

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

April 16, 2024  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmembers Hamilton, Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Stokes and Zahn<sup>1</sup>

ABSENT: Mayor Robinson

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Deputy Mayor Malakoutian presiding.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian noted that the Mayor requested an excused absence from tonight's meeting.

→ Councilmember Stokes moved to excuse Mayor Robinson from tonight's meeting, and Councilmember Hamilton seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

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

(a) Earth Day Proclamation

Councilmember Lee read the proclamation recognizing April 22, 2024, as Earth Day in Bellevue. He encouraged all residents to take part in protecting our trees and natural environment and to join the City in its commitment to fostering sustainable practices.

(b) Distracted Driving Awareness Month Proclamation

Councilmember Hamilton read the proclamation declaring April 2024 as Distracted Driving Awareness Month in Bellevue and urged all residents to practice safe driving and to pledge to drive distraction-free this month and all year long.

---

<sup>1</sup> Councilmember Zahn participated remotely.

Mellani McAleenan and Laura Ray, AAA Washington, thanked the Council for the proclamation. Ms. Ray said AAA Washington has long supported distracted driving awareness as part of its Safe Mobility For All advocacy efforts. She noted the program's special emphasis on young drivers.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Councilmember Hamilton moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Arredondo said the total time for oral communications is for a period not to exceed 30 minutes and topics must relate to City of Bellevue government. Persons speaking to items on the agenda will be called first and if time remains, others will be called. The presiding officer is authorized to give preference to individuals who have not spoken to the Council within the past 60 days or who are speaking to items that will come before the Council in the upcoming 60 days.

- (a) Christopher Randels, speaking on behalf of Complete Streets Bellevue, expressed concern regarding the Bike Bellevue planning effort. He said more details are needed to understand the Council's direction in March regarding the prioritization of corridors in the high-injury network and the future potential conversion of vehicle lanes to bike lanes as a last resort. He expressed concern that City staff is not viewing rapid implementation infrastructure as a viable option on the eight remaining Bike Bellevue corridors, instead categorizing them as more permanent infrastructure, longer term projects or candidates for removal from consideration. He said it was his group's impression that a majority of Councilmembers did not intend to preclude any Bike Bellevue corridor from rapid implementation or the removal of a travel lane if that is a last resort option. Mr. Randels expressed concern about the City's ongoing community outreach. He encouraged the Council to define the circumstances that would trigger the removal of a vehicle lane.
- (b) Cameron Barajas, a resident of the Crossroads area and a member of the People for Climate Action Bellevue leadership team, thanked the Council for funding additional environmental stewardship and sustainability staff. He said he appreciated the City's March 19 sustainability town hall and the information shared publicly by staff. He said People for Climate Action look forward to working with staff to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions in existing buildings, expand the Energy Smart Eastside program, promote public education, increase multimodal travel options, create a climate and resilience element in the Comprehensive Plan update, and to establish ecologically sensitive criteria for the development of the Wilburton district.
- (c) Court Olson, speaking on behalf of the People for Climate Action Bellevue leadership team, noted a handout provided to the Council. He expressed caution regarding the City's latest wedge analysis provided in the evening's meeting packet. He opined that the

documents provided by staff suggest that little action is needed to meet greenhouse gas emissions goals by 2030. Mr. Olson said that repeal of the state Climate Commitment Act will be on the fall ballot and there is uncertainty regarding Puget Sound Energy's ability to comply with the state Clean Energy Transformation Act. He said federal laws and funding could be repealed as well.

