

Council Information Requests

STAFF COLLECT QUESTIONS FROM EACH COUNCIL MEETING ON THE BUDGET. THIS VERSION IS UPDATED AS OF THE OCTOBER 29, 2024, COUNCIL MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT COUNCILMEMBER COMMUNICATIONS.

COUNCIL REQUEST TRACKING

The following table tracks the requests received during the budget deliberations by the date and order they were received. The pages that follow have the question listed as noted. You may also click on the number of the question to be taken directly to the answer.

If staff has misunderstood your question, did not answer the question or if you have additional questions, please contact John Resha at 425-452-7863 or JResha@BellevueWA.gov.

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September 17, 2024 Council Meeting

Mayor Robinson

1. Can you please explain again why this biennial budget is smaller than our last one?

Answer: The 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget is smaller compared to the current Amended 2023-2024 Budget due to two primary factors. First, the City has historically appropriated (budgeted) the cash set aside for reserves, which would show that the City was intending to spend a much larger amount than expected. The City's reserves are set aside for several purposes from health benefits, public safety pensions, land acquisition, a significant natural disaster, among others and, would only be accessed in rare circumstances. Therefore, budgeting them along with planned spending makes it harder to hold the City accountable for outcomes committed to in the budget. As a result, staff has omitted them from the budget.

The second reason is for what financial professionals refer to as, "double budgeting" which is when the City budgets for services conducted by and then received by two departments within the City. For example, City departments paying the Information Technology Department (ITD) for its services would result in budgeting the costs of providing the services in ITD and within the other departments as an expense for those services. In reviewing the City's Comprehensive Financial Policies and what is mandated by accounting standards, staff decided to eliminate these historic practices in most of the City's budget with exceptions for the City's utilities and Capital Improvement Programs (CIP).

The result of these two actions is a more streamlined budget which more clearly defines the planned spending occurring in the 2025-2026 biennium.

2. Is there a way to fund Lifespring's request for rental assistance funding? Can we use council contingency? What is the process for that?

Answer: The decision to allocate council contingency to this purpose is a viable option for the Council. The City Manager will continue to work with Council to intake priorities for the contingency and, to evaluate specific impacts. The Council may submit amendments during the process however, past practice has been to have amendments voted on by Council during the meeting immediately prior to budget adoption so the Council can communicate those approved amendments as part of final direction to bring back the budget for adoption.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

3. How does the budget prioritize essential services while considering inflationary pressures?

Answer: The Preliminary Budget balances the challenges of providing essential services while also considering the impact of inflation on the costs of providing those services born by the City as well as being mindful about that burden being felt by Bellevue residents and businesses. In doing so, the Preliminary Budget limits revenue adjustments to the 1 percent property tax adjustment and cost recovery for the development services and utilities lines of business. When taking into account the costs of providing services, the City has taken on additional costs of personnel by adjusting salaries and wages to remain an employer of choice while limiting the growth of nonpersonnel costs to existing contractual obligations and similar arrangements.

4. Can you explain how the community input received at the July public hearing was incorporated into the preliminary budget? Reaching our environmental goal, bike, innovation/smart city, human resources and traffic.

Answer: The feedback received on July 9 during the initial public hearing confirmed the path taken by staff during the budget development process to further sustain these investments and, where possible, accelerate their delivery. As will be detailed more in the October 8 presentation on the Safe and Efficient Transportation System Strategic Target Area, there are many multimodal projects that have been designed and will initiate construction in 2025 or where public engagement efforts will bring the community in to prioritize the next round of investments for improving connections for people walking, biking and rolling throughout the City. Some of the highlights include neighborhood safety and mobility, continued work on the Mountains to Sound Greenway, Eastrail connections, 130th Avenue NE, among others.

Additionally, staff heard the continued engagement around climate change and the City's role in curbing greenhouse emissions. As a result, the Preliminary 2025-2026 Preliminary budget sustains and implements the investments made within the 2023-2024 Amended Budget. These investments include programmatic staffing and resources to implement the community-facing aspects of the Environmental Stewardship Plan (ESP). Further invests in greening the City's operations with projects for EV charging, greening the fleet, including an electric fire truck, as well as retrofitting the Bellevue Service Center building with more efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems. Investments in the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) will be part of the High Quality Built and Natural Environment presentation on October 15.

5. If we had unlimited resources, what innovative projects or services could be included in this budget to make Bellevue an even better place to live.

Answer: There is always the opportunity to do more as a city and the resources needed fully support city residents and businesses are incalculable. Therefore,

there are always good ideas that won't make it into the budget due to resource constraints. However, with this 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget, staff have put forth their best answer in balancing the resources available with the near-term and long-term needs of the city. To keep innovation at the forefront of budget processes going forward, proposed in this budget is the establishment of an innovation fund to allow city staff to pilot new innovative approaches to service delivery. Governed by a new multi-departmental steering team, pilots would be approved by the steering team and seeks to fund 2-5 innovative pilots per biennium, giving staff the ability to try new technologies, systems, and processes. If successful, staff can propose ongoing funding sources in subsequent budget cycles.

6. **Beyond traditional sources of revenue, are there any alternative funding strategies we should consider to support our budget goals?**

Answer: State law provides the City with opportunities to receive additional revenues from its existing revenue sources and others not pursued by the City. Currently, staff is not recommending additional revenue adjustments beyond the 1 percent property tax, development services fees and utilities rates. A comprehensive list of potential revenue sources for local jurisdictions is maintained by the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) in its annual [*Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns*](#).

7. **How can we use budget data to track progress towards achieving our DEI goals throughout the budget cycle?**

Answer: Staff are in the process of developing an accountability framework and reporting system that will provide transparency and accountability on the City's performance on DEI efforts as well as the City's Strategic Target Areas and related objectives. Staff is currently working with the Diversity Advantage Team to incorporate the Diversity Action Plan 2.0 initiative with this framework for reporting in 2025.

Councilmember Hamilton

8. **Information on what property tax goes to in the city and what is the impact of the 1 percent increase on the average Bellevue household? (Paraphrased)**

Answer: Property taxes serve as one of the primary tax sources for the City of Bellevue and fund many of the general governmental functions of the City's operations and capital investments from parks, public safety, transportation, community services, administrative staff and, much more. Of the annual property tax bills received by Bellevue property owners, approximately 12% goes to the City. The remaining portions go to the local school districts, the State of Washington education levy, King County, Sound Transit and other smaller agencies.

The median home in Bellevue is worth \$1.19 million; a resulting 1% increase to the City of Bellevue property taxes would be a yearly impact of between \$11-\$12.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

9. Council had partially funded a 2nd Fire Battalion previously, is there funding within this Preliminary Budget to make that whole? If not, would like to see that included. (Paraphrased).

Answer: The Fire Department's traditional staffing model for a battalion required 4.3 FTEs. The 2023-2024 budget funded 1 additional FTE and the city, with the agreement of the IAFF, was able to bridge most of the difference via reclassifications and an agreement not to staff B102 for up to 66 days of the year. Fire, however, has historically capably utilized a shared leadership and support model plus overtime to meet operational needs. This Preliminary Budget Proposal does not provide additional monies to further address the matter within the Battalion. It should also be noted that this matter is a currently a subject of bargaining between the city and the IAFF.

10. Understanding that council was going to increase signing bonuses for police officer laterals. Is that in this the Preliminary Budget? If not, why? Same question for police officer retention bonuses. Are they included? If not, why?

Answer: The current and any potential increase to signing or retention bonuses is not included in the 2025-26 preliminary budget. Savings from existing police vacancies is sufficient to cover the expenses of these programs. There is a small code change necessary to facilitate this program, which is anticipated to be on the October 8th Council Agenda for consideration.

Nationwide, agencies have struggled to keep pace with the attrition of officers and Bellevue is not an exception. Our experience has been that recruiting police officers is still very competitive and that many of our local comparable jurisdictions have increased their lateral hiring bonuses since we began our current program in 2018. There are, however, possible mandatory subjects of bargaining involved with modifying our current signing bonus and with any possible retention program. These issues need to be negotiated between the City and Police Guild, after which, any program will be presented to Council for ratification.

11. Answer: Council has prioritized increasing arts funding and in this budget seems flat in terms of the arts at a time where two of Bellevue's most prominent cultural attractions are on the cusp of leaving. Wants more details on this subject as well as KidsQuest. (Paraphrased).

Answer: Bellevue's funding for arts and cultural institutions is critical for small efforts and large cultural institutions which anticipate Bellevue to be one of their streams of support. Flat funding reflects a unified approach to nonpersonnel spending applied to all aspects of the 2025-2025 Preliminary Budget which only included inflationary increases for existing City obligations. Utilizing council

contingency to expand existing funding is a viable option for consideration by the body.

Potential funding for KidsQuest has been identified at \$2.5 million each year through 2028 within the Long-Term Planning Reserve. It is not currently budgeted within the 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget as there is not an existing funding agreement between the City and KidsQuest. Also, due to the size of the dollar amount, Council action would be required to approve the agreement per the City's Comprehensive Financial Policies. Any such agreement would then come forward with a budget appropriation increase to access the funds set aside in the reserves.

