

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

December 9, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian¹ and Councilmembers Bhargava, Hamilton, Lee, Nieuwenhuis and Sumadiwirya

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

Ms. Robinson noted that Deputy Mayor Malakoutian would be participating remotely for Agenda Item 2(a) only.

- Councilmember Lee moved to excuse Deputy Mayor Malakoutian from the remainder of tonight's meeting following Agenda Item 2(a). Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers were present. Councilmember Lee led the flag salute.

(a) Councilmember Conrad Lee Commendation

Mayor Robinson noted that tonight was Councilmember Lee's last meeting on the Council. Councilmembers took turns reading portions of the commendation for Mr. Lee's service since his election to the City Council in 1994. Mr. Lee served as both Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Mayor Robinson recalled Mr. Lee's involvement with the Bellevue Youth Theatre beginning several decades ago. Ms. Robinson said Councilmember Lee is well known and respected throughout the region. She noted his longtime advocacy for small businesses and the cross-cultural center. Ms. Robinson said Mr. Lee was always friendly and approachable before she began serving on the Council. She thanked him for his service and mentorship.

¹ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian participated remotely for Agenda Item 2(a) only.

Councilmember Bhargava thanked Councilmember Lee for all he has done for Bellevue. He said Mr. Lee will be remembered as an individual who shaped, and worked to improve, the community for everyone. Mr. Bhargava thanked Mr. Lee for thinking about practical solutions for what matters most to residents and workers. Mr. Bhargava said Councilmember Lee's leadership and service will be remembered for a long time. Mr. Bhargava said he had a number of conversations with Mr. Lee before he decided to pursue a seat on the Council.

Councilmember Hamilton praised Councilmember Lee's 32 years of service on the Council. Mr. Hamilton described Mr. Lee as a staunch advocate for the City's interests who regularly reminds everyone about the importance of understanding the community's needs. Mr. Hamilton praised Mr. Lee's community service and support of youth. He thanked Mr. Lee for his advocacy for the cross-cultural center.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis praised Mr. Lee's steadiness, energy and devotion. Mr. Nieuwenhuis recalled that Councilmember Lee was the first Asian American Councilmember and Mayor for Bellevue. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said he has always liked hearing Mr. Lee say that he is an American by choice and he praised his public service ethic. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said Mr. Lee has been an advocate for small businesses and a champion for neighborhoods. He noted Councilmember Lee's commitment to transparency in government and praised his respect for everyone. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said the Council will miss Mr. Lee's courage, vision and dedication to Bellevue.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian commended Mr. Lee's 32 years of service on the Council. Mr. Malakoutian said Councilmember Lee has been a person who shows up, listens and serves with his whole heart. Mr. Malakoutian said he has made an effort to learn from Mr. Lee as much as possible. He said Councilmember Lee opened a door when he was elected as the first Asian American Councilmember in Bellevue. He said Mr. Lee keeps Bellevue's best interests at the center of every decision. Mr. Malakoutian praised Mr. Lee's engineering, business and communications skills. He said Mr. Lee's positive impact on the community will be felt for many years to come.

Councilmember Sumadiwiryia said when she first came to the United States, she was not sure whether she belonged here. However, seeing Councilmember Lee serving the community made her feel like this was home. Ms. Sumadiwiryia thanked Mr. Lee for his positive impact on the community for her and her children. She said the Council will work to continue his legacy.

City Manager Diane Carlson reflected on her working relationship with Councilmember Lee beginning before she first worked for the City of Bellevue in 2000. She praised the legacy of his 32 years of service as an elected official. She thanked him for his involvement with and support of staff. Ms. Carlson said Mr. Lee always advocated for innovation. She said his service will have a lasting impact on the community and she wished him well in retirement. Staff presented Councilmember Lee with a number of gifts, including a street sign for Conrad Lee Lane.

Councilmember Lee said this is an emotional time and he was touched by all of the attendees at the earlier reception. He thanked all of the people who have supported him and the Council over

the years. He thanked his wife for supporting him and his time devoted to public service. He commented on the importance of community service and engaging youth in public service.

Councilmember Lee said public service is empowering and energizing. He commented on the importance of fiscal management and listening to the community. He confirmed that the Bellevue Youth Theatre is a longtime passion of his, noting that it welcomes everyone who wants to participate. He commented on his work with youth over the years and the importance of continuing to help newcomers find a home in Bellevue. He described his experience as an immigrant.

Councilmember Lee praised City staff for their dedication and competence. He commended the work of everyone in the Police Department and Fire Department. He said he will continue to be an interested and engaged member of the community.

- (b) Swearing in of Councilmembers Lynne Robinson, Jared Nieuwenhuis, Claire Sumadiwirya, Vishal Bhargava, and Councilmember-elect Naren Briar

Mayor Robinson introduced King County District Court Judge Lisa O'Toole to conduct the swearing in ceremony.

Judge O'Toole conducted the swearing in of Councilmembers Vishal Bhargava, Jared Nieuwenhuis, Lynne Robinson, Claire Sumadiwirya and Councilmember-elect Naren Briar.

