

Chapters of the Plan

- **Land Use**

This chapter guides growth by establishing the future land uses across the city. The Land Use Map at right guides these permitted land uses (such as are defined in the zoning code).

- **Community Design**

This chapter recognizes the community's desires to retain features that make neighborhoods unique and improve the livability of the built environment as the community grows.

- **Housing**

This chapter contains an analysis of existing housing in Bellingham and policies to support future housing needs. This chapter may be expanded to include human services topics.

- **Multi-modal Transportation**

This chapter includes an analysis of the existing transportation system and projections of future needs including alternative modes, such as walking, bicycling and transit systems.

- **Economic Development**

This chapter highlights the City's commitment to create a vibrant, sustainable economy and identifies the City's role in economic development activity. It includes characteristics of the local economy and employment sectors.

- **Environment**

This chapter implements the vision of Bellingham as a city with treasured natural features. This chapter may be expanded to "Climate and the Environment" or a new Climate Change chapter may be created.

- **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

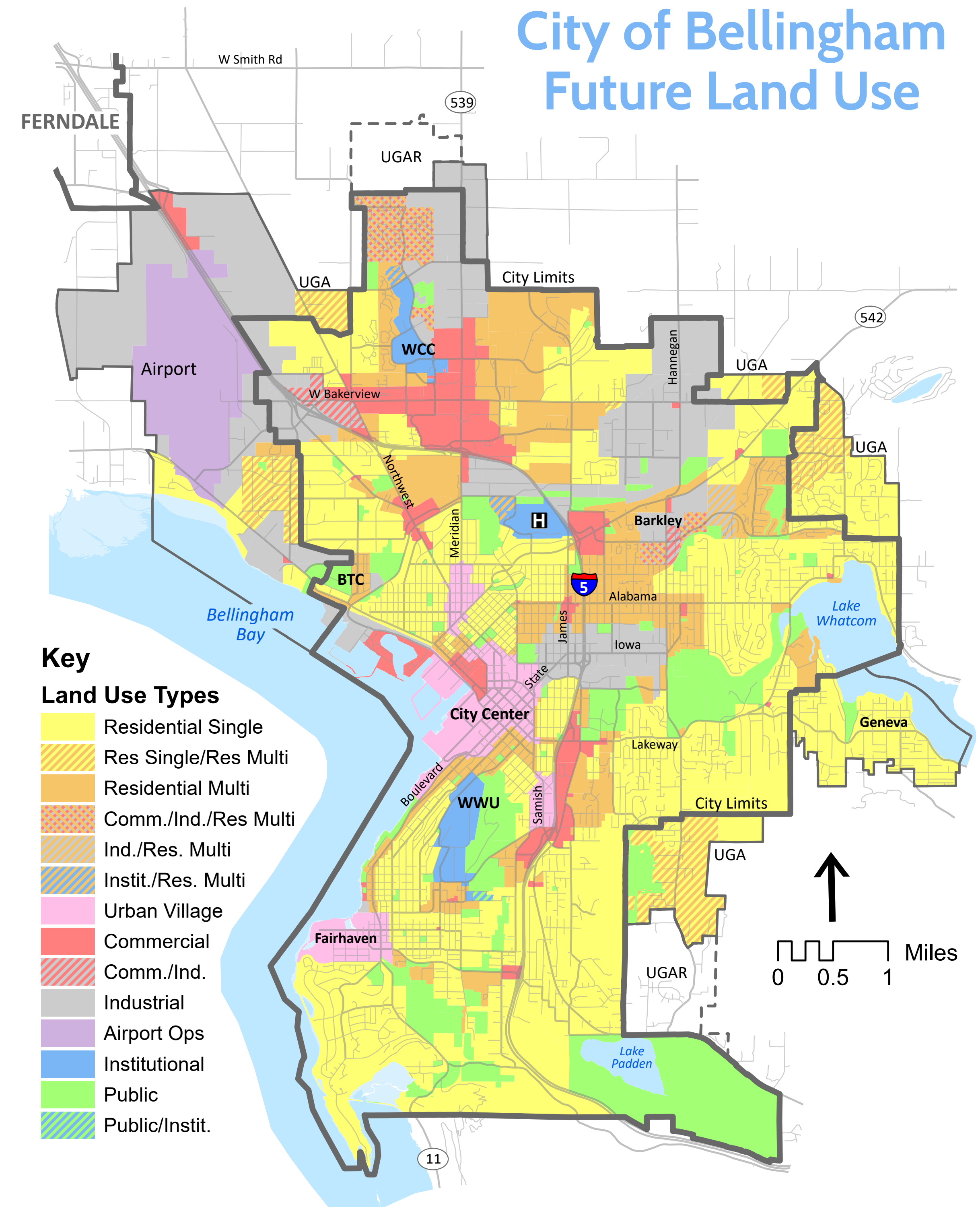
This chapter includes an inventory and level of service standards for existing and proposed facilities, and projections for future needs. This chapter is a functional plan and will be updated shortly after the rest of the plan.

- **Capital Facilities and Utilities**

This chapter contains a description of existing public facilities and services and includes projections of future needs for facilities and services.

New chapters under consideration:

- » *Climate Change and Resiliency (or incorporation into Environment Chapter)*
- » *Community/Public Engagement*
- » *Human Services (or incorporation into Housing Chapter)*



» The above map has been simplified from that referenced by the Comprehensive Plan. Additional detail is included in the Neighborhood Land Use Maps available online.

Growth Management

We plan for growth because...

People are going to move here. People and jobs are shifting to urban areas all over the world, and Bellingham is particularly appealing to many. When we plan for this growth intentionally:



Natural lands outside the city are protected from increased development, and the required infrastructure and transportation impacts are more efficiently located within the city.



Real estate prices are stabilized rather than heightened by increased demand on the existing supply. Displacement of existing residents is limited.



Infrastructure like transportation and utilities can be designed for that growth rather than overloaded by unplanned sprawl.



Public benefits like open space or affordable housing can be included.

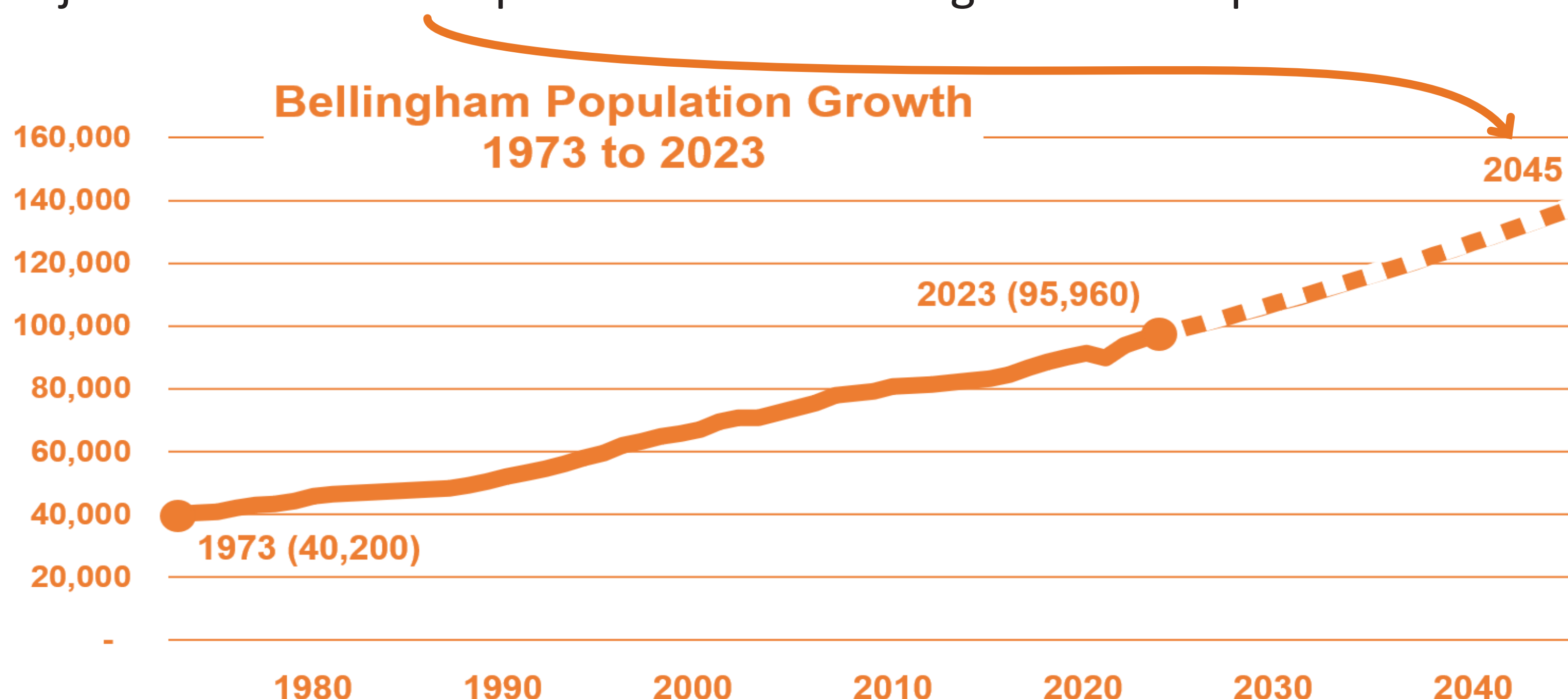


Our vision for Bellingham can be realized.

Therefore, the State requires growth management.

The process includes several steps to guide planning decisions.

- 1 The State (OFM) continually projects population growth over the next 30 years.
- 2 Ahead of the required Periodic Update, the State distributes the 20-year growth forecast to each County. Whatcom's 2045 forecast is 292,714 people, a similar but slightly increased rate of growth to that seen in the last 20 years.
- 3 The Cities within Whatcom County will collaborate to distribute this anticipated growth between jurisdictions. This represents Whatcom's growth extrapolated to Bellingham.

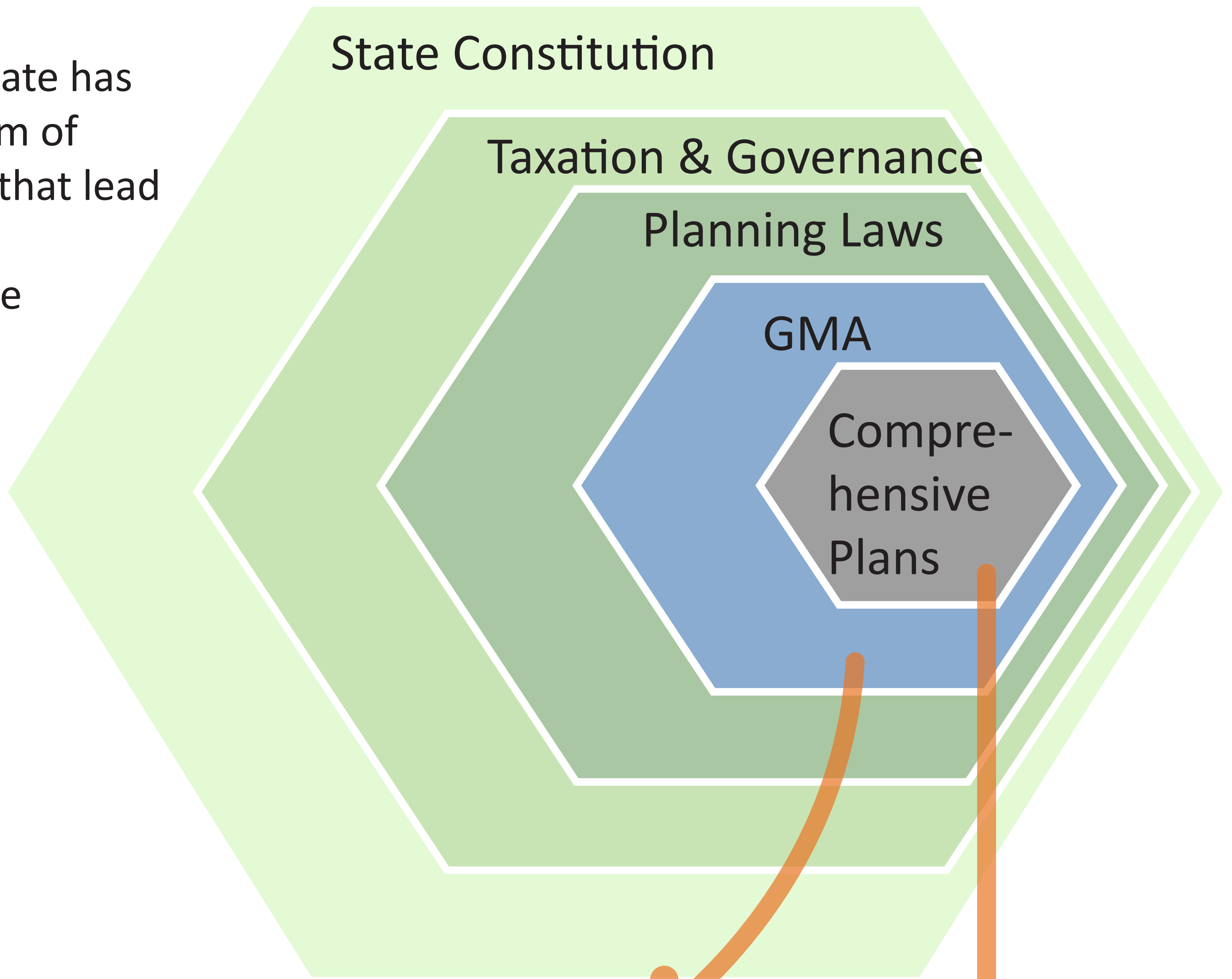


- 4 The Bellingham Plan update will plan for Bellingham's allocated 20-year growth projection.

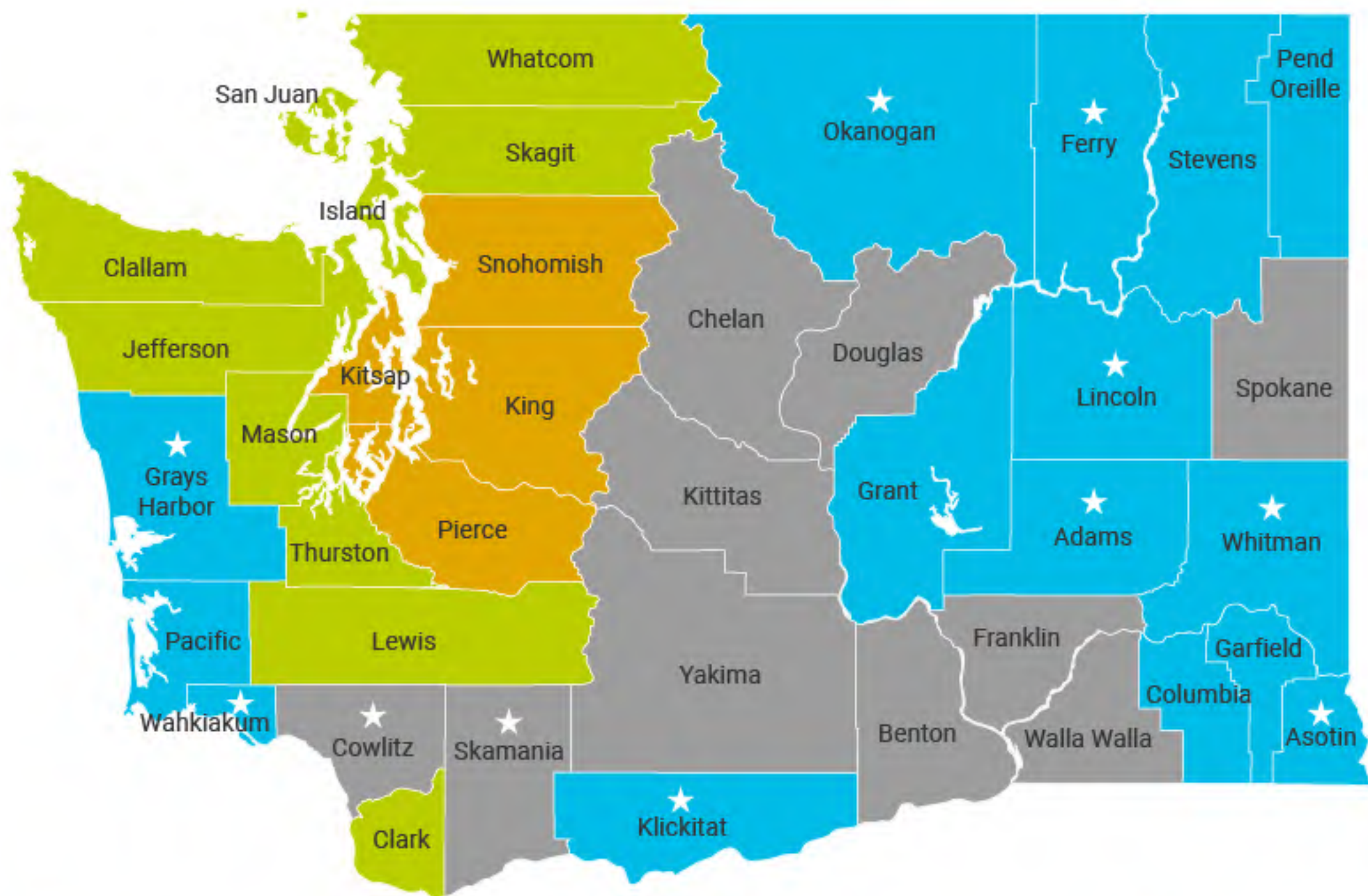
Let's plan together to create a vision for Bellingham's future.

State Planning Framework

Washington State has a nested system of planning laws that lead to local Comprehensive Plans.



Growth Management Act (GMA)



2024 Due December 31st 2025 Due June 30th 2026 Due June 30th 2027 Due June 30th

★ Starred counties are partially planning under the Growth Management Act

The Bellingham Plan

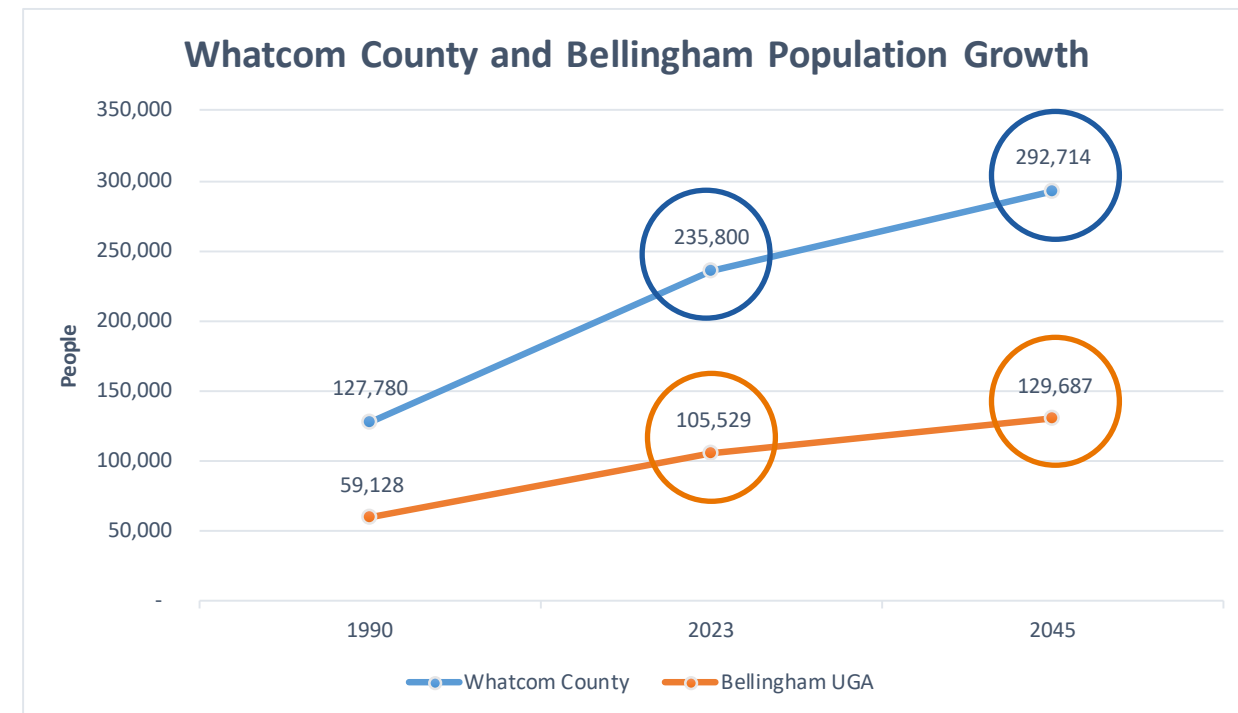
The Bellingham Plan represents the Periodic Update to the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is required every 10 years in the GMA

The Periodic Update applies to each area in turn

PRELIMINARY GROWTH PROJECTIONS

We don't get to decide how many people move to Bellingham, but we do have the opportunity to plan ahead so that we can become a community with enough parks, trails, housing, and jobs for everyone.

Population Growth



Today Whatcom County is home to about 236,000 people.

By 2045, we estimate about 293,000 people will live in Whatcom County.

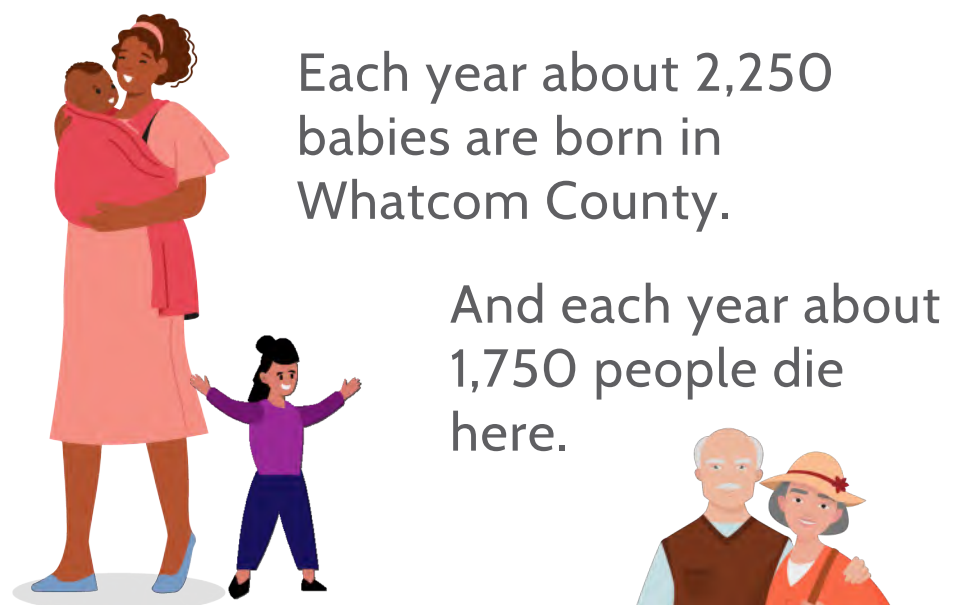
That means over the next 20 years there will be about 57,000 more people in Whatcom County.

Today the Bellingham Urban Growth Area (UGA) includes about 105,000 people.

The City is anticipated to grow to about 130,000 people by 2045.



Births, Deaths and Migration



Each year about 2,250 babies are born in Whatcom County.

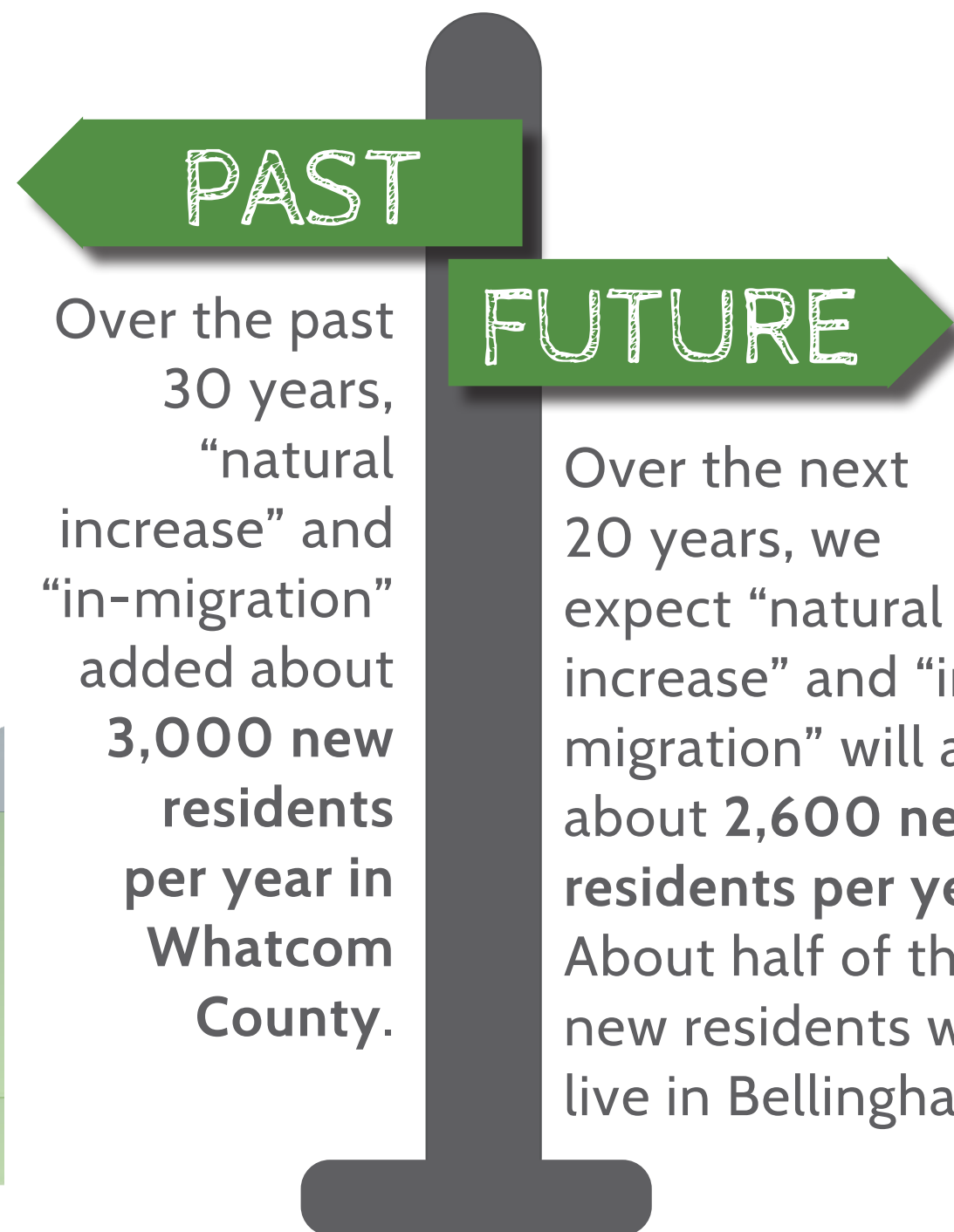
And each year about 1,750 people die here.

This means that every year about 500 more persons are born here than die. We call that the **rate of "natural increase."**

In the next 20 years, we expect less "natural increase." This is as the big Baby Boomer Generation (people aged 60-80 today) reaches end of life. More people will die than are born.

Each year, about 2,500 more people move to Whatcom County than move away. We call that **"in-migration"**.

We estimate that "in-migration" will stay about the same as in past years.



How Many Homes?

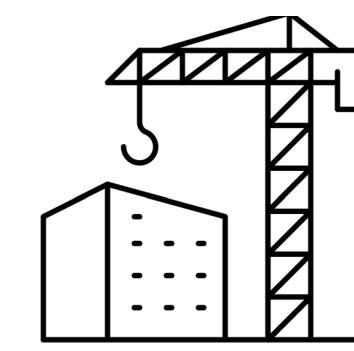


Today there are **105,500** homes in Whatcom County



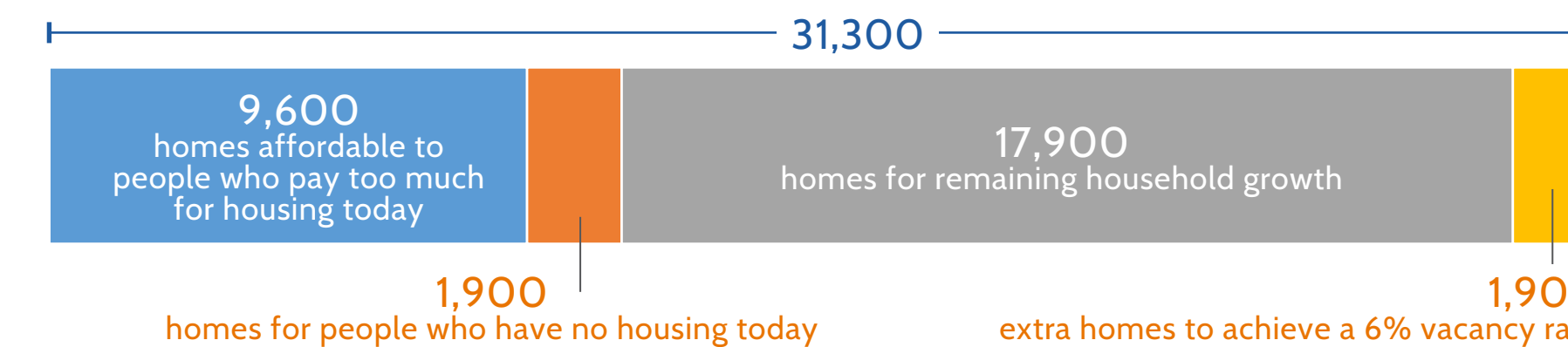
2.4 average persons per household in Whatcom County

There are not enough homes for everyone, and a lot of us pay too much for housing compared to what we earn.



We need to build about **31,300** new homes in Whatcom County by 2045.

About half, or 15,600 of those new homes will be built in Bellingham.

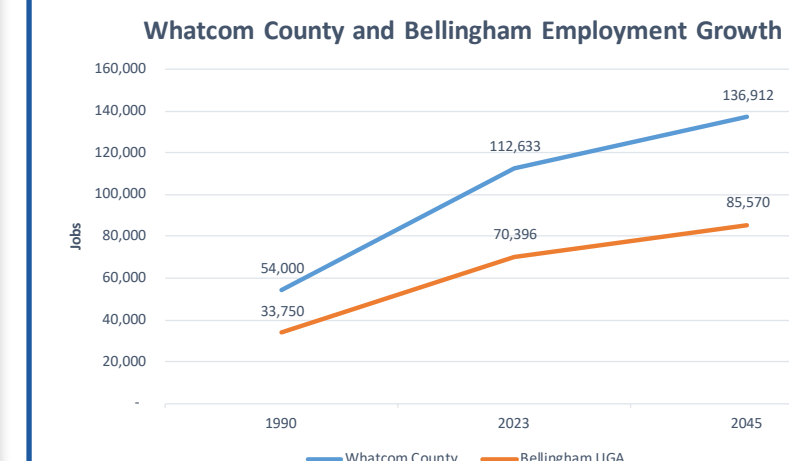


How Many Jobs?



Today there are **110,000** jobs in Whatcom County

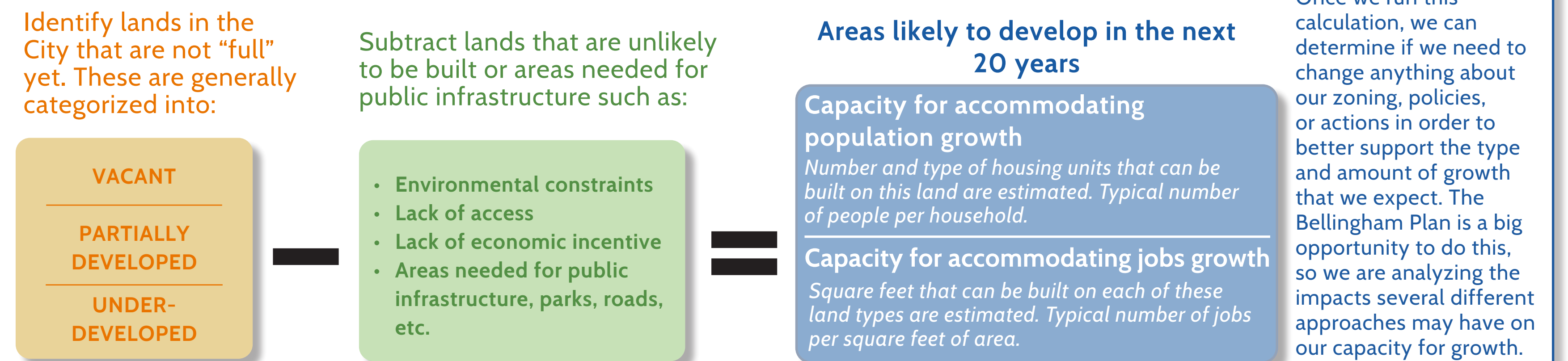
6 out of **10** of those jobs are in Bellingham



By 2045 about 24,300 more jobs will be created in Whatcom County. About 15,000 of those will be in Bellingham.

How do we estimate growth capacity?

While we get estimates of population and jobs growth from the State, we need to determine how much capacity we have to accommodate this growth. To do this, we look at our existing land and run a series of calculations. These can be simplified as follows:



Recent Comprehensive Plan Updates

While the Comprehensive Plan is updated annually in minor ways, the larger Periodic Update occurs once a decade as outlined below. This one is due in mid-2025.

