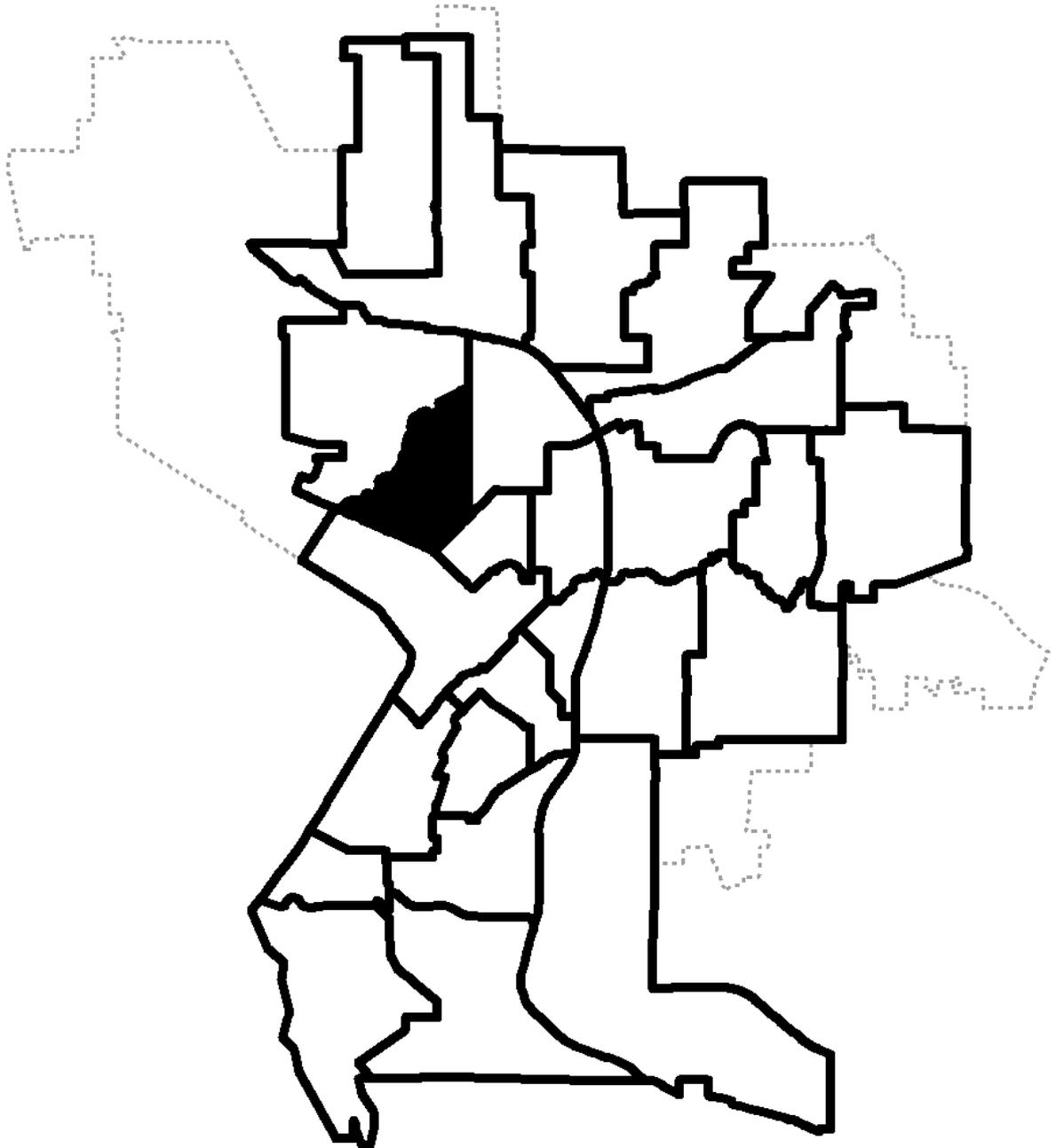




# City of Bellingham Neighborhood Plan **COLUMBIA**



As adopted by Ordinance No. 8868 and amended by Ordinance Nos. 8946, 9158, 9305, 9440, 9447, 9473, 9564, 10730, 2004-12-087, 2005-12-105 and **2010-10-057**.

