



# City of Bellevue | 2023-2024 Federal Priorities

## TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Investment in mobility and transportation infrastructure is a top priority for the City and its growing residential and business community. Bellevue's mobility, land use, equity, and climate goals depend on a robust and integrated transportation network.

- **Safety:** Bellevue's Vision Zero Plan implements a safe systems approach to accommodate a growing, diverse population and workforce. It will create a blueprint for prioritizing pedestrian and bike safety, while creating connections to transit in preparation for the opening of the Sound Transit East Link 2 Line in 2025.
  - Bellevue will take advantage of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) grant funding opportunities to leverage existing local and private partnerships, with a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) implementation grant application in 2023.
- **I-405 Master Plan Projects:** Bellevue supports infrastructure improvements to maximize the effectiveness of the I-405 corridor, update and implement the I-405 Master Plan, and upgrade the efficiency of state highways and regional corridors.
  - Key segments of this corridor that need investment include: Interchange improvements at SR 520 and 124th

Celebrating its 70th year, Bellevue champions the programs, projects, and opportunities that position our city to thrive for the next 70 years and beyond. Bellevue plans today for the next evolution of our city. This federal agenda advances the City Council's vision, values, and priorities to get us there. Bellevue is the city where you want to be.

Avenue NE; I-405 Improvements at I-90 and SR 520; and South Downtown I-405 Access/Lake Hills Connector.

## HIGH PERFORMANCE GOVERNMENT

The feeling that Bellevue ensures safety and opportunity improves the quality of life for all individuals, businesses, and neighborhoods. Bellevue ensures that city services reflect high standards and pride. Bellevue conducts business using data and cutting-edge technology.

- **Digital equity:** Deployment of digital connectivity infrastructure is essential to support the growing needs of Bellevue, its employers, and its residents. Access to high-speed internet connectivity is an essential part of bridging long-standing gaps in equity.
  - Bellevue seeks seed money in 2023 for a pilot project to launch our Digital Equity for Affordable Housing Initiative through free direct internet access to subsidized affordable housing units.
- **Public safety and accountability:** Bellevue strives to enhance public trust and transparency. Equipping police officers with body-worn cameras is an important step in that effort and is among the recommendations developed for the city by the outside consultant hired by the city Office of Independent Review Group, as part of the city's pledge to improve public safety strategies.
  - While the city's most recently adopted budget provides ongoing staffing and other operational expenses through local funds, Bellevue has requested one-time dollars in 2023 for the purchase of the body-worn program equipment.

## ACHIEVING HUMAN POTENTIAL

Bellevue is a caring community, and diversity is our strength. We want our entire community to have equitable access to services. We seek to create a fair and just community where equity is the outcome by recognizing and correcting historic and systemic injustice. Among these efforts, the city supports programs to provide shelter and permanent supportive housing for individuals experiencing homelessness, with a focus on a broad array of income levels.

- **Housing assistance:** Our region faces an affordable housing crisis, and we need to create opportunities for more Bellevue workers and visitors of all income levels to call Bellevue home.
  - The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program has been the single most important source of financing for multi-family affordable housing projects in Bellevue, including preservation and new construction projects serving families, seniors, low-wage workers, and people moving out of homelessness. We support and encourage its expansion in this Congress.

## GREAT PLACES WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

Bellevue is a "City in a Park" where environmental and open space restoration are integral to environmental, community, and economic development strategies. Our community buildings and centers, libraries, and other public facilities are places where neighbors gather, connect with each other, and support our business institutions.

- **Multimodal Improvements** – Bellevue's multimodal projects increase mobility, improve transportation choices and equity, and manage the demands of growth in a sustainable way.
  - **Eastrail:** Bellevue supports King County and other regional partners in the 42-mile north-south rails-to-trails corridor, where there is a critical funding gap for the segment crossing I-90 toward Renton. The city will support King County, the City of Renton, and community partners in seeking federal funding.
  - **The Grand Connection:** Private support from Amazon led the City to invigorate plans for a multimodal, non-motorized crossing from Wilburton to downtown Bellevue, creating a critical east-west crossing over I-405. The project is in early design, hoping to reach the 30% design milestone in mid-2024. Alongside partners, the city will seek federal support for construction in the coming years.

## HIGH QUALITY BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We enjoy a clean environment and excellent infrastructure that supports our vibrant and growing city, including a “Smart City” strategy.

