



City of Bellevue

BELLEVEUE IT'S YOUR CITY

October 2021

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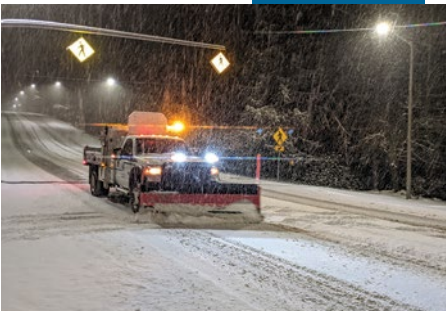
Boosters bolster COVID-19 battle

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\$7.5 million for Eastrail

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Prepare for winter



Cerasa Apartments downtown is one of several properties around the city that feature some affordable housing.

Bellevue advances affordable housing on multiple fronts

By ANTHONY AVERY
Senior Planner

Bellevue is consistently ranked one of the best places to live in the United States—with great neighborhoods, outstanding schools, a beautiful environment and a thriving economy. But it's also becoming a city where it's difficult to find affordable housing.

Today in Bellevue, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$2,241, an 18% jump from last year. Meanwhile, the average home value is \$1.2 million, 137% higher than the national average.

Addressing the need for more housing, especially affordable

housing, is a top priority for the health of the community, making it possible for more residents to age in place and see their children live here. Adding affordable housing makes it possible for more people who work in Bellevue to live in the city too. Affordable housing is on top of the City Council's agenda.

In 2017 the City Council adopted a formal affordable housing strategy, a combination of funding, developer incentives, zoning changes and other actions designed to facilitate the construction of 2,500 new affordable housing units within 10 years. Since then, 1,349 affordable housing units, more than half the target, have already been created.

On Sept. 23, the city hosted an online Neighborhood Forum highlighting Bellevue's affordable housing successes, including planning initiatives that support the strategy:

- **C1 Affordable Housing Density Bonus:** Following through on one of the action items (C-1) in the affordable housing strategy, the city is preparing to make changes to the land use code to allow a density bonus, whereby nonprofit agencies and faith organizations could build denser multifamily housing, as long as the units are affordable.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING
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D'Lights back on at Botanical Garden



By CHRISTINA FAINE
Parks & Community Services Public Information Officer

This year marks the return of beloved winter activities in Bellevue – Garden d'Lights at the Bellevue Botanical Garden and ice skating at Downtown Park. Canceled last year because of the pandemic, both productions will meet COVID-19 safety protocols.

Both are marquee parts of the Bellevue Downtown Association's Bellevue Season of Cheer, which will include dazzling holiday lights at Downtown Park and nearby Bellevue Way, also known this time of year as Snowflake Lane. For many years, these events were collectively known as "Magic Season."

The Season of Cheer will also feature gingerbread workshops at KidsQuest Children's Museum and a Dec. 18 stop at Meydenbauer Bay Park, 8-9:30 p.m., by Argosy Cruises' holiday ships (ArgosyCruises.com).

The Bellevue Downtown Ice Rink, presented by the Bellevue Downtown Association, will be open daily Nov. 19 to Jan. 9, with varying hours. Reserve tickets at BellevueIceRink.com.

Garden d'Lights features a host of dramatic plants and animals fashioned out of rebar and colored lights. A nightly wonder amid the natural beauty of the garden, Garden d'Lights will run from Nov. 27 to Dec. 31, 4:30-9 p.m. every day, including holidays. The event has delighted people for nearly three decades.

It is \$5 for admission to Garden d'Lights, free for children 10 and under. Tickets must be purchased in advance, and the holder must attend at the time and date on the ticket. On-site parking is also \$5 (free for people with limited-mobility, verified via disability parking permit). Parking is free at nearby Wilburton Hill Park. Tickets are available online at GardendLights.org.



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Transportation: Projects that connect us



By Councilmember
JENNIFER ROBERTSON

The summer construction season is over, but it seems that no matter where you are in Bellevue or what the season, transportation projects are underway. We're embracing our future by working to ensure our transportation system can handle the expansive growth we are experiencing in terms of both jobs and residents.

But we can't do it alone. The city is partnering with Sound Transit (light rail), King County Metro (buses) and the state (highways) to make it easier for people to get around using the mode of their choice.

Light rail opening soon

Construction of the East Link light rail line is nearing completion, with service slated to start in 2023. This \$3.7 billion, 14-mile extension from Seattle through Mercer Island, Bellevue and out to Microsoft in Redmond will be substantially complete next year when we will start seeing trains running on the lines as Sound Transit tests the system.

This exciting new mode of transit is expected to carry 40,000 to 50,000 riders each weekday by 2026. The city and Sound Transit collaborated to create enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access from surrounding neighborhoods and to improve bus service to make it easier for our residents to access light rail.

Neighborhood levy projects make it easier to connect within Bellevue

In November it will be five years since the voters passed the Neighborhood Safety, Connectivity and Congestion Levy. This 20-year levy has allowed us to build small but significant neighborhood transportation projects across Bellevue.

So far, we've completed more than 55 projects and invested more than \$22 million in our neighborhoods. These projects run the gamut, from sidewalks and crosswalks to bike lanes, neighborhood traffic calming and safety improvements, to help people reach home safely and more quickly.

Partnering with Legislature to improve highway access

With advocacy from our representatives in the Legislature, projects are planned to help keep traffic on Eastside highways moving, connecting our cities while getting people to jobs, education and recreation.

- **SR 520/124th Ave. NE Ramps** – funding is needed to add a new on-ramp to eastbound SR 520 and a new off-ramp from westbound SR 520 at 124th Avenue NE.
- **I-405/I-90 Interchange** – funding is needed to design direct access ramps connecting northbound and southbound traffic on I-405 to eastbound I-90. This area is a regional chokepoint that creates safety issues.
- **I-405/SR 520 Interchange** – funding is needed to design a direct connection between eastbound SR 520 HOV lanes to the I-405 express toll lanes. This project will help keep transit moving while improving safety.
- **Lake Hills Connector-I-405 Interchange** – a new interchange at 116th Avenue Southeast just south of downtown will improve highway access and decrease congestion.

As our city grows, our multimodal transportation system is growing too. Whether it's light rail to Seattle, I-405 to Everett and Renton or a bikeway on 108th Avenue that links to regional trails, Bellevue and its partners are helping people get to where they need to be safely and predictably.



