

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC**

Environmental Stewardship Initiative Quarterly Update

Michael Kattermann AICP, Department Director, 452-6191

Emil King AICP, Planning Director, 452-7223

Jennifer Ewing, Sustainability Manager, 452-6129

Sofia Fall, Sustainability Program Coordinator, 452-2829

*Community Development Department*

Ana Hagerup, Sustainability Portfolio Manager, 452-2729

*Finance & Asset Management Department*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****INFORMATION  
ONLY**

Tonight's Study Session will provide Council with an update on implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan and highlights of several key projects, along with an overview of the ESI 2024 workplan. Of the 78 actions in the 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan, staff have completed seven, incorporated 38 into ongoing operations, and initiated 23 others.

**RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

This memo is the first of the 2024 quarterly updates to Council on implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan and includes highlights over the last quarter. The last update to Council was on December 11, 2023.

**Background**

The 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan includes environmental goals and targets for 2030 and 2050, for both the community and municipal operations and identifies actions in five focus areas:

- Climate change
- Energy
- Materials management and waste
- Mobility and land use
- Natural systems.

The plan consists of a suite of actions aimed to improve the environment in the five focus areas noted above. The actions help achieve the City's environmental goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, energy use, and vehicle miles traveled per person and to increase recycling, tree canopy, walkable access to parks, renewable energy, and electric vehicle use. The municipal operations section of the plan maps out how the City will continue to lead by example in areas such as buying renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency at City facilities, and greening the City's fleet. The plan will help

preserve and enhance the natural environment, encourage transit-oriented development, and increase overall livability in Bellevue.

### **Council Direction**

As part of the adoption of the plan, Council directed staff to provide quarterly updates on implementation progress. Staff provides annual reporting on the environmental performance metrics during the summer update, and the other quarterly updates focus on progress towards implementing actions. Council directed staff to pursue and build partnerships to support implementation, leverage the expertise of stakeholders and residents, seek innovative solutions and quick wins, lead by example, and move forward with urgency. In the adopted 2023-2024 City budget, Council increased the funding to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan.

### **Progress Report**

The plan covers implementation from 2021-2025. The primary departments working on implementation include Community Development, Finance & Asset Management, Development Services, Parks & Community Services, Transportation, and Utilities. However, all departments have a role in supporting the implementation of the municipal operations actions. Of the 78 actions in the plan, the primary departments have completed seven, incorporated 38 into ongoing operations, and initiated 23, to date. The remaining 10 actions are in the work program for the remaining two years of the plan. Progress is summarized below in Attachment A, which provides a progress update for each action. The plan includes a timeframe for each action that outlines when the remaining actions are anticipated to begin.

Since the last report to Council, staff completed updates to the 2022 Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 2011 and 2021 Contribution Analyses, and the Emissions Wedge Analysis (Attachment B). Staff also updated the Environmental Performance Dashboard, including retroactive updates to previous inventories using the most current methodology (Attachment C). Additionally, staff launched Phase I Engagement for the Electric Vehicle (EV) Roadmap project and developed recommended resilience implementation actions based on Climate Vulnerability Assessment proposals.

### **Accomplishments and Milestones, First Quarter 2024**

#### Community Actions:

##### *Engagement*

- *Sustainable Bellevue Community Townhall:* The ESI Team held a townhall on March 19 to provide an update on progress, review the latest GHG inventory results, and gather input from the community on the various ESI projects and programs. Attendees were interested to learn more about the work of the new ESI team members and about staff's efforts to report on progress and greenhouse gas emissions. Attendees were also interested in understanding the implications for Bellevue in meeting the City's climate goals, if Washington Initiative 2117, to repeal the Climate Commitment Act, passes in November.
- *Sustainable Bellevue Community Engagement Survey:* Completed community engagement survey, including additional survey promotion with cultural outreach assistants, to assess the climate literacy of the Bellevue community and identify areas for future engagement program development. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Korean, and Traditional and Simplified Chinese.

- *Community Climate Challenge*: Launched Climate Challenge Team Leader cohort to provide training in climate science and action to Bellevue community members and increase overall community participation in the Climate Challenge.

