



Bellevue City Council 2021-2023 Vision & Priorities

Quarterly Report
July 1, 2023





Bellevue City Council Priorities Q2 2023 Report

On May 19, 2014, the City Council approved a 20-year vision for Bellevue, including strategic target areas and two-year priorities, and has continued to refine and set new priorities every two to three years. The seven strategic target areas are:

- Economic Development
- Transportation and Mobility
- High Quality Built and Natural Environment
- Bellevue: Great Places Where You Want to Be
- Regional Leadership and Influence
- Achieving Human Potential
- High Performance Government

In early 2021, the Council deliberated and reached consensus on a list of 22 priorities to support the seven strategic target areas for the 2021-23 term. This report provides a high-level overview of key accomplishments, ongoing actions, and next steps in the implementation of each priority. In order to ensure effective implementation of the priorities, the Leadership Team has assigned a sponsor and lead staff member for each priority who identified tasks and milestones to support the outcomes outlined by the Council. For the most part, the 2021-23 priorities represent a continuation of initiatives that are already underway with allocated staff and budget. The Council added four new priorities to this ongoing work in 2021-23 which have been incorporated into department workplans. This represents a significant body of work – 22 priorities with 111 supporting workplan items.

As of Q2 2023, the majority of supporting actions are on track and 73% of the three-year work plan has been completed. Staff is fully engaged in this work and focused on meeting Council and community expectations. As of the latest update, approximately 10% of actions are experiencing some level of disruption. This is primarily due to conditions currently impacting many industries such as supply chain constraints, material costs, or staff vacancies. Despite these disruptions and additional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, staff has made significant progress in advancing each of the 22 priorities.

Updated status reports will be provided to the Council and posted on the Bellevue Performance dashboard on a quarterly basis: performance.bellevuewa.gov.



Economic Development

Priority 1: Implement the direct strategies of the Economic Development Plan, addressing: Capacity building and partnerships, small business and entrepreneurship, workforce, retail, creative economy, and tourism.

Accomplishments:

- Bellevue and Redmond approved the Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) interlocal agreement and revenue collection will begin on July 1, 2023.
- The City hired two “entrepreneurs in residence” to lead Startup 425 who are developing programs to grow services provided to first-time business owners.
- The BelRed Arts District Alliance, a new neighborhood non-profit, filed incorporation paperwork.

In Progress/Ongoing: Implementation has continued on the Economic Development Plan. Staff is working on the developer RFP for artist-focused housing and supporting the new non-profit.

Looking Ahead: Research and analysis for the city-wide retail study has been completed and staff is working to develop recommendations.



Transportation & Mobility

Priority 2: Continue to execute our transportation capital plans for future growth and mobility of the city. Use the funding provided by the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy to improve safety, transportation, and quality of life in neighborhoods.

Accomplishments: Construction is progressing well on the TIFIA projects, with two more segments reaching substantial completion. The Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity, and Congestion Levy program recently completed ten new and enhanced crosswalks in the Lakemont, Eastgate, and Lake Hills neighborhoods. The Vision Zero program has completed all eight of the grant-funded Roadway Safety Audits (RSA) and has published the final report.

In Progress/Ongoing: Work has begun on the project evaluation and prioritization for all the concerns identified through the RSA process. The final stage of 124th Ave NE - Ichigo to Northrup Way is under construction and scheduled to be complete by Q2-2024. Design continues to progress on multiple levy projects, including a new traffic signal on 156th Ave SE at Lake Hills Blvd and the next phase of improvements associated with the transformational sidewalk and safety project in Northwest Bellevue along 100th Ave NE. Construction is almost complete on the levy-funded congestion improvement project at 148th Ave NE at Lake Hills Blvd.

Looking Ahead: Staff has kicked off the Bike Bellevue project with Council and the Transportation Commission. Public outreach on this project will begin in September 2023. Design is beginning on multiple new levy projects including a jointly funded grant and levy safety project on Coal Creek Parkway to address speeding on this corridor. The final TIFIA project, 130th Ave NE from Bel-Red Rd to NE 20th St, is on track to advertise before the end of the year.



Transportation & Mobility

Priority 3: Advocate with the state Department of Transportation and regional agencies for acceleration of the I-405 Corridor Program and completion of SR 520 improvements, including Bellevue projects (i.e. NE Sixth St., 124th Ave. NE Interchange, braided ramps, Coal Creek Parkway).

