



Attachment A

2026-2027 DS Workplan

Progress Update

July 15, 2026

Summary

The following is a status update of the Development Services (DS) continuous improvement workplan for 2026-2027. The workplan was shaped by feedback received through the department's strategic planning effort, customer experience program and the Bellevue Development Committee. *Building the Best Bellevue, Together*, is the vision that guides the work of the department while the mission upholds a commitment to protecting the quality, safety and integrity of the built and natural environment. The workplan uses a balanced framework focused on customer and community perspectives, process and system improvements, financial stability, and employee learning and growth.

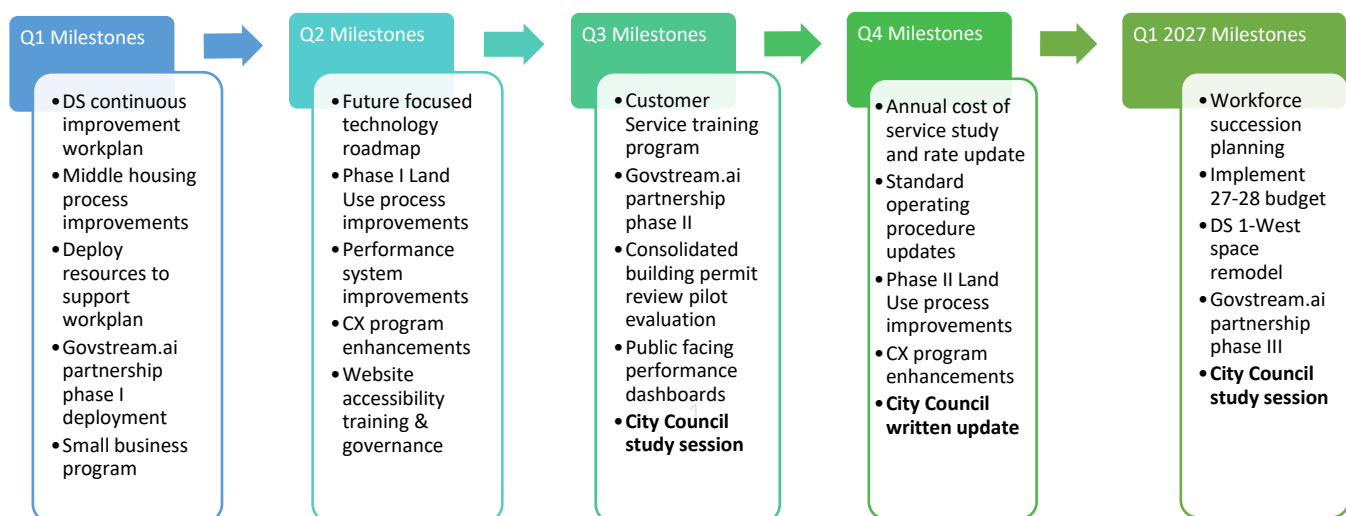
In the first half of 2026 the department has delivered the following accomplishments:

- Continuous improvement workplan established
- Middle housing permit process improvements implemented
- Deployed two AI assistants to 100+ staff members as part of Govstream.ai partnership
- Permit timelines meeting first review targets improved from 72% in 2025 to 82% in 2026
- Small business consulting services established
- Future focused technology roadmap assessment completed

Proceeding forward into the second half of 2026 and early 2027 some key changes include:

- Land Use entitlement process improvements to reduce application timelines
- Workforce investments that improve customer service, consistency and predictability
- Implementing innovative human centered AI solutions to streamline permitting
- Increasing transparency and accountability with public facing data and reports
- Enhancing customer listening capabilities that help inform future initiatives

Workplan implementation milestones and Council updates are sequenced as shown below:



2026-2027 DS Continuous Improvement Workplan

The 2026-2027 DS continuous improvement workplan is outlined as follows, with several initiatives extending into 2027, and some occurring in 2026. Yellow boxes represent the “Pre-Launch” phase, during which project scoping and planning occurs. Green boxes signify the “Execution” phase, when a project is actively worked on with subject matter experts, external partners, and policymakers when applicable. Blue boxes indicate the “Implementation” phase, when changes are in effect, and outcomes are realized.

