



May 27, 2025

Welcome: Mayor Rich Elliott
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager

City 101- Introduction to Ellensburg



Welcome to City 101



About the City and what we do
City Government
Washington Sunshine Laws
How to get involved



20,970
population

~\$127
million

70%
people

273
employees

10+
facilities

150
acres

6
utilities

11,000
customers

90.8
street miles



City Council: Legislative

- Seven elected representatives
- At-large (no districts); Nonpartisan
- Four-year terms
- Council elects a Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore to serve two-year terms
- Elections are held in odd years
- Rules and Procedures guide meetings and roles
- Council adopts policies, comprehensive plan, and budget
- Define powers, functions, and duties of City officers and employees

- **Washington Code City**
- **RCW 35A.13 Council-Manager**



Rich Elliott, Mayor



Sarah Beauchamp, Councilmember



Nancy Goodloe, Councilmember



Nancy Lillquist, Councilmember



David Miller, Councilmember



Delano Palmer, Councilmember

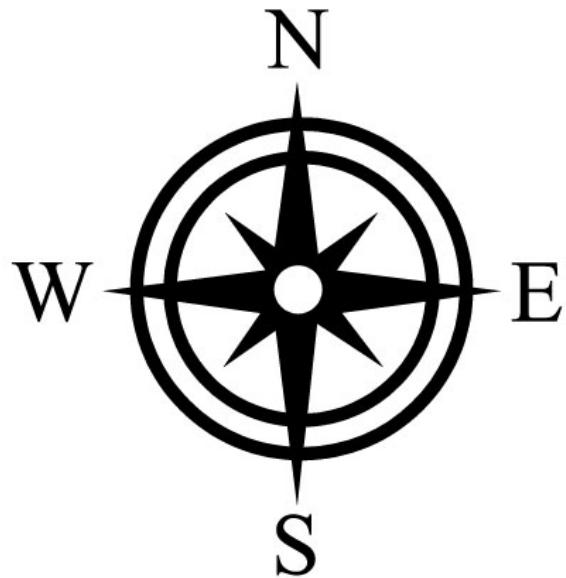


Joshua Thompson, Councilmember

City Council Actions

- **Ordinances** are the highest level of official City action. It is the only means by which laws can be created and budgets adopted. Ordinances require two readings prior to Council action.
- **Resolutions** are the official way of expressing the decision of the Council in terms of policy, approval, acceptance, or giving authority. Resolutions express council policy or direct administrative actions.
- **Proclamations** have no substantive power other than to express the will of the Mayor and are primarily ceremonial. Proclamations may be issued by the Mayor without limitation.
- **Ellensburg Code City (ECC)**
 - Ordinances are “codified” into local laws

City Council's Strategic Vision 2024-2029



- Sustainable Economic Development
- Infrastructure and Energy
- Safety, Civic Engagement, and Cultural Inclusion
- Affordable Housing and Living
- Dedicated Parks and Recreation Resources