### *Energy*

- *Clean Buildings Act Technical Support program*: Enrolled 215 buildings in the program and completed 138 energy benchmarks with another 77 in progress to date. The team has completed 26 building scoping assessments and is assisting 13 buildings in applying for Washington State Department of Commerce Clean Buildings Act Early Adopter Incentives.
- *Energy Smart Eastside*: 2023 saw the completion of a pilot that resulted in 210 heat pumps installed or under contract to be installed this year in the participating Eastside cities, 75 percent of which were in low-income single-family or affordable multi-family housing, and 45 of the installations were in Bellevue. Over 8,000 unique visitors researched heat pumps on [www.energysmarteastside.org](http://www.energysmarteastside.org), and over 600 attended webinars. The program is scaling up to increase outreach in 2024. A campaign is running now, coordinated with Puget Sound Energy (PSE), offering a \$2,500 fuel-switch rebate that stacks with utility rebates and tax credits for a total \$9,000 incentive for middle-income (80-150 percent area median income) Bellevue residents. These incentives and income qualifications align with other state and federal income requirements for energy efficiency tax credits and incentives.

### *Climate and Air Quality*

- *Climate Vulnerability Assessment*: Staff are continuing to scope out priority actions for next steps based on the recommendations in the report.
- *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant*: Supporting finalization of a strategy and approach for the region to pursue the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Planning grants and to leverage this opportunity to help prepare for future implementation grants through this program in 2024. Bellevue is contributing to a regional implementation grant application this April to drive down building emissions through energy efficiency and electrification upgrades.
- *GHG Emissions Inventory and Wedge Analysis*: Collaborated with the Eastside cities of Redmond, Kirkland, Mercer Island, and Issaquah to update GHG inventories and Bellevue's "wedge analysis", which analyzes the impact of federal, state, and local efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, staff created a new [Bellevue Environmental Performance Dashboard](#) to communicate progress on ESI targets.
- *Department of Commerce Climate Planning Grant*: Awarded a \$295,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce for planning activities to support the implementation of state House Bill 1181, Climate in Comprehensive Plans, and other associated plans. Finalizing the scope of work for this grant.

### *Mobility and Land Use*

- *Sustainable District*: Solicited proposals from several firms and hired a consultant to perform a Sustainable District Opportunity Assessment and develop Urban Design Guidelines for the Wilburton Vision Implementation. Launched a cross-departmental project to integrate district-scale sustainability into the Wilburton Vision Implementation, through Urban Design Guidelines and other aspects of the Land Use Code Amendment process. Began evaluating district-scale

sustainability frameworks, best practices, and Wilburton-specific project opportunities. Held two stakeholder workshops in December and February with the Wilburton Vision Implementation team, to share ideas and solicit stakeholder input on this integrated approach.

- *Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (CPPU)*: Reviewed existing climate and sustainability policies, best practices, and guidance from the Washington State Department of Commerce, to further incorporate climate and sustainability into the CPPU. Updated the Environment Element (proposed to be renamed as the Climate and Environment Element), including draft policy recommendations related to greenhouse gas emissions reduction, climate resiliency, and sustainability. Updated the Element narrative and proposed several changes to bring the Element more in line with State requirements, in anticipation of future compliance.
- *Electric Vehicle Roadmap*: Began work with consultant team on developing the plan to support and prepare for the electric vehicle (EV) transition in Bellevue. The planning process will help identify locations for EV charging infrastructure for state and federal grants. The final document is expected to be completed in June.
- *Electric Vehicle Readiness*: Developed an initial draft proposal for a potential building code amendment for Bellevue that would enhance current state standards in WAC 51-50-0429, for requirements for EV readiness in new construction to better align with EV ownership trends in Bellevue. Presented the draft to the Bellevue Development Committee in January for initial feedback. This project is being incorporated in the Land Use Planning Initiative process for 2024 and is anticipated to return to Council in the fall.
- *Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure*: Began analysis to determine best operations and maintenance strategy for eventual deployment of EV charging infrastructure in the Bellevue community.

#### *Natural Systems*

- *Tree Code Update*: The Development Services Department held a public information session and presented to the Bellevue Development Committee in January, to receive feedback on draft recommendations from the community and development stakeholders. Presented the draft recommendations to the Planning Commission on January 24 and the Tree Canopy Land Use Code Amendment Initial Strike Draft on March 27.

#### *Waste*

- *Waste Reduction and Recycling*: The Utilities Department provided assistance to a total of 48 businesses this quarter, including nine starting new compost services, and to five multifamily properties. Obtained a vendor to pilot dumpster sensors and monitoring at participating pilot properties in Bellevue.

