

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

July 22, 2025  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

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

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

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. Persons 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. Ms. Arredondo said individuals are allowed to speak for up to three minutes and only three speakers are allowed to speak to any particular side of a 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 for election.

- (a) Paul Clark commented regarding Agenda Item 10(a), the Bellevue Grand Connection project. He urged caution related to tax increases and long-term revenue diversions. He is in favor of the project. However, he believes it should be properly prioritized relative to other transportation needs. He expressed concern about prioritizing a pedestrian and bike crossing over I-405 before addressing basic road functionality. He said a transportation benefit district (TBD) would impose a new regressive tax. He asked the Council to work first on solving Bellevue's most urgent challenges.
- (b) Mariya Frost, Vice President of Government Affairs, Kemper Development Company, said the company was disappointed to see the TBD identified as a Tier 1 potential funding source for the Grand Connection project. She urged the Council to remove the TBD as a funding source. She said funds designated for transportation should be used to meet critical transportation needs. She said Bellevue's Transportation Department has reported a steep decline in transportation revenue resulting in limited funding availability beyond existing commitments in the Capital Investment Program (CIP) plan. She noted continuing growth and said a number of key intersections are projected to fail in terms of level of service. She said voter-approved TBD revenues should be directed to projects that relieve congestion and improve mobility for vehicles and emergency services. She said the Grand Connection is not intended to address congestion and its primary goal is to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, support placemaking and improve connectivity.
- (c) Patrick Bannon, President and CEO of the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), said he and Pearl Leung are co-chairs of the Friends of the Grand Connection group, which was formed two years ago to support the project and to partner with the City to secure the needed resources. He expressed strong support for moving forward with the Grand Connection I-405 crossing project. He said the project addresses safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- (d) Pearl Leung, Senior Manager of Public Policy, Amazon, acknowledged that the Grand Connection project is a significant undertaking for the City. She encouraged the Council to support this investment for the future to foster growth and enhance economic development. She said the project will connect employees to housing in the Wilburton area. She said Friends of the Grand Connection will continue to advocate for private, philanthropic, and state and federal funding to reduce the burden on local resources. She encouraged the City to be bold and to continue to move the project forward.
- (e) Jodie Alberts, speaking on behalf of the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, expressed support for the proposed code amendments regulating micromobility options in Bellevue. She said many employers have employees who rely on transit or other alternatives to driving. Micromobility options would make it easier for them to travel the last mile from a bus stop or light rail station to their workplace. Ms. Alberts said this would help reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips, ease parking demand and provide more flexibility for moving around the community. She encouraged timely action on creating a permit process for a pilot program.

- (f) Court Olson, speaking on behalf of People for Climate Action (PCA), commented regarding Agenda Item 10(c), Sustainable Bellevue Quarterly Progress Report. He referred to page 5 of the agenda packet materials for this item and highlighted the six bullet points. He expressed concern regarding the ability to meet 2050 emissions targets and encouraged additional funding for efforts to reduce emissions.
- (g) Craig Spiezle, a downtown resident, expressed concern regarding the proposal to use TBD funding to support the Grand Connection project. While he supports the vision behind the project, he does not believe a TBD is the appropriate mechanism for financing this project. He said the Grand Connection is a placemaking and urban design project and not a transportation project. He said state law limits the use of TBD funds. He said Councilmembers previously indicated that the use of a TBD would be a last resort if no other revenue sources were available to meet core transportation needs. He believes that threshold has not been met. He urged the Council to remove the TBD from consideration.
- (h) Nicole Myers said the Planning Commission will discuss the critical areas ordinance update on July 23. She said their packet materials assert that the City cannot follow the best available science and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife recommendation for stream buffers due to Council direction to maximize housing development. She asked the Council to clarify the City's position on that issue. She said cottage developments are now allowed to have 70 percent lot coverage in structures while other middle housing was increased to 40 percent. She said most of the homes currently under development will sell for \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million and will likely not be convenient to transit service. She encouraged the City to consider a lower speed limit in parks.
- (i) Hayden Harvey expressed support for the micromobility code amendments presented tonight for Council consideration. He thanked the City for updating regulations and aligning with surrounding cities. He said there is a clear demand for more transportation options in Bellevue and now is the time for proactive planning. He said his group has engaged with community members and there is momentum in support for micromobility options. He urged the Council to direct staff to advance a shared e-scooter and e-bike pilot program.
- (j) Matt Jack, speaking on behalf of the BDA, expressed support for updating the City Code to formally recognize and regulate motorized scooters. He noted the need for clear rules, safe infrastructure and responsive management. He expressed support for a pilot program to expand micromobility options.
- (k) Keith Swenson, a resident of The Gardens at Town Square, said the Council will receive a letter summarizing his comments. He said their 130 residents have serious concerns about traffic issues. He expressed appreciation for representatives of the Bellevue Police Department and Transportation Department, who recently met with residents to hear their concerns. He thanked the Council for the positive traffic safety initiatives over the past few years, including the reconstruction of 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Main Street and NE 12<sup>th</sup> Street and the addition of several lighted, mid-block pedestrian walkways. He noted