Legend	
Pre-Launch	Scoping and planning
Execution	Active work with subject matter experts, external partners, and policy makers when applicable
Implementation	Changes are in effect, and outcomes are realized

DS Workplan 2026-2027	2026				2027			
	Q1 2026	Q2 2026	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027	Q3 2027	Q4 2027
Customer & Community Perspective								
Middle Housing Process & System Changes								
Small Business Program								
Public Facing Performance Dashboards								
Land Use Process Improvements Phase I								
Land Use Process Improvements Phase II								
Pre-approved Plans DADU's and Cottages								
Customer Experience Program Enhancements								
Internal Process & Systems Perspective								
Website Accessibility Training & Governance								
Performance Management System Improvement								
Future Focused Technology Roadmap								
Consolidated Review Building Permit Pilot								
Govstream.ai Partnership - Streamline Permitting								
Digitizing Historic Paper Records (FEMA BRIC Grant)								
Financial Perspective								
Annual Cost of Service Study and Fee Update								
27-28 Budget Process								
Employee Learning & Growth Perspective								
Customer Service Training Program								
Standardize Operating Procedures Updates								
Workforce Succession Planning (Skills/Training)								
DS 1-West Space Remodel								

Customer and Community Perspective

The customer and community perspective is a critical component to strategic direction and focuses on understanding customer needs, enhancing satisfaction, and ultimately driving successful outcomes for the community. In addition to better understanding customer needs, initiatives in this perspective area advance permit streamlining, transparency, and a more understandable process.

Middle Housing Process and System Changes

To meet community needs for more diverse housing choices, a new permit type was established for middle housing projects. The new permit seeks to streamline the approval process for projects with three to six dwellings units, such as townhouses, stacked flats and cottage housing on a single parcel. Informed by practical feedback from those who use the city's permit process, this new permit process provides more predictable steps to help projects progress efficiently.

Small Business Program

Small Business Consulting Services are designed to help small businesses *Start Smart in Bellevue*. This new, no cost service provides personalized, one-on-one consulting to help small business owners confidently navigate the city's permitting process, from due diligence support before signing a lease through grand opening celebrations.

Public Facing Performance Dashboards

This project will establish public-facing performance dashboards that report on permit timelines against established targets. Building on changes to the Local Project Review act enacted by SB 5290, this project seeks to create even more transparency and accountability to the public. By providing clear and accessible data, the project aims to build trust and ensures that stakeholders are informed about key metrics and progress the department is making towards achieving results.

Land Use Phase I and Phase II Improvements

Process improvements aimed at creating more consistency and predictability during the entitlement review process have been separated into two phases. Phase I will focus on evaluating best practices from other jurisdictions, developing staff report templates, clarification for key code interpretations, and attention on workload management. In Phase II the workplan focuses on improving the process for decision making, increasing code interpretation transparency, and clarity around submittal requirements.

Pre-Approved DADUs and Cottage Housing Program

This initiative will provide pre-approved plan options for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) and Cottage Housing with the intent of streamlining the process to build DADUs or cottage housing. The timing of this effort will align with the next building code update cycle, which is set to go into effect in May 2027.

Customer Experience Program Enhancements

This initiative seeks to build upon the existing DS customer experience program by expanding listening capabilities and reporting on results from the program to the public. Feedback is a central part of understanding the needs of customers and where improvement efforts are needed. By expanding department listening capabilities and reporting program updates to the public, the department seeks to create greater transparency and public trust.

Process and Systems Perspective

The process and systems perspective focuses on ensuring that the core processes, systems and technology within DS are high-functioning, efficient, and well-coordinated so the department can successfully meet the needs of customers, the community, and staff.

Digital Accessibility Training and Governance

This citywide initiative aims to provide staff who create content for digital use with the training and resources they need to meet digital accessibility requirements. In addition, the department intends to use this opportunity to establish a better governance structure for maintaining and updating information hosted on the city website. This will help ensure content is current, relevant, accessible and easy to use.

Performance Management System Improvement

This initiative puts in place a more structured performance management system creating clear expectations, consistent accountability, and data-driven decision making. The project establishes a unified framework for roles, metrics, and regular business reviews where data informs necessary service delivery adjustments and actions that drive results. The initiative also aligns with a citywide effort to establish regular business reviews across all departments.

