



DATE: May 7, 2026
TO: Environmental Services Commission
FROM: Eric LaFrance - Utilities Planning Manager
Jim Grueber – Utilities Planning Sr. Engineer
SUBJECT: Water System Plan Update – Draft Review

ACTION REQUIRED

This is an informational briefing on the draft Water System Plan Update; no action is currently required by the Commission. Staff will present a review of the WSP purpose along with system analysis findings and recommendations. Staff requests that ESC review the draft Water System Plan's policies and their alignment with Bellevue's broader policies and planning efforts prior to the October ESC meeting, when staff will be seeking the Commission's comments about the Plan.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Public drinking water suppliers maintain a Water System Plan to conform with multiple federal and state laws. Requirements for a WSP are detailed in [WAC 246-290](#). The significant items of evaluation include system capacity, system operation, and water quality. Bellevue's Water System Plan (WSP) is updated on a 10-year cycle, and staff are currently working to complete the next update in 2027. The draft of the WSP update is now complete. At the May 7 meeting, staff will provide a review of the plan's purpose along with system analysis findings and recommendations.

Staff previously provided updates to ESC on the Water System Plan during these meetings:

- November 7, 2024, Utility System Planning Overview, [Meeting Details](#)
- May 1, 2025, Water System Plan Presentation, [Meeting Details](#)

The next steps in the plan update process include review by adjacent jurisdictions, regional and state agencies, and a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review will take place over the next few months. Staff will also share the plan with the community and host a public open house meeting prior to the October ESC meeting. A summary of comments collected will be presented to the ESC, and Commission comments about the Plan will be requested at that time.

After review and incorporation of comments, the Final Draft Plan will be presented to the ESC in the fall of 2026. Staff will request that the ESC recommend Council adoption of the Plan. The Plan must ultimately be adopted by the Bellevue City Council, then by the King County Council, and then approved by the WA Department of Health.

POLICY ISSUES

Policies related to managing the water system are found in Chapter 2 of the WSP and complement those in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan. Water system policies are developed by management and recommended for approval by the Environment Services Commission to Council.

The previous update in 2016 added four new policies:

- Drinking Water Storage for Emergency Supply Outages
- Green Buildings
- Water Rights for Supply Redundancy
- Regional Policy Development

In this update, no new policies are proposed, and only minor changes are recommended for the Drinking Water Storage for Emergency Supply Outages Policy; and for the Water Rights for Supply Redundancy Policy. These changes are recommended to better align with the work completed since the previous update, like the Emergency Water Supply Master Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impact. Though, project recommendations and/or policy changes could result in future fiscal impacts. Recommendations for new capital investments will likely result from the water system analysis. These recommendations will be incorporated into future budget proposals.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. The Draft Water System Plan will be available for download on Wednesday, May 6 from the city website: [Water System Plan | City of Bellevue](#). We recommend that you focus on the policies found in Chapter 2 – Water Utility Policies and review how they align with the city's broader goals found here in the utilities section of the Comprehensive Plan - [Bellevue 2044 Comprehensive Plan Utilities](#).