

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable Housing: A standard developed by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which states, "affordable housing is generally defined as housing where the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for gross housing costs, including utility costs."

Best Management Practices: Specific techniques of construction, design, methodology, and timing to minimize impacts on the environment. Generally accepted as the best tools and techniques available in resource management and protection.

Capital Facilities Plan: A mandatory element of a comprehensive plan containing an inventory of existing facilities including water systems, sanitary sewer systems, storm-water facilities, schools parks and recreational facilities, police and fire protection facilities, a forecast for future needs and a plan for financing necessary improvements.

Comprehensive Plan: A coordinated land use policy statement that is adopted by local jurisdictions in accordance with the Growth Management Act. Required elements of the plan include land use, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, and housing.

Concurrency: The Growth Management Act encourages urban levels of development to be served with the full range of urban services at the time of – or concurrently with – construction. In addition, the GMA specifically requires that transportation infrastructure, and/or mitigation strategies, be provided or funded concurrently with new development.

County-wide Planning Policies: Counties planning under the Growth Management Act must adopt "a written policy statement or statements used solely for establishing a county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted..." (RCW 36.70A.210). County-wide policies were adopted in 1993, updated in 1997, and are contained in Appendix C.

Critical Areas: Include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, steep slopes, and geologically hazardous areas and their ecosystems.

Design Review: Refers to Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 20.25, adopted October 1, 2001, which requires all new multifamily development to be reviewed according to urban design principals to ensure compatibility between new and existing residential multifamily development (see also Residential Multifamily Design Guidelines).

Development Regulations: Any controls placed on development or land use activities by the City or County including zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and environmental regulations.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Document required by the State Environmental Policy Act to inform citizens and decision makers about the environmental consequences of a pending private or governmental action. A draft and final document are issued.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas: See "Critical Areas".

Geographic Information System (GIS): A powerful computer system that integrates mapping graphics with relational database information. A GIS can perform environmental and statistical analysis on multiple map and database layers simultaneously to provide information on topography, environmental features, infrastructure (roads and utilities), land use, zoning, and subdivision of land.

Greenbelts/Greenways: These are undeveloped open space, natural areas, including agricultural lands, golf courses and other recreational uses, wildlife corridors and similar uses.

Growth Alternatives: Four different approaches that the City and County could employ to accommodate the population projected over the 20-year planning period. These four alternatives, and the anticipated impact of each one, are examined in this EIS document. See Chapter I for a list of the alternatives and Chapter 2 for a brief summary of the anticipated impact of each alternative.

Growth Management Act (GMA): RCW 36.70A, adopted by the Washington State Legislature in 1990, requires selected cities and counties (including Bellingham and Whatcom County) to prepare or update coordinated comprehensive plans to accommodate increasing populations and urban growth. The GMA is comprised of 13 general goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans (See Appendix B). The framework of the GMA mandates that several minimum requirements be met, but allows local jurisdictions to decide how best to meet these minimum requirements.

Impact Fees: RCW 82.02 authorizes local governments planning under the GMA to establish and collect impact fees to ensure that new development pays its fair share of the cost of providing the public facilities necessary to serve the new development.

Under RCW 82.02.090, the definition of “public facilities” includes (a) public streets and roads, (b) publicly owned parks, open space, and recreation facilities, (c) school facilities, and (d) fire protection facilities in jurisdictions that are not part of a fire district. The City of Bellingham currently requires impact fees for public streets and public schools. Whatcom County currently only requires impact fees for public schools for development in Urban Growth Areas.

Inclusionary Zoning: Zoning that requires developers to provide a portion of housing units in a specific project or area to meet the needs of low and moderate income people.

Infill: A growth strategy under which future population growth and development is directed to areas within existing city and Urban Growth Area boundaries. Infill development refers to the use of vacant and/or redevelopable lots and parcels within established neighborhoods prior to the conversion of undisturbed land at the edge of the city. Infill strategies are typically used to combat sprawling development patterns.

Infrastructure: See "Public Facilities".

Interlocal Agreements: An agreement intended to apply within designated Urban Growth Areas to set clear and reasonable criteria for orderly annexations including guidelines on size and timing of annexations and urban levels of development, appropriate development standards and tax revenue sharing provisions. Participants in the agreement could include the county, any adjacent city, affected fire districts (if applicable) and any other utility provider.

Land Supply: The net amount of vacant or underutilized land available for development; usually expressed in terms of gross and net (reductions for environmentally sensitive areas, infrastructure needs, market factors, etc.) acres; jurisdictions planning under the Growth Management Act are required to provide an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land to meet the anticipated population growth over the 20-year planning period.

Level of Service (LOS): A measure of the operating characteristics of a transportation facility, such as a street intersection. The state Growth Management Act requires LOS for arterial streets and transit routes, meaning that the City must establish targets for the performance of those facilities. See Chapter IV, Transportation and Circulation Section. Level of Service may also be calculated and applied to public services and facilities other than transportation. LOS standards typically provide a target or threshold for public services and facilities to meet. In the case of transportation facilities, if traffic impacts caused by development exceed the adopted LOS standard, then the development can be denied unless mitigation is provided concurrently with development (See Concurrency, above).

