



Youth Link Parks & Community Services Board Presentation

**YOUTH
LINK**

Overview

- **Background**
- **Youth Link: Board & Council**
- **Youth Input & Advisory Role**
- **2022-2023 Priority Areas & Work Plan**
- **Dialogue Opportunities**

Our Vision:

Youth Link envisions Bellevue as a city where young people are involved, valued, respected and listened to; where they feel safe and are safe; and where they can have fun. Ultimately, the impact of Youth Link is to enhance the quality of life for all members of the community.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of the Youth Link Board of Directors is to promote diversity, unity and equity for high school youth in Bellevue, representing the youth voice to leadership in our community. Bellevue Youth Link is a catalyst for responding to the interests and concerns of young people by engaging the entire community.



Historical Timeline

- **Fall of 1989** – Started by Bellevue Mayor, BSD School Board President, and City Manager to engage the City's youth.
- **January 1990** – 75 community leaders came together to create an agenda for youth.
- **June 1990** – Bellevue City Council approved a \$200,000 implementation fund for the Youth Link Program.
- **October 1990** – YL Program Coordinator was hired to develop the Bellevue Youth Council.
- **Fall of 1991** – Youth Link Board was formed. Members are appointed by and serve as advisors to the City Manager.

Historical Timeline

- **October 1991** – First biennial city-wide Youth Involvement Conference to address youth issues and develop youth agenda for the City in the next two years.
- **Previous YL projects** include Ground Zero Teen Center, Bellevue Skate Park, Teen Talk Radio Program, Safe Rides Program, Youth Wall of Fame, Bellevue Youth Court, Community Leadership Awards, Youth Involvement Conference, Unity Through Diversity events, Little Free Food Pantries, homeless meal kit project, feminine hygiene kit drive, COVID vaccine townhall info sessions, youth forums and discussions, and many more!
- **National League of Cities & Local Awards** including Washington Recreation & Parks Association Program Awards for Excellence & Innovation (Teen Closet & Kids Care Coat Drive, Youth Link University, Unity Through Diversity Event)



Youth Link Board

- Serves in an advisory role to the City Manager's Office.
- Composed of 12 youth and 6 adult board members appointed by City Manager. Board members serve a two-year term.
- Meetings occurs every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 6-8 p.m. at City Hall.
- Public board meetings are open, and students are encouraged to participate during "Public Comments" to speak about youth related topics/issues.
- YLB members work to affect change under the guidance of the City Manager's Office at a system level. Board members serve as advisors to the City Manager. With direction from the City Manager, Youth Link members may also provide input on local and regional topics, strategic plans, and policies that directly impact young people in the community.



Youth Link Board Members 2022-2023

Youth

Richard Li, Bellevue High – Co-Chair

Neo Hou, International

Irfan Madhani, Sammamish

Melisa Shafiee, Bellevue High

Mia Trenbeath, Overlake School

Daniel Domingos, Interlake

Mehr Grewal, Interlake

Sophia Sekits, Newport

Neha Mukhara, International

Alexandra Tay, Lakeside School

Vishnu Mangipudi, Lakeside School

Adults

Devika Vyas, Co-Chair

Jabes Otieno

Max Navas

Tedi Andrews

Christina Kirkpatrick

Liaisons

Councilmember Jeremy Barksdale,

City Council

Board President Sima Sarrafan,

Bellevue School District

Bellevue Youth Council

- Bellevue Youth Council is composed of 120-130 youth members and makes up the general body of the Youth Link program.
- Bellevue Youth Council and Action Teams are the praxis arm of the Youth Link program engaging in monthly service projects, special events planning, program activities, and provides important youth input on community and regional projects.
- BYC members also help organize the Kids Care Coat Drive, participate in city events such as the annual MLK celebration, and serve as liaisons for their school community regarding important youth issues and topics.



Youth Input & Advisory Role

The Youth Link Board is appointed by and serves as advisors to the City Manager. With direction from the City Manager, Youth Link members may provide important youth feedback and input on local and regional programs, projects, and policies.

Examples of past input provided:

- COB Comprehensive Plan
- COB Environmental Stewardship Plan
- COB Recreation Program Plan
- COB Parks & Open Space System Plan
- COB PCS Diversity Strategic Plan
- COB Human Services Needs Update
- COB Vision Zero street safety plan
- COB Wilburton Vision Implementation
- King County Eastside Eastrail Plan
- King County Transit Plan

Youth Link Priority Areas

- 2021-22 Priorities
 - DEI & Social Justice
 - Youth Mental Health
 - Youth Transitional Support (homelessness, food insecurity, in/out school support)
- 2022-23 Priorities
 - Youth Mental Health
 - Youth Transitional Support (expansion of community food pantry network)
 - Youth Financial Literacy Education & Wage Equity
 - Environmental Sustainability



Dialogue Opportunities

- How can Youth Link support the work of the Parks & Community Services Board by providing pathways for youth engagement and/or helping with plan implementation?
- How can the Board support the work of Youth Link—providing unique opportunities for investment in and partnership with youth leaders?