

2022 Levy for Parks and Open Space

2026 Progress Report





View of Lake Sammamish from future park site.

From the Director

Dear supporters of Bellevue parks,

I am pleased to share this progress report for Bellevue’s 2022 Parks and Open Space Levy. Bellevue’s residents have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to the long-term health and vitality of our “City in a Park.” The projects identified in this report illustrate how the city is applying your investment to develop a 21st- century park, open space, and trail system for each and every community member.

Over the past couple of years, Bellevue Parks & Community Services has continued to focus on community priorities for the park system, including additional trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities. Guided by the 2022 Parks and Open Space System Plan (bellevuewa.gov/park-plan), we are also working to provide parks and trails in underserved areas of the city, enhance public waterfront access along Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, invest in emerging sports, and develop large-scale community facilities—such as an aquatic center. You’ll see these priorities reflected in the following focus areas and projects.

We look forward to sharing our progress with you as we continue to implement levy-funded projects over the next few years.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to Bellevue’s parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

Michael Shiosaki,
Director, Bellevue Parks & Community Services



**Bellevue
Parks and
Open Space
LEVY**



Canoeing at Enatai Beach Park.



Mercer Slough blueberry farm.



Planning for Meydenbauer Bay Park phase 2.

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Picking blueberries at Mercer Slough.



Visitors enjoy the dahlia display bed at the Bellevue Botanical Garden.

Introduction

In November 2022, Bellevue voters approved a Levy for Parks and Open Space to expand investment in Bellevue’s park and open space system. Revenues generated through an increase in property tax over nine years will be used to support new parks and projects and enhance overall maintenance of the park system.

The 2022 Parks and Open Space Levy builds on a long history of bond and levy support for the park system. Previously, voter-approved initiatives have funded expansions of Bellevue’s parks and open space system, with several measures passing since the city’s incorporation in 1953. This includes initiatives approved in 1956, 1965, 1970, 1977, 1981, 1984, and 1988, as well as the 2008 Parks and Natural Areas Levy.

As part of the 2022 levy proposition, the City of Bellevue has committed to using these funds to ensure that Bellevue remains a “City in a Park” for generations to come. Specifically, the levy focuses funding on seven key areas. These include:

- preserving open space, greenways, and wildlife corridors;
- developing trails, community parks, and neighborhood parks;
- investing in emerging sports opportunities, off-leash areas, and recreation;
- planning major community facilities like aquatics and cross-cultural centers;
- restoring and developing waterfront parks and protecting water quality in Bellevue’s lakes and streams;
- acquiring and developing parks and open space in the Bel-Red and Wilburton areas; and
- maintaining improvements consistent with Bellevue Parks’ standards.

In the three years since the levy was approved, the city has completed a variety of park, trail, and open space projects in Bellevue neighborhoods. This progress report highlights these projects.

Together, the levy’s contribution to Bellevue’s park system will help us achieve our vision of a community where everyone can connect to each other and to nature through experiences that help them to live, grow, and thrive.

Bellevue Parks & Community Services: Who We Are

Vision:

In Bellevue everyone can connect to each other and to nature through experiences that help them to live, grow, and thrive.

Mission:

We build a healthy community through an integrated system of exceptional parks, natural areas, recreation, arts and culture, and a broad base of community services.

Equity: A System of Fairness

Equity acknowledges and removes disparities in opportunities, power, and resources so that everyone can reach their full potential to thrive. Bellevue Parks & Community Services practices equity, which is the responsibility of every individual in the department. Equitable access is a right, not a privilege, and is fundamental to our mission of serving all people. Through equitable policies and practices, we cultivate ties that connect people to the fabric of our community.

List of Levy Projects by Category



Bridle Trails Valley Creek Park, a new neighborhood park completed in 2024. Photo by Nate Gowdy.



Maintenance and Operations

Annual levy funding for maintenance and operations has allowed Parks & Community Services to restore select maintenance services at Bellevue's parks and park facilities to meet the city's high standards for care, appearance, and safety. This includes:

- restoration of maintenance levels at 11 neighborhood parks,
- parks with seasonal restroom closures (about half of those in the system) are now open and maintained year-round,
- funding for regular asphalt repair to parking lots and paved trails,
- monthly sweeping of parking lots,
- funding for the waterfront park geese deterrent program, and
- additional materials and supplies for community parks and community centers.



Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors and Trails

Coal Creek Natural Area Acquisition

The city, in partnership with the nonprofit conservation organization Trust for Public Land, preserved a key connection between Coal Creek Natural Area and Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park through the 2025 purchase of 12.2 acres of land within this important wildlife corridor. The site protects tributaries of Coal Creek and has high potential for ecological conservation and restoration, an expanded trail network, and interpretation of the environmental history of the site, including its role in coal mining. Funded both by the Parks and Open Space Levy and a \$14.3 million grant from the King County Conservation Futures program, this addition to Bellevue’s open space system is a result of strong local support and partnerships.

Vasa Open Space Acquisition

A 5.7-acre parcel along Vasa Creek was purchased in 2024 from the Vasa Park Resort, which has been operating as a private recreation site along the shores of Lake Sammamish for nearly 100 years. This upland site, located south of the primary resort property, protects steeply sloped and wooded terrain with mature western red-cedar, Douglas-fir, and bigleaf maple canopy. The addition expands the existing “Norelius Property & 41.5 Open Space” to a protected area of 19 acres. This open space linkage will allow for additional habitat conservation, passive recreation, an expanded trail network, and possible future connections to the Mountains to Sound Greenway and West Lake Sammamish Parkway trails. In addition to the levy, contributions from the 2020–2025 King County Parks Levy and a grant from the King County Conservation Futures Program helped cover the cost of the acquisition.

Trail Projects

The city continues to expand and enhance the trail network, connecting open spaces and providing recreational access to the many natural areas and greenways throughout Bellevue. Levy funding supported expansions in the Coal Creek trail network at the Coal Creek Ridgeline Trail, the replacement of three bridges at Lower Coal Creek (construction scheduled for winter 2025–2026), and an expansion to connect into the Forest Ridge neighborhood (currently in design and permitting).



Hiking at Mercer Slough Nature Park.



Toddler Trails program at Lewis Creek Park.



Trail at Sunrise Park.



New property acquisition at Coal Creek Natural Area.

Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors and Trails continued

Design and permitting are underway for improvements to the Forest Drive Trailhead, in coordination with the closure and upgrade of Red Cedar Trailhead by King County Wastewater. These trailheads will re-open with improved accessibility, parking, wayfinding, and an accessible trail at Red Cedar Trailhead.

Several projects for the trail network are in the planning and feasibility stages. An interpretive boardwalk at Mercer Slough Farmstand is in the feasibility phase and will connect farmstand-goers to the blueberry fields and provide a trailhead entrance on the western side of Mercer Slough. The city is also working to acquire the necessary easements to develop a greenbelt and trail network at 168th Ave NE Open Space, an area that lacks walkable access to parks. Bellevue Parks & Community Services continues to collaborate with King County Parks on Eastrail—the regional trail running north-south through the city —and is constructing, planning, or supporting improved connections to the trail.



Community Parks

Bellevue Airfield Park Master Plan Update

At more than 27 acres, Bellevue Airfield Park is one of the few remaining undeveloped large tracts of park land in Bellevue. In September 2024, the City Council adopted the updated Bellevue Airfield Park Master Plan, which includes a new aquatic facility, eight pickleball courts, a basketball court, a multi-use flex field, a children’s playground with multiple play zones, and a splash pad. To meet community goals for passive as well as active recreation, the plan also features accessible picnic facilities in the wooded northwest area of the site, improved trail connections, and a terraced lawn on the sloped area south of the existing stormwater ponds. The architectural and engineering designs are underway to support the first phase of construction for the park and aquatic center.



Newport Hills Woodlawn Park, funded by Bellevue’s 2008 Parks and Natural Areas Levy. Photo by Jeff Faddis.



Neighborhood Park Development

Ashwood Park Master Plan Update

The master planning process for Ashwood Park began in spring 2024 and focused on updating the park’s 1990 master plan to reflect public input and significant population growth in the downtown area. In spring 2025, the City Council concurred with the design recommended by the community and the Parks & Community Services Board. The updated park design includes a large open lawn area, terraced seating, a play area, an off-leash dog area, picnic shelters, restroom, and a parking lot located off NE 12th Street. The City Council adopted the updated plan in December 2025, and the project has entered the design and permitting phase.



Planning for the new Eastgate Commons park site.

Eastgate Commons Park Design

The 2022 Parks and Open Space System Plan identified significant gaps in park facilities in the Eastgate neighborhood. A design process for a new park site began in summer 2024, and the Parks & Community Services Board recommended a preferred design that was reviewed by the City Council in November 2025. The plan for this corner site features a play area for multiple ages, a flexible lawn space, a covered shelter, and picnic tables.



North Bellevue Community Center’s Sounds of Swing dance.



Robinswood Tennis Center tennis program.



Bellevue's current aquatic center is heavily used by individuals and teams.



Youth soccer program.