Accomplishments: Together with stakeholders, the City successfully advocated to legislative leadership on the importance of near-term funding for WSDOT's SR 520/124th Avenue NE Interchange Project. Funding for design of the SR 520/124th project is expected to be reinstated in the 2023-2025 biennium.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Advance the NE 6th Street Extension study alternatives through the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update environmental analysis process. The City Council provided final direction on the land use alternative in July, and transportation modeling results will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement in Fall 2023.
- The City will continue to coordinate with WSDOT on preliminary engineering and environmental review for the SR 520/124th Avenue NE Interchange Project, including the Northup Way pedestrian/bicycle approach, right of way, and public outreach.

Looking Ahead:

- Environmental review, public engagement and an access hearing are anticipated in late-2023/early-2024 for WSDOT's SR 520/124th Avenue NE Interchange Project. The City will work with stakeholders to develop a funding approach for construction of WSDOT's SR 520/124th Avenue NE Interchange Project.
- Develop a funding approach for interchange and access projects along the I-405 corridor.

Priority 4: Continue oversight of light rail construction and ensure that we implement an effective strategy for construction mitigation for neighborhoods, traffic and business.

Accomplishments:

Civil construction is complete. Construction mitigation has been successfully managed for neighborhoods, businesses, and the traveling public.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Civil construction is complete.
- Electrical systems testing for the light rail is in progress on a segment-by-segment basis.
- Staff has started working with Sound Transit on a draft list of items to be included in an amendment to the Transit Way Agreement.

Looking Ahead: Sound Transit will be starting noise and vibration testing for the light rail in Q4 2023 and is currently reevaluating the project opening date with plans to update the schedule in Q3.



High Quality Built & Natural Environment

Priority 5: Execute Affordable Housing strategy, including: 1. Look at code amendments instead of comprehensive plan amendments for projects with exceptional amounts of low-and middle-income housing; and 2. Strengthen housing bonus program.

Accomplishments:

- Significant increase in use of Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program.
- Community Engagement Guide for Supportive Housing.
- Supportive and Emergency Housing LUCA adopted.
- Removing maximum residential occupancy LUCA adopted.
- Continued progress at Operations and Maintenance Facility East & 130th Sites.
- Housing Stability Program (HB 1590) 2022 Funding Processes for Behavioral Health & Human Services and Capital Investment.
- 2022 ARCH Housing Trust Fund projects awarded in May 2023.
- City Capital Funding for Men's Shelter, Plymouth Supportive Housing, and Illahee.
- C-1 Phase 2 Faith-Based Properties LUCA.
- Release of Draft EIS for Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton.
- Assessment of 2023 state legislation relating to land use and housing.
- Downtown Residential FAR/Affordable Housing Interim Official Control adopted.
- Micro-apartments LUCA adopted.
- Affordable Housing Fee Reduction program adopted.
- Transportation Standards BCCA to align with 2021 Unit Lot Subdivision approval adopted.
- ADU Reform LUCA adopted to encourage attached accessory dwelling units.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Ongoing support for Multifamily Tax Exemption program, ARCH, Housing Stability Program (HB 1590), and regional affordable housing planning.
- Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and Wilburton: additional housing supply and affordable housing work.
- Work to finalize partnership at 130th TOD site.
- Site and program analysis initiated for the Kelly Site affordable housing project in preparation to release RFP in Q1 2024.
- Update affordable housing target number in the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Plan.
- Maximizing SEPA Categorical Exemptions BCCA.
- "Next Right Work" items: allow higher density for residential developments LUCA and simplify and expedite permitting for housing projects.
- Environmental review of wide range of potential housing concepts as part of Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.
- MFTE Code Amendment to encourage use of program for Very Small Dwelling Units.

Looking Ahead:

- Processing and adoption of "Next Right Work" items.
- Wilburton LUCA, including added housing supply, affordable housing, and targeted housing land use districts.
- BelRed Look Forward LUCA, including added housing supply and affordable housing.
- Analysis of HB 1110 (middle housing) and HB 1337 (ADUs) new state legislation.
- Analysis of SB 5290 (permit streamlining).



High Quality Built & Natural Environment

Priority 6: Complete construction of Phase One of Meydenbauer Bay Park by 2018 and the Downtown Park Gateway by the end of 2019 and synchronize with the Grand Connection as possible. Include celebration of the connection of downtown to the waterfront.

Accomplishments: Phase One of Meydenbauer Bay Park and the Downtown Park are complete. The Artwork 'Piloti' has been installed and the grand celebration of NE Gateway Plaza was held on June 24.

Priority 7: Advance implementation of the Smart City Strategy, including advanced transportation technology and autonomous, connected, electric and shared vehicle technologies.

