

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

June 2, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmember Briar

1. Call to Order

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

→ Councilmember Nieuwenhuis moved to excuse Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmember Briar from the meeting. Councilmember Robinson seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers except Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmember Briar were present. Councilmember Robinson led the flag salute.

(a) LGBTQIA2S+ Pride Month Proclamation

Councilmember Bhargava read the proclamation recognizing June 2026 as LGBTQIA2S+ Pride Month in Bellevue. He encouraged everyone to appreciate the meaningful contributions of LGBTQIA2S+ community members and to participate in Pride Month events and opportunities that celebrate inclusion and belonging.

Corrinalyn Guyette, President of the Board of Directors, Eastside Pride PNW, thanked the Council and accepted the proclamation. She commented on the alarming surge in anti-transgender legislation across the country along with violence and coordinated efforts to roll back hard-won civil rights for everyone. She thanked Councilmember Robinson for supporting the Paws and Pride Dog Walk to be held on June 6 at Downtown Park and she thanked the City for hosting the June 3 Pride Month celebration at City Hall.

(b) National Gun Violence Awareness Day Proclamation

Councilmember Robinson read the proclamation recognizing June 5, 2026, as National Gun Violence Awareness Day in Bellevue. She encouraged everyone to honor those affected by gun violence and to support efforts to strengthen community safety.

Karen Kline, representing Everytown for Gun Safety, said she is a survivor of gun violence. Mark, an 8th grader at Odle Middle School, encouraged gun safety and gun storage education, and another group member commented in Spanish.

3. Approval of Agenda

Responding to Deputy Mayor Hamilton, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Arredondo said the Council appreciates public comments and supports everyone's right to express themselves. 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) Raymond Zhao said he appreciated the speed limit reductions on certain streets, especially in the Crossroads and BelRed areas. He encouraged continued investments in multimodal infrastructure, signal improvements and traffic calming measures.
- (b) Anne Clark, a Vasa Park resident, expressed concern regarding traffic speeds on SE 34th Street, where there is a school bus zone with no sidewalks. She noted she was seriously injured as a pedestrian in the past when she was hit by a car. She said that accident would have killed a child. She expressed support for traffic safety investments.
- (c) Steve Fantle expressed support for the Vision Zero program and the City's multifaceted approach to improve traffic safety including reduced speed limits and camera enforcement. He said there are, however, additional opportunities for improving road safety that are being overlooked, including in the Factoria and Somerset neighborhoods.
- (d) Alex Tsimerman opined that the City does not treat minorities and immigrants well. He objected to being removed from Council meetings in the past. He said he has received many tickets from the Bellevue Police Department that have cost him a significant amount of money.

- (e) Guillermo Rivera, speaking on behalf of Eastside for All and Safe Haven, said the group represents more than 35 organizations. He described efforts to assist residents in response to increased immigration enforcement. He thanked Deputy Mayor Hamilton and Councilmember Sumadiwirya for attending one of their recent events. Mr. Rivera noted that he sent written comments to the Council.
- (f) Heather Kelley expressed concern regarding the fear and disruption in the community caused by federal immigration enforcement. She said at least 12 Bellevue residents have been detained and taken away in the past two weeks, including one man as he parked at St. Louise Church on Sunday.
- (g) Lyn Frandsen expressed concern regarding pedestrian safety on SE 34th Street.
- (h) Dr. Varinder Sidhu expressed concerns regarding plans for a safe parking program in a residential area and the potential impact on traffic volumes, property values and overall quality of life.
- (i) Joe Kunzler commented on concerns about another citizen who has been banned from Council meetings. He said he would email the Council with more details.

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

6. Report of the City Manager

City Manager Diane Carlson highlighted three items on the consent calendar related to the Grand Connection Crossing project and noted the written report regarding the Community Crisis Assistance Team (CCAT) under agenda item 13.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: None.

8. Consent Calendar

→ Councilmember Bhargava moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Robinson seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 5-0, and the following item was approved:

- (a) Council Minutes
Minutes of May 12, 2026 Regular Meeting
- (b) Ordinance No. 6920 approving the vacation of a dead-end portion of NE 55th Street located on the east side of the Bellevue Golf Course.
- (c) Resolution No. 10635 authorizing the execution of the Professional Services Agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc. in an amount up to \$3,172,354.29 plus all

applicable taxes, to advance design to 90% for the NE Spring Boulevard Zone 3 Project - 124th Avenue NE to 130th Avenue NE Project (CIP Plan No. PW-R-210).

