

HOUSING NEEDS

...for all income ranges, life stages and preferences.

Housing need may vary throughout a person's life...

Below are questions to consider when making housing choices, with the understanding that there are often trade-offs involved when finding a place to live.

Do you want more privacy or more of a community feel?

Can you manage stairs? Or do you need a ground floor unit?

Do you need parking, bike storage, or transit access?

Do you regularly need to be near a certain part of town, such as for work, school, or caring for a family member?

How many people will live in your home?

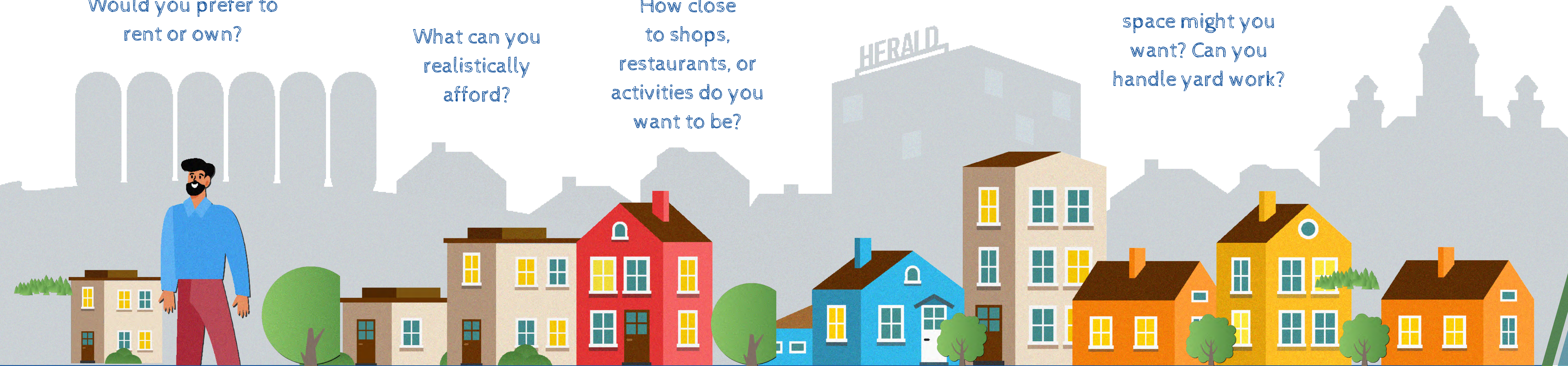
Are you willing to share your home with others who are not part of your household, such as a part of a co-op or bedroom rental?

Would you prefer to rent or own?

What can you realistically afford?

How close to shops, restaurants, or activities do you want to be?

What kind of outdoor space might you want? Can you handle yard work?



DIFFERENT HOUSING TYPES MEET UNIQUE NEEDS

As housing needs and preferences change throughout the lifespan based on evolving personal, financial, and health circumstances, different housing types can accommodate unique individual requirements.



Consider residential housing as it appears on the outside. It's often hard to tell how many units a building contains, and how it's being used, right? For example, what looks like a detached single-family house could be a:

- Duplex with separate households living in two different units
- Multi-generational living arrangement with grandparents living in an ADU
- Group of students co-living together
- Single-person living alone or with a pet
- A whole host of other possibilities!

TRIVIA!
Which of these homes has multiple units?

(Answer in the lower right corner)



Image Sources: Google Street View

**How have your housing needs changed throughout your or your family's life?
How well does your neighborhood support people at different life stages?
Write your comments on sticky notes, below.**

ANSWER: C

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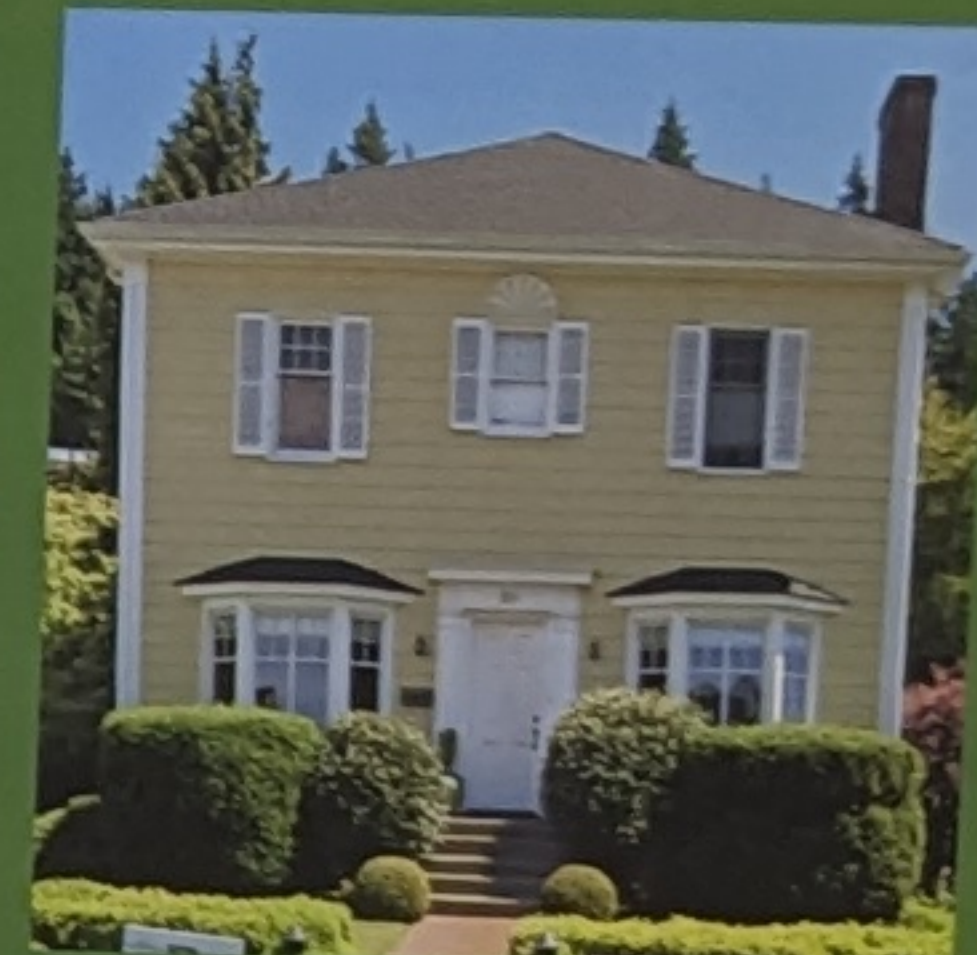
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A



B



C



Image Sources: Google Street View

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How well does your neighborhood support people at different life stages?
Write your comments on sticky notes, below.

We have had a basement apartment which has helped us pay our mortgage

We like ADUs for parents to live in.

CO-LIVING

Roosevelt
- Lots of single family homes
- Needs ADUs
- Missing middle

Columbia
No middle housing present
- For only
- I'd say Columbia has ~~the~~ little middle housing, but not none.
- More ADUs going in to duplexes

Developers are building for a variety of lifestyles in the Corvallis N.

ROOSEVELT NEIGHBORHOOD SEEMS TO BE A GOOD MIX OF DIFF LIFE STAGES.

At this point in my life, I just want a little more space. I am willing to move a little away from amenities than before.

It doesn't have to be diversity (must buy)

Commuter lacks Walkable Services

Need more middle housing options. (York)

My friends & family are looking for 800-1400sq ft homes

MANY SINGLE FAM NEIGHB. NEEDS MORE SENIORS' HOUSING, ADUs, BABYSITTING

I am looking down size and get of a duplex + condo environment

Prefer free-standing single level No shared walls

Cordata Neighborhood has a great combo of single fam, townhomes, duplexes, + apartments

Currently in Co-living arrangement. Hoping to move in with significant other

Used to want small + flexible now looking for more space to own

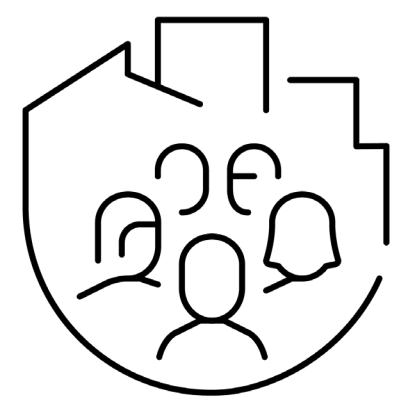
Neighborhood has a great mix of life stages

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ANSWER: C

PRIORITY FEATURES AND PREFERENCES

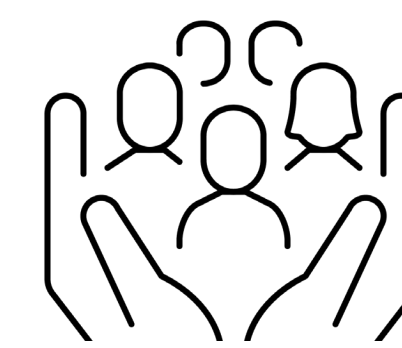
Key findings from the Housing Preference Survey



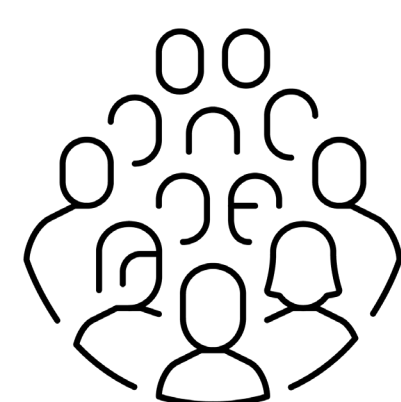
When asked what type of neighborhood they would **prefer** to live in the most common choices were **small-scale residential** (31%) and **urban residential** (27%). These neighborhoods include a **diversity of housing** forms with single-family, duplex, triplex, townhome, and small apartment and condominium blocks mixed with commercial services, **good bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and access to transit.**



A clear **majority** respondents prefer **owning** rather than renting their home. And some people (up to 21%) are interested in **shared living** arrangements that are uncommon in Bellingham today.



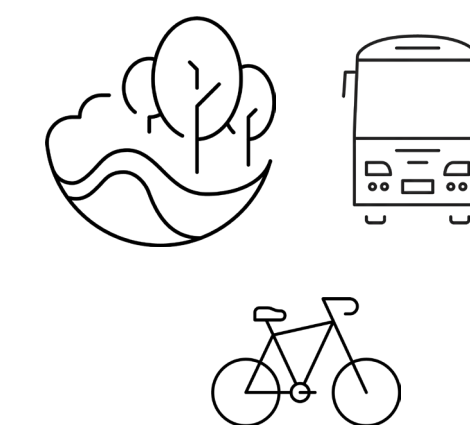
When **balancing** neighborhood and housing priorities and amenities the top concern expressed was a **feeling of safety**. Secondary priorities include being **close to parks and trails**, having a **private yard, dedicated parking**, and housing with **good quality construction and condition**. 2-bedroom units were by far the most common preference, with 3-bedroom and 1-bedroom units following and 4-bedrooms and studios the least popular.



Most respondents were generally **satisfied** with their current living arrangements. However, those that were **less satisfied** included a higher proportion of lower-income, renter, BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, young adult, and disabled community members. Historically, people in these groups have been underrepresented in the public planning process across the country.



Most of employed respondents report **working remotely a significant amount of the week.**



When considering **housing and neighborhood trade-offs**, respondents indicated a preference for neighborhoods where **homes are closer together** to gain access to transit, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and parks and trails.

To view the full survey results from the Housing Preference Survey, follow the QR code at right



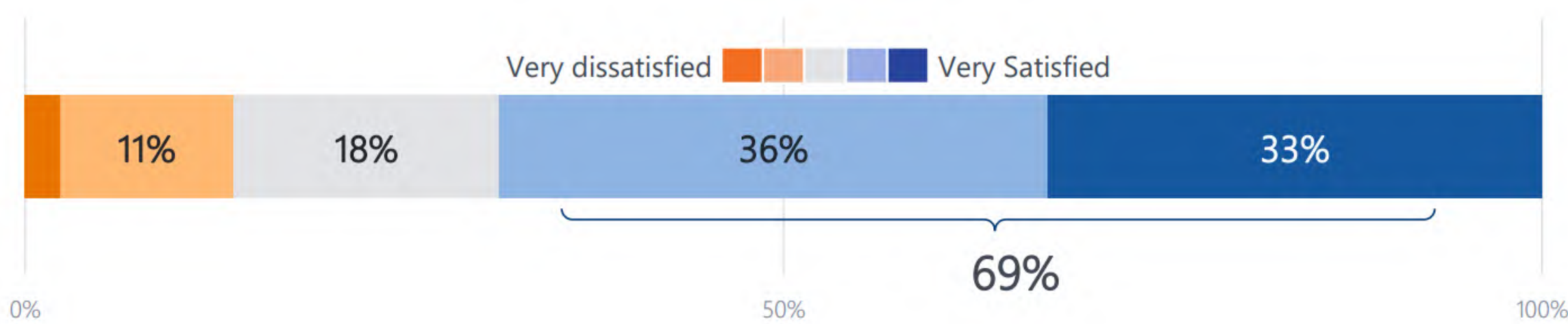
PRIORITY FEATURES AND PREFERENCES

Key findings from the Housing Preference Survey

This survey of 1,475 respondents provided information about housing needs and preferences, both regarding the housing itself and its surrounding neighborhood. Responses represented the broader community along several key demographics.

