

Bellingham Comprehensive Plan Land Use Chapter

2016

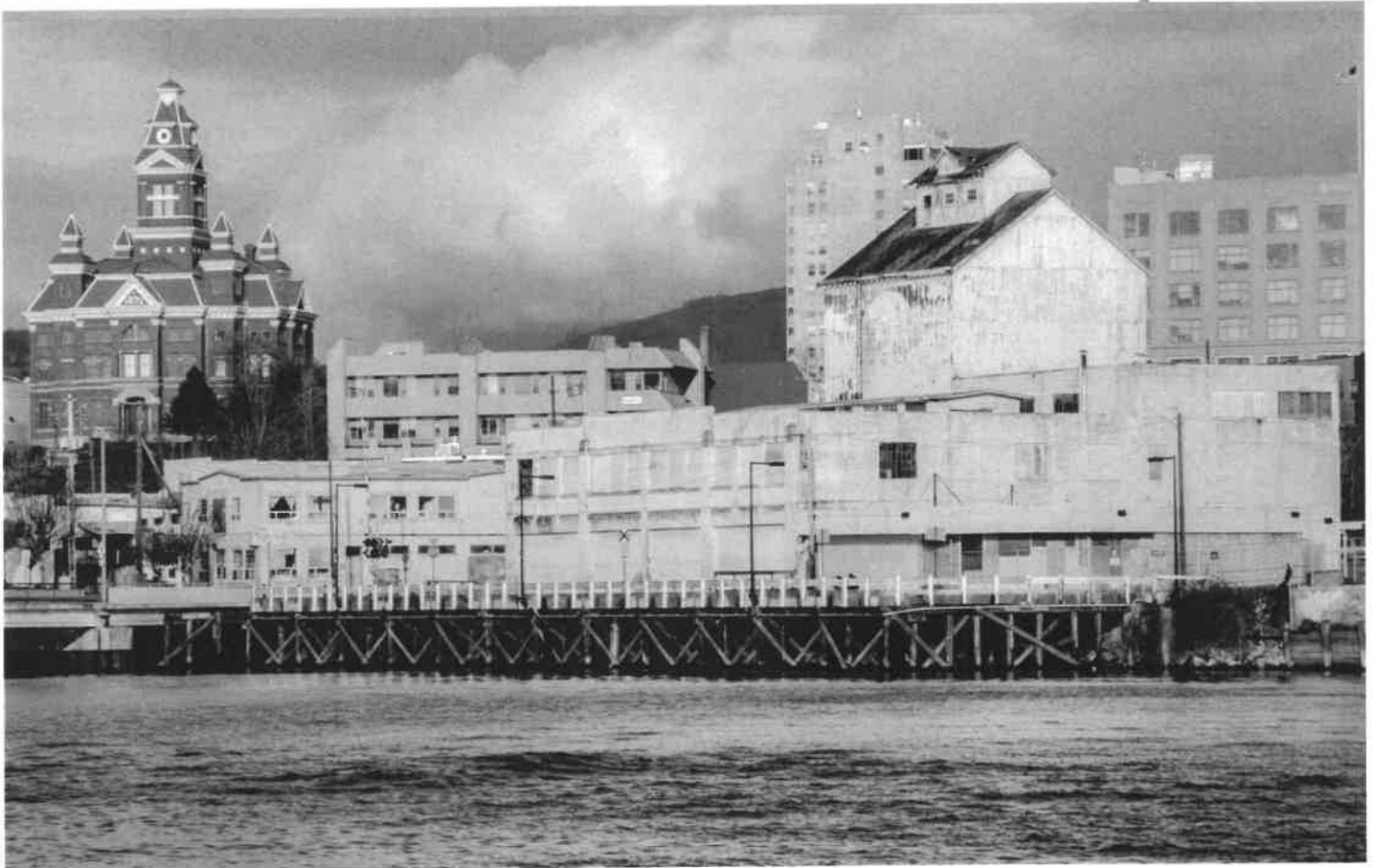


Photo by Kenni Merritt

I. Introduction

The Land Use Chapter guides the future use of land in Bellingham, ensuring the City's high quality of life is retained and enhanced as the community grows and changes. The requirement for a Land Use Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan is one of the key components of the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires cities to show how they will be able to accommodate 20 years of growth through sufficient buildable land that is zoned appropriately. This chapter is also consistent with the Whatcom County Countywide Planning Policies, considers planning approaches that increase physical activity, and includes airport compatibility policies, among other requirements.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a framework for improving the health and livability of the community by accommodating carefully planned levels of development that:

- Promote the efficient use of land through a system of mixed-use urban villages and corridors and compatible infill development;
- Create safe and healthy neighborhoods with access to recreational opportunities, housing options affordable to a range of incomes and a variety of transportation choices;
- Foster a vibrant economy and living wage jobs;
- Maintain Bellingham's sense of place by protecting and enhancing the character of existing neighborhoods, the natural environment and important historic and cultural resources; and
- Build a community that is resilient to adverse events, including natural disasters and climate change.

