

# MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &  
Community Services

**DATE:** June 17, 2026

**TO:** Parks & Community Services Board

**FROM:** Camron Parker, Assistant Director  
Wyatt Thompson, Park Planning and Development Manager  
*Parks & Community Services*

**SUBJECT:** 2027-32 Parks & Community Services Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget  
For discussion – no Board action required

At the June meeting, the Parks & Community Services Board will return to the 2027-32 budget process. As advisors to the City Council, one of the duties of the board is to provide comments on the projects proposed in the Parks & Community Services Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget (Attachment A). This is transmitted in the form of a memo similar to the quarterly memos prepared throughout the year. For reference, the recommendations submitted during the last budget process are attached (Attachment B).

In April, the board received a presentation with an overview of the city's budget process and an update on the current programs and projects underway and planned in the current CIP budget. In June, the board will discuss and agree upon key messages and themes that will form the communication to the City Council on the proposed 2027-32 Parks CIP budget. A draft letter will then be reviewed and approved by the board at the July meeting. This process is consistent with prior budget cycles.

Staff will lay the groundwork for board discussion by reviewing several items related to the CIP budgeting process. Elements include a review of the City's budget process, City Council strategic target areas (Attachment C), citywide and department planning frameworks, and a status update on the department's 2025-30 CIP portfolio.

## **Budget Process**

The budget is one of the City's most important documents. The budget process organizes all city operating and capital budgets around six Strategic Target Areas. Parks & Community Services' capital improvement proposals are primarily directed at the High Quality Built and Natural Environment target area.

Parks & Community Services' capital project proposals are responsive to the City's Strategic Target Areas and Council Priorities. In addition, they address needs and

objectives identified in the adopted Parks and Open Space System Plan (System Plan; [bellevuewa.gov/park-plan](http://bellevuewa.gov/park-plan)) and projects promised in voter-approved parks levy packages in 2008 and 2022.

This fall, the City Manager will present a Preliminary Proposed Budget to the City Council with the Parks & Community Services Board's transmittal included. The City Council will review the proposed budget through a public process and adopt the final budget before the end of the year. We will keep the board informed of the Parks CIP status throughout the process.

### **Guiding Plans and Levies**

Citywide planning starts with the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is a foundational policy document that guides the city's growth and development over 20-year spans. The last update occurred in 2024. It provides the policy basis for other guiding plans completed by various departments focusing on more specific neighborhoods, facilities, or services.

For Parks & Community Services, the Parks and Open Space System Plan (POSSP) contains the community's long-range vision for acquisition and development of parks and trails and preservation of open space. It also sets the standards for the operation and maintenance of Bellevue's parks, trails and open spaces over time. Importantly, the POSSP holds the ideas that are ultimately put into the Parks CIP. It also provides support for projects that are included in voter-approved levies (Attachment D).

### **Capital Improvement Program**

The proposed 2027-2032 CIP utilizes a new organizing element for budgeting and tracking capital projects based on portfolios and program areas. Parks & Community Services will have one project portfolio with four programs:

- Park Development and Expansion
- Trails and Natural Systems
- Waterfront and Destination Parks
- Renovation and Renewal

The Park Development and Expansion program includes projects to build-out new parks and facilities or make major enhancements to existing parks that add or change major program elements. The System Plan emphasizes acquisition and development of parks to meet future demand and geographic equity.

The Trails and Natural Systems program focuses on projects that expand and enhance the citywide network of trails and natural areas. The System Plan identifies open space, greenways, wildlife corridors, and trails as a core capital focus area with strong community support for trail access.

The Waterfront and Destination Parks program comprises projects that develop new or improve existing waterfront parks, protect shoreline ecology, and enhance iconic destination sites such as Downtown Park. Waterfront access and destination parks are called out as a distinct program category due to the complex and high-visibility nature of these capital investments.

The Renovation and Renewal program works to maintain safe, accessible and energy efficient parks and park facilities. Bellevue Parks & Community Services maintains a large, aging system that requires ongoing renovation and refurbishment to meet community needs and expectations.

### **Board Discussion**

As shared during the April presentation, broad and ongoing economic uncertainty points to a budget process that is focused on maintaining current levels of service. Following that presentation, board members identified some initial items of note, including:

- Equitable access and removal of barriers to accessing parks and programming.
- Land acquisition challenges associated with acquiring expensive land in dense commercial or urban settings, along with the key role that partnerships and/or the development process might play.
- Importance of trail connections and continuing to build out the network.
- Maintaining and enhancing flexibility in urban park design.

At the June meeting, the board will refine these items and discuss others to include in the memo to the City Council.

### **Attachments**

- A. Parks & Community Services CIP Program and Project List
- B. 2024 Parks & Community Services Board memorandum to City Council
- C. City Council Strategic Target Areas
- D. Parks and Open Space Levy report