

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-12-038

AN ORDINANCE RELATED TO LAND USE PLANNING FOR THE SAMISH WAY URBAN VILLAGE UPDATING AND REVISING THE SAMISH WAY URBAN VILLAGE SUBAREA PLAN AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS IN BMC 20.37.100 THROUGH BMC 20.37.170.

WHEREAS, the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan (Policy LU-18) provides direction to “develop new plans and update existing plans as needed to reflect the unique nature of each urban village”; and

WHEREAS, the original Samish Way Urban Village (SWUV) subarea plan was initiated by the community and adopted in 2009 after significant public outreach and involvement to develop the overall vision and goals; and

WHEREAS, while the overall vision and goals continue to be supported, the 2009 SWUV subarea plan conflicts with city-wide policy documents adopted since that time, including the comprehensive plan (2016), the pedestrian master plan (2012) and the bicycle master plan (2014); and

WHEREAS, updates to development regulations in other sections of the Bellingham Municipal Code have created inconsistencies between city-wide and Samish Way Urban Village development regulations; and

WHEREAS, a 2016-2017 study of the N. Samish Way transportation corridor identified an alternative cross-section that would result in a reduced number of drive lanes and improved conditions for bicycle and pedestrian safety; and

WHEREAS, an urban village status report, presented to City Council in December 2018, contained statistics and recommendations for amending development regulations to further encourage redevelopment in the Samish Way Urban Village; and

WHEREAS, changed conditions in the growth projections, hotel/motel market, and other features in the area are not described accurately in the current urban village plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Samish Way Urban Village plan is incorporated by reference into the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has docketed the review of the Samish Way Urban Village Plan as part of the 2018-2019 Comprehensive Plan Amendment cycle; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary proposed changes were presented to interested stakeholders at a neighborhood meeting held on October 24, 2018 at Garden View Methodist Church; and

City of Bellingham
City Attorney
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, Washington 98225
360-676-6903

WHEREAS, on December 20, 2018, the City of Bellingham as lead agency under the procedures of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), issued a Determination of Non-Significance; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Growth Management Act, the State of Washington was notified on January 2, 2019 of the City's intent to amend the subarea plan and development regulations for Samish Way Urban Village; and

WHEREAS, the Bellingham Planning Commission provided appropriate 30-day notice to conduct a public hearing on January 24, 2019 on the proposed urban village subarea plan and land use development code amendments. An additional work session was held on February 7, 2019 and thereafter the Planning Commission issued Findings, Conclusions and a Recommendation for adoption of amendments to the subarea plan and associated development regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Bellingham City Council held a public hearing on May 6, 2019 and work sessions on May 20, 2019 and July 1, 2019 and agrees with and adopts the Planning Commission Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the amendments to the Samish Way Urban Village subarea plan satisfy the requirements of BMC Chapter 20.20.040, and are consistent with the State Growth Management Act, the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, and the York and Sehome Neighborhood Plans; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the accompanying land use development code amendments satisfy the requirements of BMC Chapter 20.22, and are consistent with the State Growth Management Act, the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, and the York and Sehome Neighborhood Plans; and

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

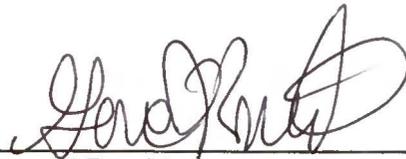
Section 1: The Samish Way Urban Village subarea plan is amended as shown in **EXHIBIT A**.

Section 2. Bellingham Municipal Code Sections 20.37.100-.170, Samish Way Urban Village, are amended as shown in **EXHIBIT B**.

Section 3. The Council adopts the Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendation of the Planning Commission included with this ordinance as **EXHIBIT C**.

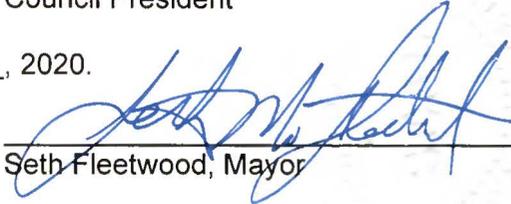
PASSED by the Council this 16th day of December, 2019.

City of Bellingham
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210 Lottie Street
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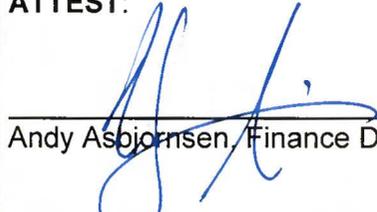
Council President

APPROVED by me this 6th day of Jan., 2020.



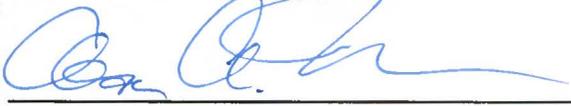
Seth Fleetwood, Mayor

ATTEST:



Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Office of the City Attorney

Published:

December 20, 2019

Exhibit A

SAMISH WAY URBAN VILLAGE SUBAREA PLAN
City of Bellingham, Washington



Planning & Community Development Department
Adopted by Ordinance No. 20109-11-06912-038
~~November~~December 20109

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INTRODUCTION

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1.1. PURPOSE OF THE SUBAREA PLAN

This document provides a policy framework for the creation-development of an urban village in a 7869-acre area surrounding Samish Way, generally located west of I-5 at the base of Sehome Hill Arboretum, north of Bill McDonald Parkway and south of Edwards Street. This area contains portions of the Sehome and York Neighborhoods. The goal of the Subarea Plan is to guide redevelopment towards the community vision. Specific implementing regulations must also be adopted to incorporate this vision into code.

Connections and compatibility to surrounding areas are of paramount importance. However, the goals here are only applicable to areas within the Samish Way Urban Village boundary.

1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO THE ~~2006~~ 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The ~~2006-2016~~ Comprehensive Plan states that anticipated population growth should be accommodated primarily through the creation of a series of within urban centers/villages. An urban center (or "urban village") is generally considered an area that:



- ↗ Contains a mix of commercial, residential, and service uses;
- ↗ Provides amenities and necessities within walking distance;
- ↗ Is designed for pedestrians, bikes, and transit, as well as the automobile;



- ↗ Facilitates strong community connections and interaction by serving as a neighborhood focal point and providing active public spaces; and
- ↗ Promotes sustainability and quality design.

The Comprehensive Plan designates the Samish Way area as an potential urban village. Comprehensive Plan policy FLU-18 directs that the City develop new plans and update existing plans as needed to reflect the unique nature of each urban village. Subarea Plans be developed for each of the proposed urban villages. Each plan must specify the following elements:

- ↗ Land uses and densities;
- ↗ Street and utility layouts;
- ↗ Lot arrangements, housing types;
- ↗ Plaza locations, streetscape amenities;
- ↗ Relationship of buildings to the street;
- ↗ Parking structures or lots;
- ↗ Protection of critical areas;
- ↗ Pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and
- ↗ Other items deemed necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

These elements are each addressed in this Subarea Plan and/or the associated development regulations. The Samish Way Subarea Plan was originally adopted in 2009, and was amended in 2019 to reflect new information and consistency with other adopted policy documents.

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1.3 THE PLANNING PROCESS

In 2004, a group of students at Western Washington University presented their ideas to the community illustrating the potential for the area surrounding Samish Way as a dynamic, people-centered place. This led to the formation of a Sehome Neighborhood Association committee to investigate neighborhood sentiments about this kind of redevelopment along Samish Way.

Starting from neighborhood survey data, the neighborhood association conducted outreach over the course of almost three years to discover interest, objections, and preferences regarding a walkable, mixed-use community along the Samish Way corridor. Outreach efforts included door-to-door contact with area businesses, multiple presentations and input opportunities for the Sehome and surrounding neighborhood associations, and collaboration with a local nonprofit, Sustainable Connections, for a professionally-moderated design charrette as well as a business breakfast meeting attended by about one-third of area businesses.

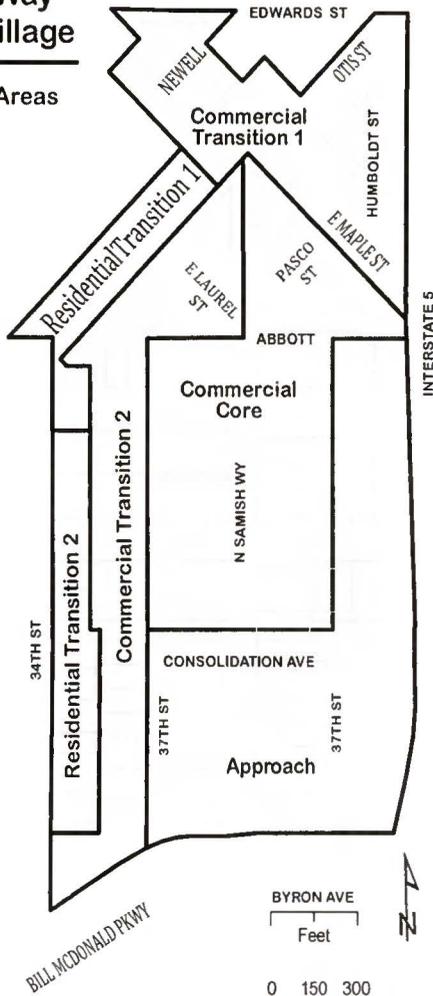
These efforts culminated in the inclusion of the urban village concept in the proposed update to the Sehome Neighborhood Plan, as well as support in the proposed York Neighborhood Plan update, which led to the initiation of the City-sponsored master planning and rezoning process.

June 2008, the City launched the master planning process by inviting the general public and all anticipated stakeholders to attend a series of four

Commented [DC2]: Updated map shows Aloha Motel parcel (315 N Samish) in the Commercial Core

Samish Way Urban Village

Land Use Areas



CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

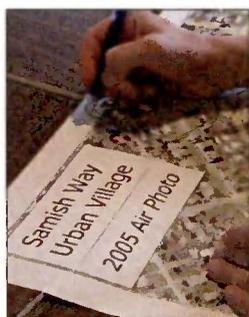
workshops to discuss the future vision of the area. The purpose of these workshops was to gather input on how the area should redevelop over time to achieve the goals of an urban village. Each workshop focused on a different subject:

Meeting #1: Introduction and Character - Discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the project area in terms of how these elements help or hinder the development of an urban village.



July 2008 Workshop Participants

Approximately 50 people attended each meeting, including neighbors, business owners, property owners, developers, real estate agents, land use consultants, and other interested stakeholders. At the conclusion of the workshops, staff hired a private engineer, architectural firm, economist, and transportation planning firm to analyze the feasibility of the concepts that were generated.



Staff presented the resulting draft master plan concepts and regulations for public review at a pre-application meeting on February 26, 2009, then to numerous City Boards and Commissions, City Departments and

small stakeholder groups, which led to the finalization of the plan.

The Samish Way Urban Village Subarea Plan was updated in 2019 to reflect changing conditions, such as the adoption of new city-wide a Pedestrian Master Plan (2012), a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans (2014), a Comprehensive Plan update (2016), and completion of an in-depth transportation study (2016-2017) for the feasibility of a new multimodal cross-section for the Samish Way corridor. The update also included recommendations from the City's Urban Village Status Report, which was published in late 2018.

Meeting #2: Public Realm: Streets, Trails and Plazas - Focus on street design, trail connections and plazas.

Meeting #3: Development Character: Permitted Uses, Design and Scale - Discussion of future

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development regulations, including permitted uses, design standards, floor area limits, height, and identification of “core” and “transition” zones.

Meeting #4: Summary of Input and Discussion of Alternatives – Presentation and discussion of concepts gathered at the previous meetings.



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1.4 NATURAL AND HISTORIC CONTEXT

Sehome Hill Arboretum provides a striking backdrop to this valley, which was established by early fishermen and builders as one of Bellingham’s first developed neighborhoods. It wasn’t until Highway 99 was constructed that the area began seeing the auto-oriented commercial development that exists along Samish Way today.

In general, the site slopes gently to the south from Edwards Street at its north end and to the east from 34th Street at an overall low grade, with some areas of rolling surface. Along Samish Way itself, the road consistently loses elevation from north to south.



1960 Aerial Photo of I-5, Bill McDonald Parkway and Samish Way (Jack Carver)

History of Samish Way

In the early 1930s, Samish Way was known as Maple Valley Road, a gravel road bounded by fields, trees and a few houses. In 1936, the road became part of Highway 99, also known as Pacific Highway 1, which ran along the West Coast from Mexico to Canada. By the mid 1950s, this main route into Bellingham had

blossomed with motels, gas stations and other auto-oriented businesses. ~~Reminders of that area include the Aloha Motel.~~

~~Rocket Express, serving coffee and doughnuts, is housed in the old two-pump gas station that opened in 1933 as Johnson Motor Service. (Bellingham Herald, October 2008)~~

Commented [CD3]: Photos replaced with current images of the district.



Johnson Motor Service circa 1933 (Marlene Hadley)



2009 use: Rocket Donuts

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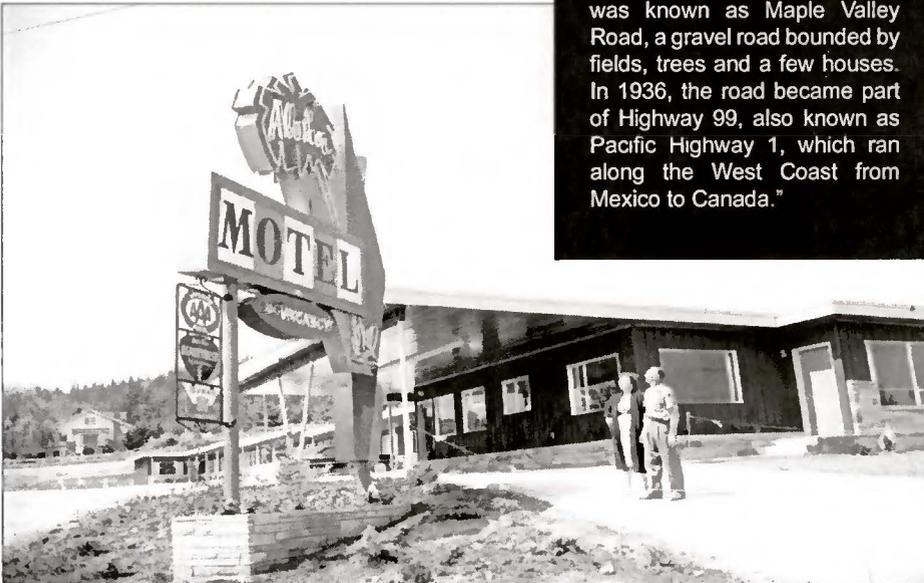
INTRODUCTION

In 1950, when Bellingham's population was around 34,000 people, there were approximately 38,000 cars using Highway 99 every day, most with destinations outside of Bellingham and most without stopping. In 1960, the first stretch of Interstate 5 opened between Samish Way and Northwest Avenue. The businesses along Samish Way west of I-5 have remained oriented to travel and auto oriented uses today largely due to the location of I-5's interchanges.