www.ellensburgwa.gov/strategicvision



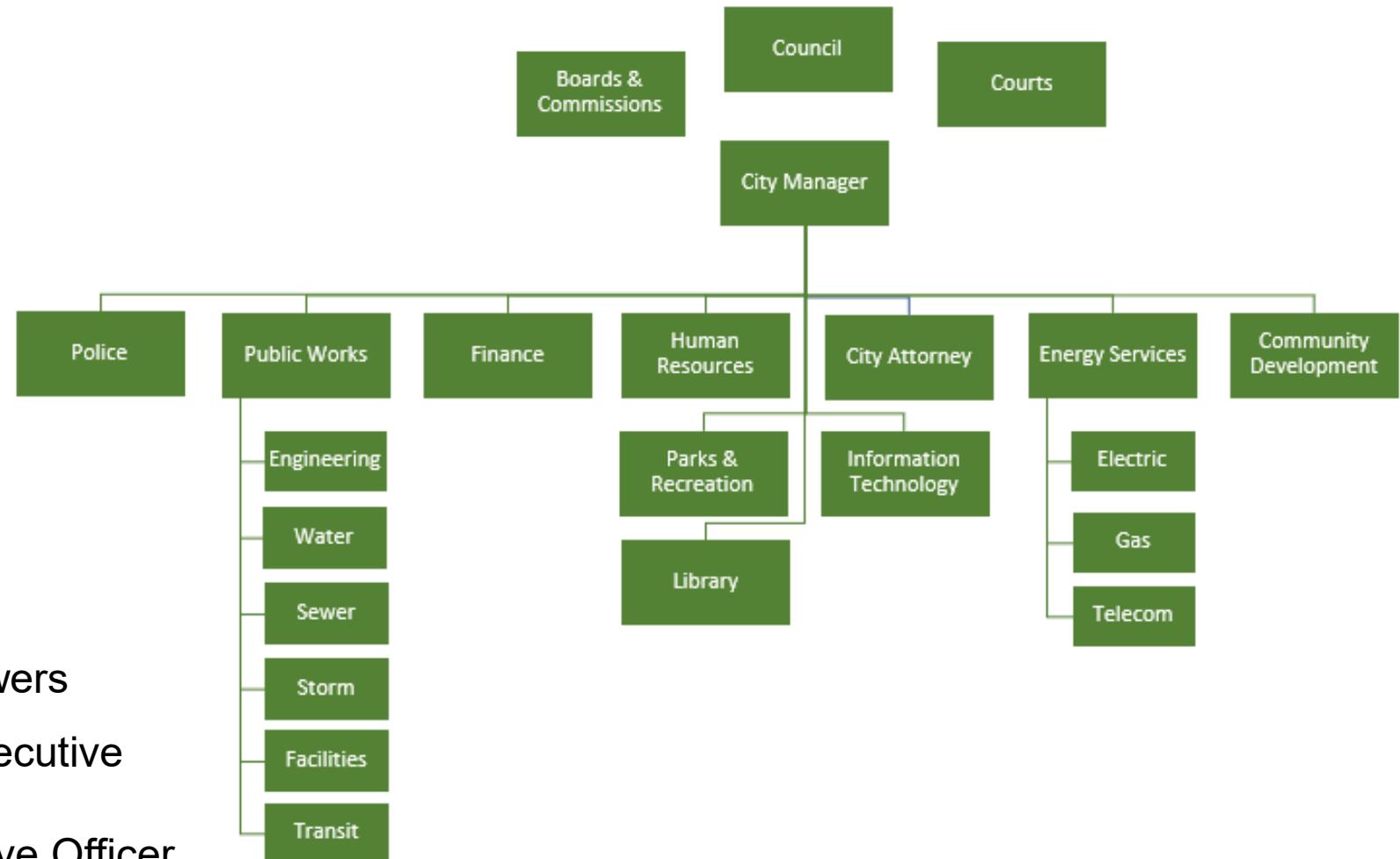
City Organization



RCW 35A.13 Council-Manager



Separation of Powers
City Manager: Executive function
Chief Administrative Officer



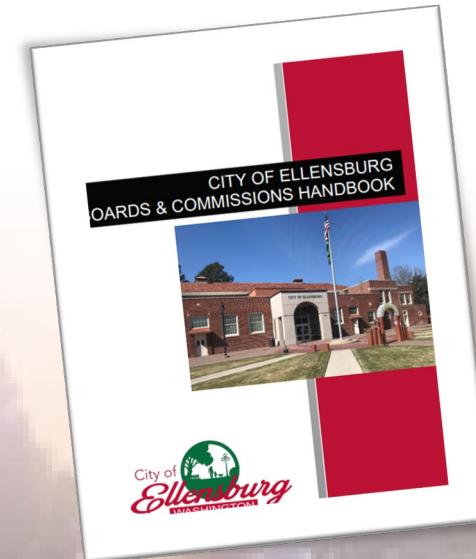
Judicial Branch

- **Kittitas County Superior Court** - adult felony crimes, civil disputes, dissolutions and family law matters, juvenile offenders, matters involving children, real property disputes, and domestic violence issues
- **Kittitas County Lower District Court – Prosecution by City Attorney’s Office**
 - Criminal misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors
 - Contested traffic infractions
 - Interlocal Agreement (ILA) for Public Defense
 - Infractions
- **Hearing Examiner** – administrative quasi-judicial land use and other matters



Advisory Boards & Commissions

- Affordable Housing Commission
- Arts Commission
- Civil Service Commission
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission
- Environmental Commission
- Landmarks and Design Commission
- LEOFF 1 Board (new)
- Library Board
- Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning Commission
- Public Transit Advisory Committee
- Utility Advisory Committee



...serve as advisory to City Council or special purpose

Partnerships with Others

Kittitas County

Central Washington University (CWU)

Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue (KVFR)

Kittitas County EMS

Conference of Governments (COG) - .09% sales tax for rural counties distribution

Economic Development – County, CWU, Chamber, EDA, etc.