- (d) Bill Westre, a member of People for Climate Action, said the wedge analysis presented during the City's sustainability town hall suggested that the 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emissions goals can be reached. He said buildings contributed to half of the 2022 greenhouse gas emissions inventory. He said People for Climate Action will be proposing specific actions the City could implement that would dramatically decrease building emissions as well as the estimated costs of those actions. He said a robust public education campaign is needed to gain public understanding, agreement and participation in reducing emissions.
- (e) Craig Spiezle thanked Diane Carlson and staff for extending COBRA medical insurance payments for Officer Bereta and his family and for all employees who are seriously injured on the job. He thanked Ms. Carlson for listening to the community, the police union and all stakeholders regarding this issue. Mr. Spiezle thanked Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Councilmember Hamilton, representatives of the police guild and Chief of Police Wendell Shirley for engaging with him throughout the process.
- (f) Ariel Davis said he lives and works in Bellevue and commutes twice per week using his bike. He expressed support for the Bike Bellevue program and noted that he was not able to attend the recent Council meeting where it was last discussed. He expressed concern regarding the Council's reluctance to convert vehicle lanes to bike lanes except as a last resort. He encouraged the City to implement the Bike Bellevue plan to provide more bike lanes.
- (g) Patrick Sathyanathan, a Bellevue resident since 2006, said he is glad the Bellevue Police Department is now using body cameras. He expressed concerns regarding the police department. He said that on March 21, a neighbor called the police to report a pellet gun in one of his cars. He said pellet guns are legal. However, two police officers without body cameras visited his house later in the day and started asking questions of his sister, who was visiting from India. He said the officers eventually left his house. He described a similar incident involving a pellet gun that occurred in January 2019, which resulted in a response by a number of police officers.
- (h) Alex Tsimerman expressed concern about negative behavior towards Jews in America.
- (i) Manpreet Sarao, a Bellevue resident, expressed concern regarding the eviction process and the adverse impacts on landlords. She thanked Councilmember Nieuwenhuis for supporting her and her husband regarding their efforts over the past two years to evict a tenant who has not been paying rent. She said the tenant is receiving free legal assistance from the Housing Justice Project while she and her husband have incurred significant legal costs. She said squatters' attorneys use the issuance of anti-harassment and

restraining orders to prolong the eviction process and intimidate landlords. Ms. Sarao said their tenant has made many false claims to the Housing Justice project, which undermines the integrity of that organization. She said the organization received \$6 million from the State and it is concerning that they have spent nearly \$100,000 to represent a single tenant. Ms. Sarao urged the state legislature to update the squatter laws in Washington to shorten the timeframe of adverse possession claims, implement stricter requirements for squatters to establish legal rights, and to provide more legal avenues for property owners to address squatting situations.

- (j) Jaskaran Sarao thanked Councilmember Nieuwenhuis for his support and thanked City staff for meeting with him. He noted that he completed the Bellevue Essentials class in 2017. He said his lawyer has been trying to contact his tenant to determine when he plans to leave Mr. Sarao's property. He said the tenant has been in the rental house for two years without paying rent.
  - (k) Sue Mercer said she recently learned that this state does not have disturbing the peace laws. She noted that she houses individuals experiencing homelessness and she recalled an incident in which one of those individuals caused a disturbance in the neighborhood while Ms. Mercer was out of town. She encouraged the Council to enact an ordinance that allows pressing charges if two or more people report an act of someone disturbing the peace. She hopes that could help the police to get people into a 72-hour hold for mental health services. She raised a second issue regarding street conditions and encouraged the City to fill all potholes. She expressed concern about street and lane closures in the downtown during daytime hours.
5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.
  6. Report of the City Manager: None.
  7. Council Business and New Initiatives
    - (a) Strategic Target Areas and 2024-2026 Council Priorities

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced discussion regarding the City Council's strategic target areas and 2024-2026 priorities.

Bianca Siegl, Assistant Director, City Manager's Office, said staff is seeking Council action to approve the target areas and 2024-2026 Council Priorities.

Danielle Verwahren, Special Projects Program Manager, said the Council first adopted strategic target areas and priorities for the 2014-2015 timeframe. During the Council's recent retreats on January 24-26 and March 15, Councilmembers reached a consensus on the target areas and priorities for 2024-2026.

The strategic target areas reflect the Council Vision and support alignment with budgeting and organizational work plans. The updated target areas continue the previous vision, include

objectives to identify desired outcomes, and reflect an increased emphasis on community safety, equity, environmental stewardship, resiliency and partnership. The six target areas are high performance government, vibrant economy, safe and efficient transportation system, high quality built and natural environment, community safety and health, and thriving people and communities.

