school, which can have costly long-term adverse effects.<sup>13</sup> The Affordable Care Act does not require dental care for adults, though plans can be found for children in the Washington Health Plan Finder.

## Community Voice

- Thirty-seven percent of phone/online survey respondents rated lack of affordable dental care as a major/moderate community problem; 10% of households “not being able to pay for dental bills” as a major/moderate household problem.<sup>14</sup>
- Thirty-six (n=7) percent of provider survey respondents report that their clients need dental services but cannot access them.
- In the consumer survey, 18% (n=20) of respondents said they could rarely or never find medical and/or dental insurance. Among those making less than \$50,000, 38% (n=15) said the same.

## Prevalence

In 2018 (the most recent year for which data are available), between 15% (both Bellevue-South and Bellevue-West) and 33% (both Bellevue-Central and Bellevue-Northeast) of adults reported they did not receive a dental checkup in the last year. Bellevue-South and Bellevue-West’s rates are (statistically) lower than King County’s overall rate.<sup>15</sup>

## Service Trends

- HealthPoint serves low-income adults, children and youth, many of whom are homeless or in transitional housing. In 2020, HealthPoint provided dental care to 402 Bellevue residents in that year.<sup>16</sup>



- According to the provider survey, demand for dental services in Bellevue was rising steadily each year until COVID-19 precautions required closures and service adjustments. Even with those adjustments, International Community Health Services (ICHHS), a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) providing health services to underserved populations in King County, provided dental care to 403 Bellevue residents in 2020.<sup>17</sup>

## Substance Use Disorder

In most individuals, dependency on a substance begins slowly and grows until their life becomes progressively unmanageable. Left untreated, the negative outcomes associated with substance use disorder are numerous, ranging from more frequent arrests to long-term health challenges. However, individuals with a substance use disorder who recognize that they need treatment and can access it are much more likely to engage in behaviors that are positive in the long term.

## Community Voice

Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents rated drug abuse as a major/moderate community problem. Twenty percent rated alcoholism as a major/moderate community problem.<sup>18</sup>

## Prevalence

- There were 515 drug and alcohol caused deaths in King County in 2020; 60 (12%) of those occurred in East King County.<sup>19</sup>
- Bellevue has a lower rate of drug- and alcohol-related deaths than the state as a whole.<sup>20</sup>
- In King County, the number of fentanyl-involved overdose deaths between March and June 2020 was triple the number in the same months of 2019, resulting from the inclusion of fentanyl primarily in counterfeit prescription pills.<sup>21</sup>
- In King County, overdoses disproportionately affect men, twice as often as women. Approximately 12% of overdoses were among people experiencing homelessness. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Despite accounting for only 7% of the population in King County, Black (non-Hispanic) individuals accounted for 18% of all drug- and alcohol-related deaths in the county. Similarly, American Indian/Alaska Native individuals account for 4% of drug- and alcohol-related deaths, but only 1% of the population. All other racial and ethnic groups included in the report (White, Asian, Hispanic, Other) have drug- and alcohol- death rates that are either consistent with or lower than their respective proportion of the population.<sup>22</sup> It is important to acknowledge that race alone is not a determining factor in either substance use or overdose; numerous studies indicate that these disproportionalities exist primarily due to the increased stressors, traumas, and systemic inequities racial and ethnic minorities routinely experience.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2020, there were 60 confirmed drug- and alcohol-related deaths in East King County. As of October 2021, there were 45 confirmed deaths.<sup>24</sup>

“We have seen an increased need for counseling, especially for BIPOC counselors and substance use disorder counseling. We have lost a couple of people to suicide in the last few months due to mental health, so this needs to be addressed.”

~ Participant,  
SafeHaven Community Conversation

- In 2019, there were 51 alcohol-related deaths in Bellevue, and the age-adjusted rate (6.6 per 100,000) is substantially less than that of King County (9.7) and Washington State (12.5).<sup>25</sup>
- Across Bellevue, between 6% (Bellevue-West) and 11% (Bellevue-Central) of adults reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days (Bellevue-South and Bellevue-Northeast were 6.3% and 6.2% respectively). None of these rates statistically differed from the overall King County rate.<sup>26</sup>

## Service Trends

- Opioids are a class of drugs including heroin, fentanyl, and pain relievers like oxycodone.<sup>27</sup> Across King County, 2,637 people were served through multiple strategies to address opioid addiction, including prescribing buprenorphine and providing trauma-informed behavioral health services.<sup>28</sup>
- Largely due to COVID-19 related service interruptions, King County's Behavioral Health and Recovery Division recorded fewer new substance use disorder assessments from March through August 2020 compared to the same months of 2019. However, the number of assessments increased per month between May and August.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2017, the most recent data available, 380 Bellevue clients received substance use disorder services from Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.<sup>30</sup>
- Therapeutic Health Services (THS) provides intensive outpatient drug and alcohol treatment. In 2020, THS provided substance abuse treatment to 267 Bellevue residents.<sup>31</sup>

## Mental Health

Individuals with a mental health diagnosis can experience disruption in their ability to think, feel, and relate to others, and this often results in changes in daily functioning. Fortunately, treatment for a mental health diagnosis, often a combination of psychosocial support and medication, can be effective. In the United States, the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH) reports that between 70 and 90 percent of individuals experience a significant reduction in symptoms and improved quality of life after engaging in mental health treatment services.<sup>32</sup>

## Community Voice

- In the 2021 Bellevue phone/online survey, having a lot of stress, anxiety or depression that interferes with their daily life was rated as a major or moderate problem by 25% of respondents, the top problem experienced by households.<sup>33</sup>
- In the phone/online survey, not being able to pay for mental health counseling was a problem for 8% of households. Not having access to mental health counseling was a problem for 10% of households.<sup>34</sup>
- Fifty-eight percent (n=11) of provider survey respondents report that their clients need mental health care but cannot access it.
- In the consumer survey, 17% (n=19) of respondents said they could rarely or never find counseling services. Among those making less than \$50,000, 29% (n=11) said the same. In addition, 34% (n=37) of all respondents said they had a lot of anxiety, stress, and/or depression that interfered with their daily living. For respondents making less than \$50,000, only 21% (n=8) said the same.

## Prevalence

- About 20% of adults in the U.S. experienced mental illness in 2020.<sup>35</sup>
  - **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** There is wide variation in the prevalence of mental illness among racial and ethnic groups. For example, in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 2019 national survey, 22% of White respondents reported experiencing mental illness in the past year, compared with 17% of Black respondents, 18% of Hispanic/Latino respondents, and 14% of Asian respondents (the lowest reported rate among all racial and ethnic groups). Respondents identifying as multi-racial had the highest incidence of mental illness at 32%.<sup>36</sup> These patterns are consistent with data from the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue Metropolitan Service Area (MSA).<sup>37</sup> Importantly, while these data are considered representative, some racial and ethnic groups may experience stigma around mental health issues, which could affect willingness to disclose challenges in surveys.<sup>38</sup>
- “Mental Health services are incredibly difficult to access for someone with cognitive issues. First, the system is challenging to navigate. Then, there are no mental health services available for people with cognitive issues and no one is talking about this gap in services. Also, it is difficult to find providers that accept Medicaid and Medicare.”

~ Participant, Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey, 26% of all respondents in Washington (n=5,950,326) reported feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge more than half the days (n= 641,484) or nearly every day (n= 901,196) in the previous week. In that same survey, 16% of all respondents reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless more than half the days (n= 478,253) or nearly every day (n= 502,207) in the previous week.<sup>39</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Statewide, those who identified as two or more races reported the highest rate of symptoms for anxiety (45%), while those who identified as Black reported the highest rate of symptoms for depression (39%).<sup>40</sup>
  - There is an inverse relationship between household income and feelings of anxiety and depression: as household income rises, the likelihood of experiencing anxiety and/or depression in a given week dramatically decreases. Across the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue MSA, people with household incomes of less than \$25,000 were five times as likely to report distress than those with incomes of \$200,000 or more. In addition, 25% of individuals from households with incomes below the \$25,000 threshold reported not being able to get needed counseling or therapy from a mental health professional.<sup>41</sup>
  - Across Bellevue, between 4.6% (Bellevue-West) and 8.4% (Bellevue-Northeast) of adults report frequent mental distress over a given month. Each of these percentages is statistically consistent with the overall King County average.<sup>42</sup>
  - Between 2014 and 2018 (the most recent data available), there were 82 suicides in Bellevue. Across Bellevue, the suicide rate ranged from 8.2 per 100,000 (Bellevue-South) to 14.7 per 100,000 (Bellevue-West). Across Bellevue, these percentages are statistically consistent with King County’s overall rate.<sup>43</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Across King County, the suicide rate for American Indian/Alaska Native residents was nearly twice the rate of

White residents. In comparison, however, the suicide rate for all other racial groups was approximately half that of White residents.<sup>44</sup> As a single group, White male adults have the highest rates of death by suicide across the county.<sup>45</sup>

## Service Trends

- Crisis Clinic provides a 24-Hour Crisis Line. In 2020, the 24-Hour Crisis Line responded to more than 3,500 calls from Bellevue residents.<sup>46</sup>
- The Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Behavioral Health Tax Fund ensures that people with behavioral health needs across King County are healthy, safe, and have access to the care they need. In 2019, approximately 2,000 East King County residents (or 10% of individuals served countywide) received at least one MIDD-funded service. MIDD strategies serving Eastside residents included: Prevention and Early Intervention (774 individuals), Crisis Diversion (884 individuals), Recovery and Reentry (168 individuals), and Therapeutic Courts (232 individuals).<sup>47</sup>
- In 2020, NAMI-Eastside provided services to 712 Bellevue residents in the form of support groups, educational seminars, and direct services.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2020, IKRON provided behavioral health assessments and services to 99 Bellevue residents.<sup>49</sup>

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# Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential



Bellevue household of three (one adult/two children) must make **\$96,060** per year (\$46.18/hr) to have a living wage.

**71%** of Bellevue adults hold a Bachelor's degree or higher.



Childcare in Bellevue for two children (toddler and preschooler) in full-time care cost **\$46,176/year**.

In the provider's survey, **54%** reported that transportation was a barrier for their clients to access services.



Unemployment in King County peaked at **15.1%** in April **2020** and was down to **4.4%** in October **2021**.

# Goal #5

## Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential

This chapter includes data about:

- Education/Training
- Employment
- Living Wage
- Childcare
- Transportation

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations within our community (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans), please see their respective chapters.

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In)Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

### Key Findings

The majority of Bellevue residents have a high level of education, however, there are not many vacancies in some of the growing sectors that pay a living wage. Some residents are underemployed and do not have enough income from one job to make ends meet.

- Barriers to employment such as lack of affordable and quality childcare, limited English speaking skills, the absence of coordinated transportation, and lack of training and education opportunities to secure higher wage jobs are key issues to be addressed to help people improve their economic conditions and the quality of their lives.
- The decrease in middle-income job opportunities makes it harder for people at lower incomes to access better jobs. There are more low-wage job opportunities, but along with these come financial instability, dependence on public supports that are dwindling due to budget cuts, and less of a chance to obtain additional training to increase skills to find a better job.
- A living wage for a family living in Bellevue is higher than in other parts of King County.

## Education/Training

To obtain living-wage jobs in Bellevue, workers must possess significant education or job skills. Limited opportunities for advanced education for living-wage jobs present barriers to people becoming self-sufficient. Job training opportunities must align with the current market for jobs paying more than the minimum wage.

### Community Voice

A theme that emerged from a number of the community conversations indicated that upward mobility out of poverty is increasingly difficult. There are many short term and survival programs, but the lack of living wage jobs, social and relational support, and specialized employment programs means individuals and families cycle in and out of crises.

### Prevalence

- King County is one of the most highly educated communities in the country: 54% of county residents hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. In Bellevue, the percentage of adults age 25 and older in 2019 who had earned a Bachelor's degree or above was 71%, an increase from 59% in 2010.<sup>1</sup> As Figure 1 shows, Bellevue residents with more education have higher median earnings.

#### Bellevue Residents/Median Earnings by Education Attainment Level, 2019

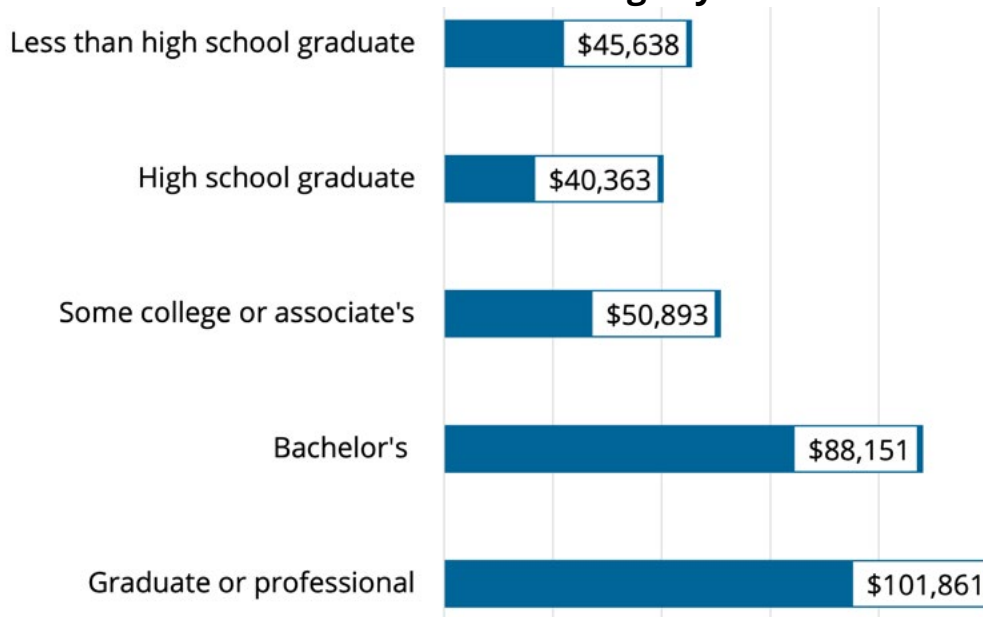


Figure 1 | Source: 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

- Higher levels of education typically result in higher pay benefits and lower unemployment.<sup>2</sup> During COVID-19, we saw the unemployment gap increase between those with a high school diploma or less and a bachelor's degree or more. Pre-Covid, the difference between the two groups was 2.2% and as of May 2020 it had increased to 8.8%. One factor contributing is the ability to telework. Approximately 65% of workers with a bachelor's degree or more teleworked, while 22% of workers with a high school diploma or less teleworked. Data also show that workers with higher levels of education are more likely to hold jobs that involve less interpersonal contact; therefore, individuals with high levels of education were less impacted by social distancing and other health precautions.<sup>3</sup>

## Service Trends

- Hopelink's English for Work and GED/High School Diploma programs served 209 individuals, 45 Bellevue residents in 2020. English for Work classes help immigrants and refugees improve their English language skills and prepare for employment in the United States. These programs goals are to help people increase their incomes with additional education. All classes are being offered remotely due to Covid-19.<sup>4</sup>
- Bellevue College's Preparing for Work program served 218 individual, 154 Bellevue residents in 2020 with workshops and trainings to help them prepare resumes, job search and English skills.<sup>5</sup>
- Bellevue College's Center for Career Connection program served 2,139 individuals, 680 Bellevue residents in 2020. Staff report that many Eastside residents sought help returning to the labor force, planning a career change, or just finding a new gig while their former employer remained shuttered. They held a fall event series called "Breaking Barriers," and it focused on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, which featured included representatives from over 20 employers interested in diversifying their workforce.<sup>6</sup>

## Employment

There has been a rise in unemployment rates both nationally and in the Seattle-Bellevue area due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there are also people who are underemployed and do not have enough income to make ends meet.

## Community Voice

- In the 2021 phone/online survey, *unemployment* was considered a major/moderate problem by 26% of respondents, a significant increase compared to 2019 when it was 11%, moving from the third tier to the second tier of community problems. Ratings of *unemployment* as a community problem peaked in 2011 at 55%.<sup>7</sup>
- The majority of phone/online survey respondents (73%) were employed either full or part-time. Only 4% (14 respondents) of those survey respondents that are working have a second job; only 3 of those that works two jobs said they could not afford their mortgage or rent with only one job. Five percent of the respondents reported currently being unemployed and looking for work.<sup>8</sup>

## Prevalence

- Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate in King County peaked to 15.1% in April 2020, which is significantly higher than the peak during the recession in 2010 when it peaked at 8.8%. The average unemployment rate was 5.1% from January through September 2021, compared to 7.6% in 2020, 2.6% in 2019, and 3.3% in 2018. Although the data is showing the economy is recovering, there are still 39,701 unemployed individuals (4.4% unemployment rate) in King County in October 2021. The data indicates to expect to see lasting effecting on the needs in the community.<sup>9</sup>
- The service sector remains Bellevue's largest job sector. Job growth in the service sector represented 61% of all jobs, making Bellevue a regional hub for service sector employment especially in information technology (26%) and professional, scientific, and technical jobs (25%).<sup>10</sup>



## Service Trends

- Hopelink's Employment Program served 59 Bellevue residents in 2020 with advanced job coaching, job search and goal setting to obtain the training for a living wage job.<sup>11</sup>
- The YWCA's Employment Program provided training to 30 Bellevue residents in 2020 to obtain living wage jobs.<sup>12</sup>
- Jewish Family Service provided 57 Bellevue residents job coaching, resume building, job search and job retention support in 2020.<sup>13</sup>
- IKRON provided 19 Bellevue residents with job searching, training workshops, and on the job training and coaching.
- Seattle Business Education HUB provides technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring to aspiring micro and small entrepreneurs who are economically and socially disadvantaged. Between January to June 2021, they served 18 Bellevue residents.

## Living Wage

Although Washington has the highest minimum wage in the nation, Bellevue residents need to have substantial wages in order to be self-sufficient. A "living wage" is often defined as the minimum income needed to purchase basic necessities without help from public assistance. Living wage calculations often include the cost of housing, food, transportation, health care, taxes, childcare and household, clothing and personal items.

## Community Voice

- In the 2021 phone/online survey, 49% of respondents rated *having a job that does not pay enough for the basics* as a major/moderate problem in their community.<sup>14</sup>
- Thirty three percent of the phone/online survey respondents rated *lack of money for basic services* as a major/moderate problem in their community. This is similar to the rating in 2019 and higher than the rating in 2013.<sup>15</sup>
- At the household level, 12% of respondents in 2021 ranked *not being able to find work that supports yourself* or your family as a major/moderate problem, about the same as 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019.<sup>16</sup>
- In the 2021 consumer survey, 36% of the respondents with an income below \$50,000 reported that they either rarely or never *can find work that supports themselves or their family*.
- During community conversations, many of our providers stated that they are experiencing a staffing shortage due to their inability to pay a competitive wage. They reported that with the cost of living so high in East King County, it has added an extra challenge in maintaining staff since many cannot afford to live here.

## Prevalence

- Washington State's minimum wage in 2021 is \$13.69 an hour, the highest in the country. Though an adult making the minimum wage working full time and supporting two children earns about \$28,500, it is barely over the federal poverty level (FPL).
- "Low wages" is defined as two-thirds of the median hourly wage for full-timeworker. For Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA a low-wage is \$18.94 per hour in 2018 compared to \$16.67 nationally. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, nationally, low-wage earners comprised 43% of the workforce. More than a year into the pandemic, they comprise 52% of the displaced

workers, nearly 10% higher than we would expect if low-wage and mid/high-wage jobs were recovering at an equal pace. Losing a job is especially devastating for those already living paycheck to paycheck or without alternative sources of income and about two in five low-wage workers were living below 200% of the poverty line. More than one in four low-wage workers were receiving safety net benefits such as food assistance or Medicaid. **Racial (In) Equity Data Point:** The displaced low-wage workforce is far younger, more racially and ethnically diverse, and have completed less formal education than the displaced mid/high-wage workforce.<sup>17</sup>

- The Self-Sufficiency Calculator measures the amount of money families would have to earn in order to live without public supports or assistance (another form of living wage).<sup>18</sup> Figure 2 demonstrates data from the Self-Sufficiency Calculator for a Bellevue resident. For example, a single parent with a school age child and a toddler earning minimum wage would need to work 127.5 hours per week, which is nearly impossible, to be self-sufficient in Bellevue based on the Self-Sufficiency calculator.<sup>19</sup>

### Bellevue Living and Minimum Wage Comparison

Family Type	Bellevue Living Wage	Gap Between Living and Minimum Wage
Single Adult	\$21.05/hr. \$43,774.497/yr.	\$6.56
Single adult with a school-aged child (6-8 years)	\$31.85/hr. \$66,248.03/yr.	\$17.36
Single adult with a school-aged child and a toddler (12-24 months)	\$46.18/hr. \$96,060.29/yr.	\$31.69
Two working adults with a school-aged child and a toddler	\$23.67/hr./adult \$98,470/yr.	\$9.18/adult
Two adults (one working) with a school-aged child and a toddler	\$47.34/hr. \$98,470/yr.	\$32.85

Figure 2 | Source: The Self Sufficiency Calculator for Washington State/Work Force Development Council Seattle-King County<sup>20</sup>

### Service Trends

- Washington State's WorkFirst temporary cash assistance program (TANF) provides training and education to help low-income families stabilize their lives. Participants must be working or actively seeking a job and assistance is limited to 60 months in a person's lifetime. In January 2021, there were 30,451 cases in the state, up from 25,110 in January 2020.<sup>21</sup>

"We have seen an increase of people experiencing financial instability due to the impacts of COVID-19 has had on the economy. Many people have lost their jobs and entered an unstable financial state. This has led to an increasing need for services."

~ Provider's Survey

- Employment Programs, including those at Hopelink, IKRON, Jewish Family Services, and YWCA focus on working with individuals to find employment that pays a living wage and/or creating a plan to increase their wages through education or job training.

## Childcare

Affordable, quality childcare is critical so that families can work and provide for their families. Research shows that the quality of early education has a direct impact on future success. Many families struggled to find accessible, affordable childcare during the pandemic.

