

Urban Fringe Subarea Plan

Updated February 27, 2018

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Urban Fringe Subarea Plan

I. Existing Goals and Policy Framework

A. Growth Management Act (GMA)

The State Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990 and 1991, requiring jurisdictions in the fastest growing areas of the state to update their comprehensive plans in accordance with GMA goals. This legislation was intended to recognize that uncoordinated and unplanned growth poses a threat to the environment, to sustainable economic development and to the health, safety and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of this state. Planning under GMA needs to occur in a coordinated and comprehensive manner drawing on the cooperation of related jurisdictions.

B. County-wide Planning Policies

As required by the Growth Management Act, county-wide planning policies have been adopted by Whatcom County with concurrence by all cities. The County-wide Planning Policies establish a county-wide framework for developing and adopting city and county comprehensive plans and assure that city and county plans are consistent.

C. Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan

The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan sets the boundaries of the 10 urban growth areas (UGAs) in Whatcom County, including the Bellingham UGA. The County, in coordination with the cities, conducts the UGA review as part of the Comprehensive Plan update required by the GMA every eight years. The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan also contains text, goals, and policies relating to the Bellingham UGA.

D. Urban Fringe Subarea Plan – Geographic Area

The Urban Fringe Subarea Plan applies to the Bellingham UGA. This Subarea Plan does not apply to land outside the UGA boundaries.

II. Population Forecasts/Land Supply

Projections of future population size are an essential component of land use planning. As required by GMA, the Washington State Office of Financial Management developed a 20-year population projection for Whatcom County. These population projections and an analysis of the capacity of land presently zoned for urban development help determine land supply needs for the next 20 years of growth. By incorporating population forecasts into the planning process, Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham will ensure, as much as possible, that future needs for employment, transportation, affordable housing, utility,

parks and other amenities will be met within the planning period. Population and employment projections are adopted in the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan.

III. Urban Fringe Subarea Plan Policies

A. General Policies Applicable to the Bellingham Urban Growth Area

The following list of policies is intended to facilitate cooperation between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham in directing and managing development in the Urban Fringe Subarea.

- 1.1 Provide for land uses in the Bellingham Urban Growth Area that conform to the Growth Management Act, Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, and County-wide Planning Policies and that consider the provision of urban services to the planning area.
- 1.2 Promote the integrity and character of each neighborhood within Bellingham's Urban Growth Area. Encourage and provide opportunities for a maximum degree of citizen participation in the governmental planning and decision making process.
- 1.3 Provide opportunities for a diversity of housing types in the Urban Growth Area.
- 1.4 Direct new high density residential, commercial and industrial development to appropriate zoning districts.
- 1.5 Direct urban growth and development into areas where City public water and sewer services are available or can be readily provided.
- 1.6 Promote development that supports and enhances efficient public transportation and an intermodal transportation system.
- 1.7 Maintain and update, as appropriate, the adopted interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham.
- 1.8 Cooperate and coordinate with the City of Bellingham, special districts, and other governmental agencies to ensure efficient provision of a full range of urban services in the Urban Growth Area.
- 1.9 Continue joint City and County site plan review for all new residential, commercial, industrial, and Airport Operations development in the Urban Growth Area.
- 1.10 Recognize that the City of Bellingham will be the primary provider of urban services and facilities within its designated urban growth area.

- 1.11 Permit development concurrent with public facilities and services needed to support that development.
- 1.12 Consistent with adopted City policy, areas in Bellingham's UGA will be eligible to receive city water and sewer service upon annexation or as otherwise allowed by the Bellingham Municipal Code.
- 1.13 Minimize land use conflicts in the Urban Growth Area through the use of appropriate buffering mechanisms, design standards, and locational criteria. Promote compatibility between land uses, especially among residential, commercial, industrial and Airport Operations designations.
- 1.14 Designate appropriate zones within the Urban Growth Area as receiving areas for transfer of development rights from the Lake Whatcom watershed in order to promote increased densities within the Urban Growth Area and decrease densities within the watershed to help protect water quality.
- 1.15 Promote a coordinated effort to identify and prioritize interconnected natural areas and features for preservation to protect water quality and provide habitat, recreation, open space and wildlife corridors.
- 1.16 Unincorporated areas added to the City's UGA in the future should be pre-zoned by the City.