Accomplishments:

- Installed 39,000 smart water meters and 38,500 cellular transmitters.
- Launched Clean Buildings Incentive Program to provide energy benchmarking support for Bellevue buildings to comply with the WA State Clean Buildings Act. Completed energy benchmarks for 107 buildings in Bellevue, 96 more in progress. Assisting 12 buildings in applying for Early Adopter Incentives.
- Completed a traffic data dashboard for internal monitoring of key operational metrics for the adaptive signal system and our bicycle network.

In Progress/Ongoing: Working on a new video analytics study focused on using passive pedestrian detection to improve the clearance of pedestrians in crosswalks. Also advancing testing on the next generation of Transit Signal Priority for the B-Line.

Priority 8: Implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, which identifies actions in five focus areas: Climate change, Energy, Materials management and waste, Mobility and land use, and Natural systems.

Accomplishments: Of the 78 actions in the plan, 67 have been completed, started, or incorporated into existing operations. Staff has also launched the Clean Buildings Incentive Program and Energy Smart Eastside. Completed Phase 1 of the tree code engagement, including a survey, information session, and stakeholder meetings.

In Progress/Ongoing: Staff is continuing to implement the plan, hiring new staff to provide additional capacity to support plan implementation, and identify state and federal grants and funding opportunities to accelerate implementation.

Priority 9: Advance a park funding strategy, including consideration of new funding sources for operations, maintenance and construction.

Accomplishments: The Bellevue Parks and Open Space System Plan was adopted by the City Council on July 11, 2022. In subsequent Council meetings, a parks levy package was compiled and approved by the Council for consideration on the November 2022 ballot. That voter initiative was subsequently approved.

Priority 10: Proceed with site selection and feasibility analysis for a major aquatic center in Bellevue.

Accomplishments: City Council has supported advancing the recommended Bellevue Airfield Park Master Plan that includes an Aquatic Facility among other park elements.

In-Progress/Ongoing: Environmental reporting and SEPA review are in progress.



Bellevue: Great Places Where You Want to Be

Priority 11: Continue to advance the Grand Connection as the city's signature gathering place. Establish the preferred crossing of I-405 and begin design discussions with WSDOT; build public support by completing city projects in the early implementation plan; educate key public and private funders on the unique opportunities available; and integrate the vision of the Grand Connection into the Wilburton plan.

Accomplishments: Continued work with private-sector developers to further the Grand Connection vision along the corridor. Staff stood up core teams in Q1 to advance the catalyst I-405 bridge crossing, which includes both the capital construction of the crossing and the operations work to ensure the space is well managed and programmed for community use. In June, the City held a community celebration for the opening of the NE gateway to Downtown Park.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Completion of raised intersections at NE 6th/108th and NE 6th/110th expected in Q4 2023.
- Continued work on implementation of the Wilburton vision, including SEPA, policy, development, and LUC updates through the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. Significant work is being done to analyze three growth alternatives as part of the EIS process.
- Staff has selected a design contractor for the non-motorized crossing and will take the contract to Council on Sep. 5. "Friends of the Grand Connection" has officially organized and created a working executive committee to support the overall program work. Work has begun with OBMA to expand their fall Wine Walk along the Grand Connection on Sep. 14.

Looking Ahead:

- Design work on the non-motorized crossing will kick off in Q3 2023 and wrap by the end of 2024. Additional RFPs for funding consultants, public space management, management consultants,

Priority 12: Work with King County and Sound Transit to ensure that Eastrail from Renton to the Wilburton Trestle is completed; complete the section of the trail from Kirkland to the Light Rail Maintenance Facility East; complete the interim connection through the Spring District; and begin to establish community connection points to Eastrail.

Accomplishments:

- Council approved the \$2 million Bellevue contribution to the Eastrail Wilburton Trestle project on June 12.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- The City has advanced the Eastrail to Spring Boulevard Connector Project to 90% design review. The City continues to work with King County and Sound Transit on 4f approval and easements.
- For the NE 8th Street Overcrossing, design is underway to complete an interim (gravel) trail between NE 6th and NE 4th so that there is a continuous connection between the bridge and NE 4th Street when the bridge is open for use.
- The Northup Way (SR 520 Trail) Connector project has started construction.
- The Wilburton Trestle project is scheduled to bid in Q3 2023, pending completion of a project agreement with WSDOT for anticipated Move Ahead WA funding.

Looking Ahead:

- The Eastrail to Spring Boulevard Connector Project is expected to complete final design Fall 2023.
- The Northup Way (SR 520 Trail) Connector project is expected to open in late September 2023.
- Ongoing evaluation of a RAISE 2024 grant submittal for the I-90 Steel Bridge. The RAISE Notice of Funding Opportunity is expected in November and proposals are likely due in February 2024.



