

2025 Community Programming Fund (CPF) Call for Programming



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Community Programming Fund (CPF) is designed to support programs, events, and installations in outdoor public spaces throughout Bellevue. The fund aims to make these spaces vibrant and welcoming, strengthen the community's connection to them as places for gathering and enjoyment, celebrate Bellevue's cultural diversity through inclusive programming. The CPF provides funding for programming led by individuals, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and small businesses.

The City has authorized a total grant fund up to \$150,000 that may be awarded under the Community Programming Fund program. Grants will be awarded based on how well proposals align with the review criteria until either the final application deadline or funds are exhausted (whichever comes earlier).

APPLY ONLINE

All submissions are managed online through Survey Monkey. You can access the application at bellevuewa.gov/cpf.

Program Contact

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Deadlines

Application opens April 1, 2025

Applications will be reviewed in waves. The deadline for review in each wave is 11:59 p.m. on the following dates:

- April 14
- May 5
- May 26
- June 16
- July 7
- July 28

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We're seeking creative, fun community programs and small events which bring Bellevuers together in outdoor public spaces—the types of activities you'd see every day in a busy outdoor plaza, public park, or community center. Think Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square, New York's Bryant Park, or Mexico City's Plaza Hidalgo. We're looking for street performers, markets, food truck programs, and pop-up producers which can help us bring life to the space and inspire connection.

Examples of public activations that support these goals:

- Live music (i.e. street performance, small concerts, etc.)
- Cultural celebrations (i.e. holiday celebrations, etc.)
- Vendor fairs (i.e. farmers' markets, night markets, craft fairs, etc.)
- Food programs (i.e. food truck rallies, wine walk, etc.)
- Wellness and play (i.e. yoga, tai chi, Zumba, etc.)
- Passive installations (i.e. public art, pop-up galleries, or interpretive exhibits, etc.)
- Workshops or meetups (i.e. board games, crafting, etc.)
- Performance (i.e. dance, comedy, poetry, storytelling, etc.)

That's just a small selection—we welcome your ideas if you have something creative in mind.

Additionally, while we hope to support a wide array of programs, it is important to note that this program may not be a good fit for everyone. In particular, if you are proposing a large event and have not yet started planning, this program is probably not a great fit for you. Take a look at the table below for a guide.

What this is for

- Small to medium-sized outdoor events, activities, and programs serving fewer than 500 people at one time*
- One-time or recurring programs or activities
- Programs or activities which are already in active planning but need a venue
- Programs or activities which are newer and/or less established
- Programs or activities which can be planned, scheduled, and executed in less than 90 days from submission

What this isn't for

- Large events, activations, or programs which serve more than 500 people at one time or require substantial City assistance *
- Ticketed programs or events
- Programs or events which are at the idea stage and require permits or approvals
- Programs or activities which are well-established annual events
- Programs or events not taking place in an outdoor public space

* Larger programs and events are **eligible** for this program, but a Special Event Permit is required if the planned audience includes 500 or more participants, if there is an anticipated impact to City streets, or if there is a need for City support services, like police or traffic control. The Special Event Application process generally takes at least 90 days. The applicant's ability to meet this requirement will be an evaluation criterion.

ELIGIBLE LOCATIONS

This program includes outdoor public spaces across Bellevue, with additional funding available for programs specifically along the Grand Connection corridor. Our goal is to support community-driven activities that bring people together in spaces throughout the city, encouraging engagement in both familiar and lesser-used locations. While we are focusing on the Grand Connection as a key area for activation, we are also committed to funding initiatives that foster community connection in other underutilized public spaces across Bellevue.

Eligible Outdoor Locations

Types of outdoor public spaces which qualify for grant funding include areas such as:

- Plazas, whether publicly or privately owned, but open for public access
- Parks, subject to Parks and Community Services' approval
- Right-of-Way areas, including sidewalks and temporary street closures
- Other publicly accessible spaces, such as outdoor courtyards, green areas and parking lots

Please note that indoor events or programs are not eligible for funding.

Along the Grand Connection

Total program budget

Up to \$100,000

Maximum individual grant award

\$15,000

Our focus and intent

Activating the Grand Connection, increasing awareness of the corridor.

Suggested locations

Public plazas, parks, and gathering spaces along the Grand Connection, such as:

- Main Street
- Downtown Park
- NE 6th St
- Compass Plaza
- City Center Plaza
- City Hall Plaza
- Eastrail/NE 6th

Elsewhere in the city

Total program budget

Up to \$50,000

Maximum individual grant award

\$15,000

Our focus and intent

Activating underutilized spaces, bringing the community together.