B. Zoning Designations, Locational Criteria and Policies

Urban Residential Designations

Urban Residential

- 2.1 The Urban Residential zoning designation (UR) is located in Bellingham's Urban Growth Area and can be urbanized at such time that a full range of urban services can be efficiently provided. The primary purpose of the Urban Residential designation is to promote an orderly transition from rural land uses and densities to urban land uses and densities. Comparable City zoning for the Urban Residential designation is Residential, Single.
- 2.2 The Urban Residential zoning designation reserves certain land in the UGA for future urban purposes and encourages interim uses that are complementary and compatible with future urban densities and services. The designation intends to encourage the responsible growth of urban areas by assuring that a full range of urban services is available to support urban level densities.

2.3 Locational Criteria

Areas Appropriate for Urban Residential zoning designation include the following:

- 2.3.1 Land areas in the Bellingham UGA that are of sufficient size to adequately accommodate the projected demands for residential and associated uses, transportation and public uses.
 - 2.3.2 Land areas where a full range of urban services presently exists or can be economically and efficiently provided in the planning period.
 - 2.3.3 Areas that contain an adequate supply of vacant land suitable for urban development.
 - 2.3.4 The boundaries of the Urban Residential designation should be well defined, logical, provide a physical "sense of community" and be capable of being expanded to accommodate additional urban growth as the need arises.
 - 2.3.5 The Urban Residential zoning district allows urban density development (outside the Lake Whatcom Watershed) when a full range of urban services are provided. In areas where such services do not exist, the maximum density is one dwelling unit per ten acres.
- 2.4 The Urban Residential designation is intended to be urban with urban uses and services and is to promote an orderly transition from rural land uses and densities to urban land uses and densities.
 - 2.5 The predominant land use pattern within the Urban Residential zoning designation should be residential, allowing single family residential, neighborhood scale commercial in specific designated areas, parks and other public uses.
 - 2.6 Existing mobile home parks will be allowed to remain as non-conforming uses.

Urban Residential - Medium Density

- 2.7 The Urban Residential Medium Density zoning designation (URM) is located in Bellingham's Urban Growth Area and can be developed at allowed urban densities upon provision of a full range of urban services. The designation should provide for affordable housing types such as apartments, townhouses, condominiums, mobile home parks, subdivisions and other compatible non-residential uses. Comparable City zoning for the Urban Residential Medium designation is Residential Multi, Planned.

- 2.8 The designation promotes an orderly transition from low density uses to higher density urban uses where predominantly residential uses complemented by compatible neighborhood scale recreation and commercial services are appropriate.
- 2.9 Locational Criteria
- 2.11.1 The URM zoning classification should be applied to areas in the Urban Growth Area that are either adjacent to existing or planned residential developments containing similar density levels or adjacent to existing or planned commercial or light industrial developments.
- 2.11.2 Higher density developments should be located to take advantage of access to public transit that is sustainable over the long term, arterial routes of travel, and commercial services and employment centers.
- 2.12 The predominant land use pattern includes single family detached dwelling units, apartments, condominiums, rooming houses, mobile home parks and retirement and convalescent centers, parks and other public uses.
- 2.13 For those URM areas currently served by sewer and water, a mix of housing types and densities is encouraged consistent with the adopted zoning.
- 2.14 A mix of housing types and range of densities within the URM designation is encouraged particularly in areas close to industrial, commercial and other urban employment centers, adjacent to arterials and major connector streets, and where there is access to transit, parks and other recreational areas.
- 2.15 The City of Bellingham's design and development standards and guidelines should apply to all development in the Bellingham Urban Growth Area.

Urban Residential – Mixed Use

- 2.16 It is the purpose of this zone designation to provide an orderly transition from rural to urban development by limiting densities and uses until services are available and then to provide for mixed uses in a manner that encourages a range of densities and dwelling unit types and pedestrian access to convenience shopping and jobs while maintaining an overall single family character and property values for the neighborhoods created within this designation. Comparable City zoning for the Urban Residential - Mixed designation is Residential, Single.

