

# Bellevue Comprehensive Plan 2044 Survey

## Introduction

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan is the city's primary tool for addressing growth while maintaining a high quality of life. It outlines a vision for the future and sets policy direction to get there. It's used by the City Council, Boards & Commissions, and staff to make decisions around housing, transportation, parks, economic opportunities, and more.

People are at the heart of Bellevue's planning efforts and robust public engagement has been used throughout the process to better understand the community's needs, desires, and concerns.

Getting participation representing the broader community can be challenging so the city worked with an outside research firm to design and conduct a statistically valid survey of Bellevue residents to better understand:

- How to prioritize planning goals.
- What features residents value in a neighborhood.
- How open residents are to adding new housing types throughout the city and in their neighborhood.

## Survey Design

1,152 Bellevue residents completed the survey. The survey used a random sample to achieve a representative view of public opinion. The data was also weighted to ensure it accurately represented the demographics of Bellevue residents across age, income, homeowner status, and residence type.

## Survey Findings

Planning requires balancing the needs and priorities of many different stakeholders. Planners need to understand both what is important to people and how people think about their priorities in relationship to each other. This survey used a unique approach to better understand what amenities, services, and housing people want in their neighborhoods and the relative importance of different priorities.

### Development Priorities

The survey asked respondents to share what they feel should be top priorities as Bellevue plans for the future. The list of priorities was developed based on community feedback from previous engagement as well as state and regional requirements.

Overall, Bellevue residents at nearly all incomes prioritized providing homeownership opportunities for a variety of income levels. Housing costs were a priority even for those making above the median income for Bellevue. They also prioritized tree canopy, accessibility and walkability, locally accessible small businesses, and unique things to do.

1	Homeownership Opportunities for Different Incomes
2	Preserve and Enhance the Tree Canopy
3	Ability to Walk to a Meeting Place
4	More Locally Accessible Businesses
5	Unique Things to Do
6	Ability to Drive Places and Easily Find Parking
7	Preserving the Size & Scale of Existing Suburban Neighborhoods
8	Housing for All Income Levels
9	Frequent Bus Service
10	Housing for Families with Children

The survey design provided the opportunity to understand differences of opinion between demographic groups and places of agreement.

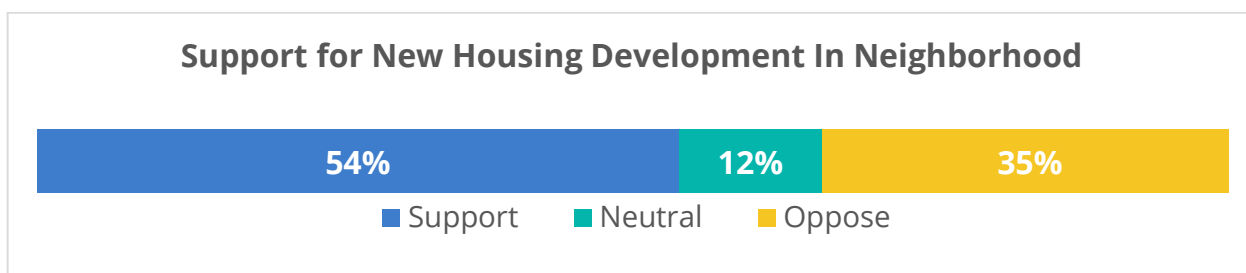
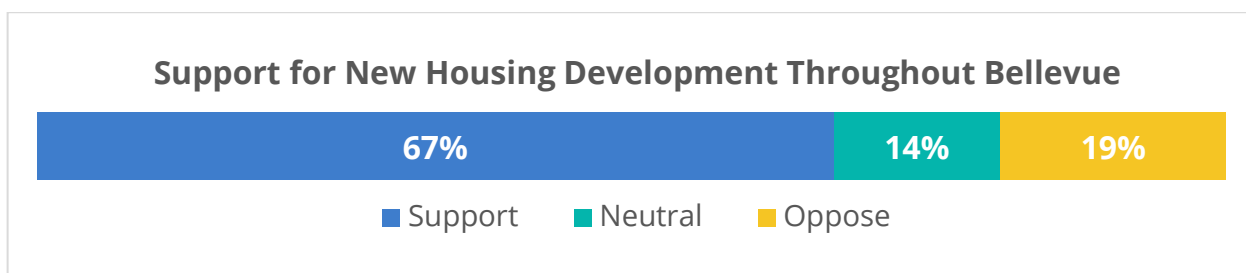
Both renters and homeowners ranked preserving and enhancing Bellevue’s tree canopy as a high priority. Renters placed a high priority on housing for all income levels, while homeowners prioritized preserving the size and scale of existing suburban neighborhoods.