2006 Update

Drivers going in

- » Growing city
- » Constrained land supply
- » Changing economic base
- » Infrastructure challenges



Changes resulting from it

- » Urban Village framework
- » Neighborhood infill strategy
- » Waterfront Vision incorporation
- » Concurrency Management



2016 Update

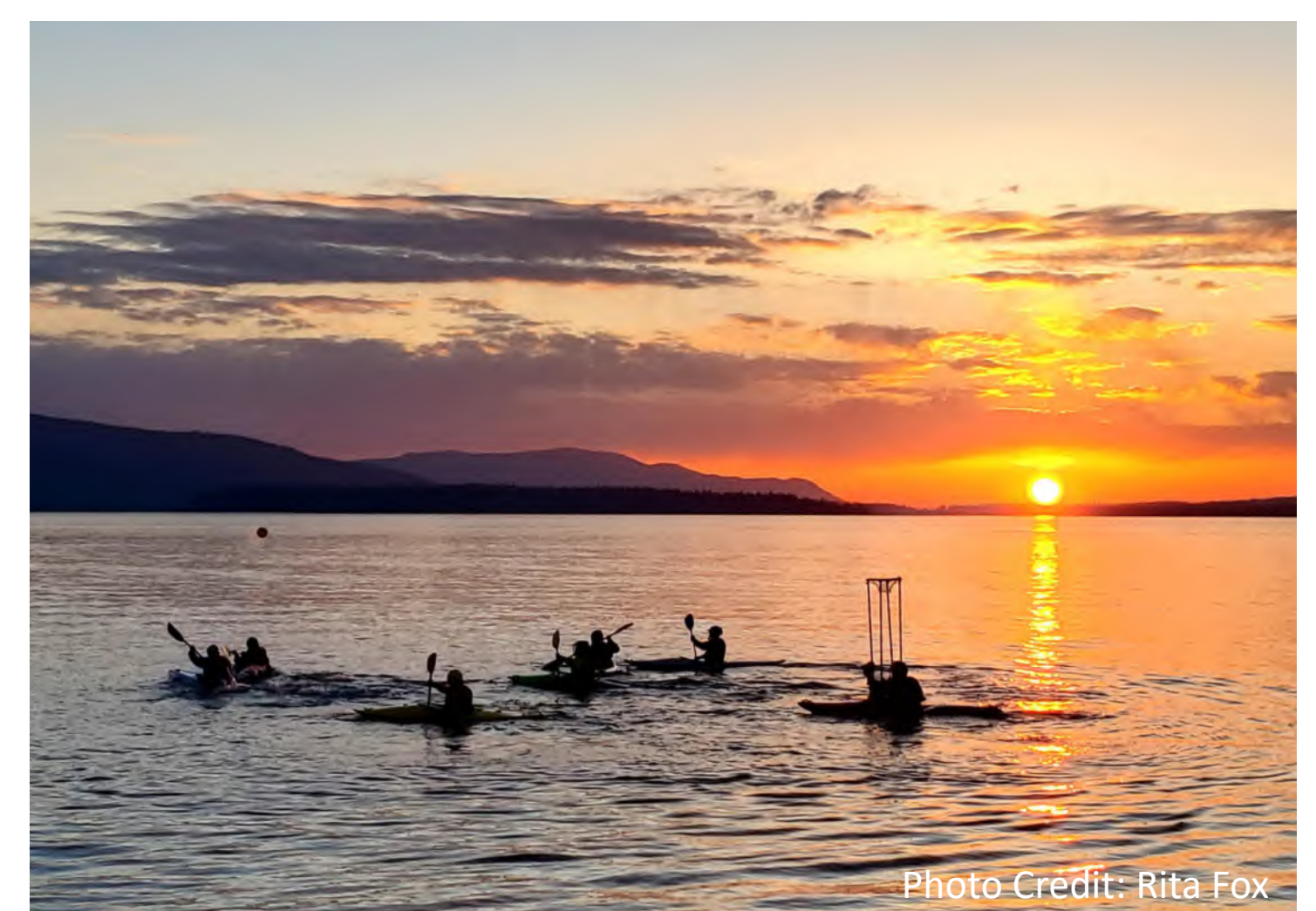
Drivers going in

- » Increasing housing costs and disparity
- » Equity and Accountability
- » Active community interest
- » Legibility concerns



Changes resulting from it

- » Homelessness & housing for unique groups focus
- » Sustainability framework
- » Healthy lifestyle additions
- » Document Accessibility



PAST AND PRESENT

A look back at how a few of our urban villages have evolved.

Waterfront District Urban Village Plan Adopted in 2013 as outlined in 2006 Comprehensive Plan



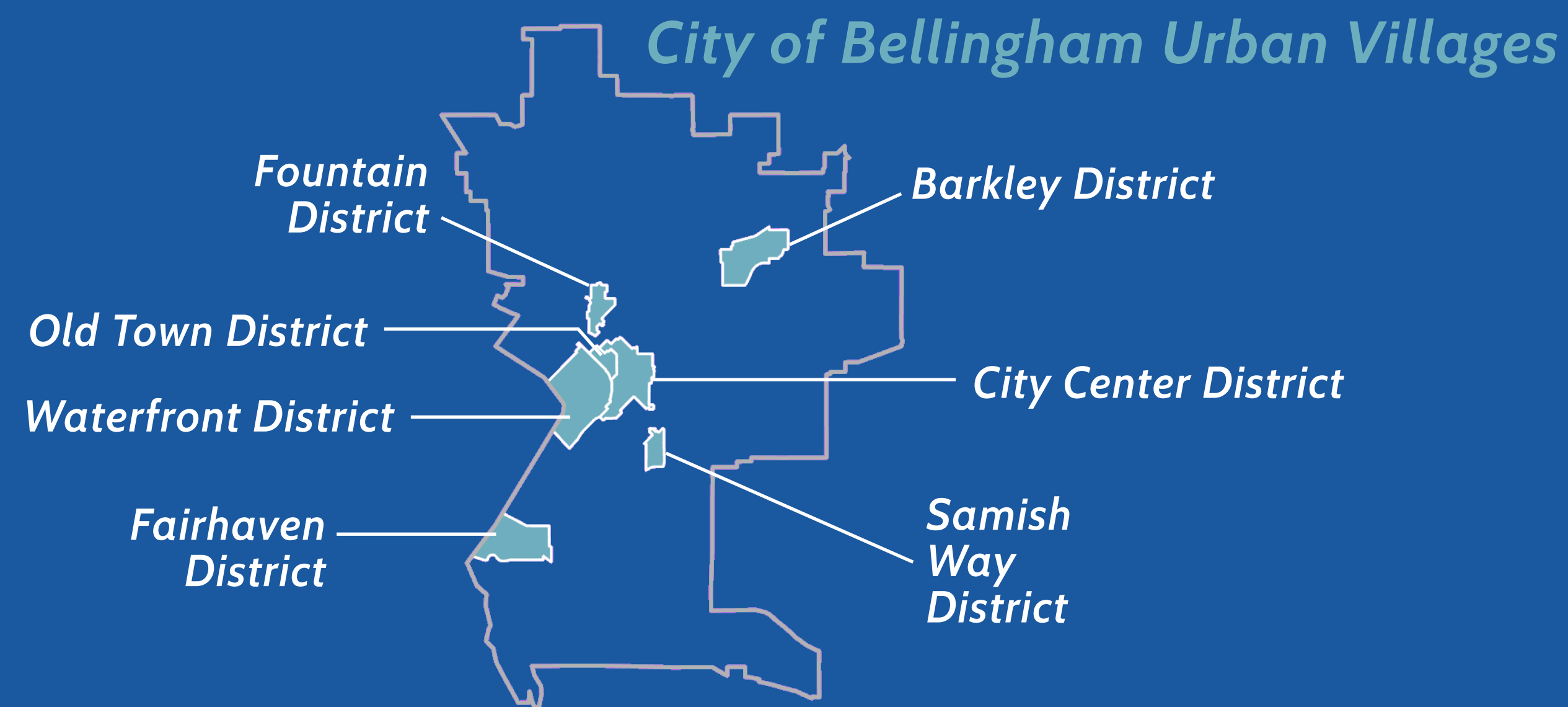
Samish Way District Urban Village Plan Adopted in 2009 as outlined in 2006 Comprehensive Plan



Fountain District Urban Village Plan Adopted in 2010 as outlined in 2006 Comprehensive Plan



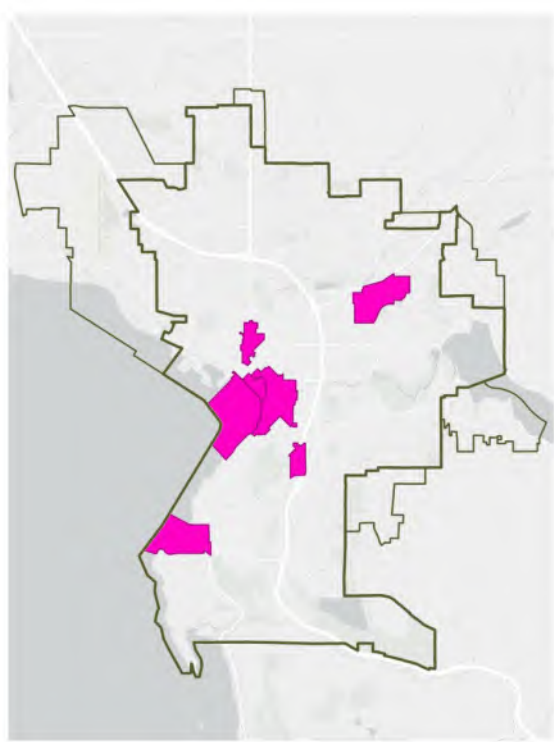
The 2006 Comprehensive Plan update responded to increasing growth pressures, cost of infrastructure and regional economic changes. The 2006 Plan included an emphasis on urban villages as one of the City's primary strategies for addressing growth, offering a smart and sustainable way to grow and improve our community.



Past plans have created impactful change. Think about what the 2025 plan should change.

BELLINGHAM'S CURRENT GROWTH STRATEGY

Since 2006, Bellingham's growth strategy has called for compact, sustainable development. The city is connected by streets with bus routes, sidewalks, and bike lanes. The growth strategy also calls for beautiful parks, trails, and natural areas. Important parts of this strategy are:

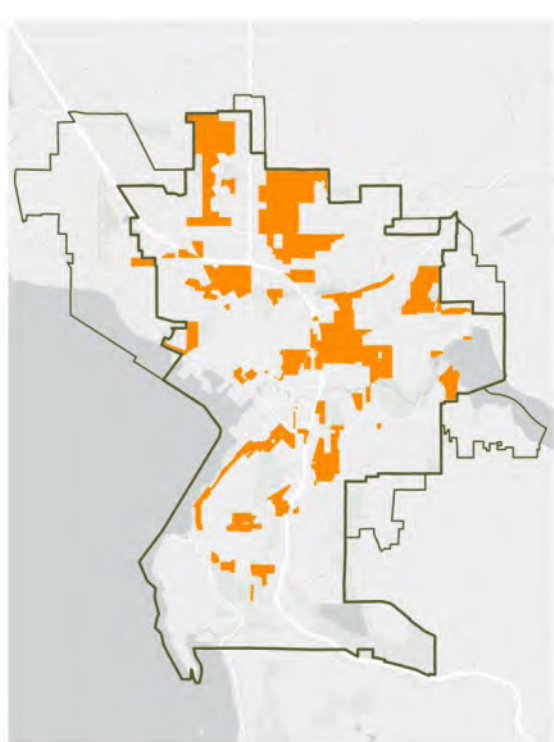


Urban Villages

Vibrant areas where people can live, work, shop, and play. Here you will see our tallest buildings, wide sidewalks, and more buses.



Image: John R. Kienast Jr.



Residential Multi Zones

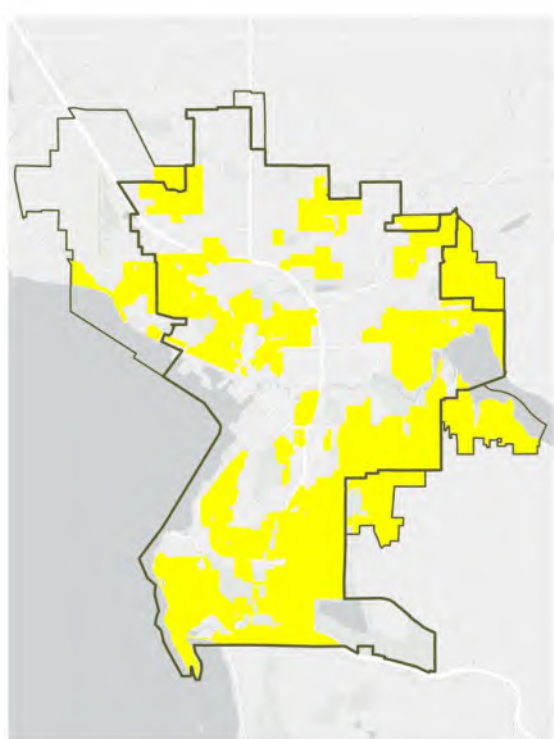
Areas with multi-story apartments and condominiums. Located near bus routes, parks, jobs, and services.



Image: Google Maps

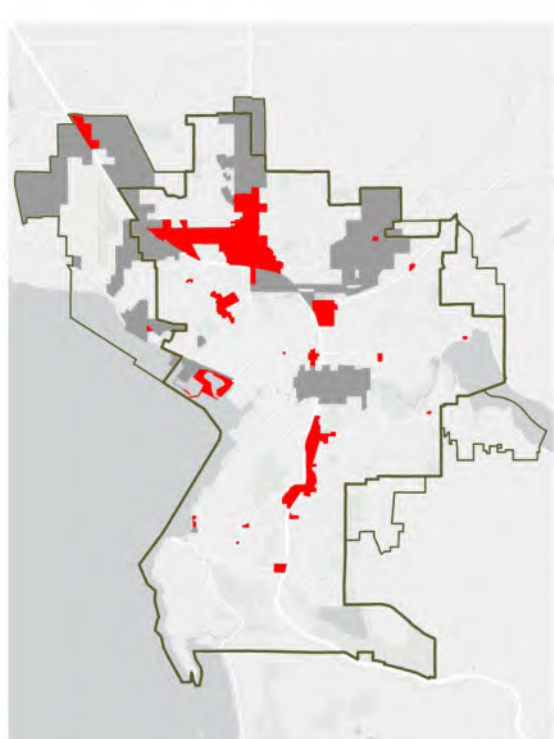
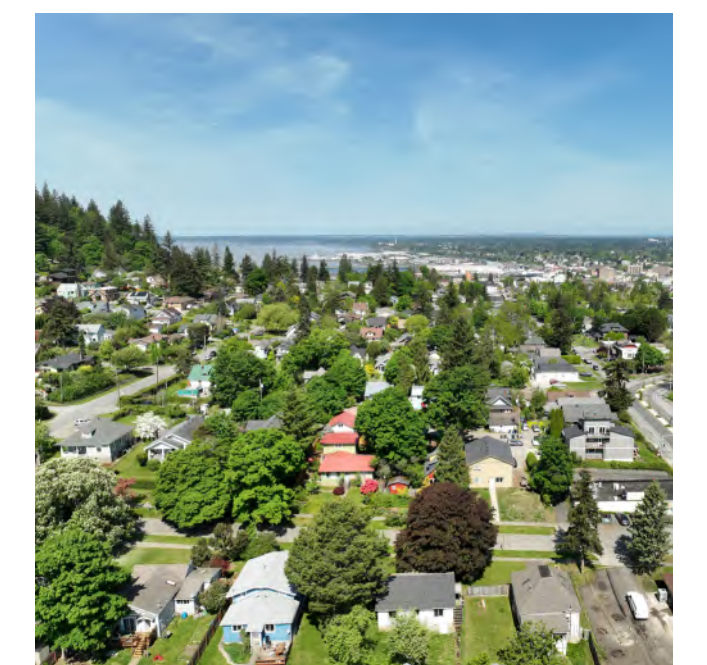


Image: Google Maps



Residential Single Zones

Here you see mostly detached homes. These areas allow small backyard cottages. They can also have basement or attic units inside homes. And some allow homes like duplexes, and townhouses.

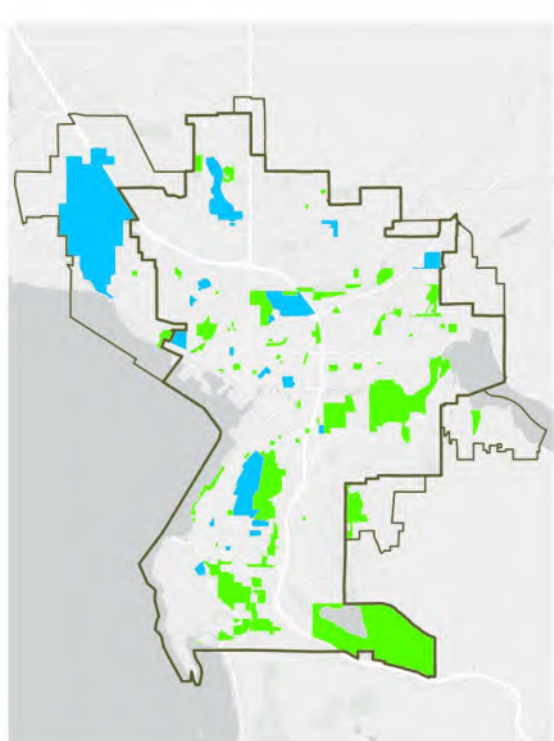


Commercial & Industrial Zones

Areas with shops, offices, and grocery stores. This is also where things are made. Businesses here provide many services and jobs. Many of these areas allow apartments above or next to businesses.



Image: Google Maps



Institutional & Public Zones

Here you will find city offices and services. There are also areas for schools and colleges, and for the hospital and the airport. There are parks with playgrounds and ball fields. And natural areas with trees and ponds. You can walk or ride between the parks on a network of greenways trails.



Image: Mike Spingola

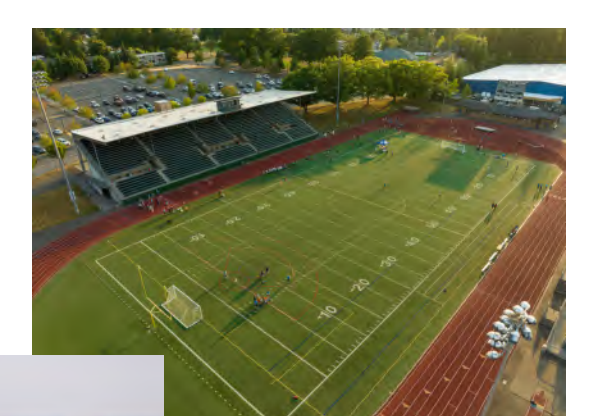


Image: courtesy of Western WA University

URBAN VILLAGE INFORMATION

Since 2006, one of the City's primary growth strategies has been the establishment of a series of "urban villages." These urban village plans support the creation of vibrant mixed residential and commercial neighborhoods, boost economic development, and encourage a safe and attractive pedestrian experience. In short, urban villages offer a smart and sustainable way to grow and improve our community.

Since 2006, urban villages have accommodated

1/3

of the residential growth in Bellingham.
(3,000 units)

Urban villages are home to

10%

of Bellingham's residential population.
(9,400 residents)

Urban villages employ

30%

of all workers in Bellingham.
(1,200 businesses and 16,000 employees)


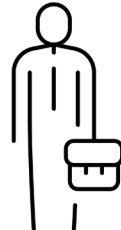
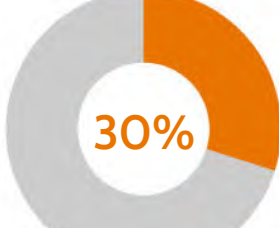
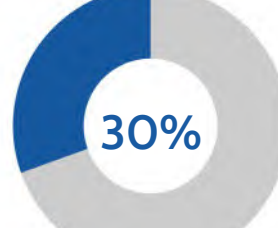
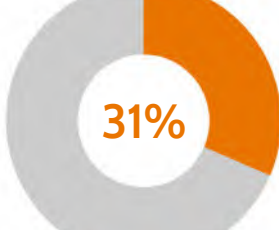
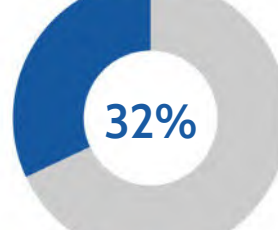
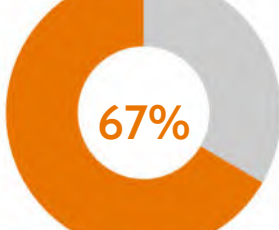
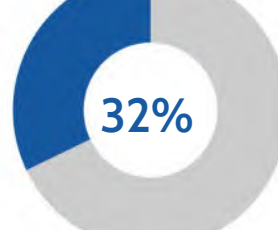
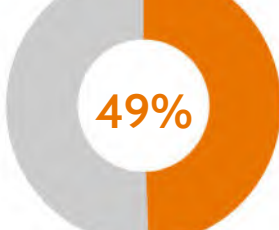
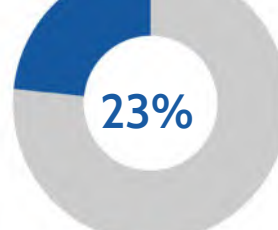
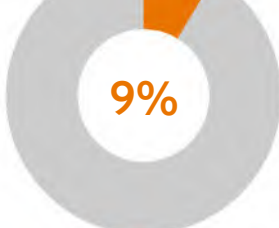
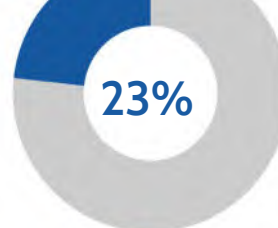
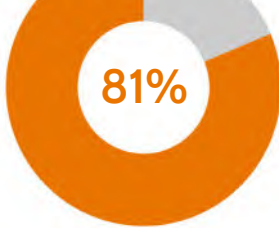
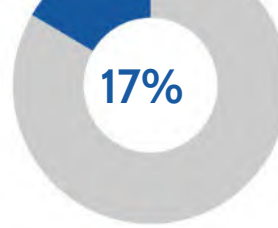
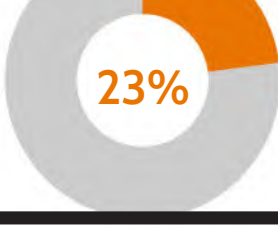
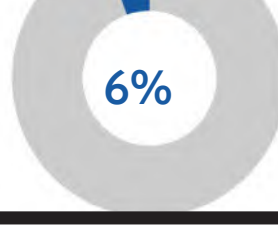
Since urban villages were adopted, development incentives have triggered over

\$550M

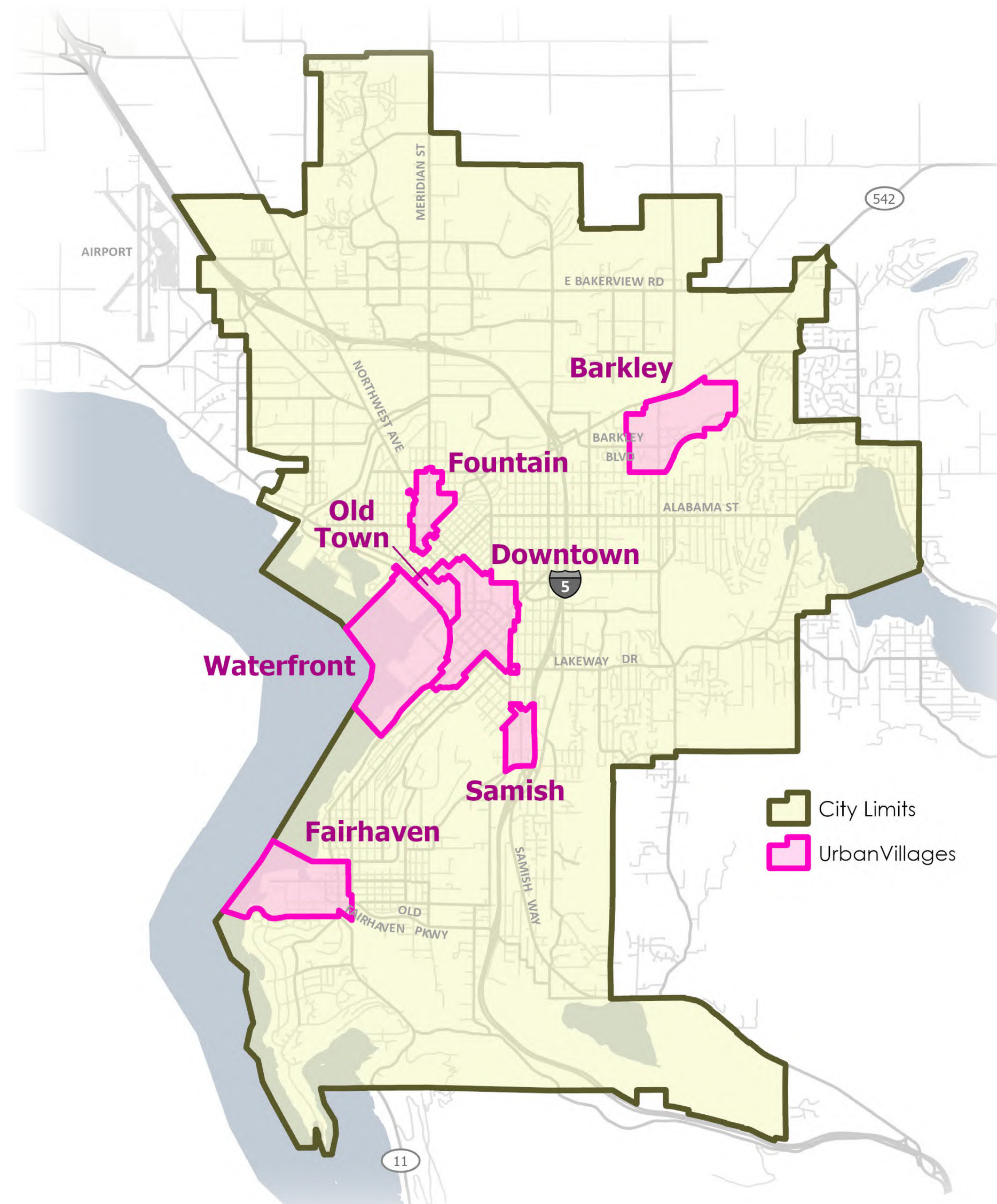
in private investment

The city offers a variety of incentives to encourage development in urban villages including tax and impact fee reductions, density and floor area bonuses, and reduced parking requirements.

Bellingham's urban villages vary widely in size, population, history, and amount of land available for potential redevelopment. The below statistics are not intended to compare the urban villages to each other, but rather to evaluate how well each village is developing according to its own unique potential.

URBAN VILLAGE				
	CURRENT HOUSING	% PROGRESS TOWARDS 2036 HOUSING GOAL*	CURRENT JOBS	% PROGRESS TOWARDS 2036 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT GOAL*
Barkley District *Plan in process	477 units 822 residents		2,325 jobs 143 businesses	
Downtown District Adopted 2014	2,356 units 4,513 residents		9,075 jobs 588 businesses	
Fairhaven District Adopted 2012	867 units 1,589 residents		1,603 jobs 181 businesses	
Fountain District Adopted 2010	489 units 1,010 residents		819 jobs 85 businesses	
Old Town District Adopted 2008	87 units 184 residents		532 jobs 44 businesses	
Samish Way District Adopted 2009	688 units 1,198 residents		594 jobs 72 businesses	
Waterfront District Adopted 2013	83 units 141 residents		1,120 jobs 70 businesses	

Benchmark goals were developed in 2013. Goal projections are set for 20 years from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan (2036), regardless of which year the urban village plan was adopted. These goals forecast how much development would take place by 2036, and do not necessarily indicate total growth capacity.



For more details, visit the urban village dashboard at cob.org/uvdashboard or scan the QR code.



Dashboard best viewed on large screen devices.

URBAN VILLAGES OF TODAY

Urban Villages are an important part of Bellingham’s growth strategy. Each of our seven Urban Villages are at different stages of development. Some areas had established mixed-use development decades or even a century ago, others are changing significantly each year.







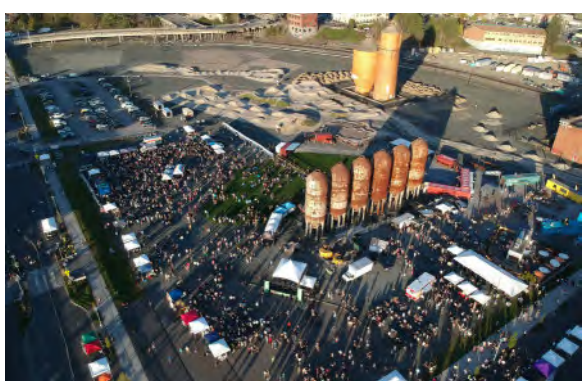
When you think of how each Urban Village is developing, what do you think is working well? What could be improved upon or changed?



Use blue sticky notes to tell us what is **working well** today.



Use pink sticky notes to tell us what is **not working well** and should change.

<p>Barkley Urban Village</p> 	
<p>Downtown Urban Village</p> 	
<p>Fairhaven Urban Village</p>  <p><small>Image: Kenji Merritt</small></p>	
<p>Fountain Urban Village</p> 	
<p>Old Town Urban Village</p>  <p><small>Image: Donald Brown</small></p>	
<p>Samish Way Urban Village</p> 	
<p>Waterfront Urban Village</p>  <p><small>Image: Lauren McClanahan</small></p>	

PHASE 1 RECAP

What we heard from you.

Phase 1 Visioning Themes based on community response

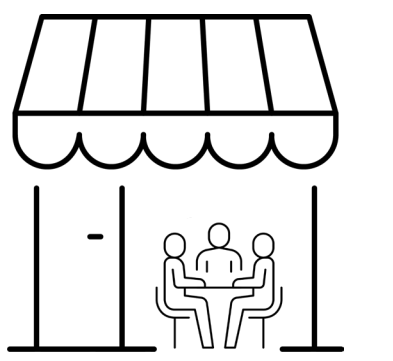


Vision Survey
Summary Report



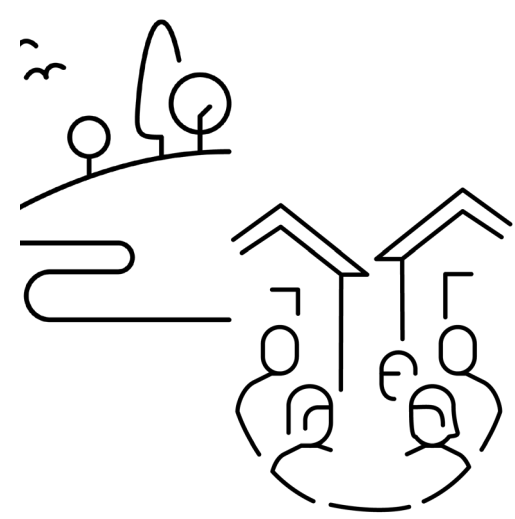
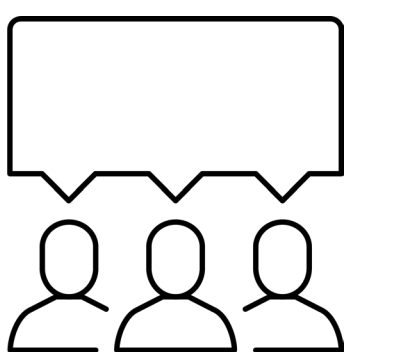
Housing types, rental protections, and affordability are clear priorities

Lively and creative, well-connected, and walkable places with services and amenities dispersed throughout the city



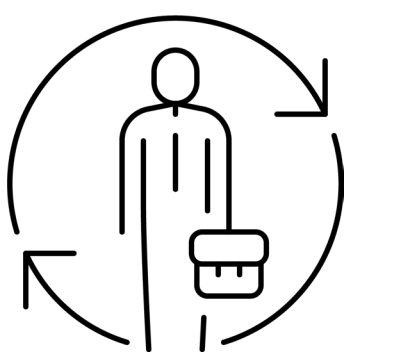
A safer Bellingham, with more accessible health and social services for all

More equitable representation of voices from historically marginalized and underrepresented community groups



Pedestrian-centric gathering and community spaces, including greenways and parks

A locally-scaled economy with an activated downtown, livable-wage jobs, and local business support



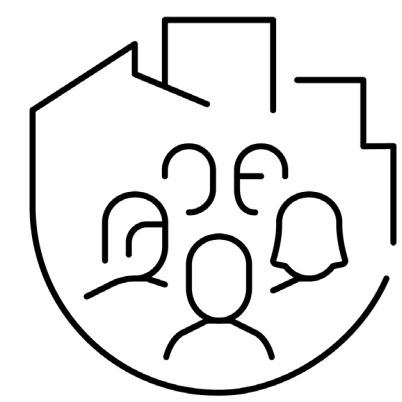
Support for arts and culture

Phase 1 Summary Report



PRIORITY FEATURES AND PREFERENCES

Key findings from the Housing Preference Survey



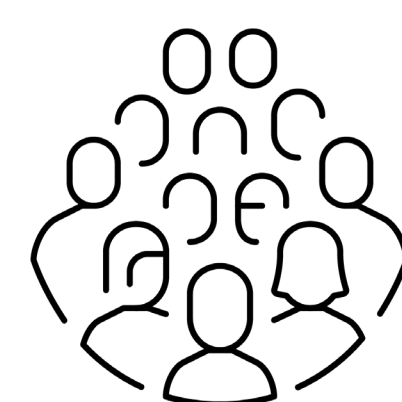
When asked what type of neighborhood they would **prefer** to live in the most common choices were **small-scale residential** (31%) and **urban residential** (27%). These neighborhoods include a **diversity of housing** forms with single-family, duplex, triplex, townhome, and small apartment and condominium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



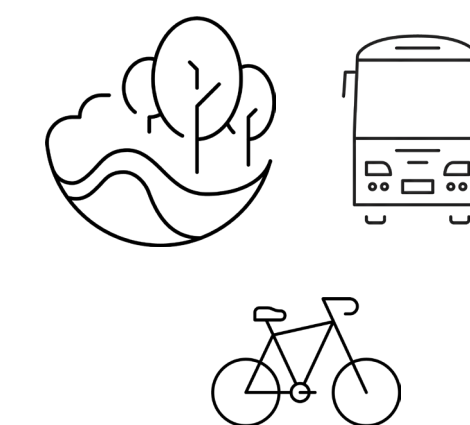
When **balancing** neighborhood and housing priorities and amenities the top concern expressed was a **feeling of safety**. Secondary priorities include being **close to parks and trails**, having a **private yard, dedicated parking**, and housing with **good quality construction and condition**. 2-bedroom 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



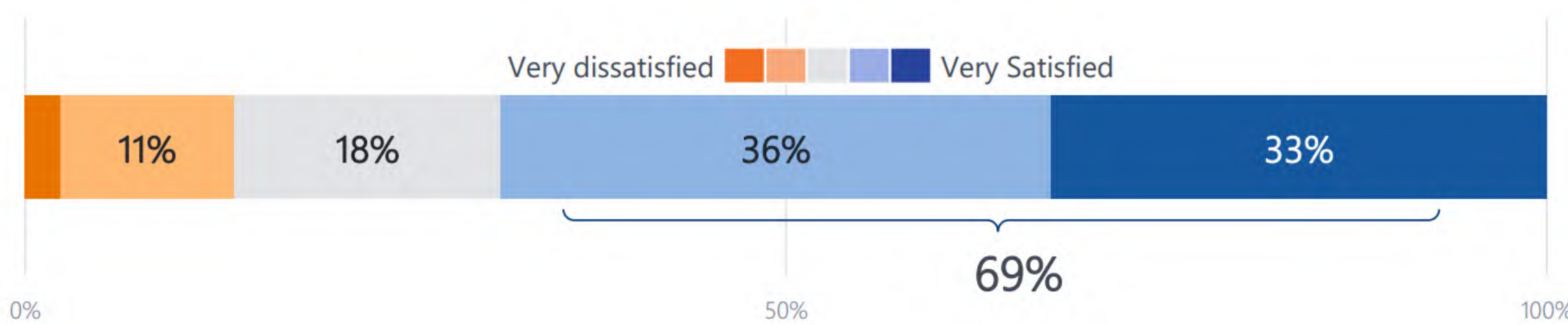
PRIORITY FEATURES AND PREFERENCES

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.

