

# Reimagining Neighborhood ~~Watches~~

*Holistic View of Safety & Neighborhood Well-Being*

## ***Bellevue BeSafe Neighborhoods***

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# Overview

- Where We Are Today
- Why Care – Community & City Benefits
- Community Feedback & Insights
- Holistic Approach
- Engagement Themes & Opportunities
- Neighborhood Level Opportunity Mapping
- Vision, Strategy
- Naming Concept
- Appendix
  - Learning From Others Cities - Best Practices
  - Naming Conventions – *Built off a unified vision and strategy*
  - Community Engagement Overview
  - Bellevue Neighborhood “Teachable Moments”
  - Neighborhood Association List Overview



# Context & Caveats

- Independently took on this initiative about 4 months ago seeing the challenges I was having and observing.
- Goals
  - To objectively understand neighborhood safety and well-being issues.
  - Obtain and present an unfiltered 360 degree view
  - Help define what a re-scoped program might look like
  - Think outside of the box



# Where We Are Today

- Created in 1972 by the National Sheriffs Association.
- In 2002 in cooperation with USA Freedom Corps, Citizen Corps & DOJ the program was expanded to preparing neighborhoods for disasters
  - Goal - to drive broader neighborhood engagement
- NNW site is inactive, no recent posts, emails not answered / links broken.
- Of the 56 Bellevue neighborhood associations, only 6 have been confirmed, most are informal and none would be described as vibrant.\*\*

Source: <https://www.nnw.org/our-history>

\*\* Independent research to known neighborhood associations completed 7/1 – 7/15, working from the list of registered organizations posted at [https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf\\_document/2022/Registered%20Neighborhood%20Associations%206.8.22%20%28version%201%29.pdf](https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2022/Registered%20Neighborhood%20Associations%206.8.22%20%28version%201%29.pdf) Over 70% of the contact info was out of date those listed by the city were invalid. Of the listed 56 organizations, contact was not successful in over 30%. Outreach included public outreach, email, web searches and Wash SOS site for business registrations. 2 of those listed have since dissolved and 1 new one was added.



# Why We Care – Why Invest

- Help make our neighborhoods safer and citizens feel safer
- Promote emergency preparedness and readiness.
- Build and strengthen bridges between police, city and the community.
- Create neighborhood connections and a “Sense of Community”.
- Enhance the quality of life for those who live, work and visit Bellevue.
- Neighborhoods can be a “force multiplier” for BPD



# Challenges of Neighborhood Programs

- Difficult to sustain and maintain community participation
  - Neighborhoods and neighborhood orgs are dynamic
  - Often created responding to an issue and then fade away
  - Leadership turnover / recruitment
  - Lack of tools and resources (databases, templates, mini websites)
- Cultural diversity & language barriers
  - 45% speak a language other than English at home
- Community Concerns
  - City efforts are siloed, fragmented and inconsistent
  - Perception of past false starts and lack of commitment



# What Neighborhood Safety Concerns Do You Have?



- Added concerns - A heat dome event.
- Based on listening sessions and neighborhood input.



# A Holistic View

## *Neighbors Feeling Safe & Secure*

### **Environmental**

- Natural Disasters
- Air Quality
- Heat Domes
- Water Quality
- Snow Storms
- Power Outages