Future Focused Technology Roadmap

The department's strategic planning effort uncovered the need to conduct a thorough assessment of current technology systems and develop a long-term plan to modernize systems and optimize business processes. With the help of an outside consultant, this initiative seeks to provide a clear path towards modernizing permitting technology, reducing friction for staff and customers, and aligning future investments with organizational priorities and regional alliances.

Consolidated Review Building Permit Pilot

This pilot permit review project began in September 2025 and will conclude in the summer of 2026. The project establishes a new streamlined review process for single family building permit applications aimed at replacing independent parallel reviews with a consolidated review process.

The project seeks to improve coordination across all departments and ultimately reduce the number of revision cycles, cutting down on overall application time. The evaluation phase of the project will help determine lessons learned and next steps.

Govstream.ai Partnership – Streamline Permitting

Bellevue’s partnership with Govstream.ai is a public-private design collaboration focused on streamlining the city’s permitting process through responsible, human-centered AI. Together, the City of Bellevue and Govstream.ai aim to cut application resubmissions, improve customer experience, and support broader housing and economic development goals by applying AI where it removes the most friction. This includes applying AI solutions during feasibility, application and permit review stages of the development process, allowing issues to be surfaced earlier, reducing rework and ultimately decreasing the overall time it takes to obtain a permit.

Digital Historic Paper Records (FEMA BRIC Grant)

In early 2025 the city accepted a grant through the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program to digitize historic paper permit records. The project includes digitizing approximately 85% of the city’s existing building permit paper records to improve code administration and mitigate hazards associated with long-term storage of large format plan sets. The project also makes the records easier to access, cutting down on administrative time and costs associated with storage and public records requests.

Financial Perspective

The Financial Perspective focuses on ensuring Development Services has the resources, resilience, and sustainable funding strategies necessary to deliver high-quality services through economic and development cycles.

Annual Cost of Service Study and Fee Update

Development Services is a line of city business that must adjust to development cycles and operate within a revenue stream primarily generated by permit fees. Each year a cost-of-service study is initiated using tools that assess service levels, financial performance, and forecast changes in development activity. The analysis and resulting fee adjustments are essential to sustaining service levels, maintaining revenues to support operations, and ensuring competitive fees in our region.

2027-2028 Budget Process

During the biennium budget process DS prioritizes investments that enable quick response to changes in workload, performance or revenues generated from permit fees as Bellevue travels through development cycles. In addition, investments in ongoing process improvements and future continuous improvement work across the department will continue to be a focus.

Employee Learning and Growth Perspective

The Employee Learning & Growth perspective focuses on building the competencies and culture needed for staff to succeed, emphasizing continuous learning, shared leadership, and a strong sense of belonging. This perspective area aims to foster an inclusive leadership culture and improve staff retention by supporting employee development and clear career growth pathways.

Customer Service Training Program

In coordination with an outside consultant the department will develop a continuous and ongoing customer service program. The program will be designed to incorporate the city's core value of exceptional public service by equipping staff with the skills and competencies to facilitate timely and appropriate development in a complex regulatory environment. This initiative will also put in place ongoing staff training and a development plan for onboarding new hires in the future.

Standard Operating Procedure Updates

This initiative aligns operational practices across permit review teams, establishes clear escalation and decision-making pathways, and strengthens transparency for both staff and customers. The updates will address how comments are issued, tracked, and resolved; clarifies expectations for code interpretation; creates structured protocols for staff transitions and major project communication; and will reinforce a facilitative service delivery approach. These updates will ensure applicants experience a more reliable, timely, and coordinated review process.

Workforce Succession Planning

The workforce succession planning efforts focus on building a future ready organization by strengthening employee learning and growth opportunities. This initiative introduces structured learning pathways that help employees gain the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to advance into future roles. These learning pathways are designed to support long-term operational stability, and create clear, supportive development routes that empower staff to grow their careers while contributing to a more resilient and adaptable workforce.

DS 1-West Space Remodel

The DS 1-West space remodel project will modernize and reconfigure the first-floor workspace to better support Development Services' long-term operational needs. The remodel's overarching goal is to create a future ready environment that enhances employee experience, supports cross department collaboration, and optimizes the available workspace for DS staff.