Bellingham accommodates growth primarily through compact development within the City limits, including infill development in areas served existing infrastructure and services and mixed-use urban villages (or "centers") that are connected by vibrant transit corridors (see Supporting Information section). While higher-intensity development occurs in urban villages, the character of established single-family residential neighborhoods will continue to be preserved and enhanced. Vibrant centers of activity make it easier to walk, bike and use transit for daily needs; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; contribute to a sense of community; provide economic benefits; reduce the need for expansion of the City's urban growth area (UGA); and protect open space and agricultural land.



The corner of Holly and Bay Streets in downtown is lively on sunny days. Photo by Philip Humphries.

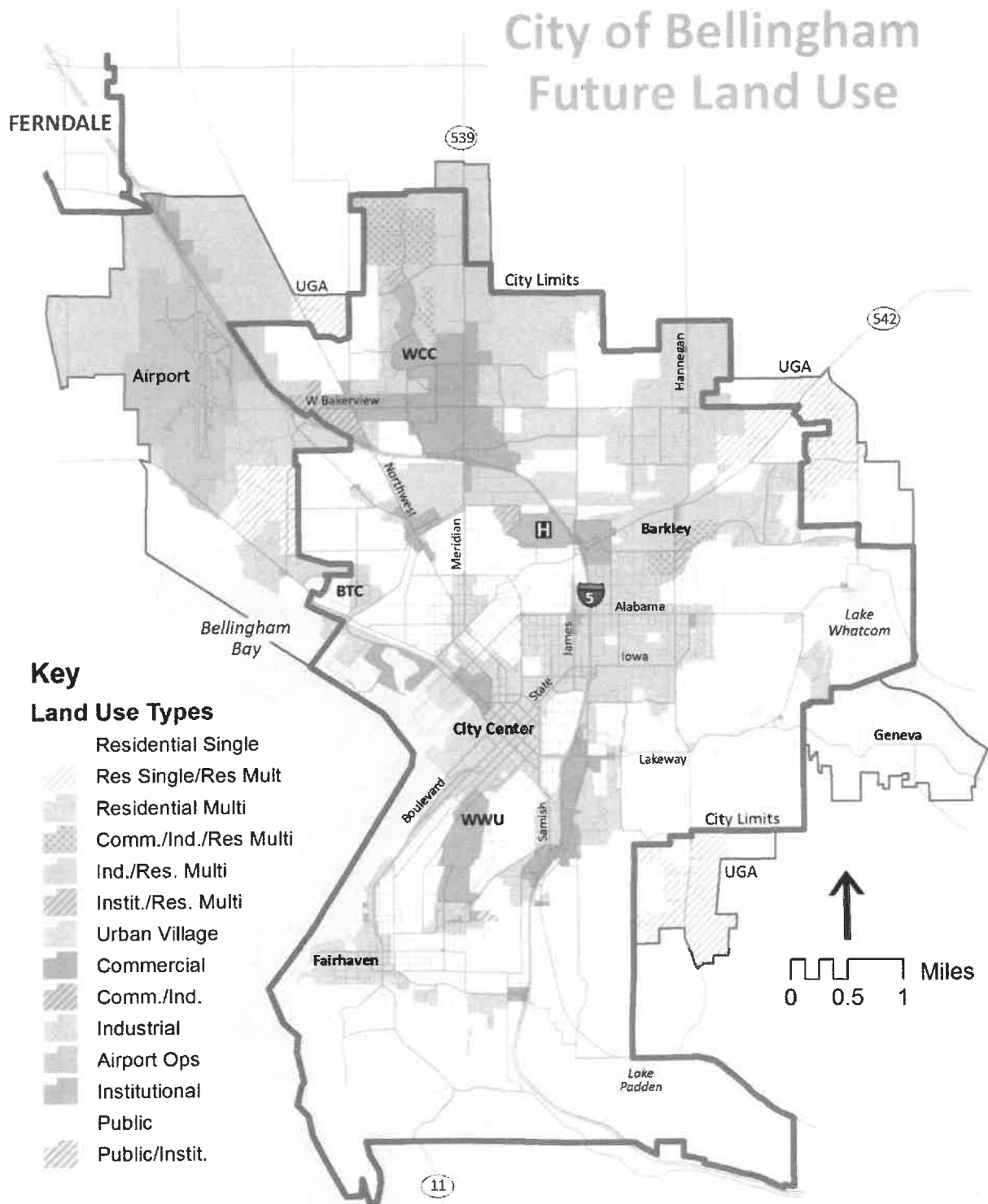
These concepts are further defined under the following seven categories, which form the organizational basis for the goals and policies of this chapter:

- Residential Development**
- Urban Villages and Transit Corridors**
- Commercial and Industrial Development**
- Public and Institutional Development**
- Urban Growth Area and Annexation**

**Public Participation
Sustainable Land Use**

The chapter's 10 goals mirror the City's Legacies and Strategic Commitments and emphasize the interdependence of the environment, economy and society:

- GOAL LU-1 Support sense of place in neighborhoods.**
- GOAL LU-2 Foster vibrant urban villages.**
- GOAL LU-3 Support a thriving local economy across all employment sectors.**
- GOAL LU-4 Maintain and enhance publicly-owned assets and institutional uses.**
- GOAL LU-5 Support the Growth Management Act's goal to encourage growth in urban areas.**
- GOAL LU-6 Use transparent processes and involve stakeholders in decisions.**
- GOAL LU-7 Protect and restore our community's natural resources (land, water and air) through proactive environmental stewardship.**
- GOAL LU-8 Protect and improve Lake Whatcom and its watershed to ensure a long-term, sustainable supply of water.**
- GOAL LU-9 Preserve historic and cultural resources.**
- GOAL LU-10 Foster community connectedness to improve the health of residents.**



III. Goals and Policies

Residential Development

Over half of the City's total land area is zoned residential, making it the dominant land use in Bellingham in terms of total acreage. Residential development is also encouraged in the City's commercial and urban village zones. Bellingham had approximately 37,825 dwelling units in 2015, the majority of which were single-family homes. During this same year, developed residential areas of the City contained an average density of 6.5 units per acre.

Land Use Categories

Zoning	Acres	Percent
Residential Single	9,719	42.3%
Residential Multi	3,263	14.2%
Commercial	1,275	5.5%
Industrial	3,908	17.0%
Urban Village	865	3.8%
Institutional	418	1.8%
Airport Ops	1,024	4.5%
Public *	2,517	10.9%
Total Acres	22,989	100.0%

* Some land is public use or is otherwise designated for residential, commercial, or other uses.

GOAL LU-1 Support sense of place in neighborhoods.

Policy LU-1 The Single-Family Residential designation permits a range of housing densities to achieve the City's housing diversity and affordability goals. In undeveloped or infill areas, new housing may include single-family detached, single-family attached, townhouses, cottage housing, accessory dwelling units, clustered housing and other small-scale housing forms. Accessory, public and semi-public uses are also allowed.

Policy LU-2 The Multi-Family Residential designation is intended for areas that are able to support higher concentrations of people, while encouraging a desirable living environment within and adjacent to these districts. This zoning also provides a compatible mixture of residential housing types, typical accessory uses, public and semi-public uses, office uses and limited neighborhood commercial uses in appropriate areas.

Policy LU-3 Residential densities are permitted as follows:

Residential, Low Density - 7,201 or more square feet per dwelling unit (5 or less units per acre). The Low-Density Residential designation should be used for land that is not suited for more intense urban development because of environmentally-sensitive areas and/or public facility or utility capacity limitations.



Single-family homes in the Columbia Neighborhood. Photo by Aarin Wright.

Residential, Medium Density - 3,600 to 7,200 square feet per dwelling unit (6 to 12 units per acre). The Medium-Density Residential designation should be used for land that is suitable for moderate density development.

Residential, High Density - 0 to 3,599 square feet per dwelling unit (more than 12 units per acre). The high-density residential designation should be used for land near existing or potential high-frequency transit service and/or adjacent to or near employment and commercial areas.



Multi-family units on High Street.

Policy LU-4 Protect the unique character and qualities of existing neighborhoods, while identifying opportunities for improved livability, safety, and housing affordability and diversity.

Policy LU-5 Foster neighborhoods with a balanced mix of housing prices that are compatible with the wages and incomes in the community.

Policy LU-6 Support higher-density development with parks, art, schools and other public amenities.

Policy LU-7 Periodically review and update the City's residential zoning regulations and design standards to promote quality development that considers and complements existing neighborhoods.

Policy LU-8 Work with the community's institutions of higher education to develop a comprehensive strategy addressing issues associated with off-campus student housing. Potential measures include:

- Build relationships with large student housing providers to provide adequate off-campus housing that is high quality and complementary with its surroundings;
- Provide education to landlords of student housing located in older homes regarding the City's historic preservation program and ways in which to economically improve older properties;
- Expand residential parking zones to lessen the impacts of overflow student parking in established single-family neighborhoods; and
- Enforce the City's Rental Registration and Safety Inspection Program.

Residential parking zones (RPZs) help ease parking congestion in residential neighborhoods, while balancing the needs of all people who use public streets. RPZs help neighborhoods deal with impacts through transportation and parking demand management strategies (see Transportation Chapter).

Policy LU-9 Promote small-scale commercial uses (e.g. corner stores) within neighborhoods, particularly where these uses historically existed, to encourage walkability and provide opportunities for employment and placemaking.

Placemaking: People interacting with one another builds stronger, healthier communities. To make a place great, it should include these qualities: sociability, uses & activities, access & linkages, and comfort & image.

Policy LU-10 To achieve a healthy mix of housing that is affordable to a wide range of incomes, implement and seek new, innovative tools, including, but not limited to:

- Density bonuses;
- Inclusionary zoning;
- Cluster subdivisions that preserve open space, retain natural features and provide other public benefits;
- The Infill Housing Toolkit, which includes small lot homes, townhomes and other housing forms;
- Accessory dwelling units;
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings;
- Purchase and transfer of development rights (TDR) programs; and
- Public-private partnerships for shared parking facilities, wetland mitigation, and regional stormwater management.



