

Neighborhood News

City of Bellevue

News for and about Bellevue Neighborhoods

April 2012

Share thoughts about new options for East Link light rail

The City and Sound Transit invite residents to attend an April 26 open house event to discuss and comment on potential cost-saving ideas for the East Link Light Rail project. The event is scheduled for 4-7 p.m. in the Bellevue City Hall Concourse.

East Link is the voter-approved project extending light rail from Seattle, across Lake Washington on Interstate 90 to Bellevue and on to the Overlake Transit Center in Redmond. In November 2011, the Bellevue City Council and the Sound Transit Board agreed to establish a collaborative framework to share the additional cost of a tunnel in downtown Bellevue. Since that time, the City and Sound Transit have been engaged in a Collaborative Design Process which includes the identification of ideas with the potential to reduce project costs.



At the April 26 event, participants will have an opportunity to comment on potential cost saving ideas for the light rail project. A number of the more promising potential cost saving ideas will undergo further study, environmental review and design based on the recommendation of the City of Bellevue and Sound Transit. The project is entering the final design phase, leading up to construction beginning in 2015, and the beginning of service in 2023. Project questions can be directed to Michael Kattermann at the City, 425-452-2042, mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov or to Katie Kuciemba at Sound Transit, 206-398-5459 or katie.kuciemba@soundtransit.org.

Arts Commission seeking new members

Three positions on the Bellevue Arts Commission are open for interested residents. Applications are due by April 15 for four-year terms beginning June 1, 2012. The Arts Commission advises the council about arts issues in Bellevue, including the biennial sculpture exhibition, neighborhood public art projects and funding for local artists and arts organizations serving Bellevue. Meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in City Hall.

Residents can apply online, obtain a faxed application by calling 425-452-6466, or pick up an application from the City Clerk's Office, the City Hall Service First desk, the Bellevue Regional Library, the Lake Hills Library or Mini City Hall at Crossroads. Completed applications must be accompanied by a resume and must be returned online or sent to the Clerk's Office, P.O. Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012.

City, County working on final details of annexation

Annexation of Eastgate and Tamara Hills is moving forward, but as the Bellevue City Council heard last month, setting an effective date will take a bit longer than anticipated.

In late 2011, residents of both areas completed the signature-gathering efforts necessary to achieve annexation by petition. Initially, April 1 was proposed as the date for bringing Eastgate and Tamara

Hills into the City of Bellevue. Last month the City Council agreed to look beyond April 1 for a final annexation date after learning that complicated issues of transition from King County to Bellevue will require additional time. City and County staff currently are working on an agreement that establishes procedures for such matters as the handling of development permits, transfers of real property, etc.

Both Bellevue and King County are eager to finalize the Eastgate/Tamara Hills annexation, and the City is ready to begin serving the area's 5,000-plus residents. Based on March discussions with County leaders, staff are anticipating a June 1 effective date for completing the annexation. Questions about the annexation process can be directed to Nicholas Matz, 425-452-5371 or nmatz@bellevuewa.gov.

Sharing responsibility for the 'common good'

Neighbors move from exploring problems to pursuing solutions

Walking the talk – moving from good intentions to actions that make a difference – that's the challenge presented by the third Bellevue Neighborhood Forum on Thursday, April 19. You're invited to join in the lively discussion from 7 to 9 p.m. in City Hall.

Earlier forum participants explored the concept of responsibility for the common good on Feb. 29 with inspirational speaker Bill Grace, director of Common Good Works. In a second event on March 29, participants applied the concept to specific community issues after listening to educational presentations on housing, caring for at-risk youth, and thriving in a diverse community.



On April 19, Bill Grace will return to facilitate a hands-on workshop for those who want to move from talk to action in addressing any of the above three issues, or other issues of interest to forum participants. Neighborhood Outreach staff will be on hand to provide advice and assistance with resulting action steps and community projects.

The Bellevue Neighborhood Forums are made possible by the generous contributions of 12 neighborhood associations: Bridle Trails, Horizon Heights, Newport Hills, Whispering Heights & Collingwood, Norwood Village, Sunset,

Surrey Downs, Ellene's Addition, Bellecrest, Woodridge, Horizon Crest, and Somerset. Your Local Market, a recent addition to the Downtown Bellevue business community, is providing refreshments for all three forums. The April 19 event is free and open to the public. Advance registration is helpful, but not required. For information, contact Neighborhood Outreach staff at 425-452-6836.