1946 Historical Photo - Heading North on Samish Way turning into Maple St. (Jack Carver)

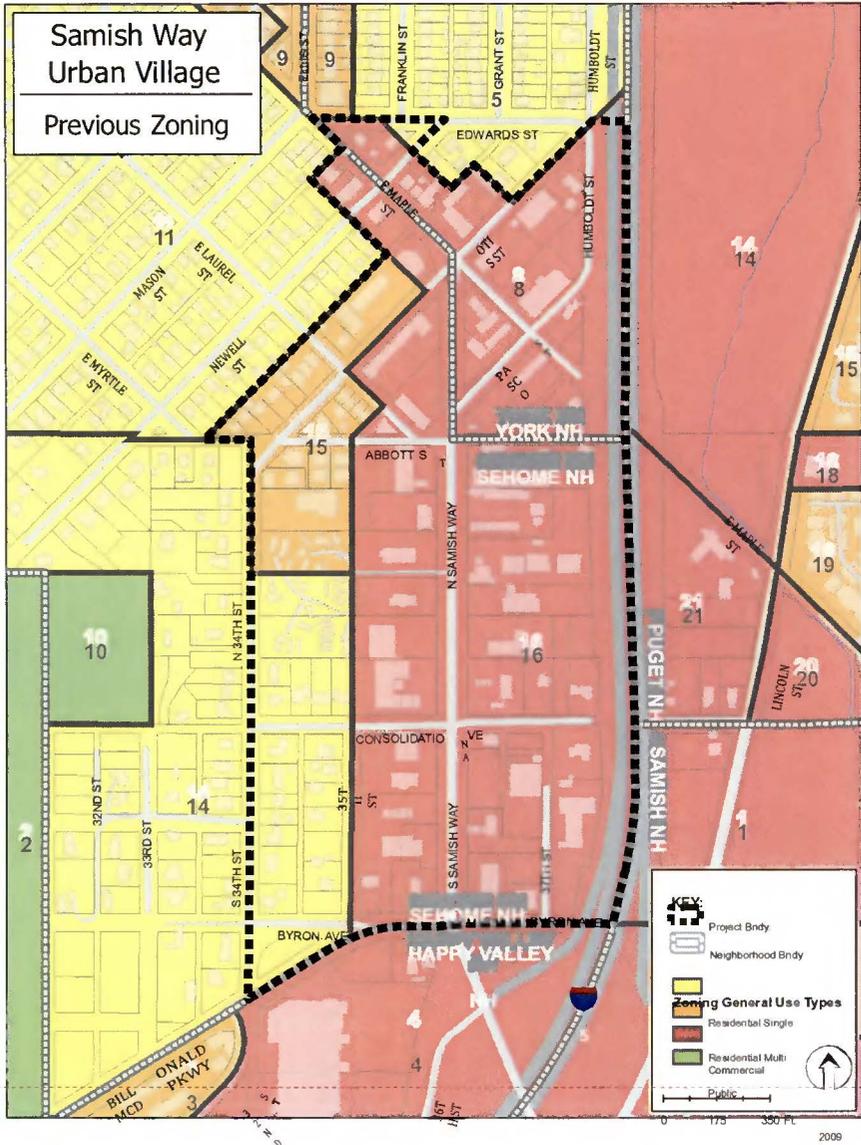
"In the early 1930s, Samish Way was known as Maple Valley Road, a gravel road bounded by fields, trees and a few houses. In 1936, the road became part of Highway 99, also known as Pacific Highway 1, which ran along the West Coast from Mexico to Canada."



Aloha Motel 1960 (Jack Carver)

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Commented [CD4]: Map removed; no longer relevant.

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The Area Today

Samish Way is a gateway to Western Washington University (WWU), downtown, the waterfront and Lake Padden. The area is easy to access from Interstate-5, which may perpetuate the automobile service-orientation of many businesses along this stretch. Currently, the area contains commercial and limited residential development, and the vast majority of the area is covered by parking lots. Approximately 61.7% of the project area is currently covered ~~in~~ with impervious surfaces.

Businesses along Samish Way include gas stations, hotels, restaurants, and retail establishments. The nearby Sehome Village shopping center provides grocery and other retail services to the south of the project boundary.

The areas to the west and north/northwest of the area are primarily residential, with single-family homes and small apartment buildings.



Looking north on Samish Way

Commented [CD5]: Photos updated with current images.



Looking south on Samish Way towards Bill McDonald Parkway



Parking Lot adjacent to Samish Way



Abbott Street

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CHAPTER TWO VISION

2. VISION

Envision Samish Way in the future. After passing the freeway service businesses near Bill McDonald Parkway, visitors enter a welcoming gateway to Bellingham, greeted by a tree-lined streetscape with wide sidewalks supporting cafes and window shoppers. The area feels comfortable, bright, and is spotted with small green spaces and public amenities.

In the morning, residents of the nearby historic neighborhoods stroll down the hill for a cup of coffee through the tree-lined bike and pedestrian trails that connect their homes to the urban center. They join the diverse mix of residents from the condos and apartments above as they start their day at a breakfast eatery.

Casual lunchtime spots are filled with students and workers enjoying free internet access along the tree-lined sidewalks safely separated from Samish Way car traffic. Business is brisk all day, with a diverse mix of retail and professional services complementing each other. Cars move slowly past the tree-lined median, stopping at the signalized intersections to allow students heading up and over Sehome Hill to cross the street.

In the evening, neon signs advertising the nightlife infuse the area with an atmosphere of fun that draws families as well as the young professionals and



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Samish Way Urban Village

Estimated Redevelopment Potential

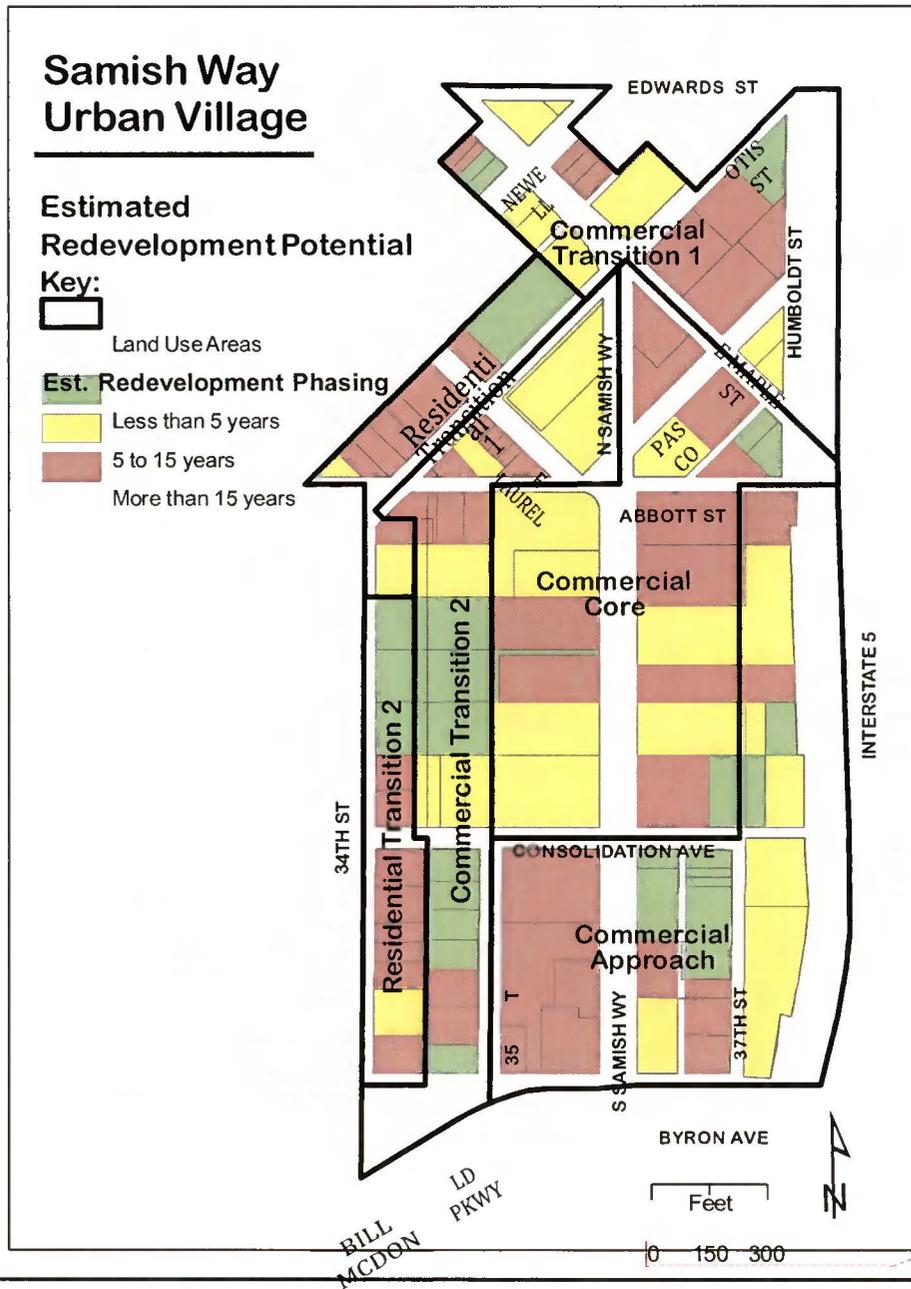
Key:



Land Use Areas

Est. Redevelopment Phasing

- Less than 5 years
- 5 to 15 years
- More than 15 years



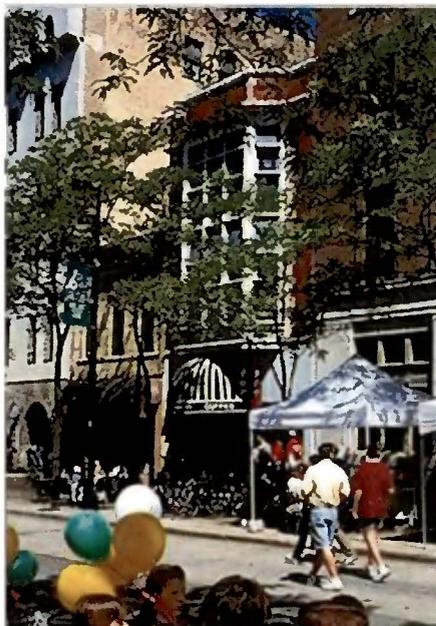
Commented [CD7]: Updated map shows properties that have been redeveloped since 2009 and some changes to reflect property status. Added language: "short-term, mid-term, long-term".

CHAPTER TWO VISION

WWU faculty that live in the area. The couple sitting in the drive-up burger joint remembers this was once Old Highway 99.

Many people who visit from other parts of town enjoy riding the bus on the [GO Line high-frequency transit line](#) that offers frequent transit service through the area, or else they park their car in the garage located below the business they're visiting. The solid row of businesses along the street draw people to continue window shopping until they are surprised to find they've perused the whole stretch of "The Way".

From the urban center, the taller buildings abutting Samish Way taper down to single-family and courtyard housing, facing the landscaped park-like expanses of the single-family homes which back up to the Historic Districts and Sehome Hill Arboretum above.



2.1 REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

In 2008, each parcel within the Samish Way Urban Village was evaluated for its redevelopment potential based on recent financial investment in the property, the condition of existing structures, the redevelopment interest of the property owners, and physical parcel characteristics to estimate a general timeline for redevelopment. Utilizing this analysis, it's estimated that up to 2013 growth projections estimated 1,291,646 housing units and 612,250,306,125 square feet of commercial space may be added to the area by 2022-2036. This level of residential development would result in a net density of approximately 29 units per acre. Limited development is anticipated within the was limited during the first 5-10 years of the plan's adoption of this plan, with only three new residential units and 17,530 square feet of commercial space added during that period. Some parcels may not develop until 2022 or later, depending on the economic environment. Changes in market and regulatory



Commented [CD8]: Updated images.



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conditions are expected to speed up pace of
redevelopment over the next decade.

SAMISH WAY URBAN VILLAGE SUBAREA PLAN

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3. DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Housing

There are currently 169 residential dwelling units in Samish Way urban village. The units are split almost evenly between condos (23%), single-family (22%) and apartments (22%). Mobile homes parks make up another 15% of the housing. There are 38 units subsidized for low-income residents, which reflects 22% of all housing units in Samish Way urban village.

Employment

There are currently 71 employers in the Samish Way urban village, providing a total of 595 jobs. Of these, 57% are in hospitality or food and beverage, 20% are retail, and another 17% are commercial businesses.

Environment

The LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development) rating system was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council to analyze whether a development will achieve a more sustainable development pattern. LEED-ND categories include several aspects of development, including "Smart Location and Linkage", "Neighborhood Pattern and Design", and "Green Construction and Technology".

Many of these elements must be achieved on a site-specific project level at the discretion of the individual developer. However, using just the known aspects of the Samish Way Subarea Plan, it appears this urban village could achieve at least a LEED Silver rating if constructed as envisioned. This is due primarily to the following plan elements:

Smart Location: The project is located on a previously-developed site within the City limits and is served by existing utility and street infrastructure



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DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Environmental Sensitivity: Except for a few steep slopes, there are no environmentally sensitive areas (such as wetlands, streams, floodplains, agricultural land, etc.) within the site boundaries.

Transportation Network: The project includes the creation of a more compact street grid to facilitate connections within and through the area. Additionally, [and more frequent bus service is proposed may be provided by WTA](#) as density in the area increases. Bike and pedestrian pathways through the area will be added and clearly delineated through a wayfinding system.

Compact, Mixed-Use Development: The goal of the Subarea Plan is to create a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood with a variety of businesses and services. Buildings would be designed to enhance the pedestrian experience, and the impacts from automobiles mitigated through traffic management and design standards.

Property owners and developers in the area are encouraged to consider how [the LEED-ND or other green building](#) criteria may be incorporated into their own site-specific redevelopment projects to save money on energy costs and meet the stated sustainability goals of the community.

3.1 DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER POLICES

Land Use Policies

- Encourage a healthy mix of residential and commercial uses to make the area a desirable place to live, work and play.

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- ~~Explore the establishment of a~~Continue to offer the Multi-family Tax Exemption ~~program zone within the Subarea to~~ encourage market rate and affordable residential development.
- Allow light manufacturing and some auto-oriented uses within the Approach area.
- Require ground floor ~~commercial-retail~~ uses ~~along Samish Way and emphasize Samish Way between the Otis Street and Abbott Street intersections~~ as the primary commercial ~~corridor mode~~. Provide flexibility in other areas where topography, power lines, onstreet parking and/or market conditions do not support commercial uses in the short-term. In these cases, ground floor residential development should be designed for the future retrofit to commercial uses.
- Encourage development of a community center, day care, and other family-oriented uses, preferably in close proximity to the public plaza.

- Add street trees and landscaping to the right-of-ways within the project area.

Site Design Policies

- Develop ~~sites~~street frontage to create an interesting and comfortable environment for pedestrians.
- Construct buildings adjacent to the sidewalk except when setback to accommodate plazas, outdoor dining, wider sidewalks or enhanced landscaping.
- Locate eateries, outdoor cafes and plazas on the south and west sides of the development whenever possible to maximize light, warmth and comfort.
- Encourage structured parking where possible to focus ground floor space on pedestrian retail activity and other active uses. Where structured parking is impractical, locate it behind the building and provide landscaping to lessen the impact on the public streetscape.