The South Bellevue light rail station will connect nicely with bus routes.

COUNCIL ROUNDUP

By MICHELLE DeGRAND
Deputy Communications Officer

Bellevue Police continue enacting reforms

The City Council received a quarterly progress report in September on how the Bellevue Police Department is continuing its response to recommendations for reforms brought to the city through an independent review undertaken in 2020.

The review was the result of a pledge made by Mayor Lynne Robinson and the council following the murder of George Floyd to assess police policies and practices, and engage the community to understand where improvements could be made, particularly related to use of force.

Of the 47 reforms recommended in the review's final report, the department has formally incorporated 20 into the Bellevue Police policy manual since April. In addition, the department is in the process of

evaluating body-worn cameras and hopes to implement a system by the first quarter of 2022.

Neighborhood Walks successful

The City Council on Sept. 13 received a report about Neighborhood Walks held over the summer, which attracted more than 100 residents. After a virtual format for the walks in 2020, city leaders returned to an in-person format this year, visiting Northeast Bellevue, Somerset and West Bellevue. There was also one online, citywide Neighborhood Walk.

The walks, now in their fourth year, are designed to provide an informal venue for two-way interaction between city leaders and residents, who can share what is important to them about their neighborhoods.

Top areas of interest during the walks this year included public safety and police services, neighborhood character and

connections, homelessness and human services, transportation planning, growth, and the environment.

American Rescue Plan Act funding approved

The council on July 26 unanimously voted to begin using up to \$8 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to help 1,000 Bellevue households pay back rent they owe because of the pandemic's economic impacts.

Bellevue expects to receive approximately \$20 million in ARPA funding through 2022. The act provides \$1.9 trillion nationwide to address ongoing challenges Americans are facing due to COVID-19.

The most critical needs for Bellevue's recovery include housing stability through rent and eviction relief, workforce assistance and small business help.

Three council positions contested



Three City Council seats are up for election this year, with ballots required to be postmarked or returned to a ballot box by election day, Tuesday, Nov. 2.

While most people in King County vote by mail, voters with disabilities can vote online or go to one of several special voting centers.

The information below is from the King County Voters Pamphlet, available on the King County Elections website (KingCounty.gov/depts/elections.aspx).

POSITION 2



DEXTER BORBE
owner, Interim HealthCare



CONRAD LEE (incumbent)
retired Boeing engineer

POSITION 4



RUTH LIPSCOMB
retired software design engineer



JARED NIEUWENHUIS (incumbent)
marketing director, Kalypso Media Group

POSITION 6



GINA JOHNSON
physician



LYNNE ROBINSON (incumbent)
physical therapist

Virtual Permit Center offers one-on-one video meetings

By **AMANDA RICH**
Development Services Public Information Officer

The ongoing pandemic continues to pose challenges to visiting City Hall. To make accessing services easier for customers with general questions about development permits and the permit process, Development Services is offering one-on-one video meetings through the Virtual Permit Center.

The in-person Permit Center, a core city service, reopened in July. The Virtual Permit Center allows customers guaranteed time via video meeting with permit technicians and plan reviewers. Before applying for any permits, residents, contractors, business owners and other customers can receive guidance about the process from the convenience of their home or office. Learn more about the Virtual Permit Center and book a meeting at BellevueWA.gov/virtual-permit-center.

During these meetings, Development Services staff help customers determine what kind of permit they need, and review information and documents required. Staff can also answer

questions about city codes before customers start investing time and resources on a project. Common topics include remodels, deck additions, roof replacements, landscaping and tree removal and the use of a street or right of way. Customers can also ask questions like “What are the setbacks on my property?” and “Where can I put an air conditioning unit when installing a heating and cooling system?”

Staff are also available for general questions via phone and e-mail. See the Development Services Contact Us page at BellevueWA.gov/development-contacts.

Development Services offers one-stop permit shopping for land and building development. Department staff review plans, inspect projects and investigate code violations. These services ensure that projects are safe and aligned with federal, state and city codes. When customers are ready to apply for building permits, permitting in Bellevue is paperless via MyBuildingPermit.com. More information about permits and the paperless permit process is available at BellevueWA.gov/development-services.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Continued from page 1

- **House Bill 1590 Funding:** Revenue from a one tenth of 1% sales tax authorized by the state Legislature and enacted by the council is being used to fund affordable housing construction and housing-related services.
- **Multifamily Tax Exemption:** This exemption, adopted in 2015 as an incentive for developers to include affordable housing in market-rate multifamily projects, has been refined to encourage more participation by developers.
- **Capital Investment Partnerships:** City capital investments for affordable housing through various partnerships.

More than 100 residents attended the virtual forum, and they shared opinions about various issues related to housing. There was support for increasing the range of housing types in Bellevue, addressing the impact of “mega houses” in neighborhoods and adding senior housing, so more residents can age in place. There were people for and against accessory dwelling units. For more information on this work, visit BellevueWA.gov/affordable-housing.



Bellevue provides rental and mortgage relief to residents

By CHRISTINA FAINE
Parks & Community Services Public Information Officer

Residents behind on rent or mortgage payments because of pandemic-related hardship can apply for assistance. This financial relief can be crucial as the statewide moratorium on evictions is set to expire on Sunday, Oct. 31.

The City Council authorized \$7 million of Bellevue's federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support the Residential Rental and Mortgage Relief program. Nine organizations contracted by the city to provide rental assistance to Bellevue residents during the pandemic will provide rental, mortgage and move-in assistance to low- and moderate-income residents.

Eligible residents must self-attest to how COVID has impacted their housing stability. Eligibility criteria and program details are available at BellevueWA.gov/resident-rent-relief. The agencies providing the grants will help residents with the application and translation whenever needed.

In addition to applying for rent and mortgage relief, tenants can receive help from the Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center, which is helping renters negotiate payment of back rent with landlords through the Eviction Resolution program (BellevueWA.gov/eviction-resolution).

The rent and mortgage relief program includes current and back rent, mortgage and/or move-in assistance, including utility assistance if included in rent, and past due rent or mortgage paid by credit card or loan. It also includes up to three months documented future rental or mortgage assistance.

Relief can cover all documented past-due rent or mortgage since March 3, 2020 and all documented move-in costs for clients who have been evicted or "self-evicted." Agencies will not ask for immigration status or require a social security number for services.