articles in the recent edition of the City's neighborhood news regarding the launch of Safe Streets Bellevue and the testing of adaptive technology for all road users. Mr. Swenson said he was shocked by the number of fatalities and serious injuries on Bellevue streets so far this year. He commented on the importance of reducing speed limits.

- (1) Paul Rood said he read the minutes of Council meetings in 2024 regarding the expansion of the hours when outside noise is allowed. He said the public comments all represented commercial interests and asked for extended hours for commercial projects in the downtown. He expressed concern regarding the citywide expansion of the hours. He said it will not shorten the duration of construction projects or promote affordable housing. He expressed concern that the City does not have staff with the expertise to evaluate the health impacts of noise. He said the City receives significant complaints regarding after-hours noise. He asked the City to set the allowed noise hours as follows: Monday-Thursday, 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM; Friday, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM; and Saturday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

## 5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions

- (a) 2026 Recommended Budget and Strategic Plan for Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (TPA)

Lorie Hoffman, Arts and Creative Economy Manager, Community Development Department, introduced the update regarding the Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) 2026 budget and strategic plan.

Lizzette Flores, Cultural Tourism Specialist, said staff is seeking Council direction to return with legislation as part of the 2026 mid-biennium budget adjustments to support expenditures consistent with the proposed budget and strategic plan.

Caroline Dermarkarian, Chair, Bellevue-Redmond TPA Advisory Board, said that overnight visitors spend an estimated 2.5 times their lodging cost in support of local restaurants, small businesses, attractions and entertainment venues. She said the TPA collects a \$2.50 per night fee on lodging charges. The funds are submitted to the Washington State Department of Revenue and distributed to the City of Bellevue, which is the legislative authority for the TPA. All revenues from the two cities are maintained separately and are not commingled with their general funds. The revenues collected in the two zones are used in the respective cities to ensure a local benefit. The TPA Board includes four representatives from each zone, including tourism and hospitality industry experts. The Board played a key role in shaping the annual budget and strategic plan for the TPA.

Ms. Flores highlighted accomplishments in the Bellevue zone including 2.2 million overnight visitors in 2024, creation of the Destination Development Plan, promotion of culinary tourism and improved visitor communication. She said the 2025 initiatives include transportation enhancement (e.g., Bellevue airport shuttle, Bellhop local shuttle) and tour programming. Redmond had more than 400,000 overnight visitors in 2024 and One Redmond is expanding its

tourism staff. A strategic partnership has been established between the City of Redmond and Woodinville wine businesses.

Chair Dermarkarian said the separate budgets and strategic plans for the Redmond and Bellevue zones are provided in the meeting materials. The final scopes of work will go before the Council during the contracting process later this year. Bellevue's strategic plan focuses on walking tours, culinary tourism, sales missions, sustainability, Bellevue Bound podcast, and the Bike Hop e-bike program at several local hotels. Bellevue's 2026 goals include attracting 2.5 million visitors, increasing citywide hotel occupancy by five percent to 73 percent and increasing weekend hotel occupancy by four percent to 68 percent. Redmond's 2026 goals include attracting 420,000 visitors, supporting transportation options and developing niche tourism markets.