Ms. Siegl presented the list of the 2024-2026 Council priorities:

- Customer service and data
- Brand identity
- Arts programs
- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Use of City-owned property for affordable housing
- Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) permitting
- Old Bellevue character
- Eastrail completion
- Diversity Advantage Plan
- Community Engagement
- Human Services
- Homelessness.

The priorities retain items carried over from the 2021-2023 priorities including customer service technologies, the City's brand identity, affordable housing, Eastrail and the Diversity Advantage Plan.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff for the presentation.

→ Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the Council's Strategic Target Areas and 2024-2026 Council Priorities, and Councilmember Hamilton seconded the motion.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for their work. She noted that the Council remains committed to its priorities related to climate action, environmental stewardship and Vision Zero transportation investments. She expressed an interest in increasing human services funding. She asked how the Council's "parking lot" items compiled by staff during the Council retreats will be handled.

City Manager Carlson said staff will continue to track those items and they can be brought back at any time by the Council.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for the strategic target areas and priorities and said they are a good precursor to budget discussions. He noted the importance of cross-cultural activities and collaboration within the thriving people and communities target area. He said high performance government is important as well. He said everyone, including Councilmembers, need to have adequate resources to enable them to maximize their potential.

Councilmember Stokes commented that the strategic target areas and priorities provide the foundation for budget discussions and other decisions. He thanked staff for their work.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for their work with the Council. He said the Council has had a number of discussions about improving and expanding Council resources, and he looks forward to future budget discussions.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff for clearly consolidating all of the Councilmembers' input. He said the priorities are appropriate and ambitious and he is eager to move them forward.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked his colleagues for their comments and thanked staff for their work.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

#### 8. Consent Calendar

→ Councilmember Hamilton moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 6-0, and the following items were approved:

- (a) Council Minutes  
*Minutes of March 18, 2024 Regular Meeting*  
*Minutes of March 25, 2024 Special Meeting*  
*Minutes of March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting*
- (b) Motion to approve payment of claims and payroll for the period March 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024.
- (c) Motion to award Bid No. 23064 for the Clyde Hill 465 Reservoir Improvements project to Purcell P&C LLC, as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, in an amount not to exceed \$982,092, plus all applicable taxes (CIP Plan No. W-85).
- (d) Resolution No. 10373 authorizing the execution of an amendment to the General Banking Services Agreement with Bank of America, N.A. for a two-year extension and to increase the contract value to an estimated amount of \$958,280, plus all applicable taxes.
- (e) Resolution No. 10374 authorizing the execution of an amendment to the Merchant Services Agreement with Bank of America, N.A., for itself and as assignee of Banc of America Merchant Services, LLC, for a two-year extension and to increase the contract value to an estimated amount of \$12,339,000, plus all applicable taxes.

- (f) Resolution No. 10375 authorizing execution of a labor agreement between the City of Bellevue and the International Association of Firefighters Union, Local 1604, representing Firefighters through Captains, for a three-year contract period starting January 1, 2024, and expiring December 31, 2026. The executed agreement shall be substantially in the form of the agreement in the Council Library.
- (g) Resolution No. 10376 authorizing execution of a temporary special use agreement with King County across City of Bellevue property located at 12020 SE 11th Street, for a term of thirty (30) months with option for two extensions up to six (6) months each, as part of King County's Eastrail project.
- (h) Resolution No. 10377 authorizing execution of all documents necessary to implement settlement of the claim brought by Marco Bussadori in the amount of \$490,062.74.
- (i) Resolution No. 10378 authorizing execution of all documents necessary to implement settlement of the claim brought by Qi Guo in the amount of \$228,721.69.
- (j) Resolution No. 10379 authorizing execution of Amendment 6 to the Marymoor Park Interlocal Agreement with King County for maintenance and operation of Bellevue/King County Marymoor Ballfield Complex.
- (k) Resolution No. 10380 renaming 103rd Avenue NE between NE 8th Street and NE 900 Block to "Avenue Square NE" and naming the street between 103rd Avenue NE and Bellevue Way NE "Avenue Square NE."
- (l) Resolution No. 10381 appointing a Board Member and an Alternate Board Member to the Cascade Water Alliance Board of Directors.

