



CITY OF BELLEVUE » Electric Vehicle Roadmap

## Attachment B: Engagement Report

October 2024



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# B Engagement Report

## B.1 Introduction

The City of Bellevue is developing an Electric Vehicle Roadmap to guide the deployment of EV charging infrastructure, incentives, and programming across the city, in accordance with the 2021-2025 Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan. The Plan sets goals for 50 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2030, and 80 percent GHG emissions reductions by 2050. Bellevue aims for EVs to account for 25 percent of registered vehicles on its roads by 2030, and for all registered vehicles to be EVs by 2050. This EV Roadmap forecasts a path toward transportation electrification in Bellevue, then identifies a series of actions and strategies the city can implement to align Bellevue's goals with those of Washington State. A major focus is ensuring all members of the Bellevue community will have access to, and benefit from, the transition to electrified mobility.

Outreach was conducted in two phases. Phase I covered the development of the draft Roadmap and strategies from the launch of the project in December of 2023 to April 2024. Phase II covered the release of the draft strategies and draft roadmap to the public from July to September 2024.

## B.2 Overview of Phase I Outreach

The Electric Vehicle Roadmap team conducted Phase I Outreach from December 2023 to April 2024. The EV Roadmap team contacted thousands of community members through online tools and in-person events and used a variety of techniques to reach different cross sections of the public.

The goals of Phase I Outreach were to:

- Introduce the EV Roadmap project to the public
- Understand EV charging needs in the community, and, in particular, identify areas of the city where there is a high need for access to EV charging that is not currently being met by the market
- Understand barriers to EV adoption across different cross-sections of the community
- Understand community attitudes towards EVs and EV charging
- Identify other community mobility needs

## B.3 Phase I Outreach Activities

The EV Roadmap Outreach Phase I consisted of four main components: a Community EV Adoption Survey, EV Charging Map, intercept interviews with community members, and a focus group for property managers.

### B.3.1 Community EV Adoption Survey

240 community members completed the Community EV Adoption Survey, which was available in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese on

Engaging Bellevue from December 20, 2023 to March 11, 2024. 238 English surveys were completed; as well as one survey in Simplified Chinese and one survey in Spanish. The Community EV Adoption survey asked community members questions to better understand current attitudes towards EVs in Bellevue; current levels of access to EV charging based on housing type in Bellevue; barriers to EV adoption for residents; and community behavior around EVs. There were two versions of the survey; one for current EV owners, and one for those who do not currently own an EV.

### B.3.2 EV Charging Map

Community members had the opportunity to share suggestions for future EV charging stations at public places, multifamily buildings, or workplaces around Bellevue. 158 suggestions were submitted to the virtual map, while 175 suggestions were gathered on a physical map taken to various community events and tabling opportunities. The virtual map was launched on December 20, 2023 and closed on May 1, 2024. The physical map was presented at the following locations and events:

- CHIME Lunar New Year Festival at Overlake Christian Church on Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 12:00pm-5:00pm
- Bellevue Downtown Library on Saturday, March 9, 2024 from 12:00pm-3:00pm
- H Mart on Saturday, March 16, 2024 from 11:30am-2:30pm
- Bellevue Downtown Library on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 from 2:00pm-5:00pm
- EarthFest 2024 at the Bellevue Botanical Garden on Saturday, April 20, 2024 from 11:00am-3:00pm

### B.3.3 Intercept Interviews

EV Roadmap staff and Cultural Outreach Assistants conducted intercept interviews at locations around Bellevue for the month of March 2024. Intercept Interviews consisted of City of Bellevue staff asking library patrons, shoppers, and other community members to answer a few brief questions about the electric vehicle transition in Bellevue, including: current access to EV charging; current thoughts on EV adoption; barriers to EV adoption; and EV benefits. Community members could also offer further feedback on other EV-related topics. In addition, residents who participated in the intercept interviews were invited to place a pin on the online or physical EV charging maps. Intercept interviews were conducted at the following locations:

- Bellevue Downtown Library on Saturday, March 9, 2024 from 12:00pm-3:00pm
- H Mart on Saturday, March 16, 2024 from 11:30am-2:30pm\*
- Junta de Mamas weekly Zoom meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 from 9:15-10:00am\*\*
- Bellevue Downtown Library on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 from 2:00pm-5:00pm

***\*Conducted primarily in Mandarin***

***\*\*Conducted in Spanish only***

### B.3.4 Property Management Focus Group

Property managers and condo board members around Bellevue were recruited for a focus group via digital and in-person advertising. The focus group took place at Bellevue City Hall on March 27, from 6:00pm-7:30pm, and was attended by 3 property managers and 1 condo association board member. Participants were compensated with a \$50 Visa gift card, and dinner was provided.