Respondents under 30 years old ranked the ability to walk to a meeting place and access to frequent bus service as top priorities. For respondents older than 56, preserving and enhancing the tree canopy and preserving single-family neighborhoods ranked as the highest priorities. Housing costs and attainable home ownership at all income levels was ranked highest for respondents between 30 and 56.

### Support for Development Throughout Bellevue and in Your Neighborhood

Survey respondents were asked about their level of support for increased housing, including townhomes, apartments and condominiums, both in their neighborhood and throughout Bellevue.

Overall, 67% of residents indicated support for new housing development throughout Bellevue and 54% of residents support new housing development in their neighborhood.



There are significant differences between demographic groups. Renters, younger residents, and residents in existing high-rise and mid-rise neighborhoods were nearly twice as likely to support new housing development Bellevue, whereas homeowners, older residents, and residents in primarily residential areas were more likely to oppose new development.

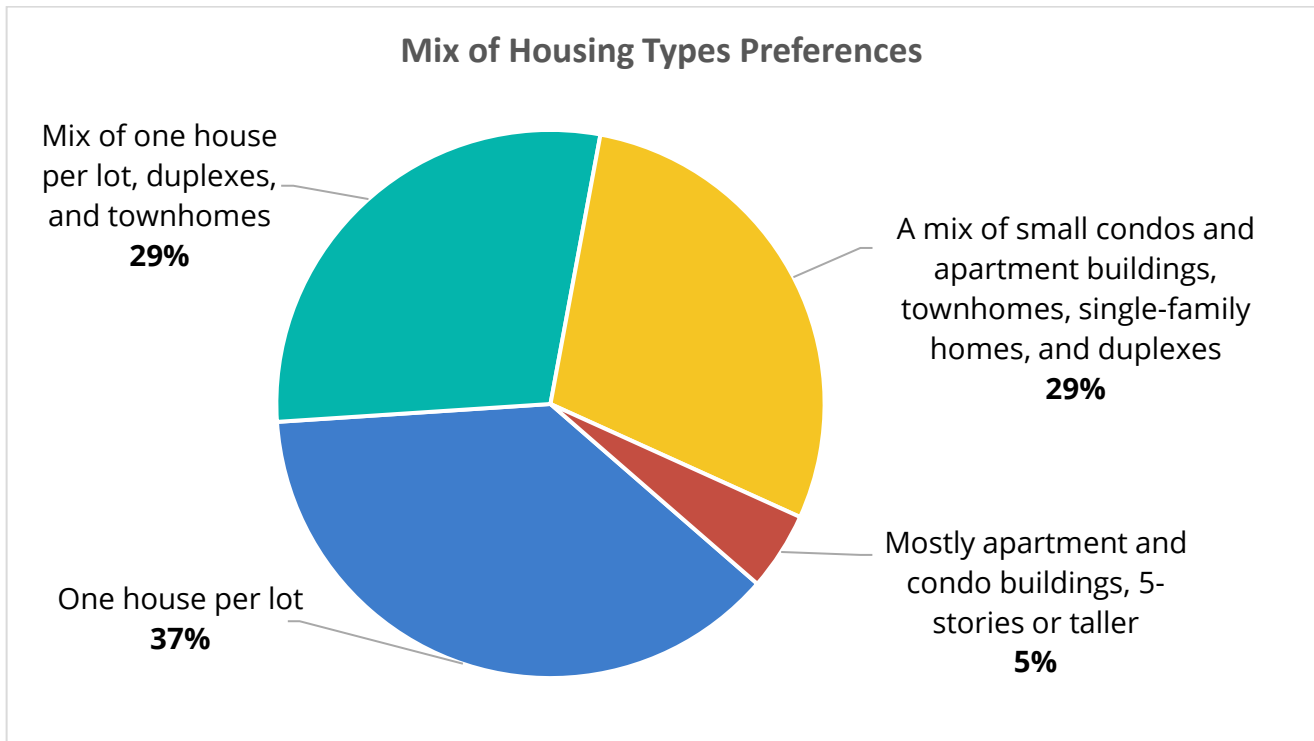
### **Neighborhood Preferences**

The survey included an exercise designed to understand what features residents prioritize when considering their ideal neighborhood based on a specific set of criteria. Respondents were prompted to *“Think about the kind of neighborhood you would like to live in today and in the future. What would your ideal neighborhood look like?”* They were then presented with a series of neighborhood designs based on five attributes with different options under each attribute. Those attributes were:

- The mix of housing types
- Access to businesses and services
- Requirements for affordable housing
- Street design
- Access to and types of parks or green space

Of the five attributes, the mix of housing types and access to businesses and services were the most important factors in determining what makes an “ideal neighborhood.” The importance of these factors is fairly consistent across all demographic groups.

