

ORDINANCE NO. 2013-06-044

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM ESTABLISHING NEW AUTHORITY AND STANDARDS FOR ADDRESSING AND STREET NAMING WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS BY REPEALING BELLINGHAM MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 18.28.150 "STREET NAMING" AND ADOPTING BELLINGHAM MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 17.30 "ADDRESSING AND STREET NAMING".

WHEREAS, there have been instances where street addressing has resulted in non-uniform and confusing street naming/numbering for new and existing city streets; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified the need to establish authority for the City to implement and enforce a uniform and standardized system of street naming and addressing of physical properties within the City limits; and

WHEREAS, addressing is an essential function of public safety to insure that emergency response providers are equipped with the necessary information to locate a physical location during an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Bellingham Municipal Code does not provide authority to implement these functions; and

WHEREAS, the subdivision ordinance gives street naming authority to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, Emergency services (Fire and Police) should have street naming authority; and

WHEREAS, a uniform and standardized system of street naming and addressing is necessary to maximize/facilitate the duties of emergency response providers; and

WHEREAS, revising the Bellingham Municipal Code as enacted herein is in the best interest of the City of Bellingham residents by establishing a standard property identification process for the benefit of emergency services and the safety of our citizens;

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM DOES ORDAIN:

Section 1. Bellingham Municipal Code Section 18.28.150 - Street Naming is hereby repealed in its entirety:

~~18.28.150 - STREET NAMING~~

~~The Commission shall approve a list of street names that are recommended by the 911 Dispatch, Police and Fire Departments, and the Technical Review Committee. A developer may incorporate an approved street name into the plat design. The Commission shall name~~

~~all streets individually until such time that the street name list is approved.~~

~~The Commission shall have authority to name any street name which has not been previously approved on the street name list. The applicant shall complete and submit a Street Name application to the Planning Department. The application shall be routed to 911 Dispatch and the Police and Fire Departments. If the emergency service providers reject a street name, the application shall not proceed to the Commission for final approval. The emergency service provider's recommendation shall be forwarded along with a Staff/Technical Review Recommendation to the Commission for consideration.~~

~~Private rights-of-way shall not be named by the Commission. A proposed street name for a private road shall follow the above Street Name application process with the Director of Planning and Community Development having the sole authority to name the private right-of-way. The Planning Director shall take into consideration the recommendations of 911 Dispatch and the Police and Fire Departments.~~

Section 2. Bellingham Municipal Code Chapter 17.30, entitled "Addressing and Street Naming", is hereby created as follows:

17.30.010 - SCOPE & GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an address standard to facilitate efficient response by emergency services, minimize future street name and addressing conflicts, and comply with U.S. Postal Standards to the greatest extent feasible.

B. Applicability

The requirements of this section shall apply to all property and to all public and private streets in the City of Bellingham and supersede all addressing and street naming standards in BMC Chapters 17.10 and 17.20.

C. Authority

The Fire Chief or their designee is authorized to enforce the provisions of this chapter and shall have the authority to render interpretations of this chapter, and to adopt policies, procedures, rules and regulations in order to clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, policies, procedures, rules and regulations shall comply with the purpose of this code and shall not have the effect of waiving requirements specifically provided for in this code.

17.30.020 - DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following words and terms shall have the meanings shown in this chapter:

Avenue – A street of varying lengths that may be directional depending on location in the City.

Boulevard – An arterial street with a median.

Court – A minor street less than 500 feet in length ending in a turnaround, a cul-de-sac, or permanent dead-end street.

Circle - A short street that returns to it, or a secondary street that begins and circles back to terminate on the same street.

Drive - A street that is longer than 1,000 feet and continues through to other rights of way.

Lane – A street that is generally less than 1,000 feet in length.

Loop – A short street that begins and ends on the same street of another name.

Parkway - A long, continuous street that handles heavy volumes of traffic and has major thoroughfare characteristics.

Place – A cul-de-sac or permanent dead end street. Named from the more major street from which it takes access.

Road – A street that is frequently used, has heavy traffic volume, and runs in any direction. This is a County designation that may be continued in City.

Street – A street of varying lengths that may be directional depending on location in the City.

Way – A street of varying length that may change direction.

17.30.030 - STREETS

A. General

Streets within the City of Bellingham shall be designated, identified and maintained in accordance with Sections 17.30.030(A) through 17.30.030(E).

B. Designation

All private and public street designation shall be in accordance with Section 17.30.030(B)(1) through 17.30.030(B)(6). Designation assignment shall be consistent with this code and shall be approved by the Fire Chief or their designee.

1. Annexation

Designation of recently annexed streets, which have a centerline alignment offset less than 50 feet from an existing City intersection, shall be re-designated to bear the

name of the adjacent City street. The re-designation will be in accordance with the requirements of Section 17.30.050(B).

2. Alignment

Designation of new streets, which have a centerline alignment offset less than 50 feet, shall bear the name of the adjacent street. Otherwise, the street will be designated in accordance with this section.

3. Neighborhoods

New streets should continue any alphabetical, numerical, or type of name already established within the neighborhood.