Ms. Dermarkarian highlighted the budgets for the two TPA zones. The projected fee collections for 2026 total \$2,946,900 in Bellevue and \$942,059 in Redmond. The predicted reserve balances at the end of the year are \$256,000 for Bellevue and \$75,365 for Redmond.

Ms. Flores asked the Council to consider directing staff to return with legislation to support mid-biennium budget adjustments consistent with the TPA budget and strategic plan recommended by the TPA Advisory Board.

Councilmember Lee thanked everyone for their work. He asked for a copy of the 2025 budget and asked about the contingency funding. He asked about the higher allocation for Redmond in the area of administration and research. Ms. Hoffman said staff will provide the 2025 budget to the Council. She said a significant difference in the two years is a fairly robust increase for the Redmond zone. She said the reserves are held by the City of Bellevue and are not available for expenditures. The contingency fund is part of the contracted amount for the operation of the TPA.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked Chair Dermarkarian and staff for the update. He asked about the selection of festivals and events. Ms. Hoffman said Visit Bellevue has a selection committee within its advisory board that evaluates proposed festivals and events. She said organizations apply to Visit Bellevue for grant funding.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Flores confirmed that staff is working with community partners in preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Councilmember Bhargava suggested that the TPA contemplate the volatility related to state and federal funding in setting reserves.

Responding to Councilmember Sumadiwirya, Ms. Hoffman said Visit Bellevue tracks a number of performance metrics including those related to social media, marketing engagements, open rates on emails, new email subscribers, web site referrals and other measures. Ms. Hoffman said staff will make that information available for the Council. In further response, Ms. Hoffman said visible benefits of the TPA's efforts include the Bellhop shuttle, the free e-bike program at specific hotels, Visit Bellevue welcome center at local events and appearances by Belle the

Bobcat throughout the community. She said Japanese tourism has increased by 13 percent compared to last year.

Councilmember Hamilton expressed support for the TPA program and proposed budget and strategic plan.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to direct staff to return with legislation as part of the 2026 mid-biennium budget process to support expenditures consistent with the annual Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) 2026 budget and strategic plan, as recommended by the BRTPA Advisory Board. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

6. Report of the City Manager

City Manager Carlson introduced an update regarding the Republic Services work stoppage. She recalled that the company recently suspended waste collection due to an out-of-state labor disruption. As of July 21, Republic Services resumed garbage, recycling and yard waste services for residential customers. Ms. Carlson thanked Utilities Department staff for working with Republic throughout the work stoppage to coordinate free waste drop-off locations and billing credits to Bellevue customers. Additional departments involved in the effort included the Transportation Department, Bellevue Police Department and the Parks and Community Services Department. The Bellevue School District was involved in responding to the work stoppage as well.

Wendy Weiker, Municipal Manager, Republic Services, apologized for the local impacts of the out-of-area labor dispute. She said the local unions have good working relationships with Republic's management teams. The work stoppage was in solidarity with drivers based in Boston. The work stoppage began on July 9 and continued through July 18. Ms. Weiker thanked City staff for helping to organize and communicate regarding free waste drop-off events. She said Bellevue residents appreciated the opportunity to bring garbage, recycling and yard waste to those events for disposal. She said the billing credits will appear on the next bill.

Mayor Robinson thanked Ms. Weiker for the update and for all of the work provided by Republic Services.

Ms. Carlson introduced the new Fire Chief, Dave Tait, who has been with the City of Bellevue for 28 years. She said he has worked in a number of roles and she has great confidence in his ability to lead the Fire Department.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: None.

8. Consent Calendar

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 7-0, and the following items were approved:
  - (a) Council Minutes  
*Minutes of June 17, 2025 Regular Meeting*
  - (b) Resolution No. 10528 authorizing the write-off of twenty-two uncollectable accounts totaling \$77,966.32 from various City departments.
  - (c) Resolution No. 10529 authorizing execution of a four-year Modified General Services Contract with Pacific Office Automation to provide copiers and related services for all City departments, for a total contract amount including contingency funds, not to exceed \$814,495.76, plus all applicable taxes.

9. Public Hearings: None.

10. Study Session

- (a) Bellevue Grand Connection Program Updates and Funding Proposal

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's update regarding the Grand Connection program and funding.

