



Bellevue City Council

2024-2026 Vision & Priorities

2024 Year-end Report
January 01, 2025



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



Bellevue is a city of diverse and connected neighborhoods.

Our inclusive residential communities are safe, friendly and welcoming, with gathering places that connect neighbors to each other. Housing options abound, with many choices in a range of affordability levels.



Bellevue is a great place for business.

Businesses choose Bellevue. We compete with the world, and collaborate with local and global business partners to help them achieve success. We value our talented workforce. Entrepreneurs turn their vision into reality through access to human, intellectual and monetary capital. We welcome and support our businesses, from small mom-and-pop shops to world headquarters.



Education is a core value.

We are well-educated, well-trained and prepared for life in the 21st century, where we create the future. Students of all abilities are prepared and supported for success in their future, and we continuously strive for improvement.



We celebrate all aspects of our culture.

We embrace our many diverse cultures through arts, history, business, entertainment, food, community gatherings and nightlife. Cross-cultural connections enrich our community and sense of belonging.



We are a “City in a Park.”

We value our abundant open space – whether it be the tranquility of a wooded trail or a paddle through the Mercer Slough. Everyone has access to activities and amenities, be they people-watching in an urban plaza, enjoying our trails, playing a favorite sport or gazing at the shimmering sun on a bright blue lake.



Bellevue is an equitable community.

Bellevue is diverse and welcoming, and everyone, from newborn babies to people with decades of life experience, feels a sense of belonging, with opportunities to engage and thrive. Equity is a core value, and we actively work to build an inclusive community, free from racism, hate or bias.



Innovation is an integral part of our community.

We embrace and support innovation in all aspects of our community – systems, institutions, businesses, schools and government. This innovative spirit is crucial to Bellevue’s success.



Environmental sustainability drives our long- and short-term actions.

Our natural environment is an integral part of our sense of place, and its preservation is paramount. We focus on reducing our environmental impacts in order to support the health, wellbeing, and resilience of individuals, our community and the region.



Our elected leaders share these goals and this vision.

Bellevue cares for all people by listening, being accountable to and engaging with residents and stakeholders. We provide the vision and strategy needed to fulfill our ambition for excellence and be leaders and collaborators throughout the region. Bellevue is respectful of and respected by our neighbors.

The future of Bellevue is multidimensional, and city government will keep the trust of its residents by focusing on:

- High performance government
- Vibrant economy
- Safe and efficient transportation system
- High quality built and natural environment
- Community safety and health
- Thriving people and communities

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1. Identify and implement enterprise approaches to service management, community engagement and data analytics to improve customer service, access and transparency.

2024 Accomplishments:

- In partnership with Council Office and City Manager, ITD completed the launch of public-facing customer service management platform in September 2024. The platform streamlines the receipt of council@bellevuewa.gov and citymanager@bellevuewa.gov from the public and enables tracking and routing of public requests, comments, and feedback, while providing insights into request volume and response times. This data-driven approach has led to a 50% productivity gain and meeting 85%+ SLA compliance. As of December 2024, the platform is operational, with ongoing enhancements to expand its capabilities. The project is 100% complete.
- In 2024, the Data, Analytics and Insights (DAI) Program established the foundation for city-wide data analytics. Key achievements include staffing and onboarding new program team, initiating and completing business engagements across all departments, and forming a strategic partnership with the FAM Business Intelligence program.
- The city also rolled out a new utility customer billing portal in the summer of 2024. The initial phase of the new portal provides Bellevue utility billing customers with a secure and modern interface when managing their utility billing account.
- ITD and FAM partnered in 2024 to acquire a performance management system to replace an existing system that is end of life. The city completed the acquisition and is currently piloting the system with internal departments.