4. Name register

The Fire Department shall create and maintain a register of approved street names. The Fire Chief or designee will approve all street names placed on the register.

5. Street-type designators

Streets shall use one of the street designators from Section 17.30.020.

6. Street designation threshold

Streets serving five or more residential or commercial structures shall have a name designation.

Exception: Streets within manufactured-home parks.

C. Identification

Streets shall be identified with approved signs consistent with the City of Bellingham Development Guidelines & Improvement Standards.

1. Temporary Signs

Temporary signs shall be installed at each street intersection when construction of a new street allows passage of vehicles.

2. Permanent Signs

Permanent signs shall be installed in approved locations on both public and private streets prior to completion of street construction. A new structure may not be occupied until permanent signs are installed.

D. Maintenance

All street signs shall be maintained in an approved manner.

1. Responsibility

Sign maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner. Private street signs shall be the responsibility of the private-property owner. Public street sign maintenance shall be the responsibility of the City of Bellingham Public Works Department.

E. Existing Conditions

The Fire Chief or their designee may require existing street designation to meet the requirements of this Section when the street designation is inconsistent with this Section or when in the opinion of the Fire or Police Chief the existing condition negatively impacts emergency services responsiveness. Street re-designation will be in accordance with Section 17.30.050(B).

17.30.040 - ADDRESS NUMBERS

A. General

Address numbers, within the City of Bellingham shall be designated, identified, and maintained in accordance with Section 17.30.040(B) through 17.30.040(C)(7).

B. Designation

All address number designation shall be in accordance with Section 17.30.040(B) through 17.30.040(B)(2)(b). The City recognizes two address categories: street and unit. Address assignment shall be approved by the Fire Chief or their designee and be consistent with this code. The Fire Chief will maintain policy and procedures for the correct assignment of address during the development services permit process.

1. Street address numbers

Street address designation shall be in accordance with this Section.

a. Sequence

Street address numbers shall increase consecutively as you travel away from the beginning point of the respective neighborhood grid. Additionally, odd numbers shall appear on the left side and even numbers on the right side of streets as you travel away from the beginning point of the respective neighborhood grid.

b. Blocks

A street address will include a one or two digit block number and a two-digit building number. Block numbers and building numbers will increase consecutively as you travel away from the beginning point of the respective neighborhood grid.

c. Alpha-numeric and fractional addresses

Street addresses shall not contain either alphanumeric or fractional combinations.

d. Streets with diagonal or meandering alignment

Street address numbers shall have a block range opposite to the street it intersects.

e. Streets with circular alignment

The number sequence shall start at the intersection nearest the beginning point of the respective neighborhood grid. Street address numbers shall have a block range opposite to the road it intersects.

f. Commercial & Residential structures

Street address numbers shall reflect the location of vehicular access or as approved by the Fire Chief or their designee.

g. Alley access

Commercial premises taking access only from an alley will utilize the street address for the portion of the structure fronting the public way and include a unit number in accordance with Section 17.30.040(B)(2)(a).

h. Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Attached ADU will use the street address of the primary residence and will include a unit number in accordance with Section 17.30.040(B)(2)(a). Directional signage may also be required.

i. Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Detached ADUs will use a separate street address from the adjacent residence. Directional signage may also be required.

j. Uninhabited residential accessory structures

Uninhabited residential accessory structures and garages will not have a street address assigned.

k. Manufactured home parks

Manufactured home parks will receive a single street address. Residential spaces will receive a unit number in accordance with Section 17.30.040(B)(2)(b).

2. Unit numbers

Unit number designation shall be in accordance with this Section.

a. Sequence

A unit number will include a one or two-digit floor number and a two-digit space number. Floor numbers will coincide with the building story. Space numbers will start with "01".

Exception:

1. Basement and alley units will utilize a "B" or an "A", respectively preceding the unit number.
2. Parking levels will utilize a "P" preceding the floor level.

b. Manufactured home parks

Unit numbers will be a two or three-digit number. The Fire Chief or their designee shall approve the sequence. Additional directional signage may be required.

3. Existing Conditions

The Fire Chief or their designee may require existing address numbers to meet the requirements of this Section when the address numbers are inconsistent with this Section or when in the opinion of the Fire or Police Chief the existing condition negatively impacts emergency services responsiveness. Address re-assignment will be in accordance with Section 17.30.050(B).

C. Identification

Address identification shall be in accordance with Sections 17.30.040(C)(1) through 17.30.040(C)(5)(b)(3).

1. Placement

New and existing buildings shall have address identification placed in an approved position that is plainly legible and visible from the street fronting the property.

a. Remote Location

Where the building cannot be viewed from the public way or named private street, an approved monument, pole, or other sign or means shall be used to provide identification. This method requires that the identification is visible to both directions of travel along the primary street.

b. Complexes

An approved site plan sign shall be conspicuously posted at the main entrance of the complex that denotes building locations and addresses.

c. Rear Entrances

Address identification shall be prominently displayed on rear entrance or access doors when required by the Fire Chief or their designee.