Ellensburg Downtown Association (EDA) - Main Street Program

KITTCOM - 9-1-1 dispatch

HopeSource - Community Action Agency; low-income energy program, homelessness and housing response; transit provider, Cabulance

Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce – tourism; #MyEllensburg.com

Ellensburg School District

Waste Management

ECTV

Kittitas Valley Healthcare

What cities do:

- Essential services - water, sewer, gas, electric, etc.
- Transportation & Transit
- Clean Environment & Drinking Water
- Energy (electric, natural gas, solar)
- Public Safety
- Safe Buildings
- Quality of Life
- Community Building
- Justice
- Stable & Thriving Economy
- Land Use/Zoning/Permitting
- Balance the Budget

What cities don't do:

- Anything not delegated by the State or US Constitution (or prohibited otherwise)
- County statutory requirements (voting, public health, superior court)
- Determine business selection, investment, and location
- Undermine property rights
- Make all the laws
- Gift public funds
- Oversee schools or other taxing districts

City of Ellensburg 2025-2026 Biennial Budget Book

Budget Adopted - 12/16/2024



City of Ellensburg
501 N. Anderson St.
Ellensburg, WA 98926
www.ellensburgwa.gov

City Biennial Budget

- Total 2-year Biennial Budget
- Organized by funds - 56 “buckets” with reserve policies
- Audited by the State Auditor for State, Local, and Federal compliance
- One-time revenue to one-time expenses
- Basic revenue sources: taxes, fees for service (mostly inter-departmental), fines, and intergovernmental
- **Tax-payer supported for the public good and to be available as needed** (streets, police, parks, library)
- **User supported for individual good for on-demand services** (permits, utilities, recreation, and inspections)
- The general tax capacity is heavily limited by State law – can only tax where City has authority
- Structural deficit of revenue growth not keeping pace with growth in expenditures

Comprehensive Plan

- Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) enacted in 1990 to manage population growth and protect natural resources. It is a long-term blueprint (20-year outlook) for a community's growth and development
- GMA requires fast-growing counties and cities to maintain comprehensive plans and development regulations
 - Key goals: Reduce urban sprawl; protect farmlands, forests, and critical areas; promote efficient infrastructure investment; encourage sustainable development and housing
 - Required and Optional Elements
 - Periodic Update
 - Developed through community input!



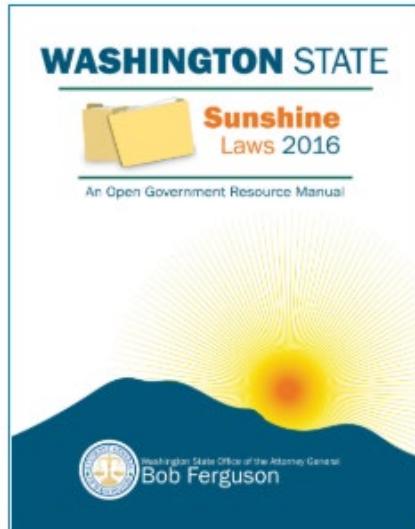
Est. 2022

 Comprehensive Plan



Adopted by City Council
Amended by City Council
Amended by City Council
Amended by City Council
Amended by City Council
Ordinance Number: 4785
Ordinance Number: 4811
Ordinance Number: 4838
Ordinance Number: 4869
Ordinance Number: 4882
December 18, 2017
November 5, 2018
December 2, 2019
January 19, 2021
December 20, 2021

Washington Sunshine Laws - Transparency



- **Open Public Meetings Act**
 - Must be open to the public
 - Published announcements, 24-hours in advance (except emergencies)
 - No secret ballots
 - Meeting records (minutes, some recordings)
 - Hybrid participation (generally)
 - Narrow exceptions for executive sessions
- **Public Records Act (PRA)**
 - Requires that all public records maintained by state and local agencies be made available to all members of the public, with very narrow statutory exemptions
 - Public record is defined in RCW 42.56.010(3) as any writing that is prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local government agency, and which contains information that relates to the conduct of government, or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function

Stay Informed

Subscribe To The Monthly E-Newsletter



To get regular messages from the City of Ellensburg, subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter, Ellensburg Insider.