Looking Ahead:

- The deployment of the city's Utility Billing Assistance program will leverage an existing service management platform to provide a streamlined electronic application process for those who may qualify for the program.
- The city will launch the second phase of the Utility customer billing portal update in Q2 2024. The second phase will provide customers with water consumption data, analytics and dashboards, customer-selected notification and customer self-help features in addition to billing and payment capabilities. The city will also start an exploratory project to provide an options analysis aimed at improving Utilities' call center capabilities to improve customer service.
- The mobile city services application MyBellevue will be replaced this year with an intended completion in Q4 of 2025.
- The city has also started the Special Event Permitting project intended to improve the customer experience when applying for a special event permit in Bellevue. The project is intended to complete by May 2025.
- Community Development, Communications, and ITD are collaborating in crafting a Community Engagement Framework aimed at standardization where appropriate, and improved data analytics to support citywide community engagement efforts.

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2. Develop and establish an updated 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 delivers high quality services and is a place that people want to live, work, learn and play.

2024 Accomplishments:

Our brand is what defines us and what connects us to our audiences and stakeholders. Our work to assess and update our brand includes initial work with important audiences to determine how they perceive us, how we can best reach them (in both messaging and methodology) and whether these things are in alignment with our current city vision, values and communications practices.

In 2024, the city has conducted initial research into prior brand efforts and engaged a consultant to develop a scope and get assistance in the outreach component of the work. This will include focus groups, interviews and/or surveys with key stakeholders (including council) and the community to determine our current public perception and whether it aligns with our council priorities, vision and values as an organization, helping to assess where we need the most work in our brand identity. It will also help determine who and how we are reaching various communities within Bellevue and what we can do better from a communications framework and storytelling perspective. This work will include an equity lens and will provide contextual information about how diverse communities receive and perceive information from local government.

Looking Ahead:

The outreach phase is expected to be completed in the first half of 2025. Once this outreach with key stakeholders is completed, we can determine where our brand identity needs work in order to reflect our past and our future, leave a lasting positive impression and reinforce that Bellevue delivers high quality services and is a place where people want to live, work, learn and play because they are welcomed, enjoy a high quality of life and can feel free to engage with their local government.

In the second half of 2025, we hope to begin implementing some improvements based on the outreach phase and be able to identify other improvements that may require additional financial support. Examples of improvements to implement may include: visual identity elements, changes in communication protocols, introduction of new touch-points and/or methods for outreach and engagement, refreshed messaging, adjustments to voice and tone, proactive marketing campaigns, new technology or tools, etc. We expect to begin rollout of initial components of the plan by the end of 2025.

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3. Explore options to expand arts funding through mechanisms such as the annual grant process, direct investment in the BelRed Arts District or others.

2024 Accomplishments:

Although overall funding for the Arts remained flat in the 2025-2026 Budget, the new structure between CIP and general fund moved most arts funding into a singular arts general fund. This allowed more flexibility in program budgets and additional resources were available for Arts Grants which now have a budget of \$350K in 2025 between arts general fund dollars and external grant support from 4Culture King County. In 2024, the city launched the new Arts and Culture Facility Grants.

Partnership and support for the BelRed Arts District continues and beyond direct investment in the Arts District Community Alliance's organizational growth and projects, new signage has been installed to further visual placemaking, and active work is taking place in new creative business attraction and retention.

Looking Ahead:

Moving forward, staff will continue to identify new funding sources for the arts and continue to invest in arts and culture capacity organizational capacity building. In BelRed the new site-specific sculpture by Po Shu Wang featuring sound bites from BelRed musical artists is set to be installed near the end of the 130th Ave NE transportation project in Q4, 2025 or early 2026.

4. Update the Affordable Housing strategy and targets with a focus on implementing high-priority actions.

2024 Accomplishments:

In 2024, staff began work to update the 2017 Affordable Housing Strategy in an effort to continue the City's progress on affordable housing implementation. A new ten-year affordable housing target was developed and approved by City Council as the overarching goal of the update, providing clear direction to develop actions to build or preserve 5,700 affordable units at a range of income levels. To support the effort to build on past work, the team documented engagement and implementation efforts since the adoption of the 2017 strategy.