12. Clarity is needed on the investment mentioned during the presentation regarding police transparency and DEI in this budget. What is the investment adding in dollars and value above what already exists? (Paraphrased)

Answer: In the presentation regarding the Budget Equity Toolkit (BET), the mention of investments regarding the Police Department reflect what the Department is currently doing with its existing dollars. The BET is oriented to examining the current state of the City's DEI efforts to identify potential gaps and investment opportunities to mitigate those gaps. In this case, Police is a positive example of using robust data collection for several purposes. Below is the excerpt from the BET on the Police Department:

[The] Police Department is committing to community engagement and relationship building, especially with Police Advisory Councils, comprised of community members with diverse backgrounds. The department also shows a strong collection of data, including its Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies certification, Specialized Police Intelligence and Data Resource technology and a data dashboard that shares essential information with racial and other disaggregated identifying characteristics on Police workforce, crime, arrests, use of force and more. The department is also investing in multiple programs aimed at providing direct services and resources to vulnerable communities, such as CCAT and domestic violence staffing. Staff capacity and training is also a priority, with mental health intervention training for police officers and staffing focused on community engagement and data analysis that will increase DEIB. (2025-2026 Preliminary Budget, Chapter 1, PDF Page 52)

Councilmember Zahn

13. Regarding permitting support for small businesses and special events – is that to streamline permitting? There is a distinction between support and streamlining so that special events can move forward quickly.

Answer: The additional investment includes both streamlining and support for small businesses, special events and activities associated with public space activation. Community Development would work in partnership with other City departments to streamline the system that can require external partners to

engage with several City departments with different deadlines and expectations into a more unified point of entry for utilizing public space going forward. The Development Services Department would also be adding in pre-application support for these stakeholders to complement the public space management program.

14. Regarding funds and plans for public art funding, public art can be part of the arts budget and CIP. For some government agencies they fund through the CIP that is public-facing. Would like to know what is the City's approach is taking in this budget and what considerations there are. (Paraphrased)

Answer: The City's approach to funding arts investments between the operating and capital budget is dependent on what the planned spending will cover. The City follows the Governmental Accounting Standard Board's (GASB) definition of what qualifies as a capital asset, usually items above \$100,000. The City has had a practice of accumulating funding and budget appropriation within the CIP for yet to be identified art installations that would exceed any one year of budget. As the City is moving away from accumulating resources in the CIP for unplanned expenditures, the funding for these capital installations resides in the Arts Reserve and can be appropriated by Council as these opportunities are identified. Operating funding for the City and associated grants programs resides within the City's operating funds to adhere to the standards alluded to above.

15. An investment into the cross-cultural center is mentioned in the presentation as resources and site selection analysis. Is that only the site selection or does that include preliminary design of the cross-cultural center?

Answer: The investment included in the 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget supports continuing the studies of a future Cross-Cultural Center, which has been funded previously through CIP project G-118. Work will expand on a previously completed site selection analysis. In this phase, site analysis will be conducted using more recent data for siting opportunities, with the goal of identifying a suitable site or sites. This may potentially include conceptual design work and environmental review.

16. Investments in economic development for small and mid-sized businesses is a positive. Are we confident there will be enough resources included in this budget for both the small and mid-sized businesses? If resources are limited, should the City be focusing on small businesses first before we expand in size and scope?

Answer: The resources include funding that will exhaust the remaining American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) dollars allocated to the City by the federal government and while staff anticipates there will be benefits to both small and mid-sized businesses, the primary focus will be that of small businesses.

17. Would like to understand as the conversation moves to the CIP about how the City is considering educating staff on methodologies in capital project management with the hope of maximizing delivery of the CIP.

Answer: In early 2025, staff will be working with an external consultant to evaluate the current capital delivery practices maintained by the capital delivery departments and identify potential best practices to enhance delivery. These may include, resource allocation and planning, training (which could include capital delivery methodology), project management tools, contract and data management, among others. The full scope has yet to be established. Staff will provide more details throughout the process next year.

Email Received September 24 2024

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

18. Request for an independent or third-party PSE reliability study.

Answer: The question was raised regarding how Bellevue will address current and future power needs as the City grows consistent with the Comprehensive Plan targets. The agenda packet (from September 24) includes a one-pager explaining the City's Memorandum of Understanding with PSE to monitor electrical system reliability in Bellevue. As part of the MOU, the City holds an annual meeting that is open to the public to review the reliability report that PSE submits. That meeting was on September 19, and included community attendees in addition to Councilmember Lee, City staff and PSE staff. There is also ongoing work to conduct long-term planning for power needs in Bellevue between City and PSE staff.

19. Explanation regarding the need for an Office of Housing. How much will cost, what is this office focused on, and what will it do that we are not already doing?

Answer: This topic was part of the High Quality Built and Natural Environment STA overview on October 15. The Office of Housing will focus on acceleration of housing work and implementation of new policies in the Comprehensive Plan. It will help support development of at least 100 affordable units on average/year and increase the City's ability to pursue development and funding partnerships. The Office will use four existing housing staff from CD and repurpose an existing position in the CMO. The 2025-26 work includes consultant assistance to develop an operational framework for the Office (\$250,000).

September 24, 2024 Council Meeting

Councilmember Hamilton

20. What kind of feedback has the City received in terms of the DS fee changes?

Answer: Did not receive feedback from BDC last month. Would not characterize lack of feedback as support or opposition. DS has left feedback loop open for BDC. Additionally, DS will have another meeting with BDC to solicit feedback.

21. What is the status of the Affordable Housing Permit Review and Inspection Fee Reduction program? Is that complete or is there more work to be done?

Answer: This program was born out council's "Next Right Work" and was structured around council's policy direction. DS has implemented the program based on council direction. If there's interest in changing or expanding that program, council has the discretion to do so. During the STA discussions, DS can further discuss the progress of the program as well as the next Council conversation regarding the, "Next Right Work."

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

22. Within the 2025 Property Tax Distribution graph, can you break down the Other Jurisdictions bucket of 11% to what the Other Jurisdictions are?

Answer: The other taxing jurisdictions levying a property tax in Bellevue include the following and their percentage of the property tax bill.

- Port of Seattle – 1.3%
- King County Libraries – 3.7%
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) – 2.9%
- King County Flood Control District -- 0.9%
- Sound Transit – 2.1%

23. In regards to SB 5290, is it a 90-day review timeline or a sliding scale timeline depending upon the permit type?

Answer: It is a sliding scale of 65 days, 100 days, and 170 days based upon the project permit type.

24. With the City's expected economic growth and activity, and with what's in the current pipeline, how do we ensure the accuracy of permit reviews and inspections (other than adding FTE/LTEs)?

Answer: Through several ways, including the help of the BDC. DS focuses on relationship building with applicants so that they can have discussions with their reviewers and inspectors; education for customers and internal staff to help understand changes; the BDC meetings has created a forum for customers to bring issues and zero in on after-action reports if there's something DS staff need to educate themselves on.

25. If mid-project something changes, who bears the responsibility for that permit that is already being issued?

Answer: Ultimately, everything needs to be up to code, but DS will work with the customer to address the issue and minimize the impact for the customer.

26. If an emergency/urgency arises for a project that impacts the permitting process, does the City offer any kind of expedited or special service so that the project isn't in jeopardy?

Answer: The City does not have anything specifically structured to address these types of situations; however, DS is committed to providing excellent customer services. When issues arise, DS adjusts and works with the unique needs of the customer.

27. Why has the Issaquah single family impact fees changed dramatically from year to year?

Answer: This is largely due to not having an elementary school growth related project, the increase in high school generation rates, and the application of the state's one-time school construction assistance funding.

28. Can you define the HS student generation rate?

Answer: For every new development and housing unit, it is assigned a value as to how many students from elementary, middle, and high school age will be generated from that project. There is typically more elementary age students generated than high school students. This year the high school generation rate was much lower than normal and didn't have any elementary students. As a result, the Issaquah school district can only collect on the High School generation rate. The calculation and collections are shown in the Capital Facilities plan.

Councilmember Lee

29. For Reserves, how does the City's budgeted reserve levels compare to past?

Answer: Majority of the reserves is close to what the historical levels have been. Capital reserves is a bit larger because of the integration of planned spend for the CIP. These new reserves are things that have existed in different places at these levels. It is important to note, a number of these reserves are guided by the actuary dictated by RCW or the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). The City has always met or exceeded these prescribed targets.

30. What percentage of the planning reserve is part of the City's entire reserve buckets?

Answer: The planning reserve, which includes parks, fire, municipal, housing, and arts is roughly 90-91 million dollars out of the current 400 million set of reserves. The goal of this reserve is hold them, but to utilize and keep them visible so that it doesn't just sit and collect interest.

31. For property tax, what's the total 1% at the current assessed value? How much do we raise for a 1% property tax increase?

Answer: If we raise the 1% property tax, it equates to \$903k. It is important to acknowledge that 41% will go to voter approved levy type projects with exception of the 2008 parks levy. Of the approximately \$903k, \$531k is associated with the General Regular Levy and will flow into the General Fund.

32. Given the code can be open to interpretation from staff, developers, and other customers, how do we make sure we have excellent customer service (particularly with commercial projects that hasn't been making progress)? Are there conversations and/or incentives the City provides?

Answer: There will be a small percentage that will fall under these circumstances, which will require DS to pursue an after action. Additionally, DS has a customer experience program that allows customers to address any issues and provide information regarding process improvements. BDC has also worked closely with DS to identify priority issues that should be addressed, which are now in a work schedule and/or work program where DS prioritizes issues.

33. In the proposed fees table, why are the fees for single family 500 Sq. FT. Addition almost as high as the minor commercial project?

Answer: For single family permits, DS charges a flat fee that is derived from an hourly rate and the average time it takes to review that permit. The valuation-based fee is based on the nationally recognized internationally code council table that is published twice a year that DS adopts. Along with the adjustment of the CPI-W. The fees for the two project examples provided in the presentation are proportional to the scope and scale of each example.

Councilmember Zahn

34. Because the budget is packaged differently, the Council is seeing differences in figures showing \$1.75 billion in expenditures, while also seeing \$1.65 billion. Please make sure to address these nuances during the STA presentations. Also addressing the nuances of the reserves, since there a couple of tables with different numbers depending on the presentation.

Answer: In the overview of the STAs, staff will draw these pieces together for a consistent narrative and staff will produce charts and other relevant information to provide greater clarity in this area for the Monday October 715 edition of this memory bank.