Bellingham Cohousing's condominium homes are privately owned and include features one would expect in a typical residence.

Policy LU-11 As neighborhood plans are developed and updated, important priorities and issues should be identified, including:

- A mix of housing types for all income levels, ages and abilities;
- References to the appropriate adopted plans for parks, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure;
- Significant historical, archaeological and cultural resources;
- Walkable and accessible neighborhood schools;
- Significant public vistas and view corridors;
- Placemaking and streetscape amenity opportunities, including public art, street furniture, green infrastructure projects (e.g. street trees and rain gardens), and pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Potential Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) improvements;
- Protection of critical areas and other environmentally-sensitive areas;

Crime prevention through environmental design is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely on the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts.

- Spaces for small-scale community gardens, healthy mobile food vendors, and other opportunities for healthy, local food; and
- Potential considerations for areas susceptible to natural disasters and climate change impacts (see [Whatcom County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan](#)).

Urban Villages and Transit Corridors

The City's urban villages, which are planned to accommodate much of the City's higher-density mixed-use development, are key to preserving neighborhood character while taking advantage of existing infrastructure. Since adoption of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, master plans, design standards, and regulations have been developed for six urban villages - the Downtown, Waterfront, Fairhaven, Fountain, Samish Way, and Old Town Districts (see Bellingham Existing and Proposed Urban Villages map). These villages are part of a larger "centers and corridors" planning approach that links mixed-use centers of activity through vibrant, high-frequency transit corridors. As implementation of the urban village plans progresses, planning work can begin on the transit corridors that connect them to each other and the surrounding community (see Transportation Chapter).

Urban villages are activity centers that provide pleasant living, shopping and working environments; strong pedestrian accessibility; adequate, well-located public spaces; a connected street system; and a balance of retail, office, and residential uses.

A formal urban village plan has not been adopted for the Barkley District, which functions as an urban village in many ways and is identified as an urban development center in the Barkley Neighborhood Plan. Other potential areas for urban village planning include the James Street, Cordata, Lakeway/Lincoln, and Birchwood/Northwest/Maplewood areas. If the existing planned urban villages continue to succeed and the need for additional centers arises, these areas would be evaluated for potential master planning processes. It's important to note that the designation of an area as an urban village does not preclude the development of mixed-use buildings on a smaller scale elsewhere throughout the community.

A recent review of the success of urban villages indicates mixed results. The Downtown, Fairhaven and Barkley Districts have seen significant development, but others have had limited development activity. Growth has been uneven due to a variety of factors, including availability of land, environmental cleanup requirements, private landowner interest and motivation, economic health, desirability of an area, and development risk. Many of the urban villages were planned during the Recession; thus, they will require time and a healthy economy to attract and leverage new investment and evolve into vibrant centers. A few additional observations include:



The Barkley Urban Village provides living, shopping, employment and recreational opportunities.

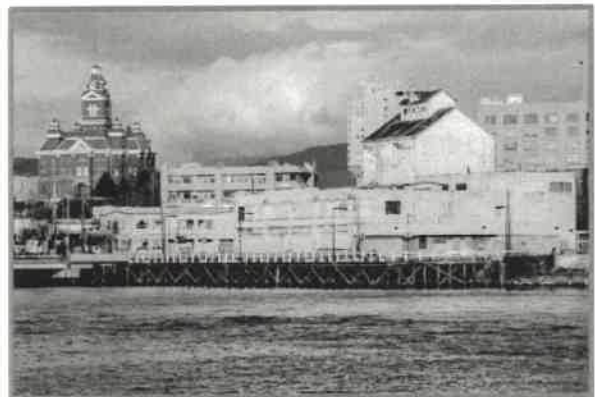
1. **Incentives can be very effective, but need to be applied in a targeted manner.** The judicious use of incentives can help "jumpstart" development in urban villages. This is evident in the significant increase in housing downtown through the use of incentives such as the multi-family tax exemption program, which has incentivized development of over 600 housing units,

with over 200 more under construction or in building permit review. However, in slow-starting urban centers, incentives alone have not overcome the risks associated with establishing new mixed-use development. It is likely that catalytic "pioneer" projects will be required to establish developer confidence. These types of projects cannot be anticipated in a predictable manner and will likely require location-specific incentives to encourage more timely development.

Spreading incentives too broadly can be counterproductive and will stretch limited City resources. Targeted use of major incentives has resulted in better outcomes than applying them across a broader area, which can dilute their effectiveness.

2. City commitment and public amenities are important. The City's commitment to improving infrastructure and amenities in urban villages can be just as, if not more, effective at attracting development to these areas than direct financial incentives. Just shy of a decade after adoption of the urban village concept, the development community is starting to take a real interest in these areas. The City's focus on the downtown for the past two decades is paying off, with 660 new housing units and 25,000 square feet of new commercial development since 2006. Whenever possible, the City should look for opportunities to leverage expenditures in public amenities and infrastructure with private investment when they are likely to have a multiplier effect, especially for early development in new urban villages.

3. Inherent economies of scale and effort can be beneficial. Larger, multi-project development proposals in urban villages that are under common management/ownership (i.e. Barkley Village and the Waterfront District) provide a unique opportunity for the City to work with proponents to provide predictable growth and more efficient infrastructure.