### Community Voice

- *Lack of affordable childcare* was rated as a top-ranked community problem in the 2021 phone and online community survey. 51% rated it as a major/moderate household problem, which is the same as 2019 but an 21% increase from 2013.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2021, 21% of the phone and online community survey respondents rated *Not being able to find affordable childcare* as a major/moderate household problem.<sup>23</sup>
- Thirty-six percent of community phone and online community survey respondents rated *Lack of available childcare* as a major or moderate community problem. This was a new question in 2021, so there is no past data available for comparison.<sup>24</sup>

### Prevalence

- As of October 2021, there were 458 childcare centers and childcare homes in EKC. This represents approximately 22,989 slots with the majority in childcare centers. The number of slots represents a 6% reduction in total slots in EKC from 2019.<sup>25</sup>
- About 35% of childcare providers in East King County offer what is called “non-standard” hours, such as childcare after 6:30 pm, overnight, and/or during weekends. However, the demand of working parents needing childcare during “non-stand” hours is much higher than the slots available. 82% of care during evenings, nights, and weekends is done by family, friend, or neighbor (FFN) caregivers.<sup>26</sup>
- Nearly 75% of King County’s young children 0-5 are not in formal early learning programs, such as licensed childcare, Head Start, and ECEAP. 25% are in the care of FFN caregivers while their parents are at work or school. FFN caregivers include grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, good family friends, and others who are an important part of parents’ social support network. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** FFN care is preferred by Black, Indigenous, People of Color families because FFN caregivers are people that they know and trust to care for their child within the family’s home culture and language. FFN care is also more prevalent among immigrant families and children with special needs.<sup>27</sup>
- Washington ranks among the top five highest in the country in the cost of childcare, especially for infants.<sup>28</sup> Childcare for an East King County (EKC) family with an infant and a preschooler in full-time care at childcare center costs, on average, \$50,988/year; EKC childcare costs are the highest in the county. In EKC, the average annual cost of infant care is \$29,832, 26% of the Seattle-Bellevue 2019 area median household income.<sup>29</sup>

## Average Monthly Cost of Care at Center 2021

Age	Bellevue
Infant (under 12 months)	\$ 2,486
Toddler (12 mos - 2 1/2 yrs)	\$ 2,085
Preschool (2 1/2 - 5 yrs)	\$ 1,763
School Age (full day K and up)	\$ 600

Figure 3 | Source: Child Care Resources

- Many childcare centers and homes accept only a few families using Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidies because the reimbursement rates are lower than market rate. As of June 2021, 51% of EKC childcare centers, family childcare homes and after-school programs accept WCCC subsidies, a decrease from 62% in June 2019.<sup>30</sup>
- In the Seattle-Bellevue-Tacoma Metropolitan Service Area, the median annual salary of a teacher in a childcare center is \$35,240 (\$16.94 per hours) while a kindergarten teacher makes a median annual salary of \$68,340 (\$32.86 per hour). The lack of competitive wages makes it difficult to recruit and retain educated childcare workers.<sup>31</sup>

## Service Trends

- Child Care Resources (CCR) assists Bellevue families in accessing quality childcare. In 2018, they helped 4,207 clients in need of childcare to search for matching providers in Bellevue and 12,738 statewide. They report that changes in subsidy eligibility means that fewer families can receive state funding and, as a result, they must request other locally funded scholarship programs. Ten Bellevue resident have been served with subsidy in 2021.<sup>32</sup>
- Funding for Head Start and the State Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) in King County is insufficient to meet the need for quality early learning for children from families with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty level. In 2016, all 151 Head Start preschool slots in Bellevue School District (BSD) were eliminated.<sup>33</sup>
- CCR case managers helps families experiencing homelessness to secure stable, quality childcare so they can find housing, look for work, and go to domestic violence related meetings, court, or medical appointments. In 2021, the program averaged 5 family intakes per month which was fewer than in previous years due to changes in federal funding and the pandemic.<sup>34</sup>

"Affordable childcare is a huge barrier for many working parents. The problem became an even larger challenge during the pandemic, because many families needed full-time child care while their children were doing school remotely and there was limited capacity at childcare centers. 50% of the household we serve are single parent households making it even more difficult to afford the additional cost of full-time childcare."

~ LifeSpring, Community Conversation

- The State's childcare subsidy program Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) serves low-income families earning up to 200% FPL who are working or participating in a DSHS-approved training activity. Families may still have a substantial co-pay: a family of three earning \$38,000 a year would pay \$425.50 per month for two children in childcare, about 13.5% of their annual income.<sup>35</sup>

## Transportation

Reliable public transportation is another key component in people being able to access and retain employment.

### Community Voice

- Forty one percent of the 2021 phone/online survey respondents rated *inadequate public transportation* as a moderate or major community problem, similar to responses in the last several surveys. Seventeen percent of respondents rated it as a household problem.<sup>36</sup>
- In the 2021 phone/online survey, 41% rated *lack of other transportation option (besides public transportation)* as a major/moderate community problem.<sup>37</sup>
- In the 2021 provider survey, 63% of respondents reported that their clients needed, but could not find, help with transportation. Fifty four percent reported that transportation was a barrier for their clients to access services.

### Prevalence

**Bellevue Resident's Mode of Travel to Work by Poverty level**

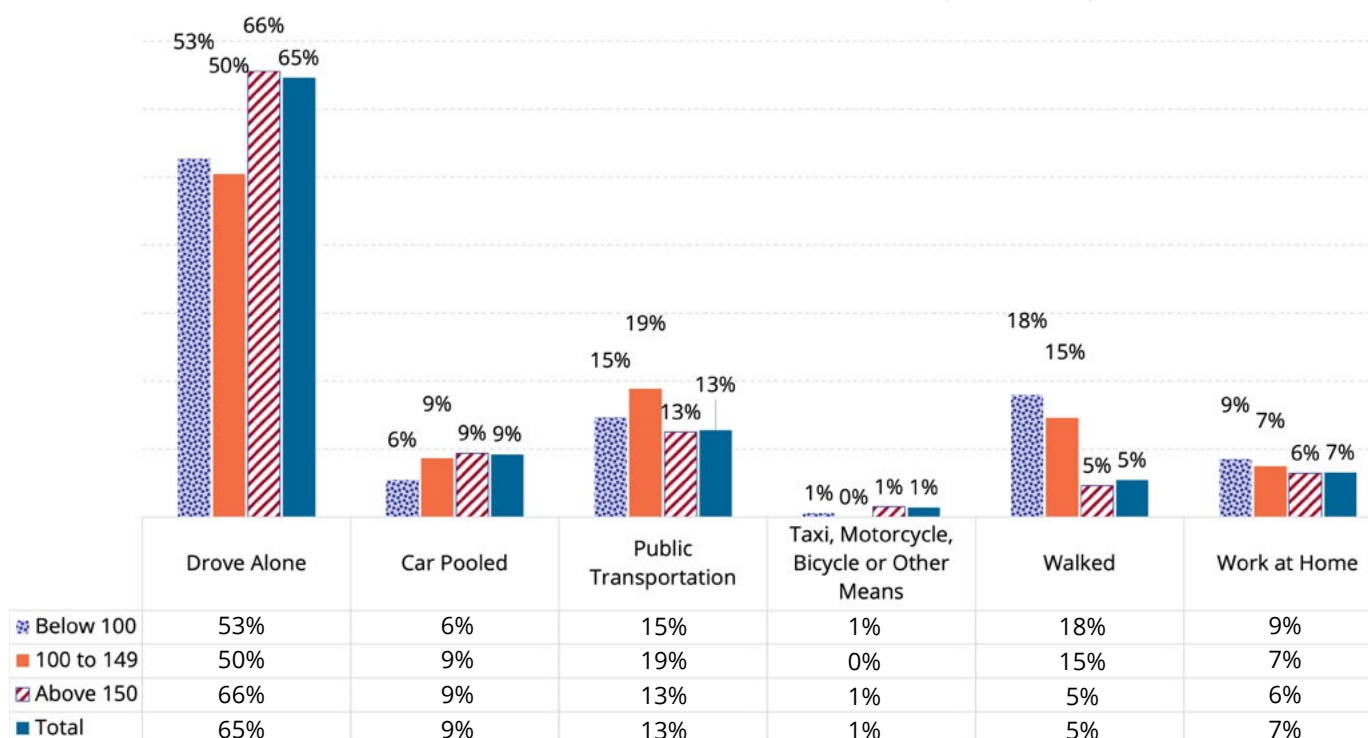


Figure 4 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As Figure 4 shows, workers in households with incomes below FPL or between 100 and 149% of FPL had the highest proportions of people using public transportation with about 15 and 19% respectively.<sup>38</sup> However, public transportation is not inexpensive, especially if the trip includes transfers and/or a family with multiple members.

## Service Trends

- Hopelink provides non-emergency medical transportation in King and Snohomish counties for medical services covered by Medicaid. In 2020, they provided 816,800 rides to 31,924 individuals.<sup>39</sup>
- Hopelink also provides public DART Transit through a contract with King County Metro. DART offers bus routes in some neighborhoods using mini buses that can go off regular routes to pick up and drop off passengers. DART operates on a fixed schedule, but one that has more flexibility than regular Metro Transit buses. In 2020, they provided 428,876 rides in King County.
- Sound Generation's Volunteer Drivers program offers older adults (60 and older) free, personalized transportation to and from essential healthcare appointments through volunteer drivers. They provided 827 one-way trips to 71 individuals.



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## Endnotes

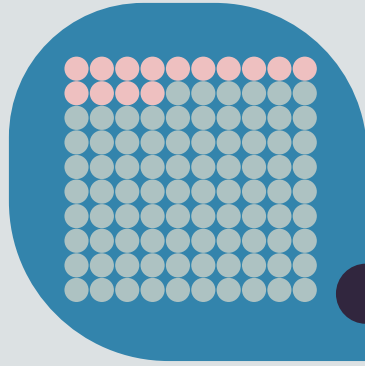
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# Specific Populations



# Older Adults



**14%** of Bellevue residents are 65 years of age or older.

**1 in 4** people that utilized Hopelink's Bellevue Center Food Bank were ages 55 and over.



Almost **1/3** of senior renters in Bellevue spend more than **50%** of their income on housing.

**31%** of the phone and online survey respondents rated lack of services for elderly persons as a major or moderate community problem.



In the US, individuals aged 65 and older account for **20%** of all suicide deaths.

About 8% of older adults in Bellevue age 65 and over had incomes below the Federal Poverty Level.



# Older Adults

## Key Findings

- Housing options are needed to address the huge shortfall of affordable housing for many older adults on a fixed income.
- The rising cost of living strongly impacts many older adults living on fixed incomes. More older adults will likely delay their retirement and work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65, primarily because they can't afford to retire.
- Millions of older adults are affected by elder abuse, including physical mistreatment, neglect in care, and financial exploitation.
- The demand for support services for older adults from other countries, including both those newly settled in Bellevue as well as long-time residents, continues to increase. These services include English classes, culturally sensitive healthcare, and activities that promote engagement in the community.
- Coordinated transportation for older adults in the community is a rising issue. As more older adults decide not to drive, they still need reliable, affordable transportation to medical appointments, employment, grocery stores, and to continue being involved in the community.

## Brief Description

The aging of a large segment of the population profoundly impacts and shapes the type of services and supports that will be needed in our communities, not only in Bellevue, but throughout the county, state, and nation. In Bellevue, 14% of residents are 65 years of age or older.<sup>1</sup> BelRed, Downtown, Northeast Bellevue, Northwest Bellevue, and West Lake Sammamish have the largest share of their residents in the older adult cohort, 65 years and over.

People are living longer; over the last decade, the average life expectancy in King County climbed to 81.7 years, which exceeds the national average of 78.7 years and Washington State average of 80.2 years. Within King County, the North Region (81.2 years) and the South Region (79.3 years) have lower life expectancy compared to the King County average, whereas the East Region (83.9 years) and Seattle (83.4 years) both have higher life expectancies. As a result of longer life expectancy, people are more likely to need some type of long-term care services and supports (LTSS) and for many it will be a challenge to stretch retirement income and savings to pay these costs.

**Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** There exist noteworthy differences in life expectancy by location and race/ethnicity in King County. Life expectancy is highest among Asian (85.7 years) and Hispanic residents (84.0 years). Black residents have a life expectancy of 77.6 years old and the life expectancy of white residents is 81.6 years old. While estimates may be imprecise due to small population numbers, at 72.2 years, Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander residents have the lowest life expectancy of all racial/ethnic groups in King County.<sup>2</sup>

Older adults have diverse abilities, backgrounds, incomes, and needs. Members of the Bellevue Network on Aging (BNOA) identified a number of issues that they believe should be addressed for older adults in Bellevue. The top needs they reported are affordable housing, improved



transportation options for non-drivers, affordable long-term care options including opportunities that allow residents to stay in their homes, support for people with memory loss and their caregivers, safeguards for older adults related to elder abuse including scams and financial abuse, and the ability for older adults to “age in place” with dignity and grace.<sup>3</sup>

Bellevue ranks well for its age-friendly amenities and overall livability. The city has a Senior Score of 79, which is seven points higher than the national average and 11 points higher than the rest of the state. This proprietary ranking system analyzes more than 100 factors related to finances, health and safety, recreation and leisure and general quality of life.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter only provides information about goals 1 through 5 as they relate specifically to older adults. For a broader discussion of these areas, please see their respective chapters.

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be a Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential
- Additional Topics for Considerations:
  - Disability Issues
  - Transportation
  - Increased Racial and Ethnic Diversity

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In)Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead

- Roughly 1 in 4 people (26%) that utilized Hopelink's Bellevue Center Food Bank in Fiscal Year 2019 were ages 55 and over.<sup>5</sup>
- Bellevue Fire CARES reports that they have seen an increase in older adults who need help maintaining their homes and needing assistance with food insecurity.<sup>6</sup>
- Concerns about hunger in King County have primarily focused on families with children. Since the Great Recession, however, the need for food assistance among King County seniors has increased dramatically. In King County in 2016, adults aged 55 and older accounted for almost 1 in 3 food bank visits, up from 1 in 5 in 2010.<sup>7</sup>
- Nationally, roughly 7.3 million older adults are food insecure in the U.S., participation in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has steadily increased over the past decade, yet still only 48% of older adults who qualify are enrolled. Older adults with disabilities are more than 2.5 times as likely to be food insecure as their non-disabled peers.<sup>8</sup>



- In the U.S. in 2019 7% (5.2 million) of seniors were food insecure. For the Seattle-Bellevue-Tacoma area, 5.3% of older adults were food insecure.<sup>9</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Fifteen percent of older black adults reported experiencing food insecurity, compared to 8% of older adults who are Asian American, Pacific Islander, Native American, and multi-racial, and 5% of older white adults.<sup>10</sup>
- As the pandemic continues, seniors face new challenges to put food on the table. Six three percent of senior households served by the Feeding America network reported they have had to choose between paying for food or medical care. Households that include an adult age 50 or older are at an increased risk of having someone with a chronic health condition that can often be mitigated by healthy food options, including depression, diabetes, and high blood pressure.<sup>11</sup>
- In 2020, Sound Generations distributed 7,875 meals to home-bound seniors in Bellevue, and a total of 469,095 across King County. During deliveries, they also provide referral to other services, including transportation, caregiving, legal assistance and the Sound Generations Pathway's Information and Assistance Program.<sup>12</sup>
- In Bellevue, there are only 400 affordable (below market) rental units specifically for low-income older adults.<sup>13</sup> Almost one-third (31%) of senior renters in Bellevue spend more than 50% of their income on housing.<sup>14</sup>
- Eastside Emergency Shelter providers for both single men and single women reported a large number of older adults needing homeless services, including shelters, safe parking for those living in their cars, and connection to resources.<sup>15</sup> Crisis Connections of King County found that almost 25% of the calls they received in 2020 were from older adults in search of human services assistance.<sup>16</sup>
- ARCH offers tools to educate seniors, caregivers, and their families about housing choices in East King County when considering aging in place or transitioning to a new home.<sup>17</sup>
- Universal Design (UD) is an approach to design planning that recognizes and accommodates the ordinary changes people experience over their lives due to aging and life circumstances. This philosophy is beginning to impact the way new housing units are designed and built to enable older adults the maximum mobility in their homes, as well as people with disabilities and families with young children. Housing incorporating universal design elements, such as grab bars and low kitchen counters, can assist older adults in staying in their homes longer without having to move if they develop mobility challenges. The Northwest Universal Design Coalition advocates for these elements to be included in public planning such as streetscapes, sidewalks, transit and walking trails.<sup>18</sup>
- Fourteen percent of residents in Bellevue reported living in a home that needed major home repairs, a 7% increase from 2019 which is statistically significant.<sup>19</sup> The City of Bellevue Major Home Repair Program serves around 35 low- and moderate-income households annually and the Minor Home Repair Program, provided by Sound Generations, provides about 35 households with smaller repairs annually. For both programs, over 80% of clients are age 65 or older. Bellevue Fire Department also can install grab bars and help older adults assess their homes for potential tripping hazards.

Shelter and housing options are needed for older adults with medical issues that require assistance.  
~ Bellevue Fire CARES, Community Conversation

## Goal 2: Supportive Relationships

- Thirty-one percent of phone and online surveys rated the lack of services for elderly persons as a major or moderate community problem.<sup>20</sup>
- In the consumers survey, 18% of respondents stated that they could either never or rarely find services for older adults.
- Bellevue Fire CARES stated that case management services are needed for older adults to help them navigate the system and connect them to resources.<sup>21</sup>
- Due to COVID-19, many of the programs for older adults have taken place online. CISC staff reported that many of the older adults they serve are nervous to attend programs offered over Zoom and do not know how to log into a meeting. The cost of internet service is also a barrier.<sup>22</sup>
- Forty-seven percent of the respondents in the Bellevue Aging Adult Recreation Plan Survey reported that their financial situation made it challenging to participate in social and/or recreation activities.<sup>23</sup>
- 54% of older LGBTQ adults feel isolated from others, and only 15% of older LGBTQ adults access Senior Centers.<sup>24</sup>
- LGBTQ older adults are more likely than non-LGBTQ older adults to be very concerned about having enough money (51% vs. 36%), experiencing loneliness in old age (32% vs. 19%), declining physical health (43% vs. 33%), not being able to take care of themselves (43% vs. 34%) or not having anybody to take care of them (30% vs. 16%).<sup>25</sup>
- People are living longer and as a result of longer life expectancy, people are more likely to need some type of long-term care services and supports (LTSS) during their lifetimes. For many it will be a challenge to stretch retirement income and savings to pay these costs.<sup>26</sup>
- Caregiving can take a toll on the emotional, physical and economic health of the caregiver. The total lost wages, social security benefits, and private pension losses due to caregiving could range from \$283,716 (for men) to \$324,044 (for women), an average of \$303,880. When this average is multiplied by the 9.7 million people over age 50 caring for their parents, the amount lost is nearly \$3 trillion.<sup>27</sup> The value of unpaid caregiving exceeded the value of paid home care and total Medicaid spending in the same year.<sup>28</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Nationally, 62% of adult caregivers are white, 17% Hispanic (non-White, non-African American), 13% are African American and 6% are Asian. Over half of African American caregivers are more likely to reside with the care recipient and are more likely to find themselves “sandwiched” between caring for an older person and a younger person under age 18, or caring for more than one older person.
- 9% of caregivers self-identify as LGBTQ.<sup>29</sup>
- Momentia is a grassroots movement empowering people with memory loss and their loved ones to remain connected and active in the community. Work has begun to create an Eastside Momentia focused in East King County. During Covid-19, Momentia has offered numerous virtual programs.<sup>30</sup>
- Bellevue Fire CARES is a team of advocates that respond to the needs of some of Bellevue’s most vulnerable residents, as identified by fire crews and police officers during a 911 response. Advocates perform home visits to assess the client’s needs and provide case

management to connect the client to community resources. In 2020, CARES received 708 referrals and 263 people enrolled in the program, which is an increase from 2019 (529 referrals and 204 enrolled). 62% of the referrals were females (at an average age of 51.9) and 38% were males (average age of 53.7). The top two reasons for referrals were for mental health and medical issues; 47% of the clients served had mental health issues, 17% Substance Use Disorder Issues and 15% were unhoused. This data reports individuals who had at least one of these issues, but many had co-occurring issues.<sup>31</sup>

- Aging and Disability Services (ADS) provides a key link between federal and state funding for services for older residents and family caregivers in the Seattle-King County area and the community-based organizations that deliver the services. ADS partners with community-based organizations to provide adult day services, caregiver support, case management, elder abuse prevention, health maintenance, health promotion, information and assistance, legal support, nutrition, senior centers, and transportation services. The majority of these services are accessed by contacting Community Living Connections.<sup>32</sup>

### **Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence**

- Approximately 1 in 10 Americans aged 60+ have experienced some form of elder abuse. It is estimated that only 7% of elder abuse cases are reported to authorities. Some estimates range as high as 5 million elders who are abused each year. Elders who experienced abuse, even modest abuse, have an increased risk of death by 300% compared to elders who have not been abused.<sup>33</sup> Prevalence rates by type of abuse relying on self-reports of abuse: psychological (11.6%), physical (2.6%), financial (6.8%), neglect (4.2%), and sexual (0.9%) abuse.<sup>34</sup>
- Direct medical costs associated with violent injuries to older adults are estimated to add over \$5.3 billion to the nation's annual health expenditures, and the annual financial loss by victims of elder financial exploitation were estimated to be \$2.9 billion in 2009, a 12% increase from 2008.<sup>35</sup>
- The Bellevue Police Department's data indicates an overall increase of Adult Protective Services (APS) referrals. Caregivers and family members have been encouraged to report any incident of assault, neglect or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult, no matter how minor the incident may seem. In 2020, there were 89 APS referrals involving potential financial exploitation and 138 allegations of abuse. Out of these 227 referrals, 61 cases were assigned to a BPD Detective for further investigation (10 financial and 51 related to abuse).<sup>36</sup>
- Elder fraud, also called elder financial abuse or elder financial exploitation, is defined as the misappropriation or abuse of financial control in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust, resulting in harm to the elderly victim. More than 334,000 scams and financial abuse cases targeting older adults in the US are reported to authorities every year for an estimated \$6.3 billion in damage. Most experts agree it is just the tip of the iceberg, with an estimated 1 in 23.5 incidents of elder fraud reported to authorities. A 2020 study found that elder financial abuse in the U.S. could be even more prevalent and costly than first thought, with an estimated 7.86 million cases of elder fraud occurring in the U.S. annually resulting in \$148 billion in losses. In Washington State, there were 9,375 reported incidents (\$147.6 million) for the estimated 220,323 incidents (\$3.5 billion) that occurred.<sup>37</sup>
- Older people with dementia are particularly susceptible to abuse. Nearly one in two older adults with cognitive impairment is a victim of abuse. In addition to being dependent upon others for assistance, elders with dementia are more likely to experience deficits in memory,

communication, and judgment, making it harder for them to identify, prevent, and report mistreatment. Many may also be reluctant to report abuse by caregivers and others upon whom they rely. Older people with dementia are often at an increased risk of mistreatment because of pre-existing medical and mental health weaknesses.<sup>38</sup>

I've seen a significant increase in the level of fear in older adults, especially Asian older adults. They are afraid to leave their house to run basic errand.

~ Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network,  
Community Conversation

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** King County Coalition Against Hate and Bias (KCCAHB) is a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression. The Coalition Partners administer a Hate and Bias Incident Response Survey which collects data from communities affected by hate and bias. (For more information, see Goal 3: Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse). Chinese Information and Referral Services shared that 20.6% of the reports they received in King County are from individuals aged 55 and older. Similarly, KCCAHB and partnering EKC agencies collecting EKC-only data noted that 5.7% of the reports they received are also from individuals 55 and older.<sup>39</sup>

## Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

- Six percent of the phone and online survey respondents rated not being able to find home health care or day care for an elderly person as a major or moderate household problem.<sup>40</sup>
- Alzheimer's disease remains the 3rd leading cause of death, affecting women more than men. Among adults older than 65, the rate of death from Alzheimer's among females was 1.8 times that of males.<sup>41</sup>
- 20% of older LGBTQ individuals and 44% of older transgender individuals believe their relationship with their healthcare provider would be adversely affected if their health provider knew their sexual orientation/gender.<sup>42</sup>
- Twenty percent of people aged 55 years or older are estimated to experience some type of mental health concern. The most common conditions include anxiety, severe cognitive impairment, and mood disorders (such as depression or bipolar disorder). Mental health issues are often implicated as a factor in cases of suicide.<sup>43</sup> Depression is a significant predictor of suicide in elderly Americans. Comprising only 13% of the U.S. population, individuals aged 65 and older account for 20% of all suicide deaths, with white males being particularly vulnerable. Suicide among white males aged 85 and older (65.3 deaths per 100,000 persons) is nearly six times the suicide rate (10.8 per 100,000) in the U.S.<sup>44</sup>
- Finding medical coverage can be challenging for older adults who are not eligible for Medicare. To qualify for Medicare, an individual must be 65 years or older, and/or not eligible for Medicaid, and must be low-income.
- Someone turning age 65 today has almost a 70% chance of needing some type of long-term care services and supports in their remaining years. The duration and level of long-term care will vary from person to person; the average time in long-term care is 3 years.<sup>45</sup>

- Washington State passed a new law mandating public long-term care benefits for Washington residents. The Long-Term Care Act was created to reduce pressure on the Medicaid system and will be paid for by a 0.58% tax on employee wages. Residents have one opportunity to opt out of this tax by providing proof they have a long-term insurance policy in place by November 1, 2021.<sup>46</sup>
- Washington has 3,568 senior living providers, which include 1,873 assisted living communities. In 2021, there are 131 licensed adult family homes in Bellevue. 96 of these accept Medicaid. Of the 2 Bellevue nursing facilities, 1 accepts Medicaid.<sup>47</sup> The monthly cost of assisted living in Washington State averages \$5,500, which is considerably more expensive than the national average of \$4,051. Assisted living facilities in Bellevue and surrounding parts of the Seattle metropolitan area typically charge \$6,500 per month or \$78,000 per year. In Washington State, expenses typically are the following: Adult Day Care (\$1,441), Assisted Living (\$5,500), In-Home Care (\$5,720), and Nursing Home Care (\$9,112).<sup>48</sup>
- Nationally, nearly 1 million adults aged 65 and older live with a substance use disorder (SUD) which continues to be a growing issue in older adults. Chronic health problems associated with aging, including chronic pain, as well as stressors such as grief and loss of independence, may contribute to substance misuse. Alcohol is the most used drug among older adults, with about 65% of people 65 and older reporting high-risk drinking, which is defined as exceeding daily guidelines at least weekly in the past year. Although many behavioral therapists have been successful in treating substance use disorders in older adults, providers may confuse SUD symptoms with those of other chronic health conditions or with natural, age-related changes.<sup>49</sup>
- Medicare is a health insurance program for people aged 65 and older, and some people under age 65 with certain disabilities. Low Medicare reimbursement rates continue to limit the number of older adults some doctors will serve. Dental care is not covered under Medicare, so some low- and moderate-income older adults postpone routine care until problems occur. Eye care and hearing aids are often unaffordable for people on Medicare because only limited services are covered.
- Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports assist low-income seniors and adults with disabilities with services they typically cannot access with Medicare or private health insurance. This includes home care, nursing care, assisted living, meals, nursing homes and other services. One in seven Medicare beneficiaries in Washington are enrolled in Medicaid.<sup>50</sup>

## **Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential**

- Americans 55 and over made up 36.4% of the workforce in 2020.<sup>51</sup>
- More adults aged 65 and older left the labor force in 2020 than in any year since the U.S. began tracking such information in 1948. Many will likely never work again, which could jeopardize their immediate and long-term financial security. Between February 2020 (just before the pandemic hit the U.S.) and February 2021, the participation in the labor force fell 11.1 percent for people 65 and older, but only 1.2 percent for those ages 55 to 64, 2.2% for those ages 25 to 54, and 2.9 percent for those ages 16 to 24. In addition to the nearly 1 million workers aged 65 and over who permanently left the labor force during this timeframe, another 165,000 older workers remained in the labor force but joined the unemployment rolls while they looked for new employment. Older unemployed workers



generally take twice as long as their younger counterparts to become reemployed, and those who find work typically earn only half as much they did at their previous job.<sup>52</sup>

- In King County, 21% of people 65 or older are low-income.<sup>53</sup> Older adults cannot meet their basic living expenses if they live at the federal poverty level and/or rely only on the average Social Security benefit. This is true for older adults, whether they rent or own a home. As shown in the 2020 Elder Economic Security Standard Index for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Area (Figure 1), a person aged 65 or older renting a one bedroom apartment would have needed an income of about \$32,148 annually.<sup>54</sup> In 2021, the maximum income for someone receiving SSI is \$794 per month (\$9,528 annually) and the average Social Security benefit is \$1,543 per month (\$18,516 per year). Without other savings or assets, this person cannot make ends meet without other supports such as rent subsidies or assistance in covering supplemental health care costs.

### Monthly and Yearly Totals 2020

Elder Index for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue-Metropolitan Area						
	Single Elder			Elder Couple		
Expenses	Owner w/o Mortgage	Renter, one bedroom	Owner w/ Mortgage	Owner w/o Mortgage	Renter, one bedroom	Owner w/ Mortgage
Housing (incl. utilities, taxes, & insurance)	\$713	\$1,447	\$1,926.00	\$713	\$1,447	\$1,926
Food	\$272	\$272	\$272	\$498	\$498	\$498
Transportation	\$205	\$205	\$205	\$316	\$316	\$316
Healthcare (Good)	\$431	\$431	\$431	\$862	\$862	\$862
Miscellaneous	\$324.00	\$324	\$324.00	\$478.	\$478	\$478
Index Per Month	\$1,945	\$2,679	\$3,158	\$2867	\$3,601	\$4,080
Index Per Year	\$23,340	\$32,148	\$37,896	\$34,404	\$43,212	\$ 48,960

Figure 1 | Source: National Council of Aging<sup>55</sup>

- According to AARP, in the U. S. about 50% of older adults rely on Social Security for about half of their income, and about a quarter depend on it for at least 90% of their income. In Washington State, about 19% of older adults rely on Social Security for 90% of their income.<sup>56</sup> Many retirees depend on slight cost of living (COLA) adjustments annually to help them pay their bills. In 2021, 65 million recipients received a 1.3% a cost-of-living increase, slightly less than the 1.6% provided in 2020. Social Security announced a 5.9% increase in 2022, a significantly larger increase than previous years.<sup>57</sup>
- About 8% of older adults in Bellevue age 65 and over had incomes below the Federal Poverty Level. Although this percentage is about the same as the U.S. (9%) and King County (8%),<sup>58</sup> it still indicates a number of vulnerable older adults are impacted and illustrates the need for human services for these older adults.



- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** There are significant disparities in poverty rates among ethnic groups in Bellevue; according to data from the 2015-2019 ACS, 18% of African American older adults aged 60 + live in poverty in Bellevue, 11% of Asians, 16% of Hispanics and only 7% of Non-Hispanic Whites.<sup>59</sup>

## Additional Items for Consideration

### Disability Issues

- 2 in 5 adults 65 and over have a disability in the U.S. In 2019, 19% of adults aged 65 and older reported they could not function at all or had a lot of difficulty with at least one of six functioning domains (hearing, seeing, mobility, communication, self-care, and cognition). In each domain, the percentage reporting any level of difficulty varied. Specifically, 22% reported trouble seeing (even if wearing glasses), 31% reported difficulty hearing (even if wearing hearing aids), 40% reported trouble with mobility (walking or climbing stairs), 8% reported difficulty with communication (understanding or being understood by others), 27% reported trouble with cognition (remembering or concentrating), and 9% reported difficulty with self-care (such as washing all over or dressing).
- There are an estimated 641,000 adults aged 60+ with cognitive and other disabilities (e.g., cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury). This number is projected to double to 1,242,794 by 2030, coinciding with the aging population of baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964.<sup>60</sup>
- Although the average life span is increasing, many older adults' quality of life is affected by disability or activity limitations. Of adults in King County age 65 and older, 32% have a disability. Data shows that disabilities increase with poverty. In King County, for example, 45% of people age 65 and older who live in poverty have physical disabilities. In Bellevue, 66% of people age 65 and older who are living in poverty have at least one disability.<sup>61</sup>
- In Bellevue, estimates from the 2015-2019 ACS also demonstrate the likelihood that having a disability increases with age, as shown in Figure 2.<sup>62</sup> The impact of an increased number of older adults with disabilities, including mental illness, is already being noted by human service providers, and will likely increase as does that population.

## Age Distribution of People with a Disability (2015-2019)

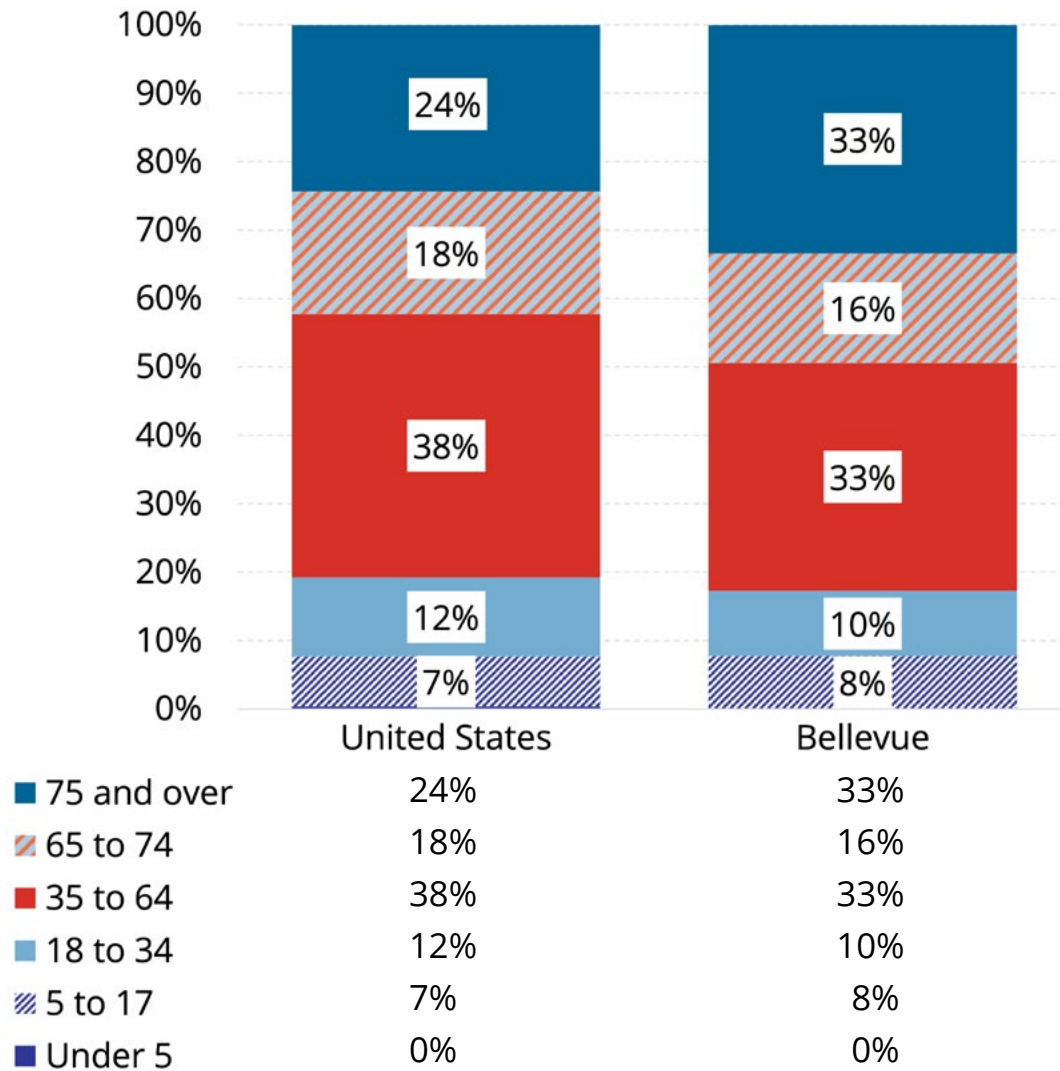


Figure 2 | Source: American Community Survey 5-year 2015-2019

- Nearly 25 percent of those aged 65 to 74 and 50 percent of those who are 75 and older have disabling hearing loss. Hearing loss can be misdiagnosed as dementia, and hearing loss can cause the degree of dementia to be overestimated. Some cognitive tests depend on being able to hear and understand spoken language. Additionally, there are some similarities between the characteristics of hearing loss and dementia, such as problems understanding, social isolation, and depression. Untreated hearing loss can affect relationships with family, friends and others, cause disengagement from social or group activities, make independent living difficult (such as hearing the doorbell or phone) and reduce the sense of self-confidence. In effect, untreated hearing loss can contribute to loneliness and isolation, as shown in the studies below.<sup>63</sup> One technology to assist people who are hard of hearing is called “Looping” which is a wireless audio loop that circles the walls within a room and is connected to a sound system which in turn is amplified through a person’s hearing aid. This technology greatly improves the ability of a person with hearing loss to hear in large spaces such as auditoriums or meeting rooms.<sup>64</sup> The City of Bellevue has added looping technology to a number of its public meeting spaces including the City Council Chamber, Conference Room, and some spaces at our community centers.

## Transportation

- Bellevue Fire CARES reported that transportation for older adults to get to appointments is a huge challenge, especially when services are outside of East King County.
- Indian American Community Services (IACS), formerly Indian Association of Western Washington, reported that transportation is a huge barrier for a large number of the seniors in their community since many do not drive. This leads to isolation. IACS states that they have been advocating for improved services but have seen only small improvements.<sup>65</sup>
- In the Bellevue Aging Adult Recreation Plan Survey, 56% of respondents reported that transportation is a challenge for participating in social and/or recreation activities.<sup>66</sup>
- In King County, 26% of residents 65 and older report using public transportation to get to and from their neighborhoods, slightly higher than residents compared to the same group nationally.<sup>67</sup>
- Households headed by an older adult in Bellevue are less likely to have a vehicle than are households headed by middle-aged people (defined as 35 to 64 years old). About 13% of all households headed by someone age 65 or older did not have a vehicle and 39% of renter households headed by someone age 65 or older did not have a vehicle.<sup>68</sup> Making the decision to stop driving either for health or financial reasons can have an impact on the number of older adults who need other forms of transportation in order to meet their basic needs such as doctor visits, shopping, and recreation.
- Lack of personal transportation is one of the main reasons older adults miss medical appointments and are less likely to participate in social, family, and/or religious activities which can result in physical fragility and social isolation.<sup>69</sup>
- During community engagement activities conducted by Aging and Disability Services (ADS) in early 2019 and previously, residents described transportation challenges including the multiple barriers faced by those with special health needs, difficulty navigating the transportation system, and the acute need for improved transportation in rural areas. Approximately one-third of King County residents have some mobility challenge related to disability, age, or income. Additionally, due to lack of affordable housing, some of the highest-need populations are being displaced to suburban and rural areas that are not well-served by public transit. In a recent community needs survey conducted by ADS, cost was the most cited transportation challenge. Community transportation, also referred to as “special needs transportation,” serves as a lifeline that connects older adults to healthcare, supportive services, healthy food, and social and cultural engagement. Several public and private transportation agencies have convened as the King County Mobility Coalition to support innovative, coordinated community transportation and person-centered mobility management.<sup>70</sup>
- Sound Generations provided one-way rides to 827 older adults living in Bellevue and 5,569 older adults in King County through their volunteer transportation program in 2020. Rides are provided for both medical and non-medical related needs rides. Due to Covid-19, both the number of volunteer and number of residents requesting rides had a significant decline. Even during the pandemic, Sound Generations kept the rate of denial low and offered rides through a ride-share app when a volunteer was not available.<sup>71</sup>
- In King County, Americans with Disability Act (ADA) paratransit services are provided by Metro’s Access Transportation. King County Metro’s Access program fills some of the need

for door-to-door service for eligible people with disabilities but continues to have gaps for many customers.

## Increased Racial and Ethnic Diversity

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Indian American Community Services, formerly Indian Association of Western Washington, reported that older adults in the East Indian communities often experience isolation and depression as they adjust to American culture, and that more opportunities are needed to keep residents active and social in the community. COVID-19 has exacerbated the problem since people are not able to visit in their neighborhood community nor travel back and forth to India.<sup>72</sup>
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** About 29% of Bellevue residents age 65 and over speak a language other than English at home. The effects of a diverse older adult population in Bellevue continue to have an impact on service needs and delivery and will increase in coming years.<sup>73</sup>

### Race/Ethnicity of People 65 Years Old and Older in Bellevue, 2015-2019

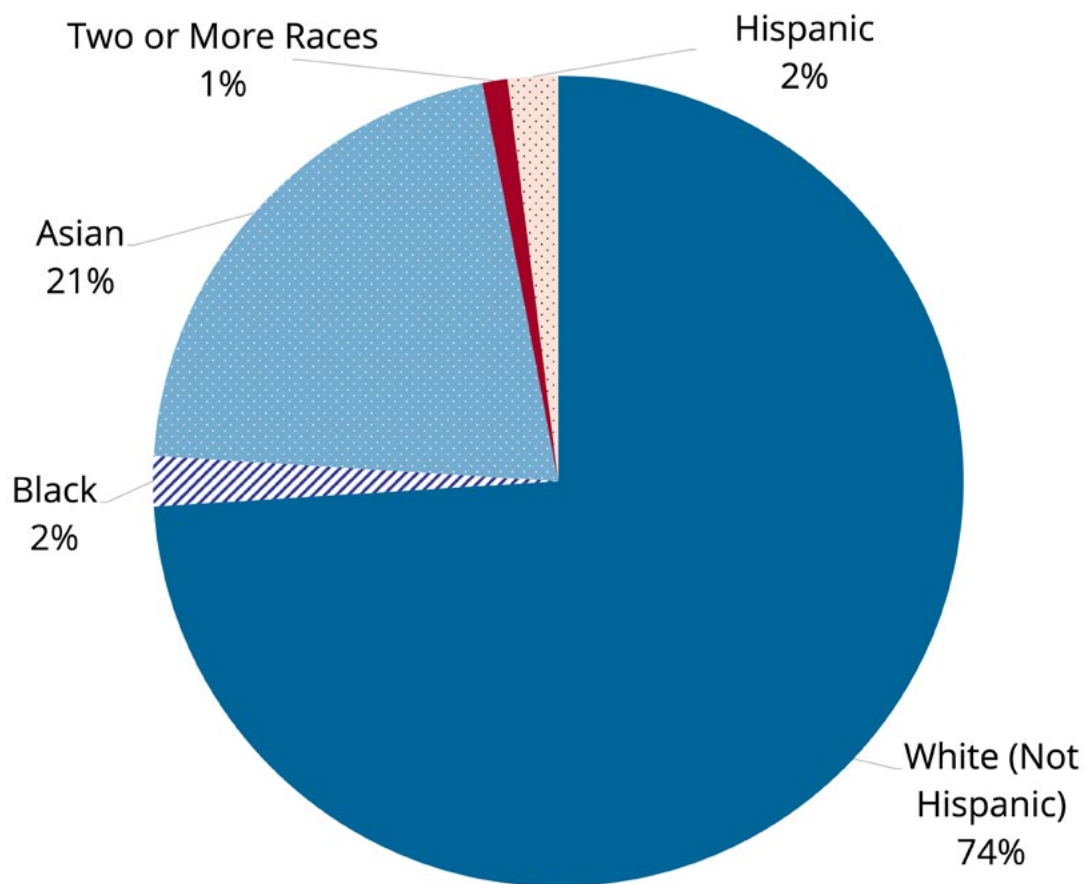


Figure 3 | Source: US Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey (5-year estimates), tables B01001B-I

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** People of color will make up an increasing proportion of the older adult population as Americans reach retirement age. This trend is expected to continue in the foreseeable future. As indicated in Figure 4, data from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey reveals that age distribution in Bellevue is different for different racial and ethnic groups. Among the 65 year and older population of Bellevue, the largest racial groups are White Non-Hispanic (74%) and Asian (21%).

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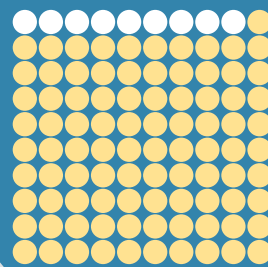
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# People with Disabilities



**10%** of adults in Bellevue have a disability.

**9%** of students enrolled at Bellevue School District are receiving Special Education Services.



People with a disability are **twice** as likely to live in poverty and earn a median income **one third** less than those who do not have a disability.

