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ORDINANCE 2008- 12-113

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM AMENDING
BMC 13.70 TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY MANAGEMENT (Section 1)
AND APPLICABLE SECTIONS OF THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT
OF THE BELLINGHAM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (Section 2)**

WHEREAS, the City has a responsibility under State law to measure, monitor, and maintain locally adopted level of service (LOS) standards for arterial streets and transit; and

WHEREAS, The Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan adopts Person Trips Available by Concurrency Service Area as the LOS standard; and

WHEREAS, the City is required to adopt transportation concurrency measures to ensure that adequate transportation facilities exist or are provided concurrently with development, according to local land use priorities and LOS standards, or that funding to provide the transportation facilities is in place within a six-year time period; and

WHEREAS, if person trips generated from a development proposal can be shown to exceed the locally adopted LOS standard for a Concurrency Service Area, then the City must not allow the development to be approved as proposed; and

WHEREAS, the City's SEPA Official has reviewed this Ordinance and related environmental checklist and has issued a Determination of Non-Significant (DNS) environmental impact (SEP2008-00027) under the State Environmental Policy Act; and

WHEREAS, as required by RCW 36.70.106, notice of the City's intent to adopt a new Multimodal Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance was filed with the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development on July 22, 2008, and sent to other reviewing agencies at least 60 days prior to the effective date of this ordinance; and

WHEREAS, after mailed and published notice of the proposed amendments to the LOS standards and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management, the Planning Commission held two public hearings on the proposed amendments on August 7 and September 4, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered the staff report, public comment received, and engaged in extensive deliberation through two public hearings and voted 6-1 to recommend that the City Council adopt the Multimodal Transportation Concurrency ordinance; and

WHEREAS, after mailed and published notice, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed amendments to the LOS standards and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management on November 3, 2008; and

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1
2 **WHEREAS**, the City Council has considered the staff report, public comment
3 received, and the Planning Commission Findings of Fact;

4
5 **WHEREAS**, the City Council agrees with and hereby adopts the Findings of Fact,
6 Conclusions and Recommendations of the Bellingham Planning Commission.

7
8 **WHEREAS**, the City has a process to amend the comprehensive plan once per year
9 in accordance with BMC 20.20.060 and BMC 21.10.150; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, the proposed amendments to the Transportation Element of the
12 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management
13 Ordinance are consistent with the goals and policies of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan,
14 the Countywide Planning Policies, and the GMA.

15
16 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF**
17 **BELLINGHAM:**

18
19 **Section 1: Amendments to Bellingham Municipal Code Chapter "BMC 13.70.000**
20 **TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE"** are hereby adopted
21 as follows:

22
23 **13.70.000 Multimodal Transportation Concurrency Management**

24
25 **13.70.010 Authority and Purpose**

- 26
27 A. An ORDINANCE adopting a Multimodal Transportation Concurrency Management
28 system for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, as well as arterial streets within
29 the Bellingham City limits, as required by the Growth Management Act (RCW
30 36.70A.070(6)(e)).
31
32 B. The purpose of this ordinance is to establish a Multimodal Transportation
33 Concurrency Management program to ensure that adequate multimodal
34 transportation capacity in the form of "person trips" is available prior to, or concurrent
35 with, final approval of development permits.
36

37 **13.70.020 Definitions Specific to Concurrency Management**

38
39 **Adequate Multimodal Transportation Facilities and Services** means pedestrian,
40 bicycle, transit, and arterial street facilities which have the capacity to serve
41 development while meeting the City's adopted level of service (LOS) standards.

42
43 **Arterial Street** means any street that the Public Works Department has classified and
44 adopted as a primary, secondary, or collector arterial in the Transportation Element of
45 the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.

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1 **Calculated Level of Service (LOS)** means the assessment of the number of person
2 trips available in the committed multimodal transportation system compared to the
3 multimodal transportation demands of new development, measured in person trips
4 available.

5
6 **Committed Multimodal Transportation System** means the entire system of
7 multimodal transportation facilities and services used to calculate person trips
8 available relative to a development proposal. It includes existing and proposed
9 pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and arterial street facilities and services, which are
10 adopted in the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan with a
11 financial commitment for construction in the first, second, or third years of the most
12 current adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program, or for which other
13 financial commitments have been secured. Related components of the committed
14 multimodal transportation system include:

- 15
- 16 1) State highways and freeways within the City;
- 17
- 18 2) WTA transit routes and frequency, as identified in WTA Strategic Plans;
- 19
- 20 3) Park and ride lot locations;
- 21
- 22 4) High occupancy vehicle exclusive lanes; and
- 23
- 24 5) Projects to be provided by the State, cities or other jurisdictions may become
25 part of the committed transportation system upon decision of the Director of
26 Public Works. The Director of Public Works may make adjustments to the
27 committed transportation system for corrections, updates, and modifications
28 concerning costs; revenue sources; acceptance of facilities pursuant to
29 dedications which are consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan; or the
30 date of construction (scheduled for completion within the six-year period) of
31 any facility enumerated in the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.
- 32
- 33 6) Developer committed improvements for arterials, transit, pedestrian, and/or
34 bicycle facilities.
- 35

36 **Concurrency** means that adequate transportation facilities are in place at the time of
37 development approval or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the
38 improvements or strategies needed for adequate transportation facilities within six
39 years. Bellingham requires completion of adequate transportation facilities within
40 three years. Concurrency, as required by the 1990 Growth Management Act (RCW
41 36.70A.070(6)), means that the City may only permit development approval if a
42 development would not cause level of service to fall below the City's adopted LOS
43 standard of Person Trips Available within Concurrency Service Areas (CSA). For
44 purposes of meeting the Growth Management Act requirements, in addition to City
45 multimodal transportation facilities, the City will incorporate State highways of regional
46 significance within the calculation of Person Trips Available, but will not apply

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1 concurrency to Highways of Statewide Significance consistent with RCW 47.06.140.
2 The City will only include Whatcom County or other transportation arterials outside of
3 the City's jurisdiction in the calculation of Person Trips Available according to an
4 executed interlocal agreement with the controlling jurisdiction or agency.
5

6 **Concurrency Application** means formal submittal of a Concurrency Application
7 Form to the Public Works Department identifying the complete scope and information
8 needed to calculate the associated person trip generation of a proposed
9 development. The concurrency application is the applicant's written request seeking
10 review and approval of transportation concurrency from the City.
11

12 **Concurrency Approval** means a determination by the Public Works Department that
13 adequate person trips are available and the operational level of service (LOS) will not
14 fall below the adopted level of service (LOS) standard due to transportation impacts
15 created by the proposed development.
16

17 **Concurrency Evaluation** means the process, which may include a trip generation
18 analysis by the applicant, to determine whether adequate person trips are available
19 for a proposed development.
20

21 **Concurrency Management System** means the procedures and processes used by
22 the City Public Works Department to determine that development permit approvals
23 will meet the City's transportation concurrency requirements.
24

25 **Concurrency Measurement Point** means a specific location on the multimodal
26 transportation network used to measure vehicle traffic volume or transit service
27 frequency (See Table 1).
28

29 **Concurrency Mitigation** means transportation demand management strategies
30 and/or multimodal transportation facility improvements constructed or financed by a
31 developer which provides additional person trips for the facility which are needed to
32 provide adequate Person Trips Available to serve the development proposal.
33 Concurrency Mitigation applies to pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and arterial street
34 facilities.
35

36 **Concurrency Service Area** means a defined geographic area in which concurrency
37 measurements points provide data used to calculate the number of Person Trips
38 Available to new development on the transportation network serving the area (See
39 Figure 2).
40

41 **Development** means specified improvements or changes in use of land, designed or
42 intended to permit a use of land which will contain more dwelling units or buildings
43 than the existing use of the land, or to otherwise change the use of the land or
44 buildings/improvements on the land in a manner that will increase the number of
45 person trips generated by the existing use of the land, and that requires a
46 development permit from the City. A phased development is any development

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1 involving multiple buildings where issuance of building permits could occur for
2 individual buildings.

3
4 **Final Certificate of Concurrency** means the final certificate issued by the Public
5 Works Department confirming the availability and reservation of a specified amount of
6 capacity on the committed transportation system specific to the approved permit for
7 development. A Final Certificate of Concurrency must be issued concurrently with
8 development permit approval to account for any reduction in person trip reservation
9 from Temporary Certificate of Concurrency.

10
11 **Financial Commitment** consists of the following:

- 12
13 1) Revenue designated in the most currently adopted Six-Year Transportation
14 Improvement Program for multimodal transportation facilities or strategies
15 comprising the committed multimodal transportation system. Projects to be
16 used in defining the committed multimodal transportation system for the
17 calculation of Person Trips Available shall represent those projects that are
18 identified as fully funded for construction in the first, second, or third years of
19 the adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program; or
20
21 2) Revenue from federal or state grants for which the City has received notice of
22 approval; or
23
24 3) Revenue or secure bond that is assured by an applicant in a form approved by
25 the City in a voluntary agreement to complete adequate transportation
26 facilities within three years; and/or
27
28 4) Budgeted WTA service expansions.

29
30 **Growth Management Act (GMA)** means the Washington State Growth Management
31 Act enacted in 1990 and approved amendments.

32
33 **Interlocal Agreement** means an executed legal instrument structuring binding
34 relationships between political entities as defined by RCW 39.34.

35
36 **Level of Service (LOS) Standard** means the Person Trips Available (PTA) within
37 each Concurrency Service Area (CSA) to serve new development as adopted in the
38 Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

39
40 **Peak Hour Project Trips** means the person trips estimated to be generated by a
41 proposed development during the one-hour weekday afternoon period during which
42 the greatest volume of users are on the multimodal transportation system. The peak
43 hour project trips shall be estimated based on procedures identified in the City's
44 Development Guidelines and Improvement Standards Manual. The peak hour project
45 trips are used to determine Transportation Concurrency for development.

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1 **Peak Hour Vehicle Traffic** means vehicle traffic volumes during the one-hour
2 weekday afternoon period during which the greatest volume of vehicle traffic uses the
3 arterial system, as identified separately at each appropriate Concurrency
4 Measurement Point.

5
6 **Person Trips Available (PTA)** means the ability of the committed transportation
7 system to accommodate the transportation impacts of new development within a
8 Concurrency Service Area (CSA) and is expressed in terms of weekday PM peak
9 hour person trips available. For purposes of the concurrency evaluation, the available
10 person trips will be based on the total person trips calculated for each travel mode
11 less the already used person trips for that mode. The sum of the available person
12 trips for each mode will be the total available person trips for each concurrency
13 evaluation area.

14
15 **SEPA** means the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21) as implemented by
16 the City of Bellingham.

17
18 **Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program** means the expenditures
19 programmed by the City for capital purposes over the next six-year period in the Six-
20 Year Transportation Improvement Program pursuant to RCW 35.77.010. The financial
21 plan underlying the adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program identifies
22 all applicable and available revenue sources, and the plan forecasts these revenues
23 through the six-year period with reasonable assurance that such funds will be timely
24 put to such ends.

25
26 **Temporary Certificate of Concurrency** means the initial certificate issued by the
27 Public Works Department confirming the availability and reservation of a specified
28 amount of capacity on the committed transportation system specific to the proposed
29 development.

30
31 **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** means land use development that generally
32 has the following characteristics:

- 33
- 34 • A local node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity including office,
35 residential, retail, public and civic uses;
 - 36
 - 37 • High density, high-quality development within 10-minute walk (¼ to ½ mile
38 radius) surrounding transit stop;
 - 39
 - 40 • Reduced and managed parking inside 10-minute walk (¼ to ½ mile radius)
41 surrounding transit stop;
 - 42
 - 43 • Transit stop as prominent feature of development;
 - 44
 - 45 • Walkable design with pedestrian as the highest priority;
 - 46

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- Designed to include the easy use of bicycles, scooters, and other non-motorized transportation modes; and
- In some cases, supplemental transit systems including trolleys, streetcars, and, where feasible, regional light rail or heavy rail systems.

Transportation Mitigation includes all non-concurrency measures required by City development regulations, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements, and Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) assessment to mitigate the non-concurrency related transportation impacts from a proposed development.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies means techniques or programs that reduce single-occupant vehicle commute travel or improve the capacity of a transportation facility and that are approved by the Public Works Department. TDM Strategies may include but are not limited to vanpooling, carpooling, and public transit, access management, signalization, and channelization.

Travel Demand Forecast Model is the City's computerized transportation model, which is used to develop and analyze peak hour travel demands on the City's transportation facilities. This information is used as the basis for the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and in other transportation planning and traffic engineering applications.

13.70.030 Applicability

- A. A Temporary Certificate of Concurrency issued by the Public Works Department is required for a development permit application to be determined as complete for review by City staff.