2.17 Locational Criteria

Areas appropriate for Urban Residential - Mixed (UR-MX) zoning designation include the following:

- 2.20.1 Land areas within the Bellingham UGA that are of sufficient size to adequately accommodate the projected demands for residential, commercial, transportation and public uses.
- 2.20.2 Land areas where a full range of urban services presently exists or can be economically and efficiently provided in the planning period.
- 2.20.3 Areas that contain an adequate supply of vacant land suitable for urban development.
- 2.21 Commercial uses will be clustered in a single center which is no larger than (2) two acres, excluding areas used for multi-family. The commercial uses should not exceed 2,500 square feet per building.
- 2.22 This designation provides a receiving area for transfer of development rights credits.
- 2.23 The Urban Residential - Mixed (UR-MX) zoning designation is located in Bellingham's UGA and can be developed at allowed densities upon provision of a full range of urban services. The designation should provide for affordable housing types such as apartments, townhouses, condominiums, subdivisions and other compatible non-residential uses; with a net density of at least 6 dwelling units per acre as the lowest allowable single family density.
- 2.24 Multi-family dwelling units should not comprise more than 25% of the total dwelling units in one development proposal.
- 2.25 Residential development should be located within walking distance of transit stations, designated commercial centers, parks and recreational areas, and other employment centers where appropriate.
- 2.26 Neighborhood centers allow a mix of commercial, professional office, day care, and residential uses. Establishment of neighborhood centers requires conditional use permit approval.
- 2.27 Establishment of mobile home parks requires conditional use permit approval.
- 2.28 Commercial development should occur in nodes. Linear strips will be discouraged.

- 2.29 Businesses in neighborhood centers will have their fronts located on arterial or collector streets; or located adjacent to a public square or neighborhood park; and be no less than one-half mile from an existing or approved commercial center or other commercial use or zone.
- 2.30 Neighborhood centers should be visible and accessible to pedestrians from the streets and clearly defined through lighting, landscape, landmarks, and/or open space.
- 2.31 Parking for neighborhood centers will be located at the rear of the buildings with access from alleys or side streets.

Commercial Designations

- 3.1 The Urban Fringe Subarea Plan provides two commercial zoning designations in the Urban Growth Area, and addresses the needs and opportunities for the City of Bellingham, the Urban Growth Area, and larger regional area.

General Commercial

- 3.2 The General Commercial zoning designation is intended to provide a broad range of retail goods and services that will benefit a large trade area commensurate with demand. The designation also intends to facilitate safe and efficient circulation systems, provide methods to attain compatibility with surrounding noncommercial areas, and promote site design that will efficiently use available commercial land. Building design should take into account aesthetic and compatibility concerns. Comparable City zoning for the General Commercial designation is Commercial, Planned.

3.3 Locational Criteria

Areas appropriate for the General Commercial designation should conform to the following criteria:

- 3.3.1 Parcels that are served by arterials and/or collectors.
 - 3.3.2 Parcels that have the potential of being served by urban level of service.
 - 3.3.3 The designation should be located where there is a public need.
- 3.4 Whatcom County acknowledges existing patterns of commercial uses within the Urban Fringe Subarea. To provide for additional future commercial development, certain areas are designated General Commercial allowing a range of commercial uses including sales and servicing of vehicles, mobile homes and boats; eating and drinking

establishments; professional offices, service and retail establishments; commercial indoor and outdoor recreation; commercial wholesaling; multi-family dwellings; and public uses that are necessary for the function of the designation.

- 3.5 Ensure compatibility between General Commercial developments and the surrounding residential areas by identifying performance and development standards.
- 3.6 Encourage the location of new commercial development in proximity to other existing commercial uses, or oriented to serve part of a planned development.

Neighborhood Commercial

- 3.7 The primary purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial zone is to provide convenience goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood Commercial areas are generally located near residential areas. Comparable City zoning would be Commercial, Neighborhood.