The waterfront and downtown from Bellingham Bay. The Waterfront District Subarea Plan was approved in 2013. Photo by Kenni Merritt.

GOAL LU-2 Foster vibrant urban villages.

Policy LU-12 The Urban Village designation encourages the creation of intensely-developed mixed-use areas where infrastructure, transit, and other public facilities and services are available or can easily be provided. Urban villages should provide significant job opportunities and a substantial amount of new housing, allowing people to work, shop and recreate near where they live. The ultimate mix of land uses, densities, infrastructure requirements and other typical zoning, design, and development standards should be established in a master plan.

Policy LU-13 Promote and facilitate continued development of the City's seven existing urban villages - Downtown, Waterfront, Fairhaven, Fountain, Samish Way, Old Town and Barkley. These areas are expected to accommodate significant residential and mixed use development over the 20-year planning period (see urban village master plans, design standards, and regulations).

Policy LU-14 Ensure that Bellingham's City Center (i.e. Downtown, Waterfront and Old Town Districts) retains its role as the dominant cultural, civic, financial and service center for the community and region. This area should be unique, attractive, and reflect Bellingham's history and natural setting (see Downtown Bellingham Plan, Waterfront Master Plan, Old Town Subarea Plan, City Center Neighborhood Plan and City Center Implementation Strategy).



Digester tanks on the waterfront are proposed to be incorporated into the area's redevelopment. Photo by Aarin Wright.

Policy LU-15 Continue effective incentives and develop new incentives where needed for the planned urban villages. These incentives should be targeted to areas where they have proven to be successful and/or where the greatest need has been identified. Incentives should be flexible to respond to opportunities and changing markets.

Policy LU-16 Establish benchmarks and annual monitoring of key indicators for urban villages to assess the effectiveness of incentives and implementation progress.

Policy LU-17 In instances where a proponent controls multiple properties within an existing urban village and seeks to address the coordinated provision of infrastructure, cooperatively develop plans, approaches and agreements, including development agreements.

Policy LU-18 Develop new plans and update existing plans as needed to reflect the unique nature of each urban village. The plans should consider the elements identified in Policy LU-11, as well as the following:

- Land uses and adaptive performance-based development standards to encourage compatible new development and greater flexibility in design, particularly when the development context is well defined;
- An appropriate mix of commercial, office and residential uses;
- Parking requirements, including the potential for parking maximums and/or reduced parking requirements, and design standards that support multi-modal transportation options; and



Pedestrian walkway in Fairhaven Urban Village. Photo by Caitlin Forslof.

- Sustainable development practices and the use of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) rating system, or similar system, to measure the potential sustainability outcomes of the proposed plans.

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
– Brundtland Report

Policy LU-19 Consider developing integrated transportation-land use plans along Whatcom Transportation Authority's (WTA) GO Lines connecting urban villages where appropriate. The planning process should consider the following (see Transportation Chapter):

- A mix of land uses and higher densities within each corridor, resulting in transit-oriented development;
- Design standards that support the multi-modal nature of the corridors;
- Efforts to increase the effectiveness of public transportation along the corridors; and
- The elements identified in Policies LU-11 and LU-18.

A Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a mixed-use residential and commercial area designed to maximize access to public transportation, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership.

Public Participation

Planning for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan included an extensive public involvement process with dozens of public meetings, open houses in the unincorporated UGA, meetings with neighborhood groups, hearings on the environmental impact statement (EIS), and Planning Commission and City Council hearings and study sessions. One of the highlights of this process was the 2004 community forum on growth management, which engaged over 1,000 citizens to develop the vision, goals and policies for Bellingham's future growth and development. The 2016 update is not an overhaul of the 2006 plan; rather, it builds on the thoroughly vetted visions, goals and policies in the existing plan, incorporating updated and consolidated language where necessary.

In 2014 and 2015, the City engaged the public in the process of developing final recommendations for the population and employment projections and UGA boundaries. Engagement opportunities included an online survey; two open houses; a dedicated discussion forum website (engage.cob.org); a dedicated Comprehensive Plan Update webpage (cob.org/compplan); and numerous group and individual meetings with neighborhoods, nonprofit groups, realtors, developers, and other interested stakeholders. Additionally, four work sessions and one public hearing were held with the Planning Commission, and three work sessions and one public hearing were held with the City Council. Over 100 letters and emails were submitted throughout the process to develop the forecasts and UGA boundaries.



Participants weighed in on growth options at the March 2015 open house.

Numerous Planning Commission and City Council work sessions and public hearings were also held in 2015 and 2016 on the updated Comprehensive Plan chapters. Periodic process updates were sent via email to a list of interested stakeholders. The draft chapters, meeting dates, presentations, public comments, comment trackers, and other information on the process were posted on the Comprehensive Plan update webpage. Approximately 150 comments were submitted between January and October 2016.

GOAL LU-6 Use transparent processes and involve stakeholders in decisions.

Policy LU-63 Encourage active, broad-based citizen participation in the creation of plans, regulations, and development proposals.