~~The hotel market in Bellingham and Whatcom County is relatively strong (Property Counselors, 2009). Nine motels flank Samish Way between [redacted] St. and Bill McDonald Parkway. Hotels and motels are encouraged to continue to provide~~

~~imity to I-5, Western Washington University, and other area attractions. New hotels accommodations in the area, which is in close prox- and motels should consider incorporating ground floor uses, such as restaurants, that support the pedestrian character and provide services for area residents.~~

Commented [CD9]: Updated Text Box: "The lodging industry in Bellingham experienced phenomenal growth between 2008-2018, with the addition of over 400 new hotel rooms, primarily in the north end of town, according to Bellingham/Whatcom County Tourism. Meanwhile, two motels in the Samish Way urban village closed due to enforcement issues (including one, the Aloha Motel, which was purchased through condemnation proceedings and demolished by the City, then later sold to the Bellingham/Whatcom Housing Authority for redevelopment). The remaining motels along the Samish Way corridor continue to serve budget travelers and those visiting nearby Western Washington University; however, the market is not likely to result in hotel/motel redevelopment or addition of lodging in this area in the near future."

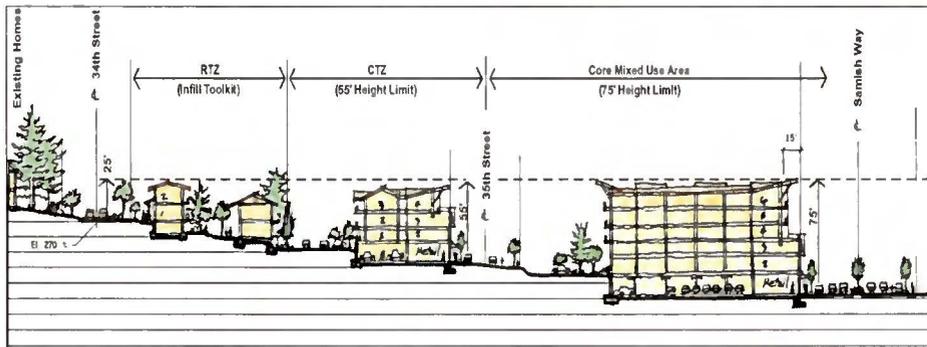
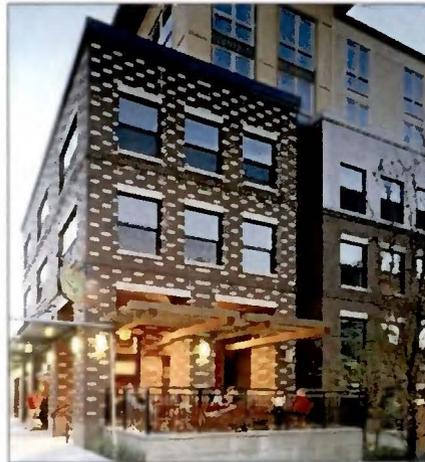
CHAPTER THREE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

- Incorporate bio-swales and other low-impact stormwater management techniques ~~into landscape medians, street plantings and private stormwater systems~~ where possible to provide an aesthetic amenity and reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff.



Building Design Policies

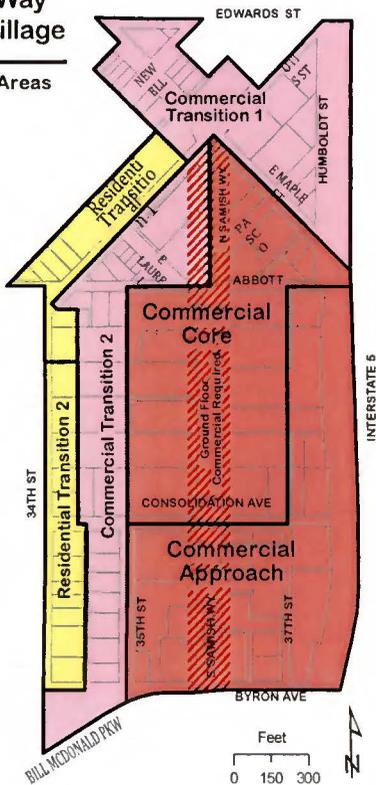
- Employ a design review process that ensures projects comply with the intent of the established design standards.
- Encourage developers to implement Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) noise mitigating measures in buildings adjacent to I-5 to buffer traffic noise.
- Establish building heights that create appropriately-scaled development for the desired intensity while providing economically feasible redevelopment opportunities.
- Require signs to be appropriately scaled in proportion to the building and site.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the adopted Design Review criteria as development occurs in the area.



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Samish Way Urban Village

Land Use Areas



Commercial Core (C)-
 The Commercial Core area is intended to be the densest area within the urban village with the highest concentration of employment and housing. This area is likely to have direct access to transit and a wide range of supportive land uses such as retail, office, recreation, public facilities, parks and open space. The pedestrian environment is emphasized.

Commercial Approach (C)-
 The Commercial Approach area is intended to allow commercial uses similar to the Core, with a less intensive mix of ground floor pedestrian oriented uses such as offices and interspersed drive through services such as gas stations, banks and fast food restaurants. Some light industrial and auto oriented uses are allowed to continue due to proximity to I-5 and the auto focused history of the area.

Commercial Transition (CT) –
 The Commercial Transition areas are intended to allow commercial uses similar to the Core and Approach Areas, but those with less limits on height, FAR and uses that may generate more noise and/or vehicular impacts on abutting residential areas. Height limits are lower to lessen the impact on the adjacent residential areas. Residential-only buildings are more likely to occur in the CT allowed in the Transition areas than mixed-use buildings, given the focus on N. Samish Way street front commercial development. However, they should all buildings should be

Residential Transition (RT) –
 The Residential Transition areas are immediately adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods. A mix of residential housing types is encouraged to support the abutting commercial area and provide housing choices for people of various incomes and ages.

Commented [CD10]: Updated map includes the Aloha Motel parcel (315 N Samish) in the core and required ground floor commercial between Otis and Abbott intersections.

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DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

*designed
with an active and direct interface with
the street to support the pedestrian
experience.*

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DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

3.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

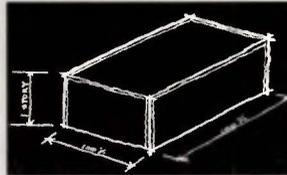
- Adopt development regulations to insure all redevelopment complies with the community vision established in this document.
- Develop an economically feasible Floor Area Ratio (FAR) system, allowing for increase in development capacity in exchange for provision of public amenities such as affordable housing, green building, public plaza dedication and/or contribution to the Lake Whatcom Watershed Acquisition Fund.
- Establish four development areas based on the desired intensity of development and physical characteristics: Commercial Core, Commercial Approach, Commercial Transition, and Residential Transition areas. These areas are intended to ensure development is appropriately scaled and to allow uses that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reduce the minimum parking rate and provide bicycle parking with all new development in the Commercial areas to support the multi-modal nature of the urban village.



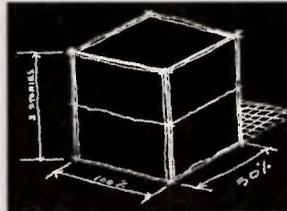
- Establish landscaping requirements to increase the amount of vegetation provided with new development.

What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

FAR is the gross square footage of a building divided by the square footage of the site.



Two different forms of a 1.0 FAR building



For example: In both examples above, the building is 10,000 square feet, and is built on a 10,000 square foot lot. This is an FAR of 1.0.

If you know the FAR and you want to calculate how much gross floor area you could build, multiple by the FAR by the site area.

- Encourage incorporation of smaller evergreens and other vegetation found in the Sehome Hill Arboretum to strengthen the connection to help integrate this open space amenity with the urban village.
- Work with neighborhood associations and private property owners to adopt a tree preservation plan identifying trees and other native vegetation that should be preserved to support habitat and add aesthetic value to the area.

Commented [CD11]: Updated photo using an image from Bellingham.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING

4. CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC PARKING

EXISTING CONDITIONS (2019)

Street right-of-way accounts for approximately 34 of the 69,257.8 total acres of the project area (~49%). N. Samish Way defines the character for most people traveling through in their cars. Wide traffic lanes, narrow unprotected sidewalks, businesses separated from the street by parking lots, and a lack of vegetation creates an threatening unpleasant environment for people and discourages pedestrian activity. Flashing crosswalks and pedestrian refuges were added at several locations along the corridor, which have improved pedestrian safety.

A comprehensive corridor study was completed in 2016 to examine alternatives for the Samish Way streetscape. This study identified several methods for improving bicycle and pedestrian comfort and safety, and to change the street to a more urban character. These improvements are intended to be constructed in 2020, as resources allow.

Some Side streets in the district often dead-end or have 1 way access, and Lack of streets-right-of-way in other areas results in large "superblocks" with no through pedestrian or vehicular access for over 900 feet in some cases.



Bicyclists riding on Samish Way sidewalk

Most bicyclists choose to ride on the sidewalk, which exists only on Samish Way and parts of Byron Avenue. These sidewalks are interrupted by numerous driveway curb-cuts, creating the potential for collision with vehicles attempting to enter the roadway.

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

In contrast, 34th Street has a pleasant rural environment despite its proximity to Samish Way and Bill McDonald Parkway. Shared lane markings were added in 2018 to direct bicyclists from Bill McDonald Parkway, along 34th Street to signalized crosswalks at Otis/Maple/Samish and beyond to Lakeway Drive through the York Neighborhood. This link to the surrounding bicycle network was recommended in the 2014 city-wide Bicycle Master Plan, and provides an alternative bike route with less traffic than Samish Way. Pedestrians appear comfortable walking down the street, surrounded by well-established vegetation. However, there are limited connections to the Sehome Hill Arboretum or into the commercial area, and no sidewalks exist.

As Samish Way redevelops, adequate parking must be provided in a way that does not detract from the intended pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Shared parking facilities should be encouraged and on-street parking added to side streets wherever possible as conditions warrant to support the commercial activity in the area and to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.

4.1 CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING POLICIES

Circulation Policies

- Enhance the street grid and eliminate-reduce the impact of “superblocks” by extending connections from 35th Street and 37th Street between Consolidation Avenue and Abbott Street. Right-of-way should be dedicated upon property redevelopment for this purpose.
- ~~Add a~~ A new east-west mid-block pedestrian connection between Abbott Street and Consolidation Avenue and a new link from the Street to the Commercial areas should be

provided as shown on the right-of-way and pedestrian connection map on page 243.

- ~~Support street vacations when exchanged for newly dedicated right-of-way.~~

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

- Create an access management ordinance that requires redevelopment to consolidate individual driveways to shared driveways along N. Samish Way to increase automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian safety. An access management ordinance would allow for the identification of future opportunities for landscaped medians that could be constructed in the center turn lane if driveways are consolidated and/or eliminated.
- Consistent with the City's 2016-2017 Samish-Maple-Ellis Corridor Study completed by Public Works, rReduce Samish Way to two one vehicle lanes in each direction, add buffered bicycle facilities lanes in each direction, and a intermittent landscape median/turn lane to on Maple Street between Otis and Edwards where feasible.
- ▲ Once the Samish Way transportation improvements listed above are completed, rReduce the posted speed limit along Samish Way to a maximum of 25 miles per hour as redevelopment occurs and automobile traffic increases to make the street more comfortable for bikes/pedestrians and increase the visibility of businesses to passerby.
- As warranted over time as redevelopment occurs and as vehicle traffic increases, dConstruct traffic signals or roundabouts to on Samish Way at the intersections with Abbott and Consolidation to manage traffic flow from side streets while maintaining and create safe pedestrian crossings.
- Highlight pedestrian crossings with bulb-out sidewalks, use of different surface materials and markings, and use of the landscape median as a mid-street pedestrian refuge.
- Add a new traffic signal pedestrian-activated pedestrian crossing signal to the intersection of 354th Street and Bill McDonald Parkway.
- Work with WTA to design a bus pullout in the public right of way on the north side of Bill McDonald parkway between 34th and 35th Streets that is capable of accommodating future 70-foot long articulated busses traveling to WWU. prior to 35th Street being opened to traffic.
- ▲ Study future multimodal transportation improvements to the Samish Way/Bill McDonald Pkwy intersection, which is expected to experience significant morning and evening vehicle traffic congestion. Provide a double left turn lane at Bill McDonald Parkway to allow for adequate storage space for vehicles preparing to turn northbound onto Samish Way.
- Add new multi-use public trail connections to the Sehome Hill Arboretum at Allen Avenue and Newell Street, as identified in the Sehome Arboretum Master Plan.
- Establish a Expand the City's vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding systems to guide people to and from the Sehome Hill Arboretum, WWU, Lake Padden and downtown.
- Supply curb cuts through the traffic diverters at Grant and Humboldt Streets to allow bikes and wheelchair access between the Samish Way Urban Village, Franklin Park, and the York Neighborhood.

CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

- Explore the feasibility for a bike and pedestrian overpass across Interstate 5 near ~~E-Maple and Abbott Streets~~Consolidation Avenue to connect the Samish Way Urban Village to the Western Washington University/Whatcom Transportation Authority Park and Ride and developed neighborhoods east of I-5.
- As traffic increases, implement traffic management techniques as needed along 34th Street (based on established Public Works' ~~adopted~~ criteria) to regulate traffic flow through the established neighborhoods.
- Prohibit vehicular access from 34th Street to the commercially-zoned areas of the urban village, except for emergency vehicles as needed.

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING



Looking North on new 35th Street towards Abbott



Artist rendering of 35th street

Transit Policies

- Provide covered bus shelters and other amenities at bus stops and orient development towards transit stops to create a comfortable and interesting environment for pedestrians and transit riders and promote transit use.
- Encourage WTA to expand high-frequency (~~“GO Line”~~) transit service as redevelopment occurs and as new residential density creates a ridership base to connect the Samish Way corridor to WWU and downtown.
 - Relocate the westbound transit stop at Bill McDonald Parkway to the City right-of-way at Byron and 35th Street (across the street from the eastbound transit stop) to facilitate a safer pedestrian crossing to the Sehome Village retail service area and provide a pleasant environment for transit riders.
 - Work with WTA to design a bus pullout in the public right-of-way on the north side of Bill McDonald parkway between 34th and 35th Streets that is capable of accommodating future 70-foot long.

CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

articulated buses traveling to WWU.

- ▲ ~~Accommodate either 2 buses or a double bus at new bus pull-outs to support an eventual increase in transit service.~~

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING



Courtesy of Whatcom ~~Transit~~
~~Transportation~~ Authority

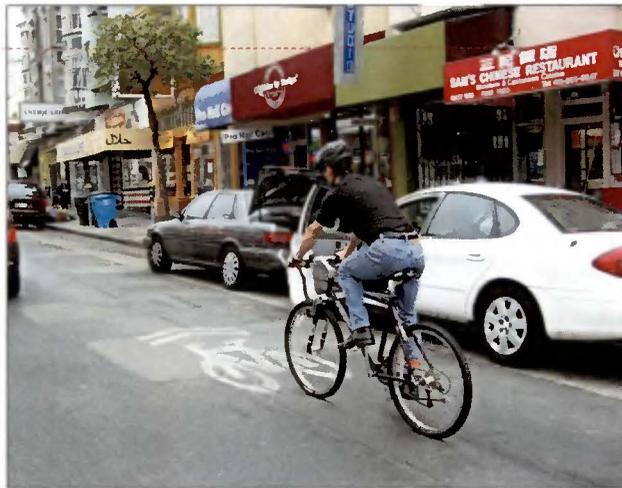
- Add street furniture, public art, and pedestrian-scale lighting to ~~streets within the~~the ~~retail c~~Core to create a sense of place and define the center of the village.
- Provide stormwater treatment in public landscape beds wherever possible.
- Construct a continuous 14-foot wide "sharrow" lane to accommodate bicycles along each outside travel lane of Samish Way. Each sharrow should be marked with a bicycle symbol to clearly identify that it is a shared lane for both bicyclists and motorists.