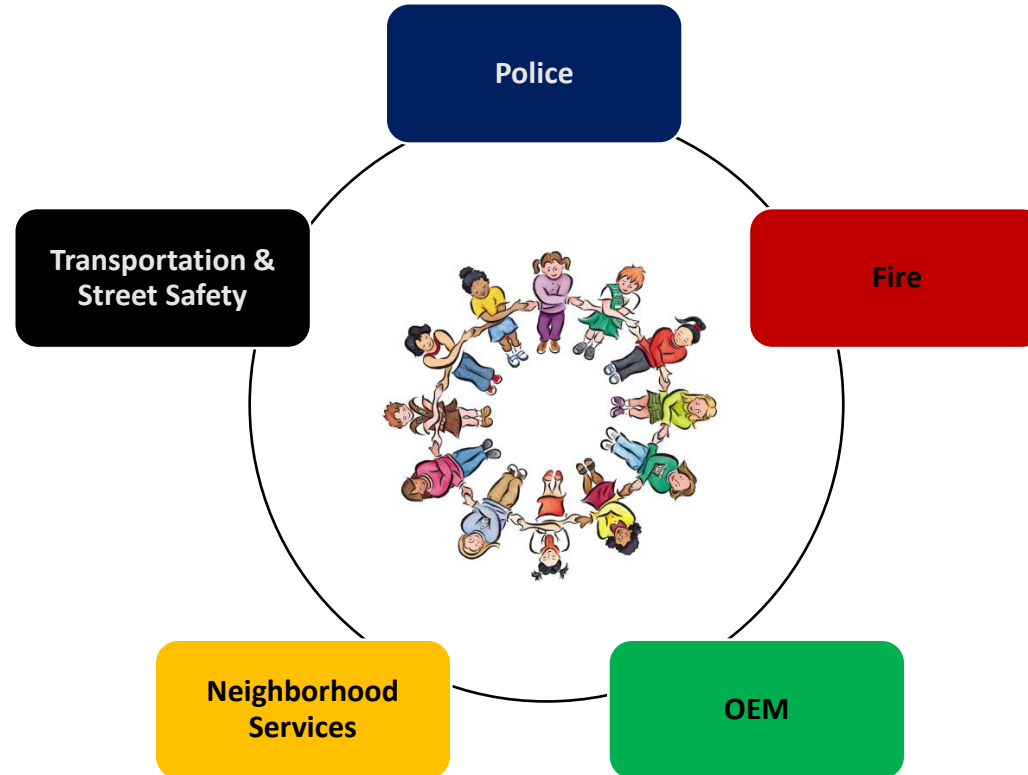
### **Other**

- Water Safety
- Pet Safety





# Key Stakeholders



## Potential Community Assets

- Bellevue CERT
- Police Advisory Councils
- Bellevue Network on Aging
- Bellevue Essentials Alumni
- Bellevue Community Police Academy – Alumni
- Bellevue School District
- PTAs



# Engagement Themes & Opportunities

Month	Activity / Area of Focus
Jan	Document / Record Holiday Gifts & Valuables / National Self-Defense Month International Data Privacy & Protection Day (Jan 28)
Feb	National Heart Month / CPR refresher
March	
April	Spring Cleaning - Remove blocking shrubs / fire hazards / adjust your video cameras National Earth Day
May	Summer First Aid / Water Safety
June	Wildfire Readiness
July	Fireworks Safety
August	National Crime Prevention Night Out
Sept	Back to School Street Safety, Crime Presentation in Schools National CERT Week
Oct	National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (White House / DHS) National Crime Prevention Month / National Home Security Month National Fire Protection Week "Cooking safety starts with YOU"
Nov	Prevent Holiday Porch Pirates / Fire Safety / Smoke Alarm Test (Daylight Savings Time)
Dec	Winter Weather Readiness National ID Theft Awareness Month (FTC)



# Neighborhood Opportunity Mapping\*

## *Where To Target Potential Pilots*

Name	Area	Type	Homes	Approx. Members	BPD Volunteer	BPD Advisory Council	Watch	CERT	BFD Volunteer	BES Alumni	Updated
Lake Hills Neighborhood Association	Lake Hills					1				1	9-Jul
Lake Lanes Association											
Lakemont Community Association		ASSOC		613	1	1				1	6-Jul
Lakemont Highlands Division 2 HOA		HOA									
Lochleven Community Association	NW Bellevue	ASSOC	500	40	1	1	1	1		1	6-Jul
Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors	NW Bellevue	ASSOC					1			1	9-Jul
Mockingbird Neighborhood Association											
Monthaven Association											
Newport Hills Community Club		ASSOC		2,700 (24							8-Jul

\*Partial listing. Data mapping of volunteers to be completed.  
Full summary is available provided contact info is not posted or share publicly.



# Asks To Council

- Pivot and focus on the needs of neighborhoods.
- Remove barriers and siloed approaches.
- Embrace and support a holistic engagement strategy.
- Create a neighborhood advocate to proactively engage neighborhoods and neighborhood associations.



# Appendix

# Vision & Strategy (Concepts)

- Visions –
  - Create a sense of safety, security and and promote neighborhood well-being
  - Create Safe, Beautiful & Healthy Neighborhoods
- Strategy
  - Encompass a wider range of activities, fostering positive relationships, addressing various safety related concerns within the community.
  - Embrace interconnectedness of various programs and initiatives promoting a safe and healthy neighborhood.



