



DATE: November 19, 2024

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Emil A. King AICP, Department Director, 452-7223  
*Community Development*

SUBJECT: Governor's Smart Communities Awards

Staff will provide a brief presentation about the 2024 Governor's Smart Communities Awards that the City received for the Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan, in partnership with King County, and for the Housing Stability Program. The awards will be presented by Washington Department of Commerce staff to the Bellevue City Council and King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci who is accepting the award for the Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan on behalf of King County Council.

Presented annually since 2006, the Governor's Smart Communities Awards recognize local governments and their partners for exceptional land use planning and development. Awards are organized by category with special recognition given to the Judge's Merit Award. From community visioning to developing new housing, these awards highlight each step in the local planning process and the hard work, collaboration and community engagement it takes to accomplish these community-led goals.

In partnership with King County, the City received a Judge's Merit Award for the Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan. Recognizing a unique opportunity, Bellevue is using trail-oriented development as an important part of the growth strategy for Wilburton and worked with King County Parks to create a roadmap for a 100-foot-wide linear park and trail through the heart of one of the fastest growing areas in the Puget Sound region. Bellevue will be adding the Wilburton Transit-Oriented Development Access Concepts Design Guide as a supplemental document to the City's Transportation Design Manual to provide guidance for implementation as development occurs. The level of outreach, innovative designs and effective partnership around the planning process all contributed to the plan earning the Judge's Merit Award.

The City won a second award for the Housing Stability Program under the Smart Housing Strategies category, which recognizes creative plans, policies, programs and actions. Bellevue's Housing Stability Program is a dedicated revenue program developed to generate capital for projects that serve the City's most vulnerable residents. The program provides funding for construction, acquisition, operation, maintenance and on-site support services. Using a 0.1 percent sales tax option, the program has provided \$16 million in project funding over the last two years for construction and preservation, serving households earning 30 percent or less of Area

Median Income. The Housing Stability Program has supported Bellevue's strategic housing goals under the Comprehensive Plan and the 2017 Affordable Housing Strategy.

Award winners this year span the state and provide insights into an amazing amount of community achievements. Bellevue was one of only two cities to receive two awards, underscoring the City's commitment to effective implementation of the state's Growth Management Act.

These awards recognize the outstanding work of staff across departments, collaboration with King County and extensive involvement of the community, and underscores what the City can achieve together as One City. The Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan work was led by staff in the Transportation Department's Implementation Planning Division, Mike Ingram, the Parks and Community Services Department's Planning, Design and Project Development Division, Ryan Walker, and the Community Development Department's Strategic Planning Division, Janet Shull. The Housing Stability Program work was led by staff in the Community Development Department's Affordable Housing team: Sabrina Velarde; Parks and Community Services Department's Human Services Division: Andrew Ndayambaje; and ARCH's Investments Manager: Patrick Tippy.