13.70.040 Timing of Concurrency Review

- A. A Temporary or Final Certificate of Concurrency must be in effect for the proposed project at the time of application for development permits. Non-exempt applications without a valid Certificate of Concurrency shall be considered an incomplete application.
- B. A Temporary Certificate of Concurrency shall expire one year after issuance unless a development permit application for the project has been submitted to the City and has been determined to be complete.

13.70.050 Concurrency Evaluation

- A. A concurrency application and concurrency evaluation shall be provided by the applicant for each proposed development permit application.

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- 1) The concurrency evaluation shall be conducted for the specific property, uses, densities and intensities based on information provided in the concurrency application.
- 2) Changes to the proposed uses, densities, and intensities that create additional impacts on transportation facilities shall be subject to an additional concurrency evaluation.
- 3) The concurrency evaluation will be conducted as part of the required traffic study as set forth in the City's Development Guidelines and Improvement Standards Manual.
- 4) In conducting the concurrency evaluation, the calculated level of service (LOS) standard for vehicle trip generation will be compared to the adopted (LOS) standard for each impacted arterial street.
- 5) Arterial street LOS measurements will be combined with the following other variables to calculate multimodal person trips (See Table 1, below):
 - a. Degree of pedestrian network completeness;
 - b. Degree of bicycle network completeness; and
 - c. Seated capacity and frequency of public transit bus routes.

B. The Public Works Department will review the concurrency evaluation and comments will be provided per the City's Development Guidelines and Improvement Standards Manual.

C. The Public Works Department will maintain a listing of all pending concurrency applications, concurrency approvals, and Temporary and Final Certificates of Concurrency.

- 1) The projected person trips generated by each proposed development project that has received a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency shall be accounted for as part of subsequent concurrency evaluations.

D. In order to monitor the cumulative effect of exempt development approvals (as defined in Section 13.70.090 of this ordinance) on the level of service (LOS) for arterials, as well as completeness of pedestrian and bicycle networks and the seated capacity and frequency of public transit routes, the concurrency evaluation will include the impacts of exempt development approvals in all relevant concurrency monitoring reports. This will be measured through annual City traffic counts on arterial streets, ridership statistics provided by Whatcom Transportation Authority, and City measurements of completeness for pedestrian and bicycle networks.

E. The requirements of this section shall be applied at the time of approval of an initial development phase and may be adjusted for any subsequent development phase

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based on the cumulative impact of all the phases. All exempt development permit applications which have been submitted by the same developer on the same or contiguous parcels of land within the one-year period immediately prior to a current concurrency application shall be included in the application and concurrency evaluation.

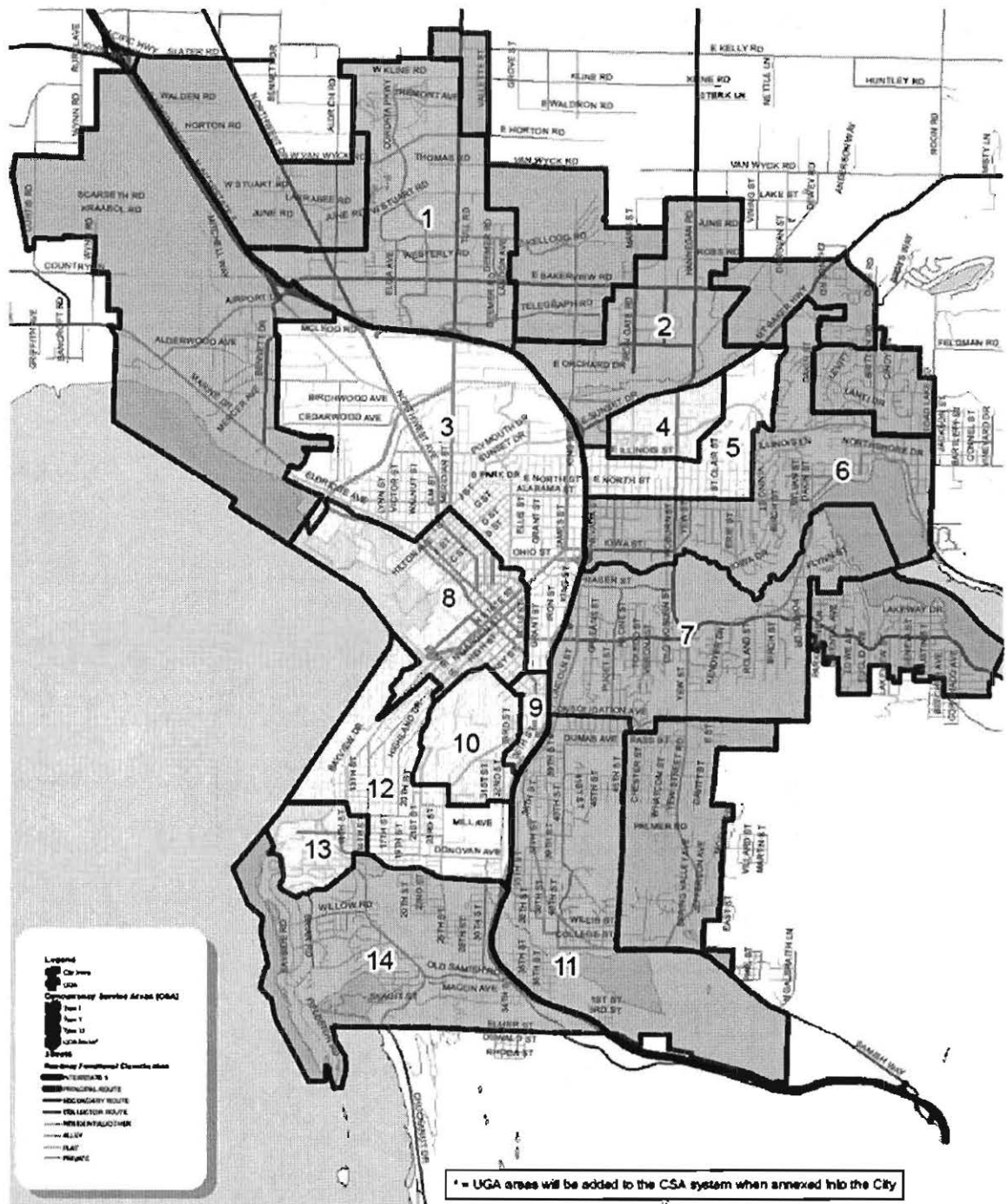
TABLE 1. Bellingham Transportation Concurrency Program Policy Dials

Mode	Transportation Concurrency Service Areas		
	Type 1 ¹	Type 2 ²	Type 3 ³
Motorized			
Auto			
Mode weight factor ⁴	0.70	0.80	0.90
Transit			
Mode weight factor ⁵	1.00	1.00	0.80
Non-Motorized			
Pedestrian			
Percent threshold for minimum system complete ⁹	50%	50%	50%
Person trip credit for 1% greater than minimum threshold ⁹	20	20	20
Mode weight factor ⁶	0.60	0.60	0.60
Bicycle			
Percent threshold for minimum system complete ⁹	50%	50%	50%
Percent credit for 1% greater than threshold ⁹	20	20	20
Mode weight factor ⁷	0.40	0.40	0.40

1. Type 1 = Urban Village areas with adopted master plans, high-density mixed use zoning, or an active master plan process.
2. Type 2 = Medium density areas adjacent to and influenced by Urban Villages.
3. Type 3 = Lower density and auto-oriented areas outside of Urban Villages.
4. Auto mode weight factor considers the importance of roadways to a service area, relative to the availability of other mode alternatives.
5. Transit mode weight factor considers the availability/viability of the transit mode to a service area.
6. Pedestrian mode weight factor considers the importance of pedestrian facilities to a service area, relative to land use and travel patterns.
7. Bicycle mode weight factor considers the importance of bicycle facilities to a service area, relative to land use and travel patterns.
8. This is the minimum level of the planned system completed for it to be considered a viable mode alternative.
9. Person trips credited to service area based on the amount of the system completed minus the minimum threshold.

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Transportation Concurrency Service Areas (CSA)
 City of Bellingham Transportation Concurrency Program Update
 M:\08108002 Bellingham Concurrency\GIS\Figures\concurrency data set 8.5x11.mxd
 Printed on: 28 October 2008 09:12 AM

FIGURE
2



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1 **13.70.060 Concurrency Approval**

- 2
- 3 A. The City shall not grant concurrency approval or issue a Temporary Certificate of
- 4 Concurrency for a proposed development permit application unless there are
- 5 adequate transportation facilities and person trips available on the existing or the
- 6 committed transportation system to serve the new development.
- 7
- 8 B. If the concurrency evaluation shows that adequate person trips are available, then the
- 9 concurrency application shall be approved. The Public Works Director shall issue a
- 10 finding of concurrency approval and a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency.
- 11
- 12 1) A Temporary Certificate of Concurrency must be issued prior to determination of
- 13 complete application for a development permit.
- 14
- 15 2) A Temporary Certificate of Concurrency shall expire exactly one (1) year after the
- 16 date of issue by the Public Works Department.
- 17
- 18 C. The determination of concurrency approval shall become final at the time of final
- 19 development permit approval as per Section 13.70.070, below.
- 20
- 21 D. The issue of concurrency approval may be raised as part of any appeal of the
- 22 development permit for which the concurrency approval was granted.
- 23
- 24 E. If a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency is issued for a proposed development, but
- 25 the proposed development permit is denied, expires, or is voluntarily withdrawn, then
- 26 the Temporary Certificate of Concurrency will be rescinded and transportation
- 27 capacity will not be reserved for that development.
- 28

29 **13.70.070 Final Certificate of Concurrency**

- 30
- 31 A. A Final Certificate of Concurrency shall be issued upon final approval of the
- 32 development permit for which a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency was issued.
- 33
- 34 B. The Final Certificate of Concurrency will only be valid for the type and intensity of
- 35 development that was approved by the city, unless concurrency approval also
- 36 covered subsequent project phases.
- 37
- 38 C. The Final Certificate of Concurrency shall be adjusted to account for any reduction in
- 39 traffic impact and capacity reserved by the Temporary Certificate of Concurrency.
- 40
- 41 D. If a proposed development project is modified during the review process and results
- 42 in an increased generation of person trips, then a new concurrency application,
- 43 evaluation, approval, and Temporary Certificate of Concurrency will be required prior
- 44 to development approval and issuance of Final Certificate of Concurrency.
- 45

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- 1 E. The information contained on the Final Certificate of Concurrency shall include the
2 following:
3
4 1) The property location and Whatcom County Assessor's parcel number (s) for
5 the development project;
6
7 2) The number and type of dwelling units, square footage of commercial or
8 industrial floor area, specific uses, densities, and intensities for which permit(s)
9 were approved, including the number of person trips generated and accounted
10 for in that particular Concurrency Service Area;
11
12 3) Mitigating measures required to ensure adequate transportation capacity for
13 the approved development project, as approved by the Public Works
14 Department;
15
16 4) An effective date; and
17
18 5) An expiration date.
19
20 F. A Final Certificate of Concurrency shall be valid for the same time period as the
21 development permit. If the development permit approval does not have an expiration
22 date, the Final Certificate of Concurrency shall be valid for five (5) years from the date
23 issued.
24
25 G. The Final Certificate of Concurrency may be extended by requesting a new issuance
26 from the Public Works Department with an updated expiration date. The Final
27 Certificate of Concurrency can be extended to remain in effect for the life of each
28 subsequent development permit approval for the same parcel, as long as the
29 applicant obtains the subsequent development permit approval prior to the expiration
30 of the first development permit approval.
31
32 H. No development shall be required to hold more than one valid Final Certificate of
33 Concurrency, unless the applicant or subsequent owner proposes changes or
34 modifications to the property location, density, intensity, or land use that creates
35 additional impacts on transportation facilities.
36
37 I. A Final Certificate of Concurrency runs with the land and is valid only for subsequent
38 development permit approvals for the same parcel, and to new owners of the original
39 parcel for which it was issued. A Final Certificate of Concurrency cannot be
40 transferred to a different parcel and shall be limited to uses and intensities for which it
41 was originally issued.
42
43 J. A Final Certificate of Concurrency may be voluntarily surrendered or withdrawn by the
44 owner of the parcel(s) for which the certificate was issued.
45

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1 K. Upon issuance of a Final Certificate of Concurrency, the City generally will be bound
2 by its terms for the life of the certificate. The City is not bound, however, when
3 funding is lost from previously committed transportation projects that would have
4 added capacity needed for the specific Final Certificate of Concurrency.

