

The first quarter of 2026 brought continued momentum for Bona Fide Bellevue, with progress across our key initiatives.



Main Street Program Launch

We've been building toward this moment for years. After consistently applying the Main Street 4-Point Approach, we officially launched our Main Street program earlier this year. We welcomed Bryan Davidson as our part-time Main Street Manager, already well known to many of you as the manager of our farmers market. Bryan hit the ground running, and we've been building the foundation to identify a data-informed transformation strategy for our business district, informed by market research and community-wide input.

Early activities toward that milestone included a site visit to Bellevue by staff from the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) as well as attendance at a PDC-sponsored statewide managers meeting and a downtown training workshop.

To support our strategy, we've obtained detailed Claritas market data for Bellevue Borough, along with data for 10-, 15-, and 25-minute drive times. This provides a clear picture of our trade area, helping us better understand who lives in and around Bellevue, how and where they spend their money, and where opportunities exist to support local businesses.

We've also continued our long-standing partnership with Town Center Associates, who provide downtown property data that will inform the development of a comprehensive building and property inventory, a critical foundation for understanding our assets and guiding future investment along Lincoln Avenue.

This work is positioning us to move into the next phase of engagement and strategy development.

Planning is also underway for our signature events, including Bellevue UnWined, Rhythm & Brews, and our Live Worship Shop House Tour. These events play an important role in activating Lincoln Avenue, supporting local businesses, and bringing the community together.

RIDC Seedling Communities

Since 2025, we’ve been collaborating with staff from the Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) through their Seedling Communities pilot program, focused on community-centered economic development. In January, representatives from Bona Fide Bellevue and the Borough met with their team to discuss local priorities and redevelopment opportunities, and in March, we walked Lincoln Avenue together to look at key properties.

We’re excited about the potential this relationship holds to unlock new investment, strengthen our Main Street strategy, and position Bellevue for long-term economic growth.



Community Engagement

In March, we collaborated with PublicSource to host a "You Have the

Historic Preservation

We applied to the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) for a Keystone Preservation Planning Grant to fund a consultant to prepare a nomination for listing the Bellevue Borough Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, a meaningful step toward honoring Bellevue's identity as a "Streetcar Suburb." We also submitted a letter of inquiry to the Allegheny Foundation seeking matching funds in support of that effort. We’ll share updates as they become available.

National Register listing brings significant benefits, from grant opportunities and tax credits to enhanced property values and economic development, and importantly, it places no restrictions on the rights of private property owners.

We also reached out to eligible homeowners who may be interested in purchasing a Historic Home Plaque, a great way to celebrate your home's place in Bellevue's history.

Redd Up Bellevue

Led by Mikhaila Stang, our first litter clean-up under Improve the Vue kicked

Floor" town hall right here in Bellevue, a community conversation designed to give residents a voice on the issues that matter most. [Learn more about the You Have the Floor on the Public Source website.](#)

Our annual Seed Swap was held on March 21, bringing neighbors together to share seeds, exchange knowledge, and connect with one another ahead of the growing season. The event continues to be a simple but meaningful way to build relationships, support local gardeners, and strengthen our sense of community. Special thanks to T & M Hardware, Family Dollar, Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank, Sow Right Seeds, High Mowing Organic Seeds, and The Living Seed Company for donating seeds to support the event.

off in April and was a huge success. Approximately 35 volunteers collected 32 bags of trash. Coffee was generously donated by Wunderbar.



Active Transportation Committee — Building Equity in Transportation & Travel for Yinz (BETTY)

BETTY has been busy! In addition to drafting multimodal policies and planning community events that encourage walking and biking, ATC member Dan Carroll developed a web app to collect data on sidewalks, crossings, and curb ramps. Committee members will use the app in the field to collect data, supporting the Borough's development of a comprehensive Pedestrian Network Conditions Inventory to help inform and prioritize future investments in the pedestrian network.

Summer Intern

We're also excited to announce that Bona Fide Bellevue and the Borough will be sharing a summer intern through the Local Government Academy's Internship Program. The intern will support implementation of the Borough's Active Transportation Plan, Bellevue in Motion, assist with Borough needs, and help advance our Main Street activities.

Friendship Garden

Good news for the Friendship Garden! We were awarded an in-kind grant from Grow Pittsburgh's Community Garden Sustainability Fund to support site improvements at the garden.



Beacon Scholarship

We're proud to announce that our scholarship program has been rebranded as the Beacon Scholarship. The Bona Fide Bellevue Beacon Scholarship awards \$1,500 to a graduating Northgate student who is pursuing additional educational opportunities after high school, whether at a college, university, technical or trade school, or other post-secondary institution.

Applications for the 2026 Beacon Scholarship are open now through May 15, 2026. Apply today at bonafidebellevue.org/scholarship. Questions? Reach out to us at scholarship@bonafidebellevue.org.

Operations

Behind the scenes, we've strengthened our operations and finalized our 2025 Annual Report, which will be shared soon. We are also identifying funding opportunities to support the long-term sustainability and growth of our organization.

We've established a new mailing address: [546 Linden Way, Suite 1, Bellevue, PA 15202](#), associated with our storage space in the basement of the historic former Dietz Building.

We also applied for an event grant through Allegheny County's Main Streets Allegheny program to help offset costs for sponsoring Light Up Bellevue, our beloved holiday celebration, in 2026 and 2027. Fingers crossed!

Garden Season is in Full Swing!

Friendship Garden and Herb Garden workdays are underway, with several opportunities to get involved:

- **Friendship Garden Workdays:**
Fridays, May 1 and May 15
at 5:00 PM
- **Herb Garden Workdays:**
Saturdays, May 2 and May 16
at 9:00 AM

Cap off the month at our **Spring Garden Party on May 30 from 5:30–8:30 PM** at the Friendship Garden. A joint gathering of Friendship Garden and Herb Garden volunteers and their families, the evening will feature a potluck and live music by Brad Bendis.

What's Coming Up

As we continue building momentum around our **Main Street program**, there's a lot ahead. Look for the formation of a new Main Street Committee under Bona Fide Bellevue, along with expanded business outreach, roundtables, a community-wide meeting, and a community perception survey in the months to come.

Interested in volunteering? Visit our Get Involved page: bonafidebellevue.org/get-involved/

On May 2, celebrate with the **Mid-Atlantic Mothers' Milk Bank**, which is rehabilitating a building at 575 Lincoln Avenue and will soon call Bellevue home. Learn more at their website; <https://midatlanticmilkbank.org/>

Bellevue UnWined returns on June 6 from 5:00–9:00 PM, bringing wine tastings and local vendors to Lincoln Avenue.

A documentary screening on June 19 will serve as a lead-up to our **Jane Jacobs Walk** on the morning of June 20 (times to be announced). Jane Jacobs was an influential urbanist whose ideas about vibrant, walkable neighborhoods continue to resonate in Bellevue. Learn more: <https://www.janejacobswalk.org/about-jane-jacobs-walk/meet-jane-jacobs/>.

We'll wrap up the second quarter with a **Volunteer Appreciation Day** on June 24 from 3:00–7:00 PM at the Bellevue Farmers Market — a free celebration for everyone who volunteered with Bona Fide Bellevue. Enjoy free pizza, lawn games, and more as we celebrate you and all you've contributed to the community!

Thank You!

Thank you to our volunteers, partners, businesses, and the Borough for your continued support. In the months ahead, we'll focus on expanding outreach to local businesses and community members as we continue building momentum for our Main Street program and downtown initiatives.



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