35. Would like to understand the revenue options the City has in order to possibly accelerate investments.

Answer: A comprehensive list of potential revenue sources for local jurisdictions is maintained by the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) in its annual *Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns*. Additionally, the City's Banked Property Tax capacity equals approximately \$7 million.

36. Regarding the November election, if some of the measures pass (specifically 2117) what is the impact on the City's revenues and budgeting process?

Answer: I-2117 would repeal the Washington Climate Commitment Act, which would likely remove certain grant funding sources from which Bellevue has benefitted. As future grant awards are not counted on, the revenue and budget impact will likely be minimal. However, programmatically, this will create gaps in supporting the City's Environmental Stewardship Initiative goals.

37. Are opportunities to take advantage of AI for DS' permitting process?

Answer: DS has been partnering with IT to look at technologies to help DS, particularly with low-risk tools. DS gets frequently contacted by AI startups and companies in this space and are figuring out ways how this can help future work. However, DS has yet to see a premier or preferred tool that has emerged as a tool for permitting.

38. Does the City have method of expediting permits for green buildings, affordable housing, and/or other projects of that nature?

Answer: DS is currently looking at expedited options and getting closer to having a better understanding of where DS would like to go. As part of the Next Right Work for affordable housing DS initiated an expedited permitting program for 100% affordable housing projects as a method to incentivize these types of projects based on Council direction.

Email Received September 29, 2024

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

39. Given the ongoing economic uncertainties, how does the City plan to mitigate the potential risks associated with the revenue projections in the Preliminary Budget? Are there contingency plans or alternative revenue sources that can be considered if the economic situation worsens? Any scenario planning? There are several assumptions that may not become reality.

Answer: All forecasts contain risk. Should the forecasted revenue not materialize, the City Manager would first review spending to curtail or slow non-critical services. If those actions are not sufficient, staff would engage with Council regarding revenue sources available and tradeoffs with programmatic reductions.

40. Beyond the immediate concerns of the 2025-2026 budget, what are the City's long-term financial sustainability strategies? Are there any initiatives or policies being considered to address potential structural deficits or revenue shortfalls in the future?

Answer: The 2025-2026 preliminary budget contemplates future focused planning including understanding future service levels and capital needs, in order to engage about prioritization and long-term funding. Additionally, should a spike in economic activity occur, staff will also look at future revenue stabilization reserve strategies to offset future economic fluctuations.

41. How can technology, AI, and innovation be leveraged to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of budget management and financial operations? Are there any specific investments or pilot programs planned to explore new technologies in this area?

Answer: Artificial Intelligence is an emerging space within financial and budget management that the City is maintaining a close eye on from both the financial as well as IT perspectives. Underlying the more simplified budget structure is the first of many steps the City anticipates taking over the near-term to streamline financial systems (IT and business). Streamlining and becoming less unique will allow the City to more efficiently conduct its business while also preparing for the replacement of its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, JD Edwards. Many products currently on the market are leveraging AI and the City will explore its application to financial processes during product evaluation and selection.

Email Received October 4, 2024

Mayor Robinson

42. We have talked about losing King County prosecutors. Can we budget to contribute funds to retain these positions? Is it possible to use any of the opioid settlement money?

Answer: (same as 58. below)

King County regularly reviews its services and support. As a result of Federal funds during Covid-19, the County increased service levels for various programs and services. With the ending of those Federal funds, there are many service levels returning to pre-Covid levels. The County Budget Office has not actively sought funding for service replacement.

October 8, 2024 Council Meeting

Mayor Robinson

43. The Bike Patrol Program was put back in after COVID, but there haven't been any recent updates on it. What happened?

Answer: Due to staffing levels, the department is focusing on assuring that the patrol squads are fully staffed first, before staffing specialty units like the bike unit. As soon as our staffing levels improve, we plan on re-staffing the bike team since they are a key part of community engagement and proactive patrol, especially in parks and green spaces. Funding the Bellevue Light Rail Unit (BLU) in the last budget cycle actually increased the number of bikes trained officers since BLU officers are also bike certified. The department continues to deploy bike certified officers to special events and large events even if these officers are not currently assigned to the full-time bike unit or BLU team.

44. Where does the City stand on implementing State legislation to increase density in neighborhoods? Given the aging infrastructure in some older neighborhoods, how is the City planning to manage the added stress if families wish to add attached or detached dwelling units?

Answer: Utilities is currently developing comprehensive updates to our water, wastewater, and stormwater system plans over the next two years. As part of this planning process, we will engage with Bellevue's Community Development and Development Services Departments to obtain projected changes in housing density, by neighborhood. Any increased demand in system capacity will be determined using the Utilities water, wastewater, and stormwater computer system models, and this information will be included in our updated system plans. Ultimately, the system plans will inform new "capacity for growth" projects to be included in the Utilities Capital Improvement Program.

45. With the repeal of Initiative 2066 on the ballot in November, and knowing that this initiative has been funding some projects, how would its repeal impact the City's budget?

Answer: Initiative 2066 (I-2066) has policy implications for the city meeting its greenhouse gas initiative targets and other climate goals. Bellevue staff is unaware of any direct funding impacts of I-2066 to Bellevue.

Initiative 2117 (I-2117) would repeal the Climate Commitment Act (CCA). Repeal of the CCA would negatively impact the scale, scope, timeliness, and overall effectiveness of several Bellevue projects and programs. Some examples include:

Projects in Bellevue funded entirely by the CCA – At Risk

Electric fire truck. The legislature allocated \$800,000 toward the purchase of electric fire engines and charging infrastructure for Bellevue and Redmond Fire Departments, funded by Climate Commitment Act funds.

Washington Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Program. Twenty sites in Bellevue have been selected for Level 2 and direct current fast chargers for public use. CCA funds fully fund the design and construction of this public EV charging infrastructure. Construction of the charging sites has yet to begin. Sites in Bellevue include the Bellevue College campus, Factoria, Crossroads, and Downtown.

Eastrail Multi-Use Corridor – I-90 Steel Bridge. The 42-mile walk and roll path connecting Renton and Snohomish received \$12m for the I-90 Steel Bridge rehabilitation. This funding has not been appropriated and is at risk if I-2117 passes and the CCA is repealed.

Projects in or adjacent to Bellevue partially funded by the CCA – At Risk

Climate Planning Projects in Bellevue. See below for examples of Bellevue:

- Planning projects involving studies, assessments, data collection, and staff, stakeholder, and public engagement work.
- Residential Electrification Strategy
- Update to annual Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Development of draft 2026-2023 Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan
- Development of Climate Resilient Bellevue Strategy
- Deputy City Manager Genesee Adkins provided additional information on the CCA and I-2117 to City Council via email on July 12.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

46. Is there a time when utilities can move to spending less on aging infrastructure and more on capacity for growth, or other areas, or just reduce cost impacts to ratepayers?

Answer: Utilities' focus on renewing and replacing aging infrastructure must continue indefinitely in a cyclical manner. Bellevue maintains about \$10 billion in assets across the three piped utilities. This includes over 1,600 miles in water, sewer, and storm pipe, 24 water reservoirs, 22 pump stations, 47 sewer pump and flush stations, and thousands of other infrastructure elements. As assets are built, they progressively age through their life cycle (ranging from roughly 20 years for small assets to 50 - 100 years for pipes and structures), and ultimately reach the end of their life cycle, they will require renewal or replacement. Utilities then implements timely replacement projects for the assets and the cycle starts over again. To strategically manage the renewal of infrastructure, Utilities relies on a robust Asset Management Program. We make

data-driven decisions to replace each asset based on its age, condition, risk of failure, and consequence of failure. Replacing assets at just the right time - not too soon and not too late - enables us to get the most service life from an asset before it fails. This is how we reduce cost impacts to ratepayers while providing the level of utility service that our customers expect. To avoid and prevent large rate spikes, careful technical and financial planning is crucial to strategically manage the City's utility infrastructure in the most prudent and responsible manner.

47. Regarding Vision Zero and the Spring Blvd bike route, it was mentioned that the design is anticipated to be completed by 2027. What is causing the bottleneck in the design process for it to take that long?

Answer: There are many environmental factors involved, including wetlands and the need for a bridge, which make up the primary challenges in the design process. It's a large project that will take time to complete. Also, the process of property acquisition is very time consuming.

Councilmember Hamilton

48. Given that the Council contingency reserve may not be substantial, are there any projects where staff believe those funds could provide a boost? Could some of this reserve be allocated to enhance those programs?

Answer: As mentioned by multiple council members during the meeting on 10/8, we have a long list of needs for new sidewalks, sidewalk repairs and crosswalk enhancements. Transportation would be happy to work with council to identify a particular project where the funds could enhance a project or program, however, the reserve amount may not support much of the cost of a sidewalk or capital construction project.

Councilmember Lee

49. Is the Curbside Management a pilot program? What is the current status?

Answer: The Council adopted the plan last year, and the first implementation step will be an analysis to determine whether parking meters would be financially viable. This is necessary work, and the analysis will assess the availability of parking spaces in the downtown area and determine how much to charge to fund enforcement of paid parking. The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. The study area includes the Urban Core of Bellevue and will be worked through the Transportation Commission. The Transportation Commission will ultimately make a recommendation to council as to whether curb pricing should be used as a tool to improve availability of on-street parking in the Urban Core.

50. Concerning complaints about potholes in I-90, are there any similar issues occurring locally?

Answer: There are no similar issues that staff are currently aware of.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

51. Moving beyond laterals, what else do we need to do in terms of retention that may be inside or outside of the budget process?