**26%** of nonfatal violent crimes in the US were against people with disabilities, even though they only account for **12%** of the population.



Adults with a disability report experiencing frequent mental distress almost **5 times** as often as adults without disabilities.

# People with Disabilities

## Key Findings

- Funding for services for people with all types of disabilities continues to lag behind the growth of this population. The result is that there are wait lists for many programs, including subsidized supportive housing program and family support programs. This trend is predicted to continue over the next several years due to higher life expectancy of the aging population with developmental disabilities and the increase of referrals of children with disabilities.
- Lack of affordable housing is a problem for people with disabilities as the need is growing faster than housing stock is produced. It is especially critical for people with disabilities to find housing in familiar neighborhood settings, near support systems and convenient amenities, in order to maintain their independence to whatever extent they are able.
- Early intervention services for children birth to three with disabilities reduce later costs; for children whose disabilities are identified when they are older, critical time is lost.

## Brief Description

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), adopted in 1990, provides protection from discrimination for people with disabilities. The ADA defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities.” The City of Bellevue has consistently and diligently worked to make all its programs, services and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. For over 30 years the city has provided adaptive recreation programs, as well as other accommodations, and access to general recreation programs. It’s important to note that under Title II of the ADA, social services must be accessible for people with disabilities. Title III of the ADA covers public accommodations, which generally includes all places open to the public, such as offices for counseling services, legal services, translation services, doctors’ offices and shelters.<sup>1</sup>

Ten percent of adults (18+) in Bellevue have a disability, compared to 11% in King County. Disability prevalence increases with age; in Bellevue 8% of children (under 18) reported having a disability compared to 49% for those 65 and older.<sup>2</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Adults who identify as bisexual are significantly more likely to report disability than those who identify as heterosexual. The number of individuals with an identified disability is lowest among Asian and Hispanic residents, compared to most other racial/ethnic groups. Individuals with a disability is also disproportionately represented in those who are lower income.<sup>3</sup>

## Number of Disabilities by Type, 2015-2019

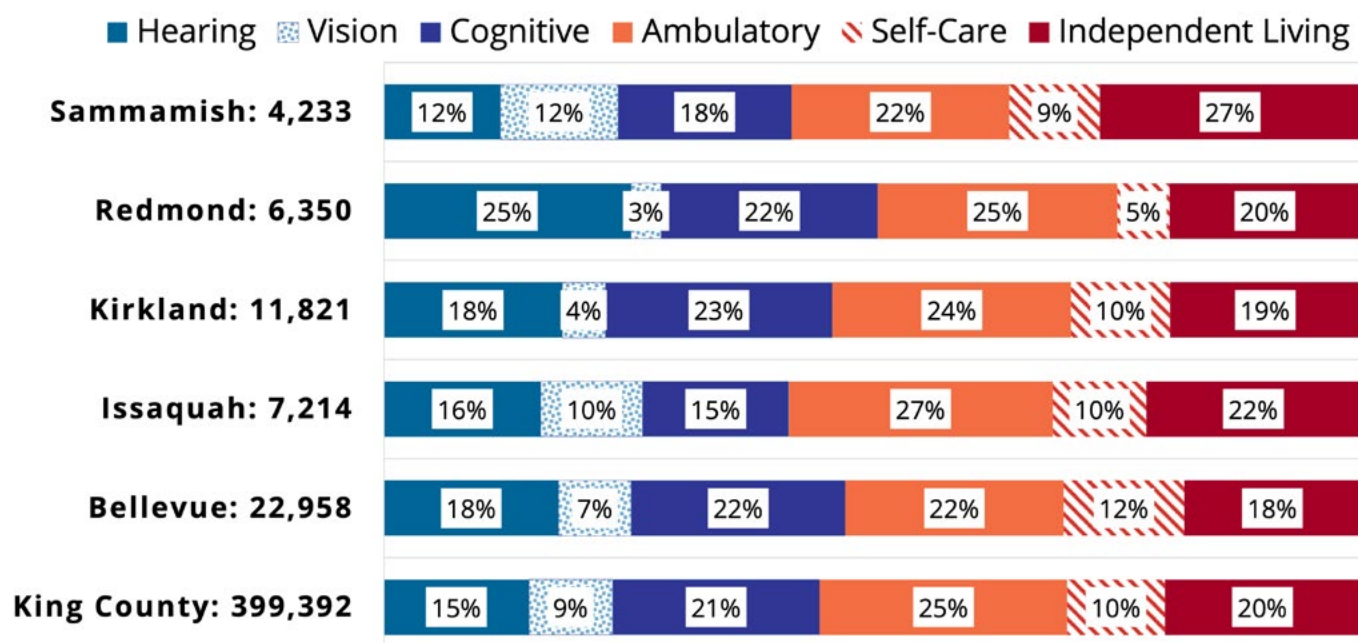


Figure 1 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2015-2019 American Community Survey (5-year estimates), Table S1810

As shown in Figure 1, Bellevue has 22,958 disabilities reported. Respondents can select more than one disability. Based on the Census definition, ‘Self-Care’ is defined as someone having difficulty bathing or dressing because of a disability and ‘Independent Living’ is defined as someone having difficulty doing errands alone, such as a doctor’s appointment or shopping because of a disability. This chapter only provides information about goals 1 through 5 as they relate specifically to People with Disabilities. For a broader discussion of these areas, please see their respective chapters.

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential
- Additional Topics for Consideration

### Transportation

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City’s ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In)Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead

- An emerging theme from several community conversations was the need for very-low income and zero-income housing options for those with disabilities. Households on Social Security Income can only afford very-low income housing. Individuals waiting for SSI have very limited housing options with very long waiting lists, so individuals often end up either relying on their support system to provide housing or they become homeless.
- There is a lack of nutrition education and support for the population of people with disabilities.<sup>4</sup>
- People with disabilities who are not able to work are often on a fixed income, which makes it almost impossible for them to be able to afford housing unless it is subsidized or a low-income unit.<sup>5</sup>
- Finding affordable housing in the community is challenging for many people, especially those with disabilities who seek an independent living arrangement. With the maximum federal monthly payment of \$794/month for an eligible individual in 2021, an SSI recipient could only afford \$238/month rent (30% of income). There is not one county in the U.S. where even a modest efficiency apartment is affordable for someone receiving SSI.<sup>6</sup> The Fair Market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan area is \$1,741/month, more than the entire SSI check.<sup>7</sup> For individuals who rely solely on their SSI check for income, or even those working in supported employment, market rate housing is not an option.
- In King County, the number of persons with developmental disabilities living in residential habilitation centers (RHCs) and nursing homes, facilities that provide intensive nursing care and skill development for those with a disability that requires extensive support, has decreased dramatically. In 2017, there were about 943 individuals in one of these 4 facilities in the State, compared to 4,145 at their peak in 1967. The average annual cost per client living in RHCs is \$230,120 compared to \$24,322 per client annually to receive personal care services in the family's home or community residential facilities.<sup>8</sup>

## Goal 2: Supportive Relationships

- In the 2021 phone/online survey, 26% of respondents indicated that lack of services for people with disabilities was a major or moderate problem in the community. 6% of respondents stated that not finding programs for someone with a disability was a major/moderate household problem and 6% stated that not being able to find affordable care for a person with a disability was a major/moderate problem.<sup>9</sup>
- Staff from Kinderling stated that during the pandemic they have seen parents struggle with getting specialized services for their children who have disabilities. When the services were offered in-person, the parents are faced with the challenge of accompanying their child to the services and finding childcare for their other children, as there are usually limits on how many people can be at an appointment.<sup>10</sup>
- Washington Division of Developmental Administration (WDDA) was serving 49,512 individuals in July 2021. In King County, they served 6,382 children and 6,621 adults. Since 2017, the DDA caseload has grown at an annual average rate of 3%.<sup>11</sup> In King County, 74% of people with developmental disabilities are not served through the state Developmental Disabilities Administration. These services are reserved for those already in or near crisis.

and who are at risk of institutionalization. Statewide, this leaves more than 85,000 people at increased risk of unemployment, homelessness and incarceration. It also puts their families at increased risk for financial or housing instability.<sup>12</sup>

- Families are still the primary caregivers for adults with developmental disabilities and are themselves aging. In the US, about 76% of individuals with developmental disabilities reside at home. In 25% of these homes, the family caregiver is over 60 years of age.<sup>13</sup>
- The City of Bellevue Department of Parks and Community Services provides adaptive recreation opportunities for those with disabilities as well as inclusion support to participate in general recreation. Most adaptive programs occur at the Highland Community Center and several programs are also offered at various other locations, including the Northwest Arts Center, Tennis Center, Aquatic Center and the Bellevue Youth Theater. Bellevue offers forty adaptive recreation programs. In 2019, the Highland Community Center had 250 active participants. The other recreation programs have another 86 active adaptive participants, with 45 at Bellevue Youth Theater, 25 at Northwest Arts Center, and 10 for adaptive tennis and 6 for wheelchair tennis at the Tennis Center. Due to Covid-19, the number of active participants in 2020 decreased because centers were not open for in person programs. However, Bellevue programs still had a total of 149 active adaptive participants, including 100 at Highland Center, 9 at Northwest Art Center, 37 at Bellevue Youth Theater, and 3 at the Tennis Center.<sup>14</sup>
- Bellevue's Parks and Community Services Choices Plan for People with Disabilities outlines the process for providing recreation/inclusion services for people with disabilities. There has been an increase of kids with disabilities participating in general recreation programs, primarily in summer day camps.<sup>15</sup>
- Bellevue Parks and Community Services has a Recreation Inclusion Coordinator and Inclusion Recreation Staff to assist with accommodations or modifications to reinforce successful experiences in general recreation programs. The recreation program only received small number of people requesting inclusion services, but this could be because the recreation division already serves kids with disabilities in the majority of camps offered. Staff report that children attending summer camps at Highland Center have higher needs than in previous years. As a result, a lower child to staff ratio is needed. Other adaptive recreation programs in Bellevue are offered by Special Olympics of Washington, Bridge of Promise and Outdoorsforall.<sup>16</sup>

## Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence

- Disabled people are disproportionately victims of violent and other crimes in the United States and the frequency of these crimes are increasing. The data shows that from 2017-2019 disabled people accounted for 26% of nonfatal violent crimes, even though they make up only 12% of the population and are victims of violence at almost four times the rate of non-disabled people. From 2009 to 2019, the rate of violent victimization for people with a disability rose from 28.8 per 1,000 (2009) to 46.2 per 1,000 (2019). Persons with cognitive disabilities had the highest rate of violent victimization (83.3 per 1,000) among the disability types measured.
- Sexual assault is a huge concern for people with developmental disabilities. Bullying is also a growing issue for adults with developmental disabilities.<sup>17</sup>



- People with disabilities are more likely to experience victimization, be arrested, be charged with a crime, and serve longer prison sentences once convicted, than those without disabilities. Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities intersecting with other marginalized identities (i.e. individuals of color or LGBTQ individuals) are even more likely to get caught up in the system. Once entangled, they face unique challenges, bias, and inaccessible services, which only perpetuate the cycle of criminal justice involvement.<sup>18</sup>
- Children with disabilities are two to three times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers.<sup>19</sup> Students with disabilities are disproportionately affected by bullying at all ages and in all learning settings, with serious negative impacts on their education, health and well-being. Students with a disability from low socioeconomic backgrounds reported more bullying than students from other socioeconomic family backgrounds.<sup>20</sup>
- Bullying Prevention & Social Skills curriculum is taught across all schools in the Bellevue School District. Younger students learn about empathy, making friends, problem solving and responding to bullying. Integrated lessons for older students include the impact of gossiping, taunting and bullying, as well as the dangers of cyber-bullying.<sup>21</sup>

## Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

- Hero House uses a Clubhouse model to provide services for people living with mental illness and behavioral health disorders. They stated that they have seen an increase in number of community members are seeking services at the Clubhouse.<sup>22</sup>
- Kinderling reported that in their Child Care and Preschool Consultation program, they are seeing increased stress, emotional and sensory regulation issues in young children.<sup>23</sup>
- Bellevue's Disability Allyship Resource Team (DART) Employee Resources Group (ERG) stated that there is a need for affordable access to durable medical equipment for people with disability, because the options are limited, and it's not always covered under insurance.<sup>24</sup>
- Bellevue's DART ERG members also discussed the lack of needed coverage for hearing aids. There is some coverage under Medicaid and Medicare, but they do not cover digital hearing aids which allow someone to be fully functioning. Many private insurance plans do not cover the cost, leaving the individual the burden to pay for all or most of this extremely expensive item needed to fully function in the community.<sup>25</sup>
- Adults with disabilities report experiencing frequent mental distress almost 5 times as often as adults without disabilities. Frequent mental distress is associated with poor health behaviors, increased use of health services, mental disorders, chronic disease, and limitations in daily life. During the COVID-19 pandemic, isolation, disconnect, disrupted routines, and diminished health services have greatly impacted the lives and mental well-being of people with disabilities.<sup>26</sup>
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reported that for many people living with disabilities, physical care is seen as the first priority. However, when a disability impacts a person's quality of life, it can affect all aspects of their well-being and daily experiences. Many people with disabilities experience traumatic stress due to the painful treatments received for their physical condition, as well as depression and anxiety from the isolation they experience. Physicians treat the physical issues, but often view any mental health

symptoms as a by-product of the physical experience. Those mental health issues can often be overlooked or dismissed in order to focus on providing physical comfort or pain relief.<sup>27</sup>

- In the United States, over three million children (4.3% of the under 18 population) has a disability in 2019. Children living in poverty were more likely to have a disability (6.5%) than children living above the poverty threshold (3.8%). Yet, families in poverty tend to have fewer financial resources to care for a child with a disability.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2019-2020, Kinderling provided services to 5,524 children and families. Of the early intervention graduates in 2019, 53% will not need special education at age 3 and 75% narrowed the development gap.<sup>29</sup>
- Kinderling's Early Care and Education Consultation program focuses on early identification of developmental disabilities/delays and behavioral challenges by providing consultation and training to child care programs. In 2020, Kinderling provided services for 64 Bellevue residents with 645 hours of assistance.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2021, 9% of students enrolled in the Bellevue School District were receiving Special Education services.<sup>31</sup> However, Census data reports that only 8% of children ages 5 to 17 in Bellevue have a disability.<sup>32</sup> It appears disabilities in children are slightly unreported in Census data.
- People with disabilities can receive medical insurance through three different programs based on eligibility. Medicaid provides free or low-cost medical benefits to people with disabilities. Medicare provides medical health insurance to people under 65 with certain disabilities and any age with end-stage renal disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant). Affordable Care Act Marketplace offers options to people who have a disability, who don't qualify for disability benefits, and need health coverage.<sup>33</sup>

## Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential

- During a community conversation, Bellevue's ADA Core Team discussed how remote learning severely impacted both children and adults with disabilities. It was a difficult transition to determine how to follow the IEP and ensure they were receiving the needed services.<sup>34</sup>
- Many of the supportive employment programs have been put on hold during the pandemic. Supportive employment programs have been very successful in both supporting people with disabilities to gain employment as well as employers having valuable, talented people that fit their position.<sup>35</sup>
- Many people living with a disability face employment discrimination and have difficulty accessing full-time employment. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2019, only 19.3% of people living with disabilities were employed. Those who are working are often only able to obtain part time and/or temporary work which does not usually include access to health care benefits. People with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty and earn a median income one-third less than those who do not have a disability. In Washington, the median annual earnings for people with disabilities are \$22,445, the equivalent of about \$10.75/hour for full-time employment. People with a disability earn 62% of the median earnings (\$36,217) of Washingtonians without disabilities.<sup>36</sup>
- Many adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities experienced job loss at the

beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although some have begun to be rehired, it has been very slow for this population.<sup>37</sup>

- The State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a service for people with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. In FY 2020, 1,571 people were successfully employed. The median income for clients at intake was \$0 and their median annual income at closure was \$17,004.<sup>38</sup> Although the wage increase is significant, it is still not a livable wage.
- Median annual earnings for people with disabilities over the age of 16 years old in Seattle is \$22,735, the equivalent of about \$10.93/hour for fulltime employment. Compared to the median earnings of \$44,827 for Seattle worker without disabilities.<sup>39</sup>
- AtWork! provides supported employment and works with businesses to identify job opportunities that take advantage of an individual with disabilities' unique talents while meeting a critical business need.<sup>40</sup> In 2020, AtWork! provided 89 Bellevue residents with one-on-one employment sessions to support them in gaining and maintaining employment.<sup>41</sup>

"Many of our clients have disabilities that limit or prevent their ability to work."

~ The Sophia Way, Provider's Survey

## Additional Topics for Consideration

### Transportation Gap

People with disabilities must have access to both public and private transportation to lead full, self-directed lives. People with disabilities lack sufficient access to reliable, accessible, and safe modes of public and private transportation. Every mode of transportation presents barriers for individuals with disabilities. These barriers prevent people with disabilities from meaningful participation in everyday activities that promote high quality community living experiences.<sup>42</sup>

- During the first year of Covid-19, many of the bus and transit services were decreased, which effected people with disabilities that rely on public transportation to meet their basic needs.<sup>43</sup>
- In the U.S., millions of individuals with disabilities use public transit to maintain their autonomy and participate fully in society. For many, it is their only transit option. However, even where accessible public transportation exists, adults with disabilities consider transportation options inadequate. Inadequate transportation inhibits community involvement, including successful employment. Where there is available transportation, there is often little to no training available to support individuals with disabilities to make full use of it.<sup>44</sup>
- The demand for transportation for special needs populations, defined as older adults, people with disabilities, youth and people with low-incomes, is growing steadily. The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) is a collaborative group of diverse partners who have a stake in mobility management for special needs populations. The Coalition works with transit authorities, service providers, end-users, and various stakeholders to identify and address transportation equity in King County. Through its 2015-2020 action plan and beyond, the KCMC has launched a number of initiatives through specialized committees – like Access to Healthcare and Access to Work and School – to evaluate and fill gaps in transportation barriers. A project from the committee is the Inclusive Planning grant, which seeks to improve transportation for all King County community members using an inclusive

planning lens and a focus on older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers. Various grants have allowed the KCMC to pursue and test solutions that further the Coalition's goal to connect more people to transportation.<sup>45</sup>

- King County metro provides three Accessible Service programs, Access Paratransit Program, Community Access Transit (CAT) and taxi scrip program. Metro's Access Paratransit program serves people with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route buses, helping them lead more independent lives. In 2020, Access provided 455,391 one-way trips. CAT is a partnership between Metro and human services agencies where Metro provides funds and free loaner vans to agencies to assist in providing van services for their clients that would otherwise use Access. In 2020, CAT provided 258,818 one-way trips. Metro's taxi script program provides half-price taxi service for eligible riders. In 2020, the taxi script program provided 86,460 one-way trips.<sup>46</sup>

"The transportation system is not great, and it requires many of our elderly and disabled clients walk a good distance to get to public transportation."

~ Provider's Survey

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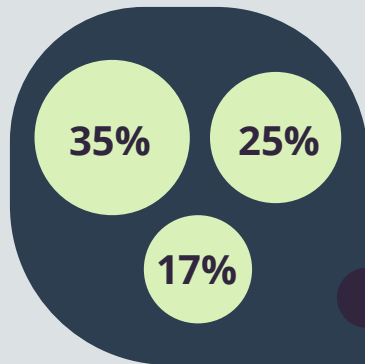
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# Refugees and Immigrants



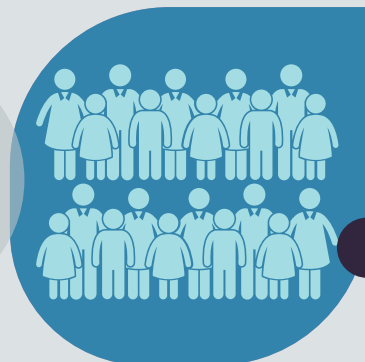
Racial & ethnic discrimination noted as a community concern: **35%** in **2021**, **25%** in **2019** and **17%** in **2011**.

**26%** rated lack of services for non-English speakers in the community was a major or moderate problem.



**10%** of Bellevue households have limited English proficiency.

Nearly **55,000** Bellevue households speak a language other than English at home.



The need for more culturally and linguistically responsive human services grows each year.

# Refugees and Immigrants

## Key Findings

- The need for more culturally and linguistically responsive human services grows each year. Throughout the community, there is a need for information to be available in languages other than English. In addition, there is a need for more diverse staff who are not only bilingual but also culturally competent. Many providers expressed challenges in recruiting bilingual staff.
- Many refugees and immigrants are refusing services and disengaging from other public or private systems. The most commonly cited reason for doing so was the perception that accessing resources is not safe for them or their family due to their citizenship status.

## Population Overview

The City of Bellevue's population continues to grow and diversify. Forty-one percent of Bellevue's population is foreign-born, up from only 13% in 1990.<sup>1</sup> The term "foreign-born" includes immigrants (documented and undocumented), refugees, and asylees. Immigrants are people who petitioned to enter the U.S. to become lawful permanent residents. By comparison, refugees are those who are forced to leave the country of their nationality due to persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution, and asylees are foreign nationals currently residing in the U.S. awaiting refugee designation.

This chapter only provides information about goals 1 through 5 as they relate specifically to refugees and immigrants. For a broader discussion of these areas, please see their respective chapters.