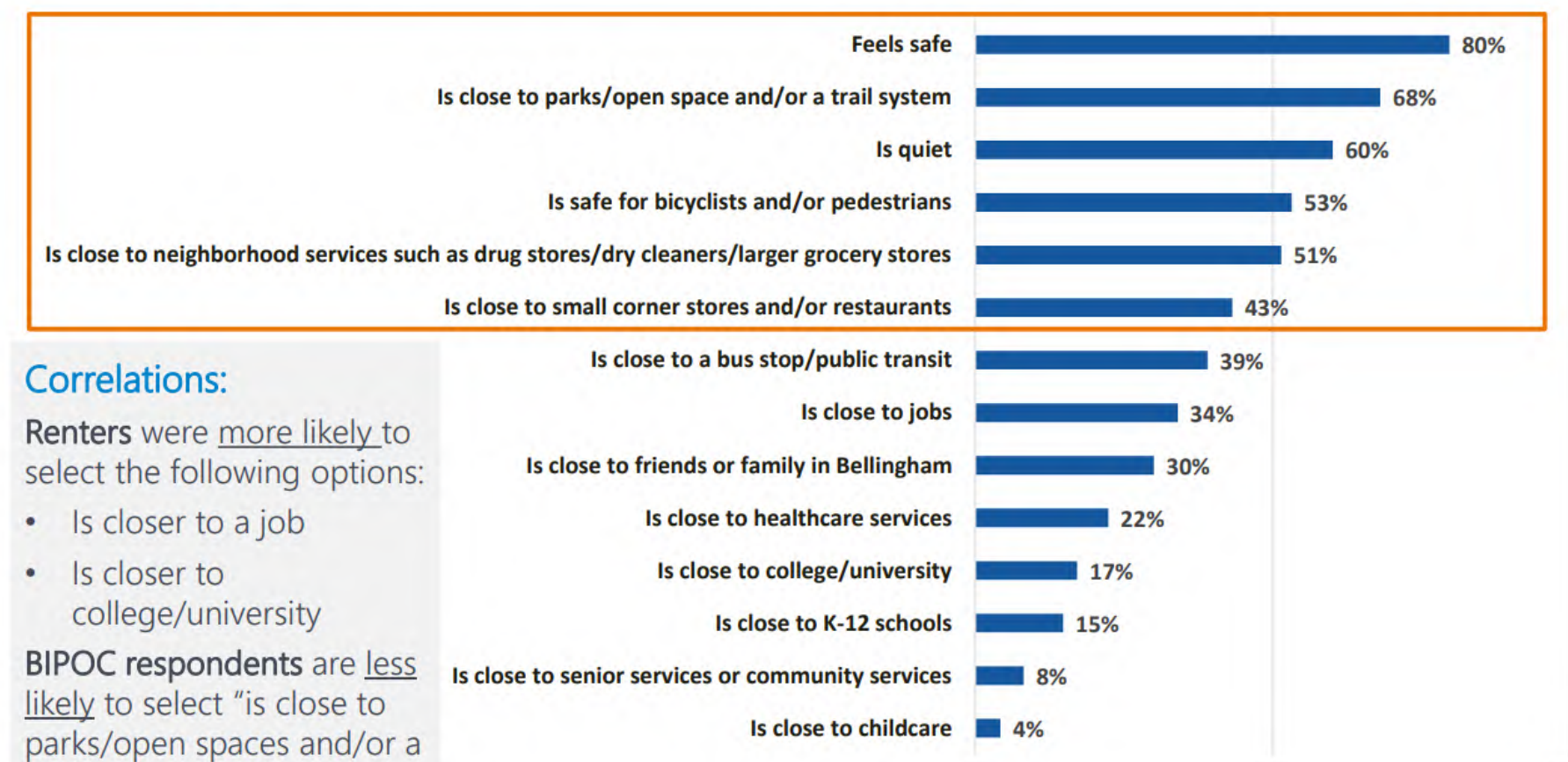
Most respondents (69%) were satisfied with their current housing situation.

How satisfied are you with your housing situation?
Base: all respondents (n=1,469)



Neighborhoods that feel safe and quiet, are close to parks, trails, commercial services, and have bicycle and pedestrian connectivity were top priorities for respondents.

When choosing the ideal location to live, please select all the options that are important to you.
Base: all respondents (n = 1,475)



Correlations:

Renters were more likely to select the following options:

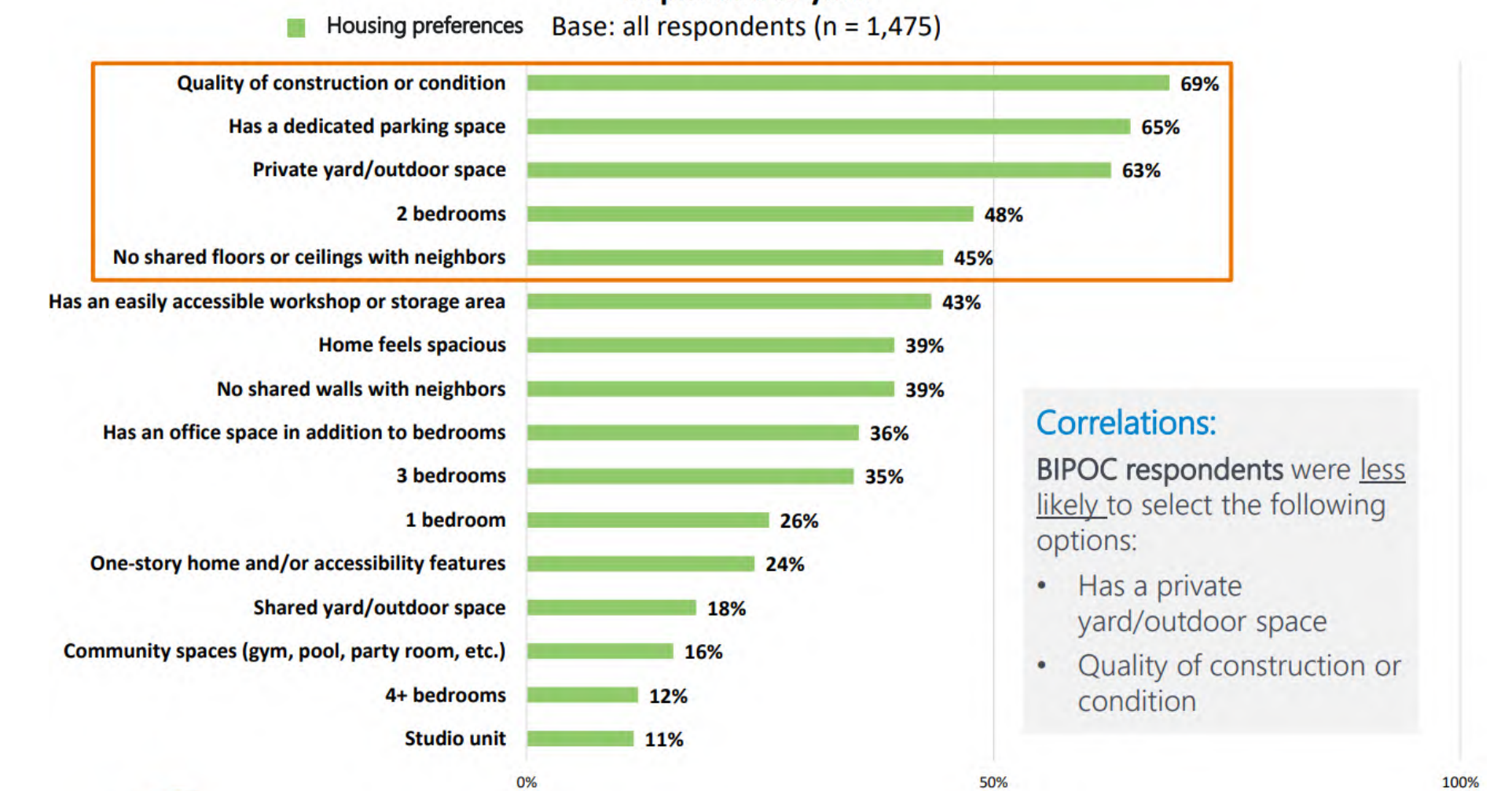
- Is closer to a job
- Is closer to college/university

BIPOC respondents are less likely to select "is close to parks/open spaces and/or a trail system".



Housing with quality construction and condition, dedicated parking, a private yard, and two-bedroom size with no neighbors above or below were top priorities for respondents.

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Base: all respondents (n = 1,475)



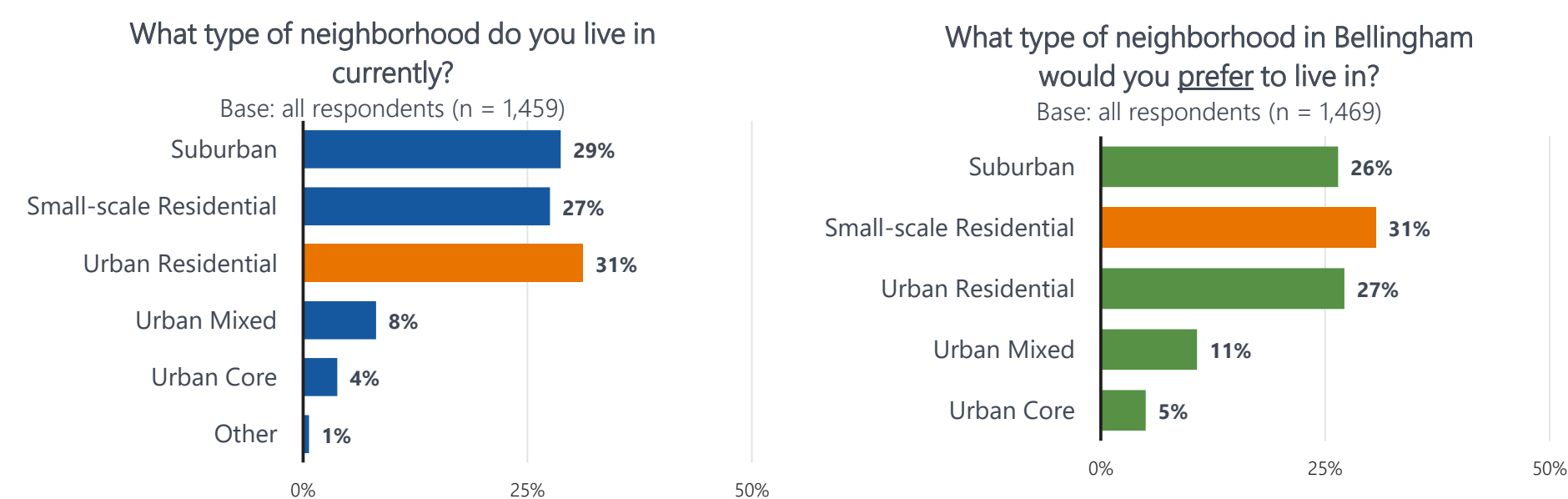
Correlations:

BIPOC respondents were less likely to select the following options:

- Has a private yard/outdoor space
- Quality of construction or condition



Small-scale residential was the most preferred neighborhood type. Among those who preferred a neighborhood type other than their own, urban residential and small-scale residential top the list.



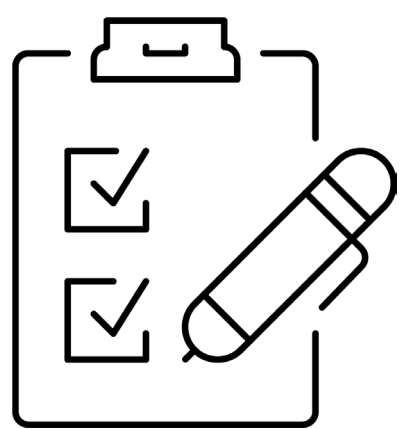
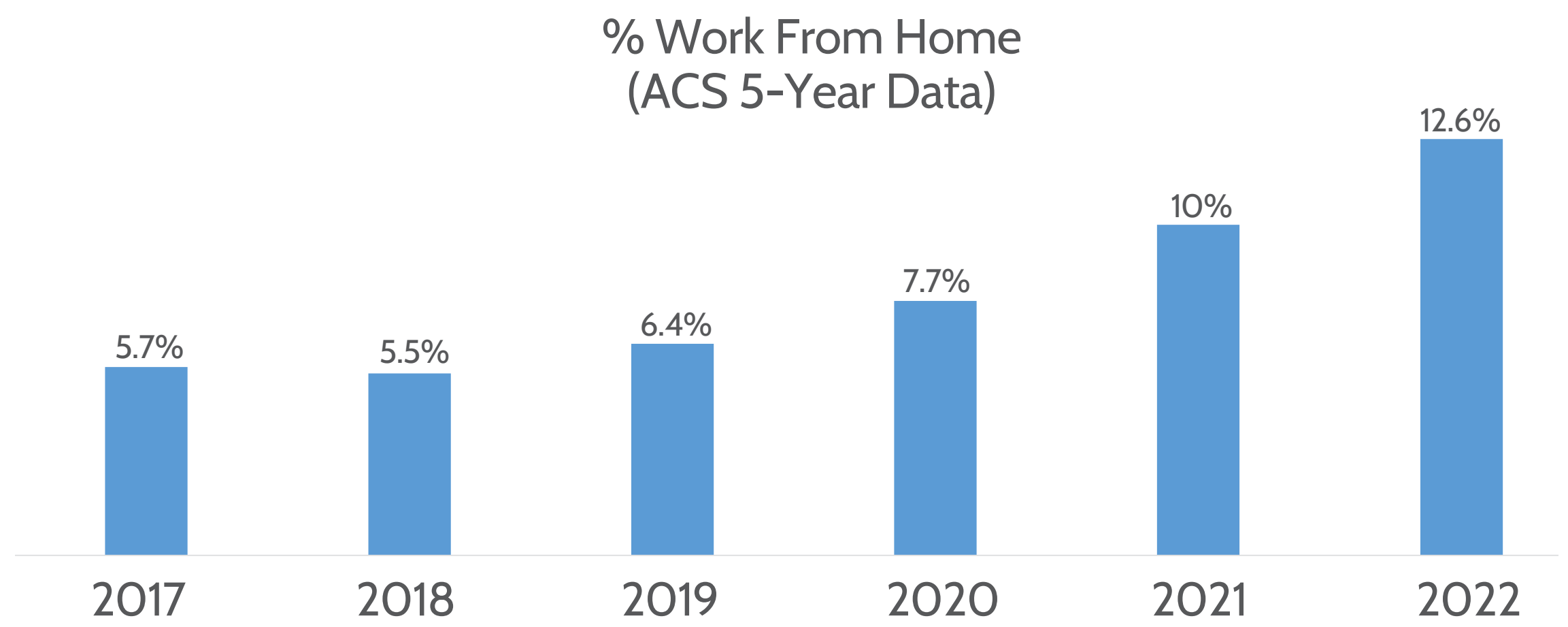
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REMOTE WORK TRENDS

How and where are people working now?