Suggested locations

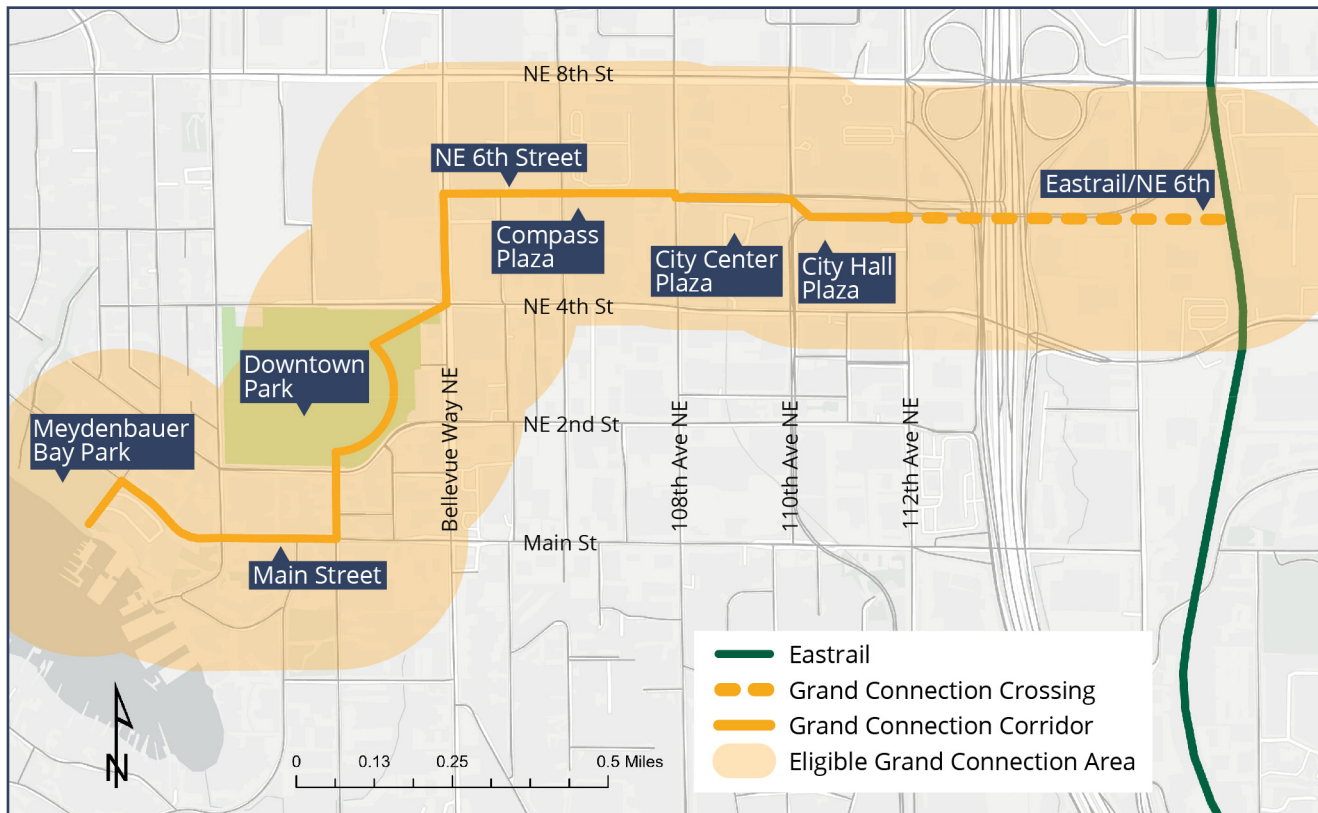
Public plazas, parks, and gathering spaces across the city, such as:

- BelRed Arts District
- Spring District
- Ashwood Park
- Highland Park
- Factoria
- Bellevue College
- Other locations as requested

In **City Hall Plaza**, we can work with you directly to schedule the space depending on availability and specific program requirements. Programs will need to meet City facility rental requirements.

In other spaces, including private properties and city parks, owner permission and/or permits may be required. We can let you know what might be required based on your plans, but it is the program organizer's responsibility to obtain property owner approval and any necessary permits.

