



Bellevue City Council

2024-2026 Vision & Priorities

2025 Year-end Progress Report
January 1, 2026



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:

- Expanded enterprise service management by onboarding FAM Business Systems into the Freshservice Enterprise Service Management Platform, eliminating manual request logging and enabling workflow-driven triage with automated ticket assignment, confirmations, status updates, dashboards, and improved visibility into request trends.
- Completed rollout of the online Special Event Permitting application portal to streamline the special event permitting process, expedite processing, and improve transparency for applicants and city staff.
- Launched Phase 2 of the Utilities customer portal, providing water consumption data, analytics and dashboards, and customer-selected notifications and self-help features in addition to billing and payment capabilities.
- Completed an options analysis to enhance the Utilities call center capabilities to improve customer service.
- Soft-launched the Utility Billing Assistance web application with Mini City Hall personnel as the first users, leveraging the city's existing service management platform to streamline assistance applications and improve administration of submitted applications.
- Advanced permitting modernization through partnership with Govstream.ai—piloting AI tools and beginning broad rollout of Phase 1 "Permit Guide," introducing AI-powered assistants (web, email, and voice) to provide pre-application guidance and assist staff serving the public in-person and online.
- Built and delivered enterprise data analytics capabilities by establishing foundational BI platform components (including initial finance-data use case work and a citywide data analytics community of practice) and delivering a Data Lakehouse platform that provides financial data to the city's Monthly Business Review process and is architected for future growth.

Looking Ahead:

- Continuing the work on enhancing the customer experience on the permitting process, DS and ITD will start iterating on the next phases, which include working on the Application Assistant and First Review. Phase 2 involves the Application Assistant that ensures application submissions are complete and compliant from the start, reducing errors and unnecessary back-and-forth. Phase 3 – First Review involves an AI-driven, basic requirements review and automated triage to help surface potential issues with applications and prioritize high-risk applications for further analysis.

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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.

Looking Ahead:

- The city is actively working on a comprehensive Data Governance framework to ensure consistent, secure, and high-quality data management across all departments. This work includes finalizing a citywide policy, establishing governance roles and structures, and implementing tools for data cataloging and master data management. These efforts will strengthen transparency, improve decision-making, and support the city's long-term digital transformation goals.
- The city is advancing a procurement transformation as part of its broader Business Transformation Program to modernize systems and processes. This initiative will streamline procurement workflows, clarify roles and responsibilities, and integrate technology to improve efficiency and transparency for staff and vendors. These changes are designed to deliver a more consistent, customer-focused experience and align with the city's enterprise modernization goals..

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:

The initial outreach and brand assessment for the priority has been completed, including five focus groups, a community listening session, a public survey and targeted engagement with City Council and city staff members. Outreach findings were presented to the council in October, with broad-based support for the identified areas of focus for brand enhancements.

Looking Ahead:

The communications team will hold a team retreat in February 2026 and solidify the ways and places the enhancements will appear in the team's work plan. In addition, we are awaiting confirmation on whether technology budget proposals with some of the identified enhancements will be approved to begin work in 2027. Participants who contributed to the study will receive an update in Q1 once the communications work plan is solidified.

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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.

Progress Update:

Expanded the Arts Project Grant overall funding and increased individual award amounts, from \$1,000 - \$3,000 \$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 completed engagement with organizational partners and the public to refine the recommended strategies and actions. This culminated in a draft Affordable Housing Strategy for City Council consideration, which includes recommended strategies and a supplemental Action Plan.

Looking Ahead:

The Council will hold a study session in Q1 2026, followed by the adoption of the 2026-2032 Affordable Housing Strategy.

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

Progress Update:

In 2025, the Office of Housing 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's term sheet has been executed by Bellwether and is currently under city review. The Kelly TOD project is finalizing the term sheet. The 130th TOD is working to finalize the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement establishing the framework for negotiations.

Looking Ahead:

Staff continues to work with legal counsel to prepare the Predevelopment and Ground lease Agreements with each developer and anticipates final lease agreements will 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 initiated and advanced the "pre-launch phase" which 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 2025 to February 2026 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.

Looking Ahead:

City Council will review the scope of the pre-approved DADU and Cottage Housing program on February 24 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.

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. In Q4, 2025, the city began evaluating and scoping policy tools to preserve the architectural character of Old Bellevue.

At the direction of Mayor Robinson and City Council, the city initiated preparation of an Interim Official Control (IOC) on Part 20.25A of the Land Use Code to ensure new development is compatible with established character in the Downtown-Old Bellevue (DT-OB) district and along Main Street between 100th Ave and Bellevue Way.

Looking Ahead:

Staff will present the proposed IOC to the City Council in early February 2026 for discussion and potential action. In addition, the Planning Commission's recommendation on the HOMA LUCA is anticipated to come to City Council in late February to early March. Following City Council review and action on HOMA, staff will prepare to initiate Downtown Livability Amendments 2.0. Concurrently, 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.

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, with a planned opening alongside the trestle (anticipated 2027)

Looking Ahead:

In 2026, staff anticipate the start of construction on county projects in Wilburton and trail access at 1900 118th Ave SE, as well as city projects at Spring Blvd and 118th Ave SE. The conceptual design for Eastrail Connection at Main St will be developed in 2026.

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

In 2025, the city completed the draft Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 and conducted refinements through both internal and community review. The plan was adopted by City Council in December.

Looking Ahead:

Staff are creating workplans for implementing the goals and strategies included in DAP 2035. Public reporting on progress and metrics will be available Q3 2026.

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.
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Progress Update:

In 2025, the city formed a new community engagement team, hosted community focus groups and launched city-wide surveys on engagement. The team also completed the Community Inclusion and Engagement Survey, and Branding Survey.

Looking Ahead:

In 2026, staff will prioritize completion of the Community Engagement Toolkit to provide a roadmap for departments on community engagement practices; pilot coordinated approaches with community-based organizations to support engagement with underrepresented communities; and continue to emphasize standardized citywide survey practices and transparency of data management.

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

The 2025 Human Services Needs Update is complete and 99% of agencies have met their contracted performance goals.

Looking Ahead:

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:

- In 2025, Homelessness Outreach staff engaged more than 500 individuals experiencing homelessness and helped more than 100 move into housing or shelter.
- 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 maintains contracts with two agencies to provide hoteling for outreach clients as needed during severe weather events.
- The City Council approved an extension to the Safe Parking program, serving over 60 families and transitioning more than 48 of those to permanent housing.
- Human Services and Homelessness Outreach staff co-chair the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee, creating a network of agencies serving those experiencing homelessness on the eastside, and helping said agencies to support one another.
- 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:

- The Office of Housing is pursuing long-term options for the continuation of the Safe Parking program.