#### Municipal Operations:

- *Building Energy Efficiency Retrofits*: Finance & Asset Management staff are continuing planning and design for an energy efficiency retrofit of the Bellevue Service Center to bring the building into compliance with the Washington State Clean Buildings Standard and increase resiliency of the facility with a new backup generator.

- *City Hall Solar:* Staff are evaluating options and timing for placing solar on City Hall, due to actual costs being higher than expected for the solar installation and the need to re-roof City Hall sooner than planned, to make the project feasible.
- *Green Fleet:* Finance & Asset Management staff continued planning and design for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure at the Bellevue Service Center and City Hall. Awarded grant funding through a Department of Commerce grant for EV charging infrastructure at City facilities.
- *EV Charging Infrastructure Grant:* The City was awarded a Department of Commerce grant for \$650,000 for EV charging infrastructure (as part of a regional grant submitted by King County) for employees and fleet at all 10 fire stations, the Bellevue Service Center, and City Hall, and for public charging at the Botanical Garden.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Update**

Staff completed an update to the GHG Emissions Inventory for 2022 emissions. Staff worked with the Eastside Climate Partnership Cities of Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, and Redmond to standardize inventory methodology across the region to ensure consistent approach and results. This project included the 2022 GHG inventory for community and municipal emissions, Emissions Wedge Analysis, 2011 and 2021 Emissions Contribution Analyses (Attachment B), and the [Environmental Performance Dashboard](#) (Attachment C).

Bellevue's 2022 GHG Inventory found that communitywide emissions were down 8 percent from the baseline year of 2011, despite population growth of 21 percent and a 13 percent increase in jobs. However, emissions were up 6 percent from the previous 2021 inventory, largely driven by a return to pre-pandemic transportation levels. Similarly, Bellevue's municipal operations emissions increased by 6.5 percent from 2021 to 2022, also largely driven by a continued return to office and pre-pandemic commutes. But thanks to the City's investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy, municipal operations emissions were down 48 percent from the 2011 baseline, putting the City on track to achieve its short-term target of a 50 percent reduction by 2030.

### **2024 Workplan**

In 2024, staff will continue many of the initiatives previously launched, such as Energy Smart Eastside and the Clean Buildings Incentive Program, with goals to expand the reach of these programs with new staff on board. The EV Roadmap project will be completed in the summer, to help prepare staff for potential federal and state EV charging infrastructure grants. The Wilburton Sustainable District Opportunity Assessment will be completed in the second quarter, which will involve developing recommended next steps for advancing the goals for the district. The big initiative which will begin later in 202, will be the launch of the update of the 2021-2025 Sustainable Bellevue Plan, with a goal of completing the plan update by the end of 2025.

Staff will continue to update Council quarterly and provide updates to the community through the monthly Environmental Stewardship newsletter, biannual Environmental Stewardship town hall, and other project updates.

## POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

### Policy Impact

#### 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan, (Res. 9859, 2020)

- The Environmental Stewardship Plan was adopted on December 14, 2020, and includes updated environmental goals and targets and 78 actions for implementation over a five-year period, 2021-2025.

#### Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Climate Change Policies (2015)

- EN-6. Establish an achievable citywide target and take corrective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as reducing energy consumption and vehicle emissions and enhancing land use patterns to reduce vehicle dependency.
- EN-7. Develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that create a more resilient community by addressing the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, and habitat.
- EN-8. Provide regional leadership on environmental issues that extend beyond Bellevue's boundaries and require regional cooperation.
- TR-140. Support means to reduce transportation-source greenhouse gas emissions.

#### King County Cities Climate Collaboration (Res. 8789, 2014)

- Council joined the King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) on August 4, 2014, by signing an Interlocal Agreement (Resolution 8798). K4C is a partnership among cities across King County working to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions consistent with Countywide Planning Policies.

#### K4C Joint Commitments (February 17, 2015, and September 14, 2020)

- Council voted to sign the original K4C Joint Commitments on February 17, 2015, and to sign the updated K4C Joint Commitments on September 14, 2020, to reaffirm Bellevue's participation in the K4C and support for the regional countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

### Fiscal Impact

The adopted 2023-2024 City Budget includes an additional \$500,000 in the ESI Operating budget to support the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan along with \$560,000 per year for 2023-2024 for implementing the plan in the ESI Implementation CIP budget.

## OPTIONS

N/A

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Sustainable Bellevue Plan Implementation Progress, March 2024
- B. Bellevue 2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Executive Summary
- C. Bellevue [Environmental Performance Dashboard](#) Graphs

**AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan, 2021-2025