## B.4 Overview of Participation

During the 4.5-month Phase I Outreach period, the EV Roadmap made over 620 connections with community members. Overall participation varied by activity, and some people may have participated in more than one activity.

- 240 people submitted an online Community EV Adoption Survey
- 158 pins were submitted on the online EV Charging Map
- 168 pins were entered on the physical EV Charging Map
- 50 people offered feedback during intercept interviews
- 4 people participated in a focus group

### B.4.1 Supporting Diverse Participation

Throughout the Phase I Outreach period, the EV Roadmap team made intentional effort to hear from diverse voices that reflect the makeup of our broader community. In particular, the intercept interviews, which included conversations in Spanish and Mandarin conducted informally at public locations and organizational meetings in Bellevue, and in-person tabling with the EV Charging Map were designed to reach community members not typically included in public participation.

Reporting on demographic information of participants in some outreach activities can be challenging. The format for some in-person, drop-in outreach activities, including the EV charging map tabling and intercept interviews, does not allow for easy data collection. Additionally, participants are never required to provide demographic information, either for in-person or online outreach activities.

Demographic information was not collected during intercept interviews or during in person tabling with the EV Charging Map. The online Community EV Adoption Survey provided the most structured opportunity to collect demographic data, which allows staff to understand how participation in this activity compares to citywide demographics. In general, participants in the Community EV Adoption Survey were older, whiter, and more likely to be homeowners than Bellevue as a whole.

## Race and Ethnicity

Bellevue as a whole:

61% PEOPLE OF COLOR

Survey respondents:

44% PEOPLE OF COLOR

*\*14 % of respondents did not answer*

## Homeownership Status

Bellevue as a whole:

47% RENTERS

Survey respondents:

13% RENTERS

## Language Spoken at Home

Bellevue as a whole:

47% ENGLISH NOT SPOKEN AT HOME

Survey respondents:

10% ENGLISH NOT SPOKEN AT HOME

*\*10% of respondents did not answer*

## B.5 Summary of Input

Because the different outreach activities had different content and different main focuses, this report evaluates input from each activity individually. However, it is possible to identify some common themes from across the outreach activities. These include:

- **Access to EV Charging in Multifamily Buildings:** Community members expressed a need charging available to renters and residents in multifamily buildings.
- **Public Charging:** In intercept interviews and on the online and physical EV Charging maps, community members expressed a desire for publicly available EV charging stations in central and frequently visited public locations, including shopping malls and libraries.
- **EV Barriers:** In the Community EV Adoption survey and in intercept interviews, community members identified cost of EVs and lack of reliable access to EV charging as main barriers to purchasing an EV.
- **Charging Behavior:** For residents who already owned an EV, 89% of Community EV Adoption Survey respondents and 100% of EV-owner intercept interview respondents charged their vehicles most often at home, citing convenience of home charging as the reason.

- **Interest in Other Forms of Mobility:** 52% of Community EV Survey respondents and many intercept interview respondents expressed interest in other forms of e-mobility, including an EV car share, e-bikes, and e-scooters. Intercept interview participants in the Junta de Mamas meeting in particular identified high cost of EVs and lack of access to charging as insurmountable barriers to EV adoption and expressed an interest in the city offering accessible, affordable mobility and e-mobility programs to low-income residents.
- **Grid Limitations:** Among property managers and condo board members who participated in the focus group, and some intercept interview participants, limitations of the grid and access to power were identified as important barriers to installing EV charging for resident use at multifamily buildings.

### B.5.1 Community EV Adoption Survey

As highlighted in the Overview of Participation section of this report, the Community EV Adoption Survey respondents are not fully reflective of the makeup of our community as a whole. In general, the respondents of the survey were much more likely to be homeowners, current EV owners, and speakers of English at home than Bellevue as a whole. Additionally, survey respondents were less likely to be people of color than Bellevue as a whole. Although the survey was available in five languages, only two surveys were completed in languages other than English.