Policy LU-64 Develop innovative techniques to reach out to underserved populations and those typically not involved in planning efforts.

Policy LU-65 Support a culture of dialogue and partnership among residents, property owners, the business community, organizations, other interested citizens, and City officials.

Sustainable Land Use

In its broadest sense, sustainability encompasses an integrated set of social, economic and environmental principles that work together to provide a better future for ourselves and future generations. Embedded in this definition is the idea that policies and actions can be crafted that will simultaneously create an equitable society, strong economy and healthy environment. The City's Legacies and Strategic Commitments, which are woven throughout the Comprehensive Plan, serve as the City's sustainability principles. The goals and policies below highlight ways to protect the natural environment through land use decisions and provide guidance on fostering a healthier community.

This section complements the plan's other sustainability goals and policies, including those related to growth primarily within the existing City limits and in areas largely served by existing infrastructure and services, including the City's mixed-use urban villages. This approach reduces the need for additional development further out from the City's existing urban areas, thereby protecting open spaces and agricultural land and reducing dependency on single-occupancy vehicles. Well-designed infill in existing areas also helps balance opportunity and housing choice in every neighborhood.

GOAL LU-7 Protect and restore our community's natural resources (land, water and air) through proactive environmental stewardship.

Policy LU-66 Encourage design flexibility (e.g. clustering and low impact development) to preserve existing site features, including trees, wetlands, streams, natural topography, and similar features.

Low impact development refers to systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat.

Policy LU-67 Establish land uses, development densities, impervious surface coverages and stormwater standards that minimize flooding, streambank erosion, and loss of aquatic and other habitat.

Policy LU-68 Through redevelopment opportunities, promote the restoration of streams, creeks and other environmentally-sensitive areas. Improve public access to these sites (when appropriate) and educate the public about their benefits.

Policy LU-69 Promote and encourage the use of sustainability tools and rating systems such as the STAR Community Rating System, Energy Star, LEED and LEED-ND. Explore the effectiveness of these tools in achieving sustainable development practices.



Volunteers helped restore habitat in 2015 as part of the Squalicum Creek re-route project.

Policy LU-70 Identify and strive to preserve scenic vistas of important natural features, such as the Cascade Mountains, Lake Whatcom, Bellingham Bay, Chuckanut Bay, the San Juan Islands and hills, that provide the natural backdrop to the City.

Policy LU-71 Review parking standards to reduce the impacts of parking lots on urban form, pedestrian mobility, and the natural environment. Continue to pursue parking management best practices.

GOAL LU-8 Protect and improve Lake Whatcom and its watershed to ensure a long-term, sustainable supply of water (see Environment Chapter).

Policy LU-72 Continue to designate receiving zones for development rights transferred from the Lake Whatcom Watershed in areas of the City appropriate for higher densities.

Policy LU-73 Continue implementing low impact development techniques in the Lake Whatcom Watershed and encourage LID approaches in new and redevelopment projects elsewhere throughout the City and UGA.

Policy LU-74 Continue working with Whatcom County and other entities to adopt regulations that restrict or prohibit land use practices and activities that cumulatively impact water quality.

Policy LU-75 Continue the Lake Whatcom Watershed Property Acquisition Program.

GOAL LU-9 Preserve historic and cultural resources.

Policy LU-76 Encourage preservation, restoration, and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic properties through code flexibility, fee reductions and other regulatory and financial incentives. Continue to designate and protect historic landmarks.



1303 Astor Street is listed on the National, State and Local Historic Registers.

Policy LU-77 Protect significant archeological resources from the adverse impacts of development.

Policy LU-78 Maintain an ongoing process of identification, documentation, and evaluation of historic properties to guide planning and decision making, as well as to provide reference and research material for use by the community.

Policy LU-79 Create and promote interpretative educational programs and activities about historic and cultural resources through City and nonprofit partnerships.

GOAL LU-10 Foster community connectedness to improve the health of residents.

Policy LU-80 Support implementation of the Whatcom County Community Health Improvement Plan, which is focused on community connectedness and resilience, child and family well-being, healthy active living, and health care access and service delivery (see Housing, Transportation and PRO Plan for additional goals and policies).

A growing body of evidence and best practices increasingly links planning decisions to environments that allow and encourage people to be physically active, eat nutritious food, and live in safe and healthy places.

Policy LU-81 Increase access to healthy food for all Bellingham residents by encouraging and supporting healthy food retail, farmers markets, and small-scale urban farms (e.g. residential and community gardens).



Policy LU-82 Explore incentives and regulatory changes to encourage grocery stores, farmers markets, food carts and other mobile vendors to locate in underserved areas.

Policy LU-83 Encourage development patterns that support healthy, affordable food access.

The Downtown Farmers Market brings the community together each Saturday during the growing season. Photo by Kenni Merritt.

Policy LU-84 Encourage healthy food purveyors, such as grocery stores, farmers markets and community food gardens, to be located near residential areas and public transit.

Policy LU-85 Limit the use of certain restrictive covenants that preclude the use of real property for grocery store operations and sales. Provide exceptions when certain conditions are met.

