

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC**Overview of Hazard Mitigation Plan and Disaster Debris Management Plan**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

Consider directing staff to return with a resolution adopting the City of Bellevue Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) for action at a future Council meeting. The HMP provides a detailed analysis of the natural hazards Bellevue is susceptible to and identifies strategies to mitigate risks and lessen the potential impact from future emergencies or disasters. Council will receive an annual report on progress and the HMP will be updated every five years to reflect changes in the City's hazard assessment and mitigation strategy.

Additionally, for information purposes only, staff will provide Council with details of the City of Bellevue's recently completed Disaster Debris Management Plan. Both plans seek to lessen the impact of disasters on the City of Bellevue and are critical components of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), which is due at the conclusion of this year.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider directing staff to return with a resolution adopting the City of Bellevue Hazard Mitigation Plan for action at a future Council meeting.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**Hazard Mitigation Overview**

The term "hazard mitigation" refers to actions that reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards such as earthquakes, floods, storms, and wildfires. It involves strategies such as planning, programs, projects and other activities that can mitigate the impacts of hazards. Hazard mitigation is important because it is a proactive approach to disaster management that identifies hazard risks before they occur. By recognizing vulnerabilities and implementing strategies to reduce these risks, individuals and communities can better prepare for potential disasters and lower the likelihood of property damage, injury or death. Mitigation efforts can help protect human life, reduce financial impact, support environmental preservation and ease the recovery burden after a disaster.

This HMP is intended to fulfill the requirements identified in the federal Robert T. Stafford Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5131 et seq.) which requires state and local governments to develop hazard mitigation plans as a condition for Federal Emergency Management Agency pre-disaster mitigation grant assistance. It also satisfies the hazard analysis requirement identified in WAC 118-30 and serves as the basis for the City of Bellevue's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, which is due at the conclusion of 2025. It is also intended to meet the requirements for a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

The plan was prepared in accordance with FEMA's April 2025 Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide. Staff submitted the final draft HMP to Washington State's Emergency Management Division (EMD) for review in September 2025. Once EMD completes their review, they will send the plan to FEMA for further review and approval. FEMA may require revisions to the HMP as conditions of approval. The plan does not go into effect until it formally adopted by the City of Bellevue Council and approved by FEMA.

Plan Development

The City of Bellevue HMP is the result of a multi-year planning effort, involving input from City staff, response partners and community members. The HMP plan development was funded by a FEMA pre-disaster planning grant that the City of Bellevue was awarded in April 2023.

The City of Bellevue formally began the process to develop the HMP in February 2024. A core planning team, comprised of City and consultant staff (Perteet Inc.), assembled a steering committee that included representatives from most Bellevue departments and key community and regional planning partners (i.e., Bellevue School District, Cascade Water Alliance, King County Office of Emergency Management, etc.). This committee met monthly to establish a vision, develop goals, assess risks and hazards in Bellevue and develop mitigation strategies to address the identified risks.

The plan assessed risk of eight natural hazards that may affect Bellevue: dam failure, drought, earthquake, flood, landslide, severe weather, volcano and wildfire and wildfire smoke.

Throughout the process, staff provided opportunity for Bellevue residents to engage with and provide input on the process. Committee meetings were open to the public, the city hosted two in-person events to educate residents on the plan, staff attended multiple in-person events (i.e., Earth Day at the Bellevue Botanical Gardens in April 2025), and input was solicited online via the Engaging Bellevue platform. The purpose of these outreach efforts was to solicit broad input on Bellevue's hazards and gather feedback on proposed mitigation strategies.

Once adopted, staff will provide an annual report on the City's progress on mitigation action implementation. The plan will be updated every five years to reflect changes in the city's hazard assessment and mitigation strategies.

Risk Assessment

During the planning process, a risk assessment was performed on each of the eight natural hazards. The results of the risk assessments are described in chapters 8-14. Using the results, a "Risk Ranking" of was established, based on an assessment of the following for each hazard:

- Probability

- Impact on Property
- Impact on People
- Impact on the Economy

The findings of this risk ranking can be found in the “Risk Ranking” section of the plan (specifically pg. 204). This risk ranking will be used to inform emergency planning efforts (such as the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan) and mitigation actions moving forward.