The Census did not previously ask complex questions about remote work, but the percentage of those in Bellingham who work fully remotely has steadily increased in recent years.



In order to understand more detail about people who work remotely, we asked the community. The survey they took was statistically valid, meaning the sampling of community members who responded reflected Bellingham demographics as a whole.

Here are some takeaways for all employed Bellingham residents:

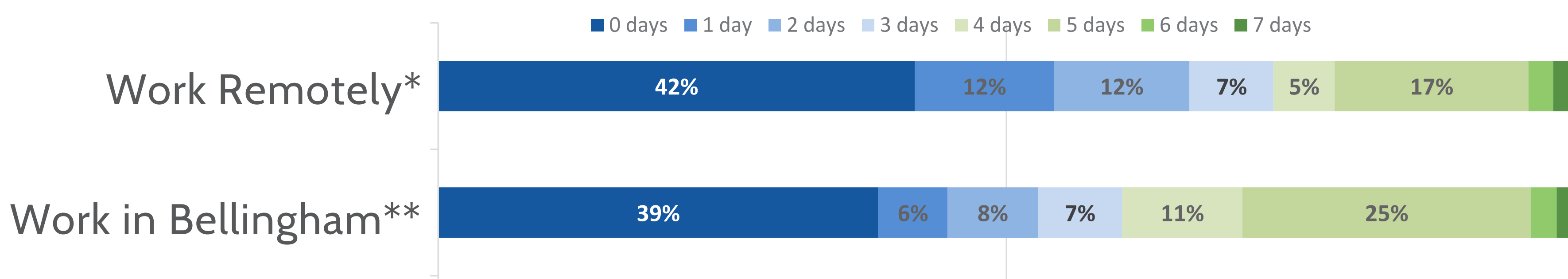
36% work partially remote (1-4 days a week)

22% work fully remote (at least 5 days a week)

39% are not commuting to a job in Bellingham (either work fully remote or travel outside Bellingham for work)

16% sometimes travel well outside of Bellingham for work (commute for at least one day in a typical week to a location at least 20 miles outside Bellingham, not including overnight stays)

How many days in a typical week do you work from each of the following locations?



*Data represents employed Bellingham residents who typically work at home or in a public place like a coffee shop.

**Data represents employed Bellingham residents who commute to a job in Bellingham.

MIDDLE HOUSING TYPES

A variety of housing types and densities are already permitted throughout much of the city. These areas are identified in Bellingham's Infill Toolkit, which was adopted in 2009 and expanded with more areas added in 2018.

The Infill Toolkit focuses on vacant or underused lands in urban areas and helps to reduce sprawl. The toolkit includes eight housing types with key design features to promote privacy, cohesiveness with the neighborhood, and interaction with the street.

MAP KEY:

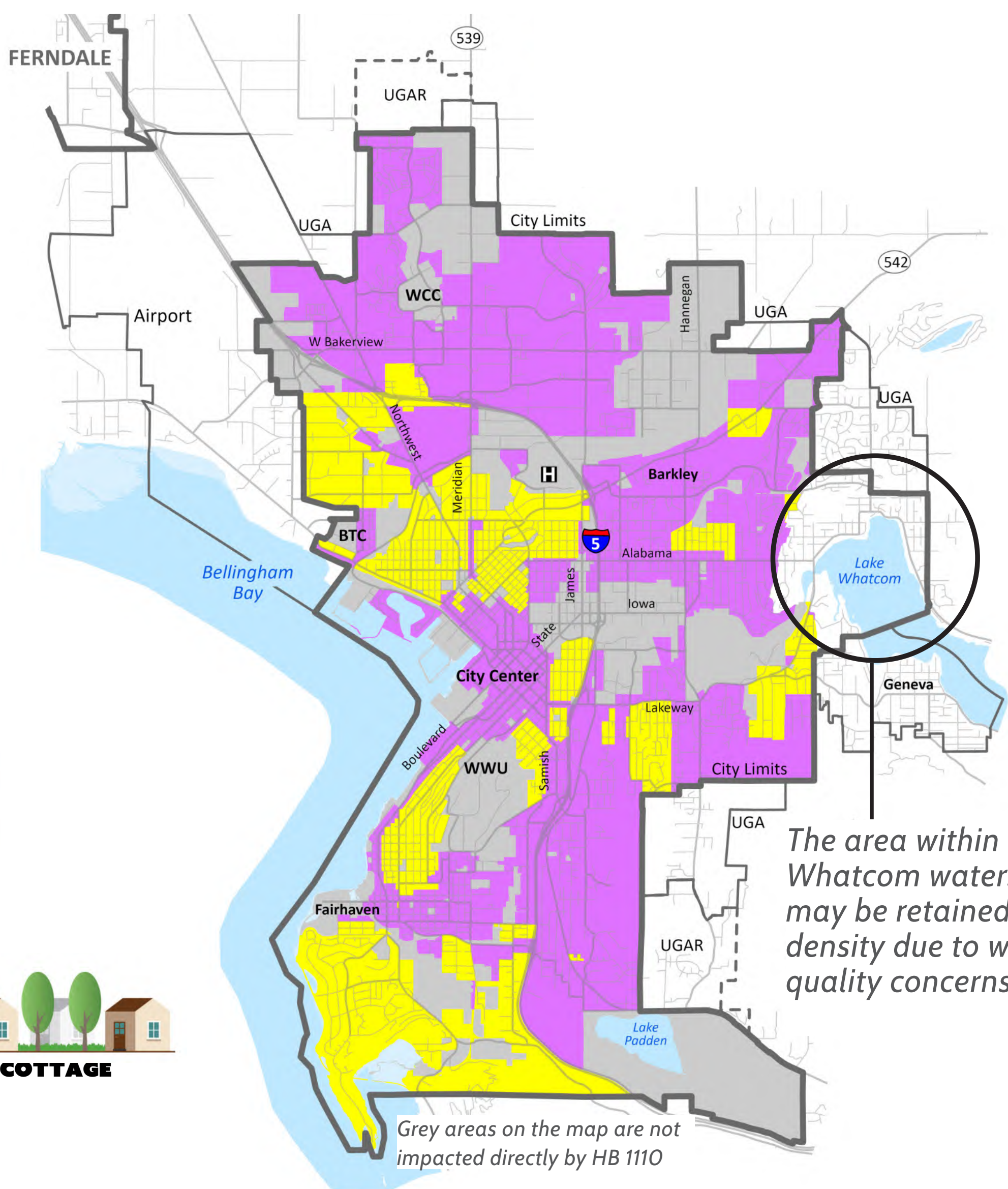
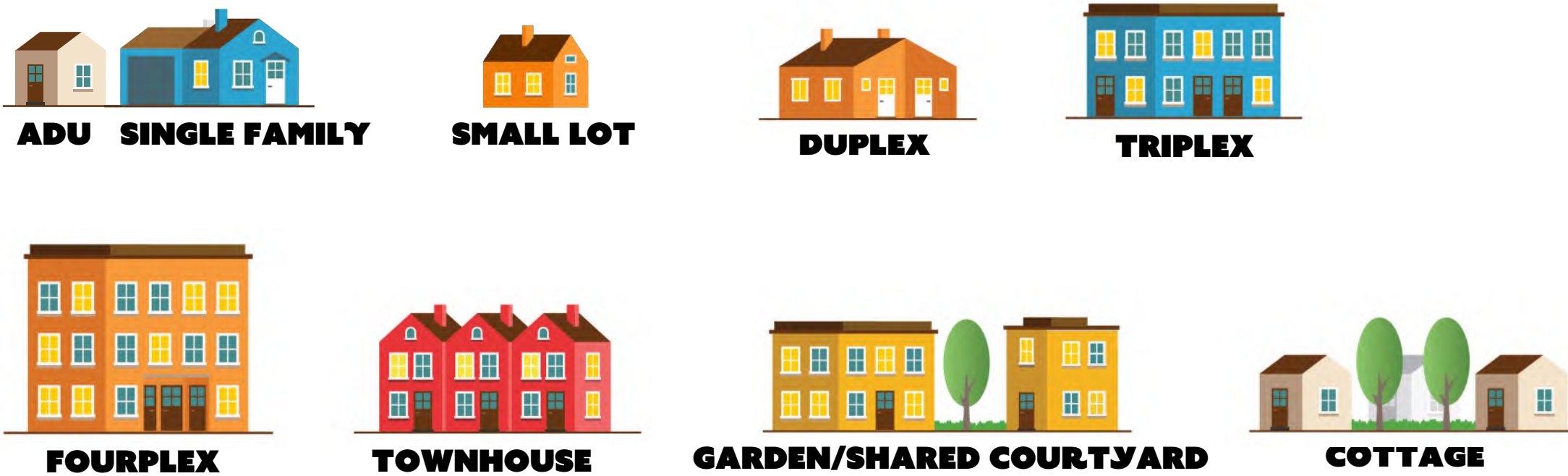
 Infill toolkit NOT currently allowed

This area currently only allow 1 single family home and up to 2 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) per lot.



 Infill toolkit allowed

The infill toolkit is permitted here, allowing a variety of housing types and a 50% density bonus if these infill types are used.



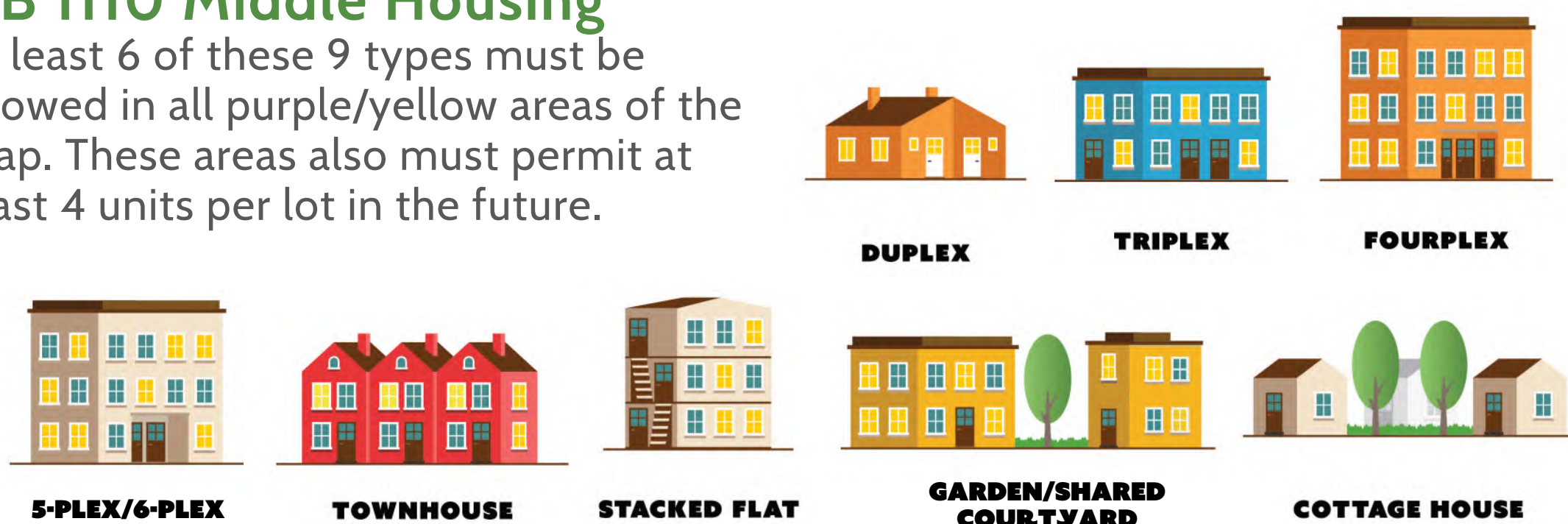
The area within the Lake Whatcom watershed may be retained at lower density due to water quality concerns.