Genesee Adkins, Deputy City Manager, City Manager's Office, said staff is seeking Council direction to move forward with the application for state approval of an alternative delivery design and construction method and with the steps necessary to prepare to fund the next phase of the Grand Connection program. She said staff last discussed this project with the Council in March. Since that time, the City established its Office of the Grand Connection. She said the project is unprecedented and involves a broad team of professionals. Given the complexity of the this public works program, including partnerships with developers, the business community and others, staff felt it was important to assign a dedicated team to facilitate efficiency, decision-making, accountability and execution.

Ms. Adkins recalled that the Grand Connection was a 2025 state legislative priority. The City requested \$900,000 for City Hall Plaza and up to \$50 million from a state transportation package. The City received \$250,000 for the plaza and time-limited special authority to use tax increment financing (TIF) for the Grand Connection project.

Anthony Gill, Office of the Grand Connection, Community Development Department, said the City's new community programming fund will support 37 organizations and individuals this summer and fall in providing free public activities across Bellevue. The application period was open from April 1 through May 26, with outreach to community organizations and event producers. The City received 99 applications totaling nearly \$900,000 in requests. He said the

list of supported events and programs is available on the City's web site at [Bellevuewa.gov/CPF](http://Bellevuewa.gov/CPF) or search for community programming fund.

Mr. Gill described an interactive engagement pilot program to facilitate two-way information sharing about the Grand Connection as well as basic transit information and wayfinding. Interactive nodes are placed throughout the corridor and information is available in nine languages.

Nathan Torgelson, Director, Office of the Grand Connection, said there is a deadline in mid-August to submit the City's application for an alternative delivery method for the Grand Connection project. Staff is working with two consultants to prepare the application for state approval of the general contractor/construction manager (GC/CM) method. Staff will present information to the state committee on September 25.

Mr. Torgelson said the Grand Connection will provide a 40-foot wide corridor over I-405 with public space around City Hall. He said the City will partner with private property owners to enhance the connection and to identify placemaking opportunities.

John Resha, Chief Financial Officer, Finance and Asset Management Department, presented the funding proposal reflecting a mix of different potential tools. The Grand Connection project totals \$150 million to \$200 million and funding could include donations, state and federal funding, and other contributions. Tier 1 funding tools, which are the most likely candidates, involve the TIF option or a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) sales tax or vehicle fee. Tier 2 funding tools include philanthropic and private funds, dedicated or specific use funds, federal and state grants or a Local Improvement District (LID). Tier 3 funding tools include the Business and Occupation (B&O) tax and banked property tax.

The TIF option involves identifying one increment area with a maximum property current assessed valuation of \$500 million. The TIF must be established no later than June 2026 and the estimated revenue over the lifetime of the TIF area is \$55.9 million to \$93.3 million. Mr. Resha said the state legislative special authority for the City to use TIF requires affirmation from the other taxing jurisdictions (i.e., Sound Transit, King County, King County Library System, King County Emergency Medical Services, Port of Seattle).

Mr. Resha described the TBD tool, noting that the City established the TBD in 2023. Councilmanic options include a 10-year 0.1 percent sales tax and a vehicle fee. A \$20 annual vehicle fee could generate approximately \$2 million, which could be bonded for approximately \$60 million over a 25-30 year term. The sales tax is estimated to generate approximately \$10 million per year over the 10-year TIF period. Referring to Tier 2 funding tools, Mr. Resha noted the uncertainty around federal or state grants. Under Tier 3, the B&O tax generates \$5 million to \$7 million annually and the banked property tax capacity provides approximately \$7 million per year.

Ms. Adkins said next steps include development of the conceptual project financial plan, additional analysis of the TIF option, and the initiation of final design and engineering work. She said staff will return this fall to present the TIF analysis.



Councilmember Hamilton thanked everyone for the information and expressed strong support for the Grand Connection project. He said the project will have a tremendous impact on the community and directly supports sustainability, micromobility and tourism. The Grand Connection will provide a critical, environmentally friendly transportation connection between the Wilburton area and the Eastrail to the east and the downtown core to the west.