3.8 Locational Criteria

Areas suitable for the Neighborhood Commercial designation should conform to the following criteria:

- 3.8.1 Parcels are served by arterials or collector streets. The designation is centrally located to the neighborhood it would serve.
- 3.8.2 The designation does not exceed five (5) acres.
- 3.8.3 The designation is to be located on property where ownership patterns and land parcelization is conducive for development.
- 3.9 The Neighborhood Commercial designation provides convenience goods and services to surrounding neighborhoods of urban residential densities.
- 3.10 Ensure compatibility between neighborhood commercial developments and the surrounding residential areas by identifying and applying performance and development standards.

Industrial and Airport Designations

- 4.1 The Urban Fringe Subarea Plan provides four industrial and airport zoning designations: Heavy Impact Industrial, Light Impact Industrial, Gateway Industrial, and Airport Operations in the Urban Growth Area. These designations address needs and opportunities for the City of Bellingham, the Urban Growth Area, and the larger regional area. Each designation intends to meet a range of industrial needs.

Heavy Impact Industrial

Intent Statement:

4.2 The rationale of the Heavy Impact Industrial zoning designation in the Urban Fringe Subarea is to acknowledge existing heavy industrial uses situated in proximity to Bennett Drive, Marine Drive, and Roeder Avenue; to endorse a diverse economic base; and to attain compatibility between industrial activities and adjoining residential land uses.

4.3 Locational Criteria

Areas appropriate for the Heavy Impact Industrial designation should conform to the following criteria:

4.3.1 Parcels that are generally flat, well drained, with sufficient soil bearing capacities.

4.3.2 Parcels within the existing Heavy Impact Industrial designation with sufficient land to provide buffers to non-industrial uses.

4.3.3 Proximity to transportation corridors (including direct access to identified truck routes not requiring the use of residential streets) and opportunities for interconnecting transportation modes (rail, truck routes, water and air) and urban services including sewer, water, storm drainage, fire and police protection and labor supply pools.

4.4 The Heavy Impact Industrial zoning designation takes advantage of truck, rail, freeway, air and water transportation access as well as proximity to potential labor pools. A full range of urban services should be available to the heavy industrial areas including sewer, water, storm drainage, and police and fire protection. Comparable City zoning is Industrial, Planned. Commercial uses, that are not accessory to the primary industrial use, will be prohibited.

4.5 It is the policy of Whatcom County to evaluate the short and long range impacts to existing public facility, utility and transportation systems resulting from industrial development. If it is determined that industrial development will cause financial and physical impacts which exceed the scheduled capital improvement programs of various systems, Whatcom County will request industrial users to financially participate in the costs of upgrading these systems.

4.6 Whatcom County should work with the City of Bellingham to manage and improve direct truck access to and from the HII area which minimizes

truck traffic flows in adjacent and surrounding residential areas situated in the county and city.

- 4.7 Whatcom County will encourage the appropriate governmental authorities, including the Northwest Clean Air Agency, Department of Ecology and Environmental Protection Agency, to monitor pollution control and nuisance abatement. Whatcom County should assure that the design and location of industrial development will include consideration of pollutant sources and abatement methods, and critical areas which may be situated in or in proximity to the industrial area. The location, development, expansion and operation of industries should move toward minimizing pollution of all forms and its impact on other areas.
- 4.8 When practical, Whatcom County encourages industrial operations to take place within enclosed structures with the intent of minimizing potential light, glare, odors and noise impacts to adjoining residential uses.
- 4.9 Because the HII areas adjoin existing and planned residential areas situated in Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham, it is necessary to move toward obtaining mutual compatibility with these residential areas. To obtain mutual compatibility, it is the policy of Whatcom County to permit those existing uses and future uses which will minimize hazards, pollution, nuisances and odors to surrounding residential areas. The following uses will not be permitted in the Heavy Impact Industrial zoning district in the Urban Fringe Subarea: manufacturing and processing of asbestos and products derived therefrom; petroleum refining and the primary manufacture of products derived directly therefrom; primary manufacturing of rubber, plastics, chemicals, paper, and primary metal industries.
- 4.10 With the intent of fostering and promoting compatibility with surrounding residential land uses both in the county and the City of Bellingham, it is the policy of Whatcom County to require industrial users to provide a buffer which is situated on industrial land and adjoins the residential areas. The buffer may alternately be provided off-site by written agreement in the form of a deed restriction on the off-site parcel that runs with the land and that is filed with the County Auditor. The off-site buffer agreement will be written so that it may be revised or rescinded in the event that land uses or zoning designations are changed in such a way that the buffer is no longer necessary.
- 4.11 Because certain existing industrial users are located adjacent to Bellingham Bay and use the shoreline or water transport for a portion of their operation, it is the policy of Whatcom County to require consistency with the Whatcom County Shoreline Management Program for proposed industrial uses or the expansion of industrially related uses which are proposed within the jurisdictional area of the Program.