State legislation housing types for consideration:

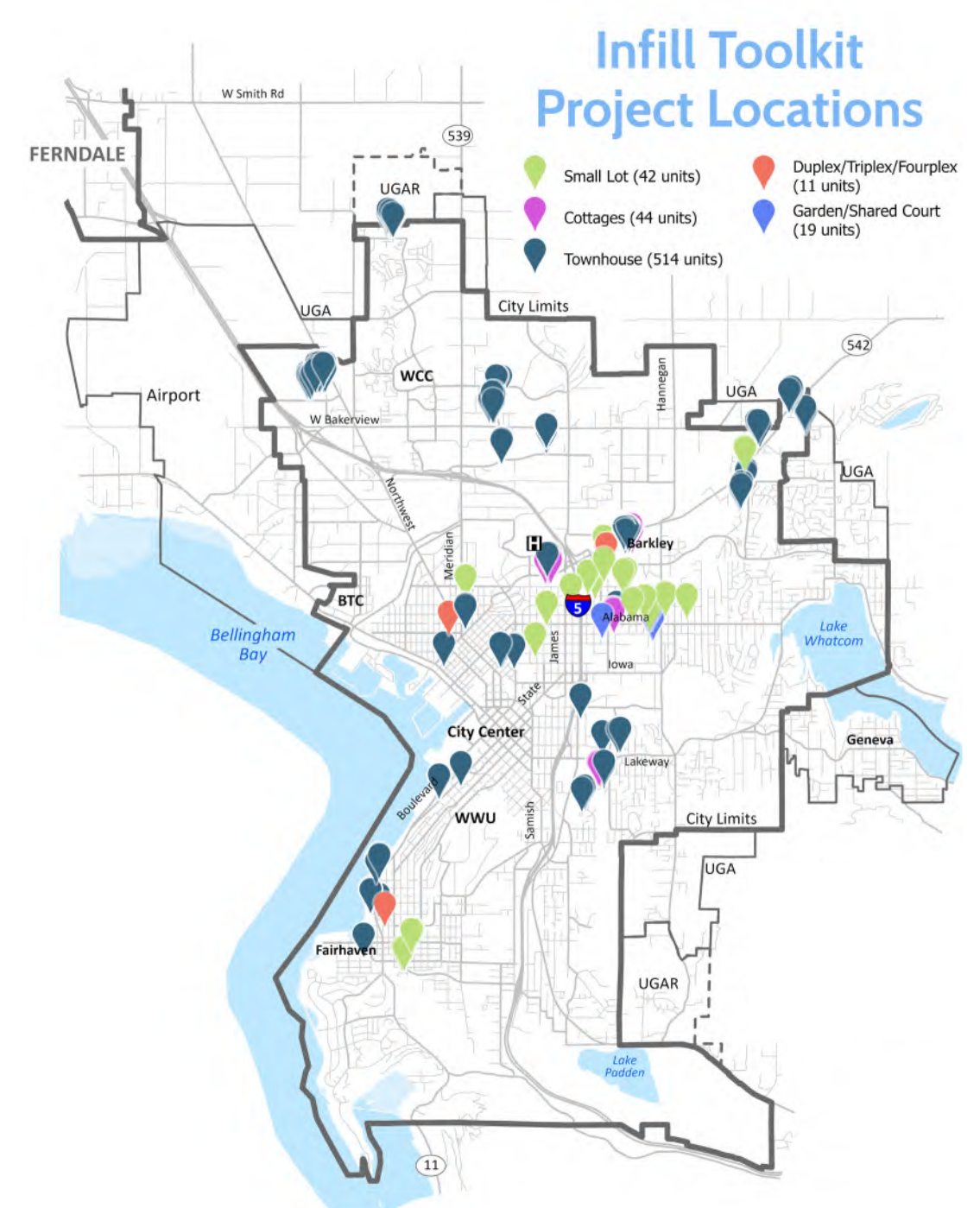
HB 1998 Co-living housing is required to be permitted anywhere where 6 or more units are permitted on a lot. These projects rent/sell individual rooms but have shared kitchen facilities. They can be large or small.



HB 1110 Middle Housing At least 6 of these 9 types must be allowed in all purple/yellow areas of the map. These areas also must permit at least 4 units per lot in the future.



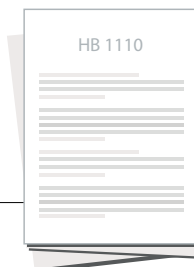
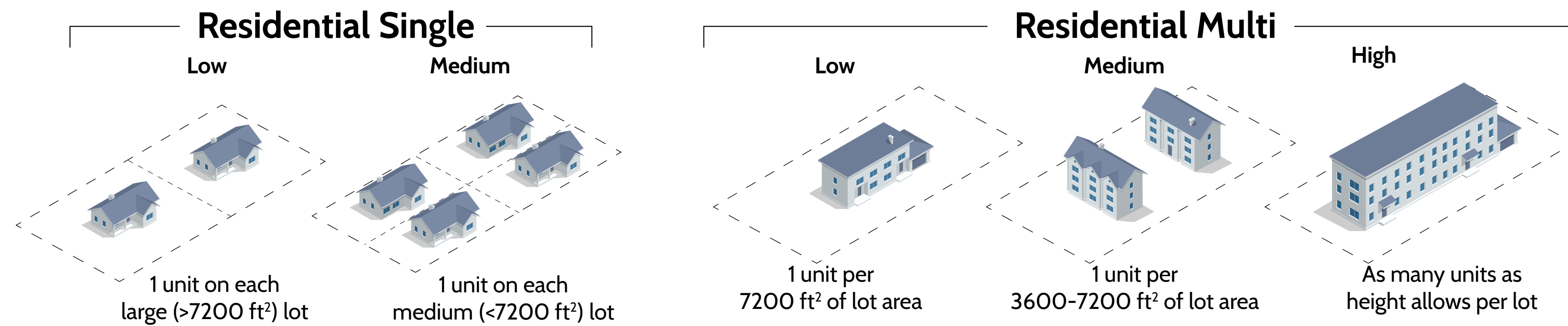
Since the adoption of the Infill Toolkit in 2009, over **600 Infill Toolkit units** have been created.



MIDDLE HOUSING AND CHANGING NEIGHBORHOODS

Passed by the state legislature in 2023, House Bill 1110 legalizes middle-scale housing forms in residential neighborhoods. This means that changes are coming to Bellingham's neighborhoods, with at least 4 units per lot allowed. As a result, we will need to re-think our existing zoning and how we regulate density and bulk in residential areas across the city.

Focused on the number of units allowed based on site size



Washington State HB 1110 requires at least 4 units and a variety of types to be allowed per lot.

POSSIBLE NEW RESIDENTIAL APPROACH

This means we need to re-think how we consider density and bulk in residential areas across the city.

Focused on the size, type, and scale of housing for each area



Considering this possible new approach, pick 3 preferred housing types you'd like to see in each potential area and place these icons in the boxes.

Low Density

Medium Density

High Density



COTTAGE HOUSE



DUPLEX



TOWNHOUSE



STACKED FLAT



TRIPLEX



COURTYARD APARTMENTS



FOURPLEX



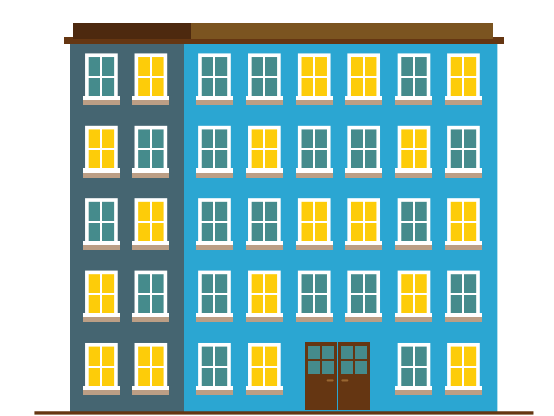
CO-LIVING HOUSING (SMALL)



FIVEPLEX SIXPLEX



CO-LIVING HOUSING (LARGE)



APARTMENT

Pick from these housing types

HOUSING DESIGN FEATURES

Regulated design standards aim to control the physical characteristics and appearance of a community's housing stock. Many local governments, including Bellingham, have used design requirements to:

- Ensure development fits a desired aesthetic that enhances the public realm.
- Creates a sense of place, and promotes pedestrian activity.
- Integrate infill housing into existing neighborhoods.

Today, multifamily housing has a variety of design standards, but single family homes have none. Single family homes have dimensional standards like height limits and setbacks, but they have no design regulations.

Middle housing is regulated by the infill toolkit, with design standards as summarized on the next 4 boards.

Modulation & Articulation

Architectural & Exterior Details

Building Orientation

Landscaping & Outdoor Features



HB 1293 requires that design standards be objective, meaning that they are clear and easy to interpret.



HB 1110 requires that middle housing design standards be no more restrictive than single family design standards

This means that single family homes and middle housing forms will be regulated with the same objective design standards in the future. Any design standards that are retained from the following boards will also apply to single family homes.

Take a look at the next four boards and let us know which standards you think are most important to retain and prioritize for both single family and middle housing forms.

MODULATION & ARTICULATION

Housing Design Features

Modulation

Modulation includes unique building segments to help avoid long flat walls. This can include stepping or projecting portions of the building at specific intervals to help break up the continuous wall.

Articulation

Articulation includes smaller design elements, like bay windows or canopies, that help delineate building spaces

Examples:



Currently, Bellingham's Code has the below standards and guidelines for modulation and articulation in middle housing:

Place a dot on which elements we should prioritize in design.

Use a sticky note to provide additional ideas or your thoughts about the existing standards.

Roof forms emphasizing vertical proportions and modulations		
Varied massing such as bays and dormers		
Change of materials, colors, and textures		
Building modulation every 30 feet – stepped forward or back		
Use lines and rhythms to create human scale streetscape		
Variety in orientation, design, and layout with similar character		
Facade broken into distinct elements		

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Varied massing such as bays and dormers		
Change of materials, colors, and textures		<p>energy efficiency ought to be a priority</p> <p>Good ideas, but beware of adding too much. Stepped Back so that there is room for bill landscaping and trees. Setbacks make ornamentation and wider, therefore less human scale and less walkable.</p> <p>Energy efficiency and cost should be prioritized. Windows need to be prioritized.</p>
Building modulation every 30 feet – stepped forward or back		<p>Cut corners for every entrance so people with wheel chairs can enter easily.</p> <p>Dormer + bays or windows in the envelope edge energy efficiency so this shouldn't be required.</p> <p>Define or enforce this one?</p>
Use lines and rhythms to create human scale streetscape		<p>Use examples from natural world to inform design elements.</p>
Variety in orientation, design, and layout with similar character		
Facade broken into distinct elements		

Prioritize user experience over lookalike.

ARCHITECTURAL & EXTERIOR DETAILS

Housing Design Features

Architectural details and exterior materials examples:



Currently, Bellingham's Code has the below standards and guidelines for architectural details and exterior materials in middle housing:

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Minimize impact of garage with garage door details

Reflect common neighborhood design features such as porches, dormers, gables, and architectural detailing

Incorporate elements and forms from nearby buildings of character (established and historic neighborhoods)

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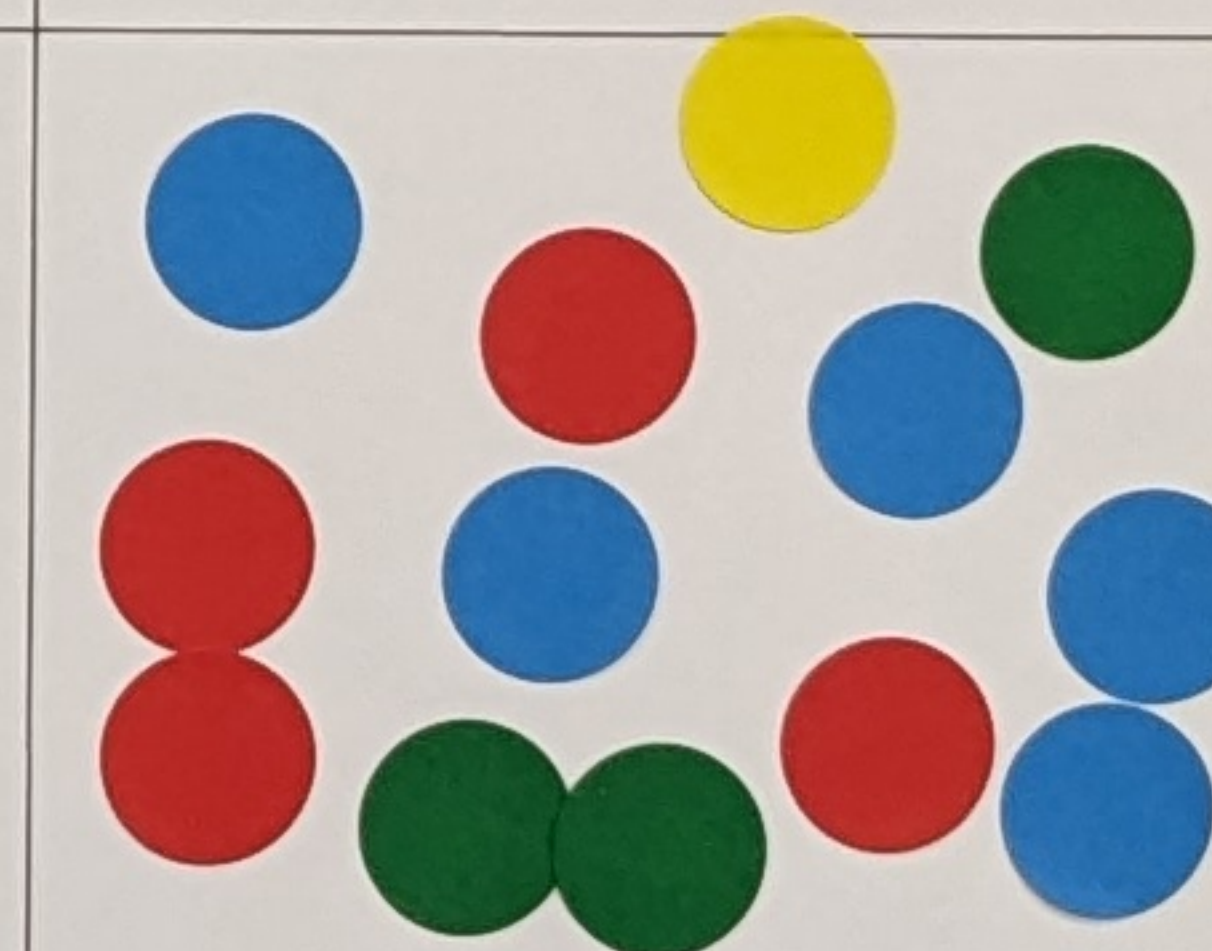
Use a sticky note to provide additional ideas or your thoughts about the existing standards.

