

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

2024-2025 Federal Agenda

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**ACTION**

Staff is asking the council to adopt the 2024-2025 Federal Agenda, as revised by staff reflecting council input at the 5/14/24 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the 2024-2025 Federal Agenda.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Adoption of the Federal Agenda allows the City to convey to our congressional delegation and federal agencies Bellevue's highest level vision and principles, as well as a clear sense of what Bellevue will be asking for, applying for, or supporting in 2024-2025.

Current Context: the 118th Congress, Second Session

During April, Congress made progress on a number of critical fronts, including advancing an aid package to our allies around the globe, getting the fiscal committees of the House and Senate in order, and starting Senate consideration of legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), among other things. The Administration also made some key announcements around water quality.

Supplemental Foreign Aid Package for Ukraine, Israel, Taiwan, etc.

After months of delays, a \$95 billion foreign aid package cleared Congress on April 24th. The bill includes \$60.8 billion for Ukraine, \$26.4 billion for Israel and humanitarian aid and \$8.1 billion for the Indo-Pacific to counter China.

The package also contains national security and sanctions provisions. It allows the confiscation of Russian dollar assets, something critics allege would weaken the status of the US dollar as the world's reserve currency. It also bans the popular social media app TikTok if China's Bytedance does not divest itself from the company. The package mandates sanctions on Iranian oil and includes \$9 billion in humanitarian aid, including for Palestinians, due to pressure from Democrats.

A list of Bellevue's delegation leadership and committee assignments is below:

Bellevue Congressional Delegation – 2024 Committee Assignments	
Sen. Patty Murray	Senate President Pro Tempore Appropriations Committee, Chair Chair of Subcommittee Energy and Water Development • Defense • Homeland Security • Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies • Military Construction & Veterans Affairs • Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee Budget Committee Veterans' Affairs Committee
Sen. Maria Cantwell	Commerce, Science and Transportation, Chair Energy and Natural Resources Finance Indian Affairs Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Rep. Suzan DelBene (D, WA-1)	Ways & Means New Democrat Coalition, Chair Women's High-Tech Coalition, Co-Chair
Rep. Adam Smith (D, WA-9)	Armed Services, Ranking Member

Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Appropriations

The congressional appropriations process is finally underway after a delay caused by a series of leadership changes on both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.

At the end of March, Kay Granger (R, TX) announced that she would be stepping down as chair of the House Appropriations Committee. After a frenzy of inter-caucus positioning and elections, the House Republican Conference Committee ratified Rep. Tom Cole (R, OK) as the new chair of the House Appropriations Committee. House Republicans also picked three new Appropriations Subcommittee chairs: Rep. Steve Womack (R, AR) will chair the House Appropriations Transportation-HUD Subcommittee, Rep. David Joyce (R, OH) will chair the

Financial Services Subcommittee and Rep. David Valadao (R, CA) will chair the Legislative Branch Subcommittee. Rep. Lauren Underwood (D, IL) will also be taking over as the ranking member on the Department of Homeland Security subcommittee, replacing Rep. Henry Cuellar (D, TX), who is stepping down as he faces a federal indictment.

In the Senate, Senator Kyrsten Sinema (I, AZ) became chair of the Senate Appropriations Military Construction-VA Subcommittee. Sinema's promotion comes after a shake-up that started with the passing of the late Senator Dianne Feinstein (D, CA). Feinstein had led the Energy and Water Subcommittee, but Sen. Patty Murray (D, WA) took the helm — in addition to leading the full committee and the Military Construction-VA Subcommittee — for the rest of FY 24 after Feinstein died. Murray will continue as the Energy and Water Subcommittee chair and hand off Military Construction-VA to Sinema.

Through the remainder of the spring and summer, Congress will work through the appropriations process to develop the 12 annual appropriations spending bills that will fund the government. The spending caps agreed to in the debt limit agreement enacted in 2023 provides Congress some guidance to get started, but agreement on the exact top-line numbers for each appropriations bill still need to be negotiated. Like in years past, the appropriations process is expected to be extremely challenging and dominated by partisan positioning, especially during a Presidential election year.