Light Impact Industrial

4.14 The Light Impact Industrial zoning designation supplies a reasonable amount of land for light impact industrial uses which are dependent upon proximity to other industries; are dependent upon an urban labor supply; will promote efficient public and private expenditure and will be compatible with surrounding non-industrial areas. Comparable City zoning is Industrial, Planned and/or Institutional.

4.15 Locational Criteria

Areas appropriate for the Light Impact Industrial zoning designation should conform to the following criteria:

- 4.19.1 The Light Impact Industrial designation should consist of a number of parcels of sufficient size to accommodate zoning and buffer requirements. The buffer may be provided off-site by written agreement in the form of a deed restriction on the off-site parcel that runs with the land and that is filed with the County Auditor. The off-site buffer agreement will be written so that it may be revised or rescinded in the event that land uses or zoning designations are changed in such a way that the buffer is no longer necessary.
 - 4.19.2 Parcels that are generally flat, well drained, with sufficient soil bearing capacities. Areas of predominantly steep slopes, wetlands, and other critical areas are not appropriate for Light Impact Industrial zoning districts.
 - 4.19.3 Proximity to major transportation corridors, international transportation routes with all-weather access capability, and proximity to urban services.
 - 4.19.4 Sufficient land to provide buffers between industrial operations and adjoining residential areas.
- 4.20 The Light Impact Industrial designation allows a range of uses related to industries which do not emit smoke, glare, noise, vibrations, odors and other nuisance factors which create unacceptable off-site impacts.
- 4.21 The area bounded by Slater Road, the Burlington-Northern railroad tracks and Silver Creek has been annexed by the City of Ferndale. Whatcom County will not permit expansion of the UGA in this area to ensure protection of Silver Creek, maintain the rural character of the surrounding area, and preserve a natural buffer area between the Cities of Ferndale and Bellingham.

Gateway Industrial

Whatcom County's economy is significantly influenced by its proximity to Canada and the large population in Vancouver, B.C., and this role is anticipated to continue in the future. The I-5 corridor and the Bellingham International Airport function as gateways into Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham. It is through these gateways that travelers form their first impressions of the community. To augment the positive impact of international markets, it is desirable to provide a reasonable supply of land for a variety of light industrial uses that would be attractive to travelers using the major international traffic corridors.

Light industrial parks frequently are large land areas that are master planned for aesthetic and functional compatibility, but can be composed of small tracts of land in different ownerships, where industrial uses occur independently but under overall design standards. To take advantage of the opportunity to present a positive business image of Bellingham and Whatcom County to travelers and because of the relatively small parcel sizes in the area, standards for site, landscaping, building, and signage design are included in the Gateway Industrial zoning text.

- 4.22 The Gateway Industrial designation is intended to provide concentrated areas, located in proximity to major transportation corridors that will present a favorable image of Bellingham and Whatcom County to travelers. In addition, in areas immediately adjacent to full freeway interchanges, uses that serves the traveling public are provided. The designation intends to facilitate safe and efficient circulation systems, provide methods to attain compatibility among mixed uses, and promote site design that is visually compatible with surrounding areas, including the Bellingham International Airport. Urban services must be available and will be extended in an efficient and rational growth pattern. Comparable Bellingham zoning is Industrial, Planned.