Full results of the Community EV Adoption Survey, including demographic information, are available in Engagement Appendix A. This report highlights key findings:

- **Housing Situation (All respondents):**  
80% of respondents live in single-family homes or townhouses. 18% of respondents own or rent multifamily housing, including condos. Overall, only 13% of survey respondents were renters of any type of housing.
- **Knowledge of Plug-in EVs (All respondents):**  
Most respondents (87%) said they were familiar with plug-in EVs. 13% indicated a limited knowledge or awareness.
- **Ability to Charge EV at Home (All respondents):**  
Roughly half of respondents (51%) can charge an EV at home, while the rest do not, are unsure, or have other or partial access to home charging, such as occasional access to shared chargers at multifamily buildings, or access to a less-than desired level of charging at home. Among respondents who rent or own multifamily housing, condos, or townhouses, 63% did not have the ability to charge an EV at home.
- **Awareness of Incentives (All respondents):**  
Most respondents (84%) are aware of state and federal incentives aimed at reducing the cost of purchasing EVs or charging equipment.

- **Interest in Other Electric Mobility (All respondents):**  
A significant portion of respondents (59%) expressed interest in alternative electric mobility options such as EV car share, e-bikes, and e-scooters.
- **Ownership of BEV/PHEV (All respondents):**  
Nearly half (48%) of respondents already own or lease either a Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) or Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV).
- **Charging Behaviors (Current EV owners):**  
87% of respondents charged most frequently at home. Of the respondents who charged most frequently at home, 85% said they preferred this location because of convenience.
- **Charging Preferences (Current EV owners):**  
80% of respondents said that if they had access to charging at home, at their workplace, and in public places, they would prefer to charge at home.
- **Factors in Purchasing an EV (Current EV owners):**  
Environmental concerns (61%) and cost savings (13%) were identified as primary factors influencing the decision to purchase an EV.
- **Consideration of Purchasing an EV (Non-EV owners):**  
Many respondents are considering purchasing or leasing an EV in the future (59%), with environmental impact (38%) and cost savings (20%) selected as important factors considered for potential purchase. However, a significant portion of respondents (41%) are not considering purchasing or leasing an EV in the future.
- **Barriers to Purchasing an EV (Non-EV owners):**  
Access to reliable charging infrastructure (22%), affordability (17%), and range concerns (19%) were identified as the most significant barriers to EV adoption. Additional barriers selected were time required to charge an EV (15%), as well as not needing a new vehicle at this time (14%). Among survey respondents who rent or own multifamily housing and condos, lack of reliable access to charging was the most commonly chosen barrier to purchasing an EV (80%), followed by concerns about EV range (40%).
- **EV Ownership Considering Barriers (Non-EV owners):**  
Despite the consideration of barriers, a majority (64%) of respondents expressed willingness to own an EV if these obstacles were addressed.



### B.5.2 EV Charging Map

On both the physical and online EV Charging Maps, community members identified frequently visited public spaces and shopping centers as desired locations for EV charging. These locations included the Crossroads and Downtown malls, as well as public libraries. Certain Bellevue neighborhoods were particularly requested for EV charging on the online and physical EV Charging Maps. Downtown, Crossroads, Factoria, and Eastgate were the most frequently cited locations for EV Charging on the online map.

On the physical map, frequently requested neighborhoods were: Downtown, Crossroads, Factoria, and Eastgate. As the physical map was taken to locations around the community, it is possible responses on the physical map may be more biased towards locations and neighborhoods where the tabling took place, including Downtown, Wilburton, and Overlake.

### B.5.3 Intercept Interviews

Intercept interviews took place over the month of March 2024, and 50 residents offered feedback in total. Intercept Interviews at Bellevue Downtown Library were conducted in English only, while those at H Mart were conducted primarily in Mandarin. Interviews at the Junta de Mamas meeting were conducted in Spanish only.

Demographic information was not formally collected during the intercept interviews. However, residents were asked whether they currently owned EVs, and why or why not. They were also asked if they lived in single-family or multifamily housing in Bellevue.