Regional Leadership

Priority 13: Be an active regional partner, whether it is with cities east of the lake, Seattle and King County, schools and special purpose districts, or the state and federal government. Strategically pursue public and/or private funding and partnerships where beneficial to Bellevue and the region. Establish a partnership with the Port of Seattle on our mutual areas of interest, including attraction of international business and tourism.

Accomplishments:

- Consistent with Council's federal legislative agenda, Bellevue submitted four requests for congressionally directed spending and community project spending, also known as "earmarks."
- Bellevue secured four Sound Cities Association appointments for 2023 and two appointments through the Association of Washington Cities.
- Bellevue staff is implementing an Economic Development Partnership Grant from the Port.
- Council approved the 2023-24 Federal Legislative Agenda in June 2023.
- Council and staff advocated for the City's State Legislative priorities during the 2023 session.
- Senator Patty Murray visited Bellevue Fire Station #1 in May to learn more about Bellevue's initiative with Redmond to electrify our fire stations, making them safer for our firefighters and for our community and reducing our climate-warming emissions.

Looking Ahead: Staff is preparing recommendations for the 2024 State Legislative Session. Bellevue staff will create a detailed report documenting Port-funded funded projects and outcomes. Bellevue staff anticipates submitting the report to the Port in December.



Achieving Human Potential

Priority 14: Leverage the higher education institutions in Bellevue to benefit our residents and businesses. The Global Innovation Exchange and its partners present an opportunity to dramatically grow human potential in the field of technology innovation. The city should support GIX and take advantage of the financial and human benefits that will come from it. Bellevue College is an important partner in providing workforce development. The city should support the college, the faculty and students in the city's transportation and affordable housing plans. The city should implement the TechHire initiative to benefit the region's technology companies.

Accomplishments: Bellevue's new workforce specialist has held regular office hours at Mini City Hall which has allowed residents of diverse backgrounds to get connected and get help with job needs. Bellevue is also partnering with Redmond on a survey of residents to help quantify the needs of job and training seekers.

Looking Ahead: Bellevue staff is working with community organizations on apprenticeship and internship programs.



Achieving Human Potential

Priority 15: Continue to implement the Diversity Plan, including determining the availability of and need for multicultural programming in the city and completing the cross-cultural study already underway.

Accomplishments:

- Communities of Color Initiative: Completed the Communities of Color Phase 2 work plan with Joshua Barr. Completed mock dialogues and training before issuing invitations to the CCC community dialogues.
- Cross-Cultural Programming: Developed communications materials and work plan for cross-cultural programming. Recruitment has started for the Convening Team to develop cross-cultural interaction within the City.
- Diversity Advantage Plan 2.0: Completed engagement with steering team focus group and created an external engagement plan for the DAP 2.0 update.
- Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network: Work plans for all committees complete. BDAN has advised on four major City projects to improve communication, collaboration, and the City's ability to provide better service to its diverse community.
- Implicit Bias and Microaggression Training: Completed beta testing with city leadership teams.

In Progress/Ongoing:

- Communities of Color Initiative: Conducting a series of community dialogues to consider how to implement policy concepts aimed at improving equity and inclusivity. The Coordinating Team will then hold post-dialogue discussions, a community check-in and make policy recommendations.
- Implicit Bias and Microaggression Training: Rollout has begun for this training, which is required for all City staff.

Looking Ahead:

- Diversity Advantage Plan 2.0: Develop plans for internal engagement with City employees.
- Cross-Cultural Programming: Form a convening group and send out invitations to Community Design Meetings, which will engage the community in identifying the top priorities for this phase of implementing the Cross-Cultural Center.

Priority 16: Work toward an Eastside solution for a permanent location for a men's homeless shelter.

Accomplishments: Construction is complete and the men's shelter has moved to its permanent location on the Eastgate Housing Campus.



Achieving Human Potential

Priority 17: Explore a safe parking program for homelessness response.

Accomplishments: City Council discussed program options in July 2022 and received an update on program structure and implementation in January 2023. Staff developed the program framework, completed analysis, and selected the Lincoln Center as the host site for the pilot program. The first two rounds of the City's Request for Proposal were not successful, likely due to lack of capacity in the homelessness services provider network. Staff continues to engage with area service providers to identify an operational partner or team and prepare for program launch. The program is a two-year safe parking pilot, with contracted site and case management services, as well as outreach to religious organizations to support expansion of safe parking programs. Funding for the program is included in the City's 2023-2024 budget.

In Progress/Ongoing: Staff is engaging with area service providers to identify an operational partner or team. Staff regularly coordinates with outside partners including KCRHA Vehicle Residency Working Group, Eastside cities, and existing safe parking locations.