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential

In addition to these goals, the following topics have been identified as important to this population:

- Language Barriers
- Fear and Discrimination

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase Racial (In)Equity Data Point. **As the majority of refugees and immigrants in Bellevue are people of color, all data in this chapter are Racial (In)Equity Data Points.**

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead

- Staff at both Bellevue Wraparound Program and LifeSpring discussed the challenge of accessing culturally appropriate food through available food program. There has been an effort to improve the availability of culturally appropriate food, but there is still a need for more options in the community for each cultural group.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2019, 40% of the Bellevue residents served in Hopelink's food programs were immigrants or refugees. In addition, 26% of the Bellevue residents who accessed food services reported Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Hopelink continues to have Spanish (35%) and Russian (32%) as the main languages spoken among Bellevue LEP clients accessing Food services. Chinese & Mandarin (7%), Farsi (5%), and Arabic (4%) are the next most common languages spoken among clients that report limited English proficiency. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and ensuring that food services were easily accessible, Hopelink stopped collecting demographic data for food program clients. Therefore, this is the most recent data available.<sup>3</sup>
- More than half of Bellevue residents that Renewal Food Bank served in 2020 identify as immigrants or refugees.<sup>4</sup>
- 92% of Immigrants/Refugees served by all Hopelink programs at the Bellevue Service Center reported being stably housed, 7% report being homeless or at-risk. In comparison, 82% of Non-Immigrant/Refugees served at the Bellevue Center reported being stably housed, 18% reported being homeless or at risk.<sup>5</sup>
- Muslim Community Resource Center (MCRC) serves a high percentage of refugee and immigrant individuals. One of the programs they offer provides culturally relevant food assistance and gas assistance. From January 2021 to September 2021, they served 177 Bellevue residents with 277 services of either food or gas assistance.<sup>6</sup>

## Goal 2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities

- Both in the community conversations and in the provider's survey, providers stated that there is a significant lack of resources for those battling immigration laws or trying to attain citizenship.
- Indian American Community Services (previously Indian Association of Western Washington) reported a surge in legal needs ranging from domestic violence to legal immigration. They offer a legal clinic that offers support to build the individual's case with limited hours, but no representation in court. They have significantly increased their frequency of their clinics and are currently holding 5-6 clinics in a month.<sup>7</sup>
- Almost three-quarters (73.7%) of parents and caregivers of children in 5th grade and younger in King County had someone to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting or raising children in 2017 and 2019. Parents and caregivers in households that spoke many languages other than English at home were less likely to have emotional support with parenting. This includes parents and caregivers who primarily speak at home in Amharic (62.6%), Arabic (20.0%), Chinese (50.7%), Korean (59.2%), Russian (44.0%), Somali (42.4%), Spanish (27.2%), Telugu (47.3%), Vietnamese (62.3%), and other languages (48.3%).<sup>8</sup>
- With the increasing and complex needs of Bellevue residents, Bellevue Mini City Hall (MCH) staff continue to spend more time with each customer as more agencies and organizations lack capacity to respond especially to those with limited English and cultural barrier issues. Currently, volunteer interpreters and city staff offer assistance in Chinese (Mandarin and

Cantonese), Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Hindi, Somali. City staff also have access to the dual-receiver language line, which provides an over-the-phone interpreter in more than 100 languages at Mini City Hall and throughout the city.<sup>9</sup>

- Many families from diverse cultures prefer their children be cared for by families, friends, or neighbors (FFN) rather than in centers. FFN is more prevalent among immigrant families, because FFN caregivers are people that they know and trust to care for their child within the family's home culture and language. Child Care Resources collaborates with community-based organizations to offer Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups, which is a weekly facilitated play group where children get to experience socializing with their peers and FFN caregivers/parents learn more about child development and how they can help their children be ready for kindergarten. Due to COVID-19, all sessions are being held virtually. Prior to the pandemic, 4 groups met in Bellevue: 1) Newport Library in Chinese & English (run by Chinese Information and Services Center – CISC), 2) Woodside East Apartments in English (CISC), 3) Crossroads Community Center in Spanish & English (CISC), and 4) North Bellevue Community Center in English (Indian Association of Western Washington). All groups are free to families.<sup>10</sup>

“There is a need for more diverse staff who are not only bilingual but also culturally competent.”

~ Community Conversations

### Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence

- King County Sexual Assault Resource Coalition (KCSARC) reports an increased demand from Spanish speaking refugees and immigrants over the past few years and now provides all their services in Spanish as well as English. They provide access to legal services for Latinx survivors who are in need of immigration legal assistance related to the sexual assault as well as those needing family legal services related to sexual assault.<sup>11</sup>
- Immigrant survivors of domestic violence may be subject to unique forms of abuse, especially those who are undocumented or whose legal status depends on the abuser. Physical, emotional, sexual, and other kinds of abuse occur in all communities; however, abusers may use immigration status as an extra weapon of power and control, threatening to call Immigration and Customs Enforcement if a victim challenges or reports domestic or sexual violence. Those who are undocumented may be particularly vulnerable to this type of threat because they fear being deported if they challenge or report their abusers to law enforcement.<sup>12</sup>
- Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) serves refugee and immigrant women and families to support them to stabilize, promote acculturation, increase language proficiency, and improve employability. In 2020, 18 Bellevue residents completed Refugee Women's Alliance 8-week domestic violence support group.<sup>13</sup>
- Consejo Counseling Services' Domestic Violence Advocacy Program provides counseling, outreach, and advocacy services to Latinx survivors of domestic violence; most of their clients are immigrants from Latin America who speak Spanish. In 2020, Consejo has provided 22 Bellevue residents with 268 hours of counseling and 146 hours in support groups.<sup>14</sup>

*For information on Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents, please see Goal 2: Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence.*

## Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

- Safe Haven is a grassroots group of non-profit providers and advocates that collaborates to strengthen systems for immigrants and refugees, with a particular focus on advocating for the rights and safety of undocumented community members. During a community conversation at a Safe Haven meeting, participants reported a need for culturally relevant services for Immigrant and Refugees. They discussed the stigma of accessing services and the challenge when they're not able to receive services from someone that both understands their culture and is bi-lingual when needed. Members reported clients going to Seattle or South King County to access services.<sup>15</sup>
- Mini City Hall staff reported that accessing health care is especially challenging for older immigrant individuals, because they cannot afford private insurance and may not qualify for Medicaid or Medicare.<sup>16</sup>
- International Community Health Services reported in the provider's survey that refugees and immigrants often find it hard to find care that is provided in their language and in ways that are culturally appropriate. Some are not eligible for Medicaid, having not been in the US long enough, or are not familiar with the US healthcare and insurance systems and are unsure about the out-of-pocket costs they may have to pay so they delay accessing needed care.<sup>17</sup>
- Several providers report that there is a significant need for more bi-lingual, culturally competent mental health providers. They discussed there often being a stigma associated with accessing mental health services, so it decreases anxiety when the provider speaks their primary language and understands the culture. Chinese Information Service Center (CISC) staff reported that there are no therapists in Bellevue that speak Russian and accept Medicaid, resulting in clients accessing services in South King County.<sup>18</sup>
- Indian American Community Services (IACS) discussed the stress, anxiety, and grief that individuals in their community and likely other immigrant communities are experiencing due to the impact of COVID-19. They stated that nearly every Indian family they know has lost a family member or friend that lives in India to COVID-19. Being so far away from family makes it even more challenging to go through the grieving process.<sup>19</sup>
- International Community Health Services (ICHHS) services a high number of immigrant and refugee clients. They stated in their provider's survey that the demand for dental services in Bellevue was rising. From January 1 through June 30, 2021, the dentists at the ICHHS Bellevue Clinic that are funded partially by city funds provided 980 visits to 679 unduplicated Bellevue residents. During the same period in 2019, these dentists provided 353 visits to 236 unduplicated residents. This shows how demand has increased above even pre-pandemic levels.<sup>20</sup>

## Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential

- Although the lack of living-wage jobs was a consistent theme across community conversations, immigrant populations have unique experiences and challenges. CISC staff discussed that many of the clients they serve have the skills to do the job, but their language barrier makes it nearly impossible for them to obtain jobs that fit their skills and education.<sup>21</sup>
- Bellevue College's Preparing for Work program helps meet the refugee/immigrant community's need for job and English skills training. Bellevue College served 680 Bellevue residents in 2020 through Preparing for Work Course and Center for Career Course<sup>22</sup>

- In 2020, Jewish Family Services, who serves a high percentage of immigrants and refugees, provided 34 Bellevue residents with employment services, such as resume creation, job coaching, and skills training.<sup>23</sup>
- Hopelink's English for Work (EFW) program teaches English language learners how to search for jobs and speak about their skills and experience. All classes were moved online due to COVID-19, which results in a decreased number of participants. In FY 2021, over 150 clients were served. Of those who completed the course, 18 percent improved their employment status. Of all employed students who completed the course, their average wage when exiting the course was \$17.88 per hour.

## Additional Items for Consideration

### Language Barriers

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) refers to anyone above the age of 5 who reported speaking English less than "very well" in the U.S. Census classification system. Those with LEP can find it difficult to navigate systems due to lack of information available in their native language and inability to directly communicate with providers.

- In the phone/online survey, 26% of respondents said that *lack of services for non-English speakers in the community* was a major or moderate problem.<sup>24</sup>
- Several providers discussed that information in the community is often only offered in English and not translated. Therefore, the immigrant and refugee community are often not aware of community resources, community events, and other important information distributed into the community, include COVID-19 precautions.
- Asian Counseling and Referral Services reported in the provider's survey that parents/guardians struggle getting connected with community services due to language barriers, and unfamiliarity of resources and services they qualify for.<sup>25</sup>
- Approximately 10% of Bellevue households and 6% of King County households had LEP in 2019. About 30% of these Bellevue households speak Spanish and 24% speak an Asian or Pacific Island language.<sup>26</sup>
- Regardless of language proficiency, nearly 55,000 Bellevue households speak a language other than English at home; 55% speak an Asian and Pacific Island language, 29% an Indo-European language, and 14% Spanish.<sup>27</sup>
- CISC discussed community information often not being translated in a timely manner, sometimes only having that translation completed a couple days before the program ends. CISC took a proactive approach and prioritized translating COVID-19 information as it became available. As of August 2021, they had translated over 300 pieces of COVID-19 information into Chinese, because the information was not translated as it was released.

"Refugees and immigrants often have to face English language barriers, which prevent them to find a good job, to involve with their children's schooling and helping them succeed in school...etc. just to name a few. Transportation would also be a major issue for newcomers who rely on public transportation which is not always convenient."

~ Provider's Survey, Jewish Family Services



- Jubilee REACH, a community center in the Lake Hills neighborhood, offers ESL classes at all levels. These ESL classes can help students to prepare for entrance to a college or university, or help to improve English for social purposes or travel. Students practice conversational English and learn the skills necessary for communicating in a wide variety of situations. In 2019, more than 200 students from 23 countries attended ESL classes. In March of 2020, the ESL program was temporarily deferred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ESL program has resumed in-person classes at the Jubilee REACH Center as of October 5, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

## Fear and Discrimination

- Several provider's survey respondents reported increased fear related to immigration status was a substantial barrier to clients accessing services.
- Thirty-five percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate community issue, a 10% increase from 2019 and 22% increase from 2009.
- Seven percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate household issue, a 2% decrease from 2019 and the same as 2009.
- Twenty percent of the consumer survey respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination most of the time or sometimes. 31% of respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing discrimination other than racial or ethnic discrimination.
- Across many community conversations, a major theme was that many refugees and immigrants are refusing services and disengaging from other public or private systems.<sup>29</sup> The most commonly cited reason for doing so was the perception that accessing resources is not safe for them or their family due to their citizenship status.
- A substantial amount of fear among immigrants and refugees stems from the federal government's proposed administrative redefinition of "public charge." An individual seeking admission or permanent residency in the U.S. is deemed inadmissible if they are likely to become a "public charge," meaning they will become primarily dependent on the government for support. Use of these programs, though legal, could be used against immigrants in their attempts to gain permanent residency status.
- Bellevue Mini City Hall staff reported that many immigrants they serve, especially those who are undocumented, withdraw their families from housing, medical care and nutrition programs because they feared deportation.<sup>30</sup>

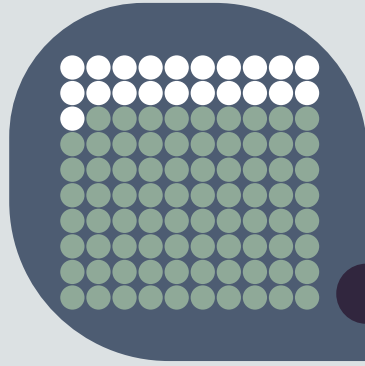
*For information on Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents, please see Goal 2: Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence.*

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## Endnotes

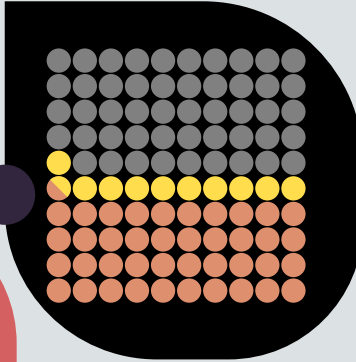
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# School-Aged Children and Youth



Youth under age 18 comprised about **21%** of Bellevue's population in 2019.

Over **50%** of students at BSD are people of color, with Asian students making up over **40%** of all students.



**18%** of students at BSD were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

BSD reported **333** students qualified as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act in the 2020-2021 school year.



**27%** of respondents ranked "lack of services for children and youth/teens" as a major/moderate community problem.

**35.6%** of 12th-grade students reporting depressive feelings.



# School-Aged Children and Youth

## Key Findings

- Many children and youth continue to show signs of significant stress: problems in school, substance use disorder, anxiety, suicide ideation and depression.
- Access to supports for school-aged children and youth to ensure their health and wellbeing is critical. Many families still struggle to provide the basics for their children because the cost of living is outpacing earnings. Lack of resources can put children and youth at risk for poor outcomes.
- With the growing diversity in Bellevue, there is a need for more culturally responsive programs and activities for school-aged children and youth and their families who may be coping with adjusting to a new country and culture or to gender-based or physical differences.

## Population Overview

Responding to the needs of school-aged children and youth is critical for their healthy growth and development. This is especially important for those with limited access to resources they need to succeed in school and in life. It is important to ensure that their families are also receiving support, such as help in finding livable wage jobs and affordable housing.

Youth under age 18 comprised about 21% of Bellevue's population in 2019. Bellevue had a similar proportion of youth compared to the nation (22%), Washington State (22%), and King County (20%), but a larger proportion than Seattle (15%). About 42% of youth under age 18 in Bellevue identify as White, compared to 74% of people 65 and over.<sup>1</sup> The Bellevue School District (BSD) is highly diverse. Over 50% of students are people of color, with Asian students making up over 40% of all students.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter only provides information about goals 1 through 5 as they relate specifically to School-Aged Children and Youth. For a broader discussion of these areas, please see their respective chapters.

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence
- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential
- Additional Topics for Consideration
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) Youth

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase Racial (In)Equity Data Point.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Goal 1: Food to Eat and a Roof Overhead

Bellevue's child poverty rate was 6% on average between 2015-2019, compared to 10% county-wide. For children under 5 years of age, the poverty rate was slightly higher in Bellevue at 7% and 10% across the county.<sup>3</sup>

In the 2020-21 school year as of October 1, 2021, 18% of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.<sup>4</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** As Figure 1 shows, some races and ethnicity groups had higher rates of being eligible for Free and Reduce Lunch. For instance, 13% of the students at BSD are Hispanic/Latino, yet 46% of the students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch are Hispanic/Latino.

### Race and Ethnicity Percentages for Total Bellevue School District Population and for the Low-Income Population (Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch)

Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity Percentages for the Total BSD Population	Racial/Ethnicity Percentages for the Low-Income Population (Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch)
Asian	44%	18%
Black	3%	11%
Hispanic/Latino	13%	46%
Multi-Ethnic	9%	6%
Native American	0.20%	0.20%
Pacific Islander	0%	1%
White	29%	18%
Grand Total	100%	100%

Figure 1 | Source: Bellevue School District <sup>5</sup>

- BSD offered food for students during the pandemic, since students were no longer able to access free and reduced meals at school. Schools worked to reduce barriers to access. However, many families still had to drive to pick up the food daily, so the cost of gas was a challenge for some families.<sup>6</sup>
- LifeSpring partners with BSD to provide food assistance during school breaks for Bellevue students enrolled in free and reduced lunch or experiencing economic hardship during the school year. Children receive a grocery store food voucher, which allows families to purchase fresh produce, dairy, meat, and culturally relevant food. While schools were providing remote learning, LifeSpring partnered with Bellevue School District to respond to the needs of the families.<sup>7</sup>
- Backpack Meals for Kids partners with the BSD to help families access needed food for the weekends. They distribute 600 packs of food through the Family Connections Centers each week. They reported an increased need due to COVID-19.<sup>8</sup>

- During a community conversation at LifeSpring, staff discussed the need for shelter for families with children in Bellevue and more affordable housing units in Bellevue that serve families with children in the BSD.<sup>9</sup>
- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, every local educational agency is required to designate a liaison for homeless children and youth. The local educational agency liaison coordinates services to ensure that homeless children and youth enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically. BSD reported 333 students qualified as homeless under the McKinney -Vento Act in the 2020-2021 school year. This is a decrease from the 375 students in 2019-2020, which BSD expects is due at least in part to the decline in enrollment<sup>10</sup>

### BSD Racial and Ethnic Enrollment Compared to Homeless Students

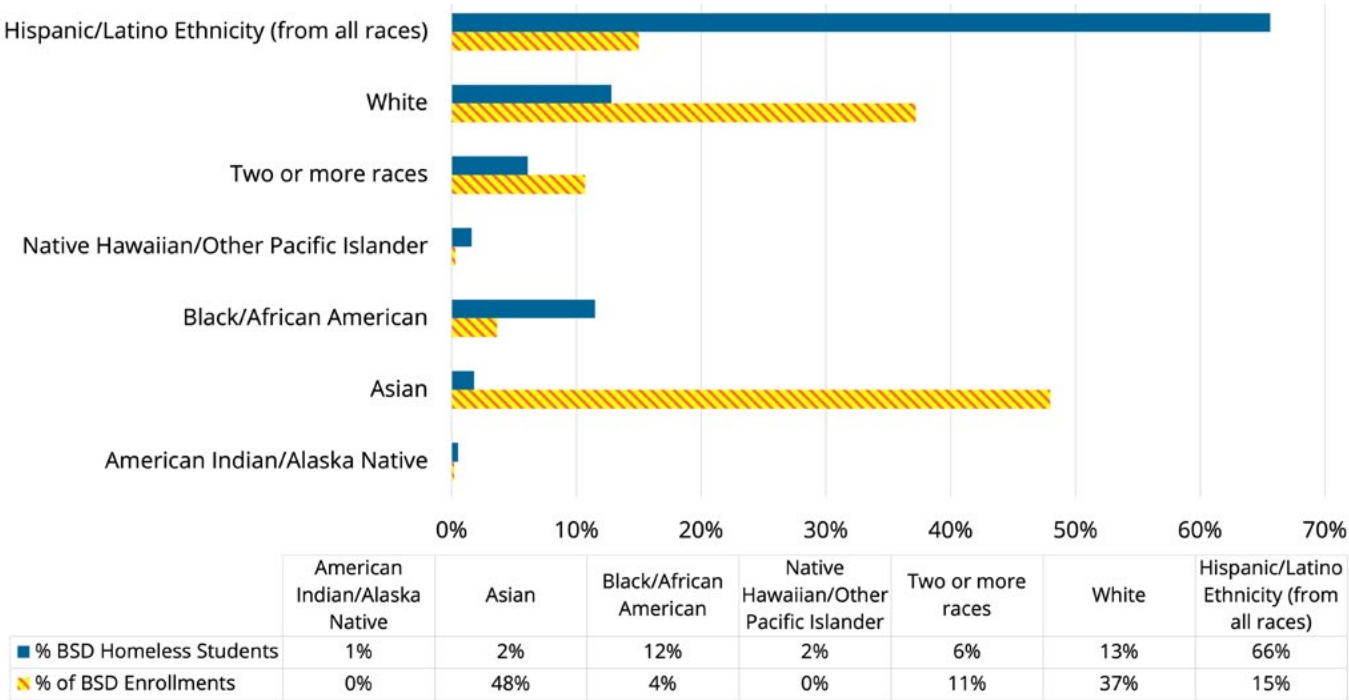


Figure 2 | Source: Bellevue School District

- In outreach conversations conducted with adults, youth, and families experiencing homelessness, a common theme was the need for affordable housing. With the high cost of living, households with individuals working full-time are not able to afford to pay for the basics.<sup>11</sup>
- In the 2020 annual Count Us In, All Home's point-in-time count in King County, 19% of those counted were less than 18 years old. The Youth Count consists of face-to-face interview using a survey, where the street count consisted only of an observational count. 955 unaccompanied youth and young adults were counted, 26% of those counted were under 18 years old and 74% were 18-24 years old. These numbers do not include

"There has been an increase in students experiencing financial instability due to the impact COVID-19 has had on the economy. Many people have lost their jobs and have entered unstable financial states. This has led to an increase in students needing services to provide food for them during the week."