**Neighborhood Plan Adoption:** In 1980, the Bellingham Plan was adopted and included individual plans for each neighborhood. When the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted in 1990, the City was required to update and amend the Bellingham Plan to include comprehensive planning elements required by the GMA. The Bellingham Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1995 and again included all of the individual neighborhood plans.

**Neighborhood Plan Amendment:** The Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 20.20 includes procedures by which individual property owners may petition the City for an amendment to an individual neighborhood plan. This may be a simple text amendment to address a condition or concern in a particular neighborhood or it may be a request for a change to the land use designation in a portion of a neighborhood. Because the neighborhood plans are adopted as part of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, the GMA restricts amendments to once per year. The deadline for submitting neighborhood plan amendments to the City is December 1 of each year (See BMC 20.20). An amendment to a neighborhood plan is made by ordinance. All of the changes made to this plan since it was originally adopted are listed on the last page of the plan.

**Neighborhood Plan Update:** Periodically, individual neighborhood plans merit a complete update due to changes of conditions in the neighborhood and/or the City. A complete neighborhood plan update can be a complex process requiring a great deal of time, public participation, and planning staff resources. Some of the individual neighborhood plans that were originally adopted in 1980 have received complete updates, while others have not.

## COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

### I. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Although various parts of the Columbia Neighborhood have different types of housing and a range of public improvements, one generalization which can be made about the character of this neighborhood is that it is a healthy single family residential area which is valued as such by its residents. The overwhelming majority of the residential structures within this neighborhood are single family. Although some parts of the neighborhood are among Bellingham's oldest residential areas, the housing is well maintained with mature landscaping and is very attractive. Overall, housing conditions in the Columbia Neighborhood are among the best of Bellingham's older, more built-up single family neighborhoods.

The extent of neighborhood development is another characteristic of the entire area. Development began in the late 1880s. For the past 35 years, development has consisted primarily of in-filling vacant lots and smaller areas. Approximately 90 percent of the neighborhood's housing is over 20 years old. With some notable exceptions, the area is platted into 5,000 square foot lots and most of the development has consisted of one house per lot.

The southernmost portion of the neighborhood contains many large, older homes, some of historical significance. This area is platted with 5,000 square foot lots, most of which are developed.

It is further characterized by narrow, often tree-lined streets and well kept yards with mature landscaping. Most of the streets, alleys, and public utilities are fully developed, with curbs, gutters, wide planting strips, and sidewalks along the 18 to 24 foot wide streets. The residents along the western side of Eldridge Avenue enjoy views of Bellingham Bay, but, due to the flat topography of the area, very few other residents enjoy the view. People living along Squalicum Creek value their private green spaces along the water.

Another unique area within the neighborhood is north of Connecticut, including Lynn, Victor, Williams, and Utter Streets. There is a concentration of newer housing and several of these streets have been widened to 36 or 42 feet. The lots along Lynn and Victor Streets are as large as 10,000 square feet.

The final distinct neighborhood area is bounded by Northwest Avenue, Illinois, Elizabeth, Oregon and Meridian Streets and Squalicum Creek. Platting and development of this area is more typical of the Birchwood Neighborhood than of the rest of the Columbia Neighborhood. Lots are as large as an acre, with the average near 17,000 square feet. There are no alleys, sidewalks or storm drainage systems (curbs and gutters) in this area.

Most of the remainder of the neighborhood is single family residences from 30 to 70 years old, usually in good condition. Landscaping is generally mature, although

there are fewer trees than in areas previously described. There is a mixture of kinds and conditions of streets - some with and some without curbs. There are alleys platted throughout, and most of the residential streets have sidewalks. Lots are generally 5,000 square feet, with one house per lot. There are many small houses (especially in the northern parts) which were built as homes for coal miners who came to work in the coal mine just north of Squalicum Creek in the Birchwood Neighborhood.

There are several commercial sections peripheral to the Columbia Neighborhood residential areas. The Fountain District and the strip development to the north along Meridian Street are developing a mixture of different building types. Most of the remaining houses have been converted to commercial uses within the last few years. An opportunity is available to coordinate, to some degree, the landscaping and design of new buildings, which will replace the old houses now being used for commerce.

The northern end of Northwest Avenue comprises the other neighborhood business section of Columbia. In contrast to Meridian Street, most of the uses here are in what were originally commercial buildings or in extensively remodeled buildings. The businesses do serve local needs, although Yeager's draws considerable trade from outside the Columbia/Birchwood Neighborhoods. This presents occasional overflow parking problems, which are a nuisance to adjacent residences and traffic on Lynn Street.