4.23 Locational Criteria

Areas suitable for the Gateway Industrial designation should conform to the following criteria:

- 4.23.1 Proximity to major transportation corridors, Bellingham International Airport, transportation routes with all-weather access capability, and proximity to urban services.
- 4.23.2 Public water, sewer, on-site storm water drainage, and sufficient fire and police protection should either be presently available or should be feasibly provided during the planning period.
- 4.23.3 Proximity to potential labor pool.

- 4.23.4 Sufficient land to provide buffers between industrial operations and adjoining residential areas.
- 4.24 The Gateway Industrial designation should use limited areas having industrial access and traveler visibility in a manner that promotes the long range economic vitality of Bellingham and Whatcom County. Uses should be directly related to the access opportunities, or in certain areas, serve the traveling public.
- 4.25 The Gateway Industrial designation should enhance and maintain the natural and economic resources of Bellingham and Whatcom County through land use patterns that avoid linear strip development, while providing for safe and efficient vehicular movement, by requiring that individual sites are designed in a clustered or concentrated form of development instead of lining the road frontage. In addition, site design standards are contained within the zoning text to aid in the compatibility of mixed uses and the visual harmony with the surrounding areas.

Airport Operations

The Bellingham International Airport originated in 1940 as a single runway and developed into a three-runway configuration in 1941 when the Army Corp of Engineers supervised its construction with national defense funds. In 1947, the airport transferred ownership from the federal government to Whatcom County and in 1957 from the County to the Port of Bellingham.

The federal government recognizes Bellingham International Airport as an integral part of the national aviation system and has supported development at the airport over the years through a variety of programs and projects including land acquisition; runway and taxiway construction and maintenance; lighting systems; crash/fire/rescue building construction; airport planning and others which have allowed the airport to expand and meet the traveling needs of a growing population. The comparable City designation is Institutional.

- 4.26 The primary purpose of the Airport Operations zoning designation is to provide sufficient area for existing and future regional airport operations to serve the interest of Whatcom County. The District should accommodate regional airport facilities and be served by adequate public services. The District should provide uses related to the operation of an airport. Other uses should be consistent with the Bellingham International Airport Master Plan.
- 4.27 Locational Criteria

- 4.27.1 The Airport Operations (AO) District is located and implemented consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Subarea Plan.
- 4.27.2 The AO District should accommodate regional airport facilities and be served by adequate public services.
- 4.28 Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham encourage the Port of Bellingham to work closely with the Federal Aviation Administration to comply with federal laws relating to airport noise and continue to develop operational procedures to minimize noise generated by general aviation activity at the airport.
- 4.29 Encourage buffer greenbelts around the Airport Operations (AO) District to minimize impacts of noise generated by general aviation activities at the airport.
- 4.30 Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham recognize the existing and planned orientation of runways at the Bellingham International Airport. To minimize hazard and nuisance adjacent to and in the vicinity of the airport, land uses and densities should be compatible with airport uses.
- 4.31 Residential development is discouraged in the day-night average sound level (Ldn) of 65+ noise exposure contours as mapped in the Bellingham International Airport Master Plan. Builders are encouraged to include adequate sound insulation for residential structures located close to the airport.
- 4.32 Whatcom County will promote disclosure of airport noise through implementation of WCC 8.34.
- 4.33 Encourage the City of Bellingham to adopt airport/land use compatibility rules applicable to properties in the vicinity of the airport.

Recreation and Open Space

The primary purpose of the Recreation and Open Space zoning designation is to ensure the continued public provision of a variety of services, optimizing public investments, conserving recreation and open space resources and uses, and promoting compatibility between public functions and surrounding land uses. Comparable City zoning for the Recreation and Open Space designation is Public.

IV. Urban Growth Area

A. Urban Growth Areas Defined

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), cities and counties are required to designate areas where urban growth is encouraged and areas where urban development is discouraged. Urban growth, as defined by the GMA,

"refers to growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures and impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of such land for the production of food, other agricultural products, or fiber, or the extraction of mineral resources, . . . (RCW 36.70A.030(19))."