9. Public Hearing: None.

10. Study Session

- (a) Keep Bellevue Beautiful Program Update

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's update regarding the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program.

Mike McCormick Huentelman, Assistant Director, Community Development Department, said the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program is approaching its one-year anniversary. The program focuses on cleanup events, abandoned shopping cart retrieval, graffiti prevention and removal and the upcoming Adopt-A-Street program.

Sarina Miller, Keep Bellevue Beautiful Coordinator, Community Development Department, said this has been a true community effort with 344 volunteers and seven neighborhood cleanup

events. There have been more than 65 youth volunteers under the age of 18 and families with young children. Ms. Miller said a number of businesses have participated in the cleanup events and the City's probation work group program partnered with Keep Bellevue Beautiful to provide community service opportunities. She thanked the Fire Department and Parks and Community Services Department for their assistance, including providing dumpsters for the program.

Ms. Miller said the Adopt-A-Street program involving neighborhoods, businesses and civic groups will be launched this summer and will allow individuals and organizations to adopt one mile or more of the public right-of-way on Bellevue streets. Staff is gathering all needed supplies and developing the mapping and reporting systems to make it easy for individuals and organizations to select adoptable streets and track cleanup events. The adopted streets will host four cleanup events annually and the City will supply the needed supplies, including Keep Bellevue Beautiful trash bags, and safety training. Ms. Miller said Republic Services has agreed to pick up Adopt-A-Street street bags from residences at no additional charge. She said interested parties may subscribe to updates on the Keep Bellevue Beautiful web page.

Ms. Miller said upcoming events include Earthfest 2024 at the Bellevue Botanical Garden and the Wilburton area cleanup event on April 20 and the Eastgate cleanup event (150<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of I-90) on May 11.

Ms. Miller said the City initiated the abandoned shopping cart retrieval program in April 2023 as a supplement to retailers' ongoing work to contain and retrieve their shopping carts from the right-of-way. Since that time, 3,080 carts have been retrieved by the City's vendor. She thanked the community for reporting abandoned carts through the MyBellevue app, which has helped the City collect approximately 250 carts per month.

Lisa Beauchamp, Code Compliance Supervisor, Development Services Department, said retailers have been willing and responsive partners with the City in shopping cart retrieval. She said many retailers have improved signage on their carts and in parking lots to notify the public that removing a cart is unlawful and to provide a phone number to call if an abandoned shopping cart is found. She said staff has met with 60 retailers in Bellevue who use shopping carts to discuss signage, containment and retrieval.

Mr. McCormick Huentelman recalled past discussion with the Council about exploring cost recovery related to shopping cart retrieval. He said the approach would require code changes regarding labeling and other requirements for retailers. He noted that the overall cost of retrieval services by the City has been relatively minimal and many retailers have their own retrieval services. He said staff believes that the current approach is working well and does not recommend any code changes or enforcement approach. He said staff will continue to monitor and track the number of cart retrievals. The City recently renewed its contract with the cart retrieval vendor through March 2025.

Mr. McCormick Huentelman recalled the Council's interest in addressing graffiti prevention and removal. He displayed the brochure developed to notify the public to report, record and to remove graffiti within 48 hours. He said the swift removal of graffiti is one of the best ways to prevent future graffiti.



Ms. Beauchamp presented a map depicting the locations of 153 graffiti-related complaints from June to December 2023 and 151 complaints from January to March 2024. She said graffiti on City-owned property is referred to the proper department and removed as quickly as possible. Code Compliance works in coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and King County to remove graffiti, and private property owners are encouraged to file online police reports.

