



Bellevue City Council

2024-2026 Vision & Priorities

Q3 2025 Progress Report
October 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.

Progress Update:

- The utility billing assistance web application was soft-launched in July, with Mini City Hall staff becoming the first to use the tool. This application leverages the city's existing service management platform to streamline the application process for utility billing assistance and improve the administration of submitted applications.
- The city has partnered with a local start-up, Govstream.ai, on a pilot project to test artificial intelligence tools to streamline and accelerate Bellevue's permitting processes. By speeding up permit applications and creating a more consistent, user-friendly experience, the project can better support the city's housing production and economic development goals
- As part of the effort to build a citywide data analytics and business intelligence program, the city partnered with a vendor to facilitate the implementation of a data lakehouse. It integrates financial and operational data into a centralized platform that enables advanced data analytics and business intelligence capabilities.

Looking Ahead:

- Work is currently underway to develop an enterprise customer and service management vision and strategy, which will consider community engagement needs and serve as the guide for future business transformation work. The strategy is scheduled to be completed by the end of January 2026 and will inform other program work to be completed in this area. In addition, staff will be hosting community listening sessions in November and will incorporate these findings into the proposed strategy.
- The data lakehouse platform will be delivered by the end of 2025 and will provide financial data to the city's monthly business review process. The lakehouse will be architected to allow for future growth, with additional use cases added in 2026 to support both business transformation and other strategic city-wide needs.

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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.

Progress Update:

Over the last quarter, significant progress has been made toward the project's outreach goals, including the completion of five focus groups, a community listening session, and targeted engagement with City Council members. Final outreach activities will be completed in October, including an additional focus group, targeted outreach to staff, and the completion of the survey.

Looking Ahead:

Staff will present the study's findings to the City Council in late October. Once direction is received, staff will begin to implement improvements in 2026 and beyond. Participants who contributed to the study will receive an update.

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

Progress Update:

This quarter, the annual Arts Project Grant opened for applications. Applicants for arts grants can choose from pre-set award amounts, from \$3,000, \$5,000 and \$7,000 for individual projects. The new awards levels will help organizations keep up with rising operating costs.

Looking Ahead:

Arts Project Grant applications will be reviewed by the Arts Commission and return to City Council in December 2025 or January 2026, for approval.

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

Progress Update:

Staff are refining and prioritizing draft strategies and actions for the Affordable Housing Strategy Update utilizing the project's technical analysis and engagement. Council consideration of the Affordable Housing Strategy Update is planned for early-2026 and will align with the ongoing Office of Housing study.

Looking Ahead:

The draft Affordable Housing Strategy Update will be presented to the City Council in January 2026 for direction, along with an action plan.

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

Progress Update:

In the last quarter, the Office of Housing has completed 18 proposal evaluations for the two city-owned parcels designated for affordable housing development (Wilburton and Kelly). The evaluation process concluded with the selection of a development team for each site and project kick-off meetings with the two affordable housing development teams were held in August. Staff is currently negotiating the terms of the development and lease agreement with each developer. The Wilburton TOD project is on track for contract negotiations. The Kelly TOD project is located in BelRed, so contract negotiations may be impacted if adoption of the BelRed Land Use Code Amendment is delayed.

Looking Ahead:

Staff anticipates the contract negotiations will continue through Q4 2025 and be ready for City Council's consideration in Q1 2026.

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

Progress Update:

On June 24, City Council adopted new regulations allowing Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs). This provides a framework for developing pre-approved DADU plans. Council also expanded this priority to include pre-approved Cottage Housing plans. Staff is currently in the "pre-launch phase" and preparing to initiate work on this program with Council in January 2026. The "pre-launch" phase includes developing the community outreach plan, assembling the internal team, and identifying external stakeholders and design professionals who will contribute to the effort.

Staff are also exploring ways to leverage Development Services' AI partnership with Govstream.ai to strengthen the program. As a result, the City Council's initiation date has shifted from October to January to allow additional time for these discussions. The schedule was adjusted to take advantage of an AI integration opportunity and to align with the state building code update cycle in November.