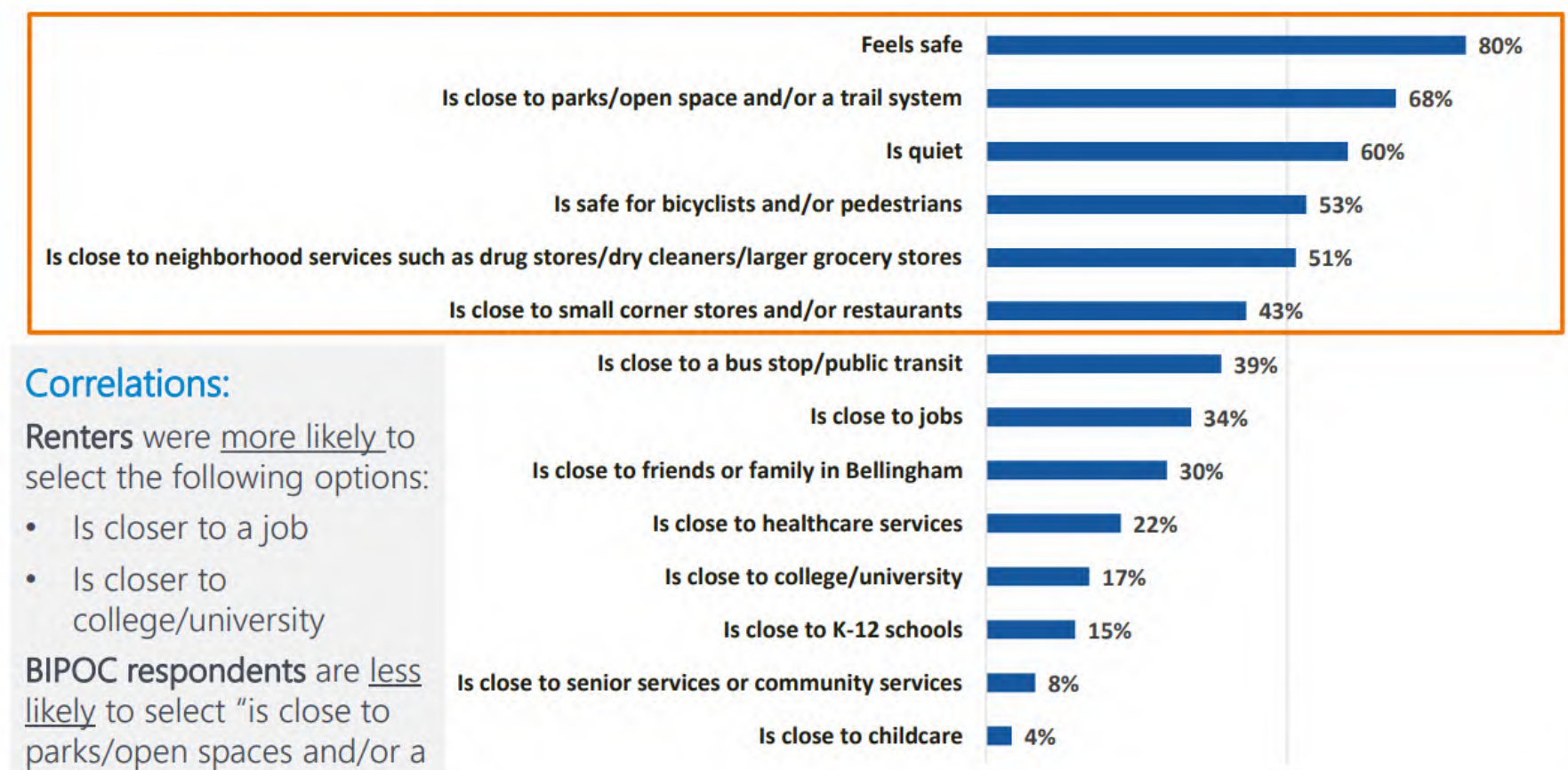
Most respondents (69%) were satisfied with their current housing situation.

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:

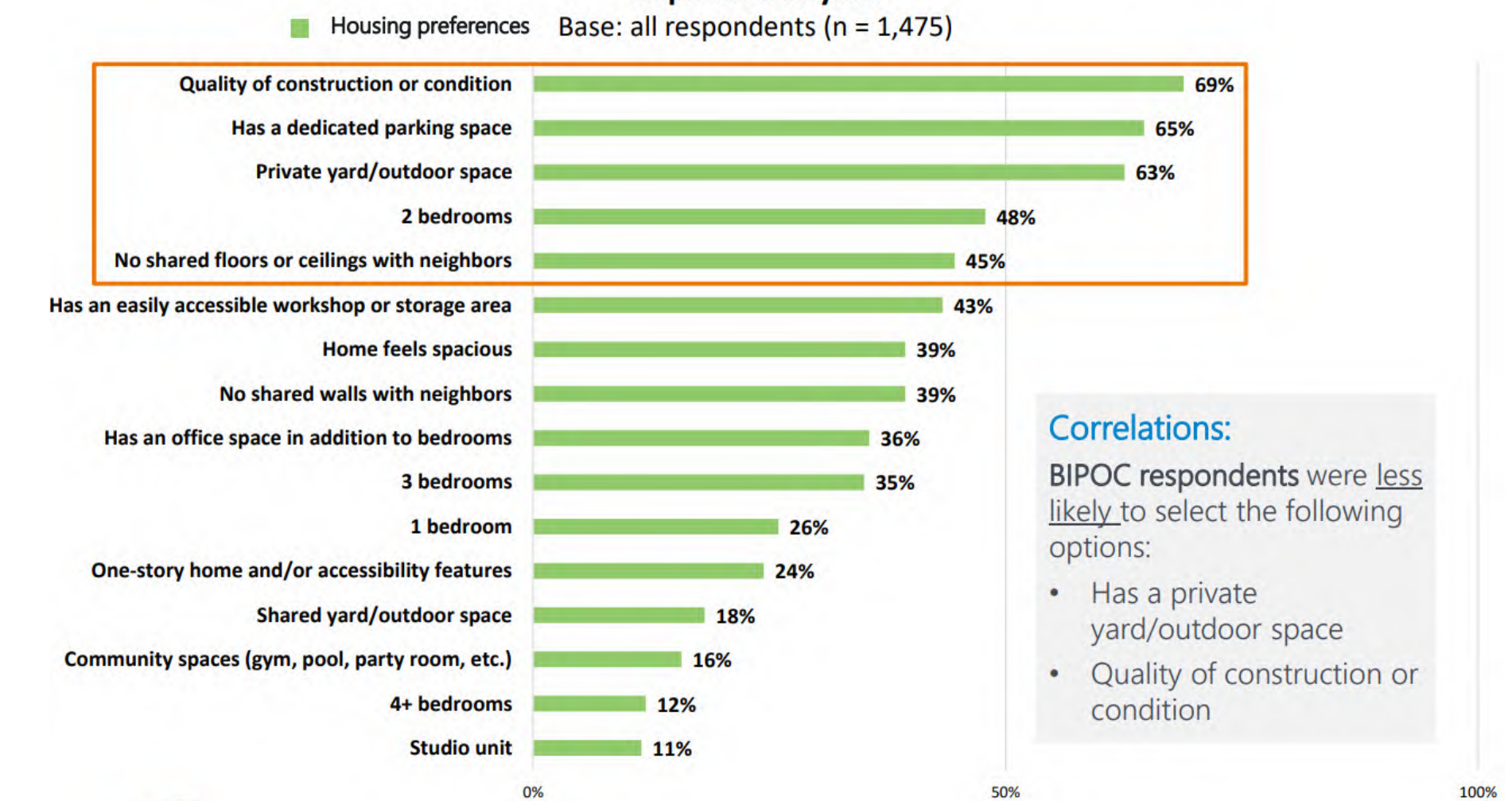
- Is closer to a job
- Is closer to college/university

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.

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



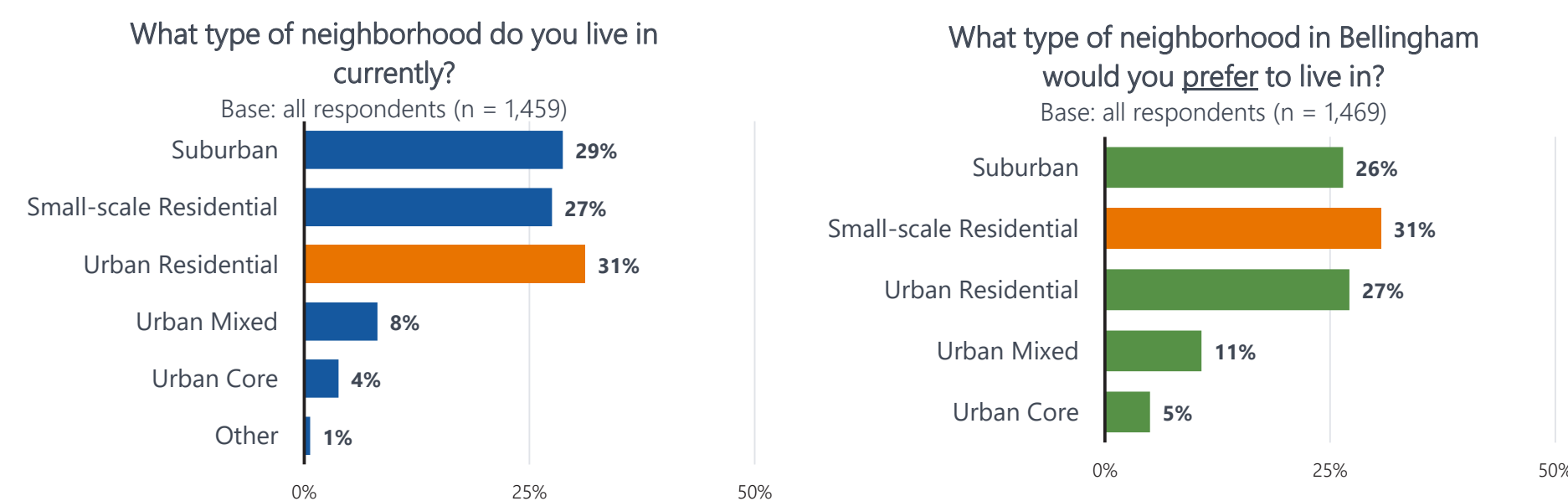
Correlations:

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.



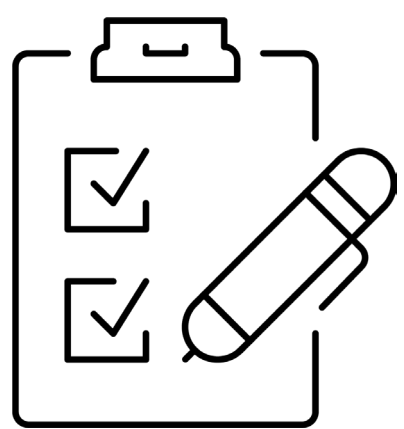
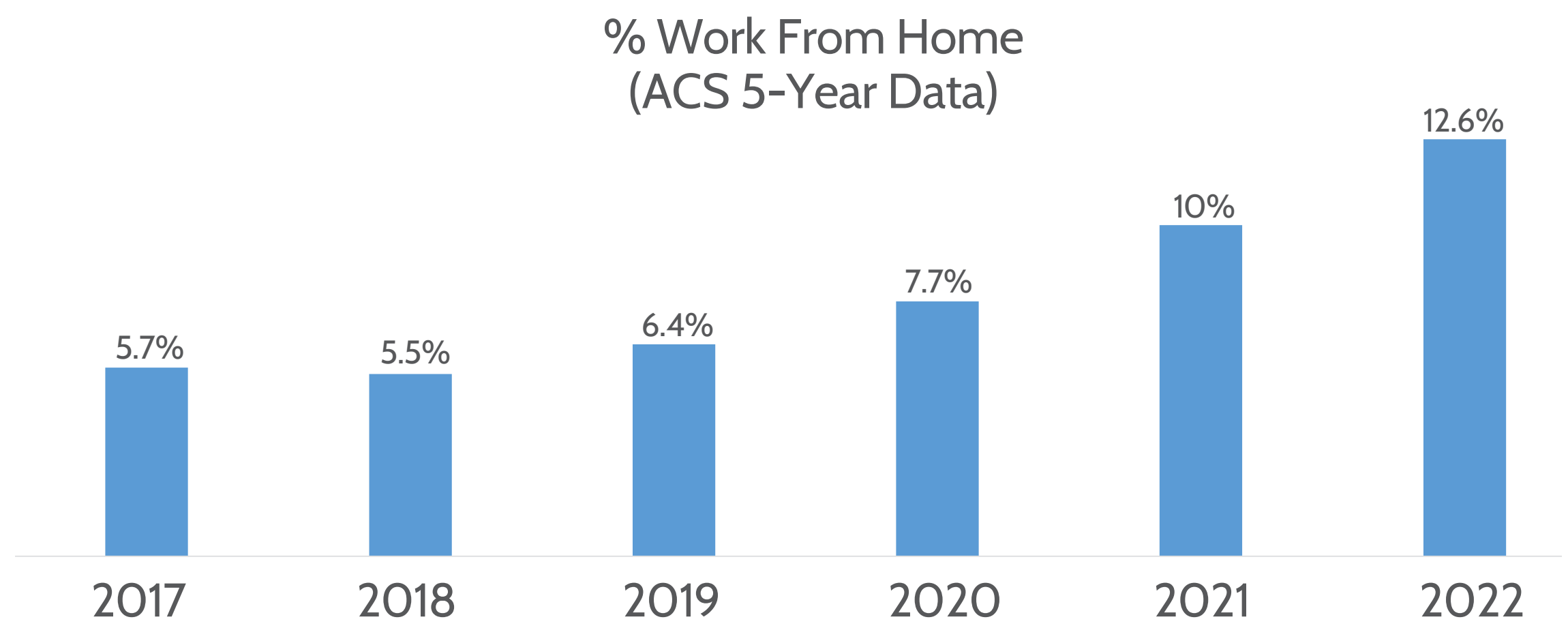
To view the full survey results from the Housing Preference Survey, follow the QR code at right



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:

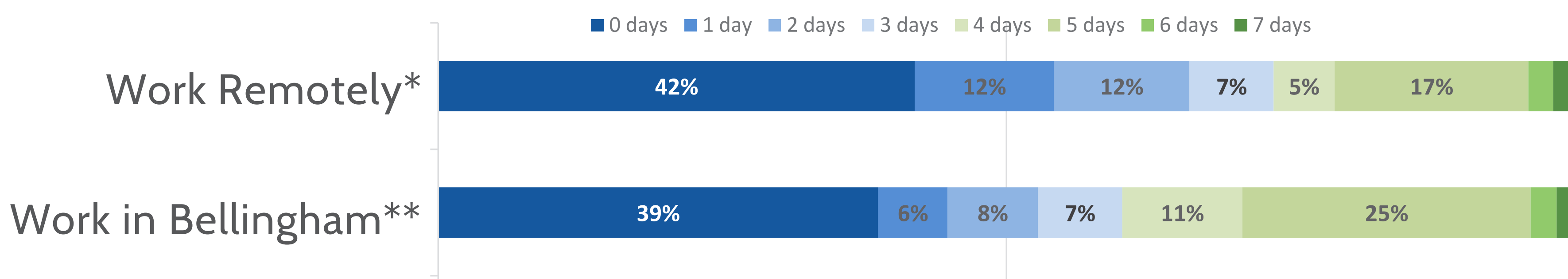
36% work partially remote (1-4 days a week)

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.

REMOTE WORK IMPACTS

At the Community Vision event held in February, community members brought up issues and opportunities.

Add to this list and provide feedback on how you think we can address and plan for these trends in the Bellingham Plan .

OPPORTUNITIES	ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Personal benefits of remote work opportunities (e.g. work-life balance)+ Opportunity to reimagine office space downtown+ Transportation benefits (potential for less strain on the transportation network and decreased parking needs)+ Interest in more things closer to home, where more people are working now (see Complete Neighborhoods board) <p>What opportunities are missing?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Housing cost concerns (potential for remote workers to drive up housing prices by moving to Bellingham; concern that those working retail/service jobs may be getting priced out)- Potential for less engaged community members/less interest in local issues- Concern about losing community connections and a desire to bring the community together <p>What issues are missing?</p>
<p>How can the Bellingham Plan support these opportunities?</p>	<p>How can the Bellingham Plan address these issues?</p>

WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

Phase 1 July - December 2023

The community weighed in on their vision and priorities for Bellingham.

Phase 1
Summary
Report



Phase 2 Jan 2024 - current

In Phase 2 staff have been working with the community to dig into the highest priority issues. The heart of this outreach so far is in five open houses that highlighted the following:

Phase 3 Fall 2024

Provide draft policies for public discussion.

Phase 4 Early-mid 2025

Bring the plan through the adoption process. The Planning Commission's will discuss and recommend a plan for the City Council to then discuss and adopt.

Community Vision

February 22

- » Nature/greenery as a defining feature of Bellingham
- » Mixed-use neighborhoods focus
- » More gathering places and community features
- » More multimodal transportation and pedestrian-focused areas
- » Housing as a legacy of this plan



Scan the QR code to take a look at the materials from any of these events and leave feedback.

Vibrant, Welcoming, and Equitable Community

March 6

- » More celebration of creativity, art, culture, community, food, and nature
- » Better affordable food access, childcare opportunities, home ownership opportunities and services support
- » Emphasis of human-scale design for welcoming atmosphere
- » Need for accessible and welcoming community centers
- » More pocket parks
- » Common meanings of "Safety": Safe housing and services, safe walking/biking options, and feeling part of the community

Housing Affordability

April 16

- » Interest in incentivizing unique building types and designs
- » Support for unique needs of seniors and families
- » Popularity of co-living housing
- » More housing closer to jobs
- » Focus on building orientation in design priorities
- » More transit, biking, and walking to tackle climate change

Economic Vitality

May 15

- » Need for more living wage jobs, which have not kept up with housing prices
- » Desire to preserve industrial land supply
- » Interest in diversifying economic sectors
- » Interest in creating community and cultural centers
- » Desire to support walkable, bikeable, and parkable places with connections to the outdoors and something to do (festivals, music, food and drinks)
- » More mixed-use neighborhoods, especially with grocery stores, but limited noise at night
- » High-speed rail as an opportunity for better connectivity throughout the region
- » Importance of street trees and alternative forms of transportation over other street area uses

Housing Types & Neighborhoods

June 4

- » Support for many housing types, especially co-living housing in smaller scale neighborhoods
- » Less interest in fiveplex/sixplex and stacked flats in today's single family areas
- » Interest in using arterials or transit proximity to define differences in residential zoning
- » Significant support for allowing small-scale businesses in all residential areas
- » Limit noise, hours, and parking to encourage local use
- » More regulation inside neighborhoods than along arterials and near Urban Villages
- » Design priorities: Outdoor spaces, street trees, and design elements like porches and gables
- » Support for more walking/biking/transit infrastructure funding if parking requirements are decreased

Today's event will build upon these topics to discuss how Bellingham should grow in the future.

Help us choose a growth strategy that best supports our priorities in all these areas.

As you work through the boards today, consider how the topics intersect. How do they impact what growth strategy you support?

State Legislation



Legislation passed in recent years at the state level impacts the Bellingham Plan. See June 5th City Council presentation for details.

HB 1220 (2021) - “Housing for All”

This bill changed the way housing planning happens across WA, especially:

- » Redefining housing projections by income band and emergency housing types such as shelters
- » Requiring jurisdictions to plan for and accommodate those projections (62% of Whatcom County’s allocated units fall below 80% of the Area Median Income)
- » Requiring identification and addressing racially disparate impacts of existing housing policies

HB 1181 (2023) - Climate

This bill increased planning requirements related to climate change and resiliency, such as:

- » Adding a climate change element
- » Adding emissions reduction and resiliency sub-elements
- » Increasing requirements related to emissions and vehicles miles traveled (VMT)

HB 1110 (2023) - “Middle Housing”

This bill requires jurisdictions like Bellingham to allow the following:

- » At least four units per lot on residential lots
- » An additional two units per lot if affordable
- » At least six units per lot near transit like the Amtrak station
- » Only administrative design review based on objective standards

HB 1337 (2023) - ADUs

This bill is focused on limiting barriers to accessory dwelling unit (ADU) development. It has already been addressed by recent Bellingham legislation with changes such as:

- » Allowing two attached or detached ADUs per lot
- » Allowing ADUs up to 1000 square feet in size and up to 24’ in height
- » Prohibiting more stringent design review for ADUs than for single family residential structures
- » Prohibiting owner occupancy requirements (not in effect in Bellingham until HB 1337 applies)

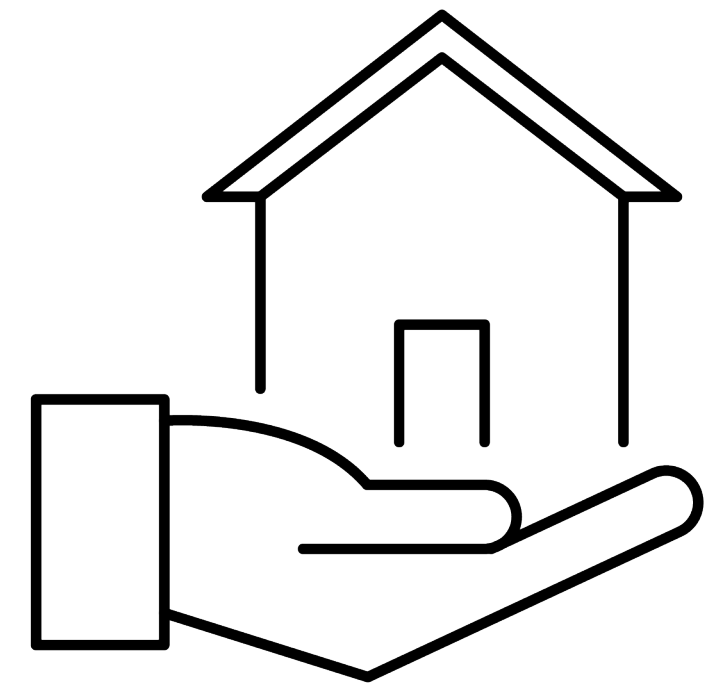


HOUSING SUPPLY LEGISLATION

State legislation that reforms the way local jurisdictions regulate new housing.

House Bill 1110 - Middle Housing

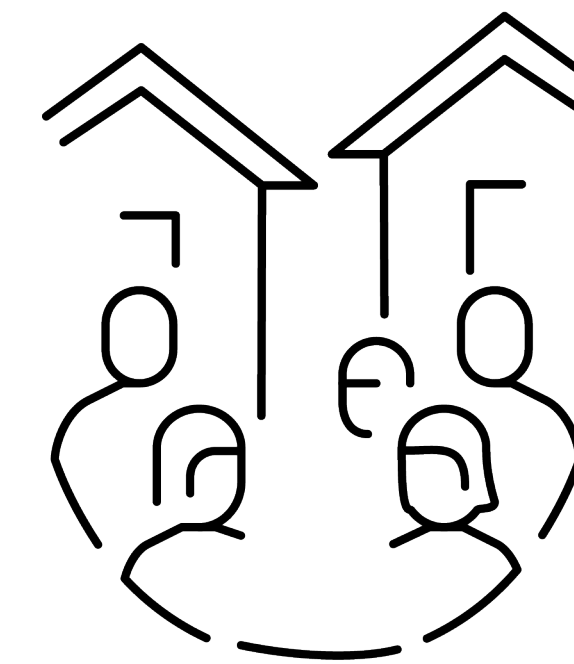
Passed by Washington Legislature in 2023



Legalizes middle housing forms in residential neighborhoods. This bill requires jurisdictions of Bellingham's size to allow a variety of middle-scale housing types up to four units per lot in all residential zones. Six units per lot must be allowed in some areas, depending on proximity to transit and affordability of the units. Additionally, regulations for these housing forms may not require standards that are more restrictive than those required for detached single-family housing.

House Bill 1998 - Allowing Co-Living Housing

Passed by Washington Legislature in 2024



Co-living housing is a residential development with sleeping units that are independently rented and lockable, and residents share kitchen facilities with other sleeping units in the building. Other names to refer to co-living housing include single room occupancy, rooming house, boarding house, and lodging house. By December 31, 2025, Bellingham must allow co-living housing on any lot located within a UGA that allows at least six multifamily residential units, including on a lot zoned for mixed use development.

House Bill 1220 - Housing Affordability for All Income Levels

Passed by Washington Legislature in 2021.

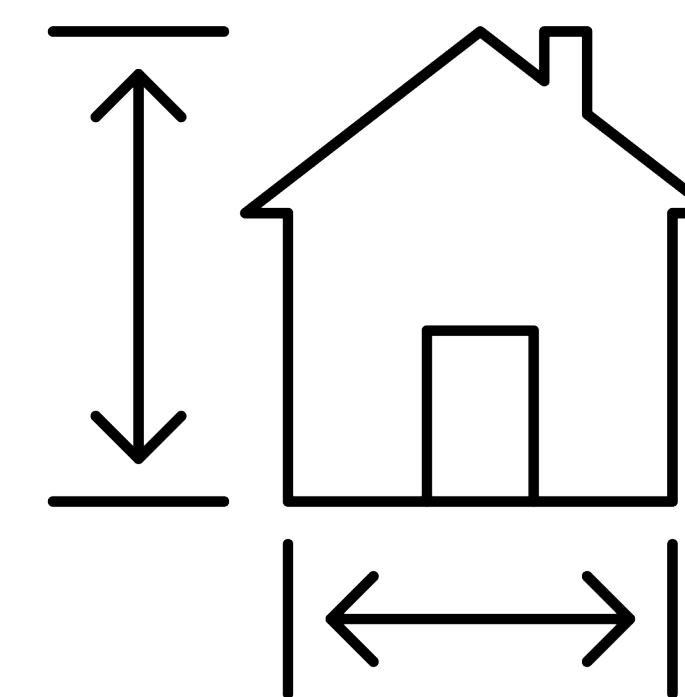


Amended the GMA to instruct local governments to **“plan for and accommodate”** housing affordable to all income levels.

Local jurisdictions like Bellingham are now required to evaluate the potential cost of permitted housing types when planning to accommodate households across all income levels. This means planning for more variety of housing types, including middle housing. Also requires jurisdictions to **identify and remove local policies with racially disparate impacts** and implement regulations that begin to undo inequalities. *(See the board on “Economic Displacement” for more information)*

House Bill 1293 - Streamlining Design Review

Passed by Washington Legislature in 2023



Streamlines local design review processes that are used to evaluate the exterior of proposed new development, facilitating the construction of much-needed housing. Bellingham may apply only **clear and objective regulations** to determine whether a given building design is permissible, and the regulations may not result in a reduction in permitted density. In addition, the process cannot require more than one public meeting.

Scan the QR code for more information on the City's progress on State Legislation affecting housing.



STATE LEGISLATION

Affecting housing affordability and supply.

House Bill 1220

Passed by Washington Legislature in 2021

Amended the GMA to instruct local governments to “plan for **and accomodate**” housing affordable to all income levels.

Changes to local housing elements include planning for sufficient land capacity for housing needs, including all economic segments of the population:

Extremely Low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Upper
0% - 30%	30% - 50%	50% - 80%	80% - 100%	100 - 120%
Percent of Area Median Income (AMI)*				
<small>* Income categories defined by Commerce utilize Median Family Income</small>				

Planning for moderate density housing options, including but not limited to ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and multi-plex (middle-scale housing).



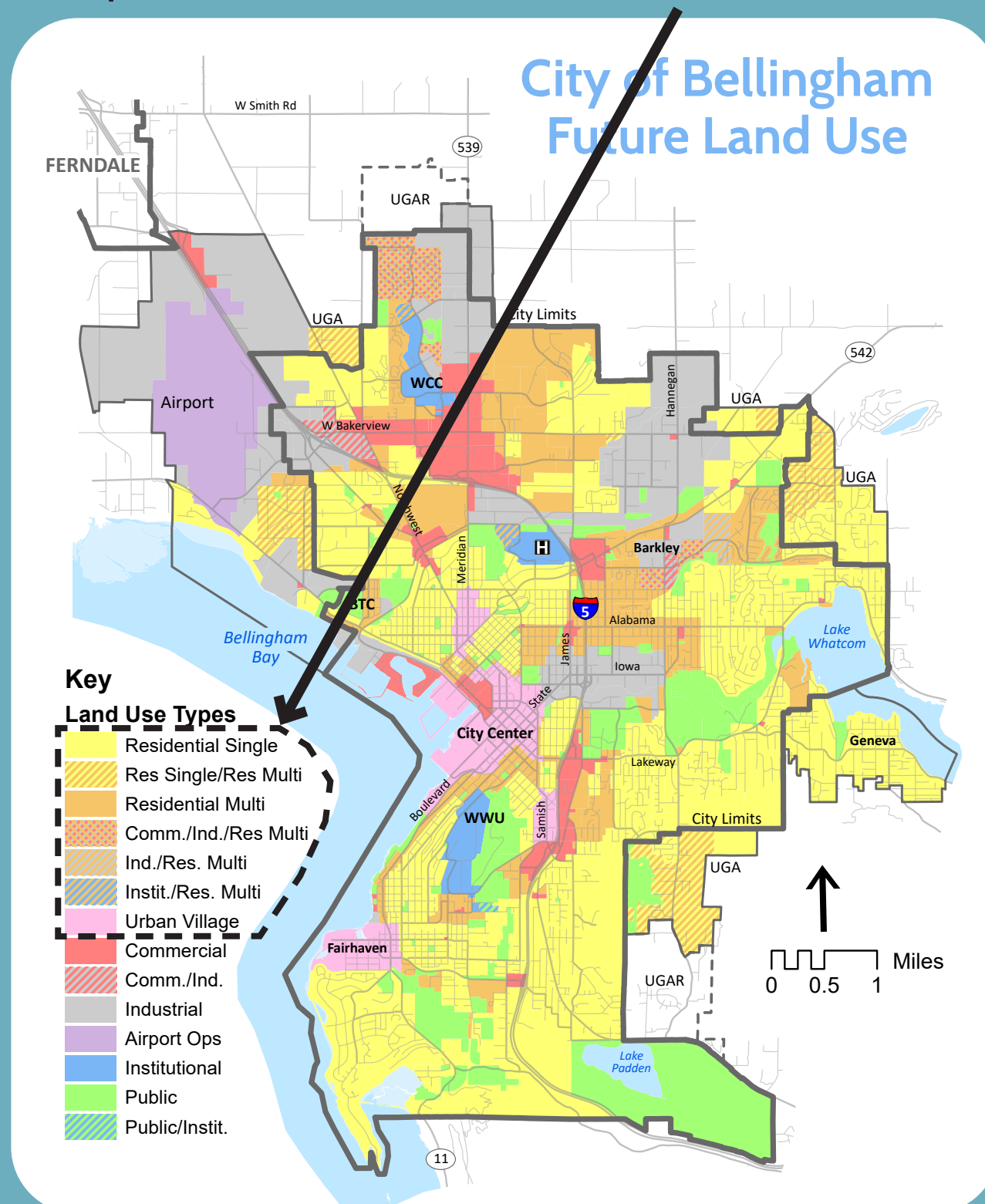
House Bill 1110

Passed by Washington Legislature in 2023

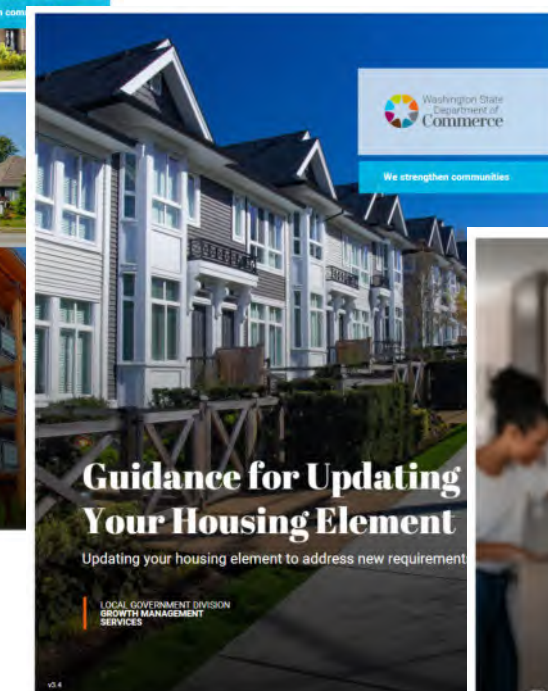
Legalizes middle housing forms in residential neighborhoods.