Looking Ahead: Anticipate program launch by end of 2023.



High Performance Government

Priority 18: Build trust in government by developing and implementing a comprehensive communication plan with proactive strategies and systems, and robust, transparent, open public engagement processes. Characteristics that were discussed include: Share clear and timely information; engagement – getting input; and the more we listen, the more responsive we are.

In Progress/Ongoing: After completing an initial draft plan through a consultant in Q4 2022, the plan is in review with city staff and leadership. Staff is currently in the review and refinement process, and will make a determination on whether further consultant help will be needed to finalize the plan.

Looking Ahead: Staff will work over the coming months to finalize the draft and develop a subsequent/companion internal strategic communication plan for use to develop staff work plans. The final comprehensive communications plan will be posted on the city's website.



High Performance Government

Priority 19: Identify and implement technologies that improve customer service by the City of Bellevue.

Accomplishments: The Open Data project completed on May 23, 2023. The project's goal was to provide a data portal to the public in expanded downloadable formats that includes metadata, integration with web maps and applications, and providing a direct connection to the most up-to-date versions of city data for consumption.

In Progress/Ongoing: Product selection and contracting has completed for the Enterprise Service Management platform and the project has commenced.

Looking Ahead: The city is currently piloting an updated version of the city website's MyBellevue Chatbot. New features of the chatbot includes enhanced discovery and delivery of information contained in the city website. In addition, discovery of content and its delivery has been automated allowing for a more efficient way to manage and maintain up-to-date information.

The city is also piloting the internal use of a Training & Onboarding Staff Assistant chatbot with the goal of reducing the institutional knowledge gap by capturing, organizing, and transferring critical knowledge and expertise to staff when they need it.

In addition, we are also piloting the internal use of a Permit Discovery Assistant chatbot that will help streamline the permitting process by reducing ambiguity and complexity associated with the permit discovery process and the delivery of public information.

Priority 20: Establish a long-range financial strategy that includes options that respond to the future operating and capital needs of the city.

Accomplishments: The 2023-2024 Adopted Budget continues implementation strategies to provide fiscal sustainability for the City including continuation of prior cost reductions and increasing revenue to address a growing and urbanizing city. One recent highlight includes the adoption of a Transportation Benefit District by City Council in July.

In Progress/Ongoing: As the economy continues to unfold staff is developing financial forecasts that recognize the current economic challenges including, inflationary pressures, global instability, and higher interest rates, to provide actionable information to City leadership that also outlines potential risks and opportunities for the City. Staff will continue to monitor and return to Council in late 2023.

Looking Ahead: The near-term outlook shows the fiscal gap narrowing substantially in years 2025/2026 barring a severe recession or another economic downturn. The main drivers for the City are twofold: 1) revenue structural imbalance not keeping pace with inflation, 2) and urbanization and new growth creating additional expenditure pressures. Even with the advances adopted in the 2023-2024 budget, the long-term outlook shows a continual structural deficit. Staff will continue to present options to Council for the longer-term outlook as the mid-biennium approaches.



High Performance Government

Priority 21: Develop and establish a new brand identity for the City of Bellevue that reflects both our past and our future; an identity that is iconic and leaves a lasting impression that Bellevue is a place that people want to live, work, learn and play.

In Progress/Ongoing: This initiative is in-progress, contingent upon advancements made on Priority #18 (Comprehensive Communications Plan). Further progress toward completion of Priority #18 is expected to inform the objectives and outcomes of Priority #21. As Priority #18 is advanced substantially this year, efforts on Priority #21 can ramp up near the end of the year (exp. Q4 2023.)

Priority 22: Leverage data and technology to enhance community engagement, equity, and accountability. Measure and share interactive reports of key performance indicators across city services. Increase the reporting of correlated and aggregated community inputs to inform future policies. Set up a dashboard to continuously report on progress against council priorities/vision.

Accomplishments: The city has completed the Data Analytics pilot. The goals of the pilot were to design and implement the city's data warehouse infrastructure using department-specific data sources and to learn and apply best practices to manage and operate the data analytics platform.

In Progress/Ongoing: The Racial Equity Composite Index project, now renamed to the Bellevue Equity Atlas project, has commenced. The project has been chartered and a project plan has been created and approved. The Public Safety Customer Communication project Go Live has been shifted to August 2023 in order to accommodate the addition of Hindi and Russian languages.

Looking Ahead: Outline a Data Analytics Roadmap and start work on enterprise Data Governance. The Bellevue Equity Atlas web map Go live in August 2023.