Recreation and Community Facilities

Aquatic Center Design

A new aquatic center at Bellevue Airfield Park will help the city meet its growing aquatic needs and support affordable access to aquatic programming for all community members. The City Council-recommended aquatic facility concept for Bellevue Airfield Park is approximately 130,000 square feet and includes a 50-meter pool, separate deep-water tank, and pools dedicated to therapy, lessons and programs, and leisure amenities. Dry side spaces will support both aquatic programming and community use and will feature a fitness area, community use rooms, lockers, spectator seating, and other facilities. More detailed architectural and engineering designs are underway in alignment with the first phase of design for Bellevue Airfield Park.



Meydenbauer Bay Park, phase 1 complete.



Waterfront Restoration and Development

Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase 2 Planning and Design

Parks & Community Services is moving ahead with the next phase of development for Meydenbauer Bay Park, increasing public shoreline access at one of the community's oldest parks. After two years of planning and public outreach, in summer 2025 the City Council directed staff to proceed with construction documentation and permitting to develop phase 2. In this next phase, the park will continue to grow, providing new viewing areas, connections between downtown and the waterfront, and expanded recreation amenities. Park features will include the Meydenbauer Bay Park Gateway Plaza at Main and 100th Ave SE, new parking areas, and an interim shoreline promenade expansion. Design and permitting are expected to take approximately 3 to 4 years before construction begins.

Chism Beach Park Shoreline Renovation

Feasibility and cost analysis are underway for a renovation of the Chism Beach Park waterfront. This project will include ecological restoration of the shoreline to reduce erosion and support salmonid habitat, renovation of the public beach area for improved accessibility, and upgraded lifeguard and storage facilities, among other amenities. Future development will likely be phased based on budget.

Lake Sammamish Property Stabilization

Work is ongoing to prepare the city's newly acquired properties along Lake Sammamish for future planning and public access. This includes the demolition of six existing structures on four sites, which will begin in early 2026.



Pickleball at North Bellevue Community Center.



Off-leash dog area at Wildwood Park.



Foot golf at Crossroads Park.



Emerging Sports and Off-Leash Areas

Pop-Up Off-Leash Program

Parks & Community Services has initiated a pop-up program to test accessible and safe off-leash sites for pets and their owners. The goal of the program is to identify and recommend favorable locations for permanent off-leash area use. The 2023 pilot program resulted in permanently established off-leash areas at Crossroads Community Park, Wilburton Hill Community Park, and Wildwood Park. The temporary off-leash area at City Hall remains in use, with ongoing testing and evaluation of new locations for pop-up off-leash areas.