Answer: To enhance retention beyond lateral hires, we will be focusing on employee retention programs, a multifaceted approach that includes both strategic initiatives and proactive support systems, irrespective of budget constraints. The Bellevue Police Department's Retention strategies will also be supported by the work of the Human Resources Department in partnership with all departments that are currently underway and will continue through the next budget cycle, in which we are identifying approaches that will be implemented citywide. Identifying and implementing specific programs aimed at retaining current employees is vital, which fosters employee engagement and job satisfaction. In summary, by integrating these strategies, we can create a supportive workplace environment that not only attracts but also retains top talent, aligning our workforce with our long-term goals.

52. For the event Captain, would that simply be for events, or would that include protests as well?

Answer: The events Police Captain would also be responsible the law enforcement response to protests as well as special events.

53. Is the Bellevue School District reaching out to the City to reinstitute School Resource Officers at Bellevue High School?

Answer: We remain in regular contact with Bellevue School District regarding School Resource Officers and other matters. They are not pursuing this investment at this time.

54. Is the number of incidents on Sound Transit's 2 Line mentioned in the presentation a Bellevue Police number or a Sound Transit Number?

Answer: The number comes from BPD, and BPD may request an access to the data collected by Sound Transit.

55. Number of officers down?

Answer: The number of Police Officer vacancies sits at 27 as of today.

56. Do we have mutual aid agreements for the jet ski water rescue program?

Answer: Bellevue's Fire Department and the neighboring fire agencies dispatched by NORCOM operate under automatic/mutual aid agreements, use automatic vehicle locators (AVL) and strive to ensure inter-operability. King County has designated geographic regions of the county as Zones, and Bellevue is in Zone One (1). Other Zone 1 fire agencies include Bothell, Duvall (joining

Eastside Fire and Rescue January 2025), Eastside F&R, KCFD 27, Kirkland, Redmond, Shoreline, Snoqualmie, and Snoqualmie Pass. Discussions are continuous in Zone 1 on how to best ensure seamless response and interoperability across geographic boundaries, as all the agencies in the Zone recognize the need to minimize obstacles in emergency situations. Mutual aid responses are specified in the King County Fire Resource plan. The department can both request and provide resources to regional task forces and strike teams under the agreements in the plan

57. What will be the total number of street cleaners if two more are added?

Answer: It will bring the total to four, which will increase the overall cleaning capacity.

Councilmember Zahn

58. Since Bellevue is covering some costs that King County is no longer paying, are there any other upcoming issues the City should be aware of to ensure King County pays its fair share?

Answer (same as 42. above): King County regularly reviews its services and support. As a result of Federal funds during Covid-19, the County increased service levels for various programs and services. With the ending of those Federal funds, there are many service levels returning to pre-Covid levels. The County Budget Office has not actively sought funding for service replacement.

59. Are the additional police captains for events included in the cost recovery efforts for those events?

Answer: No, the cost for the Police Captain's time for special events is not recovered. For the majority of events, the organizers are billed only for personnel overtime costs associated with working the event. There are no costs recovered for planning or command level work associated to the event.

60. What lessons have been learned from the CCAT program and outreach including the opioid crisis?

Answer: There were several significant successes experienced by the CCAT program. One such success was in the CCAT team's transfer of cases to the Bellevue Fire CARES case management team. In the first 12 months over 146 cases were supported by CARES advocates and professional social workers, allowing community members to access vital resources and support services.

Some operational observations of what has been working with the program include fully integrating the CCAT and CARES101 teams into Station 1 which allows for spontaneous collaboration and sharing of information to support clients. CCAT teams train together which has

provided the opportunity for officers and MHPs to understand and respect each other's roles and perspectives even more.

The community demand for CCAT presence has been greater than expected. CCAT regularly receives invitations to events, to make presentations and to meet with community partners and teams.

CCAT sees the value of training firefighters and police officers with basic skills to respond to lower acuity behavioral health calls, leaving CCAT available to respond to higher acuity calls.

Funded by Opioid Settlement Funds, the CCAT/CARES MHP team added a dedicated Opioid Response Social Worker to the team who provides outreach, case management and connection to resources to individuals in opioid crisis and their families.

The CCAT team greatly benefited from the basic crisis negotiation training and use these skills regularly. Bellevue will be hosting an advanced level course in November.

61. What is the status of Fire Station 10 and the fire levy? Since costs are higher than expected, should we consider additional funding for renovation or replacement?

Answer: Fire Station 10 is funded with both Fire Levy and General Fund sources. Additionally, a significant investment in major maintenance at all Fire Stations is being delivered in 2025-2026. It is likely that additional resources will need to be identified for future fire station investment and completion, but not for the 2025-2026 budget period.

62. Can we reexamine the eligibility criteria for the utilities rate relief program, considering the increased Human Service needs?

Answer: Utilities is committed to reviewing the rate relief programs including the eligibility criteria and ways to streamline the application process. This work is slated for 2025,

63. In the Wilburton commercial area, how can we leverage waste energy and rethink our approach to reduce solid waste generation?

Answer: Although there are no specific plans for a waste-to-energy plant in Wilburton, the City is committed to working with King County to consider waste-to-energy options under our inter-local agreement. We are currently evaluating technologies in future long-term solid waste planning, with recommendations to be developed in the 2026 timeframe as part of King County's Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan update. It should also be noted that sewer heat recovery is being evaluated by one developer and is a key component to the Wilburton Sustainable District.

Beyond these efforts, our current approach includes the Wilburton LUCA, which contains language on solid waste space requirements to encourage waste reduction and recycling. Bellevue also offers Wilburton green building amenity incentives, with performance requirements for construction and demolition waste reduction.

64. Could WIFIA be another funding source for water infrastructure and utilities from an investment perspective?

Answer: As Utilities and the City explore project delivery and funding, the Comprehensive Financial Policies provide an opportunity to explore many financing options, including the use of debt – like WIFIA.

65. How is the budget for educating about safety aligned with the City's growth?

Answer: The proposed budget for safety aligns with Council direction to plan citywide for a safe, complete, and connected multimodal transportation system that keeps us moving and that connects us to the region. To accomplish this, staff will engage with the public, elected and appointed officials, city departments, community/businesses, and agencies to ensure people in Bellevue are well-connected, with transportation facilities that provide for safe travel to schools, jobs, transit, health care, and to entertainment, shopping, and commercial centers.

66. How are we progressing with multimodal transportation investments and first/last-mile solutions as the 2 Line connects to Seattle? What opportunities are there to partner with the private sector or perhaps, King County Metro to improve transit services to Bellevue?

Answer: Extensive work was done during design of the 2 Line to plan for and implement multimodal connections to 2 Line stations in Bellevue. Many improvements have been completed and additional projects are underway, such as the 130th Avenue NE complete street project in BelRed, extension of the Main St Multi-Purpose Path to 108th Ave NE and new neighborhood sidewalk segments connecting to the South Bellevue Station. Included in this budget is the design phase of Spring Blvd Phase 3, which will provide additional multimodal connections between the Spring District and BelRed stations. Staff have also been working with King County Metro to advance small transit infrastructure projects that will support improved transit connections to the 2 Line stations as part of Metro's East Link Connections program.

Email Received October 8, 2024

Councilmember Hamilton

67. Group of questions received by Councilmember Hamilton

- If reserves have been removed from the budget, how much is being set aside in cash reserves in 2025-2026?
- How much of the \$2.2B budget was reserves and how much was the double-budgeting? (trying to reconcile the \$500M reduction.)
- How did the double budgeting issue originate, and when was it first introduced?
- Wouldn't an audit or routine financial review have identified this double-budgeting issue earlier (or the bond rating agencies)?
- Has this impacted past budgets and financial transparency for council oversight?
- Councilmember Zahn was not able to get the new budget numbers to add up (and I think Jared or Mo made a similar comment.)
- Have you been provided a revised budget that the numbers add up/reconcile?
- Transparency seems to be an issue. How specifically does the new budget improve on transparency?

Collective Answer:

There are a few factors that each contributed to the change from a 2023-2024 \$2.2 billion Appropriation to a Preliminary 2024-2025 (proposed) Appropriation. All of which have been annually reviewed by the State Auditor.

True Cost of Service

Historically, the City embraced an approach to show the true cost of service that would combine normal service delivery costs plus indirect or shared services so that each department could display like an enterprise department.

Example (not real dollar amounts)
Department ABC actual cost of service: \$200m
Indirect costs for shared services: \$20m
Total Department ABC Appropriation: \$220m

Total shared services actual cost: \$200m
Mark up to receive/transfer Department ABC shared services costs: \$20m
Total shared services Appropriation: \$220

Removal of the Department ABC mark-up and the shared services transfer results in -\$40m in Appropriation, while leaving the actual Department ABC and shared services appropriations at \$200m each.

The 2023-2024 budget book identifies \$330 million of indirect/shared costs, some of which needs to remain for Utilities and Capital Improvement Program costs.

One-Time Revenues/Expenditures

Due to Federal stimulus funds and TIFIA loan proceeds, there are more than \$100m of one-time monies in the 2023-2024 Appropriation.

Appropriation of Cash

The City has a historic practice of appropriating all fund balance (cash on hand, which includes monies like the Utilities Repair and Replacement Reserve). These reserves were held as fund balance and in some cases appropriated expenditures (to result in a fund balance).

The 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget and Financial Plans identify \$811.4 million in reserves that are not proposed for appropriation and have clearly identified usage requirements that include Council Action. (See [Comprehensive Financial Policies Chapter 8](#) for descriptions).