In September, the city allocated \$500,000 in ARPA money for commercial rent relief, offering Bellevue's small businesses and arts organizations grants of \$2,500 to \$15,000 to help pay lease arrears accumulated as a result of the pandemic.

These projects are being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award SLFRP4086 to the city from the federal Department of the Treasury.



Help to pay utility bills through COVID-19

By JESSICA GUTHRIE
Utilities Public Information Officer

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Bellevue Utilities is committed to helping residents who have had difficulty paying utility bills due to financial hardship. The governor's water shut-off moratorium ended on Sept. 30, but Utilities will continue to suspend water shut-offs and late fees for nonpayment through the end of the year.

This extension provides additional time to pay past-due balances and/or set up payment plans. Residents who have or may face a past-due balance are encouraged to contact Utilities as early as possible about available support options, some of which are listed below.

Payment Plans: Utilities staff can help set up flexible payment plans that work with customer needs. Please contact 425-452-6973 or myutilitybill@bellevuewa.gov to discuss options.

Emergency Assistance Program:

This can help cover up to four months of basic water, sewer and drainage service charges for customers who have faced

a one-time financial shock, such as job or income loss due to COVID. To be eligible, customers must meet the program's low-income guidelines for the past 30 days and not receive other Utilities financial assistance. For more information and to apply, visit BellevueWA.gov/utility-relief, or contact 425-452-5285 or utilityrelief@bellevuewa.gov.

Utility Rate Relief Program:

This program provides a discount on basic utility costs for water, wastewater and drainage to low-income seniors (62 and older) and low-income persons with permanent disabilities. Customers must meet specific residency and income guidelines. Visit BellevueWA.gov/utility-relief or contact 425-452-5285 or utilityrelief@bellevuewa.gov to learn more and apply.

NEW! Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program:

This federal program can provide an additional source of utility assistance for customers who meet the state's low-income guidelines. To learn more about program eligibility and apply for assistance, customers can book an appointment with Hopelink at Hopelink.org or 425-869-6000.

Dispute Resolution Center helps tenants avoid eviction

By MARCIA McREYNOLDS
Conflict Resolution Center Manager

With a statewide ban on evictions of residential tenants set to end Sunday, Oct. 31, people who fell behind on rent due to the pandemic are encouraged to settle on a repayment plan with their landlord. The Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center can help.

The state Legislature has ordered that dispute resolution centers around the state, including Bellevue's Conflict Resolution Center, assist landlords and tenants in negotiating repayment plans. Local landlords can't start eviction proceedings until the CRC has certified that they tried to reach an agreement with the tenant first.

Both landlords and tenants can start rent repayment negotiations. When either party

calls the CRC, they go through an intake process, during which the center will attempt to engage the other party to commit to the process. Then the parties must sign an agreement to mediate/conciliate.

Parties will be assigned a conciliator. If a translator is needed, the CRC will arrange one. At the CRC, all cases are handled through phone conciliation. Each party speaks to the conciliator, who helps them resolve issues by going back and forth on the phone between them.

If an agreement is reached, the tenant and landlord sign it, and the tenant begins to make payments according to the plan. If there is no agreement, the landlord is certified to file a suit necessary to evict the tenant. The landlord may have to wait a year for a court date.

It is important that tenants respond to either the landlord or the CRC within 14 days of first being contacted about a repayment plan. To qualify for rent assistance, tenants must also remain at the property where the back rent is owed.

Landlords are required to offer a repayment plan to tenants or call the CRC to initiate one.

Information about the CRC's Eviction Resolution program, including a repayment plan worksheet, is available at BellevueWA.gov/eviction-resolution. If you are a landlord or tenant experiencing rental debt due to COVID-19, contact the CRC (425-452-4091 or bcrc@bellevuewa.gov). Or fill out a case report on the MyBellevue app or portal (BellevueWA.gov/mybellevue).

Home Repair program helps Crossroads retirees keep home tip-top

By DONNA ADAIR
Repair Loan Specialist

Brett Davis and Suzanne Barr love their home, a 1930 house in Crossroads where they have raised multiple children in a blended, Brady Bunch kind of family. However, they both recently retired and find some maintenance costs challenging.

To help low-and moderate-income residents keep their homes, the City of Bellevue provides zero-interest, deferred loans through its Home Repair program. Homeowners can receive up to \$35,000 for repairs on their first loan, and up to \$50,000 over a lifetime. These loans don't have to be paid back until the sale or transfer of the home.

"Home is a space where you can create traditions over generations," Barr said. With two loans from the city, Davis and Barr have been able to maintain and preserve their home, hosting extended visits from children and grandchildren who all call the Crossroads house home. The house, which the couple bought in 1998, is one of the last of its generation in Crossroads.

After Davis noticed an orange flyer in their mailbox about the Home Repair program, Davis and Barr applied for a loan in 2019.

That \$23,600 loan covered rebuilding the dangerous stairs from the deck and adding



Brett Davis and Suzanne Barr stand in front of their Crossroads home, which they've maintained with the help of zero-interest home repair loans from the city.

handrails, as well as adding insulation to the attic, crawlspace and walls. Also, some much needed electrical work was completed, adding outlets and circuits. An exterior door that no longer worked because it was from a previously existing deck was converted to a window.

In 2020, after Davis had retired from sales and marketing during the pandemic, they applied for a second loan from the city program. That \$20,000 loan paid for replacement of failing siding on the west side of the house, which was causing flooding in the basement. The entire exterior of the house was repainted.

"The neighbors all love the beautiful blue color of our home,"

Barr observed with a smile. She gets to look at the color often herself, as she tends vegetables and fruit in the backyard. She takes pride in her garden and it shows.

Davis has lived in Bellevue since he was three years old, and Barr has lived here for many years too. They plan to live the rest of their lives in this home. Barr said she appreciates the quiet neighborhood and easy access to services.

To be eligible for the Home Repair program, you must own your home and have lived in it for at least a year, the home must be in Bellevue and you must meet income requirements.

To verify if you meet these requirements and learn more about the program, please go to BellevueWA.gov/home-repair.

For more information, contact Parks & Community Services home repair loan specialist Donna Adair (dadair@bellevuewa.gov or 425-452-4069).