Minimize impact of garage with garage door details



Do not block scenic views

Reflect common neighborhood design features such as porches, dormers, gables, and architectural detailing



I THINK THE NEW HOUSING ACROSS FROM HOME DETOR IS A GOOD EXAMPLE

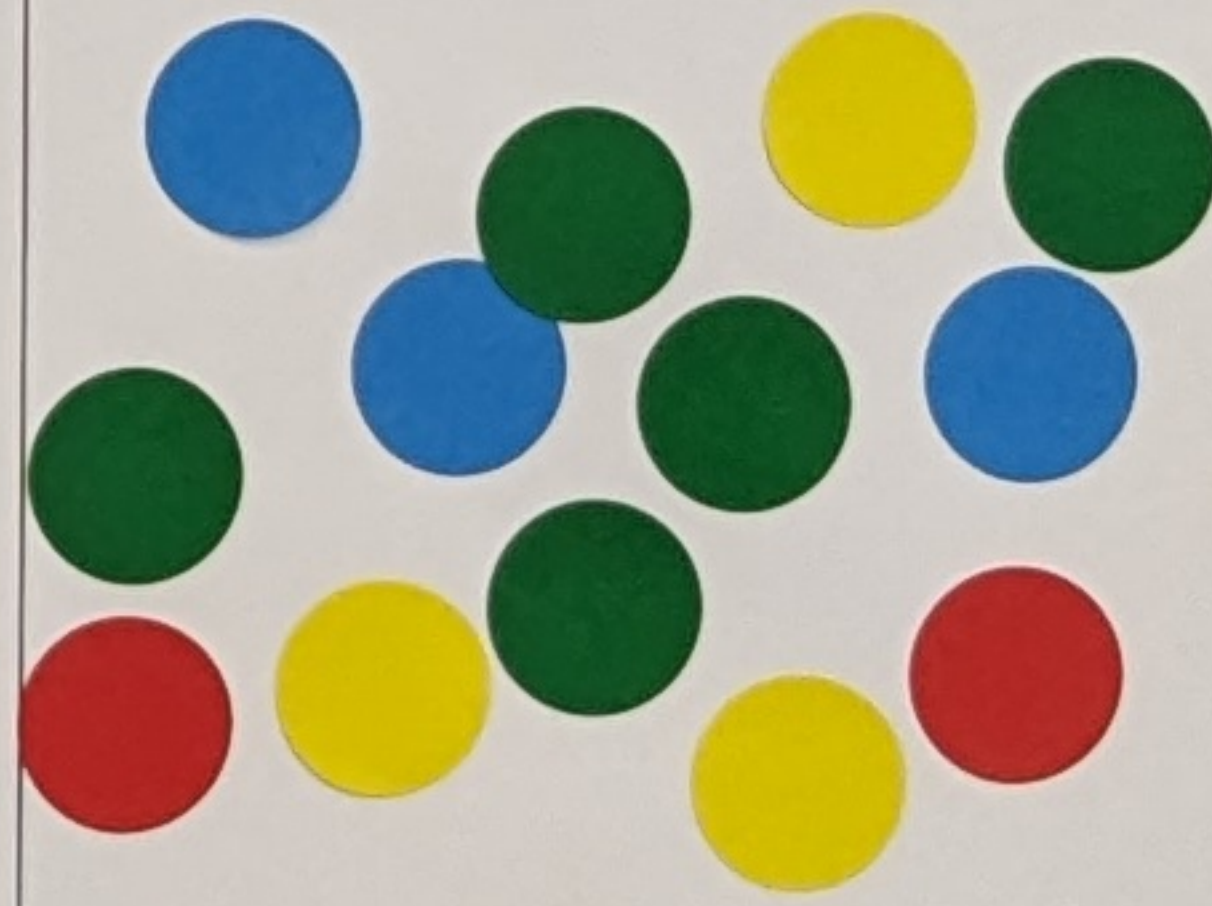
housing w/ character is important but not too much

Design to encourage interactions w/ neighbors

This will not contribute to affordable housing

Outdoor amenities for gathering are important dog areas

Incorporate elements and forms from nearby buildings of character (established and historic neighborhoods)



This is an unnecessary cost on housing

Balance between historic context + ORIGINALITY

Respect the aesthetic environment in places by window to look at mistakes

over-emphasis on some "historic" buildings holds us back from designing existing neighborhoods which we desperately need

Be innovative and create a sense of place

BUILDING ORIENTATION

Housing Design Features

Building orientation examples (where the front door and porches face):



Currently, Bellingham's Code has the below standards and guidelines for building orientation in middle housing:

Place a dot on which elements we should prioritize in design.

Use a sticky note to provide additional ideas or your thoughts about the existing standards.

Prioritize front/entry side of housing facing street over side lane or pedestrian corridor		
Parking should not be located between housing and street or lane		
Garages facing a street or lane should be narrower than the width of the home. Minimize visual presence of garages with landscaping and architectural details		
Prioritize locating parking off an alley		
Minimum dimensions for front porches		
Entrances facing the street or lane (or open space)		
Use single-story porches and bay windows (massing elements) on front side of buildings		
At least one entrance should be visible from street		

BUILDING ORIENTATION

Housing Design Features

Building orientation examples
(where the front door and porches face):

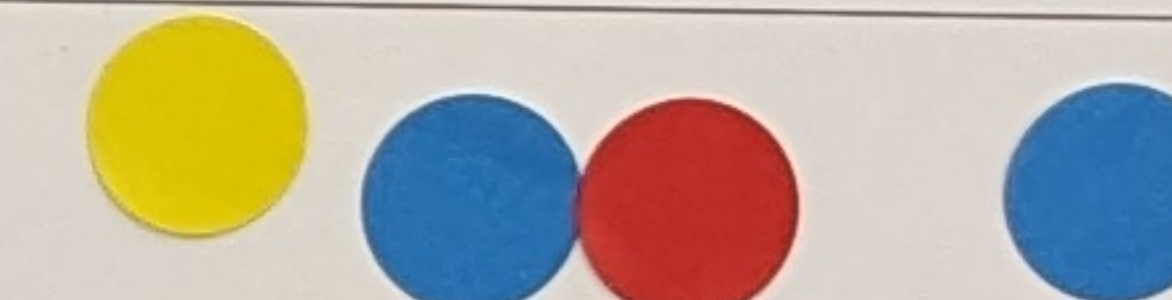


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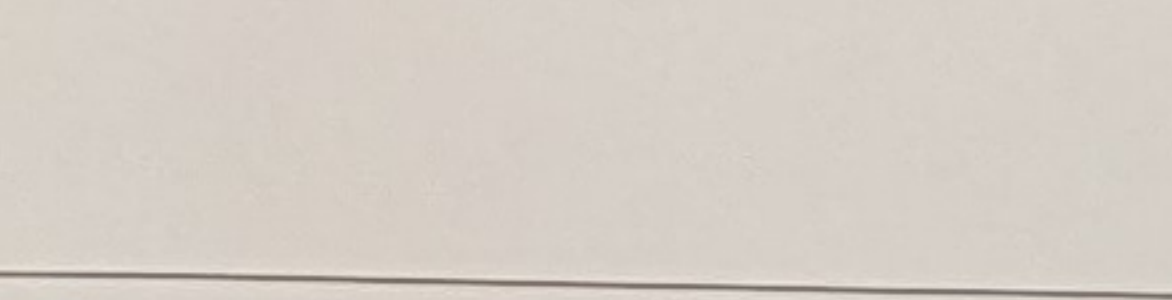
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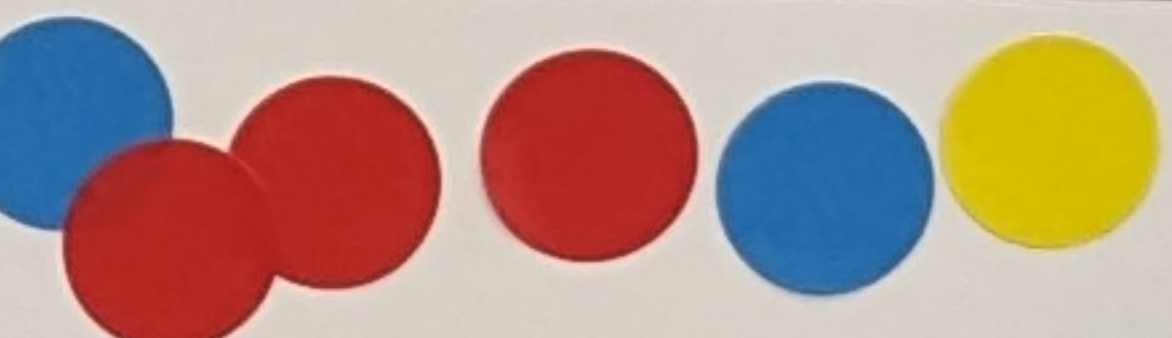
Prioritize locating parking off an alley



Minimum dimensions for front porches



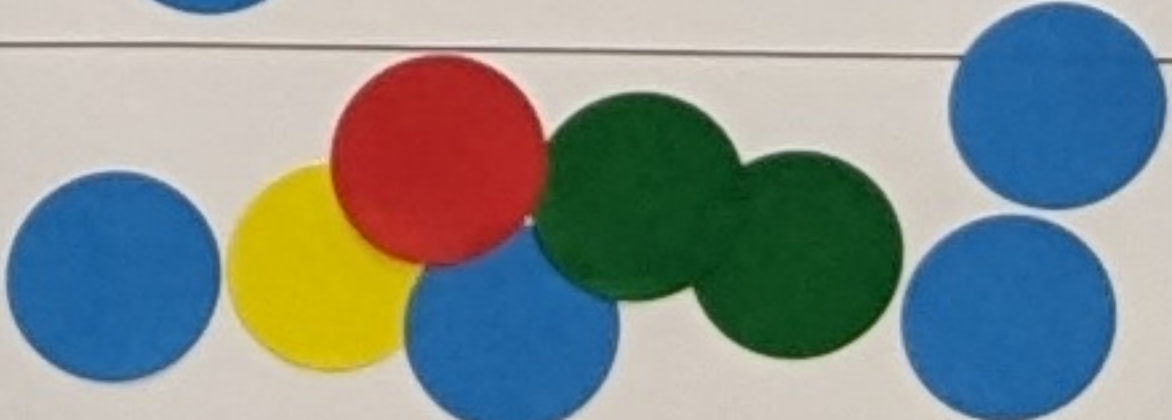
Entrances facing the street or lane (or open space)



Use single-story porches and bay windows (massing elements) on front side of buildings



At least one entrance should be visible from street



Place a dot on which elements we should prioritize in design.

Use a sticky note to provide additional ideas or your thoughts about the existing standards.

How safe will a neighborhood be if there is more housing? People do not know!

No parking requirement

No parking minimums

Front porches are a waste

Open front porches look nice but offer very little value in cold Bellingham. Should not be mandatory

People don't enter using street facing doors. Flexibility should be encouraged

Entrances on high (15+ ft) streets should face street

Glassed in porches are wonderful

Please, as an alternative, wrap porches in a way that can easily enter

Orient housing to be energy efficient. Allowing for sunlight to heat homes

LANDSCAPING & OUTDOOR FEATURES

Housing Design Features

Landscaping and outdoor features examples:

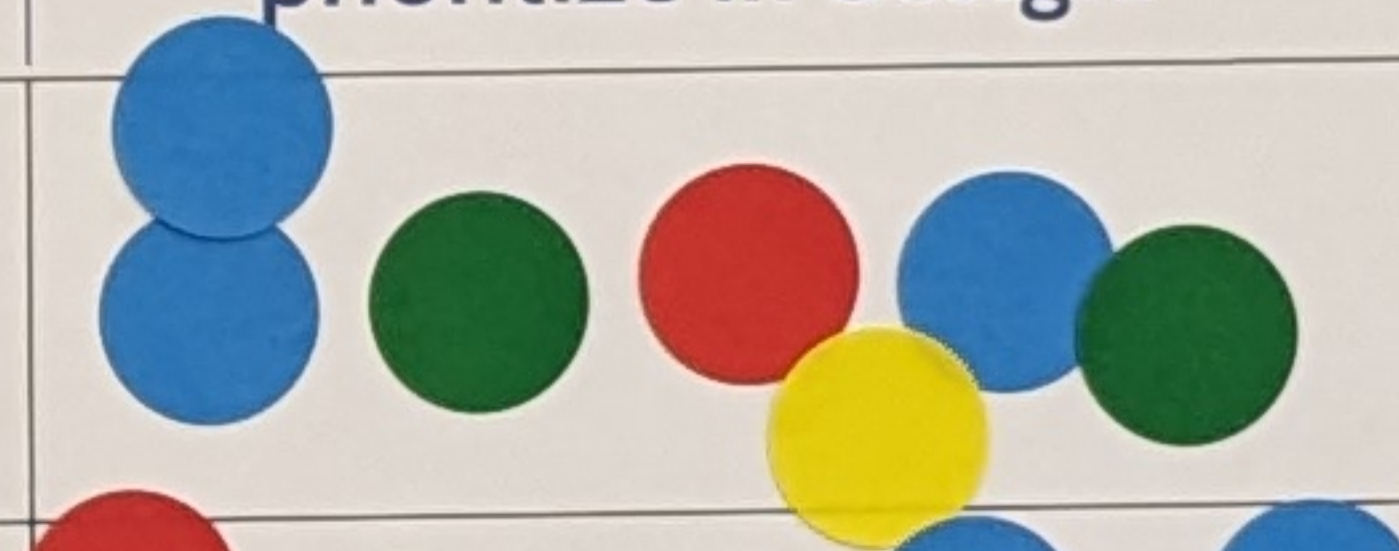


Currently, Bellingham's Code has the below standards and guidelines for landscaping and outdoor features in middle housing:

Place a dot on which elements we should prioritize in design.

Use a sticky note to provide additional ideas or your thoughts about the existing standards.