Feedback from community members who participated in the Intercept interviews can be grouped into 4 key themes (Engagement Report Appendix B: Intercept Interview Summary Results):

- **Public charging:**

Respondents expressed a desire for more publicly accessible charging, particularly at central and frequently-visited locations, such as the Bellevue Downtown Library. Respondents also described a desire for charging that was accessible for use by patrons at shopping centers, and for affordable charging for low-income residents. In particular, respondents identified a desire for free charging for low-income residents. Public charging was the most common theme that occurred across the intercept interviews.

- **EV access and equity:**

The second-most frequent theme in the intercept interview responses was EV access and equity. Respondents identified access to charging at home for multifamily renters and prohibitive costs of EVs as major barriers to EV adoption, particularly for low-income residents. Respondents also expressed concerns that even if EV charging was made more accessible in public locations, they would be mainly used by middle- and higher-income residents who could afford to purchase an EV. Respondents expressed a desire for more

affordable mobility and e-mobility options accessible to lower-income residents, including EV carshare programs that could be of low cost or free to low-income residents or seniors. Residents expressed concerns that focusing on access to EV charging alone would do little to address the most pressing mobility needs for the city's low-income residents.

- **Access to reliable charging for multifamily buildings and condos:**

Intercept interview respondents expressed a desire for increased access to reliable charging for residents of multifamily buildings and condos. Respondents who were current multifamily building residents identified lack of access to charging at home as a common barrier to EV adoption. Though respondents indicated that better public charging access would help, access to charging at home was preferable.

- **EV hesitancy, reliability of technology and the grid, safety of use:**

Some respondents also expressed hesitancy towards EVs, including concerns about reliability of EV range and technology, and batter performance in cold temperatures. Some respondents expressed concerns about capacity of the electrical grid to meet EV charging needs in the community. A few respondents also expressed concerns about whether EV charging would be safe and secure for residents to use, and whether fires or performance in wet conditions were a concern for EV batteries.

### B.5.4 Property Management Focus Group

Three property managers and one condo association board member participated in the focus group. All property managers managed buildings occupied by 100% renters. The condo board member identified his association as mostly made up of condo owners, with 8 of 64 units occupied by renters.

Feedback from community members who participated in the focus can be grouped into 8 key themes (Engagement Report Appendix C: Focus Group Summary Notes):

- Grid capacity issues and concerns
- Lack of information about how to begin and complete the charging process
- Incentives and rebates
- Concerns about security, convenience, or other attributes of EV charging
- Difficulty navigating the charging installation process
- EV/EV charging benefits
- Cost of charging and/or maintenance

In particular, the EV Roadmap team was interested in the major barriers to installing EV charging for residents at multifamily buildings and condo associations. The feedback on these barriers and possible strategies for reducing barriers from the focus group is summarized here:

### **MAJOR BARRIERS**

The major barrier for property managers who had begun the installation process was navigating power availability and grid capacity. The property managers who had begun the process did not feel they had enough grid capacity to install the level of charging they would ideally prefer. They also felt that once they had started the process, there was a great deal of confusion about how to navigate it. When they faced roadblocks, they were unsure of what resources might help them understand how to deal with them, or where they could go for help. Additionally, property managers who had begun the process also identified cost of installing and maintaining charging at multifamily buildings as a major barrier.

The major barrier for property managers who had not begun the installation process was not knowing how to begin or what the process would look like for them. These property managers were concerned about how to understand their property's charging needs, grid capacity, and potential incentives available.

Additionally, all the property managers expressed some uncertainty over what level of charging is most appropriate for their buildings and resident needs. None of the property managers were very familiar with existing state or federal incentives for installing charging.

### **BARRIER REDUCTION**

The property managers who had begun the installation process identified more electricity/grid capacity and more incentives and rebates as the main things that could reduce barriers. They also identified resources that would help property managers navigate the process as important to barrier reduction.

Property managers who had not begun the process identified resources for property managers on beginning and navigating the process from start to finish as the main thing that could reduce barriers.

## **B.6 Phase II and Next Steps**

The EV Roadmap team used the feedback received during Phase I Outreach to inform the strategy and siting recommendations for the EV Roadmap. Input from the Phase I Engagement Summary was incorporated into the Draft EV Roadmap. The draft strategies and Draft EV Roadmap document were released for further public input during Phase II engagement activities.