- Consolidate transit stops and fire hydrants into one location to maximize on-street parking.

- Encourage developers to work with WTA to provide annual bus passes to residents and/or employees in exchange for development incentives such as reduced parking requirements or transportation impact fees.

Streetscape Policies

- Add a landscape median with left-turn pockets at major intersections and consolidated driveways, and include street trees and landscaping along Samish Way.
- Maximize sidewalk width for pedestrian safety and comfort.



Example of a sharrow

- Narrow the drive lanes on residential and commercial shopping streets to slow traffic and allow wider sidewalks.

Commented [CD12]: Updated photo to show local example.

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING

- Design streets bordering the existing single-family neighborhoods to reflect the adjacent residential character and provide a buffer from the urban village.



Public Parking Policies

- Consider expanding the Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) if needed to limit parking encroachment into adjacent single-family neighborhoods as density occurs.
- If parking demand and commercial activity warrants over time Add on-street metered parking to the Commercial Core one side of Samish Way, provided safety for people walking or on bicycle should be a priority and should be maintained or enhanced should this future retrofit occur. Install parking meters in this area, utilizing revenue from the meters to form a Parking Benefit District for maintenance

and improvements.

- Encourage on-street parking on ~~and~~ all side-non-arterial streets where possible.

4.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- ~~Create a Maintenance District for the public spaces, landscaping and other public amenities within the Subarea.~~

Commented [CD13]: Insert Bike/Pedestrian Connections map in this section.

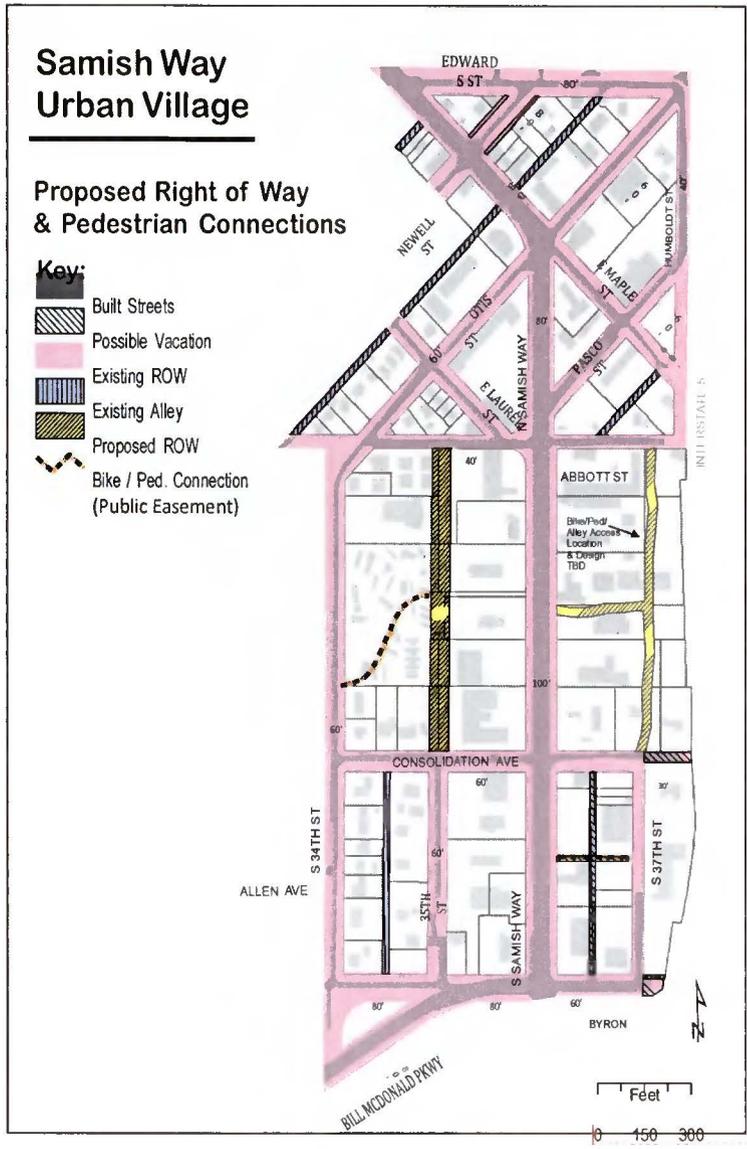
CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

- ~~Explore adding metered parking stalls to the Core over time, as redevelopment occurs and parking demands increase. Create an associated and creating a Parking Benefit District to direct meter revenues into local area beautification and maintenance.~~
- ~~Work with property and business owners to adopt an access management ordinance consolidating driveway curbs cuts at a minimum spacing of 200 feet, or where most logical.~~
- ~~Encourage property owners to establish a Local Improvement District (LID) or Late-Corner Agreement to organize the proportional fair share cost of improvements and amenities in the area.~~
- Require new development to construct adjacent streets to the standards recommended in this Subarea Plan, ~~except with limitations for N. Samish Way and Abbott Street, which are identified as longer-term transitional areas which will require a coordinated effort by the City to transform when conditions are ripe and resources are available, and identified "special streets".~~
- ~~Prohibit private vehicular access from 34th Street to the commercially-zoned areas of the urban village.~~
- ~~Explore grants and other financing funding sources tools to help implement the proposed street designs for N. Samish Way, 34th Street and Abbott Street, as conditions warrant.~~
- ~~Acquire Require dedication of right-of-way with redevelopment where identified and needed to provide access and~~ create a more compact

CHAPTER FOUR

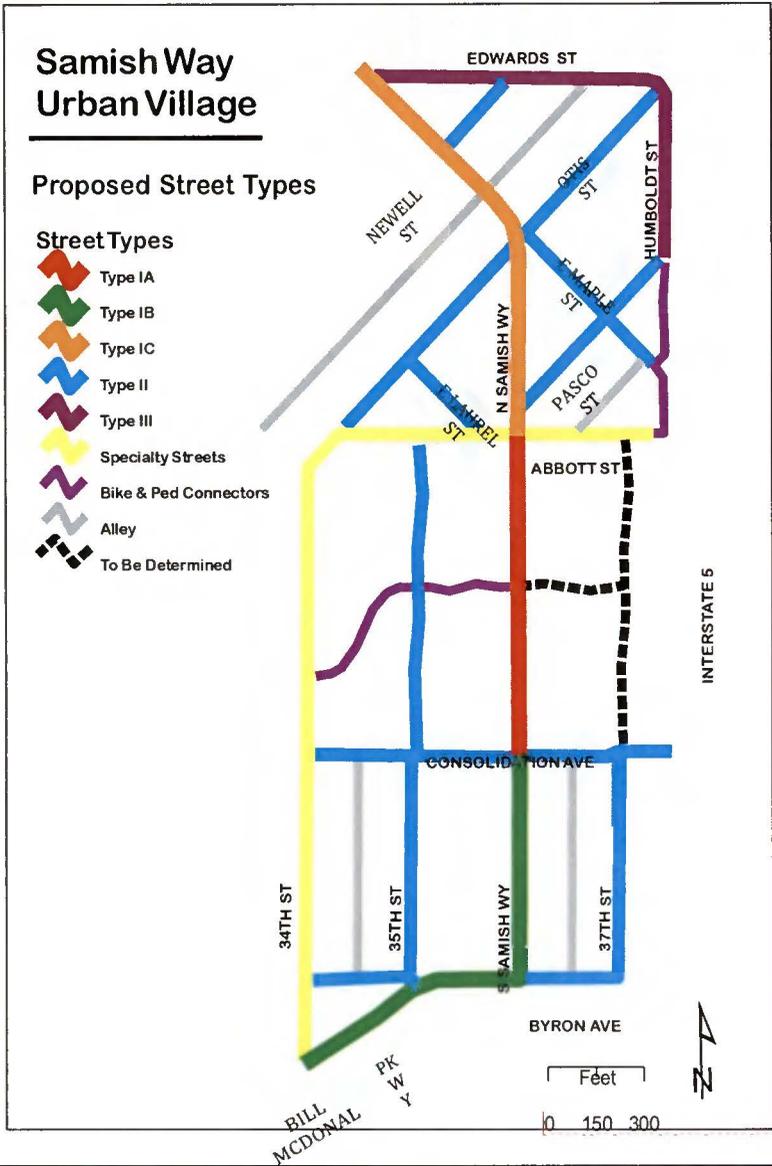
CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING



Commented [CD14]: Updated map shows current conditions and improves clarity of requirements.

CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

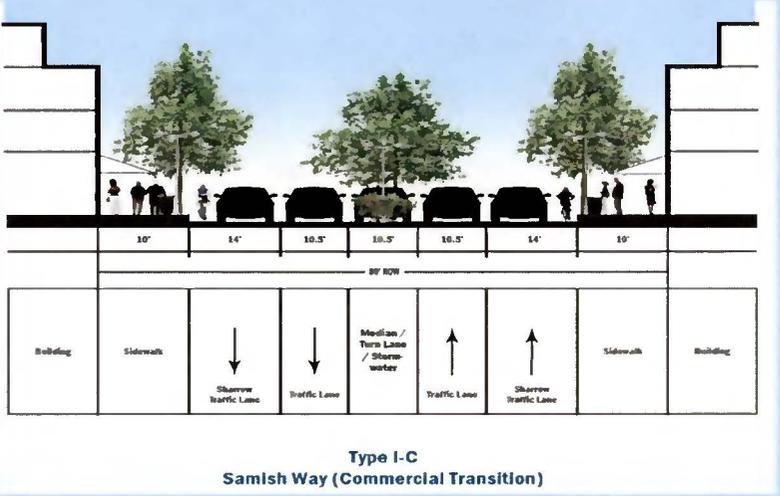
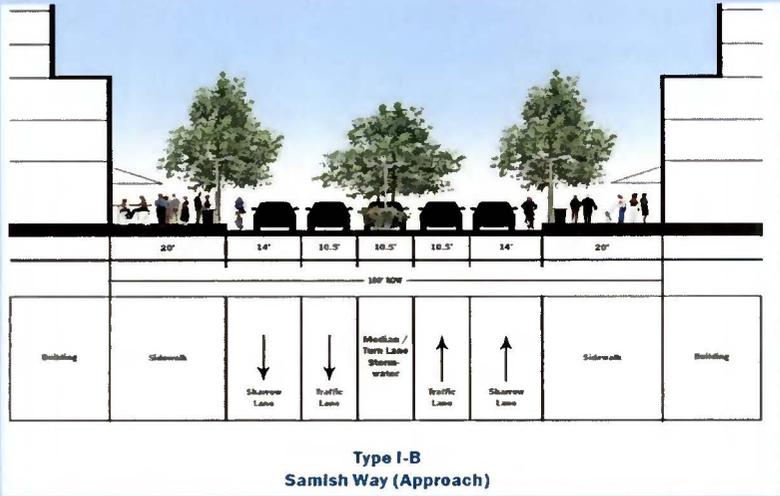


Commented (CD15): Updated map shows revised street type for Samish Way, revisions to improve clarity for 35th and 37th, and location of bike/ped connections.

CHAPTER FOUR

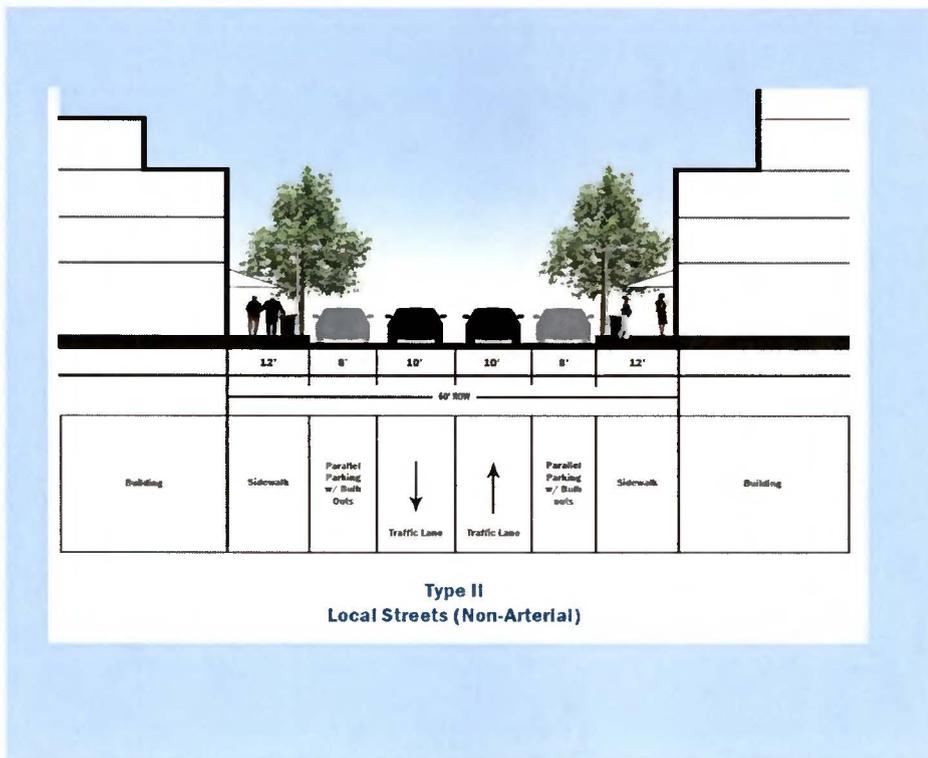
CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

Commented [CD16]: Updated cross-section to reflect Samish Way corridor study recommendations.



CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING

Type II: Local (non-arterial) Streets. These streets should maximize sidewalk width and on street parking. Drive lanes should be reduced to 10-feet to slow traffic. This cross section should be used as a guide to setting street standards in the area, with flexibility to approve alternatives based on localized conditions.



Type III: Residential boundary streets (not shown). These streets abut existing single-family zones and should be improved to the City's ¾ standard, with parking and sidewalks added to the project side.

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING

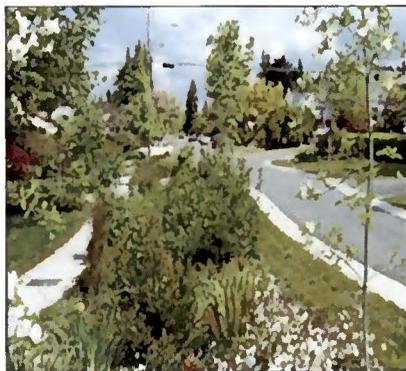
Special Streets: 34th Street and Abbott are designated as “special streets” with a unique design character to ~~compliment~~complement their location and function. These are primary travel routes for bikes and pedestrians ~~and~~and/or intended to ~~be a draw to the~~serve as a neighborhood amenity.