5
6 **13.70.080 Denial of Concurrency**
7

8 A. If adequate person trips are not available to serve a proposed development, then the
9 concurrency evaluation shall not be approved and a Temporary Certificate of
10 Concurrency shall not be issued.

11
12 B. If the concurrency evaluation is not approved, the applicant shall select one of the
13 following options:

14
15 1) Accept the denial of the concurrency evaluation and application for Temporary
16 Certificate of Concurrency. The development application will be determined to
17 be incomplete, the project will be removed from subsequent concurrency
18 evaluations, and the project will receive no further review by the City of
19 Bellingham.

20
21 2) Amend and re-submit the concurrency application within 90-days to:

22
23 a) Reduce the scale and impact of the development project to be within
24 the range of person trips available;

25
26 b) Phase the development project to match future construction of
27 multimodal transportation infrastructure or services that adds needed
28 person trip capacity;

29
30 c) Provide transportation demand management or person trip reduction
31 strategies, when the department determines that such strategies will
32 be reasonably sufficient as to reduce the impact to be within the
33 range of person trips available; or

34
35 d) Voluntarily arrange, by a financial commitment or instrument
36 approved by the Public Works Director to implement multimodal
37 transportation improvements or transportation demand management
38 strategies needed to achieve concurrency. Transportation mitigation
39 must be acceptable to the City in form and amount, to guarantee the
40 applicant's financial obligation for capital improvements to achieve
41 concurrency approval for the development units.

42
43 3) The 90-day period to amend the concurrency application shall begin no later
44 than 14 days after notification of denial for the concurrency evaluation and
45 Temporary Certificate of Concurrency, as required under this ordinance.
46

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- 1 4) If the applicant elects to amend the concurrency application within the 90-day
2 period, then the applicant's 14-day appeal deadline shall begin on the date the
3 Public Works Director issues a written decision on the amended concurrency
4 application.
5
6 5) Appeal the denial of concurrency and non-issuance of a Temporary Certificate
7 of Concurrency, pursuant to the provisions of Section 13.70.140 of this
8 ordinance.
9

- 10 C. If a development that is consistent with the zoning provided in the Comprehensive
11 Plan fails the concurrency evaluation, the City may review whether the underlying
12 zoning is appropriate in the given area, as well as the feasibility of providing increased
13 multimodal transportation capacity in the area, consistent with the adopted
14 Comprehensive Plan and projected six-year transportation improvement program
15 funding.
16

17 **13.70.090 Exemptions from Concurrency Application**

18
19 The following development permits shall be exempt from requiring a new concurrency
20 application and evaluation:
21

- 22 A. Development projects with applications determined to be complete prior to the
23 effective date of this ordinance shall be considered to have concurrency approval as
24 long as the accompanying development permit is valid and has not been modified
25 after the effective date of this ordinance. If the accompanying development permit
26 does not expire, capacity shall be considered to exist for three (3) years after the
27 effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter.
28

- 29 1) If the accompanying development permit has expired, or if the development
30 project has been modified with a resulting increase in traffic impact, then a
31 concurrency application, evaluation, approval, and Temporary Certificate of
32 Concurrency shall be required prior to any new permit application review for
33 completeness.
34

- 35 B. Extension of previously issued, unexpired development permits.
36

- 37 C. Phases of projects that were disclosed by the applicant and subject to a concurrency
38 evaluation as part of the original application (i.e., phased development), provided that
39 a concurrency evaluation was approved for the expansion or subsequent phase.
40

- 41 D. No Impact. Development applications for projects which do not create concurrency
42 impacts to the City's transportation facilities; such development includes but is not
43 limited to:
44

- 45 1) Any addition or accessory structure to a residence with no change in use or
46 increase in the number of dwelling units;

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- 2) Interior renovations with no change in use or increase in the number of development units;
- 3) Interior completion of a structure for use(s) with the same or less intensity as the existing use or a previously approved use;
- 4) Replacement structure with no change in use or increase in the number of development units;
- 5) Temporary construction trailers;
- 6) Driveway resurfacing, or parking lot paving;
- 7) Re-roofing structures; and
- 8) Demolitions.

E. Permit Actions Exempt From Concurrency. The following permits are issued as a result of legislative or quasi-judicial actions, do not have transportation capacity impacts, and are therefore exempt from concurrency evaluation requirements.

- 1) Boundary line adjustments;
- 2) Variance;
- 3) Parking waiver or joint parking;
- 4) Vision clearance waiver;
- 6) Billboard relocation;
- 7) Exempt home occupation;
- 8) Lot line adjustment;
- 9) Non-conforming use status determination;
- 10) Over-height fence;
- 11) Shoreline statement of exemption;
- 12) Site area exception (BMC 20.30.040 (B) (1) (d)); and
- 13) Wireless communication facility that does not require either a planned development approval or conditional use permit.

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1
2 F. Accounting for Multimodal Transportation Capacity Used (See Table 1).
3

- 4 1.) Public Works will regularly conduct arterial traffic counts to account for
5 arterial transportation capacity used by development;
6 2.) Public Works will annually update inventories of completed pedestrian and
7 bicycle networks; and
8 3.) Public Works will coordinate with Whatcom Transportation Authority
9 (WTA) to obtain annual ridership statistics, seated capacity inventories,
10 and service frequency data.
11

12 G. Transportation Report on Annual Concurrency. The Public Works Department shall
13 annually produce and publish a Transportation Report on Annual Concurrency
14 (TRAC) in conjunction with the 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program. The
15 TRAC shall document person trips available on the multimodal transportation network
16 and shall, to the extent possible, identify multimodal transportation facilities and
17 services and concurrency service areas where potential concurrency problems may
18 arise. Potential mitigation and transportation demand management strategies will be
19 suggested, as needed.
20

21 **13.70.100 Annual Inventory of Person Trips Available**
22

- 23 A. The City's travel demand forecast model shall be updated as needed and the City will
24 recalculate available person trips to include:
25 1.) Changes in the adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program and
26 any other transportation improvements which have a financial commitment for
27 construction within six years;
28 2.) Inventories of completed pedestrian and bicycle networks; and
29 3.) Annual ridership statistics, seated capacity inventories, and service frequency
30 data.
31

32 **13.70.110 Adopted Arterial Level of Service Standards**
33

- 34 A. The transportation level of service (LOS) standards for arterial streets and multimodal
35 facilities and services are described and contained in the Transportation Element of
36 the current City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.
37

38 **13.70.120 Intergovernmental Coordination**
39

- 40 A. The City shall consider establishing agreements, or continue existing agreements with
41 other local governments, agencies, jurisdictions, and the State of Washington to
42 coordinate the imposition of level of service standards and concurrency management
43 programs. Existing agreements shall continue in force until modified or terminated.
44
45 B. The City shall apply this transportation concurrency management ordinance, fees,
46 and mitigation requirements to developments within its jurisdiction that impact

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1 transportation facilities under the jurisdiction of other local government agencies and
2 the State of Washington, if interlocal agreements are in place at the time of the
3 concurrency evaluation, unless the agreement sets forth alternative standards, fees,
4 and mitigations.

- 5
6 C. The City may agree to accept and implement conditions and mitigations that are
7 imposed by other jurisdictions on development in their jurisdiction pursuant to
8 interlocal agreements or other agreements in place.
9

10 **13.70.130 Relationship to SEPA**

- 11
12 A. A determination of concurrency approval shall be an administrative action of the City
13 of Bellingham that is categorically exempt from the State Environmental Policy Act.
14 However, this does not mean to imply that the development proposal itself is exempt
15 from SEPA review, regardless of its exempt status under this ordinance.
16

17 **13.70.140 Administrative Appeals**

- 18
19 A. The applicant may appeal the denial of concurrency approval and denial of
20 Temporary Certificate of Concurrency on any of the following grounds:
21
22 1) A technical error; or
23
24 2) The applicant provided accurate alternative data or a traffic mitigation plan that
25 was rejected by the City;
26
27 B. Appeals of a concurrency evaluation denial shall be made according to the process
28 set forth in BMC 21.10.250 for open record hearings before the Hearing Examiner.
29
30 C. Applicants must file an appeal, and submit full payment the specified appeal fee,
31 within 14 days of the date that the City issues written notification of denial.
32
33 D. The City shall reserve person trips for the proposed development units during the
34 appeal.
35
36

37 **13.70.150 Fees**

- 38
39 A. The fees charged for processing a concurrency application, including review of the
40 concurrency evaluation, issuance of a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency, or
41 appeal of concurrency evaluation denial shall be as specified in the schedule as
42 established by City Council resolution.
43
44 B. Development by municipal, county, state and federal governments, and special
45 districts (as that term is defined in state law) are exempt from the Temporary
46 Certificate of Concurrency Application Fee.

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1 **Section 2: Amendments to applicable sections of the Transportation Element of the**
2 **Bellingham Comprehensive Plan** are hereby adopted as follows:
3

4 **Chapter 3 - Transportation Element**

5

6 **Chapter 3 - Transportation Element**

7
8 ***NOTE: 2008 amendment of the Transportation Element is required to make revisions***
9 ***to applicable sections describing Transportation Concurrency methodology, level of***
10 ***service (LOS) text, and to applicable goals and policies that implement GMA LOS and***
11 ***Transportation Concurrency requirements.***
12

13 **PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

14 **Transportation Concurrency Management**

15
16
17 The Transportation Element considers the location and condition of the existing multimodal
18 transportation network, identifies transportation problems, projects future needs, and
19 identifies methods to address future transportation needs in compliance with the
20 transportation concurrency requirements of the Washington State Growth Management
21 Act.
22

23 New and improved transportation facilities, for all modes, will be needed as growth occurs.
24 The amount that is spent on building new transportation facilities and on improving existing
25 ones is at least partially dependent on the land use decisions that are made and the
26 demands that those decisions will put on the various transportation modes.
27

28 Providing transportation infrastructure at the same time as, or in advance of, development
29 can be much more cost-effective than retrofitting inadequate transportation infrastructure
30 after development has occurred. Ensuring that well-connected facilities for all
31 transportation modes are available provides the public with viable alternatives when
32 choosing how they move around the City. Multiple modes are often accommodated along
33 the same transportation corridor, such as sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes, public transit, and
34 private, commercial, and industrial vehicle travel on arterial streets.
35

36 Level of Service (LOS) Standards

37 The Transportation Element contains the city's plan to provide specified levels of
38 transportation service in a timely manner. The Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS)
39 standards that are adopted in this plan will be maintained through upkeep of the existing
40 circulation system, expansion of transportation service where needed, and efforts to
41 reduce the demand placed on the system (demand management).
42

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1 The Transportation Element modifies the LOS standards that the City had adopted from
2 1994 to 2008. The revised level of service standards are based on "**Person Trips**
3 **Available by Concurrency Service Area**" using a range of travel modes for key
4 transportation facilities and services needed to serve growth in different parts of the city.
5 Transit facilities and services are incorporated as one part of the LOS standard in terms of
6 available person trips.

7
8 The Level of Service (LOS) standards provide measurable criteria to judge the adequacy
9 of the multimodal transportation system by calculating person trips available for
10 transportation concurrency evaluations. New development will be prohibited unless
11 adequate person trips are available or multimodal improvements to the transportation
12 system to accommodate the impacts are made concurrent with the development as
13 specified under the concurrency provisions of the Growth Management Act and
14 Bellingham's Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance (BMC 13.70).

15
16 While adding vehicle capacity to an arterial street may be necessary in some
17 circumstances, continual road widening is not a long-term solution to rush-hour traffic
18 congestion. The City's transportation policies are focused on managing the transportation
19 network safely and efficiently for all modes without unnecessarily widening arterial streets
20 to add capacity for automobiles. Transportation concurrency calculations incorporate
21 variables for a range of transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle) to
22 establish the number of person trips available to serve new development.

23 24 **Public Participation and Planning Efforts**

25
26 The Transportation Element has been developed to be consistent with a wide variety of
27 community planning efforts conducted over many years, ranging from "Visions for
28 Bellingham" to the "Community Forum on Growth Management," as well as those listed
29 below.

30
31 1992 Visions for Bellingham;
32 1995 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan;
33 1997 County-wide Planning Policies;
34 1997 Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan;
35 2001 Whatcom Transportation Plan (WCOG);
36 2003-2022 Washington State Transportation Plan;
37 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS);
38 2004 WTA Strategic Plan; and
39 2004 Community Forum on Growth Management.
40 2006 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance (BMC 13.70)
41 2008 Transportation Concurrency Methodology Revision project

42
43 In addition, the Transportation Element has been developed in accordance with Section
44 36.70A.070 of the Growth Management Act. Numerous public hearings and work
45 sessions were held by both the Planning Commission and the City Council to address the

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1 transportation needs of the City of Bellingham. The Transportation Element represents the
2 community's transportation policy plan for the next 14 years (2009-2022).