Policy LU-86 Consider using health impact assessments to assess the potential health impacts of land use and development decisions.

Policy LU-87 Support and encourage informal community gathering places in existing and new neighborhoods.

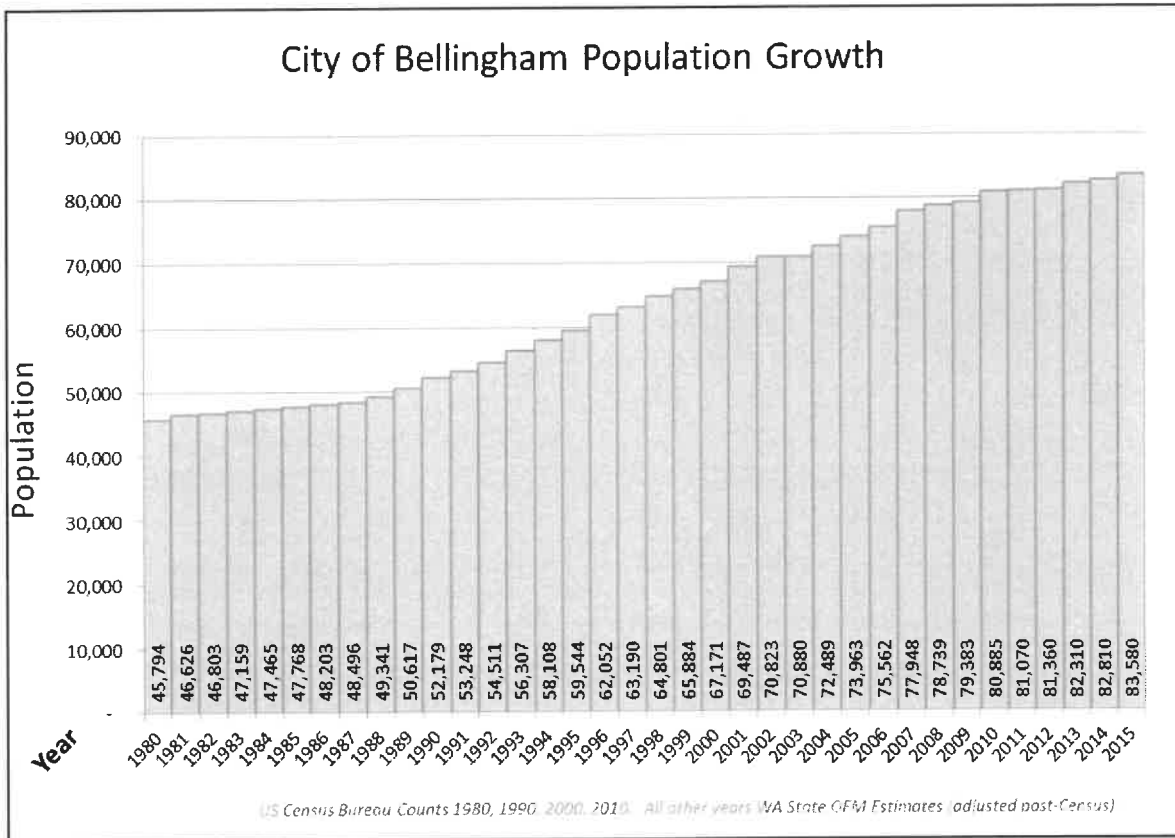
Policy LU-88 Encourage the integration of arts and culture into public places.

Policy LU-89 Accommodate the changing needs of residents as they age through considerations such as the design of safe, walkable neighborhoods; the convenient location of senior services; and universal design in building codes.

***Multigenerational communities** promote the well-being of children, youth and older adults, and provide opportunities for mutually beneficial interaction among age groups. Access to quality health and social services is one key element of age-friendly communities.*

Population

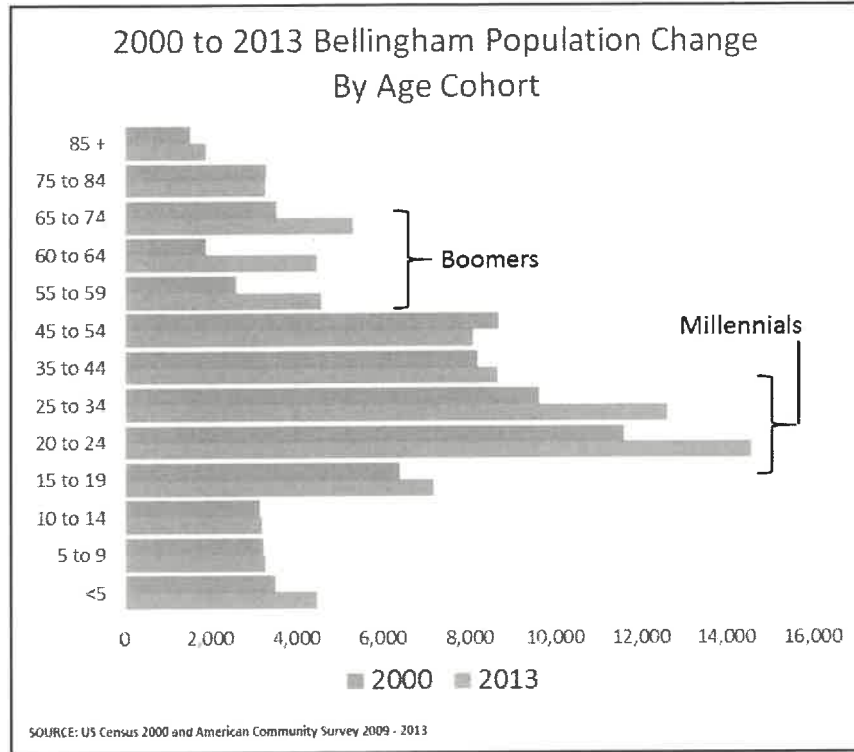
Bellingham's estimated 2015 population was 83,580 people. This is a doubling in population since 1980, with rapid growth through the 1990s and early 2000s (see chart). Growth since 2007 has been slower, but still steady.



