

# Citywide Local Street Speed Limit Reduction

## Project Update

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October 15, 2024



# Direction

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Seek direction to return at later date with ordinance (on consent) that will alter city code (11.32 Speed) and set default speed limit on streets to 20 mph, except as otherwise posted



# Agenda

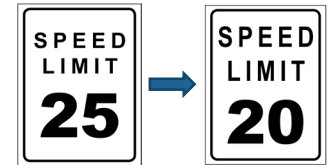
*February 2024 direction:  
begin outreach and  
return to share what was  
learned.*

1. Background
2. Summary of outreach
3. Proposed speed limits
4. Implementation
5. Direction



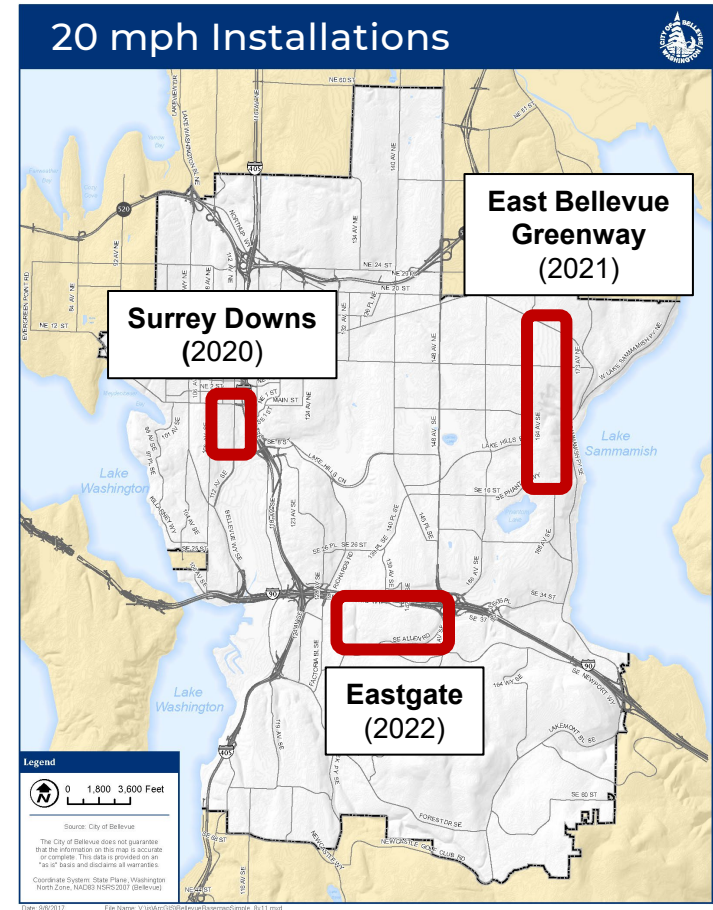
# Project background

- Lower speed on most local streets from 25 mph to 20 mph
- ~350 signs, 150 pavement markings
  - Estimate: ~\$600,000
- Response to community concerns
- Supports Vision Zero (Safe Speeds)
- Lower speeds = safer
- **Culture shift: safety starts on your street**