~ Provider's Survey, Backpack Meals for Kids



youth under 18 years old who are in a family or have children. There were 1,190 family with children, representing 3,743 adults and children experiencing homelessness on the morning of the count.<sup>12</sup>

## Goal 2: Supportive Relationships

- Twenty-seven percent of respondents in the 2021 phone/online survey ranked “lack of services for children and youth/teens” as a major/moderate community problem, as compared to 20% in 2019.<sup>13</sup>
- Staff from the BSD report that some kids needed extra support as they really struggled with remote learning. The Boys and Girls Club, Jubilee Reach, and YouthLink provides homework help and tutoring. To address the significant need in at the end of the 2020-2021 school year, YouthLink’s partnered with Bellevue Boys and Girls Club to offer offsite virtual tutoring.<sup>14</sup>
- BSD staff also discussed the lack of availability of childcare slots, especially for older children. In 2020, COVID-19 added an extra layer of challenge for accessing childcare when schools were working remotely and some childcare centers closed down or lowered capacity.<sup>15</sup>

## Goal 3: Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence

- In 2018, 81% of King County eighth graders reported feeling safe at school. In BSD, 88% of eighth graders felt safe in school.<sup>16</sup>
- In 2018, 5% of King County 12th graders reported having been a member of a gang in the past 12 months. Four percent of BSD 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported as such.<sup>17</sup>
- In King County, there has a significant decrease in juvenile arrests over the last six years with 2,695 juvenile arrests in 2013 and 1,719 juvenile arrest in 2019.<sup>18</sup> We saw a similar decrease in Bellevue. In 2020, 107 juveniles were arrested in Bellevue compared to 200 in 2019, a decrease of 56.5%.<sup>19</sup> **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Even as the number of incarcerated youth has declined, disparities affecting young people of color have continued to grow. Youth of color account for 28% of the U.S. population in 2017; however, they represented 67% of detained youth.<sup>20</sup> King County reports that youth of color, especially African American youth, are disproportionately represented in the population of incarcerated youth.<sup>21</sup>
- The City of Bellevue has a low level of gang activity for a municipality of its size and proximity to other major urban areas. Most of the police department calls for service that involve gang members are limited to crimes committed by persons who live outside our city and whose gang is based out of the city they reside in. There are several individuals who live in Bellevue who are loosely affiliated with gangs that are active regionally. These people tend commit low level street crime, primarily street level drug-dealing and assaults related to the activity, as well as property crimes such as Burglary, Malicious Mischief (Graffiti), and Trespass. Over the past 3 years, there have been a relatively small number of cases flagged as gang related that occurred in the City of Bellevue; 2018: 18, 2019: 28, 2020: 21.<sup>22</sup>

## Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

- Youth and young adults have experienced many disruptions due to COVID-19 such as school closures and remote learning, social isolation, family financial hardship or lack of access to food, and some who have experienced either the illness or death of a family member

due to COVID-19. Rates for youth suicidal ideation and attempt had been rising prior to the pandemic; the system that serves youth and young adults was already overburdened. The pandemic further intensified the strains on young people's mental health and well-being, as well as on the youth mental health system.<sup>23</sup>

- A widespread challenge expressed during several community conversations was the increased need for behavioral health services for youth; waitlists are over six weeks long for the majority of the services. Several behavioral health providers stated that they are working to address the need, but their current challenge to staying fully staffed along with the increasing demand has exacerbated the problem.
- Mental health service moved to virtual meetings during Covid-19. During community conversations with Bellevue Wrap Around Services, staff expressed the challenge for youth accessing the technology resources to maintain counseling and to stay connected during a time that they felt so isolated.
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service staff report that since the start of the pandemic, referrals are needing a high acuity of care and clients have increased suicidal ideation, isolation, and depression symptoms.<sup>24</sup>
- According to the Washington State Department of Health Rapid Health Information Network, there has been an increase in the number of emergency department visits involving suicidal attempts in King County for youth age 10 to 17. The data is for the months of July to September for each year. From July to September in 2019 there were 280 visits, in 2020 there were 342 visits, and in 2021 there were 377 visits.<sup>25</sup>
- In King County, the number of deaths by suicide among youth under age 18 stayed roughly the same between 2019 and 2020 (14 deaths each year); however, the average age dropped from 16.5 years in 2019 to 14.6 years in 2020. Looking at the regional data, East King County previously had the highest rate in King County with 33% of deaths by suicide among youth under age 18 between 2016- 2019. However, for 2020-2021 only 5% of deaths by suicide among youth under 18 were East King County residents. Youth suicide remained constant by race/ethnicity (majority white, non-Hispanic) and gender (majority male) between 2019 and 2020. In the past 5 years (2016- 2021), 14% of youth who died by suicide were known to identify as LGBTQ. However, this is likely an underestimate as there may be additional youth that were not included if their gender identity or sexual orientation was not known to family or friends.<sup>26</sup>
- Washington Poison Center staff reported that calls regarding adolescent self-harm/ suspected suicide steadily increased over the last decade, especially in the last year. In the first 6 months of 2021, they had 1,399 adolescent patients calling about self-harm/suicide attempts, which is up from 1052 adolescents in the first 6 months of 2020.<sup>27</sup>
- The prevalence of depression has been rising among King County youth for the past 10 years. The Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) reports whether students, during the past year, have felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some of their usual activities. Averaging data from 2016 and 2018, 31.4% of King County 8th-, 10th-, and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students experienced depressive feelings. The percentage of youth reporting depressive feelings increases significantly with each grade level from 25.7% of 8th-grade students to 35.6% of 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students reporting depressive feelings. Figure 3 displays the responses for overall King County, by geographic region, and by Race/Ethnicity. For youth in

East King County, 27.9% of the HYS respondents reported experiencing depressive feelings. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Hispanic (38.0%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (34.6%), American Indian/Alaska Native (34.4%), and multiple-race (37.4%) youth were more likely than Asian (27.5%), Black (29.9%), and white (29.5%) youth to report depressive feelings.

### Depression Prevalence (8th, 10th, and 12th Grade) King County (Average 2016 & 2018)

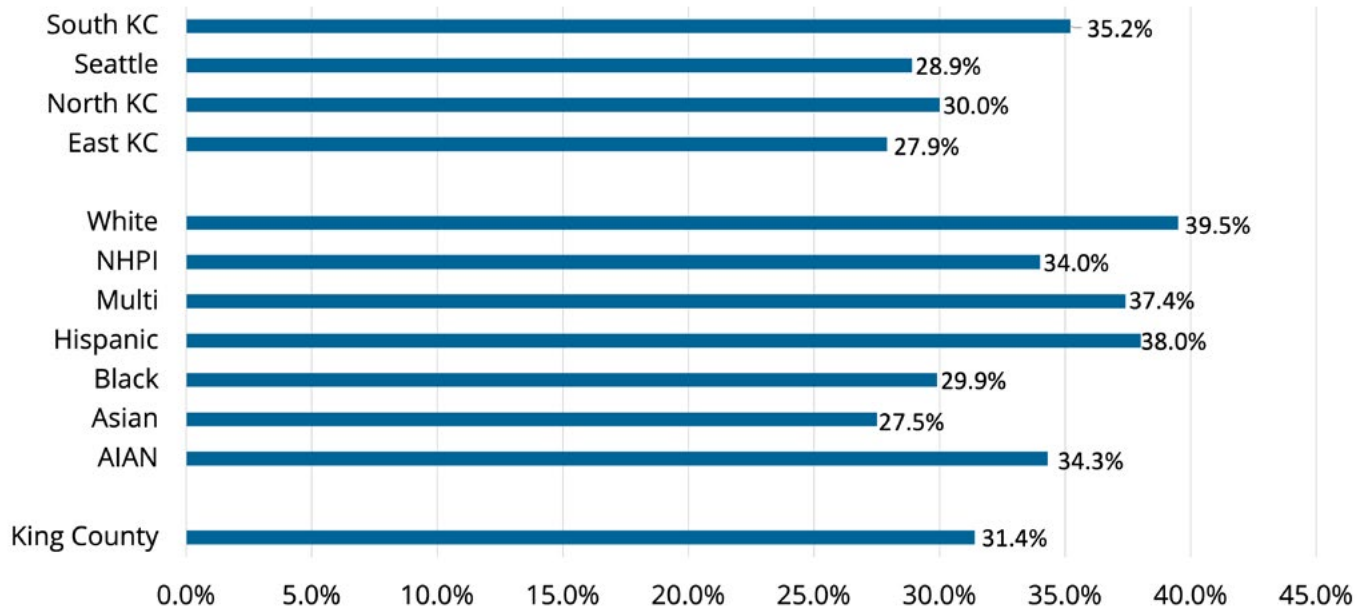


Figure 3 | Source: Healthy Youth Survey<sup>28</sup>

- The HYS also showed that 19% of 8th graders, 20% of 10th graders, and 19% of 12th graders in King County had contemplated suicide in the last 12 months. In BSD, 18% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 21% of 10th graders and 20% of 12th graders reported as such, all increased compared to 2016 data.<sup>29</sup>
- Twenty seven percent of sixth graders in King County reported in the 2018 HYS that they'd been bullied in the past 30 days. By 12th grade, this rate had dropped to 13%. In BSD, a similar trend was noted: 26% of sixth graders and 12% of twelfth graders reported being bullied.<sup>30</sup>
- This indicator also reports on 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders' high-risk substance use, including alcohol, marijuana, painkillers, or other illegal drugs in the past 30 days. Averaging data from 2016 and 2018, 23.7% of King County youth responding to the HYS in the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades reported using high-risk substances or other illegal drugs during the past 30 days. Twenty-two percent of students in East King County reported using a high-risk or illegal substance, compared to Seattle (29.0%), North (22.2%), and South (23.0%) regions. The percentage of students reporting substance use increased 2.5 times between 8th (9.1%) and 10th (23.2%) grades and increased another 1.6 times between 10th and 12th (37.4%) grades. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Hispanic (28.9%) and multiple-race (28.6%) youth were significantly more likely to report substance use compared to the King County average.
- Dental care is important and can affect an individual's general health. In 2015, 38% of children in King County had cavities – about the same as the 40% reported in 2010. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** The presence of dental cavities is a marker of dental health and access to care among children. At a rate 2.4 times that of white children, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children were significantly more likely to have had cavities than children in

other racial/ethnic groups. Asian, Black, Hispanic, and multiple-race children were also more likely than white children to have had cavities. More than half of children who are eligible for free/ reduced lunch have had cavities. At 33%, students from English-speaking households were significantly less likely to have had cavities than those from households where the primary language was Spanish (54%) or another non-English language (47%). This data suggests that children in these racial/ethnic groups may have reduced access to dental care.

- Averaging data from 2014–2018, more than seven out of 10 expectant mothers (72.2%) in King County received early and adequate prenatal care. **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander expectant mothers (47.7%) were significantly less likely to have early and adequate prenatal care compared to any other race/ethnicity. American Indian/Alaska Native (60.4%) and Black (61.5%) expectant mothers were the second and third less likely, respectively. White expectant mothers (76.4%) were most likely to have early and adequate prenatal care. The likelihood of receiving early and adequate prenatal care increases with age. Young expectant mothers age 10–17 years old were least likely (48.4%) to have received prenatal care. Expectant mothers 18–24 years old had the second lowest percentage (60.8%).<sup>31</sup>
- Averaging data from 2014–2018, 3.9 per 1,000 infants born to King County residents died within 365 days after birth. The King County rate is lower than the Washington state infant mortality rate of 4.7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births (2018). **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Disparities persist by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and neighborhood. Infants born to American Indian/Alaska Native mothers (12.2 per 1,000) die at rates more than four times the rate among Asian (2.8 per 1,000) or white mothers (3.0 per 1,000). Infants born to Black mothers (7.8 per 1,000) die at rates more than 2.5 times the rate of infants born to Asian or white mothers.<sup>32</sup>
- Research has shown that when mental health and substance use disorder are treated simultaneously, people are more likely to be successful in long term recovery. Youth Eastside Services (YES) provides this treatment for co-occurring disorders whether or not the young people can afford it. YES staff report an increase in the number of teens they see that need this type of care.<sup>33</sup>
- The Crisis Connections' Teen Link program provides a youth-answered help line open evenings to respond to calls from youth on a wide variety of topics. Teen Link handled 33 calls (chats) in 2020 and as of September 2021 they have had 21 calls (chats) from Bellevue youth.<sup>34</sup>
- TeenLink also offers suicide prevention training in junior, middle and high schools, and youth serving organizations. Teen Link presented to 494 students from Bellevue in 2020 and 544 as of September 2021.<sup>35</sup>

"The need for behavioral health services for youth and families is as substantial as ever. Youth continue to struggle with issues including anxiety, depression, grief and loss, substance use, and family conflict. Online learning and social isolation have further exacerbated mental health concerns for some individuals, and suicidal ideations is on the rise among youth."

~ Youth Eastside Service

## Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential

- With Covid-19, school districts had to navigate new ways of teaching youth while students were participating remotely. During a community conversation with Bellevue Wrap Around Services and YouthLink staff, staff stated that virtual school was a huge challenge for students without internet. In the beginning, students were going to parks and other public places to access internet to complete their schoolwork.
- As of October 2021, BSD's enrollment was 18,808.<sup>36</sup> Some students who are Bellevue residents attend schools in the Issaquah School District: Sunset and Cougar Ridge Elementary Schools and Issaquah Middle School.
- Across BSD in the 2018-19 school year, 69% of children entered kindergarten with expected skills in all six domains of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills.<sup>37</sup>
- In 2020, BSD's 4-year graduation rate was 94%, with 2.1% continuing in school and 3.8% dropping out.<sup>38</sup>
- In addition to growing racial and ethnic diversity, there are now 104 first languages spoken in the district. Forty-one percent of students speak a first language other than English. The top two languages are Mandarin Chinese and Spanish with over 1,500 speakers each, followed by Chinese unspecified, Korean, Russian, Telugu, and Hindi.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2021-22 school year, 16% of BSD students were English Language Learners (ELLs).<sup>40</sup>
- Eastside Pathways (EP) engages organizations and works collaboratively to align efforts to address the systemic barriers that hold back some of our children to maximize every child's opportunity for success in school and life from cradle to career. EP partnerships include 84 public, private, and non-profit organizations. The City of Bellevue has been a partner from the onset with staff participating in the collaboratives, on the board, and providing other support.<sup>41</sup>

"An increased number of high schoolers are seeing their parents being laid off and taking on the responsibility of working and bringing home income while also going to school, which is a lot of pressure on a youth."

~ Bellevue Diversity Staff

## Additional Items for Consideration

### Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + (LGBTQ+) Youth

- The 2018 Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) show that 11.3% of King County public high school students identify as LGBTQ+ and 7% are not sure of their sexual orientation.<sup>42</sup>
- BGLAD is a weekly drop-in social support group for youth at Youth Eastside Services, established as a welcoming and affirming space for people exploring or seeking support for their identities. In a community conversation with BGLAD, a participant stated that teens, especially LGBTQ+ teens, don't know where to go to get domestic violence resources.<sup>43</sup>
- BGLAD participants in the community conversation also stated that underage or young adult queer folks are overrepresented in sex work.<sup>44</sup>



- Forty-six percent of homeless LGBTQ youth report they no longer live in their family home due to family rejection of their sexual orientation and 17% ended up on the streets after they aged out of the foster care system.<sup>45</sup>
- Within 48 hours of becoming homeless, 1 in 3 homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation. There is a disproportionate number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) youth in the commercially sexually exploited population. LGBTQ youth's entry into commercial sexual exploitation often begins with survival sex: the exchange of sexual favors for basic needs like food, shelter, or clothing. Homeless LGBTQ youth were three times as likely to engage in survival sex than their heterosexual peers.<sup>46</sup>
- The National Coalition for the Homeless reports that between 20-40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+.<sup>47</sup> Of the unaccompanied youth in the 2020 Count Us In report, 27% of the youth and young adults identified as LGBTQ+, compared to 1% of the non-unaccompanied youth and young adult population.<sup>48</sup>
- Due to their sexual orientation, many LGBTQ+ youth are routinely victimized not only by their peers but by their own family members. LGBTQ+ youth who face discrimination, name-calling and abuse in their childhood are more likely to have low self-esteem and higher rates of mental health problems.<sup>49</sup> The HYS reports whether students, during the past year, have felt so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some of their usual activities. Averaging data from 2016 and 2018, 57.2% of youth identifying as LGBTQ+ report depressive feelings compared to youth who identified themselves as heterosexual (26.4%).<sup>50</sup>
- The HYS indicator reports on 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders' high-risk substance use, including alcohol, marijuana, painkillers, or other illegal drugs in the past 30 days. Among youth identifying as LGBTQ+, 34.4% reported substance use, which is higher than youth identifying as heterosexual (23.5%) and higher than the overall King County average.<sup>51</sup>
- In a recent King County Community Health report, key informants and LGBTQ+ youth and young adults were asked to relate their experiences with the healthcare as well as other systems from which they seek resources. Some themes that emerged included lack of feeling heard by doctors; lack of safety in general, at school, and out in the community; and lack of support from adults. Youth suggested that some ways to mitigate these issues would include having more queer friendly intake forms that gave many options for sexuality choices, displaying PRIDE flags and signage, and having LGBTQ+ staff.<sup>52</sup>
- Staff from Friends of Youth, which works with youth experiencing homelessness, report that they see a disproportionate amount of LGBTQ+ and youth of color represented in the demographics that they serve.<sup>53</sup>



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# Veterans



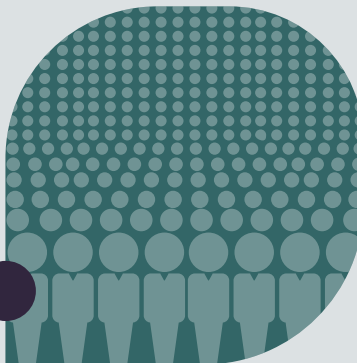
**125,000** active military members and their families may be facing food insecurity in the United States.

2020 Count Us In, **813** identified as Veterans, from those **51%** unsheltered and **49%** sheltered.



In Washington State in 2019, there were **192** veteran suicides.

An estimated **19,500** to 28,000 King County Veterans with PTSD.



**5.8%** of military members identify as LGBTQ.

# Veterans

## Key Findings

- Due to the pandemic, many services for veterans, similar to other populations, had to be provided virtually, with social distance or with hybrid models. It became clear that a significant number of this population had no digital access or social supports to provide help in lieu of formal, in-person services.
- As a result of a focused countywide effort over the past years, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in King County has decreased considerably.
- Behavioral services, substance use disorder treatment and services for military sexual trauma are particularly critical to have available in the community as sometimes veterans seek non-VA help with these issues.
- Though rates of veteran suicides have decreased slightly, this continues to be an issue.
- Affordable housing is one of the most frequently identified top needs among veterans by both veterans and providers.
- Ongoing partnerships between human service agencies and federal, state, and county veterans' programs are still needed to ensure that veterans are aware of the benefits to which they are entitled and get help in accessing these benefits when they are eligible. Navigators that assist with finding health care and other resources could be a model to provide a more comprehensive approach.

## Population Overview

Veterans are individuals of all genders who have served in one of the five branches of the military (Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Air Force) and also includes “citizen soldiers”, those serving in the State National Guard or as part of the Services Reserve Components. Since the events of 9/11, more attention has been paid to the human service needs of veterans due to the high visibility of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq although veterans from the Gulf War, Vietnam, and Korea also have a strong presence in the Puget Sound Region.

In 2020, 18.5 million individuals were veterans, accounting for about 7% of the civilian noninstitutional population age 18 and over. Of all veterans, 10% are women. Veterans are defined as individuals who have previously served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and who were civilians at the time these data were collected. A higher percentage of the veteran population are male than that of the general population. The veteran population is also of an average age that is older than that of the general population. In part, this reflects the characteristics of veterans who served during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era, all of whom are now over 70 years old. Veterans who served during these wartime periods accounted for 37% (6.8 million) of the total veteran population in 2020. Forty-one percent of veterans (7.6 million) served during Gulf War era I (August 1990 to August 2001) or Gulf War era II (September 2001 to present). Twenty-two percent (4.1 million) served outside the designated wartime periods.<sup>1</sup>

As of August 2021, there are 544,533 veterans in Washington State, about a 6% decrease compared to 2016.<sup>2</sup> The total number of veterans in King County has also been declining for more

than a decade, since 2010 there has been over a 20% decrease. There are 106,581 veterans in King County; more than 65,000 vets are over the age of 55 (66%) and (9%) are 34 years of age and younger. About 5,100 veterans live in Bellevue, roughly 5% of all veterans in King County.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond reductions in number of veterans, there are also demographic differences and changes. Women are the faster growing group; by 2043, women are expected to make up 16.3% of all living veterans nationally. Currently, there are more than 6,965 women veterans living in King County and 526 (10%) in Bellevue.<sup>4</sup> Nationally, male veterans are more likely to be White than their non-veteran counterparts. In contrast, female veterans are more likely to be people of color compared to their non-veteran counterparts. Veterans of all gender identities are less likely to be Hispanic than their non-veteran counterparts.<sup>5</sup> Figure 1 provides race and ethnicity data for both Bellevue and King County veterans.<sup>6</sup>

### Estimated Number of Veterans by Race and Ethnicity

	King County	Bellevue
American Indian/Alaska Native	774 (1%)	7 (0%)
Asian	5,412 (5%)	387 (6%)
Black	7,358 (7%)	68 (1%)
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	946 (1%)	94 (1%)
White	78,573 (78%)	4,461(86%)
Multiple races	3,533 (4%)	111 (2%)
Some other race alone	1,382(1%)	431(1%)
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	4,577 (5%)	66(1%)
Total	106,581	5,170

Figure 1 | 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table S2101)

In 2005, King County voters passed a Veterans and Human Services Levy (VHSL), which is collected through a property tax of .05% per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. These funds are split equally between services for veterans, military members and their families, and human services for vulnerable populations. In 2011, the Levy was renewed by 69% of voters for another six years, which generated about \$18 million annually. In November 2017, 68% of voters approved the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy (VSHSL), adding seniors to one of the groups to be served. The Levy will raise an estimated \$350 million between 2018 and 2023 for seniors, veterans, and vulnerable populations. In 2018, about 9% of clients served were from East King County.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter only provides information about goals 1 through 5 as they relate specifically to veterans. For a broader discussion of these areas, please see their respective chapters.

- Goal 1: Food to Eat and Roof Overhead
- Goal 2: Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
- Goal 3: A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence



- Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach their Full Potential

In addition to these goals, the following topics have been identified as important to this population:

Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Lesbian, Queer, Intersex or Asexual Members of the Military

We recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In) Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

## Goal 1: Food to Eat and a Roof Overhead

- An estimated 813 individuals experiencing homelessness (7% of the total count population) in the 2020 Count Us In (formerly One Night Count) report identified as veterans. The Count was not conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This represents a downward trend that began in 2018; the number of veterans has fallen by 38% since 2017. Half of 2020's veterans were unsheltered (51%), while 49% were sheltered. Since 2017, 2021 has marked the highest sheltered rate for veterans of 51%. Of the veteran homeless population, about 80% are men, 57% white, 97% were non-Hispanic, and 92% were 25 and up. About 27% of the veterans experiencing homelessness reported that this was the first time that they were experiencing homelessness. Additionally, 11% of the veterans (compared to 17% of the non-veteran population) identified as LBTQIA+.
- **Racial (In) Equity Data Point:** Of the veterans included in the 2020 Count Us In data, Black, Indigenous, People of Color or multiple races represent 43% of the total, while in King County, 38% of the population is Black, Indigenous, People of Color or multiple races.<sup>8</sup>
- Compared to other Count Us In survey respondents, veterans reported notably higher rates of living with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and similar rates of physical disabilities to the non-veteran population. Veterans had an overall rate of psychiatric or emotional conditions of 70%, and 55% report experiencing PTSD.
- Mental health and alcohol or drug use issues were the most frequently cited cause of homelessness by veterans (13% for each) followed by illness and medical problems (10%).<sup>9</sup>
- The most critical needs for veterans mentioned in the providers survey include rental assistance and housing.<sup>10</sup>
- King County Veterans Program launched the COVID-19 Veteran Rental and Mortgage Assistance Pilot program, investing over \$288,000 in housing payments to support veterans and their families staying safely housed.<sup>11</sup>
- As many as 125,000 active military members and their families may be facing food insecurity in the United States. Some of the reasons cited are cost of living, other financial commitments, and limited income. Only 2% of active-duty service members qualify for

"Affordable housing is the number one need for veterans."