Special Street: 34th Street Bike Boulevard Concept

34th Street should be maintained by promoting a ~~“street edge alternative”~~ design with ample landscaping, at-grade sidewalks and narrow drive lanes. Addition of a sidewalk should be limited to the east side of 34th where new development and higher density is expected, ~~and~~—it should be set

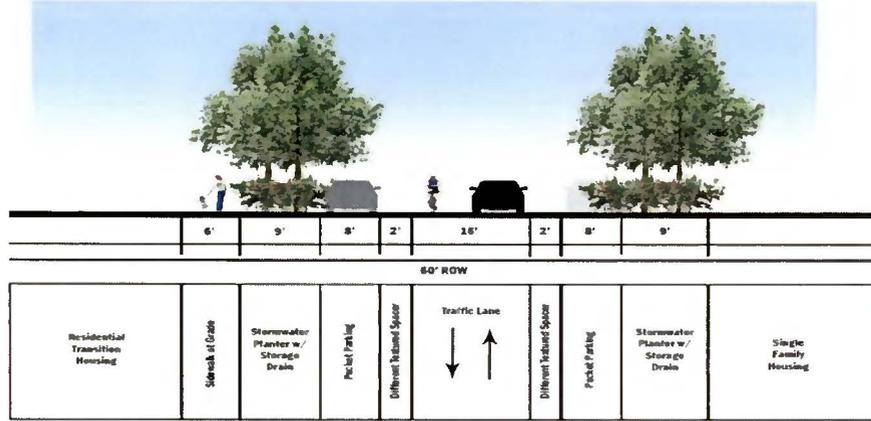
back from the street edge and allowed to meander to further accentuate the more leisurely character of 34th Street.

Pocket parking and ~~stormwater~~—landscaping dimensions may vary depending on the localized conditions such as topography, desire to preserve existing vegetation and whether ~~property owners~~ desire—on-street parking is required.
Example of the design character proposed for 34th St



CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING



**Specialty Street
34th Street**
~~(Street Edge Alternative Concept)~~

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING

Special Street: Abbott Street: Shared Street Concept

Abbott Street is an existing 40-foot wide right-of-way located in the core of the Subareurban village. While not necessary for circulation, ~~t~~his street connects people from the commercial areas ~~up~~ into the residential neighborhood and Sehome Hill Arboretum. To create a sense of place and community, a portion of this street should be redeveloped into a woonerf residential shared street. ~~There are five components found in most~~ The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) contains recommendations for shared streets which include:



Commented [CD17]: Replaced photo with regional shared street example.

Example of a woonerf

- 1) Textured pavements flush with the curb that reinforce the priority of the pedestrian.
- 2) Street furniture to define the shared space and subtly delineate the traveled way for all modes.
- 3) Signage and tactile warning strips to reinforce the use of the space.
- 4) Staggered blocks of landscaping, parking, or other elements to define use of spaces, decrease traffic or create traffic calming.

The specific elements appropriate for Abbott will need to be defined in further detail as the area develops and conditions and resources warrant the redesign of the street.

1) Create distinct gateways that announce, celebrate, and enhance the neighborhood's identity; this signifies to drivers that they are guests in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER FOUR CIRCULATION, STREETSCAPE AND PARKING

2) Add curves to the travel lane to deliberately break up the driver's sight line.

3) Use features that serve a dual purpose of slowing traffic while providing amenities for residents to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. Examples of such features would be benches, bollards, play equipment, and plantings.

4) To discourage drivers from speeding, a shared street should eliminate continuous curbs. This creates a situation where drivers and pedestrians are placed on the same level, and drivers are directed by bollards, street furniture, trees, and varied pavement treatment.

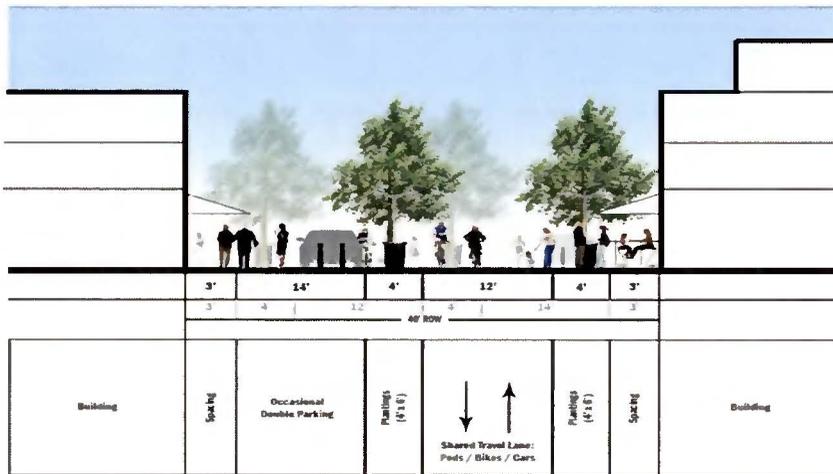
5) Finally, it is crucial to provide parking but with intermittent spacing so that the street does not begin to feel like a parking lot. The cumulative effect of these measures is a greater sense of comfort in hope that pedestrians will use the street space. (Colin Hand, 2007)

CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCULATION, STREETScape AND PARKING



Artist rendering of Abbott Street



Specialty Street
Abbott Street
 (Shared Street Concept)

CHAPTER FOUR
CIRCULATION, STREETScape
AND PARKING

CHAPTER FIVE

PARKS, PLAZAS, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Samish Way Urban Village Parks & Openspace

5 . PARKS, PLAZAS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Commented [CD18]: Enlarged map to full page.



Today, there is limited public open space within the Samish Way urban village boundary. However, there are several existing parks within close proximity. This plan contains goals to enhance the connections to these surrounding open spaces and create new gathering places within the urban village.

The Sehome Hill Arboretum is a 180-acre natural forest habitat managed jointly by The City of Bellingham and Western Washington University. Passive recreational amenities are provided via the numerous trails that crisscross the site. The eastern boundary of Sehome Hill creates a lovely forested backdrop to the Samish Way Subarea. However, steep topography limits the number of access points.

Other parks within walking distance include Franklin Park (located within the York Neigh-

borhood) and Laurel Park (located to the northwest in the Sehome Neighborhood). These are small neighborhood parks that provide space for families and students to intermingle and play.

Several small areas of undeveloped right of way dot the project area. These have been sporadically attended to by adjacent neighbors and other interested parties, but could be further enhanced to provide additional amenities to the public.

CHAPTER FIVE

PARKS, PLAZAS, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Using/Providing Amenities Within the Existing Public Right-of-Way

Byron / Bill McDonald Parkway – A volunteer group intentionally planted this area as a chestnut grove. This grove should be maintained and enhanced as a pocket park, including removal of invasive species and addition of plantings. Several large evergreen trees border Bill McDonald Parkway, providing pleasant coverage but limited visual access into the site. Larger evergreens along Bill McDonald should be selectively thinned to increase sunlight and make the area safer for general public use.

Bicycle and pedestrian access from 34th Street via the trail to Bill McDonald Parkway should be upgraded to ADA standards and enhanced as conditions warrant and resources allow. The existing Whatcom Transportation Authority bus stop should be moved west, adjacent to this area, across the street from the eastbound bus stop. An enhanced pedestrian crossing should be provided via a new signalized inter-section pedestrian flashing crosswalk at the intersection of 34th 35th and Bill McDonald Parkway. Passive recreational opportunities such as trails and benches would also make the area a more usable amenity for pedestrians and transit riders.



34th Street & Abbott Street – This small triangular piece of right-of-way is at a crossroad between the existing neighborhood and the urban village. Native vegetation at this site should be retained, and the trail widened to allow increased/improve access. Wayfinding signs should be added to this location to direct people to the Commercial Core, Abbott Street, and down 34th Street to the Sehome Village shopping center.

The other small triangle of vegetation located to the west on Newell Street should be preserved as native habitat, with a wayfinding sign to the Newell Street trail connection.

Humboldt Street Right-of-Way – The south end of the Humboldt Street right-of-way terminates and becomes at property of-owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation. Fir and other tall trees would interfere with existing power lines, so unless these are moved underground and relocated, a tree buffer of short pines and tall shrubs should be established. A bike and pedestrian connection should be extended to 37th Street and wayfinding signs added



to indicate connections to other areas of interest within the City

Commented [CD19]: Updated photos to show current conditions.

CHAPTER FIVE
PARKS, PLAZAS, AND
NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

CHAPTER FIVE PARKS, PLAZAS, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

5.1 PARKS, PLAZAS, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTION POLICIES



- Construct a new public plaza within the Core area of the village. This plaza should be a minimum of 16,000 square feet and abut on at least 1 public street.
- Public plaza(s) should be constructed to include amenities such as:
 - Water feature(s);
 - Landscaping (including a mixture of trees, shrubs and groundcover);
 - Public art;
 - Outdoor furniture and resting places;
 - Pedestrian-scale lighting;
 - Community garden;
 - Play equipment;
 - Unique paving pattern; and/or
 - Other elements that promote public use.
- Encourage the development of smaller, privately-owned and maintained plazas and open spaces.
- Enhance connections to the Sehome Hill Arboretum and surrounding parks by providing

wayfinding signs from the urban village to the new trail entrances proposed at Allen Avenue and Newell Street.

- Consolidate private and public open spaces where possible to achieve larger and more functional public spaces.
- Utilize existing undeveloped rights-of-ways to enhance connections to and from the urban village and provide passive recreational opportunities.



5.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Offer a density bonus for the dedication of land to construct a public plaza.
- Incorporate pedestrian/bicycle connections and plazas into the Parks Capital Facilities Plan so that Park Impact Fee funds may be applied to acquisition and/or construction of capital projects within the project area.
- Require a public access easement to connect 34th Street to the Commercial Core, as shown on the Proposed Right-of-Way and Pedestrian Connection map on page 24.

CHAPTER FIVE
PARKS, PLAZAS, AND
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CHAPTER SIX CAPITAL FACILITIES

6. CAPITAL FACILITIES

The Samish Way Subarea contains basic capital facilities, such as utility infrastructure, streets, and minimal trails. Enhancements are needed primarily in the form of public space, trail connections and street improvements to achieve a pedestrian-oriented environment. Much of the area lacks adequate sidewalks or street trees, crosswalks, or other pedestrian amenities such as street furniture and garbage cans. Although some trails exist, many of these are informal dirt pathways that have been carved out by frequent use.

Utilities are well established in the area and appear to have the capacity to handle increased development and density. Prior to increasing infrastructure capacity, developers should explore new technologies that could reduce additional impact on the existing system without requiring an expansion of these systems.

6.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Since 2010, the City has invested over \$1,070,000 in transportation infrastructure projects, with another \$1,400,00 in investments planned for the coming years. This has been for improvements to sidewalks, four flashing crosswalks, center pedestrian refuges and curb extensions to improve pedestrian safety, as well as bicycle boulevards to improve access and safety for cyclists.

Where possible, the City should invest in improvements that will generate renewed interest in the area and promote redevelopment, primarily in the high-visibility location of Samish Way itself. These types of improvements are necessary for City-wide benefit, as they play into the larger transportation network.

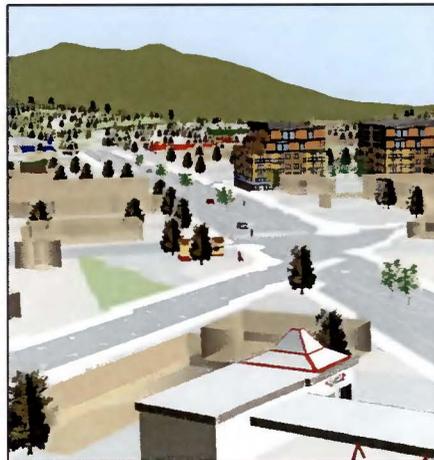
Since 2009, the private sector has invested \$1,088,404 in the form of 19 different improvements to commercial buildings. This does not include the additional cost of improving Private property owners are responsible for undertaking local streets, which is improvements on a site-specific project basis according to the intended streetscape established in this plan. but may wish to explore establishment of an LID, urban taxation district, latecomer fee system or other funding method to more equitably time street improvement costs. The estimated costs of adjacent street improvements were incorporated into

the economic analysis of the proposed Floor Area Ratio, and although they appear to be feasible, still bear a substantial portion of the cost of development. Flexibility in the street improvements requirements is necessary to support the slow evolution of this neighborhood over time and respond to the specific conditions effecting each redevelopment parcel.

The Full implementation of the proposed street designs improvements for Samish Way, Abbott Street to add a bicycle facility and 34th Street requires coordinated analysis and construction. This project will should be completed-undertaken by the City and paid for with a-utilizing a combination of infrastructure improvement grants, or loans, Local Improvement District and any available City/other identified funding sources, as redevelopment warrants this investments. Addition of on-street parking may be undertaken individually by a developer in the short-term as feasible, or may be undertaken by the City in the future if conditions warrant and resources allow.

Improvements to convert Abbott Street to a future shared street concept will also require significant coordination and expense, and should also be undertaken as a City-led project in the future, as conditions warrant and resources allow.

Park and Transportation Impact Fees generated from redevelopment in this area may be a potential source of revenue for capital facility projects. However, these projects must be incorporated into the Capital Facility Plans of the Parks and Recreation and/or Public Works Departments in order to utilize this funding source.



Future Capital Improvements Costs and Revenues

The Samish Way urban village is a long-term project which will develop over several decades. The following projects have been identified as future improvements to support the vision outlined in this document. Projects will be scheduled and budgeted over time a redevelopment occurs and as conditions warrant the prioritization of these investments. The costs and sources of revenues below are estimates only, and reflect the approximate costs and fees in 2009 dollars.

Local Streets*

Estimated Cost	\$12,024,000
Source of Revenue	Improvements to adjacent local streets improvements would be required as a condition of private development.

Reconfiguration of Samish/Maple/Ellis

Arterial Upgrade (Samish Way and E. Maple)

Estimated Cost	\$3,818,100 \$2-2.5 M Cost estimate is for Rechannelization to add a Separated bike facility. Future on-street parking may be added by the develop in the short- Term, at their own cost, as feasible, or in the future as a coordinated City project as conditions warrant and resources permit.
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Sources of Revenue

City Funds (LIFT, REET, Street, etc)	\$564,764
State and Federal Grants (Transit oriented development, Low Impact Development, Urban Renewal, etc)	\$2,000,000
Traffic Impact Fees**	\$1,253,336

Public Space Improvements

Abbott Street (Shared Street / Woonerf Concept)

Estimated Cost	\$1,065,000 \$1.2 to \$2M
Sources of Revenue	
City Funds (LIFT, REET, Street, etc)	\$565,000
State and Federal Grants (Bike / Ped Improvements, etc)	\$500,000

34th Street (Natural Drainage System model):

Estimated Cost:	\$1,775,000
-----------------	-------------

Sources of Revenue:

State and Federal Grants (Stormwater/LID, Bike/Ped)	\$500,000
LID Commitment from abutting property owners	\$500,000
City Funds (LIFT, REET, Street, etc)	\$775,000

Plaza Construction and Trail Improvements

Total Cost	\$860,000
Plaza Construction	\$800,000
Trail Improvements	\$6072,000

Source of Revenue

City Funds (PIF, REET, Grants, Etc)	\$860,000 (Estimated \$1 million generated from Park Impact Fees.)
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*Does not include Samish Way, Abbott Street or 34th Street

**Traffic Impact Fees (TIF) and Park Impact Fees (PIF) estimates were based on potential build-out of the Samish Way urban village through 2022 using 2009 impact fees charges.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

7. CONCLUSION

This Subarea Plan contains the long-term vision for the area. There are several actions within this plan that may help expedite the redevelopment of the area and implement the goals of the plan. Community involvement and interest in the project lead to the initiation of the City's master planning effort. This energy should continue through the promotion of the projects in this planning document.