The main source of population growth in Bellingham's urban area is in-migration. From 1960 to today, 66% to 75% of the population growth is a result of people moving to Bellingham. The other 25% to 33% of the growth is due to more births than deaths (natural increase).

Demographics

Age - As the "2000 to 2013 Bellingham Population Change by Age Cohort" chart shows, Bellingham and Whatcom County experienced significant growth over the past decade in the 20 to 34 and 55 to 74 age groups. Growth in the 18 to 24 group is primarily due to increased enrollment at the City's university and community colleges (one in five Bellingham residents identified themselves as a college student in the 2010 census). Growth in the 45 to 65 age group represents the aging of the baby boomers and the influx of retirees and others who have flexibility in choosing where they want to live.



Racial Diversity - According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the United States is projected to become a plurality nation by 2044. While the non-Hispanic White alone population will still be the largest, no race or ethnic group is projected to have greater than a 50% share of the nation’s total population. Shifts in the racial and ethnic composition of the future population are projected to occur primarily within the native population, which will become the majority-minority by 2044. The child population within the United States is even more diverse and is projected to experience the majority-minority crossover in 2020, just six years into the future.

Between 2000 and 2010, the proportion of Bellingham’s non-White population increased from 12% to 15%. The largest increase was in the “Asian or Pacific Islander” category, which increased from 4.2% of the total population in 2000 to 5.1% in 2010. People of Hispanic origin increased from 4.6% to 7%. Nearly 13% of persons five years and older speak a language other than English at home. The Bellingham School District reports that 43 different languages are spoken in their schools, with Spanish, Russian and Punjabi as the most common after English.

Households - Bellingham’s average household size was 2.24 persons per household in 2000 and decreased to 2.18 in 2010. This number has been declining for some time and mirrors national trends. Smaller household sizes in Bellingham are likely due to increasing enrollment at the City’s three college campuses and increasing numbers of seniors and millennials. College students make up over 20% of the Bellingham’s total population, and 70% of Bellingham households have one to two people.

Housing Mix and Tenure - Approximately 44% of the existing housing stock in Bellingham is multi-family. The percentage of multi-family units is likely to continue to increase, as much of the remaining residential land is zoned for multi-family housing. Accordingly, the future demand analysis assumes

“In 2019, KulshanCLT will also expand their work in the Birchwood neighborhood, continuing to work with the community to create a vision for three acres purchased in 2017 near Birchwood Elementary. Their goal is to build a community of 12 to 16 homes, joining their 20 existing homes in the area, plus a small farm. That work could also include placemaking—establishing the spaces that support the gathering and building of community—such as a farm stand, coffee shop or community center.”

(Whatcom Talk article)

Katy,

Can you please look up this parcel and find out what its limitations are in the way of zoning? Put in on our list of potential sites for FwC per Saptal/Tyler. It's owned by KCLT but County Exec/CE has asked KCLT to be open to setting aside a portion of it for FwC and has asked Greg to look into it....

Start keeping a "Potential Sites" list together... square footage, constraints, zoning, access to transit, ...this will help us get a jump on this task.

Plus, there's a Parks site but Nicole is on vacation. You could reach out to Laine Potter in Parks and ask her for information about the Clark's property and the parcel set aside for affordable housing. Nicole and I have talked about it.

And, there's another possibility – For now, just put Rob Janiki Property near Bellis Fair Mall. And, will fill in later.

Thank you,
tara

From: Tyler Schroeder <Tschroed@co.whatcom.wa.us>
Sent: Wednesday, July 7, 2021 4:00 PM
To: Sundin, Tara J. <tsundin@cob.org>
Subject: 2912 BIRCHWOOD AVE

Geo ID: 3802235625310000
Assr Situs Add: 2912 BIRCHWOOD AVE
Abbrv Legl Desc: LOT A LAFRENIERE LLA AS REC AF 2050806012-EXC NLY
Primary Prop Use: RES NO CODE
Acres: 0.79

Tyler R. Schroeder
Deputy Executive/Administrative Services Director



Whatcom County Executive's Office
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 108
Bellingham, WA 98225
Ph 360 778 5207

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