# Past success with 20 mph

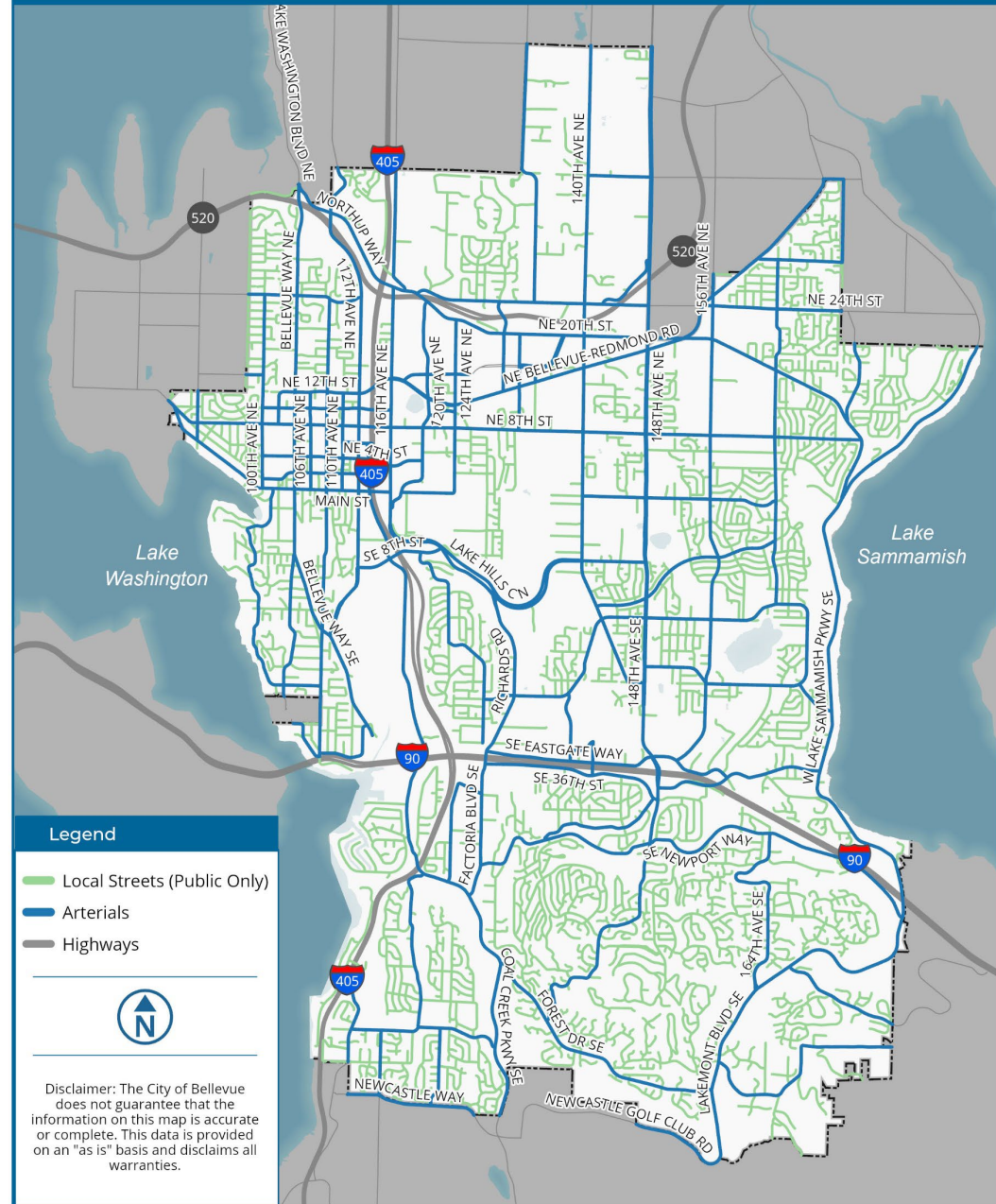
- Tested in (3) neighborhoods
- Effective in reducing high-end speeding
- Community feedback: surveys show support for 20 mph speed limit



# Speed management

- Two types of streets in Bellevue
  - *Local*: speeds managed by traffic calming program
  - *Arterials*: upcoming work item to address arterial speed management

## Types of Streets in Bellevue



# What is a local street?

- Defined in comprehensive plan
- 64% of streets
- Generally:
  - Provides for short trips
  - Lower volume
  - Often lacks sidewalk
  - Presence of driveways
  - Variety of activity
- Community can use story map to find local streets



# Outreach

- Goal: inform, educate and answer community questions
- Went to where our community is
- Connected with community associations and groups
- Tens of thousands reached through city communications





# Outreach conducted



**Crossroads Farmers Market**



**Newport Hills Community Club Briefing**



**Translated webpages**



**EarthFest at Botanical Gardens**



**65,000 recipients**



**Cross-posting on social media**

# Questions we heard

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- Will the speed limit be effective?
- Will there be improved safety outcomes?
- Will the speed limit be enforced?
- Will trips take longer?
- Will speeds be reduced on arterials?
- Will there be traffic calming?

***Broad agreement that people drive too fast in Bellevue neighborhoods***



# Questions from the community

## ▪ Will the speed limit be effective?

- 3 existing slow zones have reduced high-end speeding
- Some already drive < 20 mph
- More speed limit signs added
- Some streets to remain at current speed limit

## ▪ Will there be improved safety outcomes?

- Yes, lower speeds improve safety outcomes
- Safety starts on your street

## ▪ Will the speed limit be enforced?

- Yes, traffic service request (TSR) best way for residents to connect with enforcement
- Existing slow zones effective with no added enforcement
- TR providing PD with data on higher-speed streets



# Questions from the community

## ▪ Will trips take longer?

- Negligible amount; local streets serve short trips

## ▪ Will speeds be reduced on arterials?

- Not as part of this project
- Next year: advancing implementation of Speed Management Plan (arterials)
- Grant-supported to advance