3
4
5
6 **Glossary of Transportation Planning Terms**

7
8 **Adequate Multimodal Transportation Facilities and Services** means pedestrian, bicycle,
9 transit, and arterial street facilities which have the capacity to serve development while
10 meeting the City's adopted level of service (LOS) standards.

11
12 **Arterial Street** means any street that the Public Works Department has classified and
13 adopted as a primary, secondary, or collector arterial in the Transportation Element of the
14 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.

15
16 **Calculated Level of Service (LOS)** means the assessment of the number of person trips
17 available in the committed multimodal transportation system compared to the multimodal
18 transportation demands of new development, measured in person trips available.

19
20 **Committed Multimodal Transportation System** means the entire system of multimodal
21 transportation facilities and services used to calculate person trips available relative to a
22 development proposal. It includes existing and proposed pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and
23 arterial street facilities and services, which are adopted in the Transportation Element of the
24 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan with a financial commitment for construction in the first,
25 second, or third years of the most current adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement
26 Program, or for which other financial commitments have been secured. Related components
27 of the committed multimodal transportation system include:

- 28
29 1) State highways and freeways within the City;
30
31 2) WTA transit routes and frequency, as identified in WTA Strategic Plans;
32
33 3) Park and ride lot locations;
34
35 4) High occupancy vehicle exclusive lanes; and
36
37 5) Projects to be provided by the State, cities or other jurisdictions may become part
38 of the committed transportation system upon decision of the Director of Public
39 Works. The Director of Public Works may make adjustments to the committed
40 transportation system for corrections, updates, and modifications concerning
41 costs; revenue sources; acceptance of facilities pursuant to dedications which
42 are consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan; or the date of construction
43 (scheduled for completion within the six-year period) of any facility enumerated in
44 the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.
45

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1 6) Developer committed improvements for arterials, transit, pedestrian, and/or
2 bicycle facilities.
3
4
5

6 **Concurrency** means that adequate transportation facilities are in place at the time of
7 development approval or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the
8 improvements or strategies needed for adequate transportation facilities within six years.
9 Bellingham requires completion of adequate transportation facilities within three years.
10 Concurrency, as required by the 1990 Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)),
11 means that the City may only permit development approval if a development would not cause
12 level of service to fall below the City's adopted LOS standard of Person Trips Available within
13 Concurrency Service Areas (CSA). For purposes of meeting the Growth Management Act
14 requirements, in addition to City multimodal transportation facilities, the City will incorporate
15 State highways of regional significance within the calculation of Person Trips Available, but
16 will not apply concurrency to Highways of Statewide Significance consistent with RCW
17 47.06.140. The City will only include Whatcom County or other transportation arterials
18 outside of the City's jurisdiction in the calculation of Person Trips Available according to an
19 executed interlocal agreement with the controlling jurisdiction or agency.
20

21 **Concurrency Application** means formal submittal of a Concurrency Application Form to the
22 Public Works Department identifying the complete scope and information needed to calculate
23 the associated person trip generation of a proposed development. The concurrency
24 application is the applicant's written request seeking review and approval of transportation
25 concurrency from the City.
26

27 **Concurrency Approval** means a determination by the Public Works Department that
28 adequate person trips are available and the operational level of service (LOS) will not fall
29 below the adopted level of service (LOS) standard due to transportation impacts created by
30 the proposed development.
31

32 **Concurrency Evaluation** means the process, which may include a trip generation analysis
33 by the applicant, to determine whether adequate person trips are available for a proposed
34 development.
35

36 **Concurrency Management System** means the procedures and processes used by the City
37 Public Works Department to determine that development permit approvals will meet the
38 City's transportation concurrency requirements.
39

40 **Concurrency Measurement Point** means a specific location on the multimodal
41 transportation network used to measure vehicle traffic volume or transit service frequency.
42

43 **Concurrency Mitigation** means transportation demand management strategies and/or
44 multimodal transportation facility improvements constructed or financed by a developer which
45 provides additional person trips for the facility which are needed to provide adequate Person

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1 Trips Available to serve the development proposal. Concurrency Mitigation applies to
2 pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and arterial street facilities.

3
4 **Concurrency Service Area** means a defined geographic area in which concurrency
5 measurements points provide data used to calculate the number of Person Trips Available to
6 new development on the transportation network serving the area.

7
8 **Development** means specified improvements or changes in use of land, designed or
9 intended to permit a use of land which will contain more dwelling units or buildings than the
10 existing use of the land, or to otherwise change the use of the land or
11 buildings/improvements on the land in a manner that will increase the number of person trips
12 generated by the existing use of the land, and that requires a development permit from the
13 City. A phased development is any development involving multiple buildings where issuance
14 of building permits could occur for individual buildings.

15
16 **Final Certificate of Concurrency** means the final certificate issued by the Public Works
17 Department confirming the availability and reservation of a specified amount of capacity on
18 the committed transportation system specific to the approved permit for development. A
19 Final Certificate of Concurrency must be issued concurrently with development permit
20 approval to account for any reduction in person trip reservation from Temporary Certificate of
21 Concurrency.

22
23 **Financial Commitment** consists of the following:

- 24
25 1) Revenue designated in the most currently adopted Six-Year Transportation
26 Improvement Program for multimodal transportation facilities or strategies
27 comprising the committed multimodal transportation system. Projects to be
28 used in defining the committed multimodal transportation system for the
29 calculation of Person Trips Available shall represent those projects that are
30 identified as fully funded for construction in the first, second, or third years of
31 the adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program; or
32
33 2) Revenue from federal or state grants for which the City has received notice of
34 approval; or
35
36 3) Revenue or secure bond that is assured by an applicant in a form approved by
37 the City in a voluntary agreement to complete adequate transportation
38 facilities within three years; and/or
39
40 4) Budgeted WTA service expansions.

41
42 **Growth Management Act (GMA)** means the Washington State Growth Management Act
43 enacted in 1990 and approved amendments.

44
45 **Interlocal Agreement** means an executed legal instrument structuring binding relationships
46 between political entities as defined by RCW 39.34.

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1
2 **Level of Service (LOS) Standard** means the Person Trips Available (PTA) within
3 each Concurrency Service Area (CSA) to serve new development as adopted in the
4 Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

5
6 **Peak Hour Project Trips** means the person trips estimated to be generated by a proposed
7 development during the one-hour weekday afternoon period during which the greatest
8 volume of users are on the multimodal transportation system. The peak hour project trips
9 shall be estimated based on procedures identified in the City's Development Guidelines and
10 Improvement Standards Manual. The peak hour project trips are used to determine
11 Transportation Concurrency for development.

12
13 **Peak Hour Vehicle Traffic** means vehicle traffic volumes during the one-hour weekday
14 afternoon period during which the greatest volume of vehicle traffic uses the arterial system,
15 as identified separately at each appropriate Concurrency Measurement Point.

16
17 **Person Trips Available (PTA)** means the ability of the committed transportation system to
18 accommodate the transportation impacts of new development within a Concurrency Service
19 Area (CSA) and is expressed in terms of weekday PM peak hour person trips available. For
20 purposes of the concurrency evaluation, the available person trips will be based on the total
21 person trips calculated for each travel mode less the already used person trips for that mode.
22 The sum of the available person trips for each mode will be the total available person trips for
23 each concurrency evaluation area.

24
25 **SEPA** means the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21) as implemented by the City of
26 Bellingham.

27
28 **Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program** means the expenditures programmed by
29 the City for capital purposes over the next six-year period in the Six-Year Transportation
30 Improvement Program pursuant to RCW 35.77.010. The financial plan underlying the
31 adopted Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program identifies all applicable and available
32 revenue sources, and the plan forecasts these revenues through the six-year period with
33 reasonable assurance that such funds will be timely put to such ends.

34
35 **Temporary Certificate of Concurrency** means the initial certificate issued by the Public
36 Works Department confirming the availability and reservation of a specified amount of
37 capacity on the committed transportation system specific to the proposed development.

38
39 **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** means land use development that generally has the
40 following characteristics:

- 41
42
 - A local node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity including office,
43 residential, retail, public and civic uses;
44

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- High density, high-quality development within 10-minute walk (¼ to ½ mile radius) surrounding transit stop;
- Reduced and managed parking inside 10-minute walk (¼ to ½ mile radius) surrounding transit stop;
- Transit stop as prominent feature of development;
- Walkable design with pedestrian as the highest priority;
- Designed to include the easy use of bicycles, scooters, and other non-motorized transportation modes; and
- In some cases, supplemental transit systems including trolleys, streetcars, and, where feasible, regional light rail or heavy rail systems.

Transportation Mitigation includes all non-concurrency measures required by City development regulations, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements, and Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) assessment to mitigate the non-concurrency related transportation impacts from a proposed development.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies means techniques or programs that reduce single-occupant vehicle commute travel or improve the capacity of a transportation facility and that are approved by the Public Works Department. TDM strategies may include but are not limited to vanpooling, carpooling, and public transit, access management, signalization, and channelization.

Travel Demand Forecast Model is the City's computerized transportation model, which is used to develop and analyze peak hour travel demands on the City's transportation facilities. This information is used as the basis for the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and in other transportation planning and traffic engineering applications.

PART 2: EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

NO REVISIONS TO PART 2 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME

PART 3: THE LAND USE – TRANSPORTATION LINK

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1 The Land Use Element outlines a land use strategy that encourages mixed use buildings,
2 neighborhood centers, and urban villages, within or near neighborhoods, that will provide
3 City residents with more opportunities to walk, bike, or ride transit when making short trips
4 for convenience goods and services. The Transportation Element supports the land use
5 strategies in the Land Use Element by identifying deficiencies and needed connections in
6 the pedestrian, bicycle, and arterial/transit network.

7
8 As described in the Land Use Element, Bellingham envisions the establishment of several
9 urban villages over the 20-year planning period that will contain a mix of residential units,
10 shopping, services, employment centers, and recreational amenities. If this mix is
11 realized, then more residents, employees, and visitors within or near these villages may
12 choose to walk, bicycle, use trails, and ride public transit more often than using private
13 automobiles. A well-connected sidewalk, trail, and bicycle route network will provide better
14 opportunities for people to walk and ride for shorter trips. The findings from the 2004
15 FTA/Social Data study of Bellingham travel behavior support this (See below).

16
17 In July 2005, WTA implemented a Primary Transit Network that provides high-frequency
18 public transit on City arterials to connect urban villages and employment centers. This
19 increased and convenient high-frequency public transit may help to reduce private
20 automobile trips. In fact, research suggests that public transit becomes more sustainable
21 at densities higher than 10 – 12 units per acre. WTA's Primary Transit Network and
22 Bellingham's infill land use strategy will complement each other to provide a viable
23 alternative to the private automobile for longer in-city trips.

24
25 It is not realistic to assume that most people will stop driving automobiles or that large
26 percentages of people will use alternative transportation modes until alternative modes
27 become more viable and convenient. There are economic and geographic realities to
28 travel behavior including housing affordability, preference for rural living, employment
29 locations, busy family schedules, and individual shopping, restaurant, and entertainment
30 preferences that will continue to make the private automobile more convenient than other
31 modes of transportation.

32
33 If Urban Villages are designed to be mixed use employment, shopping, entertainment, and
34 residential areas, then there will also likely be vehicle traffic attracted to and generated
35 from each of the urban villages. This will generate traffic congestion on the arterial streets
36 that serve the urban villages. The arterial streets serving these Urban Villages should be
37 designed primarily as places for people rather than as places dominated by automobiles.
38 Urban villages need to be well-served by facilities for all modes of transportation:
39 pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile.

40
41 It is also assumed that there will be significant in-bound and out-bound traffic congestion
42 on roads entering and exiting the City due to the 'drive until you can afford to buy' housing
43 phenomenon, described below, and the dominance of Bellingham as the regional
44 employment, shopping, and entertainment center of Whatcom County (see Graphic
45 "Employment Centers in Whatcom County").
46

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1 Increased traffic congestion on arterial streets and market-based parking policies, as well
2 as fuel costs, may create disincentives to the exclusive use of private single-occupant
3 automobiles, but viable and convenient alternative modes of transportation (Safe
4 sidewalks, well-connected bicycle lanes, well-connected trails, and high-frequency transit)
5 must be available for these to be successful (See Transportation Demand Management
6 section, below). Bellingham's multimodal focus on Transportation Concurrency
7 requirements will help to assess, complete, and enhance the multimodal transportation
8 network while also supporting the infill land use strategy of the Comprehensive Plan.
9 Successful infill development will support WTA transit service and will provide more
10 opportunities for people to reduce automobile trips.