Councilmember Hamilton said the Grand Connection supports the development of housing in the Wilburton area, tourism and open space. He thanked staff for identifying the potential funding tools. He supports moving forward with the alternative delivery application.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis asked how the Friends of the Grand Connection group interacts with the Office of the Grand Connection. Ms. Adkins said the group represents the external supporters of the project, similar to the Friends of the Waterfront group in Seattle. She said the project requires a long-term commitment to programming and activation. Mr. Torgelson noted that he worked with the waterfront group in Seattle, with a South Lake Union development group, and on the Kent Station project.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said he appreciated the information on funding tools. However, he recalled that previous Council discussions have always focused on private-public partnerships. He questioned identifying private funding as a Tier 2 option. He noted opposition in the community to the TBD funding option and encouraged staff to provide more details in the future.

Mr. Resha said the City needs to demonstrate to the State of Washington that it has the capacity to provide the needed project funding. The City has not yet received letters of commitment or grant awards for future funding.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis expressed support for the Community Programming Fund grant program. He noted that the Grand Connection project is aligned with the City's goals related to economic development, sustainability, tourism and other areas. He cautioned, however, that there are significant transportation needs as well.

Responding to Councilmember Sumadiwiryia, Mr. Gill said the City is required to get approval from the state to use alternative delivery methods and the City must demonstrate that it has the financial capacity to deliver the project. Mr. Gill said the application requires information about who is on the project team, expertise of the design consultants and the current status of the project.

Ms. Adkins said the use of the GC/CM approach is increasing among jurisdictions to deliver transportation projects and other types of public works projects. The approach helps the City maintain more control over costs, project scope and project delivery.

Ms. Sumadiwiryia said the Grand Connection will be a significant achievement for the community. Responding to Ms. Sumadiwiryia, Mr. Resha said the City will seek bond funding through a series of transactions. Ms. Adkins said the Grand Connection project is included in the Council's Federal Legislative Agenda priorities. She said the City continues to pursue a number of funding strategies.

Councilmember Bhargava thanked staff for the presentation. He said the Grand Connection is a visionary project that will draw attention to Bellevue and provide public benefits. He commended staff for identifying a broad range of potential funding tools. He spoke to the importance of transparency regarding the project funding. Mr. Bhargava expressed support for moving forward.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. Resha said the City is required to obtain permission from the state to pursue alternative project delivery. Mr. Lee asked about the use of TIF, noting the City has other financing options. Mr. Resha said TIF makes good sense based on the Council's longtime policy direction that growth should pay for growth. Mr. Lee suggested using TIF for transportation projects. Mr. Resha confirmed that the Council will decide which financing tools to use, including TIF and TBD fees. Mr. Lee spoke in favor of discussing whether to use the banked property tax capacity.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff for the information and the Friends of the Grand Connection for their ongoing support. He said it is essential to provide multiple transportation modes. He commended staff for their coordination with developers and private property owners. He expressed concern regarding increasing construction costs.

Mr. Torgelson said the GC/CM construction approach helps with risk management. If costs continue to escalate, the project team will need to reevaluate the actual costs and the engineering of the I-405 crossing. Mr. Gill said the GC/CM process involves the ability to work with the general contractor earlier than in other project delivery methods. Ms. Adkins said the primary design consultant hired a subconsultant to help develop low, middle and high range estimates for actual construction costs.

Responding to Mr. Malakoutian, Mr. Resha said the City is actively engaged with the Friends of the Grand Connection to identify philanthropic and corporate opportunities for support of the project. In further response to Mr. Malakoutian, Mr. Resha said the GC/CM process provides specific off-ramps throughout the project design and development.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Mr. Resha said staff will engage the public in considering funding options. Ms. Robinson asked about using a levy for the Grand Connection project. Mr. Resha said that is one potential longer term option. However, he noted the immediate purpose of gaining approval to use the GC/CM method.

Ms. Robinson asked how the City will engage with partners using TIF. Ms. Adkins said the City has informed other taxing jurisdictions that it might want to use TIF and will discuss the TIF analysis with them when completed.