### **B.6.1 Phase II Outreach**

Phase II outreach took place from July to September of 2024, and consisted of two key activities, a draft strategy Open House and a Draft Roadmap Public Review period. Phase II engagement was centered around the draft strategies and draft Roadmap document, developed with input from Phase I engagement. In total, connections were made with over 100 community members throughout Phase II engagement.

## B.6.2 Open House

On July 22, the EV Roadmap team held an open house in Crossroads Park from 4:30pm-7:30pm. Participants were encouraged to read boards describing the EV Roadmap project and summarizing the policies for each focus area. Participants were given four dots to place next to policies they wanted to see prioritized for implementation, and post it notes for open-ended feedback. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of EVs with drivers with their vehicles located by the public EV charging in the Crossroads Parking lot. The event was open to the public and received drop-in traffic from Crossroads Park as well as pre-registered attendees. In total, around 100 people attended the Open House.

In general, policies to prioritize EV funding and incentives, enhance user experience at EV charging stations, and create financial incentives received the most support from participants in dot voting. In open ended feedback, participants expressed a desire for increased access to EV charging, such as increasing charging available at multifamily buildings; reducing costs for public charger use; improving charger reliability; and improving user experience at public chargers. Some participants also expressed general EV hesitancy, including concerns about the environmental impact of used batteries, grid capacity, and impacts on road maintenance.

## B.6.3 Public Review Period

After incorporating feedback from the Open House, the EV Roadmap Team released the Draft EV Roadmap for public review on Monday, September 9. The public review period was open for two weeks until Monday, September 23 and promoted via city channels, including a news release, social media, and various mailing lists.

Members of the community were invited to read the Draft Roadmap in its entirety and by individual section on Engaging Bellevue. In total, 17 community members left comments during the two-week period.

Key themes in the comments included general support for EVs and the Draft EV Roadmap strategies, hesitancy or skepticism towards EVs and the draft strategies, support for public and multifamily building charging, and support for diverse mobility options in addition to EVs that would reduce overall car dependency in Bellevue.

### **Key Quotes:**

The EV Roadmap team selected key quotes for inclusion in this report that represented the main themes present in the comments overall. Quotes may have been condensed or edited for clarity. All comments, unedited and in their entirety, are available in Engagement Report Appendix D: EV Roadmap Public Comments.

“Charging stations should NOT be built with taxpayer money.”

“It is well known that tire particles shed by heavy cars pollute the streams in winter and are floating in the air near the roads in summer. It is nice that you at least mention air quality in your roadmap,

but you aren't paying it nearly enough attention. The city's electrification plans should focus not on car charges but on better transit...and on better non-car options, like e-bikes and e-scooters, things that residents are [explicitly] asking for."

"Beyond having a growing number of chargers, there needs to be a plan in place for ensuring the chargers actually work and maintaining them when they don't."

"This is wonderful, I hope we can use this as an opportunity to reduce our carbon emissions in Bellevue and also create an infrastructure for greener alternatives to gas powered cars."

"I'm excited by the city's progress on this plan. I hope that the city's chargers will be located where our neighbors currently spend time—parks, grocery stores and shopping centers, etc. This will enable people to charge while attending to other business or activities."

"One thing to take into account...is that most people who have EVs are likely to have charging at home, otherwise they wouldn't have gotten the car. While it would be nice to have charging stations around, I don't think it's completely necessary."

"This roadmap is extensive, which is promising. It also highlights the need for available EV charging in existing multifamily sites without current access...Questions for which solutions need to be developed include: How do you implement it now, with the capacity to grow as adoption increases?"

"I believe it is important...not only to promote EV adoption, but also [to] work towards the city's goals for 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions."

"Require all rental Unit buildings (townhomes, single family, apartments) to have electrical capacity to support EV charging and plan to retrofit existing units"

#### B.6.4 Next Steps

After publication of the final EV Roadmap, staff anticipate ongoing periodic engagement as the city moves into implementing aspects of the EV Roadmap. Additionally, there will be further opportunities for public engagement on EVs, e-mobility, and mobility options as the city updates its Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship plan for 2026-2030.