11 **Bellingham Travel Mobility Behavior Study**

12 *No revisions necessary to this section at this time*

13 **Travel Demand Forecast Model and Level of Service for Motorized Vehicles**

14
15
16
17
18
19 In order to determine and evaluate the ability of the arterial street system to respond to
20 current and future vehicle traffic demand, the City has developed a travel demand forecast
21 model for Comprehensive Plan updates. The model synthetically evaluates vehicle traffic
22 impacts on the arterial transportation system based on land use assumptions, employment
23 data, the physical configuration of the street network, and vehicle traffic data imported into
24 the model. The model distributes vehicle traffic and compares traffic volume to the
25 assigned design capacity of the streets. The ratio of volume to capacity is the foundation
26 for determining Peak Hour LOS for motorized vehicles.

27
28 The transportation model can be used to determine the current vehicle volume to capacity
29 status with regard to Peak Hour LOS, and to predict any future vehicle volume to capacity
30 status by importing information that is representative of the time period for which
31 information is desired. The transportation model is primarily used for evaluating,
32 determining and planning the future needs of the arterial transportation system for long-
33 range Comprehensive Plan updates. Base year assumptions, traffic volumes, and design
34 capacities greatly influence the outcome of the forecasts of future conditions on motor
35 vehicle traffic on the transportation network. As per GMA, the City uses the travel demand
36 forecast model to assist in updating the Transportation Element every 7 years.

37
38 It is important to note that predicting the future is an imprecise science and that all
39 transportation models are built upon a variety of assumptions for future land use,
40 employment, and vehicle travel behavior. Transportation model analysis is essentially an
41 extrapolation of known and observed trends into the future. The model is built on several
42 assumptions, including total build-out occurring within a specified period and the
43 continuation of current land use, employment, and transportation trends. Based on these
44 basic assumptions, the model forecasts how vehicle trips will be distributed across the
45 transportation network and where road capacity problems may occur.

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1 **Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) Standards**

2
3 Adopting an appropriate level of service (LOS) for the community is required under the
4 Growth Management Act. Bellingham’s adopted LOS standard is “Person Trips Available
5 by Concurrency Service Area” based on arterial and transit capacity for motorized modes
6 and on the degree of network completeness for pedestrian and bicycle modes, as listed
7 below. The individual mode weight factors for each transportation mode available in each
8 Concurrency Service Area are listed in Table 1. of BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency
9 Management Ordinance.

10
11
12 Motorized Transportation Modes

- 13
- 14 • **Arterial Streets:** Peak Hour LOS Person Trips Available (PTA) during weekday p.m.
15 peak hour based on data collected at designated Concurrency Measurement Points
16 for each Concurrency Service Area;
- 17
- 18 • **Transit:** Determine seated capacity, measure ridership, and equate to person trips
19 available via public transit service during weekday p.m. peak hour based on data
20 collected at designated Concurrency Measurement Points for each Concurrency
21 Service Area;
- 22

23 Non-motorized Transportation Modes

- 24
- 25 • **Bicycle:** Credit person trips according to degree of bicycle network completeness for
26 designated system facilities/routes for each Concurrency Service Area;
- 27
- 28 • **Pedestrian:** Credit person trips according to degree of pedestrian network
29 completeness for designated system facilities/routes for each Concurrency Service
30 Area; and
- 31
- 32 • **Trails:** Credit person trips according to degree of bicycle and pedestrian network
33 completeness, where trails serve a clear transportation function for a Concurrency
34 Service Area.
- 35

36 If there are not enough Person Trips Available in the Committed Multimodal Transportation
37 System to serve a proposed development, then concurrency mitigation measures must be
38 implemented to provide the number of person trips needed to serve the proposed
39 development. For motorized modes, this may require the addition of capacity for vehicles
40 or transit through a variety of measures.

41
42 **Motorized Vehicle Trips**

43
44 The City will regularly collect vehicle traffic counts at designated Concurrency
45 Measurement Points on arterials streets serving Concurrency Service Areas (CSA).
46 These vehicle traffic volumes will be converted to person trips using local and national

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1 data for average car occupancy rates. Motorized vehicle person trips will then be used as
2 one variable to calculate total Person Trips Available within each Concurrency Service
3 Area (CSA). The individual mode weight factors for each transportation mode available in
4 each Concurrency Service Area are listed in Table 1. of BMC 13.70 Transportation
5 Concurrency Management Ordinance.
6

7 The following information regarding LOS classifications for vehicles is provided for
8 reference only as this is only one of several variables used to calculate multimodal LOS in
9 Bellingham. The average travel speed for through vehicles along an urban arterial street
10 is the determinant of the operating level of service (LOS) for vehicles. The travel speed
11 along a segment, section, or entire length of an urban arterial street is dependent on the
12 running speed between signalized intersection and the amount of control delay incurred at
13 signalized intersections.
14

15 Urban arterial street LOS for vehicles is based on average through-vehicle travel speed for
16 the segment, section, or entire urban arterial street under consideration. The following
17 Level of Service (LOS) standards for vehicles are described by the Transportation
18 Research Board in the *Highway Capacity Manual, 2000* to characterize LOS along urban
19 streets:
20

- 21 • **Peak Hour LOS A** (50% - 60% Capacity) Describes primarily free-flow operations at
22 average travel speeds, usually about 90% of the free-flow speed for the given street
23 class. Vehicles are completely unimpeded in their ability to maneuver within the traffic
24 stream. Control delay at signalized intersections is minimal.
25
- 26 • **Peak Hour LOS B** (60% - 70% Capacity) Describes reasonably unimpeded operations
27 at average travel speeds, usually about 70% of the free-flow speed for the street class.
28 The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is only slightly restricted and control
29 delays at signalized intersections are not significant.
30
- 31 • **Peak Hour LOS C** (70% - 80% Capacity) Describes stable operations, however, the
32 ability to maneuver and change lanes in mid-block locations may be more restricted
33 than LOS B and longer queues, adverse signal coordination, or both may contribute to
34 lower average travel speeds of about 50% of the free-flow speed for the street class.
35
- 36 • **Peak Hour LOS D** (80% - 90% Capacity) Describes a range in which small increases
37 in flow may cause substantial increases in delay and decreases in travel speed. LOS
38 D may be due to adverse signal progression, inappropriate signal timing, high traffic
39 volumes, or a combination of these factors. Average travel speeds are about 40% of
40 free-flow speed.
41
- 42 • **Peak Hour LOS E** (90% - 100% Capacity) Describes significant delays and average
43 travel speeds of 33%, or less, of the free-flow speed. Such operations are caused by
44 a combination of adverse signal progression, high density of signalized intersections,
45 high traffic volumes, extensive delays at critical intersections, and inappropriate signal
46 timing.

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- 1
2 • **Peak Hour LOS F** (100% ±) Describes urban arterial street flow at extremely low
3 speeds, typically 25% to 33% of free-flow speed. Intersection congestion is likely at
4 critical signalized intersections, with long signal delays, high traffic congestion, and
5 extensive queuing of vehicles.
6
7
8
9
10

11 **Transit Trips**

12
13 Transit trips are determined by counting seated capacity available on WTA buses,
14 measuring ridership on selected routes at Concurrency Measuring Points, and converting
15 this to Person Trips Available within Concurrency Service Areas (CSA). Transit person
16 trips are used as one variable to calculate total Person Trips Available within Concurrency
17 Service Areas (CSA). For example, WTA high-frequency transit (15-minute headways)
18 can provide the seated capacity equivalent of up to 320 person trips per hour (40-seat bus
19 x 4 runs per hour in each direction).
20

21 The City works with WTA to determine seated capacity on transit routes, regularly collect
22 transit ridership statistics, and to calculate the number of transit person trips available in
23 each Concurrency Service Areas (CSA) within the City. The City also works closely with
24 WTA in updating the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and the WTA Strategic Plan.
25

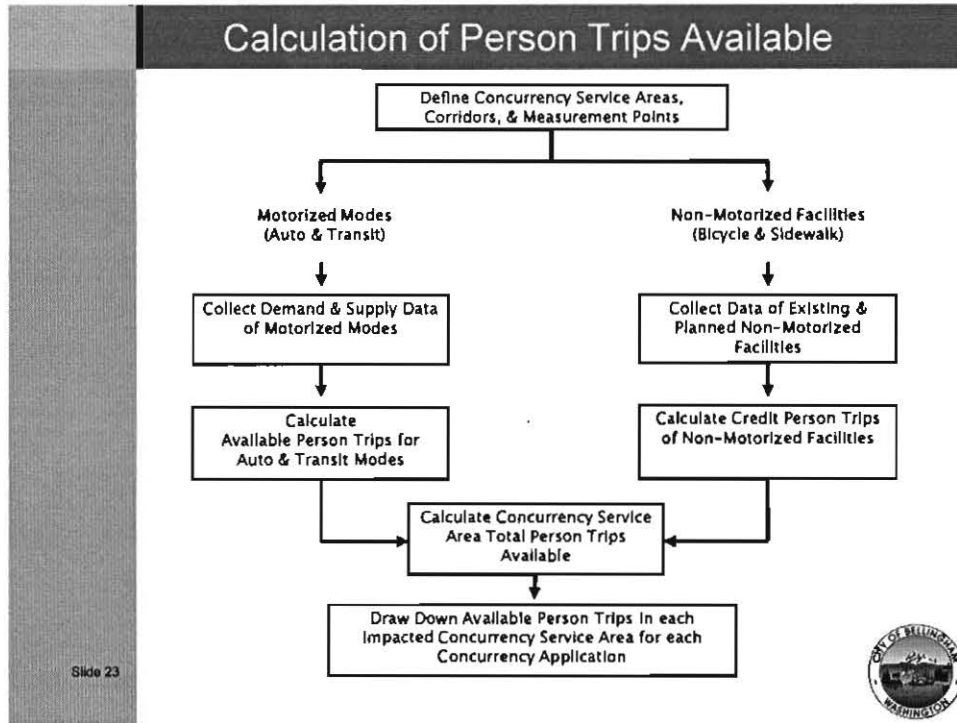
26 **Non-Motorized Bicycle and Pedestrian Trips**

27
28 Sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and, in some cases, off-street multi-use trails also provide
29 person trips in the multimodal transportation network. Pedestrian and bicycle trips are
30 determined by measuring the degree of completeness of selected pedestrian and bicycle
31 routes serving Concurrency Service Areas (CSA), and converting this to credits for Person
32 Trips Available. The City works directly with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory
33 Committee (BPAC) to determine the degree of completeness of selected pedestrian and
34 bicycle routes serving Concurrency Service Areas (CSA). Pedestrian and bicycle person
35 trip credits are used as one variable to calculate total Person Trips Available within
36 Concurrency Service Areas (CSA).
37

38 For example, assume that the City awards 20 person trip credits for every 1% of bicycle
39 facility completed above 50%. Assume that the current inventory shows 45,000 linear feet
40 of select bicycle facilities serving a Concurrency Service Areas (CSA). Assume that
41 27,000 additional linear feet of select bicycle facilities are fully funded within the 6-Year
42 TIP. Then, $27,000 / 45,000 = 60\%$ Complete, which is 10% above the minimum 50%
43 threshold for awarding person trip credit. At 20 credits for every 1% above 50%, this
44 would convert to 200 bicycle person trips available in that Concurrency Service Areas
45 (CSA). The more complete the bicycle network is, the more person trip credits are
46 available.

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1
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Slide 23

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7

Transportation Concurrency Management

As per RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (a) (iii) (B), this Transportation Element contains the City's plan to provide specified level of service standards (LOS) for all locally owned arterials transit routes, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities to serve as a gauge to judge performance of the system. The level of service (LOS) standard of Person Trips Available (PTA) adopted in this plan will be maintained through upkeep of the existing motorized vehicle circulation system, expansion and enhancement of WTA public transit service where needed, completing well-connected pedestrian and bicycle routes, and efforts to reduce the demand placed on the system (Transportation Demand Management).

Regular traffic counts, arterial capacity, transit ridership counts, and seated transit capacity provide measurable criteria to judge the availability of person trips using motorized modes to help assess the adequacy of the transportation system to accommodate additional development. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities also provide non-motorized mobility options to support additional development, but these facilities are measured based on their degree of completeness rather than capacity or volume of use. Trails that serve a clear transportation function may also be counted as pedestrian and bicycle facilities parallel to arterials. Annual measurements of facilities and services on both the motorized and non-motorized transportation networks are equated to "person trips" and used to calculate an

25

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1 annual number of person trips available to serve new development in each Concurrency
2 Service Area (CSA) (Calculation illustrated above).