GRAND CONNECTION CORRIDOR



WHAT WE'LL PROVIDE

Our goal is to activate public spaces across Bellevue and support individuals and organizations which develop and produce this programming. If selected to participate, we will provide:

- Grant support of up to \$15,000 per applicant
- Permit advising and fee coverage, if applicable
- Limited marketing and promotional support
- Networking opportunities

First, we'll provide funding to support your program, event, or activity—up to \$15,000, depending on the program's scale and budget. Grants will be awarded based on review criteria until the final application deadline or funds are exhausted (whichever comes earlier).

During the application process, you will provide a budget for your proposed activity

or program, and you'll have an opportunity to request a specific grant amount based on activity level:

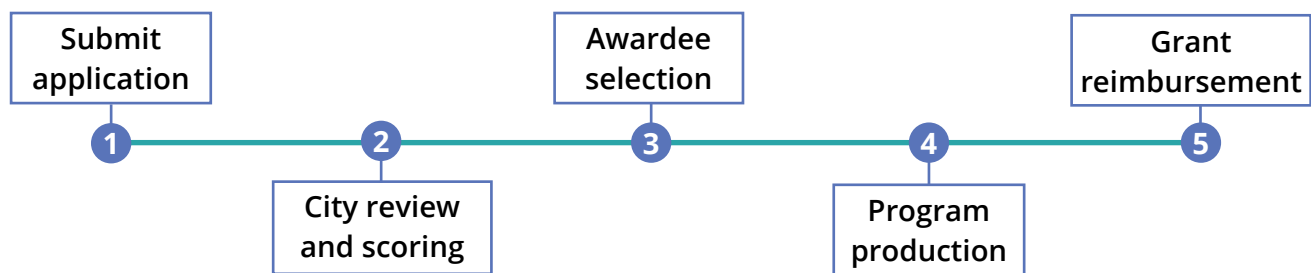
1. **\$1,000** — *Examples:* a one-time community class or meet-up, a small temporary art installation.
2. **\$2,500** — *Examples:* a series of free yoga classes, a single live music performance, a summer-long drop-in board game meetup.
3. **\$5,000** — *Examples:* a summer-long series of fitness classes, a custom passive public art exhibition, a small cultural celebration, a summer-long weekly street performance "residency."
4. **\$10,000** — *Examples:* two or three farmers' markets or vendor fairs, a symphony performance or major event.
5. **\$15,000** — *Examples:* a summer-long farmers' market or vendor fair, a single large cultural celebration with live music

Second, the city's public space management team will advise on permitting requirements, assist in scheduling if your event is proposed to take place at City Hall Plaza, and connect you with any additional resources you may need. **We cannot waive or expedite permit requirements, and we cannot provide preferential access to public spaces like Downtown Park. All applicable permitting and scheduling requirements still apply.** If your program requires a City permit through Development Services (such as a right-of-way permit for activities in City streets or an noise permit for certain activities with amplified sound), we will cover your permit and review fees.

Third, we can assist in promoting your program through City channels, including social media, newsletters, and public event calendars to boost visibility and participation. Our role is not to lead your marketing and promotion efforts, but we can help amplify yours. Grant awardees will be asked to acknowledge the City's support as a condition of accepting funds.

Fourth and finally, we'll connect you to a network of small activators and event producers in Bellevue. Public space managers are always looking for different activities and programs to keep people coming back to their properties and businesses. By participating in this program in 2025, you'll enter on the ground floor for a newly enlivened series of venues.

PROGRAM PROCESS AND TIMELINE



1. **Submit application:** Applicants must submit a detailed application through SurveyMonkey, outlining the event or program, including the target audience, goals, and logistics.
2. **City review and scoring:** The City will review the application for completeness, then review proposals in waves beginning on April 14 and every three weeks thereafter. Proposals will be scored based on an evaluation rubric that considers alignment with program goals, community impact, and feasibility. If necessary, we may seek additional information.
3. **Awardee selection:** Once an application is approved and a contract is signed, the awardee is responsible for organizing and producing the event or program, scheduling the event space, and obtaining any necessary permits.
4. **Event/program production:** The awardee executes the event or program. **If the awardee must apply for permits for their event or program, we will pay the relevant fees on the awardee's behalf.** (Note that permit fees will not be covered if the program organizer applied for permits before applying to the CPF program.)
5. **Reimbursement:** After the event or program, the awardee will submit a post-event report that includes an outline of the public benefit, community impact, and an invoice for the grant amount. Grant funding will be paid as a reimbursement upon the City's receipt of a post-event report. Grantees must provide a post-event report within 30 days after the event.