Mr. McCormick Huentelman said the City is tracking how quickly graffiti is removed and who is asking for assistance to remove it. He said there have not been any requests for assistance from businesses to remove graffiti over the past year. However, there has been a handful of residents who requested assistance and they all fit the City's hardship criteria to qualify for assistance. He said that going forward, the City will provide the service of painting over graffiti for single-family residential properties that meet the hardship criteria.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked and complimented staff for their work on the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked Ms. Miller and said she is great ambassador for this program, always upbeat, which helps to attract residents to participate. He thanked Ms. Beauchamp and the community volunteers.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked where residents can find information about the Adopt-A-Street program and whether signage will be provided. Referring to abandoned shopping carts, he said he thought enforcements codes were already in place although they have not been used. He encouraged the City to continue to work with retailers. However, he noted that the City is paying to retrieve their carts and said he is concerned that some retailers might be taking advantage of that assistance. He said he was pleased with the community engagement and positive impact of the program.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked the City Manager to consider an interlocal agreement (ILA) with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to allow the City to address graffiti and litter rather than waiting for WSDOT to take action on their roadways and highway ramps. He said he has heard complaints from residents that WSDOT is not addressing the problems. He wondered whether the City's Transportation Department could have a role in addressing graffiti and litter. Ms. Carlson said staff will explore the issue and potential options.

Ms. Miller said information about the Adopt-A-Street program will be provided on the Keep Bellevue Beautiful web page. As the mapping platforms are built to reflect the streets that have been adopted, those streets will have their own landing pages to provide more specific information. She said staff is exploring options for acknowledgments, including signage.

Mr. McCormick Huentelman said the primary issue with enforcing abandoned shopping carts is being able to trace carts back to specific locations, especially if there are multiple stores with the same name. He said enforcement would require a code revision regarding a fee. Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked about the possibility of fining a store chain even if the specific store connected to an abandoned cart could not be verified.

Councilmember Zahn thanked the community for their support of the program. She thanked staff for providing the trash bags to be picked up at no charge by Republic Services. She encouraged the installation of cigarette receptacles at certain locations, especially in the downtown. She expressed support for the Adopt-A-Street program. She stated her understanding that members of the public can sign up for cleanup efforts with WSDOT and asked whether that could be rolled into the City's program. She suggested perhaps establishing a mascot for the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program.

Referring to the public's involvement on highways and ramps, Mr. McCormick Huentelman noted concerns about the safety of community volunteers. He said the current focus of the program is residential streets. He said the State's Adopt-A-Highway program provides safety training, equipment and insurance to engage public participation. He said the City will incorporate information about the State's program into the City's information about the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program.

Ms. Miller said the Adopt-A-Street program will begin in July and the City will start taking applications at that time. She acknowledged that staff has heard comments about cigarette butts when picking up litter.

In further response to Councilmember Zahn, Ms. Miller said Republic Services is providing clearly identifiable yellow bags for free trash pickup after cleanup events. Mr. McCormick Huentelman said the City tracks the number and locations of bags that are collected.

Councilmember Stokes praised the Keep Bellevue Beautiful program and noted how you do not realize how much litter is out there until you participate in a cleanup. He said these are good community building events and he is pleased with the success of the program. He thanked Councilmember Nieuwenhuis for advocating for the program and thanked staff for their hard work.

Councilmember Lee thanked staff, residents and businesses for their coordinated efforts. He thanked Councilmember Nieuwenhuis for his support and for participating in numerous cleanups. Mr. Lee said he has received emails about litter at sports fields and in parks. He suggested that sports teams and scout troops might want to participate in cleanup events.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff for the presentation and their work. He confirmed that there is strong enthusiasm behind the program and he credited Ms. Miller for her role in that. He said he reported an abandoned cart through the MyBellevue app and promptly heard back from staff. He said he attended a cleanup event in the Newport Hills area and observed that the events are not just about cleanup but also about community building.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian complimented everyone for doing a great job. He thanked staff for being both proactive with the Adopt-A-Street program and reactive in terms of litter cleanup. He praised staff and the 344 community volunteers for collecting 200 bags of litter and for coordinating the retrieval of more than 3,000 shopping carts. He encouraged friendly competition and ways to acknowledge volunteers.

At 7:49 p.m., Deputy Mayor Malakoutian declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 7:58 p.m.

(b) Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) Quarterly Update

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's quarterly update regarding the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) program.