3
4 As per RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b), new developments must be prohibited unless there are
5 an adequate number of available person trips within the Concurrency Service Area (CSA)
6 of the development, or improvements to the multimodal transportation system to
7 accommodate the impacts are made concurrent with the development or unless the
8 multimodal transportation network affected by the new development meets one of the
9 three exceptions listed below, consistent with the concurrency management requirements
10 of the Growth Management Act.

11
12 Under GMA's concurrency management requirements, infrastructure must perform within
13 the level of service adopted by the City. The LOS adopted by the City for the multimodal
14 transportation network is Person Trips Available (PTA), measured during the weekday
15 p.m. peak hour.

16
17 Consistent with transportation concurrency requirements of the Growth Management Act
18 (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b)), land use and building permits for new developments may be
19 issued as long as:

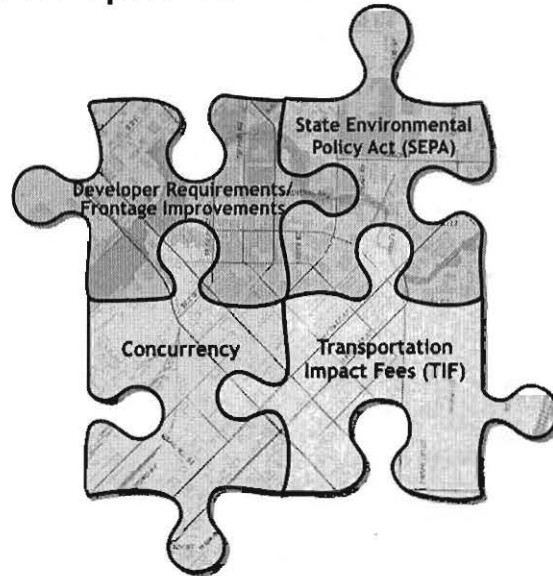
- 20
21 1.) The Concurrency Service Area (CSA) affected by the proposed development has
22 an adequate number of Person Trips Available (PTA), or
23
- 24 2.) The Concurrency Service Area (CSA) affected by the proposed development has
25 new multimodal transportation facilities scheduled and fully funded for improvement
26 within the first, second, or third year of the City's Six-Year Transportation
27 Improvement Program; or
28
- 29 3.) The transportation facilities affected by the proposed development are designated
30 as "Highways of Statewide Significance" not subject to local transportation
31 concurrency standards.
32

33 All new development proposed in Bellingham will also be required to pay City Traffic
34 Impact Fees (TIF), fund and construct transportation improvements that are required by
35 City development regulations, and/or fund and construct transportation improvements that
36 are required to mitigate impacts identified through the State Environmental Policy Act
37 (SEPA) project review process.

38
39 ***Transportation concurrency mitigation refers only to the addition of motorized***
40 ***transportation capacity or completeness of non-motorized transportation network,***
41 ***whether through the addition of a new travel lane or turn lane for vehicles, sidewalks,***
42 ***bicycle lanes, ride-sharing and other TDM programs, or transit service. The graphic***
43 ***below, shows that "Concurrency" is only one piece of the transportation mitigation puzzle.***
44

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Development Review Elements



1
2
3 **Directing Urban Growth Through Transportation Policy**

4
5 *No revisions necessary to this section at this time*

6
7
8 The "Drive to Affordability"

9
10 *No revisions necessary to this section at this time*

11
12
13 **Public Decision-Making to Adopt Transportation Policy**

14
15 On an annual basis, and in conjunction with the public hearing for the 6-Year
16 Transportation Improvement Program, the Public Works staff will publish a Transportation
17 Report on Annual Concurrency (TRAC) that will provide an overall analysis of the
18 performance of the multimodal transportation network. Public Works staff will annually
19 report to the City Council the number of person trips available in each Concurrency
20 Service Areas (CSA) and where there may be needs for transportation mitigation. At that
21 point in time, the City Council will direct staff to explore a range of alternative mitigating
22 measures, including the consideration of allowing some arterials to experience higher
23 levels of motorized vehicle congestion during the p.m. peak hour. This would require
24 amendments to Table 1. of the BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management
25 Ordinance.
26

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1 Adopting changes to individual thresholds in Table 1. of BMC 13.70 can only be
2 accomplished through amendment to BMC 13.70, which requires public hearings before
3 both the Planning Commission and City Council and therefore **additional arterial streets**
4 **will not be allowed to, experience higher levels of motorized vehicle congestion**
5 **during the p.m. peak hour unless the City Council votes to do so.**
6
7

8 **Transportation Demand Management**

9

10 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to measures used to address
11 transportation capacity by reducing the transportation demand generated rather than
12 physical alterations to increase capacity supply. These methods focus on promoting
13 programs for realizing better transportation efficiencies. The following TDM measures
14 could be implemented in addition to physical improvements to the multi-modal
15 transportation network to increase capacity for motorized transportation, increase the
16 completeness of non-motorized transportation networks, use existing capacity more
17 efficiently, or reduce the peak period transportation demands:
18

- 19 • Continue to work with WTA to enhance the Primary Transit Network and encourage
20 development that is transit supportive.
21
- 22 • Give higher priority to developing and maintaining transportation facilities such as the
23 bicycle and pedestrian trails network that mitigate impacts on the environment, reduce
24 energy consumption, and promote increased physical activity for the maintenance of
25 better public health;
26
- 27 • Continue to work with the City and County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees
28 and Neighborhoods to identify missing links in the bicycle and pedestrian networks and to
29 educate and encourage the public to use bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation;
30
- 31 • Continue to implement Bellingham's Multifamily Design Review Guidelines to encourage
32 development to be transit supportive, pedestrian-oriented, and bicycle friendly.
33
- 34 • Identify "Multi-Modal Corridors" throughout the City of Bellingham and the UGA and
35 require new development to provide facilities or contribute TIF's for pedestrian, bicycle,
36 and motor vehicles modes of transportation. *[GMA does not allow use of TIFs for transit*
37 *facilities or service].*
38
- 39 • Work with WTA and the City Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to set and
40 monitor target goals for increasing the total share of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit trips
41 and reducing automobile trips based on benchmark mode share data from 2004
42 FTA/Social Data Study.
43
- 44 • Continue to encourage land use patterns that reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles
45 traveled.

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- 1
- 2 • Develop neighborhood commercial centers and urban villages and locate higher density
- 3 housing convenient to jobs and services to ensure pedestrian and bicycle access to
- 4 transit lines via sidewalks, trails, and bicycle routes, and to encourage bicycle, pedestrian
- 5 and transit commute trips.
- 6
- 7 • Develop a Transportation Demand Management program aimed at reducing congestion,
- 8 air pollution and energy consumption by requiring large employers and major new
- 9 developments to reduce the number of single occupant vehicles being driven to and from
- 10 those projects. Focus areas should include downtown Bellingham, Western Washington
- 11 University, Cordata/Bellis Fair, Saint Joseph's Hospital, and industrial areas along
- 12 Woburn and Hannegan near Sunset Drive.
- 13
- 14 • Review parking requirements for major commercial and industrial uses for the purpose of
- 15 reducing the supply of parking thereby providing a disincentive to automobile use.
- 16

17 **Other Measures to Address Transportation Needs**

- 18
- 19 • Maintain the transportation concurrency management system to ensure that adequate
- 20 transportation facilities are available to serve new development.
- 21
- 22 • Continually utilize the City of Bellingham travel demand forecast model to anticipate
- 23 future transportation needs so transportation facilities and services can be provided in a
- 24 timely and coordinated manner.
- 25
- 26 • Identify and analyze opportunities to increase **connectivity** of the transportation network
- 27 that would create better circulation throughout the city.
- 28
- 29 • Continue City participation in the Whatcom County Council of Governments regional
- 30 transportation planning process.
- 31
- 32 • Whatcom County and Bellingham should cooperate to establish a coordinated
- 33 Transportation Impact Fee system for the proposed Urban Growth Area.
- 34
- 35 • Evaluate the potential to convert and/or replace the City's conventional gasoline and
- 36 diesel-fueled vehicles to alternatively fueled vehicles.
- 37
- 38 • Continue to seek available state and federal transportation grant funding, collect
- 39 Transportation Impact Fees (TIF), and identify new funding sources, such as Real Estate
- 40 Excise Taxes (REET) to support necessary transportation system improvements.
- 41

42 **PART 4: PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS**

43

44 *NO REVISIONS TO PART 4 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME*

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1 **PART 5: TRAVEL DEMAND FORECAST MODEL PROJECTION OF FUTURE FOR**
2 **VEHICLE TRAFFIC CONGESTION**

3
4 Under GMA's concurrency management requirements, infrastructure must perform within
5 the adopted level of service identified and adopted by the City. The LOS adopted by the
6 City for the multimodal transportation network is Person Trips Available (PTA), measured
7 during the p.m. peak hour. Thus, building permits for new developments may be granted
8 as long as person trips are available within the Concurrency Service Area (CSA) to serve
9 by the proposed development financial commitments for mitigating measures are secured
10 and implemented, or the facility is fully funded and scheduled for construction in the first,
11 second, or third year of the City's Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
12

13 The City anticipates that the following arterial streets will continue to experience high
14 levels of motor vehicle congestion during the weekday p.m. peak hour.
15

- 16 • **Meridian Street between Broadway and East Maplewood.** This arterial section of
17 Meridian Street is expected to have traffic volumes that exceed the physical capacity of
18 the road. Mitigation would require the removal of all on-street parking and the physical
19 widening of the intersections at Broadway/Meridian and Illinois/Meridian. The removal
20 of on-street parking between Broadway and Illinois would have a negative impact on
21 businesses in the area. North of Illinois, the removal of on-street parking would, to a
22 lesser degree, negatively affect residential on-street parking. The widening of
23 intersections at Broadway/Meridian and Illinois/Meridian would require the
24 displacement of businesses. **Status:** The City Council determined that removal of on-
25 street parking and physical reconstruction of intersections was not a desirable form of
26 mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle
27 traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
28
- 29 • **King Street between Ohio and Iowa.** This one-block link experiences lower levels of
30 service primarily because of intersection problems at King and Ohio. Located in
31 conjunction with the interstate southbound off-ramp, signalization of this intersection
32 presents negative effects in the form of freeway backups due to the length of the ramp
33 and sight distance concerns due to the ramp curvature. Southbound traffic on King
34 experiences excessive delays because of the existing geometry. Mitigation of this
35 deficiency is complex and will require major interchange restructuring. **Status:** The
36 City Council determined that physical reconstruction of intersections was not a feasible
37 or desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m.
38 peak hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
39
- 40 • **Boulevard Street between State and Finnegan.** Although experiencing higher levels
41 of motor vehicle traffic congestion during the p.m. peak hour, this link presents no
42 significant capacity concerns due to the limited number of intersections along the
43 route. There are topographic constraints to widening this arterial, but the deficiency
44 may be partially overcome with the installation of curb, gutter, sidewalks, improved
45 street lighting, and bicycle lanes. Bicycle lanes have been created on part of this route

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1 and a flashing pedestrian crossing device has been installed at the Boulevard/Adams
2 intersection. In addition, a shared off-street bicycle and pedestrian pathway exists
3 below the bluff that includes bridges, safe railroad crossings, and two boardwalks
4 connect this portion of downtown to Fairhaven. WTA high-frequency public transit
5 between downtown Bellingham and Fairhaven began in 2006 and potential future
6 mitigation could include street trolleys. **Status:** The City Council determined that
7 widening this arterial was not feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for the
8 community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic
9 congestion is expected for this arterial.

- 10
- 11 • **12th Street between Old Fairhaven Parkway and Hawthorn.** This link is constricted
12 in width due to the 2-lane configuration of the State highway bridge over Padden
13 Creek. Additional complexity results from the convergence of Cowgill, Hawthorn, Park
14 Ridge, 12th Street, and Chuckanut Drive (SR 11) at the signalized intersection south of
15 the State highway bridge. Potential mitigation includes improvement of signal timing, a
16 new arterial connecting Chuckanut Drive (SR 11) to Old Fairhaven Parkway through
17 Area 4 of the South Neighborhood, and reconstruction and widening of the Padden
18 Creek Bridge. **Status:** The City Council determined that reconstruction and widening
19 of the State highway bridge was not a financially feasible form of mitigation for the
20 community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic
21 congestion is expected for this arterial.

22

Orleans Street between Sunset and Alabama. Traffic volume is can exceed the
23 physical capacity of the road during the p.m. peak hour traffic congestion. The width of
24 the street cannot support additional travel lanes without widening. If the road were to
25 be widened, parking would be displaced and, in many instances, the road would be
26 placed close to existing homes. **Status:** The City Council determined that removing
27 on-street parking and widening this arterial was not a feasible or a desirable form of
28 mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle
29 traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.

