

# Environmental Stewardship Plan






## Draft Actions for Parks & Community Services Board Review

### Introduction

This document summarizes the current list of proposed actions for the Environmental Stewardship Plan related to the parks department, for review by the Parks & Community Services Board. These actions have been developed by a team of city staff and consultants and build on the City's work to date to implement relevant policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks and Open Space System Plan.

### Plan Overview

The Sustainable Bellevue Plan is organized into the following focus areas:

 <p><b>Climate Change</b></p>	<p>The <b>Climate Change</b> section includes strategies to reduce emissions and prepare for the long-term impacts of climate change. Strategies and actions include tactics for integrating climate change into city processes, building city staff capacity to address climate change, and prioritizing investments in historically marginalized communities.</p>	 <p><b>Municipal Operations</b> This focus area includes measures that cover topics included in the other five focus areas but are specific to Bellevue municipal operations. Strategies and actions include reporting progress towards Environmental Stewardship goals, incorporating sustainability commitments into city staff trainings, developing long-term plans and policies for electric vehicles, and promoting sustainable landscaping and conservation of natural resources.</p>
 <p><b>Mobility &amp; Land Use</b></p>	<p><b>Mobility &amp; Land Use</b> includes public transit, employee commuting, and how the city uses its land and open spaces. Strategies and actions work toward improved land use and clean and efficient transportation systems.</p>	
 <p><b>Energy</b></p>	<p><b>Energy</b> use is essential to modern life and makes up the largest portion of Bellevue's carbon footprint. Strategies and actions increase energy efficiency in buildings, promote rooftop solar, and support worker training and transitions into the green economy.</p>	
 <p><b>Materials Management and Waste</b></p>	<p><b>Materials Management &amp; Waste</b> activities aim to reduce the negative impacts from consumption and waste practices and achieve zero waste of resources. Strategies and actions include increasing community recycling, reducing waste generated, improving purchasing practices, and addressing construction and demolition waste.</p>	



### Natural Systems

The **Natural Systems** chapter focuses on improving and preserving the integrity and health of Bellevue's natural systems and ensuring all residents have access to Bellevue's abundant and beautiful natural resources. Strategies and actions include increasing tree canopy citywide, improving air quality, reducing water consumption, and enhancing ecological conditions for forests, streams, wetlands, and wildlife.

## Goals and Targets

The Environmental Stewardship Plan will include actions to be implemented over a five-year period, in the following five focus areas: climate change, mobility and land use, waste, natural systems, and energy. These actions are either new efforts, or expand upon existing initiatives designed to advance progress toward achieving the following goals and targets:

Focus Area	Goal	2030 Target	2050 Target
Climate Change	Reduce Bellevue's greenhouse gas emissions and prepare and adapt to ongoing climate change impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Bellevue's communitywide greenhouse gas emissions <b>50%</b> by 2030, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Bellevue's communitywide greenhouse gas emissions <b>80%</b> by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> </ul>
Mobility and Land Use	Minimize the environmental impacts of transportation and development in Bellevue by focusing development in growth centers and providing all residents with access to a variety of mobility options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a <b>65%</b> commute-trip drive-alone rate for residents and people working in Bellevue by 2030.</li> <li>Strive to have <b>25%</b> electric vehicles registered in Bellevue by 2030.</li> <li>Reduce per capita vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by at least <b>20%</b> by 2030, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> <li>Support transit oriented development and strive to achieve <b>70%</b> of jobs and <b>50%</b> of housing located with a ¼ mile of a frequent transit network stop (15-minute headway or less) by 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a <b>45%</b> commute-trip drive-alone rate for residents and people working in Bellevue by 2050.</li> <li>Strive to have <b>100%</b> electric vehicles registered in Bellevue by 2050.</li> <li>Reduce per capita vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by <b>50%</b> by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> <li>Support transit oriented development and strive to achieve <b>85%</b> of jobs and <b>65%</b> of housing located with a ¼ mile of a frequent transit network stop (15-minute headway or less) by 2050.</li> </ul>

Focus Area	Goal	2030 Target	2050 Target
Waste	Reduce the negative impacts from consumption and waste practices and strive towards Zero Waste of Resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a <b>50%</b> recycling rate by 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve <b>Zero Waste</b> of Resources by 2050.</li> </ul>
Natural Systems	Improve and preserve the integrity and health of Bellevue's natural systems and ensure all of Bellevue's residents have access to Bellevue's abundant natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve and maintain the health of Bellevue's streams<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>Achieve a <b>38%</b> citywide tree canopy by 2030.</li> <li>Ensure that <b>80%</b> of Bellevue's residents live within 1/3 of a mile to a park, open space, or trail by 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve and maintain the health of Bellevue's streams.</li> <li>Achieve a <b>40%</b> citywide tree canopy by 2050.</li> <li>Ensure that <b>100%</b> of Bellevue's residents live within 1/3 of a mile to a park, open space, or trail by 2050.</li> </ul>
Energy	Ensure long-term access to clean energy while reducing the fiscal and environmental impacts of consumption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve <b>80%</b> renewable electricity by 2030.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Reduce energy use by <b>10%</b> by 2030, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve <b>100%</b> renewable electricity by 2045.</li> <li>Reduce energy use by <b>30%</b> by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> A target for stream health will be developed as part of the Watershed Management Plan, being led by Utilities.

<sup>2</sup> This would involve PSE replacing all coal-fired generation with renewable generation by 2030. The Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act calls for carbon neutral electricity by 2030, which can be achieved through renewable generation and renewable energy credits.

