



Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy

# Accountability Audit Report

## City of Bellevue

For the period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023

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**Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy**

September 30, 2024

Council  
City of Bellevue  
Bellevue, Washington

**Report on Accountability**

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for City operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the City's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor  
Olympia, WA

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## AUDIT RESULTS

### Results in brief

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, City operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

### About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the City of Bellevue from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.260, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all local governments. Our audit involved obtaining evidence about the City's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the year ended December 31, 2023, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Self-insurance – property and liability, health and welfare, unemployment, workers compensation
- Procurement – public works
- Payroll – bonus pay
- Accounts payable – travel expenditures
- Open public meetings – compliance with minutes, meetings and executive session requirements
- Financial condition – reviewing for indications of financial distress

## RELATED REPORTS

### **Financial**

Our opinion on the City's financial statements and compliance with federal grant program requirements is provided in a separate report, which includes the City's financial statements. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

### **Federal grant programs**

We evaluated internal controls and tested compliance with the federal program requirements, as applicable, for the City's major federal programs, which are listed in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs section of the separate financial statement and single audit report. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY

Incorporated in 1953, the City of Bellevue is the 5th largest of 281 cities in the State of Washington. Bellevue is located on the east shore of Lake Washington. The city encompasses 33.51 square miles and is located 11 miles east of Seattle and 275 miles west of Spokane. Bellevue is 175 miles north of Portland, Oregon, and 230 miles south of Vancouver, Canada. The city has 16 identified neighborhoods: BelRed, Bridle Trails, Cougar Mountain/Lakemont, Crossroads, Downtown, Eastgate, Factoria, Lake Hills, Newport, Northeast Bellevue, Northwest Bellevue, Somerset, West Bellevue, West Lake Sammamish, Wilburton, and Woodridge.

The City of Bellevue is a noncharter code city, operating under Section 35A of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). The city is a Council-Manager form of government with a seven-member City Council elected by the voters of the city. City Council members are elected at large, rather than by district, and are responsible for establishing the general guidelines and policies for the city. Each member serves a four-year term. The City Council elects the Mayor and Deputy Mayor from within its ranks. The City Council appoints the City Manager as the city's chief executive officer responsible for carrying out the policies and direction set by the City Council. This includes the enforcement of laws and ordinances, the execution of contracts and agreements, and maintenance of peace and order in the city.

The City of Bellevue provides a full range of local government services. These services include police and fire protection; emergency medical services; construction and maintenance of streets and traditional municipal infrastructure; planning and zoning; park and recreational activities; and cultural events. In addition, the city operates an equipment rental fund and provides storm and surface water, water, and sewer services. Certain city services, such as public safety, utility, information technology, and equipment rental and maintenance, are provided on a fee basis to other governmental agencies and neighboring taxing districts. Conversely, other government agencies provide the city with jail and court services through interlocal agreements. Bellevue residents receive library services from the King County Library System.

The city is financially accountable for the Bellevue Convention Center Authority (BCCA), which is reported as a discrete component unit of the city. The BCCA accounts for revenues and expenses associated with the operation of Meydenbauer Center. Meydenbauer Center is located in Downtown Bellevue and contains a 54,000-square foot convention center and trade show facility, a 410-seat theater, and 434-stall underground parking garage.

### Contact information related to this report

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*Information current as of report publish date.*

### Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the City of Bellevue at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, [www.sao.wa.gov](http://www.sao.wa.gov). Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

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