Mitigation Strategies

As a result of the planning process, the City has identified 33 mitigation strategies that can be implemented to mitigate potential damage caused by earthquakes, wildfires, floods, and a number of other natural hazards that Bellevue may be susceptible to in the future. These mitigation strategies can be found in Table 17-1 of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Identifying the strategies in this plan makes them eligible for future funding opportunities when they become available and allows the city to reduce risk and build a more resilient Bellevue.

Disaster Debris Management Plan Overview

In the face of increasing natural disasters and extreme weather events, it is critical that Bellevue enhances its preparedness and response capabilities. One example of this effort is the development of the City of Bellevue’s first Disaster Debris Management Plan (DDMP). Having this plan helps ensure that Bellevue can quickly and efficiently manage the removal, collection, and disposal of debris after a disaster. Major disasters such as earthquakes have the potential to generate catastrophic volumes of debris, including vegetative waste, construction/demolition waste, and hazardous household waste. For example, a 7.2 Seattle North earthquake has the potential to generate approximately 3,493,220 cubic yards of waste. This helps the City to minimize disruptions to public services, reduce environmental and health hazards, and facilitate faster recovery efforts.

Plan Development

In 2018, the City of Bellevue’s Transportation Department (with support from the Office of Emergency Management) began a planning initiative to develop the City’s first DDMP.

The DDMP was developed as part of a regional planning initiative. Bellevue invited all contract cities and several neighboring jurisdictions to participate. In addition to Bellevue, representatives from the following cities were part of the Disaster Debris Planning Team (DDPT):

- City of Clyde Hill
- Town of Hunts Point
- City of Medina
- City of Newcastle
- Town of Yarrow Point

The City of Bellevue contracted with Perteet Inc. to coordinate with the DDPT and develop the Disaster Debris Management Plan. A series of meetings were held with both the regional partners and departmental working group to develop and vet the plan.

The planning process was interrupted due to COVID-19; however, the plan has been signed by the

Transportation Department Director and Emergency Manager and the City of Bellevue is in the process of establishing an RFP to hire contractors to serve as debris haulers and monitors in the event of a catastrophic, debris-generating disaster. Having these contractors on call will allow for more rapid restoration of vital services and a quicker return to normalcy after a disaster.

DDMP Response

The DDMP outlines how the City of Bellevue will respond to a catastrophic disaster that generates more debris than the City can manage on its own. It includes guidance for activating contracts for debris haulers and monitors, facilitating response amongst City departments and coordinating with neighboring jurisdictions to establish a cohesive response strategy.

A key component of this plan was the establishment of roads that will be prioritized for debris-clearing efforts during a disaster. Each City was responsible for identifying these routes in advance, to ensure access to critical infrastructure and services remains open. These routes are made publicly available in the appendices of the DDMP.

Additionally, as part of the planning process, potential sites were identified in Bellevue where debris can be temporarily stored until it can be properly disposed of. Sites were evaluated by considering:

- Property ownership
- 5-acre requirement
- Distance from high population density areas
- Ingress / egress
- Adherence to local, state, and federal rules/laws/ordinances
- Proximity to natural running water or potable water wells

Based on these criteria, six potential temporary debris management sites were identified for the plan (see Appendix 11). The use of these sites will be temporary and they will be restored to their original condition after debris management activities conclude.

Having this plan helps ensure Bellevue is able to respond and recover quickly from an emergency or disaster.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Bellevue City Code (BCC):

BCC 3.98.015 directs that the City of Bellevue will “operate under the policy guidance of the City of Bellevue comprehensive emergency management plan, which shall include the following elements: response, mitigation, continuity, and recovery”.

Washington Administrative Code (WAC):

WAC 118-30 directs that each emergency organization “shall create, promulgate, and maintain a current plan which shall be based on a hazard analysis”.

Federal:

Robert T. Stafford Act, as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000, codified at 42 U.S.C. § 5131 et seq., requires state and local governments to develop hazard mitigation plans as a condition for federal pre-disaster mitigation grant assistance.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan does not mandate implementation of any mitigation actions; however, the mitigation actions identified in the plan may be eligible for grant dollars in the future, once the plan has been adopted and approved.

OPTIONS

1. Consider directing staff to return with a resolution adopting the City of Bellevue Hazard Mitigation Plan for action at a future Council meeting.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

2025 City of Bellevue Hazard Mitigation Plan and Community Wildfire Protection Plan
City of Bellevue – Disaster Debris Management Plan