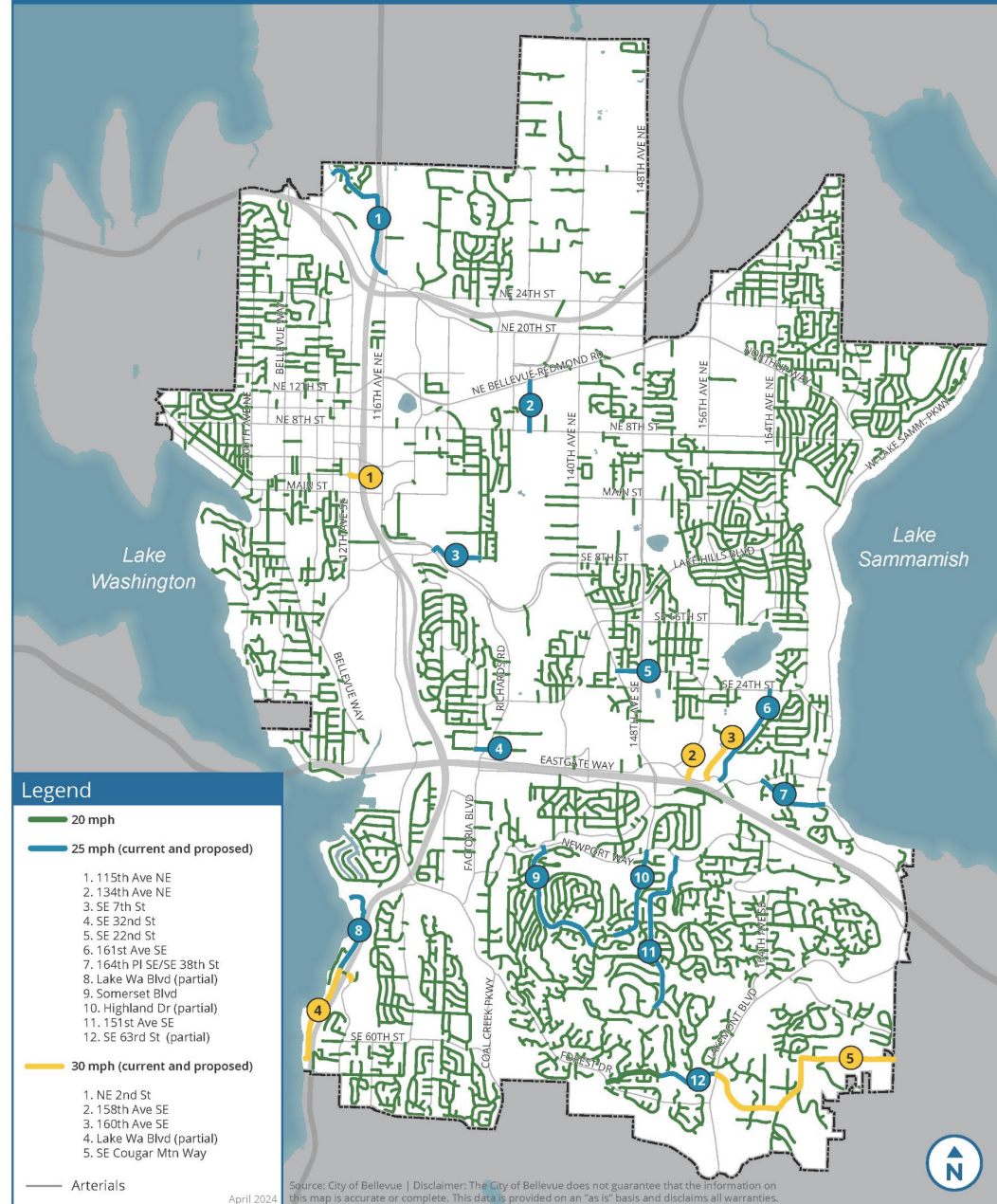
## ▪ Will there be traffic calming?

- Yes, continue popular program to build traffic circles, speed humps, radar signs, etc.
- 5 projects in planning/design to further reduce speeds
- Lower speed limit = extension of our traffic calming program



# Future speed limits

- Subset of streets to remain at current speed limit
  - 12 at 25 mph
  - 5 at 30 mph
- Key drivers: less mixing between travel modes (decreased safety risk) and connections to major streets that serve as primary access in neighborhood



# Proposed speed limits



Currently 25 mph, proposed to remain at 25 mph



Currently 25 mph, proposed for 20 mph



115<sup>th</sup> Ave NE west of 116<sup>th</sup> Ave NE



SE 9<sup>th</sup> St west of 168<sup>th</sup> Ave SE



# City code change

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- BCC 11.32 (Speed) will change
- Currently: default 25 mph speed limit on all streets, except otherwise posted
- Proposed: default 20 mph speed limit on all streets, except otherwise posted
- Redline code in packet



# Project timeline

**2020-2022**  
Transportation  
tests 20 mph  
speed limit in (3)  
neighborhoods.

**October 15, 2024**  
Study session:  
seek direction to  
return with  
ordinance.

**Fall 2025/  
Spring 2026**  
Speed limit  
signs installed.

**February 2024**  
Study session:  
directed to  
proceed with  
outreach.

**October 22, 2024**  
Consent: approve  
ordinance;  
commence design.





# Continued outreach and awareness

- Goal: widespread, saturated awareness (no surprises)
- Opportunities:
  - Ribbon cutting
  - Communications/media/advertising (*It's Your City*, transit advertising)
  - Unique opportunities (yard signs, child art contest)
  - In-person events/briefings/tap into community networks
- Evaluation



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