7.1 IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

~~The abutting neighborhood associations should prioritize which projects should be included in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), identified for grant opportunities, and promoted for volunteer activities.~~

- Public/Private partnerships should be explored with WTA, WWU, WSDOT, Bellingham Housing Authority, and the Bellingham School District, along with private developers, to further the goals of the Subarea Plan.
- A Samish Business Association should be established over time to represent the goals of the business community by creating and create an organized forum for discussion and pooling of resources.
- ~~A Local Improvement District should be established as a method for achieving the desired infrastructure improvements in the Subarea Plan.~~
- Design and development of public amenities such as wayfinding signs, public plazas,

artwork selection and sidewalk amenities street design details should include a public process.

- Public plazas and other park amenities should be adopted into the Parks Capital Facilities Plan to make these improvements eligible for Park Impact Fee funds.

Commented [CD20]: Updated photo.



- Street improvements and other capital facility goals within this document should be prioritized and adopted into the Public Works Capital Facilities Plan to make these improvements eligible for Transportation Impact Fee funds, as conditions warrant.
- A Parking Benefit District should be explored to funnel invest meter revenue into local improvements for the Subarea.
- ~~Issuance of a Planned Action Ordinance should be explored as resources become available to streamline the SEPA environmental review process for site-specific developments.~~
- Study the feasibility of moving utilities underground on new and existing streets to enhance the aesthetic of the area and protect future cutting of large, native trees.

EXHIBIT B

20.37.100 Samish Way urban village – Applicability.

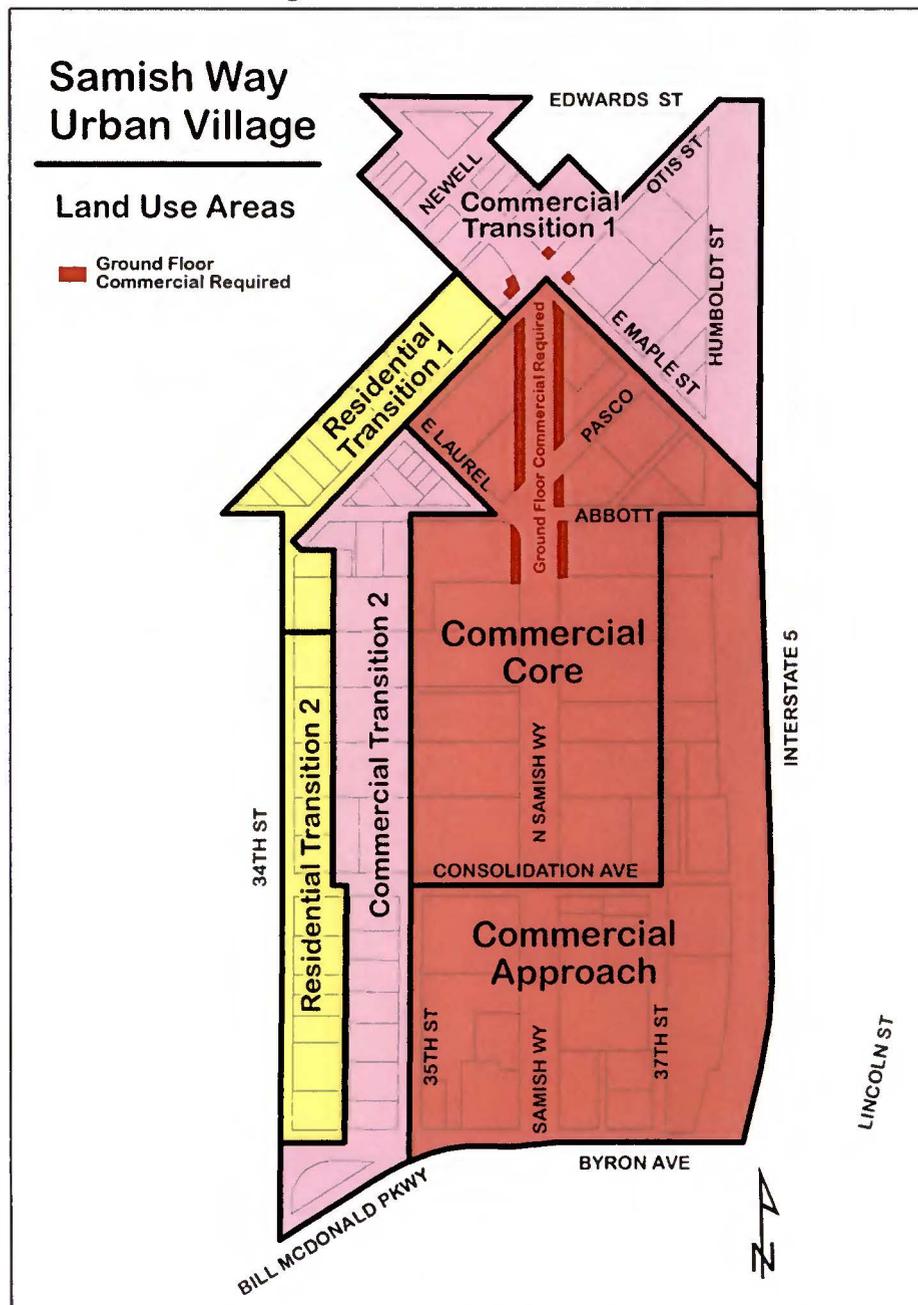
A. – C. [No change]

20.37.110 Samish Way urban village – Establishment of boundaries and land use areas.

A. The boundaries of the Samish Way urban village and associated land use areas are hereby delineated as shown in Figure 20.37.110.

B. 1.-4. [No change]

Figure 20.37.110 – Land Use Areas



20.37.120 Samish Way urban village – Permitted uses.

A. In Table 20.37.120, land use classifications are listed on the horizontal axis. Samish Way urban village land use areas are shown on the vertical axis.

1. If the symbol "P" appears in the box at the intersection of the column and row, the use is permitted subject to general requirements for the use and the use area.
 2. If the symbol "C" appears in the box at the intersection of the column and the row, the use is permitted subject to the conditional use provisions specified in Chapter 20.16 BMC and to general requirements for the use and the use area.
 3. If a number appears in the box at the intersection of the column and the row, the use is permitted in the use area subject to the special limitation indicated in the corresponding note at the end of the table.
 4. If the symbol "N" appears in the box at the intersection of the column and the row, the use is not allowed in that area, except for certain short-term uses (see BMC 20.10.040, Temporary uses).
 5. Use Determination: In the case of a question as to the inclusion or exclusion of a particular proposed use in a particular use category, the director shall have the authority to make the final determination. The director shall make the determination according to the characteristics of the operation of the proposed use as they relate to similar allowed uses within the use area.
-

Table 20.37.120 – Permitted Uses

P = Permitted # = <u>See note</u> Permitted with limitations C = Conditional Use N = Not allowed					
Land Use Classification	Area				
	Commercial Core	Commercial Approach	Commercial Transition 1 and 2	Residential Transition 1	Residential Transition 2
1.-22 [No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]
23. Detached single-family dwelling unit with less than 5,500 square feet of total floor area	P <u>N</u>	P	P	P(6)	P(6)
24. Detached single-family dwelling unit containing 5,500 square feet or more total floor area	N	N	N	N	N
25. Attached accessory dwelling unit (consistent with procedures and requirements outlined in BMC 20.10.036)	P <u>N</u>	P	P	P	P
26. Detached accessory dwelling unit (consistent with procedures and requirements	P <u>N</u>	P	P	P	P

P = Permitted # = See note Permitted with limitations C = Conditional Use N = Not allowed					
Land Use Classification	Area				
	Commercial Core	Commercial Approach	Commercial Transition 1 and 2	Residential Transition 1	Residential Transition 2
outlined in BMC 20.10.036)					
27. Chapter 20.28 BMC, Infill Housing					
a. Smaller House	P(5) N	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5) N
b. Small House	P(5) N	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)
c. Cottage	P(5) N	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)
d. Duplex/Triplex	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5) N
e. Shared Court	P(5) N	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)
f. Garden Court	P(5) N	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)
g. Townhouse	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5)	P(5) N
28.-43 [No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]	[No change]

Notes:

1 - 7 [No change]

20.37.130 Samish Way urban village – Development.

A. *Applicability.* The regulations of this section shall apply to the development of any principal and/or accessory use within any area in the Samish Way urban village except as follows:

Development in residential transition areas shall comply with Chapter 20.28 BMC, Infill Housing, Chapter 20.30 BMC, Residential Single Development, or Chapter 20.32 BMC, Residential Multi Development, [Table 20.37.130\(A\) and BMC 20.37.130\(C\) and \(D\) for corresponding development unless specified otherwise herein.](#)

Table 20.37.130(A) – Standard Development Regulations

Development Standards	Area						
	Commercial Core	Commercial Approach	Commercial Transition 1	Commercial Transition 2	Residential Transition Areas		
					Chapter 20.28BMC, Infill Housing	Chapter 20.30BMC, Residential Single Development	Chapter 20.32BMC, Residential Multi Development
Minimum Lot Size	None	None	None	None	(1)	5,000 SF	5,000 SF
Maximum Density	None	None	None	None	12,000 SF per unit	5,000 SF per unit	2,000 SF per unit
Setbacks from Property Lines	None (4)	None (4)	None (4)	None (4)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Maximum Height	75 feet (5)	75 feet (5)	45 feet (5)	55 feet (5)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	2.5, up to 34.5 (7)(6)	2.5, up to 34.5 (7)(6)	2.5, up to 3.5 (7)(6)	2.5, up to 3.5 (7)(6)	(1)	N/A	N/A

Notes:

1 -4 [No change]

5 Height is measured per BMC 20.08.020, height definition No. 1. A building may be divided into modules and stepped with height measured on a per module basis in response to topography on sloping property. Height may be increased by three feet in order to accommodate a taller ground floor commercial street frontage or increased roofline modulation. ~~**6** Building height on properties fronting N. Samish Way may be increased to 65 feet, with director approval, provided the development includes a community benefit such as affordable housing or public space consistent with the criteria in BMC 20.37.130 B and/or other community benefit demonstrated by the applicant.~~

~~**6 7**~~ See subsection (B)(2) of this section for FAR standards and bonus criteria.

B. *Floor Area Ratio (FAR).*

1. *Purpose.* The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) standards are intended to accomplish several purposes of the Samish Way subarea plan. Combined with the established height limits herein, the FAR allows for greater flexibility in how to mass buildings on sites and relate projects to unique on- and off-site features.
2. *Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Standard.* ~~The maximum FAR is 2.5, or up to 3.5 with use of floor area transfers and bonuses as outlined below. Base and maximum FARs for each commercial area are shown on Table 20.37.130-A. Floor area transfer and bonuses summarized in Table 20.37.130-B provide the opportunity to increase the base FAR on individual building sites to the maximum FAR on Table 20.37.130-A. Properties that dedicate property for right-of-way purposes as outlined in BMC 20.37.140(D) may use the pre-dedication square footage of the property for purposes of calculating FAR, i.e., every square foot dedicated yields two and one-half square feet of development area.~~
3. *Transfer of Floor Area.* Transfer of FAR among properties that are part of a single development plan is allowed when approved by the planning director, provided:
 - a. The designs for the sending and receiving properties are reviewed at the same time.
 - b. The property owner(s) executes a covenant with the city that is attached to and recorded with the deed of both the site transferring and the site receiving the floor area reflecting the respective increase and decrease of potential floor area.
4. *Floor Area Bonus Options.* Floor area bonus options are offered as incentives to encourage facilities and amenities that implement the Samish Way subarea plan.
 - a. Projects may use more than one bonus option unless specifically stated otherwise; bonus floor area amounts are additive.
 - ~~b. The maximum floor area ratio increase that may be earned through the bonus options is 1.0 for a maximum FAR on site of 3.5.~~

Table 20.37.130(B) – Summary of Floor Area Ratio Bonus Options

Bonus Option	Floor Area Bonus (1)
Public Plazas and Open Spaces	Dedicate 1 SF; receive 2.5 SF
Affordable Housing	Provide 1 SF; receive 4 SF
Minimum LEED Silver Gold Certification (or Equivalent)	1.0 FAR bonus

Lake Whatcom Watershed Property Acquisition Program	Receive one SF for each fee unit paid (see fee schedule)
Property dedicated for public right-of-way	Dedicate 1 SF; receive 2.5 SF

e.b. Bonus Options.

i. *Public Plazas and Open Spaces.* Floor area may be transferred to and from any property within the Samish Way urban village when approved by the planning director, provided:

(A) The transferred floor area will result in dedication of a public plaza or open space with a minimum square footage of 16,000 square feet.

(B) For each square foot ~~dedicated of base FAR allowed by the development code transferred from an eligible site~~, two and one-half square feet of bonus floor area is earned ~~on the receiving site(s)~~ up to a maximum of 1.0 FAR per receiving site; and

(C) The property owner(s) executes a covenant with the city that is attached to and recorded with the deed of both the site transferring and the site receiving the floor area reflecting the respective increase and decrease of potential floor area.

ii. *Affordable Housing.* Development which includes housing for low and middle income residents may receive bonus floor area when approved by the planning director. For each square foot of affordable housing, four square feet of bonus floor area is earned, up to a maximum of ~~0.5~~ 1.0 FAR. The project must have controls in place to ensure that the units remain permanently affordable in accordance with subsections (B)(4)~~(e)(b)(ii)(A)~~ and (B) of this section:

(A) Annual Income. All purchasers or tenants shall be from a household whose annual income, at the household's initial occupancy of the single-family residence, is 80 percent or less of the median income (determined by Housing and Urban Development) as adjusted by family size of the Bellingham Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), specifically defined as Whatcom County; and

(B) Housing Expenses. The monthly expenditure by a purchaser, as described in subsection (B)(4)~~(e)(b)(ii)(A)~~ of this section, for housing including rent or mortgage repayment, insurance, taxes and utilities (water and sewer) shall not exceed 38 percent of the gross household income at the time of purchase and the amount for rent or mortgage repayment shall not exceed 30 percent of gross household income. All other variable living expenses associated with the resident's occupancy shall not be a factor in the calculation of affordability.

iii. *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design™ (LEED) Certification (or Equivalent)*. Buildings that incorporate sustainable design receive a maximum 1.0 FAR bonus. To qualify for this bonus, the proposed project shall be certified by the planning director as a minimum LEED Gold Silver-certification (or equivalent).

iv. *Lake Whatcom Watershed Property Acquisition Program (LWWPAP)*. Contributors to the LWWPAP receive floor area bonuses when approved by the planning director, provided:

(A) Bonus floor area earned is paid for on a per square foot basis according to a fee schedule established by city council resolution;

(B) Floor area paid for and floor area earned is at a 1:1 ratio, such that for each square foot paid for, one square foot of floor area is earned on the receiving site up to a maximum 0.5 FAR bonus;

(C) The applicant must submit with the application for land use review a letter from the Bellingham finance department documenting the amount which will be contributed to the LWWPAP.

v. Property dedicated for public right-of-way. Properties that dedicate property for right-of-way purposes may use the pre-dedication square footage of the property for purposes of calculating base and bonus FAR. Properties that dedicate property for right-of-way purposes within the block bound by 34th and Abbott Streets, Consolidation Avenue and N. Samish as shown in Figure 20.37.140 may receive a floor area bonus when approved by the planning director, as follows:

(A) Land area dedicated and floor area earned is at a 1:2.5 ratio. For every square foot dedicated, two and one-half square feet of floor area is earned on the development site.