Looking Ahead:

The Affordable Housing Strategy update was officially launched by City Council in November. The process to develop the strategy, including guiding principles and draft actions, will continue over the course of 2025. Engagement and outreach with the general public and organizational partners is planned throughout the process, with events beginning in January. The Council will receive a mid-project briefing, with the intent to present the recommended strategy before the end of 2025.

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5. Identify and implement strategies to facilitate use of city-owned property for affordable housing development.
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2024 Accomplishments:

In 2024, staff re-launched work to develop a competitive procurement process for three city-owned sites designated as suitable for housing development. The city is spearheading the development of these sites through a public/private partnership model, working closely with the affordable housing and market rate development communities in addition to community organizations. Staff has so far established a strategy for each parcel, detailing key development outcomes that align with policy objectives and neighborhood goals. Key milestones of this work, include finalizing an offering strategy (complete), refining evaluation criteria and timing (Q1 2025), and engaging the community, partners, and stakeholders (ongoing).

Looking Ahead:

The final phase in this process will be to hold an engagement event to present the finalized offering strategy to the community and release the offering materials, both in early 2025.

6. Simplify the permitting process for Accessory Dwelling Units by offering pre-approved plans for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units.
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2024 Accomplishments:

This work is nested under a Next Right Work project to encourage middle housing types, such as duplex, triplex, quadplexes, and Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADU), Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), including mechanism for separate ownership. In 2024, staff continued work on the DADU and Middle Housing LUCA. Adoption of this phase of the project is targeted for June 2025.

Looking Ahead:

The final phase of this work will begin in 2025 following the adoption of the Middle Housing and DADU code changes. Initiation is expected in July 2025 with a completion/launch in March 2026.

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7. Develop policy tools to preserve the architectural character of Old Bellevue and support the retention of existing businesses as redevelopment occurs.
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2024 Accomplishments:

This priority is aligned with the city's work on the Downtown Livability Amendments 2.0 LUCA. The initial Downtown Livability code and policy updates occurred in 2017, and the 2.0 project aims to identify and resolve implementation gaps and conflicts while exploring additional ways to enhance downtown livability. It will also consider adjustments to the amenity incentive program related to protecting historic facades and other significant design features in Old Bellevue.

In addition, Cultural and Economic Development actively reaches out to businesses at risk of displacement from redevelopment to connect them with new spaces in Bellevue or to return to their existing site after redevelopment.

Looking Ahead:

The Downtown Livability Amendments 2.0 LUCA is part of the two-year Land Use Planning Initiatives (LUP) workplan and is scheduled for council initiation in early Q1 2026, with a targeted completion by Q4 2026. A "pre-launch" phase will occur in Q4 2025, during which we will engage the community on the project scope, including discussions and research on the effectiveness of our current historic façade code approach.

8. Work with King County and partner agencies to develop the Eastrail from Renton to Snohomish, including key projects and local connections in Bellevue.
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2024 Accomplishments:

- Start of work on historic Wilburton trestle in May. (King County)
- Opening of Eastrail bridge over NE 8th Street in June. (King County)
- Opening of additional 1.2 miles trail, from the Sound Transit OMFE to NE 4th Street in April/June. (King County)
- Announcement of \$25m federal RAISE grant award for the I-90 gap segment in June. (King County application, with support from Bellevue staff)
- Governor's Smart Communities Award recognition for the City-County Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan in November.

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8. Work with King County and partner agencies to develop the Eastrail from Renton to Snohomish, including key projects and local connections in Bellevue.
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Looking Ahead:

In 2025, staff anticipate progress on these city and county projects:

- Construction of the Eastrail crossing at SE 1st Street. (King County)
- Opening of a 0.3-mile segment of Eastrail from NE 4th Street to SE 1st Street. (King County)
- Construction of the Eastrail to Spring Blvd Trail Link connection. (City of Bellevue)
- Development of a preliminary design for the Eastrail Connection at Main Street. (City of Bellevue)

In 2026, staff anticipate progress on these city and county projects:

- Opening of the Wilburton Trestle and crossing under/over I-405. (King County)
- Opening of 1.2-mile segment of Eastrail from SE 1st Street to 118th Ave SE/Mercer Slough. (King County)
- Construction of the Eastrail to Mountains to Sound/I-90 Trail connection. (City of Bellevue)

9. Update the Diversity Advantage Plan and implement the near-term actions.
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2024 Accomplishments:

In 2024, the Diversity Advantage Team made significant strides in updating the Diversity Advantage Plan (DAP 2.0) and preparing for its implementation. The guiding principles and equity objectives were finalized and approved, ensuring alignment with city priorities and incorporating valuable community feedback. A comprehensive communications and rollout plan was developed to effectively engage internal leaders and staff.

To support Council adoption, the team created detailed presentations, narratives, and engagement materials. Plans for department engagement sessions are being finalized to gather feedback and identify actionable near-term priorities. Additionally, targeted training on DAP 2.0 principles has already commenced to build capacity across departments.

Looking Ahead:

Key priorities for 2025 include securing Council adoption (Q2), hosting a staff and community town hall, engaging with community leaders, and initiating targeted implementation efforts to drive meaningful progress.

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10. Enhance community engagement efforts to increase equitable public participation in city decision-making and improve the reach and effectiveness of the city's engagement strategies.

2024 Accomplishments:

City departments have initiated efforts to broaden and deepen public participation in city decision-making over 2024. Most notably, these include:

- Utilization of community advisory groups, such as the Bellevue Development Committee for stakeholder engagement on land use, permitting and process improvements or Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network and Communities of Color Committee for updating the Diversity Advantage Plan 2.0 and specific recommendations for improving equitable outcomes for Bellevue's community.
- Addition of FAM Community Panel survey group for continuous community surveys within the Performance Program in addition to Budget and Performance Surveys.
- VISION 2050 award from PSRC for Bellevue 2044 Comprehensive Plan engagement practices, including Cultural Outreach Assistants, storyboards, surveys and strategic focus groups.
- Council adopted a 2025-26 budget proposal for enhancing community engagement to support standardizing city approaches to community engagement, broaden engagement with traditionally underrepresented communities, improve communication and transparency, and advance citywide data collection of community input to inform city decision-making.

Looking Ahead:

After an internal audit of community engagement practices, staff created a recommendation to form a new Community Engagement Team to support citywide community engagement efforts. Following Council's budget approval, implementation in 2025 will include:

- Recruitment of the team, orientation, and training will occur in Q1. Timelines for 2025 citywide community engagement initiatives and community input on prior community survey data will be developed this quarter.
- Between Q2 and Q3, staff will convene focus groups and stakeholder engagement on improving community engagement. Council will receive an update on the program at this time.
- In Q4, the team will create a community engagement framework to support citywide efforts that includes recommendations for surveys and data analytics. In parallel, the team will develop a timeline and resourcing plan for 2026 citywide community engagement efforts.

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- 11.** In alignment with the Human Services Strategic Plan, support human services programs to meet community needs and increase equitable access and outcomes.

2024 Accomplishments:

As an ongoing part of the city's human services work, staff support human services programs through continuous technical assistance and annual site visits as they respond to community needs. Staff work to build relationships with new and existing programs and agencies and to provide support when agencies experience challenges in their provision of services. In 2024, staff provided technical assistance to 43 agencies and conducted 89 site visits to human services programs. 2024 also included supporting agencies as ARPA dollars were depleted and those services adopted. In addition, the 2024-2030 Human Services Strategic Plan was adopted and implementation began.