Masks, vaccines key as region battles Delta variant

With the highly contagious Delta variant of COVID-19 spreading quickly in August and September among unvaccinated people and even breaking through to some who have been vaccinated, health officials and government leaders around the world have imposed new mask and vaccine mandates, including here in Washington.



Verification of vaccination or negative test is required to enter outdoor public events of 500 or more people and indoor entertainment and recreational establishments and events such as live music, performing arts, gyms, restaurants and bars in King County.



All individuals in indoor public spaces (including restaurants, grocery stores, malls and public-facing offices) must wear face coverings, regardless of vaccination status, across the state.

While close to 94% of Bellevue's population is vaccinated, breakthrough cases contributed to a surge of infections in the city in August and September. Even in early October, an average of around 20 Bellevue residents were getting sick each day, according to Public Health - Seattle & King County.

Deaths and hospitalizations have remained low in Bellevue despite the Delta variant, likely because of the high vaccination rate here.



Booster shots available

To help prevent or reduce the severity of breakthrough COVID-19 cases, the state Department of Health in September began making booster doses available to certain high-risk populations who were given the Pfizer vaccine originally. All people 65 and older and all adults with underlying medical conditions or whose jobs put them at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 are eligible for the Pfizer booster shot.

Third doses of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, distinguished from booster shots, are also recommended for some people with compromised immune systems.

On Oct. 20, the FDA recommended booster shots for those who received Moderna and Johnson & Johnson-Janssen vaccines, and authorized mixing or matching booster doses.

People can find and schedule booster or third shots just as many did earlier, via the state's vaccine locator website - VaccineLocator.doh.wa.gov.

Communications award for ‘Apart Together’ issue



“Great job providing a vital resource to those in your community and overcoming barriers to access by providing it in multiple languages and formats,”

noted one of the judges. Another wrote,

“This project showed a unique understanding of the needs of the city’s target audience and a willingness and ability to adjust resources during a crisis to meet those needs.”

By **CLAUDE IOSSO**
It's Your City Editor

In the spring of 2020, as many Bellevue residents and businesses were reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic shutdown it triggered, the City of Bellevue produced a special “Apart Together” edition of this newsletter, It's Your City.

Intended to reach many residents who didn't have computer access, including Bellevue's most vulnerable, the May 2020 issue featured an insert with a map of food banks and other key resources, presented in multiple languages.

For that “Apart Together” issue, the city has won a Savvy Award from 3CMA (the City County Communications and Marketing Association). Staff collected the award in early September.

The city's communications team, which includes public information officers who support operational departments, produces It's Your City three times a year, with layout support from the Information Technology Department's Graphics team.

For this powerful issue, Neighborhood Outreach celebrated residents finding ways to share hope among their neighbors. Human Services (Parks & Community Services) gathered information about nonprofits and created the multilingual insert with a map of food banks and other resources. The Diversity Advantage team (City Manager's Office) arranged for translations of the entire issue, which were made available online.

For the latest news and accurate information about the City of Bellevue, visit BellevueWA.gov/newsroom.

City ramps up efforts to address homelessness

By **BRAD HARWOOD**
Chief Communications Officer

With the homelessness crisis continuing to impact the region, the City of Bellevue has been aggressive in its efforts to both help people experiencing homelessness and minimize effects on neighborhoods.

In September 2019, the city hired a homelessness outreach coordinator to connect those experiencing homelessness with

services, while also working with area agencies and other city staff to come up with coordinated, innovative solutions to a complex problem.

For many years, the city has also collaborated with neighboring cities to fund Eastside shelters for men, women and children, and youths. The city supports the development of a proposed permanent men's shelter in Eastgate, while providing funding for a temporary one in Wilburton

and rotating ones at churches and other places.

In a report to the City Council in September, staff reported that Stephanie Martinez, Bellevue's homelessness outreach coordinator, has been able to make a difference. Working in the field, with help from Fire CARES, police officers and staff from other departments, she worked with 162 people experiencing homelessness in Bellevue this year and last, she helping 43 find permanent or transitional housing.

According to King County's Point-in-Time Count in 2020, 11,751 individuals were experiencing homelessness around the county, 1,032 of them counted on the Eastside. The Bellevue School District reported that 375 students were homeless in 2019-2020.

The root causes of homelessness around the country include low-paying jobs, domestic violence, chronic health conditions, substance use disorder and mental health issues.

Locally, skyrocketing housing costs have compounded the issue. While the city has been addressing homelessness in several direct ways, it has been working to limit it indirectly



With assistance engineered by Bellevue homelessness coordinator Stephanie Martinez, Kim Larson, center, was able to get off the streets and find housing. Moriah Tejada of Bellevue Fire CARES and Bellevue police officer Joseph Tellier helped Larson into his new home.



Homelessness coordinator Stephanie Martinez visits an encampment in Bellevue.

through efforts to increase affordable housing in Bellevue.

If you are concerned about a potential unauthorized encampment, please report it via the MyBellevue portal (BellevueWA.gov/mybellevue) or on your phone via the MyBellevue app.

Want to help? You can support social service agencies and faith communities that provide shelter and related services through contributions to Bellevue's Human Services Fund (BellevueWA.gov/human-services-donations). Complete information about the city's homelessness response is available at BellevueWA.gov/homelessness.



Public feedback being used in transportation planning effort

By KEVIN McDONALD
Transportation Principal Planner

As part of an effort to update the way Bellevue assesses the health of its transportation system, the city's Transportation Commission is working on a new long-range planning framework. To help commission members better understand public attitudes, a questionnaire was recently conducted.

This new framework is called the Mobility Implementation Plan and it takes a fully "multimodal" approach to transportation planning, factoring in the needs of people who ride transit, walk, roll or bike, in addition to people who drive. The MIP ensures that plans for future and potential transportation projects are compatible with each other and with the city's land use plan.

The results of the questionnaire suggest that people want a transportation system that works for everyone, regardless of their mode of travel or destination.

For example, when respondents were asked how the city's transportation system should accommodate more people living and working in the city:

- **83%** strongly agree or agree that sidewalks should be improved;
- **78%** strongly agree or agree that improvements to reduce travel times should be built;
- **70%** strongly agree or agree that more bike lanes and trails should be built;
- **65%** strongly agree or agree that bus waiting areas should be improved;
- **62%** strongly agree or agree that more mid-block crossings should be added; and
- **32%** strongly agree or agree that wider roads and intersections should be built.