3. Approval of Agenda

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Arredondo said the total time for oral communications is for a period not to exceed 30 minutes and topics must relate to City of Bellevue government. Individuals speaking to items on the agenda will be called first and if time remains, others will be called. The presiding officer is authorized to give preference to individuals who have not spoken to the Council within the past 60 days or who are speaking to items that will come before the Council in the upcoming 60 days. Each speaker is allowed up to three minutes to speak and a maximum of three speakers are allowed to speak to any one side of a particular topic. In compliance with Washington state campaign laws regarding the use of public facilities, no speaker may support or oppose a ballot measure or candidate.

- (a) Qiong Chen, Executive Director, United Hub, expressed appreciation for Councilmember Lee's many years of service to Bellevue. She presented a United Hub Community Appreciation Award to Councilmember Lee and wished him the best in retirement.

- (b) Mason Ji concurred with all of the comments about Councilmember Lee by his colleagues. Mr. Ji recalled first calling Mr. Lee in 2011 and praised him for his long public service. Mr. Ji praised Mr. Lee's leadership and innovation. He thanked him for his work on behalf of the community.
- (c) Matt Felton, owner of the Gateway One office building at SE 8th Street and 112th Avenue SE, said the building is nearly at full occupancy. He expressed support for a balance of transit-oriented development (TOD) housing and ecological function in adjacent redevelopment efforts. He said he was recently approached by someone interested in buying a portion of his parking lot near the light rail station to build more than 300 new homes, including 60 affordable housing units. He said he is ready to sell the land and understands the need for housing. However, the obstacle is that he has a full office building and his major condition of sale is for the buyer to replace the parking stalls they displace to retain parking for his office tenants. Mr. Felton said he paid \$34.5 million for the property and the building houses important professional services. He said a logical way to replace the parking is to reconfigure the surface parking lot, which contains several landscaped islands. He said the islands are considered wetlands and interfere with redevelopment.

City Clerk Arredondo encouraged Mr. Felton to email his full comments to the Council using Council@BellevueWA.gov.

- (d) Mark Hoyt, representing Trammell Crow Residential, said they are a developer of middle income housing throughout the region. He commented on the challenges in resolving the issues described above by Mr. Felton. He requested assistance to help resolve the matter.
- (e) Tim Hay expressed concern about the misuse of stream typing. He said not all streams have fish. He expressed concern regarding the required field investigation. He said he was a developer for 26 years. He said the state's experts are being ignored to the benefit of the developers.
- (f) Dr. Susan Mercer thanked Councilmember Lee for his service. She noted her ongoing concerns regarding parking regulations and improvements needed for residential parking. She thanked the City for filling and repairing potholes. She said she would like to meet with traffic engineering staff to discuss traffic lights.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager: None.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives

- (a) Determining Procedure for Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor at Council's January 6, 2026 Meeting

Mayor Robinson introduced discussion regarding the procedure for the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on January 6. She said the default method follows Robert's Rules of Order. Over the past several years, the Council has chosen to use the simultaneous voting method.

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to adopt a temporary Council Rule authorizing conducting the January 6, 2026, elections for Mayor and Deputy Mayor by voting all nominees simultaneously using the simultaneous method of voting. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

(b) Selection of Temporary Chair for January 6, 2026 Council Meeting

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to nominate Mayor Robinson to serve as temporary chair for the January 6, 2026, Council meeting. Councilmember Sumadiwirya seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

8. Consent Calendar

- Councilmember Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Hamilton seconded the motion.
- The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 6-0, and the following item was approved:
 - (a) Council Minutes
Minutes of November 25, 2025, Regular Meeting
 - (b) Motion to approve payment of claims and payroll for the period November 1, 2025 - November 30, 2025.
 - (c) Ordinance No. 6892 amending Chapter 11.49 of the Bellevue City Code for consistency with state law; amending Sections 11.49.010, 11.49.020, 11.49.030, 11.49.040, 11.49.050, 11.49.080, 11.49.100; deleting Sections 11.49.060, 11.49.070; creating new Sections 11.49.001, 11.49.005, 11.49.011, 11.49.015, 11.49.090, 11.49.095, and 11.49.110; providing for severability; and establishing an effective date.
 - (d) Resolution No. 10564 deeming seven (7) locations higher-crash risk sites where it is suitable to locate automated traffic safety cameras pursuant to Washington State Revised Code (RCW) 46.63.250.
 - (e) Resolution No. 10565 authorizing execution of a one-year agreement between the City of Bellevue and Premier Blue Cross, with the option to extend for one

additional contract term, for medical and prescription drug third party administrative services.

- (f) Resolution No. 10566 authorizing execution of an agreement with Owen Equipment Company for the purchase of one new combo eductor truck, in the amount to not exceed \$696,587, plus applicable taxes.
- (g) Resolution No. 10567 authorizing execution of a labor agreement between the City of Bellevue and the International Association of Firefighters Union, Local 1604, representing Fire Prevention & Education employees, for a three-year contract period starting January 1, 2025, and expiring December 31, 2027. The executed agreement shall be substantially in the form of the agreement in the Council Library.
- (h) Ordinance No. 6893 amending Section 3.79.130(G)(4)(e) of the Bellevue City Code to increase the percentages of sick leave accruals employees may cash out upon retirement or separation and provide that the payment will be deposited into the employee's health reimbursement arrangement account.