2026 Reserves

General Reserves		Planning Reserves	
Operating Reserves	\$49.2m	Arts	\$1m
Capital Reserves	\$75m	Fire	\$5m
Equipment Replacement Reserves	\$42.4m	Housing	\$40m
Compensation and Risk Reserves	\$21.8m	Municipal	\$6m
Development Services Reserves	\$58.7m	Parks	\$40m
Total General Reserves	\$247.1	Total Planning Reserves	\$92m
Utilities Contingencies and Reserves	\$472.3m	Total Reserves (all Funds)	\$811.4m

Financial Plans and Transparency

As discussed with Council during the updates to the Comprehensive Financial Policies, the City’s budget and resources have gotten more complex in recent years with most services and capital requiring multiple sources of revenue. As a result, staff identified that aggregating these sources and expenditures for budgeting purposes provided a clearer picture of where and how much was being appropriated for expenditure. This has also translated to forecasting, which now displays actual tax revenues, rather than the historic practice of forecasting net General Fund revenues. We look forward to feedback on how to further improve transparency.

When trying to review the proposed Preliminary Budget, we have developed two financial plans – General and Utilities that focus on enterprise and general government delivery. The very simplified version of the combined financial plan for the 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget is as follows ([Detailed Financial Plans available in the Budget Book](#)):

	2023-2024 Projected			2025-2026 Proposed		
	Utilities	General	Combined	Utilities	General	Combined
Beginning Fund Balance	\$391.5	\$442.1	\$833.7	\$395.2	\$539.5	\$934.7
Revenues	\$840.9	\$1,287.2	\$2,128.1	\$677.2	\$1,099.7	\$1,776.9
Expenditures	\$837.3	\$1,189.8	\$2,027.1	\$497.2	\$1,257.7	\$1,754.9
SubTotal before Reserves	\$395.2	\$539.5	\$934.7	\$575.2	\$381.5	\$956.6
Designated Reserves	\$372.0		\$372.0	\$472.3	\$339.1	\$811.4
Ending Fund Balance	\$23.2	\$539.5	\$562.7	\$102.8	\$42.4	\$145.2

\$s in \$1,000,000s

October 15, 2024 Council Meeting

Mayor Robinson

68. How are we going to address the needs of something like the Bellevue Farmers Market that is valuable to our City, but not part of Visit Bellevue? Who [which City department] oversees the farmers market?

Answer: The interactions of the Bellevue Farmers Market have historically been with Community Development's Cultural and Economic Development Division (CED). In recent years, the Bellevue Farmers Market applied for an arts project grant to cover the costs of live music at the market and reached the maximum award of \$3,000. This year, they have applied for a 2025 arts partnership grant with a maximum award of \$10,000. This is a very competitive grant program. For 2025, the City received the highest number of applications ever, and even with an expanded budget, will only be able to fund a fraction of the requests. Looking forward, a new City funding source or funding through other partners could be a possible path to address this type of need more directly.

69. Has anyone been a beneficiary of the fee reduction program yet or is it new? Can you tell us about those beneficiaries and uses?

Answer: Yes, there are several in process.

Sagebrook: Crossroads Apartments, LLC proposal consists of a former assisted living facility that is being converted to 108 affordable housing units for 60% AMI. The site is located at 15750 NE 15th Street, north of Crossroads Mall. The project has received a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) for the west and east buildings. Once final items are completed for all of the reviewing disciplines, the project will receive a Certificate of Occupancy for completion of the project.

Operations and Maintenance Facility East (OMFE): Bridge Housing has received a Design Review approval (23-126561 LD) to construct two buildings on the south portion of Sound Transit's OMFE site located at 1899 120th Avenue NE. The project proposes two residential buildings: one five story residential building with 84 units of affordable housing and one seven story building with 150 units of affordable housing for a total of 234 housing units. Approval of this application occurred on September 19, 2024.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church: Habitat for Humanity has submitted for a Planned Unit Development (PUD), 23-110538 LK, for an affordable housing condominium development containing 25 dwelling units. The site is located at 4315 129th Place SE. The homes will be income restricted to buyers earning less than 80% AMI. Resale restrictions will be recorded on the properties for 50 years for resale to buyers of the same AMI.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

70. Do our past and current [Vibrant Economy] initiatives have enough scale to really move the needle? What are our metrics for success? Are the efforts focused on sustainability and green technologies? Are we bringing support in creative industries? Are we seeing the results of all the investments we've been making? Do all these investments support entrepreneurs from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and underrepresented communities?

Answer: Based on the strategies and guidance in the last two Economic Development Plans, the support for direct cultural & economic development work has grown substantially. Bellevue offers more services than ever before. Significant improvements have been achieved and can continue to be delivered over time.

As part of the Economic Development workplan for 2025-2026, the City will be updating its economic development plan. This plan looks at sectors and approaches for prioritization. Concurrent to this work, the City is updating our Diversity Action Plan and the timing of these efforts will lend itself to current recommendations and approaches for incorporating businesses and entrepreneurs from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and underrepresented communities.

71. In this budget, how can we do more for environmental stewardship, and how are we addressing our goals? Are we moving in the direction of our goals for the environment, and if not, how is this budget addressing that?

Answer: The Preliminary Budget continues investments in Environmental Stewardship staff and resources established in the last biennium budget, to support the achievement of our communitywide and municipal operations goals. A new budget for Energy Smart Eastside has been established, and the Environmental Stewardship Initiative budget includes investments in electric vehicle charging infrastructure and programs, commercial energy efficiency technical assistance, affordable housing green building assistance, furthering the Wilburton Sustainable District, and education and outreach. For municipal operations, the budget includes capital investments for the Bellevue Service Center, to improve energy efficiency and prepare for fleet electrification – two critical investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from city operations. The budget also includes funding for an update to the Sustainable Bellevue Plan, which will chart a course for achieving the 2030 and 2050 environmental goals.

Staff has provided the CMO and FAM with two potential scenarios if additional funds were allocated for ESI. One scenario contemplates \$100,000 over the 2025-26 timeframe and the other \$300,000 over the two years. Options at each funding level include resources for heat pumps, EV charging infrastructure for affordable housing, or an electric landscaping equipment fund.

Councilmember Hamilton

72. We need to be ready to make more investments as things change in the near-term. Considering the limitations of this budget, how are we going to pay for the things that we want to do (maybe at mid-bi or later) but just can't right now? What gets us to the next level?

Answer: The process of identifying, prioritizing, and new and evolving priorities involves planning, community engagement, and Council deliberation to then develop funding and investment plans. This biennium represents significant efforts to do this prioritization and begin engagement with community around our current and longer term needs, in order to develop and align different funding sources for consideration.

Councilmember Lee

73. How do we attract and retain businesses here? We also need to attract talent from other places, and they will want to bring their families. How can we figure out how to attract these people? Can the City restructure and repurpose internally to have a department dedicated to economic development, to focus on attracting and retaining companies and talent?

Answer: Bellevue takes a number of targeted approaches to attract and retain businesses. These include:

- Our partnership with Greater Seattle Partners (GSP) targets companies “ready, willing and able” to invest in sectors where Bellevue has competitive advantages including Cloud Computing, eCommerce, Interactive Media, AI, Telecoms, and others.
- The Business Retention and Expansion Program builds relationships with employers to address issues and questions as they arise. Frequently, these relationships position Bellevue very well to capture expansions of existing employers.
- Workforce development programs to ensure our workforce matches industry demands.
- Development of active public spaces and promotion of events that serve as employee amenities.

Bellevue has piloted a number of smaller scale recruitment and international trade programs over the years. Many were successful during their limited run, but required larger scale to be impactful.

In addition to these targeted strategies, actions the City takes across all workstreams impact business' decision making including public safety, housing, parks, transportation and utilities infrastructure. All of these factors contribute to the overall business climate. Due to this citywide work, 81% of businesses rate Bellevue as a better place to do business than other locations.

Regarding attracting talent: Attracting and retaining workers is an important element of community and economic development that requires a multi-pronged approach, including –

- Expand capacity of education providers -- Many students across the country move for undergraduate and graduate school opportunities. The University of Washington and Seattle University are incredible magnets for the region. However, their current capabilities do not produce enough workforce to meet the region’s annual demand for workers. Working to increase the capacity of UW and Bellevue College, while also exploring opportunities for other providers is important.
- Affordable housing – access to stable and affordable housing is important for workers in all industries. Bellevue’s work to expand and accelerate delivery of housing for all income levels will help retain workers.
- Improve access to creative, community, and entertainment options – residents, workers, and visitors prefer environments where they can access museums, community celebrations, and non-work entertainment. Work on things like Public Space Management, Grand Connection, BelRed Arts District, and event venues will help attract and retain workers.
- Amenities for urban families – As Bellevue continues to redevelop, it is important to support families at multiple life stages and with a preference for urban living. As workers move from single Twenty-somethings downtown into parenthood in BelRed or Wilburton, those urban families will need amenities that support young children like parks, playgrounds, community centers, and affordable daycare. Bellevue School District provides a high-quality education that attracts families from across the state and their facilities are most easily accessed from Bellevue’s lower density neighborhoods. Parents looking to live in Wilburton and BelRed in particular would have access to fewer amenities that would attract and retain them in those neighborhoods.

Regarding city structure: The current trend in economic development is centered around holistic support for the economy. The work on business recruitment and retention is co-housed with many of the same work streams currently housed in Cultural & Economic Development.

74. In the discussion of community spaces, does that include the cross-cultural center?

Answer: Yes, the preliminary budget includes funding for both cross-cultural center programming and advancing the site selection process.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

75. Will the permit streamlining also include things like signage for restaurants?

Answer: Any small business that needs permitting assistance.

76. How are we going to fund a multi-cultural center? Are the cultural facilities grants related to the multi-cultural center?

Answer: The funding path for a multi-cultural center will likely involve a mix of public (tax) revenues along with grant and philanthropic partnership. The demonstration and planning efforts may add clarity to the investment plan.

The cultural facilities grants approved by Council on October 8 are separate from the multi-cultural center.

77. How do we build relationships with and get feedback from the business community? There are many ways we can learn from that and leverage that to attract more companies. We've talked a lot about diversification of our economy and we don't really see that in this plan. What are we doing to plan for that diversification?