The purpose of designating urban growth areas is to promote compact urban development; ensure efficient use of land resources; and facilitate the economic provision of urban services. Urban growth areas should include areas and densities sufficient to provide for the urban growth that is projected to occur in the next twenty years. Urban growth requires urban levels of service, including: storm and sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, transportation, fire and police protection, public transit, schools, parks and other public utilities associated with urban areas.

Since the intent of the GMA legislation is to ensure concurrency of certain facilities and services with projected growth and development, urban growth should be located first in areas already characterized by urban growth. These areas should have existing public facilities and service capacities to serve the development of the area. Second, urban growth should be located in areas that will be served by a combination of existing and planned public facilities and services; and finally in areas adjacent to areas characterized by urban growth, where adequate public facilities and services are not presently available.

B. Factors Affecting Urban Growth Areas

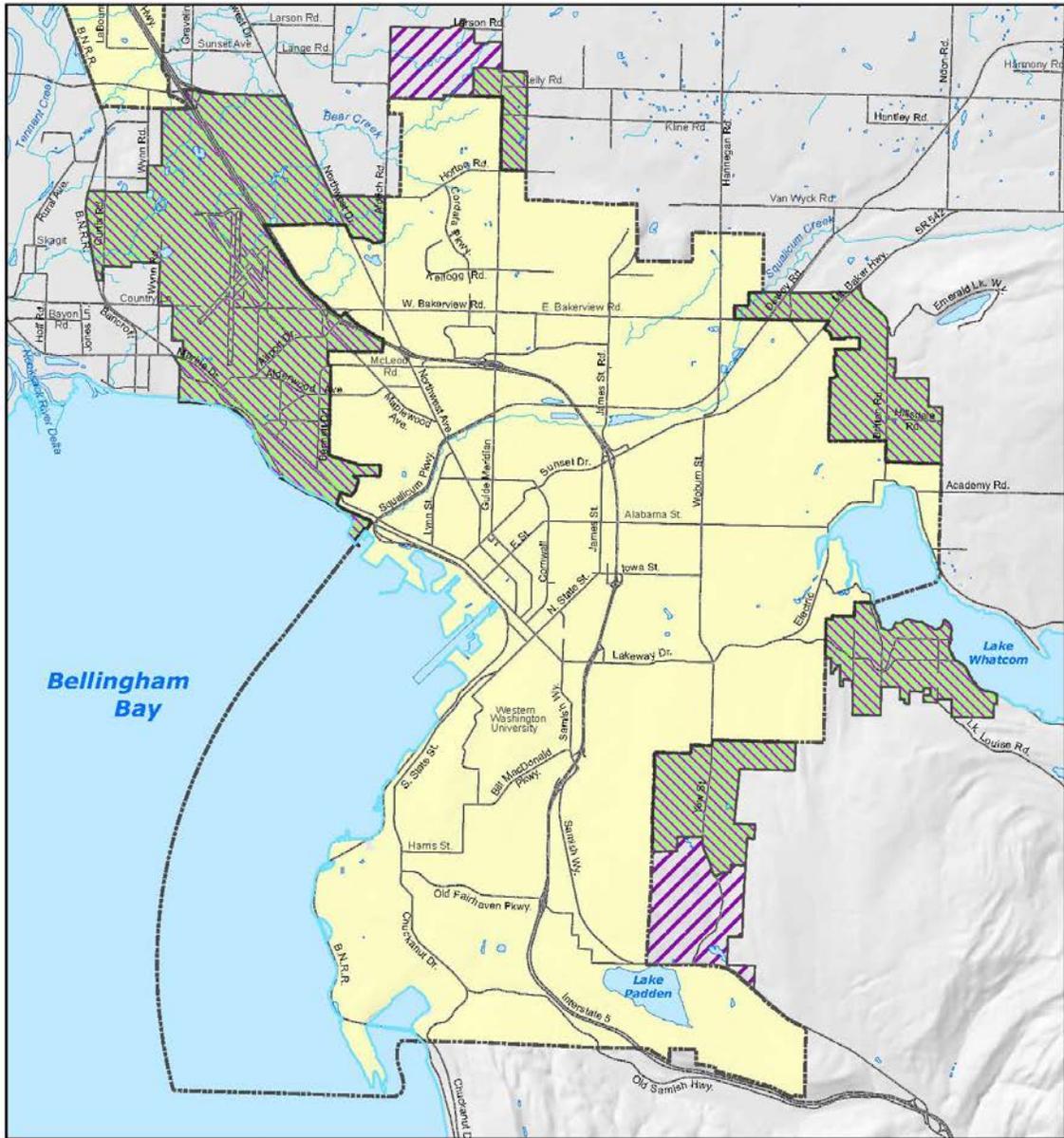
Land use development in the City of Bellingham and adjacent urban areas is the result of a variety of economic, social and physical variables. The direction, type, and timing of growth are influenced by the topography, environmental constraints, market conditions, the extension of services including sewer and water, and the development of transportation systems.