- (d) Resolution No. 10636 authorizing execution of a Heavy Civil General Contractor/Construction Manager (GC/CM) Contract with Kraemer North America, LLC for the I-405 Crossing - Downtown to Eastrail project (CIP Plan No. G-126) in an amount up to \$1,921,842.04, plus all applicable taxes, for initial performance of Preconstruction Services within the General Contractor - Construction Manager (GC-CM) project delivery framework governed by Chapter 39.10 RCW.
 - (e) Resolution No. 10637 authorizing execution of a Professional Services Supplemental Agreement (SA01) with HNTB Corporation in an amount up to \$5,765,592.51, plus all applicable taxes, to provide owner advisory, preconstruction, and project management services within the General Contractor - Construction Manager (GC-CM) project delivery framework governed by Chapter 39.10 RCW for the I-405 Crossing - Downtown to Eastrail project (CIP Plan No. G-126).
 - (f) Resolution No. 10638 authorizing execution of a Professional Services Supplemental Agreement (SA04) with WSP USA, Inc. in an amount up to \$15,371,944.76, plus all applicable taxes, to develop final design and permitting, up to issuance of construction documents within the General Contractor - Construction Manager (GC-CM) project delivery framework governed by Chapter 39.10 RCW for the I-405 Crossing - Downtown to Eastrail project (CIP Plan No. G-126).
 - (g) Resolution No. 10639 authorizing the execution of the Eastside Public Safety Communications Agency Joint Board Interlocal Agreement.
 - (h) Resolution No. 10640 authorizing the purchase and installation of new play equipment at Lewis Creek Community Park, and demolition of existing play equipment utilizing the cooperative agreement pricing through the King County Directors Association (KCDA) with equipment made by AllPlay, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$510,836, plus all applicable taxes.
 - (i) Resolution No. 10641 authorizing the purchase and installation of new play equipment at Lake Hills Community Park and demolition of existing play equipment utilizing the cooperative agreement pricing through the King County Directors Association (KCDA) with equipment made by AllPlay, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$562,802, plus all applicable taxes.
9. Public Hearing: None.
10. Study Session Items

(a) Utility Bill Assistance Program Expansion

City Manager Carlson introduced discussion regarding the utility bill assistance program.

Lucy Liu, Director, Utilities Department, said staff is asking the Council to consider incorporating the Environmental Services Commission's recommendations for expanding the utility bill assistance program into the submitted budget to be considered as part of the upcoming biennial budget. The City currently offers utility bill discounts and rebates to low-income senior adults and disabled residents and a utility tax rebate to low-income multifamily and single-family residents. Short-term assistance includes emergency assistance and the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program waiving two months to four months of utility bills. Ms. Liu said approximately 1,100 households are enrolled in a utility bill assistance program.

Scott Edwards, Deputy Director, commented on the need for utility bill assistance, noting that approximately 11,000 low-income households in Bellevue do not qualify for long-term bill assistance. He described community outreach involving partnerships with community organizations, social media campaigns, news releases, Bellevue TV, cultural outreach advisors and other partners and methods.

Matt Hobson, Fiscal Manager, described four options for expanding long-term utility bill assistance and their impact on overall rates for all customers. The Environmental Services Commission recommends Option B1 providing varying levels of discounts (35-70 percent) to all households earning 80 percent of the area median income (AMI) or below. This option results in an overall rate increase of 1.2 percent for all monthly residential customers. Mr. Hobson said the commission recommended aligning the short-term utility assistance program requirements with the long-term options. The commission also recommended expanding the solid waste long-term assistance program to multifamily residential households.

Ken Wan, Chair, Environmental Services Commission, said the commission spent considerable time reviewing ways to enhance the utility bill assistance program. The commission supports expanding eligibility for the program to all low-income households and aligning the solid waste assistance program with the bill assistance programs for water, sewer and stormwater utilities. Chair Wan said the commission believes the recommendation strikes an appropriate balance between affordability, equity and responsible utility stewardship while helping ensure that essential utility services remain accessible to everyone.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff and the commission for their work and concurred with the need for assistance to more households. He said the analysis of the four options was helpful for understanding the tradeoffs. He expressed support for Option B1 as recommended. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Chair Wan commented on the criteria and goals considered by the commission for a balanced approach.

Councilmember Bhargava thanked everyone for their work. Responding to Mr. Bhargava, Mr. Hobson described how staff developed the different scenarios and estimated rate impacts. Councilmember Bhargava expressed support for the recommendation.

Councilmember Robinson thanked staff and the commission for the recommendation. She said she hopes the City will be able to receive grants to assist in financing utilities infrastructure.

Responding to Councilmember Sumadiwirya, Mr. Edwards said he would follow up with information regarding the process and timeline for applying for emergency assistance. In further response to Ms. Sumadiwirya, Mr. Edwards noted staff's plans for public education regarding the assistance programs and the opportunity for every customer to donate to the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton expressed support for the recommendation and commented on the challenge of trying to maintain sustainable utility rates. He wondered whether it would be possible to use Council Contingency funds to further enhance the utility bill assistance program. Ms. Liu said staff would follow up with an analysis of potential options for an additional one-time contribution to the program.