- 30
- 31
 - 32 • **Lincoln Street between Meador and Lakeway Drive.** Traffic volume can exceed the
33 physical capacity of the road during the p.m. peak hour resulting in higher levels of
34 motor vehicle traffic congestion. The width of the street cannot support additional travel
35 lanes without widening. If the road were to be widened, parking would be displaced
36 and, in many instances, the road would be placed close to existing homes. **Status:**
37 The City Council determined that removing on-street parking and widening this arterial
38 was not a feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore,
39 higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this
40 arterial.

- 41
- 42 • **Woburn Street between East Illinois and Alabama.** Increased residential,
43 commercial, and industrial development, as well as regional pass-through traffic, will
44 result in this transportation facility experiencing higher levels of motor vehicle traffic
45 congestion. Physical widening of this arterial section of Woburn would require
46 expensive purchase of right-of-way and possible purchase and removal of homes.

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1 Recommended future mitigation should include reconstruction of the Alabama /
2 Woburn intersection to add capacity, establishing a WTA high-frequency transit route.
3 **Status:** The City Council determined that removing on-street parking and purchasing
4 homes to widen this arterial was not a feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for the
5 community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic
6 congestion is expected for this arterial.
7

- 8 • **Lakeway Drive between Lakeway/King and Lakeway/Lincoln Intersections:** This
9 section of arterial is directly affected by the two intersections. Future development
10 along Lakeway Drive (Birch Street), in Sudden Valley, along Lincoln Street, and in the
11 downtown area, will continue to impact this arterial section and these intersections.
12 Vehicle traffic exiting Interstate 5 also impacts the Lakeway/King intersection. The two
13 intersections were reconstructed in 2004 with wider turning radii and minor capacity
14 improvements. In order to reduce future delay, the intersections would require
15 additional approach lanes. Due to the surrounding built environment, widening of the
16 streets would require right-of-way acquisition and displacement of businesses. **Status:**
17 The City Council determined that widening this arterial was not a feasible or a
18 desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak
19 hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
20
- 21 • **Ohio Street at Ohio/King Intersection.** The proximity of the intersection with the I-5
22 southbound interchange, combined with high traffic volumes and near-intersection
23 high-volume driveways are expected to cause both the arterial and the intersection to
24 experience higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion. Relocation or modification
25 of the interchange and the closure of driveways are the only mitigating measures that
26 could correct these circumstances. **Status:** The City Council determined that
27 relocation or modification of the interchange and the closure of driveways were not a
28 feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher
29 weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
30
- 31 • **Ohio Street at Ohio/James Intersection.** The location of the intersection combined
32 with high and unregulated traffic volumes from the southbound I-5 interchange and
33 adjacent streets create delay at the intersection which will cause the arterial to
34 experience higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion. Signalization of the
35 intersection would create severe congestion on Ohio Street and exacerbate the
36 operation of the King/Ohio intersection. **Status:** The City Council determined that
37 signalization of the intersection was not a feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for
38 the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic
39 congestion is expected for this arterial.
40
- 41 • **Northwest Avenue, Elm Street to Interstate 5:** Northwest Avenue, like many other
42 arterials streets, has on-street parking. Removal of on-street parking would allow
43 conversion of the street to four travel lanes, much like what was done on Alabama
44 Street. The displacement of the parking would have a negative effect, not only to
45 residents, but to the businesses in the vicinity of Lynn Street. This is another arterial
46 street that will experience higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion. Northwest

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1 Avenue serves as a major entry/exit point to Bellingham and the City cannot control
2 the number of vehicles traveling on this arterial. **Status:** The City Council determined
3 that removal of on-street parking was not a feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for
4 the community. Therefore, higher weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic
5 congestion is expected for this arterial.
6

- 7 • **Northwest north of Interstate 5 to Bakerview Road.** Increasing development along
8 both Northwest and West Bakerview combined with inbound/outbound traffic from
9 Whatcom County will result in this transportation facility experiencing higher levels of
10 motor vehicle traffic congestion. The City cannot control the number of northbound
11 vehicles exiting Interstate 5, nor the number of vehicles entering and exiting the City on
12 Northwest. Recommended mitigation should include working with WSDOT to address
13 the Interstate 5/Northwest interchange on- and off-ramp configurations. The City will
14 be adding bicycle and pedestrian facilities along this section in 2009, as well as a one-
15 lane roundabout at the northbound on- and off-ramps to Interstate 5.

16 **Recommendation:** Widening this arterial to add vehicle capacity may not be feasible
17 and may not be a desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher
18 weekday p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
19

- 20 • **Lakeway Drive (between Electric Avenue and City limits).** The two-lane portion of
21 Lakeway Drive east of Electric Avenue to the Birch Street traffic signal and to the
22 Bellingham City limits experiences higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion. The
23 portion of Lakeway Drive east of the City limits is in the unincorporated Bellingham UGA
24 and is therefore the responsibility of Whatcom County until annexation occurs. Lakeway
25 Drive is the only east-west arterial that provides access to Bellingham from residential
26 development in the Geneva UGA, the western Lake Whatcom Watershed, and the
27 community of Sudden Valley which will have approximately 7,000 residents when it
28 reaches the build-out allowed by County zoning. Traffic congestion occurs on weekday
29 mornings and evenings as commuters from Sudden Valley and the Geneva UGA enter
30 and exit the City for work, shopping, and entertainment. The City cannot control the
31 number of inbound/outbound vehicles entering and exiting the City.
32

33 Additional potential future mitigation could include:

- 34 1.) WTA high-frequency public transit between Sudden Valley and downtown Bellingham;
- 35 2.) Aggressive public educational efforts jointly funded by the City, County, WTA, and the
36 Sudden Valley Association to encourage commute trip reduction such as carpooling,
37 transit ridership, compressed work schedules, etc.; and
- 38 3.) Related mitigating measures, such as construction of a community commercial
39 shopping and entertainment center to serve Sudden Valley and a new Sudden Valley
40 public school complex. Both of these land uses have the potential to eliminate or
41 reduce vehicle trips throughout the Lake Whatcom Watershed.
42

- 43 • **Recommendation:** Widening Lakeway Drive to add vehicle capacity is not considered
44 feasible or a desirable form of mitigation for the community. Therefore, higher weekday
45 p.m. peak hour motor vehicle traffic congestion is expected for this arterial.
46

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Travel Demand Forecast Model Projections

While the population growth alternatives evaluated by the City in the July 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) are based on the same rate of population growth, they distribute the growth (primarily the residential growth) in different ways, based on compact infill, substantial expansion of the Urban Growth Areas, or a combination of compact infill and limited expansion at urban densities. The major areas for commercial and industrial employment growth and, therefore peak hour trip generation, are the same under each alternative. While there could be an increase in industrial and commercial zoned land, the impacts will be primarily on the same major arterial corridors.

Travel Demand Forecast Model Assumptions

To identify future transportation deficiencies, the population growth scenarios from the FEIS were plugged into the transportation model and residential (home), commercial and industrial (jobs) growth distributed around the city and the Urban Growth Areas. The computer model analyzed traffic impacts from growth over the 20-year planning period. Some transportation facilities are projected to fall below a Peak Hour LOS E classification even with the assumed completion of all of the following arterial street projects:

- San Juan Boulevard between Yew and 40th;
- June Road between Kellogg and Aldrich;
- Kline Road between Aldrich and Deemer;
- Kelly Road between Meridian and Cordata;
- Wildwood between 40th and Governor Road;
- Governor Road between Samish and San Juan;
- Palmer Road between Governor and Yew;
- Tull Road between Kellogg and Stuart;
- Deemer Road between Stuart and Kline;
- Horton Road between Deemer to Meridian;
- Guide Meridian (WSDOT) between Horton and Ten Mile;
- Sunset Drive (5 lanes) between Woburn and McLeod;
- Irongate Road between Bakerview and Hannegan;
- New arterial connection (possibly 24th Street) between Old Fairhaven Parkway and Chuckanut Drive;
- Bakerview (5 lanes) between Deemer and Hannegan;
- Hannegan (5 lanes) between Bakerview and Sunset; and
- Bakerview between Hannegan and Mt. Baker Highway.

The arterials projected to drop below Peak Hour LOS E classification during the p.m. peak hour are listed below and shown on Map T.8. Potential mitigation is identified, but where mitigation alternatives are limited or not feasible, adoption of higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion should be considered for some transportation facilities during the p.m. peak hour.

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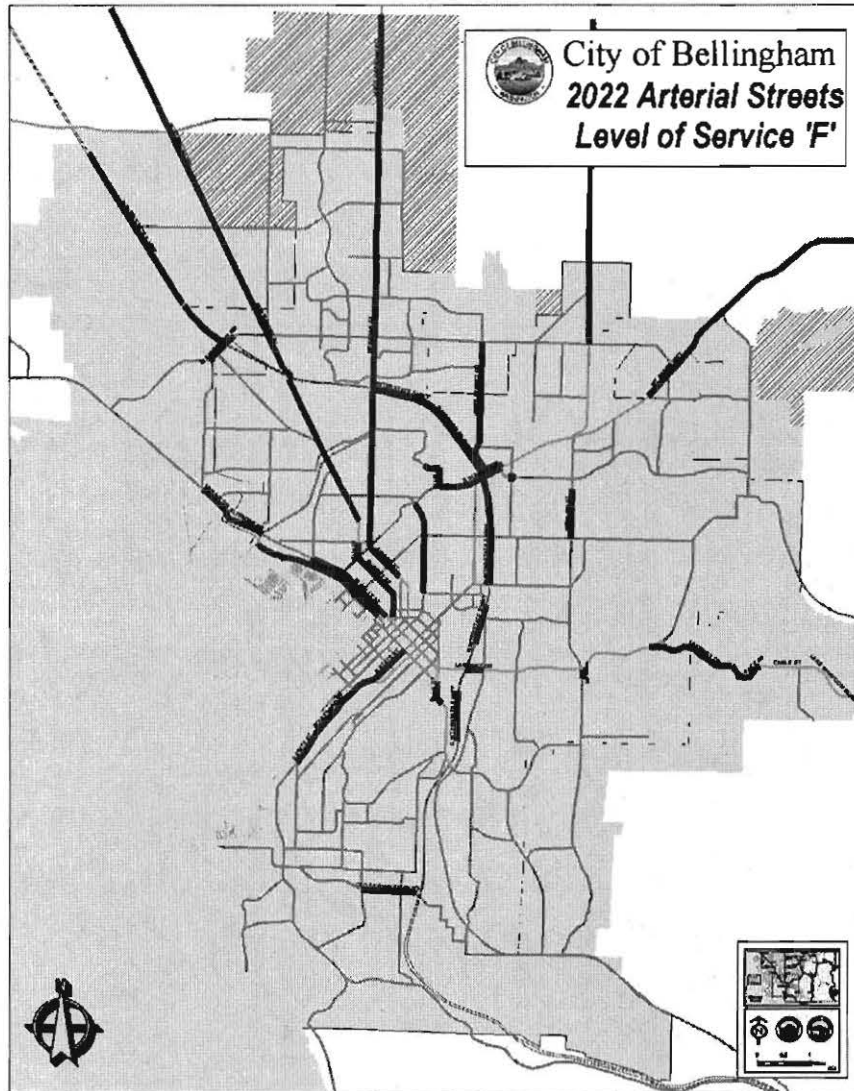
1 The list of arterials projected to experience higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion
2 by 2022 is not a recommendation, nor is it an adoption, of higher levels of motor vehicle
3 traffic congestion. Staff will alert the City Council when each of these arterials experience
4 higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion during the Transportation Report on
5 Annual Concurrency (TRAC) presentation. At that point in time, the City Council will have
6 to direct staff to explore a range of alternative mitigating measures, including the
7 consideration of allowing the arterial to experience higher levels of motor vehicle traffic
8 congestion during the p.m. peak hour.