Provide landscaping (and landscape structures) to unify the site and separate housing units from hard surfaces



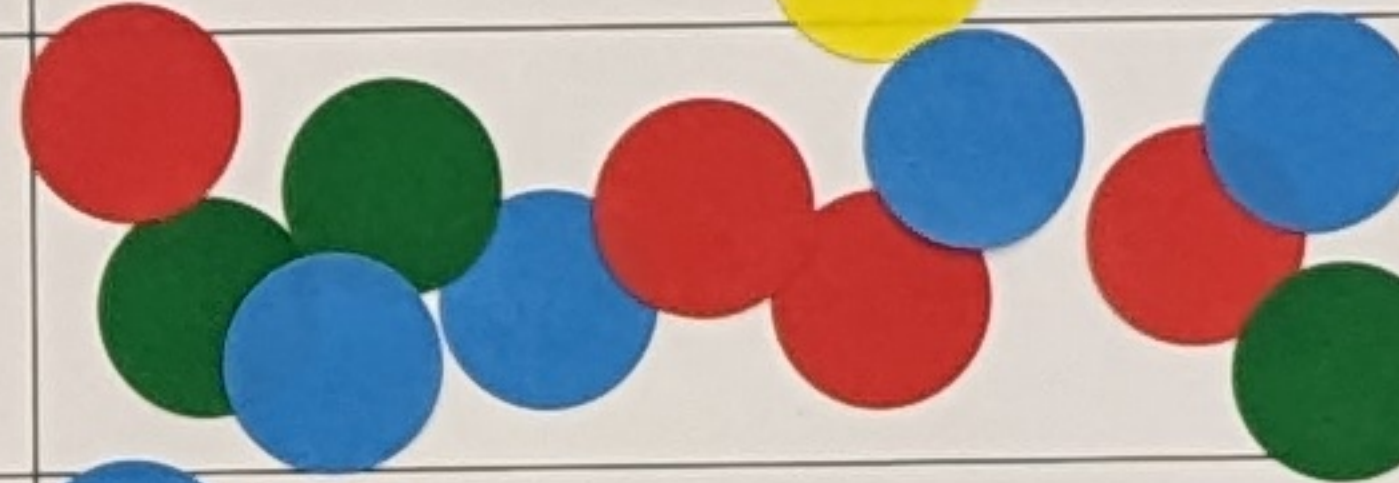
Use these as objective standards and not "bargaining chips"!

Yes to trees
boo to lawns

NO STREET
Trees they cause one or more a lot of WORK!

Depends on neighborhood density - less outdoor space & less parking for a density

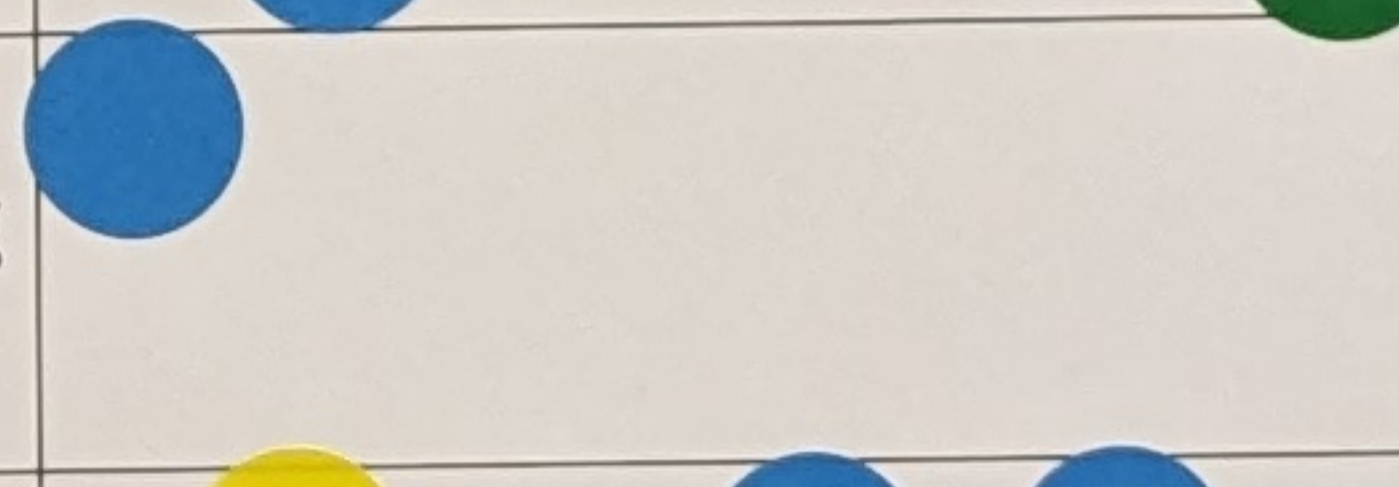
Provide private, usable space directly accessible from unit



patios for gardening in pots of hanging plants

This is a parker is a parker... example of what small town would like period would give people a sense of permanence

Design fencing to be integrated with building architecture and provide visual interest



Provide walkways to connect all dwelling units

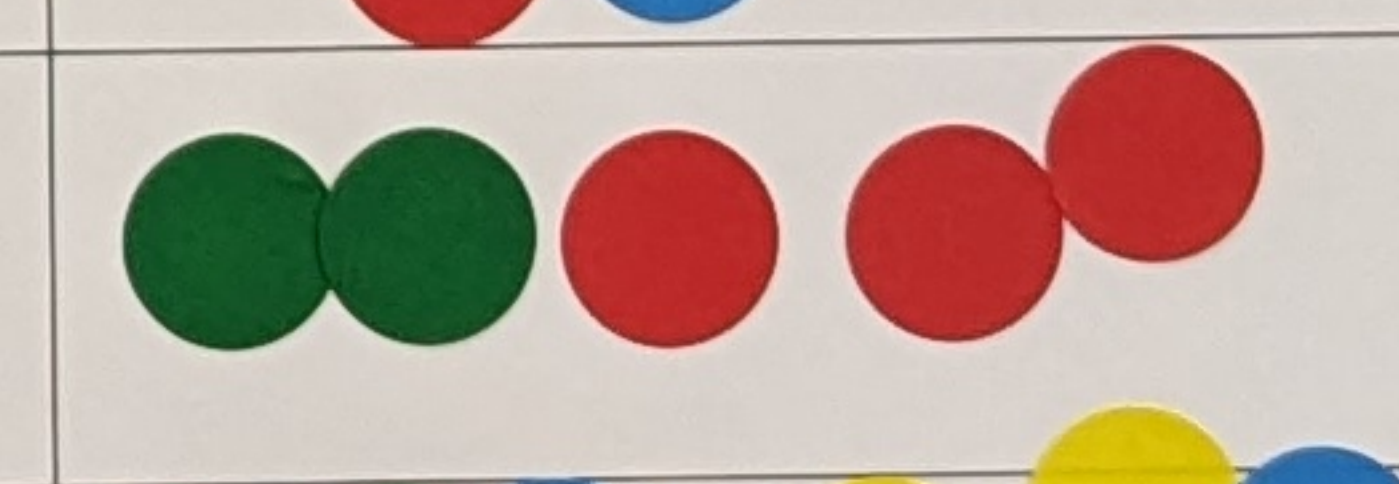


Prioritize shared driveways and prohibit front yard parking aprons



more parking & sand beds
↓ Density

Consolidate and screen garbage/recycling areas



Consolidate Garbage, Recycling, and mailboxes!

Help to be recalled to be discouraged but accessible for City Sen

Provide street trees at a prescribed interval



Native trees! Fruit trees!

Will be increasing importance given long temps of greenery!

More Fruit-bearing Street trees

Environmentally friendly, native plants! Not grass, other options that are better for birds! Fruit bearing trees!

Define and enhance the function of shared spaces (courtyard, common space, etc.) through the use of paving, landscaping, and amenities



Common large setbacks the private space

Very few people or neighbors clean their side walk, or streets

Common Spaces! Bathing outside of Bus

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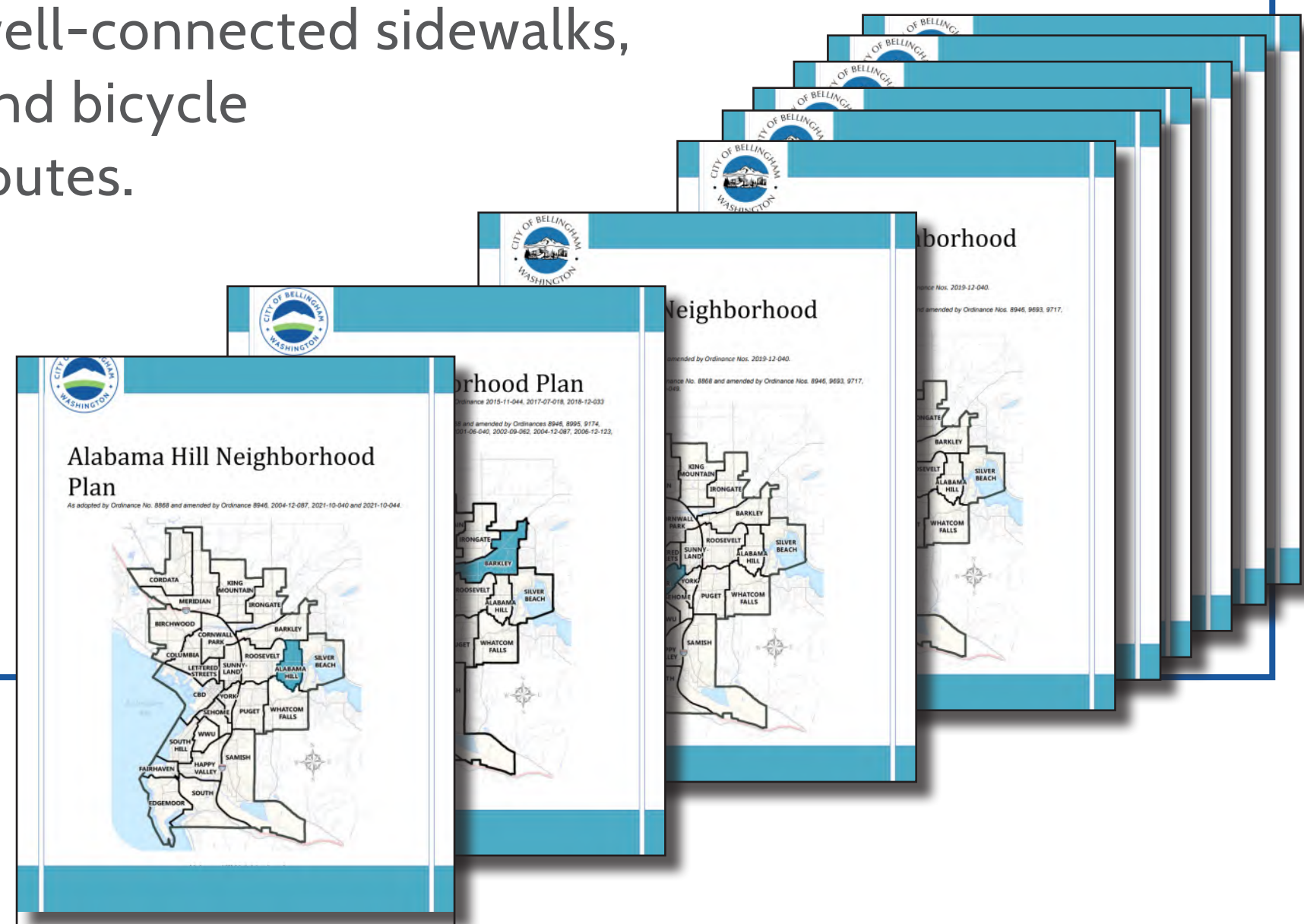
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Define and enhance the function of shared spaces (courtyard, common space, etc.) through the use of paving, landscaping, and amenities

BELLINGHAM'S NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

The 1980 Neighborhood Plans

Many forward-thinking ideas and priorities captured in the 1980 neighborhood plans have shaped our community for the better. These plans laid out the vision for Bellingham's livable neighborhoods, world-class parks and trails, and well-connected sidewalks, and bicycle routes.



Citywide Infrastructure Planning

Over time, Bellingham has included the infrastructure elements from the neighborhood plans into citywide system plans. These plans prioritize connectivity, sustainability, and social equity. This approach is less fragmented, is more efficient to maintain, and ensures capital investments are made where they are needed most and can provide the greatest benefit.



A Need for Simpler Regulations and More Flexibility

Now, changes are needed. Bellingham's land use system, based on 25 separate plans with over 450 unique subareas, is also challenging for staff to administer and difficult for developers and the community to understand.

Like many cities, Bellingham has land use zones that prioritize single-family detached housing over all other forms. This type of zoning results in racially and economically disparate impacts and exclusion in housing.

The Path Forward

To accomplish this, we will need a simpler, citywide set of standardized zoning regulations and objective review criteria. These changes will provide equitable opportunities for more housing variety across the city, will enable better integration of climate-action policies, and will help ensure consistent, fair, and timely review of development proposals.

New State laws now require Bellingham to change our plans and regulations to:



Address racially disparate impacts and replace exclusive single-family zoning with zones allowing a variety of middle-scale housing types.



Plan for housing for households of all income levels.



Incorporate new regulations that mitigate for impacts related to development and improve community resilience to the effects of climate change.

COMPLETING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

WHAT'S COMMON TODAY?



IN-HOME BUSINESS



SEPARATED IN-HOME BUSINESS



BUSINESS AT FOREFRONT



MULTIPLE UNATTACHED BUSINESSES



MULTIPLE ATTACHED BUSINESSES



LARGE BUSINESS

The Bellingham community wants more **small-scale commercial options** spread throughout the city, particularly in areas close to residential areas for an easy walk or bike ride from home. These spaces help make a place special, provide ways to gather with neighbors, and allow for easier access to essential goods and services, like groceries or medical supplies.

Today, we allow “home occupations,” which are limited commercial uses, such as piano lessons or craft-making, that are allowed to take place within a residence. These require a permit and are limited in external presence and neighborhood impact.