Pickleball Improvements

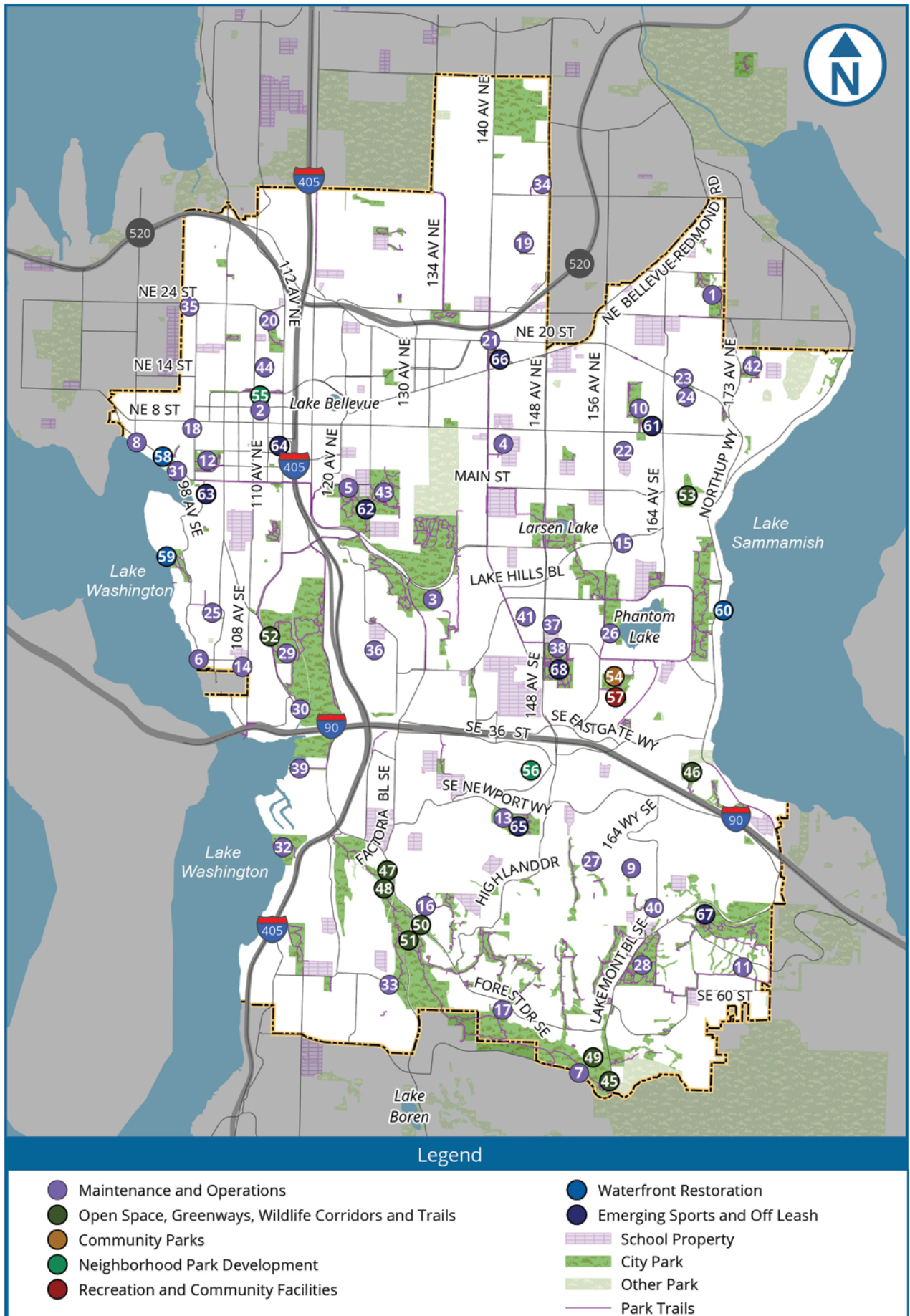
To address the growing popularity of pickleball, new striping and pickleball nets have been provided for 32 shared sport courts across the park system, including at Eastgate, Crossroads, Highland, and Lakemont Parks.

Cricket Improvements at Robinswood Community Park

The synthetic turf athletic fields at Robinswood Community Park are at the end of their lifecycle. As part of the turf replacement, the city is installing a cricket pitch in addition to the park's multi-use markings for soccer and lacrosse. Construction started late 2025 and will wrap up in spring 2026.

Park Map

Park map key on pages 14-15



Park Map Key

Maintenance & Operations

- 1 Ardmore Park
- 2 Ashwood Park
- 3 Bannerwood Sports Park
- 4 Bellevue Aquatic Center
- 5 Bellevue Botanical Garden
- 6 Chesterfield Park
- 7 Cinder Mine Trailhead,
Coal Creek Natural Area
- 8 Clyde Beach Park
- 9 Collingwood Mini Park
- 10 Crossroads Park
- 11 Deer Run Park
- 12 Downtown Park
- 13 Eastgate Park
- 14 Enatai Neighborhood Park
- 15 Evergreen Park
- 16 Forest Hill Neighborhood Park
- 17 Forest Glen Neighborhood Park
- 18 Goddard Mini Park
- 19 Goldsmith Neighborhood Park
- 20 Hidden Valley Park
- 21 Highland Park
- 22 Hillaire Park
- 23 Ivanhoe Park
- 24 Ivanhoe Sportsfield
- 25 Killarney Glen Park
- 26 Lake Hills Greenbelt Phantom Lake
- 27 Lattawood Park
- 28 Lewis Creek Park
- 29 Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm
- 30 Mercer Slough Sweyolocken Boat Ramp
- 31 Meydenbauer Bay Park
- 32 Newcastle Beach Park
- 33 Newport Hills Park
- 34 North Bellevue Community Center
- 35 Northwest Arts Center
- 36 Norwood Village Neighborhood Park
- 37 Robinswood Sportsfield North
- 38 Robinswood Community Park
- 39 SE 40th Street Boat Launch
- 40 Silverleaf Park
- 41 Spiritwood Park
- 42 Tam O'Shanter Park
- 43 Wilburton Hill Park
- 44 Zumdieck Park

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48 Lower Coal Creek Replacement Bridges

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51 Red Cedar Trailhead

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62 Wilburton Hill Park Off-Leash Area

63 Wildwood Park Off-Leash Area

64 City Hall Temporary Off-Leash Area

65 Eastgate Park Pickleball

66 Highland Park Pickleball

67 Lakemont Park Pickleball

68 Robinswood Park Cricket



Downtown Movies in the Park.



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