(B) The applicant must submit with the application for land use review a letter from a civil engineer documenting the land area to be dedicated for right-of-way.

C. *Design Standards*. Design review applies as outlined in Chapter 20.25 BMC. The following design standards are intended to carry out the goals and policies of the Samish Way subarea plan and shall be used in addition to the urban village design ~~district standards, and~~ decision criteria, and departure provisions outlined in BMC 20.25.020(D)(3)(b). Should the provisions of this section conflict with any other provision in BMC 20.25.020(D)(3)(b), the provisions of this section shall apply.

1. *Commercial Street Frontage*.

a. *Intent*. Along Samish Way, between Bill McDonald Parkway and E. Maple Street and including the Abbott Street and Otis Street intersections, street front uses should be

compatible with intensive commercial activity and provide opportunities for visual or interactive links between businesses and pedestrians.

b. *Standards.* Along Samish Way, between and including the Bill McDonald Parkway and E-Maple Street, Abbott Street and Otis Street intersections, ground floor commercial space (including retail, services, ~~office, government,~~ or similar non-residential uses) shall be provided along the ~~full~~-building street front as shown in Figure 20.37.110 for a depth of at least 20' measured from the front face of the building. Lobbies for Hotel and residential lobbies uses and hotels and parking garage entries are exempt from this provision. shall qualify as ground floor commercial, however hH hotel/motel guest rooms, dwelling units and structured parking shall not qualify occupy street level building frontage where ground floor commercial space is required.

2. *Yards.*

a. *Intent.* Provide appropriate transitions between Commercial and Residential areas.

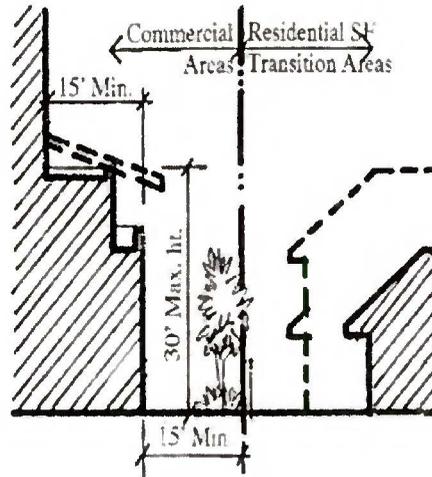
b. *Standard.* A building shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from a property line abutting or across an alley right of way from a Residential Single Zone or a Residential Transition Area. (See Figure 20.37.130)

3. *Height.*

a. *Intent.* The scale of those portions of a building facing an existing developed neighborhood should conform to the scale established in the neighborhood or the scale identified for the district.

b. *Standard.* The maximum height within 30 feet of a property line abutting ~~or adjacent to~~ a residential single zone or a residential transition area shall be two stories and 30 feet. (See Figure 20.37.130.)

Figure 20.37.130 - Massing and Articulation



4. *Detached Single-Family Residential Development in Residential Transition Area 2.* The following design standards and guidelines apply to single-family development using Chapter 20.30 BMC in Residential Transition Area 2.

a. – b. [No change]

D. 34th Street Access Restriction. Vehicular access from the commercial transition zone to 34th Street and Edwards Street is prohibited, except for emergency vehicles. [Ord. 2015-01-001 § 1; Ord. 2009-11-069].

20.37.140 Samish Way urban village – Street improvements.

A. *Applicability.* The regulations of this section shall apply to all new construction, and to renovation of existing site and building improvements when the cost of renovation of existing site and building improvements exceeds 50 percent of the assessed valuation of the site and improvements.the development of any principal and/or accessory use within any area in the Samish Way urban village.

B. *Requirements.* ~~New construction or renovations of 50 percent or more of an existing structure(s) shall improve abutting streets to three-fourths standard, with the following exceptions:~~

1. Abutting streets shall be improved to three-quarters standards, as shown in the Samish Way subarea plan, except as follows:

a. Samish Way. Projects abutting Samish Way shall improve only the abutting sidewalk from the existing curb line to the property line to accommodate the proposed street designs in the Samish Way subarea plan. Abutting curb and gutter shall additionally be replaced when necessary to close curb cuts and/or to replace damage sections.

~~2. Projects abutting 34th Street shall install the abutting sidewalk. Projects consisting of more than three units shall also install pocket parking.~~

~~3.b. Abbott Street. Projects abutting Abbott Street shall ~~install~~improve a five-foot minimum standard sidewalk and repave the abutting portion of the street.~~

~~4.c. 35th Street extension and link to Samish Way. Requirements for ~~P~~projects abutting the proposed extension of 35th Street between Abbott Street and Consolidation Avenue and the link to Samish Way as shown~~proposed~~ in Figure 20.37.140 are required to dedicate sufficient right-of-way and construct street improvements as necessary to serve the multimodal transportation needs of the proposed development and create an orderly extension of public infrastructure.~~

~~d. 37th Street extension. Projects abutting the proposed extension of 37th Street between Abbott Street and Consolidation Avenue as shown in Figure 20.37.140 are required to dedicate sufficient right-of-way and construct a 20-foot paved area meeting fire access and public works standards.~~

~~2. Pedestrian/Bike Corridor. A nonmotorized bike and pedestrian corridor with public access easement linking 34th Street to Samish Way shall be provided as generally shown in Figure 20.37.140. The corridor shall be designed and built to ~~c~~City standards.~~

~~3. The calculation of available FAR for land dedicated as right-of-way is outlined in BMC 20.37.130(B)(4)(b)(v).~~

~~The determination of the percentage of renovation shall be based upon whether the valuation of proposed site improvements exceeds 50 percent of the assessed value of the existing site improvements.~~

~~C. Street standards shall be consistent with the Samish Way subarea plan streetscape designs. Minor ~~M~~modifications to the standards in subsection (B)(1) and (2) above may be approved by the planning and public works directors. ~~Such modifications may be granted when:~~~~

~~a. Ppractical difficulties arise in the design and construction of streets due to topographic or geological limitations or other problems inherent or peculiar to the area, or~~

~~b. where ~~T~~the directors find that imposition of the required street design would be detrimental to the interest of the neighborhood, or~~

~~c. The directors find that the modification will provide an equal or better solution that is consistent with the goals and policies in the Samish Way urban village plan.~~

~~D. Street and Bike/Pedestrian Corridor Dedication and Improvement Requirements.~~

~~1. Thirty-fifth Street between Abbott Street and Consolidation Avenue. Thirty-foot public right-of-way dedication and LID commitment (or other approved method of street construction to the Type II street standard) is required prior to building permit issuance for properties abutting the~~

proposed 35th Street, as shown in Figure 20.37.140, on which new development, or redevelopment, is proposed.

Exception: Redevelopment of a single parcel consisting of less than 10,000 square feet of floor area with a height limit less than 35 feet under BMC 20.08.020, height definition No. 1 is exempt from this requirement. New structures may not encroach on the proposed right-of-way alignment.

~~2.—Pedestrian/Bike Corridor. A nonmotorized bike and pedestrian corridor with public access easement linking 34th to 35th Street shall be provided as generally shown in Figure 20.37.140. The corridor shall be designed and built to parks and recreation department standards.~~

Figure 20.37.140 – Proposed Right of Way & Pedestrian Connections

Samish Way Urban Village

Proposed Right of Way & Pedestrian Connections

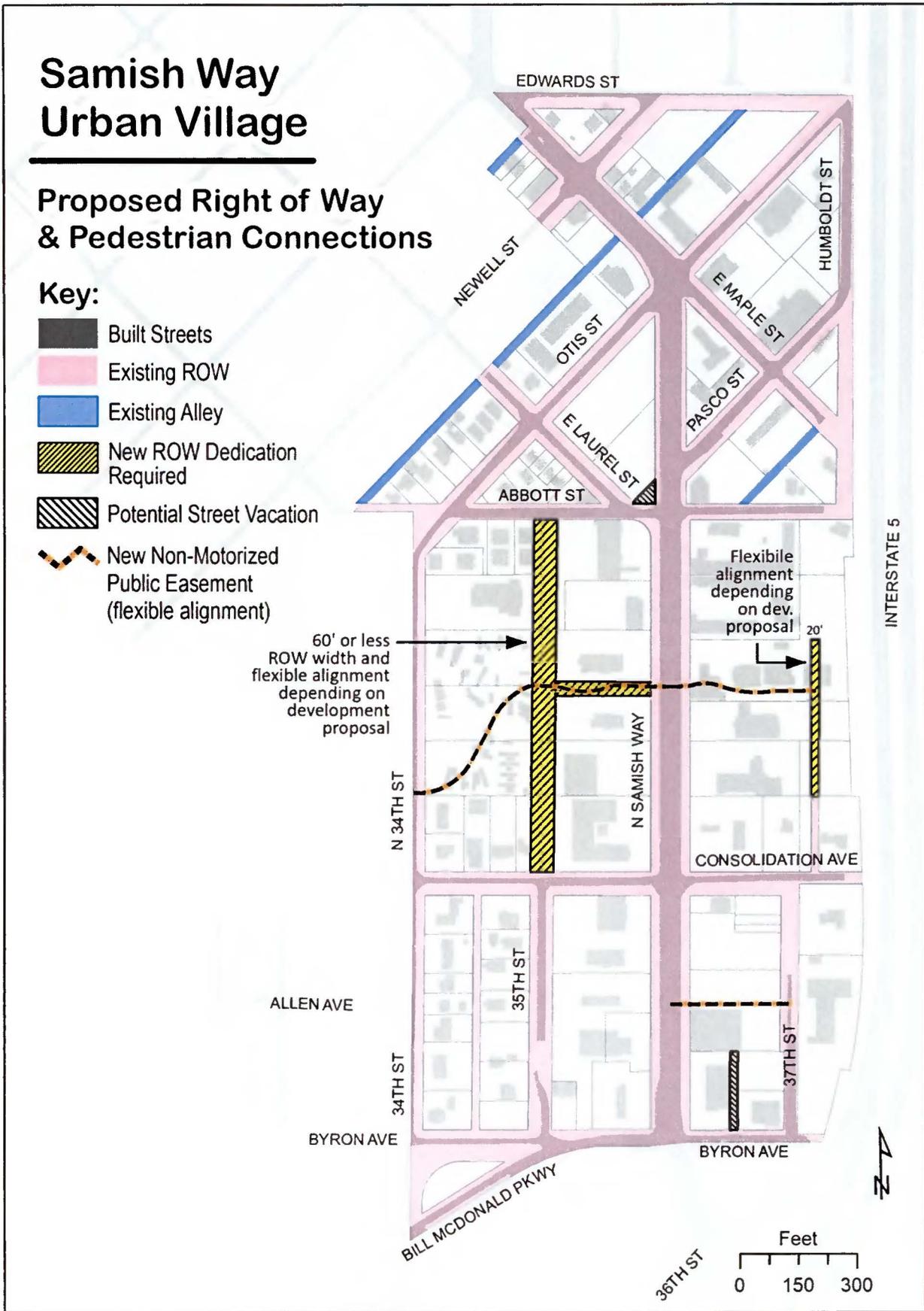
Key:

-  Built Streets
-  Existing ROW
-  Existing Alley
-  New ROW Dedication Required
-  Potential Street Vacation
-  New Non-Motorized Public Easement (flexible alignment)

60' or less ROW width and flexible alignment depending on development proposal

Flexible alignment depending on dev. proposal

20'



20.37.150 Samish Way urban village – Parking.

A. – E [No change]

F. *Bike Parking.* All new development shall provide bicycle parking spaces equivalent to 15 percent of the total required automobile parking, calculated prior to any automobile parking reductions. [Ord. 2017-03-009 5-34; Ord. 2009-11-069].

1. Number of Spaces Required. Bicycle parking is required for certain use categories to encourage the use of bicycles by providing safe and convenient places to park bicycles. These regulations ensure adequate short- and long-term bicycle parking based on the demand generated by the different use categories and on the level of security necessary to encourage the use of bicycles for short and long stays

a. The required minimum number of bicycle parking spaces for each use category is shown on Table 20.37.150. No bicycle parking is required for uses not listed.

b. The required minimum number of bicycle parking spaces is based on the primary uses on a site. When there are two or more separate primary uses that operate at the same time on a site, the required bicycle parking for the site is the sum of the required parking for the individual primary uses.

2. Exemptions.

a. No long-term bicycle parking is required on a site where there are less than 2,500 square feet of gross building area.

b. No bicycle parking is required for unattended surface parking lots.

3. Bicycle Parking Standards.

a. Short-Term Bicycle Parking.

i. Purpose. Short-term bicycle parking encourages shoppers, customers, messengers, and other visitors to use bicycles by providing a convenient and readily accessible place to park bicycles. Short-term bicycle parking should serve the main entrance of a building and should be visible to pedestrians and bicyclists.

ii. Standards. Required short-term bicycle parking shall be located:

(A) Outside a building;

(B) On the site;

(C) At the same grade as the sidewalk or at a location that can be reached by an accessible route; and

(D) Within 50 feet of the main entrance to the building as measured along the most direct pedestrian access route. For sites that have more than one primary building, the bicycle parking shall be within 50 feet of a main entrance as measured along the most direct pedestrian access route, and shall be distributed to serve all primary buildings.

(E) Short-term bike parking may be located within the public right-of-way provided the location and design are subject to public works department approval.

b. Long-Term Bicycle Parking.

i. Purpose. Long-term bicycle parking provides employees, residents, commuters and others who generally stay at a site for several hours a secure and weather-protected place to park bicycles. Although long-term parking does not have to be provided on site, the intent of these standards is to allow bicycle parking to be within a reasonable distance in order to encourage bicycle use.

ii. Standards. Required long-term bicycle parking shall be:

(A) Provided in racks or lockers that meet the standards of subsection (G)(3)(c) of this section;

(B) Located on the site or in an area where the closest point is within 300 feet of the site;

(C) Covered. At least 50 percent of required long-term bicycle parking shall be covered and meet the standards of subsection (G)(3)(c)(v) of this section (Covered Bicycle Parking); and

(D) Secured. To provide security, long-term bicycle parking shall be in at least one of the following locations:

1. In a locked room;

2. In an area that is enclosed by a fence with a locked gate. The fence shall either be eight feet high or be floor-to-ceiling;

3. Within view of an attendant or security guard;

4. In an area that is monitored by a security camera; or

5. In an area that is visible from employee work areas.

Table 20.37.150 – Minimum Required Bicycle Parking

<u>Specific Use</u>	<u>Long-Term Spaces</u>	<u>Short-Term Spaces</u>

<u>1. Multifamily Housing</u>	<u>2, or 0.5 per bedroom and studio unit.</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 20 dwelling units.</u>
<u>2. Commercial: Retail sales and service, including eating and drinking establishments.</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 12,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 5,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</u>
<u>3. Commercial: Office</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 10,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 20,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</u>
<u>4. Commercial: Off-street parking lots and garages available to the general public.</u>	<u>2, or 1 per 20 automobile spaces.</u>	<u>6, or 1 for each 20 automobile spaces.</u>
Note: <u>Wherever this table indicates two numerical standards, the larger number applies.</u>		

c. Standards for All Bicycle Parking.