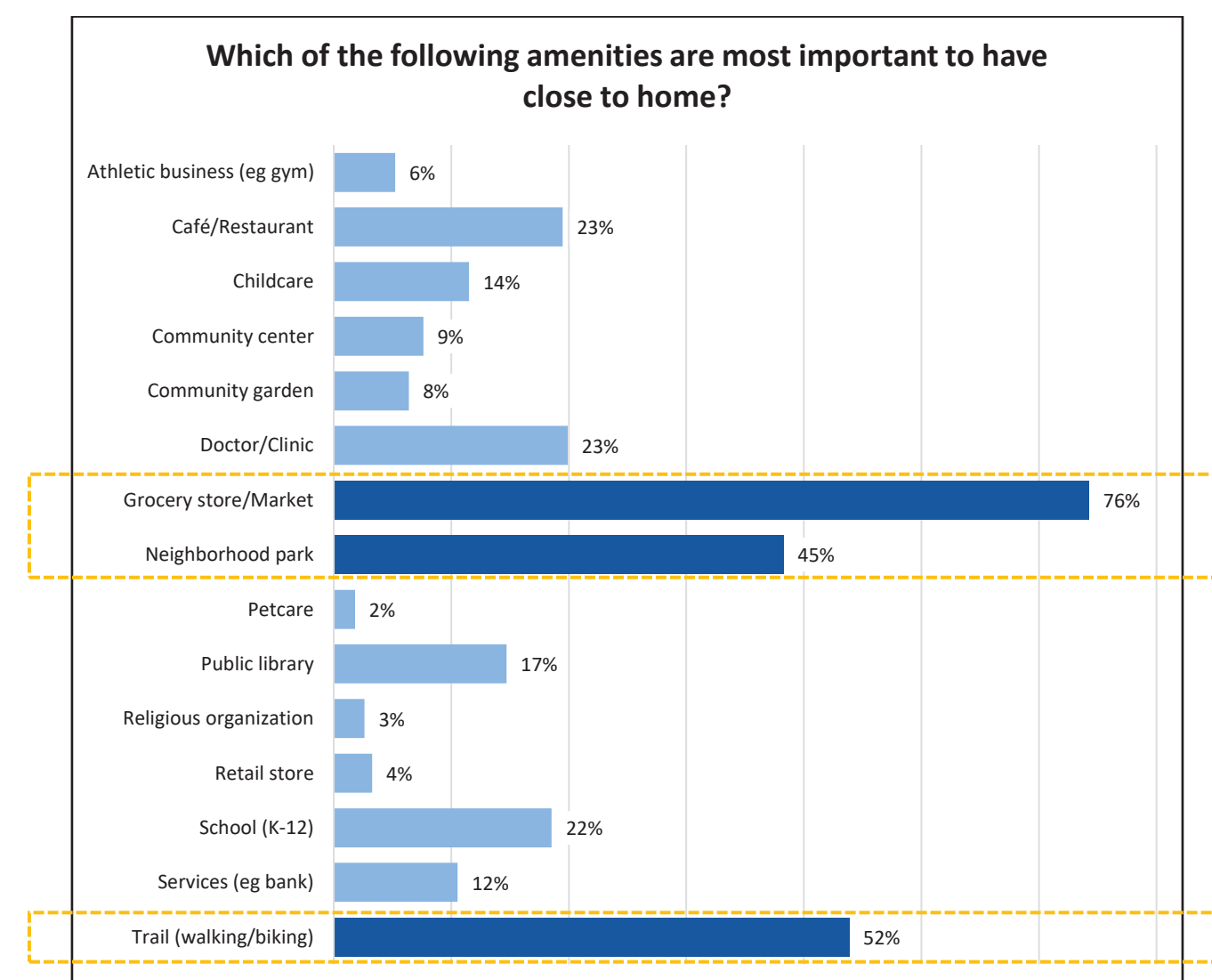
We could allow and encourage more options between these two scales.

Today, only a few of these exist. They are generally older and have been in continuous use since before our current regulations were put in place.



We also have many large commercial areas that allow retail, office, or other uses in large clusters. These areas generally attract visitors from around the city and are separated from residential areas with buffers, roadways, or other transitional elements.

In fall of 2023, more than 4,000 people took our Vision Survey and weighed in on the types of options they'd like to see close to home. The most popular were grocery stores/markets, parks and trails, doctors/clinics, cafes/restaurants, schools, public libraries, childcare, and services like banks.



In your round table discussions later in this meeting, you will discuss where these different scales of uses may be appropriate, and what restrictions would be needed in each case.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

in Bellingham

What is a short-term rental?

A short-term rental (STR) is defined as “a lodging use, other than a hotel or motel, in which a dwelling unit or portion thereof is provided to guests by an STR operator for a fee for fewer than 30 consecutive nights”



Why do some local governments regulate STRs?

STRs can cause neighbors concern about potential impacts (noise, parking, etc.). Additionally, without regulations, STRs can impact the housing supply by taking units out of the long-term housing market. In response, some local governments, including Bellingham, have created STR regulations.

What does Bellingham require?

All STRs within city limits require a permit. Bellingham’s regulations specify:

- Operational limitations (days per year, number of STRs per operator, owner occupancy, etc.)
- Location within a dwelling unit
- More flexibility in commercial and urban village zones
- More restrictions in the Lake Whatcom watershed
- Other requirements, such as parking, business license, insurance, and safety inspection.

To date, we have approximately 100 permitted short-term rentals in Bellingham.

Will new “middle housing” bring more STRs?

Not necessarily. This is because STRs in new middle housing units will still need to comply with all STR requirements. Currently, only STRs in commercial or urban village zones do not require owner occupancy.

What’s your perspective on short-term rentals?
Write your thoughts on sticky notes, below.

*To learn more about short-term rental regulations at the City,
scan QR code at right*



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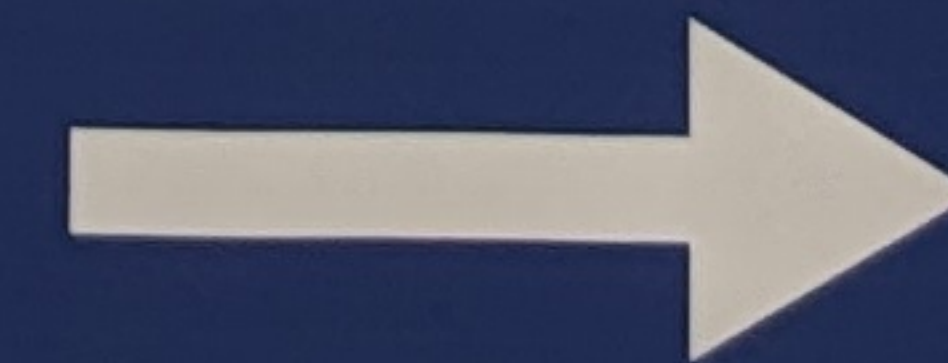
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What’s your perspective on short-term rentals?
Write your thoughts on sticky notes, below.

Sticky notes include:

- Not sure who neighbors are
- Can be good extra income source
- NOT A FAN SHOULD BE A PERCENT OF TOTAL
- I like having some short term rentals in Bellingham
- May cause increase in rental for others
- Better than snowbirds homes sitting empty half the year. Limit # at date
- STRs are very useful when moving
- Some see ok BUT SINCE HOUSING IS A BIG ISSUE SEEMS LIKE A BAD THING
- More people who plan to live here should STR
- Can be good income or job option for elders
- What about STR Limits (X units per Y) instead of base?
- Increase tourism and can increase local business traffic
- Mixed feeling just depends on the number. Need to be limits
- Limit corporate purchases
- No more short-term rentals should be allowed
- No STRs Neighborhood noise and safety issues
- if STR in new middle housing is not owned by Bellingham
- Should be owner occupied only
- My spare room helps me afford the expensive purchase price + mortgage
- STRs are good privacy for tourists but drive up local costs
- Helps with housing needs + tourism
- not a big fan. Only good for owner-occupied housing

To learn more about short-term rental regulations at the City, scan QR code at right



HOUSING AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

How our housing types and neighborhoods grow over time - and where development occurs - has an impact on the climate.

Design for Resilience

Housing can be designed to withstand climate impacts such as extreme weather, flooding, or heatwaves. Additionally, building in areas less prone to climate hazards (e.g., avoiding floodplains, wildfire-prone areas) can reduce the risk of climate-related damage.

Design or Retrofit for Energy

Incorporating energy-efficient technologies and designs (e.g. better insulation, energy-efficient windows, solar panels) can reduce the carbon footprint of houses. Implementing more stringent building codes and standards can help drive the development of climate-friendly housing.



Image Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/energy-efficient-housing-made-more-affordable-mortgage-shachi-naidu/>

Compact Development

Promoting higher-density development can reduce urban sprawl, lower emissions, and improve energy efficiency. Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, found that for the 700 cities they studied, “infill housing — that is, homes built in existing urban areas, near transit, jobs and services — can reduce greenhouse gas pollution more effectively than any other option.” (Seattle Times)

Smart Growth and Transit-Oriented Development

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PARKING AND LAND USE

The City Council recently discussed reducing or eliminating the rules that require a minimum number of parking spaces to be provided alongside new development. On May 20th, they directed the Planning Commission to consider a number of potential approaches to reducing these requirements.

Today's Parking Requirements

While there are many nuances to the parking regulations, the following outlines the general role of our code in regulating the minimum number of spaces that a development must provide.

Single Family



2 parking spaces per house
(+ 1 space for each bedroom over 3)

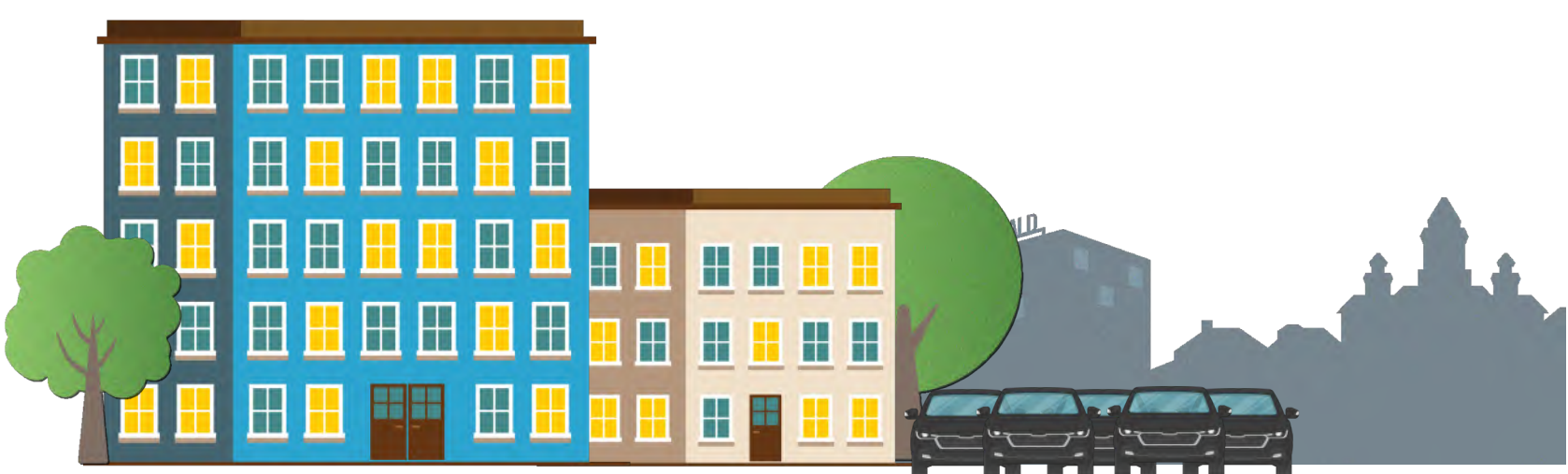
Multi-Family



Total number of parking spaces is based on unit types:

Studio: 1 space per unit
1-2-bedroom: 1.5 spaces per unit
3+ bedroom: 2 spaces per unit

Urban Villages



- The residential requirements vary but are generally less than the Single/Multi-family requirements.
- Non-residential requirements vary but include things like 1 parking space for every 350SF of office space.
- Downtown, Old Town, and Fairhaven all have some areas that are exempt from parking requirements.

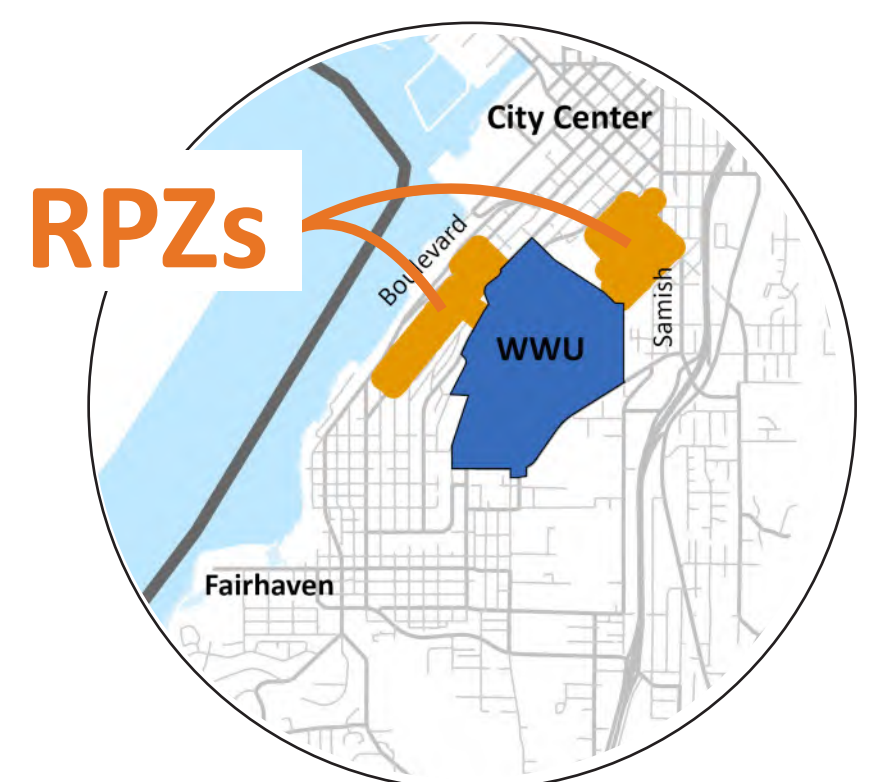
Accessible Parking

Accessible parking stalls are required based on a ratio of how many total stalls are provided (for instance, 1 disabled stall is required if 20 total stalls are provided, but 6 disabled stalls are required if 200 total stalls are provided).



Residential Parking Zones

Residential Parking Zones (RPZs) exist near Western Washington University and help secure an ample supply of parking for residents and visitors through the use of parking permits to residents within the parking zone.



NOTE: The number of required parking spaces can be altered through a variance or through a parking waiver or shared parking agreement, each of which has its own process for potential approval.