The questionnaire was available on the city's interactive [EngagingBellevue.com](https://www.bellevuewa.gov/engagingbellevue) site from July 26 to Aug. 16; 556 people who live, work or travel in Bellevue responded.

While the results are not statistically valid—like a random-sample survey would be—it does provide valuable information for the Transportation Commission.

The full results of the questionnaire are available at [BellevueWA.gov/mobility-plan](https://www.bellevuewa.gov/mobility-plan)

The Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) will help the city make decisions about transportation investments that meet the needs of anticipated population and job growth. The MIP will monitor transportation system performance for all modes, use an equity index to help prioritize projects to improve accessibility and include environmental targets to help minimize the impacts of transportation.

Amazon contributes \$7.5 million for Wilburton Trestle, Eastrail upgrades

By CITY STAFF

The Bellevue segment of Eastrail, a regional trail along the Interstate 405 corridor for people who walk and bicycle, got an enormous boost recently as Amazon has committed \$7.5 million to King County Parks to rehabilitate the landmark Wilburton Trestle and address a key gap in the trail.

The trestle restoration is a critical component to complete the continuous 42-mile Eastrail system from Renton to Snohomish County, including seven miles that run through Bellevue.

Mayor Lynne Robinson, King County Executive Dow Constantine and other officials were on hand Sept. 20 to share the news. In thanking Amazon, Robinson noted the extensive collaboration that has made progress on Eastrail possible.

"This really is about partnerships. It's about regional partnerships with all the cities along this trail and with King County," she said. "It's also about community partnerships. We've had contributions from REI, from Facebook, from Kaiser Permanente, and now this very generous one from Amazon."

Along with funding from King County, which owns and manages much of Eastrail, Amazon's contribution will be used to preserve and upgrade the 100-year-old, 1,000-foot-long trestle that once carried trains six days a week. They carried everything from aircraft fuselages and freight to dinner guests before the railroad line was formally deactivated in 2008.

The 100-foot-tall, former railroad bridge features an impressive skyline view of downtown Bellevue that will soon be accessible to residents, workers and visitors.

The total project cost to convert the trestle into a segment of Eastrail is \$32 million, according to King County. Amazon's \$7.5 million investment includes \$5 million to complete the trestle and \$2.5 million for the nearby Wilburton Trail Segment. The two new segments are expected to be finished in 2024.

In partnership with the state Department of Transportation, King County Parks also is scheduled to open a 2.5-mile paved segment of Eastrail this fall, south of Interstate 90.

Amazon is in the process of increasing its footprint in Bellevue and expects to employ 25,000 workers downtown by 2028. In addition to its major contribution to King County, the company in May donated \$1.4 million to the City of Bellevue to boost human services, neighborhoods and parks, and donated \$1 million in September 2020 to the city's Human Services Fund.

Another theme Robinson emphasized at the announcement event was how Eastrail will link to other local and regional trails in Bellevue.

"This is kind of the missing link Amazon is putting in place here. It's going to connect neighborhoods to neighborhoods, cities to cities, and the region to our downtowns," Robinson said. "When you combine it with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail, our Lake to Lake Trail, and, ultimately, our Grand Connection, what a tremendous community asset this will be."



Mayor Lynne Robinson thanks Amazon for its \$7.5 million contribution to develop Eastrail.



Taking steps toward less plastic in Bellevue

What to know and do about state laws set to reduce single-use plastics

By ERIN HISLOP
Conservation and Outreach
Administrator

Ever wonder what happens to all those plastic bags you get at the grocery store? They're a common form of pollution that threatens the environment; with harmful chemicals released when they are produced, used and then slowly disintegrate into microscopic particles after being discarded.

The state Legislature recently passed two laws reducing single-use plastics. Bellevue's residents and businesses can help eliminate them and reduce waste, protecting our natural resources.

- **Plastic bag ban:** Plastic bags clog recycling facilities and foul waterways, roadways and our environment. Beginning Oct. 1, Washington's plastic bag ban prohibits single-use plastic bags and charges a fee for acceptable alternatives provided by the retailer.
- **Plastics Law:** Under the "Plastics Law" expected to be phased in between now and 2024, other key single-use waste items will get a boost out of the waste stream. The law will:
 - Require restaurants to only give customers disposable serveware, such as plastic straws, utensils, condiment packets and drink lids, if they request them.
 - Restrict the sale of Styrofoam products, starting with packing peanuts and food service containers.
 - Require recycled content in plastic items such as trash bags and beverage bottles.
 - Eliminate the recycling symbol on rigid plastics, which did not always align with our local recycling system and vendors.

These are big steps for our state and our city, but we each have a role to play in helping to reduce plastics and other non-recyclable waste.

BYOB—bring your own bag!

We can eliminate all paper and plastic bags, avoid fees and protect our natural resources by remembering to bring our own reusable bags while shopping.

Decline single-use plastic serveware. Plan ahead to use your own durable serveware such as utensils and straws.

Take a "Greener Living" class to learn about small actions that can make a big impact. Bellevue Utilities is offering another round of these great workshops this fall and winter, including a "Plastics: Problems and Possibilities" class. Other class topics include sustainable shopping, reducing wasted food, recycling/composting right, and safer cleaning. For more information and to register, visit BellevueWA.gov/greener-living-classes.

Long-time educator leads city's equity and inclusion efforts

By CLAUDE IOSSO
It's Your City Editor



Dr. Linda Whitehead

Dr. Linda Whitehead, a long-time Bellevue resident who has advanced equity in public education for many years, is the city's first-ever chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer.

"We're very excited to have Linda on board, and to have her expertise in advancing critical diversity, equity and inclusion work," City Manager Brad Miyake announced in August.

Since adopting a Diversity Advantage plan in 2014, the city has been making a concerted effort to address any

inequities in its services and practices, including providing cultural competency training for all staff and recruiting for jobs among diverse communities. People of color have represented half of Bellevue's population since 2015.

"The city's vision statement 'Bellevue welcomes the world' emphasizes the importance of diverse voices in the work place and the community,"

Whitehead noted in an email. "Diversity, equity and inclusion must be embedded in the city, and addressed as a high priority."