## Draft Actions

The following actions represent a subset of draft actions from the plan, which relate to the Parks Department. The Climate Actions would involve the Parks Department to a degree, but would not be led by Parks. Some of the other Natural Systems actions would

### Climate

**1. Sustainable District. Explore creating a sustainable district, such as an EcoDistrict, in downtown, BelRed, or Wilburton, to encourage district-scale sustainability. Establish district-scale sustainability goals with partner organizations.**

Several models of sustainable districts exist, which have been used to accelerate local sustainability within a neighborhood. These models are typically used in downtown or mixed-use districts and are public-private partnerships between the property owners, tenants, local government, and other organizations. The districts set districtwide environmental goals, which could mirror the city's goals, and collaborate on actions to achieve the goals. Sustainable districts typically include some form of organizing body, technical assistance to property owners for activities such as energy conservation, and incentives for green building or other environmental amenities. Several neighborhoods in Bellevue could be potential candidates for a sustainable district. Further outreach and engagement of potential partners and champions, along with an analysis of various program models is recommended to further assess the viability and impact of this approach.

**2. Climate vulnerability assessment. Perform a climate vulnerability assessment to understand long-term risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change and identify next steps in terms of enhancing resiliency.**

The climate vulnerability assessment will identify specific strategies to support Bellevue's residents, businesses, and operations most impacted by acute and chronic climate change and public health-related impacts. Strategies are focused on both the reduction in the severity of impacts and increasing the speed of recovery to mitigate major disruptions in community operations.

The step-by-step process for this effort includes gathering community data including input through an inclusive outreach and engagement effort and current and projected climate data; conducting a prioritization exercise to determine shocks and stressors with the highest level of impact, particularly to individuals most impacted by climate change; and drafting measurable policies to mitigate impacts. This effort would help to inform the next Comprehensive Plan update, to continue to advance Bellevue's resiliency.

**3. Environmental equity assessment: Perform an environmental equity assessment to identify environmental risks to communities of color and equitable access to environmental resources in Bellevue. Use the assessment to develop recommendations for policies and programs to continue to advance equity and reduce environmental burdens.**

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

This assessment will evaluate environmental justice concerns and also look at access to environmental resources and benefits in Bellevue, to help identify priority areas for further planning, policy development, and programs.

## Natural Systems

### **4. Public property tree planting. Identify locations on public property for increasing tree canopy, such as in the right-of-way and other areas, and develop a plan and funding strategy for planting and maintenance.**

Identify sites and develop a long-term plan for increasing tree canopy in targeted areas on public property, and in particular in the right-of-way. This effort would evaluate existing capital project plans and areas with need for increased tree canopy, along with any areas with stormwater management issues that could benefit from an increased tree canopy, such as streams. This effort will also include a long-term plan for funding and maintenance for trees in the right-of-way.

### **5. Multiple environmental benefits for open space preservation. Identify and acquire sites whose preservation as open space would confer multiple environmental benefits, including but not limited to stormwater management, flooding mitigation, and enhancement of tree canopy.**

Open space preservation can serve multiple functions in supporting a resilient city. This action would work toward several Natural Systems communitywide goals in the Environmental Stewardship Plan: land set aside to protect habitat and stream health, provide tree canopy, and absorb stormwater can also serve as a recreational amenity for residents through careful planning and site design. Layering functions and benefits on a single site, where possible, is an efficient and responsible use of land and resources in urban environments where such opportunities may be scarce.

This action requires a longer timeframe because it involves both the identification and acquisition of open space sites, which can take many years. Various planning efforts will inform this action, including the Watershed Management Plan, guidance around tree canopy enhancement, and the upcoming update to the Parks and Open Space System Plan in 2022. Other neighborhood- or district-level planning efforts may identify site locations, including work around the Wilburton land use initiative and the BelRed Look Back.

### **6. Funding strategy to achieve open space goals. Consider strengthened code requirements, land use incentives, or fees on new development to expand the park system and increase walkable access to parks and trails.**

Code requirements, land use incentives, and impact fees on new development are tools used by jurisdictions to ensure that investment in a city's park system keeps pace with population growth. Bellevue has implemented incentives for the creation of public open space in the Downtown and BelRed land use codes: these incentive systems allow for increased building density and redevelopment potential in exchange for the developer supporting the cost of publicly accessible park and open space features. While Bellevue's existing incentive systems have provided some degree of support for park system expansion, there is opportunity to evaluate and strengthen incentives to more effectively support acquisition and development, in particular in high-density neighborhoods with increasing property values.

In addition to examining incentives, this action will also explore the benefits and drawbacks of code requirements or fees that would support the expansion of the park system to meet the needs of additional residents and workers. Unlike most neighboring jurisdictions, Bellevue does not currently collect park impact fees from new development.

**7. Plan for walkable access to parks. Continue to plan for achieving the walkable access to parks, open space, and trailheads goal as part of the next update to the Parks & Open Space System Plan.**

Every six years, Bellevue Parks & Community Services updates its Parks & Open Space System Plan to meet the requirements of the state Recreation and Conservation Office. The plan charts the community's long-range vision for acquisition and development of parks and trails and preservation of open space. To ensure that the city's park system is meeting community needs, the plan maps and analyzes the number of Bellevue households that are located within 1/3 mile of a park entrance or trailhead. In addition to geographic proximity, the 2022 plan update will evaluate demographic information and environmental health to equitably prioritize areas for acquisition and development.