- i. Purpose. These standards ensure that required bicycle parking is designed so that bicycles may be securely locked without undue inconvenience and will be reasonably safeguarded from intentional or accidental damage.
- ii. Bicycle Lockers. Where required bicycle parking is provided in lockers, the lockers shall be securely anchored.
- iii. Bicycle Racks. Required bicycle parking may be provided in floor, wall, or ceiling racks. Where required bicycle parking is provided in racks, the racks shall meet the following standards:
 - (A) The bicycle frame and one wheel can be locked to the rack with a high security, U-shaped shackle lock if both wheels are left on the bicycle;
 - (B) A bicycle six feet long can be securely held with its frame supported so that the bicycle cannot be pushed or fall in a manner that will damage the wheels or components; and
 - (C) The rack shall be securely anchored.
- iv. Parking and Maneuvering Areas.
 - (A) Each required bicycle parking space shall be accessible without moving another bicycle;
 - (B) There shall be an aisle at least five feet wide behind all required bicycle parking to allow room for bicycle maneuvering. Where the bicycle parking is adjacent to a sidewalk, the maneuvering area may extend into the right-of-way; and
 - (C) The area devoted to bicycle parking shall be hard surfaced.

-
- v. Covered Bicycle Parking. Covered bicycle parking, as required by this section, can be provided inside buildings, under roof overhangs or awnings, in bicycle lockers, or within or under other structures. Where required covered bicycle parking is not within a building or locker, the cover shall be:
- (A) Permanent;
 - (B) Designed to protect the bicycle from rainfall; and
 - (C) At least seven feet above the floor or ground.
- vi. Signs. If required bicycle parking is not visible from the street or main building entrance, a sign shall be posted at the main building entrance indicating the location of the parking.

20.37.160 Samish Way urban village – Landscaping.

A. – D. [No change]

20.37.170 Samish Way urban village – Signs.

A. – C. [No change]

D. *Standards.*

1. Off-premises and rooftop signs are prohibited. Pole signs are prohibited with the exception of freeway-oriented signs as specified herein.
2. Building-mounted signage shall not exceed 300 square feet per use, and no single use shall have more than 100 square feet per building elevation, except as provided in subsections (D)(4) and (5) of this section.

Exemption: Building identification signs or cornerstones are permitted as an integral and architecturally compatible part of the building or structure. Cornerstones shall not exceed four square feet and building identification signs shall not exceed 32 square feet. These exemptions shall not contain any colors, words, letters, numbers, symbols, graphic designs, logos or trademarks for the purpose of identifying a good, service, product or establishment.

3. One monument sign per development site is permitted whether it is for a single or mixed use. The monument sign shall not exceed 60 square feet per face or six feet in height measured from existing grade.

4. Freeway-oriented signs are permitted as follows:

- a. Limited to the commercial approach area.
- b. Limited to one sign per property.
- c. Sign may be freestanding or located on a building.
- d. Sign shall be located between the subject building and the freeway.
- e. Sign height shall be no more than 20 feet above the surface of the nearest primary driving lane at the nearest point to the sign.
- f. Sign size shall not exceed 250 square feet in area on any one face.

5. Animated, moving, blinking or electronic (LED or similar) message boards are permitted as follows:

- a. Only in association with theaters.
- b. The total gross area of the message board for any one use shall not exceed one square foot of area to one lineal foot of street frontage or 100 square feet, whichever is more restrictive.
- c. Message boards are prohibited as freeway-oriented signs.

6. Building-mounted signs extending over the street right-of-way shall comply with ~~the International applicable Building and public works Codes~~. ~~There shall be at least eight feet of vertical clearance between the bottom of the sign and the sidewalk and the sign shall not extend within two feet of the street curb.~~

7.- 9. [No change]

BELLINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

JANUARY 24, 2019

Following a public hearing and deliberation on the proposed amendments to the Samish Way Urban Village subarea plan and development regulations, the Bellingham Planning Commission has determined by a vote (7-0) that the proposal complies with and implement the goals and policies of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and should be adopted.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Summary of Proposal

The Samish Way Urban Village (SWUV) is located generally west of I-5, east of 34th Street, north of Bill McDonald Parkway and south of Edwards Street. Updates to the 2009 Subarea Plan and associated development regulations for the area were proposed due to changes in the transportation network identified in the city-wide pedestrian master plan (2012), bicycle master plan (2014), and N. Samish Way arterial study (2017). Other changes to the development regulations were recommended in the 2018 urban village status report. Outdated information was updated for consistency with city-wide codes and current conditions in the area.

2. Background Information

- The SWUV plan was initiated by the community and adopted in 2009 after significant public outreach and involvement in developing the overall vision and goals. The proposed amendments are consistent with this community vision.
- In 2015, the City acquired the site of the former Aloha Motel at 315 N. Samish Way. The property was sold to the BHA in 2017 and will be redeveloped with a mix of over 150 housing units serving a range of incomes, new office headquarters for the agency, and commercial uses. Redevelopment of the site will be a major step in moving closer towards the future vision for Samish Way urban village. The BHA has been pursuing financing and preliminary design feasibility since the purchase of the property, and recently received notification of a \$3M award from the State Department of Commerce Housing Trust Fund for project, which is scheduled to break ground later this year.
- In 2017, the city conducted a study to identify alternative configurations for N. Samish Way to reduce the number of drive lanes with the goal of improving pedestrian and bicycle safety. This resulted in a revised recommendation for the cross-section of this street, in conflict with the existing subarea plan.
- On October 24, 2018 city staff held a neighborhood meeting at Garden View Methodist Church on Forest Street to introduce the preliminary recommendations for the amendments. Approximately six members of the public were in attendance.
- On December 10, 2018, staff presented a report on the status of Bellingham's urban villages to City Council. Council supported the recommended changes for Samish Way, which are included in the proposal.

- On December 21, 2018, the site was posted and a Notice of Public Hearing mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the SWUV boundary.
- On January 24, 2019, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and work session on the proposed amendments.

3. Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies

The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies the goals and policies that are used as a guide for legislative and administrative decisions regarding changes to the comprehensive plan and development codes. Relevant comprehensive plan goals and policies are provided in Attachment A.

4. Public Comment

The public comments received are provided in Attachment B.

5. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination if applicable

A non-project Determination of Non-Significance was issued on December 20, 2018.

6. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and/or Review Criteria (BMC 20.20.040)

A. There exists an error, omission or inconsistency in the pertinent comprehensive plan or neighborhood plan provision;

Changing neighborhood conditions and updates in city-wide regulations have resulted in inaccuracies in the SWUV plan and regulations. The amendments will address these issues:

- Update required street improvement cross sections and right-of-way dedication maps to reflect current conditions;
- Update preferred bike routes, bike facilities and pedestrian facilities for consistency with the city-wide bicycle and pedestrian master plans;
- Update growth projections from the most recent Comprehensive Plan analysis;
- Update hotel/motel data to reflect the current status of those operating in the district and the overall lodging industry;
- Update capital facility cost estimates with current projects and prices.

B. All of the following criteria have been met:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and other applicable laws; or

The Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, developed in accordance with the GMA, contains several goals and policies that are consistent with and addressed by these amendments, as provided in Attachment A.

2. The proposed amendment addresses changing circumstances, changing community values, and is consistent with and will help achieve the comprehensive plan goals and policies.

The proposed amendments address the changing circumstances and values and support the applicable comprehensive plan goals and policies:

- Revise the proposed configuration of the Samish Way arterial to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and create a more appropriate street character to support development of a compact mixed-use district;
- Eliminate the requirement for a setback or step-back when abutting a right-of-way to reinforce building to the street edge;
- Provide flexibility in building height for the BHA redevelopment to support the creation of a range of housing types, including much needed affordable, senior, and transitional housing;
- Expand the allowable types of infill housing and increase the density of infill housing in the Residential Transition zones to promote residential development and range of housing opportunities.

3. The proposed amendment will result in long-term benefit to the community and is in the community's overall best interests.

The proposed amendments will continue to support the long-term vision and goals for the SWUV of creating a dense urban mixed-use neighborhood, additional housing opportunities and safer bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and amenities. In addition, the amendments support the BHA redevelopment of the Aloha Motel property by providing flexibility in the height, while protecting the interests of surrounding property owners. This project will be a major investment in the area and will result in the conversion of a highly underutilized vacant property.

4. The amendment will not adversely affect the public health, safety or general welfare.

Staff Response: The proposed amendments will improve public health, safety and welfare by supporting revisions to the Samish Way arterials to improve travel conditions for bicycles and pedestrians, increasing opportunities for housing and creation of a neighborhood commercial district, and providing additional commercial, entertainment, services and amenities for the area.

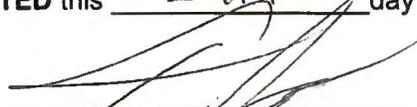
II. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the staff report and the information presented at the public hearing, the Planning Commission concludes that the proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan and development regulations meet all of the Comprehensive Plan amendment criteria in BMC 20.20.040.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the Bellingham Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan and development regulations as shown in the draft ordinance as provided in Attachment C.

ADOPTED this 24th day of January, 2019.



Planning Commission Chairperson

ATTEST: 

Recording Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM: 

City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

Samish Way Urban Village Plan Update Relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies

GOAL LU-1 Support sense of place in neighborhoods.

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

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

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

GOAL LU-2 Foster vibrant urban villages.

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

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

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

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

- Land uses and adaptive performance-based development standards to encourage compatible new development and greater flexibility in design, particularly when the development context is well defined;
- An appropriate mix of commercial, office and residential uses;
- Parking requirements, including the potential for parking maximums and/or reduced parking requirements, and design standards that support multi-modal transportation options; and
- Sustainable development practices and the use of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) rating system, or similar system, to measure the potential sustainability outcomes of the proposed plans.

GOAL LU-3 Support a thriving local economy across all employment sectors.

Policy LU-22 Avoid auto-oriented strip commercial development. Where such areas already exist, prohibit linear expansion and encourage redevelopment into more compact, mixed-use nodes of activity, especially along WTA transit routes.

Policy LU-23 Regularly review and update the City's commercial zoning regulations (e.g. text and associated maps), design standards, and design review process as needed to allow design flexibility and creativity, address emerging issues, and foster compatibility of development with the character of surrounding areas.

Policy LU-24 Encourage the inclusion of context-sensitive elements in the design, maintenance, and update of new and existing mixed-use, industrial and commercial sites (e.g. lighting, signs and landscaping) and buildings (e.g. scale and height).

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

GOAL CD-1 Promote streetscapes that enhance the economic vitality and overall visual quality of the City, support the circulation network, and support pedestrian-scale streets and patterns of activity.

Policy CD-1 Enhance the streetscapes along the City's major commercial corridors and other major streets through coordinated public and private improvements to convey a positive image of the district they are located within, contribute to its economic vitality and perception of the City, and improve visual and physical transitions into adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy CD-2 Ensure that land use, fire, and street standards are coordinated to provide greater pedestrian comfort and safety and more attractive alternative modes of transportation. Implementation strategies include:

- Discourage cul-de-sacs where topography allows and encourage well-connected streets in new and existing neighborhoods.
- Connect missing links within the Citywide multimodal transportation network for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, freight trucks, and automobiles.
- Implement street calming measures in street designs to improve speed limit observance.
- Where possible, install physical buffers between the sidewalk and traffic such as site appropriate street trees and landscaping, street furniture, rain gardens or other low impact development techniques, and on-street parking.
- Orient new development to streets, and effectively frame in the streetscape.
- Encourage commercial activities such as sidewalk retail and outdoor dining.
- Restrict parking to the side or rear of development, or within a structure.
- Consider allowing on-street parking to count toward off-street requirements in selected mixed-use areas to encourage compact, pedestrian-oriented development and to lessen the size and impacts of large parking lots.
- Encourage the use of alleys for vehicle access and utility installation.
- Coordinate placement of physical features between streets and buildings to accommodate staging areas for emergency response vehicles, including aerial apparatus.
- Prioritize implementation of the above in designated urban villages as outlined in the Land Use Chapter

Policy CD-8 Discourage future extension of linear auto-oriented commercial development along rights-of-way in areas already developed. Existing auto-oriented strip commercial areas should be converted to support and contribute to walkable, mixed-use areas wherever possible.

Policy CD-9 Support public and private investment in improved infrastructure and amenities in existing neighborhoods, particularly in areas with high concentrations of low-income housing.

Policy CD-12 Periodically review and update the City's zoning regulations, design standards and design review process to ensure they promote quality development and result in projects that consider and complement existing neighborhoods. Specific recommendations include:

- [several bullets not applicable]

- Review auto parking standards to reduce the impacts of parking on urban form, adjacent uses, housing affordability, pedestrian mobility, and the natural environment. Continue to pursue parking management best practices.
- Adopt long- and short-term bike parking requirements.

GOAL CD-5 Ensure that the design and development of urban villages and transit corridors convey a positive image of the district they are located within, contribute to the economic vitality and perception of the City, and improve visual and physical transitions into adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy CD-29 Design urban villages and transit corridors to promote reduced dependency on automobiles and provide opportunities for increased pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit access.

GOAL H-1 Ensure that Bellingham has a sufficient quantity and variety of housing types and densities to accommodate projected growth and promote other community goals (see Land Use Chapter).

Policy H-1 Support high-density and mixed commercial/residential development in the City's urban villages, high capacity transit corridors connecting the villages and other appropriate areas that allow people to work, shop and recreate near where they live.

Policy H-3 Encourage well-designed infill development on vacant or underutilized properties.

Policy H-4 Continue to support implementation of the Infill Housing Toolkit, which permits innovative housing forms such as small and smaller lot single-family homes, cottages, duplexes, triplexes, common courtyards and townhomes.

Policy H-6 Review commercial zoning regulations that require commercial development along with residential development. Consider adding criteria that would allow, in certain circumstances, residential uses to develop independently or within commercial flex space.

Policy H-13 Consider the impacts on Citywide housing capacity, affordability and diversity when making land use policy decisions and code amendments.

Policy H-14 Actively coordinate with public and private partners in efforts to meet regional housing needs.

GOAL H-4 Support housing options for special needs populations.

Policy H-46 Work with agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations to locate housing to serve Bellingham's special needs populations, particularly those with challenges related to age, health or disability.

Policy H-52 Foster and support partnerships that have proven to be successful in reducing homelessness, preventing homelessness and assisting the chronically homeless with needed care.

GOAL T-2 Provide safe, well-connected, and sustainable mobility options for all users.

Policy T-5 Connect missing links within the Citywide multimodal transportation network for all modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit bus, freight trucks, and private automobiles.

Policy T-6 Design multimodal transportation improvements on existing and new streets with the safety and mobility needs of all user groups considered and with priority emphasis placed on the most vulnerable user groups, as illustrated below:

- Pedestrians
- Bicycles
- Public Transit
- Commercial Vehicles/Trucks
- High Occupancy Vehicles
- Single Occupancy Vehicles

GOAL T-3 Increase infrastructure for bicycles, pedestrian, and non-single-occupancy vehicle modes of transportation

Policy T-9 Incorporate sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans into all transportation capital improvements on public streets, wherever feasible.