# Naming Proposal

- BeSafe (a BeSafe Neighborhood)
  - Actionable, intuitive and a positive connotation
  - Emphasizes collaborative and proactive community efforts to help address safety concerns, crime prevention, emergency preparedness, street safety and other key issues.
  - Promotes a sense of community
  - Extensible to support future programs and initiatives



# Learning From Others

- Fresno - Creating Safe, Beautiful & Healthy Neighborhoods
- Wash DNR – Neighborhood Program
- Redmond & Mercer Island have incorporated CERT, emergency response and readiness
- Seattle - Programs tailored for condos and apartments
- SF Safe - **S**afety **A**wareness **F**or **E**veryone a 501c3 funded by SFPD <https://sfsafe.org/>
- Spokane C.O.P.S. – Community Oriented Policing Services - 501c3, <https://www.spokanecops.org/>





# Learning From Others


- Fresno - Creating Safe, Beautiful & Healthy Neighborhoods
- “Is not just focused on preventing crime in neighborhoods”



<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/fresno-is-revamping-its-neighborhood-watch-program-heres-how-you-can-get-involved/ar-AA11I3EC>  
<https://www.makefresnosafef.org/>



# Wildfire Ready Neighbors! | There's Strength In Neighbors



**HOME** ESPAÑOL

## ARE YOU WILDFIRE READY?

### GET YOUR FREE WILDFIRE READY PLAN TODAY!

Wildfire is a fact of life. But when we come together as neighbors, we can reduce the risk wildfire poses to our properties, homes, and community.

By working together, everyone benefits. Sign up today to get your free Wildfire Ready Plan and schedule a consultation from our local wildfire experts.

**SIGN UP**

## ANNUAL ACTIONS

- Remove all flammable items within 5 feet of your home's edges.**
  - Create a non-flammable perimeter by removing all flammable items within the Immediate Zone, such as debris, dead vegetation, pine needles, wood scraps and other ignitable materials such as newspapers, boxes, or firewood. This includes removing anything flammable underneath decks or porches.
  - Remove flammable mulches and plants containing resins, oils, and waxes, such as arbovitae and juniper plants. Use crushed stone or gravel instead of organic materials like cedar mulch or bark. Plants within 5 feet of your home should be limited to low-growing, fire-resistant native plants and ground covers. Choose fire-resistant plants from this list found here: [bit.ly/3KGHmie](https://bit.ly/3KGHmie).
- Protect your home against embers.**
  - To reduce ember entry, use metal panels or a 1/8-inch metal mesh to screen or box-in the area below your deck. If exterior vents are not already ember-resistant, 1/8-inch metal mesh screening should also be applied.
  - The roof is the most vulnerable part of your home. If you have an untreated wood roof, it is considered an extreme danger and should be replaced with Class A fire-rated materials listed here: [bit.ly/2xty9Av](https://bit.ly/2xty9Av). Even if your roof is fire-resistant, regularly inspect it for loose or missing shingles and replace as needed.
  - Clear pine needles and leaves from your gutters and roof on a schedule that makes sense for your property – most likely on a seasonal basis.
- Maintain landscaping year-round.**
  - A healthy plant is much more fire-resistant than a stressed one. Regular watering, pruning, and cleanup increases plant health, making them more resistant to wildfire.
  - Spring and summer are high-growth times for grasses. Keep grass mowed to a height of 3 inches or less. Tall grasses spread fire rapidly, but when kept short can act as a fuel break to slow down or stop fire spread.
  - Watering plants during summer helps keep them green and less flammable. Using drip irrigation and watering early morning or early evening is a water conservation-friendly way to keep things green in the summer.
- Manage flammable invasive plants like Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry on your property.**
  - Flammable invasive plants not only spread fire more rapidly, but also outcompete native plants that are less flammable and provide important benefits for native birds and wildlife. To determine the best options for your property, visit the WA State Noxious Weed Control Board: [nwcb.wa.gov](https://www.nwcb.wa.gov).
  - In general, removing the plant and its roots and seedlings helps prevent smaller infestations from spreading. For ongoing maintenance, seed or plant native species. Grazing by goats, sheep, cattle and horses can also be effective for managing growth.

## SEASONAL ACTIONS

- Prepare for smoky skies.**
  - Establish air filtration to remove fine particles from smoky air that can result in negative health effects. Learn how to DIY a box fan filter using a furnace filter and bungee cord here: <https://bit.ly/DIYBoxFilter>
  - Set AC units to re-circulate to keep smoke out of your home.
- When it's smoky:**
  - Stay inside and stay hydrated.
  - Mask up outdoors and limit your outdoor activity. N95 masks are recommended to protect against wildfire smoke.
- Remove flammables in the Intermediate Zone.\***
  - Maintain healthy flowers, plants, and grasses within 30 feet of your home. Replace flammable plants with native, fire-resistant plants. Choose fire-resistant plants from this list found here: [bit.ly/3KGHmie](https://bit.ly/3KGHmie).
  - Move firewood to a location more than 30 feet away from your home.
  - If you have a large propane tank in this zone, remove debris and any live plants from under or within 3-5 feet around the tank.
- Prune trees and manage vegetation in the Intermediate Zone.\***

## PREPARE YOUR PROPERTY, PROTECT YOUR NEIGHBORS.

Wildfire preparedness isn't one-size-fits-all. That's why we've developed a simple survey to help your local wildfire experts craft a Wildfire Ready Plan just for you that works for your property, budget, and lifestyle.