~Key informant interview

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, according to the USDA. But approximately 7% of military personnel and their families face food insecurity.<sup>12</sup>

## Goal 2: Supportive Relationships

- The number of veterans calling the Crisis Connections 2-1-1 Community Information Line for assistance increased in 2020 by 17% compared to 2018. The number of requests is higher from veterans living in South King County and Seattle, as shown in Figure 2. The share from East King County increased to 10% compared to 6% in 2018. Of cities on the Eastside, Bellevue veterans had the highest number of calls (88).<sup>13</sup>

### Crisis Connection Calls

REGION	Total Veterans	% of Requests by Region 2020
East Total	193	10%
North Total	108	5%
Seattle Total	748	38%
South Total	930	47%
Total 2-1-1 Requests	1,985	100%

Figure 2 | Source: Crisis Connections<sup>14</sup>

- There are a total of 5.5 million caregivers caring for former or current military personnel in the U.S. (1.1 million post 9/11). Nine in ten (96%) caregivers of veterans are women and 70% provide care to their spouse or partner. 30% of veterans' caregivers provide care for a duration of 10 years or more as compared to 15% of caregivers nationally. 88% report increased stress or anxiety as a result of caregiving, and 77% state sleep deprivation as an issue.<sup>15</sup>
- Strategies funded through the VSHSL have increased awareness of the needs of families and dependents of soldiers and veterans. The Military Family Counseling Program provides no-cost behavioral health counseling to families.<sup>16</sup>
- Affordable legal services are important for veterans. King County Bar Association provides eviction legal assistance and Eastside Legal Assistance Program provides eviction prevention and legal counsel for civil legal issues.<sup>17</sup>
- Another one-stop call center for veterans was funded by the VSHSL and is operated by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs.<sup>18</sup>

## Goal 3: Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence

- There has been a trend toward more reports of sexual assault of military members, often reported when they leave the services and become veterans, ranging from unwanted sexual contact and harassment to rape. These are referred to as military sexual trauma or MST. In 2018, the most recent data available, about 6.2% of active duty women indicated experiencing a sexual assault in the year prior to being surveyed, a statistically significant

increase over 2016. The estimated prevalence rate men in active duty remained statistically unchanged at 0.7 percent. Using these rates, the Department of Defense estimates 20,500 Service members, representing about 13,000 women and 7,500 men, experienced some kind of unwanted sexual contact or penetrative sexual assault in 2018, up from approximately 14,900 in 2016.<sup>19</sup>

- When national prevalence rates are applied to King County, as many as 7,900 veterans are potentially affected by MST. The 2019-2023 Implementation Plan for the King County VSHSL includes funds for a program operated by a non-profit to seek out and specialize in serving women and transgender veterans in King County.<sup>20</sup>
- One of the top three challenges with transition from the military that women veterans identified was coping with mental health issues related to MST (25%). Through the Annual Warrior Survey, 44% of women warriors reported experiencing MST as a result of their service. This survey found that more warriors have had experiences often related to MST, with nearly 73% of women warriors reporting experiencing sexual assault or harassment while in the military.<sup>21</sup>
- Nationally, 10% of jail and prison inmates report having served in the military. King County statistics suggest that veterans make up about 2% to 3% of the inmate population at any given time. The Incarcerated Vet Reentry Service Program (funded by VSHSL and administered by the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, WDVA) helps eligible vets and other military personnel within the King County misdemeanor jail system by providing legal counsel and services such as behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services.<sup>22</sup>
- Seattle Veterans Treatment Court (established in 2011) and King County Regional Veterans Court (established in 2012) provide an opportunity for veterans to choose treatment for substance use disorder or receive other resources as an alternative to incarceration. The VSHSL provides a Court Clinician who screens veterans for these courts and helps guide them through the process. Public Health Seattle & King County provides Jail Health Services, including a cognitive behavioral class. Between June 2018 and June 2019, 192 veterans were enrolled; 126 were referred to Behavioral Health services, and 130 were referred to education or employment services. Over half of all referrals result in actual participation in services.<sup>23</sup>
- **Racial (In) Equity Data Point:** Black, Indigenous and People of Color or multiple races represent 50% the jail population in King County<sup>24</sup> while in King County, 38% of the population is Black, Indigenous, People of Color or multiple races. A segment of this population are veterans.<sup>25</sup>

## Goal 4: Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible

- Over the next twenty years, the number of veterans over age 65 in Washington State will remain stable, but there will likely be a sharp rise (35%) in veterans ages 85 and over. There will likely be increased demands for long-term care, including hospice and Alzheimer's care, supportive housing, behavioral health, and substance use treatment. The effects of this rapidly growing population are reflected in the fill levels of Washington Veterans' Homes, which have experienced occupancy rates between 95% and 100% for the last 10 years. These homes report that 95% of their residents do not have medical insurance and are not eligible for other health care, such as Medicaid, Medicare, and private health insurance. Currently, over 300 veterans live in these homes in Orting, Spokane, Port Orchard and Walla Walla, WA.<sup>26</sup>

- The emotional effects of serving in combat have been evident for veterans throughout history, but beginning with the Vietnam War, there has been more national awareness of the extent of the trauma on the veteran and their family. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) have emerged as two signature injuries of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. PTSD is a severe reaction to trauma that includes hyper-alertness, nightmares, and depression. TBIs are head injuries which can result from combustive explosions that may result in concussions that may at first seem mild but can lead to symptoms that begin to appear up to three months after the event. TBIs can also be a contributing cause of PTSD.

The VA estimates up to 15% of Vietnam veterans, 11% to 20% of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom veterans and 12% of Gulf War veterans experience PTSD.<sup>27</sup> There are an estimated 19,500 to 28,000 King County veterans who have PTSD from all war eras, and as many as half of them will not seek treatment from the VA or community organizations without assistance to overcome reluctance or institutional barriers. Untreated PTSD contributes to other issues such as high rates of chemical dependency, other behavioral and mental issues, divorce, homelessness, and criminal justice system involvement.<sup>28</sup>

“Services such as health care, substance use disorder treatment and mental health services are in silos; they need to be more connected to be accessible to veterans and the general population as well.”

~Key informant interview

“Many veterans are reporting more severe PTSD syndromes triggered by the recent events in Afghanistan, even Vietnam era veterans.”

~Key informant interview

- Of the 46,510 Americans who died from suicide in 2018, the most recent data available, 6,435 were veterans. This was not a significant difference compared to 2017. The annual total number of veteran suicide deaths increased by 36 from 2017 to 2018, an increase of 0.6% (from 6,399 in 2017 to 6,435 in 2018), while the veteran population fell by 1.5% (from 20.4 million to 20.1 million). From 2017 to 2018, the average number of veteran suicides per day rose from 17.5 to 17.6. This compares to 30.1 in 2016. While the average rate did rise slightly, there were positive trends related to VA healthcare and suicide prevention efforts overall. <sup>29</sup> In Washington State in 2019 there were 192 veteran suicides.<sup>30</sup>
- Over half of provider survey respondents ask clients at intake about their veteran status, similar to previous years. The most critical needs for veterans mentioned are mental health services, rental assistance, and affordable housing.<sup>31</sup>

## Goal 5: Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential

- Overall, veterans have lower rates of poverty than non-veterans but there are differences related to age and race among veteran groups.

**Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** White male veterans in 2017 had poverty rates of 5.5% compared to 10.9% for Black/African American male veterans. Poverty rates for veterans between the ages

of 17 and 34 are higher than all other age groups of veterans except for men 55 to 64 years old. Veteran poverty in 2017 was highest in Puerto Rico, District of Columbia, and West Virginia.<sup>32</sup>

- Employment providing a living wage is a key need for many veterans as they are leaving the military.
- The unemployment rate for veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time since September 2001, a group referred to as Gulf War-era II veterans, rose to 7.3 percent in 2020, as of March 2021. The jobless rate for all veterans increased to 6.5% in 2020. These increases reflect the effect of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the labor market.<sup>33</sup>

**Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** As Figure 3 shows, national figures reveal that veterans of color sometimes have higher rates of unemployment.<sup>34</sup>

### Unemployment Rates of U.S. Military Veterans: 2018 Annual Average

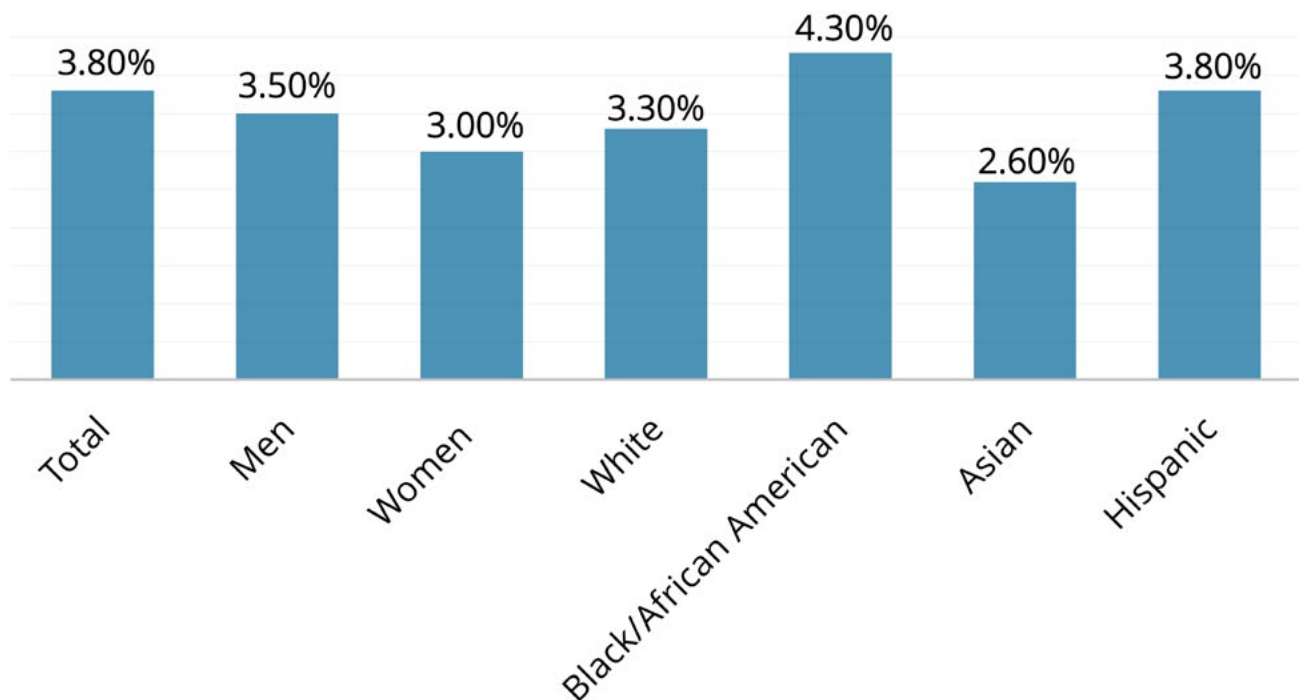


Figure 3 | U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

- In King County, the local unemployment rate for veterans is 4.4% (about 1,900 veterans), slightly higher than rate for the non-veteran population (4.2%). In Bellevue, the veteran unemployment rate is 2.5% (about 50 veterans), slightly lower than non-veteran population (3.5%).<sup>35</sup>
- Several resources focused on employment training and education for veterans are located throughout King County. WorkSource offices in Shoreline, Redmond, Renton, and Seattle offer specialized services. Bellevue College has a Veterans Conservation Corps (Vet Corps) member on-site to help veterans navigate systems needed to adjust from military to college life. Vet Corps members also assist with training and job placement opportunities.<sup>36</sup>
- The King County Department of Human Resources' Vets 4 HIRE Program supports veterans in making a successful transition from military to civilian employment and provides a pipeline of skilled veteran talent for positions within King County. Due to the pandemic, hiring was slower in 2020 than in previous years.<sup>37</sup>

## Additional Issues for Consideration

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ (LGBTQ+) Members of the Military**

- In a national survey, 5.8% of service members identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Among the male services members, 1.9% identified as gay and 2.0% identified as bisexual. Among female services members, 7.0% identified as lesbian and 9.1% identified as bisexual. In this survey, 0.6% identified as transgender, which is identical to that of the US adult population. The survey found that although military members that identify as LGBTQ are a small portion of the population, there are disparities in their experiences of bias that indicate they have special health care needs that should be monitored and addressed.<sup>38</sup>
- It is estimated that more than 134,000 veterans are transgender and about 15,000 trans people currently serve in the military. Support for transgender people in the military has improved, but many still face barriers related to confidentiality of their military records and receiving coverage for medical procedures.<sup>39</sup>
- The US Department of Veterans Affairs announced in 2021 that it will begin the process to expand health care services available to transgender veterans to include gender confirmation surgery.<sup>40</sup>



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# Appendices



# Appendix A

## Methodology

### Engaging the Community: Input on Health and Human Services Needs

To obtain a comprehensive picture of human services needs and issues in Bellevue, a blend of quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Staff met or talked with a diverse group of stakeholders who live, provide services and/or work in the City of Bellevue. Data used in the report comes from the phone/online survey; consumer, youth and provider surveys; Community Conversations; key informant interviews; and extensive review of reports and websites. Care was taken to include, whenever possible, those groups or individuals that might be underrepresented in more traditional data gathering methods.

This section outlines the many ways community engagement was accomplished and describes the organization of the report.

Public Meetings with City Council, the Human Services Commission, and Parks Board:

■ City Council Study Session	April 1, 2021
■ Human Services Commission public meetings	March 2, 2021 July 20, 2021 January 4, 2022
■ Parks Board	May 11, 2021

### Bellevue Residents

#### Phone and web-based survey:

Between June 7, 2021 and July 11, 2021 Comengage.us conducted a survey of 390 Bellevue residents: 274 completed online and 116 completed by phone. This represents a statistically valid sample to project to the entire population at a 95% confidence level (Error Rate:  $\pm 4.9\%$ ). The survey (phone and online) was available in Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Korean, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, and English. A total of 22 surveys were completed in languages other than English. This includes: 12 Chinese (Simplified), 5 Chinese (Traditional), 2 Korean, 1 Russian, and 2 Spanish. All non-English surveys were completed online. Of the survey respondents, 223 reported that someone in their household speaks a language other than English. All research was conducted according to ISO 20252: 2012 Market Research Quality Standards. Respondents were assured that all responses would be kept confidential. No answers or opinions are tied back to individual residents and responses are aggregated by neighborhood and analyzed by groups.

This year, the sampling and data collection methodology again used addresses (address-based sampling, ABS) rather than listed phone numbers that included a web-based option and a phone



option, similar to 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019. Since 2017, the ABS methodology was enhanced with the introduction of email addresses to increase response rates and reduce survey costs. This multi-modal approach compensates for the increase of cell phone-only and primarily cell phone households (previously unaccounted for in strictly address-based sampling). Since 2019, the methodology was further enhanced by using a City of Bellevue registered email address list which directed all respondents to a City of Bellevue owned domain.

All respondents rated a series of 28 potential community problem areas and 24 household problem areas as 'major,' 'moderate,' 'minor,' or 'no problem.' In addition, respondents answered questions about accessibility to and quality of human services, demographics and community support. The average survey time was just under 15 minutes. Most key measures were retained from previous years. Appendix D contains the list of new questions in the follow-up survey.

**Consumer Survey:** Unlike the phone and online survey, the consumer survey specifically targeted Bellevue residents receiving human services. The survey ran from September 20, 2021 to October 15, 2021. Due to COVID-19 and most human services being offered only remotely, a new methodology was used this year. Previously, a paper survey was distributed between English-as-a-Second-Language providers at Bellevue College, Jewish Family Services, Hopelink, and Bellevue Mini City Hall who assisted in gathering feedback from their participants by encouraging them to complete the survey. However, this model required adjustment since most human services providers are offering services remotely. Therefore, this year's consumer survey was available both in paper format and electronically, using survey monkey. Both paper copies of the survey and flyers, with a QR code and the electronic link, were distributed to Bellevue Community Centers, Mini City Hall, and local libraries. An email was distributed to all agencies that Bellevue Human Services funds and agencies that have requested to be on our distribution list, which explained the importance of the survey and included a request to assist in distributing the survey to their consumers. The email included an electronic copy of the flyer and included an offer for city staff to deliver physical copies of the survey or flyer to their agency. In addition, the email was also sent out to Bellevue's Communication distribution list.

Surveys were available in English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese (Simplified) and Chinese (Traditional). All surveys were completed in English, 9 reported speaking Chinese at home, 3 reported speaking Russian at home, 3 reported speaking Spanish at home, and 2 reported speaking Farsi at home.

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which 17 household issues were or were not a problem for someone in their household, as well as service accessibility. Due to the nonrandom nature and small sample size, these results are not statistically valid. However, they can be used anecdotally to demonstrate general themes about human services needs within groups underrepresented in the phone/online survey. Also, since the survey was distributed to a wider audience, we received responses from 116 respondents with a household income over \$65,000 (highest income bracket), which is a different demographic than we've seen in the past. We took this into account when reporting data and when appropriate, reported results for all respondents, followed by results for household with an income below \$50,000.

**Community Conversations:** Bellevue residents or service providers participated in 22 informal focus groups for the Needs Update, called Community Conversations. Different races and ethnicities were included among the participants, mirroring the large diverse population in Bellevue. All community conversations were held as a remote meeting, where participants also

had the option to call in to increase accessibility. See Appendix F for a detailed listing of these groups and dates they were conducted.

## Human Services Providers and Administrators

- **Provider Surveys:** Forty-one health and human services providers that serve Bellevue residents completed an online survey summarizing service trends, utilization rates, gaps, and barriers. The survey was sent to all non-profit agencies that applied for Bellevue Human Services funding in the 2020-2021 funding cycle and other agencies that have requested to receive Bellevue Human Services emails.
- **Key Informant Interviews:** Seven individuals with expertise on a specific topic or subject area were interviewed in a remote meeting between March and November 2021. Key informant interviews provide insights into the needs and issues experienced by a particular population when other information is not available.
- A complete list of who was interviewed can be found in Appendix G of this report.

## Other Sources of Information

**Reports, Studies and Websites:** Many public and private organizations produce in-depth reports focusing on specific topic areas like housing, unemployment, older adults, youth, or public health. These reports offer a broad national, statewide, or regional perspective useful for trend comparison.

**Data Limitations:** The data in the Needs Update came from reliable sources. However, as in all reports, care must be taken in interpreting the data because of the presence of certain variables over which the researcher has no control. For example, changes in public awareness of certain community-level problems like domestic violence or homelessness can affect the public perception of their prevalence. Typically, observing a trend over a period of several years better indicates the extent of the problem. Whenever possible, trends observed over at least three years are included. Other issues affecting data quality or quantity:

- Inability to obtain unduplicated counts of certain populations (e.g. the number of individuals accessing services who are experiencing homelessness, who may need to access services from more than one provider);
- Under-reporting of certain topics given their personal nature, such as income or problems like rape and domestic violence;
- Lack of data for a smaller geographic area like Bellevue, so data is used from a larger area like the county or based on national prevalence;
- Lack of access to underrepresented groups, such as those who are disabled, those who speak languages other than English, or the frail elderly; and
- Changes in data collection and reportage methods.



# Appendix B

## Phone and Online

## Survey Results

### Ratings for Problem Areas in the Community

		Not / Minor	Moderate	Major
Top Tier Problems (30%+ Major/ Moderate)	Lack of affordable housing	26%	23%	51%
	Lack of affordable child care	49%	27%	23%
	Having jobs that do not pay enough for the basics of food, shelter, and clothing	51%	28%	21%
	Lack of affordable medical insurance	55%	22%	23%
	Homelessness	54%	31%	15%
	Lack of affordable medical care	56%	27%	17%
	Mental illness or emotional problems	58%	30%	13%
	Inadequate public transportation	59%	26%	15%
	Drug abuse	63%	25%	12%
	Lack of other transportation options	59%	25%	16%
	Lack of affordable legal services	63%	26%	11%
	Lack of affordable dental care	63%	25%	12%
	Lack of available child care	64%	24%	12%
	Racial or ethnic discrimination	65%	26%	9%
	Crime in the community	68%	27%	6%
	Lack of resources to provide support to parents	67%	26%	7%
	Lack of money for basic services	67%	24%	9%
	Lack of services for elderly persons	69%	24%	7%

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		Not / Minor	Moderate	Major
Second Tier Problems (20% up to <30% Major/Moderate)	Something else	74%	7%	19%
	Lack of services for children and teens	73%	23%	4%
	Lack of services for non-English speakers of the community	72%	22%	6%
	Domestic violence	73%	21%	6%
	Unemployment	74%	20%	6%
	Hunger	75%	18%	7%
	Lack of services for people with disabilities	74%	19%	7%
	Violence in the community	78%	17%	4%
	Alcoholism	80%	16%	4%
Third Tier Problems (<20% Major/Moderate)	Children/youth dropping out of school	82%	13%	5%

Q2 For anything that you feel is a problem, please tell me if it is a minor, moderate or major problem.