Mayor Robinson asked staff to follow up via email regarding the differences between TIF and the federal TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) loans used in the BelRed area. She asked how bikes will be routed once they cross into the downtown and how the City will develop the infrastructure to support the increased usage of bikes, scooters and other wheeled travel modes. She expressed support for the Community Programming Fund and

encouraged adding the events (e.g., swing dancing lessons at City Hall Plaza) to an events calendar. Mr. Gill said staff is looking at options and working with partners to get events onto their calendars.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. Gill said the Community Programming Fund supports events throughout Bellevue. For 2025, approximately \$50,000, or half of the funding, was allocated to events outside of the downtown.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to direct staff to move forward with the process for state approval of an alternative delivery design and construction method of project delivery (i.e., General Contractor/Construction Manager) and with the steps necessary to prepare to fund the next phase of the Grand Connection program. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

At 8:21 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 8:37 p.m.

(b) Recommended Bellevue City Code Section 11.48.210 Amendments to Revise the City's Regulation of Motorized Foot Scooters

City Manager Carlson introduced discussion regarding proposed amendments to the City Code to revise the regulations affecting motorized foot scooters.

Andrew Singelakis, Director, Transportation Department, said staff is seeking Council direction to prepare an ordinance amending Bellevue City Code Section 11.48.210 to define and regulate motorized foot scooters, and to bring the ordinance forward for final action as part of the consent calendar at a future Council meeting. He said the current regulations were adopted in 2007. He said the proposed changes are targeted to enhance consistency with state law.

Franz Loewenherz, Mobility Planning and Solutions Manager, said BCC 11.48.210 was adopted in 2007 in response to the community's concerns about safety and noise. He said the current regulations make it difficult to legally operate a scooter and they are not aligned with state law or with regulations in neighboring jurisdictions.

Mr. Loewenherz said the code amendments are supportive of Comprehensive Plan Policies TR-13 (car sharing and micromobility sharing) and TR-31 (emerging technologies). He recalled that staff presented a management brief to the Council in February regarding motorized foot scooters. The Transportation Commission held a number of discussions and proposed amendments to the City Code. Mr. Loewenherz said staff proposes placing the code amendment on the August 4 consent calendar for Council action.

Mr. Loewenherz said the Transportation Commission's recommendation is provided as Attachment A to the agenda memo. The commission recommended that motorized foot scooters not be allowed to operate on unpaved gravel trails or on sidewalks. The commission recommended that the helmet requirement be removed. However, staff fully intends to continue

to encourage helmet usage through its communications strategies. Mr. Loewenherz noted the maximum speed limit of 15 miles per hour and the age requirement of 16 years or older.

Mr. Loewenherz said there was significant community interest in the proposed amendments. He said most of the letters received reflected support for the code amendment language and for advancing a shared micromobility program using both e-scooters and e-bikes.

Next steps include evaluating the program elements and issues including lessons learned from other cities, permit requirements and management, interdepartmental coordination, staffing and contract needs, revenue potential, monitoring and performance evaluation, and permit compliance.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis expressed support for the proposed code amendments. He asked about the timing for launching a shared scooter pilot program. Mr. Singelakis said it would probably occur next spring. He said a number of departments will be involved in establishing the program and selecting the vendor. Mr. Nieuwenhuis recalled that the shared bike pilot program was successful in the past. He encouraged specific regulations, including regarding scooter parking and dismount zones. As Council liaison to the Transportation Commission, Mr. Nieuwenhuis expressed appreciation for their work.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Loewenherz said the penalty for the violation of any provision of this chapter is a traffic infraction punishable by the imposition of a monetary penalty of not more than \$250.

Councilmember Bhargava expressed enthusiasm for introducing shared foot scooters in Bellevue. He encouraged initiating the pilot program as soon as possible with well-defined safety criteria and other performance metrics. He expressed support for the proposed code amendments. He encouraged equity and accessibility for everyone, including in the areas of payment tools, discounts and other factors. He said motorized foot scooters are helpful in providing transportation for the last mile for transit users. Mr. Bhargava encouraged robust public engagement and education regarding the new regulations.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff and the Transportation Commission for their work. He suggested partnerships with the Bellevue School District to provide safety workshops for students.