Another area where adjacent residents are occasionally annoyed by parking associated with commercial uses is along Broadway Avenue. However, most of the offices are well landscaped and designed and appropriate for Broadway.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PROPOSALS**

### **II. OPEN SPACE**

Columbia Neighborhood residents enjoy the use of Elizabeth Park, which is viewed as a valued community asset. The park has been very popular since its dedication in 1883 and needs some renovation. The landscaping in the park is extensive and mature and provides the most significant open space in this neighborhood. Overnight use of the park has increased and should be discouraged. Community safety should be addressed by the Police Department and/or a neighborhood crime watch group.

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**RENOVATE THE PLAYGROUND, RESTROOM, AND TENNIS COURTS AT ELIZABETH PARK AND IMPROVE BARRIER-FREE ACCESS. SUPPORT COMMUNITY SAFETY THROUGH CRIME WATCH.**

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The western and northern portions of the Columbia Neighborhood are not adequately served by neighborhood park facilities, and access to the proposed Squalicum Creek Trail/Greenway system is limited. A number of potential park sites have been identified which could be acquired and developed as neighborhood parks.

Although not all of the sites will become parks, a demand and need analysis calls for at least one new neighborhood park in the northwest portion of the Columbia

Neighborhood. A neighborhood park could be located at ends of Jefferson and Lafayette Streets, near Squalicum Creek. There is also City owned land along the creek between Northwest and Meridian that could be developed as a wayside park.

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A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AT THE ENDS OF JEFFERSON AND LAFAYETTE STREETS. A WAYSIDE PARK ON CITY PROPERTY ALONG SQUALICUM CREEK SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND GREATER ACCESS TO THE PROPOSED SQUALICUM CREEK TRAIL SHOULD BE OBTAINED.

The existing parks, together with the Columbia Elementary School play fields, comprise less than nine acres. Given the degree of development in most of the neighborhood, opportunities for additional large parks are very limited. The idea of acquiring small, relatively undeveloped, low maintenance play lots, in those portions of the neighborhood which are without nearby parks should be considered. Carl Lobe Park, located on Eldridge Avenue along the southern portion of the neighborhood boundary, is one such example. In the northernmost area there is Lorraine Ellis Park as well as Gibson and Peabody Plazas.

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A SMALL PLAY LOT, WITH MINIMAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOW MAINTENANCE DESIGN FEATURES, SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND MAINTAINED IN THE SOUTHWESTERN PORTION OF THE COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD.

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PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ACTIVE RECREATIONAL AREAS, SUCH AS A BASKETBALL COURT, WITHIN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS.

Squalicum Creek forms the northern and western boundary of the Columbia Neighborhood. It is a resource of city-wide significance, being one of four fish-bearing streams flowing through the City to Bellingham Bay. The Creek flows at the base of an incline for much of this stretch, so it is separated topographically from development to the south. The riparian vegetation that once buffered the creek has been reduced by the development of Squalicum Parkway, which follows the creek from Roeder Avenue to Meridian Street. Fish habitat has been diminished due to poor water quality, sedimentation, and fish passage obstacles.

The desirability of this area along Squalicum Creek for open space and trails has been recognized by the community and in city policy and planning documents for years. Most recently the **Squalicum Creek Greenway Master Plan** (1995) describes a foot and bike trail that would link Bellingham Bay to Hannegan Road and become an integral link in the regional Bay-to-Baker Trail. The **Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Plan** adopted by the City in 1994 identifies the Squalicum Creek Corridor as a site for a future trail as well as access points to the trail from adjacent neighborhoods. The City's **Wildlife and Habitat Assessment** (1995) recognizes the value of the wildlife and fish habitat in this corridor and recommends preservation and improvement of features that support both. The **Watershed Master Plan** completed for the City in 1994 identifies problem areas for water conveyance, water quality, and fish habitat in Squalicum Creek and recommends solutions. A **Salmon Habitat Survey** conducted by the City Planning and Community Development Department in 1994 revealed a tremendous potential for habitat in this section of creek which flows along the Columbia Neighborhood, but

populations are low due to habitat alterations, stream blockages, and poor water quality.