This bill requires jurisdictions of Bellingham’s size to allow a variety of middle-scale housing types up to four units per lot in all residential zones. Six units per lot must be allowed in some areas, depending on proximity to transit and affordability of the units. Additionally, regulations for these housing forms may not require standards that are more restrictive than those required for detached single-family housing.

Middle housing forms up to 4 or 6 units per lot must be allowed in these areas.



Planning for emergency housing and permanent supportive housing



The WA State Department of Commerce provides guidance to help jurisdictions:

- Establish income-based housing targets.
- Evaluate and update policies and regulations to remove barriers to housing production.
- Ensure adequate capacity and opportunity exist to meet housing needs.
- Identify and address racially disparate impacts like exclusionary zoning that favors single-family detached housing over other housing types.

For a full list of recently passed legislation affecting housing supply, stability and subsidies, scan the QR code at right.



MIDDLE HOUSING

Recent State legislation impacts how we plan for mid-scale housing types.

Providing a variety of housing choices to meet the full range of housing needs and income levels is critical. Middle housing, or housing that is at a middle scale between single-family homes and larger apartment buildings, will need to be expanded in Bellingham.

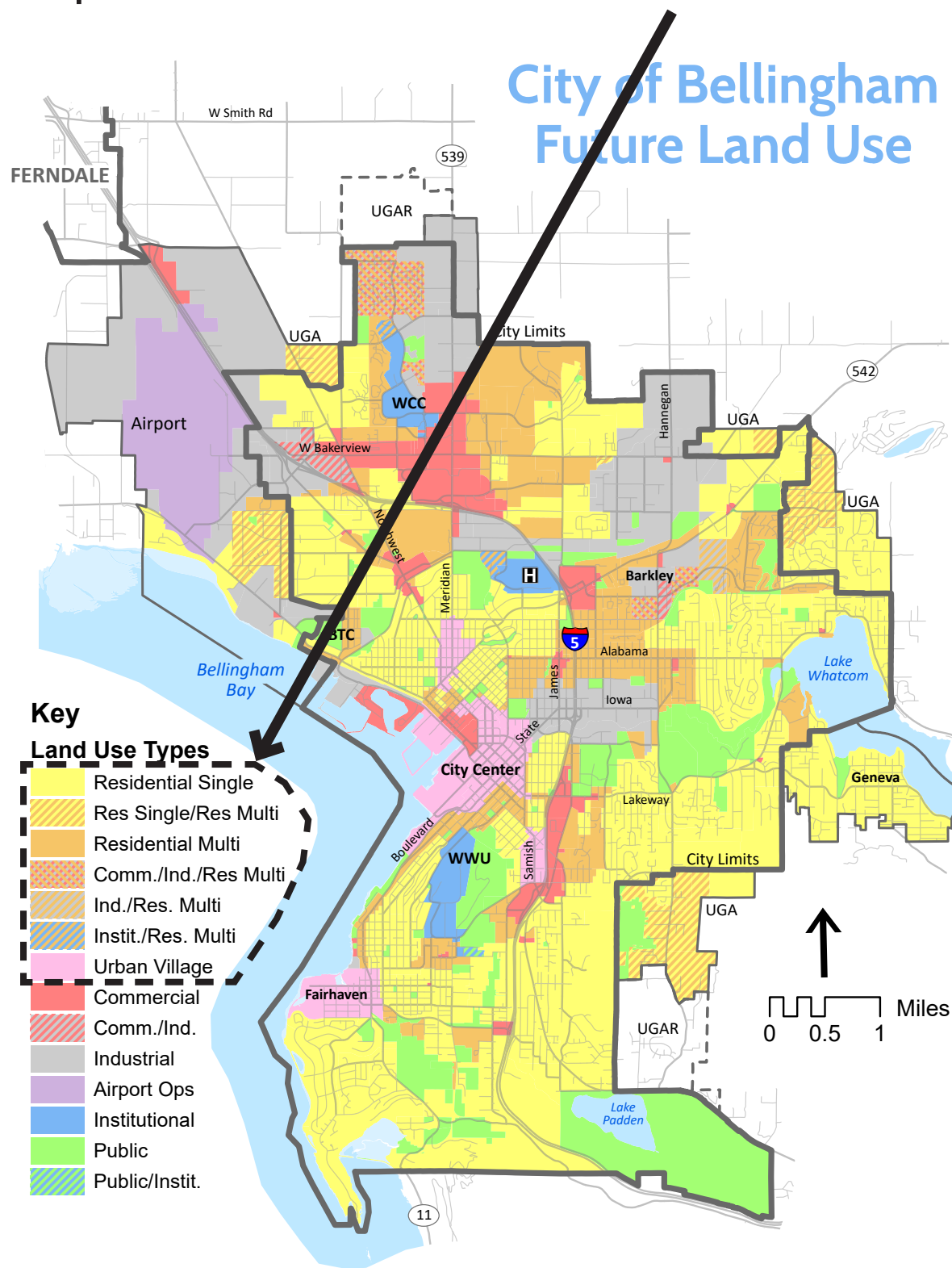
House Bill 1110

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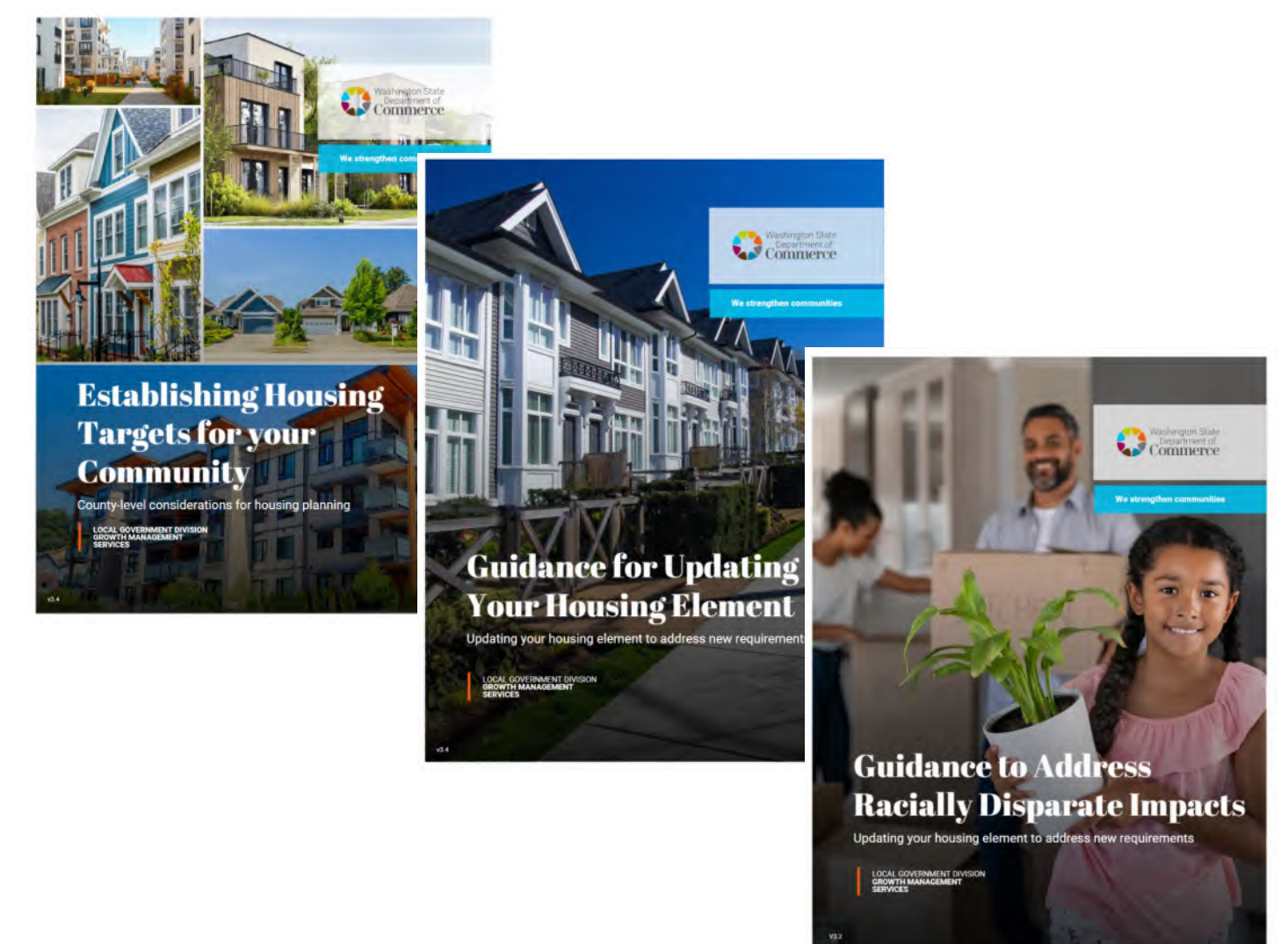
Middle housing forms up to 4 or 6 units per lot must be allowed in these areas.



Planning for emergency housing and permanent supportive housing



Planning for moderate density housing options, including but not limited to ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and multi-plex (middle-scale housing).



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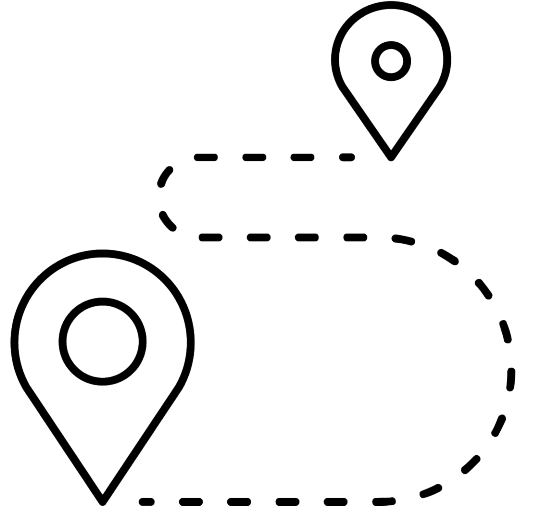
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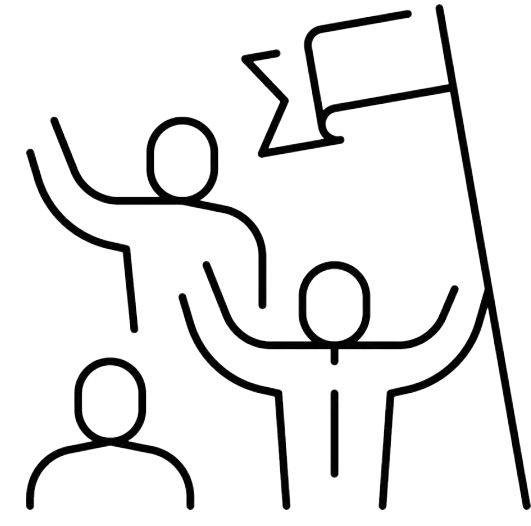
WHAT IS ADEI?

Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



ACCESSIBILITY

The design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them.



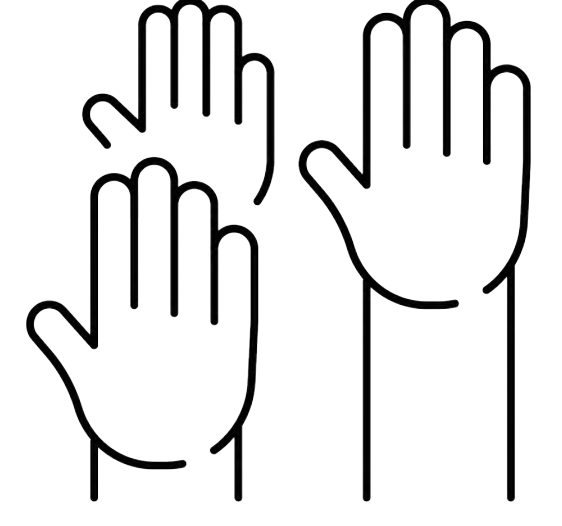
DIVERSITY

An aspect of organizational culture or community characteristics. Involves having people with varying identities, experiences, and backgrounds, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, language, ability, socioeconomic status, national origin, and education.



EQUITY

Equity is the act of developing, strengthening, and supporting fairness in systems, resources, opportunities, and outcomes. Equity requires addressing structural barriers. Creating equity does not mean lowering standards, but ensuring everyone is at the same starting point and is equipped with the right tools to meet the standards.



INCLUSION

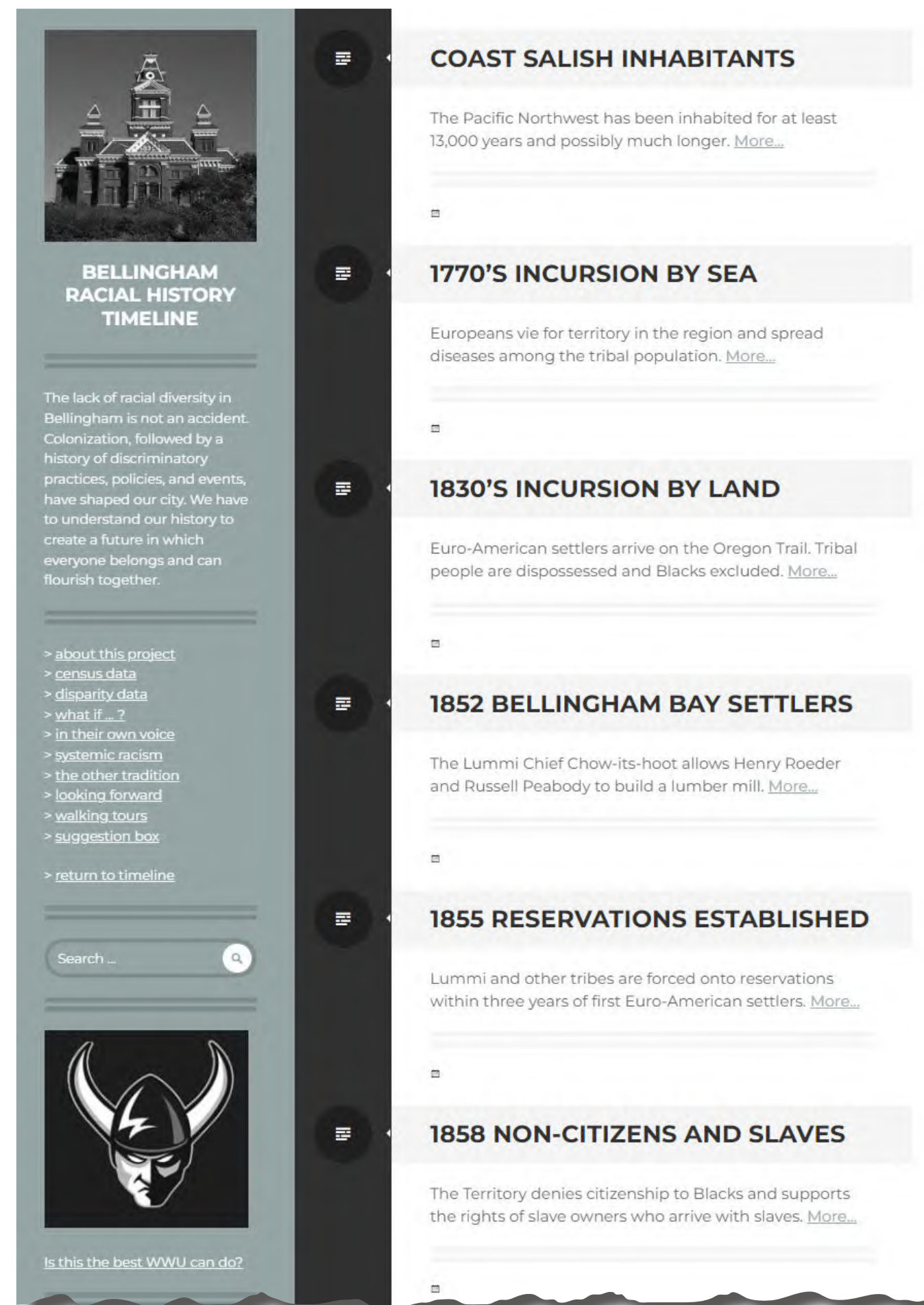
The degree to which organizations meaningfully and intentionally involve employees and community members in work, conversations, and decision-making opportunities. Where all employees and community members feel their viewpoint, ideas, perspectives, and experiences are valued and respected.



Citations/Sources: Adapted from Strategic-Plan-to-Advance-Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-and-Accessibility-in-the-Federal-Workforce-11.23.21.pdf (whitehouse.gov) and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Glossary of Equity (wa.gov).

RACIAL HISTORY TIMELINE

A collaborative initiative of WWU faculty, students, and community members.



This project is a collaborative initiative of university faculty, students, and community members – from diverse racial backgrounds – who care about the future of Bellingham. We hope to see this city grow into a vibrant inclusive community that is welcoming to all.

The project is founded on the premise that humanity is one. Every individual has equal worth and should be accorded equal dignity. Our diversity is a source of beauty, richness, interdependence, and strength. The well-being of every individual and group derives from the well-being of the entire social body.

Justice therefore requires that all people have the fullest opportunity to develop their latent capacities to contribute to the betterment of the community, from which they also derive their well-being. Justice also requires truth. And this project is dedicated to telling the truth about our past so that we can build a more peaceful, just, and mutually prosperous future together.

The groundwork for this project was laid with a Diversity and Social Justice Grant from Western Washington University. The principle researchers were Michael Karlberg and Selvi Adaikkalam Zabihi.

“Justice also requires truth. And this project is dedicated to telling the truth about our past so that we can build a more peaceful, just, and mutually prosperous future together.”

Bellingham Racial History Timeline website (<https://wp.wvu.edu/timeline/about-this-project/>)

To learn more about this project and view the full digital timeline, scan the qr code at the right or visit:
<https://wp.wvu.edu/timeline>



UNITED STATES LAND USE AND ZONING

Historic Segregation

American communities and government practices have together caused exclusionary practices in the past across the country and here in Bellingham. Washington House Bill 1220 (2021) requires cities like Bellingham to reverse this practice and address “racially disparate impacts” of current policies and practices. This includes the reversal of practices that protect traditionally single family areas over other residential areas, which relates to a racist history and today disproportionately impacts people of color.

Early 1900s:
Various US cities enacted **zoning codes** prohibiting people of color from moving into White neighborhoods. This was ruled unconstitutional in 1917.

1920s - 1940s:
Racially restrictive covenants that disallow any residents of color were widespread. These were deemed unenforceable in 1948 but remain on many deeds today.

A University of Washington project shows over 1400 restricted properties in Bellingham and surrounding area. These covenants are no longer legally enforceable, but represent remnants of an exclusionary history that succeeded in driving most people of color from the city. Areas platted between 1925 and 1948 were often racially restricted.

For example: Squalicum Park Flats (148 properties) – “No persons of any race other than the White or Caucasian race shall use or occupy any building or any lot, except that this conveyance shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race,

1957 - 1977
The development of the **Interstate Highway System** sped up suburbanization and often demolished or further segregated BIPOC communities.

1950s - 1970s
Urban renewal projects stemming from the 1949 Housing Act targeted areas of disinvestment that were disproportionately occupied by BIPOC communities. Federal funds were used to rebuild existing neighborhoods, forcing BIPOC families to move away, often replaced by white families due to other segregating policies.



For more detail on this history, see the guidance on HB 1220 implementation provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce (page 50).

1900s 1910s 1920s 1930s 1940s 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s ...present

1926 - Present:
Zoning was used across the country to separate uses that are considered incompatible. Single-family zoning was widely used in collaboration with other practices “as an attempt to make the suburbs racially exclusive,” (Commerce HB 1220 Guidance) while industrial and other “incompatible” uses generally located near BIPOC neighborhoods, impacting health and well-being.

1930s - 1970s:
Redlining was a standard practice, with the federal Home Owner’s Loan Corporation deeming neighborhoods to be financially risky (and labeled in red to designate a “hazardous” area) if occupied by residents of color. This has resulted in clear lines of racial segregation in cities across the country that follow the original redlining maps.

A variety of widespread government-sponsored **home loan programs** and processes assist white families in purchasing homes in the newly constructed suburbs while generally excluding families of color from home ownership opportunities. Some well-documented examples include the 1933 Homeowners Refinancing Act and the 1944 GI Bill.

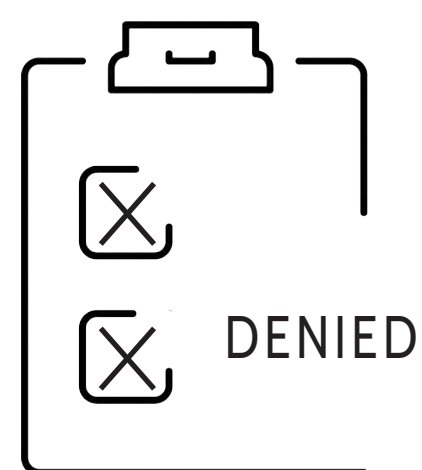
The timeline information on this page was compiled from Washington State Department of Commerce “Guidance to Address Racially Disparate Impacts - Updating your housing element to address new requirements”. Scan the qr code on this page to learn more.

UNITED STATES LAND USE AND ZONING

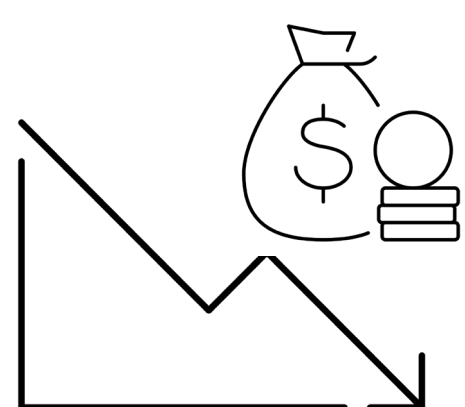
Discrimination practices persist...



Racial steering, where real estate professionals steer buyers of color to certain neighborhoods and away from others, occurs today.



Predatory lending practices disproportionately impact BIPOC communities, with Latino applicants with similar backgrounds twice as likely to be denied for a loan than their white counterparts.



Residents of color are also more likely to have their homes **undervalued in property assessments**, making home loans more difficult to acquire, wealth more challenging to accumulate, and local services like schools more difficult to fund adequately.

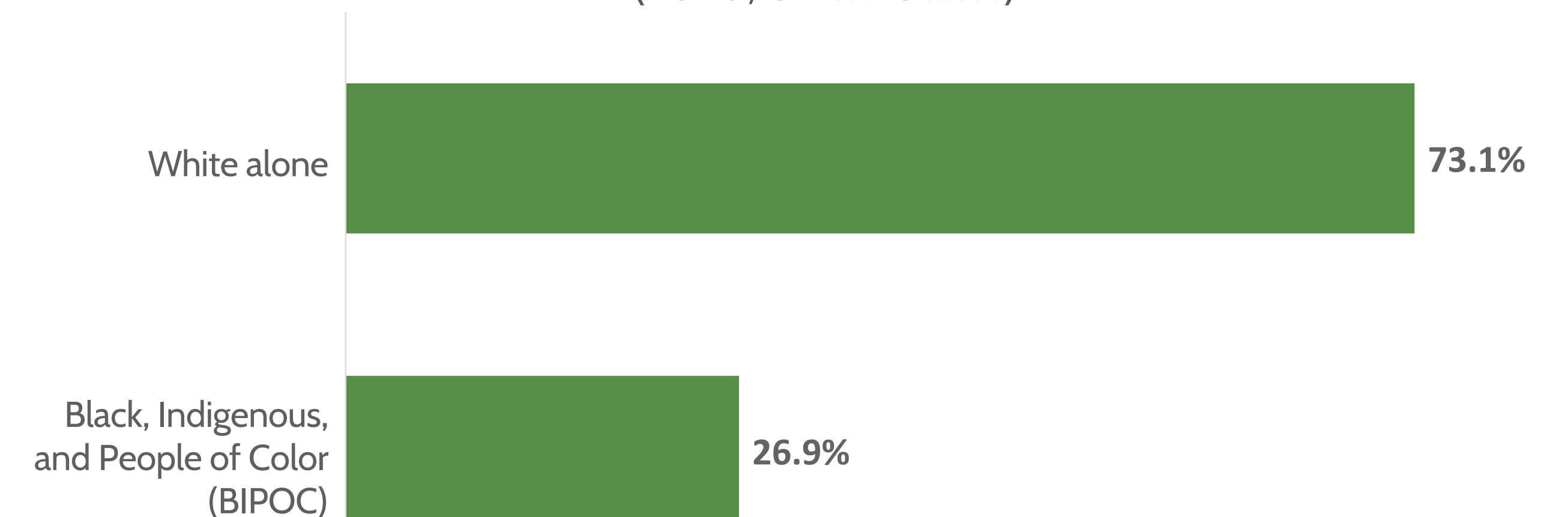
Generational Wealth

These practices led to generations of white families who were able to buy into suburban developments when costs were low. Home values increased, more opportunities like good schools were available, and these families benefited over time through several generations. Families of color did not have these opportunities.

The US homeownership gap between BIPOC households and white households is larger today than it was in 1960, showing the lasting impacts of these and other policies.

Home Ownership in the United States

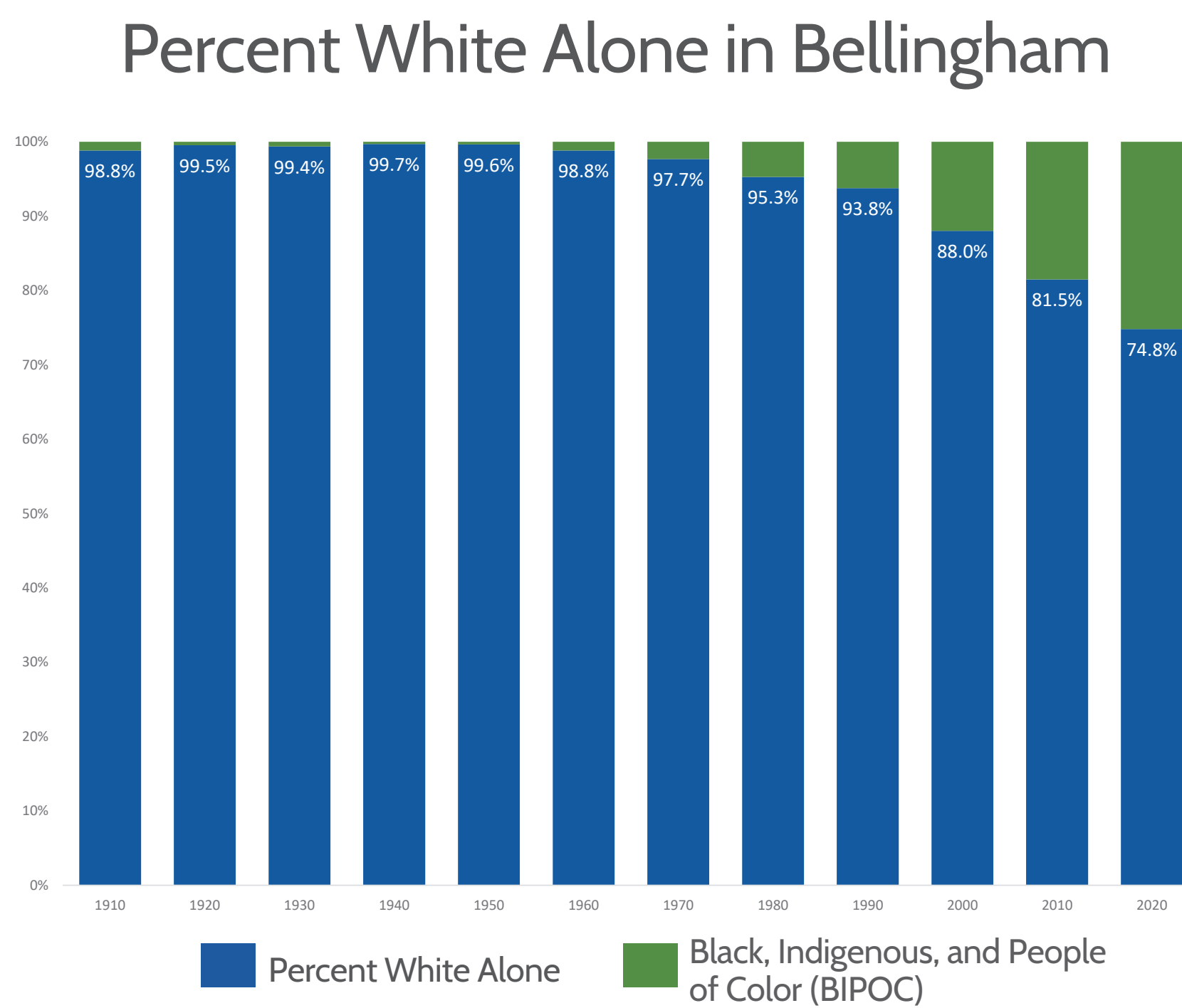
(2020, United States)



Source: 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

BELLINGHAM'S HISTORIC EXCLUSION

Bellingham has a history of forcefully excluding people of color. Despite earlier diversity of residents, these practices left 1970 Bellingham as 97.7% White.



Source: 1910 - 2020 Decennial Census.
Note: Starting in the 2000 Decennial Census, participants were allowed to choose more than one race.

Since then, Bellingham has slowly begun to diversify. Bellingham Plan outreach efforts show strong community desires to continue diversifying and becoming more welcoming to those of different backgrounds.



Pre 1770s Coast Salish peoples inhabited Whatcom County for generations until white settlement begins by sea in the late 18th Century and by land in the early 19th.

1850

1855 Point Elliott Treaty removes Native Americans from their ancestral lands. Many rights and compensation promised were not fulfilled.

1860

1860s Many Chinese workers arrive to work in the lumber mills, mines, and other trades.

1870

1880

1885 All Chinese are forcefully expelled from the area.

1890

1900 Early 1900s Many South Asian workers arrive to work in the area.

1907 All South Asians are forcefully expelled from the area.

1910

1920

1929 The state Ku Klux Klan (KKK) convention is held in Bellingham. The Mayor presents the "key to the city" to the KKK leader.

1930

1920s - 1940s Many new housing developments are legally restricted to white residents, significantly limiting housing opportunities for residents of color.

1940

1942 Japanese Internment during WWII results in the removal of at least 33 Japanese Bellingham residents.

1950

1950s Sundowning, where police would pick up Black individuals still in the city after dark and drop them off at the edge of town letting them know they are not welcome, is common in Bellingham.

1960

1960s - 1970s Native American Tribes across the nation organize protests to reestablish their fishing rights as promised in earlier treaties. Lummi fishers are targeted by non-native fishers, often with violence, after they are granted certain fishing rights by the federal government in 1974.

1970

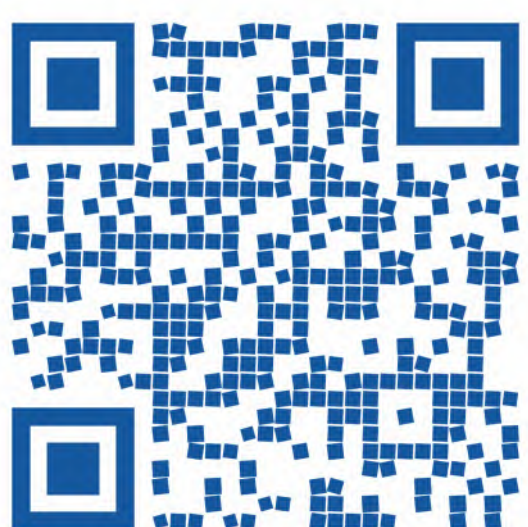
1980

1994 Several instances occur of crosses being burned at nearby migrant workers' camps. This is a symbol of the KKK.

1990

Recent instances of antisemitic, racist, or Islamophobic incidents and threats are also recorded in and around Bellingham.

Present



The timeline information on this page was compiled from the Bellingham Racial History Timeline, a collaborative initiative of WWU faculty, students, and community members. Scan the qr code at the left or visit <https://wp.wvu.edu/timeline> to learn more.

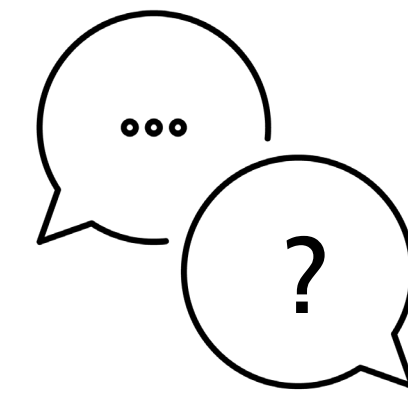
THE CITY'S ROLE IN REVERSING INEQUITIES

Change is inevitable and we see community-wide efforts to adapt to change as opportunities to be more inclusive and welcoming than we have been in the past.

We need to recognize and document past and current practices both intentional and unintentional that create or reinforce inequity for specific groups or classes. For example:



Notification procedures that focus on property owners without acknowledging renters.



Notifications, announcements, documents, and/or meetings provided in English without options for translation to other languages.

City plans, forms, applications, and other documents that include industry jargon or insider terminology without instructions or contextual explanations in everyday, accessible language.



Public meetings conducted in locations without any, or with limited ADA accessibility.