Jennifer Ewing, Sustainability Program Manager, Community Development Department, said the City will hold its first Earthfest event on April 20 at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. She highlighted progress since the last update to the Council including the addition of five sustainability staff, receipt of \$800,000 in grant funding to support climate planning and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and the launch of the Wilburton Sustainable District opportunity assessment. She highlighted a news article indicating that Eastside carbon emissions remain below pre-pandemic levels.

Ms. Ewing said that of the 78 actions in the Environmental Stewardship Plan, the City has initiated or incorporated into ongoing operations 61 actions. Seven of the remaining actions have been completed and the final 10 actions will be implemented over the next year. Top priorities include the tree code update, residential electrification and efficiency and commercial building energy efficiency. Referring to the 2022 community inventory results, Ms. Ewing said greenhouse gas emissions are below the baseline but trending upwards following the pandemic.

Ana Hagerup, Sustainability Portfolio Manager, Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Department, said the City has been tracking greenhouse gas emissions since 2011. There was a decrease in community emissions in 2020 during the pandemic. Emissions were reduced by eight percent since 2011 and have remained below the 2011 baseline level. However, emissions have been increasing since 2020. Ms. Hagerup said electricity and natural gas are used in commercial buildings, accounting for 23 percent of emissions, and the residential sector generates 20 percent of the emissions. The largest source of emissions is related to transportation, with 47 percent of emissions being generated by passenger vehicles. There has been a 27 percent reduction in vehicle miles traveled in passenger vehicles, however.

Turning to the 2022 municipal inventory results, Ms. Hagerup said the City is operating below its greenhouse gas emissions target. Emissions have been reduced by 48 percent, due largely to the reduction in municipal energy use from efficiency and renewable energy projects. Ms. Hagerup said electricity and natural gas make up 41 percent of municipal emissions. She said 71 percent of the electricity used for City operations is purchased from a local wind farm project in Olympia and a large solar farm project in Eastern Washington. She noted an increase in employee commuting since the pandemic. However, 14 percent of employees who are commuting are driving electric vehicles. She said fleet emissions have increased by only one percent since 2021 as the City continues to electrify its fleet vehicles.

Sofia Fall, Sustainability Program Coordinator, Community Development Department, described the wedge analysis that models different emission and action scenarios. If the City does nothing,

emissions would be expected to increase by approximately 55 percent by 2050. The City's emission reduction targets since 2011 are 50 percent by 2030, 70 percent by 2040 and 80 percent by 2050.

Ms. Fall said a substantial degree of emissions reduction strategies are needed to achieve those goals. She said the wedge analysis reflects the reduction in emissions anticipated due to federal, state and regional policies related to energy codes, the state Clean Buildings Act, federal vehicle regulations, state clean fuel standards, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) transportation plan, the state Climate Commitment Act and other measures. The model assumes the full implementation of all of those policies and projects a resulting 49 percent reduction in emissions by 2050.

Ms. Fall noted that the wedge analysis reflects a certain percentage of emission reduction that will occur due to actions on the municipal level. Those actions include electrifying new and existing buildings by 100 percent by 2050 and reducing transportation emissions. If successful, the City will achieve the targeted 80-percent reduction in emissions by 2050. Ms. Fall cautioned that some of the state and regional policies might not be fully implemented by 2030, which provides a level of uncertainty. She said the current municipal trajectory is not on track to meet emission reduction targets. She said more information is available on the City's new online environmental performance dashboard.

Ms. Ewing said the City held a sustainability town hall in March to hear from the community and has been involved in additional public outreach over the past few months. She said there is interest in the community to reduce emissions and staff has been working to engage diverse communities within Bellevue.

Ms. Ewing said the 2024 workplan includes the electric vehicle roadmap, Energy Smart Eastside program, Wilburton Sustainable District planning, continued modifications to municipal operations and an update of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan. She noted pending state grant applications. She said the Environmental Element of the Comprehensive Plan has been revised as part of the overall plan periodic update.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Zahn, liaison to the Environmental Services Commission, said she was pleased to have the additional sustainability staff. She said she appreciated the partnerships created by City staff and looks forward to the update of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan by the end of 2025. She noted that the electrification of heavy duty equipment will not begin in the near future and she suggested expediting that effort. She wondered whether there is more the City could do to reduce vehicle miles traveled and asked whether there are targets related to the installation of heat pumps. She asked whether the City is pursuing federal Inflation Reduction Act tax credits.