9
10 *As stated in the section titled "Public Decision-Making to Adopt Transportation Policy,"*
11 *above, adopting changes to individual thresholds in Table 1. of BMC 13.70 can only be*
12 *accomplished through amendment to BMC 13.70, which requires public hearings before*
13 *both the Planning Commission and City Council and therefore additional arterial streets*
14 *will not be allowed to, experience higher levels of motorized vehicle congestion during the*
15 *p.m. peak hour unless the City Council votes to do so.*
16
17

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Travel Demand Forecast Model: Arterial Streets Projected to Experience Higher Levels of Motor Vehicle Traffic Congestion by 2022



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1
2 **Arterial Streets Projected to Experience Higher Levels of Motor**
3 **Vehicle Traffic Congestion by 2022**
4 **(Based on 2002 – 2022 planning period)**
5

6 *NOTE: Change all 'recommendations' in this section generally as follows:*
7

8 **Recommendation:** If widening this arterial to add vehicle capacity is not feasible or is not
9 a desirable form of mitigation for the community, then the City Council may need to
10 consider allowing higher levels of motor vehicle traffic congestion during the weekday p.m.
11 peak hour for this arterial in the future.
12
13

14 *NO OTHER REVISIONS TO PART 5 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME*
15

16 **PART 6: SIX YEAR FINANCING PROGRAM**
17

18 *NO REVISIONS TO PART 6 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME*
19

20 **PART 7: TRANSPORTATION GOALS (TG)**
21

22 *NO REVISIONS TO PART 7 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME*
23

24 **PART 8: TRANSPORTATION POLICIES (TP)**
25

26 **TP-11** Establish Level of Service (LOS) standards for a range of multimodal transportation
27 modes to identify deficiencies and need for improvements.
28

29 Bellingham's adopted LOS standard is "**Person Trips Available by Concurrency Service**
30 **Area**" based on arterial and transit capacity for motorized modes and on the degree of
31 network completeness for pedestrian and bicycle modes, as listed below. The individual
32 thresholds for each transportation mode available in each Concurrency Service Area are
33 listed in Table 1. of BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance.
34

35 Motorized Transportation Modes
36

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- 1 • **Arterial Streets:** Peak Hour LOS Person Trips Available (PTA) during weekday p.m.
2 peak hour based on data collected at designated Concurrency Measurement Points
3 for each Concurrency Service Area;
4
- 5 • **Transit:** Determine seated capacity, measure ridership, and equate to person trips
6 available via public transit service during weekday p.m. peak hour based on data
7 collected at designated Concurrency Measurement Points for each Concurrency
8 Service Area;
9

10 Non-motorized Transportation Modes

- 11
- 12 • **Bicycle:** Credit person trips according to degree of bicycle network completeness for
13 designated system facilities/routes for each Concurrency Service Area;
14
- 15 • **Pedestrian:** Credit person trips according to degree of pedestrian network
16 completeness for designated system facilities/routes for each Concurrency Service
17 Area; and
18
- 19 • **Trails:** Credit person trips according to degree of bicycle and pedestrian network
20 completeness, where trails serve a clear transportation function for a Concurrency
21 Service Area.
22

23

24 **TP-12** To further support the Urban Village and infill strategy of the Land Use Element, the
25 Bellingham City Council allowing some arterials to experience higher levels of vehicle
26 traffic congestion during the weekday p.m. peak hour, as follows:
27

- 28 1.) On local arterials within designated Urban Villages;
- 29 2.) On local arterials that enter/exit the City; and
- 30 3.) On local arterials where mitigation is not feasible.
31

32 **TP-48** Establish Person Trips Available by Concurrency Service Area for motorized
33 transportation modes at Concurrency Measurement Points on arterial streets during
34 weekday peak hours. Identify those facilities that are currently operating below the
35 adopted Peak Hour LOS and identify specific actions necessary to bring these facilities up
36 to standard.
37

38 *NO OTHER REVISIONS TO PART 8 NECESSARY AT THIS TIME*
39
40
41
42

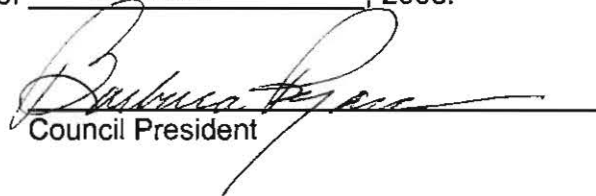
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1 **Section 3.** The Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations of the Planning
2 Commission as shown in Exhibit A are hereby adopted by the City Council.

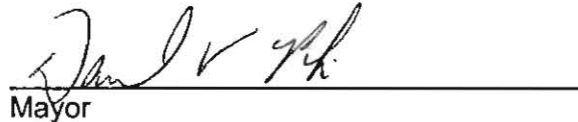
3
4 **Section 4: EFFECTIVE DATE.**

5
6 These revisions to Bellingham Municipal Code Chapter "BMC 13.70 MULTIMODAL
7 **TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY MANAGEMENT**" and the **Transportation Element**
8 **of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan** shall become effective on Thursday, January 1,
9 2009.

10
11
12 **PASSED** by the Council this 8th day of December, 2008.

13
14
15 
16 Council President

17
18
19
20 **APPROVED** by me this 15th day of December, 2008.

21
22
23 
24 Mayor

25
26
27 **ATTEST:** 
28 Finance Director

29
30
31
32 **APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

33 
34 Office of the City Attorney

35
36
37
38
Published: December 12, 2008

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ATTACHMENT A

**BELLINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION FINDINGS OF FACT,
CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

SEPTEMBER 4, 2008

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SUMMARY

Adoption of new level of service (LOS) standards based on Person Trips Available in Concurrency Service Areas and multimodal transportation concurrency methodology to further implement the infill land use strategies adopted in the Land Use Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan. This proposal requires amendments to applicable sections of BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance and the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.

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18
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I. FINDINGS OF FACT

20
21

1. Proposal Description -

22 The Bellingham Public Works Department has proposed amendments to the Transportation
23 Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and to BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency
24 Management Ordinance. Specifically, these amendments include:

- 25
26 A.) Adopting new level of service (LOS) standards, based on Person Trips Available, for
27 a range of transportation modes including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle;
28
29 B.) Adopting new multimodal transportation concurrency methodology and development
30 requirements; and
31
32 C.) Adopting an ordinance making these amendments effective January 1, 2009.
33
34
35
36

1 **2. Background Information/Procedural History -**

2
3 January 1995 – Bellingham adopts LOS standards “E” and “F” based on vehicle volume-to-
4 capacity (v/c) ratios in the Transportation Element of the GMA mandated Bellingham
5 Comprehensive Plan.

6
7 March 2006 – Bellingham adopts BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management
8 Ordinance to comply with GMA requirements (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b)).

9
10 June 2006 – Bellingham re-adopts LOS standards “E” and “F” based on vehicle volume-to-
11 capacity ratios in the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan for
12 consistency with BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance.

13
14 March 2007 – Bellingham Public Works presents 2007 Transportation Report on Annual
15 Concurrency (TRAC) and advises City Council that LOS standards based exclusively on vehicle
16 v/c ratios are not likely to allow the level of infill development called for in the Land Use Element
17 and that the Transportation Element calls for development of multimodal LOS standards.

18
19 June 2007 – City Council directs staff to conduct research into other transportation concurrency
20 methods being used by other jurisdictions.

21
22 December 2007 – Public Works issues Request For Proposals (RFP) 130-2007 titled
23 “Transportation Concurrency Methodology Revision Project.”

24
25 February 2008 – Transportation consultant “The Transpo Group” hired to assist Public Works
26 staff in developing new LOS standards and multimodal Transportation Concurrency
27 Methodology.

28
29 March 19, 2008 – Public Works conducts special Wednesday evening work session with the
30 Bellingham City Council to discuss and explain a wide variety of integrated transportation
31 requirements, responsibilities, and processes, including Transportation Concurrency.

32
33 May 19, 2008 – Public Works provides City Council with status report for the Transportation
34 Concurrency Methodology Revision Project.

35
36 July 7, 2008 – 30-day advance notice of August 7 Planning Commission published in
37 Bellingham Herald, posted on City web site, and mailed to a wide variety of interested parties.

38
39 July 8, 2008 - SEPA DNS issued by Bellingham Planning Director with 14-day comment period.

40
41 July 14, 2008 - Public Works provides City Council with status report for the Transportation
42 Concurrency Methodology Revision Project, announces August 7, 2008 Planning Commission
43 public hearing.

44
45 July 22, 2008 – Public Works issues 60-day notice of intent to amend Transportation Element of
46 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management
47 Ordinance.

48
49 July 23, 2008 Staff report provided to Planning Commission and made available to public.

50
51 August 7, 2008 Planning Commission holds public hearing on proposed amendments.

1
2 September 4, 2008 Planning Commission continues public hearing on proposed amendments.
3 Public hearing closed, Planning Commission discusses and approves 6-1.
4

5 September 11, 2008 Public Works makes presentation on new Transportation Concurrency
6 methodology and submittal requirements to members of the Building Industry Association of
7 Whatcom County (BIAWC).
8

9 October 3, 2008 30-day advance notice of November 3, 2008 City Council public hearing
10 published in Bellingham Herald, posted on City web site, and mailed/e-mailed to a wide variety
11 of interested parties.
12

13 November 3, 2008 Public Hearing before Bellingham City Council.
14
15

16 **3. Public Comment Received and Responded To** 17

18 Attachment G provides staff response to the public comment that was received at the August 7,
19 2008 public hearing, staff response to email questions received from Planning Commissioners
20 between August 7 and September 4, and Planning Commission meeting minutes from both
21 August 7 and September 4.
22
23

24 **4. 2009 Transportation Report on Annual Concurrency (TRAC)** In 2006, 2007, and 2008, 25 Public Works made public presentations of the Transportation Report on Annual Concurrency 26 (TRAC) to the Bellingham City Council. Beginning in 2009, Public Works staff will also make 27 annual public presentation of the TRAC to the Bellingham Planning Commission. 28 29

30 **5. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination** 31

32 A non-project SEPA Determination of Non-Significance was issued by the City of Bellingham on
33 July 7, 2008 with a 14-day public comment period. The public comment period expired on July
34 23, 2008 with no comments received.
35
36

37 **6. Consistency with the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and BMC Review Criteria** 38

39 As per BMC 20.20.060 D. Criteria, the City may amend the comprehensive plan only if it finds
40 the following:
41

- 42 1. The proposed amendment bears a substantial relation to public health, safety, and
43 welfare;
44

45 Adoption of multimodal LOS standards and multimodal transportation concurrency
46 methodology will account for the total transportation capacity available to serve new
47 development. This will allow Bellingham to implement infill land use strategies
48 consistent with the GMA goal for compact urban areas. In addition, adoption of
49 multimodal transportation concurrency methodology will allow Bellingham to focus
50 multimodal transportation infrastructure in Concurrency Service Areas, which will help to
51 further promote the use of alternative modes of transportation. This will have a positive

1 impact on the public health, safety and welfare of all Bellingham neighborhoods. The
2 Planning Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the criteria.

- 3
4 2. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act;

5
6 Encouraging infill land use strategies and multimodal transportation facilities and
7 services is critical to fulfilling the GMA goal for compact urban areas and reduction of
8 urban sprawl. The Planning Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the
9 criteria.

- 10
11 3. The proposed amendment is consistent with the countywide planning policies;

12
13 The proposal is consistent with strategies of the countywide planning policies intended to
14 promote growth within cities and to protect county rural lands. The Planning Commission
15 finds that the proposal is consistent with the criteria.

- 16
17 4. The comprehensive plan will be internally consistent; and

18
19 Land use goals and policies of the comprehensive plan emphasize infill development,
20 pedestrian oriented mixed-use development, and Urban Villages. Transportation goals
21 and policies promote multimodal transportation infrastructure and alternative
22 transportation modes. Adoption of multimodal LOS standards and Transportation
23 Concurrency methodology will favor new development where adequate multimodal
24 transportation infrastructure exists and will direct growth to the downtown, urban villages
25 and urban growth area. The proposal is internally consistent with these priorities. The
26 Planning Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the criteria.

- 27
28 5. The proposed amendment will result in long-term benefits to the community as a whole
29 and is in the best interest of the community.

30
31 The proposed amendments implement the land use and transportation visions, goals,
32 and policies of the comprehensive plan, which promote infill development strategies and
33 increased mobility for people using a variety of transportation modes resulting in long-
34 term benefits to the community. The Planning Commission finds that the proposal is
35 consistent with the criteria.

36
37
38 Relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies and BMC review considerations were
39 included in the Planning Commission's deliberation of the proposal and reflected in the staff
40 report.

41 42 **II. CONCLUSIONS**

43
44 Based on the staff report and the information presented at the public hearing, the Planning
45 Commission concludes:

- 46
47 1. The proposed amendments to the Transportation Element of the Bellingham
48 Comprehensive Plan and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance
49 are consistent with the goals and policies of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, the
50 Countywide Planning Policies, and the GMA.

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- 2. The proposed amendments to the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance satisfy the review factors and criteria in BMC 20.20.060 C and D.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the Bellingham Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the proposed amendments to the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and BMC 13.70 Transportation Concurrency Management Ordinance with an effective date of January 1, 2009.


ADOPTED this 4th day of September, 2008.



Tom Barrett
Planning Commission Chairperson

ATTEST: 

Recording Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


City Attorney

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15
16