Congress will once again allow consideration of congressionally directed spending/community project funding (earmarks) proposals in the appropriations process. However, House Republicans have further tightened the rules around eligibility. For a second year, the House has prohibited earmarks under the Defense, Financial Services and Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bills. For FY 25, earmarks submitted only by government entities will be considered for the popular Economic Development Initiative account under the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Non-profits had previously made up a significant percentage of entities receiving funds from that account.

Bellevue has submitted three congressionally directed spending proposals for the congressional delegation's consideration. A summary table appears below:

City of Bellevue – Submitted FY 2025 Congressional Funding Requests		
Bellevue and Redmond Electric Fire Engines & Charging Infrastructure	Funding would close the funding gap needed to purchase two electric engines and install charging infrastructure at Bellevue Fire Station 1 and Redmond Fire Station 12.	\$885,534
Lake Washington Sanitary Sewer Lake Lines Program	Funding would help to complete the Management Plan focused on policy development, financial analysis, and capital program development.	\$500,000

Bellevue Grand Connection: I-405 Crossing - Downtown to Eastrail	Funds would support completion of the 30%-100% design.	\$2.5M
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Draft 2024-2025 Federal Agenda

The attached document represents Bellevue's federal interests to our congressional delegation, federal agencies, and stakeholders. It connects our overarching goals to the timely items for this and the following year (as the federal government budget cycles straddle the calendar-year, running October 1-September 30). It is structured similar to recent state legislative agendas, with a set of priority issues specifically relevant in 2024-2025, as well as broader federal issues where the city has an interest. The goal is to convey Bellevue's high-level objectives while also providing a clear sketch of what Bellevue will be asking for, applying for, or supporting in 2024-2025.

The priority issues for 2024-2025, as recommended by the intergovernmental relations team, are:

- Transportation and Mobility
 - *Highlights:* Eastrail, Grand Connection crossing, Smart City technology
- Essential and Sustainable Infrastructure
 - *Highlights:* Funding for utility infrastructure, Reducing climate pollution, Affordable internet access and connectivity
- Housing and Safety Net Programs
 - *Highlights:* Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, Childcare and resources for working families

Because federal budgets and proposed legislation may evolve throughout the year, we will weigh in on important items that advance the City's six strategic target areas. The agenda also includes a number of other known federal issues that are already of interest to the City.

Timeline and Next Steps

Adoption of a Federal Agenda in May would be well-timed for the City's objectives. As noted above, Bellevue currently has three congressionally directed spending requests moving forward in the Appropriations process. There are also three grant applications currently pending at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Transportation (USDOT). Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, and city staff are also traveling to Washington, DC in early June to promote those funding requests and grant applications. A key mission for that delegation visit will be checking in with congressional offices on King County's pending RAISE grant application at USDOT, which would provide critical funding to help close one of the last remaining gaps in the 42-mile corridor.

During the balance of the year, staff and city officials will continue to promote our Federal Agenda in a variety of ways. Staff will work with NLC to track federal grant opportunities, as well as associated trainings offered by NLC or other resource groups. Staff will continue to offer our congressional delegation opportunities to visit Bellevue projects during in-state work periods or

the August recess, both to educate members about burgeoning needs and demonstrate the success of and gratitude for federal partnership in our community. Bellevue will collaborate with other governmental, community, and private partners on evolving grant availability as well as ideas for the next round of congressionally directed spending (earmarks).

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

An adopted Federal Agenda serves as an important messaging document for the City, encapsulating the most important federal-level policy positions for Bellevue in 2024-2025. It is important that the City be clear in articulating the City's needs and following through on strategic opportunities, as Congress and federal agencies' actions can have a wide range of impacts on the City.

Fiscal Impact

Federal funds are a significant consideration for a number of city programs. Federal funds come to the City through a variety of avenues. Formula funds come to the City through Metropolitan Planning Organizations or state agencies. Additionally, the City benefits from competitive programs that are overseen and awarded either directly by federal agencies themselves or at the regional level through the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the 2024-2025 Federal Agenda, as drafted.
2. Do not adopt the Federal Agenda and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. 2024-2025 Federal Agenda

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A