Learn more about parking reforms at the City.

View City Council discussion on reducing or eliminating parking requirements.



PARKING AND LAND USE

Benefits of Reducing Parking Minimums

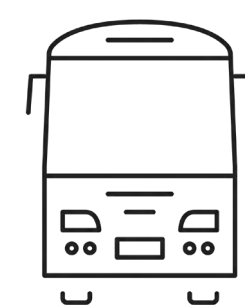
Over the past several decades, the City has shifted its policy framework and has made efforts to move away from the suburbanization of the city. The objective was to provide more shared parking resources and reduce single occupancy vehicle use, primarily through increased biking, walking, and transit usage.

Reducing/eliminating minimum parking requirements would put the decision of whether to create parking spaces, and how many, in the hands of individuals so they can make land-use decisions that work for them and their property. Additionally, staff will evaluate regulations to determine what types of mandates should be loosened and which should remain, taking considerations such as ADA requirements, safety, and electric vehicle charging stations into account.

Some benefits of reducing parking requirements include:



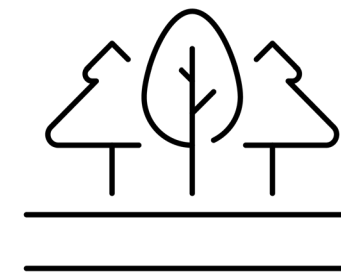
Reducing the cost of providing housing (each parking space generally costs over \$20,000 in Bellingham).



Reducing reliance on cars and encouraging alternative (lower environmental impact) methods.



Increasing the amount of housing that can be built (parking requirements often limit the number of units that can be built due to limited space for parking on site).



Reducing hardscaped areas that both increase the temperature of urban areas and create stormwater runoff.

Considerations if Parking Minimums are Reduced/Removed

Planning Commission and ultimately the City Council will consider reducing or removing minimum parking requirements across the city (or within certain areas of the city).

If these parking requirements are reduced or removed, what are the most important considerations to include alongside these changes? Place up to two dots on the ideas below.

Provide more paid public parking at popular destinations	Require alternative parking to be provided (such as shared parking agreements between multiple building owners)
Require more accessible parking spaces (link disabled stalls to the size and type of building rather than to the total number of stalls provided)	Dedicate more street parking spaces to short-term pick-up/drop-off (carpooling or ridesharing)
Increase funding for transit and pedestrian infrastructure (requires new funding source)	Increase funding for bicycle infrastructure (requires new funding source)
Encourage the development/locating of a bicycle or scooter share in Bellingham	Provide a “fee-in-lieu” option for those who reduce the parking they provide (they pay a fee for each parking space they choose not to provide, which can be utilized to improve pedestrian, bicycle, or transit infrastructure)
Establish more RPZs in residential areas near popular destinations (requires funding for enforcement resources)	Other (place a stickie)

PARKING AND LAND USE

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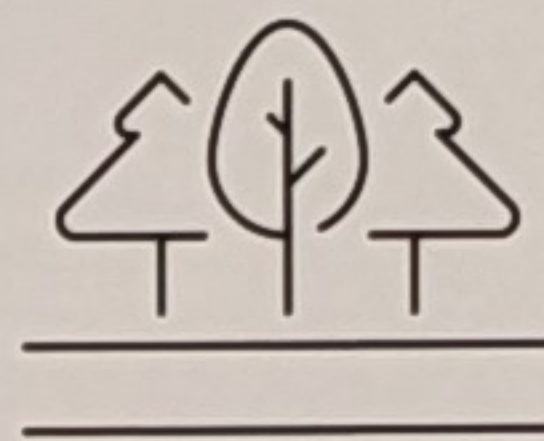
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Pilot bike share network connecting Downtown Bellingham to fairhaven

Anti-car user geatorty becoming excessive

Banning car use should not preclude adequate ped/transit infra

Developers want reduce cost unless forced. Only reduce parking minimums in exchange for required affordable

Bikes downtown. Now down sidewalks on sidewalks

transit to trails like burial

more covered bike parking

New Holly bike lane endangers pedestrians

Can we do a subsidy for not building parking instead? Encourage

building indoor secure bike parking

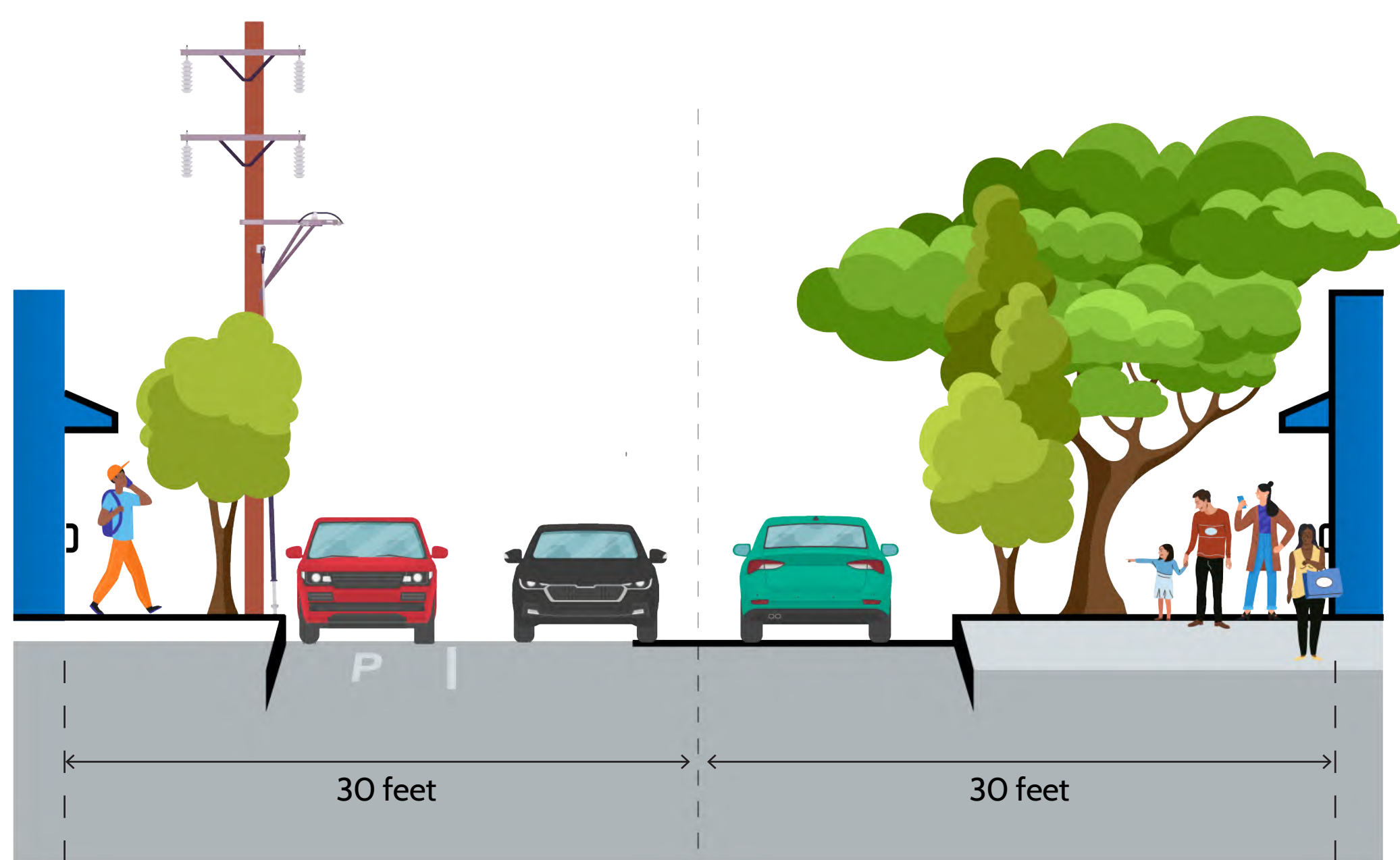
Parking mandates subsidize pollution

+ reduce speed limits on streets like state st -> fair haven

STREET AND SIDEWALK TRADE-OFFS

How to utilize limited space to meet diverse public uses.

Many Bellingham streets include a travel lane for cars and a dedicated lane for street parking. The diagram below shows the typical street components on the left side, with a sidewalk, small street trees, overhead utility lines, street parking and a travel lane in each direction.



However, in the context of walkable neighborhoods with abundant tree canopies, this pattern could change. Wider sidewalks can enhance the pedestrian experience and accommodate larger trees. Larger trees mean more money is needed to place utility lines underground and it reduces the space available for the street—as a result there might only be room for a single travel lane for cars and no parking. This is just one example of the trade-offs we must consider when designing streets.

There are many possible street and sidewalk design combinations that can accommodate various public uses and meet different needs, but they each prioritize different elements.

As we encourage more street connectivity across the city, we may have opportunities to improve some streets that include a mix of both residential and small commercial uses (not including existing Urban Villages).

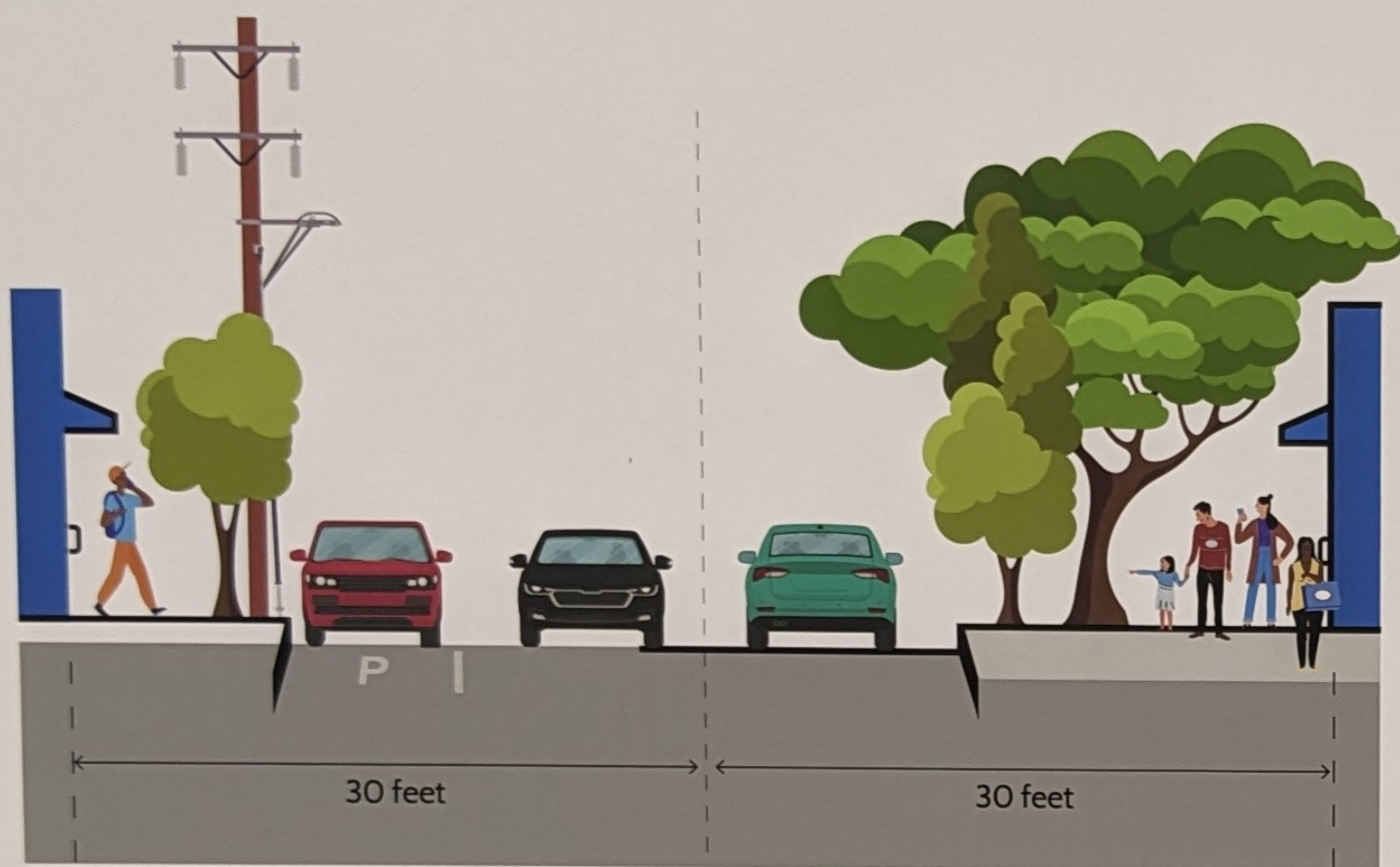
**What elements are most important to include along these mid-sized streets?
Add a stickie note to the top 3 elements that you'd like to prioritize along these streets.
Write any considerations you want to add about that element.**

Travel lanes for cars	Travel lane for transit	Separated bike lane	Larger street trees	Wide sidewalks	Street Parking	Bus shelters, bike parking, benches or other features

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<p>Turn lanes too</p> <p>Lower the Speed Limits!</p> <p>Lower city-wide Speed limit to 25 MPH and 30 MPH in dense areas</p>	<p>Bus rapid transit please!</p>	<p>Paint isn't infrastructure, Protection please!</p> <p>protect existing bike lanes with prefab concrete curbs</p> <p>plastic bollards not good either or safe</p> <p>Protected bike lanes with vertical delineators</p>	<p>Landscaping in front as well as trees</p> <p>add street trees and other greenery to medians all over like Bill McIndoo Road like Samish Road and Malibu road</p> <p>Trees create shade & reduce heat in the summer</p>	<p>No bikes on Sidewalks downtown</p>	<p>Please swap street parking w/ bike lane every where possible. The parking protected lanes on hills can be replicated all over</p> <p>less street parking to make room for properly protected bike infrastructure for bikes.</p>	<p>Slow Traffic</p> <p>Sheltered Dropoff fill handicapped</p> <p>more bike racks like the ones in front of Boundary Bay</p>