Policies that protect and reinforce established land use patterns over other, more inclusive housing forms. Single-family detached housing, for example, has a history of excluding racially-diverse households.

THE CITY'S ROLE IN REVERSING INEQUITIES

What else could we be doing? Use a sticky note below to let us know.

Examples from Bellingham's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies relating to equity:

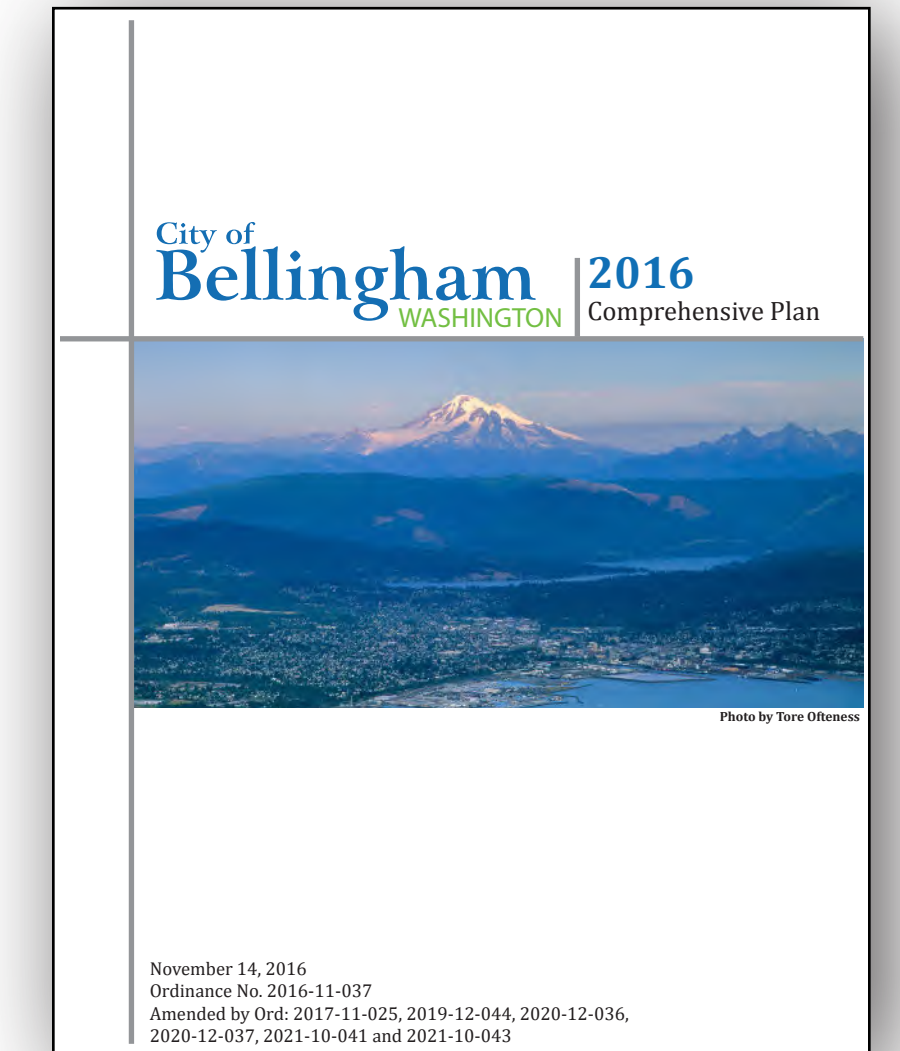
Land Use Chapter – Policy LU-28 – “Consider social equity and health issues in siting such uses as manufacturing and essential public facilities (EPFs) to limit exposure to harmful substances and environments.”

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

Capital Facilities and Utilities Chapter Policy CF-1 O - “Provide, maintain, and upgrade public facilities to meet the primary service needs of the City in a manner which respects social diversity, protects public investments in existing facilities, maximizes the use of existing facilities, and promotes orderly compact urban growth.”

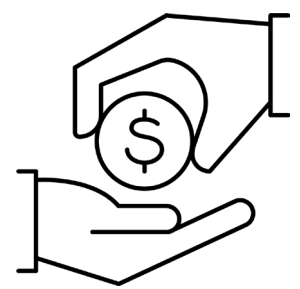
Multi-Modal Transportation Chapter – Policy T-31 – “Provide accessible pedestrian and bicycle facilities for all through equity in public engagement, service delivery, and capital investment.”

Parks Recreation and Open Space Chapter - Objective 5H – “Provide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training opportunities for staff.”



THE CITY'S ROLE IN REVERSING INEQUITIES

Bellingham is working to improve how services and resources are developed and provided to address the diverse needs of everyone in the community. While there is much work yet to do, here are some recent actions taken by the City to improve accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion:

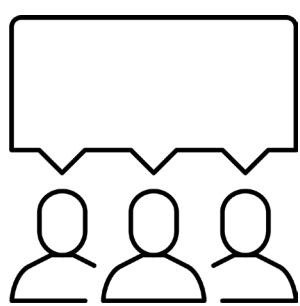


Funding was added to support a **new ADEI Analyst position** to support Citywide ADEI efforts in 2022, and the position was filled the same year.

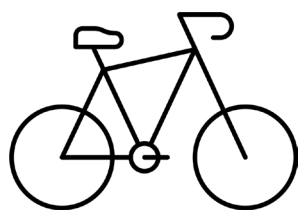
The City's 2023-2024 Budget and Work Plan included an emphasis on streamlining the hiring process to generate qualified groups of **diverse applicants**.



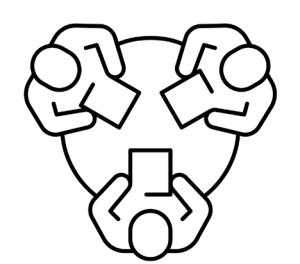
Added funding to reinvigorate and **improve leadership training**, adding specific expertise and content **to support ADEI awareness, best practices, and action**.



Increased use of on-call **language translation services** (ASL, Spanish, etc.) for public meetings, and translation of written communications for important public outreach efforts (the Bellingham Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian master plans, Urban Forest Management Plan, Community Broadband Internet survey).



Striving to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities for people all ages and abilities by **prioritizing investments in underserved communities**.



The Bellingham Public Library 2023 Action Plan included a strong **focus on practices and programs that are welcoming and inclusive to all** and that provide access to problem-solving and learning resources and opportunities.

What else could we be doing? Use a sticky note below to let us know.

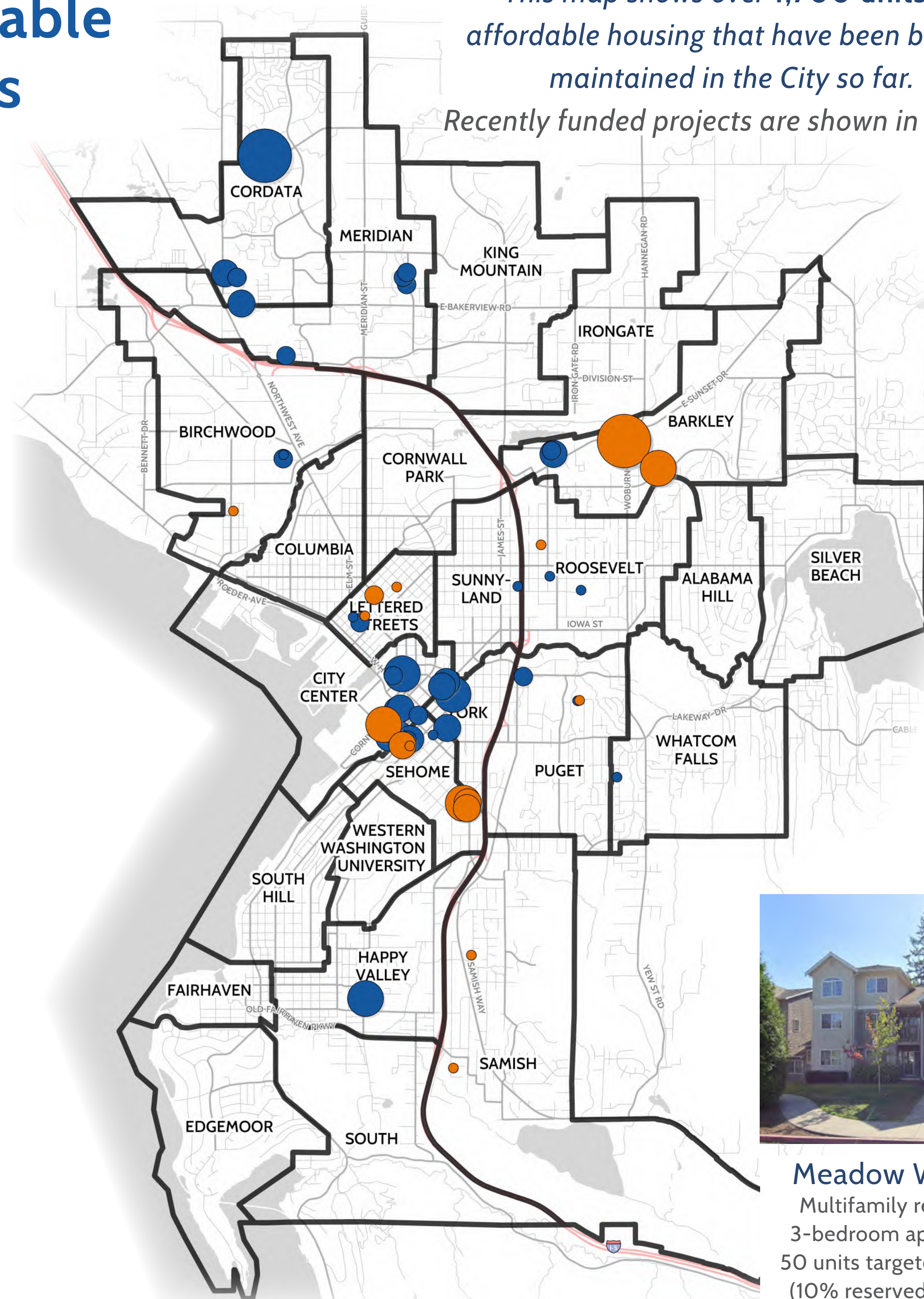
EQUITY AND HOUSING

We need affordable housing in every neighborhood.

The City has contributed to expanding affordable housing across Bellingham, and we are always working to add more.

Use a sticky to let us know what surprised you or any other thoughts.

This map shows over 1,700 units of affordable housing that have been built or maintained in the City so far. Recently funded projects are shown in orange.



Willow Creek Apts

Multifamily rental housing with 16 studio apartments for disabled adults. All units targeted to incomes <50% AMI.



Samish Commons

Multifamily rental housing with Studio, 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments. Units targeted to incomes <60% AMI. 49 units targeted to families, 53 units targeted to seniors, and 69 units targeted to general low-income households.



Meadow Wood Townhomes

Multifamily rental housing with 2- and 3-bedroom apartments for families. All 50 units targeted to incomes <60% AMI (10% reserved for homeless-on-entry).



Villa Santa Fe

Multifamily rental housing with 2- and 3-bedroom apartments for farmworker (or other natural resource industry) families. All 50 units targeted to incomes <50% AMI.

PLANNING & CLIMATE EMISSIONS

How we plan will impact Bellingham greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In our daily lives, many actions we take – from heating homes to driving cars – cause the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs). GHGs contribute to climate change by trapping heat, harming our health and the environment around us. As our city continues to grow, more GHGs could be emitted overall. We can work together to decrease these emissions and their impact on the climate.

Transportation of people and goods contribute the most carbon in Bellingham.

Building energy, especially **heating and cooling**, is most efficient in multifamily buildings with multiple units insulating one another.

Some **building materials**, like concrete, contribute more carbon emissions than others, like wood.

When buildings are farther apart, more material and construction emissions are required to provide **roads and utilities** to those buildings.



URBAN AREA

There will be fewer emissions in this scenario.

SMALL SCALE RESIDENTIAL AREA

There will be more emissions in this scenario.

SUBURBAN AREA

There will be the most emissions in this scenario.

Scan the QR code for more information on the City's climate emissions and goals.



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

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)



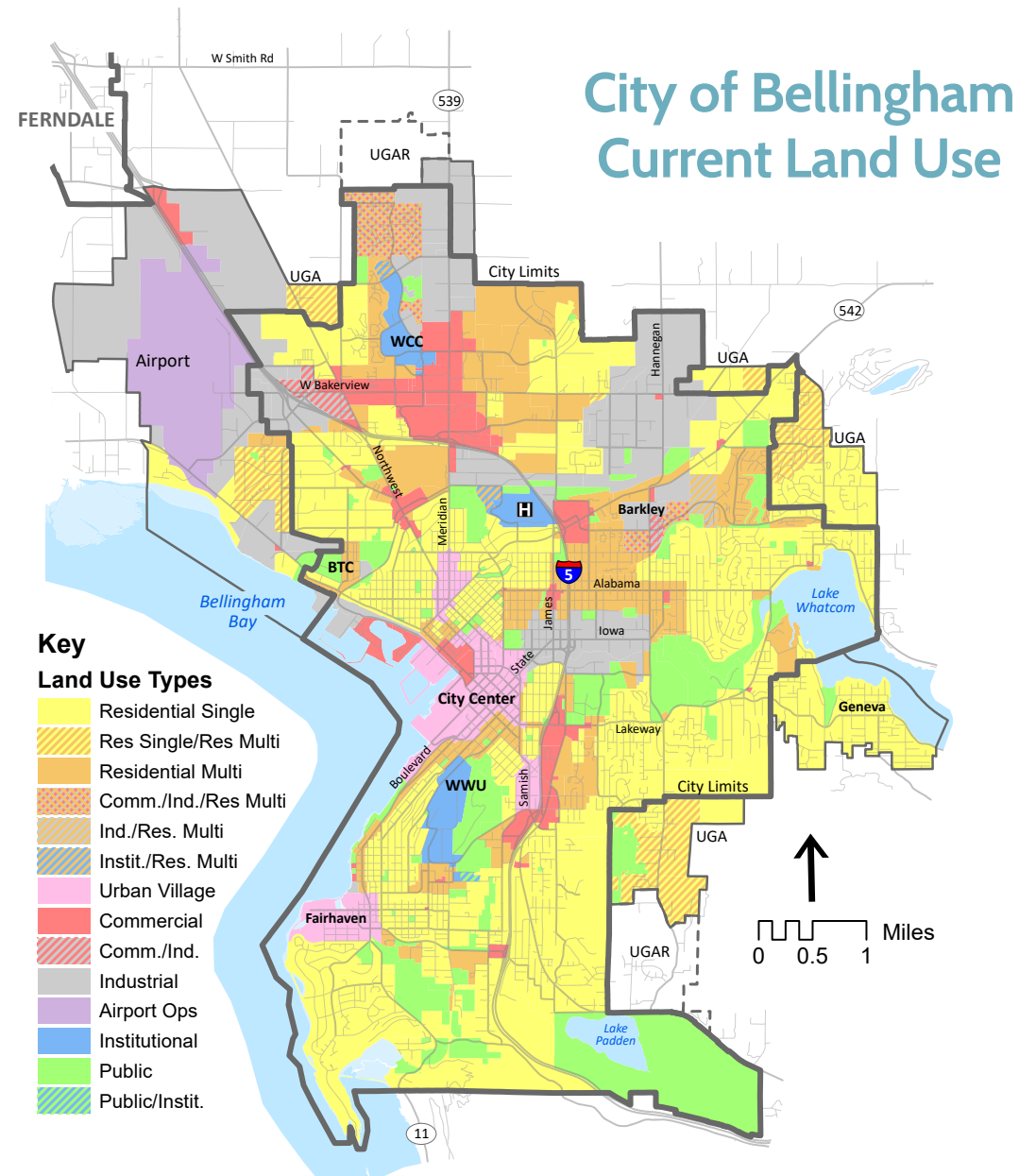
LOCATION AND TRANSPORTATION

Location, location, location!

We all know that Bellingham is a desirable place to live. While we are proud of all the amenities Bellingham has to offer, it does come at a cost. Housing is more expensive in Bellingham than other cities, and depending on the location within Bellingham, the cost of housing can vary. Many location impacts will continue to affect housing costs, however the Bellingham Plan can address the following location barriers to help reduce prices:

Land Use

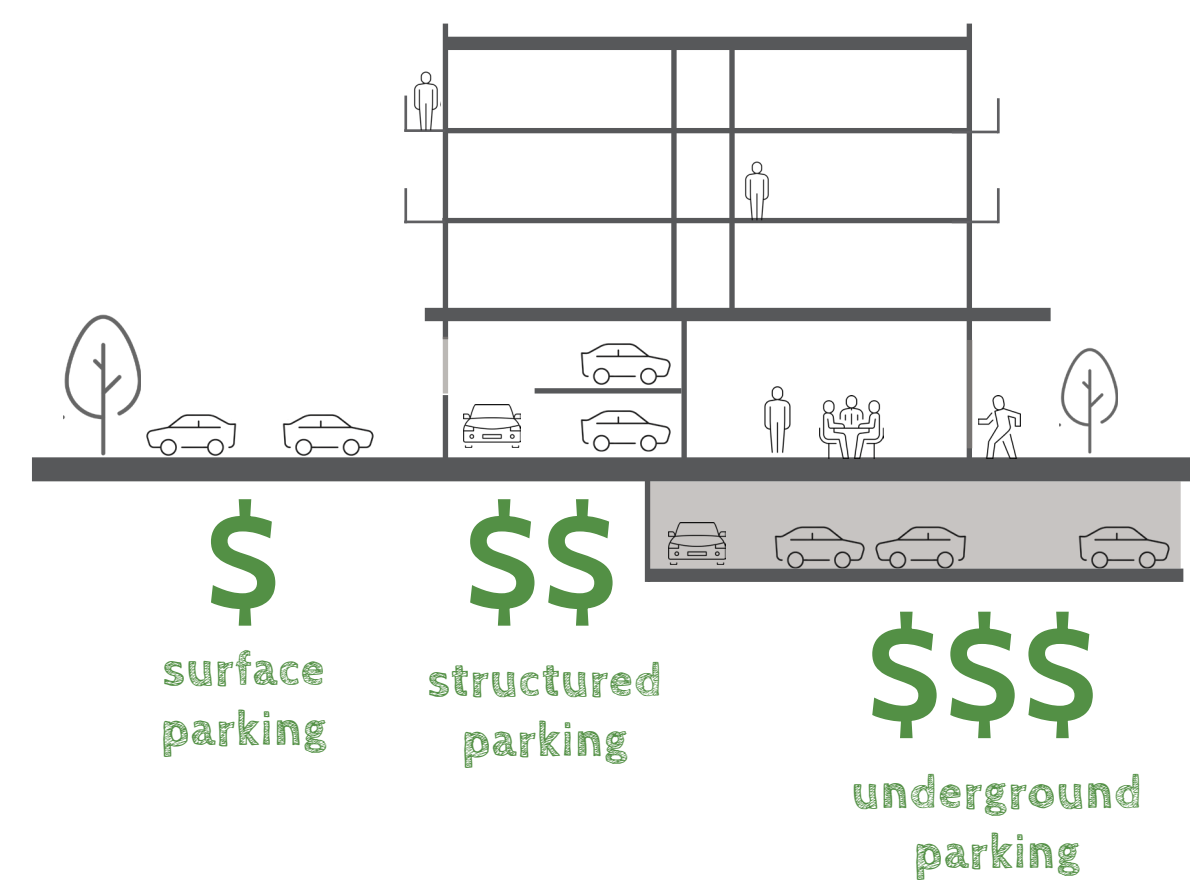
Bellingham's land use code regulates where different uses and housing types are allowed. **Excluding certain uses and housing types from specific areas can inflate the cost of housing** as land supply is essentially limited.



Over 40% of land in Bellingham is zoned Residential Single

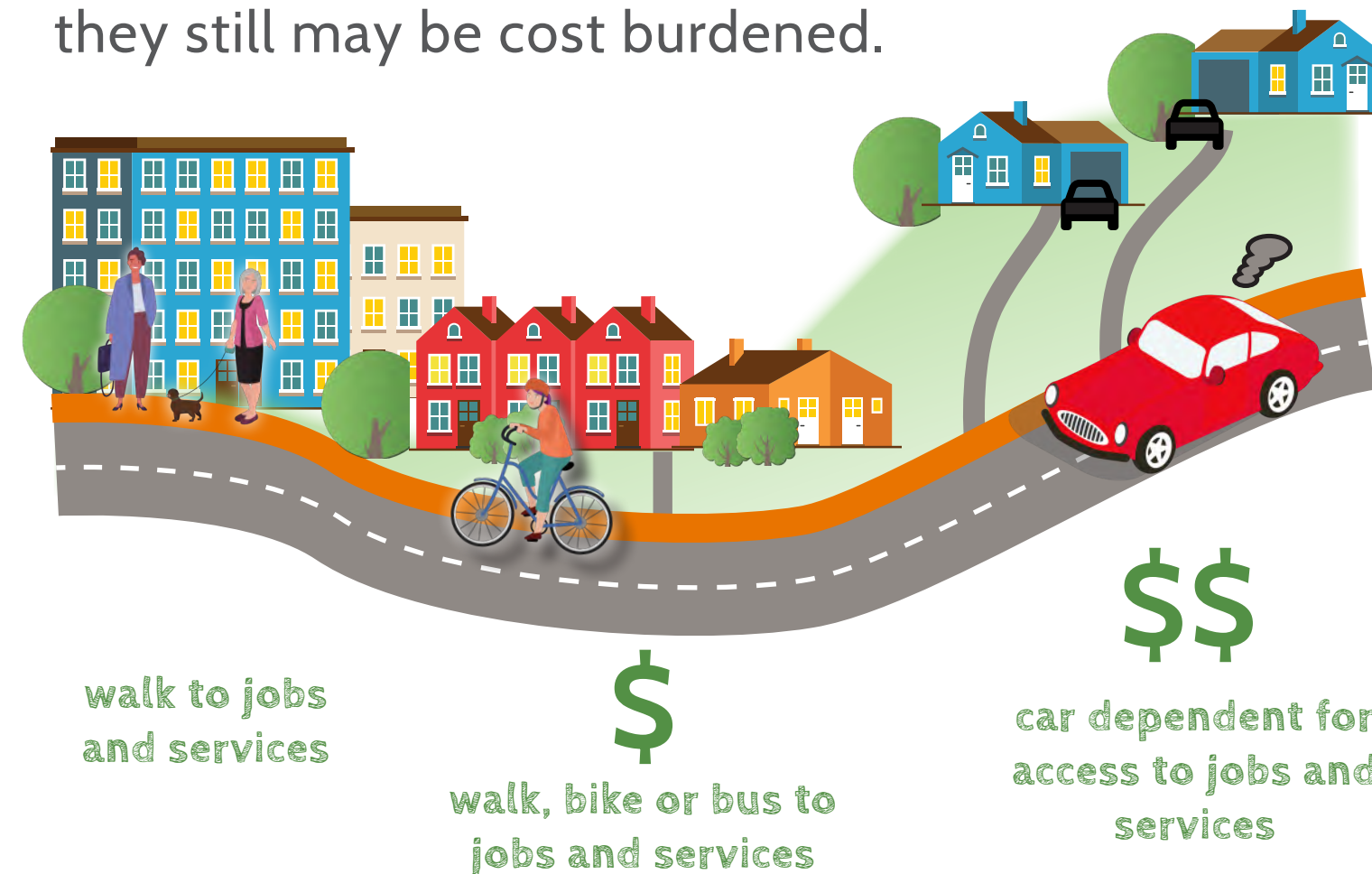
Parking

Providing off street parking is expensive! On average, a surface lot space in Whatcom County can cost \$20,000, a space in an above-ground structure can cost \$40,000, and a space in an underground structure can cost over \$80,000.* **This cost ultimately falls on the tenant as developers need to charge more per unit to account for the parking costs.** When parking is “bundled” with rent, households do not have a choice but to subsidize that parking with their rent – even if they don’t own a vehicle.



Transportation

While housing costs tend to be less when they are farther away from services, amenities, and jobs, the transportation costs associated with the additional distance can ultimately increase the cost of living. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), **households in car-dependent neighborhoods spend up to 25% of their income on transportation**, compared to 9% for households in more walkable neighborhoods with more transit options.** Even if a person is paying less than 30% of their monthly income on rent, if their transportation expenses are so high due to owning a car, and the associated commute, they still may be cost burdened.



Use sticky notes to write down potential solutions for removing these barriers.

* Jo, N. (2022). Parking policy & housing affordability. Whatcom Housing Alliance. <https://whatcomhousingalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Parking-Report-Final-Draft-6.6.22.pdf>

** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development | Office of Policy Development and Research. (2014). Creating connected communities - HUD USER. https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/pdf/Creating_Cnnted_Comm.pdf

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

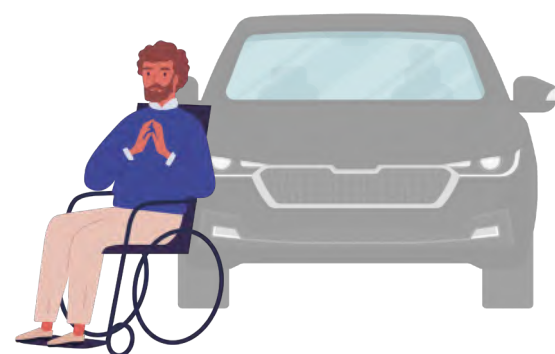
Urban Villages



- 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.

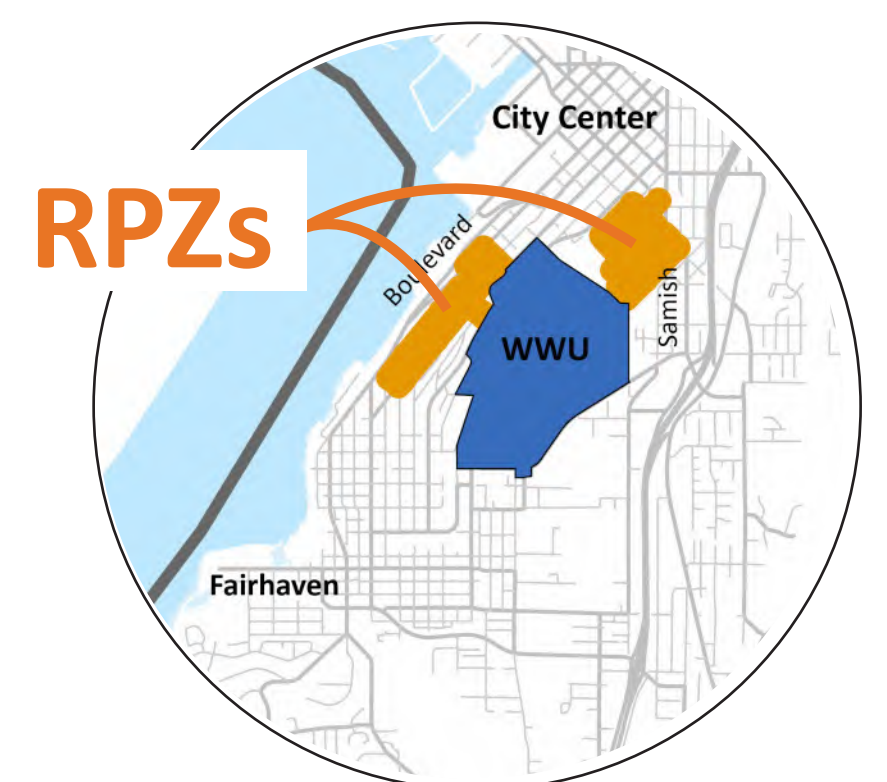
Accessible Parking

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

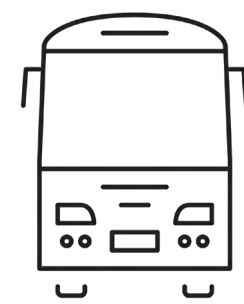
Over the past several decades, the City has shifted its policy framework and has made efforts to move away from the suburbanization of the city. The objective was to provide more shared parking resources and reduce single occupancy vehicle use, primarily through increased biking, walking, and transit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



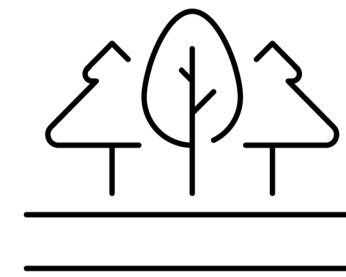
Reducing the cost of providing housing (each parking space generally costs over \$20,000 in Bellingham).



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

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.

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 20, they directed the Planning Commission to consider a number of potential approaches to reducing these requirements, including citywide changes or those based on geographic differences.

At the Housing Types and Neighborhoods (June 6) event, staff asked the community what considerations are important if parking minimums are reduced or removed. They overwhelmingly showed support for increased funding towards pedestrian, transit, and bicycle infrastructure.

Now, we want to hear about the parking changes themselves. Use dots to answer each question below:

In what areas would you like to decrease or eliminate the required parking minimums?
Select as many of the below as you like.

Near existing transit service	
In existing urban villages/areas with a mix of denser residential and commercial uses	
Small (infill) residential projects within existing neighborhoods	
In areas with street parking today	
Other (provide input on sticky note)	

If on-site parking requirements were to be eliminated for residential neighborhoods, how far away from your home would you feel comfortable parking your car?
Select only one of the below.

Directly in front of my residence	
On the same block as my residence	
Within a 2-3 block radius of my residence	
Any distance, as long as it supports more needed housing	
I prefer to have dedicated parking on the property. I will not live anywhere that doesn't have dedicated parking.	

HOW SHOULD WE GROW?

Each of the next three boards shows a different way we could grow. Each approach focuses on a growth strategy, including different elements to make it happen.

We do not need to pick one approach only.

It is likely that we will **select multiple elements from each approach**. These elements will form the Bellingham Plan growth strategy. No matter which other elements we select, our growth strategy will:



Continue to focus on and invest in urban villages.



Meet state housing legislation, including allowing middle housing across the city.



Meet state climate legislation, including focusing on resilience and equity.



Use an equity lens, balancing growth with public investment to mitigate displacement.

As you look at all three boards, consider which elements of that approach you support. Consider how those elements work with one another.

How would you describe your preferred overall approach?

Does it align with just one or several of the following boards ?

How We Grow - Approach 1

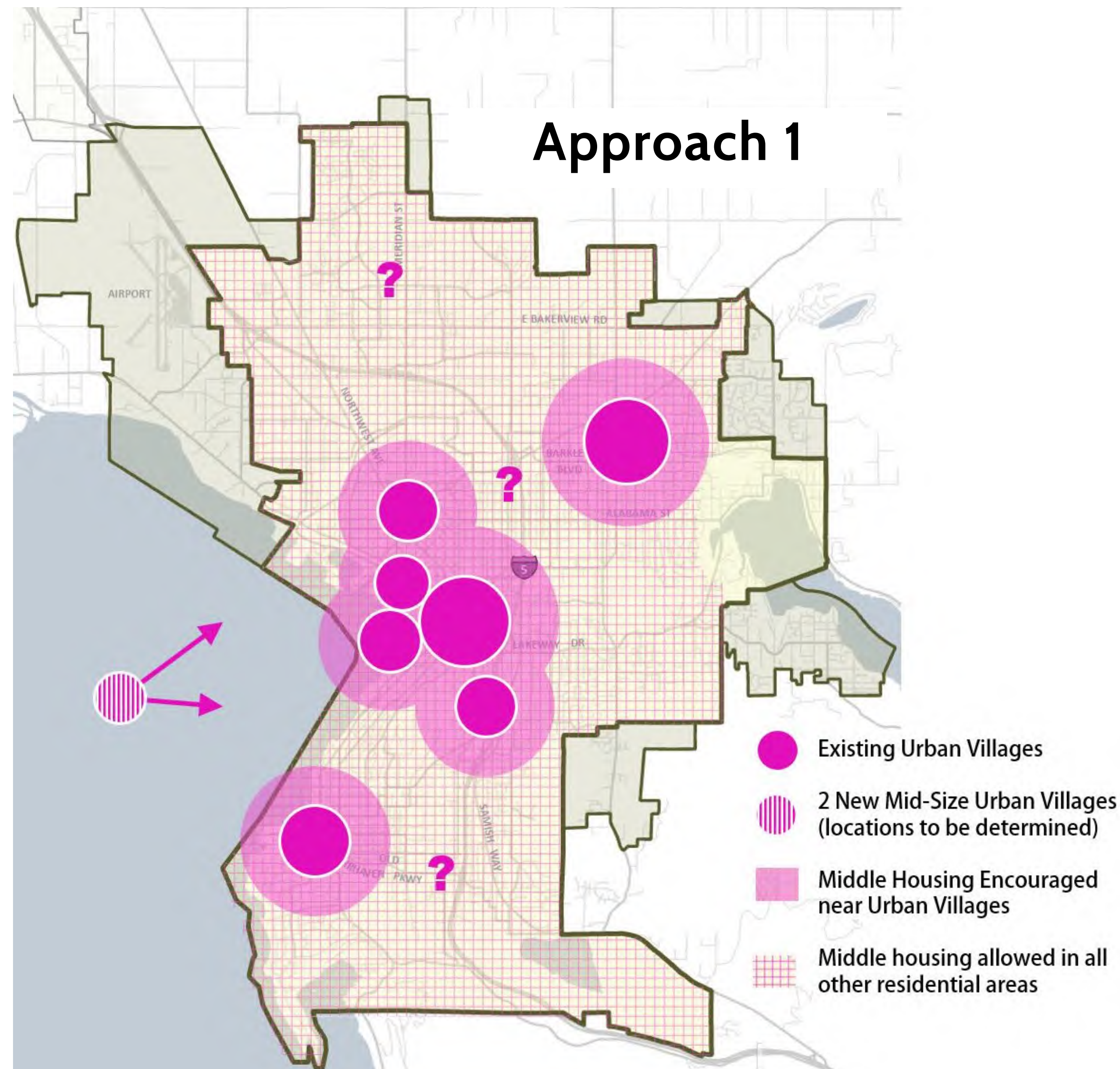
URBAN VILLAGE FOCUS

Key Concepts:

Strong focus on Urban Villages with a mix of housing, jobs, and services.