Ms. Ewing said the Energy Smart Eastside program takes advantage of a number of tax credits and she noted Puget Sound Energy and City incentives for residents to utilize. She said the Inflation Reduction Act includes tax credits previously available only to private sector and residential activities. However, local governments can now receive a tax credit for their efforts.

Ms. Hagerup said the City is tracking tax credits. However, the City did not have any eligible projects in 2023. She said staff is exploring grants related to the electrification of medium and heavy duty equipment. Councilmember Zahn suggested reaching out to the National League of Cities for resources.

Responding to Councilmember Hamilton, Ms. Ewing confirmed that the emission reduction goals will not be met if federal, state and regional policies are not fully implemented. She said the Clean Energy Transformation Act passed several years ago requires Puget Sound Energy to transition to 100 percent renewable electricity. The City will continue to monitor PSE's progress toward that goal. In further response to Mr. Hamilton, Ms. Hagerup said a major focus over the next several years is fleet electrification and reducing transportation emissions. However, there is a need to continue to reduce building emissions as well.

In further response to Mr. Hamilton, Ms. Ewing said she is excited to have the new sustainability team and she believes that current staffing is adequate. She said cities are sharing staffing for the Energy Smart Eastside program. The City hopes to receive grant funding through the Climate Commitment Act and Washington State Department of Commerce. Additional staffing will likely be needed to support those grants. Ms. Ewing noted a partnership with Hopelink to support the Energy Smart Eastside program.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff and said this is good news. He is pleased to have more staffing. Responding to Mr. Stokes, Ms. Ewing said there is always a lag in receiving data and most data is not received until six months or so following the end of a given year. She said staff hopes to start working on the 2023 emissions inventory in the near future. Mr. Stokes said he appreciates staff's enhanced efforts. He expressed concern about potential political and legal actions that could adversely impact efforts.

Councilmember Lee said Bellevue has the opportunity to demonstrate its commitment and leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He acknowledged that the two areas with the biggest potential impact are transportation and buildings/energy usage. He noted that while the public supports the City's efforts to date, it is important to continue to educate the public about the challenges, goals and options for reducing emissions.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the accomplishments to date. He expressed concern about the potential impacts if Initiative 2117 is successful in repealing the 2021 Washington Climate Commitment Act. He said a number of automakers are decreasing their electric vehicle production.

Ms. Ewing said electric vehicle purchases are increasing in Bellevue and approximately 20 percent of cars sold in Bellevue last year were electric. She acknowledged, however, that that is higher than other communities. She said people need to be able to easily access charging stations, especially in multifamily housing.

Ms. Ewing said the repeal of the Climate Commitment Act would have an impact on efforts to reduce emissions. She noted that the act includes funding for transportation-related investments and other climate-related programming.

Councilmember Lee said it is important to continue to be nimble and able to change and evolve as circumstances and conditions change.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff for the thorough update and said he is impressed with the progress and community engagement efforts. He expressed concern about gas consumption and asked about the level of confidence in the wedge analysis. Ms. Fall said the error in the graph noted by a speaker during oral communications has been corrected. Ms. Ewing said the projection is based largely on jobs and housing unit targets for the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Malakoutian expressed concern about the ability to meet greenhouse gas emission targets. Ms. Ewing said this is an interim status report and the next update to the environmental stewardship plan will reflect the positive impact of many new federal and state regulations and policies.

In further response to Mr. Malakoutian, Ms. Ewing said if certain federal and state policies are not implemented, there will be a coordinated regional effort to address next steps.

11. Land Use: None.
12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.
13. Written Reports
  - (a) Intergovernmental Affairs Monthly Update
14. Unfinished Business: None.
15. New Business: None.
16. Executive Session: None.
17. Adjournment

At 8:55 p.m., Deputy Mayor Malakoutian declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC  
City Clerk

/kaw