All you have to do is follow three simple steps:

1. Tap the sign-up button and answer a few questions.
2. Get your free Wildfire Ready Plan and schedule a consultation from our local wildfire experts.
3. Take action to protect your property, connect with local contractors, and help your community.

**SIGN UP**

## CREATE A DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Protect your property's perimeter with zone-by-zone actions

## WILDFIRE READY TODAY:

Whether you rent, own a vacation home, own a forested property, or just live in a home with a backyard, we offer clear steps to help you prepare for wildfires. It all starts with your community. Step one is to engage with your neighbors and develop a plan, because one of our best defenses against wildfire is collaboration.

## WILDFIRE READY TOMORROW:

The steps you take today are a great beginning, but it's important we look at wildfire resilience over the long term. Because when we get there, the payoff is huge: A wildfire-ready home and a community of neighbors who are all working together to keep it that way.

Use this **Wildfire Ready Plan** to find your starting point and map out a plan for long-term wildfire preparedness every month, every season, and every year.

**KEY:** TOP PRIORITY FREE LOWER COST

## ENGAGE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

- Schedule time to talk with your local wildfire experts.**
  - Sign up for a free **Wildfire Ready Home Visit** to determine how vulnerable your property is to wildfire based on the unique characteristics of your home and its immediate surroundings. During the visit, you'll receive tailored recommendations that will help increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. Ideally, you would be present for the visit, but it's not required for completion.
  - If your property is forested, sign up for a free **Forest Health Consultation** to assess your forest's health and identify potential problems and solutions. During the visit, a local forester will help you determine the management practices that best match your goals and are optimal for your forest's health.
  - If you already signed up for a home visit or consultation on our website **hang tight!** Someone will be in contact with you for scheduling. If you didn't express interest in one of these services when you signed up, but would like to now, visit [wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov/visit](https://wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov/visit).



# Naming Criteria Considerations

- Build off a vision and strategy
- Be multi-cultural
- Be welcoming and inclusive
- Emphasize the collaborative and proactive community efforts to help address safety concerns, crime prevention, emergency preparedness, street safety and other key issues.
- Be extensible to support future programs and initiatives





# Why Avoid The Words Crime & Watch

- **Suspicion and Profiling:** Some people might view a "Crime Watch" as a group that is overly suspicious of certain individuals, leading to potential profiling and discrimination.
- **Government Surveillance & Privacy :** The name may be perceived as neighbors conducting surveillance on behalf of the government.
- **Limited Scope:** May suggest a focus only on crime-related matters, overlooking other important community concerns such as safety during emergencies and traffic safety.
- **Fear-Based Approach:** The emphasis on "crime" could create an atmosphere of fear or paranoia within the community, detracting from the positive aspects of community engagement and collaboration.
- **Negative Stereotypes:** Negative stereotypes associated with certain communities, leading to potential stigmatization.
- **Lack of Inclusivity:** The term "watch" could discourage broader community involvement in safety initiatives.
- **Overemphasis on Crime Reporting:** Might lead to a lack of attention on crime prevention and community building.



# Engagement To-Date

- ~ 65% of all registered neighborhoods
- Over 75 Residents & Members of OneBellevue
- 4 Members of City Council
- Director of Office of Emergency Mgt (OEM)
- Director of Neighborhood Services
- Members of BPD
- Members of Bellevue CERT



# Teachable Moments

- Pandemic – Neighborhood response
- Hannukah wind storm
- Downtown riots
- Other cities?
- Other programs
  - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
  - Map your Neighborhood / Citizens Service
  - Senior Services

Sources: [https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf\\_document/2020/CDD-20-5502-NEWS-MAY20-WEB%20%28002%29.pdf](https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2020/CDD-20-5502-NEWS-MAY20-WEB%20%28002%29.pdf)  
<https://mil.wa.gov/map-your-neighborhood>



# City Neighborhood Association List

- Over 50% of info is out of date / inaccurate
- Many groups are reluctant to share info
  - Due to privacy and spam
  - Solicitations for a range of business services
  - Unclear benefit of provide the City the info
- Desire for City to help with some of the block and tackling
  - Mini websites
  - “Contact us” form vs exposing an email address
  - Association email address with auto forwarding
  - Help with understanding RCW24.03A
  - Tool Kit – Templates and best practices