Ellensburg
INSIDER

Stay Connected



ellensburgwa.gov/subscribe



Safe and Inclusive Community

- Ellensburg Police Department (EPD) added resources to police investigations and administration to address strategic public safety needs. EPD produced an annual report available online.

Ellensburg INSIDER
City Annual Report 2021

Working Toward A Strategic Vision

In the fall of 2021, the Ellensburg City Council developed a shared vision for the future built on strategic priorities. The City Council's Strategic Vision 2022-2027 represents the most important issues facing the City of Ellensburg and establishes precedence for expenditure of staff and other City resources. In addition to providing essential public services, the vision includes:

- Sustainable Energy
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Affordable Housing
- Safe and Inclusive Community

These priorities were further refined in 2022. To learn more, ellensburgwa.gov/strategicvision

Sustainable Infrastructure

The City adopted a Housing Action Plan in 2021 with strategies to create more housing, different types of housing, and more affordable housing stock. The City was awarded an additional \$75,000 Department of Commerce grant to implement the priority strategies in 2022.

Affordable Housing

Funds from the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) were allocated to projects that directly benefit the community: Unity Park design and construction, Anderson Road Sewer Extension, a construction project manager, and gateway signage to improve the first impression entering the City.

Adopted FEMA flood regulations to retain compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program.

Parke partnership grants funded West Ellensburg Park field improvements, Ellensburg Explorer/Exploradores de Ellensburg nature day camps (KEEN), and Rucker Creek floodplain interpretive signs.

Significant Projects Completed:

- Main Street Signification
- Central Business District Alley (3rd & 4th, Main to Water) reconstruction
- Bridge Load Ratings Update
- North Campus Signal at 14th Avenue and Wildcat Way

Stuart Meadow Project

The Stuart Meadow project is a partnership for Hammons to build 18 units of affordable housing. The City provided property contribution and affordable housing tax funding. The project will break ground in 2023.

Economic Development

- To support recovery efforts, the City partnered with Kittitas County to create a County-wide economic development strategic plan with some specific actions for Ellensburg. Industry centered groups (real estate, agriculture, small business, transportation, manufacturing, technology, etc.) have been included in planning to identify priorities to enhance quality of life and a robust local economy as the community grows. Funding was provided by the City of Ellensburg business incubator earlier in the year.
- The Arts Commission (from the City's arts fund) distributed \$15,700 in public grants, purchased five pieces for the City's collection, commissioned one social equity piece, revitalized First Friday Art Walk, and funded the Art Walk auto tour.
- Lodging Tax grants to support community events totaled \$46,000.

Upcoming Projects

Major infrastructure projects scheduled for 2022:

- Two trail sections to create better connectivity: Palouse to Cascades (PTC) reconnection from Dean Nicholson Blvd. to University Way and a shared use path along Ellensburg Road from Third Ave. to the PTC Trail.
- Improvements along Helens Ave. from Water St. to Airport Road are nearly complete and include new sidewalks, fire hydrants, Central Transit bus shelter, and bicycle lanes.
- Unity Park master planning is underway with construction in 2023.
- City roadway upgrades as Gateway I and II projects proceeding along University Way and Vandave Highway to enhance the image. 1st, Normandy, 2nd, and 3rd Avenues street trees.
- University Avenue/Yarrow Creek and Fifth Avenue/ Railroad will get new asphalt.
- Installation of field lights at Rotary Park youth baseball/softball complex.

Budget & Administration

- Business Licenses: 1,787 active
- New Business Licenses: 310
- Resolutions: 42
- Public Records Requests: 148
- Budget: \$122 million
- Employees: 196.27 FTEs
- Payroll checks processed: 5,418
- Survey responses: 2,808
- Financial Audit: 0 findings
- Grant expenditures: \$3,240,408
- Housing

Coffee With City Council

Friday, August 19
9-11 a.m.
at Dakota Cafe

Stop by for a cup and conversation.