Answer: The update of our Economic Development Plan will include priority sectors and efforts to diversify our City's business economy. This effort will also take into consideration regional economic development partners and efforts.

There are many ways we engage with current businesses and leverage that to attract more companies. Ongoing relationships developed through Bellevue's Business Retention and Expansion program and small business walks serve as a way to connect with business leaders, gather specific feedback, and provide a helping hand on specific questions. Quantitatively, the City surveys its business community every two years to obtain metrics and track trends going back to 2015.

The Bellevue Development Committee serves as an important venue for our property owners and property developers to engage with the City on issues related to code and development.

Our business districts, public space, and public-private partnership teams also spend substantial time developing connections with the business community; most notably, they regularly go out to business organization meetings to listen, learn, and hear from owners and operators directly. This also allows them to serve as city liaisons to districts like downtown, Old Bellevue, and BelRed.

Regarding diversification: The City began working on economic diversification in earnest with adoption of the 2020 Economic Development Plan. Historically, Bellevue's approach to economic development focused on commercial real estate development and the construction of office towers for major employers, particularly technology companies. In 2020 the Council adopted policies that intentionally moved toward more holistic economic development that includes small business, tech startups, retail, workforce development, tourism, public private partnerships, and the creative economy. The City added staff focused in several of these areas. Over the last four years, that work has laid foundations for a more resilient economy and deeper work on intentional cultivation of new

industries will be explored as part of the ED Plan update.iiAre we able to include the farmers market in Visit Bellevue or support them a little more given the need?

Answer: The interactions of the Bellevue Farmers Market have historically been with Community Development's Cultural and Economic Development Division (CED). In recent years, the Bellevue Farmers Market applied for an arts project grant to cover the costs of live music at the market and reached the maximum award of \$3,000. This year, they have applied for a 2025 arts partnership grant with a maximum award of \$10,000. This is a very competitive grant program. For 2025, the City received the highest number of applications ever, and even with an expanded budget, will only be able to fund a fraction of the requests. Looking forward, a new City funding source or funding through other partners could be a possible path to address this type of need more directly. (Same as Mayor Robinson question on Bellevue Farmers Market.)

78. Office of Housing: what does the creation of this office do to our relationship with ARCH? As we take a more direct approach to providing housing in our city, how does it impact our relationships with other providers?

Answer: The relationship with ARCH continues as-is. The proposal for the Office of Housing is attempting to accelerate some City-owned sites for affordable housing, have more City discretionary money to use, and to take advantage of the comprehensive plan and code updates. The Office is a complement to what ARCH is doing rather than a change to that relationship.

Councilmember Zahn

79. Will the economic development strategic plan be updated in 2025?

Answer: ED plan is a five-year plan and it goes through 2025. We will bring back the launch of the 2026-2030 ED plan this winter, looking back on the goals and milestones from current plan to look ahead to the next five-year update.

80. Will the streamlining of permitting also activate City Hall and City-owned facilities like community centers?

Answer: We are going to work with the stakeholders to structure the program around need. Our presumption is that efforts will also include all City spaces including City Hall (which may include non-permitting processes), all with the goal of activating spaces downtown and all over the City.

81. Even though we're streamlining permitting, there is still a significant permit fee. Does streamlining equate to lower permit dollars? Is there a way to have a small pool that would be available for these small groups that have ideas for wanting to activate different City facilities?

Answer: Development Services does have a cost recovery model, which means fees support the full cost of operating. Some customers need more assistance with their permits, and so they end up paying for more hours for more

assistance. This new program is fully general funded (e.g. not funded by fees), and so customers won't be paying those fees for extra assistance. We expect folks to see some relief in costs due to this program, and we can use the two years of this period to see how the program might be adapted in the future.

82. FIFA just announced that there will be six games for the Club World Cup hosted in Seattle in 2025. Are there any thoughts or ideas for leveraging that opportunity to showcase Bellevue in 2025 ahead of the World Cup in 2026?

Answer: FIFA chose Lumen Field to host six games for Club World Cup, June 15- July 13, 2025. Staff are working with Visit Bellevue, the city's liaison to regional efforts, to identify opportunities for watch parties, community connections, and other engagements. The level of visitors will be significantly lower for the Club World Cup and will offer a good opportunity to test things for the larger event in 2026.

83. How can we reach even more of the community?

Answer: Our Procurement Diversity Initiative continues efforts to engage with partner organizations and businesses to expand our supplier relationships. This effort includes office hours through direct and regional groups and events and is helping women-owned and minority businesses learn how to engage with the City's procurement processes. Staff are regularly seeking referrals and opportunities to diversify the organizations that do business with the City.

84. Are there any additional dollars for Arts in the budget to support pop-ups, programming, and/or performances to support the artistic community more?

Answer: Options for funding activities in public spaces increases with the \$300,000 per year in new funds for public space management work along the Grand Connection. Some of those funds will support work to improve the permitting process for event producers and some will be used to support partner-produced programming.

Overall, funding for the arts remains flat this biennium, although the new budget structure allows for more flexibility in how funds are distributed between public art projects and programming grants. Funding for arts programming and grants could be revisited in 2027-2028 because additional grant awards can help our non-profit community deliver more programming. Per capita spending continues to decline as the number of applicants continues to grow. The budget continues the new Arts & Cultural Facilities Grants, following the Council's allocation of the initial \$1.8M to support four cultural spaces. The new Arts Reserves reflects a transfer of the current balance of the Public Art CIP to a new operating account in preparation for the Public Art CIP sunset based on the new financial policies. a

85. On Eastrail: are there funds for access from neighborhoods to the trail?

Answer: The city capital budget includes project G-103 Eastrail. Funds in this project provide resources to support analysis and preliminary design of

connections to the Eastrail, including connections to Bellevue neighborhoods. Depending on the cost, actual construction of some connections may require additional resources, beyond those currently allocated in G-103. Bellevue Parks is currently early in the planning phase for a connection in the Woodridge neighborhood on a city-owned property, which may require additional funding for construction. The proposed 2025-2030 CIP includes a Transportation project to build out connections at SE 5th Street in the Wilburton neighborhood. At this point, there are no other shovel-ready project concepts for Eastrail connections that need additional funding for construction. As additional project concepts are developed in the coming years, staff will seek funding for construction via existing city programs, outside sources and the biennial budget process.

86. On ESI: would like to better understand how we can accelerate the investments in this area. What do some of the funding mechanisms look like, or would that happen more in the mid-bi? Are there ways to partner more with the school district or sustainability ambassadors or others to create more programs to work with youth on environmental sustainability?

Answer: The Preliminary Budget helps advance implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan with continued investment in key programs such as Energy Smart Eastside, the Clean Buildings Incentive Program, and new investments in EV charging, green building support, and other areas. To accelerate investments, staff will continue to seek state and federal grants, building on the success in securing grant funds over the past several years, which have resulted in over \$3M of grant funding for ESI projects and programs. As part of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan update, staff will explore additional funding mechanisms used by other cities to fund sustainability, energy efficiency, and weatherization initiatives.

ESI staff have been involved in the Bellevue School District Sustainability Plan development and will continue to provide support and expertise in the BSD Sustainability Steering Committee. Youth engagement is part of the outreach strategy for the Sustainable Bellevue Plan update and engaging volunteers in a new Home Energy Advisor Pilot Program will help advance education and outreach for Energy Smart Eastside.

87. Can we provide more training for staff on how we might deliver capital investment in alternative ways? Would like to better understand this.

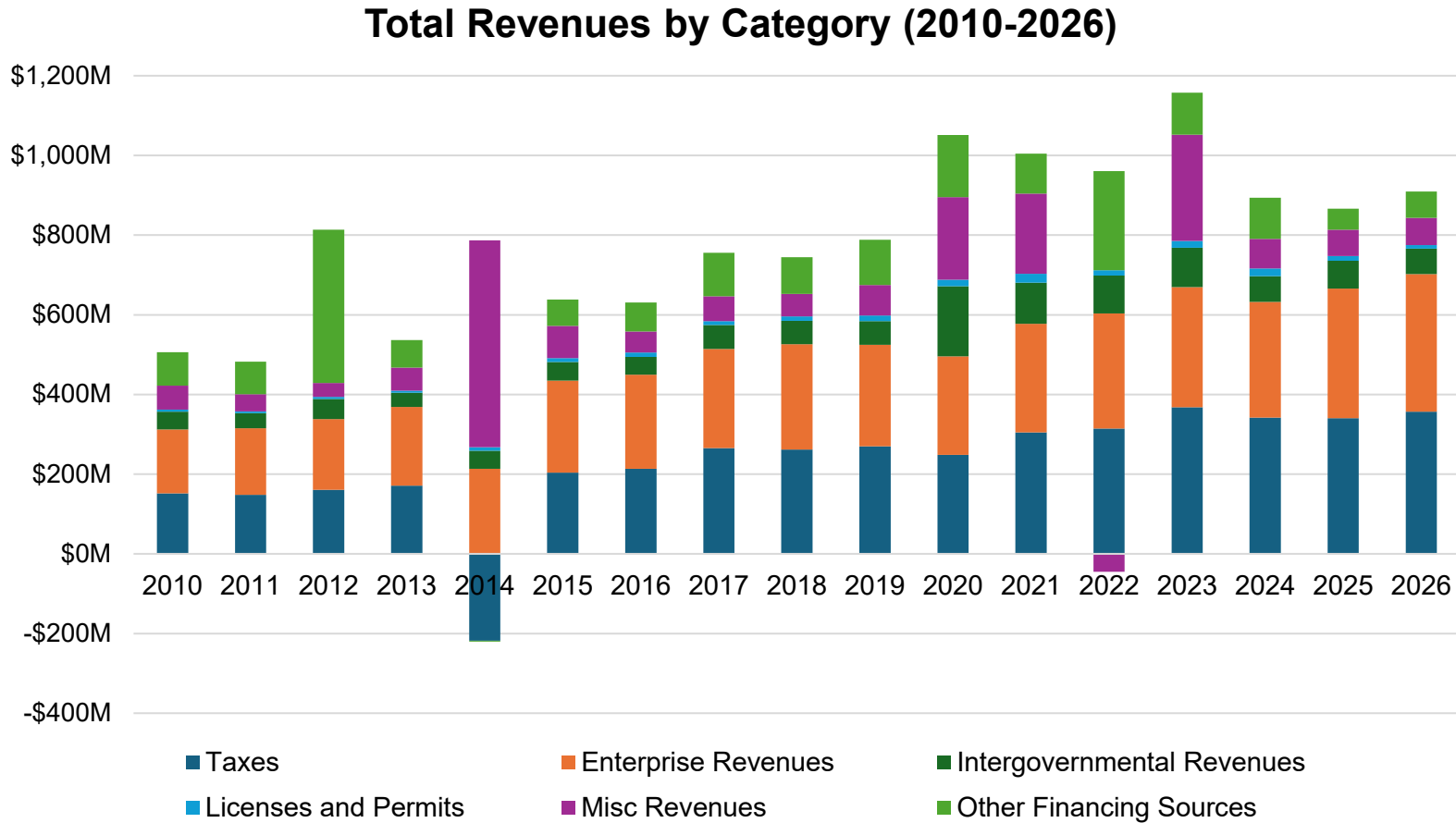
Answer: As part of the City's 2025 CIP programmatic analysis, we will be exploring training and potential certification for alternative delivery methods for all of the CIP portfolios.

