



# Executive Summary





# Background and Methodology

## Background

The biennial Budget Survey provides a statistically reliable tool to enhance the City's knowledge of Bellevue community members' perceptions of the City and to better understand community priorities for and expectations regarding city services. The Budget Survey is one part of the greater framework for making city budget decisions.

## Methodology

Data collection took place between November 21, 2025, and January 5, 2026.

- **Address-based sample:** ReconMR drew a sample of 19,500 addresses within the city limits. All addresses were sent a postcard invitation. Additionally, records with valid email addresses were sent an email invitation and two reminders. Addresses with a valid cell phone number were sent an MMS text message invitation and one reminder. Finally, outbound phone calls were made to non-responders.
- **Bellevue Community Panel:** Beginning in 2024, survey respondents were asked if they would be interested in participating in future research with the City of Bellevue by joining an online panel. Panel members are invited to all Bellevue surveys.
- **General Public:** Additionally, the City publicized the survey and made it available to the general public.\*

## Results

The survey effort resulted in a total of 1,278 completed surveys.

The overall margin of error for the address-based sample and community panel sample is +/-2.67 percentage points at 95% confidence, excluding design effects.

This means, that if the survey were repeated 100 times using the same methodology the survey results would be within +/-2.67 points for 95 out of those 100 repetitions.



# Overall Perceptions

All six trended questions regarding Overall Perceptions in Bellevue have remained similar to their prior year ratings.

## Overall quality of life in Bellevue

- Nearly nine in 10 (88%) Bellevue respondents say that the overall quality of life in Bellevue “exceeds” or “greatly exceeds” their expectations.

## Quality of services provided

- Most Bellevue respondents (82%) say that the overall quality of city services "exceeds" or "greatly exceeds" their expectations. Those who rent give higher ratings than homeowners.

## Bellevue compared to other communities

- Bellevue respondents generally agree that when compared to other cities and towns, Bellevue is a better place to live (91%). Those under 35 give significantly higher ratings than those 35 and older.

## Direction Bellevue is headed

- Seven in 10 (68%) respondents say Bellevue is headed in the right direction. Those who live in multi-family homes are more apt than those in single-family homes to give higher ratings. Ratings are also higher among those who only speak English or speak it very well, compared with those who speak it less than very well.

## Value for tax dollar paid

- Two-thirds of respondents (65%) feel they are getting their money's worth for their tax dollars paid. Those who rent their homes are significantly more likely to feel they are getting their money's worth for their tax dollars paid than homeowners.

## Quality of Life in Neighborhood

- Eight in 10 (78%) respondents rate the quality of life in their neighborhood as "Good" or "Excellent."



# Taxes and Services

Respondents are most apt to say they're willing to pay more only if services increase (34%). These results are consistent with 2024.

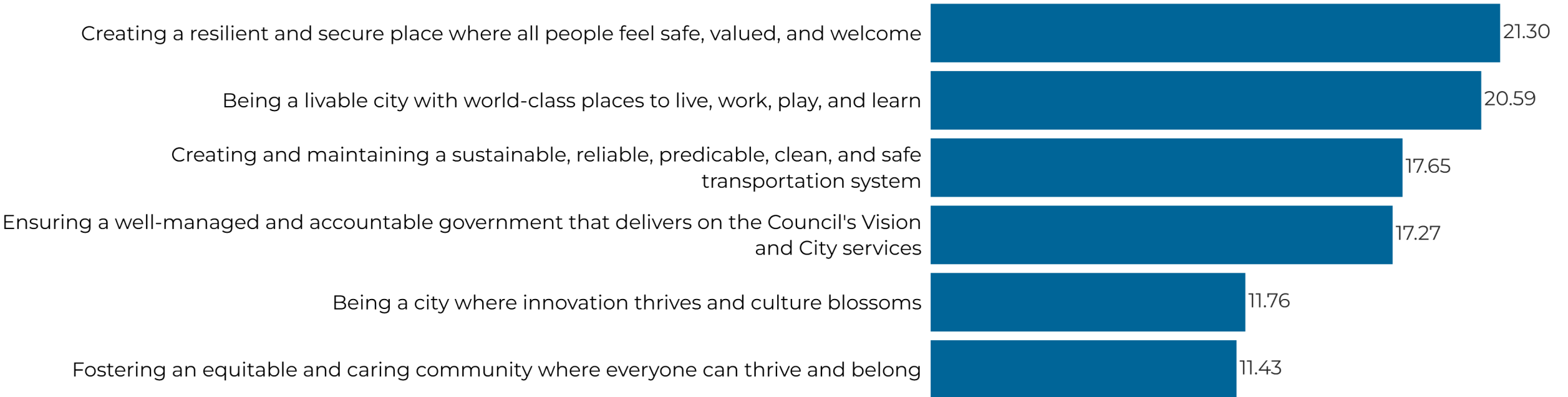
Younger respondents are more likely to pay more if services increase than those older than 35. Additionally, respondents of some other race/ethnicity are more apt to prefer a reduction of services to lower taxes than white respondents and Asian respondents.



# Budget Priorities

The top three budget priorities in which Bellevue should invest are...

- Creating a resilient and secure place where all people feel safe, valued, and welcome
- Being a livable city with world-class places to live, work, play, and learn
- Creating and maintaining a sustainable, reliable, predictable, clean, and safe transportation system





## Budget Priorities - Demographic Differences

"Creating and maintaining a sustainable, reliable, predictable, clean, and safe transportation system" is the second most important priority among single-person households and is significantly more important for this group than it is for households with multiple people.

"Creating a resilient and secure place where all people feel safe, valued, and welcome" becomes more important for households that speak a language in addition to / other than English. It is more important for multi-lingual households than for English-only households, and is significantly more important for those who speak English less than very well.

"Fostering an equitable and caring community where everyone can thrive and belong" is significantly more important for households with incomes below \$200,000 than it is for households with incomes at or above \$200,000.

"Being a livable city with world-class places to live, work, play, and learn" is more important for households with incomes of \$150,000 or more than it is for households with incomes below \$150,000.

"Ensuring a well-managed and accountable government that delivers on the Council's Vision and City services" is significantly more important to residents 55 or older than it is to residents under 55. It is also significantly more important to residents who have lived in Bellevue for 20 years or more than those who have lived in Bellevue for less than 20 years.



# City Services

Rather than asking respondents to rate the importance of each service item, the survey asked for satisfaction ratings only and then used a model called Relative Importance Analysis. This is a type of regression that looks for a correlation between respondents' indications of how well a service is meeting their expectations and their overall feelings toward the City, an index variable derived from the questions regarding the Overall Perceptions of Bellevue.

The top focus areas listed below are the services with higher-than-average levels of importance and lower than average performance levels.

The top focus areas for Bellevue are:

- Prosecuting misdemeanor crimes
- Reducing travel concerns in downtown Bellevue
- Improving intersections and roadway capacity
- Managing residential development
- Responding to code violations
- Enforcing traffic laws