UW collaborates on wayfinding plan for Crossroads neighborhood

University of Washington Department of Urban Design & Planning students are working with City transportation planners to develop a neighborhood wayfinding plan for Crossroads. The plan will outline strategies – such as signs, kiosks and markers – to improve transportation information for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. Examples of wayfinding techniques can be found in Downtown, where information kiosks are helping travelers navigate busy streets.

The public is invited to comment on the plan at a community design workshop at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10, at the Crossroads Shopping Center Community Room. You can take a short survey online or in-person at Crossroads Mini City Hall. Go to

<http://www.gobellevue.org/> to access the survey or find more

information about the project, or contact Sherwin Lee, the project's planner, at sherwin@gobellevue.org.



Another look at trees – what you need to know before you cut

Trees are the icon of the Pacific Northwest, yet they are also the subject of conflicts, complaints and questions to City staff. People in the Northwest love trees because they enhance neighborhoods, clean the air and filter the water in lakes and streams. Unfortunately, they also drop leaves and limbs and sometimes – in stormy weather – huge branches. The occasional result is a blocked street or a downed power line. To minimize these problems and prolong their useful lives, trees require care and attention.



The following are answers to some of the common “tree questions” asked by local residents.

- ✳ Do I need a permit to prune a tree on my property? The answer is usually no. You can prune trees on your own single-family property – if:
 - They are not in or near a critical area – a wetland, stream floodplain, or shoreline;
 - They are in a steep slope critical area AND you follow the City’s tree pruning guidelines: (available at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Development%20Services/Tree_Pruning_Guidelines.pdf).
- ✳ Is a permit required to remove a tree on my property? Again the answer is usually no. The only time you need a permit to remove a tree on your own property is when:
 - The tree is in or near a critical area – a steep slope of 40 percent or more, a wetland, a stream corridor, a floodplain, or a shoreline;
 - You live in Bridle Trails, which has specific tree retention regulations;
 - Tree removal would result in more than 1,000 square feet of ground disturbance;
 - The tree is in a Native Growth Protection Area.
- ✳ If I’m in doubt about needing a permit, who should I call? City staff can give you a definite answer. Call 425-452-4188 or landusereveiw@bellevuewa.gov.
- ✳ Can I prune my neighbor’s tree if it encroaches on my property? The answer is usually yes. Unless you strike an agreement with the tree owner, you are responsible for any cost of pruning. Trim only to the property line and take care not to damage the health of the tree.
- ✳ Am I within my rights to cut or prune a tree that’s blocking my view if it’s located on public property or another private property? Absolutely not. If the tree is on city property, you may face civil, or even criminal, penalties.
- ✳ What if the tree appears to be a danger? First and foremost, consult with the owner.
 - For a tree on City parks property, call 425-452-6855 or email parksweb@bellevuewa.gov.
 - To report an unhealthy tree in the right-of-way, call 425-452-7840.
 - If the tree is on your own property, you should consult with a tree professional. (Find one through the International Society of Arboriculture, www.treesaregood.org, or the Society of American Foresters, www.safnet.org).
 - If the tree is on private property, ask the owner to check it out. If the owner is unwilling, you may want to document your concerns in writing.
- ✳ If a neighbor’s tree falls and damages my property, who is responsible? This is a question for your attorney. But in past cases, the tree owner has not been held financially responsible for damage unless you can prove that the tree was a danger and the neighbor was aware of it.

- * What are some other resources that could help me with my concerns about trees?
 - o Contact your homeowners or neighborhood association. Many Bellevue neighborhoods have covenants that deal with trees, views and private property responsibility.
 - o Contact Neighborhood Mediation, 452-452-4091, for help with resolving a conflict over trees.

Try the Customer Assistance Website

Did you know Bellevue residents can easily ask questions, obtain information, and request services from the city online?



The City of Bellevue's CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE website allows citizens to report issues, request services, and ask questions all in one place and without needing to know who at the city to contact. From the City's website home page, just click on the green button on the right hand side of the page.

Join a discussion of culturally competent health care

- * *Is the health care system sensitive to cultural differences?*
- * *Can cultural issues and misunderstandings compromise quality of care?*
- * *Are residents from diverse cultures seeking health care approaches that are not available locally?*

Join the discussion of these and other womens' health care issues on Tuesday, April 24, 1-2:30 p.m. at Crossroads Community Center. Bellevue women are invited to attend this special session of Cultural Conversations featuring a panel of experts on cultural competence in health care: Yris Lance, community relations liaison for the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities; Ira SenGupta, Executive director of the Cross Cultural Health Care Program; and Sachiko Nakano, a licensed acupuncturist who treats women from all over the world.