Base=all respondents

# Ratings for Problem Areas in the Community

		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	Change from 2019
Top Tier Problems (30%+ Major/Moderate)	Lack of affordable housing	58%	61%	51%	68%	78%	75%	74%	-1
	Lack of affordable child care	25%	39%	30%	40%	46%	51%	51%	0
	Having jobs that do not pay enough for the basics	34%	40%	35%	40%	46%	50%	49%	-1
	Homelessness	15%	22%	28%	30%	35%	42%	46%	+4
	Lack of affordable medical insurance	48%	55%	41%	35%	46%	44%	45%	+1
	Lack of affordable medical care	41%	51%	40%	35%	42%	45%	44%	-1
	Mental illness or emotional problems	19%	27%	19%	27%	30%	34%	42%	+8
	Inadequate public transportation	33%	38%	35%	38%	39%	40%	41%	+1
	Lack of other transportation options	-	-	-	-	-	-	41%	-
	Drug abuse	25%	30%	24%	26%	34%	38%	37%	-1
	Lack of affordable legal services	24%	27%	20%	25%	32%	27%	37%	+10
	Lack of affordable dental care	34%	41%	34%	32%	37%	36%	37%	+1
	Lack of available child care	-	-	-	-	-	-	36%	-
	Racial or ethnic discrimination	13%	17%	16%	17%	25%	25%	35%	+10
	Lack of resources to provide support to parents	-	-	-	-	-	-	33%	-
	Lack of money for basic services	22%	31%	21%	23%	31%	28%	33%	+5
	Crime in the community	18%	25%	30%	26%	27%	32%	32%	0
	Lack of services for elderly persons	18%	24%	15%	24%	30%	28%	31%	+3

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		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	Change from 2019
<b>Second Tier Problems (20% up to &lt;30% Major/Moderate)</b>	Something else	-	-	-	-	-	-	26%	-
	Lack of services for children / teens	19%	23%	17%	20%	24%	20%	27%	+7
	Lack of services for non-English speakers of the community	31%	34%	31%	26%	21%	22%	28%	+6
	Domestic violence	17%	22%	17%	19%	19%	18%	27%	+9
	Unemployment	44%	55%	35%	27%	20%	11%	26%	+15
	Hunger	18%	22%	21%	20%	23%	23%	25%	+2
	Lack of services for people with disabilities	17%	24%	15%	21%	26%	21%	26%	+5
	Violence in the community	18%	13%	16%	10%	15%	17%	22%	+5
	Alcoholism	17%	23%	18%	19%	23%	20%	20%	0
<b>Third Tier Problems (&lt;20% Major/Moderate)</b>	Children/youth dropping out of school	-	-	-	-	-	-	18%	-

Q2 For anything that you feel is a problem, please tell me if it is a minor, moderate or major problem. Base=all respondents

# Ratings for Problems Experienced by the household

		Not / Minor	Moderate	Major
Top Tier Problems (10%+ Major/ Moderate)	Having a lot of anxiety, stress or depression which interferes with your daily life	76%	14%	11%
	Not being able to find affordable child care	79%	8%	13%
	Inadequate public transportation	83%	9%	8%
	Children or teens with emotional or behavior problems	81%	14%	4%
	Living in housing that needs major repairs which you cannot afford	86%	7%	6%
	Not being able to find work that supports yourself or family	88%	7%	5%
	Not being able to pay for the doctor bills	89%	5%	6%
	Not having access to mental health counseling	90%	6%	4%
	Not able to pay for dental bills	90%	6%	4%
Second Tier Problems (5% up to <10% Major/ Moderate)	Experiencing any other type of discrimination	91%	6%	4%
	Not being able to afford legal help	92%	5%	3%
	Not being able to pay for medical insurance	91%	4%	5%
	Not having enough money to pay for housing	92%	4%	4%
	Not being able to get medical insurance	91%	4%	4%
	Experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination	93%	5%	3%
	Not being able to find programs for someone with a disability	94%	6%	1%
	Not being able to pay for mental health counseling	92%	3%	5%
	Not able to pay for prescriptions	92%	5%	3%
	Not being able to find affordable care for someone with a disability	94%	2%	4%
	Anything else	93%	2%	5%
	Not being able to pay the utility bills	94%	3%	3%

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		Not / Minor	Moderate	Major
Third Tier Problems (<5% Major/Moderate)	Not being able to find home health care or day care for an elderly person	97%	3%	1%
	Not having enough money for food	96%	2%	2%
	Domestic Violence which can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse	97%	2%	1%

H1 For each one, please indicate if it is has been a major problem, moderate, minor problem, or not a problem at all for you or anyone in your household over the past several years.

Base=all respondents for most; respondents with children for those relating to childcare; respondents with non-English speakers for those relating to English; respondents with elderly/disabled people in their home for those relating to elderly/disabled



## Ratings for Problem Areas in the Household

		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2020	Change from 2019
Top Tier Problems (10%+ Major/Moderate)	Anxiety, stress or depression which interferes with your daily life	16%	20%	15%	17%	16%	20%	24%	+4
	Not being able to find affordable child care	5%	7%	8%	21%	22%	25%	21%	-4
	Inadequate public transportation	18%	20%	22%	19%	21%	21%	17%	-4
	Children or teens with emotional or behavior problems	7%	7%	7%	10%	12%	15%	19%	+4
	Living in housing that needs major repairs which you cannot afford	9%	11%	10%	6%	9%	7%	14%	+7
	Not being able to find work that supports yourself or family	11%	20%	17%	13%	15%	10%	12%	+2
	Not being able to pay for the doctor bills	14%	12%	14%	10%	11%	12%	11%	-1
	Not having access to mental health counseling	6%	9%	7%	7%	6%	5%	10%	+5
	Not able to pay for dental bills	14%	13%	14%	12%	10%	9%	10%	+1

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		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2020	Change from 2019
<b>Second Tier Problems (5% up to &lt;10% Major/Moderate)</b>	Experiencing any other type of discrimination	-	-	-	-	-	-	9%	
	Not being able to afford legal help	10%	11%	10%	8%	8%	8%	8%	
	Not being able to pay for medical insurance	16%	15%	15%	8%	12%	12%	9%	-3
	Not having enough money to pay for housing	11%	12%	12%	13%	13%	15%	8%	-7
	Not being able to get medical insurance	16%	13%	13%	7%	7%	11%	9%	-2
	Experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination	7%	5%	7%	4%	7%	9%	7%	-2
	Not being able to find programs for someone with a disability	6%	5%	7%	8%	10%	9%	6%	-3
	Not being able to pay for mental health counseling	6%	9%	7%	7%	9%	8%	8%	
	Not able to pay for prescriptions	14%	9%	10%	6%	7%	7%	8%	+1
	Not being able to find affordable care for someone with a disability	6%	4%	7%	8%	14%	9%	6%	-3
	Anything else	-	-	-	-	-	-	7%	
	Not being able to pay the utility bills	6%	7%	10%	7%	7%	5%	6%	+1
<b>Third Tier Problems (&lt;5% Major/Moderate)</b>	Not being able to find home health care or day care for an elderly person	6%	7%	6%	5%	10%	10%	3%	-7
	Not having enough money for food	7%	6%	7%	10%	6%	5%	4%	-1
	Domestic Violence which can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse	-	-	-	-	-	-	3%	

H1 For each one, please indicate if it is has been a major problem, moderate, minor problem, or not a problem at all for you or anyone in your household over the past several years.

# Appendix C

## Demographic Profiles

### Weighting—Unweighted and Weighted Data Compared to Bellevue Population

	2021 Human Needs Survey (unweighted)	2021 Human Needs Survey (weighted)	Bellevue Population*
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	53%	49%	50%
Female	47%	51%	50%
<b>Age**</b>			
18–34	15%	29%	28%
35–54	40%	38%	38%
55 Plus	44%	33%	33%
<b>Household Size</b>			
Single Adult	25%	23%	26%
Two or More Adults	74%	77%	74%
<b>Children in Household</b>			
None	67%	62%	68%
One or More	33%	38%	32%
<b>Dwelling Type</b>			
Single-Family	53%	51%	50%
Multi-Family	47%	49%	50%
<b>Home Ownership</b>			
Own	71%	67%	57%
Rent	29%	32%	43%
<b>Income</b>			
Less than \$25,000	4%	3%	11%
\$25,000–\$50,000	6%	4%	12%
\$50,000–\$75,000	10%	10%	13%
\$75,000 or Greater	80%	83%	65%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
White (not Hispanic)	66%	63%	56%
Asian (with any other race)	25%	27%	37%
African American	1%	2%	4%
Other	9%	9%	6%
% Hispanic	4%	5%	7%
(multiple responses)			

Continued on next page

	2021 Human Needs Survey (unweighted)	2021 Human Needs Survey (weighted)	Bellevue Population*
<b>Years Lived in Bellevue</b>			
0–3	18%	21%	n.a.
4–9	23%	26%	
10 or More	59%	53%	
Mean	17.39	15.45	
<b>Language Spoken at Home</b>			
English only	52%	51%	58%
Other than English	48%	49%	42%

\*Source for population figures: All data are 2013-2017 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

\*\*Note: Age was imputed for respondents who refused their age.

## Sample Sizes

Unless otherwise noted, all reported statistics are based on weighted-base sizes. For reference, the table below provides both weighted and unweighted base sizes for each subgroup of respondents shown in this report.

Weighted versus Unweighted Base Sizes	
All Respondents	By Neighborhood
2011 (n = 409) 2013 (n = 624) 2015 (n = 423) 2017 (n = 484) 2019 (n = 450) 2021 (n = 390)	Bel-Red (n = 13, n <sub>w</sub> = 15) Bridle Trails (n = 22, n <sub>w</sub> = 22) Cougar Mountain / Lakemont (n = 29, n <sub>w</sub> = 25) Crossroads (n = 24, n <sub>w</sub> = 27) Downtown (n = 63, n <sub>w</sub> = 65) Eastgate (n = 15, n <sub>w</sub> = 16) Factoria (n = 11, n <sub>w</sub> = 10) Lake Hills (n = 53, n <sub>w</sub> = 53) Newport (n = 35, n <sub>w</sub> = 32) Northeast Bellevue (n = 21, n <sub>w</sub> = 20) Northwest Bellevue (n = 35, n <sub>w</sub> = 38) West Lake Sammamish (n = 16, n <sub>w</sub> = 17) Somerset (n = 15, n <sub>w</sub> = 13) West Bellevue (n = 19, n <sub>w</sub> = 17) Wilburton (n = 7, n <sub>w</sub> = 7) Woodridge (n = 11, n <sub>w</sub> = 11)
Groups of Respondents	
Respondents Who Rate the Availability of Help Low (<4) 2021 (n = 28, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 30) Households with Children 2021 (n = 149, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 130) Speak Language Other than English 2021 (n = 223, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 212) Experienced 1 or More Household Problems 2021 (n = 195, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 207) Someone in Household Looked for Help in Past 2 Years 2021 (n = 131, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 144) Respondents who Found the Help they Needed YES (n = 81, n <sub>w</sub> weighted = 90)	

\* n = number unweighted

\* n<sub>w</sub> = number weighted

## Count of Households with Non-English Speakers – Unweighted data – N's shown

	Survey Contact Method			
	Landline	Cell Phone	Online	Total
Participant speaks a language other than English	3	40	138	181
Someone else in the household speaks a language other than English	2	25	58	85
Household where anyone speaks a language other than English (note, that this does not equal the sum of the above two rows as it is possible for both the participant and a second person to speak more than one language)	4	51	168	223
No one in the household speaks a language other than English (English only household)	13	47	105	165

## Count of Languages Spoken in Household – Unweighted data – N's shown

	Survey Contact Method			
	Landline	Cell Phone	Online	Total
Chinese	0	6	36	42
Mandarin	0	9	19	28
Hindi	0	5	12	17
Spanish	3	9	13	25
Korean	0	2	11	13
Telugu/Telueu	0	2	4	6
Cantonese	0	0	0	0
French	0	2	6	8
Japanese	0	3	9	12
Arabic	0	0	2	2
Vietnamese	0	2	1	3
Russian	0	3	11	14
Italian	0	0	0	0

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	Survey Contact Method			
	Landline	Cell Phone	Online	Total
Tamil	0	1	4	5
Afrikaans	0	0	0	0
Aleut	0	0	0	0
Armenian	0	0	0	0
Bulgarian	0	0	1	1
Cambodian	0	0	0	0
Farsi	0	0	1	1
Filipino	0	0	0	0
German	1	4	3	8
Hebrew	0	1	0	1
Indian	0	0	0	0
Kannada	0	0	1	1
Lao	0	0	0	0
Norwegian	0	0	0	0
Polish	0	0	0	0
Portuguese	0	0	5	5
Romanian	0	0	0	0
Samoan	0	0	0	0
Serbo/Croatian (Bosnian)	0	0	1	1
Somali	0	0	0	0
Swedish	0	0	0	0
Tai/Taiwanese	0	0	0	0
Turkish	0	0	2	2
Other	0	4	12	16



# Appendix D

## Questionnaire Changes 2019 to 2021

2020 Questionnaire	2021 Questionnaire
<b>GENDER</b> Are you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Female</li> </ul>	<b>Gender</b> Do you identify as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Female</li> <li>• Transgender</li> <li>• Gender neutral</li> <li>• Some other gender identity (specify)</li> </ul>
<b>Q2</b> The following is a list of concerns that are found in some communities. For each one, please indicate if it is a major problem, moderate problem, minor problem, or not a problem at all for people and families in your community. (If you do not have personal experience with each issue, please answer to the best of your knowledge) (Community is your neighborhood or among those living near you. It does not mean Bellevue as a whole) <b>Removed:</b> People not speaking or understanding English well enough to function in society	<b>Community Concerns</b> The following is a list of concerns that are found in some communities. For each one, please indicate if it is a major problem, moderate problem, minor problem, or not a problem at all for people and families in your community, in Bellevue. <b>Added:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of services for non-English speakers of the community</li> <li>• Inadequate public transportation</li> <li>• Lack of other transportation options</li> <li>• Children / youth dropping out of school</li> <li>• Lack of available child-care</li> <li>• Something else (Please specify)</li> </ul>
<b>ECON1A</b> Do you have more than one job? 01 YES 02 NO	<b>Number Of Jobs</b> How many jobs do you currently have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of part-time jobs: ____</li> <li>• Number of full-time jobs: ____</li> </ul>
<b>ECON1B</b> If you only had one job, could you afford your mortgage or rent?	<b>Afford One Job</b> If you only had one of your current jobs, could you afford your mortgage or rent?
<b>INCOME</b> What is the approximate total annual family income of all members of your household?	<b>HH Income</b> What is the approximate total annual household income?

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2020 Questionnaire	2021 Questionnaire
<p><b>Q53</b> Are you personally receiving care or assistance with daily activities from someone who lives in your household? ("Care" means help with things such as bathing, personal hygiene, walking, etc.) 01 YES 02 NO</p> <p><b>Q54</b> Do you or anyone in your household currently provide care or assistance with daily activities for someone else who lives in your household who is disabled or elderly? (Select all that apply) ("Care" means help with things such as bathing, personal hygiene, walking, etc.) 01 Yes, I do 02 Yes, someone else in my household does 03 No, no one in my household does</p> <p><b>Q55</b> Do you or anyone in your household currently provide care or assistance for daily activities for a disabled or elderly relative who does not live in your household? 01 Yes, I do 02 Yes, someone else in my household does 03 No, no one in my household does</p> <p><b>Q56</b> Does someone from outside your home provide care or assistance with daily activities for you or someone else who lives in your household? 01 YES 02 NO</p>	<p><b>Disability</b> Do you consider yourself or someone in your household have a disability? • Yes, I have a disability • Yes, someone else in my household has a disability 02 No one in the household has a disability</p> <p><b>Resident Care</b> Which of these statements pertains to you? ("Care" means help with things such as bathing, personal hygiene, walking, etc.) • I personally receive care or assistance with daily activities from someone else living in my household. • I personally receive care or assistance with daily activities from someone not living in my household. • I provide care or assistance with daily activities for someone else living in my household. (Please do not count dependent children under 18 unless they have a physical or mental disability) • I provide care or assistance with daily activities for someone who does not live in my household. • Someone else in my household provides care or assistance for who does not live in my household. • Someone else in my household receives care or assistance with daily activities from someone not living in my household. • None of these apply to me</p>
<p><b>H1</b> The following is a list of problems for which individuals or families sometimes look for help. For each one, please indicate if it has been a major, moderate, minor problem, or not a problem at all for you or anyone in your household over the past several years. <b>Subtracted:</b> Finding it difficult to budget the money that's available</p>	<p><b>HH Problems</b> The following is a list of problems for which individuals or families sometimes look for help. For each one, please indicate if it has been a major, moderate, minor problem, or not a problem at all for <b>you or anyone in your household over the past several years.</b> <b>Added:</b> • Living in housing that needs major repairs which a landlord will not provide. • Experiencing any other type of discrimination • Domestic Violence which can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse • Other (specify)</p>

### The following questions were added in 2021:

**Living Situation** Which of the following best describes your current living situation?

**HH Income Change** Over the past 12 months has your total household income increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

**HH Reason Change** Was the change in your household income a result of the pandemic?

**Behind on Rent** Are you currently behind on your rent?

**Months Behind** How many months are you behind on rent?

**Type of Discrimination** What type(s) of discrimination did you experience?

### The following questions were asked in 2019 but were not asked in 2021:

**Q3** Human Service needs are basic needs such as providing physical and/or emotional support when you need it. Are there any other human service needs or problems in your community not mentioned earlier?

**Q3A** What do you think are the other human service needs or problems in Bellevue?

**H4** How difficult would it be to meet your current household's basic expenses such as housing, food and medical if your paycheck were delayed for a week?

**INCOME3** How often do you get paid?

# Appendix E

## Address-Based Sampling

In the past, a random-digit dialing (RDD) telephone survey was used. Strict quotas were used to ensure representation of men and women, different age groups, and residents of multi-family versus single-family dwelling types was roughly proportionate to their actual incidence in the population. While RDD telephone survey research continues to be used widely, it has come under increased scrutiny due to the proliferation of cell phones as well as declining response rates. This has called into question the representativeness of surveys conducted using traditional RDD samples. Estimates today are that as many as 46 percent of all households in King County no longer have a landline telephone and rely strictly on a cell phone or other mobile device to make and receive calls. An additional 17 percent of households have both landline and cell phone numbers but rely primarily on their cell phones.<sup>1</sup>

To address the high incidence of cell phone only households or households whose members primarily use cell phones, a major methodological change to address-based sampling (ABS) was implemented beginning with the 2011 Human Needs Assessment. In 2017, the ABS methodology was enhanced with the introduction of e-mail addresses to increase response rates and reduce survey costs.

The sample frame was composed of a list of all addresses in Bellevue—as defined by census block groups—including those indicating that post office boxes are the only way they get mail. This list was then matched against a comprehensive database to determine if the household had a matching landline or cell phone number. Additionally, e-mail addresses were appended where possible.

- If no matching phone number was found, the household was sent a letter signed by the city manager asking them to complete the survey online or by calling a toll-free number.
- If an e-mail address was found, the household was sent an e-mail inviting them to complete the survey online or by calling a toll-free number. Non-responders were contacted by phone.
- If a matching phone number was found, the household was called and asked to complete the survey by phone.
- In order to obtain a representative sample of multi-family households, the ABS sample was appended with a dwelling-type indicator (single vs. multi-family home) and addresses marked as multi-family were over-sampled during the mailing of the invitations.

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1 National Health Statistics Reports December 18, 2013, “% Distribution of Household Telephone Status for Adults Aged 18 and Over,” <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr070.pdf>

# Appendix F

## Community Conversations

Goal Area	Issues/ Population	Group/Date
Specific Populations	All Ages	Bellevue Community Center Staff 3/15/21
		Bellevue Fire CARES Staff Meeting 5/11/21
		Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach Staff 5/10/21
		Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee 5/6/21 & 6/3/21
		LifeSpring 5/20/21
		NAMI 2/18/21
	Older Adults	Bellevue Network On Aging 3/4/21
		Kirkland Senior Council 4/13/21
	People with Disabilities	Bellevue ADA Core Team 3/31/21
		Community Homes & Highland Community Center 3/31/21
		Disability Allyship Resource Team 4/28/21
	Refugees and Immigrants	Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network 6/29/21
		Bellevue Diversity Staff 5/26/21
		Bellevue Mini City Hall Staff 5/11/21
		Chinese Information and Services Center 8/10/21
		Debbie Lacy & CISC staff 8/30/21
		Indian American Community Services (formerly IAWW) 8/12/21
		Safe Haven Meeting 5/21/21
Specific Populations	School-Aged Children and Youth	Bellevue Wrap Around Services & YouthLink Staff 5/17/2021 & 5/18/2021
		Bellevue School District Family Connection and McKinney Vento Staff 6/14/21
		BGLAD Support Group - Youth Eastside Services 3/25/21
		Stevenson Parenting Group 3/9/21

# Appendix G

## Key Informant Interviews

Area of Focus	Contact	Date
People with Disabilities	Kim Indurkar, Bellevue Highland Community Center	10/22/2021
People with Disabilities	Blayne Amson, Bellevue ADA/Title VI Civil Rights Program Administrator	3/18/2021
Veterans	Lauren Nickols, Coordinated Entry Specialist at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	10/14/2021
Domestic Violence	Rachel Krinsky, Executive Director, LifeWire	9/20/2021
School Age Youth and Children	David Downing, Executive Director, Youth Eastside Services	3/25/2021
School Age Youth and Children	Naomi Calvo, Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment, Bellevue School District	11/3/2021
School Age Youth and Children	Charese Jones, Early Learning Services Director, Child Care Resource	11/5/2021



# Appendix H

## 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,880
2	17,420
3	21,960
4	26,500
5	31,040
6	35,580
7	40,120
8	44,660
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,540 for each additional person.	

Source: Federal Register: The Daily Journal of the United States Government

## 2020 Federal Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,760
2	17,240
3	21,720
4	26,200
5	30,680
6	35,160
7	39,640
8	44,120
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,480 for each additional person.	

Source: Federal Register: The Daily Journal of the United States Government

## 2019 Federal Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,490
2	16,910
3	21,330
4	25,750
5	30,170
6	34,590
7	39,010
8	43,430
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,420 for each additional person.	

Source: Federal Register: The Daily Journal of the United States Government

## 2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$15,060
2	\$20,290
3	\$25,526
4	\$30,750
5	\$35,980
6	\$41,210
7	\$46,440
8	\$51,670
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,230 for each additional person	

Source: Federal Register: The Daily Journal of the United States Government



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-6452 (voice) or email [cstangland@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:cstangland@bellevuewa.gov).

For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice) or email [ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov). If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.



Bellevue  
Human Services

[BellevueWA.gov](http://BellevueWA.gov)