Two new Urban Villages in high potential areas that help fill gaps in the city's network (locations to be determined at a future time).

Incentives/requirements for middle-scale housing near all Urban Villages, providing more housing closer to Urban Village jobs and providing a buffer to lower-scale neighborhoods.



✚ What elements of Approach 1 do you want to incorporate into Bellingham's growth strategy?

■ What elements of Approach 1 do you want to avoid as Bellingham grows?

How We Grow - Approach 2

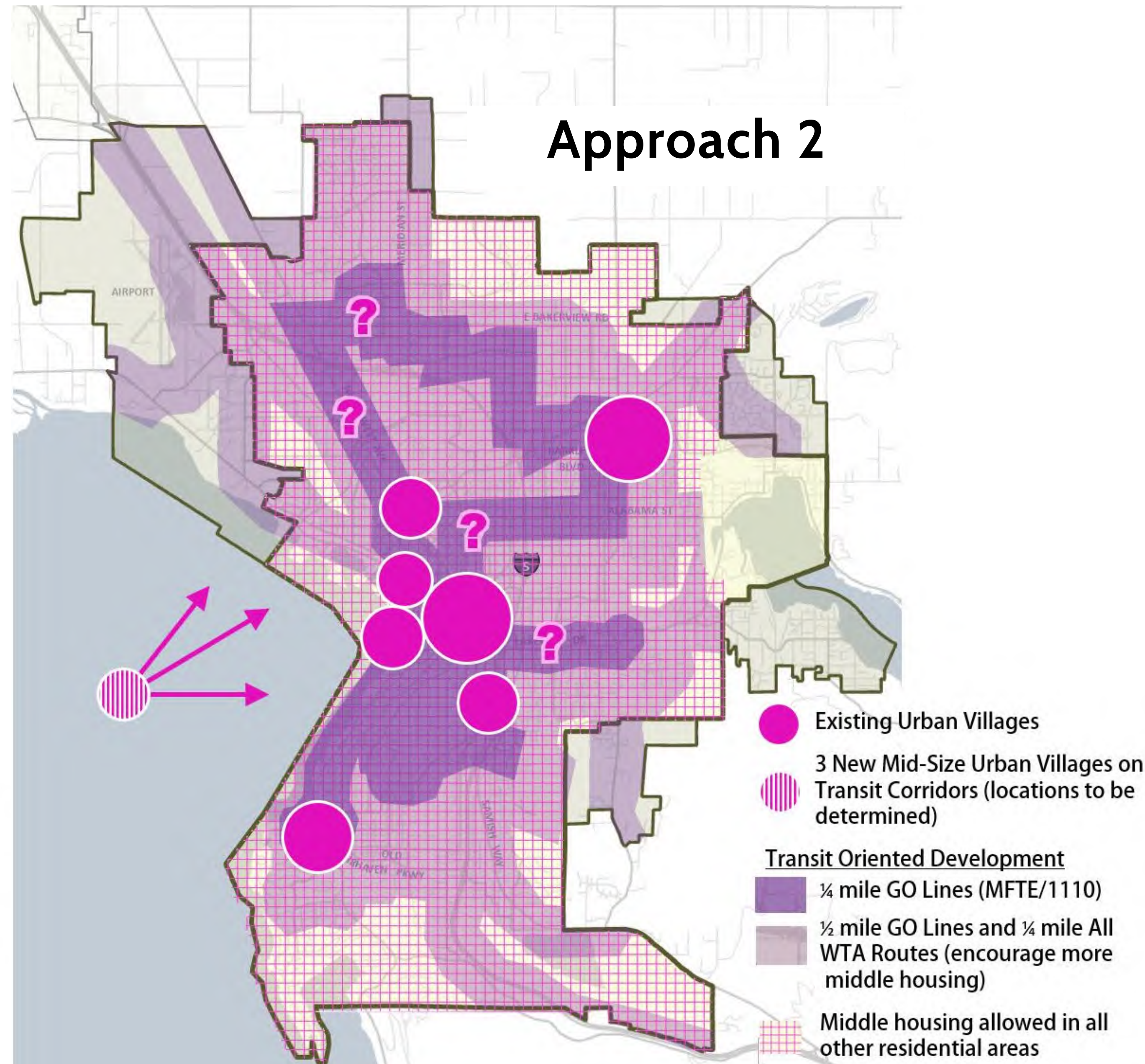
TRANSIT-ORIENTED FOCUS

Key Concepts:

Focus of new growth along high frequency transit routes.

Incentives/requirements for middle-scale housing near these routes, providing more housing close to transit and creating a buffer to lower-scale neighborhoods.

Addition of three new Urban Villages located along transit routes (specific locations to be determined at a future time).



✚ What elements of Approach 2 do you want to incorporate into Bellingham's growth strategy?

■ What elements of Approach 2 do you want to avoid as Bellingham grows?

How We Grow - Approach 3

COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

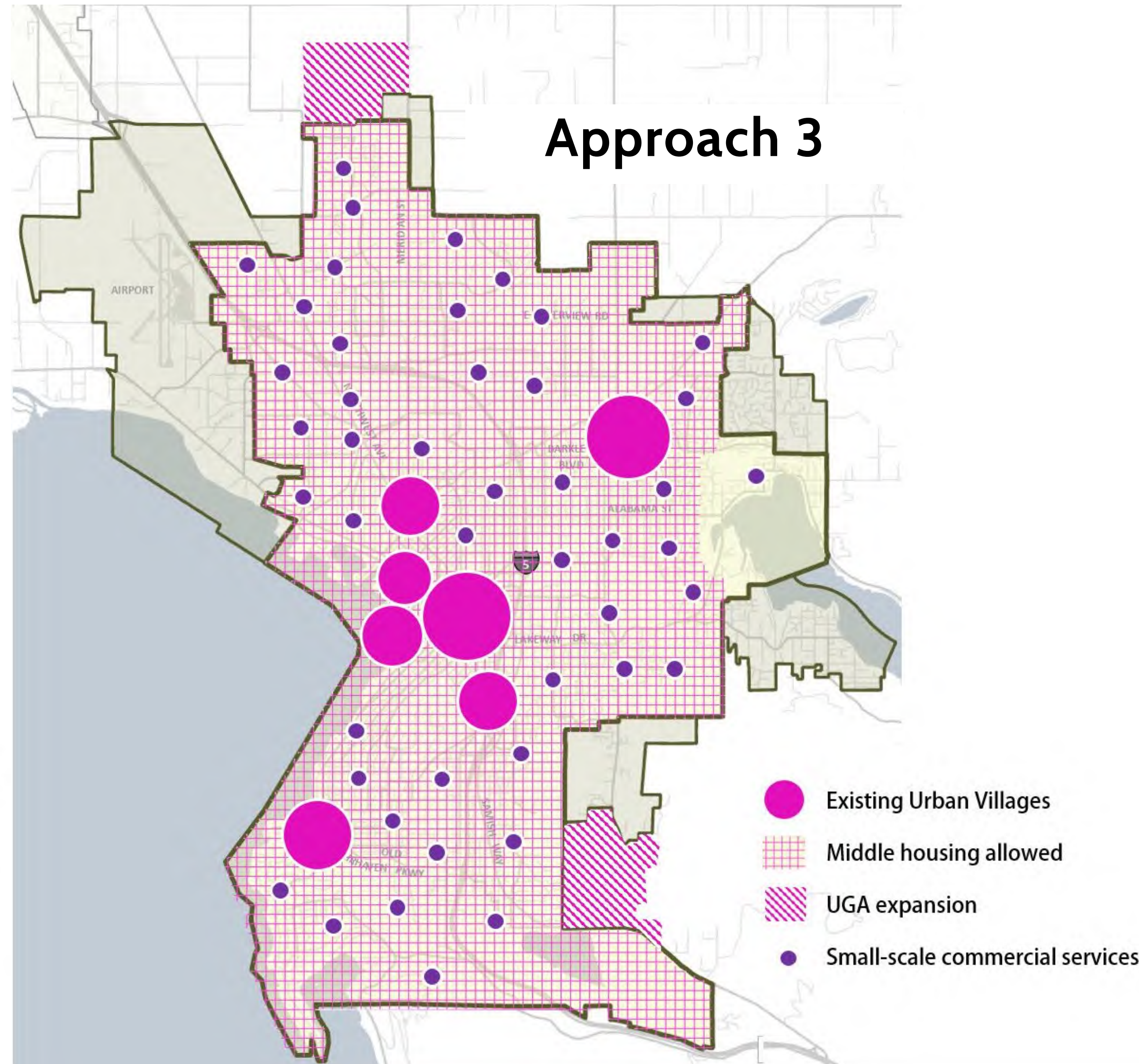
Key Concepts:

No new Urban Villages, with growth instead spread around the city.

Encouragement of middle housing production across the city.

Emphasis on providing small-scale commercial uses in every neighborhood, filling gaps in existing goods and services.

Addition of some area to the north and south that the city could eventually grow into (Urban Growth Area expansion).

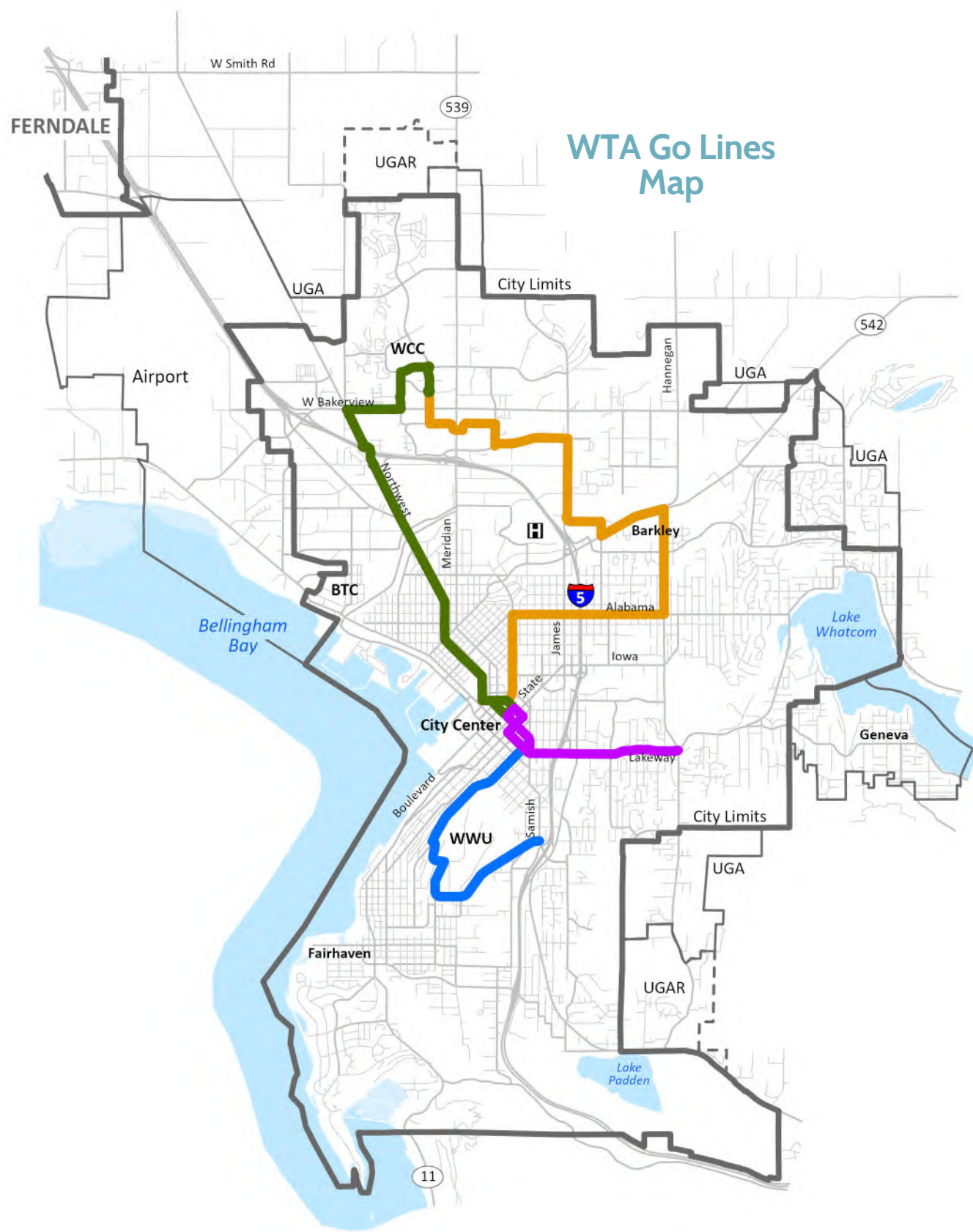


✚ What elements of Approach 3 do you want to incorporate into Bellingham's growth strategy?

■ What elements of Approach 3 do you want to avoid as Bellingham grows?

WHAT IS TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT?

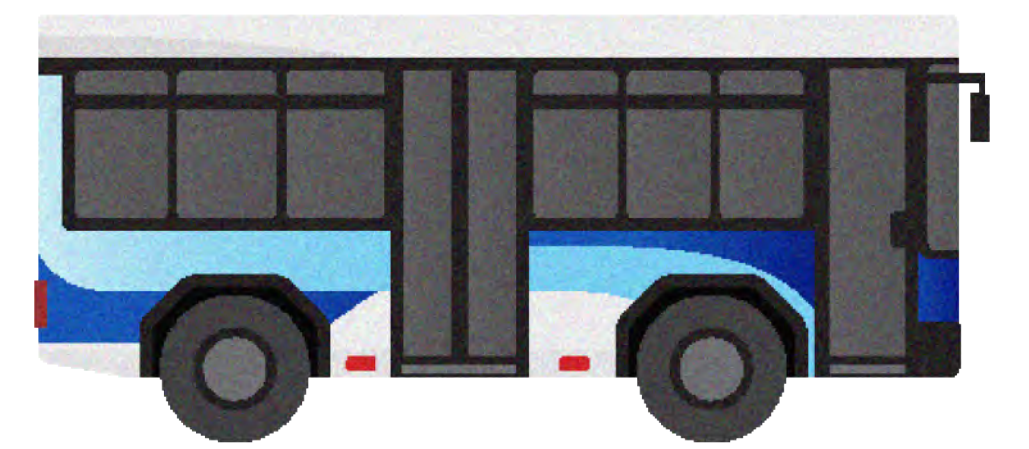
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) creates dense, walkable, and mixed-use spaces near transit that supports vibrant, sustainable, and equitable communities. A mix of uses, activities, and services allow TOD residents to commute to work, run errands, recreate, and meet basic needs without a car. TOD is typically thought of in terms of light and heavy rail transit, but some communities like Bellingham apply this concept to bus transit (Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) - Transit-Oriented Development).



Currently, Whatcom Transit Authority operates four “GO Lines”, which offer service every 15 minutes on weekdays along major corridors in Bellingham (Blue, Green, Gold, and Plum Lines). In the future, stops along these lines may be considered “major transit stops”; that means areas close to these stops would be able to accommodate additional development under new State legislation compared to other parts of Bellingham.

Did you know that House Bill 1110, allows at least 6 units on all residential lots if located within a quarter mile of a major transit stop?

With the Bellingham Plan, we could expand the development potential along transit even further. The City could incentivize and encourage TOD, leading to higher density neighborhoods along existing GO Lines.



WTA recently completed a Rapid Transit Study. This study reviewed how WTA can improve speed and reliability on key corridors, as well as the potential for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BRT is a premium service that includes increased frequency and features to improve speed and efficiency. The study looked at two different options for future BRT – one on the existing Gold Line and the other on the existing Blue and Green Lines combined.

Visit engage.ridewta.com/rapid-transit-study to learn more!



Transit-Oriented Development could support Bus Rapid Transit and Bus Rapid Transit could support Transit-Oriented Development!

The map shows two main transit corridors in Bellingham: a Gold Line (Route 331) connecting downtown Bellingham to Cordata Station at Whatcom Community College, and Green plus Blue Go Lines (Route 232 and WWU Routes) connecting Cordata Station to Western Washington University and Lakeway through Downtown. The map includes street names like Bakerview Rd, Bellis Fair Pkwy, and Northwood Ave.

Transit corridors being studied:

- Gold Go Line (Route 331)**
Approximately 7 miles connecting the downtown Bellingham Transit Station to Cordata Station at Whatcom Community College
- Green plus Blue Go Lines (Route 232 and WWU Routes)**
Approximately 6 miles connecting Cordata at Whatcom Community College to Western Washington University and Lakeway through Downtown.

These routes represent

- 60% of our total system ridership (2.57m boardings)
- Western Washington University having the highest demand of any destination in Bellingham

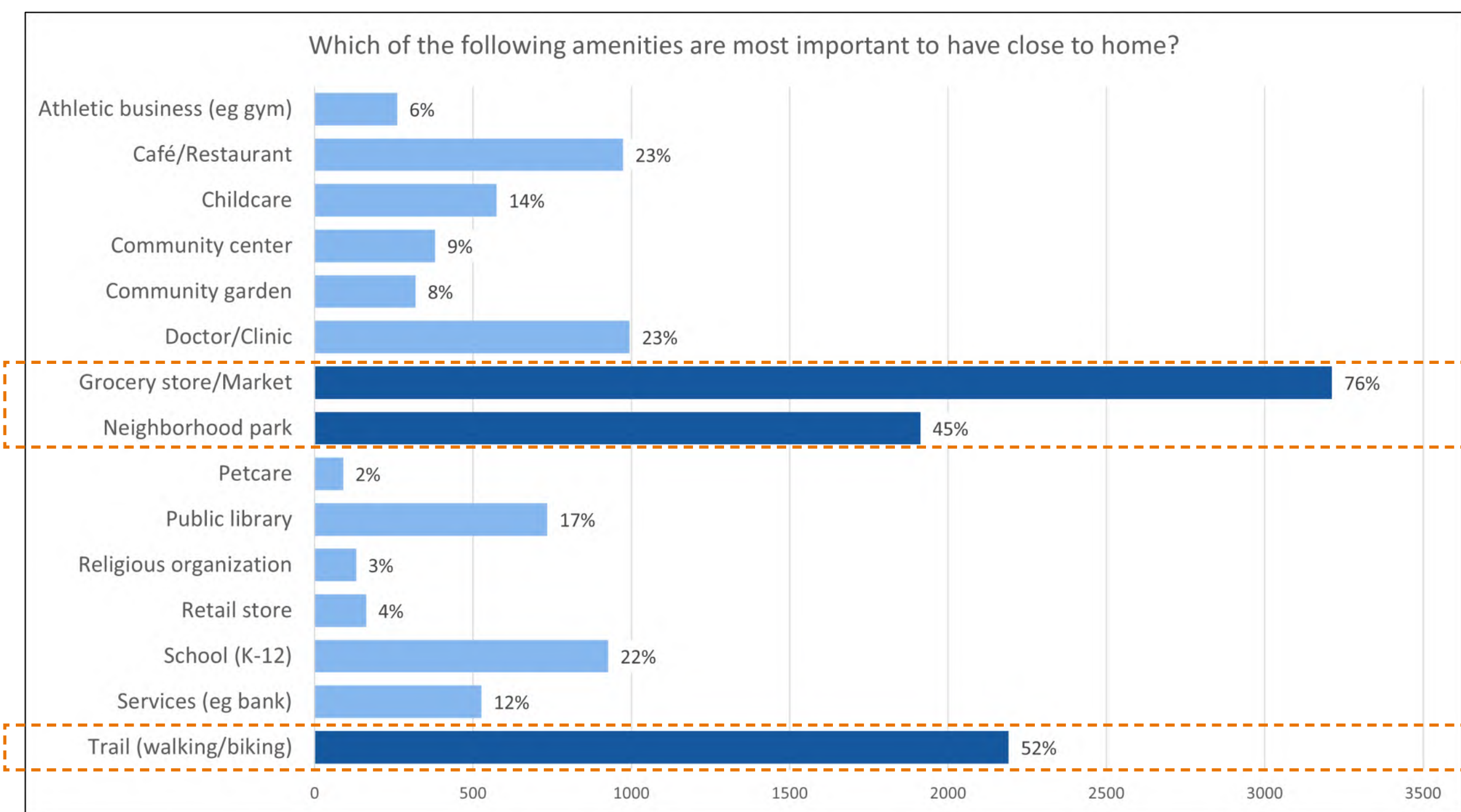
While both corridors are candidates for BRT improvements, funding and resources are a challenge for WTA. The outcome of this study will help WTA and the City pursue the necessary funds and resources.

WTA

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

What amenities should everyone in the community have access to?

Creating complete communities where everyone has access to basic amenities and services is an important goal for the Bellingham Plan. In Fall 2023, the community described how important it is to provide a variety of amenities in every neighborhood. Over 4,000 people provided feedback on which were most important to have near home in the Bellingham Plan Vision Survey.

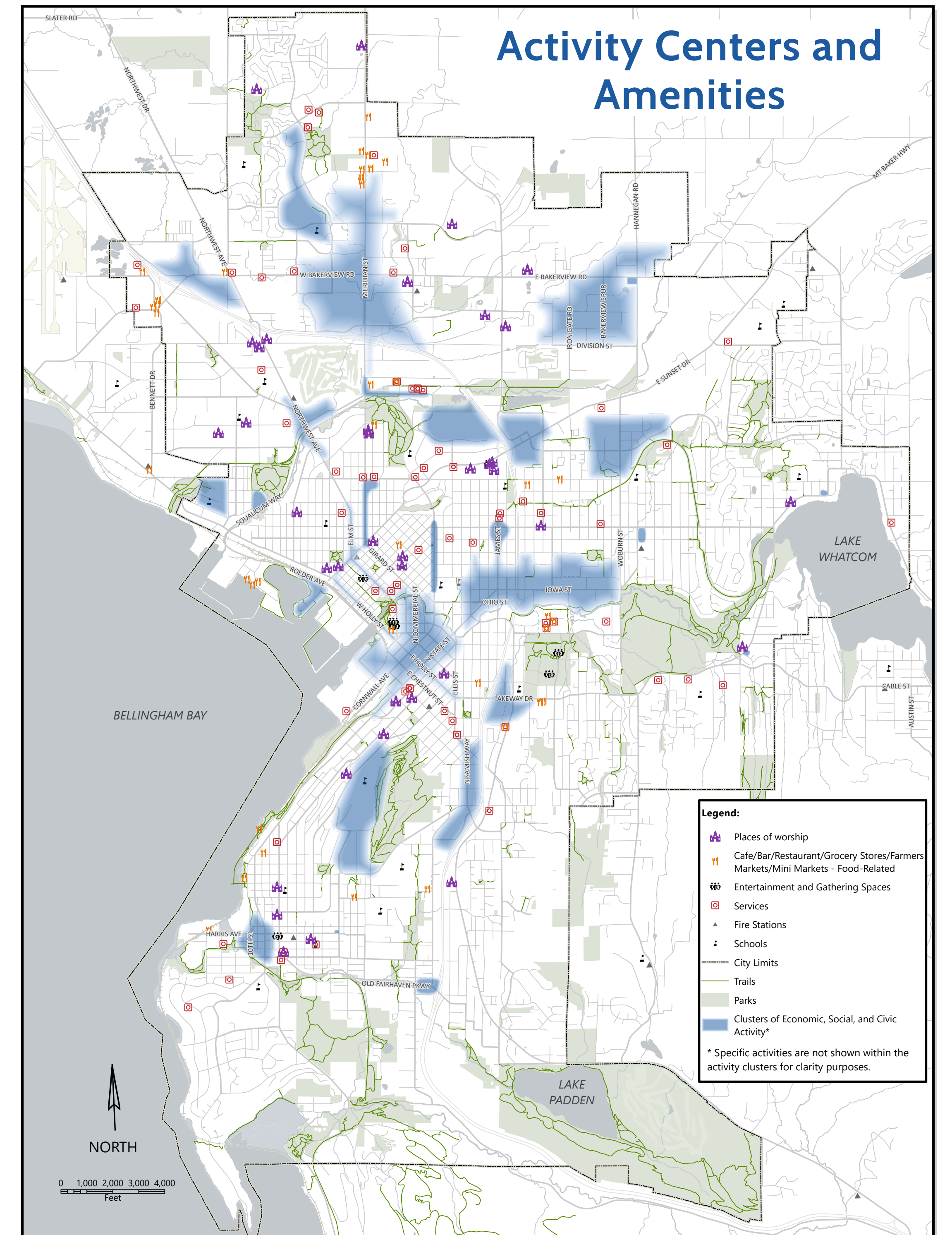


While there was some variation along demographics, the trends remained relatively consistent between owners and renters, different age groups, and other demographic variations.



Check out the Vision Survey report to learn more.

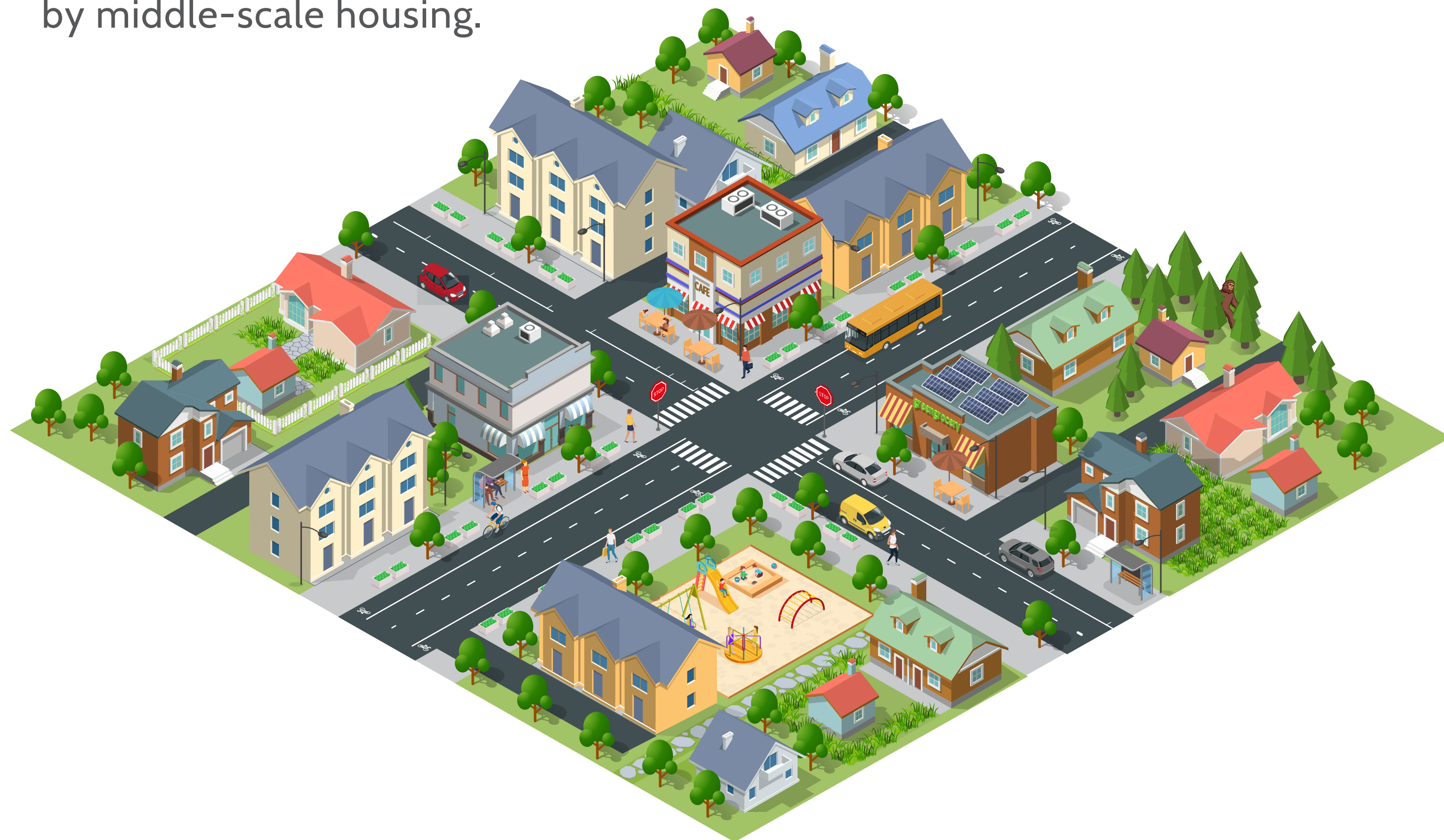
This map helps understand where these amenities and services exist today. Larger activity centers with many amenities have been faded out in blue, but areas with just a single or few uses are also shown with points. Some areas of the city do not have as much access to these uses as others.



COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

There is a strong interest in the community to encourage small-scale commercial uses in residential areas. This could allow better access to the amenities listed on the previous board to people across the city.

Providing access across the city means supporting new uses in neighborhoods that don't have them today. One way to achieve this is to cluster them in small centers, similar to the example below. These areas need enough people around them to support the businesses, so they are likely to be located along a busier street and/or be surrounded by middle-scale housing.



We've heard a lot about what places people are excited to have near their homes, such as the uses seen on the complete communities board. In order for these businesses to be successful, we may need to reconsider some constraints on what is allowed. Here are some example areas we could address if we begin permitting these uses in more places.

Place a sticky note with more information on what you find most important to consider, or provide other comments in the "other" category.

<p>Location of centers (What types of areas would/wouldn't be appropriate for these centers?)</p>	<p>Operation (What things like open hours, delivery access, or other operations should be limited?)</p>
<p>Size of individual uses (Would you like to limit how big individual businesses can be?)</p>	<p>Size of buildings (How would you like to limit how big – height and bulk – the buildings can be?)</p>
<p>Appearance/design of buildings (Are there particular visual elements you'd like to see on these buildings?)</p>	<p>Other</p>

COMPLETING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

WHAT'S COMMON TODAY?



IN-HOME BUSINESS



SEPARATED IN-HOME BUSINESS



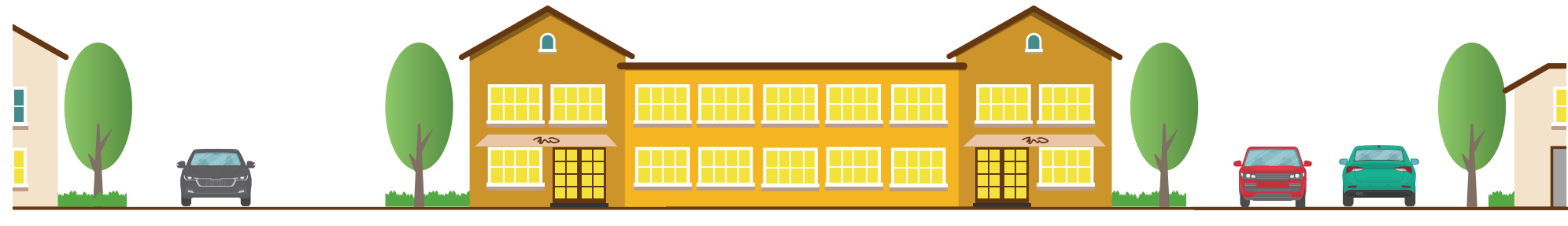
BUSINESS AT FOREFRONT



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.

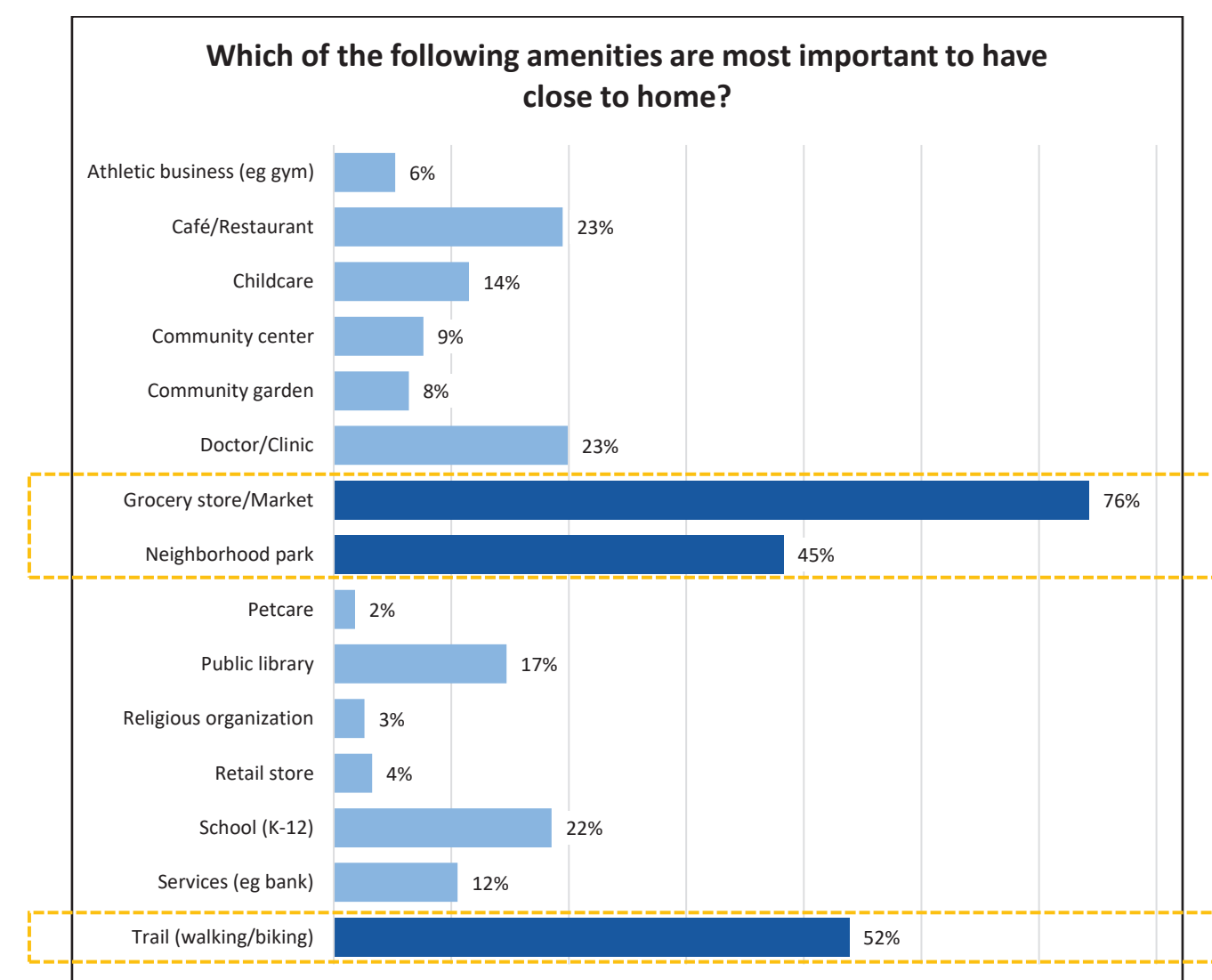
We could allow and encourage more options between these two scales.