The Shoreline Management Master Program (1974), designates this portion of Squalicum Creek as Conservancy I, a classification in which most development is not permitted within 100 feet of the shoreline and clearing is restricted to 50 feet from the shoreline. The purpose of the Conservancy I designation is to protect areas which are intolerant of intense modification. Projects along the creek, such as a recreational trail, that do not interfere with shoreline processes or cause a detrimental effect elsewhere are permissible.

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A GREENWAY AND TRAIL SYSTEM ALONG SQUALICUM CREEK SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED TO PROTECT WILDLIFE HABITAT, WATER QUALITY, AND PROVIDE A POSITIVE TRAIL EXPERIENCE. ANY DEVELOPMENT OF THIS AREA SHOULD BE MINIMAL, SUCH AS A TRAIL OR WAYSIDE PARK, DUE TO THE SHORELINES SENSITIVITY TO MODIFICATION.

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Street trees in this neighborhood have historic significance and help give the neighborhood a distinctive character. For a neighborhood with limited open space, street trees are of particular importance, both for the visual as well as the wildlife value. Those sections of the neighborhood where street trees do not exist or are present in small numbers should be a priority for a tree planting effort. Older trees with historic significance, such as some of the trees in Elizabeth Park, shall be protected. It is advised that a certified arborist with the Parks Dept. assess the most important historic trees and provide a maintenance recommendation.

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STREET TREES SHALL BE PRESERVED AND AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO PLANT MORE IN AREAS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH FEW STREET TREES. AN ARBORIST SHOULD ASSESS HISTORIC TREES AND MAKE A RECOMMENDATION FOR THEIR MAINTENANCE. TREES SHOULD PROVIDE BEAUTY AND WILDLIFE VALUE.

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### **III. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES**

#### **Schools**

Columbia Elementary School is the only public facility within the neighborhood. Students living in the Columbia Neighborhood attend Columbia Elementary School, Shuksan Middle School and Bellingham High School. As mentioned earlier, the playground, at just less than two acres, is also the only sizable play field in the neighborhood. In view of the lack of other recreational spaces in Columbia, these areas are needed by the community. However, the school has no parking for its employees, and the dense development on small lots and narrow streets creates parking problems on Walnut and Utter next to the school.

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MEANS SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED FOR PROVIDING SCHOOL RELATED PARKING WHICH WILL NOT REDUCE THE PLAYGROUND AREA AND WHICH

## WILL FIT IN VISUALLY.

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### **Railroads**

There are railroad tracks along the entire southern and western sides of the Columbia Neighborhood. The main line through Whatcom County passes below the bank along Eldridge Avenue. An existing track to Sumas runs along Squalicum Creek on the western side of the neighborhood. There is local concern about the location of the switching yard, which is directly below one of the city's most densely populated residential areas. People several blocks from Eldridge can hear and feel the switching, much of which is done in the early morning hours. Some residents on the southwest side of Eldridge have lost tens of feet of their back yards to bank slumping which, they contend, is being accelerated by vibration from the switching. The real issue, however, is the potential hazard created by the storage and moving of tank cars in the switchyard, as detailed above. Tank cars, some of which contain highly volatile and toxic substances, are stored and switched directly below the homes on Eldridge Avenue.

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THE RAILROAD SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO RELOCATE ITS SWITCHING YARD. UNTIL THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED, THE RAILROAD SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS OF THE SWITCHING YARD ON ABUTTING RESIDENTIAL USES INCLUDING: EXPLORING SAFETY MEASURES TO REDUCE THE POTENTIAL HAZARDS INVOLVED WITH THE STORAGE AND SWITCHING OF TANK CARS CONTAINING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND RESTRICTING THE HOURS OF EXCESSIVE NOISE TO DAYLIGHT HOURS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IN REGARDS TO COUPLING AND REFRIGERATION.

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### **Drainage**

Those parts of the Columbia Neighborhood, which have flat, poorly draining soils, and are without properly functioning storm drainage, experience problems. The southern part of Columbia has a storm sewer system, and drainage problems there are often related to inlets clogged with leaves. Other areas in the northern and western portions of the neighborhood have no storm sewers and often have large puddles in the streets after heavy rains. The solution to this problem is the construction of storm sewers. This is an expensive venture, which, with today's funding methods, would require the property owners in an area to organize and tax themselves in order to have the storm sewers built.

### **Sanitary Sewers**

No significant local sewer capacity problems exist within the Columbia Neighborhood. Some lateral sewer main replacement and rehabilitation is necessary in areas north of Monroe Street and south of Illinois Street. The sanitary sewer mains in Eldridge Avenue are also in need of rehabilitation, but do not limit local development potential of existing platted lots.