Over a 30-year career in public schools, at school districts including Marysville and Lake Washington, Whitehead progressed from teacher to superintendent. Over that time, she created policies and procedures that supported equity and inclusion. Whitehead, who earned a doctor of education degree from Seattle University, has worked with national organizations to develop policy and foster systemic change for equity.

In Bellevue, she participated on the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network and Bellevue Network on Aging to advocate for equity and services for seniors and people of color. Whitehead also served briefly on the team leading the city's new Centering Communities of Color initiative before accepting the chief DEI officer position. Keep up to date on the city's critical efforts by checking BellevueWA.gov/diversity-advantage.

Bellevue medics receive American Heart Association award

By CAMARI OLSON
Fire Public Information Officer

When someone has a severe heart attack, small details in their care can make a big difference. Bellevue firefighter/paramedics and emergency medical technicians have received an American Heart Association award for protocols that ensure rapid, life-saving treatment.

The Bellevue Fire Department is the first agency in King County to earn the AHA's Mission: Lifeline Silver Plus Achievement Award. Bellevue paramedics and EMTs are trained to quickly identify signs of a severe heart attack and perform and send electrocardiograms to ER doctors while en route to the hospital.

"I'm very proud of our medics," Fire Chief Jay Hagen said when the award was announced.

"When seconds can mean the difference between life and death, they do the little things to ensure speedy, life-saving treatment."

Each year, more than 250,000 Americans have a severe heart attack caused by a complete blockage of blood flow to the heart. Doctors work to restore blood flow by mechanically opening the blocked vessel or providing clot-busting medication, but crucial time is saved if they receive key information before the patient even arrives.



Free classes to help you make sustainable home choices

By JESSICA GUTHRIE
Utilities Public Information Officer

Bellevue Utilities is offering more free "Greener Living" community classes this fall and winter.

The popular "Greener Living" workshops, designed to teach simple ways to be kind to our earth while reducing toxins and waste at home, have been running for more than a decade. Class topics are updated regularly based on need and interest.

The fall series of classes will run through December.

For full class listings, dates and times, visit BellevueWA.gov/greener-living-classes.

Registration is required to attend classes. To register, email recycle@bellevuewa.gov or call 206-949-1787.

The current workshop topics include the following:

SAFER CLEANING

Shop for and make your own safer cleaning products with common ingredients.

PLASTICS: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

Learn which plastics can be recycled and how to help reduce global impact.

REDUCE WASTED FOOD

Maximize your food through proper storage, label reading and innovative recipes.

SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING

Tips to help reduce consumption and make environmentally friendly purchasing choices.

SUPER SORTER

Learn where common items belong: recycle, compost or garbage, and how to handle unusual and potentially hazardous items.



Residents earlier this month participated in a Greener Living class at the Bellevue Botanical Garden focused on sorting the right way for recycling, compost and landfill.

Get ready, winter weather is on the way

By TRANSPORTATION STAFF

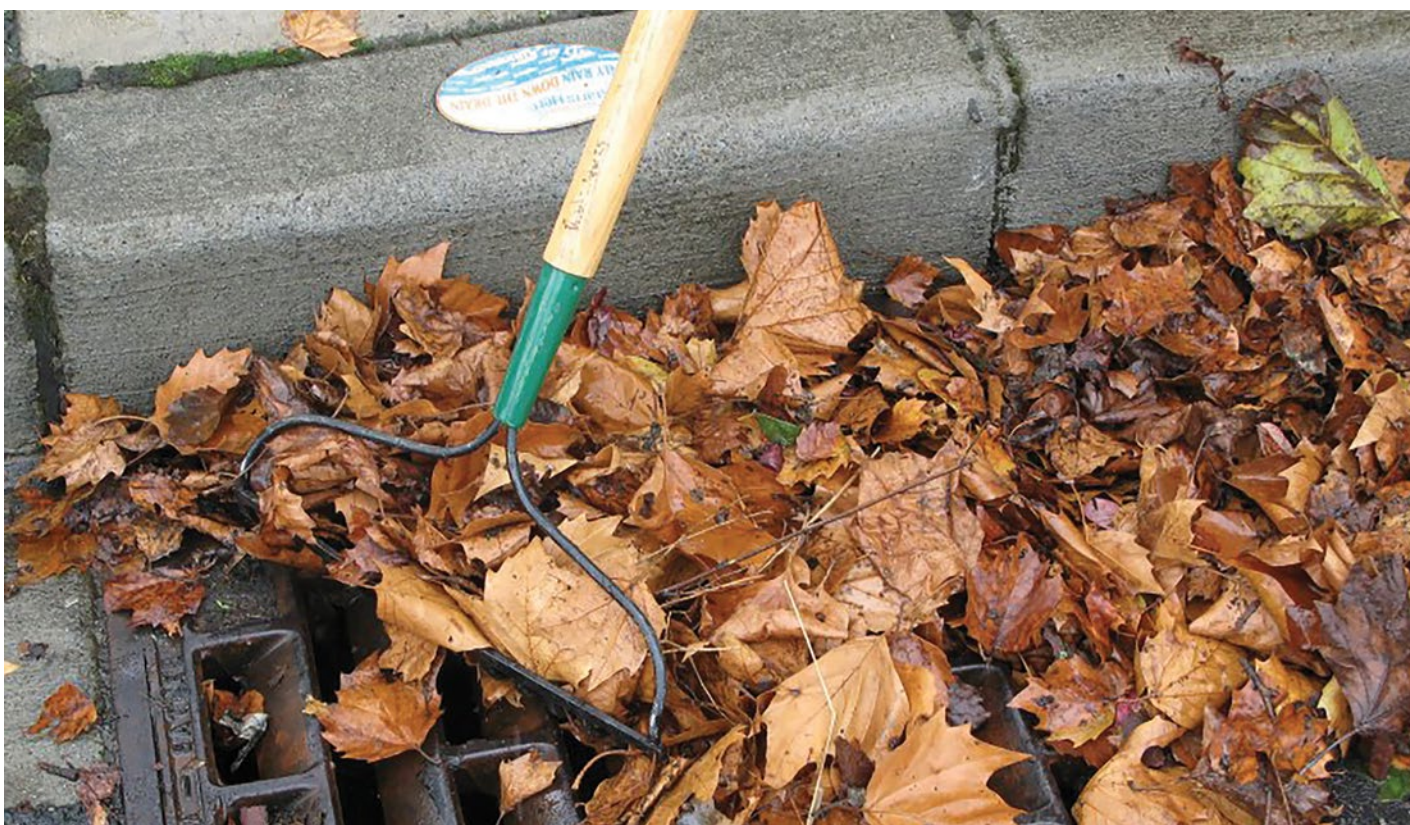
It's time to prepare for winter weather before it arrives. Here are some resources you can slap on the fridge now that could come in handy later:

- **Who to contact:** For life-threatening emergencies, call 911. To report flooding, blocked or hazardous streets and sidewalks, fallen trees and similar problems, call the city's 24-hour response line at 425-452-7840 or use the MyBellevue app. Call Puget Sound Energy at 1-888-225-5773 to report a power outage.
- **Social media information during a weather emergency:** Check the city's Twitter ([Twitter.com/bellevuewa](https://twitter.com/bellevuewa)) and Facebook ([Facebook.com/bellevuewashington](https://facebook.com/bellevuewashington)) for the latest developments.
- **Website information:** During significant weather events, information is posted on the city's homepage at BellevueWA.gov. Street closures are posted at BellevueWA.gov/traffic-advisories. Useful information about the city's snow and ice response, driving tips and home safety tips can be found at BellevueWA.gov/snow-ice. The webpage includes a snow response priorities map and a Winterize resource guide in six languages.

In case of snow and ice, the city's snow response fleet includes seven 1-ton, 4x4 trucks and eight 7-yard dump trucks that can be configured with plows and sanders to clear roadways.



Snow response crews include staff from multiple city departments who typically work 12-hour shifts, around the clock, until all roads are passable. Streets are prioritized for plowing based on a snow response map that takes into account emergency services, transit, traffic volume and other factors.



Puget Sound Energy at 1-888-225-5773.

- For your own safety, never wade or drive through flooded areas.
- If you have a crawlspace or basement that regularly floods or has standing water, you may want to install a sump pump. If you have one already, test it regularly.
- Build responsibly; get the proper permits from the city before clearing or constructing in or next to critical areas such as designated floodplains and wetland areas.
- Slow stormwaters and prevent erosion and mudslides by preserving trees and other vegetation on steep slopes, especially near streams and lakes.
- Routinely clear leaves, debris and sediment from storm drains, driveways, culverts, drainage ditches, swales and gutters.
- For information about potential financial assistance programs to address property flooding, contact Bellevue Utilities at 425-452-6932 or utilities@bellevuewa.gov.

Prepare for the rainy season, prevent flooding

By JERRY SHUSTER
Senior Stormwater Engineer

When the rainy season hits, the city's storm drain system can become overwhelmed, and flooding can occur. It's a good idea to prepare now to protect your home and property from potential flooding,

Watch out for clogged drains on your street

Most flooding in Bellevue is caused by storm drains in streets and parking areas that get clogged with leaves and debris, especially during heavy rains. Utilities crews regularly inspect, clean and maintain the city's public storm system to minimize the risk of flooding. But with over 20,000 public storm drains in the city, city crews need help from residents to keep them free of debris.

Is your property in a floodplain? You may need to take extra precautions

Bellevue's stormwater system includes storm drains, storage ponds, pipes and ditches that discharge to wetlands, streams and lakes. Floodplains, the areas adjacent to streams and lakes, perform a community benefit by storing excess rainfall until the storm subsides. Properties next to wetlands, streams and lakes are most susceptible to flooding.

To find out if your property is in floodplain, call 425-452-6932 or visit BellevueWA.gov/flood-insurance-maps.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers policies to protect your property. Flood insurance is required

for structures in the floodplain that have federally-backed mortgages, but anyone in Bellevue can receive flood insurance. Ask an insurance agent for more information about NFIP policies. The city participates in a FEMA flood reduction program, which entitles property owners to a 25 percent discount on NFIP policies.

Additional tips to help you protect your property from flooding:

- Utilities staff can help you with flooding or other drainage problems, including finding your water shut-off valve. Call 425-452-7840 any time, day or night.
- Know how to shut off your electric and gas service at main switches and valves if your property floods. Call





EBCC looks at affordable housing, big houses and tree canopy

By **RON EPSTEIN**
EBCC Vice Chair

It's been a couple of busy months for the East Bellevue Community Council as the city accelerates its affordable housing strategy.

The EBCC recently voted on two interim official controls related to supportive housing and emergency housing and shelter, and residential dwelling occupancy limits. The first control responds to a state law requiring cities to allow permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in all land use districts where residential dwellings and hotels are allowed, and to allow emergency housing and shelter in land use districts where hotels are allowed. The second interim control conforms the city's regulations to a state law prohibiting cities from limiting occupancy for residential dwellings.

The EBCC approved these interim controls, which are effective for six months, while permanent regulations are developed. The permanent amendments will come before the EBCC for approval/disapproval.

In our September meeting, we held a courtesy hearing concerning the proposed C-1 Affordable Housing Density Bonus Land Use Code Amendment. This amendment would offer additional density for housing developments on land owned by faith-based organizations, nonprofit organizations and certain public agencies, as long as the developments are comprised entirely of affordable housing.

This proposed amendment would create additional capacity for 1,427 affordable housing units around the city, bringing the total capacity to 6,023 units for all eligible sites in the city. Some EBCC members voiced concerns about equity and density, saying that the EBCC area has more growth than other neighborhoods.

The EBCC recently heard from Save Our Scale (SOS), a group of residents concerned about redevelopment of neighborhoods that involves large houses uncharacteristic of their neighborhoods. SOS asserts that these out-of-scale houses impact taxes and the middle-income nature of some Bellevue neighborhoods. The group further says that overly large houses are affordable to only high earners, leading to a serious hollowing-out of Bellevue's largest middle-class residential areas.

SOS is spearheaded by Ellen Weiss, who posted concerns about the redevelopment of a neighboring property on Nextdoor, drawing many comments of support about the issue. Weiss would like to see changes to the land use code that would reduce the allowable height and area for a new or remodeled house in Bellevue.

Another organization that came before us is 300trees.org, which is supporting the city's efforts to achieving the goal of 40% tree canopy by 2050. Don Marsh of 300trees told us about a student tree-planting project on the Sammamish High School campus.

