



# City of Bellevue | 2025-2026 Federal Agenda

Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength.

We embrace the future while respecting our past.

## Key Priorities

### TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Bellevue's growing residential and business community requires a transportation system that is sustainable, reliable and predictable. We appreciate the opportunity created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for cities to apply directly for competitive grants. Bellevue's mobility, land use, equity, and climate goals depend on a robust and integrated transportation network.

- Grand Connection Crossing: Bellevue will improve access and economic activity to the second-largest regional jobs center in Puget Sound by constructing a multimodal bridge over I-405. The east-west crossing will connect more than half a million people via a regional trail network, including the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail and Eastrail. Bellevue supports King County's award for \$25 million in BUILD funding for Eastrail.

The Grand Connection Crossing project reached the 30 percent design milestone in 2025. Alongside private partners and community supporters, the city is seeking support for congressionally directed spending in FY26 and will seek federal competitive grants support for construction in coming years.

- Smart City technology: Bellevue's Smart Mobility Plan will manage growth and improve safety by leveraging technology to optimize transportation systems across the city. Investments will help the city plan for shared-use mobility, autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, and data management. In 2024, Bellevue was awarded a USDOT Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Program competitive Stage 1 grant award to help deploy pedestrian-focused technology treatments. Bellevue will apply for Stage 2 funding in 2025, which would enable the city to expand this program more broadly.

## ESSENTIAL AND SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The health and safety of our growing community require continued investments in essential and sustainable infrastructure at the federal level. The federal government is an essential partner to the City of Bellevue, and federal policies and funding plays a critical role in supporting a number of basic and complex community needs.

- Funding for utility infrastructure: Bellevue residents face untenable rate increases to protect our region's waterways and to ensure resilient utility infrastructure. Our region's ratepayers alone cannot pay the enormous cost to maintain and improve aging utility systems. Support for federal grant funding is critical for water infrastructure and to expand utility bill assistance for low-income households.
- Lake Washington Sewer Lake Lines: Bellevue seeks program development funding through congressionally directed spending in FY26 for the Lake Washington Sewer Lake Lines Management Plan, which will guide the replacement of 15 miles of sewer lines in and along the shoreline of Lake Washington.
- Reducing climate pollution: Bellevue appreciates leveraging federal resources, including pollution reduction grants, energy rebates, and clean energy and energy efficiency tax incentives, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution.
- Affordable internet access and connectivity: Deployment of digital connectivity infrastructure is essential to support the growing needs of Bellevue, its employers, and residents. Access to high-speed internet connectivity is an essential part of bridging long-standing gaps. Bellevue was awarded congressional federal funding for digital equity in FY24.

## HOUSING AND SAFETY NET PROGRAMS

Bellevue strives for a community in which every individual has access to necessary resources, housing, and supportive services. We seek partnership in creating an equitable and caring community where everyone can thrive.

- Safety net and pass-through programs: The federal government has been a steady partner in supporting a range of social services, and those dollars are often passed through the City to community-based organizations that provide direct services. These programs include but are not limited to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Section 8 housing, and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Without reliable funding for these and other programs, individuals fall into desperate circumstances and require more complex intervention to be stabilized.

- Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC): The LIHTC program is the single most important source of financing for multi-family affordable housing projects in Bellevue, including preservation and new construction projects serving families, seniors, low-wage workers, and people moving out of homelessness. We encourage its expansion in this Congress.
- Childcare and resources for working families: Limited sources exist to help families pay for the costs of childcare, and one-time pandemic sources are fading. Tax credits for working families and childcare help increase employment rates and the earnings of parents, as well as reduce child poverty. Bellevue supports Congressional action to support these programs.

## Federal Policy Statement

The City of Bellevue has an enumerated vision, structured around six strategic target areas: High Performance Government, Vibrant Economy, Safe & Efficient Transportation System, High Quality Built and Natural Environment, Community Safety & Health, and Thriving People and Communities. As federal budgets and proposed legislation evolve, Bellevue will weigh in on important items that advance the strategic target areas of the City's adopted priorities. Below are current federal interests:

Emergency services and community safety: We are at the center of the eastside crescent formed by the cities of Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue, Issaquah, and Renton. We celebrate the benefits of working as one region, as well as partnering with other governments. In 2023, Bellevue and Redmond became the first in the state to begin electrification of our fire engines, securing multiple grants. Together, we appreciate a congressionally directed spending investment in FY 24. We value the ability to tap into critical emergency services grants from FEMA and elsewhere.