## **Water**

The water system within the Columbia Neighborhood is an old pipe network, which over the years has required some repair and replacement. The gridding of mains between streets is adequate with some additional loops desired for increased circulation. A connection with the Nequalicum Neighborhood would be warranted off West Street when the water system is extended off Lafayette eastward. This would provide supplementary feed into the Columbia Neighborhood while adding circulation west of Squalicum Parkway.

The 1993 Comprehensive Water Plan identified a needed improvement to water mains within the Columbia Neighborhood which would benefit locations along the waterfront off Roeder Avenue. Those areas have moderately deficient fireflow levels and require a new 16-inch water main on North Street from Elm Street to Keesling replacing the existing 8-inch pipe. The 16 inch main improvement would further extend down Monroe Street and connect with the main on Eldridge as far west as Squalicum Parkway where it would replace the existing 8 and 10 inch mains now serving down to Roeder Avenue.



## IV. CIRCULATION

### Arterials

Meridian Street, Elm/Northwest Street and Squaticum Parkway are the three streets, which are presently designated as principal arterials in the Columbia Neighborhood. Traffic volumes on Meridian Street and Elm/Northwest Street are reaching 15,000 Vehicle Trips Per Day (VPD), which is considered close to full capacity for 2 lane arterials.

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RESIDENCES AND PARTICULARLY BUSINESSES ALONG MERIDIAN AND NORTHWEST USE AND RELY UPON ON-STREET PARKING TO MEET OR SUPPLEMENT THEIR PARKING NEEDS. TRAFFIC VOLUMES ARE PROJECTED TO INCREASE, CONSEQUENTLY THE CONTINUED PROVISION OF ON-STREET PARKING WILL LEAD TO FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN TRAFFIC SERVICE LEVELS. EFFORTS TO PROVIDE OFF-STREET PARKING AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS WILL CONTINUE. WHILE THIS MAY ALLEVIATE DEMAND FOR ON-STREET PARKING, THE NEIGHBORHOOD SERVING FUNCTION OF THIS COMMERCIAL AREA WILL CONTINUE TO CALL FOR RETENTION OF ON-STREET PARKING.

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Secondary arterials in Columbia include Illinois Street east between Northwest Avenue and Meridian Street, and Eldridge Avenue. Use of Eldridge Avenue by truck traffic has greatly decreased over the past few years. The use of this street for residential traffic only should be encouraged by continuing to place weight limits and hours of truck traffic.

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TRUCK TRAFFIC ON ELDRIDGE AVENUE SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED THROUGH CONTINUATION OF WEIGHT LIMITS AND RESTRICTED HOURS.

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Monroe, Lynn, and Illinois Street west of Northwest serve as neighborhood collectors in Columbia. Illinois is 36 feet wide and has traffic volumes of 2,800 vehicles per day. Traffic on Lynn and Monroe Streets is of comparable volumes, although volumes on Monroe west of Lynn and Lynn south of Monroe drop to about 700 vehicles per day. Monroe is just 24 feet wide and Lynn, except for the part between Illinois and North Streets, is only 20 feet wide. These are substandard widths for neighborhood collectors. However, the Columbia area is at, or near, its projected population capacity, and these streets are on the low end of neighborhood collector volumes. Traffic congestion is not bad on these streets now, and the narrow widths help to slow traffic.

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LYNN AND MONROE STREETS SHOULD NOT BE WIDENED. PARKING REMOVAL SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED.

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In 1995, the Public Works Department conducted the West Street Traffic Study. The purpose of the study was to document the concerns of the residents on West Street, and to present the Public Works Department's findings in response to those concerns, including staff recommendations. Because the study showed that there were no accidents or major cut-thru traffic, the Public Works Department recommended that

West Street should not be closed at Squalicum Parkway, that four-way stop signs should not be installed on West Street at the intersections of North and Jefferson Streets, and that crosswalks should not be installed on West Street at Monroe, Jefferson, and North Streets. This plan recognizes the neighborhood's ongoing concern relating to public safety on West Street and recommends continued monitoring of the traffic situation. Pedestrian safety measures may be needed if the level of traffic increases.