Application opens	April 1, 2025
Application review	In waves beginning on April 14, then every three weeks thereafter
Eligible program dates	June 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025, with priority for programs taking place between June 1 and October 31
Application closes	July 28, 2025 or when funds are exhausted

Applications will be reviewed in waves. The deadline for review in each wave is 11:59 p.m. on the following dates:

- April 14, 2025
- May 5, 2025
- May 26, 2025
- June 16, 2025
- July 7, 2025
- July 28, 2025

If we need additional information to process your application, we will contact you as quickly as possible to ensure your application is complete in time to fairly review. Funds are first-come, first-served and available until exhausted, so we strongly recommend applying early.

ELIGIBILITY

- Grants may be awarded to individuals or organizations.
- Small businesses with fewer than 100 total employees are eligible if the supported programming otherwise meets the criteria and the event is not an intentional or de facto advertisement for the business. Businesses are strongly encouraged to partner with a community organization or nonprofit.
- Applicants must obtain any necessary permits and/or property owner permissions and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Applicants must have the ability to independently market and execute the proposed event in its entirety providing all labor, equipment and materials needed. Proposals must:
 - ▶ Have a target audience or participant base which includes residents, employees, visitors, and/or students in Bellevue.
 - ▶ Take place in an outdoor location.
 - ▶ Take place between June 1 and December 31, 2025.
 - ▶ Be free and open to the public. If the program applying for funds has a ticketed element, the supported element (for example, live music at a ticketed wine tasting event) must be free and open to the public.
 - ▶ Not be a direct promotion for an upcoming for-profit or paid activity
- Selected grantees must:
 - ▶ Enter into a contract with the City of Bellevue, including requirements for public access and grant acknowledgment.
 - ▶ Provide a post-event report within 30 days after the event.
- In alignment with state and local laws and policies, grants will not be awarded to:
 - ▶ Churches, schools, and/or religious organizations where city funds might be used for religious purposes.

- ▶ Groups which discriminate based on age, race, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.
- ▶ Groups currently in litigation with the city.
- ▶ Political campaigns or parties.
- ▶ Unions representing city employees.
- ▶ Organizations which already have an ongoing contract with the city to support activation and/or programming in the Grand Connection corridor.

SELECTION PROCESS

The evaluation process ensures alignment with program goals and prioritizes high-quality, impactful activations.

Evaluation criteria:

- **Activate public space:** Programs should effectively transform public spaces into vibrant, engaging environments. Programs will be evaluated on how well they draw people into the space, create a welcoming atmosphere, and contribute to a lively, well-used public realm that supports local economic activity.
- **Community engagement:** Programs should actively engage with the community and offer meaningful benefits. They should provide valuable experiences for diverse audiences, create opportunities for participation, and contribute to the overall enhancement of the community. An individual program may not appeal to everyone, but it should contribute to the whole set of funded programs providing something for everyone.
- **Feasibility:** Programs should be realistic and achievable within logistical, financial, and regulatory constraints. Applicants must demonstrate that they can successfully produce and execute the program, ensuring it can be planned and delivered within a 90-day timeframe. Feasibility will also consider any necessary permits or approvals required for public space use and event production.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What if I have an idea for a program, but haven't yet started planning?

A: It depends on the scale of your program. Generally, this program is a good fit for programs which can be planned and executed in less than 90 days. Smaller programs and activities can typically meet this timeline, and some larger ones may be able to as well, particularly if the organizer has some experience or the program has a relatively standard setup. For larger programs which require City support or where the organizer is relatively new to event production, this program may not be a good fit, unless you are beyond the idea stage and your planning is already underway.

Q: Do I receive access to City facilities or parks if I apply for this program?

A: No, a grant award is not a guarantee that any permit or scheduling request will be approved. If your program would take place at City Hall Plaza, we'll help with scheduling, subject to availability. If your program is taking place elsewhere, you are responsible for all relevant approvals and/or permits, though we'll help point you in the right direction.

Q: What happens if I receive funding, but my program doesn't end up happening?

A: Because the grant is reimbursement-based, funds will only be awarded upon completion of the program and satisfaction of the post-event documentation requirements. Contracts will not be extended beyond December 31, 2025.

Q: What permit fees will you cover?

A: We'll cover the application and review fees associated with any permits you may require through our Development Services team. That's most relevant for you if you're proposing an activity in a public street. We will not award additional funds to cover rental fees or other charges associated with your use of a particular venue or space. If selected to receive a grant award, we will provide you with the necessary information, although a grant award is not a guarantee of a successful permit application.