Email Received October 15, 2024

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

88. Could I get a graph or the data showing total revenues into the city for each year beginning in 2010 through to 2024.

Answer: Please see the chart and table below.



Council Questions and Responses (Memory Bank) November 7, 2024

Year	Taxes	Enterprise Revenues	Intergovernmental Revenues	Licenses and Permits	Misc Revenues	Other Financing Sources	Total Revenues
2010	\$152,136,292	\$160,154,699	\$44,756,016	\$4,856,042	\$60,040,627	\$83,921,073	\$505,864,749
2011	\$148,359,257	\$166,811,145	\$37,722,785	\$4,612,684	\$43,408,028	\$81,186,391	\$482,100,289
2012	\$161,031,171	\$177,516,080	\$49,987,200	\$5,485,539	\$34,755,584	\$384,830,263	\$813,605,837
2013	\$170,972,062	\$197,950,082	\$35,704,942	\$4,728,425	\$58,246,621	\$68,581,120	\$536,183,252
2014	-\$217,717,852	\$213,293,120	\$45,381,456	\$9,256,740	\$518,803,191	-\$2,787,978	\$566,228,677
2015	\$204,052,172	\$230,431,615	\$47,409,056	\$9,318,536	\$81,044,165	\$65,964,312	\$638,219,857
2016	\$213,495,398	\$235,860,523	\$44,569,969	\$11,528,753	\$52,979,826	\$72,123,976	\$630,558,446
2017	\$265,518,223	\$248,560,248	\$60,085,934	\$9,982,511	\$62,051,479	\$109,333,534	\$755,531,929
2018	\$261,868,541	\$264,335,151	\$58,552,960	\$10,933,721	\$56,618,772	\$91,979,176	\$744,288,322
2019	\$269,859,305	\$255,170,236	\$58,829,495	\$14,554,864	\$76,384,411	\$113,295,822	\$788,094,132
2020	\$248,153,458	\$247,901,269	\$175,780,667	\$16,417,710	\$207,269,034	\$155,783,629	\$1,051,305,768
2021	\$304,822,365	\$272,290,763	\$103,691,260	\$21,880,822	\$201,195,517	\$100,834,620	\$1,004,715,346
2022	\$314,281,487	\$289,162,795	\$94,857,182	\$13,636,239	-\$45,347,934	\$248,668,164	\$915,257,934
2023	\$368,074,573	\$301,078,729	\$99,328,874	\$16,845,652	\$266,734,901	\$105,414,508	\$1,157,477,237
2024	\$342,072,566	\$290,232,232	\$64,477,161	\$19,390,254	\$74,243,379	\$103,258,059	\$893,673,652
2025	\$340,782,692	\$325,309,585	\$69,819,219	\$11,325,089	\$66,351,438	\$52,348,194	\$865,936,217
2026	\$356,777,269	\$345,118,794	\$64,504,656	\$8,418,080	\$68,156,913	\$66,376,277	\$909,351,989

October 22, 2024 Council Meeting

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian

89. Overall, the budget has immediate infrastructure needs, but there are long term needs and are we planning for those? Are we planning for long term fiscal sustainability? How are we trying to find funding for the long-term needs?

Answer: The long-range planning effort, which has \$250,000 in this budget, tees up and sets up the prioritization so we can develop the funding schemes over the next couple of biennium to get to that place.

90. HS Funding - There is a big difference between the ask of \$36m and the funding of \$17m, what are the opportunities we can work with other organizations that could help the funding gap?

Answer: In addition to federal sources of funding, the King County Best Starts for Kids (BSK), Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) levy and the Veterans, Human Services and Seniors (VSHSL) levy, King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) Continuum of Care funding and the Behavioral Health Crisis Care Levy are sources that contribute to countywide human services support funding. Additionally, a comprehensive list of potential revenue sources for local jurisdictions is maintained by the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) in its annual [*Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns*](#).

91. HS Funding - Has there been a cost benefit analysis that quantified the long-term benefits and potential cost savings of fully funding human services?

Answer: There has not been a cost benefit analysis done to determine the impact of fully funding human services. The scope of that potential analysis and evaluation is substantial. However, staff regularly receive metrics from service providers that are funded by the City to determine the outcomes resulting from these services.

92. HS Funding - The equation that is provided for human services, the population and inflation. Can staff create an equation that is impacted by changes in demographics?

Answer: An equation to determine the appropriate funding levels to meet the human services needs of an evolving population, while ideal, presents too many unknowns to accurately estimate. For instance, data on demographic changes and household needs often lag and it is difficult to predict the funding that will be available to meet these needs from private contributions and other governments at the local, state and, federal levels.

Councilmember Lee

93. We haven't been in City Hall for 40 years. Why does it require a remodel?
When the City purchased this building, didn't we remodel it then too?

Answer: The building is 40 years old; we've been here for 20 years. There was remodeling that was done to the facilities, but as with every building the systems need upgrading. We're at 40 years, in any facilities life it's time to look at how you replace and update things.

94. Clarification about the HS budget and if there's an extra \$2.5m to be spent.

Answer: FAM provides a preliminary number for the human services fund early in the year. The Human Services Commission forms recommendations against this preliminary number. The Commission also provides a recommendation should any additional funds be available. The City Manager included an additional \$2.5 million in the preliminary budget, so the conversation is about how to apply that \$2.5 million. Do we use the Commission's recommendations or does Council have other direction?

Councilmember Zahn

95. Municipal stewardship - Is the budget on track to meet our greenhouse gas goals by 2030? If not, what funding or investment can we get based on current budget?

Answer: Yes, for municipal operations, we are currently on track to meet our GHG reduction goals by 2030. However, following the completion of the long-range facilities plan we may take a look at additional planning efforts specific to facilities infrastructure components that may be contributing to GHG emissions and identifying efficient, sustainable alternatives.

96. EV Charging - are we anticipating getting IRA tax credits and getting that money back?

Answer: Yes, we anticipate eligible projects to be completed in 25/26 budget cycle that will be eligible for a tax credit.

97. Do we have sufficient funds to have as strong cyber security as possible? If not, are there some funds we could help with that?

Answer: Bellevue continues to increase investments in cybersecurity, including modest additional investments in enhanced tools in the 2025/26 proposed budget.

98. Digital upgrades, digital equity - Is there any additional system upgrades that would help our staff be even more efficient and effective with digital equity?

Answer: This budget includes funding for an LTE program coordinator to support Digital Equity and Innovation. This role is designed to increase capacity to build on the partnerships that staff have begun to forge in support of the federal grant.

99. Support for special events - How much funding is in here for opening City Hall even more on the weekends? The community centers? Do we need to have facilities open longer?

Answer: As we grow as a City, there are more frequent and regular requests for the use of City facilities. As part of our City Hall facility planning work, we are also looking at how City Hall is or could be used to support more community events. Currently, City Hall provides for only a few events on weekends each year. While additional funding is not identified in the 2025-2026 preliminary budget, Council Contingency could be a source of funding provide for staffing, event support, and facilities costs for an additional twelve to twenty-four dates per year.

100. Communities of Color - Is there an allowance of funds per year for their recommendations that they'll get next year? Or will that be part of the mid-bi recommendations that come from CCC?

Answer: In 2025, the Preliminary Budget includes \$75K to support the CCC's efforts.

101. HS Funding - In regard to the extra \$2.5m, would like to understand if the allocation of those dollars is in alignment with what the Human Services Commission came up with in terms of that allocation. In some regards we need more funding for youth and for culturally specific organizations? Within the \$2.5m are we meeting the needs of funding youth and culturally specific organizations? Didn't they have a wish list?

Answer: The Commission's recommendations for added funding totaled \$4.8m. The Preliminary budget provides high level recommendations with 2/3rds going to youth services and the other 1/3rd going to other gaps left by ARPA funding. Within youth services, the Commission's recommendations would allocate the funding to childcare and behavioral health, the areas of greatest need. For the remaining 1/3rd the commission had a series of recommendations with the first recommendation for any added funding being shelters and housing.