Mayor Robinson said she is a scooter rider in Seattle, which is typically quicker than waiting for a bus. She commented on the importance of adequate infrastructure for public safety. She suggested developing a code amendment for electric bikes as soon as possible. She encouraged signage in city parks regarding the range of the electric scooters and bikes. She asked whether there are anticipated or recommended routes for foot scooter traffic. Mr. Loewenherz said the collection of data will provide insight into the travel patterns.

In further response to Mayor Robinson, Mr. Loewenherz said the City will provide approximately three miles of bike infrastructure this year and 10 miles next year. He said many

of the lanes have sharrow markings. Mayor Robinson said she would prefer to see infrastructure originating from light rail stations and connecting to an existing pedestrian or mixed use path.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for a pilot program for shared foot scooters. He asked how this will fit with curbside management regulations. He asked how the 15 mile per hour speed limit is enforced. Mr. Loewenherz said there will be robust public outreach. He said staff has been working with the Bellevue Police Department to determine the best enforcement strategy.

Councilmember Sumadiwiryra said foot scooters can help increase the visibility and access to small businesses. She encouraged expediting the implementation of the pilot program. Mr. Singelakis said next spring is a feasible timeline for developing the program.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff for the presentation and expressed support for the proposed code amendments. He endorsed the goal of aligning more closely with state law and regulations in neighboring jurisdictions. He said he appreciated the restriction on using motorized scooters on sidewalks. He agreed with Mayor Robinson that the City should provide adequate infrastructure to support different wheeled transportation modes. Mr. Hamilton expressed support for moving the code amendments forward.

- Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to direct staff to prepare an ordinance amending Bellevue City Code Section 11.48.210 to define and regulate motorized foot scooters, and to bring the ordinance forward for final action as part of the consent calendar at a future Council meeting. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

(c) Sustainable Bellevue Quarterly Progress Report and 2026-2030 Plan Update

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's update regarding progress in implementing the 2021-2025 Sustainable Bellevue Plan and the development of the draft 2026-2030 Sustainable Bellevue Plan.

Thara Johnson, Assistant Director, Community Development Department, said the current Sustainable Bellevue Plan was adopted by the Council on December 14, 2020. She highlighted the agenda for the presentation.

Jennifer Ewing, Sustainability Manager, Community Development Department, noted that the meeting packet contains a summary of recent accomplishments and the presentation would focus on the plan update. She said the plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policy vision and guides community and municipal operations' strategies and actions. The updated plan will retain the same five focus areas: 1) energy and buildings, 2) mobility and land use, 3) materials and waste, 4) climate change, and 5) natural systems.

Ms. Ewing reviewed the timeline for the Sustainable Bellevue Plan update process since October 2024. The City Council is anticipated to adopt the final plan in November. Ms. Ewing

highlighted the plan goals for each focus area and the over-arching goal to be carbon neutral by 2050.

Ms. Ewing said the meeting packet includes more details about the extensive community engagement process. The priorities identified by the community were bold climate action, community resilience, waste reduction, transit access and walkability, support for renters and multifamily buildings, and energy efficiency and grid resilience. Ms. Ewing said the City held two open house meetings and the annual Earth Day celebration so far this year. She noted expanded activities with students and families. She said the City conducted a survey regarding resident priorities. Approximately 80 percent of the respondents supported bold climate action and 83 percent confirmed that climate change is an important issue for them.

Ms. Ewing said climate resilience and preparedness have emerged as high priorities within the community, especially following serious storms in recent years. She commented on the elements of climate mitigation versus climate resilience.

Ms. Ewing recalled that in April the Council asked staff to report on whether the City is on track to meet the 2030 sustainability goals. She said municipal operations have already met and exceeded the 2030 greenhouse gas reduction goal and are on track to meet the 2040 targets. On the community side, meeting emissions reduction goals will rely on actions at the local, state and federal levels. Ms. Ewing recalled reporting earlier in the year that the City reduced emissions by eight percent since 2011 despite 25-percent population and job growth. However, the community is not on track to meet the short- or long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

The high-impact strategies for achieving community climate goals are decarbonizing (electrifying) existing buildings and reducing vehicle miles traveled. Foundational strategies include building community resilience and sustainability funding. Ms. Ewing said staff reevaluated the emissions reduction pathways analysis. She acknowledged that there are a number of factors the City cannot control in addressing greenhouse gas emissions. She said it is not likely that the City will achieve a 50-percent reduction in emissions by 2030. However, it could achieve that goal by 2035.