### **Residential Streets**

As stated in the neighborhood character section, most of the residential streets in Columbia are 18 - 24 feet wide. A fair percentage of them have curbs and gutters, and most of the southern portion of the area has sidewalks and large planting strips. Standards for constructing new, or for upgrading existing, streets should be consistent with the predominant character of the neighborhood.

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THE RECOMMENDED RESIDENTIAL STREET STANDARDS FOR THE COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD ARE 24 FOOT WIDTH WITH CURBS, GUTTERS, STORM DRAINAGE, 8 - 12 FOOT WIDE PLANTING STRIPS, AND SIDEWALKS. SIDEWALK LOCATION SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE TO PRESERVE EXISTING VEGETATION.

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### **Bicycle Facilities**

A 1978 report entitled Bicycle Facilities Planning, done for the Bellingham Office of Planning and Development, details actions on both a five and 25 year timeline that are required to provide a safe and adequate bicycle transportation system citywide.

The general focus of the five year program is to provide for safe cycling on existing streets while the 25 year plan provides is a combination of bikeways and open space and greenbelts that will serve as both a recreational facility as well as a transportation system.

The recommendations presented here are excerpted from that report and are included to present the type of bicycle facilities that will be required in the neighborhood to meet the five and 25 year goals.

The five-year plan identifies on-street improvements only. For Columbia Neighborhood these are as follows:

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DESIGNATED BIKE LANES SHOULD BE PROVIDED ON ELDRIDGE, NORTHWEST, LYNN, ELM, ROEDER AVENUE AND MERIDIAN STREETS.

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UPGRADE STORM DRAINS SO THEY ARE PERPENDICULAR TO FLOW OF TRAFFIC.

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The 25-year plan identifies primarily off-street bicycle facilities related to greenbelts and trail corridors. Those proposed in this neighborhood include:

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A BICYCLE CONNECTOR PATH SHOULD BE ACQUIRED AND DEVELOPED FROM THE BRIDGE ON NORTHWEST AVENUE DOWN TO SQUALICUM PARKWAY, PROVIDING NEIGHBORHOOD PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS TO THE GREENBELT.

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BICYCLE ACCESS SHOULD BE PROVIDED ON WALNUT STREET BETWEEN VICTOR AND ILLINOIS STREETS.

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A PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE OVERPASS, FROM THE BLUFF ALONG ELDRIDGE AVENUE OVER THE RAILROAD TRACKS TO THE WATERFRONT AND HARBOR AREA, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

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WEST STREET BETWEEN SQUALICUM PARKWAY AND NORTH STREET SHOULD BE UPGRADED.

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BIKE ACCESS TO ELIZABETH PARK SHOULD BE PROVIDED AND IMPROVED.