102. HS Funding - If we were to try and get to the wish list of \$4.8m, what are some possible options for funding beyond the \$2.5m?

Answer: State law provides cities like Bellevue with revenue options to meet a host of needs. However, in options for Human Services specific revenues are limited. To meet this need Council could consider adjusting unrestricted tax sources like sales tax, property taxes, etc., or, instruct staff to reprioritize funding of planned investments or ongoing services included in the Preliminary Budget.

103. The wish list doesn't get to the fully funded ask from all the different community organizations. We know that part of the ask is that they are trying to pay the people providing the service a living wage and we would like to support that as much as possible so I would like to understand that.

Answer: Performance expectations in agency contracts are based on the funds allocated, not the original amounts requested by the agency. So, if an agency is allocated less funding than they originally requested, their performance expectations would be adjusted accordingly, preventing the agency from incurring uncompensated expenses. In addition, in the 2024-2030 Human Services Strategic Plan, Council provided guidance to "Increase the capacity of Bellevue's human services system by providing equitable access to human services funding opportunities, to support organizations in meeting the needs of and reducing disparities among Bellevue's most marginalized residents." More specifically, "Activity 2.4 In order to sustain the human services continuum, adopt the best practice of a standardized 20% for indirect/administrative costs in contracts with City funds." This guidance provides funding to ensure that agencies are compensated for the full cost of their contractual provision of services to Bellevue residents.

104. Can Council make a different choice than the HS Commission's recommendations? Can Council support both HS Commission's recommendations (focus on homelessness) and support youth and rental assistance for families?

Answer: While Council is not bound by the recommendations of the HS Commission, past practice and expectations suggest that deviating from their recommendations would create a greater need for dialogue. The Council can support HS Commission and provide additional refinement for supplemental funds that are both planned in the 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget and potentially augments with Council Contingency.

Mayor Robinson

105. Could staff bring back to Council for next year to review in detail HS commission's new strategic plan with objectives?

Answer: Staff can bring the 2024-2030 Human Services Strategic Plan for review with the Council.

106. Has Boost requested additional funding for childcare?

Answer: The Upwards Boost program did apply for CDBG funding from HUD; we anticipate a decrease in funding from HUD in 2025. Contingency plan shows what would occur if the City received more than anticipated. Boost microenterprise is recommended by the Commission for funding in 2025.

107. Cross Cultural Center - Could staff provide council the results of the consultant's work? Where it analyzes multiple sites versus one site, believe that was included.

Answer: The November, 2020 AECOM report cited the following findings from interviews with 40 key stakeholders, both internal and external:

1. There was strong interest and enthusiasm in the idea of a center that would focus on cross cultural, diversity, and/or equity issues, with multiple visions expressed and mix of levels of awareness. Visions ranged from a performing arts space to a community center with a multicultural focus to a "third place" where people of underrepresented groups would feel welcome.
2. There was significant alignment around the value of a separately branded facility rather than integration into existing community centers, with the idea that the organization operating the facility would be mission-driven around crosscultural and equity issues. The facility would produce programming as well as support other organizations programming. Several people emphasized that most organizations currently engaged in programming is focused on one segment of the community and is not cross-cultural in nature.
3. Many stakeholders emphasized the importance of a facility specifically designed and operated as intentionally welcoming to all people and communities, in contrast to one that can be made accessible through special accommodations. This would require advance planning, training, and experienced staff.

A more in-depth summary of findings can be found on pp. 40 - 41 of the 2020 feasibility study:

https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2021/Cross-Cultural%20Feasibility%20Assessment.pdf

The 2022 feasibility study offered a similar recommendation: "The current vision anticipates crosscultural interactions through formal programming, as well as informal cross-cultural interactions through the development of a center that serves as a third place. It is different from a community center or performing arts venue in its mission to create programming, interactions, and activities that achieve cross-cultural engagement. It is envisioned to host a variety of cultural, multicultural, and cross-cultural activities. While these activities can be accommodated in other space types that exist in the City, shared spaces with multiple tenants and activities aligned around common goals can be very effective and create synergies and additional benefits. There is significant research about the benefits of mission-driven shared multi-tenant non-profit centers, which is discussed in this report."

The 2022 AECOM report recommended the city provide current city-owned spaces and grants for cross-cultural programming in the short-term while investing in the long-term strategies needed to develop a stand-alone facility. Final feasibility report

can be found here:

https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2023/Cross-Cultural%20Center%20Feasibility%20Study%20Phase%203.pdf

108. HS Funding - I would like staff to weigh in on the council contingency. I see more money going to homelessness than I've ever seen. I support looking into adding the funds for homelessness prevention and youth and rental assistance for families.

Answer: The Preliminary Budget includes a one-time investment of \$2.5m with 2/3 going to the areas of great disparity in youth services, childcare and behavioral health, and 1/3 going to other gaps left by the spenddown of pandemic funding. The Human Services Commission has adopted recommendations that the Council could choose to use to allocate this one-time investment. Should the Council choose to also use the council contingency to invest in human services, the Council could also use the Commission's recommendations to guide that investment. The Commission's recommendations include specific amounts for agencies, and a recommendation of the priorities for allocation. Shelters, housing and rental assistance were all identified as priorities by the Commission.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

109. Safe Parking Program - Council has not dug into the specific data of the program. Is this truly working? Is there a six-month update?

Answer: Yes, once we hit the six months mark, the City will have better data and provide something by the end of the year.

Councilmember Stokes

110. Cross Cultural Facility - number of people we will serve, what the need is, how will one building serve this community when the need is high?

Answer: Staff will provide to provide the Council with the final cross-cultural feasibility report which provide an in-depth analysis of the potential demands for and the supply of spaces/facilities serving cross-cultural programming in Bellevue. This analysis shares detailed assumptions about the numbers and populations served.

111. Cross Cultural Center – What is in the budget? Breaking down what is and isn't for the building?

Answer: The last direction we had from Council was we were told to look at programing, and then to look at the need for a site. So that's where we are. The cross-cultural pilot program in May 2025 has asked for additional funding for one more year. While simultaneously looking at programming and site analysis.

Email and Follow Up Conversations: October 24, 2024

Councilmember Lee

112. 1 percent property tax increase. Consistent with your wonderful attempt for budget transparency, I'd want to see how the money is spent for me to vote for it.

Answer: The City does not track dollar for dollar spending of property taxes. As identified in Question 31, the 1% increase in property tax, it equates to \$903k, of which 41% (\$372k) will go to voter approved levy project categories, with exception of the 2008 parks levy, which does not increase.

113. I would like to see seed money included in the budget to start conceptual design and fundraising of a Cross-Cultural Center. Like other capital projects such as Aquatic Center, etc., it takes time to bring awareness to raise money from donors. Public seed money is essential as early catalyst for the success of Cross-Cultural Center Project.

Answer: The Preliminary Budget contains \$100k for site analysis, which will pick-up the work that was begun with the 2019-20 preliminary siting analysis. This work will lend itself toward identifying sites and developing funding partnerships to achieve the goals of this program.

114. How is the following reflected in the Budget: Separate budgets for independent research, study and analysis for Councilmembers initiatives, community engagement and policy decisions (\$200,000 per Councilmember).

Answer: These resources are not identified in the 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget. Through our City Manager form of government and with Bellevue's Council Rules, a process exists to raise topics of interest amongst Councilmembers. Additionally, based on Council and community input, staff have proposed a large number of study areas within the Preliminary Budget, which will provide significant resources and community engagement to support individual evaluation and deliberations by the Council.

115. How is the following reflected in the Budget: Separate travel budget for each Councilmember (\$25,000).

Answer: The Preliminary Budget does not reflect individual budgets for Councilmember travel. The travel budget for Council was increased by \$20,000 per year to a total budget of \$120,000 for the biennium. Council rules of procedure (Resolution 10369) and reference guide govern the use of these monies consistent with City's Comprehensive Financial Policies.

116. How is the following reflected in the Budget: Funding and/or pilot for one-stop check in for flights departing Sea-Tac International Airport with transportation between downtown Bellevue and the airport.

Answer: Several years ago Bellevue and the Port of Seattle discussed the opportunity for a security screening facility in central Bellevue with a direct shuttle to SEA. The idea has remained conceptual because of some logistical challenges with creating a TSA-staffed facility away from the airport and delivering passengers behind SEA security. As an interim step, Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) funding has been used to create the recently launched visitor-focused [Bellevue Airport shuttle](#). For \$30 per passenger, riders can pre-book the service and depart from hotels centrally located in Bellevue. Users still have to go through security screening at SEA. Usage and performance data from this new service could be used to explore additional services in the future.

117. How is the following reflected: Curb Management.

Answer: Budget has been added in PW-R-46 (Traffic Safety and Implementation) to help pay for the curb pricing study discussed in the response to memory bank question 49. This funding will cover the implementation study and additional next steps if a curb pricing program is approved.

118. How is the following reflected in the Budget: Global Research Institute feasibility.

Answer: The 2020 Economic Development Plan includes an option to work on attracting a major research institute to Bellevue. Bellevue College is an important part of the city's workforce development pipeline as an open enrollment college. Future work should preserve and enhance its ability to provide accessible technical certifications and associate degrees. Creating a new research-focused entity requires significant partnership with existing education institutions, employers, and state leaders. As part of the update to the ED Plan, the City can play a role as a convener of initial conversations. Future work could include contributing to studies and other partnership work.

119. How is the following reflected in the Budget: Innovative housing cost study.

Answer: The Preliminary Budget does not include an innovated housing cost study reviewing innovative and emerging technologies in building construction. However, the Building Code provides a pathway for applicants and builders to seek innovative approaches and the use of alternative materials when those approaches and materials meet equivalent provisions found in the code. The City has evaluated numerous proposals like this in the past and welcomes engagement with design professionals and contractors seeking an innovative new approach.