Colin Munson, Climate and Electric Mobility Coordinator, Community Development Department, presented the draft strategies organized under the five focus areas. Energy and buildings strategies focus on building decarbonization (electrification), building performance policy evaluation, and large building decarbonization incentives. He said 90 percent of emissions in Bellevue come from buildings and transportation. Mobility and land use strategies address electric vehicles, accessibility and connectivity funding, sustainable land use and mobility options.

Mr. Munson said the community advocated for addressing climate resilience. He noted a strategy around assessing long-term funding options. Strategies related to waste and materials include continued efforts to reduce waste. Draft strategies for the natural systems focus area address the tree canopy, electric lawn care equipment, stormwater management and reducing water usage.

Mr. Munson said the draft plan will be released for public comment in August and the plan will be presented to the Council in October. Staff anticipates plan adoption in November.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian said he appreciated the City achieving its municipal operations greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal. He thanked staff for their outreach to youth and underrepresented communities.

Responding to Mr. Malakoutian, Ms. Ewing said staff is interested in adding more strategy level metrics to the updated Sustainable Bellevue Plan. Ms. Johnson said staff is building more flexibility into the updated plan. Mr. Malakoutian encouraged linking the goals to specific budget outcomes.

In further response to Mr. Malakoutian, Ms. Johnson recalled previous discussion regarding the financial analysis. She said the intent is to adopt the plan by the end of the year. In 2026, the Council will begin engaging in conversations about the 2027-2028 operating budget.

Mr. Malakoutian asked how climate resilience is measured. Ms. Ewing said the climate vulnerability assessment is a good start to look for specific metrics to evaluate the City's resilience. She said staff has been working with a consultant and reviewing plans from around the country.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff for the update and commended them on achieving the municipal operations goals. He said he appreciated all of the community engagement. He expressed support for the draft strategies and said he looks forward to reviewing the draft plan this fall.

Councilmember Bhargava encouraged focusing on controllable factors to the extent possible. He asked whether there are incentives or other measures that could be adopted to accelerate progress in addressing building emissions. Ms. Ewing said the state building code enhances energy efficiency every time it is updated. She said the Energy Smart Eastside program provides outreach, education and incentives for low- and moderate-income households to install energy efficient heat pumps. The Clean Buildings Incentive Program involves commercial and multifamily buildings. Mr. Bhargava recommended tracking the controllable inputs.

Councilmember Sumadiwiryia expressed an interest in more information regarding incentives for future developers. Responding to Ms. Sumadiwiryia, Ms. Johnson said the City engaged in a climate vulnerability assessment a couple of years ago. She said it resulted in a number of recommendations that informed Comprehensive Plan policies and the strategies in the plan related to resilience. Ms. Ewing said the vulnerability assessment was a good foundation for this work. However, there is more to understand as the City continues to move forward.

Councilmember Lee commended staff on their progress to date. Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Ewing commented regarding the five focus areas. She acknowledged that there is more to do to build out the pedestrian-bike network. She said the City has made good progress with the Clean

Buildings Incentive Program for commercial buildings. The Energy Smart Eastside program has been successful with residents.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Ms. Johnson said that when staff returns with the draft plan in the fall, they will address the high-impact actions in the plan and associated costs.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis asked about the goals of the public outreach to begin in August. He asked whether there will be sufficient time for public input to inform the draft plan. Ms. Ewing said the draft plan will include details regarding the actions and timelines. She said staff will be looking for broader public feedback on specific actions, following up on past discussions with the community regarding priorities. She said the plan will reflect a package of actions needed to achieve the City's goals. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for their work.

Mayor Robinson said she was pleased to see the decrease in car trips per capita. She asked staff to follow up with an email addressing how the City could achieve zero waste.

11. Land Use Reports: None.
12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.
13. Written Reports: None.
14. Unfinished Business: None.
15. New Business: None.
16. Executive Session: None.
17. Adjournment

At 9:55 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC  
City Clerk

/kaw