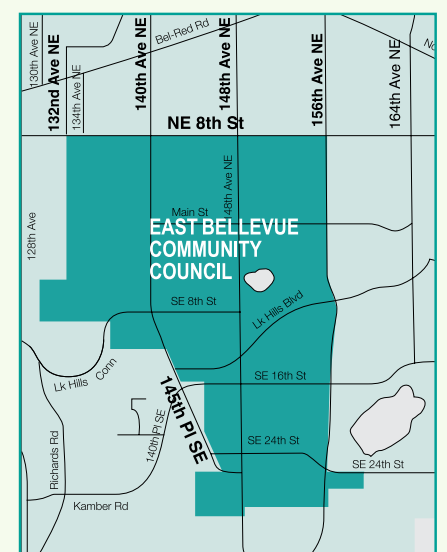
I hope to see your written comments and hear your oral communications at our meetings, the first Tuesday of the month on Zoom. If you want to reach out to me directly, please email repstein@bellevuewa.gov.

For more information about the EBCC, call Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts, 425-452-6806.

The EBCC meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Members: Hassan Dhananjaya, Ron Epstein, Ross Gooding, Betsi Hummer, Steven Kasner

We welcome comments about the East Bellevue area. You can share your views with the EBCC via email at ebcc@bellevuewa.gov. To find out more about the agendas and decisions of EBCC, BellevueWA.gov/ebcc.



Weigh in on new long-range parks plan

By **RYAN WALKER**
Parks Planner

Do you want to help shape the future of Bellevue's parks and open space? We are updating the long-range Parks and Open Space System Plan, and want to hear from you.

The parks plan provides policy and guidance on the acquisition, development and management of parks and open space citywide. It is also a foundational tool for city capital budgets that fund development of parks. Many of the Bellevue parks and trails we use and treasure today started as ideas in the parks plan.

Residents are invited and encouraged to provide ideas about what they would like to see in the park system by visiting EngagingBellevue.com and completing a parks user survey by Nov. 8. You can also share ideas on a map or by emailing staff. The following questions can help prompt ideas.

- What do you like about Bellevue's parks, trails and open spaces? Are there any improvements that could be made?
- How can we provide safer and expanded access to parks and trails?
- What can be done to ensure all populations in Bellevue benefit from our parks system?

The parks plan is updated about every six years. The current plan was adopted in 2016.

Public outreach for the 2022 parks plan is happening this fall, with a virtual public hearing held in September and a Neighborhood Leadership Gathering about the plan earlier this month.

Project updates and information, including the current plan, can be found at BellevueWA.gov/park-plan.

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CITY CONTACTS

Many city facilities remain closed at this time.

City Hall	450 110th Ave. NE / P.O. Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012
Service First (general information)	425-452-6800
City of Bellevue website	BellevueWA.gov
City Council Office	425-452-7810

City Offices

City Clerk's Office and Public Records:	425-452-6464
City Manager:	425-452-7228
Community Development	425-452-7892
Conflict Resolution Center	425-452-4091
Crossroads Mini City Hall	425-452-2800
Development Services	425-452-6800
New permit applications	425-452-4898
Inspection requests, application and status, pay fees	425-452-6875
Simple permits, inspection requests	MyBuildingPermit.com
Application and inspection status	MyBuildingPermit.com
Code Compliance	425-452-2047
Diversity Program	425-452-7886
East Bellevue Community Council:	425-452-6806
1st Tuesday each month, 6:30 p.m.	
Lake Hills Clubhouse, 15230 Lake Hills Blvd.	
Fire Emergency Only	911
Fire Non-Emergency	
Business and Information	425-452-6892
Inspection	425-452-4254
Fire prevention	425-452-6872
Human Resources	425-452-6838
Information Technology	425-452-4626
Neighborhood Outreach	425-452-6836
Parks & Community Services	
Aging Services	425-452-4200
Recreation Program Registration/Parks Info	425-452-6885
Youth Sports	425-452-6885
Ballfield Rental	425-452-6914
Picnics/Facility Rentals	425-452-6914
Park Maintenance	425-452-6855
Human Services	425-452-6884
Probation	425-452-6956
Community Centers	
Crossroads Community Center	425-452-4874
Highland Community Center	425-452-7686
North Bellevue Community Center	425-452-7681
Northwest Arts Center	425-452-4106
South Bellevue Community Center	425-452-4240
Marina	425-452-4883
Police Emergency Only	911
Police Non-Emergency	
Crossroads Station	425-452-2891
Factoria Station	425-452-2880
Complaints and Information	425-452-6917
Crime Prevention: Commercial	425-452-2979
Crime Prevention: Residential	425-452-6915
Transportation	
Administration/Information	425-452-6856
Utilities	
Administration/Information	425-452-6932
Billing/Customer Service	425-452-6973
Water, Sewer and Street Maintenance & Emergency	425-452-7840
Other Numbers (Not city government)	
Regional Animal Services of King County	206-296-PETS
Republic Services (recycling, yard debris, garbage)	425-452-4762
Metro Transit/Sound Transit	206-553-3000

 For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-4448 (voice) or email ciosso@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice) or email ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov. If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.

It's Your City is published for people who live or work in Bellevue. For questions or comments about this publication, contact Claude Iosso, 425-452-4448 or ciosso@bellevuewa.gov.

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East Bellevue Demo Greenway



A bicyclist and her dog round a recently installed, decorative traffic circle at 165th Avenue Southeast and Lake Hills Boulevard, part of the East Bellevue Demonstration Greenway.

The greenway treatments, intended to make it safer and more comfortable to bicycle and roll on the corridor, include:

- Bicycle pavement markings such as "sharrows" and green paint for higher visibility near busy road crossings
- Rapid-build traffic circles and associated pavement artwork at several locations
- Relocated stop signs at key intersections to minimize the number of stops for people biking and rolling
- Wayfinding signs directing people to nearby destinations
- New 20 mph speed limit signs (down from 25 mph)

The demonstration period will last approximately six months, until early 2022.

Depending on project results and feedback from residents, more permanent treatments—including speed bumps, concrete traffic circles and traffic diverters—may be added later as a separate project.

We'd like to know what you think of the city's first greenway. When you have a moment, we invite you to respond to a short questionnaire at EngagingBellevue.com/east-bellevue-greenway.



Use the MYBELLEVUE app to request services, access city news, check out jobs and view social media. Download it today.
BellevueWA.gov/MyBellevue