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.

COMPLETING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS



IN-HOME BUSINESS



SEPARATED IN-HOME BUSINESS



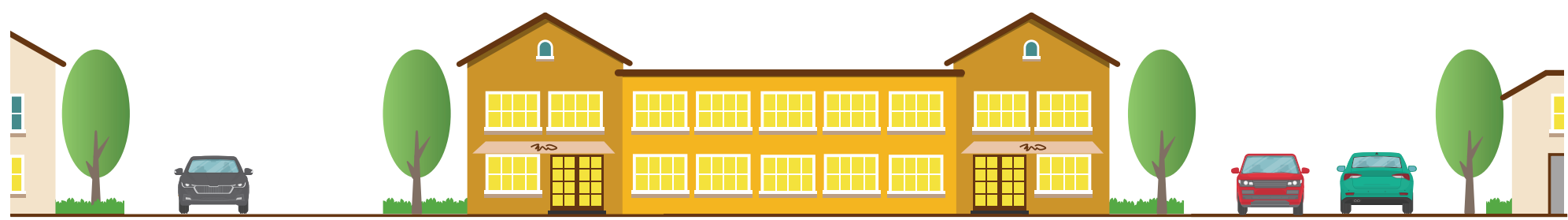
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LARGE BUSINESS

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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.

The Bellingham community wants to allow more small businesses in residential areas. These spaces can help make a place special. They provide ways to gather with neighbors and access to goods and services. So far, staff have heard the most about the following:

- People want more grocery stores, markets, medical clinics, cafes, restaurants, childcare, and services like banks close to home.
- These types of uses should be allowed in a small scale around the city. Larger clusters of businesses should only be allowed near Urban Villages and along arterials or frequent transit areas.
- To encourage small businesses that focus on local neighborhood use, community members want to limit:
 - » The size of the businesses (no larger than a certain area)
 - » The permitted hours of operation and noise levels
 - » The on-site parking (use a parking maximum)

Consider the possible approach described at left. Do you feel it is important to **require that housing also be provided** on the same property as the new business?

CHILDCARE

What the City is doing, what others are doing.

Childcare is essential.

Supporting access to affordable childcare increases labor force participation and regional economic growth. Lack of available, affordable care limits household economic advancement and employers' ability to fill and retain jobs.

City of Bellingham

Assisted with the purchase and interior finishing of childcare facilities.

- Facilities were within affordable low-income rental housing projects, as well as stand-alone childcare facilities.
- So far, 3 are operational, 3 nearly complete, and 1 is underway (these include Kids World, Barkley Trailview, Samish, Millworks, Laurel-Forest, Bellis, Lydia Place).

Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Coronavirus response funding (CARES Act), and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were used to support these efforts.

Provided limited subsidies to local childcare providers for operational costs and for low-income families needing assistance to secure childcare services.

- Subsidies were provided both directly and through the Center for Retention and Expansion of Childcare housing at Opportunity Council.

CARES Act and ARPA funds were used to support these efforts.

Offers a pilot program using CDBG funds to assist low-income homeowners in retrofitting their homes to provide adult family home or childcare services.

In the Community

The Opportunity Council

- Provides clients with information and referrals to licensed childcare facilities;
- Through the Center for Retention and Expansion of Childcare, providing licensed childcare providers with coaching, technical assistance, funding access, consultation services, and professional development opportunities.

Whatcom Community College

- Provides programs for Washington State childcare and early childhood education professional certifications.

Whatcom County collaboration

- Coordinates efforts to expand and support early learning and stability for families with young children, including through their new Healthy Children's Fund levy.



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.

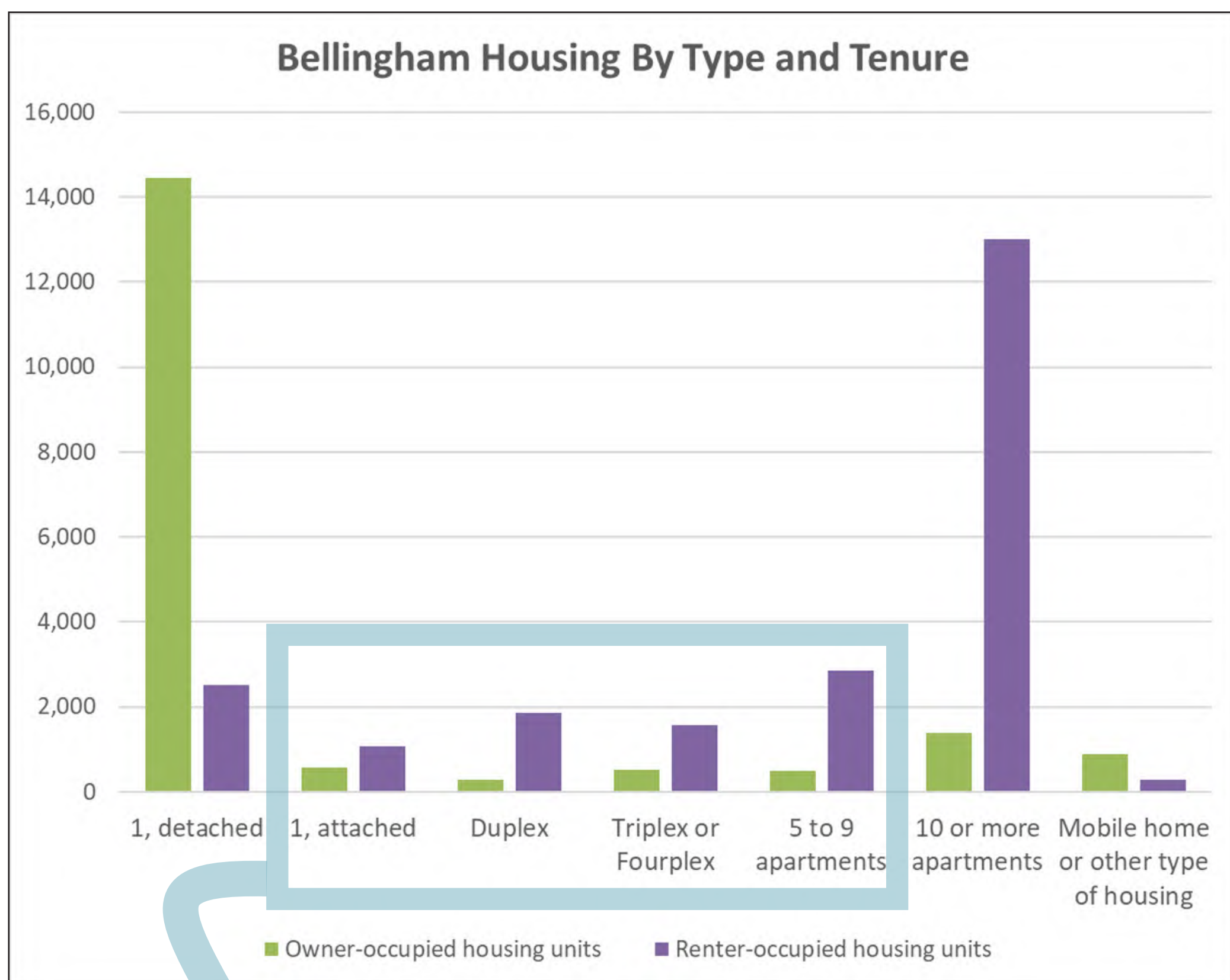
What’s your perspective on short-term rentals?
Write your thoughts on sticky notes, below.

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



BUILDING TYPES

And housing affordability

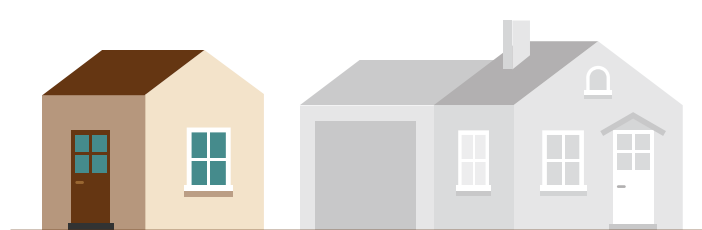


There are very few units in buildings between single family homes and large apartment buildings.

This graph displays the discrepancies in the existing housing stock in Bellingham. As it becomes more viable to build ADUs, triplexes, fourplexes, and even small apartment buildings, we may see more of them throughout the city.

Other unique living situations may become more common as well. Additionally, cooperative or communal living could exist in more traditional buildings forms – both small and large!

Use a sticky note and provide comments on the emerging building types below.



DADU



COTTAGE HOUSE



TOWNHOUSE



CO-OP HOUSING



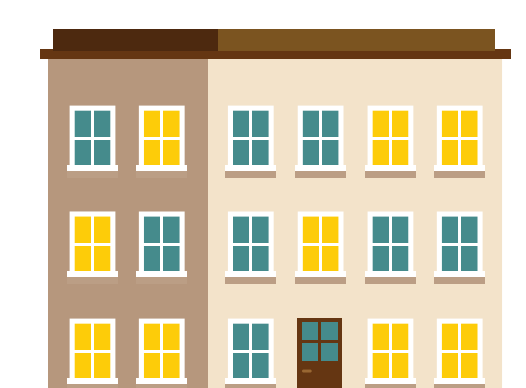
DUPLEX



COURTYARD APARTMENTS



STACKED FLAT



MULTI-UNIT

Or list other housing types below

For more information on current housing statistics, visit cob.org/housingstats

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:

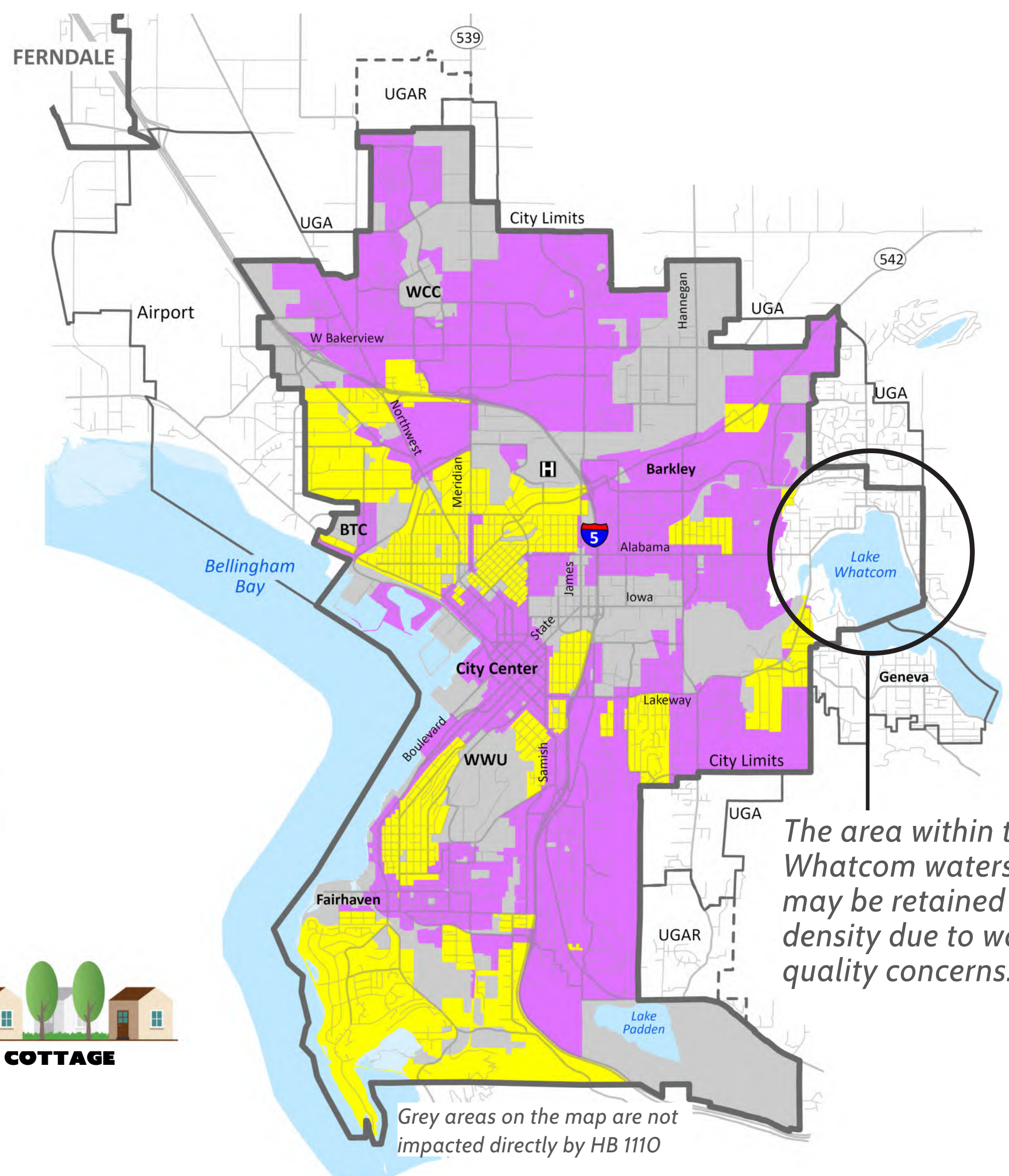
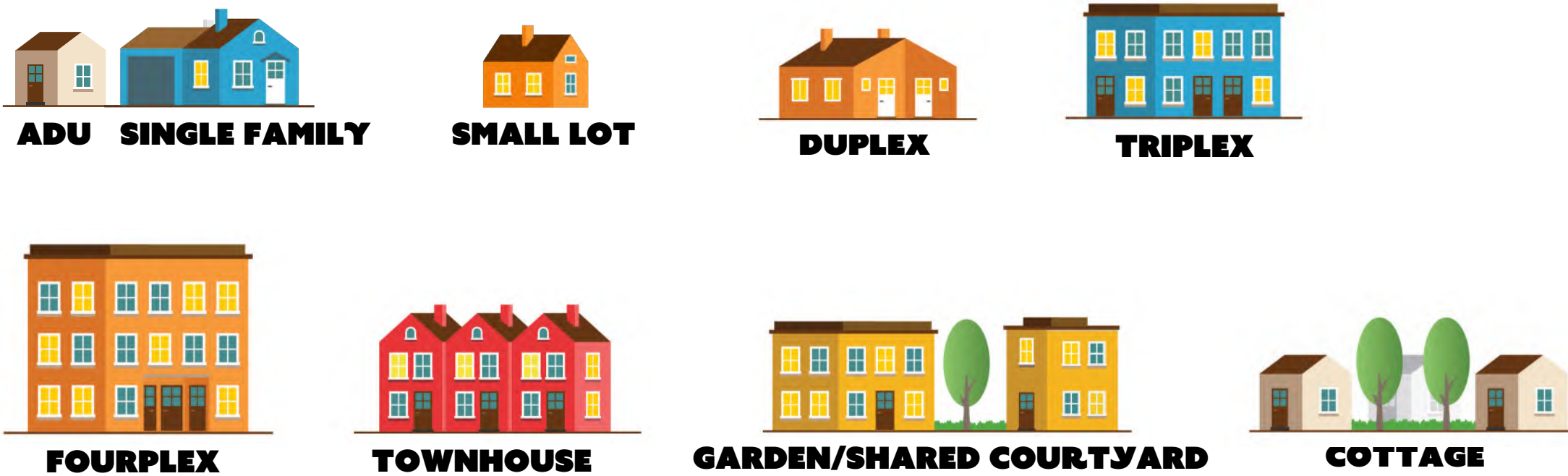
 Infill toolkit NOT currently allowed

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.



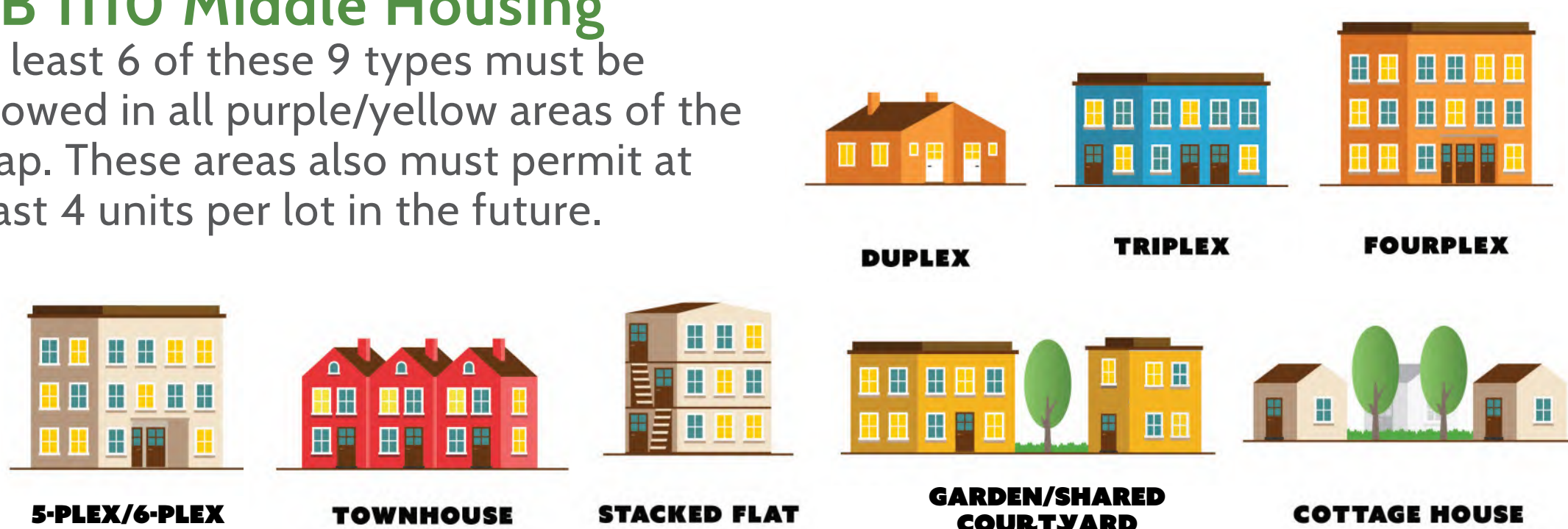
The area within the Lake Whatcom watershed may be retained at lower density due to water quality concerns.

State legislation housing types for consideration:

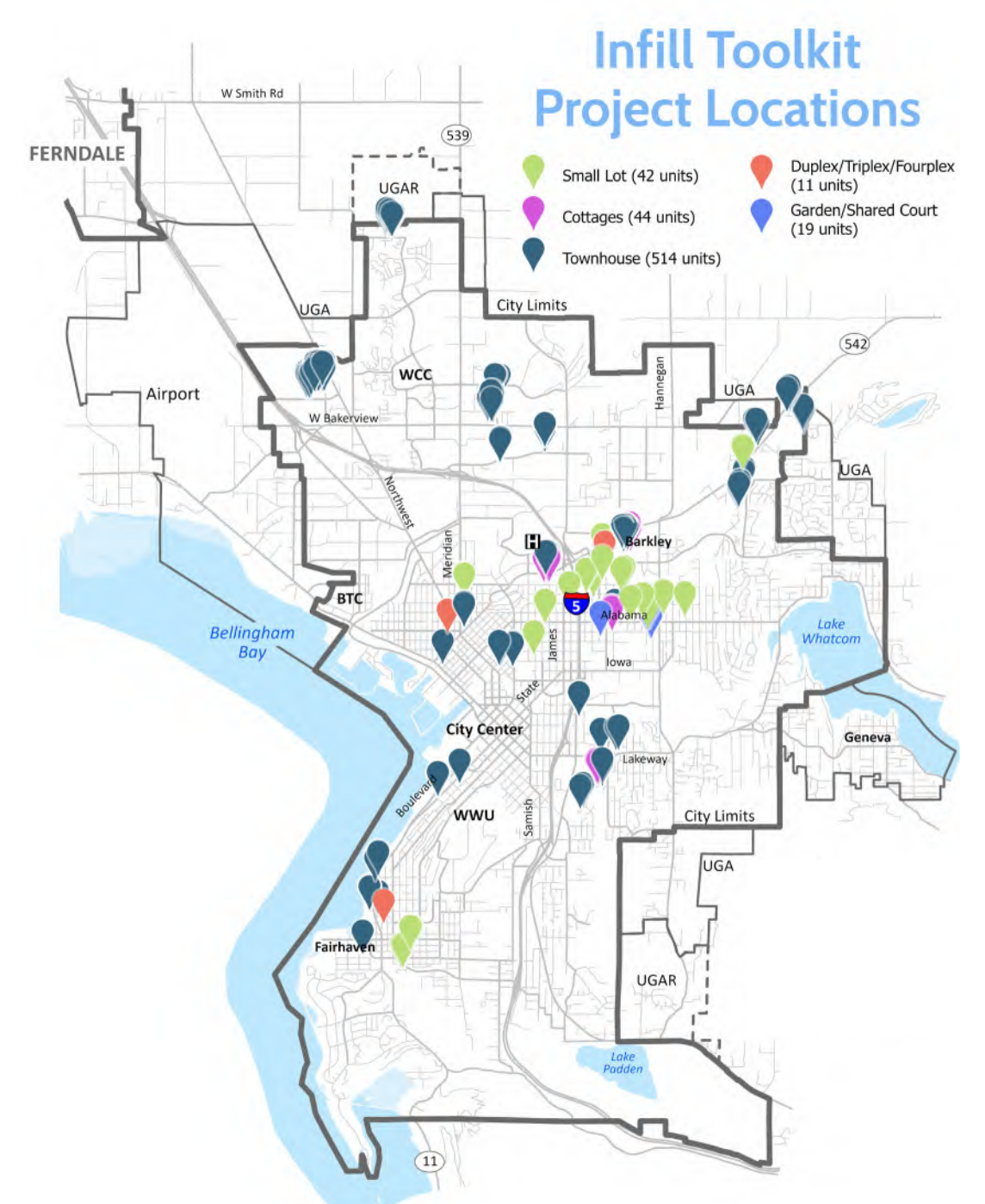
HB 1998 Co-living housing is required to be permitted anywhere where 6 or more units are permitted on a lot. These projects rent/sell individual rooms but have shared kitchen facilities. They can be large or small.



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.



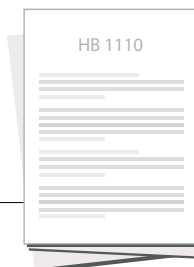
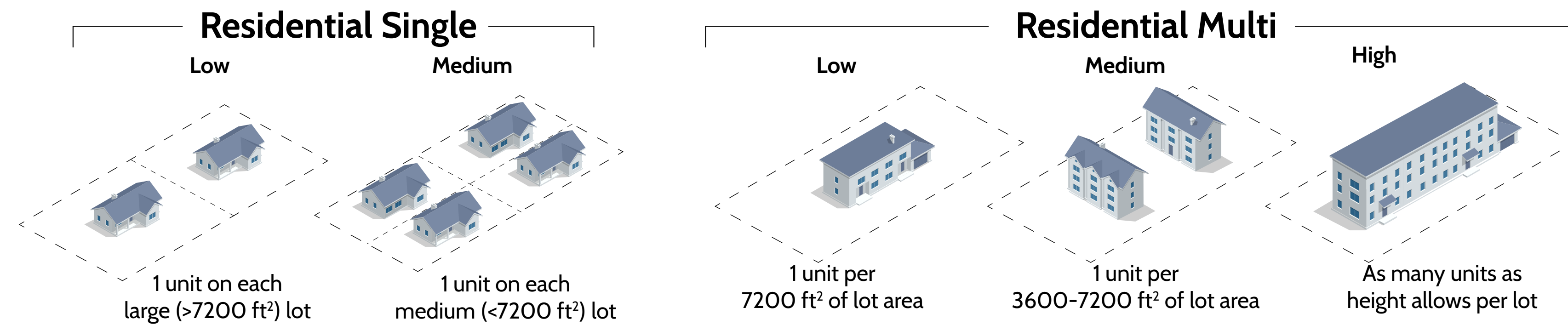
Since the adoption of the Infill Toolkit in 2009, over **600 Infill Toolkit units** have been created.



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

Pick from these housing types



COTTAGE HOUSE



DUPLEX



TOWNHOUSE



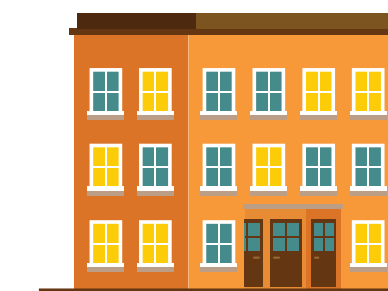
STACKED FLAT



TRIPLEX



COURTYARD APARTMENTS



FOURPLEX



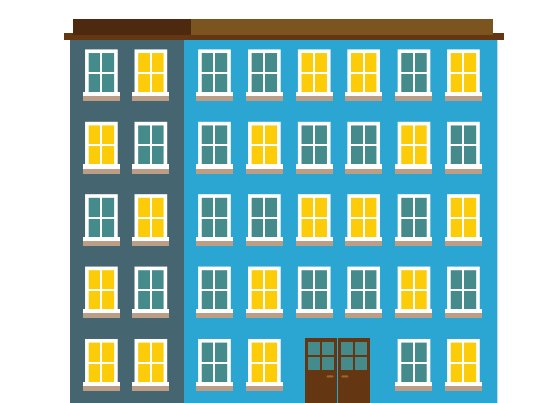
CO-LIVING HOUSING (SMALL)



FIVEPLEX SIXPLEX



CO-LIVING HOUSING (LARGE)

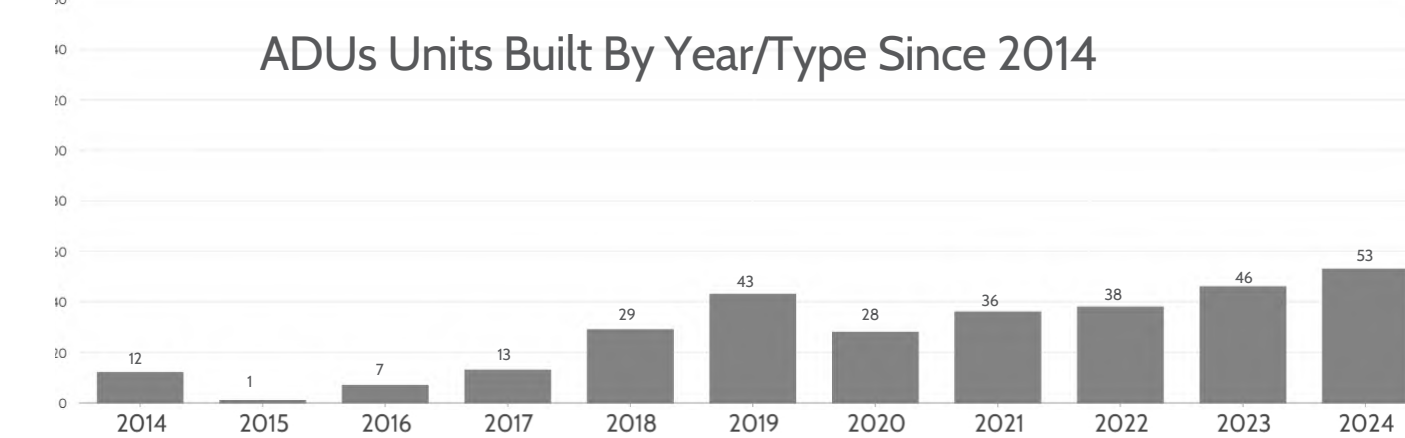
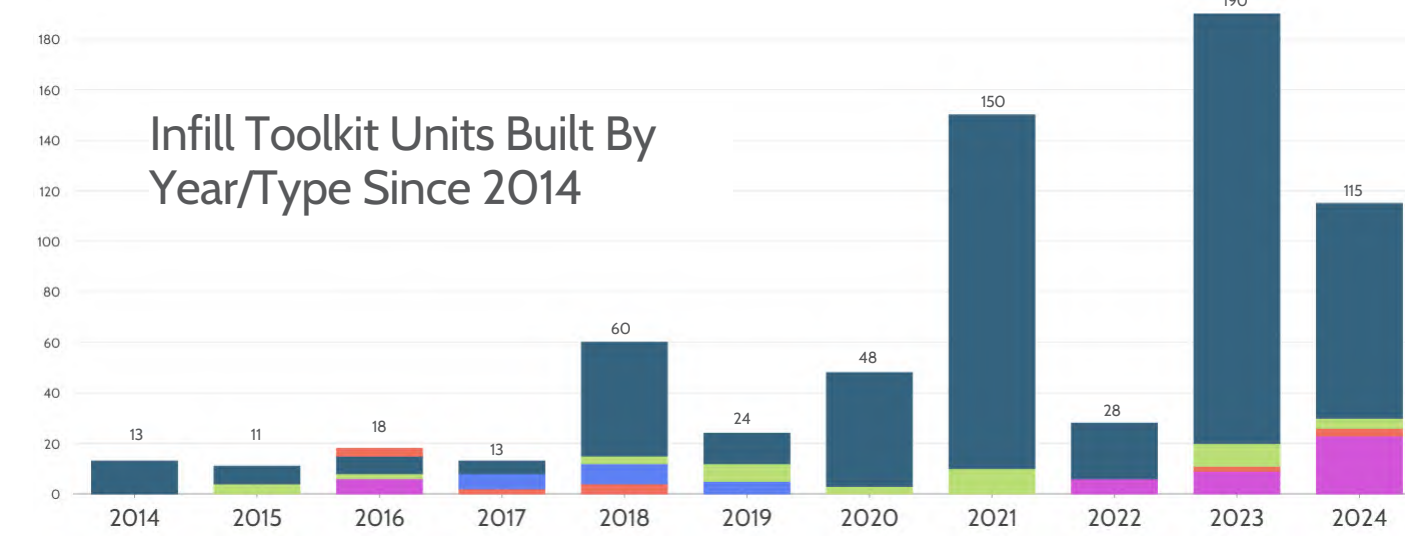
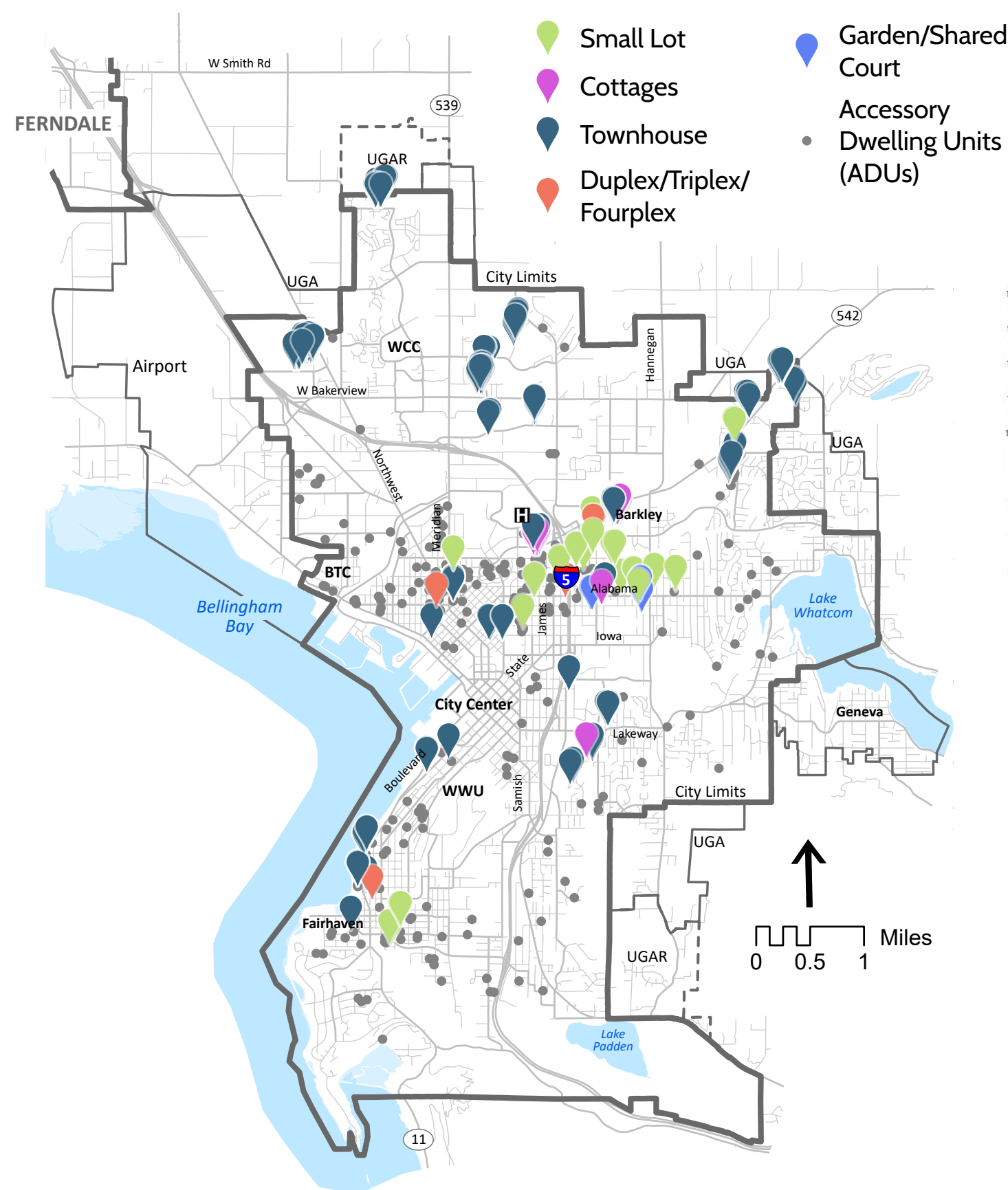