Provide Input

BeHeardEburg.com
YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

City Director
Emergency Services 9-1-1

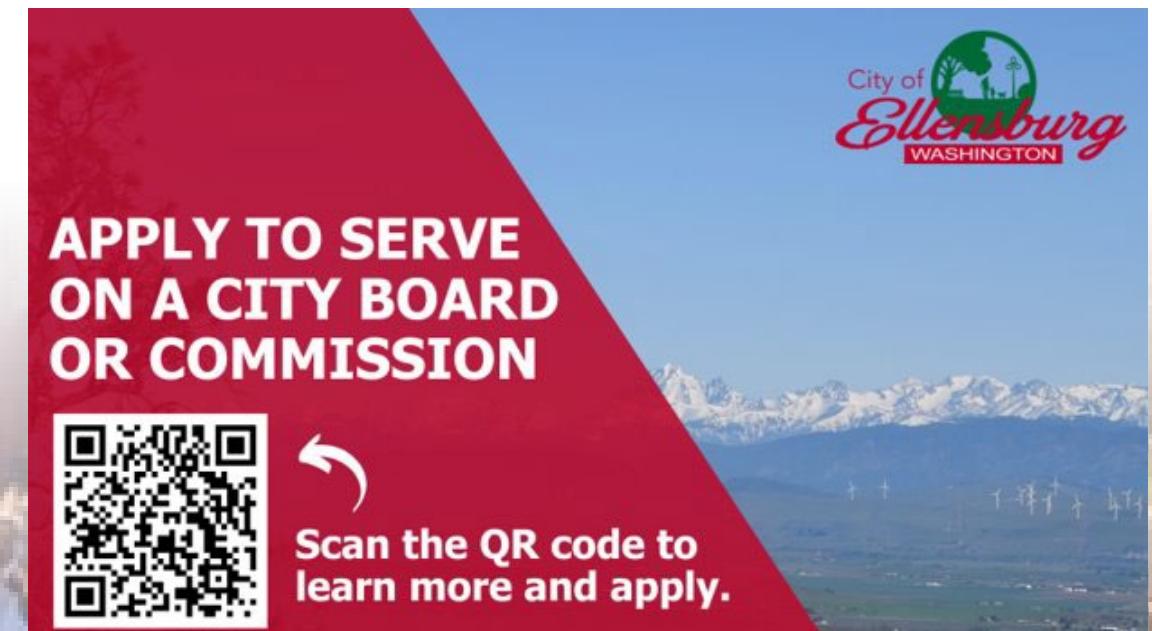
Fire Department | 509-933-7231 non-emergency
Police Department | 509-962-7200 non-emergency

General Information | 509-962-7204
City Manager | 509-962-7221
Building Permits | 509-962-7231
Halt Homes | 509-962-7240
Library | 509-962-7220
Natural Gas Division | 509-962-8638
Parks & Recreation | 509-962-7230
Public Works & Utilities | 509-962-7231
Utility Billing | 509-962-7201

City of Ellensburg
501 N. Anderson St.
Ellensburg, WA 98542
ellensburgwa.gov

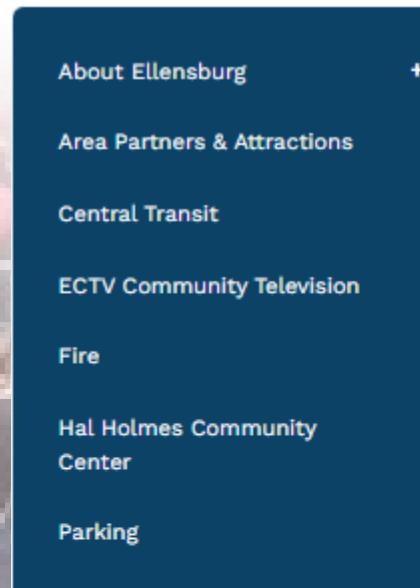
How to serve on a Board or Commission

- Openings | [Boards & Commissions | Ellensburg, WA](#)
- Applications online or City Manager's Office
- Attend a meeting
- Interview by sub-committee
- City Council appointment
- Ad-Hoc Committee and Sub-committee service



How to be involved

- Comprehensive Plan
- Attend a meeting
- Provide testimony (projects and City Council – written or verbal)
- Participate in an Open House
- Take a survey
- Let us know how to be more accessible
- Serve on an advisory board or commission
- Ask your questions or dispel a rumor...



[Home](#) > [In Our Community](#) > [Rumors & Questions](#)

Rumors & Questions

Check this page for updates on rumors, questions, or chatter heard about town to get the facts a

Rumors & Questions

Rumors & Questions

What question do you have about the City of Ellensburg? Have you heard a rumor that you want to check? Let us know!

[Ask A Question*](#)

Thank you!

citymanager@ellensburgwa.gov

Slides will be posted on the City website.

Please take the survey to help us improve. Thanks!



Est. 2022