The criteria used for evaluating Bellingham's urban growth areas are based on an analysis and evaluation of the following:

1. GMA requirements;
2. Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan provisions relating to UGAs and UGA Reserves;

3. Population and employment projections;
4. Land supply needs for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational developments;
5. Urban service capacity, including sewer, water, and other infrastructure;
6. Existing and proposed plans-recognizing consistency and compatibility with existing local and regional policies including County-wide Planning Policies and the City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan;
7. Protection of wetlands and associated systems, other critical areas, and open space;
8. Impact on designated Resource Lands;
9. Existing land use; and
10. Requests for specific zoning by property owners.

V. Bellingham Urban Fringe Subarea Planning Area Map



- Bellingham Urban Fringe Subarea

-  Bellingham Urban Fringe Subarea
-  Urban Growth Area
-  Urban Growth Area Reserve
-  Incorporated City

USE OF WHATCOM COUNTY'S GIS DATA IMPLIES THE USER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
 Whatcom County disclaims any warranty of non-negligence or warranty of fitness of this map for any particular purpose, either express or implied. No representation or warranty is made concerning the accuracy, currency, completeness or quality of data depicted on this map. Any user of this map assumes all responsibility for use, storage, and further agreement to hold Whatcom County harmless from and against any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of this map.

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VI. Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The Urban Fringe Subarea Plan is a policy document that is used to guide the land use decisions affecting both the private and public sectors of the subarea. For the plan to function as an effective decision-making document, it must be flexible enough to weather changes in public attitudes, developmental technologies, economic forces, and legislative policy.

The plan envisions two general types of plan amendments, which will be conducted in accordance with the County's Public Participation Plan. **The first type is a review conducted every eight years.** The GMA requires a periodic review of comprehensive plans every eight years to ensure that, among other things, UGAs have sufficient area and densities to accommodate the projected urban growth over the 20-year planning period. In association with this periodic review, new population and employment growth projections are formulated, a land capacity analysis is conducted, capital facility plans are updated, and UGA boundaries are reviewed. During the eight year review, the City of Bellingham issues recommendations on whether or not to expand the UGA. The County Council adopts updates to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, including any changes to the UGA boundaries. The Urban Fringe Subarea Plan text, goals, and policies may be updated concurrent with or after the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan update. It is the responsibility of both the Bellingham and Whatcom County Planning Commissions and Planning staff as well as the people of the subarea to initiate and participate in such a review.

The second type of amendment is that proposed by private property owners. An individual or agency may propose an amendment to the plan. Private applications for Comprehensive Plan amendments are processed in accordance with the procedures in the Whatcom County Code. Plan amendments proposed by either the public or private sector which would alter or expand the Bellingham UGA require an amendment to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and are reviewed by both the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County. The Bellingham City Council will issue a recommendation prior to a final decision by the Whatcom County Council.

VII. Implementation

The policies in this Plan are implemented by the Whatcom County Zoning Code and maps prior to annexation. After annexation, City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan policies and regulations will apply.