The event is free and open to all women in the community. For more information, contact Julie Ellenhorn at 425-452-5372 or jellenhorn@bellevuewa.gov.



April meetings

(All meetings are in City Hall unless otherwise noted. Agendas are subject to change. You may confirm with Neighborhood Outreach the day before or day of the meeting. Or consult the city web pages listed below to download agendas.)

4/2 City Council (6:00 extended study session, Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center)

Budget workshop http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm

4/3 Arts Commission (4:00, 1E-109) Commission work plan for 2013-14, discussion on non-monetary ways to assist arts groups, discussion of Bellwether 2012: reGeneration

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/arts_comm.htm

4/3 East Bellevue Community Council (6:30, Lake Hills Clubhouse, 15230 Lake Hills Blvd.) Staff report related to graffiti http://www.bellevuewa.gov/EBCC_Homepage.htm

4/3 Human Services Commission (6:30, 1E-113) Public hearing on 2013 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; overview of city's Budget One process

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human_serv_comm.htm

4/5 Bellevue Network on Aging (8:30-10:30 a.m., 1E-120) Senior Information & Assistance & Evergreen Care Network presentation, committee reports

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/network_on_aging.htm

4/5 Eastgate/I-90 Citizen Advisory Committee (5:30, 1E-112) Final report approval

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/eastgate-corridor.htm>

4/5 Environmental Services Commission (6:00, 1E-111) Thank you to Council Member Dr. Davidson (6:30 regular meeting, 1E-113) Storm System Plan; budget process and financial policies; Capital Investment Program (CIP) – proposed investments, proposed changes
http://www.bellevuewa.gov/enviro_serv_comm.htm

4/9 City Council (6:00 study session, Council Conference Room) NE 4th Street project, possible discussion on animal control, Hilltop annexation update (8:00 regular session, Council Chambers) Arts Commission Funding Guidelines update, Consent Calendar, discussion and direction to City Attorney on Kimberlee Park Planned Unit Development (PUD) http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm

4/10 Parks & Community Services Board (6:00, Council Conference Room) Agenda to be determined http://www.bellevuewa.gov/parks_board.htm

4/11 Planning Commission (6:30, Council Conference Room) Tentative meeting date – please call to confirm or see web site http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning_commission.htm

4/12 Transportation Commission (6:30, Council Conference Room) Public hearing on 2013-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update; Downtown Transportation Plan Update; Transportation Facilities Plan Update http://www.bellevuewa.gov/trans_comm.htm

4/16 City Council (6:00 study session, Council Conference Room) Possible discussion on animal control (8:00 regular session, Council Chambers) Consent Calendar, possible decision on Kimberlee Park PUD http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm

4/17 Human Services Commission (6:30, 1E-113) Orientation to the 2013-14 Human Services funding process http://www.bellevuewa.gov/human_serv_comm.htm

4/19 Growing Transit Communities – East Corridor Task Force (3:00, Redmond Public Library, Room 2, 15990 NE 85th, Redmond) Regional planning effort led by Puget Sound Regional Council with participation from the City of Bellevue <http://psrc.org/about/advisory/gtc-communities/corridor-task-forces/east-corridor-task-force/>

4/19 Bellevue Neighborhood Forum (7:00, Council Chambers) Community workshop focused on sharing responsibility for the Common Good in Bellevue (See above article)

4/19 Public hearing on Bellevue Botanical Garden proposal (7:00, Council Chambers) Opportunity to comment on Conditional Use and Critical Areas Land Use Permits to allow construction of new visitor center at 12001 Main St., relocation of the Sharps Cabin, construction of a new 8,500-square-foot visitor services building, remodeling of the 2,271-square-foot Shorts House, expansion of parking area from 53 to 119 spaces, and filling of a Category IV wetland with associated mitigation..

4/23 City Council (6:00 extended study session, Council Conference Room) Possible joint meeting with Bellevue School Board, Eastgate I-90 Final Report and Recommendations, regional issues http://www.bellevuewa.gov/council_overview.htm

4/25 Planning Commission (6:30, Council Conference Room) Shoreline Master Program Update http://www.bellevuewa.gov/planning_commission.htm

4/26 East Link Light Rail Open House (4:00-7:00, City Hall Concourse) See above article

Bellevue's Neighborhood Outreach Office offers a variety of programs and partnerships for neighborhood leaders and active residents. To learn more about citizen involvement opportunities and programs to enhance neighborhoods, call 452-6836.