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### **Alleys**

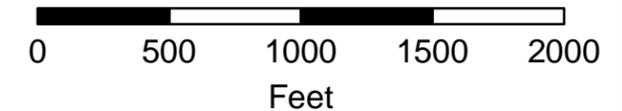
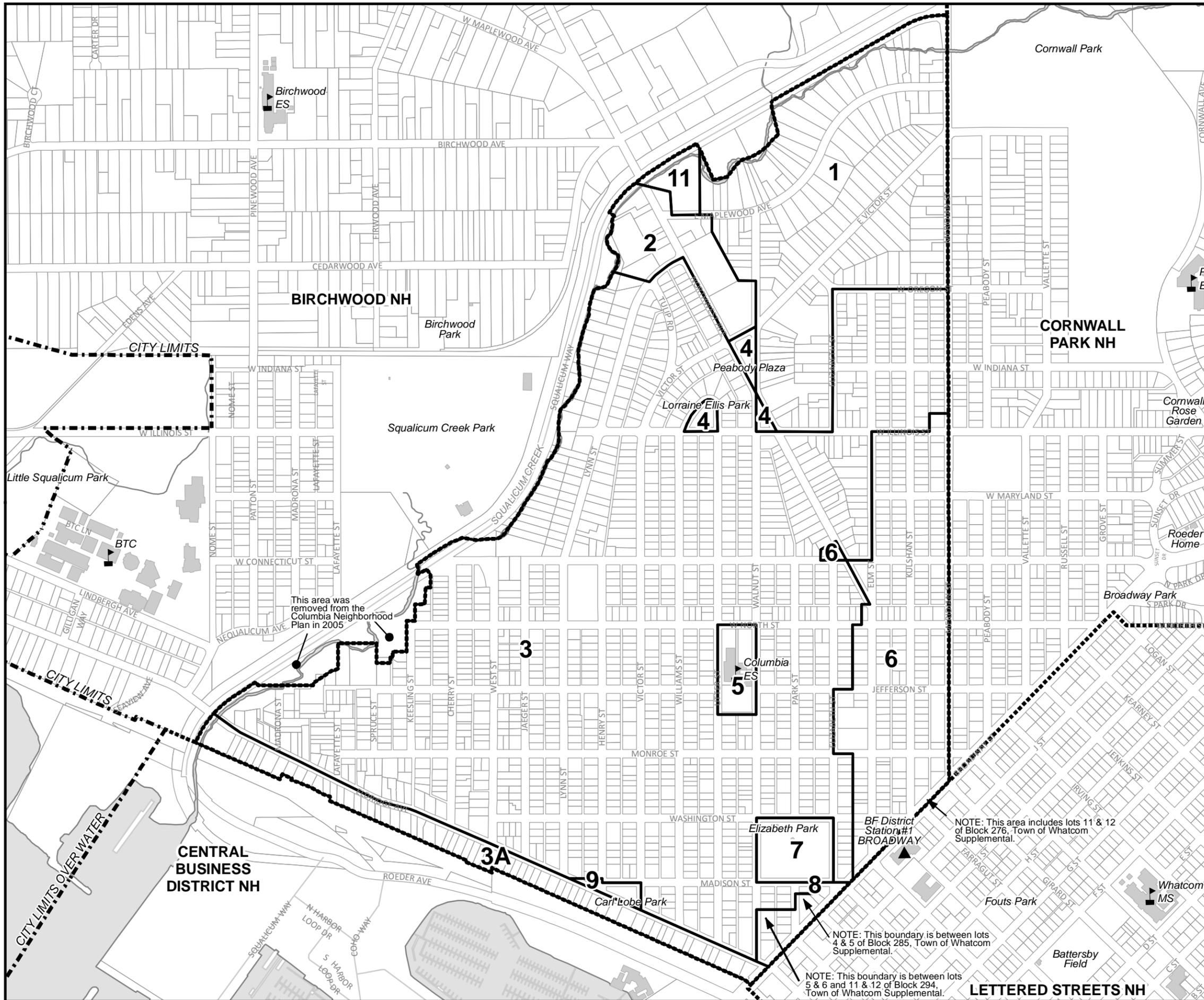
There are alleys platted through virtually all of the southern three-fourths of the Columbia Neighborhood. They are an important element of the neighborhood's circulation system, complementing the small lots and narrow streets. They provide access to garages or parking and eliminate curb cuts on the streets. An inventory of the neighborhood's alleys shows a variety of surfaces. All alleys, which are used, are in fair to good condition. The gravel ones are graded regularly by City crews. Those, which are not in at least fair condition, are in the northern part of the neighborhood where the lots are larger and access to garages is from the streets.

### **Pedestrian Facilities**

Sidewalks exist in most of the areas in the Columbia Neighborhood where residents want them. Along the south side of North Street from Elizabeth Street to Cherry Street the sidewalk is part of Bellingham's Safe School Routes Program. North Street, as well as Monroe Street, is a designated school route for children to reach Columbia Elementary School. Crosswalks are needed on Monroe Street at Utter Street and on Utter Street north of Jefferson Street.

# COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE

AREA	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATION
1	Single Family Res, Low Density
2	Commercial
3	Single Family Res, Med Density
3A	Single Family Res, Med Density
4	Public
5	Public
6	Urban Village (Fountain Dist Subarea Plan)
7	Public
8	Multi-Family Res, High Density
9	Public
11	Multi-Family Res



City of Bellingham  
Planning Department  
2011

NOTE: This area includes lots 11 & 12 of Block 276, Town of Whatcom Supplemental.

NOTE: This boundary is between lots 4 & 5 of Block 285, Town of Whatcom Supplemental.

NOTE: This boundary is between lots 5 & 6 and 11 & 12 of Block 294, Town of Whatcom Supplemental.