The survey exercise went further to examine the specific preferences within each attribute. Looking at the Housing Mix attribute, data shows that, while “one house per lot” received the largest single share of support (37%), overall, residents preferred neighborhoods that have a mix of housing types (63%) from lower to higher scale densities including duplexes, townhomes, cottage homes, and apartments.











The data shows preferences differ significantly between certain demographic groups. Younger residents and renters were more likely to prefer neighborhoods with a wider variety of housing types, whereas older residents and homeowners were more likely to prefer a more traditional single-family neighborhood. Nearly half of residents who currently live in single-family homes or in a primarily residential neighborhood would prefer a neighborhood with more low-scale or mid-scale development like duplexes, townhomes, cottage homes, or small apartments.





Respondents also weighed in on other neighborhood characteristics, including business mix, green space, street design and affordable housing. Here the data shows a strong preference across all demographic groups for convenient, walkable access to businesses and services, requirements for affordable housing options, and streets that are designed for pedestrian and bike safety.





## Popularity of Neighborhood Types

Analysis of the survey exercise revealed four neighborhood designs that have high levels of resident preferences.

<h3>Single-Family Residential</h3>  <p>One house per lot</p>
 <p>Only residential zoning, must drive to all businesses</p>
 <p>Medium sized parks 15-20 minute walk away with some parking and amenities</p>
 <p>Pedestrian and bike oriented street design that prioritizes safety and slower speeds</p>
<p>Some options for affordable housing</p>
<p><b>26% prefer this type of neighborhood</b></p>

<h3>Low Scale Residential</h3>  <p>Mix of one house per lot, duplexes, and townhomes</p>
 <p>Some small businesses within walking distance</p>
 <p>Medium sized parks 15-20 minute walk away with some parking and amenities</p>
 <p>Pedestrian and bike oriented street design that prioritizes safety and slower speeds</p>
<p>Some options for affordable housing</p>
<p><b>38% prefer this type of neighborhood</b></p>

<h3>Mixed Use</h3>  <p>A mix of small condos and apartment buildings, townhomes, single-family homes, and duplexes</p>
 <p>Some small businesses within walking distance</p>
 <p>Medium sized parks 15-20-minute walk away with some parking and amenities</p>
 <p>Pedestrian and bike-oriented street design that prioritizes safety and slower speeds</p>
<p>Some options for affordable housing</p>
<p><b>29% prefer this type of neighborhood</b></p>

<h3>Urban Core</h3>  <p>Mostly apartment and condo buildings, 5-stories or taller</p>
 <p>Denser development with small and large businesses within walking distance</p>
 <p>Medium sized parks 15-20-minute walk away with some parking and amenities</p>
 <p>Pedestrian and bike-oriented street design that prioritizes safety and slower speeds</p>
<p>Some options for affordable housing</p>
<p><b>7% prefer this type of neighborhood</b></p>

This data shows that Bellevue residents have a wide range of preferences and having a variety of neighborhood types where possible is key to meeting the needs of different people. It's important to note that currently, more than half of the city's land is zoned only for single-family homes. The Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan provides the city an opportunity to potentially expand options within Bellevue to meet resident interest in other neighborhood types.

## **How the Survey Fits Into the Planning Process**

Public participation is an integral part of the planning process and there have been numerous opportunities for people to share input through direct mail, online, and at virtual or in-person events. The results of this survey will be shared with the Planning Commission and City Council as they determine the city's future growth strategies. The results will also help inform policies.

It's important to note that while this survey provides key data on the views of Bellevue residents, the Comprehensive Plan must also take into account the needs of other stakeholders. People who visit, work, study, or own a business in Bellevue are also part of the community and their voices are considered in the planning process. As a future-focused document, the Comprehensive Plan must also bear in mind the needs of people who will make Bellevue their home in the coming years.

## **Where to learn more**

The full survey results can be found at [links.comengage.us/CompPlanSurvey](https://links.comengage.us/CompPlanSurvey). The survey dashboard allows people to explore survey data in greater detail and see results by income, dwelling type, children in the household, and neighborhood.



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-6930 (voice) or email [bbrod@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:bbrod@bellevuewa.gov). For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice). If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.