2. Timing of Installation

Address identification shall be installed upon the start of building or tenant space construction activities and approved permanent identification must be installed prior to occupancy approval. In the case of a re-assignment, the address identification shall be installed within five (5) days of the effective date.

3. Style

Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers.

4. Contrast

Address numbers shall have a positive contrast with their background or as approved by the Fire Chief or their designee. When address numbers are located on clear glazing the numbers shall be white in color.

5. Number Height

Address numbers shall be in accordance with Sections 17.30.040(C)(5)(a) through 17.30.040(C)(5)(b)(3).

a. Building Numbers

Exterior building numeral height and stroke shall be in accordance with the minimum requirements of Table 17.30.040(C)(5)(a).

**Table 17.30.040(C)(5)(a)
Building Numeral Height & Stroke**

Distance ^a	Height	Stroke
0' to 50'	6" ^b	1/2"
51' to 100'	8"	3/4"
101' to 150'	10"	3/4"
151' to 200'	12"	1"
Over 200'	14"	1"

- a. Distance is measured from the face of the building to the centerline of the addressed street.
- b. One- & two-family and townhomes are permitted to have a minimum height of four (4) inches.

b. Unit Numbers

Interior and exterior unit numbers shall be in accordance with Sections 17.30.040(C)(5)(b)(1) through 17.30.040(C)(5)(b)(3).

1. Exterior Identification

Exterior commercial suite identification shall have a minimum height of six (6) inches. Exterior multi-family unit identification shall have a minimum height of three (3) inches.

2. Interior Identification

Interior suite identification shall have a minimum height of one and one half (1-1/2) inches.

3. Rear Entrances

When required by Section 17.30.040(C)(1)(c), identification shall have a minimum height of two (2) inches.

6. Maintenance

The view to all address identification shall remain unobstructed and be maintained in an approved manner.

a. Responsibility

Identification maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner, occupant, or renter.

7. Existing Conditions

The Fire Chief or their designee may require existing identification or lack thereof to meet the requirements of this Chapter when the identification is inconsistent with this Chapter or when in the opinion of the Fire or Police Chief the existing condition negatively impacts emergency services responsiveness. Address re-assignment will be in accordance with Section 17.30.050(B).

17.30.050 - Notification

Street re-designation, address assignment and re-assignment shall be in accordance with this section.

A. Address assignment

Upon assignment, the Fire Chief or their designee shall notify the following:

1. Property owner,
2. Current resident,
3. United States Postal Service,
4. Whatcom County Assessor,
5. What-Comm Dispatch Center,
6. City of Bellingham Finance Department,
7. City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department,
8. City of Bellingham Public Works Department,
9. City of Bellingham Police Department,
10. Local utility providers,
11. Washington State Department of Labor and Industries
12. Other agencies determined by the Fire Chief or their designee.

B. Re-assignment and re-designation

The procedure for address re-assignment and street re-designation shall include notification by both a Notice of Pending Action and Final Notice in accordance with this section.

Exception: Re-assignment of an address at the request of the current property owner will only require compliance with Section 17.30.050(B)(2).

1. Notice of Pending Action

The current residents and/or property owners subject to address re-assignment or street re-designation will receive a Notice of Pending Action through posting the affected structure or by certified mail, a minimum of 30-days before proposed final re-assignment is to occur. The Notice of Pending Action will notify the resident of the pending re-assignment and their rights to appeal pursuant Section 17.30.090.

2. Final Notice

After completion of the requirements of Section 17.30.050(B)(1) and the resolution of all appeals, the Fire Chief or their designee shall provide Final Notice to the following:

- a. Property owner,
- b. Current resident,
- c. United States Postal Service,
- d. Whatcom County Assessor,
- e. What-Comm Dispatch Center,
- f. City of Bellingham Finance Department,
- g. City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department,
- h. City of Bellingham Public Works Department,
- i. City of Bellingham Police Department,
- j. Local utility providers,
- k. Washington State Department of Labor and Industries
- l. Other agencies determined by the Fire Chief or their designee.

17.30.060 - Unlawful Acts

It shall be unlawful for any person to:

- A. Erect or install a street name sign not in accordance with this section.
- B. Remove, alter, change, or deface a street sign or address identification erected or installed as provided herein.
- C. Place or posts address identification not approved by Chapter.
- D. Fail to place an address visible from the street.

17.30.070 - Violations

All unlawful acts shall be enforced as a violation of the International Fire Code as adopted by BMC 17.20.010.

17.30.080 - Fees

A fee for address activities shall be paid as required, in accordance with the schedule as established by City Council resolution.

17.30.090 - Appeals

Appeals of orders, decisions, or interpretations shall be processed in accordance with the BMC 17.20.020.

17.30.100 Conflict Resolution Clause


All existing references in the Bellingham Municipal Code that are in conflict with this section are hereby amended and superseded by this section.

PASSED by the Council this 17th day of June, 2013.



Council President

APPROVED by me this 24th day of June, 2013.

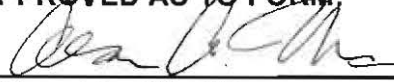


Mayor

ATTEST: 

Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Office of the City Attorney

Published:

June 21, 2013