## V. SUBAREA DESCRIPTIONS AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

### Area 1

This area is distinguished by its unusually large lots. Most lots are 80 feet wide and 200 to 450 feet deep. Average lot size is over 17,000 square feet. The predominant land use is single family, although there are several duplexes and three small apartments. There is also a convalescent home, the Salvation Army Complex, and an office. Single family housing in the area is of mixed vintage, although most of it is more than 20 years old. The overall housing condition of this area is good and offers housing opportunities for those who would like to live in the city, but would also like a large backyard. This area was the subject of a study in 1970, Cornwall Park Acreage Land Use Study, to determine whether the large lots in this area might be put to a higher density use. The recommendation of that study was that use remain as it is.

In addition to this study, a recent analysis of the area located south of East Victor Street between Walnut and Elizabeth Streets was conducted. This analysis showed that the majority of the lots in this area range in size from 10,000 square feet to 14,000 square feet and that only two lots are equal to or exceed the current minimum lot size requirement. As a result, this area may be appropriate for smaller lot sizes if the lots were subdivided in conjunction with the dedication and construction of alley access. In order for this reduction of lot sizes to occur, all property owners must agree and Fire and Public Works concerns must be addressed.

Physically, this is a level area, with a steep 30-foot bank dropping to Squalicum Creek, which is the northern boundary of the area.

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**AREA 1 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, LOW DENSITY**

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### Area 2

This area is currently used as neighborhood business. The area includes some of the hillside down to Squalicum Creek west of Northwest Avenue, although the boundary was kept to the top of that topographic break east of Northwest Avenue because there is some developable land along the creek on which commercial uses are not appropriate.

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**AREA 2 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL**

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### Areas 3 and 3A

This area includes most of the Columbia Neighborhood. Virtually the entire area is platted into 5,000 square foot lots and is already developed, although there is an

unrecorded subdivision along Northwest Avenue and Walnut Street between Connecticut and Illinois. There are also several unplatted areas of small ownerships, which are virtually all built upon, in the southwestern corner of the neighborhood.

The predominant use throughout the area is single family. There are also two churches, a convalescent center, and several offices and other commercial uses along Elm Street and Northwest Avenue. The 1995 vacant land inventory identified the potential for 80 additional dwelling units in the area, 47 of which are existing platted, vacant lots.

Most of the housing is older, including many houses of historical significance. The overall condition of this housing is good. The continued preservation of these older homes should be encouraged through flexibility in the Land Use and Development Code for repair and replacement of historic features.

The area is bounded to the south and west by steep bluffs, with Squalicum Creek as the western boundary. Those lots south of Eldridge Avenue have excellent views of Bellingham Bay and the San Juan Islands. A separate Area 3A differs from Area 3 only in the special condition related to those views in the Columbia Neighborhood zoning section of the Land Use and Development Code.

**AREA 3 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM DENSITY**

**Area 4**

This area consists of three small ornamental city parks - Ellis Lorraine Park, Gibson Park, and Peabody Plaza Park.

**AREA 4 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC**

**Area 5**

Columbia School and its playground make up this area.

**AREA 5 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC**

**Area 6**

The Fountain District Urban Village Subarea Plan includes land within the Columbia, Cornwall Park and Lettered Streets Neighborhoods. Area 6 is the Columbia Neighborhood portion of the Subarea Plan boundary. The Subarea Plan is a policy document that will guide future development within this subarea. **See Exhibit A – Fountain District Urban Village Subarea Plan** for details.

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**AREA 6 LAND USE DESIGNATION: URBAN VILLAGE**

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**Area 7**

Elizabeth Park is this area. Any future development of the park should include drainage improvements.

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**AREA 7 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC**

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**Area 8**

This area along Broadway Street includes one office building, a funeral parlor, two churches, a drive-thru espresso stand, and six single-family residences. The homes are in sound condition or are in need of only minor repairs. Professional offices are allowed in this area per the Land Use and Development Code.

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**AREA 8 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY**

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**Area 9**

This area includes Lobe Park and the small City owned triangular piece of property across Henry Street from Lobe.

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**AREA 9 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC**

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**Area 10**

This area was removed from the Columbia Neighborhood with the adoption of the Fountain District Urban Village Subarea Plan in October, 2010.

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**AREA 10 LAND USE DESIGNATION: NONE**

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**Area 11**

This small subarea is traversed by Squalicum Creek. There is a significant

topographical difference in the subarea creating two distinct building areas. One such area is adjacent and on the same grade as E. Maplewood Street. The other area lies between the creek and the upper area. A retirement home occupies this area.

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**AREA 11 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

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**[Exhibit A, Fountain District Urban Village Subarea Plan](#)**