APARTMENT

MIDDLE HOUSING EVOLUTION

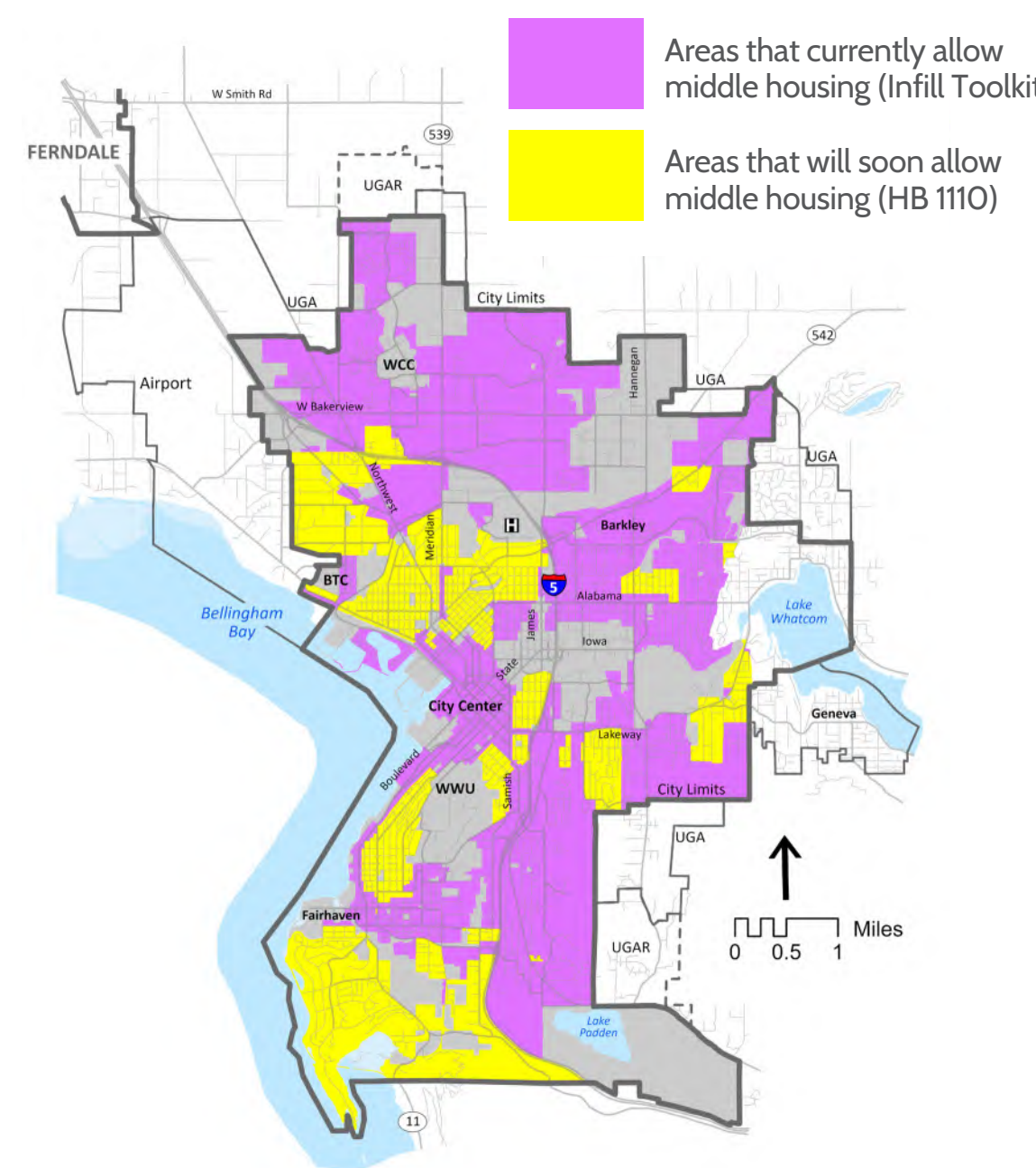
Middle housing (sometimes referred to as “missing middle” housing) refers to several housing types that fit between single family detached houses and large multi-family buildings. Middle housing includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage housing, courtyard apartments, townhouses and stacked flats (WA State Dept of Commerce). The City of Bellingham’s Infill Toolkit already permits many of these housing forms throughout much of the City.

Infill Toolkit Projects built since 2014



680 Total Infill Toolkit units built since 2014.
222 Townhouses built on individual lots (ownership opportunity).

How middle housing could develop over the next 20 years



Typical Phasing

0-5 years

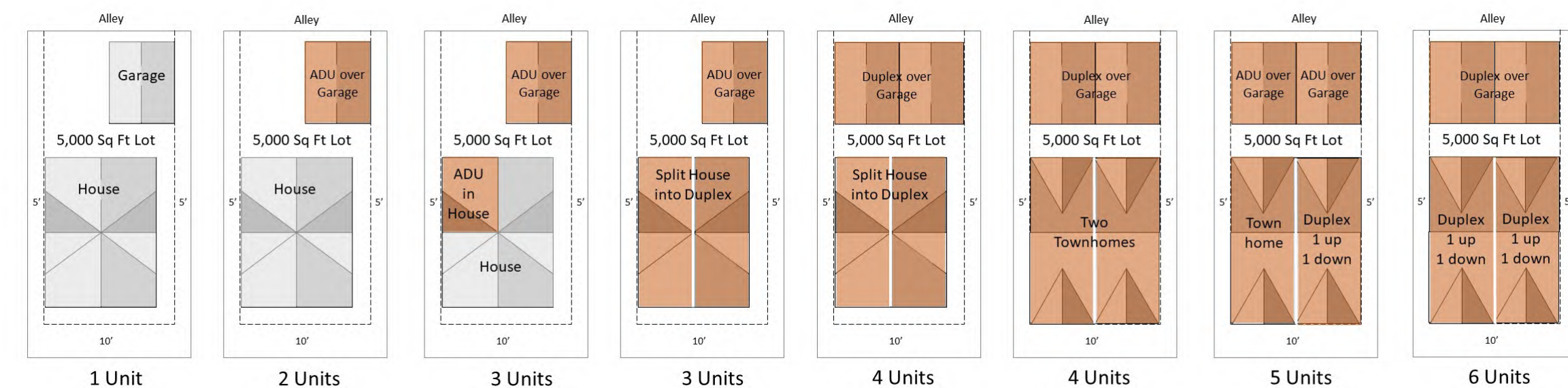
5-10 years

10-15 years

Experience to date has shown that communities that have passed middle housing legislation have found that it is being developed modestly and gradually. This is expected to change gradually over time if more jurisdictions allow middle housing and more builders gain familiarity constructing this housing type.

(WA Department of Commerce & OPTICOS DESIGN INC.)

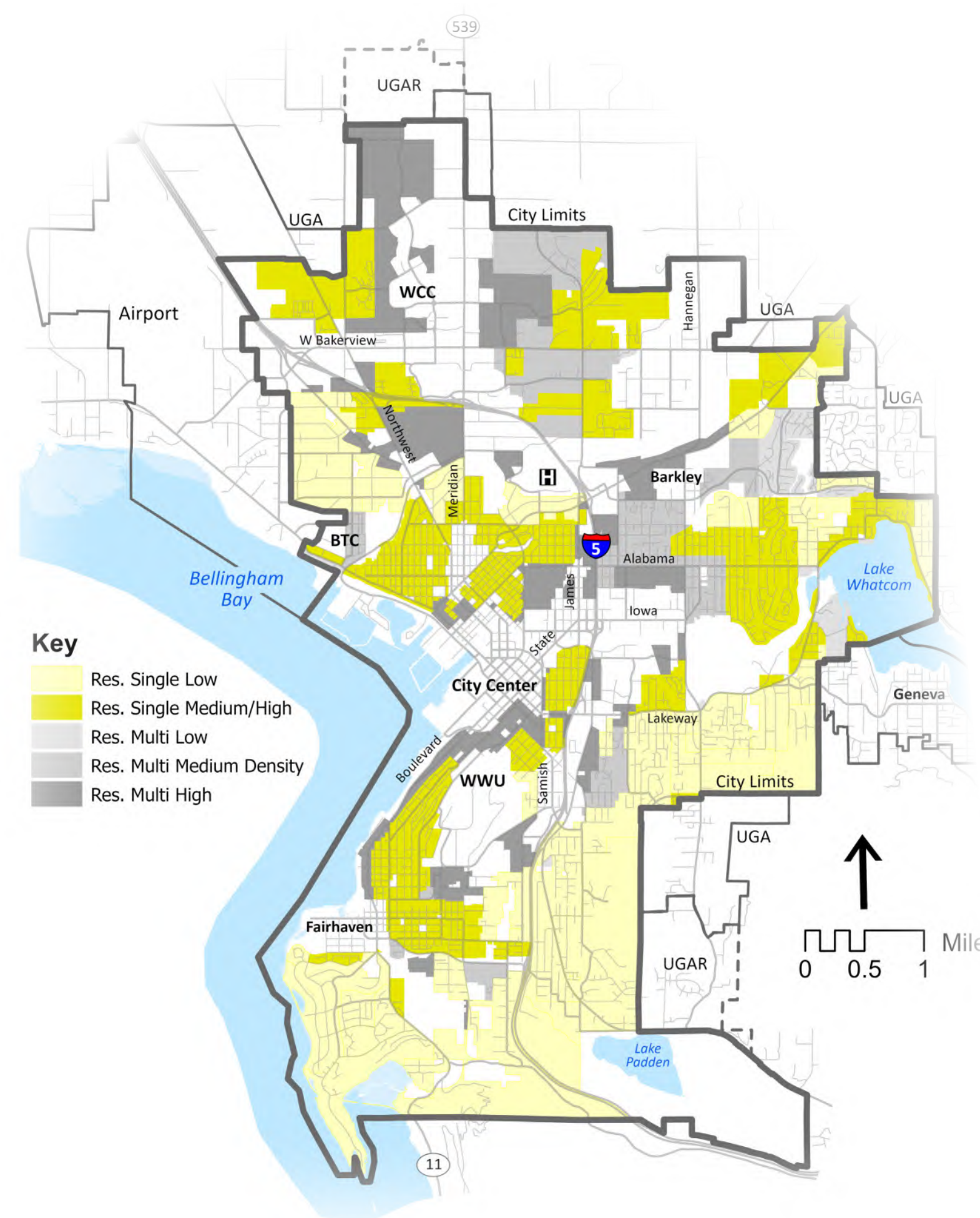
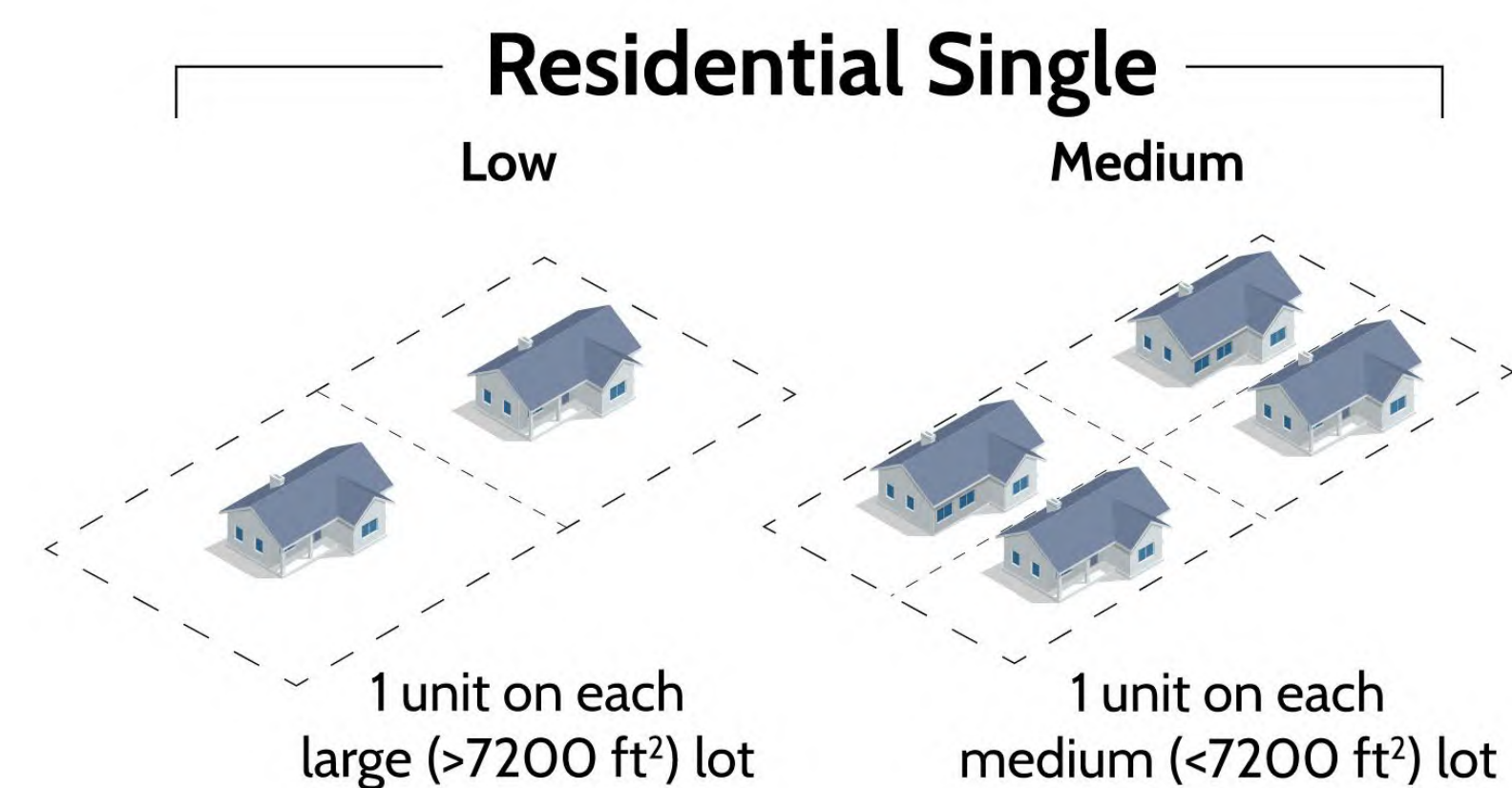
How could this work on a typical single family lot?



APPROACHES TO ZONING FOR MIDDLE HOUSING

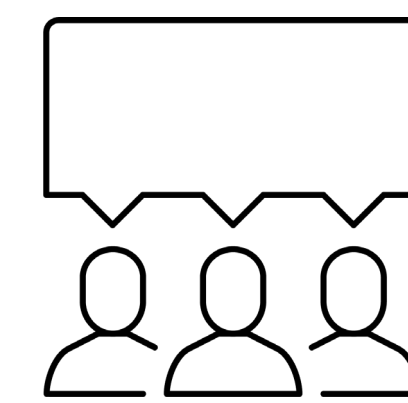
With the implementation of HB 1110, all residential lots will allow for at least 4 housing units per lot – therefore, density allowances will increase across the board in all currently identified “single family zones.” However, we have the opportunity to regulate currently classified “low” or “medium” single family areas differently from one another OR treat them the same. (Keep in mind that there are factors such as site constraints that will also limit how many units get developed.)

Today, our existing zoning focuses on the number of units allowed based on site size. As shown on the map, Residential Single zones are currently categorized as “low” or “medium” density areas.



At last month’s “Housing Types and Neighborhoods” Open House (6/4/24) we asked if there **should be variation in how existing single-family zones are regulated and if so, what kinds of regulations should be different.**

While we heard a mix of opinions, the majority of feedback suggested:



Distinguishing between “low” and “medium” areas in terms of density doesn’t make sense.

Different sets of regulations between low and medium areas can be inequitable and protectionist.

However, consider different regulations for housing on arterials or close to transit with more flexibility on scale, height, and housing types.

Do you have any other suggestions on what if any, kind of variation should exist on regulations for existing single-family zones? Leave a sticky note with your thoughts.

ECONOMIC DISPLACEMENT

Displacement due to inability to afford rising rents (residential or commercial) or costs of ownership like property taxes and maintenance.

Historic discrimination has left non-white racial groups disproportionately vulnerable to the risk of displacement.

Racially disparate impacts:
When policies, practices, rules or other systems result in a disproportionate impact on one or more racial groups.

Assessing racially disparate impacts on displacement:

- Homeownership rates
- Rates of housing cost burden
- Rates of overcrowding
- Cost of housing compared to median household income
- Concentrations of racial groups with economic characteristics differing from the rest of the community

The City must assess zoning that may have racially disparate or exclusionary effects like these and establish policies to prevent displacement or reduce hardships. One way the City can do that is by engaging with the community to help identify root causes and structural factors contributing to gentrification and displacement.

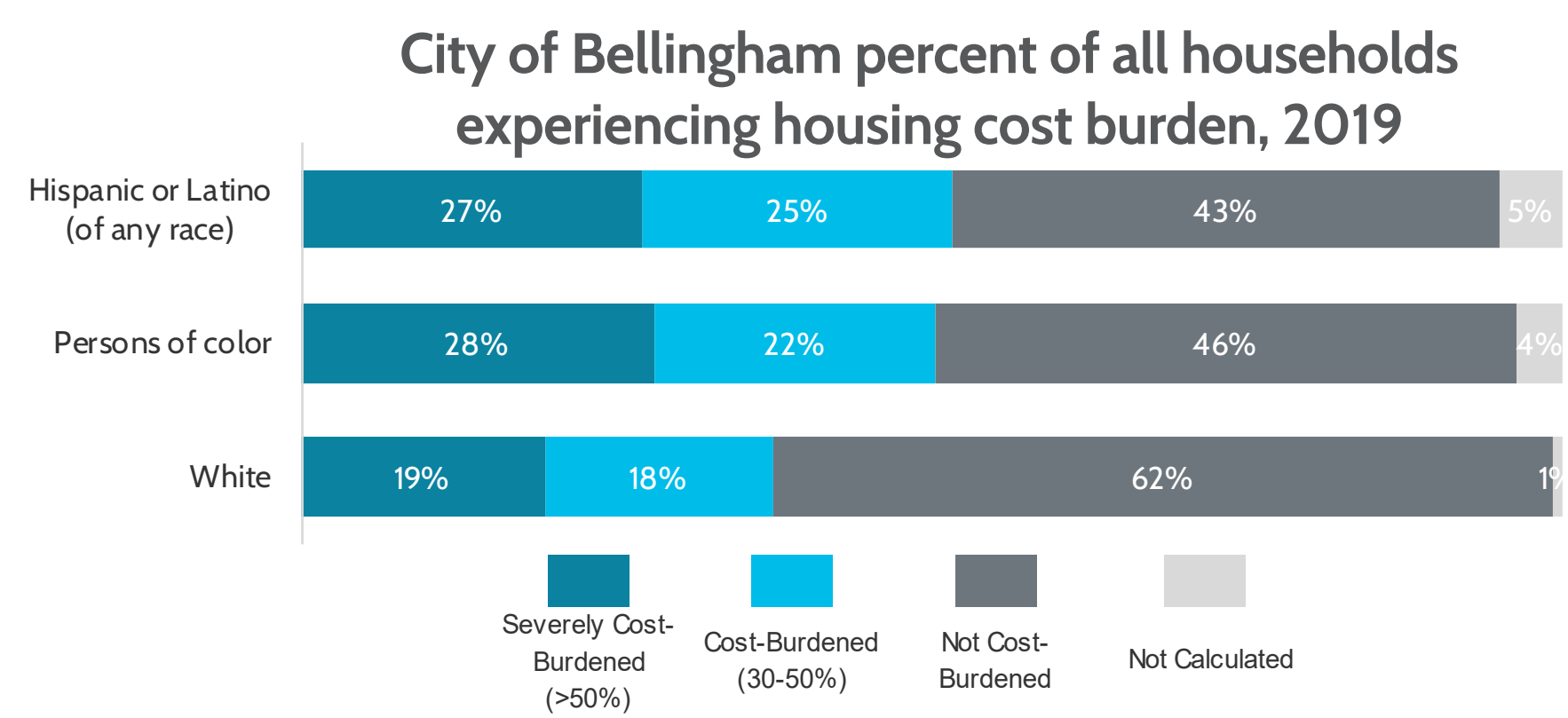
The City's role in reversing inequalities

Selections from Bellingham's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies:

Land Use Chapter – Policy LU-28 – “Consider social equity and health issues in siting such uses as manufacturing and essential public facilities (EPFs) to limit exposure to harmful substances and environments.”

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

Parks Recreation and Open Space Chapter - Objective 5H – “Provide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training opportunities for staff.”



Washington State House Bill 1220 requires cities to remove biased language from our plan, including those that:

- Rely on euphemisms
- Conflate desired characteristics with a housing type
- Reference code administration and enforcement without clear guidelines

Example from Department of Commerce:

EXAMPLE POLICY

Maintain the character of established single-family neighborhoods, through adoption and enforcement of appropriate regulations.

REVISED POLICY

Maintain the scale and form of buildings in established residential neighborhoods through adoption of context-sensitive regulations.

- We changed “character” to “scale and form”
- We changed “single family neighborhoods” to “residential neighborhoods”
- We removed “enforcement” because that could result in displacement risks, and instead focused on solutions that were tailored to meet the needs of the community and supports allowing residents to stay in their homes as much as possible.

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

40

Many of Bellingham's existing policies, especially in the housing chapter, need to be evaluated and amended to address racially disparate impacts in this way.

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

CONSTRUCTION TYPE

The way a building is built influences how much it will cost.

These requirements are generally defined by nation-wide or state requirements, such as the building and energy codes. **Recent state legislation** will make it less expensive to build certain kinds of buildings.



High-Rise Requirements

Building code requires that buildings with occupied floors over 75' high must have more fire protection measures, since fire truck ladders can't reach this high. This adds cost, making buildings 8 stories or less generally more cost-efficient than taller buildings.



Multi-unit Building Requirements

Buildings with 3 or more units must use a more stringent code, which adds more robust wall assemblies, sprinklers, and other costly requirements. This has discouraged the development of triplexes, small apartment buildings, and other housing types for decades.



Recent state legislation (HB 2071) initiated a shift to allow 3-6-unit buildings to use the less expensive code type in the future.



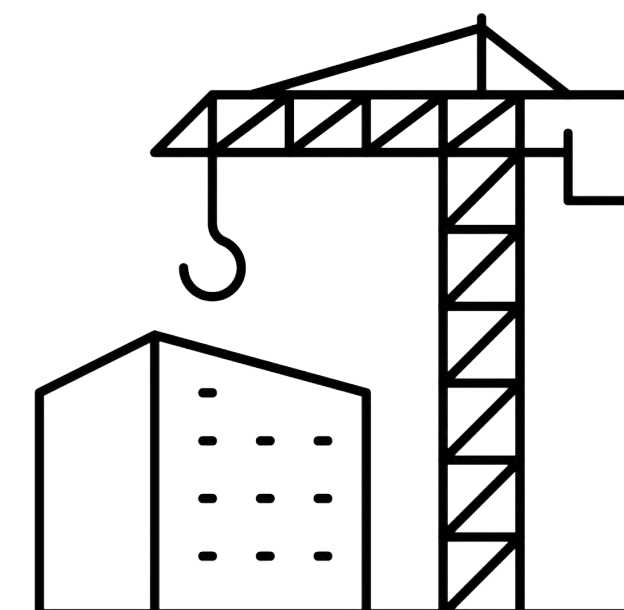
Egress/Emergency Exit Requirements

Building code requires multiple ways out of the building in case of emergency. This has required even small apartment buildings to have inefficient hallways connecting multiple sets of stairs in addition to the elevator when required.



Recent state legislation (SB 5491) initiated a shift to allow up to 6-story single-stair buildings that are common in many areas of the world, encouraging more small apartment buildings in the future.

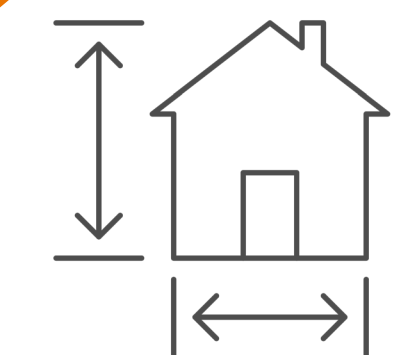
The City of Seattle has allowed these types of buildings for decades, but they have been uncommon due to the multi-unit building requirements.



Energy Requirements

The state energy code defines requirements like lighting efficiency, building envelope construction, and energy use. This impacts things like what materials and construction methods can be used and what heating equipment is allowed or required. While these requirements often save money over time by using less energy, they often cost more at the start of a project.

The Bellingham City Council has determined that adoption of building electrification, energy efficiency and solar readiness regulations will implement various goals and policies of the Climate Protection Action Plan and the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.



Required Layout

Building code requires every housing unit to include certain fixtures and space requirements.

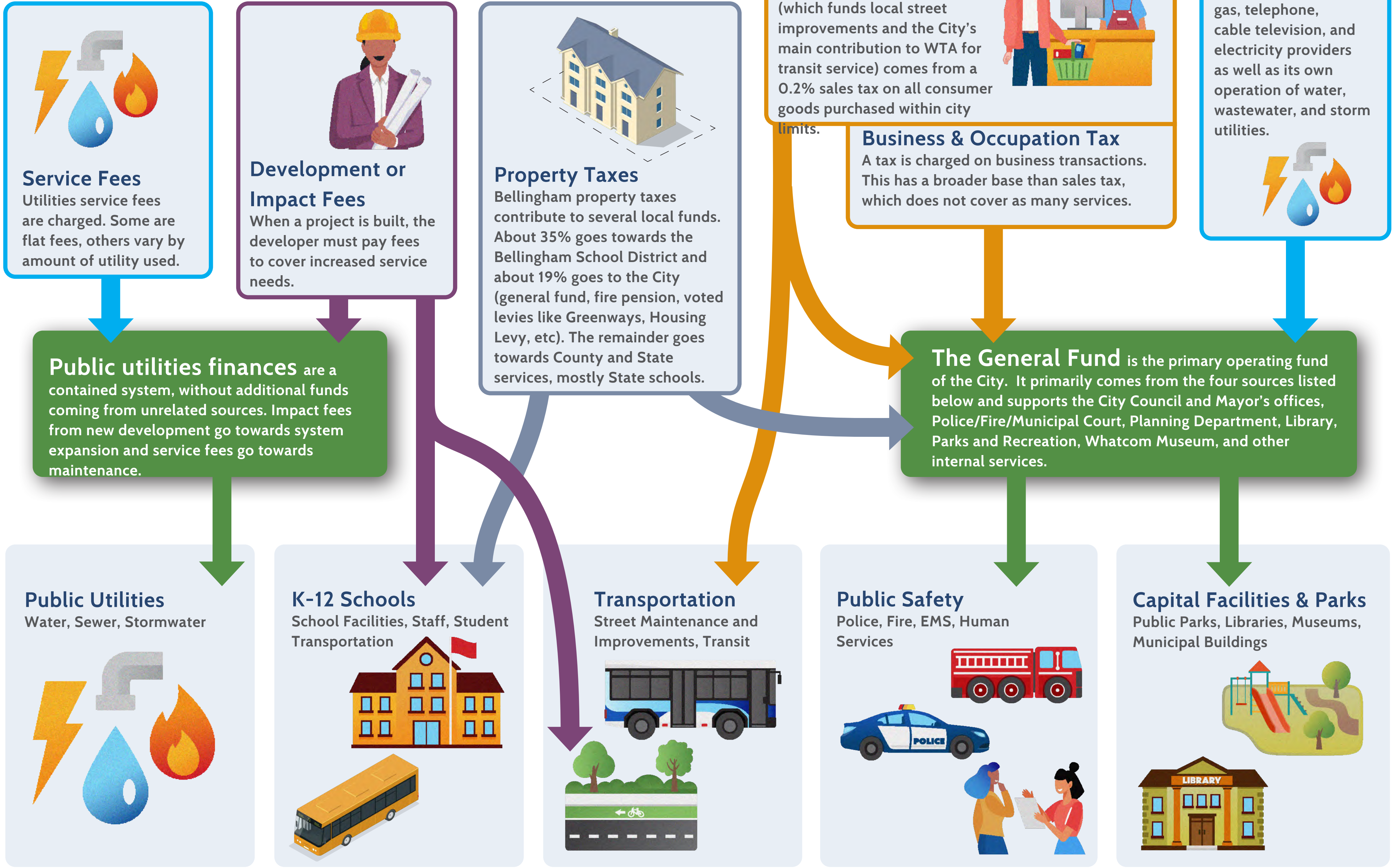


Recent state legislation (HB 2071) initiated a shift to allow these requirements to be lessened in order to encourage smaller, less expensive units to be allowed.

Construction Cost Drivers

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Primary Funding Sources



Local Government Services

Many other sources, especially state and federal grants or taxes, also fund these services.

Providing these urban services to each home costs the City more when those homes are further apart.



Urban (Over 35 homes/acre)

~\$5,000/home/year



Middle-scale (10-35 homes/acre)

~\$8,000/home/year



Suburban (3-9 homes/acre)

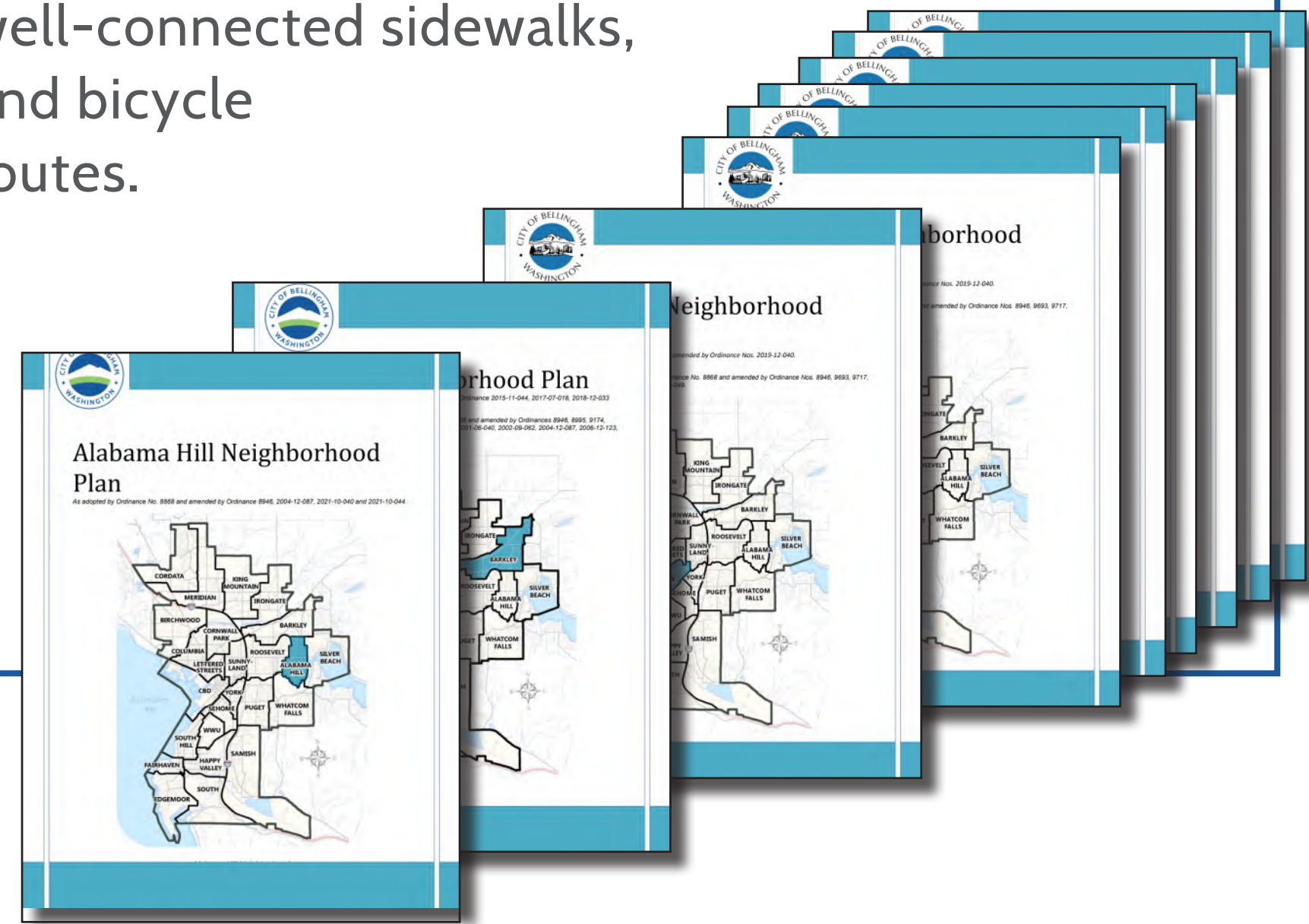
~\$11,000/home/year



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.