- Councilmember Nieuwenhuis moved to direct staff to incorporate the Environmental Services Commission's utility bill assistance program expansion recommendations into the submitted budget and utility rates to be considered by the Council as part of the upcoming biennial budget process. Councilmember Robinson seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

At 7:32 p.m., Deputy Mayor Hamilton declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:42 p.m.

(b) Vision Zero Progress and Safe Speeds Bellevue Direction

City Manager Carlson introduced discussion regarding the Vision Zero program and Safe Speeds Bellevue recommendation.

Chris Long, Assistant Director for Mobility Operations, Transportation Department, commented on the positive impact of reducing speed limits on arterial streets. He requested Council direction to return with an ordinance to amend Bellevue City Code 11.32 to adjust speed limits in accordance with the Safe Speeds Bellevue recommendation.

Franz Loewenherz, Mobility Planning and Solutions Manager, recalled that the Council adopted the Safe System approach in 2020 to advance the City's Vision Zero goals. He presented information regarding fatal and serious injury crashes between 2016 and 2025 in Bellevue, other cities and statewide. Contributing factors include excessive speeding, disregard for traffic signs or signals and distracted driving.

Mr. Loewenherz highlighted Vision Zero activities in 2025 including securing \$1.8 million in grants for citywide safety projects. The City implemented the Safe Routes to School program

and updated micromobility regulations. Mr. Loewenherz described infrastructure improvements completed in 2025 and highlighted key 2026 Vision Zero activities including new speed safety cameras.

John Murphy, Neighborhood Transportation Services Manager, said the Safe Speeds Bellevue program focuses on evaluating speed limits on the street network that are currently posted at 30 miles per hour or higher. He said lower speeds decrease the frequency and severity of crashes. He said reducing the speed limits recently on a few arterials has reduced speeding. He highlighted the City's extensive community engagement process to solicit input regarding the Safe Speeds Bellevue program. He said there was strong community support for lower speed limits and robust speed enforcement.

Benjamin Wright, Senior Transportation Engineer, presented a citywide map with staff's proposed speed limits and noted the 20 miles per hour speed limit near Old Bellevue and Downtown Park. He said staff is requesting Council action on June 23 to revise the code. He said staff will coordinate with the Bellevue Police Department regarding the speed limit changes and enforcement. Staff will continue to explore and implement additional tools including technology, traffic calming and intersection crossings.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton, liaison to the Transportation Commission, thanked staff for their work and the thorough presentation. He said people walking and biking are disproportionately represented in fatal and serious injury crashes. He expressed concern regarding excessive speeding and said that any increase in travel time from a lower speed limit is worth the tradeoff of enhanced safety. He expressed support for staff's recommendation to adjust speed limits.

Responding to Councilmember Robinson, Mr. Wright said the City of Redmond is currently conducting a study of their speed limits, which will affect areas in northeast Bellevue. In further response, Mr. Murphy said staff does not anticipate that the changes will cause issues with cut-through traffic. He encouraged the public to report any concerns to the City, however.

Councilmember Sumadiwirya thanked staff for the presentation and expressed appreciation to Mr. Murphy for standing in the rain to speak with Vasa neighborhood residents regarding their traffic safety concerns. She thanked police officers for their participation as well. Responding to Ms. Sumadiwirya, Mr. Murphy said he could provide more detailed information regarding the community engagement and participants.

Responding to Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Loewenherz said he would follow up with more information regarding incidents and fatalities on the high-injury network. Mr. Nieuwenhuis commented on the importance of speed enforcement and Mr. Loewenherz confirmed that the police department has launched an emphasis on speed enforcement. Mr. Nieuwenhuis encouraged involving schools and students in providing input. He expressed support for staff's recommended speed limit changes.

Councilmember Bhargava expressed support for staff's recommendation and commented on the importance of enhancing safety and maintaining multimodal options. Responding to Mr. Bhargava, Mr. Long said the City received approximately 800 responses to the community

survey. Councilmember Bhargava commented on the importance of educating the public about the speed limit changes. Mr. Murphy concurred and said signage will be enhanced as well. In further response, Mr. Loewenherz said there will be a 30-day warning period before new traffic cameras begin issuing tickets.

→ Councilmember Bhargava moved to direct staff to return with an ordinance to revise Bellevue City Code 11.32 to adjust speed limits in accordance with the Safe Speeds Bellevue recommendation. Councilmember Nieuwenhuis seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

11. Land Use Reports: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions: None.

13. Written Reports

(a) Community Crisis Assistance Team (CCAT) 2023-2024 Report

14. Unfinished Business: None.

15. New Business: None.

16. Executive Session: None.

17. Adjournment

At 8:34 p.m., Deputy Mayor Hamilton declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

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