Public safety and accountability: Bellevue strives to enhance public trust and transparency. Equipping police officers with body-worn cameras is an important step in that effort and is a part of the city's pledge to improve public safety strategies led by recommendations from the city's Office of Independent Review Group. With support from congressionally directed spending, Bellevue deployed this technology in 2024. Looking forward, Bellevue Police may seek resources to equip vehicles with in-car video, harness artificial intelligence to improve officer efficiency, and work with community partners to develop a real time intelligence ecosystem.

Safety: Bellevue's Vision Zero Plan implements a safe systems approach to accommodate a growing, diverse population and workforce. Bellevue is making improvements to pedestrian and bike safety by determining areas of greatest need.

Energy efficiency and transformation: The City supports policies and investments that promote renewable energy and combat climate change, including implementing energy-efficient building codes, electrifying fleets, and deploying vehicle charging infrastructure. One of our collaborations is the Energy Smart Eastside Program, comprised of the cities of Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah, and Mercer Island. We also support additional funding for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants and incentives to retrofit buildings.

Immigration and asylum: The nation is facing an asylum and refugee crisis, and the Eastside is affected by and interested in ways to prepare for these needs. Collaboration between public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and communities is imperative. These challenges should be approached through coordinated planning and leadership and not by any one community alone. Comprehensive immigration reform that will resource asylum and refugee programs, process applications faster, protect the H1B program, and remove the federal prohibition on employment for newly arrived asylum-seekers is needed. Federal investment should be made to support community response systems, including grant programs that fund housing and other needs.



Environmental health: The City supports policies and investments that improve environmental health, including the programs that support active transportation alternatives, protect open space and advance habitat restoration. Bellevue will continue to seek opportunities to leverage local, state, and federal funds to restore and protect habitat.

I-405 corridor: Bellevue supports infrastructure improvements to maximize the effectiveness of the I-405 corridor, update and implement the I-405 Master Plan, and upgrade the efficiency of state highways and regional corridors. Key segments that need investment include interchange improvements at SR 520 and 124th Avenue NE; I-405 Improvements at I-90 and SR 520; and South Downtown I-405 Access/Lake Hills Connector.

Economic development, workforce development, and arts: As Washington's second largest employment hub and second largest hotel market, Bellevue provides an attractive and welcoming business environment. As a magnet for foreign direct investment, Bellevue supports investments and policies that foster public-private partnerships, attract international visitors, deliver transit-oriented development, support small businesses and microbusinesses, and foster innovation. To help these growing industries, Bellevue supports building the capacity of our higher education institutions to provide work-based learning opportunities, upskilling programs, and degrees and certifications.

Cybersecurity: Additional funding support to local governments is needed to enhance the ability to protect critical government functions, systems, and services from cybersecurity attacks and threats. We are eager to work with our state agencies and private partners to deploy funds such as State and Local Cybersecurity Grants (SLCGP) to enhance and harden our systems. Bellevue successfully completed an SLCGP grant awarded in 2023.

5G readiness: Bellevue's infrastructure must support 5G development (i.e., connectivity and power to enable Bellevue's utility poles to be ready for 5G and allow for rapid deployment of small-cell technology for private sector entities) so our Smart City strategy can be fully deployed for the benefit of the public, for safety, connectivity, equitable access, and more.

Financing and credit assistance: Credit assistance, tax incentives and other financing mechanisms have been effective tools in expanding the available revenue for public works projects and investments. Federal direct loans, loan guarantees, and credit line assistance through programs like infrastructure banks and the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) are valuable for cities. Preservation of tax-exempt municipal bonds is critical to make it more viable to finance affordable housing projects, for example. Bellevue recommends raising the federal population cap for communities accessing the best available borrowing rates to ensure that growing, thriving communities can appropriately utilize flexible, low interest financing tools.



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