2024 also included the funding process for 2025-2026 funding. Staff supported the Human Services Commission in their review of 148 eligible applications, requesting more than \$17 million per year for the \$6.9 million per year originally identified as available (Human Services Fund, Housing Stability Program, and CDBG). The HSC's funding recommendations were in alignment with policy found in the Strategic Target Areas and the 24-30 Human Services Strategic Plan. Per policy, their recommendations prioritized the most significant gaps and disparities, as indicated by data:

- Shelter/housing/housing stability
- Food/basic needs
- Childcare
- Behavioral health and housing-related services
- Culturally and linguistically-specific services

To address the level of community need, Council also allocated \$2.79m for 2025-26 from the Council Contingency, investing in shelters, rent assistance, and youth services for behavioral health, supportive services and childcare. Staff continues to inform community stakeholders about the human services needs of Bellevue residents. In 2024, staff presented to 20 stakeholder groups and also published a human services dashboard.

Human Services Strategic Plan Implementation

Objective 1: Expand equity-focused and data-driven decision-making that best addresses the most significant community needs, prioritizing investments in the areas of greatest disparities for Bellevue residents.

In 2023-2024, \$27,571,600 was invested in human services program, including ARPA funding. In 2025-2026, \$20,060,047 was invested in human services programs.

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- 11.** In alignment with the Human Services Strategic Plan, support human services programs to meet community needs and increase equitable access and outcomes.

Investment by Service Area:	2023-2024	2025-2026
Homelessness Services	\$5,689,420	\$4,492,119
Housing Stability Services	\$7,218,443	\$1,364,936
Basic Needs	\$1,460,295	\$1,150,817
Legal Services	\$307,195	\$310,988
Supportive Services	\$3,998,988	\$4,896,696
Abuse and Violence Prevention and Support	\$1,017,977	\$228,536
Behavioral Health	\$4,817,686	\$4,623,739
Medical and Dental	\$225,510	\$134,888
Education/Employment	\$1,442,886	\$600,591
Childcare	\$1,143,200	\$2,236,739
Culturally & Linguistically Specific Services*	\$6,461,037	\$3,606,490

* Overlaps with the above service areas.

Objective 3: Expand access for Bellevue residents to culturally and linguistically specific human services.

	2023-2024 Funding Awarded	% of Total Funding Allocated	2025-2026 Funding Awarded	% of Total Funding Allocated
Culturally & Linguistically Specific Services*	\$6,461,037	23.4%	\$3,606,490	18%
All Other Programs	\$21,110,563	76.6%	\$16,453,557	82%
Total	\$27,571,600		\$20,060,047	

* Per the 2024-2030 Human Services plan, culturally and linguistically specific services are services that are designed for a particular linguistic or cultural community and delivered by individuals from that community.

Looking Ahead:

In 2025, updated data on community need will be collected through the biennial Human Services Needs Update process.

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12. Support programs related to homelessness prevention and programs that help quickly house individuals experiencing homelessness.

2024 Accomplishments:

Data from the 2023-24 Human Services Needs Update indicated that homelessness and housing stability was one of the areas of greatest need and disparity for Bellevue residents. Council previously allocated ARPA funding to increase investment in this area of need; that funding was depleted at the end of 2024. Following policy guidance from the Human Services Strategic Plan, this is an area of focus for 2025-26 human services funding. Investments in this area include the following:

	2023-2024	2025-2026
Homelessness Prevention		
Rent Assistance	\$6,054,684	\$771,564
Housing Stability Services	\$3,665,948	\$3,977,889
Home Repair Program	\$786,000	\$396,000
Homelessness Services		
Shelters	\$3,937,255	\$3,427,554

In 2024, the city's Homelessness Outreach Program:

- Served 528 unhoused community members through mid-December, which represents nearly a doubling of volume since 283 individuals served in 2023.
- Supported 56 clients in accessing permanent housing and another 45 clients in accessing transitional housing or shelter.
- Launched a pilot safe parking program which has served over 40 families/145 people in its first seven months.
- Centralized citywide encampment response within the program.
- Expanded the program staff with two additional LTEs. One is focused on housing navigation, and the other focuses on encampment response and community engagement.

Looking Ahead:

Staff will be focused on implementing the council's 2025-26 budget which includes the human services funding allocations as well as the extension of the safe parking pilot program.