At 7:15 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a break. The meeting resumed at 7:27 p.m.

- 9. Public Hearings: None.
- 10. Study Session Items: None.
- 11. Land Use Reports: None.
- 12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions

- (a) Resolution No. 10568 adopting The Diversity Advantage Plan 2035.

City Manager Diane Carlson requested Council action on Resolution No. 10568 adopting The Diversity Advantage Plan 2035.

Sara Boyle, DEI and Community Outreach Administrator, City Manager's Office, recalled that staff presented the final Diversity Advantage Plan 2035 to the Council on November 25, 2025. Based on Council direction during that meeting, staff revised the plan to amend equity objective 2.1 adding nonprofits as a focus group, amend equity objective 6.1 regarding access to human services and to amend section 7.3 to clarify the language pertaining to the cross-cultural center project.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the revisions and observed that they captured the Council's discussion well. She thanked all of the staff who worked on the plan over the past couple of years.

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to adopt Resolution No. 10568, and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.
 - (b) Ordinance No. 6894 relating to critical areas; Revising the City's development regulations governing critical areas, and revising other related development regulations, to comply with the state-mandated update deadline of December 31, 2025; Amending Chapters 20.20, 20.45A, 20.45B, and 20.50 of the Bellevue Land Use Code; Amending Parts 20.25D, 20.25H, 20.25L, 20.25P, 20.25Q, 20.30D, and 20.30P of the Land Use Code; Providing for severability; and setting an effective date.

City Manager Carlson introduced discussion and Council action on Ordinance No. 6894 updating the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Nick Whipple, Code and Policy Director, Development Services Department, recalled that the objectives of the Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) are to balance environmental protections with housing and development flexibilities, improve functional outcomes for degraded stream segments, improve protections for existing high-quality critical areas, provide innovative tools for challenging development sites, streamline and simplify the code and review process, and to remove some existing code restrictions regarding developable area.

Kirsten Mandt, Senior Planner, said development flexibilities reflected in the LUCA remove the: 1) density/intensity calculation in LUC 20.25H.045, 2) lot coverage reduction for parcels within critical areas, 3) restriction on middle housing, and 4) complexity in the buffer setbacks. The LUCA increases some stream buffers while offering flexibility in reducing buffers. For wetlands, the LUCA aligns the habitat scores with state standards, adds mitigation timing and ratio language, and adds a pathway for the potential fill of small Category IV wetlands.

Ms. Mandt briefly highlighted items related to geohazards and Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs). She said additional development tools include reduced buffers for restoring piped streams or degraded stream segments, buffer averaging, and innovative mitigation projects.

Ms. Mandt recalled that during the Council's November 12 study session, the Council was generally supportive of the Planning Commission's recommendation and discussed a potential code change for developing over wetlands in limited situations.

- Councilmember Hamilton moved to adopt Ordinance No. 6894, and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.

Councilmember Hamilton expressed support for the Critical Areas Ordinance update and said it will unlock potential housing opportunities while protecting the environment. He thanked staff and the Planning Commission for their work and for their additional analysis regarding wetlands. He looks forward to the development of more housing.

Councilmember Sumadiwiryra thanked staff for responding to the Council's suggestions and requests for clarification. Responding to Ms. Sumadiwiryra, Mr. Whipple noted the revision regarding the definition of a qualified professional in the code.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for their work and for achieving a balance between environmental protection and development potential. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Mandt commented regarding the use of a qualified professional in evaluating the typology of streams.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Rebecca Horner, Director, Development Services Department, said staff is committed to meeting the City's housing goals. Ms. Horner said staff will continue to work with Trammell Crow, if they desire, to identify alternative layouts for the site referenced earlier during oral communications. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said he did not want to miss out on any opportunities for new housing.

Councilmember Bhargava thanked staff for their work and their responsiveness to previous Council input. He commended the balance between environmental protection and development needs.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for their good work. She encouraged creative approaches to dealing with wetlands and other areas that require special treatment. She said she looks forward to the City's continued discussion with Trammell Crow regarding the wetlands/parking lot issue. She expressed support for the ordinance.

Councilmember Lee concurred with the importance of balancing environmental priorities with development needs. Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Mandt noted the City's interest in working with any applicant to maximize housing opportunities.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

13. Written Reports

- (a) Intergovernmental Affairs Monthly Update as of November 30, 2025
- (b) Report on Emergency Procurement for a Shower and Laundry Trailer and Utility Connections for Safe Parking Location at 515 116th Avenue NE.

14. Unfinished Business: None.

15. New Business: None.

16. Executive Session: None.

17. Adjournment

Mayor Robinson said she has had the honor of serving as Mayor for three terms (six years). She thanked her colleagues for their support. She said she appreciated working with Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, who served as Deputy Mayor for four years. She thanked Deputy Mayor Malakoutian for his work over the past two years. Mayor Robinson thanked City Manager Carlson and all staff for their guidance and support.

Mayor Robinson wished everyone happy holidays.

At 8:00 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

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