Looking Ahead:

City Council will review the scope of the pre-approved DADU and Cottage Housing program in January and consider directing staff to begin work on it, with the program expected to be completed and initial plans publicly available by November 2026 following the adoption of the updated state building codes.

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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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Progress Update:

This priority is included in the 2025-26 Land Use Planning Initiatives workplan and is scheduled to begin once previously initiated code amendments are completed and resources become available. Staff is assembling the team to support this code amendment and is developing the project scope and outreach plan.

Looking Ahead:

The Downtown Livability Amendments 2.0 LUCA will incorporate this priority as part of its scope, with City Council initiation expected in Q1 2026. The scope will improve upon the existing incentive-based approach in Old Bellevue. Economic Development staff will engage small businesses in Old Bellevue regarding displacement and affordability challenges as part of Economic Development Strategic Plan implementation.

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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Progress Update:

The City and King County are making progress on most milestones while working to address new issues that have arisen, such as project design concerns at the SE 1st Street crossing. Highlights include:

- Construction is underway to rehabilitate the Wilburton Trestle for trail use
- Reassessing project design due to limited sight distance at site for the Eastrail crossing at SE 1st St
- Initial design work has started on the Eastrail segment from NE 4th St to SE 1st St
- Construction is nearly complete on the segment from SE 1st St to 118th Ave SE/Mercer Slough
- Making progress toward securing the Woodridge Connection at SE 11th St

Looking Ahead:

In Q4 2025, staff expect to gain clarity on the timeframe for the SE 1st St crossing, and start work on developing the conceptual design for the Eastrail Connection at Main Street.

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

Progress Update:

The draft Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 has been completed. Staff are currently working to create near-term workplans for implementing the goals and strategies included in DAP 2035.

Looking Ahead:

The plan will come to City Council for a study session and consideration of adoption by the end of 2025.

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.

Progress Update:

The city's community engagement team is currently hosting community focus groups and has launched city-wide surveys on engagement, leveraging a new Qualtrics tool. In parallel, the team is developing a framework to coordinate with community-based organizations. Staff are pursuing consulting support to create a Community Engagement Toolkit.

Looking Ahead:

In Q4 2025, staff expect to gain clarity on the timeframe for the SE 1st St crossing, and start work on developing the conceptual design for the Eastrail Connection at Main Street.

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

Progress Update:

The 2025 Human Services Needs Update is complete and the Human Services Commission is preparing to seek guidance from the City Council in January 2026 and then develop percentage funding amounts for the 2027-28 funding cycle.

Looking Ahead:

The 2026 Community Development Block Grant funding recommendations will advance to the City Council in November 2025. City Councilmembers will receive a briefing on the Human Services Needs Update in January, alongside the recommendations from the Human Services Commission for percentage funding amounts for the 2027-28 cycle.

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

- The City Council approved a memorandum of understanding with the King County Regional Housing Authority to fund additional emergency severe weather response for individuals experiencing homelessness
- The City Council approved an extension to the Safe Parking program. 4 Tomorrow, the program's facilitator, vacated the property due to building issues and staff are working to identify a new site as well as identifying interim facilities to provide for essential needs during the transition 4 Tomorrow continues to offer case management services to families living in a vehicle.
- Homelessness Outreach staff have published a new public dashboard to share information on direct engagement, regional efforts, and services.
- Homelessness Outreach staff, first responders, and program operators at the Eastgate Housing Campus are collaborating to respond to concerns from some area residents and businesses regarding neighborhood impacts. This includes operational adjustments as well as increased outreach and BPD patrols.

Looking Ahead:

- KCRHA will release a request for proposals to facilitate severe weather response on the Eastside after the City of Redmond approves the agreement.
- Bellevue staff will begin contributing to a joint database co-hosted with the cities of Kirkland and Redmond, which will enhance the city's ability to track and report on data.