- **Smart City technology:** Bellevue’s Smart Mobility Plan will manage growth and improve safety by leveraging technology to enhance and optimize transportation systems throughout the city. Investments will help Bellevue plan for shared-use mobility, autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, and data management.
- **Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI):** Bellevue’s ESI includes goals of reducing emissions by 50 percent and achieving a 50 percent recycling rate by 2030. The City supports proposals that include funding for local governments to implement environmental stewardship actions that make measurable progress in achieving our adopted climate and environmental goals.
  - Our City is eager to access resources from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), including Climate Pollution Reduction planning grants and others, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution.
- **Habitat restoration and preservation:** We support the replacement of culverts, restoration of valuable streams, and improvement of stream water quality through water quality retrofit projects.
  - The City has applied to the National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration Grant Program and will continue to seek opportunities to leverage local, state, and federal funds.
  - Lake Washington Sewer Lake Lines Management Plan: A critical first step to the protection of water quality in Lake Washington, this plan will guide the replacement of 15 miles of sanitary sewers along the shoreline of Lake Washington. It will help to alleviate the risk of sewer pipe breaks and contamination of water quality in Lake Washington. We will seek design assistance for development of this plan over the coming years.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bellevue provides an attractive and welcoming business environment. Bellevue’s Economic Development Plan supports investments in capacity building and partnerships, support to small businesses and microbusinesses, entrepreneurship, workforce development, the BelRed Arts District, and tourism.

- **Workforce development:** Bellevue supports its partners to promote apprenticeships and programs to retrain, upskill, and transition workers impacted by business automation and structural changes in the economy. The City supports regional efforts to build interest in STEAM fields among students.
  - Local not-for-profit partners, including Bellevue College, Greater Seattle Partners, UW, and Bellevue Public Schools, are poised to implement programs under the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) & Science Act to both build workforce potential and foster innovation and public-private partnerships.
- **Cybersecurity:** Additional funding support to local governments is needed to enhance the ability to protect critical government functions, systems, and services from cybersecurity attacks and threats. We are eager to work with our state agencies and private partners to deploy funds such as State and Local Cybersecurity Grants (SLCGP) to enhance and harden our systems.
- **5G readiness:** Bellevue’s infrastructure must support 5G development (i.e., connectivity and power to enable Bellevue’s utility poles to be ready for 5G and allow for rapid deployment of small-cell technology for private sector entities) so our Smart City strategy can be fully deployed for the benefit of the public, for safety, connectivity, equitable access, and more.
  - Bellevue is eager to participate in ongoing broadband mapping work with the FCC so our region can utilize Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) funds to close gaps in accessible internet connectivity.
- **Financing and credit assistance:** Credit assistance, tax incentives and other financing mechanisms have been effective tools in

expanding the available revenue for public works projects and investments. Federal direct (low interest) loans, loan guarantees, and credit line assistance with favorable terms through programs like Infrastructure Banks and the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) are valuable for cities.

- Bellevue recommends raising the federal population cap for communities accessing the best available borrowing rates to ensure that growing, thriving communities can appropriately utilize flexible, low interest financing options.

## REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

Bellevue leads and partners with our neighbors in the region to advance common goals. We are at the center of the eastside crescent formed by the cities of Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue, Issaquah, and Renton. Bellevue, Seattle, and other King County cities collaborate, partner and celebrate the benefits of working as one region, as well as in partnership with other governments, including federal, state, and tribal entities.

### ■ **Emergency services and public safety:**

Bellevue and Redmond are first in the state to begin to electrify our fire engines, successfully securing a Washington State Department of Ecology award. This initiative is a win-win-win for public health, firefighter health, and reducing climate-warming emissions.

- An electric fire engine costs more than twice the price of a standard engine, and the total costs are considerable. Together, the cities seek federal support to close the last remaining gap in funding for the vehicles and charging systems that will move us toward a more sustainable fire fighting fleet.

- **Durable utilities and infrastructure:** The health and safety of our growing community and our quality of life require continued investments in water, sewer, stormwater and solid waste utility infrastructure. Bellevue collaborates closely with our service providers

in the region, including King County, Cascade Water Alliance, and several municipalities.

- Together with those regional partners, we encourage the federal government to help fund our aging, legacy infrastructure to comply with new, rigorous state and federal standards. In order to protect Puget Sound and public health, utilities will need to make massive investments in overhauling these behind-the-scenes systems. The federal government should be invested in making those changes a reality.

- **Energy efficiency and transformation:** The City supports policies and investments that promote renewable energy, combat climate change, and improve environmental health, including implementing energy-efficient building codes, electrifying fleets, and deploying vehicle charging infrastructure. We support additional funding for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants and incentives to retrofit buildings.

- One of our signature regional collaborations is the Energy Smart Eastside Program, comprised of the cities of Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah, and Mercer Island. This partnership seeks federal dollars to pilot an Eastside Net-Zero Low-Income Housing Retrofits program. This would fund comprehensive decarbonization and clean energy retrofits for low- and moderate-income housing units.



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