Low Income Housing: The federal government defines low income housing as housing provided for individuals earning 50% or less of the average family wage of the local jurisdiction.

Mode: A method of travel, such as pedestrian, bicycle, transit, automobile, train, airplane, ferry boat, or freight vehicles.

Multi-modal: Refers to the integration and coordination of multiple modes of travel within a local area or region.

Natural Resource Lands: Natural Resource Lands include agricultural, forestry, and mineral resource lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products, for the commercial production of timber, and that have long-term significance for the extraction of minerals.

Office of Financial Management (OFM): State agency which provides population projections to local jurisdictions.

Planning Period: For the purposes of this planning effort, the 20-year planning period is from 2002 to 2022.

Private Utilities: Water and/or sewer service owned and operated by an entity other than a political subdivision of the federal, state or tribal governments.

Public Facilities: Streets, highways, sidewalks, street and traffic lighting systems, water systems, storm and sanitary sewer systems, solid waste collection, parks and other recreational facilities, and public schools.

Public Services: Fire protection, emergency medical services, law enforcement, public health, education, recreation, environmental protection, and other governmental services.

Public Utilities: Water and/or sewer services owned and operated by a political subdivision of federal, state or tribal governments (includes water and sewer districts and public utility districts).

Regional Transportation Planning Organization: An organization created by the Growth Management Act to coordinate regional transportation efforts and to foster cooperation among state and local jurisdictions. Through voluntary association the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) has been designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization for Whatcom County.

Residential Multifamily Design Guidelines: As per BMC 20.25 Design Review, Bellingham's Residential Multifamily Design Guidelines (RMDG) are applied to new multifamily construction within the City of Bellingham. The purpose of the RMDG's

is to ensure good site and structure design to mitigate impacts to existing residential neighborhoods and to enhance the quality of life for residents of new multifamily housing. The updated Urban Fringe Subarea Plan will require that new multifamily development in the Bellingham Urban Growth Area conform to Bellingham's Residential Multifamily Design Guidelines.

Resource Based Industry: A business or industry that has a direct relationship to natural resources such as agriculture, minerals, forestry and fishing. This type of industry is generally located in close proximity to the resource or resource land.

Rural Lands: Lands that are not within an urban growth area boundary and are not designated as natural resource lands.

SEPA: State Environmental Policy Act requiring review of environmental impacts associated with certain project and non-project actions.

Short-Term/Long Term Boundaries: Short Term boundaries are used as a tool for facilitating provision of urban levels of services and preventing sprawl. The Long Term boundary includes the short term boundary and areas that have unresolved issues within the identified 20 year Urban Growth Boundary.

TIF: Transportation Impact Fee program adopted by the City Council in October 1993 and implemented by the Bellingham Public Works Department.

Urbanization: Refers to growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings and impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the use of such land for the production of food or other agricultural products, or the extraction of mineral resources.

Urban Fringe Subarea: One of 10 planning subareas in western Whatcom County. The 20,000 acre subarea is located north of Bellingham and generally bounded by Smith and Slater roads to the north, Mission road to the east, and the Lummi Indian Reservation to the west (See Figure 1 in Introduction). Whatcom County and the City are currently working to update the comprehensive plan and urban growth area boundary for this subarea.

Urban Growth Area (UGA): Areas that are currently outside of city limits, but designated to receive urban services and eventually be annexed to cities. The Growth Management Act requires that all cities have designated UGA's.

Urban Level of Service: The minimum level of urban facilities and services, including sanitary sewer, water service, police protection, fire protection and emergency medical services, parks and recreation programs, solid waste management, electric service, land use controls, communication facilities and public schools, to support urban levels of development. A full range of services would add

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

urban public transit, natural gas, storm drainage facilities, street lighting, libraries, local parks, local recreation facilities and services, and health services.

Urban Service Area: Areas north and east of the Bellingham city limits designated in 1985 (Ordinance 9461) to receive urban level services and eventually be annexed to the city. See Figure 1 in Introduction.

Visions for Bellingham: A policy document containing goals for the future of Bellingham. A delegation of over 200 citizens participated in preparation of the goals, which were adopted by the City Council and serve as the framework for the update to the comprehensive plan.

Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG): Provides regional land use and transportation services and demographic information to the local governments in Whatcom County.

Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA): Independent agency providing transit service throughout Whatcom County with concentrated service in Bellingham, Ferndale, Lynden, Blaine, and selected unincorporated areas.

Zoning: Land use regulatory tool used by jurisdictions to designate land as appropriate for particular types of land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, public, etc. Zoning also usually includes minimum and maximum densities at which the designated land uses can be developed. For example, a zoning designation of Residential Single (RS) 7,200 would allow single family residential houses to be built on 7,200 square foot lots, which equates to a density of 6 houses per acre.